Title: White Feet and Black Trails: Travelling Cultures at the Lurujarri Trail.

By Chris Healy

'Everyone is now on the move, and they have been for centuries: dwelling-in-travel.'[1]

The Body Shop funded, PBS broadcast series, *Millennium: Wisdom of the Elders* narrated by David Maybury-Lewis included an episode on Paddy Roe, a Lawman and Guardian of the Lurujarri Trail in Broome, Western Australia. In one scene Paddy draws two parallel line in the dirt as his spatial mapping of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations during his long lifetime. He assigns white people to the top line, to a position not touching the land, and black people on the bottom, in the dirt. In describing how Aboriginal people moved half way to meet white people, Paddy is matter-of-fact about the refusal of white people to make a commensurate move towards his people. But, he is clearly disappointed that Aboriginal people kept on moving towards the white people. The result—the worst of possible outcome—his people haven't come back. Whether Paddy Roe's suggestion works for Aboriginal people is their business about which I have nothing to say, but the problem, I'm sure, is not with the mobility which he describes but with how the mobility was truncated, how it became fixed and naturalised as the outcome of a history which has colonised the past more effectively than it has colonised the land. Why didn't white people make a move?

Metaphors of travel in contemporary cultural criticism seem to have proliferated exponentially—like rabbits in the Australian bush—so that the post-modern subject is inevitably in-between or in-transit, constantly mobile and surfing waves of data; she is constituted by global flows, a border-crosser, nomad, wanderer, diasporic, exile on permanent detour, a migrant

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returning, a trekker, a drifter, an itinerant, a road-runner, an (involuntary) vagrant. On the other hand when it comes to actual travel, and particularly the intersections of travel-theory and post colonialism the scholarly analytic repertoire often seems inadequate, moralistically cliched or stuck in ideological critique[2] Yet travel metaphors, actual travel and the problematically post colonial intersect in a myriad of ways. This article is concerned with one very small example of travel, the Lurujarri Trail a walking-tour, which is one of a number of ventures in Aboriginal cultural tourism being sold to non-indigenous consumers in Australia. The Lurujarri Trail exists in its current form by virtue of a number of organisational and discursive coincidences—a product of Aboriginal survival and creativity, it is part Paddy Roe's vision for his family and his country. The Trail is also of the international leisure market and the Broome regional economy; it is a product of government funding, of discourses of Aboriginality, of the tourist industry and the powerful magic of its advertising wing. It has intersected with global TV (in the form of the *Millennium* series) with travel writing and with the work of the cultural critic Stephen Muecke. In this sense Lurujarri is a site of convergence, a place where vectors of cultural force and mobility meet and disperse; a place of dwelling and travelling.

**'Australian Aboriginal Tours ... with African Style Safari Camps and Insect Proof Cabins'.**

Aboriginal cultural tourism can be used to refer to a heterogeneous set of cultural practices which have emerged across Australia over the last 10 to 20 years.[3] It includes ventures such as the Brambuk Cultural Centre at Guriwerd in the heavily 'settled' south-east of the continent and Umorrduk Arnhem Land Safaris on 'remote' lands now owned by indigenous people in the far north. It is an ambivalent field of frontier holidays and sunset cruises, art

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shops and rock–art tours, safari camps and walking trails, corroboree performances, wilderness experiences, trekking adventures, bushtucker and craft tours, cultural centres and museum displays. In the first instance, it is important to state the obvious—that Aboriginal cultural tourism is one component of a massive global, and significant national industry. While estimates of the size of the global tourism industry vary considerably, Andrew Ross provides a broadly accurate snap-shot in his assertion that 'tourism is *the* modern medium of neo colonial relations between First and Third Worlds, the uneasy passport to development for many countries, the single largest item in world trade at 8 per cent, and one of the biggest providers of inter cultural knowledge today.'[4] In Australia the tourism industry accounts for approximately 10% of GNP. Not only is the scale of the tourism industry significant but it is an expanding sector with growth in the so-called cultural tourism and eco-tourism currently running at 25% per annum. Although a tiny component of a global industry and, indeed, a relatively small sector of the Australian tourism market, Aboriginal cultural tourism in Australia, is also big business. The two most intensively visited tourist sites with some Aboriginal involvement are the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park and the Kakadu National Park. Between 1980 and 1995 the number of visitors to Uluru-Kata Tjuta increased from 75,000 to over 300,000. In a little over half that period, from 1982 to 1990 visitors to Kakadu increased from 45,000 to 240,000.

It is important to emphasise the ambivalences inherent in the designation Aboriginal cultural tourism in order to avoid unifying a very diverse field. These ventures vary in form, embracing cultural institutions, performances, display, exhibition and service provision; they vary in scale, ranging from an Aboriginal Park Ranger conducting tiny tours to the mass tourism of Uluru-Kata Tjuta; they vary in terms of actual Aboriginal

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involvement, ownership and control. Thus Aboriginal cultural tourism, as I'll be using the term, stretches from instances in which Aboriginal involvement is perhaps purely nominal, grossly exploitative and culturally destructive to instances in which complete indigenous control may be productively linked to cultural and economic autonomy. In this sense, I want to defer (for a moment at least) the obvious gestural condemnation of Aboriginal cultural tourism as on-going colonialism, expropriation and non-indigenous hegemony. In order to begin a detour let us agree that the term can stand (for the moment) as designating tourism ventures centred on Aboriginal people and Aboriginality which are designed for non–Aboriginal touristic use.

Like most forms of travel the leisure cultures around Aboriginal cultural tourism are available in the first place not in acts of travel but in the circulation of travelling texts. Non-Aboriginal people imagine, understand, encounter or consume Aboriginal cultural tourism first in the story-telling of newspaper and magazine travel-writing, in the images of postcards, photographs and luscious advertisements, in the moving -images of TV travel shows, documentaries and film; perhaps too in digital infomatic sources and certainly in the diffuse circulation of travel-talk among friends and acquaintances. To suggest that these signs are important is merely to state a truism. This is perhaps most obvious to those of us in the Pacific, first constituted for Europe in those best-selling accounts of voyages which, as I've argued elsewhere inaugurated a project of bringing 'a region and its peoples under the gaze of Europe ... etching new networks of power ... enacting coasting journeys which explored metaphors on new horizons.'[5] But this truism is also instantly persuasive in the world of cultural analyses of tourism which have grappled with the stories and images of tourism in their attention to sites and signs, spectacle and semiotics, glancing gazes and their

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photographic and written records.[6] So, let's first consider these signs. [insert figure 1]

The largest number of ventures in Aboriginal cultural tourism are to be found in the Northern Territory and are promoted through two publications. One of these brochures, *Come Share Our Culture* features an artful cover-image of bushtucker and 'traditional' craft objects. The text welcomes tourists to 'Aboriginal country'–'Pukulpa pitjama Ananguku ngurakuta' and invites the prospective tourist on

> a variety of tours that have dared to be different. By putting yourself in Aboriginal hands you will experience the traditional way of life unique to the Northern Territory.

This booklet describes the 8 day Top End Dreamtime Safari, the 3 hour Springvale Corroboree and some 47 other tours, walks, festivals and adventures. An accompanying brochure *Aboriginal people of the Northern Territory*, aims to orient the potential visitors with a brief introduction to Aboriginal history, culture, Land Rights, politics, health and economics. Already at this level of promotion, Aboriginal cultural tourism (and more vaguely, a version of Aboriginality) is being put to use for non-Aboriginal purposes, in this case those of the Northern Territory Tourist Commission. This is not an isolated instance because Aboriginality has become an important component in the marketing of Australia as a tourist destination. As one recent government commissioned study put the matter:

> Australian Aborigines, their culture and art are an important asset which is strongly promoted to domestic and international tourists as a unique cultural tourism experience in which they can participate. In the context of cultural tourism, Aboriginals and their culture are most relevant.[7]

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This kind of rhetoric is driven by the imperative of differentiating Australian tourism in a global market. Thus Aboriginal cultural tourism is both an attempt to establish a particular market niche—it is another commodity which a tourist might chose; and a mobile marker which can be deployed to establish a national distinctiveness for Australia. As the tourist industry claims Aboriginality for the nation there are both implicit and explicit exhortations which Stephen Muecke has perceptively rendered:

> "Tell us what you are really like", say the white institutions, "Dance for us once more and sing your songs. We will say to the world that this too is our *Australian* heritage: this is the nation which can stand proud amongst others because it has a timeless history in the Aboriginal peoples".[8]

But it's not only a question of semiotics. Surveys produced in the field of tourism studies have discovered a desire on the part of both domestic and international tourists to 'experience contact with Aboriginal people and learn about their culture on a visit to the Northern Territory'. The research has calibrated degrees of contact desired as ranging from a mere passing interest which can be gratified primarily through the sale of curios through those whose needs which can be met by half day or short tours, to those tourists seeking "cultural immersion', intense and intimate experiences such as those offered by the tour Desert Tracks (eight days with Pitjantjatjara people)..[9] In other words the market is racing to deliver cultural tourism experiences as opportunities which smart cultural tourists will seize now before the tribal wisdom disappears.

Predicably enough much of the tourism promotional and policy material, although not all of it, is greatly enamoured with racist discourses of authenticity and primitivism. [insert figure 2] Thus, it is easy to find examples which figure indigenous people and the land as fused and timeless, as in the

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case of a regional report from Broome which gushes breathlessly on the market share possibilities which might follow in the wake of Aboriginal cultural tourism:

> Naturally, Australia with the oldest culture and land mass on earth and its vast tracts of pristine bush and coast is ideally placed to take advantage of this [expanding interest in eco and cultural tourism]. Broome in particular, with the recent extension to its airport, enabling direct flights to and from Asia (the first 'packaged' tourists arrive from Singapore 15 December, 1992 in flights of less than two hours duration) is superbly placed to benefit.[10]

Prospective tourists are lured by replaying the permanent emergency of authenticity. In a recent two part series, one travel writer put it this way:

> [G]rowing Aboriginal involvement in the management and control of Aboriginal prehistoric heritage is a nascent Aboriginal tourist industry, offering a growing range of opportunities to view the land and its mythic and prehistoric components through the eyes of the first Australians ... there will never be a better time than now to start seeing what you can. For one thing, much of Australia's rock art is deteriorating at an alarming rate through natural agency [11]

Here 'rock art' functions as a metaphor for authentic indigeneity. The tropes are not new. The melancholy wish for the imminent disappearance of real Aborigines has been a persistent theme in the long and uneven history of the repetitive re–discovery and re–erasure of Aboriginal people from popular imagination in Australia. It also meshes smoothly with the contradictory taste regimes of savvy cultural tourists who pride themselves on picking the trends before the marauding hordes; those who boast of having been to Ubud when it was really a village of artists, those who trekked the hills of Thailand before they were packaged. Yet the tropes also swerve wildly across an incoherent spectrum. [insert figure 3] A flier for the company Australian Aboriginal

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Tours, purveyors of 'real outback eco–tourism', describes Putjamirra on Melville Island as an 'African style Safari Camp', at which you 'join in and share with Aboriginal people a lifestyle unlike you own and one that has never been offered'. In '[i]nsect proof cabins' with 'the feeling of safety and isolation – which are of paramount importance' you can experience 'the opportunity of a lifetime.'

It is impossible to make in-general claims about the results of these variously incoherent representational strategies or to predict the outcomes for indigenous people of the substantial move into tourist ventures. Perhaps, part of their logic is inevitably to simply and crudely commodify and hence control Aboriginal culture. It may be that the logic of the industry consigns Aboriginal people to the status of fourth world image and service workers. These are important questions which tourism studies often couch in terms of impact; implicitly a sense of intellectual responsibility and authority which often takes the form of patrician preservationism; a sense that those who are toured needed to be saved from themselves, or saved from a rapacious industry. Despite their importance, if not in the ways in which they are usually posed, here I want to defer these questions for the moment in order to consider the actions and stories of those who consume Aboriginal cultural tourism. In this sense I am following in the footsteps of Meaghan Morris's wonderful essay, 'At the Henry Parks Motel' which develops a general argument towards understanding tourism as a practice of place.[12] Her point of departure is the way in which a number of strands of writing about tourism reproduce patriarchal assumptions about travel as being constituted by an escape from or an erasure of domus (home) which is figured as a feminised place of confinement and enclosure. The Henry Parkes Motel becomes interesting and useful for Morris because it is linked to the idea of home, both literally in it's semiotics and design and as a space of memory-work linked to

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Morris's personal history. Thus in her wonderful study the Henry Parkes Motel is unlike the no–where transit spaces of Intercontinental Hotels where in Virilio's vision 'speed undoes place'; it is different from the sign-filled world of Las Vegas as characterised by Venturi and Scott-Brown; it is unsuited to Ian Chambers distracted methodology. Instead one motel becomes a place where the fixed and mobile meet—neither voyage nor home, it is a place of strategic installation, a place of lodgement in which different times co–exist. Here these (and other) suggestions are explored in relation to non–Aboriginal responses to and uses of Aboriginal controlled tourism. And, just so as not to ambush the reader, my route is ordered by a search for distinctive and potential transformative modes of inter cultural exchanges taking place in Aboriginal cultural tourism. My suggestion is that it's not existing travelling texts that provide a useful guide to post colonial spatial practices present but in fact those texts still under construction.

**Lurujarri: Walking on Bugarrigarra.**

> In Aboriginal practice following is "tracking up", hunting, discovering a singularity. In the Aboriginal science of tracking, following someone's footsteps means to "know" the person. To walk exactly in their footsteps means that there is an imitation—not a reproduction—of the whole movement of their bodies . And for this reason Aboriginal groups know how to walk together, their bodies have the same movement, a technique which will assure that they stay together over long distances. The walking eccentricities of city people are adapted for short displacements, individual journeys (they can't walk together because of their different styles), they are mostly sitting.[13]

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The Lurujarri Heritage Trail (figure 4) stretches about 130 km (80 miles) from Minyirr to Minarriny along the coast north of Broome. The route traces a part of a song cycle of the Jabirrjabirr, Jukun and Ngumbarl peoples, through land for which Paddy Roe acts as Guardian and Law Keeper. As a Heritage Trail or a Dreaming Trail as it is sometimes called now, it has been in operation for nearly ten years. It is wholly managed, promoted and run as a venture in cultural tourism by members of the Lurujarri Council and Goolarabooloo Co–op. Members of the Roe family and of the Co–op operate as guides to groups of up to thirty people who have traversed the trail in a variety of walks from day trips to the trek along the entire length of the route.

On the day that I began to walk the Lurujarri Trail, a motley crew were milling around, cautious, hesitant and perhaps a little equivocal. The group was composed mainly of staff and students from the Department of Landscape Architecture at the RMIT University in Melbourne who were there in large part because of the relationships built between the University and the Goolarabooloo Co-op by Jim Sinatra, a Landscape Architecture Professor.[14] After some preliminaries the truck which would carry our belongings from one camp site to the next was loaded and our walking began—past the Cemetery and behind the Hostel we skirted a ceremony ground and then tramped through a series of cul–de–sac developments where new steel-framed shells awaited cladding and every house was fringed with a simulated tropical garden and impossibly green neo–regional–colonial lawns over porous, red earth. We emerged quite suddenly from the small cluster of rural-Broome suburbs at an ocean beach. [insert figure 5] The group spread out as people tried to find a comfortable pace, rhythm and gait; tried to get used to what would be our mode of transport for the next ten days. As the Aboriginal kids handballed and kicked a football they kept up a seemingly

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endless stream of commentary, a football Creole which featured Aboriginal stars kicking impossible goals.

I'd already seen this beach, pristine and full of promises in Broome tourist advertising—but now this was Jurlirri, the route of creation beings, a line marked by songs and stories, a track in ceremony networks, a place both outside of and in my historical temporality, the place of Bugarrigarra. It was also littered with 4–wheel drive vehicles and their tyre tracks. A little wagon–train of these cars clustered on the sand below Cable Beach Club Resort, an exclusive hotel development built by Lord Alistar McAlpine the millionaire former secretary of the British Conservative Party. Many of the cars seemed to be on the beach for no other purpose than to provide of seat from which to watch the camel train as it left at sunset. Others just zoomed up and down this tidal highway while we walked on towards the sand dune and pindan country. Clearly, the car drivers and resort guests were recreational tourists, as I had been the night before. It seemed clear at that moment that resort tourism—luxurious and lavish in the manner of the Cable Beach Club Resort—was distinct from the Lurujarri trail—small scaled and human rather than capital intensive, an exercise in Aboriginal control of Aboriginal lands. Yet both tourist sites are marketed as an experience of otherness, in terms of place, climate and the semiotics of culture. Both are produced and integrated into circuits of cultural and economic production in which an authentic and different experience is what is sought and prized. Both are stop–over spaces—and although one is imaged as a space in which to worship the temple of the body and the other as a space to worship the land, both are nevertheless, places to be practised. Yet these distinctions played only a small part in producing the three most obviously available modes of walking Lurujarri.

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**Aesthetic leisure**

The first mode of walking the Lurujarri Trail was a strategy of aesthetic consumption—an orientation to the Trail as an idyllic holiday site, a holiday site which could have been anywhere, or at least anywhere which was warm and beautiful. It involved no notion of 'contact' with indigenous people beyond partaking of the services which they provided in transport, guidance, food and a schedule of entertainment. When I asked one couple how they'd come there, both described how they had originally booked a package holiday on Bali but had changed their minds after a friend of a friend told them about Lurujarri and they'd read some beautiful WA government tourist brochures. More interestingly, such aesthetic conventions associated with nature or landscape tourism also appear in a document produced for the Lurujarri Council itself by an American New Age enthusiast who reads like an adherent to the global culture of (white-) crystal shamanism. In this document the Trail becomes a kind of spiritual Health farm such that Aboriginal customary law and belief is promoted as enabling an experience of communion with the Land for the purposes of managing the stress of modernity:

> The Goolarabooloo community has always known the great power in literally walking on Bugarrigarra. In recent years this has been confirmed by the numerous tourists who have participated. The lightness and joy which re–enters previously stressed and troubled faces is a sure sign of the great healing power of this land. It would be difficult to over estimate this radically different experience.[15]

This sentiment is no mere aberration. Similar notions are promoted on the Trail through an ethic which privileges getting to know the Land simply by looking and seeing and feeling the place rather than by 'showing', reading,

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Socratic dialogue or the routines of investigation which are the staple of intellectual, scientific and juridical inquiry. These putatively 'non-western' modes may be available and possible for some tourists or perhaps even many under the right conditions. Nevertheless they arise from an orientation to the Trail that actually produces the possibility of cultural disinterest; in its' extreme version it would replicate practices of nature tourism and resort based eco–tourism as libertarian consumption. In other words cultural indifference on the Lurujarri Trail excludes precisely the cultural negotiations and recognitions which are in many ways central to the Trail's existence. Aboriginal people become what Eric Michaels feared in his work on Yuendumu video-making—condemned to inhabit an impossible space of providers of lifestyle culture; just like Bali, just like the Inuit, just like the Kyapo only unique.[16]

On the other hand there is something about the cultural indifference of aesthetic consumption which appeals to me as a counterpoint to the relentless curiosity and claiming which has driven so much of the interrogation of Aboriginal peoples and cultures. Perhaps it's just possible that the cultural indifference of aesthetic consumption and a willingness to part with cash for Aboriginal guidance through the beauties of nature might produce some interesting and non–intrusive effects. While the sentiments and the articulated rationality underpinning the aesthetic consumption of the Trail rely on cliched and stereotypical versions of Aboriginality, the actual effects of the cultural practice make few demands on Aboriginal people and do not intrude on, but may contribute to, the means by which Aboriginal people exercise autonomy.

**Huntin' and fishin'**

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The second mode of walking the trail could be described as a sporting mode—the strategy taken-up with a vengeance mainly by young men who rushed to answer the call of the wild. They couldn't wait to get their hands on tomahawks, spears and knives and henceforth they went about with their shirts off in search of huntin' and fishin'. As most of the landscape architecture students were young men, this manner of walking the trail was as popular as it was ambivalent. It was a kind of mimetic primitivism, but it's crucial to note that this was second or maybe third generation mimesis. They were not copying the Aboriginal leaders of the walk. Nor do I think they were reproducing a culturally available version of Aboriginality. The model for this mimesis was not an Aboriginal man nor Aboriginal men-in-general but in fact a 'white man' born in Holland and called Franz Hoogland. Franz has been living in and around Broome with various Aboriginal communities for over 20 years. For the last 10 or so years he has lived with Paddy Roe's family. He describes himself as having been initiated into Paddy's way and he has clearly been integrated (in complex and uneven ways) into kinship networks, language, law and country. Franz acts both as a mediator for the Goolarabaloo community and along with Paddy's great-grandson Daniel he is one of the main day-to-day leaders of walks along the Trail. But Franz is also a man of tremendous energy and enthusiasm for getting the things of the land. At every available chance he would take people on expeditions to cut down saplings for spears and then head off to skewer mud crabs in the mangrove swamps or he'd go in search of wild honey that can be found by cutting deep into acacia and paperbark trees.

Here I don't want to dwell on Franz himself, although I will return later to him as one of the group of people with more long-term connections with the Trail. However, it is worth noting that it's not only Paddy but Franz too who has been put into circulation within media cultures with important

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results for my argument here. It's no accident that the episode of the *Millennium: Wisdom of the Elders* series which features Paddy Roe is in fact not structured around Paddy's wisdom. Certainly Paddy is made both visible and audible as the bearer of wisdom but it's the coming together of Franz and Paddy, and then the scripting of Franz as becoming Aboriginal which the viewer is offered. In this sense Franz stands in for the pedagogic project of the television series as a whole. Predominantly non-indigenous people are ostensibly brought into proximity with tribal wisdom in the hope that these encounters might incite a desire for more proximity. The metaphysics is transubstantiative–the viewer takes in the wisdom in order that they might become that which they ingest. The quest for the Other becomes not only extractive (in the mode of its sponsor, the Body Shop) but wholly cannibalistic with Maybury-Lewis functioning as chief masticator for the viewer.

Be that as it may, for my purposes what's important here is that Franz cut an attractive homo social figure for the production of mimetic primitivism, particularly attractive because his primitivism was true to white fantasies of purity. Unlike the Aboriginal men who, when they considered getting turtle or dugong, would take the car to pick up a motorboat and hunt with a rifle, Franz would stand by the ocean, put a knife between his teeth and dive in to hunt in the old way ... or so it seemed to the young men. It is, I hope, obvious how easily I could critically dismiss both the underpinnings and practices of this mimetic primitivism as at best banal and at worst dangerously romantic. I could argue convincingly that this mode of consuming Aboriginal cultural tourism essentialises Aboriginal men as 'natives', that it not only makes place, space and identity interchangeable but assumes that transitory non-Aboriginal tourists have immediate access to the Aboriginality of all three categories. I could point out that at some moments this sporting mode seemed perversely close to the red-neck adage – if it

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moves shoot it, if it doesn't chop it down. I could ascribe it's valency to an excess of adolescent male testosterone or read it as a tragic men's movement version of hairy-Johns banging drums in the bush, with all its exclusionist and supremacist implications. But such characterisations would be inadequate without mentioning the attendant ways in which mimetic primitivism also produced significant spaces of connection and affect for some of the young men on the walk. Particularly in its recognition of hunting and fishing as customary practices of great significance to some Aboriginal men it involved forms of deferral and subservience which were not only respectful but actually generated opportunities for exchange and dialogue beyond the routines of respectable racism.

**Allo-fascination**

The third obviously available mode which was adopted by non–Aboriginal people on the walk could be described as allo-fascination. That was a mode appropriative (in all of the senses of the term) of Aboriginal culture, particularly Aboriginal culture as personified by Paddy Roe as a source, a voice and a body which was radically other. It could also be applied to the interactions between those non-Aboriginal women who worked with Teresa Roe (Paddy's daughter) preparing meals and line-fishing—the walk was organised around very strictly gendered and racialised divisions of labour. Allo-fascination placed Aboriginality at the centre of the experience of the Trail. The land became significant through the stories told about it by Paddy or other Aboriginal people. Cultural practices were important for the meaning attributed to them by Aboriginal people. Plants, animals, history, weather, travel routes, camp-sites, patterns of sociability and became important in the language and registers provided by Aboriginal people. Paddy Roe is, of course, radically other to most of those who walked the Trail;

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he is initiated in two language groups, he has significant regional stature in Aboriginal Law and is the custodian of an immense body of arcane and practical knowledge. But as Eve Sedgwick might remind us, we should not invest too much in other-ness so simply racialised. To constitute Paddy as a repository of knowledge and difference is to reify him as a living archive, and thus elide what he does, and especially to undervalue his translational and transactional skills. Besides, more pragmatically, Paddy Roe was the first Aboriginal child of a white father in that region; he worked for much of his life in the cattle industry, he is a skilled communicator, a sophisticated user of media technologies and long–term negotiator across the perceptions of cultural difference.

So much for the 'allo' part of allo-fascination, what about fascination? There is something culturally significant in the kind of rapt attention, enchantment or wonder which greets some indigenous people before certain non-indigenous audiences today. I'm thinking of the kind of reception accorded to a disparate group of indigenous political and cultural leaders, a list which might Noel Pearson, Pat Dodson or (the late) Oodergoo Noonuccal among others. The crucial question however seems to me whether it's possible to mark out this kind of spectatorship from the longer history of the popularity of Aboriginal people as 'live ethnological displays', circus performers and pageant artists. Certainly of the Lurujarri walkers who sat at the feet of Paddy and Teresa Roe there were both varied motivations in and varied responses to the experience. For some Paddy was tribal wisdom on display, for others it was too much like hard work to get to the end of his sometimes long and circuitous stories. Some described it in relatively value–free terms as learning while others felt as if their mode of comportment was meant to communicate respect and deference to a man of great erudition who hold positions of significance in his community and in relation to the

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Trail. Others felt that they were witness to an embodied version of the (soon to vanish) simplicity, uniqueness and authenticity which circulate around Aboriginality. In visual terms some responses called forth gazes of connection, others produced averted gazes of non–recognition [insert figure 6].

In setting out these three modes of walking—aesthetic consumption, mimetic primitivism and allo-fascination, I'm really doing no more than suggesting starting points for analysing the practice of walking, or in a more structural inflection outlining some of the available options. The only definite location which most walkers occupied was that of consumers of leisure and learning. The modes of walking I've described do not adequately communicate actual walking practices but merely indicate some available modes of comportment and initial orientations to the knowledges and practices of being on the walk. For most people, the practice of walking and dwelling actually involved negotiating these possible modes, moving between these modes, proliferating possibilities of exchange, and disorganising the comfortable security which these modes presuppose, recognising and being moved around by the shapes and contours of the experience of walking on the land.

**Boomerangs**

After a morning's work Philip Roe was keen to get some wood (gilli girri I think) to make boomerangs. He found a beautiful elbow—the perfect shape—cut one end and told me to finish the rest. After lunch many of those who had wood from that outing started to make boomerangs. The first thing you do with an elbow is split the timber. The method which Franz had been showing everyone was to use two tomahawks as a wedge and hammer. Once

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the timber is split in two you pare back the pale sapwood until the darker heartwood is exposed, roughly shape the blank with the tomahawk and then finish the detailing with a rasp. Franz loved this part of the process. He'd hold one end of the split timber, rest the other end on the ground and with great ferocious and skill sending the wood flying.

Meanwhile, I was sitting with the Aboriginal contingent of the group listening to a football game, sitting in the dirt looking at the boomerang timber I'd got and wondering if there was any chance of my team making a second half recovery. Franz came over and urged me to get started on the boomerang, offering to show me how to split the timber. I was wondering if I'd show the wood to Paddy, perhaps to talk to him about it—perhaps give it to him to make a boomerang. I didn't mention this to Franz but said, just like an equivocating academic, that I was just thinking. Franz' replied, reasonably enough and quite sensibly, that thinking about it was useless and that nothing would happen unless I did something. But I wanted to wait. Paddy showed up, not long afterwards. I snuck away from the football and showed him the timber. Paddy liked the timber but when I suggested that I'd get started with the tomahawk he put up his hand to stop me. He wandered over to one of the utes, pulled out a chainsaw and said along the lines of, 'More better this one. We get four outta 'im'

So while a mob of non–Aboriginal people played at being modern primitives, chopping away in the heat and a mob of Aboriginal people in the shade were listening to Aboriginal stars kicking impossible goals three thousand miles away, Paddy Roe took a chainsaw to a piece of timber and cut four boomerang blanks. I was casting Paddy as someone who could commune with the spirit of the boomerang wood and he was replying with rational and mechanised efficiency.

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**White Blackfellas**

Apart from the tourists who come to Lurujarri to walk the Trail there are a number of non–Aboriginal people who have lived and are living with various Aboriginal communities on a more long-term basis. For my purposes, these people fall into two groups, the first of which would include Franz Hoogland. These people understand themselves as, what in nineteenth-century Australia were imagined as, White Blackfellas—men and women living 'as if' they were Aborigines. Today they might be better described as 'white nomads' but only in a highly restrictive sense, not in the kind of in-general adoption which has found it's way into some cultural criticism. They are nomads in the sense that they are performing what Eric Michaels, borrowing from Deleuze, understood as 'unbecoming' and 'becoming'; they are un-becoming their cultural white-ness and becoming minor. In most cases these people described themselves as rejecting or shedding their European derived culture, of leaving behind possessions or the pace of the city, of refusing to work as wage–slaves, refusing to believe in the illusions of cities, wealth and success—self-descriptions which are common within a whole range of youth and alternative cultural formations. But what makes these utterances distinctive are their moves beyond a strategy of refusal. At the same time they are performing a becoming-minor in place expressed through their use of Aboriginal languages, through their position in kinship networks, through their knowledge of the country, plants, animals, weather and so on. My point is that they are nomadic only in terms of place: their un-becoming and becoming minor exists only in relation to Lurujarri so that they are simultaneously on the move—moving away from their own cultural histories as well as walking, and always there because their becoming minor requires that place.[17] It may even be that these white nomads are returning to the

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moment in Paddy Roe's history of Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal relations: that lost moment when Aboriginal people might have been European-becoming, and Europeans might have been Aboriginal-becoming while both becoming minor.

Whatever the merits of these cultural strategies they certainly do not provide a model available to the Lurujarri Trail's transient touristic visitors. There are however interesting and important possibilities between tourists and the second group of more long-term non-Aboriginal residents at Lurujarri—the students and ex-students of Landscape Architecture who were involved in establishing the Trail and have stayed on in various ways. These people have been involved in the planning and metric mapping of the trail, in writing management plans for local and state governments. There are currently proposals being developed to establish an outcamp and visitor education centre at which, according to the draft management proposal prepared by one of these students, Chris Hand:

> Visitors will be introduced to the country through Aboriginal eyes [on] guided walks through the country, focusing on living country, seasonal bushtucker, medicinal trees, middens and other aspects central to Aboriginal culture. Other activities would include traditional shelter building, fishing, carving and tree awareness.[18]

Some of these students and their friends are involved in helping to mount a case under new Land Rights Legislation, others are preparing trans cultural botany books on Lurujarri, another is preparing a seasonal calender of Lurujarri charting the relationships between weather, land, animals and plants across the six Jukun seasons for the areas. They and their professor, Jim Sinatra, have constructed a pedagogic practice which now links Melbourne and Lurujarri in a complex series of personal, teaching, professional and political articulations. Their's is an uneasy situation to be in, making links

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based on in–between–ness and mobility with all its attendant uncomfortableness. These landscape architecture students and ex-students are enacting an affirmative strategy, they are building on-going relationships not based on fixed difference and what we sometimes imagine as identities but practices of de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation. One last detour.

**Travelling and Dwelling**

Somehow it doesn't seem possible to specify a beginning, to mark off when my becoming a tourist on the Lurujarri Heritage Trail commenced. The letter which we received in response to our booking and deposit read, in part;

> We will meet under the Tamarind Tree at the home (in the township) of Paddy Roe and Teresa, his daughter, at 3pm on Monday afternoon ... This is also the site of the Goolarabooloo Hostel ... We will spend some time talking to Paddy about what is ahead, before setting off on foot to the Dunes of the coast to head north towards Nurlungurugarr ck ...

So, after we'd wandered around Broome, explored a museum devoted to the Japanese and Chinese workers in the pearling industry and discovered air conditioning in one of the local supermarkets we were at the 'home', a house on an ordinary street in the Broome Township. I don't know if Paddy was under the Tamarind Tree and I will never know because by now I have collected at least 5 published references and 6 descriptions from interviews, of Paddy Roe under the Tamarind Tree—the seer in communion is a popular image for my white informants. So I can't claim that moment as a beginning. But the home-ness of that place was a beginning of sorts and a very clever one for two reasons—it was the home of Paddy AND Teresa Roe, not a man's castle or a place of feminised confinement and it was only one kind of home

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qualified by the bracketed phrase (in the township), a phrase which gestured towards both other places of dwelling and a travelling imaginary.

Every second day, and sometimes at night, we walked between eight and twenty five kilometres from one campsite to the next. I'm not sure that writers around cultural studies are much help in thinking about this kind of walking—it doesn't call for a typology which could be borrowed from Mauss nor is 'Walking in the City' much help. Walking the Lurujarri Trail was, of course poetic, it was not a route determined by a metric map, but it was not walking as ludic resistance to the spatial program of the city. On the contrary it was goal driven (getting to the next campsite) and regimented (in terms of direction, pace and so on) under the auspice of a very particular logic, much of which I didn't understand. I am not a romantic when it comes to walking long distances, nevertheless walking and dwelling in these ways was a remarkable discipline in terms of how it created a time–space for the body, haptic spaces built around certain kinds of rhythms and relationships to the country. It was at the camp site at Wirrar that I first began to notice the ways in which camp sites were oriented, how cars were positioned, how trees were used, how sleeping and cooking areas were demarcated. That night Teresa Roe was by a cooking fire and after a while got sick of children bothering her so she started shooing them away saying, 'Get out of the Kitchen. Outside. Go on, you kids go and play outside.' I began to see the homes we were making under the sky, how we were being trained in everyday ways to fabricate a chronotope to live in. [insert figure 7] A more obviously material moment came when we were camping at Joe's Place. Here a number of us were making a shelter for a ceremony and a meeting involving Western Australian parliamentarians which was to be held in a week or so. The site and orientation of the shelter had been decided by the Aboriginal men but the design for the shelter was not fixed and so became the subject of vigorous and

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playful argument between Phillip Roe and the two non-Aboriginal architects who were on the walk—an argument full of blustering about practicality versus design, and lots of jokes about white professional incompetence and native aesthetics. Yet after a few false starts, a hybrid place was built by all of us in the sandy ground, a place which was less about a fixed ontology of race than a constitutive performance, which made a motel of sorts where white state representatives and black elders would later negotiate. In this shelter the practical training of bodies in walking and dwelling was being joined to pragmatic questions of producing a space adequate to the open-ended process of emerging forms of cultural practice and their effects. Here, without the metropolitan certainties of nomads, detective or prophets, travelling and dwelling became translational, making a place from which to tell stories: 'I went to Lurujarri once too ...'

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[1] James Clifford, 'The transit lounge of culture', *Times Literary Supplement*, 3 May 1991, pp. 7-8.

[2] For more useful cultural criticism on travel see Chris Rojek and John Urry, eds, *Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory*, London: Routledge, 1997, Caren Kaplan, *Questions of Travel: Postmodern Discourses of Displacement*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1996 and James Clifford, *Routes Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997.

[3] The most thorough survey, although now somewhat out of date is J.C. Altman, *Aborigines, Tourism and Development: the Northern Territory Experience*, Darwin: Australian National University North Australia Research Unit, 1988.

[4]Andrew Ross, `Cultural Preservationism in the Polynesia of the Latter Day Saints', in David Bennett (ed.), *Cultural Studies: Pluralism and Theory*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Literary and Cultural Studies, vol. 2), 1994, p.9.

[5] Chris Healy, *From the Ruins of Colonialism. History as Social Memory*, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p.17.

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[6] See John Frow's essay 'Tourism and the Semiotics of Nostalgia' in his *Time and Commodity Culture. Essays in Cultural Theory and Postmodernity*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997 for brilliant analysis of these questions.

[7]. Peter Brokensha and Hans Guldberg, *Cultural Tourism in Australia*, Canberra: Department of Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories, 1992, p.108.

[8]. Krim Benterrak, Stephen Muecke, Paddy Roe, *Reading the Country. Introduction to Nomadology*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1984, p.126. See also Stephen Muecke, *No Road (bitumen all the way)*, Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1997.

[9]. Peter Brokensha and Hans Guldberg, *Cultural Tourism in Australia*, Canberra: Department of Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories, 1992.

[10] Department of Planning and Urban Development, *Cable Beach/Riddle Point, Broome Development Concept Plan*, Perth: Department of Planning and Urban Development, 1990.

[11]. A.N. Maiden, `A Traveller's Guide to Aboriginal Civilisation' and `The Hidden Treasures of Aboriginal Australia', in *The Independent Monthly*, August and September 1994.

[12] Meaghan Morris, `At Henry Parkes Motel', *Cultural Studies*, vol. 2, no. 1, Jan. 1988, pp. 1–47.

[13]Krim Benterrak, Stephen Muecke, Paddy Roe, *Reading the Country. Introduction to Nomadology*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, South Fremantle, 1984, p.248.

[14]Some of the results of this association are documented in Jim Sinatra and Phin Murphy, *Landscape for health : settlement planning and development for better health in rural and remote indigenous Australia : visual story and documentation*, Melbourne: RMIT OutReach Australia Program, 1997.

[15].*The Land of the Waterbank Pastoral Station*, Broome: Goolarabooloo Association inc., 1992, p.10.

[16] Eric Michaels, *For a Cultural Future: Francis Jupurrurla Makes TV at Yuendumu*, Sydney: Art and Text Publications, 1989.

[17] As the front piece of Krim Benterrak, Stephen Muecke and Paddy Roe, *Reading the Country*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1984 reads `To the nomads of Broome, always there and always on the move.'

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[18] Chris Hand, *Draft Management Plan for the Lurujarri Heritage Trail, Broome, Western Australia*, Broome: Lurujarri Council, Broome in collaboration with RMIT, Melbourne, 1993, p.69

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