

**SCARS ON THE ARCHIVE,
VISIONS OF PLACE**

Genocide and Modernity in Tasmania

JESSE SHIPWAY

Scars on the Archive, Visions of Place: Genocide and Modernity in Tasmania

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BA (Hons)

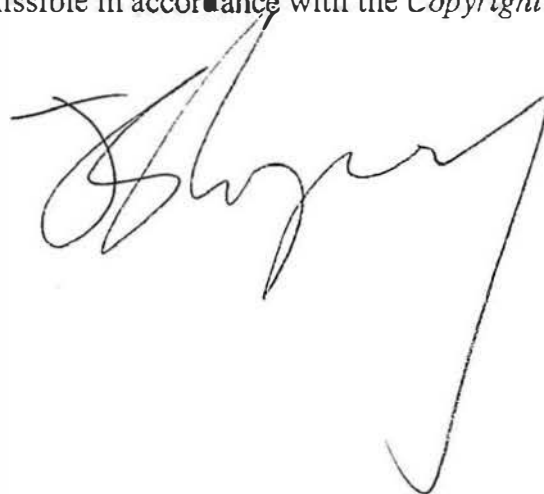
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Shipway', with a long, sweeping vertical line extending downwards from the end of the signature.

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This thesis could never have reached its destination without the kind assistance, forthright advice and empathetic imagination of a loose affiliation of friends, family and co-workers. Thank you then to my wife Helena Shipway, my supervisor Philip Mead, Pascal “Posca” Beechey, Jacob Fischer, Andrew Harwood, Pete Hay, Brett Hutchins, Keith Jacobs, Anna Johnston, Fiona Martin, Mum, Dad, Lee and Marc Prince and the postgrad community in the School of English, Journalism and European Languages at the University of Tasmania.

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*

Abstract

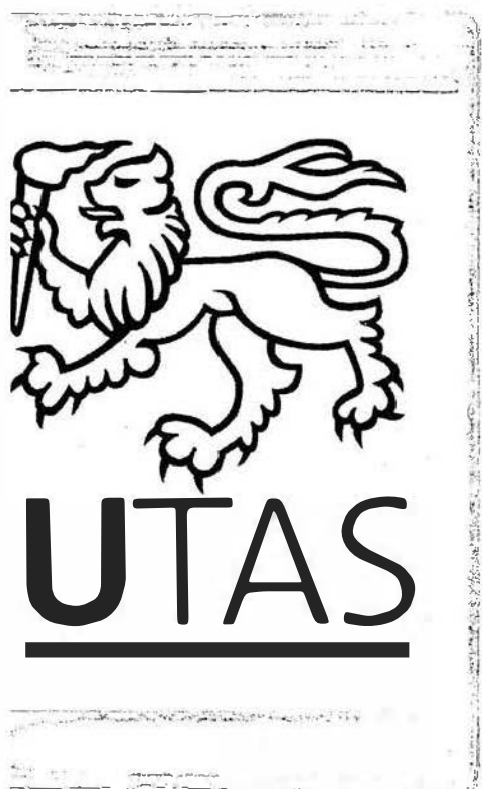
This thesis attempts to come to grips with the narrative traditions, the tropological models and the modes of speech through which Tasmania has come to be constructed as a place of genocide and a place of modernity. The dual nature of its structure responds to two important traditions in contemporary humanities scholarship, the study of genocide and the study of modernity. Through an examination of the way in which these two developmental trajectories have played out in Tasmania, I attempt to decentre and destabilise their disciplinary frameworks. In the first instance modernity is examined from an alternative perspective that allows for a mapping that is not regulated by the presence of Europe and North America, while in the second, genocide is uncoupled from the Holocaust in the name of an examination of a colonial iteration that has only recently registered on the radar screen of scholars working in the area.

In this thesis genocide and modernity function dialectically. While, on the one hand, they serve as the objects of analysis, on the other, they provide the discursive resources for the construction of a dual optic that allows for a selective re-reading of the history of Tasmania. For my purposes genocide and modernity are generators of archival energy, drivers of the spectral web that spins out through historical time and transforms a physical location into a place by making that location symbolisable and communicable. This thesis posits a communal structure of feeling that gathers itself around the signifier “Tasmania”. The linguistic traces that I have pursued are diachronic in nature but their mobilisation takes place in a continually refreshing present. Being-in-Tasmania is being-with-the-archive and that archive is structured in important ways by genocide and modernity.

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Prefatory



PREFATORY

How are we to conceive of the [archive], if it corresponds neither to the archive in the strict sense — that is, the storehouse that catalogs the traces of what has been said, to consign them to future memory — nor to the Babelic library that gathers the dust of statements and allows for their resurrection under the historian's gaze.

(Giorgio Agamben, 1999)

This thesis takes its most basic impetus from the articulation of an equivocally textual object called the Tasmanian archive. The Tasmanian archive is the locus for the storage of utterances that concern Tasmania, but it also plays a part in ushering a discursively mediated Tasmania into being. It is both about, and constitutive of, Tasmania in a social-symbolic sense. In regard to its ontology, a principle of captivity plays the pre-eminent role. A fluid, permeable entity, the Tasmanian archive is a mobile site where the text and talk of everyday discursivity are gathered together. It is where, in Jacques Derrida's terms, an act of "consignation" takes place.¹

It has a secondary function, however, that derives from its place in Giorgio Agamben's discourse on Emile Benveniste's "The Semiology of Language" as described in *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*.² Here, the archive is encoded

through the work of Foucault so that it comes to designate “the system of relations between the unsaid and the said”, or “the dark margin encircling and limiting every concrete act of speech.”³ The archive in this sense does not bring together the content of what has been written or said about Tasmania, but rather, marks the conditions of its “sayability”, the material but non-communicative dimensions that attend every act of enunciation. Because the archive responds to the being of language, as well as to its fecundity of meaning, its location is simultaneously discursive and material. It encloses a language that is anchored to speakers, places and events: phenomena that translate matter into meaning. The Tasmania archive trespasses into the order of things. Its ontology is indifferent to the boundaries of the linguistic plain that Foucault, at least, is uneasy about violating.

What [...] we wish to do is to dispense with ‘things’. To ‘depresentify’ them. [...] To substitute for the enigmatic treasure of ‘things’ anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse. To define these objects without reference to the ground, the foundation of things, but by relating them to the body of rules that enable them to form as objects of a discourse and thus constitute the conditions of their historical appearance.⁴

By drawing attention to the way the archive encloses the material conditions that make possible a given statement, Agamben prevents the “virtuality” of the discourse itself from entirely eclipsing the objects to which it is wed. This is an important achievement because it kills off the shibboleth of a cheapened version of Derrida’s “there is nothing outside the text”, the disingenuous *reductio ad absurdum* that many critics of the deconstructive approach rehearse. For Agamben, the archive protects the materiality of things-in-the-world, buttressing them against the mesmeric gravity of linguistic reductionism. In the case of a concrete location like Tasmania, the very physicality of a

statement reflected in the archive connects that statement to the place it names. The archive provides us with a way to link language games to specific places even as those places are in part a product of the discourses that they anchor.

This thesis places a frame around a collection of moments that carry a special resonance within the Tasmanian archive. As a temporalised assemblage of freestanding essays, the threads of continuity that hold it together are the contrapuntal problematics of genocide and modernisation. These two trajectories mirror each other, I contend, in that the first embodies a collective despair and recuperates its emotional charge from the past, while the latter embodies a collective hope and looks forward to the future. Throughout the history of the Tasmanian archive both genocide and modernisation have been made the subject of contested, affectively charged statements, propositions and utterances. But these speech acts are not hopelessly dispersed. Some of them are bound together in contingent assemblage by their collective emergence from a series of shared moments of inauguration. Perhaps we might more precisely describe their operative dimension as multilateral or omni-directional. At any given point in the history of Tasmania, these two trajectories position their moments of enunciation as dialogical nodes connecting the past with the future. Current discussions about the “truth” of the Tasmanian genocide, for instance, are not only played out in remote enclaves as isolated exchanges between vested interests. Rather, they enter the *agon* in the company of future projections on apparently unrelated matters like the future of old growth logging to produce an ensembled dialogue, an echolalia that rolls the mnemonics of Tasmania’s past into the wall of sound through which the present itself becomes audible. To address the problem of signal to noise presented by this formulation, this thesis targets the narrow frequency ranges of genocide

and modernity, providing a provisional and partial tabulation of their unfolding through the Tasmanian archive.

The contrapuntal method as I envisage it, should not be confused with the dialogic method that Mikhail Bakhtin distinguished in his work on Dostoevsky's poetics. This thesis is an attempt at a poetics of culture cast in terms that draw on Stephen Greenblatt's framing of the project. In "Towards a Poetics of Culture", Greenblatt seems intent on cordoning off a space for subjectivity that is problematically social. He criticizes Fredric Jameson fairly openly for demonizing the private as a capitalist illusion:

For the *Political Unconscious* any demarcation of the aesthetic must be aligned with the private which is in turn aligned with the psychological, the poetic, and the individual, as distinct from the public, the social, and the political. All of these interlocking distinctions [...] are then laid at the door of capitalism with its power to "maim" and "paralyze" us as individual subjects."⁵

For Bakhtin, the dialogic mode resides firmly in the stylistics of the novel. The novel is social, the author of the novel thinks socially. Poetics on the other hand, and I think this is Greenblatt's point, can best be thought as a private, but not reactionary, attempt to order the world through language. The contrapuntal method, as I develop it in this thesis then, is private, a personal, and hopefully, a poetic approach. As Bakhtin writes:

Herein lies the profound distinction between prose style and poetic style [...] For the prose artist the world is full of other people's words, among which he must orient himself and whose speech characteristics he must be able to perceive with a very keen ear. He must introduce them into the plane of his own discourse, but in such a way that this plane is not destroyed.⁶

There is no possibility in this thesis that the plane of my discourse will be destroyed. Unless, of course, this falling apart takes place in the ear of the reader. If destruction is

set in train, it is surely a creative destruction. Rereading Tasmanian history through the categories of genocide and modernity is, above all else, a productive enterprise.

There is a caveat that needs to be added to my delineation of the concept of the archive. At various points in this thesis, I have recourse to a conception of Tasmania that is predominantly discursive. At others, I re-read episodes of Tasmanian history as if they refer to a concrete referent, a social totality or substantive extra-linguistic place. One of the goals of this thesis is to theorise the means by which non-linguistic experience of a given location becomes, under the influence of archival energy, a communicable matrix for the construction of place. Neither place nor discourse are collapsed into one another in this equation. Rather, their mutually constitutive arising subtends an antinomy of place and language. The two contrapuntal trajectories of genocide and modernity carry this suspension over into the pragmatic unfolding of place identity in Tasmania. My account of the story of how Tasmania came to be a place of genocide and a place of modernity is split between the two registers under examination. The story of modernity in Tasmania mobilises a socio-political entity anterior to discourse, while the story of genocide as a meta-historical debate maps the surface of a field that is primarily rhetorical. An analysis of the troping of genocide and modernity in the Tasmanian archive, however, does not just reveal important “truths” about the particular place to which they refer. To this end, this thesis also looks at how large-scale, abstracted socio-cultural logics play themselves out on a local stage. How, it asks, is the universal language of modernity given a regional inflection in Tasmania? What, it inquires, does a non-metropolitan modernity look like up-close? When, it poses, will it be possible to read a genocidal logic into a historical trajectory without invoking the Jewish Holocaust?⁷

Through an engagement with these and other questions, this thesis challenges the established ways of thinking about the island that I call home. To the reader well versed in *Tasmaniana*, it proposes a re-inscription and a reassessment. To the uninitiated, it serves as a general introduction. In both cases, it is interested in problematising common-sense understandings of place, culture and identity through an interrogation of the layerings of meaning that accrete around a localised history that is always unfinished.

This thesis was completed at a unique moment in the history of the History of Australia. Keith Windschuttle's much publicised challenge to "orthodox" accounts of civilisational interaction on the Australian frontier, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History Volume One: Van Diemen's Land 1803-1847* (2003), had just been published and a lively, multiform and oftentimes downright nasty debate was only just hitting its stride.⁸ At face value, the national significance of Windschuttle's book would appear to lie in its bold contention that respected, high-profile historians like Lyndall Ryan and Henry Reynolds had deliberately doctored empirical data so as to underline emphatically their argument that the Australian colonial frontier was, in the first instance, a site of carnage and, in the second, of organised, guerilla resistance. At stake here was the official vision of the human landscape and race-relations of early European Australia. Would Windschuttle's livid, lucid, revisionist prose finally give us just cause to remove the "black armbands", the hair shirts of postcolonial shame, that we have worn since becoming cognizant that the processes of land acquisition and pastoral development in this country were anything but a peaceable affair?⁹ I say face-value because there is another, more obscured because epistemological, dimension along which the Windschuttle intervention spins the resources of history into its novel web. To my knowledge, the explosion of debate blasted into the public sphere by Windschuttle's

book, is the first and only instance of “official” Tasmanian history being used to re-write an “official” Australian history. Volume One of *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History* is dedicated solely to an examination of the landmark events of the Tasmanian genocide — the Risdon Massacre, the Cape Grim Massacre and so on — but it is also clearly looking outward: to the other editions in the trilogy that are to follow, and to the field of Australian Aboriginal history and politics more generally. Windschuttle writes:

Although the series starts in Tasmania, it will eventually cover the whole of the continental mainland. The colony of Van Diemen’s Land, as it was originally known, comes first because it has long been regarded as the worst-case scenario. Those historians now upheld as the most reputable on the subject assure us that the Tasmanian Aborigines were subject to a ‘conscious policy of genocide’. International writers routinely compare the actions of the British in Tasmania with the Spaniards in Mexico, the Belgians in the Congo, the Turks in Armenia and Pol Pot in Cambodia.¹⁰

Here, the telling of a national story, a story with national consequences, takes as its initial subject matter a set of localised events. In a classically metonymic movement, the part comes to substitute for the whole, and Tasmania is made the first port of call in what we are led to believe will be an all-bases-covered pursuit of historical truth. This kind of substitution is nothing new in its own right, other parts of Australia have long been invoked as worthy settings for the telling of national narratives: the Victorian goldfields of *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony*, the innercity Sydney slums of *Bobbin Up* or the Melbourne bohemia of *Monkeygrip*.¹¹ What is unique here, and it needs to be noted that we are talking historical rather than fictional discourse, is that *Tasmania* now becomes the exemplary locus for the staging of an historiographical performance that seeks to reorder an entire sub-disciplinary terrain that is itself the setting for a variety of important

debates about nationhood, racism and cultural identity. This tranche of developments is serendipitous in the context of this thesis because it brings home the fact that “minor” places can attain a “major” significance if they are looked at in an expedient light.¹² The optic through which we examine a place and its symbolic economies needs to be well chosen if we intend to succeed in this task.

When I began researching this thesis, I was not aware of the work Windschuttle was preparing for *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, but I was to run into his scholarship in the early stages of my own deliberations. Initially, the entire thrust of my project was directed toward a reversal of the notion that Tasmania had been left behind by modernity. The discovery of Zygmunt Bauman’s influential work *Modernity and the Holocaust* (1989) seemed to take this path in an intriguing direction so I followed it, first, to Henry Reynolds’ *An Indelible Stain: The Question of Genocide in Australian History* (2001), then to Bill Thorpe and Raymond Evans’ thoroughgoing demolition of Windschuttle’s *Quadrant* pieces from the mid-1990s, “Indigenocide and the Massacre of Aboriginal History” (2001). The modernity thread that runs through this thesis was thus, almost from the outset, intimately bound up with the genocide thread. The act of displacement that Windschuttle completes in *Fabrication* was also always a goal I had in mind when I began to think about the way that modernity’s developmental trajectories have been played out here in Tasmania. The dialectical movements that allow our thoughts to travel from the local to the general, from the one to the many, from the part to the whole, from the regional to the national to the global, form the machinery for damming the archival flows set in motion by and around this “thing” we call Tasmania.

This thesis consists of an extended introductory component followed by three sections that chart an uneven course through historical time from the invasion of

Tasmania in 1803 to the present. The opening comments seek to familiarise the reader with a defamiliarised Tasmania framed through the optics of genocide and modernity. In this section, I test the use-value of modernity and genocide as ways of seeing the archival enunciations that we have traditionally filed away under the heading of Tasmanian culture.¹³ The form of this interrogation is dialectical. On the one hand, genocide and modernity are thematic clusters with historical form: objects of knowledge that are contained within the Tasmanian archive. On the other, they provide the conceptual frameworks through which we read the archive. In regard to the latter sense, a brief survey is conducted into the state of play currently prevailing in the fields of Modernity and Genocide Studies. In the case of Modernity Studies, the objective is to situate my reading of a non-metropolitan, peripheral modernity in the context of the increasingly large body of work interested in de-centring modernity from its traditional homelands in Europe and North America. In the case of genocide, I seek to locate my own analysis in a less specific sense by presenting a survey and typology of the terms in which the Tasmanian genocide has appeared across a range of literatures.

Sections two through four comprise the detailed reading of the Tasmanian archive. Each of these three parts is given a temporal heading that performs an uneven periodisation: uneven, because this is not the kind of reconstructive thesis that purports to tell a story stretched out along a linear chronology. The past survives for my purposes as a loose collection of fragments that need not always be shaped by a strong narrative trajectory. By subtending my interventions into the Tasmanian archive with a net of historicised time, moments of archival articulation can be gathered together for practical purposes. The idea of naming a time — Van Diemonian, Tasmanian, Global — emerges out of a combination of fact and feeling that orientated my investigations. The heuristic

division of Tasmania's cultural temporality into three parts reflects the phenomenal "truth" that the people of this island worked and lived in a social cosmos that was always on the way toward becoming something other than what it was. The hypostatisation of a fluid, lived temporality thus enacted is as essential as it is ultimately inadequate. To pay due notice to this fact, a certain suppleness is built into the categories in question. The second section, which covers the period from colonisation in 1803 to Trukanini's death in 1876, for instance, includes a chapter that focuses on Richard Flanagan's *Gould's Book of Fish* (2002).¹⁴ That the diegesis of Flanagan's novel is set within the temporal parameters of the section is not the main issue here because other material that clearly falls outside its range allows the chapter to function. The same principle is at work in sections three and four, where material crosses over time-lines on a number of occasions. Part three, encloses an interval of one hundred and two years, from the death of the "last Tasmanian" Trukanini to the screening of Tom Haydon's documentary *The Last Tasmanian: A Story of Genocide* (1978). It also reaches back, however, to draw on primary material from the field diaries of George Augustus Robinson that is then re-situated in a contemporary context. Again, in part four, the portion of the thesis that appears to gesture forward to what Gayatri Spivak calls the "vanishing present", the chapter entitled "Metaphorics of an Extermination" touches in some depth on the Jewish Holocaust.¹⁵ A disclaimer that needs to be added here is that my point of focus is the agglomeration of contemporary language games that invoke the Shoah, rather than the Shoah itself.

In spite of this permeability, these divisions have their usefulness. By historicising the archival articulations that are the primary objects of my investigations, I mimic the forms of language that carry them "officially" from the past into the present. This

mimicry, it needs be said, is more akin to tribute than to parody, incorporating the linearity of the hegemonic historical forms without necessarily honoring their content. The temporal ordering of these essays runs a string through them as if they were beads on a necklace. Cut the string and they fall, disordered, to the floor.

The temporalisation of the thesis is the first order of its organisation, but there is a second order that is equally important. Each of the three sections that make up the body of the thesis includes an essay written in accordance with the tonal oppositions of the two contrapuntal trajectories of genocide and modernity. The first essay in each section engages with the variegated problematics of genocide in Tasmania, while the second focuses on modernity. Again, these rules are not absolute, so that in the second part, “Van Diemonian Time”, the genocide essay becomes the locus of an intermingled discussion of the way certain thematics we associate with modernity and modernisation form a nexus with the baleful logic of genocide when the forces of colonisation clash with an indigenous civilisation. The subtitling of each division describes its own arc through historical time, tracing out the developmental trajectories taken by modernity and genocide in their capacity as generators of archival articulations.

My point here is that through time the enfolding of language, opinion and fact performed by the archive takes different forms. As a mediating function, the archive operates in an open-ended present, giving inflection to future orientations and retrospective reconstructions. The archive both records and enables different relations to the past, present and future that can be mapped. But these cartographies are always partial, it needs to be remembered, for the same reason that periodisation always presents as an affront to the organic streams of lived temporality.

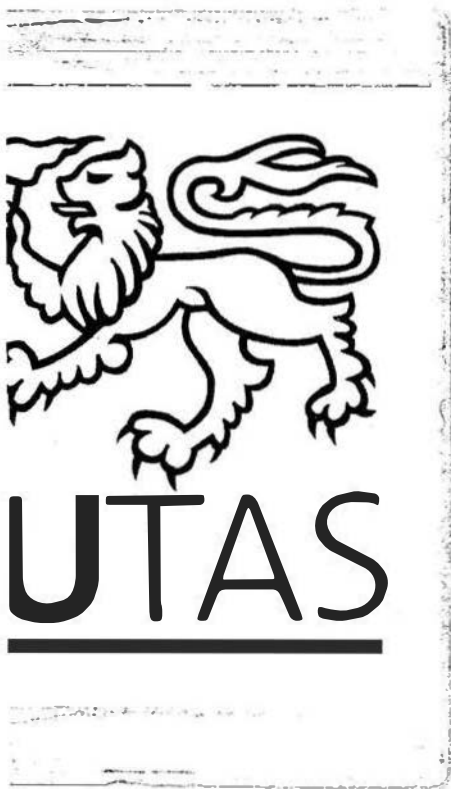
The genocide thread moves from the moment of European “settlement” in Tasmania to the “extinction” of the Aborigines after Trukanini’s death. It then charts a course through the forced forgetting of the Palawa people through the 20th century to the late-1970s when the screening of Tom Haydon’s influential documentary incited angry responses from a newly vocal Aboriginal community still coming to terms with the pragmatic implications of a restored identity.¹⁶ This rediscovery of identity is an instructive example of the way an archive can bear witness to a transformation in the rules governing what can and can’t be said about a given place. From the time of Trukanini’s death until the modern Aboriginal rights movement found its feet, the archive carried the place of Aboriginality as a present absence imprinted in fading ink on its *corpus*. While there were always members of a low-profile Aboriginal community identifying as indigenous Tasmanians, the publication of books like Clive Turnbull’s *Black War: The Extermination of the Tasmanian Aborigines* (1948) and Robert Travers’ *The Tasmanians: The Story of a Doomed Race* (1968) demonstrate that the most pervasive, and perhaps most “legitimate”, archival posture was one that eulogised the demise of the civilisation. The point here is a simple one. From the time of Trukanini’s death in 1876, an examination of the archive as record, as mediating framework and as the unspoken in what is said, revealed, in its hegemonic testimony, the non-existence of an Aboriginal population in Tasmania. After the screening of Haydon’s film, however, the archive changed irrevocably to accommodate a retrospectively reconstructed continuity of existence and a present tense being-in-the-world. The last chapter of this thesis is filed under the rubric of restoration, a decision prompted by the recognition that the texts with which it engages are of an extended historical moment defined by full

presence, and the awareness that the question of genocide in Tasmanian history has only been taken up properly in the wake of this re-materialisation.¹⁷

The modernity stream of the thesis charts a course through three different entanglements with modernity and modernisation. Under the heading of Van Diemonian time, I conduct a reading of Richard Flanagan's most recent novel, *Gould's Book of Fish*, which takes the author's representation of the modernisation of the Sarah Island penal colony on Tasmania's West Coast as a redirection of hope for Tasmanian modernity as a whole. The second essay, "A Plural Line of Sight", moves forward in time to the age of hydro-electric industry, positioning a micro-history of Tasmanian industrialisation and a précis of the larger story of nature and modernity, between two readings of the phenomenological compression of wilderness and industry at two locations across the state. The intermingling of these dialectical opposites through the visual experience of the perceiving subject metaphorises the ideational splitting that produces the complementary definitions of wilderness and nature in modernity.

The third and final part of the modernity stream focuses on the emotional attachment that the Tasmanian population has formed with its electricity-generating history and infrastructure. Drawing on a theoretical model taken from Dipesh Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe: Historical Difference and Postcolonial Thought* (2000), this chapter proposes a reappraisal of a consummately modern concept — rationalisation — through an examination of the anti-historicist refusal of privatisation enacted by the Tasmanian electorate in the 1998 state poll. In combination with the purchase of three vessels, aptly titled Spirit of Tasmania I, II and III, for plying the Bass Strait between Tasmania and the Australian mainland, I aim to show here that the collective decision to retain public control of the Hydro-Electric Commission marks a

partial re-enchantment of the state. Not only do these developments demonstrate a civic interest in alternative value-rational ends to governance in an age of neo-liberalism, they also suggest the persistence of a political ontology that positions the Tasmanian subject as something other than a purely self-interested rational utility maximiser.



Notes

- ¹ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, translated by Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996).
- ² See Emile Benveniste, "The Semiology of Language," in Robert E. Innis, ed., *Semiotics: An Introductory Anthology* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 226-46.
- ³ Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive* (New York: Zone, 1999), pp. 144-45.
- ⁴ Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, translated by Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock Publications, 1972), p. 48.
- ⁵ Stephen Greenblatt, "Towards a Poetics of Culture," in H. Aram Veesser, ed., *The New Historicism*, (New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 3.
- ⁶ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostevsky's Poetics*, translated by Caryl Emerson, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 200-1.
- ⁷ A recent example of the power of the Holocaust as a template for re-reading other genocides was the exchange between local Aboriginal activist Michael Mansell and a spokesperson for the Tasmanian Jewish Community. To Mansell's claim that Lieutenant John Bowen the commander of the first European fleet to settle in Tasmania was comparable to Hitler, Mrs Prina Clark, took a classic uniqueness position in denying the grounds for comparison. See Margaretta Pos, "Jews upset by Mansell," 30 September, 2003. <<http://www.themercury.news.com.au/printpage/0,5942,7209736,00.html>>.
- ⁸ See for instance Robert Manne, ed., *Whitewash: On Keith Windschuttle's Fabrication of Aboriginal History* (Melbourne: Black Inc Agenda, 2003). Raymond Gaita, "Bringing Home Some Genocide Truths," *The Australian*, (4 August 2003), p. 9. Robert Manne, "The Tragedy is Compounded by the Absurdity," *Sydney Morning Herald*, (25 August 2003). 30 September, 2003 <<http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2003/08/24/1061663672750>>. Dirk Moses, "Rendering the Past Less Unpalatable," 30 September, 2003 <<http://www.kooriweb.org/foley/news/story23.html>>. Keith Windschuttle, "History as Travesty of Truth," 30 September, 2003 <<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/printpage/0,5942,5639607,00.html>>. Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark, eds., *History Wars* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2003).
- ⁹ The term "Black Armband" history was coined by Geoffrey Blainey in "Goodbye to All That?," *The Weekend Australian*, (1-2 May 1993), p. 16. This was an edited transcript of Blainey's Latham Memorial Lecture, which he delivered in Sydney during the same week.
- ¹⁰ Keith Windschuttle, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History Volume I: Van Diemen's Land 1803-1847* (Sydney: Macleay Press, 2003), p. 4.
- ¹¹ Henry Handel Richardson, *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony: Comprising Australia Felix, The Way Home, Ultima Thule* (Melbourne: Heinemann, 1954). Dorothy Hewitt, *Bobbin Up* (London: Virago, 1985). Helen Garner, *Monkeygrip* (Melbourne: McPhee Gribble, 1977).
- ¹² See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, translated by Dana Polan (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1986). Just as for Deleuze and Guattari, a minor literature is written in the deterritorialized language of the coloniser, a minor place like Tasmania is subject to a process of displacement wherein its distance from imperial centres comes to be inscribed as a lack which must then be renegotiated through the terms provided by the colonising culture. As Deleuze and Guattari write, "the first characteristic of a minor literature is that in its language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization," p. 16. Furthermore, the position of minor places on the fringes of modernity makes

them useful sites for the reading of cultural logics that also define putative centres because of the estrangement effect that achieves a reterritorialisation of those dominant sites. The revolutionary potential of a "minor place" moves outwards from the margins, deterritorializing the "fragile community" of the dominant other. Like a "minor literature", a minor place has both political and subversive potential: "Create the opposite dream: know how to create a becoming-minor." p. 27.

¹³ At various points in the development of this thesis, I felt that I was producing a work of cultural history, of historiography, of biography of place, of psychoanalytically informed social theory, of hybrid literary studies and finally of archival studies. Ultimately, however, I believe it is as an instance of Cultural Studies that this thesis has its life. In this context, the centrality of place to this project generates a number of tensions with Cultural Studies in its hegemonic manifestations. If the format and contents of recent Cultural Studies anthologies are any indicator of the condition of the discipline they secure and fill out, it seems fair to say that the evolution of the vocabulary of concepts that constitutes its intellectual framework has also been the story of the forgetting of the placed location of this kind of academic work. If this assertion seems too resolute, we might temper it with the qualifier that when location is residually invoked in methodological or applied discussion of Cultural Studies it is invariably couched in terms of nation or nationality. The need to incorporate place into meta-discursive speculations about Cultural Studies takes on a dualistic form. In the immediate setting, the motivation for such speculations turns around the question of the utility of sub-national Cultural Studies. Looking beyond the soft democratic plea of inclusion that Richard Rorty calls "cultural recognition", what kinds of rationale can we identify for developing strategies for cultural analysis that draw their inspiration from the practices and symbolic economies of located collectivities whose specificity operates below the level of the nation-state? Richard Rorty, "Is Cultural Recognition a Useful Concept for Leftist Politics?," *Critical Horizons* 1.1 (2000), p. 7. Is this kind of valorisation of the local a legitimate and positive move unmotivated by *ressentiment*, or is it merely another instance of what Hardt and Negri describe as "yoking uniqueness into a hegemonic power field"? Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 2. Is such a move symptomatic of a fetishised identity politics that would produce an absolute irreducibility of competing discursive voices were it to be applied to a methodology for Cultural Studies? Or would such a development escape the cul-de-sac of the *differend* and open up discussion at the micro-cultural level that would surpass the debate around national versions in its detail and sensitivity to difference, thereby engendering new kinds of productive discussions and research synergies? Anthologies that embody the trend toward the nationalisation of place in Cultural Studies include Scott Denham, Irene Kacandes and Jonathan Petropolous, eds., *A User's Guide to German Cultural Studies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997); David Palumbo and Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht, eds., *Toward a Genealogy and Methodology of Italian Cultural Studies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Jose-David Saldivar, ed., *Border Matters: Remapping American Cultural Studies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); John Waters, ed., *South Atlantic Quarterly* 95, 1 (1996); Houston A. Baker, Manthia Diawara and Ruth Lindeborg, eds., *Black British Cultural Studies: A Reader* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996); Laura Benedetti, Julia Hairston and Sylvia Ross, eds., *Gendered Contexts: New Perspectives in Italian Cultural Studies* (New York: Peter Lang, 1996); Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly, eds., *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); David Forgacs and Robert Lumley, eds., *Italian Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Helen Graham and Jo Labanyi, eds., *Spanish Cultural Studies: An Introduction: The Struggle for Modernity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); Victoria Best and Peter Collier, eds., *Powerful Bodies: Performance in French Cultural Studies* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1999); Barry Jordan and Rikki Morgan, eds., *Contemporary Spanish Cultural Studies* (London: Arnold, 2000). Recent Cultural Studies anthologies that propose a trans-national locatedness and application include Jeffrey Belnap and Raul Fernandez, eds., *Jose Marti's 'Our America': From National to Hemispheric Cultural Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); Henry Schwartz and Richard Dienst, eds., *Reading the Shape of the World: Toward an International Cultural Studies* (Boulder: Westview, 1996); David Palumbo and Hans-Ulrich Gumbrecht, eds., *Streams of Cultural Capital: Transnational Cultural Studies* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).

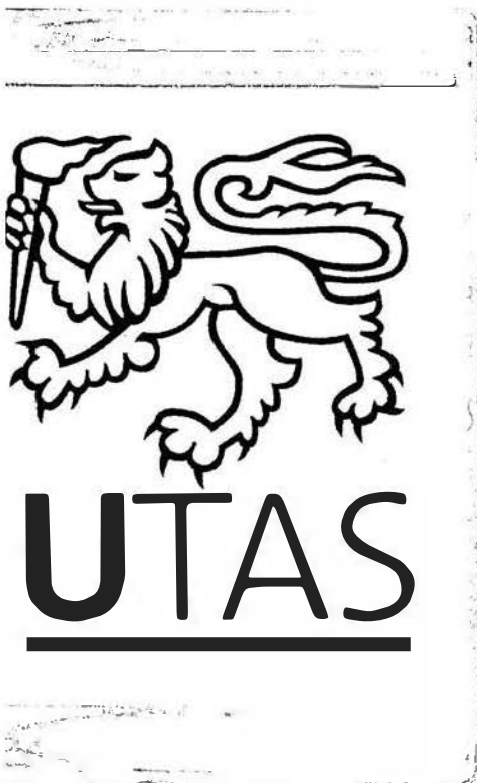
¹⁴ Trukanini was long held to be the last Tasmanian Aborigine. The spelling "Trukanini" is favoured by the Palawa people in Tasmania today. Palawa, in turn, is the title that Tasmanian Aborigines use to describe

themselves as a totality. See Greg Lehman, "Will You Take the Next Step?" Unpublished paper for the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council, n.d. 1995.

¹⁵ Gayatri Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Towards a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

¹⁶ See Robert Millikin, "Genocide Film Stirs University Press Race Row," *The National Times* (22 July 1978), pp. 23-6; Kay Daniels and Mary Murnane, letter, *The National Times*, (29 July 1978), p. 9; Bobbi Sykes, "A Re-make: This Time with a Camera," *Filmnews*, (January 1979), p. 13; Lisa Horler, "Black Survivors of White History: The Tasmanian Aboriginal Extinction Myth and the Documentary *Black Man's Houses* by Steve Thomas," *Metro*, 94 (1993), pp. 50-2; Jim Allen, "The Last Tasmanian: A Personal View," in Atholl Anderson, Ian Lilley and Sue O'Conner, eds., *Histories of Old Ages: Essays in Honour of Rhys Jones* (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2001), pp. 45-7.

¹⁷ See Jim Everett, "Aboriginality in Tasmania," 30 September, 2003.
<<http://www.utas.edu.au/docs/siglo/mag/s12/everett.html>>



CHAPTER 1

What is Tasmania?

Satellites continually photograph every centimetre of the visible surface of the planet, but the photographs are far too numerous for whole buildings full of geologists or intelligence agents to shuffle through; supercomputers will select and format the electronic pulses of which they are made.

(Alphonso Lingis, 1994)

The packaging and repackaging of the islands of the world in the genre called *isolario* invoked a set of problems that has never really left literary studies alone. With their jumbled pastiche of half-drawn maps, corroded oral testimony and displaced traces of arcadian imaginings, the *isolario* were sites of an interminable prevarication. Were they fact or fiction? Did they represent the world or make it in their image? In either case, their claim to mimesis was deeply compromised by the enduring enchantment of what Tom Conley calls a mytho-poetic “relation to the unknown”.¹ The arch-empiricist, John Locke, couldn’t have envisaged the advent of Lingis’s micro-chip-driven global positioning technology when he wrote that man can have no knowledge except by intuition, reason and “sensation, perceiving the existence of particular things”, but one can imagine the scepticism with which he might have greeted the information obtained

by these strange devices.² Perhaps he would have preferred the vivid imaginings of the *isolario*, with their curlicue fonts, their sea monsters, savages and cartographic exotica.

The machinery of contemporary scientific empiricism reads Tasmania as a docile body: as rock, water, soil and tree. It describes an archipelago covering some sixty eight thousand square kilometres, a triangular landmass flanked by a flotilla of out-rigger islands. It maps these borders onto a striated globe, hanging the islands between latitudes forty three and forty four degrees south, cutting them adrift off the bottom right hand corner of the oldest continent on Earth. To its eastern side it plots the Tasman Sea and then New Zealand, and to its south, a series of ever more weather-beaten islets dwindling down toward Antarctica. On the western side, meanwhile, the vast expanse of Southern Ocean inserted between the island's coast and southern Africa, reminds us that the presence of the latter is more an optimistic *paean* to the remnants of a unified cartographic imagination than any kind of tangible truth.

And what has happened here, in this off-shore island, off the shore of an off-shore continent? First *terra firma* itself was conditioned with ice age and deluge. Deadly games were played out in the *long durée* of human fragility and an isthmus stretching to Wilson's Promontory on the south-eastern tip of the Australian mainland provided the sufficient conditions for southward expansion. As frost became thaw and the spine of the isthmus was broken, the tracks of the palaeolithic people who had made this territory their own were lost for eternity. Inundation swept evolutionary becomings into unmapped channels and a new civilisation was born.³

Thousands of years of isolation were interrupted by the arrival, in 1642, of the Dutch explorer Abel Tasman. Acting as an agent of the Dutch East Indies Company,

Tasman was rumoured to be besotted with his boss's daughter, so he named the island Van Diemen's Land in honour of the father and hoped for the best. He was disappointed on both counts; in imputing an anonymity to the object of his adamic interpellation and in aiming so high in his conjugal ambitions. The supersession of nomenclature foreshadowed a supersession of culture. Van Diemen's Land became Tasmania and the Aborigines became a symptom tied like a Gordian knot in the tangled thread of time.

With visions of Java la Grande and the Great South Land growing otiose, European governments prevaricated over the value of Tasman's "discovery" and his visitation was followed by only sporadic reconnaissance.⁴ Eventually, a stirring of French interest in the region together with growing pressures on prison resources in England prompted British authorities to establish a permanent penal "settlement". In 1803, Lieutenant John Bowen's party arrived at Risdon Cove and, amid scenes of deprivation and desperation, promptly established a precedent for the maltreatment of the indigenous culture they encountered.⁵ After a series of genocidal skirmishes with these new "Tasmanians", the putative "remnants" of the indigenous tribes were rounded up and sent in exile to outlying Flinders Island.⁶ This move proved disastrous as disease, distress and depression wrought havoc. In the end, a weary, indifferent and, at bottom, racist administration let its policies drift toward palliative care and the Aborigines were left to dwindle out the "final chapter" of their race history at Oyster Cove, south of Hobart.

With knees buckling under the weight of convictism and genocide, the colony struggled to its feet. The cessation of transportation in 1853 reduced the flows of British scrip and, in combination with emigration to the Victorian goldfields, economic hardship acquired the fixity of a popular prejudice. Following the abolition of convictism, the

island's name was changed to Tasmania in a reflex action of forced amnesia, and semi-autonomous self-government was gained in 1855.⁷ During this period, the economy remained primarily agricultural, but a mineral boom on the West Coast provided a miniaturised version of the Victorian gold rushes, halting the population outflow and restoring a level of confidence to local business interests, particularly those based in Launceston.⁸ Inevitably, however, the reserves of tin, copper and gold petered out and the search resumed for a more reliable panacea for the chronic economic under-achievement that had marred Tasmania from its European beginnings. The universal symbol of modernisation: heavy, labour intensive industry was the obvious choice, and the state, unusually blessed in its possession of large-scale hydro-electric potential, pursued this holy grail with vigour and determination. In 1901, Tasmania was an enthusiastic participant in the formation of the Australian Federation and in 1916 industrial water-power was generated for the first time at Waddamana. A dour struggle for industrialisation followed and despite being hamstrung by a leaking population and the tyranny of distance redoubled, Tasmania's economy was slowly ground forward into the 20th century. With the waves of postwar migration lapping even at the shores of this far-flung place, progress, prosperity and modernity beckoned and, in the long boom of post-war capitalism, for a moment even seemed attainable. But in the 1970s, economies across the globe slowed to a crawl and Tasmania, stuck out on the periphery, isolated and fragile, suffered severely, even if it was not until the late-80s and early-90s that the real pain of the faltering post-oil-shock global economy was felt.⁹ The wheels of Keynesian state capitalism were ratcheted up gear-upon-gear in an attempt to squeeze whatever life was left out of the fading post-war boom, but a series of ever-grander civil projects,

culminating in the flooding of Lake Pedder in 1974, left the State Government with a crippling debt and ushered in a new reactionary politics of ecological conservation. The Greens, as they came to be known, even shared a minority government with the Labor party in the early-1990s, before a restructuring of parliament engineered by the two major electoral powers effectively squeezed them out of the democratic process.¹⁰

Contemporary Tasmania is as small and marginal as it has always been. Those new maladies of the collective soul: relative poverty, unemployment, family breakdown, lifestyle diseases, substance abuse, and the generalised anomie of consumer capitalism remain entrenched.¹¹ But as with any social organism, the metastases of dis-ease are heavily localised. For those possessed of capital, cultural and otherwise, a new optimism is gathering momentum.¹² For a place traditionally cleaved along a three-part axis, an uncharacteristic sense of unity and determination embodied in a commitment to communicative action hints at something better for the future.¹³ The natural environment is now widely regarded as the state's greatest asset, its isolation and partial modernisation are increasingly being understood as a great potentiality rather than an onerous millstone.¹⁴ Heterogeneity is the order of the day and Tasmania, as a brand name at least, seems to have ample room for developing its peculiar specificities into marketable commodities.¹⁵ The determination to extend the Faustian experiment of hydro-electrification has been exposed as anachronistic folly, and foreign investors have begun to take the state seriously again.¹⁶ The global regime of flexible accumulation with its slogans of competitive advantage, intellectual capital and niche marketing seems suddenly appealing to a newly emboldened Tasmania no longer content to cultivate a culture of mediocrity behind tariff walls.

Whatever the future might hold, however, we can be sure that it will unfold in conversation with the traditions, stories and logics of cultural identification that have dominated the past. Tasmanians are obsessed with their own history, their own environment, and, to cut to the chase, themselves as well. Uncertain as to whether anyone else really cares that much at all, Tasmanians conduct their own invigilation of the possibilities offered by that vague quintessence called *Tasmanianness*.¹⁷ Struck by their geographical estrangement from the rest of the world, spatial isolation is imported into a complex of culture and felt subjectivity, a language of difference and resemblance, of specificity and uniformity, of separation and conjunction, of people and place. The conversations that give form to this complex are carried out in different dialects and discourses, in a multitude of forums from the local pub to the daily papers — there are three of them — from novels and film, to public policy and popular folklore. Under the appellation of the Tasmanian *archive*, this set of conversations and the mercurial *langue* they ghost, is the object of analysis for this thesis.¹⁸

But what does the preceding list of historical incidents and characteristics really tell us? Naturally it is not supposed to be comprehensive — innumerable details could be added, outlines filled in, narratives linked together — and yet, it brings together the developmental trajectories cited by “official” historians of Tasmania as being most integral to the written past of this island community. It traverses the changing physical terrains too, and in omitting so much as it does so, suggests that any attempt to account fully for *Tasmanianness* through such a survey will necessarily fail.

Historical events and material forms contribute to the character of a location, but their delineation so often posits reified entities dangerously lacking in vitality. While we

would like dearly to be able to look at Tasmania through the eyes of its European explorers, or more daringly to approximate from the position of a privileged insider, the cultural codings devised by the indigenes to account for the arrival of those interlopers, we know that we cannot. Instead, we must make do with the fading residue of this experience preserved in the journals of Tasman, François Peron, Jacques Labillardière and Nicholas Baudin. While we would like, also, to ascend to an Archimedean singularity outside space and time, freezing Tasmania from the imaginary vantage point that Nietzsche calls “*subspecie aeterni*”, we must console ourselves instead with fragments and metonyms, substitutes for this impossible totality.¹⁹

What would a subjective typology of the Tasmanian landscape look like? In comparison with much of the Australian mainland to the north, its ecology is densely multiplicitous.²⁰ The misanthropic South West wilderness sprawls across a full third of the state. Its abrupt mountain ranges, snaking tree-lined rivers and crenellated, highland plains stretch from the South Coast to the lacustrine Central Highlands and over to the interior of the North-West Coast. There they meet up with a verdant agricultural region, itself abutting onto the northern coast of the island and home, in settlements ranging up to 25,000 people, to over a fifth of the human population. Across towards the north-eastern tip, the terrain becomes drier and flatter, but inland again, rich, wet forests and dairy farms dotted with tiny settlements form the material/demographic composition of the island. Moving south down the East Coast, the country becomes stragglier, poorer and drier again. From the narrow littoral that intercedes between it and the sea, white sands and clear green waters glimmer, but the interior sweats and strangles. Eventually, the coastline breaks apart into a series of inlets and peninsulas. The Forestier and Tasman

peninsulas reach down around to the east and, in concert with the land that gives them shape, the Derwent River and its tributaries form a series of sheltering bays and isthmuses that hold the capital city of Hobart firm against the shaggy purple-blue bulk of Mount Wellington. On the far side of “The Mountain” is the South West wilderness, and to its north, the lunar undulations of the Midlands, made threadbare by eucalyptus die-back, concertina their way back up toward Launceston, the island’s second city.

Places consist of these rude physical attributes; conditions, natural and cultural, upon which the details we call character slowly settle and form. These attributes are like the noumenon itself, finally inaccessible to anyone who seeks to find them. What speaks to us in their place are the strata of sediment that layer them and are shaped by them. Tasmania as a thing-in-itself is only a whisper, a faint outline, filled in and obscured by the contours which we typically recognise as giving presence to a place: empirical fact, subjective perception, natural environment, felt memory and its histories, artistic representation and configuration.

Tasmania is a human construction; an arrangement or configuration of basic elemental particles; of sense impressions made solid through the passing of time, of incidents made history through the discipline of narrative, of nature made readable by the power of interpretation.

CHAPTER 2

Looking through the Archive (of the Archive)

Do we already have at our disposition a concept of the archive? a concept of the archive which deserves this name? which is one and whose unity is assured? Have we ever been assured of the homogeneity, of the consistency, of the univocal relationship of any concept to a term or to such a word as "archive"?

(Jacques Derrida, 1995)

For our purposes, being in Tasmania is being-with-the-archive because Tasmania as a place could not exist without the archive. A physical location or assemblage thereof acquires the character of place when the phenomenal experience and memory of that location or assemblage of locations are rendered symbolizable and communicable under the influence of archival energy. The Tasmanian archive is an almost impossibly diverse entity, it gathers together statements of disparate institutional and disciplinary origin, enunciations of different length, timbre, cadence and genre. It appears to collapse temporality in its pervasive synchrony, preserving the mark of historicity only as an encoding of the following kind: statement content/date filed. But, of course, each of these textual traces opens out onto a multi-dimensional landscape of lived temporality, animating an imaginable past enriched by the manifold of vital sense perception. Under

the weight of this dizzying difference, the coherence of the archive threatens to give way. It is held firm, I wish to contend by the agency of the letter, by the power of the signifier. When we speak or write about Tasmania we usher it into being even though its existence is what makes possible our enunciations. The complex nature of Tasmania's ontology derives from the impossible plenitude of its archival articulations. The very diversity of the archive, while threatening its own internal cohesion, is precisely what makes the place to which it is wed such a richly variegated entity.

The concept of the archive offers a tentative starting point for the complex task of unravelling the vexed relationship between a place and its discursive evocations. An analysis of the discursive figurations of Tasmania is not simply an exercise in elucidating the way the place is constructed by texts because the place has a presence anterior to those representations. But neither is it a matter of comparing the discursive or imaginary Tasmania to the actual Tasmania, of adjudicating the accuracy of various representations and of setting up hierarchies of veracity around those judgements. For those with a felt memory of Tasmania, archival articulations that take the island as their object might augment and enrich, or undermine and detract from, a real set of experiences. Descriptions of landscape or culture might be uncannily familiar, oddly off-target or wildly misrepresentative. But those recalled impressions, the background against which these texts are silhouetted, are themselves not completely atextual. Representation, visual, literary and aural, informs our experience of the world in a dialectical fashion and we should resist the urge to consign textuality to the place marked out for it in, for example, the still influential Platonic theory of aesthetics. Figuration is not the rendering of a simulation or copy of a real world which is itself a poor imitation of a perfect world of

forms. It may not be that there is nothing outside the text, but what there is, is constituted to a large degree by what is written, thought and said about it. So much so that it is almost impossible to distinguish between the two. Yet a discussion of this kind is predicated on such a distinction.

Derrida's re-reading of psychoanalysis as a science of the archive; as a science of memory and of forgetting, as a science of the impression, invites further revisions of the concept at its centre. The idea of the archive, of course, is not in its everyday usage an equivocal one. The *Australian Oxford Dictionary* describes it simply as "1. a collection of esp. public or corporate documents or records. 2. the place where these are kept".²¹ For historians who labour within the confines of what Dominick LaCapra calls the "self-sufficient research paradigm", the archive stands for the promise of positivistic discovery and the *sine qua non* of a properly scientific endeavour.²² The linguistic turn in historiography has problematised this common sense orientation to the way textual fragments of the past are arranged to produce historical narratives but for those historians who continue to privilege the value of what Robert Darnton calls "grubbing in the archives", the labour of history is conceived as a search for that magic piece of textual evidence that will make a given claim indubitable.²³ As Frances Dolan writes:

In a research proposal, or a dinner party conversation, or a book treatment, a bid to legitimacy as a scholar creating new knowledge can best be bolstered by claiming to have found something no one else has found — to need a trip to the archive rather than to plug away dismally and unromantically with microfilm. [...] The archive, particularly when understood as a depositary of unpublished records and documents, as opposed to the broadly diffused and widely available print "culture", promises what other scholars do not have, the uniquely juicy and justifying tidbit.²⁴

If the dominant connotation of the signifier “archive” for this kind of historical endeavour is a resoundingly singular “truth”, the existence of a multiplicity of archives reminds us that the referent to which it is orientated remains stubbornly plural. In the space between this singularity and dispersal, the signified of the archive seems to offer a semantic stability. Archival studies, as Wim Van Mierlo points out in his work on James Joyce, knows its limits, understands its vocation and moves confidently within the parameters of a clearly defined research program:

Archival studies [is] any kind of research that uses documentary materials other than [the author’s] works, whether they are [...] actual archives in libraries, facsimile reproduction of manuscripts or any other material source that is part of the general exegesis of or contributes to a contextual understanding of [the author’s] writing.²⁵

The prospect of speaking in archival terms, then, implies an interlocutory comfort, a calm certainty and an unruffled ease. If the archive exists to preserve, it is also the object of a preservation.²⁶ We go to it for clarification, we seek it to quiet our doubts. Conceptual form and pragmatic function are in harmony in the body of the archive. But what happens when this doubled trust is betrayed? In “Truth in the Archives” Randolph Starn identifies a duplicity in these storehouses of cultural memory as old as the institutions themselves. Louis XIV, he points out, made claims on German territory through an active intervention in the archive. In pursuit of property titles to legitimate his incursions, he instructed his agents to invent them when they couldn’t be found.²⁷ The Benedictine scholar, Jean Mabillon, meanwhile, had to devise an ingenious defence of archival research – the diplomatic – to stave off the recriminations of church authorities angered by the exposure of the fraudulent foundations of certain official histories. Derrida is drawing an inference

from a problem of pragmatics, then, when he claims that the concept of the archive threatens to fall away under the weight of

the trouble of secrets, of plots, of clandestiness, of half-private, half-public conjurations, always at the unstable limit between public and private, between the family, the society, and the State, between the family and an intimacy even more private than the family, between oneself and oneself.²⁸

Perhaps the archive is less trustworthy than we have been led to believe. One can only imagine the horror with which historians would greet the news that this sacred trove of unimpeachable truths was one big joke, written like the official history of Van Diemen's Land in Richard Flanagan's *Gould's Book of Fish*, to conceal the state of affairs it purports to describe. If conceptual form follows practical function, then the idea of the archive might also reveal a plasticity denied it by commonsense definitions.

The radical recontextualisation of the term that Michel Foucault achieves in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is more a blasphemy than an apostasy in light of this contested history. The holding function of the archive drifts away from the plane of materiality in Foucault's work, but the power of delimitation he grants it echoes hegemonic characterisations.²⁹ In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault approaches the concept of the archive through an analysis of its constituent parts, discourse and the statement. He identifies the constitution of the latter in the structural collapse of the regimes of continuity that tend to be taken as given in conventional historiography. Unities like the book and the *oeuvre* and conceptual categories like influence, evolution, tradition and spirit give way, in Foucault's formulation, to configurations of statements characterised by dispersion. The colligation of these diverse particles into discourses takes place when certain enunciative modalities are combined with grids of specification

mobilised at particular institutional locations to establish a terrain of objects and practices that do not exceed the workings of the discourse itself:

Discursive relations are not, as we can see, internal to discourse: they do not connect concepts or words with one another; they do not establish a deductive or rhetorical structure between propositions or sentences. Yet they are not relations exterior to discourse, relations that might limit it, or impose certain forms upon it, or force it, in certain circumstances, to state certain things. They are, in a sense, at the limit of discourse: they offer it objects of which it can speak, or rather they determine the group of relations that discourse must establish in order to speak of this or that object, in order to deal with them, name them, analyse them, classify them, explain them, etc. These relations characterise not the language used by discourse, not the circumstances in which it is deployed, but discourse itself as a practice.³⁰

The explosion of unities into statements and their re-configuration as discourses performs at least a dual function. On the one hand, it allows us to examine the way particles of language operate as individuated forces, moving between discursive formations and opening up an array of variegated effects. On the other, it shows how vital the locatedness of specific enunciations is to the kinds of work they do. In the current context, Foucault's project seems to open up a space for the construction of a Tasmanian *discourse* as opposed to a Tasmanian *archive*. Certainly we have to hand an innumerable number of individual statements that present a principle of regularity in their mobilisation of the signifier "Tasmania" and in their contribution to the construction of an object that goes by that proper name. Additionally, there are certain institutional sites and privileged subject positions that act as *loci* for the dissemination of such a discourse. The Premier of Tasmania, for instance, is endowed with a right to speak about the state as a unified object. The proclamations of recent incumbent Jim Bacon on the topic of the "New

Tasmania” provide a classic example of the way an asymmetrically distributed power of description can be put to the end of producing a concrete entity. On the same note, a journal like *Island* serves as an institutional site for the gathering together of diverse opinions on Tasmania that stymies any attempt to separate entirely the being of a Tasmania “out there” in the real world from the textual substrate that renders it symbolisable. From another angle, however, the statements that appear in *Island* and colour the speeches of the Premier are always already discursive in so far as they are organised generically into coherent forms of expression with clear historical precedents and familiar modes of address. Articles in *Island*, for instance, tend to carry the mark of one or another academic discipline, whether it be art history, literary studies, cultural theory or sociology, while up-beat prognostications about the future of a political jurisdiction obviously fit into the time-honoured discourse of administrative prestidigitation.³¹

The skin that surrounds the statements that carry Tasmania through the universe of language refuses to be sloughed off as we break the discursive unities that hold them into their constituent elements. Statements that construct Tasmania as an economy might be removed from the context of the knowledge regime that activates them but if we were to regroup them as part of a Tasmanian discourse, wouldn't we need still to have recourse to economics to give them any meaning? Operating from within the confines of Foucault's constellation, it is impossible to diagnose which unities should be exploded and which should be re-constituted. Is the very trope of Tasmania a burdensome agent of continuity that interferes with a more direct engagement with the particularities of given statements? Or should it be made the gravitational centre for the construction of a discrete

discursive formation? The positing of discourse as a new modality for the organisation of statements tacitly implies that the statements with which it deals will be pre-discursive, that the allegiance to prior unities will be allegiances to non-discursive formations like the book or the *oeuvre*. In the case of statements about Tasmania, however, discursivity is already inscribed in the texts themselves. A statement about Tasmania as potential resource for the generation of hydro-electricity is part of an engineering and civil works discourse. A statement about Tasmania as wilderness getaway is part of a tourism discourse. A statement about Tasmania as site of depopulation is part of a social demographic discourse. These discourses consist of an innumerable number of statements of which only the smallest fraction go toward constructing the object we call Tasmania. In this regard then, Foucault's desire to remove statements entirely from their *loci* of continuity seems overly ambitious:

The systematic erasure of all given unities enable us first of all to restore to the statement the specificity of its occurrence, and to show that discontinuity is one of those great accidents that create cracks not only in the geology of history but also in the simple fact of the statement; it emerges in its historical irruption; what we try to examine is the incision that it makes, that irreducible – and often very tiny — emergence. However banal it may be, however unimportant its consequences may appear to be, however quickly it may be forgotten after its appearance, however little heard or badly deciphered we may suppose it to be, a statement is always an event that neither the language (*langue*) nor the meaning can quite exhaust.³²

In the case of an examination of statements that refer to Tasmania we are dealing not only with the irreducible specificity of the occurrence but also with discursive traces that remain inscribed in each statement after it has been sundered from its locus of continuity

qua discourse. Is it enough then, that we should ignore the regularities that bind unemployment figures for Tasmania with unemployment figures for Victoria in the name of an alternative regularity discernible through the figuration of place? If we are to retain the discursive stamp pressed onto the multiplicity of statements that concern Tasmania we require an alternative ordering principle that does not require the erasure of that meaningful discursivity. Here, I argue, the concept of the archive presents as a means for moving forward.

The history of the archive in Foucault scholarship is characterised by effacement and elision.³³ To a certain extent this neglect is understandable. The archive is a complex category whose exposition is condensed into only two and half pages of *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, two and half pages that sweep the reader up in a whirlpool of involution and innovation. At one level, Foucault seems to be designating an extra-discursive field with the category, a container capable of holding an array of discrete discourses in place. Here, the ordering of terms moves by simple enumeration: statement-discourse-archive. He complicates this schema, however, by claiming that the archive in fact describes the “systems of statements”, the set of rules and principles “not superposable” to discourse that enables us to deal with statements as either events or things:

The archive is first the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events. But the archive is also that which determines that all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass, nor are they inscribed in an unbroken linearity, nor do they disappear at the mercy of chance external accidents [...] Far from being that which unifies everything that has been said in the great murmur of a discourse, far from being only that which ensures that we exist in the midst of preserved discourse, it is that

which differentiates discourses in their multiple existence and specifies them in their own duration.³⁴

The peculiar seduction of the concept of the archive for thinking about a place like Tasmania lies in its capacity to open discursive fields into regions that connect language with other dimensions of being. For a start, there are a multiplicity of archives tied to particular “cultures, societies and civilisations”, archives that offer an unavoidable confrontation with a privileged region that is

at once close to us, and different from our present existence, it is the border of time that surrounds our presence, which overhangs it, delimits us [...] its threshold of existence is established by the discontinuity that separates us from what we can no longer say, and from that which falls outside our discursive practice; it begins with the outside of our own language.³⁵

The outside to which Foucault is referring here remains equivocal. On the one hand, it seems to designate the set of rules that govern the generation of statements. Elsewhere in *The Archaeology*, though, it is made clear that the regularity of statements that enable us to bundle them into larger provisional unities is never external to the statements themselves. Alternatively, we could seek to identify an exteriority of the archive in its role as the system of enunciability and the system of functioning for concrete statements. Here a moment of pre-discursivity is inserted into the history of the emergence of statements in the process of their very materialisation. In the case of genocide and the Tasmanian archive, the function of the latter is to determine the very form of enunciations that seek to intervene in the discursive field constructed out of the historical materiality of the decimation and displacement of the Tasmanian Aborigines. The archive is thus the point of translation that turns the incommensurability of historical fact and language into

the difference of historical discourse. The sufficient conditions for a discussion of genocide in Tasmania require the perpetration of a series of material historical crimes and a set of discursive principles such as the UN convention on the matter. The archive captures the flow of the phenomenal reality that makes up the first half of this equation and converts it into matter conducive to articulation in ensemble with the properly textual lineaments of the UN convention. On Foucault's reading, the archive operates between the *langue* and the *corpus*. Identifiable with neither the basic rules governing the construction of sentences, nor with the totality of utterances circulated through a discursive space, the archive defines "a level of practice that causes a multiplicity of statements to emerge as so many regular events, as so many things to be dealt with and manipulated."³⁶ Again in the case of genocide in Tasmania, the sea-change that saw the eclipse of the "extinction thesis" as a possible speaking position can be read as reflecting a transformation in the structure of the archive in line with "objective" discoveries by historians of Aboriginal cultural continuity.

This thesis borrows this under-appreciated theorisation of the way discourse and the extra-linguistic world come to be mutually imbricated and uses it as the foundation for a more traditionally shaped conception of the archive. The Tasmanian archive as I imagine it, *does* act as a storehouse of cultural memory, a reservoir of narrative resources that can be drawn upon by social actors in their active production of place even as that function of containment operates on a symbolic rather than a substantive level. Its materiality is thus of a phantasmatic order, becoming as Derrida puts it a "spectral *a priori*: neither present nor absent in the flesh, neither visible nor invisible, a trace always referring to another whose eyes can never be met."³⁷ I disagree with Thomas Osborne

when he questions the utility and coherence of the Foucauldian Archive on the grounds that it has a “completely virtual existence and none of the connotations of happy literalism that we have been considering.”³⁸ From the angle I take here, the poles of literal materiality and spectral evanescence are not irrevocably sundered. The archive that donates its energies to the imagination of place in Tasmania, operates at one remove from the materiality of the storehouse. The substantive ontology of its objects has to be performed and enacted. The speech acts and representational ventures through which it becomes manifest rehearse the function of the archive in its traditional sense through their implication in processes of multi-dimensional subjection.

The Tasmanian archive is potentially an ontic substance in search of a new concept, but that conceptual novelty is structured after the fashion of a Derridean *différance*. It differs from the physical archive when the latter is understood as the depository of a community’s textual remainders, but, as I have attempted to demonstrate, it shares some of the features of its homonym described in the conceptual assemblage constructed by Foucault in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and Derrida in *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Its constitution is thus of the order of the hand-me-down, deferring the quick fix of *détournement* but carrying over any genuine originality in its unfolding.

In *Archive Fever*, Derrida examines the collection of Freud’s papers stored at his family home in London, a textual resource that fits the conventional definition of the archive. This field-work, however, sets the scene for a typically deconstructive reading that tackles issues that slide more toward the epistemological end of the philosophical spectrum than the ontological. Beginning with an etymology of the term in question,

Derrida opens out a terrain in which archive marks out not only the temporally originary, the sequentially prior, but also stands for commandment. The archive is thus a nomological principle that combines with a capacity to register a housed location, the residence of the archons, “those who commanded”:³⁹

Even in their guardianship or their hermeneutic tradition, the archives could do neither without substrate nor without residence. It is thus, in this domiciliation, in this house arrest, that archives take place. The dwelling, this place where they dwell permanently, marks this institutional passage from the private to the public, which does not always mean from the secret to the non-secret.⁴⁰

This opening foray problematises the *textual* approach taken by Foucault. Derrida largely ignores the complex interrelationships that bind language and experience together in the Foucauldian archive, in the name of the more direct question, can an archive survive without a place of arrest?⁴¹ The answer seems to be no. But a rider is attached to this rebuff that leaves a gap for a problematically material object like the Tasmanian archive.⁴² The key here is the function derived from the literal definition of the term “consignation”, in Derrida’s eyes, the most basic and essential function of an archive:

By consignation, we do not only mean, in the ordinary sense of the word, the act of assigning residence or of entrusting so as to put into reserve [...] but here the act of consigning through gathering together signs. It is not only the traditional *consignatio*, that is the written proof, but what all consignation begins by presupposing. Consignation aims to co-ordinate a single corpus, in a system or a synchrony in which all the elements articulate the unity of an ideal configuration. In an archive there should not be any absolute dissociation, any heterogeneity or secret which could separate or partition in an absolute manner. The archontic principle of the archive is also a principle of consignation, that is, of gathering together.⁴³

The common object — literary, material, experiential — that holds the texts and statements of my own corpus together is *Tasmania*. Disparate discursive particles like the casual disparaging remark made by a tourist about the weather in Launceston or the fully developed *oeuvre* of James McQueen are *consigned* to the Tasmanian archive on the grounds that they share a constative predicate: the island and *socius* of Tasmania. This version of the archive doesn't perform the anamnestic function of retaining physical documentation so that historical truths can be reconstructed *a posteriori*, indeed, its enabling condition is its inexhaustibility. New additions to the archive are continually being made, while older ones drop off the face of the earth never to be seen again. Retention is not a key here, fetishistic collection is placed well and truly on the back burner. Instead, a principle of self-organisation is ascribed to the archive so that statements that relate in specific ways to other statements will tend to form points of concentration, clusters or nodes of dense amalgamation after the fashion of an ovum receiving a sperm. Utterances that fail to connect up to already consolidated clusters will circulate for a limited time before disappearing from the archive, leaving traces perhaps, but not necessarily making it any easier for similar enunciations to join the permanent ranks of the established characterisations.

Ann Laura Stoler's reading of the archival turn in post-colonial historiography eloquently summarises the functional ontology of the archive as I wish to deploy it in this thesis. The Tasmanian archive is a metaphoric as well as a substantive repository of collective significations, but its most telling attribute is its productivity. The idea of the archive as an agent of effectivity is foreshadowed in Foucault's formulation but it is seldom taken up by other scholars who remain content instead to problematise its truth

status and to lay bare its imbrication in networks of organisational power. Verne Harris comes close to making the decisive move into thinking the dissemination of archival energy as a kind of language-speaking-the-subject in “The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa” when he challenges the orthodoxy of referential understandings of the archive. However, in emphasising the role of conscious praxis on the part of archival agents, a portion of this radicalising charge is subsumed into a liberalist voluntarism:

A notion common in archival discourse is that archives reflect, or provide an image of, process, the event, the action. Stated more crudely, the idea is that archives, mirror-like, reflect reality. [...] if archival records [do] reflect reality [however], they do so complicitly, and in a deeply fractured and shifting way. They do not act by themselves. They act through many conduits – the people who created them, the functionaries who managed them, the archivists who selected them for preservation and make them available for use, and the researchers who use them in constructing accounts of the past.⁴⁴

Stoler goes a step further than Harris in reading the archival turn in historiography as a *bildungsroman* dedicated to the description of the ontogenesis and phylogenesis of “the archive-as-subject”.⁴⁵ Even though historians have long held an interest in the mechanics of the archive, the “profusion of forums in which historians are joining archivists in new conversations about documentary evidence, record keeping and archival theory” marks a decisive moment in the life-cycle of academic and professional historiography.⁴⁶

Tasmania’s partial modernity is the figure with which I began my investigations into the archive, and it remains one of the most persistent and powerful vectors for the formulation of archival enunciations. Where, we might ask, is the apotheosis of this *idée fixe* to be found? In novels like Tom Gilling’s *The Sooterkin*? In the garrulous banter at

an interstate pub? In public policy discourse like the *Nixon Report* or the quarterly assessments of the state's economy compiled by Access Economics? In sociological and demographic discourse about migration and ageing? In a generalised inferiority complex or habitus actualised and carried round by the citizens of the "Apple Isle"? ⁴⁷

In truth it exists in all and none of these places. Its sonar fragments bounce around the echo chamber of the archive, its psychic charge electrifies a system of myth. On permanent stand-by, ready to be mobilised in an instant, the troping of Tasmania as partially modern is a memory-weapon. And like all weapons the possibility of friendly fire poses itself with every pull of the trigger. As Derrida writes, archives are necessitated by the death-drive, they serve to stave off the destruction of the past in the present. The archive in this sense eternally recurs:

Because the archive, if this word or this figure can be stabilized so as to take on a signification, will never be either memory or anamnesis as spontaneous, alive and internal experience. On the contrary: the archive takes place at the place of the originary and structural breakdown of the said memory.⁴⁸

In its capacity as a resource for the construction of place, the Tasmanian archive blurs the boundaries between the mnemonic systems of the preconscious, the conscious and the unconscious. When we guide foreign visitors around the scenic sights of Hobart we act as self-conscious Cartesian subjects mobilising narratives for strategic purposes. Immersed in *Adda* at the pub, safe in the company of trusted kinsmen, however, we sense that the archive speaks through us, that we are nothing but mediums for its refracted power. The archive encroaches with the force of Marx's history, it "weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living."⁴⁹ We perform our speculative bri-colage in the greasepaints of desperation while Stoler's archive-as-subject shouts directions from stage-left. We are not

puppets of the archive, we can improvise at the edges of the production, but this doesn't alter the fact that, for the most part, the scripting of our (sub)national passions is a *fait accompli*.

In so far as it operates as a reservoir of collective significations, the archive is also infused with the power of the super-ego, of the internalised externality. The rules of normal language, the conventions of realism and the unconscious fear of schizophrenic word-salad deny us individual control over the archive. The almost total incapacity of Tasmanian writers to deal with the contemporary world without reverting to the stylistics of magic realism are evidence of this.

If its contractors and agents are shaken out of solipsism by the communality of the archive, it is important to remember that it, too, never works alone. The Tasmanian archive overlaps with a range of other archives. It is neither self-identical nor bounded by an order of exclusivity. In keeping with its dual character as law of enunciation and compendium of enunciated, the borders that surround it are porous and provisional. The act of consignation it performs is also a kind of theft, or in a softer language, of exchange. Exchange for two reasons, first because the archive always looks full, and second, because a text that is taken from the archive never has to leave. Theft without deprivation, because nothing is lost and nothing is given in return, at least not now, not yet, and not necessarily by the one who takes. Archival debt can always be paid by someone else, at another time. The diaries of Baudin are a case in point.⁵⁰ Even though they contribute to the foundation myth of Tasmanian culture they are archived materially in their imperial homeland in Le Havre. The belatedness of their translation excluded them from the Tasmanian archive even though their absence could not be felt until it became a presence,

until it was no longer there to be missed, or rather, *the other way round*. The new perspective on Baudin's leadership enriches the Tasmanian archive but it does not impoverish its French equivalent. Unless you count a retrospective mourning, the loss one feels on gaining something one might have gained earlier, the addition of Baudin's auto-text to the Tasmanian archive is something akin to pure plenitude. Archival energy does not observe the laws of the conservation of matter.

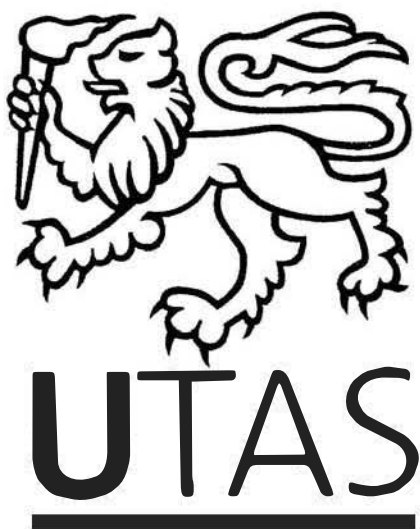
The argument being put here takes as its object the field of intercession where the Tasmanian archive meets and co-mingles with the archives of modernity and genocide. The rule that it follows is that the textual material shared by these institutions can be read dialectically. The events whose narrativisation I am examining resound in two registers. They are privileged moments in the history of Tasmania, but they are also effects and component elements of abstract social logics that are nothing other than the synthetic amalgam of isolated episodes of precisely this kind. The point to remember is that none of these archives cancels the others out. Overlaying one with the other produces a plane of contiguity, but the outer edges of the surfaces remain incommensurable.

In the case of modernity, I am not suggesting that Tasmania was excluded from the European world system until a renewal of faith in the human senses — the “recovery of nerve” in Peter Gay's terms — had worked itself up into a generalised social orientation, any more than I am contending that modernity could go no further until it had dealt with the “problem” of Tasmania.⁵¹ But even if Tasmania's role in the story of the first modernity is provisional, inessential and ontologically asymmetrical — modernity was a necessary condition for the institution of Tasmania, Tasmania was not a necessary condition for the institution of modernity — the regime of association that binds it with

the emerging conditions of the modern age is built of more substantial material than mere coincidence. Hypothetically speaking, Tasmania might have been discovered and settled without modernity — it was claimed by the Aboriginal people in this way after all — but the facts of history show us that it was. These twin histories take the form of a tight interlocking chain whose strands cannot be separated from one another without placing the structural integrity of the whole object in jeopardy.

If we accept that there are plenty of things we aren't going to learn about modernity from the Tasmanian archive, we must also accept that the story of modernity cannot wholly contain the textual traces that circulate around this thing we call Tasmania. Even as we subordinate a series of events that happened in Tasmania in the early-19th century to the glittering narrative of modernity, we must remember that the Tasmanian archive exceeds the limits of Modernity Studies. Looking through the optic of modernity and modernisation highlights certain clusters of textuality within it — statements, stories, and collective feelings about the Hydro-Electric Commission for example — but it leaves others in the dark. To argue for a re-reading of Tasmanian history through the category of modernity is to respond to the contemporary state of the Tasmanian archive, particularly as it intersects with the text and talk of everyday Australian nationalism. But it is also to identify modernity and its cognate processes and objects — cultural temporality, transformational thresholds, uneven development, imperial historicist time — as overdetermining the narratives Tasmanians tell about their homeland. It is an intervention, in other words, that is implacably dialectical, a properly modern intervention in so far as it makes the tiger's leap into the open air of the present as history. The *grand récit* of modernity and modernisation provide us with powerful tools

for uncovering the hidden affinity between ostensibly inimical events in the Tasmanian archive — is there any other common denominator to be extracted from the project of hydro-electrification and George Augustus Robinson's renaming of the Aboriginal inhabitants at Wybalenna, for example? — but the poetics of culture they suggest by no means exhausts the interpretive possibilities available therein. The double sound of genocide, the counterpoint to modernity and its inverted double in so far as it embodies despair to modernity's hope, is allowed to echo through this thesis precisely to make this point clear.



CHAPTER 3

From Archive to Place and Back Again

Any project that seeks to map out the means by which a given place acquires character through the complex activation of narrative and discourse in the context of lived experience engages in dialogue with Fredric Jameson's comment that "our cultural languages are totally dominated by space rather than categories of time, as in the preceding period of high modernism proper."⁵² Traditionally, writing on place has tended to take one of two forms: impressionistic, literary evocations of particular places, or theoretical, abstract adumbrations of place in general. If getting to the core of a given locale like Thomas Hardy's Wessex, John Updike's New England, or Patrick White's Australia, requires an immersion in the vivid fecundity of descriptive fiction, it would seem, *ipso facto*, that a turn to philosophy is required to adequately grasp place as concept. But is there really anything to be gained from stripping places of their tangible

characteristics in the name of attaining a purely conceptual understanding of place? I would like to contend here that philosophical discourse, even in its phenomenological and embodied modes, is compromised in its attempt to generate a productive discourse around place precisely because the promise of place lies in its resistance to abstraction.

This incapacity shows itself most emphatically in the endless rehearsal of arguments about the differences between space and place taken up by writers as temporally diverse as Aristotle and Michel de Certeau.⁵³ To a layman, of course, the difference is too obvious for words. Space is the empty void, while place is where you hang your hat. Alongside its fascination with abstractions like cogito, spirit, monad, being and categorical imperative, institutionalised philosophy possesses a built-in fondness for the universality of Newtonian space which is why Novalis described it as a “homesickness [...] the urge to be at home everywhere.”⁵⁴ Unlike place, the category of space lends itself to just the kind of abstruse argumentation that continental philosophy, in particular, has made its stock-in-trade. Henri Lefebvre’s social constructivist inscription of a force of production onto the void of naturalised space, for instance, is confusing at points, but at least it performs the useful function of undermining the imperialising ambitions of the physical sciences.⁵⁵ If Gaston Bachelard was on the right track when he called his mercurial study *The Poetics of Space* rather than of *place*, the contrariness of de Certeau’s counter-intuitive dictum that space is practised *place* only confirms the confused character of philosophical discourse on the topic to hand.⁵⁶

This convolution has a history, of course, but pre-determination does not necessarily constitute a defense. In the *Physics*, Aristotle breaks from Plato in making place co-terminous to space. For the latter, place or topos is located within the *chora*, the

cosmological ether that holds the universe in a particular position, but for Aristotle, the two differ from each other only in trivial ways. For the latter, place is where a thing is, it is what surrounds a thing so that in Ed Casey's words "its inner surface and the outer surface of the thing contained are strictly contiguous."⁵⁷ From Aristotle's intervention onwards, Casey argues, the category of place was hijacked by the category of space so that the zone of non-local non-particular infinite extension came to be the container that surrounded objects and localities. From here on in something might have had a place but that place was always placed in a space. Casey provides a useful list of the basic attributes of place, most of which, he argues, were lost to the category after its subsumption into the concept of space:

If space and place are both utterly relational, a sheer order of co-existing points, then they will not retain any of the inherent properties ascribed to place by ancient and early modern philosophers: properties of encompassing, holding, sustaining, gathering, situating.⁵⁸

This concept of place stripped of its intrinsic characteristics now begins to resemble the category of site, a name derived from an empty, holding function that is basically characterless. Instead of places, Casey argues, we have come to inhabit such sites, sites of regulation and discipline that produce the kinds of docile bodies famously catalogued by Michel Foucault. The juridical subject of Lockean justice, to take another example, is made into an entity by the derogation of abstract rights that derive from an insertion into a liberal location itself stripped of any immanent traits. For Casey, the antidote to this loss of place, is to be found in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's notion of smooth space, the opposite and *pharmakon* for striated or gridded space and the location of the "local absolute". In addition to terms like "region" in Martin Heidegger's work, "enclave" in

Jean-François Lyotard's, "earth" in ecology and so on, smooth space and the local absolute represent an attempt to provide a vocabulary of concreteness for thinking our situatedness and the chance to throw off the shackles of site and time as the basic organizational categories for modern thought.

But this kind of conversation with its focus on definitions and reified abstractions takes us a long way from the very concreteness of place that is its defining characteristic. Perhaps there is no bridge between those literary texts which evoke a place, imagined or otherwise, and this philosophical discourse on place in general. Perhaps, even more forebodingly, philosophy has become one of those vacant, deracinated sites, that Casey so obviously abhors.

Two alternative methodological approaches to place that seem better equipped to deal with the fuzzy logics of affect, familiarity and belonging are cultural landscape discourse and the psychology of place attachment. The latter offers positive possibilities because it establishes at its base the importance of thinking about our relationship to place rather than positing place as something distinct from human inhabitation. In drawing on Kleinian psychoanalysis, this approach brings into relief the existential significance of locatedness. As Setha Low and Irvin Altman write:

Place attachment can develop social, material, and ideological dimensions, as individuals develop ties to kin and community, own or rent land, and participate in public life as residents of a particular community.⁵⁹

Here place is clearly differentiated from space and taken as a term which organises a political as well as a physical jurisdiction. Place is the "personality of a location" and may include "patterns in the mellow brick of an eighteenth-century building, the sweep of

the Great Plains, the bustle of a small harbour full of sailboats.”⁶⁰ Cultural landscape discourse also offers useful avenues of approach to this tricky topic in its attempts to fuse the categories of natural and built components of location, “wrestling”, in Dolores Hayden’s terms, “with the combination of the two in the concept of place.”⁶¹ Its efficacy is limited, however, by the positivism of its epistemology. With their backgrounds in geography, proponents of cultural landscape discourse often struggle to come to grips with the affective fullness of place-interaction as a process. Because the experience of place invokes all five senses, phenomenology of the kind delineated by Maurice Merleau-Ponty might offer a way forward. But phenomenological approaches privilege sight, smell, touch, taste and hearing and subordinate legislative orders, jurisdictional embodiment and cultural narratives far too unequivocally to really suffice.

The promise of the archive as a means of understanding how locations become places lies in its sensitivity to the mutual imbrication of language and sensory experience. In an island the size of Tasmania, the concept of geographical separation must be drawn upon in combination with the perception of coastal spaces if the experience of a single stretch of beach, cliffs and water is to be understood as part of a continuous perimeter. If that coastal space is to be understood as part of an island called Tasmania, furthermore, higher order narratives must be accessed. Tasmania as a unified object is never available to sense perception in the same way as a more confined place like a city park or an industrial site. When we talk about Tasmanian place, then, we are talking about a combination of immediate physical awareness and cognitive mapping that relies upon official cartography, the hybridisation of isolated place interaction, memory and other factors for its successful production and maintenance. The geographical estrangement of

Tasmania that asks to be incorporated into a cultural taxonomy depends upon the imaginary imputation of *islandness*, itself a condition inaccessible to the perceiving subject other than through the synthetic amalgamation of disparate fragments of experience. It is the linguistic lineaments of the archive that allow us to weld these rough-hewn perceptions into a coherent, communicable whole. The archive tells us we are on an island even when our senses fail us.

We carry the archive around with us then, adding to it as we go. Even a thesis like this that purports to describe the archive takes part in its formulation. As we write about the archive, it undergoes a metamorphosis and we find the place we left when we sat down to write is not the same when we get up to leave. In Barthes' terms, the archive is a *scriptible* rather than a *lisible* web of texts.⁶²

The socio-economic conditions that subtend the lived experience of third millennium Tasmanians have not been cast from some exotic autochthonous matter found nowhere else on earth. The forms of life to be found here, can also be found with allowance for variation across the entirety of the late-capitalist world. Fast food franchises, shopping malls, video stores, multiplex cinemas, the transnational education system, the internet, all feature in Tasmanian life in much the same way as they do for citizens in Sweden, France, England or New Zealand. High wage employment in smart industries and symbolic analysis is harder to come by in Tasmania than in larger centres, but the employment profile of the state matches the nation in rough symmetry. There are fund managers and internet designers and tourism consultants and architects all based in the cities of Launceston and Hobart and their position descriptions do not differ dramatically from those of their counterparts in Berlin or Stockholm or Boston. There is

old money and new money, drug addiction and violent crime, corruption and community spirit, pride of place and generalised self-loathing, yuppie suburbs and welfare suburbs. And yet, as I walk out of my flat, into the hilly streets of West Hobart and, looking down toward the choppy whitecaps in Storm Bay, feel the wind in my face, I am struck by the acuity of the marketing mantra that Chakrabarty repeats in *Provincializing Europe*: “India is different” “India is different” “India is different”.⁶³ Isn’t Tasmania different too? I think. Isn’t every place unique? What could we expect to gain from speaking about places in general. Pure loss. Obliteration of otherness.

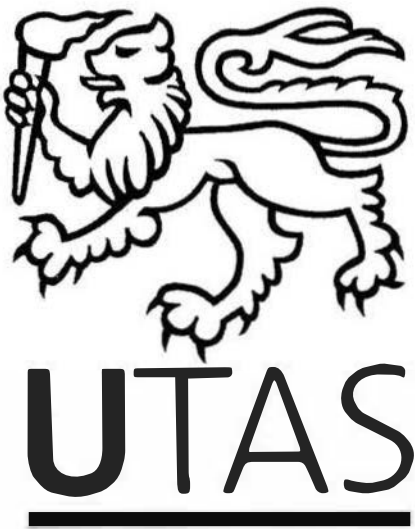
The chill of the Southern Ocean, the mix of Victorian, Georgian and Federation homes, the unrepentant topography of the city streets, the grey of the State Government buildings, the pirated brand-name clothing of the hustling youngsters in the mall, the wood smoke and blue-green eucalyptus-lined hills of the Eastern Shore, all make this part of Tasmania absolutely, irreducibly heterogeneous. I could be nowhere else but here as I write this, nowhere else but Hobart, Tasmania, at the bottom of the world, drifting off toward Antarctica.

Within a field of homogeneity, what we might call the world-system, or postmodern capitalism, or the West, or the developed world, singularity presents itself as an exception. But the emphasis placed by writers on the homogeneous heterogeneity of the late-capitalist world is really just a nostalgic response, a reflexive reaction to the effacement of a mythologised particularity that is nothing more than an agrarian afterglow. The workers of Raymond Williams’s *Wales*, who left their villages and descended upon the industrial cities in their thousands were struck by the shapeless uniformity of the “satanic mills” in which they found themselves. Tied down to the

routine of a prodromal Taylorism, elegies for the lost world of difference and specificity denoted by that slippery word — home — came easily. But in the anonymous spaces of the bourgeois present, difference still persists. Every configuration of built form and natural line, every department store and clothing shop and cafe, names itself with its own mix of colour and design, marking itself off from those that surround it. Fantasies of perfect uniformity are just that, Orwellian, Huxleyian myths of a world where texture and colour and character have been removed by some centrally planned, Corbusian architectonics.

There are always personal histories and private attachments and secret, furtive sparks of identity to be found in an ordinary landscape. Perhaps Tasmania is different for me because I am Tasmanian, because I grew up here, on these streets, with these parks and buildings and museums and waterways. Like Williams climbing in the bus above the Welsh valley where he was raised, how could a Tasmanian resist being struck by the very closeness and familiarity of home?⁶⁴ Home, after all, is always a site of heterogeneity, a difference whose sameness soothes the soul. Towerflats that are ostensibly identical to one another become sites of intimate, personalised dwelling when treated with care and attention. Even as we fill our abodes with the mass-produced commodities of late-capitalism, the arrangements and colours that we choose mark our spaces off as our own. Then there are views from windows, out on to streets, across rivers, over to hills, rolling, abrupt, steep, wooded, cleared, brown, green-blue. Richard Flanagan has observed that Hobart is the only capital city in Australia where all the major streets in the CBD open themselves out onto vistas of nature.⁶⁵ Mt Wellington crowns the south-west angle, its jutting, brooding, snow-capped bulk cuts off a quadrant of the sky and names the visual

field that it fills. Its purple tone at evening fall isn't like Table Mountain's shade. It is its own. The organ pipes, vertically thrusting linear shafts of dolomite, cut an axis up away from the undulating buttress of the foothills. The cubism of city architecture, steel and glass, is melded with the uncertainty of natural form, the crenellated, broken, shunted shapes of "The Mountain" cut a hole in the sky and neutralise the straightness of the built environment. Blue sky against grey rock against the white matchsticks of burnt-out gum. Hobart is nature's city and nature is always different.



CHAPTER 4

Of Contrapuntal Trajectories 1: Genocide

The debate around genocide in Tasmania that swept across the opinion pages of the Australian quality press in the wake of the publication of Keith Windschuttle's first volume of *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History* can be re-read in the context of this thesis as an argument about whether a signifier should be allowed to circulate through an archive. From an archival perspective, of course, the fierce thrust and counter-thrust meted out in the rugged attempts to work out once and for all whether the decimation and displacement of the Tasmanian Aborigines constituted a genocide is all just grist to the mill. The signifier has become active. Archival articulations are on the record and Tasmania as place now carries the scarlet letter that signifies man's most heinous inhumanity to man. This is especially so in the case of contributions to the archive which

emanate from outside the state. If Tasmania has a growing global reputation as an eco-tourism destination and a producer of boutique produce, it also features in the top rank of places defined by their “genocidal” pasts. What is happening to Tasmania as a place, for instance, when a student in Frank Chalk’s History and Sociology of Genocide class at Concordia University is presented with a slide show about the Tasmanian genocide?⁶⁶ The archival articulations mobilised in Chalk’s class are not unique or novel — they refer in orthodox fashion to commonly held historical knowledge: the mission of George Augustus Robinson, the Black Line and so on — but the students introduced to Tasmania in this fashion will probably not be in possession of any other information about the island, whether it be first hand experience of the place or snatches of alternative data from the archive. In this context, place and archive are indissociable. Visual images might take the place of phenomenal experience and memory in the equation I described earlier, but the kinesis of archival energy essentially does its work unaided.

References to the Tasmanian genocide are legion across a range of discursive terrains emanating from the four corners of the world. Conjoined mobilisations of the twin signifiers “genocide” and “Tasmania” can be found in the letter pages of magazines, in academic articles, in fiction, film, newspapers and in journalistic non-academic histories.⁶⁷ The questions that need to be asked about these contributions to the Tasmanian archive turn around the motivation for the deployment of the term and the work done by the term in its various contexts.

Because of the affectively charged volatility of the signifier “genocide”, this stream of the thesis is amenable to a more straightforward and commonsensical sortie into archival analysis. The reason for this is that the various contributors to the genocide

debate already do the work of applying an abstraction to an immanent set of historical logics. The archive that operates at one remove from the material history of Tasmania is thus already accessed by the historians concerned. In the stream of the thesis about modernity, on the other hand, the contributions to the Tasmanian archive engaged were not operating at the level of meta-history. In other words, in the modernity stream, I do the work of abstraction, framing a series of engagements with the problematics of modernity as instantiations of modernity in the Tasmanian archive. Thus the agency of the signifier “modernity” is of quite a different character to that of the signifier “genocide”. To make this clearer, we need to emphasise the splitting of event and discourse that this thesis is built around.

The Tasmanian archive is an “imaginary” materiality constituted by a universe of texts. These texts represent or encode events in such a way as to actually influence the character of other events that follow. There is thus no clear division between event and the archive because a function of reflexivity folds the two in on each other. In a very real sense the events do not have an ontology entirely removed from the archive but the necessity to make room for place, space and the concrete, demands that we recognise a non-archival dimension to Tasmanian history. It is also important to recognise that the *archivality* of enunciations is not always apparent to the voicer of the articulation. More precisely the *Tasmanianness* of the articulation might only become apparent later when, for example, a biography of the subject responsible for the utterance is written to lay claim to his or her status as an exemplary Tasmanian.

In the case of both modernity and genocide, the actual occurrence of the events concerned was not coded in terms of the two signifiers being examined. While

modernisation was a trope that government leaders, captains of industry and their compadres deployed on occasion, the connection to a world-historical tradition called modernity was never made. But modernity, as demonstrated by Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, is as much a narrative as a set of historico-social logics.⁶⁸ In light of this, my professed intention to trace the unfolding of a logic in the Tasmanian archive is exposed as disingenuous because such a logic conceived in those terms did not leave its traces there. Rather, the approach I have taken has been to connect up disparate events from the history of Tasmania in terms of the way they intersect with the tropes, logics, strategies, hopes and deformations laid out in the highly contested and fraught theoretical sub-field of Modernity Studies. In this sense, my account of modernity in the Tasmanian archive has really been the history of my own imputation of *modernity* into that archive.

The two levels at which the modernity stream of the thesis operates are historical actuality and synthetic theoretical discourse. The archive operates between these levels in carrying the traces of historical actuality into the present so that they can be re-coded in terms provided by modernity theory. But even if the historical actors who played a part in the various phases and stagings of the modernisation of Tasmania had not read Tony Giddens, they were still possessed of the spirit of improvement and progress, the certainty that the present was superior to the past because of its very potential, that we now identify as characteristically modern. These actors worked through the archive as they changed it. Operating within its confines, seeing Tasmania in the terms it allowed, they were also expanding its field of vision in preparation for transformations in the concrete experience of Tasmania as place. In this sense, the archive ran on ahead of history and laid down the foundations for its achievement. The archive in its variety of present forms preserves the

actions, projects and endeavours performed in its name at an earlier stage of its development.

In so far as this thesis traces the career of two signifiers in their passage through the archive, an asymmetrical relation can be identified. On the one hand, the signifier “modernity” operates as a minor term within the annals of the archive. It is deployed only rarely and doesn’t act as a nodal point in the way that signifiers like “wilderness” or “island” do. At the same time, however, historical actors went about their business at the various stages of Tasmania’s socio-cultural transformation with an orientation to the future that was nothing if not self-consciously modernising. Becoming modern was a fully formulated goal that merged archival understandings, readings of the past, and articulated premonitions of the future with material historical action.⁶⁹

The events that have since become the gravitational centre pulling together the debates around genocide in Tasmania, on the other hand, were not enacted with “genocide” in mind for the simple reason that the signifier was not put into circulation until 1944 when Raphael Lemkin published *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*.

New conceptions require new terms. By “genocide” we mean the destruction of a race or of an ethnic group. This new word, coined by the author to denote an old practice in its modern development, is made from the ancient Greek word *genos* (race, tribe) and the Latin *cide* (killing), thus corresponding in its formation to such words as tyrannicide, homicide, infanticide, etc. Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves.⁷⁰

The multiplicitous killings of Aboriginals on the Tasmanian frontier may have been perpetrated under the influence of motivations that we would now understand as genocidal but that genocidality was never articulated at the level of the letter. The concept operates, rather, at a metahistorical level as an historiographical tool for re-reading disparate incidents and tying them together into a larger totality. Most of the incidents that feature at the heart of the genocide debate – the Risdon Massacre, the Black Line, the Roving Parties, the random atrocities — were documented by historians of the 19th century and in most cases, the most important primary source providing us with access into those conflictual pasts remains the seventeen volumes of reports compiled by Governor Arthur in 1830 and filed as the Colonial Secretary’s Office Papers in the Tasmanian Archives.⁷¹ In other words, at various points in the past, the Tasmanian archive bore witness to a set of concrete events that were only to become “genocidal” at a later date. Which brings us back to the way in which a reading of genocide in the Tasmanian archive more closely fits the model of discursively oriented archival analysis. Studying genocide in the Tasmanian archive requires a dialectical balancing of materiality — the historical events that have been re-examined through the terms and conditions of genocide — and linguistic genealogy. The signifier has an independent history in the Tasmanian archive that needs to be documented if we are to come to grips with the historicity of the events to which it has become attached.

Although 19th-century historians like James Bonwick, John West and James Calder described the killings of Aborigines in Tasmania in terms of extirpation and extermination, perhaps the earliest author to explicitly mobilise the term “genocide” to describe the frontier experience in Tasmania was Bronwyn Desailly in her 1977 thesis

*The Mechanics of Genocide: Colonial Policies and Attitudes towards the Tasmanian Aborigines, 1824-1836.*⁷² Desailly's thesis catalogues the major instances of colonial death in Van Diemen's Land and contextualises them through an examination of the racist ideologies disseminated through the newspapers at the time. Her examination of genocide, however, consists of little more than a passing mention. Although the title of her thesis suggests a generalised diagnosis of genocide across the entirety of post-invasion Tasmania, in the body of the text she restricts her discussion of it to an indictment of Governor Arthur's refusal to act on advice given by George Augustus Robinson that the Aborigines exiled to Flinders Island seemed doomed to extinction. "Robinson's pleas were ignored", she writes, "and thus *genocide* was sanctioned. Once again the Colonial Government showed its overriding interest was to maintain peaceful British settlement even if this involved the extinction of a race."⁷³

Desailly's interpolation of genocide into the Tasmanian archive stands as a fairly innocuous initiation of a new way of imagining a place. The motivation for her deployment of the term is unclear, but its effect, as subtle as it might be, is to shift the "crimes" of the British colonisers into a more indictable register. The function of the Holocaust as what Alison Palmer calls the "prototype" of genocide necessarily inscribes its signifier with a power of horror.⁷⁴ By describing the decimation and the displacement of the Aboriginal Tasmanians as a genocide, Desailly draws down on that power of horror and builds a bridge between the two historical events that elides the irreducible difference at their core.

Desailly's usage of genocide stands as the first example of one of four different models for its deployment. In cases such as Desailly's, the perpetration of a genocide in

Tasmania is taken as a given and does not in itself become the subject of complex elaboration. The assumption that undergirds these enunciations holds that the mass deaths on the Tasmanian frontier were self-evidently genocidal because they were carried out by one racial grouping and directed at another racial grouping. Examples of this kind of mobilisation can be found in Bernard Smith's Boyer Lectures of 1980, *The Spectre of Trugernini*, when he discusses the anamnesis of colonial violence that began to work its way through the networks of the Australian public sphere around the time of his presentation:

It is this new awareness of what actually occurred that, it seems to me, constitutes a central problem for the integrity and authenticity of Australian culture today. How shall we redeem it from the guilty awareness that these acts of genocide and attempted genocide were being enacted most vigorously at that very time when white Australian culture was being conceived and born.⁷⁵

Peter Conrad follows Smith in his geo-autobiography *Down Home: Revisiting Tasmania* when he uses the trope of genocide to launch one of his many flights of rhetorical fancy into the imaginary space above Tasmania as place:

The island has been made by a long series of alienating schisms. Tasmania first suffered disconnection from the mainland, which left its landscape buckled and eruptive; then it was singled out as a place of penance and the site for an experiment in genocide. The settlers pathetically strove to reconcile Arcady with Alcatraz; since then, the spoliation of mountains and the damming of rivers hint at a desire to punish this unyielding place into subservience.⁷⁶

For Conrad, the genocide of the Aborigines is a vital part of the historical tapestry of Tasmania. It is a thread in a thickly interwoven cloth. For other writers, however, the

framework for invoking genocide in the Tasmanian case is to add density to the discussion of other instances of genocide or of genocide in general.

For this group, Tasmania is nothing other than a cipher, an empty place marked off on the historical record only by the atrocities directed at its indigenous inhabitants. Florence Mazian's monograph *Why Genocide?: The Armenian and Jewish Experiences in Perspective* provides a case in point. *Why Genocide?* is a work of psycho-social scholarship that seeks to develop a theoretical framework for understanding how genocides in general come to be enacted through a practical analysis of the facts in the case of Turkish Armenia and the Shoah. As is often the case with this kind of text, the Tasmanian genocide only appears in passing, where it is referred to to fill out a historical trajectory. In this instance, the broad "type" of genocide with which the Tasmanian situation complies is colonial genocide:

A case lending support to Toynbee's thesis can be seen in the case of the island of Tasmania, where in a short span of seventy-three years the British successfully eliminated the native population. [...] Genocide is not always as blatantly practiced as it was with the Nazis, nor is it always practiced as ruthlessly as in the case of the British in Tasmania [...] Genocide can be executed with a certain finesse.⁷⁷

In *A Little Matter of Genocide*, Ward Churchill performs a similar textual move to Mazian's. Short references to the Tasmanian "extermination" appear twice, in the first instance in the context of a refutation of the "uniqueness" position in Holocaust Studies and second as specifically colonial evidence for the long durational extension of genocidal practices. Even the entry for "Tasmania" in the index is bound inextricably with the signifier "extermination". Sven Lindqvist's *Exterminate all the Brutes*, doesn't

explicitly mention the term genocide in relation to Tasmania, but it does reproduce a very brief, sparsely sourced summary of the main events of the decimation to defend its claim that “[t]he Tasmanians were the most well known of the exterminated peoples and were often held up as symbols for them all.”⁷⁸

Carmel Schrire’s elegiac essay in honour of the anthropologist and archaeologist Rhys Jones, “Betrayal as a Universal Element in the Sundering of Bass Strait”, departs from the course marked out by these writers in its willingness to call the Tasmanian genocide a *Holocaust*. Schrire’s comments are essentially secondary reproductions of Jones’s own work drawn from Tom Haydon’s controversial documentary *The Last Tasmanian: A Story of Genocide*. They are most notable for the way they reiterate the genocidal character of frontier conflict in Tasmania even as their author subscribes to the “extinction as inevitability” thesis that Jones so notoriously deployed. Haydon’s film, which serves as the most significant vehicle for Jones’s particular narrativisation of colonial contact in Tasmania is one of the foundation stones for the reading of genocide into that history. It was first released in 1978, less than 12 months after Desailly’s thesis was submitted. As Haydon writes:

This [Tasmanian] community was responsible for committing, in my view, the world’s only case of a genocide so swift and so complete and the guilt of that, I think, has lain very strongly with the white people of Tasmania.⁷⁹

The second way in which references to a Tasmanian genocide are framed is in juridical terms, as a set of cases that need to be adjudged in accordance with legal definitions of genocide. The writers concerned herein, tend to be working from within the disciplinary confines of Genocide Studies more generally, or set as their target a trans-Australian

analysis of genocidal logics. The strain of commonality that binds their articulations derives from the conviction that the perpetration of mass deaths is not an adequate condition for the mobilisation of the terms of genocide. Unlike the writers who take the Tasmanian genocide as a given, the proponents of the definitional reading examine the historical facts in some detail. The fact that little “new” historical data is added to the panorama provided by 19th-century historians like Bonwick, Ling Roth, Calder and West remains salient. The additions to the Tasmanian archive made by these writers acquires a novel character primarily through the contextual placement of their comments. In the case of writing located within the confines of the international study of genocide, it might be more accurate to state that Tasmania is being added to the archive of genocide rather than vice versa. The comparativist orientation of these contributions, however, does supplement the Tasmanian archive if only through the notification that what transpired in Van Diemen’s Land from 1803 to 1876 bears a resemblance to events that took place in other colonial locations.

The definitional approaches to the Tasmanian genocide are of two principal kinds: those which engage primarily with the definition of genocide spelled out in the UN convention; and those which engage with more capacious definitions developed by genocide scholars. A. Dirk Moses’s “An Antipodean Genocide? The Origins of the Genocidal Moment in the Colonisation of Australia” is a good example of the latter in so far as it interrogates the centrality of intention to the UN definition. In brief, Moses attempts to short-circuit the closed network of UN-defined genocide through an engagement with traditions of social scientific thought that emphasise the distinction between structure and agency. Attempts to identify a UN-defined genocide in Tasmania

are impossible, Moses contends, because of the lack of deliberate policy on behalf of either the Tasmanian Colonial Governments or the Colonial Office in Britain. Rather than throwing out the term altogether, however, he proposes that we think the Tasmanian genocide as a set of “glacial” developments. In particular, he argues, the moves to segregate the Aborigines and ultimately to remove them from the Tasmanian mainland entirely, lead to genocide even if genocide wasn’t intended by the action. But Moses isn’t happy to rest there. Instead he returns to the UN definition and performs an impressive intellectual *coup de grace* by demonstrating the means by which the destruction of the Aboriginal peoples as an objective and inherent corollary of the logic of colonisation became subjectively located within the consciousness of the colonial agents themselves, producing a situation where specific genocidal intention of the kind described in the UN definition can be adduced.⁸⁰

Tony Barta foreshadows Moses’s expansion of the concept of genocide in his own essay “After the Holocaust: Consciousness of Genocide in Australia.” Here Barta refers briefly to the Tasmanian case in proposing that white Australia exists in a relation of genocide to the Aboriginal population. Barta adopts the same approach as Churchill in “Genocide: Toward a Functional Definition” in initiating his discourse with an extended quotation from the ur-text of genocide thinking, Lemkin’s *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*.⁸¹ Churchill departs from the course taken by Barta, however, in providing an overarching genealogy of the term, which, like the work of Moses, focuses on intention. From the UN definition of 1948, Churchill moves on to the contribution made by John Paul Sartre in relation to American activities in Vietnam. Here Sartre shifted the

emphasis of the definition away from intention to the effects of campaigns of occupation and colonisation:

The proof of genocide, [Sartre] asserted lies in the results of policy, not in the intentions by which it may be undertaken. The fact of Vietnamese decimation in itself established that genocide was occurring in Indo-China, regardless of the U.S. government's oft-stated rationale that its intent was to liberate the Vietnamese and safeguard their freedom.⁸²

Churchill also opens up the concept of genocide to include the elimination of specific cultural practices that mark out a specific group from its colonial opponents. Referring to a further set of texts, he asks the crucial question of whether the life of a group of people can be separated from the lives of the individuals that make it up. In the case of the Tasmanian genocide, the elimination of traditional hunting practices, the radical stifling of inter-tribal marriage and restrictions on seasonal migration clearly point, to his mind, to a case of cultural genocide.⁸³

A further set of texts that take up the question of genocide in Tasmania are those that privilege the UN definition in clearer terms than the writers surveyed above. Henry Reynolds' *An Indelible Stain: The Question of Genocide in Australian History* stands out as the most focussed of these studies, and also acquires a mark of uniqueness in its resistance to assign the term to the Tasmanian case. Apart from Keith Windschuttle's *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, Reynolds' is the most significant work to avoid the use of the nomenclature of genocide in the case of the Tasmanian frontier. In stark contrast to Reynolds' piece is Bill Thorpe and Raymond Evans' extended essay "Indigenocide and the Massacre of Aboriginal History". There, the authors, compare the

facts in the case of Tasmania with the UN definition and come up with what they see as an irrefutable verdict:

[The Tasmanian Aboriginal situation] is certainly genocidal if one takes the United Nations definition, and deploys several of its criteria to what occurred during the height of the conflict between the settlers and Aborigines over land (1824-1834).⁸⁴

Thorpe and Evans' work is a classic articulation of the factor of genocide in an historical logic. It summarises the central events of the frontier history, it begins with a discussion of Lemkin's work and it reproduces the UN definition at length. Like the international genocide scholars who push the UN definition to one side, Thorpe and Evans propose an alternative nomenclature for thinking the clash of cultures in Australia — indigenocide.

Colin Tatz also has no qualms about delivering a verdict of UN-defined genocide in Tasmania. In "Genocide in Australia" he directs our attention to article II (a) of the Convention that lays down the requirement that victims of genocide be targeted by virtue of their membership of a specific racial or ethnic grouping. After summarising some of the violent encounters between the Aborigines and the Europeans, Tatz concludes that:

This wasn't simply a murderous outbreak of racial hatred. They were killed with intent, not solely because of their spearing of cattle or their scientific value, but rather because they were Aborigines. The Genocide Convention is very specific on this point: the victim group must be at risk because of their membership of that group.⁸⁵

Ann Curthoys agrees with Tatz in her own inquiry into genocide in Tasmania, arriving at the conclusion that genocide occurred by way of a reading of Ward Churchill and Sven Lindqvist. Her intervention into the Tasmanian archive follows the form of those authors

who take the genocide as a given, however, in so far as she only makes passing mention of the Tasmanian case. Her comments are worth repeating, though, because they segue into the final modality of genocidal articulations to surface in the Tasmanian archive. Adumbrating the reversal of the extinction thesis after the Tasmanian Aboriginal Rights movement became active in the late-1970s, Curthoys states that “genocide had taken place, but it had not been complete.”⁸⁶ Here genocide is conceived as the total annihilation of a racial grouping.

Aside from the forced comparison with other genocidal events that is enacted through the mobilisation of this volatile signifier it is difficult to see the value of re-reading a set of historical events that is already recognised as horrific in terms of an alternative meta-theoretical category that only re-iterates that power of horror. In terms of its contribution to a politics of reconciliation, Ned Curthoys’s comments on genocide discourse seem to offer a tentative way forward:

Here in Australia the vexed question of genocide [...] can be [...] contextualised within an inherited European pattern of colonial expansion and mono-cultural domination requiring a response that is both urgent and historically ‘deep’, removed from pedantic legalism and myopic political imperatives.⁸⁷

Writers like Barta, Moses, Churchill, and Sartre have all made invaluable contributions to the task of developing an alternative approach to Genocide Studies that does not measure history against the legal definition laid out in the Genocide Convention. Barta paved the way for Moses’ structural displacement of the intent to commit genocide in his 1987 essay “Land and Lives in the Colonization of Australia”. “What we need,” he writes, “is a conception of genocide which embraces *relations* of destruction and removes from the word the emphasis on policy and intention which brought it into being.”⁸⁸ Barta takes the

genocide debate even further away from Ned Curthoys pedantry and myopia in “Discourses of Genocide in Germany and Australia: A Linked History” an essay released in 2001. Pioneering a linguistic turn in Genocide Studies, Barta identifies a “linked history” that brings into shared perspective the racist discourse and policies of Colonial Australia and Nazi Germany. The UN focus on intent is rendered obsolete in this approach through a subtle and supple examination of the way racist ideology came to inhabit the “ideas and assumptions” of the populations of the two countries. Furthermore, and certainly more crucially in the light of the contrapuntal nature of this study, Barta ties genocidal and racist thinking to the empirical history of European modernisation in the colonial zones of the new world:

The colonising impulse to possess the world as the birthright of European superiority could become a genocidal one wherever the assumption of superiority was threatened by resistance and competition.⁸⁹

Barta’s work here is informed by a reading of chapter nine of Lemkin’s *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* where the latter argues that genocide can be a two-fold process of dispossession and displacement followed by the establishment of an incoming colonisation:

Genocide has two phases: one, destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group; the other, the imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor. This imposition, in turn, may be made upon the oppressed population which is allowed to remain, or upon the territory alone, after removal of the population and the colonization of the area by the oppressor’s own nationals.⁹⁰

In Barta's work, a return is made to the source of genocide thinking to trump the UN claim to propriety over the administration of the intellectual lineaments of its application and reconstitution.

The interest in moulding the facts in the case of the Tasmanian genocide to the UN definition seems to issue from a vain wish to have those crimes brought to trial. In the absence of such a possibility, however, the energy expended on determining the genocidality of the destruction of the Aborigines might be put to better use. In the wake of Windschuttle's controversial historical denialism perhaps we would be better served by genocide scholars who were interested in unearthing "new" empirical data to confirm the "unsubstantiated" claims of mass death in frontier Tasmania. Ian Macfarlane's thesis, *Aboriginal Society in North West Tasmania: Dispossession and Genocide*, completed at the University of Tasmania in 2002, is one text that offers a way forward here, expanding the Tasmanian archive through the use of a volatile and problematic signifier but also reordering its empirical retinue through the discursive rendering of heretofore unknown events. Unfortunately, the publication in 2004 of texts by Benjamin Madley, Ashley Riley Sousa and William Rubinstein that somnambulate along well-cut historical paths suggests that such an approach is likely to remain unfashionable.⁹¹

CHAPTER 5**Of Contrapuntal Trajectories 2: Modernity**

There was a moment not so long ago when to be distanced from imperial centres in space and time was also to be tarred with the brush of under-development. The postcolonial turn in historiography and literary theory has done much to remedy this slight, but the traces of cultural lag, the revenants of centres and peripheries, still haunt our imagination of marginality. In existential terms, this dis-ease manifests as a feeling of isolation, the sensation that the place we are “in” is at one remove from itself, immediately present and yet far-flung, near and far at the same time. In the past, the temporal dimension of the awareness of inhabiting the “new” world was utterly confused by the fact that whatever happened in these marginal spaces was only ever an echo of what had already transpired in the imperial centres. The time-delay between events and their mediated “arrival” in the

colonies created a kind of obsessive lust for belated news reports from the “mother countries”, a situation as disorientating as the knowledge that the distant stars we experience as existing in the present might actually have burnt out hundreds of millions of years ago. In Tasmania, this sense of displacement and exile produced a phenomenology of colonial isolation, a thirst for resemblance and similarity instantiated in John Glover’s Eurofication of native landscapes, the imitational mode of cultural production that Jim Davidson calls “Tasmanian Gothic” and Hal Porter’s claim that “Hobart Town was [...] the Englishman’s miniature of London from which no home-recalling and cherished detail had been left out [...].”⁹²

For Meaghan Morris, the problematic that develops around these configurations of “imperial historicist time” and its colonial discontents can be summed up in the contention that modernity is a known history. Likewise, for Partha Chatterjee, the attempt to theorise non-European modernities incites a “politics of despair” of precisely the kind that Dipesh Chakrabarty seeks to dispel in *Provincializing Europe*. On the cognate topic of nationalism in the colonial world, Chatterjee notes:

If nationalisms in the rest of the world have to choose their imagined communities from certain “modular” forms already made available to them by Europe and the Americas, what do they have left to imagine? *History, it would seem, has decreed that we in the postcolonial world shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity.* Europe and the Americas, the only true subjects of history, have thought out on our behalf not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anti-colonial resistance and postcolonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonised.⁹³

Speaking in a different register, Richard Flanagan bemoans the obstacles to representing the particularity of “minor” places when the only languages available are overdetermined by their imperial origins:

To grow up in Tasmania not so long ago, as I did, was to meet the world each day with wonder and with love, with fear and with terror. This experience, it must be admitted, is hardly remarkable. What was remarkable — though I hardly knew it then — was that you were not allowed to express that world in forms other than that of ephemeral stories and jokes you told and others told you.⁹⁴

Chakrabarty tells us that modernity is something that happened first in Europe, then elsewhere. But the very incorporation of Tasmania into the European world-system was itself a multi-valent symptom of that cataclysmic set of social transformations. In other words, and in ironic contradiction to Bruno Latour’s famous thesis, Tasmania has *always been modern* because it was modernity that prompted its “discovery” and modernity that prompted its “settlement”.⁹⁵ The crucial point to be made here is that the institution of the entity that we now call Tasmania was an effect of modernity rather than an instance of its actively willed origination. At least until the onset of the project of hydro-electrification in the late-19th century, Tasmania was an object or side-effect of the modernisation of an imperial “elsewhere” rather than the master of its own modernity. In this regard, the experience of Tasmanians is analogous to the experience of other inhabitants of peripheral zones around the world. For these communities, the felt apprehension of their immediate location was, and to some extent remains, fundamentally dislocated.

Tasmania engages in a hide and seek game with the imaginary institution of modernity. Just as the island appears safely ensconced within its socio-historical horizon, it slips, through some unseen bolthole, into a set of wholly different discursive orders.

According to the figurations that constitute this enigmatic catalogue, Tasmania becomes, in different modalities and at different times, a virgin wilderness, an antipodean England, a home of the gothic and the grotesque and a constantly chastened economic and cultural backwater. In the texts which consider it principally in relation to the rest of Australia, it is the absence or scarcity of certain signs of modernisation — over-crowded streets, sprawling suburbs, skyscrapers, new development — that are used to bolster the argument that Tasmania has somehow escaped or been overlooked by modernity. Of course, this is a highly problematic claim. As I make clear in this thesis, the broader world-historical trajectories of modernisation and the cultural codings that accompany them have scarred the Tasmanian archive just as indelibly as its cosmopolitan equivalents.⁹⁶

But this mis-diagnosis is easily understood. Has modernity not been thought almost exclusively through analyses of the great centres of human civilisation, the cities of Paris, London and New York and the continents of Europe and North America?⁹⁷ One of the more famous of Tasmania's expatriates, Peter Conrad, would never dream of including his own birthplace in a history of modernity, existing as it does for him, on the very outskirts of a world that finds its centre thousands of miles away:

Modernity is about the acceleration of time, and also the dispersal of places. This book [*Modern Times, Modern Places: Life and Art in the 20th Century*] starts by describing the modern panic about time. It goes on to identify a series of places which are the citadels of modern society in its different phases. After Vienna, Moscow, Paris, Berlin and New York, the last in this sequence is a city which allusively jumbles up the others: Tokyo.⁹⁸

For Walter Benjamin, Charles Baudelaire's Paris was the capital of the 19th century, the *locus classicus* of the great wave of social, cultural, political and aesthetic transformation that still stands as the high tide mark in cultural histories of modernity.⁹⁹ It is important to remember, however, that this newness was invested with a special aura because it was seen as a world-historical newness, a newness-for-mankind. To paraphrase Marx, Paris's present in Baudelaire's day presented itself to the less developed cultural regions of Europe and the World as the image of their own future. Chakrabarty calls this particular kind of historicist thought a "first in Europe and then elsewhere structure of time", and it has proven extremely influential in organising frameworks for thinking the dissemination of modernity.¹⁰⁰ Take Anthony Giddens' often quoted precis from *The Consequences of Modernity*: "Modernity refers to forms of life and modes of social organisation that have their origins in 17th century Europe and have since become more or less worldwide in their influence."¹⁰¹ When Meaghan Morris tells us that this makes modernity a known history, "something which has already happened elsewhere, and which is to be reproduced, mechanically or otherwise, with a local content", a chain of egregious ramifications is set in train.¹⁰² Regions and nations outside the West can experience modernity, but that experience will never be quite as modern as the originary European instantiation. On this model, modernity has a putative, if rather imprecise spatio-temporal center, and the developmental logics that it names — industrialisation, democratisation, urbanisation, bureaucratisation — radiate outwards from this entrepot like ripples across a pond.

For an example of a global, universalising modernity we need go no further than Marshall Berman's opening proposition from *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*:

There is a mode of vital experience — experience of space and time, of the self and others, of life's possibilities and perils — that is shared by men and women all over the world today. I will call this body of experience "modernity".¹⁰³

Berman's strategy for mediating between the particular and the general is to nominate a set of archetypes, principally locations and personae, and to use them as focalising points for his reading of modernity. Giddens goes a step further than this, breaking modernity up into abstracted constituent elements or "institutional contours". Through his inclusion of the nation-state in this catalogue, he alerts us to the way that entity functions dialectically within the plural field of Modernity Studies. On the one hand, the nation-state is treated as an effect or symptom of modernity, and on the other, it is treated as the horizon or organising framework along which processes of modernisation are said to occur.

To these effacements of difference achieved in the name of an ostensibly neutral universality, we might also add influential texts in the tradition by Jürgen Habermas, Conrad and Benjamin. The modernity that Habermas describes in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures* as an "unfinished project" is more a philosophical category than a "structure of feeling" or a socio-cultural horizon, but even he argues that modernisation of the Weberian kind — the arrival and consolidation of instrumental reason, specialisation and differentiation, bureaucratisation — remains a universal *topos* in so far as it "disassociates modernity from its modern European origins and stylizes it into a spatio-temporally neutral model for processes of social development

in general.”¹⁰⁴ Conrad’s *Modern Times, Modern Places* continues this trend after a different fashion, broaching the generality of modernity through an analysis of its exemplary instantiations. The “imperialism” of a generic modernity that has spread to the four corners of the world is concealed in accounts that seek to define it as culturally neutral and neutralising, but the “first in Europe, then elsewhere” structure of global historicity is still always already present in those narrativisations. Conrad’s strategy merely brings that Euro-centrism to the foreground, finding the purest instances of modernity in the cosmopolitan centres of the world and relegating its peripheral manifestations to a secondary, replicative order. This approach finds an analog in Benjamin’s work on Baudelaire, flânerie and the phantasmagoria of the arcades, in its willing embrace of the tropology of the grand narrative to be found in its famous description of Paris as “the capital of the 19th century”.

Historically speaking, then, in instances where modernity was not characterised as an overtly European phenomenon, it was described as a generic, universalising set of socio-cultural currents that presented a neutral facade to its potential proponents, all the while concealing its conditions of origin behind a screen of unreadability. The principles of convergence and uneven development held that in the final analysis every site which fell under the spell of modernity’s siren song would wind up as mirror images of an originary, undisplaceable European configuration, even if the logics that enforced that transformation appeared non-partisan and accommodating of cultural difference. Capitalist prosperity, in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s terms, would continue to reterritorialise with one hand what it deterritorialised with the other.

In recent years a substantial body of literature has emerged which attempts to de-centre the narratives of modernity that have played such an influential part in consolidating these tensions. The imperative for doing this kind of work is made readily apparent by even the most cursory survey of the standard theoretical expositions of modernity. The attempt to combat this universalising discourse has been led by a vanguard composed predominantly of Area Studies specialists and post-colonial theorists, although feminist scholars like Susan Wolff and Rita Felski have also made indispensable contributions.¹⁰⁵ The vitality of this debate, and the currency and salience of the concept around which it circulates has been most powerfully demonstrated in recent times by the publication of Fredric Jameson's *A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present*, in which the author derisively spurns the usefulness of theorising "alternative modernities" in the name of a unifying definition that veers dangerously close to the error of generality that Aijaz Ahmed so famously critiqued in the case of "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism".¹⁰⁶ In the face of the now well-documented move towards thinking the local in the contemporary humanities, Jameson's book sits alongside Paul Gilroy's claim that "we need to embrace a planetary humanism", and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's suspicion of "yoking uniqueness into a hegemonic power field" as attempts to refocus our attention towards the transnational terrain.¹⁰⁷ While I recognise the urgency of this multi-faceted project, I also believe that the standard complaint that globalised discourse fails to account for local specificity remains salient. The task of theorising alternative modernities continues to present itself as pressing and incomplete.

I am not alone in making this assertion, as the panoply of nomenclatures designed to bear the weight of a decentred modernity so demonstrably attests. In addition to Felski and Wolff's attempts to feminise modernity, the search for a theoretical foundation upon which to construct our new readings of the *parole* of site-specific modernities has seen the coining of a whole new vocabulary that includes trans-modernities, discrepant modernities, settler modernities, plural modernities, multiple modernities, and even coeval modernities. The density and range of this work clears the way for site-based analyses of alternative, non-European modernities that do more than merely regather their subject matter in the net of orthodox modernisation theory. One of the main thrusts of this thesis, the charting of modernity's vicissitudes in Tasmania, is proposed in an intellectual climate that is nowhere near as intemperate as one might first have thought, and in fact, displays some of the characteristics necessary for deliberate and careful unpacking of conceptual orders. In the time before the emergence of work by Dilip Gaonkar, Paul Gilroy, Chakrabarty, Tani Barlow, Terry Eagleton, Harry Harootunian and Arjun Appadurai, for example, suggesting that an instantiative analysis of modernity's developmental trajectories might be successfully carried out through an historiographical intervention into the Tasmanian archive may well have been taken as a nice postcolonial kind of idea, but it would also have undoubtedly faced an uphill battle for recognition and acceptance.

But even in light of this challenge to Europe as the end of history, universal subject and common destiny, impediments to working through a radically differentiated modernity still exist. There remain important qualifiers to insert into the space between thinking about endogenous or externally enforced projects of modernisation in non-

European locations as irreducibly specific sets of events and the gesture that reduces them to pale imitations of an originary European phenomenon. “Repetition”, as Deleuze tells us, “is not generality.”¹⁰⁸ The reproduction of something in a new context represents a generalisation of that thing, not its repetition. In the case of the latter, a more radical, disconcerting and paradoxical situation has to unfold. The repetition must, on the one hand, efface its initial instantiation so that no trace of what would actually make the second event secondary and therefore generalised, remains, while on the other, some residue of the original event must be carried over in its consequent iterations in order to guarantee that iterative status.

A still more ominous spectre haunting the task of theorising alternative modernities is the centrality of the other to the colonial construction of the imperial European self. The subaltern zones allegedly being made to speak by this scholarly project are always already present in, and in fact, constitutive of the nascent modern cosmographies of geography, statehood and subjectivity. The subordination of the past effected by the triumph of the moderns over the ancients finds a synchronic proof in the condition of non-European civilisations. After all, can there be any more edifying an encounter with one’s own modernity than the “negative” re-enforcement of first contact with the indigenes of the “new” world?¹⁰⁹ Certainly, the narrativisation of those moments of interface where space comes to stand for time in the imagination of historicity remain steadfastly European, but the non-European, the oriental in Edward Said’s terms, can never be denied a place in the stories that describe the arrival of modernity.

The internally heterogeneous object of my thesis is Tasmania, a semi-autonomous ex-colonial member-state of a national federation. Occupying a point at the centre of the

two concentric circles of the global and the national, Tasmania as region can be written into the narrative tissue of modernity in a number of ways: first, as a rather insignificant if irreducibly specific instantiation of the generalised social logics of modernity; second, as a geo-political entity whose historical origins have their source in the expansionary imperialism of the first European modernity; and third, as a footnote, or perhaps a chapter, in a story of Australian modernity.¹¹⁰

It is not difficult to imagine how Tasmania might fit into the footnotes of a narrative about the first modernity. A study that was to examine the relationship between naval discoveries and the disenchantment of the world could refer us to Abel Tasman's ship's log. Stumbling across a set of mysterious incisions cut into the trunks of the trees at his landing point on Bruny Island, Tasman hypothesised that Aboriginal giants had been at work, using the notches as footholds for ascending the higher branches. Jumping forward a couple of centuries, a study of the rise of utilitarianism of the Benthamite kind might be fleshed out through a discussion of the model prison at Port Arthur which was built to the specifications of the panopticon, that most exemplary site for the production of internally policing subjectivities.¹¹¹ There can be no more doubt that Tasmania has a place in this kind of world-historical story, than there can be about the marginal, subaltern positioning of that place. Tasmania will always be a second class citizen in the body politics of global modernity, unless we can find a way to invert the narratives that constitute its flesh, turning them inside out, or back to front, so that the extremities become the body of the text and the privileged content at its heart — in all its erstwhile Europeanness — is pushed out to the margins. That the establishment of Tasmania as a colonial zone, its “discovery” and its “settlement” in other words, was a paradigmatically

modern process is not in question here. Neither, for that matter, is the factum that every locus of colonial exploration and expansion is as indelibly inscribed with the ink — blood? — of modernity as Tasmania, so that any of them might easily take its place in an analogous investigation. The key here is to establish a logic of causality and representation that makes the part substitutable for the whole, while all the while honouring the primacy of this first narrative of modernity as a European story that finds some of its scenes unfolding on the colonial stage.

If we shift the axis of our inquiry to a position that might be called Tasmanio-centric, however, an entirely different set of ways into reading the island state's path through modernity presents itself. Within the Australian cultural imaginary, Tasmania is persistently figured as non-, anti-, or only partially modern. The mode of cultural production that Jim Davidson has called "Tasmanian Gothic", for instance, represents the island as a repository of the bizarre, the bereft, and the backward.¹¹² Operating within the confines of their own discursive vector, economists emphasise the relatively archaic character of the state's regime of production, while tourism campaigns promote it as a location where a rich historical past suffuses the present and vast tracts of wilderness proffer an antidote to the differentiation, specialisation and disenchantment of (post)modern life.

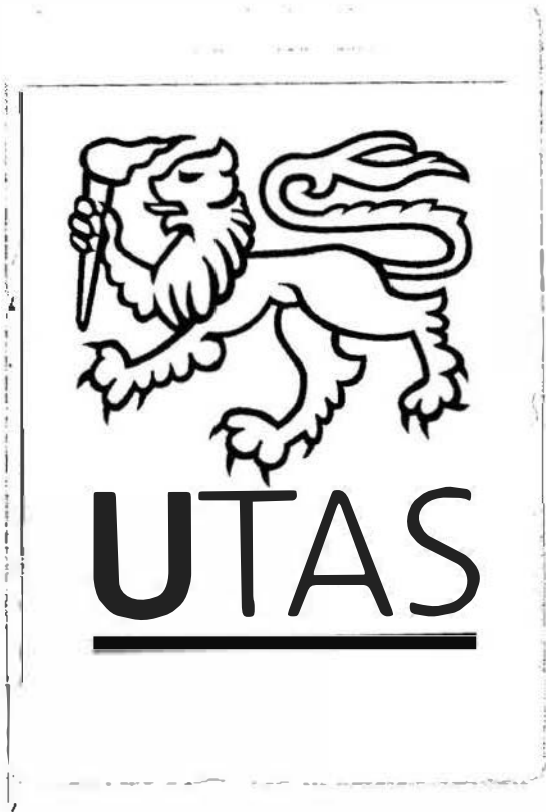
To adopt this position, however, is to read Tasmania's textual and cultural archive from the outside in. As compelling as the narratives of relative decline and underdevelopment might be, we cannot overlook the fact that endogenous processes of modernisation have taken place in Tasmania. As Krishnan Kumar points out, modernity is a contrast concept: it acquires its epistemological saliency by distinguishing the period

or condition it names from the period or condition that went before it.¹¹³ In Tasmania, a number of such transformational thresholds present themselves for analysis: the European invasion and the decimation of the cultures of the Aboriginal Tasmanians, the abolition of transportation, the acquisition of self-rule and the name change from Van Diemen's Land to Tasmania, and the project of hydro-electrification.

In this thesis, then, I will attempt to read a Tasmanian modernity that is located at a provisional point of conjunction between the global, the national and the regional. In doing so, my first priority is not to rethink modernity from the "fringes" or, indeed, to produce a propositional response to the question: "Is Tasmania modern?". Rather, I intend to use modernity's contested conceptual field as the generator of a problematic that will facilitate a reconsideration of some of the historical and cultural narratives most influential in organising the Tasmanian archive.

There is, however, a second motivation at work here. In addition to being thought as a site of modernity's absence, Tasmania has also been configured discursively as a place of absolutely irreducible specificity, as a geographically isolated, island outpost constantly under threat, externally from an encroaching wilderness and internally from a leaking population and a permanently fragile economy. Not only do I reconsider Eurocentric theories of modernity in this thesis, I also wish to reinscribe Tasmania as a place of repetition and similarity, as a place not cut adrift from a changing world but fundamentally built in its image. Implicit in this investigation is the contention that the misapprehended absence of the signs of modernity has significantly informed the narratives of decline and diaspora that Tasmanians have come to rely upon as resources

for identity formation and that, while misapprehended, this perceived neglect has played a large part in the construction of the Tasmanian archive.



Notes

¹ Tom Conley, *The Self Made Map: Cartographic Writing in Early Modern France* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p. 7.

² Quoted in Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972), p. 612.

³ The archaeologist Rhys Jones writes, "The Tasmanians came from the Australian mainland across a landbridge during late glacial times and were isolated by post glacial rising sea. On the island, adaptations had to be made to new and changing environmental situations, but there was also a fundamental continuity of this cultural tradition right through to the time of the arrival of Europeans." See Rhys Jones, *Rocky Cape and the Problem of the Tasmanians* (PhD Thesis: Sydney University, 1971), p. 627. See also Ken Collins, *South-West Tasmania* (Hobart: Heritage Books, 1990); Sandra Bowdler, "The Last Typologist: Rhys Jones and the Problem of the Archaeologists," in Atholl Anderson, Ian Lilley and Sue O'Connor, eds., *Histories of Old Ages: Essays in Honour of Rhys Jones* (Canberra: Pandanus Books, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, 2001), pp. 35-44.

⁴ For accounts of Tasman's voyage see James Backhouse Walker, *Abel Janszoon Tasman: His Life and Voyages* (Hobart: Govt Printer, 1896); Abel Janszoon Tasman, *The Discovery of Tasmania: Journal Extracts From the Expeditions of Abel Janszoon Tasman and Marion Du Fresne 1642 and 1772* (Hobart: St David's Park Publishing, 1992); Andrew Sharp, *The Voyages of Abel Janszoon Tasman* (London: Clarendon Press, 1968). Other pre-invasion European visitors to Tasmania included Du Fresne in 1772, Furneaux in 1773, Cook in 1777, Bligh in 1788 and 1792, Cox in 1789, D'Entrecasteaux in 1793, Bass and Flinders in 1798-9, Baudin in 1802. See N. J. B. Plomley, *The Baudin Expedition and the Tasmanian Aborigines 1802* (Hobart: Blubberhead Press, 1983).

⁵ Although claims to the number of deaths that occurred vary, the "Risdon Massacre" took place at Bowen's settlement on the 3rd of May 1804.

⁶ In *Fate of a Free People* (Ringwood: Penguin Books, 1995), Henry Reynolds argues that the Aboriginal resistance to white invasion was much more than a set of disorganised instances of retributive violence, but I am unwilling to impute a motive of land defence that was the product of military planning in any way resembling modern models.

⁷ For a fascinating account of the cultural politics of dependence and maturity in the case of Tasmania see Anthony Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand*, vol. 2 (London: Chapman and Hall, 1873), pp. 1-76.

⁸ This short-lived economic boom features in my own family history through my wife's maternal grandmother whose grandfather was a wealthy tin miner in the north-east of the state in the middle-to-late-19th century. See John Reynolds, *Launceston: History of an Australian City* (South Melbourne: Macmillan of Australia [for] Adult Education Board, Tasmania, 1969); Geoffrey Blainey, *The Peaks of Lyell*, 5th ed. (Hobart: St. David's Park Publishing, 1993).

⁹ See John Ralston Saul, *The Unconscious Civilisation* (Ringwood: Penguin, 1997), for an insightful discussion of the thesis that the global economy has been in recession since 1973.

¹⁰ In the 2002 state elections, the Greens actually engineered a remarkable recovery, gaining four seats in the House of Assembly, only two less than the official opposition, the Liberal Party.

¹¹ Tasmania, of course, is also touched by the "ten plagues" of the contemporary epoch described by Derrida in *Spectres of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, translated by Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994), pp. 81-3.

¹² This resurgence in economic fortunes, population increase and real estate prices prompted then Premier Jim Bacon to declare in his National Press Club of Australia Address in the week of Monday the 3rd of March, 2003, that a “new Tasmania” was emerging from the veil of despondency that had for so long clouded its future. For a more sceptical view of the current state of the state see Peter Hay’s comments in Wayne Crawford, “Bacon Regime Rapped in Performance Review,” *The Saturday Mercury*, (3 May 2003), pp. 28-9.

¹³ The most high-profile embodiment of this attempt to bridge the gap between community and government and to overcome the traditional parochialism that has set the South, the North and the North-West against one another is the *Tasmania Together* project. *Tasmanian Together* describes itself as:

a pioneering project that allows the people of Tasmania to have a say in their long-term social, economic and environmental future. [...] *Tasmania Together* has set a vision for the state based on the wishes of the people. It also includes 24 goals and 212 benchmarks that were of most concern to the people during more than two-and-a-half years of community consultation. Overwhelmingly, Tasmanians want to live in safe, clean communities, with jobs and prosperity for everyone, and they want the world to be aware of our skills in areas such as the arts, education and technology. Now, with the benefit of a community-driven vision, we can build the kind of future our people want and deserve, aimed at ensuring our children inherit a fairer, cleaner, safer and more prosperous Tasmania. 5 November, 2003.
<<http://www.tasmaniatgether.tas.gov.au>>

¹⁴ Although it must be said that this valuation of nature tends to take very different forms depending on how one prioritises the strenuous and vexed demands of conservation and industry.

¹⁵ See Gerard Castles, “The Choice,” *Island*, 87 (Spring 2001), pp. 108-15.

¹⁶ Substantial foreign investment has been made in recent years by the North Carolina based utilities company Duke Energy, the British utilities company National Grid and the Danish Engineering firm Vestas.

¹⁷ As Donald Horne writes, “Mainlanders think little about Tasmania and foreigners want to know who owns it.” *The Lucky Country: Australia in the Sixties* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), p. 58.

¹⁸ The Tasmanian archive can also be understood as a variation on the kind of social or cultural imaginary that Cornelius Castoriadis describes in *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, translated by Kathleen Blamey (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989). The archive differs from an imaginary, however, in terms of its specific function within the processes of place-formation and in its problematically material character. The archive is a material entity that exists extra-subjectively but is activated or accessed by human subjects in the course of everyday practices of being-in-the-world. The imaginary, on the other hand, has no ontology external to the subjectivities of its constituents. Obviously Castoriadis’s ur-text has been mediated and moderated through the secondary application and discussion carried out by other scholars and in that regard, I lean on Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar. In his “Toward New Imaginaries,” *Public Culture*, 14.1 (2002), Gaonkar mobilises a useful and succinct definition of the social imaginary that is worth repeating here. To paraphrase very minimally, he defines it as “an enabling but not fully explicable symbolic matrix within which a people imagine and act as world-making collective agents”, p. 1. Any post-post-structuralist use of this concept also bears the mark of Lacan’s conception of the imaginary with all its implications of misrecognition and specularity, I obviously cannot restrict the reader from following the cues that take my text to Lacan’s so I prefer to play a lay-down *misère* and let the signifier resonate in the field of the other in whatever key it may take. Anthony Wilden’s application of the Lacanian imaginary to the question of Canadian national and self-identity has also informed the character of my deployment of this rich term. See Anthony Wilden, “The Canadian Question, Why?,” *Cine-Tracts*, 2.2 (Spring 1979), pp. 1-27.

¹⁹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols, and, The Anti-Christ*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1990), p. 45.

²⁰ Marcus Clarke describes the bi-polar character of the Tasmanian environment in *For the Term of His Natural Life* (Melbourne: Hallcraft, 1949):

About a hundred and seventy miles to the south of this millrace [Port Philip Bay on the Australian south coast] lies Van Diemen's Land, fertile fair and rich, rained upon by the genial showers which pour down upon the sheltered valleys their fertilizing streams. The cool south breeze ripples gently the blue waters of the Derwent and fans the curtains of the open windows of the city which nestles in the broad shadow of Mount Wellington. But on the western coast, from the steeple rocks of Cape Grim to the scrub encircled barrenness of Sandy Cape and the frowning entrance to Macquarie Harbour, the nature of the country entirely changes. The air is chill and moist, the soil prolific only in prickly undergrowth and noxious weeds, while foetid exhalations from swamp and fen cling close to the humid spongy ground. p. 84-5.

See also Paul Collins, *Hell's Gates: The Terrible Journeys of Alexander Pearce, Van Diemen's Land Cannibal* (South Yarra: Hardie Grant Books, 2002) and Dan Sprod, *Alexander Pearce of Macquarie Harbour: Convict, Bushranger, Cannibal* (Hobart: Cat and Fiddle Press, 1977) for readings of the South West wilderness as a collaborator in human brutality.

²¹ Bruce Moore, ed., *The Australian Oxford Dictionary* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 63.

²² Or as Carolyn Steedman writes in *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002), "Scientific history of the mid 19th century inaugurated and consecrated the search for original documents as the means of reconstructing the truth of the past," p. 9. See also Bonnie Smith, *The Gender of History: Men, Women and Historical Practice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998).

²³ See particularly John Toews, "Intellectual History after the Linguistic Turn: The Autonomy of Meaning and the Irreducibility of Experience," *The American Historical Review*, 92 (1987), pp. 879-907; Hayden White, "The Historical Text as Literary Artifact," in Brian Fay, Philip Pomper and Richard T. Vann, eds., *History and Theory: Contemporary Readings* (Malden: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 15-33. The debate around genocide in Tasmania provides a perfect case study of the persistence of the archive drive in contemporary historiography. The reservations expressed by Henry Reynolds as to whether the actions of the Arthur Government were genocidal, turn exclusively around the absence of textual evidence that declares an intent to destroy the indigenous population. If such a document could be found, of course, the situation would be reversed.

²⁴ Frances Dolan, "Ashes and the Archive: The London Fires of 1666, Partisanship and Proof," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 31.2 (2001), p. 380.

²⁵ Wim Van Mierlo, "Reading Joyce In and Out of the Archive," *Joyce Studies Annual*, 13 (Summer 2002), p. 33.

²⁶ This preservation often takes the form of a defensive repudiation of "abstracted" approaches to the archive that manifests in more or less overt ways. In the text that provides the vehicle for Derrida's investigation into "archivality", Yosef Yerushalmi's *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), the author's initial move is a visit to the Freud Archives that turns up the unexpected "gift" of a first draft of *Moses and Monotheism*. For a more conscious attempt to preserve the status of the archive in the face of the deconstructive ambitions of the "rhetorical" school, see Linda Ferreira-Buckley, "Archivists with an Attitude: Rescuing the Archives from Foucault," *College English*, 61.5 (May 1999), pp. 577-83.

²⁷ Randolph Starn, "Truths in the Archives," *Common Knowledge*, 8.2 (2002), p. 391.

²⁸ Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p. 90.

²⁹ The history of the archive's theorisation needs to be plotted against the history of the linguistic turn in historiography whose modern *arché* at least, can be marked off for heuristic purposes at the publication of Hayden White's *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth Century Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). White's text unhinged the false difference present in the signifiatory complex that aimed to give the term "history" a jurisdictional control not only over the designation of events that took place in a given period, but also over the study of those events. His work moved in two directions at once. On the one hand, he sought to defamiliarise the referential "truth" status of historical narratives so that the rhetorical tools or means of emplotment subtending that narrativity could be examined in their constructive as well as their descriptive capacities. On the other hand, he aimed to bring into relief the shibboleth of a history that would innocently narrate itself to the sensitive scholar with the well-tuned ear that had been haunting reconstructive historiography since its consolidation and canonisation in the mid-19th century. Roland Barthes, "The Discourse of History," and Hans Kellner's "Language and Historical Representation," are other seminal texts in this tradition. See Keith Jenkins, ed., *The Postmodern History Reader* (London: Routledge, 1997).

I wish to contend, further, that the theorisation of the archive post-Foucault could not have taken the course it did without the groundbreaking work of White *et al.* If, as Carolyn Steedman suggests, the archival turn began long before the publication of Derrida's *Archive Fever*, could we not attribute some of the energy driving its momentum to the destabilisation of "orthodox" referential or scientific historiography effected by the proponents of the linguistic turn. Ranke's hope that history could recover the "past as it actually was" predicated itself on a commonsense understanding of the archive as inviolable source of unimpeachable fact. The undermining of this ambition enacted through the linguistic turn also threw into jeopardy the status of the archive. At the empirical level, the function of the linguistic turn as a condition of possibility for a renegotiation of the concept of the archive, is attested to by the way theoretical material pre-dating the publication of White's text seldom challenges the centrality of the archive to orthodox historiography. See "Some aspects of Archival Development since the French Revolution," in Maygene Daniels and Timothy Walch, eds., *A Modern Archives Reader* (Washington DC: National Archives and Record Service, 1984), pp. 3-21; Michael Duchein, "The History of European Archives and the Development of the Archival Profession in Europe," *American Archivist*, 55 (Winter 1992), pp. 14-25; Terry Cook, "What is Past is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas Since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift," *Archivaria*, 42.3 (Spring 1997), pp. 17-63.

On the flip side, since the mid-1980s in particular, an efflorescence of theoretical work that critically examines the place of the archive as a productive site for the activation of collective memory, as a zone of disciplinary inscription, as a space of distortion and interpolation and so on, has occurred. See the special editions of *History of the Human Sciences*, 12.2 (1999) and 11.4 (1998); Natalie Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth Century France* (Oxford: Polity, 1987); Roberto Gonzalez Enchevarria, *Myth and Archive: A Theory of Latin American Narrative: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London: Verso, 1990); Edward Bishop, "From Frass to Foucault: Mediations of the Archive," in Jessica Berman and Jane Goldman, eds., *Virginia Woolf Out of Bounds: Selected Papers from the Tenth Annual Conference on Virginia Woolf* (New York: Pace University Press, 2001); Susan Well, "Claiming the Archive for Rhetoric and Composition," in Gary Olson, ed., *Rhetoric and Composition as Intellectual Work* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2002); Mary-Anne Doane, *The Emergence of Cinematic Time: Modernity, Contingency, the Archive* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002); Peter Trifonas, "Deconstruction and the Deaths of Philosophy: Of Metaphysics and Mourning for the Archive," *Surfaces*, 9 (2001), pp. 16-25; Rob White, "Archive Power," *Oxford Literary Review*, 21 (1999), pp. 161-80; Paul J. Voss and Marta Werner, "The Poetics of The Archive," *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 32.1 (Spring 1999), pp. i-viii; Louise Kaplan, "Archive Fever: Material Reality and Psychic Reality in Biography," *Biography and Source Studies*, 6 (2001), pp. 105-14; Hal Foster, "The Archive Without Museums," *October*, 77 (Summer 1996), pp. 97-119; Fred G. See, "Prisoners of the Archive: 'Shopping of Images'," *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American Literature, Culture and Theory*, 50.1 (1994), pp. 25-50; Alan G. Thomas, "Preserving the Archive," *Twentieth Century Literature: A Scholarly and Critical Journal*, 33.3 (1987), pp. 345-47; Jerre Collins, Ray J. Gree, Mary Lydon, Mark Sachner and Eleanor Skoller, "Questioning the Unconscious: The Dora Archive," *Diacritics: A Review of Contemporary*

Criticism, 13.1 (1983), pp. 37-42; Leon DeKock, "Jean and John Comaroff's *Of Revelation and Revolution and Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*: For and Against the Comaroffs: Postmodernist Puffery and Competing Conceptions of the Archive," *South African Historical Journal*, 31 (1994), pp. 280-89; Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London: Verso, 1990); "Archive and Utopia," *Representations*, 37 (1992), pp. 104-35; Irving Velody, "The Archive and the Human Sciences: Notes Towards a Theory of the Archive," *History of the Human Sciences*, 11.4 (1998), pp. 1-16; Michael Lynch, "Archives in Formation: Privileged Spaces, Popular Archives and Paper Trails," *History of the Human Sciences*, 12 (1992), pp. 65-87; Antoinette Burton, "Thinking Beyond the Boundaries: Empire, Feminism and the Domains of History," *Social History*, 26.1 (2001), pp. 60-71; Roy Boyne, "Angels in the Archive: Lines into the Future," *Cultural Values*, 2.2/3 (June 1998), pp. 206-22; Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance," Paper Presented to the Archives and Social Memory Seminar, Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Michigan, (Sep 2000); Verne Harris and Carolyn Hamilton, eds., *Refiguring the Archive* (David Philip: Cape Town, 2002). For an excellent genealogy of the linguistic turn in historiography, see Brian Fay, "The Linguistic Turn and Beyond in Contemporary Theory of History," in Brian Fay, Philip Pomper, Richard T. Vann, eds., *History and Theory: Contemporary Readings* (Malden: Blackwell, 1998).

In the Australian context, the bitter fight over archival procedure conducted in the wake of the publication of Windschuttle's *Fabrication of Aboriginal History* needs to be read in the light of that author's vitriolic assault on the linguistic turn in his earlier book, *The Killing of History: How a Discipline is Being Murdered by Literary Critics and Social Theorists* (Paddington: Macleay, 1994). The well-nigh fetishised status of the "truth" in Windschuttle's work stands as testimony to a deep anxiety about the role of history in an academic environment where the theory of language games and a heightened sensitivity to the mechanics (or should that be art) of rhetoric undermine claims to objectivity and impartiality.

³⁰ Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 46.

³¹ Other specifically Tasmanian discursive sites include *40 Degrees South*, *Tasmanian Life*, *The Mercury*, *The Examiner*, *The Advocate*, *The Tasmanian Times* <<http://www.tasmaniantimes.com>>.

³² Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 28.

³³ Numerous scholars who take up the task of summarising the Foucauldian theory of discourse fail entirely to deal with the concept of the archive. In her monograph, *The Politics of Truth: From Marx to Foucault* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), Michele Barrett neglects the category completely. Rudi Visker does likewise in his work, *Michel Foucault: Genealogy as Critique* (London; New York: Verso, 1995). Jon Simons elides it with the historical *a priori* in *Foucault and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1995). Gilles Deleuze only gives passing mention to it in his opening essay from *Foucault* (London: Athlone, 1988), which is odd given that the piece is entitled "The New Archivist". This series of omissions is continued in Dianne Macdonell's work *Theories of Discourse: An Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), and in Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow's *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), where the authors refuse to engage with the concept on its own terms, reducing it instead to its more orthodox referential function of describing the concrete depository of a culture's texts. An exception to this rule is Sara Mills, *Discourse* (London: Routledge, 1997).

³⁴ Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 129.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 130.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 130.

³⁷ Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p. 84.

³⁸ Thomas Osborne, "The Ordinarity of the Archive," *History of the Human Sciences*, 12.2 (1999), p. 53.

³⁹ Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p. 2.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 2-3.

⁴¹ In "Archive Trauma," *Diacritics*, 28.4 (1998), pp. 68-81, Herman Rappaport identifies the discrepancy between these two archives as proceeding from their respective figurations of anamnesis:

Still as Derrida reminds us, perhaps with *Archive Fever's* phantom limb in mind, archives occur at the moment when there is a structural breakdown in memory. This contrasts rather sharply with Michel Foucault's view in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* that archives are, in essence, the textual systematisation of their own enunciability and that, as such, they are predicated upon mnemonic reliability. Derrida's archive in contrast, is mnemonically unreliable in so far as it is feverish, hallucinatory, fragmentary, and as in the case of *The Post Card*, somewhat sick. In short, where there is regularity and efficiency in Foucault's archive, there is trauma in Derrida's. p. 69.

⁴² Carolyn Steedman reads Derrida's text against the grain in *Dust*, arguing that the materiality of his archive is also highly ambiguous: "Many kinds of repository were strapped together [...] in the portmanteau term 'the archive'", she writes, "[...] as Derrida considered their limits and limitations, their denials and secrets. Indeed, the arkhé appeared to lose much of its connection to the idea of a place where official documents are stored for administrative reference, and became a metaphor capacious enough to encompass the whole of modern information technology, its storage, retrieval and communication.", p. 4.

⁴³ Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p. 3.

⁴⁴ Verne Harris, "The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory and Archives in South Africa," *Archival Science*, 2 (2002), p. 65.

⁴⁵ Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance," *Archival Science*, 2 (2002), p. 93.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Perhaps the most well consolidated site for the rehearsal of the partial modernity thesis is to be found in historical texts that emphasis the intercession of the past in the present. For writers like Robert Hughes, Peter Conrad, Christopher Koch and Henry Reynolds, the pre-modern remains indelibly inscribed in the corporeal forms of the Tasmanian landscape. As Reynolds writes in the introduction to *Fate of a Free People*: "For once I was lost for words. It didn't happen often in those days. I was a garrulous, opinionated student. At the time, I was talking with one of my history lecturers about Tasmania and the appeal of its landscape. He was less enthusiastic about it than I was. 'No', he said, 'it's a bloody sad place. You can still hear the Aborigines crying in the wind.'", p. 1. See also Peter Conrad, *Down Home: Revisiting Tasmania* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1988): "New Countries aren't supposed to have a history. But if anything Tasmania possesses too much history: a succession of pasts, queuing up like unappeased revenants to accuse the ignorant present — the graziers with their pious, neglected graveyards, the convicts rattling their chains, the Aborigines pressing their land claims.", p. 107. In *The Fatal Shore: A History of the Transportation of Convicts to Australia* (London: Collins Harvill, 1986), Robert Hughes adds: "Between convict and black, much blood is mingled in the soil of this green, lovely, lugubrious island — so much, in fact, that parts of it seem to be emblematic spots, places where ordinary nature is permanently corrupted by the leaching of history, a salt that nothing can extract from the earth.", p. 86.

⁴⁸ Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p. 11.

⁴⁹ Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," translated by Ben Fowkes in David Fernbach, ed., *Surveys from Exile: Political Writings*, vol. 2 (London: Penguin Books, 1992), p. 15.

⁵⁰ See Nicholas Baudin, *The Journal of Post-Captain Baudin Commander-in-Chief of the Corvettes Geographe and Naturaliste Assigned by Order of the Government to a Voyage of Discovery*, translated by Christine Connell (Adelaide: Libraries Board of South Australia, 1974).

⁵¹ See Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation* (New York: Norton, 1977).

⁵² Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), p. 16.

⁵³ See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998). Aristotle, *Physics*, translated by Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

⁵⁴ Quoted in Georg Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel: A Historico-Philosophical Essay on the Forms of Great Epic Literature*, translated by Anna Bostock (London: Merlin Press, 1971), p. 29.

⁵⁵ See Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

⁵⁶ See Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, translated by Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969). The abstraction of place in philosophical discourse is exemplified in sentences like the following: "In grasping the structure of place that is at issue here, what is grasped is an open and interconnected region within which other persons, things, spaces and abstract locations, and even one's self, can appear, be recognised, identified and interacted with." Jeff Malpas, *Place and Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 36.

⁵⁷ Ed Casey, "Smooth Spaces and Rough Edged Places," *Review of Metaphysics*, 51 (1997), p. 273.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 288.

⁵⁹ Quoted in Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place* (Cambridge: MIT, 1997), p. 16.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 15.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 17-18.

⁶² Roland Barthes, *SZ*, translated by Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974).

⁶³ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 48.

⁶⁴ See Raymond Williams, "Culture is Ordinary," *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism* (London: Verso, 1989), pp. 3-4.

⁶⁵ Richard Flanagan, "Introduction," in Peter Dombrovskis, Richard Flanagan and Jamie Kirkpatrick, *On the Mountain* (Hobart: Westwind Press, 1996), pp. 8-31.

⁶⁶ These materials can be accessed at <<http://artsandscience.concordia.ca/hist359/Syllabus.html>>

⁶⁷ Two of the more unexpected contexts in which the Tasmanian genocide receive a mention are Kurt Vonnegut's short stories "The Trouble with Reunions," *Forbes*, (October 4 1999), pp. 136-8, and "God Bless You, Dr Kevorkian," *Free Inquiry*, 20.3 (Summer 2000), pp. 50-1.

⁶⁸ Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, "On Alternative Modernities," in Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, ed., *Alternative Modernities* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. 1-24.

⁶⁹ Articulations that embody a will-to-modernity suffuse the Tasmanian archive. In regard to the construction of the road linking Hobart and Launceston, the governor of New South Wales, Lachlan Macquarie stated: "The entire line from Hobart Town to Launceston, a distance of 120 miles, which is now in rapid progress from both extremities, will be completed as soon as the numerous gangs placed on it, *can possibly effect so great and important an undertaking* [emphasis added]." Quoted in G. Hawley Stancombe, *Highway in Van Diemen's Land* (Glendessary: Stancombe and the National Trust of Tasmania, 1969), p. 65. The prospect of Federation also prompted articulations replete with modernising hope. As one Tasmanian stated in support of the yes case at the 1898 plebiscite: "Gentlemen, if you vote for the Bill you will found a great and glorious nation under the bright Southern Cross, and meat will be cheaper, and you will live to see the Australian race dominate the southern seas and you will have a market for both potatoes and apples and your sons shall reap the great heritage of nationhood." Quoted in Michael Roe, *The State of Tasmania: Identity at Federation Time* (Hobart: Tasmanian Historical Research Association, 2001), p. 22.

⁷⁰ *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1944), p. 79.

⁷¹ An exception to this is N.J.B. Plomley's edited version of George Augustus Robinson's diaries which were first released to the public in 1966. See N.J.B. Plomley, ed., *Friendly Mission: The Tasmanian Journals and Papers of George Augustus Robinson 1829-1834* (Hobart: Tasmanian Historical Research Association, 1966). Robinson's diary alerted 20th-century readers to the events which have since become known as the Cape Grim Massacre and in combination with Van Diemen's Land Company papers that began to enter the Archives from the 1950s onwards, remains the most significant "new" source of raw data to emerge in recent times. Ian Macfarlane's examination of the Cape Grim Massacre in his thesis *Aboriginal Society in North West Tasmania: Dispossession and Genocide* (PhD thesis: University of Tasmania, 2002) is by far the most significant recent contribution to the genocide project. However, it must be said that Keith Windschuttle also makes use of data uncovered in the second half of the 20th century to generate the controversial revisionist position he delineates in his more properly *historiographical* text *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*.

⁷² Professor Ann Curthoys of the Australian National University is currently attempting to publish a document written by Lemkin that deals directly with genocide in the Tasmanian case. This document is fifty pages long and is located in the Lemkin papers at the New York Public Library, Reel 3, Box 2. Curthoys hopes to publish this document in the journal *Patterns of Prejudice*.

⁷³ Bronwyn Desailly, *The Mechanics of Genocide: Colonial Policies and Attitudes Towards the Tasmanian Aborigines, 1824-1836* (MA Thesis, University of Tasmania, 1977), p. 170, emphasis added.

⁷⁴ Alison Palmer, *Colonial Genocide* (Adelaide: Crawford House, 2000), p. 34.

⁷⁵ Bernard Smith, *The Spectre of Truganini: 1980 Boyer Lectures* (Sydney: ABC Books, 1980), p. 10.

⁷⁶ Conrad, *Down Home*, p. 110.

⁷⁷ Florence Mazian, *Why Genocide?: The Armenian and Jewish Experiences in Perspective* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1990), pp. xi-xii.

⁷⁸ Sven Lindqvist, *Exterminate All the Brutes*, translated by Joan Tate (New York: New Press, 1996), p. 117.

⁷⁹ Quoted in Tom O'Regan, "Documentary in Controversy: *The Last Tasmanian*," in Albert Moran and Tom O'Regan, eds., *An Australian Film Reader* (Sydney: Currency, 1985), p. 131. Other texts that take the genocide of the Tasmanians as a given include Carl Weisland, "Culture Clash: What Can We Learn from the Preventable Tragedy of the Tasmanian Genocide?," *Creation*, 17.3 (June-August 1995), pp. 42-4; Jared

Diamond, "In Black and White," *Natural History* (October 1988), pp. 8-14; Samir Amin, "Imperialism and Globalisation," *Monthly Review*, 53.2 (June 2001), pp. 6-24; Payal Sampat, "Last Words," *World Watch*, 14.3 (May/June 2001), pp. 34-8; Timothy Dunne, "Colonial Encounters in International Relations: Reading Wright, Writing Australia," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, 51.3 (November 1997), pp. 309-23; Matt Cartmill, "The Third Man," *Discover*, 18.9 (September 1997), pp. 56-9; Jeff J. Cornassel and Tomas Hopkins Primeau, "Indigenous 'Sovereignty' and International Law: Revised Strategies for Pursuing 'Self-Determination'," *Human Rights Quarterly*, 17.2 (1995), pp. 343-65; Stuart Peterfreund, "Colonization by Means of Analogy: Metaphor, and Allusion in Darwinian Discourse," *Configurations*, 2.2 (1994), pp. 237-55; Peter Monteath, "Exploring Terra Australis," *History Today*, 53.1 (January 2003), pp. 48-55; Joseph Nevins, "On Justifying Intervention," *The Nation*, 274.19 (May 20 2002), pp. 32-7; Niall Ferguson, *Empire* (New York: Basic, 2002); Tony Barta, "Relations of Genocide: Land and Lives in the Colonization of Australia," in Isidor Wallimann and Michael N. Dobkowski, eds., *Genocide and the Modern Age* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2001), pp. 237-52; "After the Holocaust: Consciousness of Genocide in Australia," *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 31 (1985), pp. 154-62; Colin Tatz, *Genocide in Australia* (Canberra: The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Studies, 1999); Alison Palmer, "Colonial and Modern Genocide: Explanations and Categories," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 21.1 (January 1998), pp. 89-115; Tom Nairn, "Democracy and Genocide," *Arena*, 16 (2000/2001), pp. 75-84; Ian Hemon, *The Savage Empire: Forgotten Wars of the 19th Century* (Gloucester: Sutton, 2000); Mark Cocker, *Rivers of Blood, Rivers of Gold: Europe's Conflict with Native People* (London: Jonathon Cape, 1998); Bain Attwood and S.G. Foster, eds., *Frontier Conflict: The Australian Experience* (Canberra: National Museum of Australia, 2003); Bruce Elder, *Blood on the Wattle: Massacres and Maltreatment of Australian Aborigines since 1788* (French's Forest: Child and Associates, 1988); John Docker and Ann Curthoys, eds., *Aboriginal History*, 25 (2001); Robert Manne, ed., *Whitewash: On Keith Windschuttle's Fabrication of Aboriginal History* (Melbourne: Black Inc Agenda, 2003); Lyndall Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, 2nd ed. (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1996); "The Struggle for Trukanini 1830-1997," *Tasmanian Historical Research Association Papers and Proceedings*, 44.3 (Sep. 1997), pp. 153-73.

With the possible exception of Lyndall Ryan, all these writers base their assessment that Tasmania is a genocidal place on the sparsest of secondary sources. More worrying still, however, is the tendency of these kinds of articulations of genocide to resuscitate the now moribund "extinction thesis". Mazian, Churchill, Lindqvist and others all describe the Tasmanian genocide as total, thus failing to acknowledge the continued presence of an Aboriginal community in Tasmania.

⁸⁰ See A. Dirk Moses, "An Antipodean Genocide? The Origins of the Genocidal Moment in the Colonization of Australia," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 2:1 (Mar. 2000), pp. 89-107.

⁸¹ See Tony Barta, "After the Holocaust: Consciousness of Genocide in Australia," *The Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 31.1 (1985), pp. 154-161.

⁸² Ward Churchill, "Genocide: Toward a Functional Definition," *Alternatives*, XI (1986), p. 415.

⁸³ Alternative nomenclatures for reading the decimation of the Tasmanian Aborigines as genocide also include "Developmental Genocide" see Helen Fein, "Scenarios of Genocide: Models of Genocide and Critical Responses," in Israel Charny, ed., *Toward the Understanding and Prevention of Genocide: Proceedings of the International Conference on the Holocaust and Genocide* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), pp. 8-9; "Ethnocide" and "Genocide directed at the acquisition of wealth", see Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, eds., *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Cases Studies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 36-7; "Utilitarian Genocide", see Roger W. Smith, "Human Destructiveness and Politics: The Twentieth Century as an Age of Genocide," in Isidor Walliman and Michael Dobkowski, eds., *Genocide and the Modern Age: Etiology and Case Studies of Mass Death* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), pp. 24; "Socio-Economic Genocide" and "Retributive Genocide" see Robert K. Hitchcock and Tara M. Twedt, "Physical and Cultural Genocide of Various Indigenous Peoples," in Samuel Totten, William S. Parsons and Israel W. Charny, eds., *Century of Genocide: Eyewitness Accounts and Critical Views* (New York: Garland, 1989), p. 386; "Latent Genocide" see Vahakn N. Dadrian, "A Typology of Genocide," *International Review of Sociology*, 5.2 (1975), pp. 201-12.

⁸⁴ Raymond Evans and Bill Thorpe, "The Massacre of Aboriginal History," *Overland*, 163 (Winter 2001), p. 34.

⁸⁵ Tatz, *Genocide in Australia*, p. 3.

⁸⁶ Ann Curthoys, "Constructing National Histories," in Attwood and Foster, *Frontier Conflict*, p. 198.

⁸⁷ Ned Curthoys, "The Politics of Holocaust Representation: The Worldly Typologies of Hannah Arendt," *Arena Journal*, 16 (2001), p. 74.

⁸⁸ Tony Barta, "Land and Lives in the Colonization of Australia" in Isidor Wallimann and Michael N. Dobkowski, eds., *Genocide and the Modern Age: Etiology and Case Studies of Mass Death* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1987), p. 238.

⁸⁹ Tony Barta, "Discourses of Genocide in Germany and Australia: A Linked History," *Aboriginal History*, 25 (2001), p. 38.

⁹⁰ Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1973). p. 79.

⁹¹ See Benjamin Madley, "Patterns of Frontier Genocide 1803-1910: The Aboriginal Tasmanians, the Yuki of California and the Herero of Namibia," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 6.2 (2004), pp. 167-92; Ashley Riley Sousa, "They Will Be Hunted Down like Wild Beasts and Destroyed," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 6.2 (2004), pp. 193-209; William D. Rubinstein, *Genocide: A History* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2004).

⁹² Hal Porter, *The Tilted Cross* (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), pp. 91-2.

⁹³ Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 5, emphasis added.

⁹⁴ Richard Flanagan, "Another Country: A Short Soul History of Tasmanian Writing," *Island*, 86 (Winter 2001), p. 90.

⁹⁵ Of course, I am only taking Latour at rhetorical face value here. The science studies position he develops is outside the range of this thesis. See Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, translated by Catherine Porter (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993).

⁹⁶ An exception to this is Paul Johnson's *The Birth of the Modern: World Society, 1815-1830* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991), pp. 264-66. Johnson's work includes a passage on the Tasmanian genocide. This, however, is an instance of Tasmania being given a place in European modernity rather than an examination of a specifically Tasmanian modality of the modern. The preface to Stephen Crook, Malcolm Waters and Jan Pakulski, *Postmodernization: Change in Advanced Society* (London: Sage, 1992), pp. vii-viii, also provides a classic instance of the writing of Tasmania as a backward location. This time, however, it is the absence of *postmodern* sights and sounds that makes Tasmania anachronistic.

On the face of it, Hobart is a strange place in which to write a book about postmodernization. It is the capital of Tasmania, the smallest, most southerly and only island state of Australia. It is situated on the estuary of the River Derwent, and we look down to the estuary from our offices to the expanse of the Southern Ocean which extends, uninterrupted by land, to Antarctica. Tasmania's extreme geographical marginality often seems to be reflected in extreme social conservatism. What are coyly referred to as 'homosexual acts' remain illegal in the state, and condom vending machines only recently ceased to be so. By contrast, guns (unlike fire-works) are readily available to anyone over the age of sixteen with the money to pay for them. p. vii.

⁹⁷ This situation has changed over the period in which I researched and wrote this thesis, and indeed was on the way toward changing from the mid-1990s onward, so that numerous ways of decentring modernity have now been proposed across a wide range of disciplinary terrains. This development has seen a burgeoning of the terminologies we can mobilise for thinking non-European modernities which now include "other modernities", "multiple modernities", "coeval modernities", "trans-modernity", "discrepant modernities", "colonial modernities" and "settler modernities". In spite of this recent surge of interest in problematising metropolitan models of modernity, we need to remember that such a development may well be nothing other than a symptom of the condition it seeks to redress. Fredric Jameson's *A Singular Modernity: Essay on the Ontology of the Present* (New York: Verso, 2002) and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), are two influential monographs that make that clear. Recent attempts to challenge this dominant paradigm in Modernity Studies include: Lisa Rofel, "Discrepant Modernities and their Discontents," *Positions: East Asia Critique*, 9.3 (2001), pp. 637-49; *Other Modernities: Gendered Yearnings in China after Socialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Enrique Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of the "Other" and The Myth of Modernity*, translated by Michael D. Barber (New York: Continuum, 1995); "World System and 'Trans'-Modernity," *Nepantla: Views from South*, 3.2 (2002), pp. 221-44; James Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Dipankar Gupta, *Mistaken Modernity: India between Worlds* (New Delhi: HarperCollins, 2000); Timothy Mitchell, ed., *Questions of Modernity* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2000); Harry Harootunian, *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture and Community in Inter-War Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Charles Piot, *Remotely Global: Village Modernity in West Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Tani E. Barlow, ed., *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

⁹⁸ Peter Conrad, *Modern Times, Modern Places: Life and Art in the 20th Century* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), p. 9.

⁹⁹ See Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*, translated by Harry Zohn (London: NLB, 1973); David Harvey, *The Capital of Modernity: Parks and the Second Empire* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003).

¹⁰⁰ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 8.

¹⁰¹ Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 15.

¹⁰² Meaghan Morris, "Metamorphoses at Sydney Tower," *New Formations*, 11 (Summer 1990), p. 10.

¹⁰³ Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), p. 15.

¹⁰⁴ Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, translated by Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987), p. 2.

¹⁰⁵ See Susan Wolff, "The Invisible Flaneuse," in Andrew Benjamin, ed., *The Problems of Modernity: Adorno and Benjamin* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 141-56. Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

¹⁰⁶ See Aijaz Ahmed, "Jameson's Rhetoric of Otherness and 'National Allegory'," in Bill Ashcroft, Garth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, eds., *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 77-85. See also Fredric Jameson, "Third World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism," *Social Text*, 15 (1986), pp. 65-88.

¹⁰⁷ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, p. 2. See the discussion of Gilroy's claim in Melissa Gregg, "Remnants of Humanism," *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 16.3 (2002), pp. 273-84.

¹⁰⁸ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, translated by Paul Patton (London: Athlone Press, 1994), p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ As Dussel writes in *The Invention of the Americas*, p. 25: "The experience not only of discovery, but especially of the conquest, is essential to the constitution of the modern ego, not only as subjectivity, but as subjectivity that takes itself to be the center or end of history."

¹¹⁰ For recent work on formations of modernity in Australia see Paula Hamilton and Lesley Johnson, eds., "Localising Modernities," *The UTS Review* 6.1 (May 2000). Peter Beilharz, "Australian Civilization and its Discontents," *Thesis Eleven*, 64 (February 2001), pp. 65-76.

¹¹¹ Tasmania also serves as a site of experimentation for the empirical turn in knowledge production. Inspired by Joseph Marie Degerando's *The Observation of Savage Peoples*, François Peron, a member of Nicholas Baudin's party on his 1802 voyage, conducted experiments on the arm strength of the Aborigines with the specific intent of refuting Rousseau's "noble savage" thesis. See Bruno Latour, "The Force and the Reason of Experiment," October 3, 2003, <<http://www.ensmp.fr/PagePerso/CSI/Bruno—Latour/Articles/41—Homer.html>>; Joseph-Marie Degerando, *The Observation of Savage Peoples*, translated by F.C.T. Moore (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969). The process of cartographic disenchantment is another emphatically modern thematic that intersects with the history of Tasmania. See Alan Frost and Glyndwr Williams, eds., *Terra Australis to Australia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press in association with the Australian Academy of the Humanities, 1988).

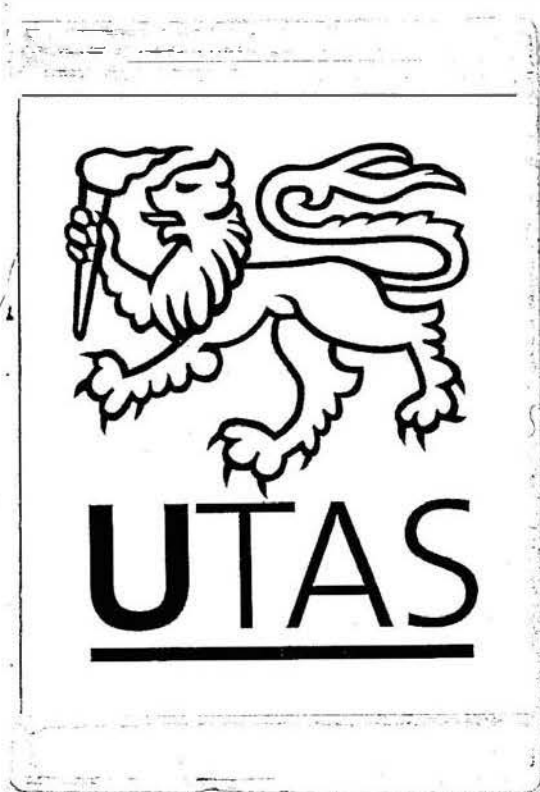
¹¹² Texts that can be included in the category of "Tasmanian Gothic" include C. J. Koch, *The Boys in the Island* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1990); *The Doubleman* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1985); Caroline Leakey, *The Broad Arrow: Being Passages from the History of Maida Gwynnham, a 'Lifer'* (London: R. Bentley, 1887); Chloe Hooper, *A Child's Book of True Crime* (Milton's Point: Knopf, 2002); Mudrooroo Narogin, *Doctor Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World* (Melbourne: Hyland House, 1983); Conrad, *Down Home*; Brian Castro, *Drift* (Port Melbourne: Minerva, 1995); Matthew Kneale, *English Passengers* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2000); Clarke, *For the Term of his Natural Life* Clarke; Louis Nowra, *The Golden Age* (Sydney: Currency Press, 1989); James McQueen, *Hook's Mountain: A Novel* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1982); Julia Leigh, *The Hunter* (Ringwood: Penguin, 1999); Tom Haydon, *The Last Tasmanian: A Story of Genocide* (North Sydney: Artis Film Productions, 1978); Robert Drewe, *The Savage Crows* (Sydney: Collins, 1976); Lord Snowdon, *Snowdon Tasmania Essay: A Collection of Photographs* (Hobart: Ronald Banks, 1981); Tom Gilling, *The Sooterkin* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 1999); Porter, *The Tilted Cross*; Andrew Motion, *Wainwright the Poisoner* (London: Faber, 2000); Michael Jacobson, *Windmill Hill* (Sydney: Hodder, 2002). For critical work on the topic see Davidson, "Tasmanian Gothic,"; Amanda Lohrey, "The Greens: A New Narrative," in Richard Flanagan and Cassandra Pybus, eds., *The Rest of the World is Watching: Tasmania and the Greens* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan, 1990); Tim Thorne, "The Gothic Keeps Breaking Through: Amanda Lohrey's Tasmania," *Bulletin for the Centre of Tasmanian Historical Studies*, 3.1 (1990-91), pp. 119-28; Richard Flanagan, "Another Country: A Short Soul History of Tasmanian Writing," *Island*, 86 (Winter 2001), pp. 90-8.

¹¹³ Krishnan Kumar, *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society: New Theories of the Contemporary World* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), p. 82.

PART 2

**Van Diemonian Time, or, the
Civilisational Clean Break,**

1803–1876



CHAPTER 6

Genocide as Modernisation

Along with the recognition that modernity remains a salient conceptual tool with which to theorise the social realities of the contemporary world, has come a reiteration of the tendency to use the term as if it applied to an originary set of events and orientations that are only ever *replicated* in non-European settings. Through a specific focus on the way modernity is inscribed onto the Tasmanian archive, however, this thesis presents the case that modernities exist firmly in the plural. As Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar explains in *Alternative Modernities*, different time-space locations produce their own modular modernities, alike but ultimately irreducible to the original European version. In light of this, the chapter at hand charts the functioning of one of those alternative modernities, but

in doing so gestures outwards to the many different sets of socio-cultural configurations that we know by that name.

If by modernity we mean the ways of life or modes of social organisation that have characterised Western civilisation since the 17th or 18th centuries — democratic governance, capitalist economy, industrial technology, state bureaucracy, bourgeois or new humanist individualism and feminism in all its different waves — then locating Tasmania within its matrix seems to require the relatively simple task of identifying the particular instantiations of these logics to be found here. As we made our way down the list of such characteristics, ticking and crossing the boxes as required, we might conclude that Tasmania, like the rest of the Western world is now entering a phase of postmodernity or even of globalisation, but we would also surely agree that for some of its history, at least, Australia's island state has been an emphatically modern site.

We would certainly not be taking any epistemological risks in reading Tasmania against the classical Euro-centric benchmarks of modernity. After all, the model of modernity that finds its *locus classicus* in 17th- or 18th-century Europe is subscribed to, in a schematic way at least, by theorists as diverse as Anthony Giddens, Thomas Macarthy, Alasdair Macintyre, Jürgen Habermas, Zygmunt Bauman, Charles Taylor, Peter Wagner, Krishnan Kumar, Marshall Berman, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Stephen Toulmin, Leo Strauss, Tilo Schabert, John Rundell, Arjun Appadurai, David Harvey and Agnes Heller.¹

It must be noted, of course, that in agreeing on the basic character of the term that sits at the centre of their various intellectual endeavours, this group of thinkers are, to an extent, only establishing a provisional common ground that might then be made the site of radical contestation. By bracketing them together, I do not intend to suggest that they

agree on anything other than the very basic contours of the modernity around which their various scholarly enterprises revolve. That they should all be writing about modernity only testifies to the radical incorrigibility of that term, to its polysemic character, and to the remarkable plasticity which sees it retain a unifying salience even as it is deployed in a multiplicity of contexts. Indeed, the modernities of Bauman and Macintyre, of Giddens and Berman, of Taylor and Wagner are often very difficult to reconcile with one another. Each of these scholars writes about a different modernity, and writes about it in a different way. There is no single hermeneutic algorithm that might translate their essays into a common language. Or is there?

The path that I am about to set out on here has already been pre-prepared by my suggestion that there are a set of basic contours that this variegated constellation of modernities has in common. It may turn out that the isolation of these categories will leave us with a model so schematic as to be of negligible value. If this is so, we must grit our teeth and persevere. An alternative strategy that would see us attempting to synthesise the multiplicity of modernities into a single coherent whole must be disqualified on the grounds of its untenability. Such an approach would leave us, on one hand, with a model of modernity that was hopelessly reductionist and, on the other, with one which was impossibly unwieldy.

So, taking due note of these complications, what sort of things might we include in a list of modernity's basic attributes?

First of all, in its hegemonic manifestation, at least, modernity is a European phenomenon that spread across the world via networks of colonisation. Second, it is an historical form whose inaugural moment is to be found some time in the 17th or 18th

centuries. Third, it proposes a distinction between the social reality and subjective experience to which it gives its name, and the antecedent medieval, archaic, classical or traditional orders that it defines itself against. It is as Kumar writes, “a contrast concept”.² In terms of substantive content, the modernity herein described encompasses a vast array of social trends, epistemological orientations and cultural ventures that include the democratic, industrial and educational revolutions, the rise of technologically directed empiricism, the split between civil society and the state, the conceptualisation of abstract human rights discourse, the institutionalised sundering of fact and value, the replacement of substantive with formal reason and the disenchantment of the world.³

If these substantive dimensions are easily identifiable in the Tasmanian context the temporal distribution of modernity and its jurisdictional claims prove less amenable to easy analysis. What, for instance, is the status of Tasmania’s modernity in the context of its geographical estrangement from Europe? How should we approach the fact that until its colonisation in the early-19th century, Tasmania remained the domain of a set of “(non)modern” civilisations par excellence?⁴ Can the differentiation that gives modernity its salience as a periodising term be located in a process of socio-cultural supersession and assimilation, or must the transformation that it names be an endogenous one? Does Tasmania have a local pre-modern history, or is its pre-modernity to be found in Europe’s past? Could we say, following Giddens, that modernity was brought to Tasmania with the European colonisers? Or is modernity a set of institutional dimensions and structures of feeling that relate to their initial conditions of possibility in the mode of the simulacrum, as a series of copies without an original? Has the *Europeanness* of modernity been effaced by its subsequent world-wide dissemination?

In this chapter I read two treatises on modernity that manage to strike a rare balance between theoretical sophistication and empirical awareness, molding the two into something like the practice that John Cash has described as “theory with an empirical intent”.⁵ These texts are Bauman’s *Modernity and the Holocaust* and Chakrabarty’s *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Both of these monographs propose a replacement and substitution of one form of modernity for another. For Bauman, the exchange is restricted to a shuffling of the deck from which he was dealt his post-Enlightenment Western hand. A critical European modernity whose pedigree can be traced back to Nietzsche, Weber and the Frankfurt School replaces an equally European modernity that optimistically “reaffirms and reinforces the etiological myth of modern civilisation as a triumph of reason over passions.”⁶ Chakrabarty’s project is of an altogether different order. He moves beyond the territories of what he calls an “imaginary” Europe, to develop a “political modernity” that subverts the logic of imperialist historicity:

Historicism is what made modernity or capitalism look not simply global but rather [...] something that became global over time, by originating in one place (Europe) and then spreading outside of it. This “first in Europe, then elsewhere” structure of global historical time was historicist; different non-Western nationalisms would later produce local versions of the same narrative, replacing Europe by (sic) some locally constructed centre.⁷

It should also be noted that the projects of Bauman and Chakrabarty are played out within distinct disciplinary boundaries. Bauman’s target is a sociological modernity, while Chakrabarty’s is a historical, or more properly a postcolonial, Marxian and deconstructive-historiographical, one.⁸ This highlights the fact that modernity’s

conceptual polysemy derives in part from its currency within a number of different intellectual traditions. The difficulty we have already experienced in attempting to isolate a working definition of modernity that takes account of the diversity of its signification while remaining succinct and pliable, is further exacerbated by this inter-disciplinarity.⁹

The second focus of this chapter is an examination of the implications of these substitutions for one of the macro-level objectives of this thesis — the formulation of strategies with which to read a specifically Tasmanian modernity. The empirical counterpoint to the theoretical movement of Bauman's *Modernity and the Holocaust* is his reading of the genocidal policies of National Socialism. A European genocide that was modern to its core, he argues, must finally lay to rest those optimistic Enlightenment narratives that make modernisation synonymous with civilisational progress. Putting to one side the distinct possibility that this supposedly hegemonic modernity is really just a straw man — does Francis Fukuyama even advocate such a cheery historical teleology any more? — the symmetry of Bauman's logic provides us with a useful template, an indispensable set of formal parameters, for a reading of Tasmanian modernity.¹⁰ If a European genocide can act so decisively as a fulcrum for a displacement and revision of European modernity, could the analysis of a Tasmanian genocide not provide us with a way into thinking the particular modernity that is our principal focus here? If the Holocaust is the ultimate test of (European) modernity, is the decimation of the Tasmanian Aborigines the ultimate test of a still uncertain Tasmanian modernity?¹¹

The answer to this question, I argue, is to be found in an approach that reads the Tasmanian genocide as a point of intersection where three streams of modernity meet. Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn argue that pre-modern and modern forms of genocide

can be distinguished on the grounds that the victims in the latter case were targeted “because of where they were or what they had,” whereas victims of modern genocides were eliminated “according to who they [were].”¹² In this chapter I challenge the epochal taxonomy implicit in this contention through an analysis of a genocide that gathers within itself a number of modernising logics even as it was actualised as a process of elimination founded on location and possession, rather than identity as such. Although we have to hand the anecdotal evidence of Tasmanian bushrangers who claimed they would just as soon “kill a crow as smoke a pipe”, the overarching cause of the decimation and displacement of the Palawa people is to be more properly identified in the expansion of European pastoral interests that began to accelerate from the 1820s onward. This expansion fits into two overlapping processes of modernisation. In so far as its product, primarily wool, was shipped back to the textile mills of an industrialising Britain, it formed one small link in the massive imperial chain that made possible the “originary” European modernity. While, in the second instance, the foreign investment upon which it was built, in combination with the revenue it attracted, facilitated an endogenous project of modernisation that allowed the chastened settlers to escape the hybrid hunter-gatherer economy that they had relied upon at the earliest stages of “settlement”.

In these two cases, modernisation led in fairly direct terms to genocide. The third and final part of the typology invokes a more complex causality. Nineteenth century European attitudes to indigenous peoples were never monolithic. Alongside the romantic sentimentalism of the defenders of the Rousseauian noble savage was the hard-line social evolutionism of writers like Robert Knox, Benjamin Kidd, Francis Galton and Charles Darwin.¹³ For this last group, the lesser races of the world would inevitably be consigned

to the dust-bin of linear history as their European masters made violent passage through the colonial zones of the “new” world. In between these two extremes, were the missionaries, the evangelists and the abolitionists represented by groups like the Aboriginal Protection Society, who adhered to the conviction that there was no intrinsic incommensurability between “savages” and civilisation. In the Tasmanian case, this position was most famously embodied in the person of George Augustus Robinson, the “great conciliator” responsible for “rounding up” the remnants of the Aborigines left over from the Black War and lobbying the Colonial Government for their removal to the Wybalenna encampment on Flinders Island. Once he had them installed on the island, Robinson initiated a civilising project that was also paradigmatically modernising. He changed the Aborigines’ names, introduced a rigorous schedule of chores and inspections, circulated a currency, encouraged the rote learning of scripture, and established vegetable gardens.¹⁴ That this conscious attempt to modernise the Aborigines brought to a halt the more gradual, organic interchange of customs that had been taking place since white contact, only exacerbated its failure all the more. Paralysed by a “mysterious” depression, the Wybalenna Aborigines refused, or were unable, adequately to reproduce and their numbers quickly dwindled away. Genocide, in this instance, was indelibly inscribed into the fabric of a modernising gesture, the two went hand-in-hand, but was there a clear logic of causality at play?

The 19th-century historian James Bonwick quotes Dr K.J. Story, a Quaker humanitarian, who answered firmly in the affirmative: “If left to themselves to roam as they were wont and undisturbed, they would have reared more children, and there would have been less mortality.”¹⁵ With the possible exception of the West Coast Aborigines

who were the last of the indigenous inhabitants to be swayed by Robinson's offer to migrate to Wybalenna, the option of roaming free across terrains marked out for pastoral development was never available in the newly colonised Van Dieman's Land. The modernisation of the Aborigines, in this sense, then, may not have led to genocide in any simple linear way, but its co-presence within the field of actions, orientations and events that constituted the final episodes of that genocide make it an indissociable metonym for the tragic totality of which it was a part.

Theorists who have taken on the task of expanding the narrative frame of modernity have tended to stretch its boundaries in one of two directions. For writers like Timothy Mitchell and Chakrabarty, rethinking modernity from the peripheries of the world-system entails a deconstruction of the conceptual structure of the term so that it might be supplemented with salient evidence from non-European locations. The singularity of modernity is preserved in this approach, even as its occlusion of the non-metropolitan is brought into relief. As Mitchell writes:

It is not that there are many different modernities, any more than there are many different capitalisms. Modernity like capitalism, is defined by its claim to universality, to a uniqueness, unity, and universality that represent the end (in every sense) of history. Yet this always remains an impossible unity, an incomplete universal. Each staging of the modern must be arranged to produce the unified, global history of modernity, yet each requires those forms of difference that introduce the possibility of a discrepancy, that returns to undermine its unity and identity. Modernity then becomes the unsuitable yet unavoidable name for all these discrepant histories.¹⁶

In Mitchell's case, a survey of Marx, Immanuel Wallerstein and Samir Amin is conducted to demonstrate that even as paradigmatically a modern institutional contour as

capitalism was never univocally European: “If modernity had its origins in reticulations of exchange and production encircling the world”, he writes, “it was a creation not of the West but of an interaction between West and non-West.”¹⁷ Going further, he puts a convincing case that the very solidity of the split identities of the West and “the rest” were fixed not from within Europe but by colonial subjects determined to distinguish themselves from the mestizos and indigenous peoples amongst whom they lived.

Chakrabarty takes a different tack in his reassessment of a singular modernity, retaining the logic of dissemination that brings modernity to colonial zones from European centres. A diversification internal to modernity is achieved, he contends, when modern logics like the public/private split and the ideal of the citizen are superimposed onto a non-modern, non-Western cultural background.

An alternative means of de-centring modernity is to make it the object of a deliberate pluralisation and to resist a dialectical recombination of that newly uncovered variety in a new synthesis. This approach is taken up by writers including Tani Barlow, Gaonkar and Taylor, but in the case of the latter two, at least, its radical potential fizzles out into circularity. For Gaonkar and Taylor, this refurbished modernity might be newly expansive and heterogenous, but it is still, in the final wash-up, an obdurately singular phenomenon. Gaonkar, for instance, declares a manifesto for thinking alternative modernities that looks more like a vain *desideratum* given his incapacity to act in accordance with its tenets. These dictums — everywhere, at every national/cultural site, modernity is not one but many; modernity is not new but old and familiar; modernity is incomplete and necessarily so — are suspended in the name of a narrativisation of modernity whose forced plurality is problematically subsumed into the genre of world-

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historical rumination. Gaonkar builds his essay, which serves as an introduction to an overarching anthology on alternative modernities, around a double framework that he calls societal and cultural modernity. Crucially, his narrativisation of these two trajectories covers orthodox ground. Societal modernisation denotes the rise of instrumental reason, Baconian science and disenchantment, while cultural modernity stands as an escape hatch from the “iron-cage” of a world terrorised by specialisation and differentiation. Gaonkar is caught betwixt and between here. While he rightly recognises that these dominant discourses constitute the default view of modernity, he brackets this conclusion in the name of a gentle kind of postcolonial revenge. The Eurocentric setting for this story, he argues, is always already challenged by the infinite variations on the theme of the modern that an examination of the (post)colonial world brings into relief. The plurality of modernity, he finally declares, can be vouchsafed through site-based analyses of the kind included in his anthology. In their sensitivity to processes of “creative adaptation”, these interventions split the referent that slides under the signifier “modernity” into a kaleidoscopic heteromorph. But even so, we are left to ponder how best to dispose of the indivisible remains of the monolith of European modernity that haunts their articulation. In his attempt to wrest a breathing space for subaltern modernities, Gaonkar has still to deal conclusively with the problem of the one and the many.¹⁸

The distinction that Taylor draws between cultural and acultural theories of modernity grounds a de-merger of modernity on the difference between thinking about the contrasts between the contemporary world and the world of our forebears in civilisational or developmental terms. If we assume that modernity differs from pre-

modernity in the same fashion that pre-modern China differed from the pre-modern West we can replace the mechanical, neutralising teleology of a formal modernisation with a fragmentary, diffuse narrative that takes account of divergences, resistances and creolisation:

From one point of view, modernity is like a wave, flowing over and engulfing one traditional culture after another [...] (but) it would be better [...] to speak of alternative modernities, as the cultures that emerge in the world to carry the institutional changes turn out to differ in important ways from each other. Thus a Japanese modernity, an Indian modernity, and various modulations of Islamic modernity will probably enter alongside the gamut of Western societies, which are also far from being uniform.¹⁹

Like Gaonkar's, Taylor's formulation bears the mark of a persistent singular modernity that slips back into the space opened up for thinking the pluralisation of the phenomenon. More precisely, the locations at which modernity is dressed in "native" costume are only allowed the poor autonomy of responding to a universal ultimatum. The "institutional changes" of modernity are an interpellative summons that are met by an interlocutive specificity, but the particularity of that response doesn't alter the uniformity of the challenge.

One of the gaps in contemporary attempts to rethink modernity from the margins is its neglect of the specificities of settler modernities where modernity is not imposed on an indigenous group by a colonising agent so much as undergoing a translation into terms practicable in a context of disjunction, absence and unfamiliarity. When Gaonkar and Taylor talk about alternative modernities they are talking about the intercession of Western habitus and the culture of the colonised, but they examine it exclusively from the

perspective of the latter. Little attention is paid to the modifications forced into the structure of European modernity as it is practised by displaced Europeans in colonial locations.

The descriptions of colonial employees “going native”, is one way of mapping the transversality of this pressure, but it does not go far enough. The idea of settler modernities offers a way forward. This ideal type is more problematically located than “colonial” modernities in so far as it is instituted and performed not by an “other” culture suddenly exposed to Western ways of doing things, but rather by the displaced Westerners themselves. A hybrid settler modernity might take on some of the practices of the indigenous culture, but in cases like Tasmania, where that culture was so quickly suppressed, writing and practising a settler modernity more properly required an imaginative recasting of the orders of life left behind in Europe. How, for instance, would common law be upheld? How would the problem of democracy be broached? How would modern education and culture be reconciled with a pre-industrial economy?

Barlow’s approach to multiplying modernity proceeds by way of an umbrella category — colonial modernity — with which Gaonkar and Taylor fail adequately to engage. The epistemological implications of Barlow’s contribution are more radical than those to be found in either Taylor or Gaonkar’s work, primarily because she offers a way of synthesising the structural dualism of the one modernity/many modernities debate without positing a new substantive singularity. Although she doesn’t directly engage with the question of settler modernities, Barlow offers a conceptual framework through which they might be considered. For “colonial” in her formulation I submit we read “settler”:

“Colonial modernity” can be grasped as a speculative frame for investigating the infinitely pervasive discursive powers that increasingly connect at key points to the globalising impulses of capitalism. Because it is a way of posing a historical question about how our mutual present came to take its apparent shape, colonial modernity can also suggest that historical context is not a matter of positively defined, elemental or discrete units — nation states, stages of development, or civilisation, for instance — but rather a complex field of relationships or threads of material that connect multiply in space-time and can be surveyed from specific sites. The historiographical formulation “colonial modernity” may prove sufficiently general to encourage ensemble-like historical writing (situated among states, perhaps, or among subnational groups across state boundaries, or among and between subjectivities and so on) rather than continuing the convention of binding historical knowledge in strictly opposed pairs (self/other, state/nation, colony/metropole).²⁰

The deconstructive turn proposed by Barlow, demands that we rethink the prospect of settler modernities even as the idea has just been proposed. The very fact that the *topos* of genocide presents itself as such a productive site for reading the cross-currents of modernity and modernisation in Tasmania demonstrates the radically unstable location of this kind of modernity. The dynamics of modernity that surrounded, informed and enabled the Palawa genocide are rendered visible only from a vantage point that eschews the obduracy of coloniser/colonised polarities, and makes permeable the spatial and legislative boundaries that normally separate the imperial centre from its “dependencies”. Modernity, is, in Barlow’s terms, a thread of material that patches together the *Europeanness* and the *Tasmanianness* of the colonising subjectivities, that sutures the gap between coloniser and indigene, that frays into shreds when adhered to the traditions of the Aboriginal peoples.

Reading Tasmanian modernity through the Palawa genocide invokes just the kind of ensembled histories that Barlow describes. The subject of Tasmanian history is indigenous, imperial and colonising all at the same time. Its modernity is European and endogenous, imitational and original, externally imposed and self-actualised. The interminable fumbling with questions of moral order and human rights that typified the Tasmanian government's policy position on the Palawa was a struggle with modernity that cannot be consigned wholly to the European frame of experience. The Aborigines, after all, were the victims of the policies of relocation, martial law and bounty hunting that were so precariously balanced on the cusp of the modern and the pre-modern.

A settler modernity of the kind that arose in Tasmania is thus inscribed in the space between coloniser and colonised. The articulations of Tasmanian modernity that find expression in the logics of genocide and its attendant problems answer the claims of both sides of the singularity/multiplicity debate. The exponential expansion of the pastoral industry that placed so much pressure on the Aboriginal population serves as a case-study that can be situated alongside Sidney Mintz's investigation of sugar plantations in the Caribbean as a telling demonstration of the imbrication of colonial zones in the first European modernity.²¹ Alternatively, the same dynamic that made possible an endogenous shift from hybrid hunter-gatherer society to pastoral economy stands as a specifically Tasmanian instantiation of an acultural logic of modernity. Finally, the modernisation of the Aboriginal population, inscribed as it was, with a deep ambivalence about the ultimate prospects of any "humanitarian" intervention, blends the specifically alternative and the globally diversifying in the body of a project for social

transformation that retains an alterity even as it repeats and augments our understanding of European modernity.²²

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In *Modernity and the Holocaust*, Bauman argues that the “Final Solution” provides the grounds for a thorough-going renovation of dominant sociological conceptualisations of modernity. However, he adds, this urgent need for re-assessment and re-evaluation has been largely resisted by those who would be most expected to respond to its demands. Professional sociologists, argues Bauman, have rejected the Holocaust’s potential efficacy as a spur for the re-configuration of their discipline’s epistemological framework, and have adopted, instead, a number of strategies — exoticisation, marginalisation, singularisation — that confine it neatly within extant boundaries. What might thus have presented as a case for a disorientating revision of established sociological categories is disavowed, belittled, misjudged and shrugged off in Bauman’s terms, and the concept of modernity that should have been the focus of the revision, remains salient and largely intact. The referent designated by this usage of modernity is the social configuration produced by the inexorable development of human communities from the Hobbesian state of nature to the rational, technological, capitalist present, and it too, is preserved and protected from the criticisms that should, in the light of the nightmare scenario of the Holocaust, be assaulting it from all angles.

Formulating a position that is part Nietzsche, part Weber and part Adorno and Horkheimer, Bauman makes modernity synonymous with the Enlightenment and then posits its growing self-consciousness as the necessary logic of its development:

We can think of modernity as of a time when order — of the world, of the human habitat, of the human self, and of the connection between all three — is reflected upon; a matter of thought, of concern, of a practice that is aware of itself, conscious of being a conscious practice and wary of the void it would leave were it to halt or merely relent.²³

While acknowledging a debt to the formulation that lies at the heart of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* — “enlightenment is mythic fear turned radical [...] nothing at all may remain outside because the mere idea of outsideness is the very source of fear” — Bauman attempts to revamp Adorno and Horkheimer’s opulent project by reversing its thesis.²⁴ Rather than extinguishing any trace of its own self-consciousness, the Enlightenment’s dialectical unfolding has, on Bauman’s terms, actually engendered a paralysing auto-critique. The critical reason that was supposed to act as a lever for the betterment of mankind has, instead, turned back upon itself to reveal a dire legacy of “blind arrogance, high-handedness and legislative dreams.”²⁵ This legacy is the same pile of debris that Walter Benjamin’s “Angel of History” would like to “make whole again”. Like the “Angel”, the Enlightenment project is tossed about in a storm called progress, a storm of its own making. It too has its back turned toward the future as it tries desperately to keep in sight a paradise that recedes ever further into the irretrievable past:

Modernity is what it is — an obsessive march forward not because it always wants more, but because it never gets enough; not because it grows more ambitious and adventurous but because its adventures are bitter and frustrated.²⁶

Bauman brings the glaring discrepancy between this formulation of modernity and the one that he nominates as the orthodox social theoretical position into relief by testing the two concepts against the historical logic of the Holocaust. Advocates of the orthodox

position, he argues, preserve the saliency of their chosen definition of modernity by reading the Holocaust as a fundamentally anti-modern set of events, or even worse, as a case of the return of a normally repressed pre-modernity:

Having processed the facts of the Holocaust through the mill of that methodology which defines it as a scholarly discipline, orthodox sociology can only deliver a message bound more by its presuppositions than “by the facts of the case”: [...] the Holocaust was a failure, not a product of modernity.²⁷

The modernity that remains isolated and immune from the ramifications of the Holocaust is the modernity that marks the culmination of what Richard Bernstein calls the “emancipatory narrative of dynamic reason actualising itself in history.”²⁸ It remains immune and self-contained, however, only through an obfuscation and disavowal of the unassimilable horrors that would otherwise cloud its optimistic outlook. By interpreting the attempted extermination of the Jewish peoples as the eruption of an irrational, atavistic malice, the defenders of this concept of modernity actually cleanse the category of its ambivalence. Modernity may have failed in the case of the Holocaust, but an examination of this failure under such anomalous conditions is actually a step toward the restoration of our faith in its normal conditions of operation:

If the lesson of mass murder does teach us anything it is that the prevention of similar hiccups of barbarism evidently requires still more civilising efforts. There is nothing in this lesson to cast doubt on the future effectiveness of such efforts and their ultimate results. We certainly move in the right direction perhaps we do not move fast enough.²⁹

But, Bauman argues, it is precisely here that an intervention must be made. On his formulation, the Holocaust was not a perversion of modernity, but rather “a rare yet

significant and reliable test of the hidden possibilities of modern society.”³⁰ For Bauman, the Holocaust must be allowed to re-configure the category of modernity so the latter can accommodate the ambiguity of events which violate its most dearly held values — in this case the sanctity of the lives of an entire race of peoples — even when that violation is achieved through the application of technologies, intellectual, organisational and mechanical, that it alone has made possible:

Having emancipated purposeful action from moral constraints, modernity rendered genocide possible. Without being the sufficient cause of the genocide, modernity is its necessary condition. The ability to co-ordinate human actions on a massive scale, a technology that allows one to act effectively at a large distance from the object of action, minute division of labour which allows for spectacular progress in expertise on the one hand, accumulation of knowledge incomprehensible to the layman and the authority of science which grows with it, the science sponsored mental climate of instrumental rationality that allows social-engineering designs to be argued and justified [...] are all integral attributes of modernity; but they also condition the displacement of the moral by the instrumental action and thus make genocide possible to accomplish — if only there are forces around determined to accomplish it.³¹

An objective like the annihilation of the European Jewry could only be brought to realisation when granted a legitimate position within the administrative field of a modern state well-accustomed to the bracketing of ethical concerns and the implementation of policy along purely instrumental lines. The pragmatics of the Holocaust, Bauman argues, were given their shape by the institutional contours of three distinct yet interrelated *topoi*; bureaucratic rationality of the kind described by Weber, the technologies and infrastructures of industrial capitalism, and the applied knowledge of sophisticated empirical science. In administering the death camps, the institutional bearers of these

intellectual and technical resources were, in a certain macabre sense, only applying their already formidable competencies to a new object. That the final product of this labour was so monstrously incongruous with the “normal” objective of a state bureaucracy, only highlights the universal applicability of the capacity to suspend value judgements and to work assiduously toward the achievement of an externally determined objective outlined by hierarchically superior subjectivities.³² It was in the subordination of this morbid end to its rather banal means of realisation, argues Bauman, that the “Final Solution” became so characteristically modern:

In fact we know of many massacres, pogroms, mass murders indeed instances not far removed from genocide, that have been perpetrated without modern bureaucracy, the skills and technologies it commands, the scientific principles of its internal management. The Holocaust, however, was clearly unthinkable without such bureaucracy.³³

The decimation and displacement of the Tasmanian Aborigines does not fit the bureaucratic profile of a modern genocide delineated by Bauman. But this does not mean that it was not a modern set of events. The confluence of three streams of modernity — British, colonial and indigenous — in the social reality of early Tasmania usefully figures the overlaid complexity of non-metropolitan modernities. At the nexus of these three trajectories, I wish to contend, the closest thing to a genuinely “Tasmanian” modernity might be found.

*

The historiography of the invasion of Tasmania can be neatly divided into two series of investigations. On one side are those interpretations which read the trajectory of Tasmania’s colonisation as the story of a lopsided struggle between modernity and pre-

modernity. James Bonwick's *The Last of the Tasmanians*, Clive Turnbull's *Black War*, Tom Haydon's *The Last Tasmanian* and a variety of works by N.J.B. Plomley construct a narrative in which an advanced European nation finds its uninspired programme for the establishment of a penal colony/pastoral station on the island we now call Tasmania, frustrated by a rather ragged population of indigenous inhabitants.³⁴ While initially accommodating to the white interlopers, repeated instances of ill-treatment at the hands of the "settlers" finally galvanise the autochthons into action. As disease and distress slowly eat away at their numbers, they conduct a resourceful campaign of resistance, only to succumb, in teleological inevitability, to the inexorable narrative logic set in motion by the invasion. According to this version of events, from the moment Governor King signed off on the decision to set up a penal colony in Van Diemen's Land, the Tasmanian Aborigines were doomed to decimation, capitulation and, in the final instance, administered extinction at the hands of a negligent British bureaucracy.

More recent scholarship has taken a different approach. By exposing the "extinction" thesis as a false conclusion to the story of the "Black War", historians like Lyndall Ryan, Henry Reynolds and Cassandra Pybus seek to displace an historical narrative fatalistically over-determined by its misconstrued finale. From this perspective, the demographic disaster, as Reynolds calls it, should be retrieved from the genre of heroic tragedy and recast as an episode in an ongoing history of relations between indigenous and non-indigenous Tasmanians. The destruction of the Aboriginal cultures of Tasmania was never a *fait accompli*. To treat it as an inevitability is to go some way toward exonerating those whose actions, or in the case of the colonial administrators,

inaction, coalesced to produce the set of events which in hindsight appear so pre-determined.

In her book, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, Ryan cites at least three moments when the apparently inexorable logic of Aboriginal displacement and decimation might have been averted: before the agricultural phase of British occupation began in 1807, before the rapid expansion of the pastoralist phase from 1820 onwards, and in 1827, when Governor Arthur first mooted the possibility of conciliation with and resettlement of the indigenous inhabitants in the north-east corner of the state.³⁵ The outcome that Turnbull, Plomley and Bonwick read as the necessary corollary of a lopsided clash between incommensurable civilisations is thus revealed to be contingent. Just as for Bauman, modernity was the necessary but not the sufficient cause of the Jewish Holocaust, Ryan's research shows that the colonisation of Tasmania created the conditions of possibility, but did not make inevitable, the slaughter of the Tasmanian Aborigines.³⁶

The most important contribution that Chakrabarty makes to the theorisation of modernity in *Provincializing Europe* is to show how incommensurable phenomena plucked from apparently diverse epochs can still hold together in a configuration of modernity. The chief focus of Chakrabarty's intervention is the concept of political modernity: of self-rule, Enlightenment principles of social organisation, constitutional freedoms, the splitting of private and public worlds and the complex notion of liberal bourgeois humanist subjectivity. The kind of modernity to be discovered in early colonial Tasmania was quite clearly not of this variety. But what Chakrabarty's work allows us to do is divorce diverse logics of modernisation from some overarching teleology and read off their enunciations in a fractured and fragmentary way. The denial of Aboriginal

agency implicit in the genocidal logic of Tasmania's "discovery" serves as an instance of the issuing of a notice of postponement to non-modern subjects from European modernisers. The Aboriginal inhabitants of Tasmania were found to be incapable of looking after themselves, they needed commandants, conciliators and administrators to usher them into the epoch of the modern. Their traditional pre-modern, ahistorical existence was found to be anathema to a culture that could only understand civilisation as the transformation of nature into recognisable forms like fields and towns. The Europeans brought modernity to Tasmania in the form of a linearity of time marked off at its far end by the moment of extinction. As Chakrabarty writes:

Historicism — and even the modern, European idea of history — one might say, came to non-European peoples as somebody's way of saying "not yet" to somebody else.³⁷

The logic of genocide of course, makes this "not yet" a response to the more macabre question of "do we have free run of the island" rather than some "progressivist" query about the indigenous inhabitants capacity to look after themselves. On the one hand, then, the invasion of Tasmania and the establishment of European settlements marked the inauguration of a modernity in so far as certain 19th-century technologies were brought to the island, in so far as the whole project of penal colonisation was based around Enlightenment tracts written by British jurists, and in so far as industrialisation was the driving force for the increased crime rates in Britain that in turn prompted the introduction of transportation. The fact that the American colonies were suddenly unavailable as a convict destination was also the result of a peculiarly modern struggle for independence and self-rule. On the other hand, British life in early Van Diemen's

Land was decidedly pre-modern. Hunter-gathering was deployed as a means of survival, democracy was non-existent, and future thinking was confined, for the most part, to vain longings for return to the homeland. Van Diemen's Land was not colonised with an optimistic orientation to the future like the United States of the founding fathers. It was a prison, a place to forget, not to model new forms of social organisation. In an ironic *volte face*, the "new" world was always to be behind the times, somehow older because less amenable to change than the old world from which it grew.

If the modernity of the early-19th century was to be witnessed in the bustling streets of London and Paris, the arcades and consumer capitalism documented by Walter Benjamin, the amazing procession of new social types and endeavours that prompted Baudelaire's famous formulation that "the modern is the contingent, the fleeting, the fugitive, the half of art whose other half is permanent and unchanging", then the chastened, fragile collection of huts at Risdon Cove and later Sullivan's Cove, must have seemed a long way behind the game.³⁸

But the modernisation of Van Diemen's Land included development in its full range — pastoral, manufacturing, civil — that coalesced to turn the colony into a self-supporting location. The labour of convicts, the work of the free-settlers, the birth of new native-born subjects, contributed to the building of a community that was a kind of becoming-modern. Genocide fits into this logic of modernisation because it was partly the result of pastoral expansion in the Midlands and elsewhere. In this formulation genocide enabled the European invaders to become modern, to trade and export wheat and wool that would deliver a modest prosperity. In a more macabre sense, on the other hand, the genocide represented the modernisation of the Aboriginal, rather than the

European, population. In his capacity as founder of the encampment on Bruny Island in 1829, Robinson attempted to christianise the natives, to provide them with access to English language learning and to wean them off the hunter-gatherer mode of production and onto an agrarian one. These were conscious efforts to modernise an intractably pre-modern people. These intentions were recapitulated at Flinders Island and Oyster Cove and the former, in particular, was the scene of blatantly insensitive modernising gestures like the changing of Aboriginal names to European equivalents and the training of female subjects as domestic assistants.³⁹ In a sense genocide was a by-product of modernisation. The indigenes succumbed to disease and lower birth rates that resulted from “incidental” encounters with the European interlopers, but the keenness of the administrators to move the Aborigines out of the areas suitable for pastoral expansion cannot be separated out from this larger diorama of mortality.

In *Provincializing Europe*, Chakrabarty points out that all non-European modernities are inscribed with a lack at their advent. Because they come after and are measured against originary European forms, they cannot be anything other than imitational and replicative. However, just as apparently incongruous inconsistencies like the absence of an interiorised private self as documented by confessional writing make Indian modernity non-modern and modern all at the same time, the conjunction of traditional Aboriginal lifestyles and modernising Western habitus in the nascent colony of Van Diemen’s land demarcates a social configuration that is as other to European forms as it is undeniably modern.

CHAPTER 7

Wishing for Modernity: Temporality and Desire in *Gould's Book of Fish*

Upon arrival in that stinking, grotty, modern world of Van Diemen's Land in the stinking late summer heat, all hideous new sandstone warehouses and customs houses and chaingangs and redcoats, I was assigned to Palmer the coachbuilder in Launceston, what passes as the capital of the island's north.

(Richard Flanagan, 2002)

If, as we are told by dream interpretation, a dream represents a fulfilled wish, what is the origin of the remarkable and puzzling form in which the wish fulfilment is expressed? What alteration have the dreamthoughts undergone before being changed into the manifest dream which we remember when we wake up? How does that alteration take place? What is the source of the material that has been modified into the dream.

(Sigmund Freud, 1963)

The root book of modernism described by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* is a very specific kind of assemblage for the dissemination of lines of flight. The modernist masterpiece is a site where cathexis is allowed to run amok in its interaction with the diagetic level of the text, even as it remains hemmed in by a totalising thematic represented most emphatically by the unity of character and chronotope in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. In a methodological echo of Edward Soja's claim that "Prophecy

now involves a geographical rather than an historical projection; it is space and not time that hides consequences from us", the schema of the root book and its antithesis, the rhizome, are steadfastly three dimensional metaphors for understanding literary production.⁴⁰ Philip Mead seems to be persuaded by Soja's *zeitgeist* in his review of Richard Flanagan's *Gould's Book of Fish* when he compares the "strange narrative density of Tasmania" to the moment in Italo Calvino's *The Castle of Crossed Destinies*, "where the narrator realises that stories don't proceed along thin, linear planes" and "the act of reading produces a dense forest of story in whichever direction the reader proceeds."⁴¹ In this chapter, I distance myself from this spatialising hermeneutic and mobilise the second of Kant's *intuitive* categories as the means of reading Flanagan's novel. The goal of this chapter is to examine the ways in which configurations of *temporality* are transubstantiated into fields for the actualisation of desire in *Gould's Book of Fish* and, to a lesser extent, in Flanagan's other novels as well.⁴²

One of the recurring motifs in Flanagan's writing is the impoverishment of the Tasmanian present, a state of affairs both enacted by, and embodied in, a malformed modernity. The imaginative force exerted upon Flanagan's fiction by this configuration of energies bleeds into his cultural criticism to produce the following problem: how are we to summon up hope for Tasmania's future, when its past is so overwhelmingly full of defeat? The answer proposed in *Gould's Book of Fish* is to radically fictionalise that past, and to imbue it with the residue of collective longing left over from the project of hydro-electrification that was aborted after the Franklin River conflicts of the early-1980s.

Another of the prominent strategies at play in Flanagan's non-fiction writing is the positing of alternative social futures for his beloved island home. This speculative

orientation stands in stark contrast to the rather bleak evocations of the actual condition of Tasmania's social world depicted in his better known fictional works. Take the following examples from his first two novels, *The Death of a River Guide* and *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*:

Aljaz walked the streets of Hobart aimlessly, wandering through the old town's streets, past its small stolid buildings of the state which were without ambition but retained a dour intent, past its dingy shops more akin in their emaciated displays to the shops of Eastern Europe before the wall came down than to those luxurious displays of the mainland. The whole town was poor, desperately poor and he saw it in the eyes of the track-suited hordes that walked by him and he smelt it rising from the gutters.⁴³

Sonja looked out beyond the office at a concrete-block toilet, a puddle of urine spreading out from it and at the puddle's edge where the urine had mixed with the old sump oil she saw swimming all the colours of the rainbow, and beyond the extraordinary swirls of metallic wonder, a beaten-up country town.⁴⁴

If there is something that binds these two visions of contemporary Tasmania with the diorama into which we are thrust in *Gould's Book of Fish*, it is the vision of economic despondency, depression, and mendicancy that hangs like a dreary cloud above the diagesis. The images of this pecuniary misfortune everywhere abound. Aljaz, the protagonist from *Death of a River Guide*, is forced to accept slave wages for the work that will result in his death because other, more profitable, means of making a living don't exist. In *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*, Sonja comes back to the island from her job in Sydney and is regarded by friends and family as a big shot, because, from the position of the job-poor, dogsbody work at a television station acquires a preternatural glow. Hammet, the narrator who presides over the framing narrative to *Gould's Book of*

Fish, meanwhile, lives from hand to mouth on the crumbs of the post-industrial employment revolution, furnishing false histories to wealthy tourists in a trade that mirrors, disreputably and in false, flip-side symmetry, the occupation of Flanagan himself.

Flanagan repeatedly presents Tasmania's economy and *socius* as struggling to catch up with the present. The upshot of the belated project of modernisation driven by the hydro-electric schemes is not, in this corpus, a thriving, diverse, multi-cultural society like mainland Australia. Instead, Bojan Buloh, the marginalised, drunken, child-abuser from *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*, is made to personify a still-born, unevenly developed modernity characterised by a fugitive self-interest that remains stuck in the past, unable to stomach the pain of transformation, acting out old traumas rather than working them through. In the shadow of this stranded incapacity, it's left to his daughter Sonja to bring a future south to her handicapped father. Sonja embodies the transplanted fate — the absent future, the depopulation anxiety — of Tasmania, a fate overdetermined by the struggle with the grim irony that its past as a place built to accommodate exiles from Great Britain has segued into a present whose future is jeopardised by another kind of emigré travelling back to an alternative centre, the Australian mainland. For Flanagan, it's almost as if a modern present that was so reluctant to come to Tasmania in the first instance, has also taken leave of the place at the first available opportunity.⁴⁵

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At first glance, *Gould's Book of Fish*, doesn't appear to be a book about modernity. It's predominantly set in the 1820s for one thing, and its protagonist, the convict forger, William Buelow Gould, is certainly no Renaissance man, although he does do a fine line

in imitational water colours. Essentially, this is a counter-history of convictism focalised around the plight of a singular victim of its depredations. Sid Hammet, a 21st-century Tasmanian furniture “restorer” and local skite, discovers the *Book of Fish* in a meatsafe at Hobart’s Salamanca Place. After its mysterious transmogrification into a brackish puddle at a popular Hobart drinking hole, he begins to recount its contents. From there, we are submerged into the life history of its author, William Buelow Gould — forger, convict, painter of fish — as Flanagan traces his biography from its lowly point of origin in commercial London, through the transportation of its subject to Van Diemen’s Land, and on to its final termination amid the wreckage of the hallucinogenic “Nova Venetia” constructed at the convict colony of Sarah Island on Tasmania’s wild West Coast. Flanagan’s book is about the malleability of truth and the reliability of writing; it’s about what can happen when imagination and desire slip into the gaps between *de jure* and *de facto* interpretations of history. It’s also about the ways in which modalities of temporality can be inserted into an economy of longing for the future, so that a fictional past becomes the model of an alternative future for a non-fictional present. In *Gould’s Book of Fish*, Richard Flanagan returns to the time of Tasmania’s first modernity in order to realise his hopes and ambitions for another modernity that is yet to come. The tragicomic failure of that fictional modernisation reflects, after the fashion of the dream-work, the ambivalence he has displayed about the real history of Tasmanian modernity.

In broad terms, the temporal horizon of *Gould’s Book of Fish* is split into two parts: the time of the present and the time of the past. The time of the present is the time of Sid Hammet and the discovery of the *Book of Fish* in the old meat-safe at Salamanca Place. The time of the past is the time of William Buelow Gould, the Commandant, and

Sarah Island. This second temporal dimension is fractured, however, by the positioning of the unreliable narrator, Gould, as intra-textual author recounting his life history from the “saltwater” cell he shares with the mysterious “King”. The time of Gould’s past is split into three: the principal moment of transcription, the events that preceded it, and the point at which those events coalesce with the telling of the narrative. By the end of the novel, time catches up with the narrative and a second modality of the present, a past-present, is engaged.

Flanagan’s radical intervention into the Tasmanian archive demands a reading sensitive to the problematics of “truth” and fiction. From the angle I am pursuing here, though, these concerns cannot be considered at a remove from the temporal structure of the novel. On my reading, the temporalities of desire at play in *Gould’s Book of Fish* coalesce with the treatment of “truth” to produce a matrix for the articulation of a kind of wish-fulfilment. It is impossible to nominate either of the two as conceptually prior, nor do they exert obviously unequal causal weights. Rather, time and fact become mutually constitutive, and perhaps, more accurately, mutually supportive in their capacity to bear the weight of textual longing. In this regard, *Gould’s Book of Fish* is an interstitial work that sits between the author’s desire for transformation in the social structure of Tasmania and the set of non-fictional commentaries and interviews that he has given on the subject. To be more precise, *Gould’s Book of Fish* functions as a response, on Flanagan’s part, to the ambivalent character of Tasmanian modernity.

As Jim Davidson suggests, Tasmania has long endured a troubled relationship with progress and futurity so that, more often than not, it is characterised as being stuck in a frieze of underdevelopment, lagging at various distances behind the times:

Tasmania, because it is confined, can never escape the Alcatraz it once was; and part of the Island's gothic character — the adjective he is driven to use again and again — arises from the fact that the past, whether acknowledged or not, is constantly interessed with the present particularly in those Midlands districts which contained many more people a century and a half ago than they do now.⁴⁶

However, because the past has only been glossed over with the buzz and movement of modernity, it remains fully available to anyone interested in re-examining and re-imagining what Tasmania might have become in different historical circumstances. Pushing to one side the period of endogenous modernisation driven by the project of hydro-electrification, Flanagan directs his revisionist energies toward the time of the first modernity, imperial British modernity, and begins the task of re-imagining his island home from there.

In this chapter, I borrow from Freudian ideas on wish-fulfilment and creative writing to argue that Flanagan's principal achievement in *Gould's Book of Fish* is the sublimation of a desire for change in contemporary Tasmanian social life so that a new object for that cathexis is isolated in the fictional colonial modernity of the island. Removing Tasmania from its subaltern position in the footnotes of the history of British imperialism, Flanagan fashions a specular "indigenous", internal modernity for the island out of the grandiloquent manifest content of the Commandant's Sarah Island. In the section of the novel entitled "Railway Fever", in particular, Flanagan engages in a process of metonymic substitution whereby Sarah Island becomes a symbol for Tasmania in its entirety and railways become the exemplary trope of a brilliant, if doomed, modernity, which, for a variety of reasons discussed elsewhere in this thesis, has failed to materialise in the real history of Tasmania:

It's not that I have a dream of a boom. The world will discover Tasmania and it will boom. Nor may the boom be a dream. It could be as destructive as the depression that we're in at the moment, because another problem we've got is that we'll take development at any cost.⁴⁷

Writing about the temporality of modernity tends to focus on changes in the subjective and social experience of time enacted by the epochal shift away from pre-modernity. Alongside changes to the way in which structures of feeling are modified by the regular, striated clock-time of modernity, however, are the speculative orientations to temporality mobilised by the process of waiting for epochal change. Marx's famous declaration that the countries that are more developed industrially become the image of the future for those places which lag behind encapsulates the way in which the expectation of modernity is organised, to paraphrase Julia Kristeva, around "the time of the promise".⁴⁸ Waiting for modernity involves a devaluing of the present as cathexis is withdrawn from an unsatisfactory "now" and redirected toward an imaginary future that may or may not actually make its fated appearance. In the case of colonial Bengal, described by Dipesh Chakrabarty, political modernity arrived as someone's way of saying "'not yet' to somebody else".⁴⁹ In Tasmania, this temporal configuration produced the unique situation in which a process of modernisation produced a modernity that was no longer modern. The establishment of heavy industry on the island was only achieved 150 years after what Phyllis Deane calls the "first industrial revolution", making it an anachronistic social form at a world-historical level even as it continued to be invested with substantial resources of local hope. The representatives of the global Green movement who directed their gaze toward Tasmania in the mid-1970s were thus

confronted with a political culture stubbornly inured to the expiration of a project for social renovation that had already been shelved in the cultural centres at the leading edge of the horizon of the new.

“Railway Fever” is a crucial part of *Gould’s Book of Fish* in this context because of the unique significance of steam locomotion to social theoretical narratives of modernisation. In perhaps the exemplary instantiation of this approach, David Harvey credits the construction of railways in Europe and North America with playing a part in the production of “time-space compression”, a phenomenological effect that he sees as central to the subjective novelty of modern existence.⁵⁰ In his influential study *The Railway Journey: The Industrialisation of Time and Space in the Nineteenth Century*, Wolfgang Schivelbusch argues further that rail services were a focal point for changes in the experience of time so that, in Nicholas Daly’s terms, the railway became “both an agent and vehicle of modernisation”.⁵¹ The tropology of “waiting for trains” folds the subjective dimensions of the experience of modern time into the society-wide anticipation of cultural transformation. The figuration of the railway in texts like Michael Winterbottom’s *The Claim*, where the fate of the principal location hinges on the decision of the railway engineers to include it on the “line” epitomises the way in which locomotives have become one of the pre-eminent vehicles for introducing the suspension of temporality effected by the anticipation of modernity into filmic and literary narratives. Equally, a different kind of “waiting for trains” played a part in the reorganisation of the subjective experience of time in the new epoch of the modern:

For members of the Victorian middle classes, the railway was often their most direct encounter with the discipline of this new industrial technology. They

learned on the station platform and in the railway carriage what the industrial worker had already learned on the factory floor. In this sense, the railway quite literally brought people up to speed.⁵²

The temporality of prison life is analogous to that of the pre-modern society awaiting an invitation to the party of modernity. Just as the agrarian or colonial community anticipates a reprieve from what Fredric Jameson calls vegetal time — the same organic life-rhythm, it must be said, that is made the object of nostalgia in the romantic imagination — the convict disavows the present in anticipation of the moment of release. For William Buelow Gould, however, locked in his “saltwater” cell at the mercy of a regime that has abandoned responsible models of rehabilitation and retribution, freedom is permanently struck off the agenda. The best he can hope for is a less draconian punishment and a timetable offering some variety of experience:

At that time my life had settled into a routine that was if not pleasant, compared to most of my fellow felons, at least tolerably comfy. Though I continued to sleep with the other convicts in the Penitentiary, between the morning and evening muster I was largely free to do whatever took my fancy and go where I liked on the island. I received extra food, a rum ration and was allowed to keep a small vegetable garden for my own use next to Castlereagh’s pen. I even had a woman, which in a colony full of men is no small matter.⁵³

Even though the transition from pre-modern to modern time is often represented as a jarring, disconcerting experience, according to a number of writers, the regularity of the railway actually operates as a reassuring presence for subjects assailed by the experiential maelstrom of modernity. Russell McDougall, for instance, suggests that “however unpunctual and unreliable they might be in fact, trains are to the British imagination emblems of a soothing Eternity.”⁵⁴ Marshall Berman adds that “the railroad ran on a fixed

schedule along a prescribed route, and so, for all its demonic potentialities, became a nineteenth century paradigm of order.”⁵⁵ In his study of time in the work of Emile Zola, Robert M. Viti offers a similar interpretation of the function of trains in the literary imagination:

The railway is the best and clearest representation of systematic order in all of Zola. [...] Besides expressing the methodical regularity of linear time, the precise movement of the minute hand as trains arrive at one station and leave another, the railway emphasizes also the order and coherence of recurrence, of circularity, since these exact movements are repeated everyday, on a regular, systematic, scheduled basis. The railway system is indeed the representation of the uniform and the harmonious, the ordinary and the expected.⁵⁶

In Flanagan’s novel this figural schema is inverted so that the railway becomes a symbol not of order but of the hallucinogenic modernising vision of the syphilitic Commandant. Gould’s involvement in the construction of the Sarah Island railway disrupts the relative harmony of his life as a painter of fish and sets him on the path to destruction. We are thus exposed to a paradox inherent in the process of “waiting for trains”. On the one hand, once they have been introduced into a community, trains take on the soothing, harmonious function described by the writers above. Their regularity and repetition situate them within a steadfastly circular temporal horizon. On the other, however, the fact of their being introduced into a community, with all its concomitant associations of progress and change, must be plotted onto a linear temporal sequence. In this last sense the arrival of the train and the end of the “wait” signals the onset of a new epochal moment, a year zero after which things will never be the same again. At the experiential level, the bi-polar character of this temporal configuration — the time of trains, the time

of no trains — produces an epistemological shock for the newly modern subject that is mirrored and amplified by the phenomenological encounter with the physicality of speed itself. The corporeal impacts of this new age of mechanised travel is most emphatically demonstrated in the case of large-scale accidents, like the infamous Staplehurst derailing that numbered amongst its victims, a rattled, if relatively unhurt, Charles Dickens:

Although Dickens got off lightly in the accident itself, the original jolt seems to have left its mark on his body, to have filed itself away in his nervous system; he relived the event over and over, experiencing all the anxiety that he didn't feel at the time.⁵⁷

The flip-side of this uniquely modern form of nervousness is the thrill induced by the experience of the new. The introduction of linear time to a community traditionally organised around the regular cycles of nature and agriculture goes hand in hand with the commitment to achieving dynamic change. Modernisation is always a response to a vision for a different future that must be reached by way of linear progression so that the time to come is irreducibly different to the time of the present. In the case of Flanagan's Commandant, the goal of modernising Sarah Island is to make the penal colony, "the product of his imaginative will" after the fashion of Miss Anne, the sister of the dead major whose identity he steals to precipitate his plan for the construction of a nation.⁵⁸ In a grand misunderstanding, the Commandant interprets the descriptions of a modernising Europe in the letters sent by Miss Anne as the account of a process of *autopoiesis* on her part:

One night, when behind his gold mask his eyes had finally wearied from rereading her wondrous letters and closed in a dully pleasant anticipation of nearing sleep, he realized that all the new technological miracles in Europe had

either been invented by Miss Anne or directly come into being from her good works, wise advice or kindly intervention: be these the locomotive, the steam ship, the steam press or the generation of the supernatural force of electricity — all were the creation of Miss Anne!⁵⁹

The introduction of linear time to Sarah Island is an initial success. Frustrated at the lack of interest in the affairs of the island shown by the authorities in Hobart, the Commandant rejects humdrum administrative cyclicity and begins to remodel the settlement according to his own linear blueprint. The following is a short passage from a section covering four pages in which Flanagan describes the arc of the colony's blossoming:

With its profits he bought more boats and had others go back to the island upon which he had been marooned and hunt the moonbird for its flesh and the seals for their skins. He formed those convicts he trusted into an elite guard, had them shoot dead half his soldiers, and by not informing the colonial authorities, kept receiving their wages as dead-pay. He doubled the rate of felling of Huon Pine and halved the amount he sent back to the colonial authorities, then as trade grew brisk quadrupled his felling and quartered the amount he sent now only as a forlorn tribute to Hobart Town, along with letters speaking of the almost insurmountable problems of poor tools, sawyers of no experience, epidemics of unspeakable sin and weather so awful the rivers were frozen for six months of the year.⁶⁰

Along with the cyclical temporality of stasis and repetition, the entropic linearity of decay and disrepair is the time-state most feared by agents of modernisation. In the case of Flanagan's Sarah Island, these two figural schemas arrive hand-in-hand to signal the failure of the Commandant's mad ambitions. The first sign that the dream of constructing a prosperous city-state has foundered on the rocks of reality is the unrequited laying of rail lines into the interior of the Tasmanian wilderness. In this case, the transubstantiated

“linearity” of the time of modernisation is met with a blank refusal from its imagined interlocutors and nothing but silence resounds along the steel network:

When after another year, there was still no sign of any incoming rail traffic, the Commandant had four search parties sent into the interior to discover exactly from which direction the new railway lines must be inevitably advancing. No-one returned.⁶¹

The introduction of a new cyclical temporality embodied in the physical structure of the railway follows hard on the heels of this interruption in linear time. With his hopes of escaping the tyranny of distance dashed by the non-appearance of incoming locomotives, the Commandant sets out to stupify himself with interminable journeys upon his circular railway. As part of the task of recruiting Gould to the job of concocting a visual accompaniment to this train-to-nowhere, he has the hapless convict strapped to the front of one of the engines. The Commandant’s wish that Gould “might better experience the new aesthetick of movement” of course, results in a pathetic parody of travel that firmly ensconces the cyclical as the dominant temporal mode. If time passes, but no distance is covered, how is the future ever to be reached?

To the growing roar of the steam engine and the rhythmic clatter of iron wheels on iron rails, I circled endlessly. Within a few minutes I was vomiting and a few minutes after that I had nothing left to retch save a foul green bile that spread like the vomit before over my clothes. On and on, round and round, and no attempt to lose myself in sleep or daydreaming or focussing on thoughts of food or women helped in any way. [...] If this was the future, thought I in one of the few moments of lucidity granted me that long evening, it was not a future that seemed worthy of the name.⁶²

Gould's Book of Fish depicts an attempt to restore the locomotive to its role as the harbinger of modernity, the carrier of progress, economic growth and new social values that it never managed to be in the 'real' history of Tasmania. Visions of the American West and the manifest destiny played out by the railway barons are transposed into Tasmania with predictably disastrous results. Unlike the American locomotives, these trains have nowhere to go. Suffering from third-stage syphilis, and viewing the world in fantastic terms from beneath his mask of gold, the Commandant retains a manic, modernist faith in the necessary link between lines and arrivals, between construction and appearance. He spreads his enterprise out into the South West in the anticipation that someone somewhere will be building from another direction, that connection will inevitably be made. But no one comes because there is no elsewhere from which they might arrive. The serpentine tracks of steel and sleepers remain unused and unwanted before being re-claimed by the wilderness that the Commandant attempts so vainly to master.⁶³

The re-emergence of cyclical time as the containing horizon for the Commandant's project of modernisation — like the Railway, the Great Mahjong Hall also falls into a state of disrepair and ultimate collapse — also signals Flanagan's failure to satisfactorily actualise his wish for a new Tasmanian modernity metonymically embodied in the "Nova Venetia" of Sarah Island. Notwithstanding the circular motifs that organise the telling of *Gould's Book of Fish* — the reappearance of Mr Hung in the final chapter, the return to the time of the now, the last gasp admission that all the novel's central characters are emanations of the same cracked, aquatic psyche — Flanagan's attempt at retroactively re-orienting his desire for future change in the real Tasmania toward a fictionalised anterior

object is stymied by the very cyclical character of the act of wishing itself. As Freud writes:

The motive forces of fantasies are unsatisfied wishes, and every single fantasy is the fulfilment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality. Mental work is linked to some current impression, some provoking occasion in the present which has been able to arouse one of the subject's major wishes. *From there it harks back to a memory of an earlier experience in which the wish was fulfilled; and it now creates a situation relating to the future which represents a fulfilment of the wish.* What it thus creates is a daydream or fantasy [...] past, present and future are strung together as it were on the thread of the wish that runs through them.⁶⁴

The most apposite section of this comment is Freud's observation on the way "past, present and future" come to be "strung together [...] on the thread of the wish that runs through them." Although undoubtedly gifted at evoking the "nowness" of present-day Tasmania, Flanagan also devotes much energy to fleshing out the past, busying himself, to paraphrase Terry Eagleton on Irish culture, with "back-projecting a venerable past" for the island.⁶⁵ This task is carried out so competently that its deployment often makes the old seem newer and more vivid than the images Flanagan draws from our own horizon of temporality. As Mead has argued, Flanagan's artistic world is built around a vision of the moment as a period of sustained temporal extension. In this imaginary temporal topology the present blends with the past and merges with the future in a single, indefinitely distended, window of time.

The fantasy that Freud discusses is firmly couched in the future tense, the wish is for an alteration in the present that might be achieved in a time to come. For Flanagan, however, past, present and future are all parts of the same monadic moment, which means

that the unsatisfied wish, which can be traced in his non-fictional writing to a desire for a re-organisation of Tasmanian modernity in the future, might just as well be directed at the past, because the two temporal modes are not subject to the same kind of division and compartmentalisation that they are in Freud's formulation.

What Flanagan is attempting in *Gould's Book of Fish*, is the recreation of "the memory of the earlier experience in which the wish was fulfilled" so that it becomes a prosthetic simulation of a prior fulfilment of his own longings for the future, a simulation that can be drawn upon as a psychical resource for moving forward and through the straitened conditions of the Tasmanian present. Flanagan is redirecting his imaginative energies at the modernity of Tasmania's past as a means of satisfying his desire for a change in the form of the modernity of Tasmania's present and future:

The only way people can go forward is by walking back into the shadows of the past. At some point you have to turn around and look back into the shadows before you can go on.⁶⁶

The bulk of Freud's theoretical writing on wish-fulfilment concentrates on the realisation of those wishes in dreams. In essays from volumes one, four, five and fifteen of the standard works, Freud outlines the major part of his theoretical corpus on night-time cognition, a corpus which has often since been represented solely by the short slogan: "dreams are the disguised fulfilment of distorted wishes." It goes without saying that the work attributed to dreams in the metapsychology is a lot more complicated than that. Freud makes room for "anxiety" and "punishment" dreams, for instance, as well as delineating three different aetiologies for the manifest content revealed in the dream-

work.⁶⁷ For the most part however, it is wishing and its subsequent fulfilment that he believes sit at the basis of our (ir)rationality for dreaming:

We have found some dreams which appear only as wish-fulfilments, and others in which the wish-fulfilment was unrecognisable and often disguised by every possible means. In the latter we have perceived the dream-censorship at work. We found the undistorted wishful dreams principally in children; though short, frankly wishful dreams seemed to occur in adults as well.⁶⁸

In “Creative Writers and Daydreaming” Freud identifies another outlet for the troubling desires that the wakeful reality principle finds unpalatable, intolerable or unsustainable. Here he connects childhood play, a third space in which fantasies may be indulged, with the (adult) act of daydreaming. He then goes on to argue that in creative writing we discover a form of daydreaming — itself a carry-over from childhood play — that is not found unsuitable for public display by the censoring forces of the reality principle. Creative writers, Freud argues, are a privileged set because they are allowed to fantasise in public. The imprimatur that makes those wishes acceptable is to be gained through the judicious use of form. By dressing desire up in respectable attire, writers make good on the disguised and distorted end of the equation that Freud established in the case of wish fulfilment in dreams, making their desires speak in powerful and representative ways to a larger community for whom that right has largely been denied:

We laymen have always been intensely curious to know from what strange sources that strange being, the creative writer, draws his material [...] Might we not say that every child at play behaves like a creative writer, in that he creates a world of his own, or, rather, rearranges the things of his world in a new way that pleases him? It would be wrong to think he does not take that world seriously, on the contrary, he takes his play very seriously and expends large amount of

emotion on it. The opposite of play is not what is serious but what is real. In spite of all the emotion with which he cathects his world of play, the child distinguishes it quite well from reality; and likes to link his imagined objects and situations to the tangible and visible things of the real world. This linking is all that differentiates the child's play from 'fantasying'.⁶⁹

The key to applying Freud's insights to Flanagan's work is the latter's ambivalent relationship with the project of hydro-electrification as expressed in the following elegiac passage from *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*:

Once this weary pastoral land had been open forest through which the blackfellas hunted and camped and of a night filled with their stories of which one had no end: that of their fierce war against the invading whitefellas. Then the surveyors came with their barefooted convict track cutters and they gave the land strange new names and by their naming and by their describing they announced the coming of a terrible revolution. Where their indian-inked maps cut the new country into neat counties with quaint reassuring English names like Cumberland and Bothwell, the surveyor's successors, the hydro-electricity engineers, made their straight lines reality in the form of the wires along which the new energy, electricity — the new god — hummed its song of promise, its seductive false prophesies that Tasmania would one day be Australia's Ruhr Valley.⁷⁰

Flanagan's involvement with the environmental movement and his generalised antipathy toward orthodox Tasmanian politics are indicative of a sensitivity to the failings of the project he describes in this passage, but when it comes to providing content for the empty form of his fictional wish, he is unable to escape completely the reservoir of future-directed optimism that Tasmanians tend to associate with this period. Flanagan avails himself of the rich resource of communal hope embodied in the project of hydro-electrification in a number of ways in *Could's Book of Fish*. His wish for an alternative

Tasmanian modernity finds an avenue for sublimation in his fiction but cannot ever remove itself completely from the influence of the “real” modernisation of Tasmania. Instead images and tropes drawn from this “true” history return again and again in condensed and displaced form to overdetermine the fictional vision, making it a kind of crazy composite of the real and the imagined; a pastiche, in other words, held together by a surplus of hope.

The social energies that Flanagan recuperates from the “true” history of Tasmania extend beyond the narrative of railway construction described earlier to encompass the story of hydro-electrification that so dominated Tasmanian self-identity through the 20th century. The first associated episode that Flanagan replots concerns the perennial struggle to enlarge the population of Tasmania at a faster rate than Australia as a whole, a key plank in the plan to arrest relative decline. Lloyd Robson’s *A History of Tasmania*, tells us that this goal has only been attained once in modern times, during the heyday of the Hydro-Electric Commission’s expansion in the early-1950s.⁷¹ A sediment of demographic optimism thus layers the infrastructural gigantism of dam building, and Tasmania’s political leaders have seldom resisted the repetition-compulsion that draws them back to pump-priming and civil works as the universal panacea for Tasmania’s economic ills. Flanagan allegorises this blind faith in the progress of engineering through his depiction of the monumental building projects of the Commandant.

The second episode that is re-presented in Gould’s narrative is the struggle over the Gordon and Franklin rivers that ultimately spelled the end of hydro-electrification after the High Court ruled in favour of the Federal Government’s intervention to halt the construction of the Gordon-Below-Franklin dam in 1983. Flanagan turns history on its

head in his fictional world, and has the Commandant exchange the rights to the river for foreign currency. Finally, the Commandant's decision to sell the entire South-West wilderness to Japanese loggers recuperates contemporary reservations about clear-felling old-growth forests for wood-chips in an economic and ecological climate where downstream, value-adding is increasingly being viewed as the only justifiable rationale for the continued sanction and subsidisation of anachronistic extractive industries. Woodchipping is not in itself a product of hydro-electrification, but the instrumental orientation to nature that is its motivating force sets up an associative chain with the project of industrialisation.

As Natalie Jackson makes clear in her demographic work on Tasmania, one of the most commonly recurring tropes in the doomsaying prognostications on Tasmania's future is the problem of depopulation.⁷² Here is Flanagan commenting on a proposal to construct a tourist site on the Hobart waterfront that engages with that problematic:

That's why Rundle [the Premier of the day] will kill the goose that laid the golden egg and build that horror show down on the wharves to get in the tourists who come on cruise ships precisely because they want to look at something like Salamanca. [...] What I'm saying is that there are forces abroad in the world that will lead to people coming here whether we want them or not.⁷³

The similarities between the orientation of Tasmania's political leaders as observed in this statement and the construction of the Commandant's plans for the Sarah Island National Railway from *Gould's Book of Fish* make the following passage from the novel worth reproducing at some length:

It was a huge undertaking, requiring sandstone be quarried and shipped from far up the coast, the purchase and assembly of all the machinery needed for the work-shops and smiths and factories associated with a great train station. All

this in face of those who quietly expressed the timid doubt that a train station on an island in the middle of the wilderness far off the coast of a nowhere land so blighted it existed only as a gaol was unlikely ever to be either the terminus or point of departure for any traveler. Such arguments were calmly refuted by the implacable conviction of the Commandant that railway lines grew out to train stations as willows roots to a lake and that therefore before long it would be the busiest train station in the Antipodes; that soon Manchurians and Liverpoolians would enviously and covetously talk of the National Sarah Island Railway Station. In this way [...] we will have traded our tyranny of isolation for the liberty of commerce.⁷⁴

Here, the Commandant is presented as an analogue for a Tasmanian State Government still infatuated with the infrastructure driven economic success that had its heyday during the boom-times of hydro-electrification. Like the proponents of that dubious project, the Commandant remains myopically set on establishing his National Railway even as unmistakeable evidence of its impending failure comes pouring in. In both cases, the fiction and the commentary, Flanagan describes an administrator obsessed with overcoming the isolation of Tasmania through large-scale construction. Unable to impede the course of contemporary events with which he disagrees, Flanagan redirects his antipathy toward the Commandant's grand folly. In a range of passages which connect up in fascinating ways with Tasmania's own inability to establish sustainable profitable commerce, Flanagan has the Commandant pursue his dream into the mouth of madness:

When it was determinedly but respectfully put to the Commandant that a train station on an island in the middle of the wilderness was unlikely to attract any other traffic that might bring in income to offset its enormous cost, the Commandant placidly and unexpectedly agreed. He then revealed that he had for the last several months not been asleep at all in the revolving locomotive cabin, but in deep discussion with a Japanese trader called Magamasa Yamada,

a man in whose land there was a great demand for wood and with whom the Commandant had entered into an arrangement to sell the entire Transylvanian [The South West of Tasmania, now covered by the World Heritage Area] wilderness in exchange for more rolling stock.⁷⁵

The social issue about which Flanagan has been most outspoken in recent years is undoubtedly old-growth logging, particularly where areas of natural heritage value are threatened by forestry practices. Once again, the satirical conflation of real world concerns and fictional renderings in the novel at hand conspires to reveal an ambivalence on the part of the author about Tasmania's dependency on primary industries as an avenue to modernity. Just as Tasmania's old growth forests are sold to Japanese interests as a means of propping up the present day economy, the Commandant sells off the rights to the South-West wilderness so that he can acquire the equipment he needs to actualise his outrageous vision for Sarah Island's future. In the final piece to this puzzle, Flanagan has the Commandant acquire currency to service his mounting debts through the sale of the Gordon River, the environmental heart of the "No Dams" movement that finally sealed the fate of the project of hydro-electrification in 1983.

Flanagan's desire for an alternative modernity for Tasmania, with all its condensations and displacements of Tasmania's "real" passage to the present, cannot quite escape a repetition of the mediocre story of the Island's "actual" modernisation. Freud's remarks on the way a wish returns to the site of a previous satisfaction as a means of drawing the energy to posit a fulfilling future theorises Flanagan's own ambivalent relationship with the project of hydro-electrification. The compression of past, present and future, fact and fiction into one marvelous brew is not enough in this case to give

succour to the vicissitudes of the author's wishing. In re-imagining Tasmanian modernity, Flanagan has no choice but to draw from the positive residues of the fleeting success of the project of hydro-electrification, allegorising its successes and failures in the Commandant's grandiose schemes for the establishment of the great trading nation of Sarah Island.

Notes

¹ See William E. Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988); Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Scott Lash, *Reflexive Modernization: Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press in association with Blackwell Publishers, 1994); Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, translated by Mark Ritter (London: Sage, 1992); Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971); *The Consequences of Modernity; Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991); Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air*; Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (New York: Free Press, 1990); Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (London: Duckworth, 1981); Zygmunt Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 1992); *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Post-Modernity, and Intellectuals* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987); *Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995); *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000); *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity, 1991); *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989); *Postmodernity and its Discontents* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997); Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*; Axel Honneth, *The Fragmented World of the Social: Essays in Social and Political Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989); Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953); *The Political Philosophy of Hobbes, its Basis and its Genesis*; translated by Elsa M. Sinclair (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952); Agnes Heller, *A Theory of Modernity* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 1999); Chakrabarty, *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); *Provincializing Europe*; Kumar, *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society; The Rise of Modern Society: Aspects of the Social and Political Development of the West* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988); *Utopia and Anti-Utopia in Modern Times*, (Oxford and New York: Blackwell, 1987); John F. Rundell *Origins of Modernity: The Origins of Modern Social Theory From Kant to Hegel to Marx* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987); Harvey, *The Capital of Modernity; The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990); Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Peter Wagner, *A Sociology of Modernity: Liberty and Discipline* (London: Routledge, 1994); *Theorising Modernity: Inescapability and Attainability in Social Theory* (London: Sage, 2001); N. J. Rengger, *Political Theory, Modernity, and Postmodernity: Beyond Enlightenment and Critique* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995).

² Kumar, *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society*, p. 66.

³ Immanuel Wallerstein, for instance, makes modernity a synonym for the Enlightenment. See Dussel, "World System and 'Trans- Modernity'," pp. 221-44.

⁴ Not only were the Tasmanian Aborigines construed as savages, they were also positioned as the missing link between primates and mankind by 19th-century evolutionists. This tendency continues up to the late-20th century when the influential anthropologist/archaeologist Rhys Jones mounted his notorious thesis that the Aborigines were degenerating as a result of cultural isolation. See H. R. Allen, "Left Out in the Cold: Why the Tasmanians Stopped Eating Fish," *The Artefact* 4 (1979), pp. 1-10; Sandra Bowdler, "Fish and Culture: A Tasmanian Polemic," *Mankind* 12.4 (1980), pp. 334-40; Robert B. Edgerton, *Sick Societies: Challenging the Myth of Primitive Harmony* (New York: Free Press, 1992); Rhys Jones, "Why Did the Tasmanians Stop Eating Fish?," in R. A. Gould, ed., *Explorations in Ethnoarchaeology* (Santa Fe: University of New Mexico Press, 1978), pp. 11-48.

⁵ John Daniel Cash, *Identity, Ideology and Conflict: The Structuration of Politics in Northern Ireland* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 1.

⁶ Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence*, p. 19.

⁷ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 7.

⁸ The most fruitful way to characterise Chakrabarty's disciplinary location is to align his scholarship with other work coming out of the South Asian Subaltern Studies Collective. See the various subaltern studies readers plus the following monographs: Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); *The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question* (Calcutta: Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, 1987); *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (London: Zed Books for the United Nations University, 1986); *State and Politics in India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997); Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983); *History at the Limit of World-History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002); *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1982); Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*.

⁹ But risk and return address one another in the form of a positive correlation. Within a field of "normal" capitalist transactions, the riskier the investment, the greater the potential rewards. This is an inter-disciplinary axiom that I hope might be successfully applied to this current problem of inter-disciplinarity.

¹⁰ See Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin, 1992), and Derrida's critique of Fukuyama in *Spectres of Marx*.

¹¹ Even though Bauman's reading of the Enlightenment as a monsterring scientific juggernaut that disavowed humanism in the name of an all pervasive lust for technological control and classificatory rigour is an influential one, it has not gone uncriticised. In "The Enlightenment, Genocide, Postmodernity," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 5.3 (2003), pp. 339-60, for instance, John Docker identifies the continued intercession of mysticism, universalist humanism and cosmopolitanism in the thinking of the "long eighteenth century" as a means for broadening the boundaries of the Enlightenment project. See also James Kaye and Bo Stråith, eds., *Enlightenment and Genocide, Contradictions of Modernity* (Brussels: P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2000); A. Dirk Moses, "Modernity and the Holocaust," *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 43 (1997), pp. 441-45; Judith Bokser and Gilda Waldman, "Modernity and the Holocaust: Some Critical Reflections regarding Bauman," *Acta Sociologica*, 35 (2002), pp. 31-59; Caj Schmitz, "Auschwitz: The Modern Project's Culmination or Collapse?," *Sociologisk Forskning*, 36.2 (1999), pp. 5-35.

¹² Uwe Makino, "Final Solutions, Crimes Against Mankind: On the Genesis and Criticism of the Concept of Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 3.1 (2001), p. 59.

¹³ See Francis Galton, *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into its Laws and Consequences* (London: MacMillan, 1925); Robert Knox, *The Races of Men: A Fragment* (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1850); Benjamin Kidd, *Social Evolution* (New York, Macmillan, 1894); Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species and the Descent of Man* (New York: Basic Books, n.d.).

¹⁴ See N. J. B. Plomley, ed., *Weep in Silence: A History of the Flinders Island Aboriginal Settlement; with the Flinders Island Journal of George Augustus Robinson 1835-1839* (Hobart: Blubberhead Press, 1987).

¹⁵ Patrick Brantlinger, "Dying Races': Rationalising Genocide in the Nineteenth Century," in Jan Nederveen Pieterse and Bhiku Parekh, eds., *The Decolonisation of Imagination* (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1995), p. 52.

¹⁶ Timothy Mitchell, "The Stage of Modernity," in Timothy Mitchell, ed., *Questions of Modernity* (University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, 2000), p. 24-5.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁸ Gaonkar, "On Alternative Modernities," in Gaonkar, ed., *Alternative Modernities*, p. 18.

¹⁹ Charles Taylor, "Two Theories of Modernity," in Gaonkar, ed., *Alternative Modernities*, pp. 182-3.

²⁰ Tani E. Barlow "Introduction," Barlow, ed., *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia*, p. 6.

²¹ See Sidney Mintz, *Caribbean Transformations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989).

²² In the *Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, Windschuttle takes issue with the argument that pastoralism contributed in any major way to the decimation of the Aborigines. He directly attacks Ryan and Reynolds in this discussion, drawing on Sharon Morgan's *Land Settlement in Early Tasmania: Creating an Antipodean England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), to argue that land appropriation was nowhere near as extensive as Ryan asserts. He also criticizes Ryan's claim that wool grown in Van Diemen's Land was exported to any substantial degree to an industrialising Britain, p. 78. Even if Windschuttle's work more accurately describes historical "reality" than the work of Ryan or Reynolds, it remains the case that the archival articulations of genocide in Tasmania have been narrativised, in the 20th century at least, in contiguous association with accounts of modernisation. Nineteenth-century histories don't tend to draw out the connection between pastoralism and decimation as strongly. In works by James Fenton and James Calder, in particular, colonial expansion is inscribed with a naturalistic inevitability that leads the latter at least to describe the murder of Aborigines by the white interlopers as "defensive killings by settlers", p. 25. See James Calder, *Some Accounts of Wars, Extirpation, Habits of the Native Tribes of Tasmania* (Hobart Town: Henn and Co, 1875). For a useful discussion of the hybrid localism of pre-pastoral Tasmania see Peter Hay, "Introductory Note," *Van Diemonian Essays* (Hobart: Walleah Press, 2002). James Boyce, "Journeying Home: A New Look at the British Invasion of Van Diemen's Land: 1803/1823," *Island*, 66 (Autumn 1996), pp. 38-63.

²³ Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence*, p. 5.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 17.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 10.

²⁷ Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, p. 5.

²⁸ Richard Bernstein, "Introduction," in Richard Bernstein, ed., *Habermas and Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985), p. 6.

²⁹ Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, p. 13.

³⁰ Ibid., p.12.

³¹ Ibid., p. 50.

³² The sheer volume of scholarly work on the Holocaust made it almost inevitable that Bauman's position *vis à vis* the modernity of the "Final Solution" would be seriously challenged. Daniel Jonah Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, (Abacus: London, 1996), for instance, casts Bauman's position in a new light in two main ways. First of all, Goldhagen reorders the "irruption of non-modernity" contention to argue that "magical ways of thinking" about Jews in Germany persisted in an unbroken lineage from the middle ages to the time of the Third Reich. Second, by reorientating the "intentionalist-functionalist" debate in order to take fuller account of the individual agency of perpetrators, Goldhagen decenters the "bureaucratic compartmentalisation" argument that Bauman relies so heavily upon. This is not to take away from the salience or originality of Bauman's intervention, but more precisely, to highlight the way that disciplinary locatedness and thematic deployment necessarily inflect the textual approach to any significant historical event. Goldhagen's articulation is a more thoroughgoing social scientific historicisation of the Holocaust, while Bauman is more interested in offering a reexamination through the language of Modernity Studies. It is primarily for this last reason that I believe a careful unpacking of Bauman's argument is useful in the context of this thesis.

³³ Ibid., p. 17.

³⁴ See James Bonwick, *The Last of the Tasmanians* (London: Sampson Low, Son, and Marston, 1870); Clive Turnbull, *Black War: The Extermination of the Tasmanian Aborigines* (Melbourne: Landsdowne Press, 1965); Haydon (dir.) *The Last Tasmanian*. For further 19th-century examples of the extinction thesis see Calder, *Some Accounts of Wars, Extirpation, Habits of the Native Tribes of Tasmania*; Henry Ling-Roth, *The Aborigines of Tasmania* (Halifax West: King and Sons, 1899); James Bischoff, *Sketch of the History of Van Diemen's Land, Illustrated by a Map of the Island, and an Account of the Van Diemen's Land Company* (London: John Richardson, 1832); James Backhouse Walker, *Papers on Tasmania* (Hobart: William Grahame, Government Printer, 1884-1896); George Washington Walker, *Notes on the Aborigines of Tasmania* (Hobart: William Grahame, Jun., Govt. Printer, 1898); James Barnard, *Aborigines of Tasmania* (Melbourne: Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, 1890); William Flower, *The Aborigines of Tasmania: An Extinct Race: A Lecture Delivered in the Hulme Town Hall, Manchester, Nov. 30, 1878* (Manchester: John Heywood, 1879); Hugh Hull, *Lecture on the Aborigines of Tasmania: Read at the Mechanics' Institute, Hobart Town, 28th Oct., 1869* (Hobart Town: Mercury, 1870); R. H. Davies, "On the Aborigines of Van Diemen's Land," *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture, Statistics, etc.* 11 (1846), pp. 409-20; Robert Smyth, *The Aborigines of Victoria: With Notes Relating to the Habits of the Natives of Other Parts of Australia and Tasmania* (Melbourne: John Currey O'Neil, 1972). For 20th-century versions see Archibald Meston, *The Problem of the Tasmanian Aborigine* (Hobart: Government Printer, 1937); Hugh Bohun, *Black Tragedy* (Sydney: Midget Masterpiece, 1933); Frederic Jones, *Tasmania's Vanished Race: National Talks Delivered from 3AR Melbourne, on Feb 26th, 1935, March 6th, 1935 and March 12th, 1935* (Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Commission, 1935); William Brydon, *The Story of the Tasmanian Aborigines* (Hobart: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 1960); William Turner, *The Aborigines of Tasmania* (Edinburgh: Robert Grant, 1908-1914); Robert Travers, *The Tasmanians: The Story of a Doomed Race* (Cassel: Melbourne, 1968).

³⁵ Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, pp. 78-94.

³⁶ A second product of this strategy is the deconstruction and dispersal of what was, on the older model, figured as a unified historical "event". Instead of a fore-grounded singularity — extinction — made up of a multiplicity of subordinated instances of mortality, this more dynamic reading of the Tasmanian genocide brings into relief the heterogeneity of deadly encounters between the colonisers and the Aborigines. As Plomley points out in appendix four of *Friendly Mission*, the Aborigines died in numerous ways; from the introduction of European disease, as a result of the occupation by settlers of the tribal hunting grounds and areas in which food was obtained, at the hands of bushrangers, police, the army, the judiciary, sealers,

shepherds and stockmen. Their numbers were also lowered by the removal of women from tribes for prostitution and slavery and from the general disruption of tribal life due to the above causes and due to the lack of regulated contact with the Europeans. See George Augustus Robinson, *Friendly Mission: The Tasmanian Journals and Papers of George Augustus Robinson 1829-1834*, edited by N. J. B. Plomley (Hobart: Tasmanian Historical Research Association, 1966), p. 964.

But an avowal of the extinction thesis is also the most obvious means by which to approach a conceptualisation of the history of violent relations between the indigenous and non-indigenous Tasmanians as a history of genocide. A genocidal relation is asymmetrical and non-reciprocal. It describes a set of events in which a unified collective subject deliberately sets out to eliminate an equally unified collective other, or not-subject that is restrained from inverting the relationship. The emphasis Bauman places on the function of the modern bureaucracy in the realisation of the objective of the Holocaust derives from the capacity of that administrative apparatus to produce these two collective entities. As the instrument for the implementation of policies of the state, bureaucracy gives body-political flesh to the abstract directives of the legislative branch of government. The state is the collective subject *par excellence*, but it cannot enforce its symbolic agency without the pragmatic aptitudes of the bureaucracy. Racial ideology might provide a rationale for the *conceptualisation* of a unified object of genocide, but the *concrete production* of that unified other relies upon the co-ordination of a set of administrative practices that can be carried out in a formulaic way across a variety of space-time locations. The same can also be said for the production of the unified collective subject, especially in conditions of totalitarianism, where as Slavoj Žižek tells us, the subject consists only of an id and a super-ego — the self-identical “I” having been eliminated by a process of interpellation uninterested in producing individuated “human beings”.

In the extinction-as-teleology argument, one side of the genocidal equation is clearly delineated. The Aboriginal tribes of Tasmania are the collective non-subject of what Clive Turnbull calls in the subtitle to his book, an extermination. That the diversity of language, custom and territorial alignments that distinguished the different peoples of Tasmania gets glossed over by such a move, is the necessary corollary of a narrative which purports to tell the story of the demise of an entire civilisation. It is less clear, however, exactly who constitutes the unified agent of this extermination. Ostensibly, of course, it is the European colonisers, but we all know that this particular collective noun designates a multiplicity of people from different classes, of different legal status, genders, occupational groups and so on. What is intriguing is that while the authors of the historical accounts in question also take ample account of this heterogeneity in their description of individual incidents of violent altercation, it is only when their narratives shift into the interpretive mode that the collective subject is invoked. As Bonwick writes in a particularly overwrought passage from *Last of the Tasmanians*:

We Europeans came upon them as evil dragons, blasting them with the breath of our presence. We broke up their home circles, the only real unit of their society. We arrested them at their corroborees, which in turn were considered evil and taken from them. Even in this one facet of their lives we destroyed their community as much as possible [...] We, the Europeans, turned their song into weeping, and their mirth into sadness. pp. 57-8.

Or Turnbull, in his opening essay to *Black War*:

Not, perhaps before has a race of men been utterly destroyed within seventy five years, This is the story of a race which was so destroyed, that of the aborigines of Tasmania — destroyed not only by a different manner of life but by the ill-will of the usurpers of the race's land. When that ill will was active it found expression in brutality. When passive it deplored extermination while condoning, and participating in the rewards of a system which made extermination inevitable [...] with no defences but cunning and the most primitive weapons, the natives were no match for the sophisticated individualists of knife and gun. So perished a whole people. p. 1.

³⁷ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 8.

³⁸ This is a modification of the exact quote from Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*, translated by Harry Zohn (London: Verso, 1983). In his essay on Guys from *Oeuvres*, edited by Yves-Gérard Le Dantec (Paris 1931-32), Baudelaire writes: "Everywhere he sought the transitory, fleeting beauty of our present life, the character of what the reader has permitted us to call *modernism*. To which Benjamin adds, "In summary form, his [Baudelaire's] doctrine reads as follows: 'A constant, unchangeable element [...] and a relative limited element cooperates to produce beauty [...]. The latter element is supplied by the epoch, by fashion, by morality, and the passions. Without this second element [...] the first would not be assimilable.'" Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire*, p. 82.

³⁹ See Plomley, ed., *Weep in Silence: A History of the Flinders Island Aboriginal Settlement*. The drastic reduction in the Aboriginal population at Wybalenna is indicative of a failed modernity, but it only rehearses a more primordial failure of European attempts to disenchant the Palawa universe. James D. Faubian reads the Weberian take on the zero degree of modernity as "a certain deconstruction: of [...] the ethical postulate that the world is a God-ordained, and hence somehow meaningfully and ethically oriented cosmos [...]. See James D. Faubian, *Modern Greek Lessons: A Primer in Historical Constructivism* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 113. Mudrooroo's fictionalised account of the genocide in *Dr Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World*, presents the demise of the Palawa as an operation of divine fate to which Wooreddy is made privy in a revelation on the beach at Bruny Island. Mudrooroo's persuasive reading of the way in which an indigenous cosmology absorbs the theology of the modernising colonisers not only turns the lip service responses to that proselytising vigour into utilitarian rather than religious forms of sociality, it also makes clear that from the perspective of the colonised, attempts to supplant their own religious practices and narratives is a kind of disenchantment. The incommensurability of Aboriginal and European theogonies is apparent in Robinson's incapacity to make sense of the polysemous utility of the signifier "Rowra" in Aboriginal discourse. See Calder, *Some Accounts of the Wars, Extirpation, Habits of the Native Tribes of Tasmania*, p. 86.

⁴⁰ Edward J. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), p. 23.

⁴¹ Philip Mead, "A Strange Narrative Density," *Island*, 87 (Spring 2001), p. 15.

⁴² See Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*, p. 681 for a delineation of the intuitive categories and the a priori categories.

⁴³ Richard Flanagan, *Death of a River Guide* (Ringwood: McPhee Gribble, 1994), p. 254.

⁴⁴ Richard Flanagan, *Sound of One Hand Clapping* (Sydney: PanMacmillan, 1997), p. 19.

⁴⁵ For a useful discussion of Flanagan's take on the history of postwar central European migration to Australia see Adi Wimmer, "Richard Flanagan's Novel and Film *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* and Australia's Multicultural Film Genre," *Westerly: An Annual Review*, 48 (Nov. 2003), pp. 127-43; Mirko Jurak, "Slovene Immigrants in Australia in Richard Flanagan's Novel *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*," *Acta-Neophilologica*, 34.1-2 (2001) pp. 17-29.

⁴⁶ Jim Davidson, "Tasmanian Gothic," *Meanjin*, 48.2 (Winter 1989), p.318.

⁴⁷ Richard Flanagan, "Does Tasmania Have a Future?," *Island*, 72-73 (Spring/Summer 1997), p. 150.

⁴⁸ Julia Kristeva, "Forgiveness: An Interview," *Papers of the Modern Language Association*, 117.2 (March 2002), p. 285.

⁴⁹ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 54.

⁵⁰ Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, p. 264.

⁵¹ Nicholas Daly, "Blood on the Tracks: Sensation Drama, the Railway and the Dark Face of Modernity," *Victorian Studies*, 41 (Autumn 1998-99), p. 56.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁵³ Richard Flanagan, *Gould's Book of Fish* (Sydney: Picador, 2002), p. 158.

⁵⁴ Russel McDougall, "The Railway in Australian Literature," *World Literature Written in English*, 28.1 (1988), p. 75.

⁵⁵ Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, p. 159n.

⁵⁶ Robert M. Viti, "The Cave the Clock and the Railway: Primitive and Modern Time in *La Bête Humaine*," *Nineteenth-Century French Studies*, 19.1 (Fall 1990), p. 115.

⁵⁷ Nicholas Daly, "Railway Novels: Sensation Fiction and the Modernisation of the Senses," *English Literary History*, 66 (1999), p. 462.

⁵⁸ Flanagan, *Gould's Book of Fish*, p. 157.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 172.

⁶³ The history of the construction and administration of railways in Tasmania is as disorganised at the textual level as it is in its historical unfolding. A number of odd magazine-style monographs written by rail enthusiasts rather than professional historians sit alongside company-sponsored official histories and the more thoroughgoing general introduction *A History of Trains and Trams in Tasmania* by Thomas Cooley (Hobart: Government Printer, 1987). Cooley quotes a letter from a curious outsider which neatly encapsulates Tasmania's obsession with railways:

Tasmanians are peculiar and sometimes manifest extraordinary anomalies. In other countries it is not an infrequent occurrence for children to build houses on the sand and even in their daydreams to erect castles in the air [...] Poverty stricken Tasmania has her hoary headed advocates for railway extension beyond the bounds of reason. Because Anglo-Australian, a writer 16000 miles away advocates a network of railways for Tasmania, the thing is to be done instantor, regardless of cost, without consideration of actual loss [...] These considerations have been produced by the recent railway meeting at Bothwell, at which extension of railway lines to all points of the compass were advocated by aged enthusiasts in a fashion which would surpass the day-dreams of children. p.102.

There are numerous texts that deal with the history of railways in Tasmania in detail but for particulrly academic interventions see Stefan Petrow, "Resisting the Law: Opposition to the Launceston and Western Railway rate 1872/1874," *University of Tasmania Law Review*, 15.1 (1996), pp. 77-104; Malcolm Abbott,

"The Restructuring of Australian Railways: The Case of the Tasmanian Railways," *Australian Economic History Review*, 41.2 (2001), pp. 198-212.

⁶⁴ Sigmund Freud, "Creative Writers and Day Dreaming," in David Lodge, ed., *20th Century Literary Criticism: A Reader* (London: Longman, 1991), p. 38, emphasis added.

⁶⁵ Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London: Verso, 1995), p. 274.

⁶⁶ Flanagan quoted in Elizabeth McMahon, "Points of Origin," *Island*, 75 (Winter 1998), p. 94.

⁶⁷ Sigmund Freud, "The Interpretation of Dreams," in James Strachey, ed., *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 5 (London: Hogarth Press, 1953), p. 551.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Freud, "Creative Writers and Daydreaming," p. 36.

⁷⁰ Flanagan, *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*, p. 21.

⁷¹ Lloyd Robson, *A History of Tasmania*, vol. 2 (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 514.

⁷² See Natalie Jackson and Rebecca Kippen, "Whither Tasmania: A Note on Tasmania's Population 'Problem'," *People and Place*, 9.1 (2001), pp. 27-37.

⁷³ Flanagan, "Does Tasmania Have a Future?," p. 140.

⁷⁴ Flanagan, *Gould's Book of Fish*, p. 166.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 170.

PART 3

Tasmanian Time, or,
One Hundred Years of
Melancholy 1876–1978

CHAPTER 8

Trans-civilisational Depopulation Anxiety

*I've been to a minor place/ And I can say I like its space/ If I am gone and
with no trace/
I will be in a minor place*

(Will Oldham, 2000)

*I, in opposition to these views, am prepared to assert that race is
everything in human history; that the races of men are not the result
of accident; that they are not convertible into each other by any
contrivance whatever.*

(Robert Knox, 1850)

This chapter is the site of a writing that is radically subjective. It moves from the proposition that situatedness takes the place of the economic base in Althusser's famous formulation whereby ideological enunciations are determined in the final instance by a productive infrastructure even though that final, eschatological moment never actually arrives.¹ It supposes also that the subjectivity that is writing here, my subjectivity, is constituted by cultural theoretical discourses that are made to resonate in a singular way through being taken up in a local context. The faltering first encounters with theoretical

formulations, the initial tentative attempts at disciplined academic thinking, speaking and writing don't take place in a vacuum. We acquire these capacities within a specific institutional context which is itself part of a larger concrete, practico-inert community. While it would be naive to suggest that the attributes of location exert the preponderant influence on the process of familiarisation and apprenticeship in question — a process that Deleuzians might call a becoming-theoretical — it would probably be a less excusable *faux pas* to ignore their impact altogether.

In this chapter, I delve further into the amateur aporetics that have been operating in a latent way throughout this thesis. I write about place in a personal way, while remaining fully aware that writing the *personal* in this context is a double impossibility. First of all, despite a number of recent and not-so recent developments in the new, new humanities — fictocriticism, para-literature, confessional and other hybrid theoretical forms — the purely subjective still fails to qualify as acceptable academic writing. Second, no matter how partial and inadequate it might be, the always already academic character of the putative graduate student subjectivity that has been force-feeding itself theory on and off for much of its adult life, is barred, from the full plenitude, the surplus enjoyment, the lack of a lack that might have been the opportunity cost of preserving an untouched, pristine, and in the Lacanian sense “real”, self.

As Dipesh Chakrabarty makes clear in *Provincializing Europe*, the private side of the split subject of modernity is both reflected in, and produced through, particular types of writing: the diary, the intimate correspondence, the autobiographical novel.² We might be seen to be affirming certain postmodernist critiques of interiority in arguing that this distinction is now eroded, if not for the fact that Chakrabarty himself shows us

that the particular experience of modernity in Bengal produced subjects for which this internal, non-social dimension was also conspicuously absent.³ Different modernities, we are told, produce different modern subjects.⁴ The impossibility of separating the purely academic layers of my subjectivity from the untouched kernel to which, in “weaker” humanist moments, I imagine they have attached themselves, is thus shown to be neither a spatially nor an historically specific phenomenon. In directing my unsteady, authorial gaze towards the place where I live, the place in which I grew up, the place in which I became familiar with this mode of writing, I am setting in motion a complex epistemological constellation, that is not for all that, worthy of contemplation in its own right.

This chapter is an inquiry into the uses of history in a minor place. Its immediate jurisdiction is Tasmania, but its implications and observations are intended to cross from the particular to the general through the trope of instantiation. It turns then, around a number of questions: how do the historical narratives that circulate in a given community impact upon the lives, both collective and individual, of the members of that community? How are these multifarious narratives taken up, resisted, repudiated and ignored? How do these stories of the past unfold into projections of what will be? How is imagined futurity bound up with a lived relationship to the discourses that construct the past? How are local histories, personal histories, connected to more generalised communal narratives of belonging?

With this string of queries, I will attempt a provisional unraveling of an historiographical strand that plays an especially important role in the structuration of the Tasmanian archive, a strand that threads itself around the decimation and displacement

of the indigenous Palawa people that took place here from 1803 onward. My intention here is not to consider the genocidal logic of the Tasmanian invasion in its own right so much as, to paraphrase Stephen Greenblatt, trace the circulation of archival energies set in motion by the enunciations which give it form in the present.⁵

In this chapter, I connect the legacy of story and memory built up around the traces of the “vanquished” race of the Aboriginal Tasmanians with other discursive threads that engage the question of human settlement in Tasmania. How have the stories which documented the wholesale disappearance of the human inhabitants of Tasmania transmuted into, and been overtaken by, accounts which emphasise a diffuse continuity of culture spreading out from the narrow focal point of the Furneaux Islands settlements to the state more generally? How does this narrative configuration both overlap with and underpin contemporary anxieties about the demographic disaster that academics like Natalie Jackson foresee befalling the modern population? How do we sustain and suspend the proposition that there is something peculiarly misanthropic about the landmass that we call Tasmania without lapsing into an intractable mysticism?

The last of these queries responds to Jim Davidson’s claim that Tom Haydon’s infamous documentary film of 1978, *The Last Tasmanian*, contained a subplot in which it was intimated that for whatever quasi-metaphysical reason, the modern population of the island was destined to follow its indigenous predecessors into oblivion:

Implicit in Haydon’s film, with its opening section showing how isolation led the Tasmanian Aborigines to regress — so that they ended up with simpler technology than they possessed a few thousand years earlier — was the suggestion that a gentler version of the same fate may well overtake the usurping whites. The shambling gait and inarticulateness of one or two of the interviewees reminds us that Tasmanian gothic does not mean merely

picturesqueness, or a pleasing aesthetic treatment of past sorrows, but also a great deal of continuing pain, muddles and sense of defeat.⁶

The threshold separating the cultural epochs of indigenous and non-indigenous Tasmania was given definitive form by an abrupt narrative closure sutured onto the race history of the former by a loose affiliation of historians and administrators aligned with the latter. In occluding the brief period of acknowledged co-presence spanning from 1803 to Trukanini's death in 1876 — the event that inaugurates the one hundred years of melancholy — the trope of total annihilation informed a discursive topography split into two parts. The autochthonous, nature-encoded ahistoricism of the indigenous culture was pushed to one side of this topography — in Freudian terms, the unconscious side — while the side of self-presence was filled out with the tentative instantiation of settler modernity installed by the displaced Europeans. The problem of race relations and narrative history in Tasmania was thus set up from the get-go as a re-run of the old Freudian saw: "Where Id was [...] there Ego shall be."

The definitive splitting enacted by the texts which smuggled the civilisational clean break into this historiographical field is complicated by the fact that they were forced to deal with the very interstitial period whose termination they announced. Even though it was not until the publication of Lyndall Ryan's *The Aboriginal Tasmanians* that the break between the periods of indigenous and non-indigenous inhabitation of the island was finally confirmed as anything other than clean and final, the authors responsible for erecting the line dividing these two epochs had by necessity to direct their focus toward its constitutive outside: the interval of co-presence. That this necessity produced a resistance should not surprise us, when we consider that the period of dual occupation was itself experienced across various institutional fields as the

opposite of what Chakrabarty calls the “not-yet” of imperial historicist time. The imaginary waiting room of history into which non-Western peoples with a claim to political modernity were ushered by their colonial administrators, was replaced in the Tasmanian case with a windswept island and a distended stay of execution. This was a time, in other words, that an entire phalanx of powerful people could not be rid of quickly enough.

Which is not to say that it doesn't serve also, as the locus of some of the most influential historical writings on the frontier experience in Tasmania. The imposing textual edifice built around the life of George Augustus Robinson, for instance, is set within a temporal horizon defined by co-presence. In spite of the layers of instability that problematise their truth-status, Robinson's field diaries remain an indispensable point of access into a diachrony of dual possession in Tasmania. Perhaps more accurately, they serve as a site of witness to a slow replacement of indigenous temporality with a utilitarian, goal-orientated time. Umarrah's transformation of Robinson's pursuit of the Big River Tribe into a tragi-comic wild goose chase, for instance, is read by some historians as a cunning attempt on the part of the Aboriginal chief to impede the completion of the Friendly Mission and thus delay the concomitant inevitability of exile to the Furneaux Islands.⁷ The infamous twitching breast which Robinson so grudgingly allows dictate the party's course, however, might also be taken as a somatic *memento mori* of a non-linear temporality, a languid non-quantifiable time whose own time was almost up.⁸

The cleft that separates the two sides of this discursive topography is narrowed, and perhaps even closed up entirely, I suggest, by the overlaying of the colonial

extermination with what is constructed as a statistically inexorable post-colonial decline of the superimposed culture. From the angle I take here, the tendency to represent the transition between the pre-modern and the modern in Tasmania as a clean break looks to be motivated by something other than a loyalty to the disciplinary protocols of what Dominick LaCapra calls the self-sufficient research paradigm of empiricist historiography.⁹ In retrospect, the accepted wisdom that the Aborigines were destroyed entirely takes on the form of a coping mechanism designed to shut down the operations of a volatile moral and social dilemma. In its basic linguistic form, the constative declaration — “There are no Aborigines left in Tasmania” — functions as an anxiety-reducing lexia, not dissimilar to the kind of polarising statements that Kleinian theorists identify with the paranoid/schizoid state.¹⁰

In what follows, I elaborate on the overturning of the thesis of complete annihilation and conduct a survey into what I term “complementary expressions of concern” about the depopulation of Tasmania. These statements are drawn, on the one hand, from historical sources recording testimony gathered by witnesses to the genocide of the Aboriginal Tasmanians, colonial subjects without direct relationships with the indigenous inhabitants and administrators even further removed from the cut and thrust of frontier interaction; and on the other, from contemporary, 21st-century academic work on demographic projections. The symmetries that unite these speech acts, scrunch together the historical interval between their variegated moments of issue and testify in an allegorical fashion to the contrivance built in to the civilisational clean break. The thesis of complete annihilation has been shown up as a frail fiction by the performative voicing of Aboriginal identity, and with that exposure, the sun-clear binarisation of

cultural occupancy proposed by the extinctionists has also been eclipsed. The epochs of indigenous and modern Tasmania cannot be cleaved down the middle and there is no unbridgeable chasm that divides them. The mutual subjection to depopulation anxiety is just one motif that can be put into circulation to demonstrate this.

The first set of utterances I examine here take the Aboriginal population as their object and can be divided into internally and externally situated remarks. On the one hand, historical sources like Robinson's field diaries, described by Ryan as the bible of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture, provide us with first hand descriptions of expressions attributed to members of a number of different indigenous tribes that alternatively bewail, protest and mourn the reduction in numbers caused by the arrival of the colonisers.¹¹ These present tense responses to a cultural trauma unfolding in an anterior "now" are buttressed on either side by remembered accounts of earlier violations and anticipations of future calamity. Take the following accounts recorded by Robinson at the Bruny Island station where he served as storekeeper from April, 1829:

The aborigines appeared greatly affected at the dire mortality which had taken place amongst their tribe and consequently showed a reluctance to remain in this abode which they had previously occupied. They therefore requested that the position of their habitation be altered — for they were led to leave a place where sickness existed and always when there had been a death supposing it was some evil spirit had caused the malady — to which I acceded and went through the necessary labour.¹²

My feelings were not a little harrowed to behold the truly forlorn condition in which Woorradly and Mangerner returned to the establishment. The former had been called upon during his absence from hence to witness the death of his wife and child [...] with respect to MANGANA words cannot adequately paint the sympathy I felt on this man's behalf when acquainted with the pungent sorrows

which unrelenting fortune had imposed upon him since his departure from hence. *He stated that his wife had been taken away by soldiers whilst he was at Recherche Bay and conducted on board a vessel and that his son, a youth about sixteen years old, had died.*¹³

The externally situated remarks, the remarks made about the Aborigines by non-Aboriginal people, on the other hand, can themselves be divided into three groups. Statements like the following made by Edward Curr, the Chief Agent of the Van Diemen's Land Company in the 1820s, betray a keenness to have the time of dual occupation expire as quickly as possible:

If they the settlers do not abandon the island [and will not] submit to see the white inhabitants murdered one after another [...] they must undertake a war of extermination on principles of which many will be disposed to question.¹⁴

In contrast are those statements which, while recommending very little by way of actual means of achieving their objective, declare a desire that the temporality of co-habitation be extended indefinitely:

The great decrease which has of late years taken place in the amount of the aboriginal population, renders it not unreasonable to apprehend that the whole race of these people may, at no distant period, become extinct [...] the adoption of any line of conduct having for its avowed or for its secret object, the extinction of the native race, could not fail to leave an indelible stain upon the character of the British Government.¹⁵

The synthesis of these two modes of speech can be found in statements which announce a desire to re-locate the indigenous population to a marginal location on the peripheries of the archipelago, to displace spatially, in other words, while remaining committed to temporal continuity:

The subject has undergone several days anxious deliberation and discussion in the Executive Council; and having examined all such persons as are competent to give information, I am at length convinced of the absolute necessity of separating the Aborigines altogether from the white inhabitants, and of removing the former entirely from the settled districts, until their habits shall become more civilised.¹⁶

The second group of expressions describe an arc through a discursive terrain thoroughly overdetermined by what Anthony Giddens counts among the exemplary institutional contours of modernity: reflexivity.¹⁷ While ostensibly mirroring the statements of the Aborigines, the institutional locatedness, technical complexity and utilisation of advanced statistical protocol that inform the expressions of concern about 21st-century depopulation reflect a sensitivity to context lacking in the protestations of indigenous Tasmanians like Mangana. Natalie Jackson's exhaustive inquiry into probable demographic outcomes for Tasmania, for instance, identifies a phobic locus, a black spot on the lung of Tasmania's human future, in the form of an apple-core-shaped representation of fertility structures in the state. This graphic display allows for the sublimation of a speculative concern about demographic devastation, so that it finds a new object in the physical lack to be seen in the readout from a knowledge instrument designed to represent reality in standardised form:

It used to be called the Apple Isle. Over its halcyon years, Tasmania also had a rounded and fertile age structure, reflecting that large baby boom cohort born in the post war period (1945-61). More recently, Tasmania has experienced four consecutive years of net population decline, and the age structure has started to resemble an applecore, with a large bite out of the key productive and reproductive 18-38 year age groups.¹⁸

The traces of reflexivity are to be found, here, in the way Jackson's comments about "[the] emerging age structure which poses a massive threat to Tasmania's future", are always already positioned within a discursive field sensitive to global population changes and the radical reconstitution of human collectivities known in the professional literature as the "demographic shift".

If we put this very modern characteristic to one side for a moment, though, and imagine what shape these kinds of expressions might take if they weren't couched in the very specific, specialised language of contemporary human ecology, it is difficult not to be taken by the resemblance they bear to the internally situated utterances attributed to Mangana. In both cases, a particular kind of skilled individual is charged with the task of preparing prognostications that take account of a variety of different future scenarios, each of these individuals pays attention to the range of permutations that the structure of relations between the subject population and outside groups might take, and both display an overarching pessimism about the likelihood of the community persisting in its range of "present" forms. That the methodologies of their projections differ wildly is as obvious as it is beside the point in the context of the current discussion. What is at question here is the way in which a particular kind of affect, a type of collective anxiety might cross between groups who are tied together by only two, and perhaps three things: a shared, if asymmetrically recorded history, the habitation of a common environment and membership of the human community.

The grounds for comparing these modern depopulation anxieties with the externally situated expressions of concern proffered by the colonial administration and the transplanted European citizenry more generally, are at once, more and less

substantial than the grounds which align them with the internally situated statements attributed to the Aborigines. On the one hand, white articulations of doubt, hope, reservation, and resentment, the pragmatic disengagements with, and the unarticulated guilt-responses to the loss of Aboriginal life in the early stages of colony building can be differentiated from concerns about contemporary depopulation, because they are not endogenous responses to a threat to the community of the one who is speaking. These are responses to a phenomenon affecting an “other” collectivity, an Aboriginal social configuration. Conversely, Jackson’s social science and the “external” remarks made by Curr, Arthur and Murray are drawn together because both groups of utterances belong to “white” populations, are couched in forms of language that recognise and invoke Enlightenment institutions such as the nation state/empire, and make a claim to legitimacy through recourse to empirical evidence.

In fact, I would like to suggest, the difference inserted into this configuration by the apparently inimical positions of the observing speakers can be collapsed through a dialectical sublation of the inside/outside distinction. The relationship of exteriority implicit in the expressions of concern uttered by Sir George Murray, Governor Arthur and Edward Curr — the fact that they are not talking about a group of which they themselves are members — also appears in a concealed form in Natalie Jackson’s work. While Jackson, a New Zealander by birth, lives in Tasmania, works at a Tasmanian institution and may for all that, consider herself a Tasmanian, the twin forces of a social scientific ego-ideal that lays claim to objectivity and detachment, and an estrangement from the local that we have grown used to expecting from academics working on the

island, actually conspire to make the subject position she takes *vis-à-vis* her object of study roughly analogical to those of Murray, Arthur and Curr.

While these metonymic utterances are embedded in the pre-modern and the modern discursive fields of Tasmanian collective life respectively, they are provisionally unified by the anxiety they display about civilisational futurity. The common ground they share is quite literally, a common ground, their setting on the physical landmass of Tasmania. This is an essay about spatial positioning and human populations, about place as a site of repetition, about the relationship between communal affect and environment. Communal affect might be understood as an emotional system that is experienced socially or extra-personally. Depopulation anxiety is a communal feeling because its object is the community and its location is plural. Two hundred years after Lieutenant Bowen's meager fleet rounded the Tasman Peninsula and sailed into Storm Bay, the population of modern Tasmania finds itself in a similar predicament to the civilisation its colonial forebears so unceremoniously shunted aside. For those of us who prevaricate over the appropriate form apologies and compensation for colonial dispossession should take, there is a peculiar, almost illicit, satisfaction in the rough justice dealt out to the present-day heirs to this genocidal legacy. In a scenario that surely has ramifications for thinking about the inter-generational transference of responsibility in the national context of the stalled project of reconciliation, the collectivity to blame for the displacement and decimation of an indigenous civilisation now finds itself confronted with premonitions of its own demise.

The overturning of the extinction thesis provided the conditions of possibility for a recognition that Aboriginal culture crosses over into modernity by way of a diffuse

continuity. Jim Davidson's suggestion that an unnamed quality possessed by the island makes it somehow resistant to human inhabitation is borne out by the symmetries I have described above. The common affect that drives these complementary expressions of concern functions as a kind of allegorical proof and testimony to the fundamental indivisibility of the two cultural epochs to which they metonymically refer.

*

In *History and Reading: Tocqueville, Foucault and French Studies*, Dominick LaCapra offers a postscript to the sustained investigation into trauma, memory and history that informed his influential historiographical work on the Holocaust. LaCapra's return to Freud through deconstruction, which culminates in this most recent text as a valorisation of "dialogic reading" at the expense of "synoptic" and "redemptive" forms, is designed to provide an alternative historical practice to the hegemonic mode of investigation organised around a self-sufficient empiricist research paradigm:

History in accordance with a self-sufficient research paradigm gives priority if not exclusive status to accurate reconstruction, restricts exchange with other inquirers to a subordinate, instrumental status and is forced to disguise dialogic exchange as reconstruction, often in a manner that infiltrates values into a seemingly objective or value neutral account.¹⁹

LaCapra's inventive, theoretically aware approach to "doing history" challenges the legislative will-to-power of the orthodox "re-constructive" approach in a number of ways, but I wish to follow his lead in only two directions.²⁰ Although this chapter, and indeed this thesis in its entirety, is not designed as an historical survey, the Cultural Studies space that it fills out is taken up more by evidence from the past than worked-over cultural theoretical objects like shopping malls, reality television or *Buffy*. The one

thing that most clearly sets it apart from orthodox history is the absence of primary texts in the bibliography. As LaCapra makes clear, proponents of the self-sufficient research methodology

enjoin gathering and analysing (preferably archival) information about an object of study in contrast to reading and interpreting texts or textualised phenomena. (In this exclusionary sense, reading a text, especially a published text is not doing research).²¹

I follow LaCapra in desiring a reevaluation of this axiomatic faith in an objectivism that posits a definitive separation between the observer and the observed. A failure to take account of the instability of the signifier affects some of the most high-profile Tasmanian history, and the question of the transferential relationships that hold between historians and their various objects of study, has never been examined in the local context, unless, of course, you consider the socially conservative criticisms of Aboriginal mobilisations of selective histories designed to extract compensation for past wrongs. If LaCapra's reading of Freud holds any water at all, even the most cursory examination of the canon of Tasmanian history is bound to uncover a rich vein of denials, repressions, and compulsive repetitions:

The dominance of this research paradigm leads to an inability to recognise reading as a problem. All texts and documents are assimilated to a homogenous status as source or evidence that enables the determination of certain findings. Research findings are often written up rather than written in a stronger sense and an unadorned, plain style is favoured. Typically, literary or philosophical texts are reduced to the status of unreliable sources because they do not yield solid evidence or clear-cut facts about empirical states of affairs [...] in any event, whatever they yield must be checked against more reliable documents, thus rendering their status redundant.²²

The lesson that I take from LaCapra, then, concerns methodology and disciplinary contextualisation. This work might be a kind of Cultural Studies of Tasmania's vanishing present, to paraphrase Gayatri Spivak, but it tries dutifully at the same time, to approach a condition of historical adequacy. In this regard, a final comment from LaCapra holds out some narrow consolation:

We should also be open to the possibility, that in the event a certain practice is not 'properly historical', a given individual may combine it with historical practices in hybridized roles or subject-positions.²³

As ersatz, simulational history this study looks to LaCapra for an imprimatur that would vouchsafe its content as well as its form. LaCapra's return to Freud is welcome because it offers an alternative cultural psychoanalytics to the Lacanian turn that, in its Zizekian manifestation in particular, has come to exercise such a powerful hold over cultural theorists working in the various territories of the North Atlantic intellectual axis. It is also useful, however, because it sutures that psychoanalytic facility to a detailed familiarity with more recent critical theoretical innovations — from the linguistic turn in structuralism to deconstruction and the hermeneutic debate between Habermas and Gadamer — to reinvigorate an historical practice that still tends toward the positivist recreational position. LaCapra's careful refutation of textually conservative historians who misread an interest in significatory processes as an attempt to demolish the real, material object, the social world or actual cultural moment that traditional historiography has made its exclusive preserve, opens up a space for radical archival practices that seek to read the written unconscious of a culture in inventive ways. Harold Bloom's insightful comment that Freudianism is the only mythology shared by scholars in the contemporary humanities unwittingly endorses LaCapra's decision to install

fundamental Freudian categories — in *History and Memory after Auschwitz* he nominates transference, resistance, denial, repression, acting-out and working-through as the core — in the empty place of a now-evacuated common-sense or mimetic approach to the historical “real”.²⁴

As I have already argued, the civilisational clean break inserted between the cultural epochs of indigenous and non-indigenous Tasmania by historians like James Bonwick, John West and James Calder in the 19th century, and Clive Turnbull, Robert Travers and N.J.B. Plomley in the 20th functions as a coping mechanism designed to shut down a volatile moral and social dilemma. Putting the empirical inaccuracy of this position aside for a moment — and I think it’s important to note that an argument could be made that the Aborigines did not “exist” for some part of the period between Trukanini’s death and the emergence of the modern political movement in the 1970s — we are left with an incomplete motivational profile, the unresolved question of why a position of this kind would be taken by so many.

On the positivist side of course, are the arguments from race history at the time. Biological discourses informed by writers like Robert Knox held sway into the 20th century and tended to emphasise a distinct origin for all races, on the one hand, and a tendency for evolutionary processes to destroy these races according to the principle of survival of the fittest. In accounts of racial composition, emphasis was placed on the full blooded or “pure” racial subject. The proper object of racial science was a total indigene untouched by miscegenation. The mixing of blood was taken by imperialist racial history as the beginning of a process of assimilation which would ultimately see the “backward” ethnicity absorbed into the more sophisticated, invariably “whiter” group.

Knox's *Races of Men: A Fragment* performs the most remarkable reduction of human character and behaviour to race. Reading it in the early 21st century is a haunting journey into the darker recesses of 19th-century biologism. Combining cosmology, natural philosophy and a protean evolutionary theory, Knox expostulates on the different capacities and destinations of races as diverse as the Sarmatians, the "Gipsies" and the "Coptics". The most chilling aspect of engaging with Knox is the thought that his ideas were in any way respectable at all. As he writes in his introduction:

Men are of various Races; call them Species, if you will; call them permanent Varieties; it matters not. The fact, the simple fact, remains just as it was: men are of different races. Now the object of these lectures is to show that in human history race is everything.²⁵

We can read the construction of the civilisational clean break as an action informed by the kind of racial theory contained within Knox's book. Diffuse continuity has no place in this world-view; as cultural practices are abolished and racial purity is diluted, races become extinct, they are subsumed into the dominant group, and indigenous *habitus* becomes incorporated into a decidedly one-sided hybrid culture.

As the work of Foucault, in particular, has shown, scientific discourses do not discover truths about the world so much as produce truth effects. Before the epistemic shift that allowed us to view diluted cultures as distinct social groups, Knoxian theory constructed a world divided into clearly discrete units of raciality. Races were indivisible monads fighting it out in a kind of race war from which only one group could emerge triumphant. This kind of discursive environment produced the truth of a Tasmanian Aboriginal population becoming extinct.²⁶

We can, however, identify the workings of a cultural psychoanalysis, a colonial symptomatology complete with phobic objects, repression and sublimation, operating concurrently with this kind of scientism. As LaCapra points out, histories which recount tragic events in this fashion perform an analogous function to the work of mourning discharged by the individual in the wake of personal trauma. Invariably, the authors who mobilise the civilisational clean break do so with a heavy heart. There is no trace of racial suprematism among them and without exception they all couch their accounts of the decimation and displacement of the Tasmanian Aboriginal population in the language of eulogy and apologia.

The interesting point to note here is the chiasmatic emotional dynamic that attends, and motivates, this work of mourning. Without exception, the historians of the civilisational clean break belong to the dominant colonial population and their mourning takes two forms. On the one hand, it eulogises the loss of the indigenous “others” precisely as “others”; a loss made all the more tragic because of the exotic character of the objects of the genocide. At the same time, however, it undergoes an affective modulation and becomes a damning testimony to the insensitive brutality of the uncomprehending colonisers. This is a guarded, mischievous self-flagellation directed primarily towards the unenlightened past of Empire and penal colony. James Bonwick, James Calder, Clive Turnbull and Robert Travers refuse to extend the guilty verdict to their own cultural moment, establishing a prophylactic border between them and the scene of the crime they describe. Although an interval of almost one hundred years separates their texts, the authors make a consonant claim to their own “cleansing” distance from the morbid transgressions of empire building. Retrospective

remonstrance is permissible in these texts, the authors would have us believe, because the statute of limitations on the crimes they describe has well and truly expired. Whether it be the 1860s in Bonwick's case, or the 1940s in Turnbull's, the historical moments from which their contributions issue are constructed as more enlightened than the dark days they describe. The work of mourning grieves the loss of the Aborigines but the working through that follows in its wake rejects the repetition-compulsion. The authors claim that had their society had its time over again, the *telos* of total extinction would be apprehended and avoided with a fierce determination.

This is equivocally guilty writing on the one hand, then, while, with the other, it extends an accusatory finger. In the case of Turnbull's *Black War*, a specific guilt is shackled to a more over-arching post-colonial regret informed by an overdetermination of biblical proportions:

Not perhaps, before, has a race of men been destroyed so utterly within 75 years. This is the story of a race which was so destroyed, that of the Aborigines of Tasmania — destroyed not only by a different manner of life but by the ill-will of the usurpers of the race's land [...] The story of the Aboriginal people of Van Diemen's Land is the story of all peoples dispossessed by conquerors more numerous and of greater technical resource.²⁷

The defenders of the extinction thesis enforce the false closure of extinction to more successfully expiate a blood guilt. They attempt to expedite a working-through that could not commence until the deed to be worked through had been completed. The situation in which they find themselves puts such closure out of reach, and thus a demand springs up for the construction of a phantasy that could begin the mourning process. A repression is enforced by the trope of extinction, a denial of a continuity of

Aboriginal existence that allows the expulsion of guilt feelings and a working-through based on a false conclusion.

The last significant text to make use of the civilisational clean break was Tom Haydon's documentary, *The Last Tasmanian*, which opened to the public in 1978. *The Last Tasmanian* provides a fairly straightforward account of the history of interaction between the indigenous Tasmanians and European explorers and invaders. To give motor force to its narrative, the film follows the adventures of the archaeologist Rhys Jones as he traces the various stages leading to the "total" demise of the first inhabitants of Tasmania. Among other sites, the film positions Jones at Recherche Bay where he builds catamarans to the specifications left on the historical record and at Sarah Island, where he reads excerpts from George Augustus Robinson's diaries that relate, in graphic terms, the miserable fate of the West Coast tribes.

Haydon's documentary is a moody, atmospheric production that makes good use of locations like these to recreate ambiances that feel uncannily real. The film's success in this regard was one of the factors leading to the "phobic" reaction it prompted from sections of the Aboriginal rights movement. Quite rightly, these groups lambasted Haydon for buying into the civilisational clean break in his presentation of the race history of the Tasmanian Aboriginals as a closed book. But the psycho-dynamic volatility of the film didn't just impact upon the Aboriginal community.

For the European Tasmanians, Haydon's film can be read as an attempt to re-enforce the repression, to allow the guilt-work to continue in keeping with the self-reinforcing "truth" that the Aborigines were dead and buried. In its filmic re-enactment of the violent interactions of the "Black War" and the peacetime practices of the

Aborigines, *The Last Tasmanian* was supposed to catalogue a melancholic termination of a whole culture. As Tom O'Regan puts it:

For the film's purposes the Tasmanian Aborigines have no existence in the present. The "Tasmanians" so called in the film are a culture and a people of the past, whose links with the present are severed. Paradoxically they achieve new life in the documentary's own accounts of them. They are re-incarnated for the viewer.²⁸

Rhys Jones's scientific argument that the Aborigines were already experiencing a narrowing of culture at the time of colonisation — "a slow strangulation of the mind" as Ryan alliteratively puts it — was supposed to take responsibility for the genocide out of the hands of the whites and restore it to the positivistic realm of the teleologically inevitable.²⁹ An appeal to evolutionary science was to secure the epistemological grounds of Aboriginal extinction while also clearing the way for a plea of diminished culpability on the part of a white population who could now be excused for acting without volition and in accordance with a cosmological order of things.

The real effects of the film's release, however, escaped this narrative cul-de-sac. Instead of providing closure to the story of genocide, the film stirred up the latent anger of the Aboriginal community and galvanised them into action. Their protestations provided a belated reminder to the European Tasmanians that the civilisational clean break was a self-serving fallacy. Political action in response to the film's release shattered the one hundred years of melancholy on the European side and opened up a new period of mourning and working-through, accompanied by an altogether more mature and realistic recognition of guilt and responsibility.³⁰

Working through, as Laplanche and Pontalis describe it, “is taken to be a sort of psychical work which allows the subject to accept certain repressed elements and to free himself from the grip of mechanisms of repetition.”³¹ In an ironic turn of events, Haydon’s film which at once allegorises the acting-out function — through the symbolic extermination of the Aborigines implicit in its plot trajectory — and includes a literal visual acting-out of the genocide, precipitated its dialectical, analytic opposite: the beginning of a trajectory of working through that continues to the present day.

Still, the working-through on the part of the European Tasmanians that has gathered force since the release of Haydon’s film, should be understood in the context of the acting-out implicit in the production of the re-enactment. According to LaCapra, transference relations are most dangerous in historical analysis when the dynamics of the historical object are repeated in the narrativisation of that object. In this case then, the genocide was repeated, not only literally in the case of a re-dramatisation of Aboriginal raids on white outposts and so on, but allegorically as well, in so far as the film unashamedly affirmed the civilisational clean break and the trope of total annihilation

For the Aboriginal community, Haydon’s film plugged straight into a raw postcolonial problematic. The narrative begins with the depiction of a small group of Tasmanian Aborigines and white political representatives venturing out by ferry into the D’Entrecasteaux Channel near Hobart to perform a belated funeral ceremony for the “Last Tasmanian”, Trukanini. The funeral is especially significant because it represented the culmination of a long struggle to have Trukanini’s remains returned to her people from the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. For Freud, the loss of drive,

the abrupt abeyance of libidinal energies which accompanies the melancholic condition results from an inability to attain a suitable object of cathexis.³² In this light, the transfer of Trukanini's bones from the "white" Tasmanians to the Aboriginal community functions in the same way as the handing back of tribal lands. Rather than signifying the terminus of a culture's development, these "symbolic tokens" vouchsafe the right to work through trauma. With lands reinstated and bones laid to rest, the work of mourning can be substituted for the melancholia of the lost object. The laying to rest of Trukanini's bones symbolised the conclusion of a narrative that recognised only full-blooded claims to Aboriginal identity and opened the way for a new story based around diffuse continuity, free of the 19th-century scientism of race theory and eugenics. Ironically, it marked the termination of the myth of complete extinction, rather than extinction itself. The repetition or return of the trauma of extinction that might have been enforced by the disposal of the bones was actually worked-through outside the frame of the film by the civil rights protests that followed its public release. Trukanini's ignominious fate is recovered and transformed into a story with signficatory potential that verges on the heroic.

For the European Tasmanians, then, the trigger effects of *The Last Tasmanian* worked to induce a working-through of the belated trauma that had been concealed by the myth of complete extinction. For the Aborigines, on the other hand, it initiated a return of the repressed. Stickers declaiming the film's racist position were slapped across the posters that marked its arrival, and leading Aboriginal spokespeople went on record to dismiss the film as factually erroneous and ethically reprehensible. For the indigenous inhabitants who were in the middle of building an activist movement, the

documentary's "refusal to acknowledge that the present day Aboriginal Tasmanian community had any continuity with the past Tasmanian Aborigines" triggered a nightmarish screen memory of self and collective-dissolution, a worst-case scenario of misrecognised non-existence that must have felt something like seeing yourself disappear before your very own eyes.³³ In addition to the ignominy of being told that they didn't exist, Aboriginal viewers of the film had also to cope with the re-presented re-memorialisation of actual almost-complete racial annihilation depicted on the big screen.

The causal link between the release of *The Last Tasmanian* and the ramping up of Aboriginal rights protests in Tasmania probably shouldn't be overdrawn, but I wish to argue that the flowering of social unrest in the wake of the film's dissemination was more than just a coincidence. As already mentioned, the film functioned as a trigger for a movement away from acting out to working through, but in itself it acted as a monumental case of the former. The documentation of a history of dispossession and extinction actually worked to repeat the original "real" process of "extermination".

Not only was the story of the Tasmanian Aboriginals as told by *The Last Tasmanian* mired in a logical positivism run amok, it also embodied the symbolic theft of the right to self-determination implicit in the function of story-telling. This was a white story about a white occupation of black lands, a white account of white histories of a black culture. The transferential relationships present in the object of study — dispossession, asymmetrical power distribution — were thus replicated in the historical account of its occurrence. In this way, the one hundred years of melancholy between Trukanini's death and the screening of *The Last Tasmanian* were also felt by the

invading culture. The litany of accounts that mobilised the trope of the civilisational clean break functioned as transference acting-out of the genocide. Their failure to acknowledge the diffuse continuity of indigenous civilisation in Tasmania mirrored and reiterated the initial decimation and displacement. To complete the argument, in the late-1970s, white historians were still doing with their pens and cameras what their military counterparts had done with their “fowling pieces” some one hundred and fifty years before.

CHAPTER 9

Wilderness and Industrial Modernity: A Plural Line of Sight

In Tasmania for many years we have laboured under the stigma of being a slow and unprogressive people, and it is all the more gratifying that at last we have risen to a recognition of the vast potentialities of our state, and seen the wisdom of turning them to account. In the hydro-electric scheme we have an undertaking exceeding in magnitude anything of the kind hitherto attempted.

(Walter Lee, Premier of Tasmania, 1916)

If we can revive our attitudes towards the land under our feet; if we can accept a role of steward and depart from the role of conqueror; if we can accept the view that man and nature are inseparable parts of a unified whole — then Tasmania can be a shining beacon in a dull and largely artificial world.

(Olegas Truchanas in Peter Thompson, 1984)

The East Derwent highway winds its way towards the northern suburbs of Hobart along a trajectory that mirrors the curves of the river that gives it its name. It is a narrow, lonely stretch of road, only two lanes of blacktop set hard against a sandstone escarpment on one side and cordoned off by water on the other. As you draw near to the

site of Hobart's first European "settlement" at Risdon Cove a lay-by tapers away to the left. If you take this intersection, you skirt back around toward the city, moving past clusters of run-down weatherboards that do nothing to forewarn of the face-to-face encounter with the industrial sublime that is just around the corner. Almost without warning, two hundred metres or so off the East Derwent Highway, the suburban vista that has accompanied your journey to this point is rent asunder and in its place, rolling down toward the river's edge like a sprawling mass of metallic spaghetti, is the Pasminco Electrolyte-Zinc Works.

Even a peremptory investigation of the physical infrastructure of EZ, as it is called by the locals, cannot avoid the tell-tale trace-elements left behind by the forces of "creative destruction" which have reshaped large-scale manufacturing across the Western world over the last sixty or seventy years. Attracted primarily by a cheap power deal done with the nascent Hydro-Electric Commission, this massive compound of smokestacks and wharfs, conveyer belts, silos and ducting was the first major industrial complex to be built in Tasmania and at its peak employed almost three thousand people.³⁴ Since then, however, the developmental trajectories of downsizing, centralisation and rationalisation, post-Fordism and technological obsolescence have all enforced themselves on this world-historically insignificant instantiation of modern industry. But it remains a useful site for a dynamic analysis aimed at generating a phenomenological symptomatology for the totality of a Western modernity teetering, in this final decisive stage, on the knife-edge of post-productionism. Surrounding the complex are paraphernalia typical of modern Fordist production: company-built accommodation, a golf course for staff and suppliers, car parks, an on-site

administration block and a host of affiliated businesses. The robust veneer suggested by this “total” complex, however, belies a more fragile actuality at its core. Even though EZ is still in commercial operation, and in spite of the fact that its levels of production are higher than they have ever been, technological advancements and a changing company policy have depleted the workforce to about three or four hundred at most. As a result, the car parks are almost entirely empty, company housing bounces along the bottom of the Hobart property market and the emptied-out administration facility looks dourly across a field it no longer controls.

Which reminds us that the history of the industrialisation of Tasmania follows the history of world-industrialisation after the fashion of a synecdoche. The ebbs and flows, the historical ups and downs, the changing fortunes of labour-intensive heavy industry in the developed world — from rapid expansion, to hegemonic stability, to profit-crises and large scale downsizings and closures — have left their traces upon the fabric of the geo-political entity of Tasmania just as indelibly as they have the North East of the United States, or the North of England or the Ruhr Valley of Germany. Likewise, the logics that have in turn provided the *raison d’être* and the encroaching decrepitude of the societies and cultures of so many of the old industrial cities of the Northern Hemisphere have also played themselves out here, in this off-shore island off the shore of an off-shore continent.

Since the late 1960s, industrial employment in Tasmania has declined by 35%, the largest drop in Australia, and, as in other “rustbelt” areas, like Rotherham in the north of England, growth in the services sectors and particularly insurance and finance has nowhere near compensated for this reduction.³⁵ As with the deindustrialisation of the

developed countries of the Northern Hemisphere, the pain of economic restructuring has been felt most in vulnerable regions outside of the principal population and administrative centres. The North-West Coast of Tasmania, perhaps the most blessed area of the state by the measures of comparative advantage — proximity to the mainland, rich soils for agriculture, high rainfall — has been the hardest hit. The victim of a series of major plant closures that seemed to threaten the very viability of the region, unemployment in the Mersey-Lyall statistical division was 11.3% in 1999 when the national average was 7.5%.³⁶

Perhaps the most significant point to make about these closures is that they were predicated on decisions made by companies whose investment in the regions concerned did not extend beyond the very rudimentary functioning of the particular businesses in question. For the centrally located, or rather, centrally dis-located administrators of such organisations, the effects of closing a factory do not extend beyond the immediate impact on balance sheets, which in cases where closure is advised, will generally be positive.

For the inhabitants of communities that have grown up around a now obsolete industry, the impacts will be of a different nature as well as being more far-reaching. Jobs will be lost both at the sites themselves and then throughout the community more generally as the multiplier effect makes itself felt. Infrastructure built to service the industries will run down and collective organisations based around the rhythms of work will cease to function. For those living around the sites, phenomenal reality will be fundamentally altered: smoke will no longer pour from chimneys; workers will no longer arrive at factory gates; trucks will no longer bring materials required by the

production mechanism; and ships will no longer leave port bearing products for sale abroad. The psycho-social and economic impacts of a factory closure may be more commonly discussed in sociological literature and the quality press, but these alterations to the experiential fabric of a social space are often the most vividly recounted by those affected.³⁷ When people in Hobart, for instance, speak about the collapse of the apple industry after Australia was excluded from the European common market in the 1970s, they speak about the sights, sounds and smells of the production process, they speak of the sense impressions built from the continuous convoy of trucks making the trip from the Huon Valley to the port of Hobart, they recall the remembered images of boats bound for Europe laden with the myriad sub-species of apples. They don't generally speak in terms of numbers of jobs, numbers of tonnes, or prices per bushel.³⁸

The history of industrialisation encapsulates more than just the rise and fall of particular types of enterprises or of changes in general modalities of production. As Krishnan Kumar suggests, industrialisation also provides the material form of modernity.³⁹ To experience modernity is to experience a world that has been industrialised, a world that is filled with the objects and organised according to the logics of institutionalised industrial production. On the phenomenological level, this experience of industrial modernity includes the subjective perception that comes from living amongst major plant infrastructure like factories, their transportational facilities and networks — ports, highways, heavy vehicles — and their wholesale and retail outlets — shopping malls and commercial centres.

This perceptual awareness though, need not link these various things together according to any obvious organising principle. Given the spatial distribution of these

different objects, in fact, the immediate perception of one branch might well preclude the perception of the other branches in the network. In a big city where retail and production are predominantly located in completely different regions, say the affluent inner-east and the industrial/commercial western suburbs of Melbourne, one group of inhabitants may well experience a world consisting principally of the apparatuses of production while the other will dwell in a world marked more by the forms of domestic and commercial consumption. The fact that the different arms of the industrial production complex will rarely work in a simple integrated fashion any more — distributional facilities, for instance, seldom transport only the products made in their vicinity — ensures that this perception of a disconnected and fragmentary system is an appropriate and inevitable condition of late-capitalist being-in-the-world, an extension of the alienation that Marx made so much of in his writings on the factory system. That much of what was once productive and functioning has now fallen into disrepair and neglect only adds to this rather complicated machinery of subjective experience. We might ask ourselves here about the differences that hold at the phenomenological level when the figure in the field of perception is a plant that is still producing manufactured goods, that is still integrated into the circuitry of capitalism, as opposed to one which has fallen out of that web of relations and now sits idle and obsolete.⁴⁰

The modern world consists of systems of social organisation and modalities of being but also of objects, of a formal social world. In the case at hand, the EZ Zinc Works at Risdon stand as a living, breathing monument to the will of Tasmania's political and business élites set on bringing this formal social world to their island home.

EZ operates as a synecdoche for modernity in general, and for Tasmanian modernity more specifically.

But the experiential significance of this complex also derives from its opposite, from that which it is not, and ironically, that which serves as its historical and epistemological antithesis. Sitting in your car and looking across the river to the Zinc Works it is impossible to ignore the backdrop against which this modern industrial scene is framed. Phenomenologically speaking, EZ functions as a figure which appears to consciousness only through its differentiation from the field or ground out of which it emerges.⁴¹ In this case, that field is Mt Wellington, the purple-blue, winter-snow-capped bulk that features so prominently in the cultural economy of everyday Hobart life. Mt Wellington functions as a multi-valent signifier. It has been considered alternatively as a picturesque and commodified backdrop to the city, as a protective bulwark against the chastening non-human spaces that lurk behind it and as a conduit for that very same presence.⁴²

Recent debate in *The Mercury* and elsewhere reminds us “Western” Tasmanians that “The Mountain” is also an object in a set of Indigenous cosmologies. In 2004, the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre suggested that an indigenous appellation be restored to Mt Wellington so that diffuse continuity in nomenclature might double the diffuse continuity of culture that has been acknowledged in Tasmania since the 1970s. As MHA for Denison, David Bartlett commented in State Parliament on the 26th of October, 2004:

[“The Mountain”] obviously does hold a significant place in Tasmanian history, and in Hobart’s history [...] However, to suggest that the [...] name [...] holds some absolute significance [...] is incorrect. In fact, prior to European

settlement [...] the Mouheneenner people, who were local here, are believed to have known the mountain also by a series of names: Unghanyahletta and Pooranetere [...] Recently the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre has suggested that Kunanyi is the true name, based upon records made by early European settlers.⁴³

“The Mountain” brings the wilderness into the “Western” spaces of Hobart but it also brings with it the history of Indigenous inhabitation and cultural coding. Fabienne Bayet has commented on the complex interplay of identity and commitment politics that have accompanied her experience of being indigenous in the Environmental Movement:

Seriously, as part of this identity, and in the face of many other greenies, I cannot remove humans from the landscape. Aboriginal people are an integral part of the Australian landscape. We are the land, the land is us ... How then do I deal with a common green ideology often advocated, and used as a major selling concept, by some wilderness groups. ‘Wilderness’, in this perspective, denotes land which is wild, uninhabited, or inhabited only by wild animals. Such conceptions of wilderness and conservation are yet another form of paternalism and dispossession if they continue to conceptually remove Aboriginal people from the Australian landscape.⁴⁴

Bayet’s remarks should remind us that when we must account for histories of habitation whenever we seek to discuss wilderness. Wilderness is not the simple opposite of culture or humanity. Mt Wellington presents as a sensual remedy for ills that many of us identify in hegemonic ‘Western’ thinking, to some extent in provides us with a visual outside to the lurid exasperation of living in modernity. We can rest our eyes on ‘Kunanyi’ and the ailments, the immoralities, the crassness of modern life, take on a less bewildering and a less exhaustive air. But wilderness is a concept rather than an ontology. You can’t experience wilderness if by that phrase we mean an unequivocal

opening up to the more-than-human world, an opening up predicated on the obliteration of a socialized subjectivity. We take tents and polar fleece and polypropylene with us when we enter the wilderness and we take our habitus and our acculturation too. Experiencing wilderness might be sublime but it is not a negation of humanity or of humanist orientations.

For the purposes of this essay, I want to suggest that the significance of ‘The Mountain’ derives from its status as a carrier of an ambiguous wilderness value. As such, to witness the EZ Zinc Works as a metonym for industrial modernity is also to witness industrial modernity’s dialectical opposite; nature, or more properly, the wilderness. One cannot be perceived without the other. They exist, to borrow Husserl’s phrase, in a state of reciprocal envelopment.

But of course, every plant, every factory is situated somewhere in physical space. No matter where it might be located, the perception of an industrial complex will necessarily entail the perception of the environmental ground upon which it has been developed. The distinction to be made here can be seen in the photographic record. While in the case of EZ, Mt Wellington dominates the scene, images of industrial complexes in England suggest a nature conquered and despoiled.⁴⁵ Nature is more an absence than a presence here, an expelled refuse that by no stretch of the imagination, could be called a wilderness. Industry, and its pastoralist precursor, have completely transformed the physical ground upon which the former is now established. That ground has been suppressed and repressed. In the Tasmanian example, on the other hand, wilderness threatens to overwhelm the human development. The former has been momentarily forestalled but is in no way acquiescent. Recapitulating Kumar’s dictum

that industrialisation provides the material form of modernity, we are confronted through this physical configuration with the following questions: how should this experiential dialectic of industry and wilderness inflect our reading of Tasmanian modernity and of modernity in Tasmania? If the perception of the forms of modern life can never be uncoupled from the perception of a nature that serves as their precondition and their opposite, does this make Tasmania a pre- or non-modern location?

EZ provides a useful vignette of what I am attempting to illustrate in this piece, but by far its fullest expression is to be found in the project of hydro-electrification. In what follows I examine the dialectic of industrialisation and wilderness through an analysis of that thwarted attempt to tame the wilderness and propel Tasmania into a bright, glorious and fundamentally modern future.⁴⁶ As an enabling move for this analysis, I also conduct a brief investigation into the different ways in which nature has been constituted and thought in modernity. This analysis will work simultaneously to interrogate the difference between nature and wilderness and to generate a conceptual con-sanguinity between these terms that will anchor the discussion.

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While honoring their differences, many prominent theorists of modernity single out industrialisation as one of the most definitive processes of the project of modernisation. Krishnan Kumar, as I have already suggested, argues that industrialisation provided the material form for modernity, while Peter Wagner writes, “the so-called industrial and democratic revolutions are sometimes seen as the social phenomena constituting modernity.”⁴⁷ In a similar vein, Jan Pakulski, Stephen Crook and Malcolm Waters note that:

The thread that draws together the views of Habermas, Offe, Lash and Urry and Harvey is a determination to save the analytic and normative salience of elements of the idea of modernity. For these writers, whatever transformation is occurring at a social level it ultimately cannot be postmodernisation. If modernity is associated with the rise of industrial capitalism [...] then we are still [...] in an advanced stage of modernity, specifically an advanced stage of capitalism.⁴⁸

Just as world-historical capitalism, especially as theorised over the *long durée* by Immanuel Wallerstein, Giovanni Arrighi and Fernand Braudel, constitutes a meta-narrative made up of innumerable local events and permutations, industrialisation too, persists as both monolith and fractal. While the overarching historiographical focus may single out the industrial revolutions that occurred in England and then Europe in the late-18th and 19th centuries as the emblematic locus or originary site of this developmental logic, it is also true that the histories of every site of Western habitation have been driven to some extent by the dramatic effects of the shift from agricultural to industrial production. Indeed, as I will show in this chapter, the conflict of interests that separated the Faustian proponents of ever greater industrial capacity and their adversaries, conservationist or ecologically-minded individuals and the political entities that represent them, still set the scene for significant debates about the direction and development of communities in this moment of alleged post-industrialisation.⁴⁹

In this chapter, I consider the particular instantiation of industrial modernisation played out in Tasmania. By examining a specific enunciation of a more generalised historical logic, I intend to bring into relief the complex and dialectical relationship that always exists between an abstracted totality and its component parts. I am also

concerned, however, with presenting a narrative of Tasmanian modernity that stands alone as a self-sustaining cultural, historiographical and textual analysis.

Tasmania, of course, is only a small place, relatively insignificant from a geo-political perspective, and marginal even to the goings on in the Federation of which it is a part. It is also a place with a short history by European standards — neglecting of course the thousands of years of indigenous inhabitation — which makes it fair game for writers who follow the rules of centres and peripheries, who accept diachrony as a linear game of origins and destinations, of sacred originals and profane imitations. But it is also a place and a society typified by what Philip Mead has called a “strange narrative density”.⁵⁰ It is in its own odd way a locus of culture, a centre of gravity, a miniaturised but perfectly formed totality that because of its self-contained geography and its unique history makes it a rich ground for analysis that seeks not only to understand the local but which aims to delineate the general as well.

When we look for the origins of industrialisation, we typically look to what Phyllis Deane has called “the first industrial revolution”, the momentous transformation of the systems of production, distribution and consumption that occurred in Britain around the middle of the 18th century and which spread quickly to continental Europe thereafter.⁵¹ We would be mistaken, however, in conceiving of this set of events as a singularity or a big-bang modality of economic metamorphosis. As Deane points out, there have been many industrial revolutions, each taking on a divergent form while all the while remaining true enough to the original to recall its novelty and significance. In the case to hand, Tasmania’s industrial revolution had to wait until 1916 and the commissioning of the first hydro-electric power station at Waddamana, for its symbolic

inauguration. While occurring some one hundred and fifty years after the archetypal English event, a number of the characteristics of the great transformation to Tasmania's economic infrastructure ushered in by hydro-electrification match those nominated by Deane as typifying an economic development of the revolutionary kind.

But the first industrial revolution has impacted on Tasmanian history in ways other than as a tropological antecedent. The motives for the colonisation of Tasmania have their origins in the social turmoil triggered off in England by the first industrial revolution. The rapidly increasing urbanisation of Great Britain around the turn of the 19th century created overpopulation problems that had as one of their effects an increasing crime rate in cities like London, Birmingham and Manchester. An obvious solution to the riddle of housing the perpetrators of these crimes was to ship them out to the vast "open" spaces of Terra Australis, "Nullius". Once there, their welfare became the problem of colonial governors, and their labour power could be more effectively put to use in the production of primary products like wool and wheat, which would then make their way back to Britain as surrogates for the individuals whose toil made possible their materialisation.

Which reminds us that the economic history of Tasmania began long before Waddamana's first deluge was channeled and harnessed, and that it stretches back, in fact, to a decidedly pre-modern point of origin at Risdon Cove in 1803. The settlement established there by Lieutenant Bowen was famously precarious, and even after Collins moved the party to Sullivan's Cove in 1804, sustenance was provided by a subsistence diet that threatened at every turn to fail in its task of securing a future for the frail encampment. The meagre official rations were garnered through an *ad hoc* mixture of

hunting and gathering, small scale agriculture and an irregular supply of goods shipped down from Sydney. Aside from the reliance on these last products, which themselves depended upon technologies and productive practices pioneered in England, Tasmania's early economy was clearly pre-industrial. Indeed, the reliance on unpaid convict labour aligns it more closely with the pre-civil war slave economies of the southern colonies of North America than with the burgeoning factory economies of Western Europe, and it was not until the 1820s that a surplus of goods made possible a tentative integration into the imperial economic apparatus as an agent of export.⁵² Wool served as the first substantial trading good when, as Lloyd Robson writes, "the British industry promoted colonial wool over that hitherto got from England itself and Spain and Germany", but whaling and sealing also proved successful ventures.⁵³

While Tasmania's population and economy increased fivefold in the thirty years after colonisation, the productive apparatus continued to rely heavily on agriculture and pastoralism. Livestock, wool and wheat were the chief exports, while cottons, linens, apparel and hardware were all imported from outside the colony. Some small scale industry did develop in this period but it was of an insignificant size:

In 1830 this component of the economy grew to include nine flour mills at Hobart Town, one at New Town, and four at Launceston; one distillery at Hobart Town; twelve tanneries in the capital, two at Launceston and five elsewhere; three fell mongers at Hobart Town and one at New Town. At Hobart Town there were also two parchment makers, soap, hat and rope businesses; three candle-makers; three coach manufacturers; seven makers of agricultural implements; one foundry; two cooperages; one dyer and one pipe manufacturer.⁵⁴

The flimsy character of this nascent manufacturing sector left Tasmania vulnerable to external economic pressures like commodity prices and by the 1840s, the colony had fallen officially into depression for the first time. In November of 1843, the Colonial Government became embroiled in a cash flow crisis caused by low levels of internal government revenue after the increasingly numerous and powerful free settlers argued that they should not have to pay convicts for their labour under the new probation system and demanded a return to the older assignment system of free labour. A collapse in the price of grain and wool exacerbated the economic woes and at the depth of the crisis some sixteen thousand ex-convicts found themselves surplus to requirements. A kind of proto-Keynesianism was enacted to absorb this labour power. The building of water supplies, swamp draining and other capital works were proposed and in order that government incomes might recover, taxes, mainly in the form of duties on imported products, were increased.

Such measures were largely ineffectual however. Vested interests and a non-representative government resisted sensible fiscal policy and by the time transportation ended in 1853, Tasmania's economic prospects appeared very grim indeed. Population concerns were extreme, the number of adult males in the colony dropped from forty one thousand in 1852 to only twenty thousand in 1862 and it was not until a local mineral boom in the late-1870s that the colony began to recover. Population decline ceased in this period, and large scale infrastructure projects like the rail links between Hobart and Launceston became a reality. The capital input supplied by mining company dividends circulated through the local economy and Launceston in particular experienced boom-time conditions, a fact evidenced still by its extensive array of Victorian architecture.

Still by the end of the 19th century, Tasmania continued to struggle along with a largely pre-modern system of production and its society suffered the obligatory injuries of such a plight.

In 1891 another blow was dealt by the bankruptcy of the Bank of Van Diemen's Land and following hard on its heels came the world wide depression which was to last almost the entire decade. Once again mining came to the rescue, this time at the Mount Lyell mines near Queenstown and at nearby Zeehan and, by 1906, the Mount Lyell Road and Rail company was one of the nation's five largest industrial entities, Zeehan had a population of eleven thousand people and Queenstown was even larger. Such bright points, however, were the exception rather than the rule; the mining boom petered out eventually and Tasmania was left once again with an under-performing economy and a hastening diaspora.

Given such an ignominious historical background, it is no wonder that the proposal put by the Launceston City Council in 1895 to construct the state's first significant hydro-electric generator was met with much fanfare. The Duck Reach plant, built on the outskirts of the city, supplied enough power to make Launceston the first town in the world to be illuminated entirely by electric lighting. Much grander plans, however, were well under way. At the turn of the century, hydro-electrification worldwide was still in its very early infancy; the USA possessed the greatest capacity with seventy two thousand horsepower on line, but aside from the efforts "stateside", little had been done to tap the great potential of water power resources.⁵⁵ The sheer magnitude of Tasmania's share of this bounty stirred the ambition of Alfred Mault, engineering inspector to the Central Board of Health, to such a degree that, when

commissioned to conduct a preliminary survey of the country around Great Lake in the central highlands, he felt compelled to declaim that “Tasmania possesses capabilities that if utilised would put her in the front rank of industrial communities employing the most economical sources of motive power-water.”⁵⁶ Here was by far the best chance yet for a backward colonial outpost, provided by *fiat* with extremely fortunate topographical and meteorological patterns, to outdo the rest of the world in an undisputedly high-stakes-game of modernisation. If the hydro-electric vision could be realised, the brute forms of Tasmanian nature might finally be harnessed to man’s ends. With its energies controlled and redirected, the society built in its midst would be thrust fully-formed into the utopian territories of industrial modernity.

An ideal location for the first large scale power plant was discovered by a Central Highlands landowner named Harold Bisdee and in 1903 he showed the site to the then professor of physics and mathematics at the University of Tasmania, Alexander McAulay. Bisdee believed that the site he had selected on the Shannon River would allow that body of water to be redirected into the Ouse gorge below, producing an almost vertical fall of over a thousand feet and a massive potential energy source. Professor McAulay agreed that the location was ideal and provided the technical specifications for damming and redirecting the river to the proposed site of the generators.

But before construction could begin, a number of more mundane concerns needed to be addressed. The proponents had yet to determine who was to buy this great humming mass of kinetic power, who was to pay for the generators and who was to put up the capital necessary for the great industrial plants that would be brought to life by

the new energy. Manufacturing in Tasmania at the turn of the century was in a depressed state and if all the factories in production at the time were to have replaced their incumbent energy sources with hydro-power the sum total required would only have amounted to about two thousand horsepower. The only viable option was to encourage someone, somewhere to develop an electricity-hungry industrial complex in Tasmania.

Which brings us back again, by confluence of Shannon and Ouse, Derwent and Esk, to the EZ Zinc Works at Risdon. A metallurgist from New South Wales, J. H. Gillies had, by the early-20th century, developed a new and potentially profitable method for treating zinc sulphide tailings, but had experienced difficulty in securing a cheap electricity source that would make the process economical. Arriving in Tasmania in 1908, Gillies met with the then Premier John Evans and outlined his plans. Evans responded positively, recognising that through Gillies' proposal Tasmania's hydro potential might have its first real chance for realisation. Gillies was given the details of the Shannon river power plant put together by McAulay and Bisdee and communicated to his backers that a viable opportunity for constructing a zinc treatment plant was available.

In spite of urgings from the Complex Ores Company, the State Government was reluctant to fund the development of the hydro power station and instead provided the company with the rights to Great Lake's hydro potential on the condition that the complex be made available for purchase by the state after twenty-one years. A new commercial entity named The Hydro-Electric Power and Metallurgical Company was formed and funds in the form of 5% bonds were raised in London. Construction began

in 1912 but two years later, and well before the plant was finished, financial difficulties resulted in the State Government's assuming ownership of the generational arm of the company. By the time the facility was completed in 1916, Gillies' zinc company was well and truly on the outer. The far larger EZ company secured a lease on land only a few kilometres to the north of Hobart and gained a contract for the lion's share of the power to be produced by the newly commissioned generators at Waddamana. Gillies moved unsuccessfully into carbide manufacturing at Electrona and the EZ plant abandoned his patented technique for treating their zinc sulphate. He eventually left business entirely and was only saved from a penniless dotage by the granting of a government pension of three hundred pounds a year. The tragic dimensions of this biographical fragment pale into insignificance when placed beside the heroic collective narrative inaugurated by the developments at Waddamana and Risdon. The era of industrial modernity had arrived in Tasmania at last and the entity that was to be its Virgil — the mighty Hydro-Electric Commission — had been ushered into existence, ironically enough in these days of opportunistic privatisation, through the acquisition at bargain basement price of a privately funded operation.⁵⁷

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Ways of thinking about Tasmania have tended to follow the paranoid-schizoid model of subjectivity proposed by Melanie Klein. The representational history of the island, which includes artistic figurations as much as the text and talk of everyday cultural discursivity, veers in bi-polar fashion from idealisation to denigration, from romantic utopianism to savage denunciation. The aesthetic appeal of Jim Davidson's "Tasmanian Gothic" stands out as a good example of this. With its emphasis on an over-determining

and tragic history, a chastening landscape and an always partial modernisation, “Tasmanian Gothic” finds its arcadian counterpoint in the mythos of Georgian pastoralism. While drawing on the same basic attributes as its disreputable cousin, this complimentary discursive tradition ignores the intimations of a dreadful sublime so irresistible to the exponents of the Gothic, and depicts Tasmania, instead, as a bucolic repose of quaint sandstone, rolling hillsides and ruddy-cheeked propagators of super-fine wool.⁵⁸

Lacking the resources of self required to sustain an ambivalent orientation toward the world, the paranoid/schizoid personality splits external reality into good and bad objects, projecting his or her own sense of unease onto the bad objects, and investing the favoured other with an unwarranted idealism. Tasmania’s history of economic under-performance has generated just such a set of reactions. For some, the only response available is departure, they leave the island and join with the good object — the Australian mainland.⁵⁹ For those who remain, the hope and desire that they find frustrated by the actuality of Tasmania’s recalcitrant economy, is split and projected onto an *imaginary* agent who, equipped with the One Big Answer, will come from a prosperous elsewhere to solve all of Tasmania’s problems.

The project of hydro-industrialisation is the apotheosis of this history of utopian thinking. By building a miniaturised replica of the apparatuses of production that had escorted modernity on its passage through Western Europe and out to the imperial territories, the proponents of hydro-industrialisation were attempting to stalemate the anxiety-producing effects of an already well-established culture of inferiority and insecurity. That the progress towards this Arcadia was predicated upon a Herculean

transformation of the natural world was just as well, given that environmental factors and what we might call the tyranny of distance redoubled, were seen as the principal causes of Tasmania's backwardness. By damming and drowning, fording and diverting, revenge could be taken upon the brute physicality that had consigned Tasmania to a state of perpetual economic inertia. The peculiarities of the island geography that had made it a "natural penitentiary", suddenly became, under the scientific gaze of the Hydro-Electric Commission engineers, a line of flight spiraling up and away from the convict past, which, in its grimly ironic way, was still so obviously Tasmania's sole historical reason for being.

But in the mid-to-late-1970s, this peculiar landscape came to form the centrepiece of another utopianism, one based around the idea that, as Cassandra Pybus puts it,

humans do not have pre-eminence in the world, that the natural world exists and has a right to exist apart from its value to humans [...] that, if this eco-centric view can challenge the anthropocentric perspective of conventional political and economic wisdom, the planet might be saved to sustain future life, including human life.⁶⁰

This, of course, is a brief synopsis of the ideological superstructure of the Green utopia. Shunning the creative destruction of the hydro-electric vision, supporters of this wilderness teleology, (dis)figured Tasmania as the potential site of a bold social experiment that would redress the hubristic deformations of modernity. Not for them the slavish repetition of industrialisation, with all its portents of imminent environmental collapse and inequitable class relations. The ecological Arcadia was to be a paradise of

particularity, equality and sustainability. As the former democrat Senator and erstwhile environmentalist, Norm Sanders, wrote:

Given a restructuring of the economy, government, public service, the legal profession, the media and the scientific establishment, Tasmania could blossom forth as the only place in the world ready to face the 21st century. [...] once politicians, public servants and the media are reformed. Utopia can start to take shape.⁶¹

This comment is a good example of the utopian strategy that Fredric Jameson calls “world-reduction”.⁶² Identifying the state’s essential character in its vast tracts of pristine wilderness, Sanders draws a line around everything else *Tasmanian* and proposes that those “disposable elements” be exculpated and fashioned anew. In doing so, he fails to recognise the fact that the networks that make up this social world are not extraneous or epi-phenomenal, and that they constitute Tasmania’s “identity” just as much as the wilderness they allegedly neglect. The nomenclature of the organisation at the vanguard of this new social movement embodies this future oriented will-to-power. The “Wilderness Society” was meant to name not just the group of individuals who came together to protect the Franklin River, but was also intended to gesture forward, to signify in the mode of the future perfect. Its goal and that of its political wing, the Tasmanian Greens, was to turn Tasmania itself into a wilderness *society*, to finally derail the faltering juggernaut of hydro-industrialisation, and to implement a new policy-platform based on the principles of sustainable development.⁶³

When an attempt was made by the dominant political parties to squeeze the Greens out of the democratic process in the mid-1990s, many of their supporters justifiably cried foul. Until the resurgent victories of the 2002 state election, it looked

decidedly like an unholy alliance of liberal and labor had, in one fell swoop, robbed the wilderness utopia of what remained of its fragile plausibility. Notable figures on the fringes of official politics reacted differently. In a forum on Tasmania's future conducted by *Island* in 1997, Richard Flanagan offered this dressing down:

The Greens are like the utopian socialists of the 1840s [...] they're on about the right things, and they've identified the great issues in the next century, but they haven't been able to create a sort of coherent political practice.⁶⁴

The utopian socialists were a very loose affiliation of European writers who saw in the great possibilities offered by industrialisation an opportunity to create a perfect society built around the principles of harmony, efficiency and equality. As one of their most eloquent representatives Claude-Henri Saint Simon wrote in 1802: "[In this new utopia] all men will work; they will regard themselves as workers attached to a workshop."⁶⁵ The utopian socialists were not luddites, nor were they sentimental traditionalists in the vein of Ruskin or Carlyle. Like their greatest critic the "scientific" socialist Karl Marx, they believed that the only way to draw Arcadia back from its misty repose in the distant future was through a wholesale adoption and application of the technologies of a nascent industrialisation.

Which reminds us that if the figure with which I began this essay, the Pasminco Zinc Works at Risdon, suggests the presence in Tasmania of a phenomenological dialectic of wilderness and industrial modernity, it also suggests a second dialectic, a utopian dialectic, based around the same two terms. In fact, the tensions between the twin utopias of development and preservation constitute possibly the most important overarching logic of structuration in contemporary Tasmanian politics. Flanagan's comment merely consolidates, at the location of an otherwise formal link, a substantive

point of conjunction between these two *topoi*. As already suggested, industrial utopics are a necessary corollary of industrialisation itself. They accompanied its development from the originary British moment of the mid-18th century and they guided it to its apogee in the long capitalist expansion of the 1950s and 60s. What we find in the story of Tasmania's hydro-electrification is a local instantiation of this more generalised historical logic. That the global economic crises of the mid- and late-1970s also marked the emergence in Tasmania of a new utopianism based around environmental consciousness suggests the radical imbrication of the universal and the particular that is one of the central concerns of this thesis. The industrial vision that had endured with such dogged persistence across the West might have reached its use-by-date after the oil shocks of 1973 and 1979, but the utopian urge that had been its companion merely found itself represented somewhere else, which seems to confirm John Carey's claim that, "to count as a utopia, an imaginary place must be an expression of desire." ⁶⁶

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Can we sensibly begin to speak of a conception of nature that is at once hegemonic and definitively modern? Michel Foucault certainly thinks so. In *The Order of Things*, he presents his famous thesis that the 19th-century transition from the "classical" age to the age of modernity produced a series of epistemic breaks that fundamentally reorganised the discursive terrains of human knowledge. One of the fields most drastically affected by this "archaeological shift" was the study of nature. Instead of an observational science that categorised and classified the physical world according to the visual similarities of its component parts, the natural science of biology centred its attention on what he calls the "fundamentally dynamic mechanisms of life":

If biology was unknown, there was a very simple reason for it [...] life itself did not exist. All that existed were living beings, which were viewed through a grid of knowledge constituted by natural history.⁶⁷

Because, for Foucault, human subjectivity is informed and limited by the *episteme* — “the total set of relations that unite, at a given period, the discursive practices that give rise to epistemological figures, sciences and possibly formalised systems of knowledge” — the emergence of formalised system of knowledge like biology provided the conditions of possibility for a generalised alteration in human ways of seeing the physical world.⁶⁸ On this reading, nature is not only rendered materially plastic by the transformative powers of industrial production, it is also made the subject of a conceptual and ideological metamorphosis at the level of the *episteme*. But then Foucault is notorious for setting up rigid boundaries between epochs where the evidence he relies upon seems to warrant a less resolute stance. His post-structuralist historiography is grounded in highly selective interpretations of raw historical materials and the idea of nature as pure potentiality, which he takes as sufficient cause for declaring a periodising “newness”, clearly has its precursors in the ideality of pre-modern culture.⁶⁹ Max Oelschlaeger, for instance, argues that one of the principal motivations for the shift to coal power in England in the late-17th century was the almost total deforestation of that country’s lands that had begun in Roman times. Since neolithic times nature has been the object of human intervention if only at the level of brute physicality. What is less clear, however, are the terms in which such interventions have been couched. What kind of conceptual framework underpinned the deforestation of Britain, for instance? And is there anything distinct and irreducibly specific about the

value system that subtends the praxis through which we moderns interact with the natural world?

Of course the first signpost of such a tendency is implicit in the way that I have approached this question. In Wittgensteinian fashion, the sentence structure which divides subject and predicate, active and passive, human culture and insensible nature clearly indicates a bifurcation of the two worlds that many theorists argue is typical of modern ways of thinking the environment.⁷⁰ In modernity, culture and nature are fundamentally separated, but such a way of thinking does not have its origins in modernity.

In *The Idea of Wilderness*, Oelschlaeger suggests that this division began with the rise of agriculture and the large scale obsolescence of hunter-gathering societies many thousands of years ago:

For hunter gatherers humankind was not privileged over the rest of the world. Nature was alive and sacred, filled with spirits. Animals, plants and even rocks mountains and volcanos and rivers and oceans were viewed as animate entities that also filled a place in Magna Mater's scheme.⁷¹

The slow and uneven approach to modernity accelerated toward the end of the 14th century with the beginning of the Renaissance and brought us into and through the vicissitudes and variegated after-images of Reformation and Enlightenment. As part of this general diorama of rapid social change, attitudes to nature began to resemble the orientations we now regard as "modern". The writers that contributed most to this rapid transformation in scientific thinking include Descartes, Bacon, Newton and Adam Smith, but the list could be extended to take in Galileo, Kepler and many others. From Descartes we inherit the dualistic metaphysics of *res extensa* and *res cogitans* and the

beginnings of an idealism that fundamentally sunders human and non-human nature by positing a consciousness possessed only by the former. Descartes' conviction that mathematics could act as a universal language that would reveal the secrets of nature worked to de-mythologise the environment and make it a passive object for human contemplation.⁷²

For his part, Francis Bacon acted as a mediator between faith and science, instituting the idea that knowledge was power and that through inductive reasoning man might come to build on earth a *mundus alter*, a new world, that would restore his pre-lapsarian dominion over nature. Sundering fact and value, Bacon supported the assignment of ethical and moral decision making to the Church and argued that proponents of the new science had a responsibility to pursue impartial truth whatever the consequences of its findings. The most radical anthropocentric reading of Bacon's works sees him encouraging any human intervention into the natural world as a step toward achieving this utopia of "infinite technique".⁷³

Isaac Newton took Bacon's faith in science and used it as an ethical motivation for the construction of a powerful new way of looking at the physical world. Newton's physics was to be the tool for constructing the changed world towards which certain powerful interests in contemporary society are still striving. By positing the laws of inertia and mechanical causation, Newton was able to figure nature as mere matter-in-motion compelled into activity by external forces. Descartes' dream of a physical world made comprehensible through mathematical science was made a reality with Newtonian calculus and the world gasped in awe as one of its proponents, Edmund Halley, utilised its tenets successfully to predict the passing of his eponymously named comet.

Adam Smith is the last figure who might be included with little dispute in this group as it was he who brought the new rationalism to the social sciences. In his groundbreaking analysis of economic behaviour, *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith anticipated the idea of *homo economicus*, man as rational utility maximiser, who pursues happiness through the endless accumulation of commodities and an ever-increasing throughput of consumption. The laws of physics for Smith manifested themselves in the world of human exchange in the form of the invisible hand, the phantasmatic force that assured that the quest of the bourgeois subject for individual wealth would inevitably result in society-wide prosperity and happiness. And the source of all this new-found-joy, of course, was to be insensible matter, which became, under Smith's gaze as well as that of other utilitarians like Jeremy Bentham, a pure potentiality to be exploited solely for the fulfilment of mankind's desire. In combination with the technological advancements that made possible the industrial revolution, the canonisation and institutionalisation of Smith's philosophy through mediums such as the discipline of economics entrenched a new approach to nature that would strip it almost entirely of its sacramental and symbolic character and play a significant part in inducing the ecological crisis of the historical present.⁷⁴

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But this chapter is an inquiry into the dialectic of wilderness and industrial modernity, not nature and industrial modernity. As I hope to have made clear above, the hegemonic modern disposition toward nature constructs it as a resource to be transformed and exploited. On this model, nature retains little substantive character of its own and instead becomes pure potentiality, a passive object to be conquered and overcome or

fetishised and enjoyed as voyeuristic spectacle. Nature is a being-for-man, not a being-for-itself. It is subsumed into the categories of the cultural.

While such a synthetic sublation might invite a dialectical reading, it is important to remember that the vulgarised Hegelianism of the thesis-antithesis-synthesis triad is a fundamental misrepresentation of the dialectical relationship. It disfigures the more accurate proposition that a dialectic, whether theoretical or phenomenological, can only exist when two terms or objects interrelate with, but retain a partial independence from, one another.⁷⁵ As such, the relationship between industrialisation and this neutered physical world should not be figured as dialectical because nature does not do enough to resist incorporation into the orders of acculturation. Wilderness on the other hand, presents itself as an indivisible remainder, incommensurable to culture. Its epistemological valency derives from its condition of otherness, from its fundamentally non-human character.

As so many contemporary definitions make clear, wilderness is radically dependent upon its estrangements from all things anthropocentric — human settlement, vehicle access, the built forms of modernity and “unnatural” bio-physical intervention.⁷⁶ Alongside modernity’s dominant discursive figurations of nature as locus of transformation runs a parallel trajectory that might be called, following Deleuze, a minor history of nature.⁷⁷ It is this discursive tradition that provides the source of the contemporary conceptualisation of wilderness recuperated by ecologists and environmentalists the world over.

It needs to be pointed out here that a common reaction to figurations of wilderness as other is a dubious kind of quasi post-structuralist critique that seeks to demonstrate

that no experience of wilderness can ever actually approach this condition of a communion with genuine alterity. In the 1993 collection *In the Nature of Things: Language, Politics and the Environment*, this position is taken up by Jan E. Dizard: “Thoreau brought with him a whole repertoire of assumptions and taxonomies with which to apprehend nature”; William Chaloupka and R. McGregor Cawley: “Rather than names for natural phenomena, wilderness and natural disaster offer codes for human relationships with nature”; and Wade Sikorski: “The wilderness or anarchy of Being is not the opposite of civilisation as it has long been characterised by the western tradition [...] but rather a building that we dwell in.”⁷⁸ While the validity of such critique must be recognised — the phenomenological apprehension of the wilderness, for instance, is always already an acculturated human apprehension — I do not wish to dwell on such concerns here. For the purposes of this chapter, it is the irreducible trace, that presence-surplus of otherness to be found in wilderness that I wish to work with. The reasons for this are two-fold; not only is it this trace that contrasts with and invokes wilderness’s dialectical opposite, industrial modernity, it is also its compelling persistence that provides the impetus for the stubborn deployment of the cultured-nature critique so popular amongst writers like those mentioned above. My position is straightforward: if wilderness did not continue to suggest something extra-human, there would surely be no need to recapitulate the rather tired response that it is always already humanised in such repetitive fashion.⁷⁹

The minor history of nature in modernity revolves around a recuperation of the organicism, sensualism and vitalism of human interactions with the non-human world repressed by the Enlightenment project. It hearkens back in other words, to pre-modern

conceptualisations of nature and revivifies them for a new socio-historical epoch. By drawing on their theological, mythical and mystical potential, the discourses which constitute this alternative viewpoint figure nature as a balm for humanity alienated by industrial modernity. Rousseau, for instance, while actually writing before industrialisation took full hold of French culture, posited the idea of the noble savage whose natural dignity and harmonious intermingling with the environment contrasted sharply with the wracked subjectivities of proto-modern man. Locke echoed Rousseau in this regard, setting up a telling dispute with his contemporary Hobbes who famously described the lives of archaic man as nasty, brutish and short. Next came the Romantic movement proper, generally regarded as the chief opposition to the hegemony of rationalist proto-modernity. In England, poets like Wordsworth, Keats, Coleridge and Shelley all shunned society for the chance to experience a sublime encounter with nature, embracing what Bronislaw Szerszynski calls the “expressivist” Romantic approach.⁸⁰ While “traditionalists” like Ruskin, Carlyle and, to a lesser extent, William Morris borrowed the homeostatic paradigm of pre-Newtonian science to critique the specialisation, atomisation, and individualism of the nascent factory system. The Romantic poets straddled a boundary line between past and present. They were interested in making nature sacred once more, but they did not wish to return wholesale to theology as a way of circumventing the reductionism of the Enlightenment paradigm. For the Romantic poets, God stood outside nature, effectively a passive observer, but at the same time, the glory of his being was to be observed in his creations, the natural world and the soul of man. As M.H. Abrams writes in *Natural Supernaturalism*:

The tendency in innovative Romantic thought is greatly to diminish and at the extreme to eliminate the role of God, leaving as the prime agencies man and the

world, mind and nature, the ego and the non-ego, the self and the not-self, spirit and the other, or subject and object.⁸¹

This same tendency is implicit in the German Romanticism developed at a similar time by philosophers like Schelling, Fichte, Novalis, the Schlegel brothers and Hegel. Borrowing heavily from Spinoza's concept of the dynamic monad, Schelling posited a complete identification of human being and nature as part of what he called an ideal realism, wherein nature should be thought as visible spirit and spirit as visible nature.⁸² Novalis conceived of a similar fusion of idealism and realism which held that nature was a universal trope or symbolic image of the human spirit blending this world and the beyond, the interior and the exterior worlds, the human being and nature, while Schlegel proposed the fusion of philosophy and poetry, reflection and creation, the ideal and the real.⁸³ The crux of all these permutations of German Romantic philosophy was their shared disputation with the Kantian division of subject and object delineated in *The Critique of Pure Reason*. While Kant had moved on from the Cartesian model of subjectivity as hermetically sealed cogito, he still maintained a rigorous division between the transcendental categories of the mind and the phenomenal world of experience. The early Romantic philosophers sought to suture together this rupture through the return to Spinoza and the positing of a dialectic idealism that merged nature with consciousness in the form of a universally objective totality.

In the 19th century the first really dedicated effort was made to transform this minor history of nature into a theory of wilderness and to devise a project for the reinsertion of wild spaces into human life. The most important figure here is Henry David Thoreau, who, as Jane Bennett points out, conceptualized wilderness as "[...] a surplus that escapes our categories and organizational practices, even as it is generated

by them.”⁸⁴ As Jonathan Bate makes clear in *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition*, one significant distinction between the nature poetry of Romanticism and the wilderness writing pioneered by Thoreau was the scale of the environment being surveyed:

Wordsworth’s mighty Helvellyn would be but a foothill in the Rockies. The British tradition I am tracing is much concerned with localness, with small enclosed vales; the American environmental tradition is far more preoccupied with vastness and with threatened wilderness.⁸⁵

Wordsworthian nature is thus only partially a non-human presence. Not only did the landscapes of his experience have a size that lent itself to an intimate knowledge, they were also environments that had been altered by human intervention. As Abrams suggests, this set of circumstances led Wordsworth and the other Romantics to conceive of nature at once as a specific entity but also as a rather abstract totality that encapsulated the far-flung reaches of the cosmos as much as it did the local English countryside. Thoreau, on the other hand, was provided with access to a landscape that was fundamentally wild. Its vastness was adequate to absorb the desire for universalism that saw the Romantics subsume under the concept of nature everything outside of the human soul, while its minute particularity enabled him to maintain a concern for specificity that is sometimes obscured in the transcendentalism of the Romantic tradition. Despite their attempts to reconcile the dialectical opposites of nature and the human, the Romantics on both sides of the English Channel retained the distinction between the two or at best subsumed nature into the imagination, rather than the other way round. As Urry and Macnaghten suggest, this meant that the Romantic critique of the hegemonic concept of nature was doomed to failure because instead of offering a

visionary or restorative alternative, it resorted to escapism as its antidote for modern disaffection:

Instead of efforts to reinvoke morality and ethics within nature by thinking through new ways to rework nature into the social, nature sustained “her” separation by departing from the predominant human sphere to the margins of modern industrial society.⁸⁶

Merely by recoding nature as valuable, argue Urry and Macnaghten, these critics of instrumental reason did not manage to heal the rupture that had sundered man from his physical environment. Henry David Thoreau, on the other hand, is such a significant figure in the history of wilderness thinking because he provided a clear *modus operandi* for achieving such a feat. According to Max Oelschlaeger, Thoreau moved on from the concept of nature posited by the two traditions that served as the preconditions of his thinking, Emersonian transcendentalism and Romanticism. Rather than allowing nature to be subsumed into the categories of consciousness or the divine, Thoreau cast off the shackles of anthropocentrism and envisioned nature as wilderness, the primal category of both human and non-human existence. Wilderness for Thoreau was fundamentally anti-dialectical, it did not interact with culture so much as provide the absolute horizon for its realisation. It could be overtly hostile to human inhabitation or welcoming in its myriad richness. It served as the precondition for humanity’s evolution but existed only as a being-for-itself. Not surprisingly, Oelschlaeger argues that Thoreau’s thinking is not only a prelude to Darwinism but also to modern hermeneutics in its contention that linguistic structures necessarily restrict man’s orientation to nature to one of exploitation or passive apprehension. Rather than describe nature, Thoreau sought to manifest it in what he called the “perfectly healthy sentence”. Overturning Cartesian models of human

communication, he desired that his utterance should have the same character as the yelp of a dog or the call of a bird. In his decision to shun modern life and re-engage with paleolithic paradigms of existence, he attempted to live half as indigene, half as infant, rejecting reflection and calculation and maintaining an intimate contact with the wilderness. Which reminds us that Thoreau's work constitutes the originary locus of modern wilderness thinking not only for its unique epistemological framework but also for its ethical system. Oelschlaeger nominates the following passage as the credo of preservationism:

The pine is no more lumber than man is, and to be made into boards and houses is no more its true and highest use than the truest use of man is to be cut down and made into manure [...] Every creature is better alive than dead, men and moose and pine-trees, and he who understands it aright will rather preserve its life than destroy it.⁸⁷

Thoreau's was a not-so-tacit critique of Adam Smith's conception of the good life espoused in *The Wealth of Nations*. Rather than conspicuous consumption, Thoreau argued for a Spartan renunciation of transient pleasures. Rather than an exploitative relationship to nature, Thoreau argued for a harmonious interaction that would irrevocably blur the lines between the human and the non-human. Rather than configuring man as *homo economicus*, Thoreau cast him as paleo-lithic aspirant to what he called "Indian Wisdom". Certainly, he was a misanthropist, he held disdain for the "quiet desperation" in which the masses lived, and asserted that perhaps the enlightened natural life was only a possibility for one in a million, but it is not for his utilitarianism that he is significant. Equally, his eccentricity is not in doubt. In one particularly memorable passage from *Walden*, for instance, he writes:

As I came home through the woods with my string of fish, trailing my pole, it being now quite dark, I caught a glimpse of a woodchuck stealing across my path, and felt a strange thrill of savage delight, and was strongly tempted to seize him and devour him raw; not that I was hungry, then, except for the wilderness which he represented.⁸⁸

Thoreau's desire to incorporate living wilderness into his own body through a violation of that "civilising" division between the raw and the cooked is exemplary of the radical re-visioning required to unseat hegemonic modern attitudes to nature. Indeed, it is in his excesses and stubborn absolutism that Thoreau perhaps most accurately foreshadows 20th-century wilderness thinking and the praxis pursued in its name. For Thoreau, true freedom was only to be found in nature and any reduction in material production that followed from its preservation was a necessary and worthy price to pay. Which brings us to one of the key differences between Thoreau's idea of wilderness and the form taken by the concept up to and into the 20th century. In the middle of the 19th century, massive tracts of the North American continent were still unpopulated by Europeans. Human settlements were concentrated on the Atlantic coast and manifest destiny and the inexorable pull of the Pacific Ocean had still not brought the West under European control. In short, wilderness was plentiful and the environment had yet to be wrested from nature's firm grip. By the 20th century, of course, things had fundamentally changed. A rapid acceleration in both human-caused damage to the natural environment and the capacity to monitor and diagnose that damage have led us to an awareness that we are on the brink of an ecological crisis, if indeed, we have not already fallen over the edge. The fundamental re-orientation toward the natural world prompted by this set of circumstances has had major ramifications for the conceptualisation of wilderness and also for the praxis pursued in its name. Indeed, we should be aware that to separate

these two domains is to ignore the way that the practical action taken to protect wilderness in the 20th century has actually worked to constitute the very idea of wilderness itself.

Thoreau's desire to escape society and re-engage with the Absolute has transmuted, in a shrinking world, into an attempt to preserve the small pockets of wilderness still untouched by human development. The incomprehensible infinity of the wilderness is now something that must be cordoned off and placed under constant surveillance. Its menacing grandeur has become fragile and brittle. Ironically, the first law of modern economics, that scarcity leads to an increase in value, encapsulates the modern environmentalist's relationship with wilderness. Still this abstracted, geo-political interpretation of wilderness should not be taken too far. From the outside looking in, wild nature may appear under threat but once one leaves the safety of the periphery and actually engages experientially with the wilderness, all the mystique, all the might and power, all the intimate, tiny detail that had seemed so tenuous from the littoral persists with the indefatigability of vegetal time. Indeed, Thoreau's writing continues to suffuse the ideologies of environmentalists the world over despite this rapid diminution in wilderness area. As Szerszynski points out, a panoply of contemporary social movements including deep ecology, radical ecofeminism, bioregionalism and neo-primitivism all borrow greatly from Thoreau's corpus of ideas, using him as a touchstone and point of access into the greater romantic tradition of "expressivism".⁸⁹ Whether it be a battle for the Brazilian or Indonesian rainforests, the tundra of the Arctic Circle or the oceanic environment of the South Pacific, the concept of wilderness, and

Thoreau's contribution to the formulation of that concept, remains at the heart of ecologically concerned praxis.⁹⁰

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The road to the Gordon Dam winds its way past Mount Field National Park, through the dilapidated towns of Fitzgerald and Maydena and into the World Heritage Area of Tasmania's South West. Built as a means of access for the Hydro-Electric Commission's Gordon Power scheme, its eighty six kilometres of white concrete and black bitumen takes you through some of the most remarkable landscapes in the world. From the road's pinnacle, the view drops away to the right as the Florentine Valley sprawls itself off to the mountains on the horizon and as you follow its descent, the thick, lurid green Gordon forests reach around to enclose your field of vision in their soaking density. As if anticipating the exaggerated character of this place, a sign discloses the annual rainfall as 10,800 millimetres, the extra zero only registering later as a typographical error, its inadvertant hyperbole quite convincing at first gloss. This lush vegetation slowly exhausts itself though, and is overtaken by a yellow-brown heathland dotted with hardy highland shrubs and, at the higher reaches, crenellated outcrops of white quartz. The size of the mountains that ring the glacial valley is difficult to judge, the primordial character of the landscape throws the human sense of perspective into revolt and the swollen waters of the twin lakes, Pedder and Gordon, act only to exacerbate this vertiginous effect. But the traces of modernity are certainly not in abeyance here, reference points proliferate. There is the road for one, and its complement of signs and signifiers naming the mountain ranges, the rivers, and the lakes that surround it. There are the markings of forestry too, and as you get closer to

the road's end, the now almost deserted hydro-village of Strathgordon. Because, after all, this is a road with a definite *telos*. At its end is the Gordon Dam, a gravity-defying concave wall of concrete that creates a reservoir so massive it actually threatens the structural integrity of the Earth's crust upon which it rests. This remarkable feat of engineering is the talisman of Tasmanian conservationism, its stunning power of refusal is the mouth that swallowed the original Lake Pedder, and its reinforced bulk is the galvanising force that steeled the will of those who would not let the Franklin go.

Perhaps even more emphatically than the figure with which I began this chapter, the Gordon Dam presents itself to the human gaze as a materialisation of the phenomenological dialectic of wilderness and industrial modernity. The Pasminco Zinc Works is an urban development. Its backdrop gestures toward the wilderness but does so in a partial way. The Gordon Dam, on the other hand, is situated at the very edge of civilisation, temporally as well as spatially. Its presence is premised on the obliteration of wilderness, the original Lake Pedder, and yet that lake remains in memory and actuality beneath the wine-dark waters that drowned it. Similarly, the human genius embodied in the Dam's formal structure seems designed as much to stop the water at its back, as to stalemate the larger forces of wilderness that surround it on all sides. The purity of its geometry is jolted and teased by the irregularity of the rock face against which it has been grafted. The reinforced curvature that fills the field of vision from one angle, is rendered insignificant from another.

Indeed, one might even say that the two histories of modern nature are materialised in this structure; that the hi-tensile bulwark of the dam embodies what Klaus Eder has called industrial reason, the will to transform nature, in this case in a

double sense because the product of the transformation is electricity, a non-product in its own right that only acquires character when crystalised in the manufacture of more substantive goods; while the wilderness that is its field embodies the minor history of nature that stretches back to the Romantic tradition and forward again through Thoreau, John Muir, Aldo Leopold and 20th-century environmentalism more generally.

For the subject who witnesses this scene, industrial modernity is suddenly given an edge. The world-historical epoch that had been taken for a totality is shown to be of finite extension. Its other, its precondition — the wilderness — greets it, joins with it, is subsumed by it, and in a classical movement of dialectical expansion, produces in its company a novel synthetic totality. Tasmanian modernity follows world modernity after the fashion of a metonymy, but, at the Gordon Dam, one realises that the physical relationship that connects those modern infrastructures to the timeless ahistoricism of the wilderness opens a space between the general and the particular, making Tasmania's claim to modernity ultimately undecidable.

Notes

¹ See Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)," in Douglas Tallack, ed., *Critical Theory: A Reader* (Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1995), pp. 298-313.

² Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 35.

³ See Noel King "Reading White Noise: Floating Remarks," *Critical Quarterly*, 33.3 (1990), pp. 66-83; Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "One or Several Wolves," *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translated by Brian Massumi (London: Athlone Press, 1988). Fredric Jameson writes of Deleuze and Guattari's anti-interpretive, anti depth-hermeneutic project:

Indeed one of the most dramatic of recent attacks on interpretation — *The Anti-Oedipus* — quite properly takes as its object not Marxian, but rather Freudian, interpretation, which is characterised as a reduction and a rewriting of the whole rich and random multiple realities of concrete everyday experience into the contained, strategically prelimited terms of the family narrative — whether this be seen as myth, Greek tragedy, "family romance" or even the Lacanian structural version of the Oedipus complex. What is denounced is therefore a system of allegorical interpretation in which the data of one narrative line are radically impoverished by their rewriting according to the paradigm of another narrative, which is taken as the former's master code or Ur-narrative and proposed as the ultimate hidden or unconscious meaning of the first one. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as Socially Symbolic Act* (London: Methuen, 1981), p. 22.

Bret Easton Ellis's satirical novel *American Psycho* (London: Picador, 1991) is perhaps the paradigmatic literary rendering of subjectivity as surface. Although Easton Ellis's protagonist Patrick Bateman attempts to reveal his psychical core to those around him, his fellow characters are completely oblivious to the possibility that he is anything other than the image he projects. The following passage, which describes a scene in which Bateman is receiving a massage, is a good example of Ellis's technique in this regard. Bateman says to the masseuse:

"Did I ever tell you that I want to wear a big yellow smiley-face mask and then put on the CD version of Bobby McFerrin's 'Don't Worry, Be Happy' and then take a girl and a dog — a collie, a chow, a sharpei, it doesn't really mater — and then hook up this transfusion pump, this IV set, and switch their blood, you know, pump the dog's blood into the hardbody and vice versa, did I ever tell you this?"

While I'm speaking I can hear the girl working on my feet humming one of those songs from *Les Misérables* to herself, and then Helga runs a moistened cotton ball across my nose, leaning close to the face, inspecting the pores. I laugh maniacally, then take a deep breath and touch my chest — expecting a heart to be thumping quickly, impatiently, but there's nothing there, not even a beat.

"Shhhh, Mr. Bateman," Helga says, running a warm loofah sponge over my face, which stings then cools the skin. "Relax."

"Okay," I say. "I'm relaxing."

"Oh Mr. Bateman," Helga croons, "you have such a nice complexion [...]", p. 116.

The implication here is not that the other characters are not interested in Bateman's interior world, which is a modernist rather than a postmodernist conceit but rather that he doesn't actually have one.

⁴ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 35.

⁵ Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 1.

⁶ Davidson, "Tasmanian Gothic," p. 312.

⁷ See particularly Cassandra Pybus, *Community of Thieves* (Port Melbourne: William Heinemann Australia, 1991).

⁸ Robinson's attempt to make contact with the Big River tribe were impeded by the circumlocutions of Manalargenna and Umarrah, the two Palawa chiefs he had chosen to guide him. The latter, in particular, was determined that Robinson heed the metaphysical instructions issued to him by his "devil" through the corporeal conduit of the "twitching breast. As Robinson writes in his entry for December 6, 1831:

Ordered the natives to look out for the footmarks of the natives. After some searching they found them. The chief seemed pleased and pointed to his breast to signify that his devil was right [...] was informed that after I had gone yesterday morning the chief rolled and tumbled about as though he was in strong paroxysm. This was the working of the evil spirit telling him the way the natives had gone [...]. Robinson, *Friendly Mission*, pp. 541-2.

For further information on Robinson, historical and fictionalised, see Kevin Blackburn, "Imagining Aboriginal Nations: Early Nineteenth Century Evangelicals on the Australian Frontier and the "nation" Concept," *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 48.2 (2002), pp. 174-92; K. E. C. Graves, "Quamby," *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1972 311(1876), pp. 142-54; Cassandra Pybus, "Oyster Cove 1988: Aboriginal History associated with Oyster Cove," *Meanjin*, 47.4 (Summer 1988), pp. 573-84; "History as Myth: G. A. Robinson and the Tasmanian Aborigines," *Overland*, 111 (June 1988), pp. 48-53; N. J. B. Plomley, *Friendly Mission; George Augustus Robinson and the Tasmanian Aborigines: A Paper Read Before a General Meeting of the Tasmanian Historical Research Association on 3 February, 1956* (Hobart: The Association, 1956); *Weep in Silence*; John Watt Beatties, *Historical Photographs Relating to Tasmania* (Hobart: [s.n.], 1912); Allan Drummond, *George Augustus Robinson* (Mentone: Green Barrow Publishing, 1999); Stephen Scheduling, *The National Picture* (Mill's Point: Vintage, 2002); Inga Clendinnen, *Tiger's Eye: A Memoir* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2000); Vivienne Rae-Ellis, *Trucanninni: Queen or Traitor* (Hobart: O. B. M., 1976); *Black Robinson: Protector of Aborigines* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1988); Mudrooroo, *Dr Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World*. Robert Drewe, *The Savage Crows* (Sydney: Collins, 1976).

⁹ Dominick LaCapra, *History and Reading: Foucault, Tocqueville and French Studies* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2001), p. 25.

¹⁰ The work of John Cash stands out in this regard. See John Daniel Cash "Ideology and Affect: The Case of Northern Ireland," *Political Psychology*, 10. 4, (December 1989), pp. 703-24 and *Identity, Ideology and Conflict: The Structuration of Politics in Northern Ireland* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹¹ Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, p. xxv.

¹² Robinson, *Friendly Mission*, p. 65.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 75, emphasis added.

¹⁴ Reynolds, *An Indelible Stain*, p. 53.

¹⁵ Sir George Murray quoted in *ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁶ Governor George Arthur quoted in *ibid.*, p. 64.

¹⁷ Giddens, *Consequences of Modernity*, p. 36.

¹⁸ Natalie Jackson and Rebecca Kippen, "Whither Tasmania?: A Note on Tasmania's Population 'Problem'," *People and Place*, 9.1 (March 2001), p. 27. Since 2002, the Tasmanian population decline has actually been reversed, but prior to that change, concern was voiced from a number of different quarters. The former leader of the opposition Bob Cheek, for instance, established a population taskforce dedicated to attracting new migrants to Tasmania, while the Cradle Coast Authority, an amalgamated local council body on the North West coast, also dedicated funds to the task of building numbers. The principal "scientific" driver of the depopulation anxiety was probably the Australian Bureau of Statistics projections released in 2001 that forecast a worst-case scenario of four hundred and thirty four thousand residents by 2021. See [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/Lookup/76B349B02F44C733CA256AE10001CFE0/\\$File/32226_99-2021.pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/Lookup/76B349B02F44C733CA256AE10001CFE0/$File/32226_99-2021.pdf).> Additional writing on the topic by Natalie Jackson can be found at <http://taspop.tasbis.com/1400/info/links.html>. See also Nicolas Rothwell, "Lost Island," *The Australian* (26-27 April 1997), Weekend Review (1), p. 6.

¹⁹ LaCapra, *History and Reading*, p. 65.

²⁰ In making this point, I am not suggesting that LaCapra's attempt to revamp historical writing is the only one circulating through the intellectual channels of the humanities. Nor am I satisfied that the orthodoxy that he is challenging is a homogeneous, undifferentiated field of scholarship. One need only look to work by David Lowenthal, Simon Schama and Carlo Ginzburg for novel approaches to writing history that avoid such a radical rebooting of historical method.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 30.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

²⁴ See Harold Bloom, "Different Voice: A Reading List for Bill Gates — and You: A Conversation with Literary Critic, Harold Bloom," *Harvard Business Review*, 79.5 (2001), pp. 63-71.

²⁵ Robert Knox, *The Races of Men: A Fragment* (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1850), p. 2.

²⁶ For further information on Knoxian racial science see Susan Collinson, "Robert Knox's Anatomy of Race," *History Today* (December 1990), pp. 44-8; Evelleen Richards, "The "Moral Anatomy" of Robert Knox: the interplay between Biological and Social Thought in Victorian Scientific Naturalism," *Journal of the History of Biology*, 22.3 (Fall 1989), pp. 373-436.

²⁷ Turnbull, *Black War*, p. 1.

²⁸ O'Regan, "Documentary in Controversy," p. 129.

²⁹ Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, p. 9.

³⁰ In 1977, prior to the screening of Haydon's film the Tasmanian Aboriginal Information Service (now the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre) presented a petition to the Tasmanian Parliament asking for Land Rights. However it wasn't until November 2, 1995 that the first lands were officially transferred back to the Aboriginal community through the Aboriginal Lands Act. Sensitivity of the Tasmanian State Government to Aboriginal issues was certainly magnified following the release of Haydon's film. Prior to 1977, Tasmania did not have any agency with specific responsibility for Aboriginal issues. The Aboriginal Affairs study group was formed in 1977, but a more heavily funded body the Tasmanian Aboriginal Research Trust was established following Haydon's film and this new concern was consolidated with the formation of the office of the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in 1982.

³¹ Jean Laplanche and J. B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1973), p. 488.

³² Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia (1917)," in *The Pelican Freud Library, 11; On Metapsychology: The Theory of Psychoanalysis* (London: Penguin, 1984), pp. 245-68.

³³ Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, p. 255. The debate over the racist undertones present Haydon's film led to a debate between Aboriginal rights activist Michael Mansell and the director on the ABC's *Monday Conference* (4 September 1979). See Robert Milliken, "Genocide Film Stirs Up Race Row," *National Times* (22 July 1978), pp. 6-9, for details.

³⁴ See Alison Alexander, *The Zinc Works: Producing Zinc at Risdon, 1916-1991* (Risdon: Pasmineo-Metals, EZ, 1992).

³⁵ As the Australian Bureau of Statistics' *Tasmanian Year Books* show, manufacturing employment dropped from thirty four thousand jobs out of a total of one hundred and forty seven thousand in 1968 to twenty three thousand jobs out of a total of one hundred and ninety five thousand in 1998.

³⁶ See Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Regional Statistics Tasmania 2001*, (Tuesday, July 31 2001), p. 21 and *Australian Economic Indicators March 2000*, (Tuesday, February 2 2000), p. 76.

³⁷ See Simon J. Charlesworth, *A Phenomenology of Working-Class Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

³⁸ See, for instance, Catherine Watson, *Full and Plenty: An Oral History of Apple Growing in the Huon Valley* (Sandy Bay: Twelvetreets Publishing, 1987).

³⁹ Kumar, *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society*, p. 82.

⁴⁰ A number of 20th-century German photographers, in particular, provide us with the visual machinery for commencing this speculative venture. See August Sander, *August Sander: Photographs of an Epoch, 1904-1959: Man of the Twentieth Century, Rhineland Landscapes, Nature Studies, Architectural and Industrial Photographs, Images of Sardinia* (Millerton: Aperture, 1980); Kim Sichel, *Germaine Krull: Photographer of Modernity* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999).

⁴¹ See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, translated by Colin Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962).

⁴² See Fiona Pollack, "Place and Space: Views from a Tasmanian Mountain," in Ruth Barcan and Ian Buchanan, eds., *Imagining Australian Space: Cultural Studies and Spatial Inquiry* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1999), pp. 145-57; Conrad, *Down Home*; Flanagan, *On the Mountain*.

⁴³ David Bartlett, speech, 26/10/04
<http://www.davidbartlett.com.au/home/speechesandpapers/speech26octoberpm>

⁴⁴ Fabienne Bayet, "Overturning the Doctrine: Indigenous People and Wilderness – Being Aboriginal in the Environmental Movement," *Social Alternatives* 13.2 (Jul. 1994), p. 27.

⁴⁵ For a good example of this phenomenon see Bernard Stonehouse, *The Aerofilms Book of Britain from the Air* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1982).

⁴⁶ The micro-history of the origins of hydro power in Tasmania that follow is designed to give the reader an insight into one episode in a diverse and multi-layered trajectory. For more thorough-going surveys of the project of hydro-electrification see particularly, R. M. H. Garvie, *A Million Horses: Tasmania's Power*

in the Mountains (Hobart: Hydro-Electric Commission, Tasmania, 1962); Simon Harris, *Power, Politics and Progress: The Evolution of Tasmania's Hydro-Electric Commission, 1914-1930* (Thesis: University of Tasmania, 1986); Doug Lowe, *The Price of Power: The Politics Behind the Tasmanian Dams Case* (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1984); Lindsay Whitham, "The Red Gate Tramway to Waddamana," *Papers and Proceedings of the Tasmanian Historical Research Association*, 46.4 (December 1999), pp. 200-12.

⁴⁷ Wagner, *A Sociology of Modernity*, p. 3.

⁴⁸ Crook, Waters and Pakulski, *Postmodernization*, p. 30.

⁴⁹ My characterisation of developers as Faustian is informed by Marshall Berman's chapter on the three metamorphoses of that classic character of German Romanticism in *All that is Solid Melts into Air*.

⁵⁰ Mead, "A Strange Narrative Density," p. 17.

⁵¹ Phyllis Deane, *The First Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 1.

⁵² This claim deliberately excludes the whaling and sealing operations that were in operation in Van Diemen's Land before British "settlement" because it is interested more in officially sanctioned production than informal hunting practices. It mentions them later because they were eventually incorporated into official economic activity measurements.

⁵³ Lloyd Robson, *A History of Tasmania*, vol. 1 (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 13.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁵⁵ A. J. Gillies, *Tasmania's Struggle for Power* (Burnie: Francis and Lillas, 1984), p. 3.

⁵⁶ Quoted in Gillies, *Tasmania's Struggle for Power*, p. 3.

⁵⁷ The reference to Virgil is symptomatic of an ironic attempt to bring my own selective micro-history of hydro-electrification into a force-field of comparability with Dante's *Inferno*.

⁵⁸ For the apotheosis of the Georgian approach see Michael Sharland, *Oddity and Elegance* (Hobart: Fullers Bookshop, 1966).

⁵⁹ The forced departure of young people in particular is a conceit that both fictional and non-fictional writers of Tasmania have found difficult to ignore. See Dennis Altman *The Comfort of Men* (Port Melbourne: William Heinemann Australia, 1993); *Defying Gravity: A Political Life* (St Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1997); Martin Flanagan, *In Sunshine or in Shadow* (Sydney: Picador, 2002); Flanagan, *Death of a River Guide*; *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*; C.J. Koch, *The Boys in the Island* (Sydney: Collins/Angus and Robertson, 1987); *The Doubleman*; Heather Rose, *White Heart* (Sydney: Anchor, 1999).

⁶⁰ Cassandra Pybus, "The Landscape of the Self," *Meanjin*, 48.4 (1989), p. 797.

⁶¹ Norm Sanders, *A Time to Care: Tasmania's Endangered Wilderness* (Blackmans Bay: Chris Bell, 1980), p. 103.

⁶² Fredric Jameson, "Utopia, Modernism, and Death," in *The Seeds of Time*, (New York: Columbia, 1994), pp. 73-128.

⁶³ See Amanda Lohrey's work on Green thinking for a useful delineation of the way Green discourse offers a middle way between the gothic and the utopian/transformational modes of seeing the natural world. Amanda Lohrey, *Groundswell: The Rise of the Greens*. Quarterly Essay. (Melbourne: Black Inc., 2002);

"The Green Discourse," in Richard Flanagan and Cassandra Pybus, eds., *The Rest of the World is Watching: Tasmania and the Greens* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan, 1990), pp. 89-100.

⁶⁴ Flanagan, "Does Tasmania Have a Future," p. 149.

⁶⁵ In John Carey, ed., *The Faber Book of Utopias* (London: Faber and Faber, p. 1999), p. 184.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. xi.

⁶⁷ Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, translated by Alan Sheridan-Smith (New York: Vintage, 1973), p. 128.

⁶⁸ This definition of the *episteme* comes from David Lodge, *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*, (London and New York: Longman, 1988), p. 108.

⁶⁹ See particularly Camille Paglia, *Sex, Art, And American Culture: Essays* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1993), pp. 170-299.

⁷⁰ See for instance Klaus Eder, *The Social Construction of Nature* (London: Sage, 1996); Scott Lash, Bronislaw Szerszynski and Brian Wynne, eds., *Risk, Environment and Modernity: Towards a New Ecology* (London: Sage, 1996); Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science*, 155.3767 (10 March 1967), pp. 1203-7.

⁷¹ Max Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), p. 20.

⁷² For recent scholarship on Descartes, nature and modernity, see Peter J. Albano, "The Cogito, Human Self-Assertion, and the Modern World," *Philosophy Today*, 44.2 (Summer 2000), pp. 184-9; Anthony Low, "'Umpire Conscience': Freedom, Obedience, and the Cartesian Flight from Calvin in *Paradise Lost*," *Studies in Philology*, 96.3 (Summer 1999), pp. 348-65; Charles M. Sheroover, "Forming the Mind of Modernity," *International Journal on World Peace*, 15.1 (March 1998), pp. 23:49; Christoph Luthy, "Spirits and Clocks: Machine and Organism in Descartes," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, 52.209 (October 2002), pp. 632-4; Robert Rethy, "The Teaching of Nature and the Nature of Man in Descartes' *Passions De L'Ame*," *The Review of Metaphysics*, 53.3 (March 2000), pp. 657-83.

⁷³ For further information on Francis Bacon and his contribution to the project of modernity, see Charles Whitney, *Francis Bacon and Modernity* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986); John Henry, *Knowledge is Power: Francis Bacon and the Method of Science* (Cambridge: Icon Books, 2002).

⁷⁴ For recent scholarship on Adam Smith that has relevance for this project see Eduardo A. Velasquez, "Eros and Modernity, or Sympathy and Nihilism," *Perspectives on Political Science*, 30.3 (Summer 2001), pp. 157-62; Andreas Kalyvas and Ira Katznelson, "The Rhetoric of the Market: Adam Smith on Recognition, Speech, and Exchange," *The Review of Politics*, 63.3 (Summer 2001), pp. 549-79; Fonna Forman-Barzilai, "Adam Smith as Globalization Theorist," *Critical Review*, 14.4 (2000), pp. 391-419; "Adam Smith and the Virtues of Enlightenment," *Political Theory*, 28.1 (February 2000), pp. 122-30; Jesus M. Zaratiegui Labiano, "A Reading of Hobbes' *Leviathan* with Economists' Glasses," *International Journal of Social Economics*, 27.2 (2000), pp. 134-61; James P. Pinkerton, "Enviromanticism: The Poetry of Nature as Political Force," *Foreign Affairs*, 76.3 (May/June 1997), pp. 2-7; David John Farmer, "Contemporary Conceptual Space: Reading Adam Smith," *Journal of Management History*, 3.3 (1997), pp. 246-59; Gus di Zerega, "Deep Ecology and Liberalism: The Greener Implications of Evolutionary Liberal Theory," *The Review of Politics*, 58.4 (Fall 1996), pp. 699-734.

⁷⁵ See Friedrich Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, translated by Clemens Dutt (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1940);

It is therefore, from the history of nature and human society that the laws of dialectics are abstracted. For they are nothing but the most general laws of these two aspects of historical development. And indeed they can be reduced in the main to three: The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa; The law of the interpenetration of opposites; The law of the negation of the negation. p. 26.

⁷⁶ See Jamie Kirkpatrick, *Hydro-Electric Development and Wilderness in Tasmania* (Hobart, Tasmanian Department of Environment, 1979).

⁷⁷ I adopt this nomenclature because the significance of Spinoza to Deleuze's "minor history of philosophy". See Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* and "Introduction," *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983).

⁷⁸ William Chaloupka and R. McGregor Cawley, "The Great Wild Hope: Nature, Environmentalism, and the Open Secret," in Jane Bennett and William Chaloupka, eds., *In the Nature of Things: Language, Politics, and the Environment* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), pp. 3-23; Jan E. Dizard, "Going Wild: The Contested Terrain of Nature," in Bennett and Chaloupka, *In the Nature of Things*, pp. 111-135; Wade Sikorski, "Building Wilderness," in Bennett and Chaloupka, *In the Nature of Things*, pp. 24-43.

⁷⁹ For a lucid, non-partisan discussion of post-structuralism and environmental thought see Verena Andermatt Conley, *Ecopolitics: The Environment in Poststructuralist Thought* (London: Routledge, 1997).

⁸⁰ Szerszynski, *Risk, Environment and Modernity*, p. 126.

⁸¹ M. H. Abrams, *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (New York: Norton, 1971), p. 91.

⁸² Ernst Behler, *German Romantic Literary Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 2.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-163.

⁸⁴ Jane Bennett, *Thoreau's Nature: Ethics, Politics and the Wild* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994), p. xxi.

⁸⁵ Jonathon Bate, *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 39.

⁸⁶ Phil Macnaghten and John Urry, *Contested Natures* (London: Sage Publications, 1998), p. 13.

⁸⁷ Thoreau in Oelschlaeger, *Idea of Wilderness*, p. 150.

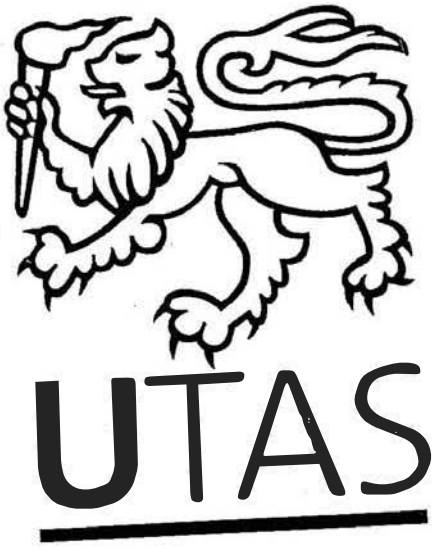
⁸⁸ Henry David Thoreau, *Walden; Or, Life in the Woods* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1965), p. 176.

⁸⁹ Szerszynski, *Risk, Environment and Modernity*, p. 121

⁹⁰ For recent work on various dimensions of the Thoreau, nature, modernity nexus see Christopher Sellers, "Thoreau's body: Towards an Embodied Environmental History," *Environmental History*, 4.4 (October 1999), pp. 486-515; Leo Marx "The Full Thoreau," *The New York Review of Books*, 46.12 (July 15, 1999), pp. 44-8; Tarla Rai Peterson, "Environmental Communication: Tales of Life on Earth," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 4.3 (August 1998), pp. 371-86.

PART 4

**Global Time,
or, The Uses of
History in a Minor
Place, 1978 ...**



CHAPTER 10

Metaphorics of an Extermination

In "The Rise and Fall of Metaphor: German Historians and the Uniqueness of the Holocaust", Wulf Kansteiner argues that German historians of an empiricist bent have traditionally couched their narratives in a straightforward referential language dominated by metonymic figuration. This linguistic commonplace was challenged, however, with the emergence of a metaphoric approach to thinking the uniqueness of the Holocaust championed by scholars like Martin Broszat, Hans Mommsen, Yehuda Bauer and Saul Friedlander.¹ The intrusion of metaphor into historical debates around the Holocaust found its fullest expression in the "Historian's Debate" that raged in Germany through the mid-to-late-1980s, but, according to Kansteiner its effects have since been largely absorbed into a new regime of "self-confident empiricism":

With hindsight, the historiographically volatile 1970s and the subsequent short reign of metaphor appear just as ripples in a sea of historiographical normality and self-confidence. The notion of the Holocaust's singularity temporarily postponed this inevitable return to business as usual and gave rise to unusual and unusually productive historiographical introspection and in this way attested to the extraordinary challenge which the historicisation of events like the Holocaust pose to academic discipline.²

In this chapter, I wish to counter Kansteiner's claim by demonstrating that metaphor continues to occupy a central position within the multi-layered discursive field that gathers the Holocaust together with other instances of historical genocide. From the angle I pursue here it is not the "uniqueness" of the Holocaust that is encoded through the rhetoric of negative metaphors but rather its very comparability. In what follows, I examine some of the ways in which the massive spatio-temporal disjunction that separates the genocide of the Palawa in Tasmania and the Holocaust has been elided through the mobilisation of a very specific metaphor, that of the "Final Solution". The deployment of this motif regularly punctuates the syntax of articulations that deal with the genocide of the Tasmanian Aborigines, but it is to one specific context that I direct my attention, Mudrooroo Narogin's historical novel *Dr Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World*.³

Thinking about Mudrooroo's inscription of "Final Solution" in *Wooreddy* might require an attention to the specificities of fictionalized plotting. Certainly his use of the two fateful words is the only instance of a novelic inscription that speaks to the literary corpus of Aboriginal Tasmania. Other examples of their deployment occur within the broad genre of academic history. Take the following four instances:

There was no doubt that the situation had been developing towards a 'final solution' for many years, a solution made inevitable primarily because of the complete lack of communication between two people, neither understanding the language of the other.⁴

The answer is that governments in the metropolis, under intense pressure from the periphery, were prepared to entertain "final solutions" to the Aboriginal problem.⁵

What made the Tasmanian case special for the Victorians was partly that their final solution seemed really final, and partly that it first became apparent in the 1830s, heyday both of utilitarian belief in progress through secular industry and reform and of evangelical belief in extraworldly salvation.⁶

The actual documentation of Truganini's death appeared irrefutable proof that the "final solution" which everyone publicly abhorred had been triumphantly attained.⁷

The writers who adopt the term "Final Solution" to describe the atrocities committed against the Tasmanian Aborigines align themselves, inadvertently or not, with the loose affiliation of scholars who argue against the singularity of the Holocaust. The motive betrayed by this modality of figuration is the desire for a certification of genocide won not so much by argumentation as rhetorical flourish. If, as Alison Palmer suggests, the Holocaust is the "normative prototype of all genocides", the application of one of its nomenclatures to an alternative historical logic might well also involve the recuperation and redistribution of its high moral seriousness.⁸ The politics of such an intervention are highly fraught. On one side stand the cautionary imperatives to avoid the splicing together of irreducible events that Steven Katz and Deborah Lipstadt deplore as "moral chauvinism" and crypto-fascist "relativism", respectively.⁹ While on the other, the

impassioned pleas of writers like Ward Churchill, Peter Novick, Norman Finkelstein and David E. Stannard implore us to acknowledge the claims of the victims of “other” genocides who feel that their suffering has not been given commensurate recognition and legitimation.¹⁰ In the spirit of Freud’s work on female sexuality and patriarchy that Juliet Mitchell famously defended on the grounds of its *descriptive* rather than its *prescriptive* force, I would like to subordinate the ethical dimensions of this piece to its empirical component.¹¹

From an imaginary vantage point somewhere in a more socially just future, the close-cropped publication of Henry Reynolds’ *An Indelible Stain: The Question of Genocide in Australian History* and Ray Thorpe and Bill Evans’ “Indigenocide and the Massacre of Aboriginal History” may well be looked upon as a pivotal moment in the history of the project of reconciliation. If historical amnesia of the kind prescribed by Keith Windschuttle succeeds in settling its soporific vapours over our collective memory, however, these texts will at least be remembered for their heartfelt plea that we take the idea of an Australian genocide seriously.

I examine these texts here because they stand as two recent high-profile examples of writing about the Tasmanian genocide in the context of a larger investigation of race-relations in the Australian nation-state as a whole. Within that emerging historiographical genre, Tasmania is often treated as the exemplary site of genocidal actions, just as the Holocaust serves as the paradigmatic case in the larger genre of international Genocide Studies. The structure of the discursive constellation into which Reynolds and Thorpe and Evans make their entrance, then, overlaps with the far larger and more powerful complex of texts that describe and interrogate the Holocaust. That

last complex, however, is not self-sufficient either, in so far as it, too, opens out into a discursive terrain that is populated by writing on genocides other than the Shoah. A byzantine network of exchange and allusion, of association and conjunction spreads itself across these discursive regimes, but even in the claustrophobic cross-currents of reference and echo, a pattern that makes Tasmania the paradigmatic site of genocide in Australia can be identified. Once this pattern is established, a con-sanguinity with the Holocaust, which itself anchors the much larger field of Genocide Studies more generally, can also be delineated.

As Thorpe and Evans make clear in their essay:

relatively few analyses of Australia's past either by indigenous or non-indigenous authors [...] have examined the concept [of genocide] at any length, either in its 'theoretical dimensions' or its empirical applications.¹²

This omission, they suggest, has played into the hands of those who argue against the occurrence of widespread frontier conflict in the nascent Australian colonies. To this end, Thorpe and Evans direct their polemic most firmly at Windschuttle's essays in *Quadrant* from the mid-1990s, arguing that in those texts, Windschuttle sought to breathe new life into the tropes of "terra nullius", "the great Australian silence" and the "quiet continent thesis".¹³ Thorpe and Evans identify a two-phase tactic as central to Windschuttle's approach: first, an out-of-hand denial that genocide ever occurred in Australia is issued, and second, a re-examination and reformulation of a modified definition of the term is blankly refused. Instead, statistical evidence from the period concerned is used to bolster the contrary contention that losses suffered by the settlers at the hands of the indigenous inhabitants were more severe than vice versa.¹⁴

Thorpe and Evans undertake a close inspection of Windschuttle's research methodology in their efforts to counter this contention, and find a rich vein of error and oversight in his work. Not only do they manage to stymie the argument from statistics, they also identify a poor use of primary sources, a highly selective consultation of recently published academic histories on the subject and a tendency to occlude relevant empirical events.¹⁵ To their credit though, and in keeping with the sweep of their piece, Thorpe and Evans quickly shift their energies away from this tussle with Windschuttle and his *Quadrant* allies, to a confrontation of the motivations that drive the widespread suspicion of "black armband" history that circulates through the cultural centres of this country:

It is intensely discomfoting to conceive of an Australian social order where the mass murder of certain people, identifiable by their ethnicity, was a way of life, executed by a minority of perpetrators, tolerated by the settler majority, and winked at by a state which, in other settings, upheld the precepts of British culture, law and justice.¹⁶

In the process of working through the resistance generated by this discomfort, Thorpe and Evans find themselves confronted with something of a semantic impasse. The first major attempt to define and codify genocide was made in 1944 by the Polish-Jewish intellectual Raphael Lemkin. Conceived in direct response to the empirical realities of the German occupation policies directed at Slavs, Jews and Gypsies in Axis-controlled Europe, Lemkin's definition, which was subsequently taken as a primary source by the United Nations Convention on the issue, conceives of genocide as a "peculiarly modern phenomenon", or, more precisely, "an old practice in its modern development."¹⁷ Dealing as they are with an historically antecedent and qualitatively distinct set of

events, Evans and Thorpe propose that a narrow definition of genocide which emphasises its specifically modern character might not have room for the Australian frontier scenario. As such, they coin a new portmanteau term that they hope will more adequately address the specificity of their object of study: indigenocide:

Indigenocide is a means of analysing those circumstances where one, or more peoples, usually immigrants, deliberately set out to supplant a group or groups of other people whom as far as we know, represent the indigenous or Aboriginal peoples of the country that the immigrants usurp.¹⁸

Thorpe and Evans do not concede, however, that the use of indigenocide's antecedent is disqualified entirely by the specifically colonial character of the empirical realities that form the focus of their investigation. Rather, they propose that indigenocide might be deployed after the fashion of a Derridean *supplément*, to both augment and replace the exegetical utility of its suffix-root.¹⁹ What happens next is that genocide comes to signify in a dual way. On the one hand it retains its concrete linkage to the Jewish Holocaust, making that moral disaster a kind of one-member set, and on the other, it becomes a more generic rubric that can be attached to any configuration of empirical events that fits its formal criteria.

The jurisdiction of Thorpe and Evans' piece is the whole of Australia, but the first case study they turn to is the settler-colonisation of Tasmania. The "Tasmanian Aboriginal situation", they argue, "is often regarded as Australia's singular genocidal example."²⁰ What is happening here is akin to the phenomenon that Dipesh Chakrabarty describes in *Provincializing Europe*, whereby a "first in Europe, then elsewhere" structure of global historical time is reproduced in non-European locations so that local versions of this same narrative replace "Europe" with some locally constructed center.²¹

For the taxonomic “class” of Lemkinian genocide, the Holocaust becomes the exemplary instantiation, the dense nucleus, if you will, of European — and therefore, Western — narratives of ethnic maltreatment and xenophobic inhumanity, while within the sub-class of Australian genocide or indigenocide, the Tasmanian extirpation is inscribed as the “locally constructed centre” of a concomitant discursive formation. The two “events” are brought together by virtue of the equivalent position they occupy within overlapping but relatively autonomous symbolic orders.

The essential gist of Thorpe and Evans’ piece quickly becomes clear. Any post-Holocaust historical analysis that seeks to delineate the workings of a genocidal logic in its particular archive will necessarily do so through an intertextual matrix thoroughly overdetermined by the Holocaust itself. Discussing genocide without invoking images and cultural memories that cluster around the representational traditions of the Shoah will be well-nigh impossible. Whether these be snatches of Primo Levi’s haunting prose-poem *If This is a Man?*, the macabre combination of muscle memory and moral exhaustion borne of enduring Claude Lanzmann’s *Shoah*, or the anamnesis of anonymous newsreel footage, the memory traces of the Holocaust will attach themselves to the particular genocide being read and appear co-extensively on the same cognitive surface or plane of immanence. We cannot de-couple and divorce the “Final Solution” from the classificatory register established in its name, even as we find baleful the comparisons between actual *sui generis* cases of “ethnic cleansing” thereby engendered. Genocide and Holocaust become, and remain, to some extent synonymous.

Equally, Thorpe and Evans’s work shows that to discuss genocide in Australian history is always to refer back, even if allusively or by association, to the colonisation of

Tasmania and the depredations wrought on its indigenous inhabitants by the disjointed assemblage of the military, the judiciary, the legislature and private citizenry. There is a connective tissue that binds in contingent and provisional fashion the Tasmanian genocide, the Australian genocides, indigenocide, the Holocaust and all the other historical logics that we approach through this terminology.

Reynolds' investigation of the question of genocide in Australian history overlaps with the reconnoitre of Thorpe and Evans. In his monograph, *An Indelible Stain: The Question of Genocide in Australia's History*, Reynolds includes a chapter entitled "Tasmania: a Clear Case of Genocide?" that engages with the growing body of international scholarship and journalism interested in trawling through the phantasmagoria of colonial bloodshed in Tasmania. While Reynolds is able to find copious "genocidal" articulations that take Tasmania as their object, he also notes the reluctance of Australians to examine the presence of genocidal relations in their own country's past. Like Thorpe and Evans, he points out that a more particularised definition of genocide — colonial genocide — has been preferred in the Australian case. The exception to this rule is the historiography of Tasmania, and Reynolds lists three Australian historians, Robson, Butlin and Hughes, who have all couched their accounts of the decimation and displacement of the Palawa people in the language of extirpation.²² For Reynolds, as for Thorpe and Evans, the Tasmanian settler-invasion stands out as the most obvious example of a genocidal action in Australian history. Reynolds actually hedges his bets when it comes to making a clear determination as to whether or not a genocide was perpetrated in 19th-century Tasmania, but for our purposes here, it is adequate to show that he acknowledges the seductive power that

such an induction has exercised over others. If genocide did occur in Australia, Reynolds suggests, the first place to which we would turn in pursuit of its traces would be Tasmania.

Reynolds also turns his attention to the question of the Shoah. As if anticipating Thorpe and Evans' iteration of the relation of contiguity that holds the Holocaust and the Tasmanian genocide together, he paraphrases a contention made by Tony Barta in an article originally published in 1985:

The terrible and well-known story of the Holocaust makes it difficult to discuss the general question of genocide, which for most people means only one thing: the murder of six million Jews. As a result, Australians have never seriously been confronted by the idea 'that the society in which they live is founded on genocide'.²³

To speak semiotically, the signifier "genocide" in Barta's formulation, refers not to the abstract realm of the denotative — the deliberate killing of a large number of individuals of a particular race, ethnicity or national grouping — but to the more connotative particularity of the Holocaust itself. One stage in the process of meaning-manufacture has thus been foregone and the movement from the acoustic sound-image of the signifier to the hypostasised concept of the signified has been renegotiated. The idea of "genocide in general" has been passed over, exchanged without notice, substituted for an instance of "actually existing genocide" which doubles over itself to reflexively saturate the semantic field of its signifier.

To call the history of altercations between indigenous and non/indigenous Tasmanians a genocide, then, is to interweave the narratives that constitute its textuality with those of the Holocaust. The lateral relation that normally holds between members

of the same class of objects is thus re-hinged, and the Holocaust becomes a kind of horizon for the unfolding of the story of genocide in Tasmania. Furthermore, Reynolds' recapitulation of the strategy that positions Tasmania at the centre of the spatial and temporal ordering of genocide in Australia mirrors the commonplace understanding that the Holocaust is the pre-eminent genocide in Western history.

Historically, debates about Aboriginality in Tasmania have taken the form of a constellation circulating around a single radial point: the question of extinction. From James Bonwick's publication of 1870, *The Last of the Tasmanians* to Clive Turnbull's *The Black War* in 1948 to Tom Haydon's documentary *The Last Tasmanian* in 1978, the absolute obliteration of the indigenous owners of Tasmania was affirmed as historical fact.²⁴ However, after years of misinformation and misguided ignorance, a racial politics with real energy and determination began to make its presence felt. And there was a story behind it all. The myth of complete extinction was the touchstone for the development of a formidable Aboriginal rights movement that began to emerge in the 1970s. This group were responsible for, and bore witness to, the remarkable situation whereby a supposedly extinct peoples actually began arguing for their own existence. In linguistic terms, this was a perfect example of a performative speech act, the process of voicing making incontestable the content of the claim being voiced.²⁵

This new optic of survival positioned a scene of diffuse continuity against a morbid backdrop of abrupt termination. It produced a new way of seeing, a post-colonial *volte face* as ethically reassuring as it was logically and empirically sound. It also cast a long shadow over the horizon of Aboriginal Studies in Tasmania. In an historiographical field dominated by a turning point of such basic ontological import,

the impact of the discovery of a genocidal pattern in the actions and orientations of the Colonial Office, the colonial administrations of David Collins, Thomas Davey, William Sorell and George Arthur and the citizenry more generally, is made to seem less explosive than it otherwise might.

But even so, a wave of ripples — legal, political, ethical, semantic — radiate out across the textual surface of the Aboriginal Studies programme in the wake of the uncovering of this secret truth. Conceptually, what the deployment of the term does is invest the incidents it describes with a heightened degree of horror. Suddenly, an irreducibly specific historical moment becomes part of a larger genus. The events which slide under the signifier of genocide — Pol Pot's Killing Fields, the destruction of the Aztec and Inca civilisations by the Spanish conquistadors, and more recently the tragedy of the Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda — come to donate some of their cultural resonance to the disaster of imperialism that took place in Tasmania from 1803 onwards.

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This chapter traces some of the links in the associative chain that ties together the Jewish Holocaust and the decimation of the Aboriginal Tasmanians. At the level of empirical reality there are few points of conjunction. What these events have in common is their shared status as genocides, a synthetic quality that isn't immanent within a given historical logic but must be read into it *a posteriori*, after the fact.

The writing of genocide histories is a kind of motivated remembering. Patterns are deliberately tracked down, motives are interrogated, intent identified, objectives isolated, with the signal purpose of having the locus to which they relate verified against

an abstract standard: the deliberate killing of a large number of individuals of a specific national or ethnic grouping (*OED*), or in the longer UN definition:

any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

Killing members of the group;

Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;

Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.²⁶

I have argued above that the idea of Holocaust becomes imbricated with the concept of genocide, even as it remains only one instance of the larger historical class of genocides-in-general. I have argued also that, in this light, the reading of other genocides, the Tasmanian case included, becomes a re-reading of the category-saturating narratives of the Holocaust. It is completely feasible, of course, that casual students of the dispossession of the Palawa people might have no working knowledge whatsoever of the death camps of Eastern Europe. For those of us who are struck by the symmetries and disjunctions that hold between the two sets of events, however, the movement that brings the Holocaust from its historical situatedness to its place in our individual and cultural memories must be mediated through the circuitry of an inter-textual network. The mechanism that accesses this network is memory. Scenes from the Holocaust — real footage, staged re-enactments, fictionalised representations, still

images, personal accounts — provide the content that fills out the empty form of the Holocaust as an idea. They are the links in the signifiatory chain that stretches out from the Holocaust to the Tasmanian genocide and which stretches back again in the opposite direction.

For our purposes here, what is in question is how this chain is connected up to a number of textual sites that deal specifically with the decimation and displacement of the Aboriginal Tasmanians. How does a formal remembrance of an historical trajectory actually open itself out onto another related vector? Where might the jumping-off points that connect these disparate narrative frameworks be found?

In *Doctor Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World*, Mudrooroo fictionalises an encounter between George Augustus Robinson and a stock-keeper and expert on local history by the name of Punch. In the principal historical source for Mudrooroo's text, Robinson's field diaries edited by N.J.B. Plomley, there is very little detail of the conversations shared by the two men, but in *Wooreddy* an extended dialogue is extrapolated from the primary material. When he runs into Punch, Robinson is on his way to meet Governor Arthur in Launceston and has with him a number of Aboriginal companions including the infamous female chief, Walyer. Keen to catch up on any information about local relations between the settlers and the Aboriginals, Robinson takes Punch with him on the journey down the Tamar from Georgetown. The fictional adjustments of history at play here are notable: Walyer was not captured until the middle of December 1830, Punch did not join the party for travel by river and Robinson never met the Lieutenant Governor in Launceston.²⁷ But the historical liberties of Mudrooroo's text are not my focus. What is significant is the

actual content of the interpolation being made. The topic of the discourse between the two characters ranges from a recounting on Punch's part of a series of atrocities committed against the indigenous inhabitants in the district, to an exchange of opinions on the righteousness of Aboriginal retaliation to settler violence and the merits of the Black Line, the preparations for which were being made at the time of the men's meeting. It is at this juncture that the two words which are our focus here make their appearance. Mudrooroo has Robinson defend the Palawa's violent responses to injuries wrought against them by making recourse to the retributivist logic for righting wrongs set out in the *Bible*. He then has Punch make the following reply:

'That may be,' rejoined Punch, 'but you'll find blessed few people agreeing with you in these parts. They settled the trouble in this district long ago and they're going to settle it in the same ways elsewhere. Why the whole area is in an uproar with the military operations getting underway. That'll be the *final solution* that will. It's what we did here and it worked! Your crows are the first I've seen this year.'²⁸

Bracketing authorial intent for a moment, the intertextual effect of this deployment of the trope of the "Final Solution" is the consolidation at the level of the letter of the connection between the two instances of genocide at issue. As a phrase that circulates within Holocaust historiography, "Final Solution" acts as a metonym for the events that it names. Applying the term to the genocide of the Tasmanian Aborigines brings the massive, multi-faceted orders of discourse and cultural memory built around the murder of the European Jewry into the colonial frame. The premodern genocide is re-plotted along a fundamentally modern axis and Holocaust imagery — anonymous graves, lines of blank-faced *musselmen*, brutal concrete encampments — crosses, incongruously, into the semiotic field of the premodern event. The Holocaust displaces the colonial

genocide, the mnemonic landscape of the former is superimposed onto that of the latter. The Tasmanian genocide is pushed into the background of a fictional diorama dedicated to its exposition by a signifier that brings with it an unmanageable surplus of meaning.

Stuart Stein sums up the ramifications of this effect when he argues that “the destruction of European Jewry is the paradigmatic instance of genocide, the analyses of which have significantly shaped our notion of what should be construed as genocide.”²⁹ Calling the Tasmanian extirpation a “Final Solution”, threatens to drown out the fragile mnemonic echoes of the colonial event, but it also stands as an alternative means of re-enforcing its status as genocide. Mudrooroo refutes Henry Reynolds’ doubts about the status of the Aboriginal decimation through figuration, rather than argumentation. By making the connection between the two events through the placing of this tiny, insubstantial pivot, this veritable hyperlink to the World Wide Web of Holocaust representation, Mudrooroo is wagering that the power of horror generated can be contained by the historically antecedent event.

In light of the evocations of Wybalenna as concentration camp that come later in the novel, this apparently innocuous use of tropology is transformed into the key that unlocks the whole figural schema of the novel. Now Dr Wooreddy, already presented as an antipodean John the Divine receiving the visitations of God on the Tasmanian equivalent of the Island of Padmos, becomes a Primo Levi of the colonial period, bearing witness to the destruction of his race, concentrating on ensuring his own survival but ultimately powerless to resist the genocide into which he is thrust.³⁰

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This essay has identified a number of ligaments that hold the Shoah and the Tasmanian genocide together. These include the almost parapraxical deployment of the trope of the “Final Solution” in writings on the invasion of Tasmania, the position of equivalence occupied by the two events in their particular discursive orders and the tendency of the Holocaust to fold back over itself and saturate the category of genocide so that like social logics become secondary variations on a normative standard. There remains, however, an unsettling trace of dissonance that lingers after such a comparison is made. As Klaus Neumann writes in a recent work on the way local cultural pasts are remembered and written:

The pasts that I am concerned with here, are, first, what is variously referred to as Auschwitz, Shoah, or Holocaust, and second, the impact of settler colonialism on Aboriginal people in Australia, something that in recent years has also come under the rubric of genocide. Little could be gained from my comparing the extermination of Jewish people in concentration camps with the large-scale theft of Aboriginal land and the murder of its owners.³¹

Inadvertently perhaps, Neumann’s comments open out onto the terrain surveyed by the various contributors to the Historians’ Debate. Mudrooroo’s figural mobilisation of “Final Solution” positions him firmly on the side of the debate that argues for the relative comparability of the Holocaust, while Neumann’s observations on the irreducible heterogeneity of the two orders of history, Australian and German/Jewish, aligns him with scholars like Eberhard Jäckel and Stephen Katz, who argue for the ultimate singularity of the Holocaust. The *Historikerstreit*, as the debate was known in Germany, engaged this dialectic of uniqueness or comparability in the light of questions about the capacity of German historians to provide cultural narratives that would give their populations a solid foundation for positive collective actions. The proponents of

this position, a neo-conservative one according to Jürgen Habermas, wanted to re-write the Nazi past in order to provide a “positive or affirmative German identity in the present.”³²

Dominick LaCapra situates his own remarks on the *Historkerstreit* within the dialectic of acting out and working through, an approach that sets the terms for a profitable reading of the figural strategy being examined here. For the task of developing more nuanced appreciations of the way historians attempt to work through collective traumas, he argues, the psychoanalytic language of transference serves as a useful tool. Essentially, he contends, relations between historians or writers and the historical scenarios they examine can be mapped out in the same terms psychoanalysis uses to describe the flows of cathexis, identification, projection and misrecognition that characterise patient/therapist encounters in the clinical setting. “How”, he asks, “should one negotiate transferential relations to the object of study whereby processes active in it are repeated with more or less significant variation in the account of the Historian?”³³

The motivation for LaCapra’s observations is a concern that historians who represent a perpetrator group will recuperate the asymmetrical relations of domination that have held sway in a real world interaction and allow them to inform the texts which document that interaction. As discussed elsewhere in this thesis, the “extinction” motif that served as the dominant trope in 19th-century histories of the Tasmanian Aborigines is a case in point. His hermeneutic lays bare the ominous fact that writers like Bonwick, West, Calder and Ling Roth, using only fountain pen and ink, were actually putting the final touches to a project of extirpation whose physical component had already wrought such bitter devastation.

This is a vital problematic to consider in the case of Mudrooroo because it allows us to make an inquiry into what happens when a colonial genocide is rewritten from the Aboriginal perspective. One might expect a range of approaches here. Power relations could be inverted to emphasise the valour of resistance and counter-attack. The mantle of victimhood could be interiorised into the narrative voice to lay bare the savagery of the invading Europeans. Fabulist departures from *de facto* history could be taken as avenues for the creation of an untouched indigenous “fragment”, somehow removed through conflict or stealth from subsumption into the invading culture. In any case, it would seem unlikely that Mudrooroo’s “activist” membership of the broader Australian Aboriginal community, a part of whose destruction he describes, will not influence the way he re-constructs the history of that destruction.³⁴

On the one hand, then, the politics of this interpolation seem easy to grasp. The allusion to the Holocaust effected by the troping of the “Final Solution” stands as a relatively uncomplicated claim to an increased awareness of the “demographic disaster” that befell Aboriginal Tasmania. The Aboriginal genocide, Mudrooroo suggests, is just as “important” as the Shoah, and the sensitivity with which people approach the attempted destruction of European Jewry should be applied to the Aboriginal case.³⁵ The ease with which the motivations at play here might be read, however, is disrupted when we consider the variety of signficatory *nexi* activated by the terminology Mudrooroo adopts to make this connection. An ambiguous transferential relationship is set up in the case of *Dr Wooreddy*, because Mudrooroo uses the perpetrators’ rather than the victims’ term for the genocide. Having Punch make reference to an imminent Tasmanian *Holocaust* would have been a more radical political intervention not merely

on the grounds of its transferential ramifications but also because of the well-nigh Brechtian estrangement that would ensue from the embedding of such language in a British colonial context. Having a reluctant participant in a colonial genocide refer to the project as a Holocaust would be akin to an SS guard puncturing the normalising bubble of policy rhetoric in a confrontation with the morbid realities of his task.

The sanitizing effects of the euphemism in question make its deployment in the context of an openly political novel like Mudrooroo's rather puzzling. LaCapra asserts that even though "Holocaust" is not the perfect term to describe the Nazi pogroms it remains a better choice than "Final Solution" because the latter is tainted by bureaucratic austerity and obfuscation. In order to acknowledge that the existence of a group who have been made the object of genocide is not a "problem", a repudiation of the veiling language of remedy and cure must be made.

Perhaps Mudrooroo is relying here on an audience finely attuned to postcolonial irony or perhaps he merely wants to point out that the Tasmanian genocide like the Holocaust was facilitated by lies, cover-ups, governmental acquiescence and a needy attachment to the moral absolution offered by the theory of inevitable demise. Even so, I contend, the process of working through the historical trauma of the Tasmanian genocide, and this, of course, is not the only function that writing of this kind performs, would have been aided by a reversal of the rhetorical polarities through which the events have been depicted. Using the language of the Holocaust would probably have offended the proponents of the uniqueness position, but it would also have served to refocalise the atrocities through the eyes of the victims of the Tasmanian genocide. The Brechtian estrangement of disrupted historical analogy effected by putting the words of

the innocent into the mouths of the guilty, would have more fully politicised the novel. Transposing the experience of the dominant party into the language of the subaltern would surely have produced more satisfactory transference dynamics than the repetition of the preferred terminology of the criminals, itself cheaply knocked up to conjure a massified murderous act into a positive social outcome.

Mudrooroo's approach here is odd in the context of his more overarching representation of Wooreddy as anthropologist and normalised human centre of the novel. Generally it is white actions that are represented as aberrant in the novel, and the construction of George Augustus Robinson as a pompous martinet, in particular, seems to indicate an active attempt on Mudrooroo's part to work through a history whose traces have been left only in the language of the interloper.³⁶ The imagining of an interiority for Wooreddy represents a significant attempt at stalemating a transference relationship that might otherwise have constructed him as a textual surface rather than a possessor of a depth psychology.

Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub have described the Holocaust as an "event without witnesses".³⁷ Thinking in empirical rather than rhetorical terms, of course, witnesses to this disaster do exist and Primo Levi in particular has always maintained that he understood the obligations ceded to him through his experience in the death camps as a kind of testimonial vocation.³⁸ In the case immediately to hand, the impossibility of bearing witness can actually be seen as an empirical truth as well as a rhetorical one. Two of the most significant developments within the horizon of the Tasmanian genocide, the Cape Grim massacre and the Risdon massacre are only available to us by virtue of their position within documents produced and preserved by

European Tasmanians. In the first case these consist of the diaries of George Augustus Robinson and Rosalie Hare, correspondence between a Van Diemen's Land Company superintendent named Goldie and the Governor of the time, George Arthur, and despatches from Edward Curr, the manager of the Van Diemen's Land Company, to the directors in England. In the second case, we have access to the journals of Reverend Robert Knopwood, a report filed by Lieutenant Moore who was temporarily in charge of the settlement, a statement by former Colonial Surgeon, Jacob Mountgarrett, and testimony given before the Committee for the Affairs of the Aborigines in 1830.³⁹ If witnesses to the Holocaust are locked into an *aporia* because they are forced to describe something that cannot be described, the silence with which the Aboriginal genocide in Tasmania was met must be all the more powerful. Fictional constructions like Mudrooroo's novel can thus be read as playing as significant a part in the preservation of the Aboriginal genocide as official historical texts like Lyndall Ryan's *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*.

The recourse that is made to the tropology of the Holocaust thus marks an attempt to fill out the empty form of a witness-less event with a content that has been deterritorialised from its original position in a parallel historical discourse. The Holocaust and the Tasmanian genocide thus become atemporal, co-terminous events, appearing together at the same time, emerging from the darkness of the past in contiguous co-ordination.

CHAPTER 11

An Enchanted State: Rationalisation and the Spirit of Tasmania

Take the example of that plural, modernities. In speaking of modernities are we merely saying that Indian modernity is different from German modernity, which is then different from, say, Mexican or Venezuelan modernity? If this is the case, what modalities of power are occluded here, not only in relation to authoritative grids of empire and globalisation, but also within non-Western formations of state and nation? Equally, by invoking a bloated and singular modernity centred on the West in order to interrogate the homogenising impulses of projects of power, do we perhaps succumb to reified representations of an imaginary but tangible Europe that overlook the labor of difference within the work of domination?

(Saurabh Dube, 2002)

As if trying to comprehend the cold dam's unfathomable mystery, Sonja stretched her arms out to embrace the bottom of that vast curved concrete wall [...] At that moment Sonja felt herself a child once more. A child on a cold snowy night, leaning against the dam, spreading her arms out along the dam wall, she felt as a child searching for reassurance, as if the huge construction were some long-lost parent.

(Richard Flanagan, 1997)

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stamped with a migratory mark, a difference at the margins of concept and world, that lifts it away from the places transformed by its influence:

The theory of modernization performs two abstractions on Weber's concept of modernity. It dissociates modernity from its modern European origins and stylizes it into a spatio-temporally neutral model for processes of social development in general. Furthermore it breaks the internal connection between modernity and the historical context of Western rationalism, so that processes of modernisation can no longer be conceived as rationalisation, as the historical objectification of rational structures.⁴⁰

The internal connection that is thus severed must, it seems to follow, be replaced by an external one linking modernity with all the minor places where its language is spoken through *patois* and creole, vernacular and slang. The history of a set of ideas that folded over itself to make an imprint on the social world from the time of the Enlightenment, through the formation of nation-states, industrialisation, urbanisation and onto the vanishing present, is displaced from that social world and the built-in tension between a trajectory of the ideal — Western rationality as grand narrative — and a trajectory of the material — historical context — is allowed to fizzle out.

Furthermore, a boundary line is pegged out to separate the hostile regimes of history and modernity, a boundary line that is designed to conceal the memory that modernity and modernisation were once the subjects of history, and that modernity is perhaps indistinguishable from what we call the history of modernity. The external connections that link a modernity that has become alienated from its European origins, and indeed from its European history, with the *loci* of its regional adaptation sets the scene for the identification of fragments of the modern in an inexhaustible well of empirical data and closes off the possibility of prioritising or privileging the

Europeanness of modernity. What is missing from this formulation, though, is a sensitivity to the generic conventions of two kinds of writing, one a historical and ethnographic form interested in the embedded placement of modernity, and the other a social scientific form more attuned to the delineation of trends, statistical models and broad synthetic shapes. Monographs like Fernando Coronil's *The Magic State: Nature, Money and Modernity in Venezuela* and Harry Harootunian's *Overcome by Modernity: History, Culture and Community in Interwar Japan* fit into the former group, in that they purport to tell the contained stories of a modernity actualised in specific places at specific times, stories whose discursive parameters, rhyme, meter and verse escape, what Saurabh Dube calls, "the limits of sociological formalism (and) the binds of *a priori* abstraction."⁴¹ The potential irony here is that studies of this kind might actually just reiterate in a different dialect the provincialising of Europe supposedly achieved by the modernisation theory described by Habermas. The extrapolation of a set of deracinated logics of modernity from their origins in Enlightenment Europe and out onto the territories of the colonial world seems at first glance to complement the endeavours of the community of scholars who have sought in recent times to bring the pressing claims of alternative modernities to our attention. I say seems, because an effacement of difference haunts the epistemological orientation of modernization theorists, an effacement borne out in Lisa Rofel's original diagnosis of an ensemble of modernities "uniformly discerned".⁴² In simple terms, modernities examined through the lens of modernisation theory, whether they be of settler, colonial or postcolonial stamp, lose a portion of their heterogeneity precisely because they are being looked at in the same way. Theorists of multiple modernities thus find themselves fighting a fire on

two fronts as the dual threat of Euro-centrism and homogeneity encroaches on the conceptual space they seek to open up.

Against this methodological backdrop, the writing of history with all its concomitant sensitivity to the concrete and the empirical presents as a liberating alternative. But how does one challenge the place of Europe as the source and subject of every narrative of modernity when the spectre of value-free social scientific positivism refuses to go away? A happy ending to the story of modernity's escape from the *metropole* might be found in the plotting of immanent, sensualised histories if not for the fact that for such histories to be written, the category that subtends their investigation first needs to be thought. In that thinking, says Dipesh Chakrabarty, we inevitably return to a European intellectual tradition whose genealogy ties together consanguine concepts including

citizenship, the state, civil society, public sphere, human rights, equality before the law, the individual, distinctions between public and private, the idea of the subject, democracy, popular sovereignty, social justice, scientific rationality and so on.⁴³

And from here the news just gets worse. Chakrabarty goes on to tell us that every attempt to write history necessarily invokes a "hyperreal" Europe at its epistemological limits and disciplinary foundations:

Insofar as the academic discourse of history — that is, "history" as a discourse produced at the institutional site of the university is concerned, "Europe" remains the sovereign theoretical subject of all histories, including the ones we call "Indian" "Chinese", "Kenyan," and so on. There is a peculiar way in which all these other histories tend to become variations on a master narrative that could be called "the history of Europe." In this sense, "Indian" history itself is

in a position of subalternity; one can only articulate subaltern subject positions in the name of this history.⁴⁴

The theoretical basis for Chakrabarty's insistence on this point is his Marxian interpretation of historicist transition narratives. These narratives and the "first in Europe, then elsewhere" structure of global historicist time upon which they stand have been instrumental in the establishment of problematics for the writing of Third World histories. The insight here is nothing short of profound. If "things reveal their categorical essence only when they reach their fullest development" and histories of non-European locations repeatedly emphasise the incompleteness of various journeys toward developed bourgeois capitalism, fully free liberal democracy and so on, the implication must be that at the hidden core of every place looked at in this way is an unrealised Europe. Historicist readings of non-European locations that find a stumbling block in these "indigenous" characteristics are railroaded into constructing their places of arrest as inadequate, lacking and immature. The historians who have been allocated the task of writing these histories find themselves trying to catch up with an ever-receding horizon. As European modernity evolves through time, the *telos* of development edges further away.⁴⁵

And even if political modernity of a European kind could be achieved in these regions, it would only encourage the retrospective identification of an ersatz *Europeanness* made visible by a methodological approach that gathers itself around the only subject of history that is theoretically knowable. In *Provincializing Europe*, Chakrabarty catalogues an economy of aspiration circulating through two ontologically distinct networks. In the first network, hope moves out along a temporal plane where Europe becomes the modern ideal for other locations to build towards, while in the

second, empirical reality itself is prodded and poked by frustrated agents of modernisation fervently set on reconciling the actual with the ideal. Political modernity is finally an impossible dream that only *appears* to find its realisation in a reified Europe that is, on closer examination, just a “figure of imagination”.⁴⁶

In his forward to W.A. Townsley’s *Tasmania: Microcosm of the Federation or Vassal State, 1945-1983*, former hydro-electricity commissioner Allan Knight presents a potted history of the organisation he headed up from 1946 to 1977. The subject in his narrative is pushed outwards from the personal vignette that begins the piece to focalise an organisational chronicle that discretely discloses the triumphalism that authors of the competing environmentalist history traditionally associate with the Commission. Knight’s subdued prose masks a declaration of *L’état ce’est moi*. Not only is the HEC the engine room of the state’s industries, on Knight’s account it is the singular driving force behind Tasmanian history. And the defining moment in this history? Nothing other than a variation on the theme of what Chakrabarty refers to as the “grievously incomplete” scenario of a Eurocentric modernist transition narrative.⁴⁷ In the sixty seven years spanning 1916 to 1983, the HEC commissioned and constructed a total of sixteen power stations, but with the High Court decision to disallow the construction of the Gordon-below-Franklin scheme the debt-financed party was brought to a sudden halt. Knight eulogises the abrupt termination of his plan for the future with a cautionary note:

A problem with hydro-electric schemes, unsupported by thermal or other kinds of power, is the storage of sufficient water to see the system through dry periods. The Great Lake and Gordon/Lake Pedder storages are the backbone of the Tasmanian system. The value of the latter storage would have been greatly enhanced by the construction of the Lower Gordon Scheme. It is not something

to be traded for a temporary political advantage, as the people of Tasmania may well find to their cost.⁴⁸

The signified that slides beneath the signifier “cost” connects this statement to the estimated dollar price of constructing the Lower Gordon Scheme, tagged by the HEC at over one billion in October, 1979.⁴⁹ More recent readings of the economic fundamentals of the proposal are unanimous in their indictment of a monetary commitment that would have come close to bankrupting the state. But Townsley seems oddly oblivious to the ramifications. Writing in 1994, he displays a remarkable willingness to endorse the linear transition narrative that Knight foreshadows:

One of the state’s greatest assets and for many years its pride, the Hydro-Electric Commission, went into a steady decline as its labour force dwindled in size and its team of engineers, second to none in Australia in its heyday, were now scattered [...] Once described as a “State within the State” and indifferent to the need to create by publicity a good image of itself, the HEC was now the victim of the “image breakers” and the ogre of the greenies. Fortunately Tasmanians are a hardy breed. No people know better the meaning of the winds of change. They adapt to and do not break before adversity. Now they realised phlegmatically that for some time to come they were blown off course.⁵⁰

Historicism is a polysemous term that is coded differently across disciplinary locations, but in Chakrabarty’s lexicon it denotes a mode of thought which has proven irresistible for third world historians interested in describing processes of development immanent to their various archives:

Historicism is a mode of thinking with the following characteristics. It tells us that in order to understand the nature of anything in this world we must see it as a historically developing entity, that is first as an individual and unique whole—as some kind of unity at least in potentia — and second as something that develops over time.⁵¹

Chakrabarty suggests that this idea of historicism doesn't imply a teleology, that it only requires that its object be internally unified. His contention, however, that historicism is what allowed Marx to say that the country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future, gestures to what I see as the indispensability of prospective destinations to the writing of historicist history. In Chakrabarty's own example of how the experience of political modernity in India undermines the historicist project at the same time as its narration remains inextricably tied up with it, the promise of progress comes in the form of a conditional offer of national independence that is deferred on the grounds that its potential recipients are not yet civilised enough to rule themselves. To this historicist "not yet", Chakrabarty juxtaposes the Third World call of "now". In the context of the process of development traced out in John Stuart Mill's "On Representative Government" that makes universal education the necessary precondition of universal suffrage, the Indian decision to give the vote to its entire adult population upon gaining independence stands, to Chakrabarty's eyes, as an exemplary gesture of counter-historicism. Rather than marking a partial modernity, the implication of the peasant in the processes of the political loosens up the European heritage of the term and provides us with the intellectual space to read modernity *otherwise*. Despite Chakrabarty's claim that historicism does not imply teleology, however, it remains the case that the radicalising potential of Indian entanglements with modernity operates within a horizon marked at one end by a European political form: liberal, capitalist democracy. The "creative adaptation" of this form to be discerned in subaltern histories of India, doesn't dislodge the benchmark case. The play of difference that

Chakrabarty extracts from his archive is activated and contained by the “not yet” uttered by the imperial someone to the colonial nobody.

In the Tasmanian case, the remarks of Townsley and Knight constitute microscopic particles of a classically historicist history. The confused conclusions to their accounts bespeak a crisis in that transition narrative. Until the Australian High Court’s decision to halt the construction of the Franklin Dam, Tasmania was an internally unified entity moving on a linear path toward an industrial future, whose echoes of Europe Richard Flanagan has identified in the hope that the island would become Australia’s Ruhr Valley.⁵² Both the content and the form of this will-to-modernity are Euro-centric. The goal of the project was to transform Tasmania into an industrial simulation of the old world, while the terms through which it has been described rehearse the historicism that makes Europe the epicentre and sovereign subject of all histories of modernity. It is almost as if Townsley’s history of Tasmania was already written in advance, and the intrusion of reality arrived as an unwelcome cause to redraft its conclusion. The metaleptic error here is summed up in his prophetic conviction that, with hindsight on their side, the Tasmanian community would finally realise the error of its ways and return the state to the historicist path marked out for it in his book.

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The great groundswell of attempts to theorise alternative modernities that has been sweeping the Western academy since the mid-1990s draws its urgency from the intellectual politics of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism. The kind of site-based readings of modernity included in anthologies like Dilip Gaonkar’s *Alternative*

Modernities, Tani E. Barlow's *Formations of Colonial Modernity in East Asia* and Dube's *Enduring Enchantments* are expressly interested in the way readings of non-Western encounters with modernity respond to the claims of a postcolonial politics of recognition.⁵³ In his introduction to *Alternative Modernities*, Gaonkar offers one version of the narrative of Western modernity. While he admits to the partiality of this narrativisation, he fails to address the epistemological problem that complicates the relations between the narrative and its subject. Is Western modernity a singular entity that can be written about in a variety of ways, or is it in fact constituted in the telling of these modern meta-stories? When modernity is understood as something that "has travelled from the West to the rest of the world not only in terms of cultural forms, social practices and institutional arrangements, but also as a form of discourse that interrogates the present", a tacit assumption is made that some other ensemble of culture, society and self-understanding is waiting to receive the influence.⁵⁴ Colonial modernities proper attain their conceptual clarity through a simple binary that opposes the modernising imperialist with the non-modern indigene. But how do we go about addressing the struggles with modernity undertaken in a place like Tasmania where the hegemonic culture is a dislocated European one, and the voices of the indigenous inhabitants who were subject to a more typical imposition of colonial modernity are still deeply marginalised? It would be wrong in this context, to focus our analysis on the latter group, for while they form an important part of multicultural Tasmania, the tragic history of decimation and displacement that followed European arrival translates, through the mechanisms of the modern covenant of one-vote one-value, into a permanently subaltern position within the collective subject of the Tasmanian *polis*.

In any case, the significance of the history of genocide to the formation and maintenance of the Tasmanian archive is remarked upon elsewhere in this thesis. The experience of modernity in a place like Tasmania which is putatively part of the West even as it is constantly assailed with the news that important things only happen at the opposite end of the globe, suggests that the pluralisation of Western narratives of modernity identified by Gaonkar should have alerted him to the pluralisation of *processes* of *Western* modernity. The intellectual tradition that informs our thinking about modernity only makes room for Tasmania in its implication that the cognitive and social transformations that we normally identify as modern have had an impact *here*. This is a weak inclusion that fails to take account of the various ways in which Tasmania is constructed as backward, non-modern, anti-modern and “magical”, even as it contains no constitutive outside to the processes of modernity normally formed by the presence of a residual indigenous tradition. Tasmania finds itself in the odd situation of trying to find a toehold to exert its own modernising plans in the face of a cultural storm blowing ceaselessly from elsewhere. On one hand, modernity offers itself as an emulation of those elsewhere, Australian, American and so on, while on the other, a nativist alternative modernity is gathered together around the conviction that “Tasmania is different”.⁵⁵

In the parlance of economic policy, to modernise is to carve out new export markets that might offer opportunities for the renegotiation of our “place” in the global economy. From a state development perspective, an intense interest is maintained in the statistical profile of the local community in the context of changes affecting the rest of Australia. When jobs growth exceeds the national average the champagne corks

start popping.⁵⁶ We are catching up, this joy pronounces, the horizon of the present is attainable yet.

Tasmania is always internally modernising. As a collectivity it enacts, in different ways and at different cultural locations, the Foucauldian axiom that “to be modern is not to accept oneself as one is in the flux of the passing moments; but to take oneself as the object of a complex and difficult elaboration.”⁵⁷ From the perspective of self-determination and autonomy, the question is whether this elaboration is based on immanent designs or whether it steadfastly continues to quote from the traditional *entrepôts*. In this regard, I believe, the answer is relatively obvious. Flows of culture still emanate from the centres of the North Atlantic axis — witness the texts with which I have to engage in this thesis for it to be timely and up-to-date — and while an anomaly like Blundstone boots — a Tasmanian product designed and manufactured here — might experience a brief period of vogue in the eyes of the transnational glitterati, the struggle to encounter the modern through a dialectical engagement with the past as resource for the construction of the new largely takes place in the imperial elsewhere of Hollywood, London, New York and Paris. To cut a long story short, I contend that the urgency with which Gaonkar endorses non-Western site-based analyses of the discrepant careers of modernity also applies in the case of sub-national settler-locations like Tasmania.

Just as non-Western locations like India provide an outside that is also interior to an expanded narrative of modernity, Tasmania’s engagement with modernity took, and continues to take, empirical twists and turns that demand a recasting of the conceptual make-up of modernity. In what follows I show how a reading of Tasmanian

modernity can do an analogous work to the labour of inversion performed by Chakrabarty in his critique of historicism. Writing about alternative modernities is not just about making a claim to an invitation to the party, it is also, more crucially, a matter of changing the nature of the very idea of the modern:

What a site-based reading decisively discredits is the inexorable logic that is assigned to each of the two strands of modernity. The proposition that societal modernity, once activated, moves inexorably toward establishing a certain type of mental outlook and a certain type of institutional order irrespective of the culture and politics of a given place is simply not true.⁵⁸



In recent writings, Richard Jenkins, Jane Bennett and Dube make the provocative suggestion that the disenchantment of the world that Max Weber positioned at the centre of his vision of the historical development of modernity has only ever been a partially complete process.⁵⁹ In his introduction to the anthology *Enduring Enchantments*, Dube argues that the “idea of modernity rests on a rupture.”⁶⁰ “The advent of the epoch”, he goes on to write, “insinuates the disenchantment of the world: the progressive control of nature through scientific procedures of technology, and the inexorable demystification of enchantments through powerful techniques of reason.”⁶¹ This historical unfolding, however, is not without its contrapuntal double, a reinsertion of the superstitious, the messianic and the mystical into the daily life-worlds of modern subjects and the institutions through which they operate as social actors:

Yet processes of modernity also create their own enchantments. Enchantments that extend from the immaculately imagined origins and ends of modernity, to the dense magic of money and markets, to novel mythologies of nation and

empire, to hierarchical oppositions between myth and history, ritual and rationality, East and West, and tradition and modernity.⁶²

For his part, Jenkins points us in the direction of a set of ostensibly anti-modern practices, faiths, creeds and imaginations that still exert a sway over the habitual orientations of modern individuals. Jenkins refutes Weber's description of a world-historical trajectory through which

the natural world and all areas of human experience become experienced and understood as less mysterious, defined at least in principle, as knowable, predictable and manipulable by humans; conquered by and incorporated into the interpretive schemas of science and rational government.⁶³

To undergird his critique, Jenkins conducts a survey of millennial cults, astrology, new ageism, postmodern science, Disneyland, ethnicity, television and computer games; phenomena that, to his mind at least, demonstrate that non-empirically grounded knowledges and Dionysian exuberance still rebuff the arrival of Weber's infamous iron cage. Jane Bennett's *The Enchantment of Modern Life*, continues this counter-offensive through a mobilisation of the shock troops of embodiment philosophy and science studies. Recruiting Bruno Latour to her cause, Bennet uses a supple intelligence to martial the sense of wonder in modernity that was supposed to have been routed by disenchantment. As she notes:

I [...] think there is enough evidence of everyday enchantment to warrant the telling of an alter-tale. Such sites of enchantment today include, for example, the discovery of sophisticated modes of communication among nonhumans, the strange agency of physical systems at far-from-equilibrium states, and the animation of objects by video technologies--an animation whose effects are not fully captured by the idea of "commodity fetishism".⁶⁴

Jenkins' conclusion that re-enchantment is a necessary corollary of the original disenchantment of the world effected by rationalisation is all well and good, but because it is proposed in the absence of an adequate account of the different kinds of rationalisation that Weber first diagnosed in *Economy and Society*, it needs to be supplemented by a closer examination of how the latter envisaged the unfolding of reason in the modern world.

Following Chakrabarty's lead, a site-based analysis of the clash of disenchantment and re-enchantment in a non-European modernity makes possible the decentring of Euro-centric conceptions of the modern precisely because it demonstrates that the putatively modern and the putatively non-modern can act together within a frame that is itself inescapably modern. Just as Chakrabarty used the Indian refusal of the "not-yet" of imperial historicism to deconstruct the concept of the political, the Tasmanian repudiation of an updated historicism based around the tenets of economic rationalism makes possible a renegotiation of Weberian rationalisation and a specific, located examination of the enduring enchantments of Tasmanian modernity.

In his account of the rationalisation of the West, outlined in the revised version of *Economy and Society* published in 1920, Weber posited a cultural nosology that distinguished between purposive, instrumental or formal rationality and substantive, material or value rationality. Wolfgang Mommsen provides a useful *précis* of the differences between these two forms of reason:

By 'formal' rationality is meant the strategy of adapting one's own conduct of life to the pre-determined purposes of the kind that the capitalist system has imposed on modern man. Under 'material rationality' on the other hand, he [Weber] meant the rationalisation of the conduct of the individual in respect to

ultimate value positions, which could under certain conditions lead to far-reaching changes of society.⁶⁵

The protestant ethic embodied in Calvinist responses to the doctrine of pre-destination is the pre-eminent example of the latter form. According to Weber, frugality and industry, embodied in capitalistic expansion became the accepted means toward the achievement of the soteriological goal. Repudiating the Catholic ideal of the monastic recluse, early Protestants sought to prove their spirituality through the worldly callings of work and reproduction. The important point to be made here is that the *telos* that gives meaning to the quotidian practices of labor and love is itself ultimately opaque to human reason, or as Anthony Giddens puts it: “the rationalisation of economic life characteristic of modern capitalism connects with irrational value-commitments.”⁶⁶

Agnes Heller takes a different tack to Giddens and Mommsen in her own commentary on Weber’s work in *A Theory of Modernity*, drawing out the fragments produced by the splitting of the social whole into competing value-spheres and making the suggestion that these spheres become configured in a hierarchy of prominence in line with their capacity to accommodate instrumental rationalisation. For Heller, Weber’s theory of modernity explains a world where economics and science exert a stranglehold on the production of ends to which individuals can aspire. The tragedy of modernity is that unless one has taken these forms of mental life as a vocation, the dominance of science and economics will produce a meaningless world evacuated of “Truth” and filled only with an endless supply of “true knowledge” that is by definition temporary and fallible.

In recent times, the doctrine of economic rationalism has been identified by critics on the left of politics as an attempt by champions of the economic value sphere to take

over the value sphere of the political.⁶⁷ This diagnosis delineates a struggle at the level of knowledge formation, a battle for the right to construct the objects of social scientific inquiry. In a succinct account of these moves, Milan Zafirovski charts the attempt by economic thinkers of the rational choice school to absorb the category of the social into their own epistemological formulation. Zafirovski's essay traces the history of an academic turf war, but the place of rational choice theory in the consolidation of free-market thinking in the national bureaucracies of Canada, the USA, the UK, New Zealand and Australia amongst other places, testifies to the more generalised significance of his argument:

The recent expansion of the rational choice model to sociology and other social sciences has often been an expression of the imperialistic ambitions of economists. This is indicated by attempts at making economics an 'imperial science', or a 'universal grammar of social science', in the form of economic approach to all human behaviour engaging in the 'colonisation' of social science.⁶⁸

Zafirovski frames his catalogue of the insurgency of rational choice economics with the contention that modern sociology developed specifically out of frustration with the anti-institutional and anti-social perspectives implicit in utilitarianism. At the heart of this dissatisfaction was the theoretical modeling of human behaviour and motivation. For the rational choice theorists, he argues, this poses no problem:

In a nutshell, the rational choice model is premised on the idea of social agents as rational utility optimisers, for it 'takes as its central core the idea that persons act rationally to satisfy preferences or to maximise utility'.⁶⁹

From this basic building block, the delineation of social contours becomes a simple matter of addition. Society becomes the sum totality of individual economic actors

mobilising to maximise utility. Left alone as a theoretical model, rational choice theory would probably have done little harm, but the replacement of Keynesianism with neo-liberalism as the economic instrument of choice for politicians and élite level public servants in the English speaking world since the mid-1970s has unleashed the rational choice model into the world of policy and social engineering. The twin ontologies of the individual and the social proposed by rational choice theory have thus translated into specific transformations in the value-rational ends pursued by state entities. In Australia, Michael Pusey describes this shift in the title of his book, *Economic Rationalism in Canberra: A Nation-Building State Changes its Mind*. Possessed of a notion of the social as the sum totality of what R. Frank calls “recklessly selfish monad[s]”, the élite public servants that Pusey interviewed broadly believed that the role of the state should be to dismantle itself so that market mechanisms could function untrammelled.⁷⁰ Turning their back on the project of building a nation, a process that J. R. Llobera nominates as one of the re-enchantments of modernity, the neophytes of economic rationalism elided entirely the distinctions between economy and society.⁷¹ As Duncan Cameron shows in the analogous case of Canada, this translates into a generalised imperative for public service agencies to pursue economic growth at all costs:

In effect, the [Macdonald] Commission [an entity formed by the Canadian government in 1985 to investigate potential privatisation options], identified economic growth as the national goal and attributed slow growth to diminished productivity. It saw a more competitive economy as promoting productivity, and posited that free trade combined with deregulation would force the Canadian economy to make structural adjustments that would enhance productivity and lead to higher growth.⁷²

The paradigm shift in value-rationality ends that this model of political economy ushered in can be brought into relief through a comparison with the Keynesian goal of full employment. Keynes' radical re-politicisation of economics after the Great Depression constituted a re-enchantment of the state simply because it challenged the pre-eminence of the value sphere of economics as capable of determining the ends of the social more generally. Keynes' successful replacement of market-clearing classical economic orthodoxy with government intervention administered by a mandarin class that William Coleman calls the "wise élite", rejoined the economic and the political in the service of a good which was, in essence, social.⁷³

The story of the disenchantment and re-enchantment of economics, however, is not an even one. For one thing, the concept of the invisible hand so central to classical economics of a Smithian kind, has been taken as the extension into the commercial realm of a beneficent world order guaranteed by the presence of a Christian god:

Smith and probably other theists like Condillac and Turgot ultimately sustained their belief in the ideal workings of the system on the supposition that the world had been designed by the 'designer' in a beneficent fashion. Following Hutcheson and Mandeville, they believed that the human order ultimately rested on certain passions which had been contrived by God and planted in human nature to support that order. But the Enlightenment had effected the rapid decay of the prestige of religious justifications, however remote, of human affairs. When providence could not even distantly be used to analyse economic affairs, what alternative arguments might establish the beneficence of the free market system? ⁷⁴

In this context, Keynes' lack of faith in the beneficence of the economic system looks like a gesture of disenchantment. The positing of the wise élite who could marshal the forces of the economy for the public good, however, opens out into a contiguous field of

enchantment marked primarily by the Hegelian notion of World Spirit actualizing itself in the state. As William Connolly has argued:

When previous understandings of God's hand in the world wilted, early modern thinkers tried to enliven them by transplanting God into reason, or nature, or Spirit or the subject [...] Hegel rationalises faith but his Spirit must be known to be believed by moderns and there is no way to demonstrate its truth.⁷⁵

The Hegelian model of the state can be read as an attempt to enact a partial re-enchantment of the world in the context of the dialectic of transcendence and immanence that has always attended the troping of enchantment.⁷⁶ In his essay, "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences", Jacques Derrida suggests that the nodal point that grounds a structure must always escape the structurality of that structure. If we apply this theoretical insight to the model of theistic enchantment, God's underpinning of a totalising moral framework, cosmogony and guide to pragmatic action must necessarily emanate from a position outside the world. Quentin Skinner, however, has argued in relation to Charles Taylor's work on disenchantment that

[w]e have come to believe that we ourselves are the sources and creators of the values by which we live. This vision of the modern world as disenchanted, lacking any sense of God as an immanent force or morality as objectively grounded [...] owes a significant debt to Max Weber.⁷⁷

In the disenchanted world of modernity God is no longer immanent, but morality is no longer objectively grounded. In the Keynesian economic universe, the totality of individual actions must be supplemented with the functioning of a state which is at once constituted by the people and elevated above the people.⁷⁸ In the Hegelian model of the

state, civil society must be supplemented with a view from above that manages to reconcile the interests of the whole with the interests of the individual:

The [...] substantiality of the state consists in the fact that its end is the universal interest as such and the conservation therein of particular interests since the universal interest is the substance of these [...] but this very substantiality of the state is Spirit knowing and willing itself [...] The state, therefore, knows what it wills and knows it in its universality [...] Hence it works and acts by reference to consciously adopted ends, known principles and laws which are not merely implicit but are actually present to consciousness; and further it acts with precise knowledge of existing conditions and circumstances.⁷⁹

The global trend toward neo-liberal privatization arrived in Tasmania with a bang in the lead up to the 1998 state election when the sitting Liberal government proposed a sale of the Hydro-Electric Commission that it had previously broken up into generating, distribution and retail arms.⁸⁰ Operating firmly within the horizon that holds that the market is the best available mechanism for resource allocation, the Rundle government made clear in its *Directions Statement* that the symbolic and mythological value Tasmanians have attached to the Hydro had to be sacrificed in the name of economic common-sense:

Energy policy has been a critical part of the development of Tasmania. It was our forefathers who saw the potential for combining two of Tasmania's greatest assets — its high rainfall and its steep terrain — with Tasmanian ingenuity and Engineering expertise to develop hydro power, but the development of our hydro power is now at an end and it is necessary to re-examine our energy policy.⁸¹

The will-to-privatisation on display here was justified through a purely economic rationality developed in accordance with the basic axioms that Bob Walker and Betty Con-Walker outline in *Privatisation: Sell Off or Sell Out*:

Debt is bad

Debt imposes costs on future generations

Governments should reduce debt

The Public sector is too big

The Public sector is inefficient

The Private sector is more efficient than the public sector

Privatisation will lead to increases in efficiency.⁸²

The Rundle government translated these *doxa* into a program for action when it proposed an elimination of state debt within eighteen months of the election through the sale of the Aurora (retail) and Transend (distribution) businesses and the ninety nine-year lease of the HEC's generating assets. The offer being made to the Tasmanian electorate was essentially utilitarian. It suggested that the extra funds freed up by the diminished state debt could be channeled into better health care and education. In other words, Rundle's position endorsed the model of the subject advanced by rational choice theory. The argument held that the individual voter would make substantive gains as a result of selling the Hydro because he or she would be the recipient of better funded State Government services. Rundle's wager rested on the assumption that the Tasmanian population would not resent the complementary diminution in intangible

values deriving from the role of the Hydro in the development of Tasmania and the collectivity-generating capacities of shared ownership. This miscalculation was to prove fatal for his government. Offering a more integrated vision of economic commonsense and state ideology, the Bacon opposition swept to power in a landslide.

The key insight that the Bacon policy machine made was the anticipation of a wish afoot in the Tasmanian electorate for a newly re-enchanted state. Where Rundle assumed that individuals would prefer quantifiable increases in education and health spending, Bacon realized that the Hydro was more than just a potential source of income. He and his advisers tapped into the mytho-poetic aura that continues to give the Hydro schemes a preternatural glow. Saving the Hydro became the objective of a campaign that mustered some of the same urgency and commitment that had led to the defeat of the HEC on the Gordon River fifteen years before. This campaign stood as a cleverly manipulated mobilisation of the past to safeguard the future and it is hardly ironic that proponents of the Hydro's sale should have criticized their opponents for taking an anachronistic stance. As Coronil states in the case of Venezuela:

Typically the Venezuelan state astonishes through the marvels of power rather than convinces through the power of reason, as reason itself is made part of the awe-inspiring spectacle of its rule. By manufacturing dazzling development projects that engender collective fantasies of progress, it casts its spell over audience and performers alike. As a "magnanimous sorcerer," the state seizes its subjects by inducing a condition of being receptive to its illusions — a magical state.⁸³

Even putting to one side the legislative arrangements that allowed the Hydro to "conjure" money for the construction of its power stations without Parliamentary approval, the Promethean urge to infrastructural gigantism and the industrial sublime

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still testified to by the popularity of the Gordon Dam as a tourist site, serve witness to the traditionally performative power of the state in Tasmania. The investment of collective pride in the achievements of the Hydro goes back to the very first project completed under its auspices. When work began on the Great Lake/Waddamana power station on December 17, 1910, Ida McCaulay, the wife of the pioneering professor of mathematics who had completed the statistical surveys for the project, stated:

It is a great occasion. I feel that deeply, this turning of the sod which will bring the waters of the Shannon to do their great work in the Power House. It means the advancement of Tasmania, and the making of her [into] what she has never been, never would have been, but for this great power scheme.⁸⁴

Fighting to win a different kind of power in 1998, the Bacon opposition showed a shrewd insight into the feelings of their prospective constituency when they outlined their plan to keep the Hydro in public hands. The setting for the speech in which Bacon declaimed his party's position couldn't have been better chosen. Braving dismal conditions at the Queenstown Motor Lodge in the energy heartland of the West Coast, Bacon delivered an address that spoke to the deep-seated attachment that Tasmanians feel to the Hydro schemes. The Hydro is "a human asset", Bacon argued, "it is a source of pride", "the provider of generational employment" and "our best asset". In a shrewd calculation he alluded to the intimate connection between the HEC and the emergence of a multicultural Tasmania after World War II, juxtaposing this cosmopolitan celebration with the gentle xenophobic warning that privatisation would see control ceded to a financial institution in "Paris, Tokyo, or Dallas". Those in attendance that day could have been in little doubt as to the register of Bacon's appeal

to the Tasmanian electorate: “That is why”, he stated in conclusion, “we know in our hearts that it is wrong to sell the Hydro.”⁸⁵

The historicist dimension of the plan to divest the state of its electricity generating assets transforms the “not yet” uttered to Indian proto-nationalists by their colonial masters into a “get a move on” driven by agents of exactly the kind of local imperial centres that Chakrabarty describes in *Provincializing Europe*. In the Tasmanian case, the external lobbying for the sale of the Hydro came from Federal Government quarters, the national “quality” press and the local media. *The Mercury* editorial for the 21st of August, 1998, for instance, described an offer by the Federal government to write-off state debt to the tune of one hundred and fifty million dollars if privatisation proceeded apace. A subsidiary of Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation, it came as no surprise that *The Mercury* supported the plan:

Mr Howard [the Prime Minister] has made clear that this offer fits in with the spirit of the Nixon Report. It does, and in doing, gives Tasmania a chance to profit even more from the sale of the Hydro, a measure which only those with eyes fixed firmly on the past can continue to deny.⁸⁶

Noted free-market commentator Alan Wood added his voice to the chorus calling for Tasmanians to agree to a sale of their electricity-generating assets when he wrote in *The Australian*:

If the Tasmanians won’t face up to [selling the Hydro-Electric Commission], their future is as a declining offshore craft and produce market, kept afloat by handouts from mainland taxpayers who may, one day, revolt.⁸⁷

Alan Wood is arguably the most high-profile Australian defender of neo-classical economic reforms and the free trade avatar to which they are directed. He is, in this capacity, a fighter for the forces of a generic modernity, a campaigner for the remaking

and renewal of Australia's *socius* along lines which have worked elsewhere, come from elsewhere and should, if properly implemented, refashion our own country in the image of those elsewhere. For the imperial historicist time that pushes this set of logics along, places and peoples that resist the transference can only be backward provinces, sites of a vain resistance to an unstoppable force that will always have its way in the final wash-up. To paraphrase Marx's rule of thumb, the countries that are more reformed neo-classically will only show to those less reformed, the image of their own future. Wood's frustration at Tasmania's unwillingness to rid itself of the "millstone" of public electricity assets is the frustration of a man who sees the world in the kind of historicist terms that Chakrabarty so skillfully pulls apart. The time-space compression that scrunches together different centuries and lays them on top of one another in a sedimentary bed of concurrence has been replaced with a much shorter time frame in the Tasmanian case. In the form of a keenness to retain control of our electricity utilities, a public policy position made hegemonic in the West through the 1950s, 60s and early-70s has been allowed to bleed into the third millennium.

Chakrabarty's reading of the conjunction of the refusal of historicism in India and its implications for thinking the category of the political folds back over itself to problematise the European tradition of the concept of the political, more specifically, as I have already noted, in terms of the conviction that universal education must necessarily precede universal suffrage. In the Tasmanian case, it is Weberian *rationalization* that is loosened up by a site-based analysis of a historicist refusal to transform the particular — Tasmania — into the mirror image of the general — the neo-liberal orthodoxy.

It would be rash to make the claim that Tasmania is somehow insulated from the purposive rationalities of science and economics, or indeed to claim that the value spheres of art and religion are somehow more entrenched here than in other “minor” places. Even so, a refusal of privatization and the positing of an alternative value rationality based around a more mystical, magical, well-nigh deified notion of the state stand as empirical claims to a reading of the enduring enchantments of Tasmanian modernity.⁸⁸

If the Bacon government’s intention in keeping the Hydro was to re-enchant the state through recourse to public emotion and collectivity-forming mythological narratives, the question remained as to how it was to get around William Connolly’s diagnosis of the implausibility of the Hegelian notion of the state in a modern world disenchanted by empiricism. Somehow, for Bacon, this proved no problem. Refusing the colonization of the political value sphere by the economic, the state government reprised Keynesian transcendentalism by purchasing three ferries to open up the tourist markets between Tasmania and the Australian mainland. The enchanting effects of this charismatic promotion of an unfashionable value rationality — government intervention in the free market — was compounded by the nomenclature chosen for the new vessels. Not content with making a claim for the presence of the “Spirit of the state” in a mandarin class of public élites, the ships themselves were christened “The Spirits of Tasmania I, II and III”. If seeing is believing in the positivist world-order, the twenty-thousand Tasmanians who ventured out to get a glimpse of their new boats on their arrival in Hobart in September, 2002, could hardly be blamed for thinking they were living in an enchanted state.

Notes

¹ See Hans Mommsen, *Der Nationalsozialismus und die Deutsche Gesellschaft* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1991); Yehuda Bauer, *A History of the Holocaust* (Watts: Danbury, 1982); Saul Friedlander, *Memory, History and the Extermination of the Jews of Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998).

² Wulf Kansteiner, "The Rise and Fall of Metaphor: German Historians and the Uniqueness of the Holocaust," in Alan Rosenbaum, ed., *Is the Holocaust Unique?: Perspectives on Comparative Genocide* (Boulder: Westview, 2001), p. 238.

³ For additional examples of the deployment of the term "Final Solution" in writing about the Tasmanian genocide see Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*. N. J. B. Plomley, ed., *Jorgen Jorgenson and the Aborigines of Van Diemen's Land* (Hobart: Blubberhead Press, 1991); Moses, "An Antipodean Genocide: The Origins of the Genocidal Moment in the Colonization of Australia,"; Brantlinger, "'Dying Races': Rationalizing Genocide in the Nineteenth Century,"; Diamond, "In Black and White," Jan Morris, "The Final Solution Down Under," in Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, eds., *The History and Sociology of Genocide*, pp. 205-22.

⁴ N.J.B Plomley, *Jorgen Jorgenson and the Aborigines of Van Diemen's Land: being a reconstruction of his 'lost' book on their customs and habits, and on his role in the Roving Parties and the Black Line* (Hobart: Blubber Head Press: 1991), p. 17.

⁵ Moses, "An antipodean genocide? The origins of the genocidal moment in the colonization of Australia," p. 91.

⁶ Brantlinger, "'Dying races': rationalizing genocide in the nineteenth century," p. 49.

⁷ Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians*, p. 2

⁸ Palmer, *Colonial Genocide*, p. 26.

⁹ Steven Katz, *The Holocaust in Historical Context Vol 1: Mass Death Before the Modern Age* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 33; Deborah Lipstadt, *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory* (New York: Free Press, 1993), pp. 20, 74.

¹⁰ See Ward Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide: Holocaust and Denial in the Americas 1492 to the Present* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1997); David E. Stannard, "Uniqueness as Denial: The Politics of Genocide Scholarship," in Alan Rosenbaum, ed., *Is the Holocaust Unique?*, 2nd edition (Boulder: Westview Press, 2001), pp. 245-90; Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1999); Norman Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry: Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering* (London: Verso, 2000).

¹¹ Juliet Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1974).

¹² Evans and Thorpe, "Indigenocide and the Massacre of Aboriginal History," p. 33. For additional work on genocide in Australia see Barta, "Relations of Genocide: Land and Lives in the Colonization of Australia,"; "After the Holocaust: Consciousness of Genocide in Australia,"; Tatz, *Genocide in Australia*; Palmer, *Colonial Genocide*; "Colonial and Modern Genocide: Explanations and Categories,"; Tom Nairn, "Democracy and Genocide," *Arena*, 16 (2000-2001), pp. 75-84; Ian Herson, *The Savage Empire: Forgotten Wars of the 19th Century* (Gloucester: Sutton 2000); Smith, *The Spectre of Truganini: 1980 Boyer Lectures*; Lindqvist, *Exterminate all the Brutes*; Mark Cocker, *Rivers of Blood, Rivers of Gold: Europe's Conflict with Native People* (London: Jonathon Cape, 1998); Desailly, *The Mechanics of Genocide: Colonial Policies and Attitudes Towards the Tasmanian Aborigines, 1824-1836*; Mazian, *Why Genocide?*; Attwood and Foster, eds., *Frontier Conflict*; Elder, *Blood on the Wattle*; Paul R. Bartrop,

"The Holocaust, the Aborigines, and the Bureaucracy of Destruction: An Australian Dimension of Genocide," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 3.1 (2001), pp. 75-87; Docker and Curthoys, eds., *Aboriginal History*, 25 (2001); Windschuttle, *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*, Manne, ed., *Whitewash*; Madley, "Patterns of Frontier Genocide 1803-1910: The Aboriginal Tasmanians, the Yuki of California and the Herero of Namibia,"; Sousa, "They Will Be Hunted Down like Wild Beasts and Destroyed,".

¹³ Thorpe and Evans, "Massacre of Aboriginal History," p. 21.

¹⁴ See Keith Windschuttle, "The Myths of Frontier Massacres in Australian History: Part 1: The Invention of Massacre Stories," *Quadrant*, 44.10 (October 2000), pp. 8-21; "The Myths of Frontier Massacres in Australian History: Part 2: The Fabrication of the Aboriginal Death Toll," *Quadrant*, 44.11 (November 2000), pp. 17-24; "The Myths of Frontier Massacres in Australian History: Part 3: Massacre Stories and the Policy of Separatism," *Quadrant*, 44.12 (December 2000), pp. 6-20.

¹⁵ Thorpe and Evans, "The Massacre of Aboriginal History," p. 24. This tussle has recently been elevated to a new level of antipathy and vitriol with the publication of Windschuttle's *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History*. In that book, Windschuttle adopts the strategies of Thorpe and Evans in the attempt to dismantle what he calls the orthodox position on race relations in colonial Tasmania. Readers interested in the debate are referred to Robert Manne's edited volume *Whitewash* and the numerous newspaper responses still available on the World Wide Web.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁷ Reynolds, *An Indelible Stain*, p. 13.

¹⁸ Thorpe and Evans, "The Massacre of Aboriginal History," p. 37. One might have thought the available nomenclatures for thinking specifically indigenous genocides would have sufficed but indigenocide does have a linguistic novelty to it that is rather seductive. Alternatives to indigenocide include developmental genocide, colonial genocide, utilitarian genocide and genocide aimed at acquiring economic wealth.

¹⁹ See Jacques Derrida, "The Dangerous Supplement," in *Of Grammatology*, translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1976).

²⁰ Thorpe and Evans, "The Massacre of Aboriginal History," p. 49.

²¹ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 7

²² Hughes, *The Fatal Shore*. N. G. Butlin, *Economics and the Dreamtime: A Hypothetical History*. (Cambridge: Press Syndicate, 1993). Robson, *A History of Tasmania*, vol. 1.

²³ Quoted in Reynolds, *An Indelible Stain*, p. 29.

²⁴ See Bonwick, *The Last of the Tasmanians*; Turnbull, *Black War*; Haydon (dir.) *The Last Tasmanian*. For further 19th-century examples of the extinction thesis see Calder, *Some Accounts of Wars, Extirpation, Habits of the Native Tribes of Tasmania*; Henry Ling-Roth, *The Aborigines of Tasmania* (Halifax West: F. King and Sons, 1899); James Bischoff, *Sketch of the History of Van Diemen's Land, illustrated by a map of the island, and an account of the Van Diemen's Land Company* (London: John Richardson, 1832); James Backhouse-Walker, *Papers on Tasmania* (Hobart: William Grahame, Government Printer, 1884-1896); George Washington Walker, *Notes on the Aborigines of Tasmania* (Hobart: William Grahame, Govt. Printer, 1898); James Barnard, *Aborigines of Tasmania* (Melbourne: Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, 1890); William Flower, *The Aborigines of Tasmania: An Extinct Race: a lecture delivered in the Hulme Town Hall, Manchester, Nov. 30, 1878* (Manchester: John Heywood, 1879); Hugh Hull, *Lecture on the Aborigines of Tasmania: read at the Mechanics' Institute, Hobart*

Town, 28th Oct. 1869 (Hobart Town: Mercury, 1870); R. H. Davies, "On the Aborigines of Van Diemen's Land," *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science, Agriculture, Statistics, etc.*, 11 (1846), pp. 409-20; Robert Smyth, *The Aborigines of Victoria: with Notes Relating to the Habits of the Natives of other Parts of Australia and Tasmania* (Melbourne: John Currey O'Neil, 1972). For 20th-century versions see Archibald Meston, *The Problem of the Tasmanian Aborigine* (Hobart: Government Printer, 1937); Hugh Bohun, *Black Tragedy* (Sydney: Midget Masterpiece, 1933); Frederic Jones, *Tasmania's Vanished Race: National Talks Delivered from 3AR Melbourne, on Feb 26th, 1935, March 6th, 1935 and March 12th, 1935* (Sydney: Australian Broadcasting Commission, 1935); William Brydon, *The Story of the Tasmanian Aborigines* (Hobart: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, 1960); William Turner, *The Aborigines of Tasmania* (Edinburgh: Robert Grant, 1908-1914); Robert Travers, *The Tasmanians: The Story of a Doomed Race* (Melbourne: Cassel, 1968).

²⁵ See Jim Everett, "Aboriginality in Tasmania," 23 September, 2003, <<http://www.utas.edu.au/docs/siglo/mag/s12/everitt.html>>.

²⁶ UN, *Treaty Series*, 78, p. 280.

²⁷ Robinson, *Friendly Mission*, p. 435.

²⁸ Mudrooroo, *Doctor Wooreddy's Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World*, p. 123, emphasis added.

²⁹ Stuart Stein, "Geno-and other cides: A Cautionary Note on Knowledge Accumulation," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 4.1 (2002), p. 46.

³⁰ I would like to thank Philip Mead for first suggesting this "biblical" reading of Mudrooroo's text.

³¹ Klaus Neumann, "Haunted Lands," *UTS Review*, 6.1 (May 2000), p. 66.

³² Dominick LaCapra, *Representing the Holocaust: History, Memory, Trauma* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 43. One of the strategies for throwing off the burden of this "black armband" history was to reduce the influence of the Holocaust on constructions of contemporary German identity by arguing for a relation of kinship between the death camps of the Third Reich and the gulags of the Stalinist Soviet Union.

³³ *Ibid.*, 46.

³⁴ Although there are numerous articles that deal with Mudrooroo's political activism, readers are referred, in the first instance, to Eva Rask Knudsen, "Mission Completed?: On Mudrooroo's Contribution to the Politics of Aboriginal Literature in Australia," in Gerhard Sliw, ed., *Missions of Interdependence: A Literary Directory* (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2002), pp. 321-32. In recent years, of course, a wide-ranging debate concerning Mudrooroo's claims to an essential Aboriginal identity has come to pass. At the time of the writing of *Wooreddy*, however, his Aboriginality was not in doubt. Subjectively then, Mudrooroo was one kind of an Aboriginal subject and his unproblematic, if individualized, inclusion within the framework of racial identity makes salient the questions around the rhetoric of victimology that I introduce here. For discussion of the vicissitudes of Mudrooroo's identity politics see Gerhard Fischer, "Mis-taken Identity: Mudrooroo and Gordon Matthews," in John Docker and Gerhard Fischer, eds., *Race, Colour and Identity in Australia and New Zealand* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2000), pp. 95-112.

³⁵ This transferential exchange is subject to limitation and restriction, not least of an ideological kind, so that one certainly wouldn't expect to discover this specific language in a fictionalised history written by someone of Keith Windschuttle's political persuasion.

³⁶ As Jodie Brown writes in “Unlearning Dominant Modes of Representation: Mudrooroo’s *Doctor Wooreddy’s Prescription for Enduring the Ending of the World* and Robert Drewe’s *Savage Crows*,” *Westerly*, 38 (Spring 1993), pp. 71-8:

The subversive power of *Doctor Wooreddy* emerges, in part, from the reversal of narrative point of view [...] Not only does this reversal subvert prejudices regarding the intellectual and emotional capacity of Aborigines, it redefines the whole concept of civilisation. The Europeans are portrayed as barbaric savages as they become the objects of a controlling gaze and a set of alien discourses. The white settlers [...] are seen to be not only aggressive but inhuman and unnatural as well. p. 74.

Annalisa Oboe takes a similar position in “Doctor Wooreddy’s War Against Time,” in Annalisa Oboe, ed., *Mongrel Signatures: Reflections on the work of Mudrooroo* (Rodopi: Amsterdam, 2003), pp. 83-105. Oboe writes: “There is neither nostalgia nor pathos in Mudrooroo’s ‘historical’ story, but a refined and subtly ironic denunciation of biased notions concerning the ‘backwardness’ of the Indigenous people, their lack of intellectual and emotional faculties, of history and culture, and a conscious retelling of the past from their viewpoint.” p. 85.

For further discussion of the postcolonial politics of representation at play in *Dr Wooreddy* see Maria Srinivasan, “Moments of Encounter in Mudrooroo’s *Wooreddy*,” in Cynthia Van Den Driesen and Satendra Nandan, eds., *Austral-Asian Encounters: From Literature and Women’s Studies to Politics and Tourism* (Prestige Books: New Delhi, 2003), pp.204-16.

³⁷ Quoted in Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz*, p. 35.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

³⁹ For the Cape Grim Massacre see Inward Despatch No.1, Curr to Directors, 2nd January 1828, AOT, VDL 5/1: BR LHC VDLC, Microform Reel 33/1, p 281; Inward Despatch No. 2, Curr to Directors, 14th January 1828, AOT, VDL 5/1: BR LHC VDLC, Microfilm Reel 33/1, p 283; Inward Despatch No. 150. Curr to Directors, 7th October 1830, AOT, VDL, 5/1, p 104-5; Letter from Curr to Colonial Secretary, 18th May 1831, AOT, VDL, 23/4, p 306; Letter from Goldie to Arthur, 18th November 1830, AOT CSO 280/25, p 488-9; Letter from Goldie to Arthur, 18th November 1829, AOT CSO 1/33/7578, p 116-7;

For the Risdon Massacre see M. Nicholls, ed., *The Diary of Reverend Robert Knopwood 1803-1838* (Hobart: Tasmanian Historical Research Association, 1977) p. 51; Letter from Moore to Collins, 7 May 1804. *Historical Records of Australia*, Series III, vol. 1, pp. 242-3; Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee for the Affairs of the Aborigines, Mr Kelly, 10 March 1830, *British Parliamentary Papers*, Colonies, Australia, 4, p. 223; Minutes of Evidence, Edward White, 16 March 1830, *British Parliamentary Papers*, Colonies, Australia, 4, p. 225.

⁴⁰ Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, p. 2.

⁴¹ Saurabh Dube, “Introduction: Colonialism, Modernity, Colonial Modernities,” *Nepantla: Views From South*, 3.2 (2002), p. 197

⁴² Lisa Rofel, “Discrepant Modernities and their Discontents,” p. 637.

⁴³ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 4.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁴⁵ One good example of the instantiation of this silent European referent in the history of a third world location is an essay by Jocelyn Alexander and Jo Ann McGregor entitled “Modernity and Ethnicity in a Frontier Society: Understanding Difference in Northwestern Zimbabwe,” *Journal of South African Studies*, 23.2 (June 1997), pp. 187-201. This account of relations between the displaced but modernising

Ndebele people and the “primitive” traditional inhabitants of the Shai gani reserve is structured around a troping of progress even as it attempts to maintain a detached but culturally sensitive anthropological gaze.

⁴³ Enrique Dussel’s notion of a “trans”-Modernity seems to offer a reprieve from the determinism of Eurocentrist Western historicism in so far as it seeks to tease out the web of alternative socio-cultural traditions centred on Chinese, Southeast Asian, Hindu, Islamic, Bantu and Latin American civilisations: “[...] modernity’s technical and economic globality is far from being a cultural globalisation of everyday life that valorizes the majority of humanity. From this omitted potentiality and altering “exteriority” emerges a project of “trans”- modernity, a “beyond” that transcends Western modernity (since the West never adopted it but, rather, has scorned it and valued it as “nothing”) and that will have a creative function of great significance in the twenty-first century.” “World System and ‘Trans’-modernity,” p. 221. In fact, the very globality of Dussel’s approach, its fondness for the meta-narrative underpinned by a sparse quantitative empiricism renders it susceptible to the critiques of Euro-centric history discussed above. Dussel fails to avoid the subordination of “other” histories in his implicit suggestion that the richness of the cultures described can only be appreciated in comparison with a normative West. The positing of alternative subjects of history that are formally identical to the West can barely be expected to solve the problems posed by the “first in Europe then elsewhere” structure of global historicist time.

⁴⁷ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 31.

⁴⁸ Alan Knight, “Forward,” in W. A. Townsley, *Tasmania: Microcosm of the Federation or Vassal State 1945-1983* (Hobart: St David’s Park Publishing, 1994), p. vi.

⁴⁹ Robson, *A History of Tasmania*, vol. 2, p. 564.

⁵⁰ Townsley, *Tasmania: Microcosm of the Federation or Vassal State*, p. 428.

⁵¹ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p. 23.

⁵² Flanagan, *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*, p. 21.

⁵³ See Saurabh Dube, ed., “Enduring Enchantments,” *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 101.4 (Fall 2002).

⁵⁴ Gaonkar, “On Alternative Modernities,” p. 14.

⁵⁵ This claim to difference can be usefully read through the historical dialectic of federalist and secessionist thinking in Tasmania. As Pete Hay writes:

I would like to find a new context for knowing Tasmania; a context that would not immediately supplant more familiar Tasmania-within-the-nation comparisons, though it might throw up some surprises — perspectives that challenge more familiar contextualities. As the nation-state passes from political, economic and — though this will lag somewhat — cultural ascendancy, all sorts of knowing, it seems to me, become possible, all sorts of political, economic, and above all, imaginative constructions. “A Tale of Two Islands,” *Island*, 89 (Autumn 2002), p. 2.

Richard Flanagan adds an eloquent addendum to this statement in his essay on Tasmanian heterogeneity, “Before We Were Her People: Tasmania and Federation,” *Island*, 86 (2001), p. 16.

Tasmania is not simply the sixth, smallest and poorest state of Australia. It is also — and to my mind far more importantly — a different country. Physically, environmentally, historically and culturally this is demonstrable. Personally it is palpable. Equally, the Kimberley is a different country, and to grow up there is a fundamentally different experience than to grow up, as I did, on the west coast of Tasmania.

The twin histories of nation formation and modernity have always been intimately, if not identically placed trajectories. Which is not to say, of course, that for a location to cross the threshold into the epoch of the modern it must endure the growing pains of nationalisation. Walter Benjamin's obsession with the sights and sounds of Baudelaire's Paris stands as adequate testimony to this fact. So when theorists like Anthony Giddens and Marshall Berman position the rise of the nation state close to the centre of their respective taxonomies of modernity, this doesn't preclude us from applying those theoretical models to a sub-national zone like Tasmania:

The maelstrom of modern life has been fed from many sources: great discoveries in the physical sciences, changing our images of the universe and our place in it; the industrialisation of production; which transforms scientific knowledge into technology, creates new human environments and destroys old ones, speeds up the whole tempo of life, generates new forms of corporate power and class struggle; immense demographic upheavals, severing millions of people from their ancestral habitats, hurtling them half-way across the world into new lives; rapid and often cataclysmic urban growth; systems of mass communication, dynamic in their development, enveloping and binding together the most diverse people and societies; *increasingly powerful nation states* [...] finally, bearing and driving all these people and institutions along, an ever-expanding drastically fluctuating capitalist world market. Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air*, p. 16.

In any case, Tasmania, while not experiencing a process of autonomous nation-formation in its own right, did, of course, give up a portion of its colonial sovereignty to join the Australian federation in 1901 which in itself creates a set of dynamics that are worthy of investigation. But to speculate upon the possible ramifications of a nationalist movement centred on the island itself, we must turn our attention to fiction, and in particular, Dennis Altman's novel, *The Comfort of Men*.

Altman's novel is partly set in an independent Tasmania. Frustrated by a lack of control over local politics, a right wing, culturally conservative Tasmanian secessionist group seizes control of the island through legislative rather than military means. The evocations of local autonomy presented by Altman are supposed to metaphorise a cultural specificity and backwardness as felt by the progressivist, homosexual narrator. Social difference is thus represented as the natural outcome of an already entrenched provincialism and resistance to the new values of 1960s radicalism, cultural politics, the anti-Vietnam war movement and so on. The trajectory of the narrative thus takes the reader on a two way course to separation. On the one hand, the narrator flits back and forward across Bass Strait charting out a path through a *bildungsroman* that eventually sees him throw off the marginalism and conservatism of Tasmania and embrace the openly gay culture of the mainland. On the other hand, meanwhile, the land of his birth holds itself steady in a recalcitrant archaism and resolutely resists the forces of social change at loose in the world, eventually divorcing itself from the more progressive mainland and turning inward to promote a culture of family values, protectionism and all the other negative traits we associate with isolationist insularity. In *The Comfort of Men*, a contraction and a widening out are juxtaposed against one another, one a personal movement away, the other a social movement back towards a new centre.

Altman's book stands alone amongst fictional representations of Tasmania in the positing of this independence. Other texts take great pains to emphasise Tasmania's difference but nowhere else is this specificity channeled into a re-imagining of the social structure of the island. Tasmania is always presented as different to the mainland, but that alterity is never used as the fulcrum along which a legislative separation takes place. Perhaps this is symptomatic of Altman's interest in gender politics, given that Tasmania had for so long, and to much mainland derision, retained a clause in its criminal code outlawing "unnatural" sexual acts, but it also displays a keen awareness of the actual condition of Tasmania's *socius* with its tangential links to the mainland economy through transfer payments, that produce a mendicancy that in Altman's vision, becomes a dependency that needs to be shrugged off if the island is to attain a maturity and self-sufficiency denied to it, seemingly, since the days of imperial subsidies to the convict industry.

It is fascinating to set this fictional rendering against the real history of independence and federation in Tasmania because the latter actually contains a signal lack of determination to retain or

acquire independent political identity beyond the level of statehood. Of all the states in the Commonwealth, representatives from Tasmania were amongst the most vehement in their pursuit of federation in the late-19th century, and in the two referenda held to decide the matter during the period leading up to formal federation, only tiny numbers outside of the affluent electorate in Queenborough in Tasmania's south, voted to join the other colonies in the construction of the Australian nation-state. Debate over union was conducted without much public enthusiasm, and aside from the editorial output of the papers in Tasmania's south, most notable public voices were in favour of federation. Primary industry in particular was very keen to have access opened up to the resolutely protectionist markets of Victoria, and once concerns over the distribution of compensation for the loss of tariffs and customs duties was sorted out, little stood in the way of the collectivisation of the six Australian colonies.

The story since then has remained largely the same. On the one hand, Tasmanians stake out their separateness with some ferocity, but on the other, links to the mainland and the imaginary community of the nation-state remain strong, the bonds tightened by an integrated higher education sector, transfer payments, social security, defence issues and common sports and past-times. Tasmania is thus at once a separate place and part of a seamless, if socially constructed, nation-state. The Bass Strait, at once guardian of specificity and bane of economic development protects the impossible object of the Tasmanian island from annexation by the overweening federalists to the north, while local politics and the inter-regional conflicts between North, North-West and South remain the dominant cleavages along which local political relations are organised.

Deploying a rhetoric of conjunction and separation to read Tasmanian culture takes us on a voyage through a range of discursive terrains. The languages of nation-building and federalism inscribe themselves within a socio-historical matrix. Their object is the *socius*, human life, communal living. The connection engendered between the mainland and the islands of Tasmania by Federation in 1901 was a symbolic one. It operated at governmental, administrative, military, fiscal and economic levels. It produced national subjectivities and national ambitions. In many ways, this macro-organisational affiliation came to replace the relationship between colonial Tasmania and the British empire, so that one centrifugal elsewhere was replaced by a new one whose closeness actually translated into a heavier influence on the affairs of the island colony.

The instalment of the bulwark of the nation-state in the hearts of Tasmanians thus ended a period of civilisational temporality that was marked by co-presence. This regime of temporality blended the time of imperialism, the time of indigeneity, and the time of colonyhood. In administrative terms, the acquisition of self-government and devolution from New South Wales after transportation ended in 1853 marks the only period of autonomous time. But even this brief epoch remained subject to contestation between local and imperial claims to authority. The Van Diemonian period that preceded it, of course, was characterised by British administration and control from a distance. The fact that the island itself, surely the chief *topos* of an otherwise absent unity, had been split into the fiefdoms of Collins and Patterson, meant that no conjunction at a symbolic level could be said to exist. Sundered across the middle, its two parts given the names of British counties, the landmass of Tasmania was a house divided against itself. That these originary divisions, this fractured, dual coloniality has continued to operate in the time of nationhood and globalisation is emblematic of the power of that first administrative distribution.

To begin with then, Van Diemonian time established a split subject of collective existence. Two colonies, two leaders, two *raison d'être*, two peoples. The synthetic reification of the archipelago of Tasmania into a single island stands as a kind of wish for social cohesion and unity that needs to be considered against this fractured backdrop. But even before the advent of European time in Tasmania, the temporalities of the indigenous civilisation were also polysemous and multiplicitous. Theorists of Tasmanian Aboriginality identify nine tribes whose relationships to one another ranged from complete non-existence to neat marital and territorial imbrication. It was only in the first phase of British colonisation that the Aboriginals were grouped into a single homogeneous mass, and as I have argued elsewhere in this thesis this production of a collective subject cannot be separated out from the structural genocide that took place on the Island from 1803 to the mid 1830s. In their annihilation, the Palawa were united, but as the diaries of George Augustus Robinson clearly demonstrate, even the war of resistance that began in 1824 was fought along tribal lines.

The four-dimensional dynamic of separation, unity, conjunction and internal fragmentation that must organise any inquiry into Tasmanian federation is complicated further by the brute facts of Geomorphology. In the empty pre-civilisational time of Tasmania, the landmass itself was part of Gondwana Land, the super-continent that stretched half way across the globe. More recently even, the ice ages that made it possible for the Tasmanian Aborigines to migrate south, created land bridges joining Tasmania with the landmass of Australia, and pre-figuring the symbolic unification that was to occur so many thousands of years later.

Within the discourse of cartography, a second unification can be read in the assumed connection of the two islands prior to Bass and Flinders' circumnavigation of Tasmania in 1800. Federation can thus be seen as reiterating a set of already historicised occurrences through a process of de-territorialisation. The plebiscite that bound Tasmania with Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland in 1901 relocated a previously cartographic and geo-morphological factum into the regime of socio-culture through a kind of *détournement*. The trope of total estrangement, of geographical isolation, indeed even of *islandness* itself is thus given a kind of mythical position within the channels of textuality that have contributed to the cultural construction of Tasmania. The island, self-contained, insular, autonomous, is made an impossible object of historical organisation. Its duration is limited, its designatory powers attenuated, its symbolism undermined. Vectors of connectivity can be shown to spread out across the Bass Strait through a sedimentary bed of time, vectors that space themselves within and throughout different discursive terrains including that of nationalism and federation.

⁵⁶ The Department of Treasury and Finances media release of 30 October, 2003 displays all these characteristics:

Treasurer David Crean said today's record *Tasmanian Survey of Business Expectations* would not be a surprise to Tasmanians as the State is enjoying records across almost every economic indicator. [...] "The TCCI/Commonwealth Bank Tasmanian Survey of Business Expectations released today shows business confidence at a record high, significantly above this time last year and any other September quarter on record. As with other economic indicators Tasmania is enjoying, the business outlook also shows the State economy to be significantly more buoyant than the national economy [...] The thrust of the Bacon Government's economic strategy has been to increase demand for Tasmanian goods and services, and today's business survey result shows that is exactly what is occurring in our State [...] The big record growth areas for the September quarter are general business conditions, and sales and revenue, but the outlook is for even stronger growth [...] In Tasmania's local domestic market, which provides 50 per cent of demand for Tasmanian goods and services, total spending in the State is growing at the same rate *as the nation as a whole*. This is great news for small and medium sized businesses across Tasmania [...] In 2001, when the business survey began to measure specific business constraints, lack of demand for goods and services consistently ranked as the second largest business constraint out of 21 constraints. It is now ranked 11th. Also in the local market, the value of work yet to be done in the building sector (\$174m) is at historically high levels, a positive indication of continuing strong demand. Exports, which account for around 20 per cent of demand for goods and services, is also at record levels, with growing demand coming from Hong Kong, Spain, Japan, China, Korea and Europe. And of course all these records in the end deliver *our State the strongest job growth in the nation*, and by far the fastest reduction in the number of unemployed. 30 October, 2003 <<http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=9636>>, emphasis added.

⁵⁷ Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?," in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, in Paul Rabinow, ed., *Essential Works of Foucault 1954-84*, vol. 1 (New York: New Press, 1997), p. 311.

⁵⁸ Gaonkar, "On Alternative Modernities," p. 16.

⁵⁹ See also Anthony Cascardi, "The Critique of Subjectivity and the Re-Enchantment of the World," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, 2 (1996), pp. 243-63; Hans Blumenberg, *Work on Myth*, translated by Robert M. Wallace (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985); G. Ritzer, *Enchanting a Disenchanted World*:

Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge, 1999); R. Schroeder, "Disenchantment and its Discontents: Weberian Perspectives on Science and Technology," *Sociological Review*, 43 (1995), p. 227-50.

⁶⁰ Dube, "Introduction: Enchantments of Modernity," in Dube, ed., "Enduring Enchantments," p. 729.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Richard Jenkins, "Disenchantment, Enchantment and Re-enchantment: Max Weber at the Millenium," *Max Weber Studies*, 1 (2000), p. 12.

⁶⁴ Jane Bennett, *The Enchantment of Modern Life: Attachments, Crossings, and Ethics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 4.

⁶⁵ Wolfgang Mommsen, "Personal Conduct and Social Change," in Scott Lash and Sam Whimster, eds., *Max Weber: Rationality and Modernity* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987), p. 42.

⁶⁶ Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 131.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Margaret Somers, "Romancing the Market, Reviling the State: Historicizing Liberalism, Privatisation and the Competing Claims to Civil Society," in Colin Crouch, Klaus Eder and Damian Tambini, eds., *Citizenship, Markets, and the State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 23-48 and "The Privatisation of Citizenship: How to Unthink a Knowledge Culture," in V. Bonnell and L. Hunt, eds., *Beyond the Cultural Turn* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 121-61; Richard Sennett, *The Corrosion of Character: The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism* (New York: Norton, 1998); Zygmunt Bauman, *Work, Consumerism and the New Poor* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1998); Graham Little, *The Public Emotions: From Mourning to Hope* (Sydney: ABC Books, 1999); Thomas Frank, *One Market Under God: Extreme Capitalism, Market Populism and the End of Economic Democracy* (New York: Doubleday, 2000); David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000); F. L. Block, *The Vampire State: And Other Myths and Fallacies about the U.S. Economy* (New York: New Press, 1996); Betty Reid Mandell, "The Privatisation of Everything," *New Politics*, (Summer 2002), pp. 83-100; Pierre Bourdieu et al, eds., *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1999); John Wright, *The Ethics of Economic Rationalism* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2003); Michael Wyatt, *Taming Economic Rationalism: Natural Laws and Political Strategies for an Equitable Global Future* (Croydon: Michael Wyatt, 1999); Bob Ellis, *First Abolish the Customer: 202 Arguments Against Economic Rationalism* (Ringwood: Penguin, 1998); Peter Saunders and Sara Graham, eds., *Beyond Economic Rationalism: Alternative Futures for Social Policy; Proceedings of a Joint Conference with the Department of Social Work and Social Administration, University of Western Australia, 27 November, 1992* (Kensington: Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, 1993); Stephen King and Peter Lloyd, eds., *Economic Rationalism: Dead End or Way Forward?* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1993); Stuart Rees, Gordon Rodley, Frank Stilwell, eds., *Beyond the Market: Alternatives to Economic Rationalism* (Leichhardt: Pluto Press Australia, 1993); Donald Home, ed., *The Trouble with Economic Rationalism* (Newham: Scribe Publications, 1992); John Carroll and Robert Manne, eds., *Shutdown: The Failure of Economic Rationalism and How to Rescue Australia* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 1992); Peter Vintila, ed., *Markets, Morals & Manifestos: Fightback! & The Politics of Economic Rationalism in the 1990s* (Murdoch: Institute for Science and Technology Policy, Murdoch University, 1992).

⁶⁸ Milan Zafirovski, "Unification of Sociological Theory by the Rational Choice Model: Conceiving the Relationship between Economics and Sociology," *Sociology*, 33.3 (1999), p. 496.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ R. Frank, "The Political Economy of Preference Falsification: Kuran's Private Truths, Public Lies," *Journal of Economic Literature*, 34 (1996), p. 117.

⁷¹ For further readings of the deification of the state see J.R. Llobera, *The God of Modernity: The Development of Nationalism in Western Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1994). Philip Abrams, "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 1.1 (1988), pp. 58-9.

⁷² Duncan Cameron, "Selling the House to Pay the Mortgage: What is Behind Privatisation?," *Studies in Political Economy*, 53 (Summer 1997), p. 16.

⁷³ William Coleman, *Rationalism and Anti-Rationalism in the Origins of Economics: The Philosophical Roots of Eighteenth Century Economic Thought* (Aldershot: E. Elgar, 1995), p. 158.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 156.

⁷⁵ William Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), p. 137.

⁷⁶ See also, Jeannie Morefield, "Hegelian Organicism, British New Liberalism and the Return of the Family State," *History of Political Thought*, 23.1 (2002), pp. 141-70; Eric Weil, *Hegel and the State*, translated by Mark Cohen (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); A. Kaufman, "Community and Indigence: A Hegelian Perspective on Aid to the Poor," *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 5.1 (1997), pp. 69-92; R. Fine, "Civil Society Theory, Enlightenment and Critique," *Democratization*, 4.1 (1997), pp. 7-28; F. R. Christie, "Hegel's Conservative Liberalism," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 22.4 (1989), pp. 717-38; G. O. Kvistad, *Radicals and the German State: Hegel, Marx and the Political Demands on German Civil Servants* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984). For more general accounts of the Hegelian concept of the state see Z. A. Pelczynski, ed., *The State and Civil Society: Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); George Morris, *Hegel's Philosophy of the State and of History: An Exposition* (Chicago: S.C. Griggs, 1887); Shlomo Avineri, *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972); Vrajendra Raj Mehta, *Hegel and the Modern State: An Introduction to Hegel's Political Thought* (New Delhi: AssociatedPub. House, 1968).

⁷⁷ Quentin Skinner, "Modernity and Disenchantment: Some Historical Reflections," in James Tully, ed., *Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism: The Philosophy of Charles Taylor in Question* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 38.

⁷⁸ R. M. O'Donnell writes, "At bottom, Keynes's prescription was that the state should act as the guardian, supervisor and promoter of civilised society. Within this general role, the nature and extent of its duties depended upon the performance of the private sector in establishing and maintaining the preconditions of goodness." *Keynes: Philosophy, Economics, and Politics: The Philosophical Foundations of Keynes's Thought and Their Influence on his Economics and Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), p. 299. Or, as Keynes himself noted:

The most important agenda of the State relate not to those activities which private individuals are already fulfilling, but to those functions which fall outside the sphere of the individual, to those decisions which are made by no one if the State does not make them. The important thing for government is not to do things which individuals are doing already, and to do them a little better or a little worse; but to do those things which at present are not done at all.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ R. Frank, "The Political Economy of Preference Falsification: Kuran's Private Truths, Public Lies," *Journal of Economic Literature*, 34 (1996), p. 117.

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⁷⁷ Quentin Skinner, "Modernity and Disenchantment: Some Historical Reflections," in James Tully, ed., *Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism: The Philosophy of Charles Taylor in Question* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 38.

⁷⁸ R. M. O'Donnell writes, "At bottom, Keynes's prescription was that the state should act as the guardian, supervisor and promoter of civilised society. Within this general role, the nature and extent of its duties depended upon the performance of the private sector in establishing and maintaining the preconditions of goodness." *Keynes: Philosophy, Economics, and Politics: The Philosophical Foundations of Keynes's Thought and Their Influence on his Economics and Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989), p. 299. Or, as Keynes himself noted:

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John Maynard Keynes, *Collected Works*, vol. 9 (London: Macmillan for the Royal Economic Society, 1971), p. 291.

⁷² G. W. F. Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, translated by T. M. Knox (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 161.

⁷³ This wasn't the first instance of privatization in Tasmania, however, as the Gray government had also sold off the Tasmanian Film Corporation and attempted to offload the Government Printers in the early 1980s.

⁷⁴ *Directions Statement* (Hobart: Tasmanian Government Printers, 10 April 1996).

⁷⁵ Bob Walker and Betty Con Walker, *Privatisation: Sell Off or Sell Out?: The Australian Experience* (Sydney: ABC Books, 2000), p. 8.

⁷⁶ Fernando Coronil, *The Magical State: Nature, Money, and Modernity in Venezuela* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 5.

⁷⁷ Quoted in Roger Lupton, *Lifeblood: Tasmania's Hydro Power* (Edgecliff: Focus Publishing, 2000), p. 30.

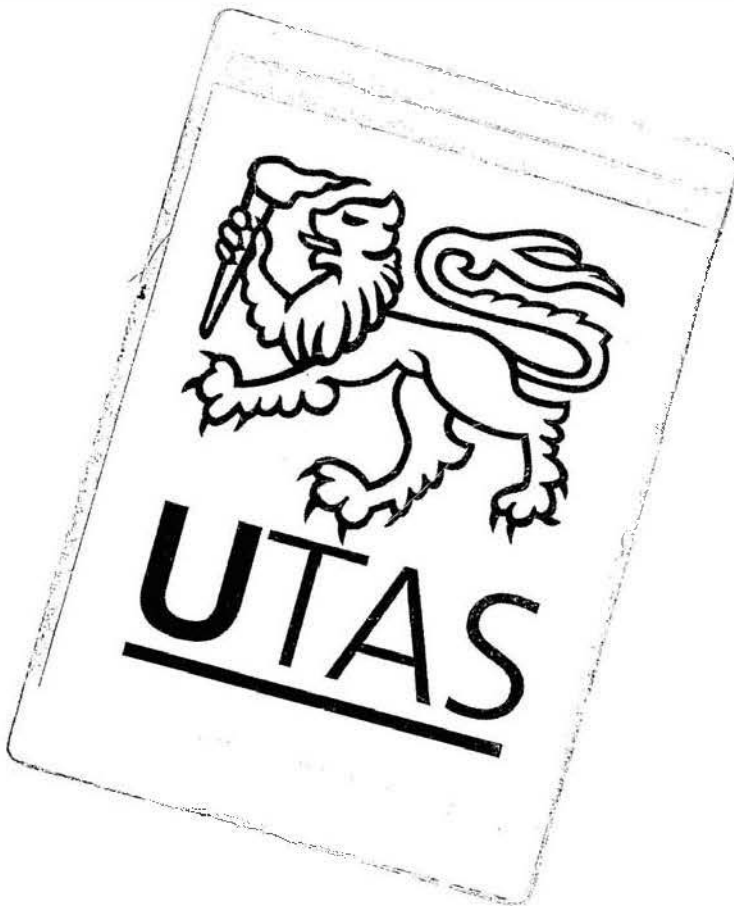
⁷⁸ Jim Bacon. " 'The Hydro' ": Keeping Our Best Asset," *Speech*, (4 August 1998).

⁷⁹ *The Mercury*, "Editorial," (21 August 1998), p. 18.

⁸⁰ Alan Wood, "Get off the Green, Green Road to Penury," *The Australian*, (21 July 1998), p. 26.

⁸¹ Other cultural thematics that rehearse the enchantment of Tasmania include the continued faith in the existence of the thylacine or Tasmanian tiger even as repeated scientific expeditions fail to identify evidence of its persistence. See Robert Paddle, *The Last Tasmanian Tiger: The History and Extinction of the Thylacine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Eric Guiler, *Thylacine: The Tragedy of the Tasmanian Tiger* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1985). By virtue of its delayed incorporation into the Western cartographic system, Tasmania was encoded at two levels as a site of ambivalent reality and anachronistic gnomism. In the first instance, the observations of Abel Tasman's exploratory party which visited Tasmania in 1642 were subtended by a world-view that juxtaposed a faith in the empirical with a residual loyalty to mytho-poetics. See Edward Duyker, ed., *The Discovery of Tasmania: Journal Extracts from the Expeditions of Abel Janszoon Tasman and Marc-Joseph Marion Du Fresne 1642 and 1772*, translated by Edward, Herman and Maryse Duyker, (Hobart: St David's Park, 1992). Similarly, Labillardière, the French naturalist who accompanied Du Fresne on his voyage to Tasmania in 1772, viewed the native Tasmanians through an optic overdetermined by Rousseauian theories of acultural nobility, consolidating a faith in the magic of the natural order over and above the repressive derogations of a newly modern sociality. See Edward Duyker, *Citizen Labillardière: A Naturalist's Life in Revolution and Exploration* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2003). Jacques Julien Houton de Labillardière, *Voyage in Search of La Perouse: Performed by Order of the Constituent Assembly, During the Years 1791, 1792, 1793 and 1794* (London: Printed for John Stockdale, 1800). This originary enchantment was parlayed into a geo-zoological nexus that recuperated Radcliffian gothicism into the nomenclature of Tasmania through the designation of the South-West as Transylvania and the figuration of its headlining inhabitant, the Tasmanian Tiger, as a vampyric hyena. In more recent times, instances of an enduring enchantment in Tasmania include the "cinderella" story of Mary Donaldson, a Hobart school-girl who married the Crown-Prince of Denmark in mid 2004; the plan to drain the wilderness land-mark Lake Pedder, see Kate Crowley "Imaging Pedder: Past Loss as Future Hope," *Island*, 80-1 (Spring-Summer 2000), pp. 59-69; "Lake Pedder's Loss and Failed Restoration: Ecological Politics Meets Liberal Democracy in Tasmania," *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 34.3 (November 1999), pp. 409-24;

and an on-going confidence that dubious geological indicators of oil reserves in the Midlands will transform Tasmania into a postmodern antipodean sultanate.



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