1991c *Report of the Inquiry into the Death of Mark Quayle* , RCIADIC, Canberra: Government Printer.

NATION AND MISCEGENATION:
Discursive Continuity in the Post-Mabo Era

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1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to express the historical continuity underlying changing regimes which Australian society has sought to impose upon Aboriginal people. At its broadest, this aim entails linking the homicidal belligerence of the initial incursions to the policy of self-determination as it now extends into the post-Mabo era. The paper's immediate motivation has been the claim that the Mabo judgement and the Native Title Act constitute a historical rupture sufficient to enable a reconstitution of the relationship between Aboriginal and settler societies. For such a claim to be properly evaluated, it is necessary to analyse the deep structures of the Australian colonial project. To this end, the paper specifies the elementary logic of Australian colonialism and traces it through a range of policy modes, concluding that, at this fundamental level, the Native Title Act does not constitute a break with the past.

To start with the ground of this historical continuity: Australia is a settler-(or creole-)colonial state. To assert this is to specify the society's primary structural characteristic rather than to describe its origins alone. In contrast to franchise or dependent colonies (British India, etc.) the primary object of Australian colonisation was the land rather than the surplus value that could be obtained by mixing native labour with it. As such, settler-colonisation is an inherently gendered project, the dormant landscape being unequivocally coded female. Settler-colonisation is predicated upon displacing indigenes from (or *re*placing them on) the land — as Debbie Rose (1991:46) points out, to get in the way, all the native has to do is stay at home. Since it cuts through indigenous society to connect directly to its territorial basis, it is awkward to speak of settler-colonisation as an articulation between coloniser and colonised. As a social relationship, it is best conceived of as a negative articulation. The cultural logic which is organic to a negative articulation is one of elimination. In its purest form, as in the case of the Guanches (indigenous Canary Islanders), Tainos, Caribs, etc., the logic of elimination seeks to replace indigenous society with that imported by the colonisers. In most of Australia, this general logic was summoned into local practice by virtue of the fact that the economic use to which the colonised land was principally turned was pastoralism, whose requirement for territory was inherently exclusive. Introduced stock competed with indigenous fauna

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ANTHROPOLOGICAL QUARTERLY

CONTROVERSY: HEGEMONY AND THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL ENCOUNTER
WENDY A. WEISS, Guest Editor
October 1993, Volume 66:4

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for subsistence, consuming the tubers, shoots and seeds whereby the indigenous flora reproduced itself and rapidly reducing waterholes to mud. In a relatively short time the only subsistence generally available to indigenous humans was the introduced fauna whose protection was axiomatic to the pastoral project (McGrath 1987:1-23; Reynolds 1981:128-130). Hence pastoral settlement constituted a zero-sum conflict, an empirical or prediscursive polarity whose recognition does not entail adherence to binary narratives in any more general or programmatic sense. Since, in practice, neither party to this relationship was able to realise its interest completely (i.e., since it was neither the case that the indigenes were eliminated nor that the invaders were repulsed) settler-colonisation has been historically realised as a range of shifting balances.

It might be objected that, if the historical surface is complex, it is doctrinaire to insist on the primacy of an underlying polarity. To repeat, therefore, the motivation is empirical. Retrospectively, polarity is indisputable — back from a certain point, there is no question as to the mutual distinctiveness of the two parties to the Australian colonial process. The differences within them were smaller than the difference between them. Thus the empirical question is whether or not (and, if so, when and where) that initial polarity has been dissolved. There can be no justification for simply assuming that it has. To this it might be argued that, in from the beach which momentarily separated the watching Gamaraigal from the First Fleet, there never was a clear line between White and Black. Rather, the overall process of invasion comprised a spectrum of articulations, from factors (such as disease and trade goods) which preceded the escaped convicts, explorers, doggers and other colonial advance guards through to the extreme of incorporation attained when neither physical nor cultural differences are mutually acknowledged. Whilst this no doubt represents an influential perception of the situation, to assume that the opposing identities became merged in keeping with this perception is to underwrite assimilationism, a phenomenon that we should be analysing rather than practising. In other words, one's position on binarism cannot be innocent. The analysis to come is intended to be oppositional in that, rather than asking why polarity should be asserted in the face of surface complexity, it asks what grounds there are for crediting the rhetoric of assimilationism with historical fulfilment. In finding none, it finds that the Native Title Act is not enough, a conclusion which indicates that the "Aboriginal problem" will continue into the future.

The question of polarity is closely tied to that of gender. Aboriginal men and Aboriginal women have been invaded in different ways — not only in terms of sexuality but in terms of their positioning in relation to the settler economy (within or without the domestic sphere, etc.), whilst white men and white women have invaded in different ways. Such considerations can produce practical contradictions in settler-colonialism. As will be argued below, the single most important practical contradiction to have obstructed the logic of elimination was quintessentially gendered. This was the sexual abuse that male colonisers visited upon Aboriginal women everywhere. The systematic nature of this abuse has prompted some to set up a competition between territoriality and sexuality so as to champion the priority of

their own preferred determinant, as in McGrath's partisan (1990:206) claim that "The women would be first, the land next". Quite apart from its dubious empirical basis (it was certainly not the case, for instance, when the First Fleet established their beachhead), such a claim completely misses the foundational genderedness of settler-colonialism as a world-historical project, on which basis it is only to be expected that its contradictions should also operate in gendered ways[1]. As a direct articulation to land, which it claims to render productive, settler-colonisation is gendered in a peculiarly thoroughgoing way. Hence the ubiquitous rhetoric of interiors waiting to be opened up, a process in which the expansion of the frontier figures as a fertilising penetration.[2] In Judaeo-Christian culture, the theme could hardly run deeper — Eve, after all, means both woman and land. So far as Australia is concerned, there has been no shortage of gendered expressions of settler-colonisation, as Marcus (1988), McGrath (1990), Schaffer (1988) and others have shown ("she", of course, is what will be right — which is to say, is what will be brought under control). In this broadest of senses, the gender of individual Aboriginal people and individual colonists becomes irrelevant — Europe is male, the conquered land is female, and ever the twain shall meet. For historical purposes, however, such metaphors do not get us very far. They are too general and too archetypical to evince any historical development. We need to go beyond the metaphors to discern the social processes that shape them and give them life in particular contexts. As will become clear below, at a particular stage of its development, the colonial contest in Australia became concentrated on the colour-coding of bodies which testified to sexual relations between male colonisers and Aboriginal women. In this most material of contexts, it would be perverse to separate territoriality from gender (or, for that matter, from issues such as sovereignty, legitimacy, etc.) since we do not encounter one without the others. Rather than thinking incrementally, in terms of territory and/or gender, we should think of settler-colonisation processually, as gendered territorialising.[3]

To analyse the historical development of Australian settler-colonisation, we will start with its primary paradigm, the frontier. Empirically, rather than being fixed, as in the visual metaphor of the dividing line, the "frontier" was shifting, contextual, negotiated, moved in and out of, enacted and suspended (McGrath 1989). As Jan Critchett (1990:23) pithily observes, are we to think of the frontier as running down the centre of the bed shared by a White man and a Black woman? — to which might be added, are we to think of the frontier as running through people's veins? In short, it is necessary to distinguish between the misleading or illusory nature of the concept of the frontier as a representation and the social effects that were sustained by the currency of that representation. It is the latter that concern us here. The representation, which obtained among the invaders, was a binary opposition which counterposed two pure types (civilization vs. savagery, etc.) and which admitted a multitude of variations. The reality accompanying it was that of invasion. The unremarkable fact that it is not possible to fix the precise extent of the invasion at any point from the landing of the First Fleet onwards does not alter the remarkable fact that, between the last quarter of the eighteenth and the last quarter of the nineteenth centuries, "Australia" was almost completely invaded. As will be explained, the idea

of the frontier consolidated this process. Thus the fact that the idea was misleading is immaterial. What matters is that it was a performative representation — it helped the invasion to occur.

The product of the Other is, of course, self. In a settler-colonial context, this means that the frontier binds together a divided colonial fragment. This is easy enough to see when an advance party, with its back to the sea, is only just beginning to fan out, but such an ideology of encirclement naturally falls victim to its own success as the invasion becomes consolidated and settlement securely established. Thus we need to distinguish different expressions of otherness and relate them to corresponding stages in the colonising process. As stated, beneath its changing operational modalities, Australian settler-colonisation evinces the primacy of a cultural logic of elimination, a sustained institutional tendency to supplant the indigenous population which reconciles a range of historical practices that might otherwise seem distinct. Focusing upon this cultural logic enables us to keep both the continuity and the differences in view. This, in turn, enables us to perceive the underlying coherence of Australian history, which links present government policy to the initial invasions. In this light, invasion emerges as a structure rather than an event.

2. Another Side of the Frontier

Whatever their motivations, temporally bounded studies run the risk of confirming the ideological rupture whereby the Australian state distances itself from its foundations. For all its virtues, for instance, Henry Reynolds' work on the frontier has an insulating effect. The line which the frontier represents is doubly misleading, since it not only constructs a hermetic division in space, but also inserts a screen into Australian historical consciousness, rendering expropriation a past event rather than a continuing structure.[4] Moreover, when frontier historiography doubles as an advertisement for its presenter's moral credentials, as it too often has done, this has the ideological effect of co-constructing writer and reader as fellow citizens of a consensual culture ("enlightened Australian opinion") which thereby revalorises itself. This transcendent moral community is blind to its own involvement in the subtly developing histories of expropriatory discourse [5] The moral detachment thus afforded compounds the historical detachment that flows from frontier periodisation.[6] Admittedly, Reynolds' frontier studies (amongst others) provided a corrective to the impression of hapless Aboriginal victimage that could be gained from accounts such as those of Rowley.[7] Nonetheless, the martial emphasis brought problems of its own, quite apart from those just mentioned. Given such strategic acumen, for instance, it is sometimes hard to see how Aboriginal resistance could ever have been contained. Moreover (and particularly in the case of Robinson and York), the romantic evocations of VietCong-style heroics were too rhetorically opportune to be credible. In the wake of the 1970s, widespread dissatisfaction with the behaviourist simplicity of the frontier-resistance model set in, with scholars such as Barwick, Reece,

McGrath, Fels, Attwood and Reynolds himself emphasising more complex and mobile Aboriginal practices involving adaptation, accommodation and synthesis.[8]

Whilst many of these analyses had the virtue of stressing the continuation of Aboriginal life beyond the frontier, the implication that resistance and accommodation are separate alternatives is quite wrong (Morris 1988: 53; cf. Genovese 1974:78). Indeed, to the extent that this implication renders Aborigines part of Australian society by analytical fiat, it is insidiously assimilationist. Thus it not only loses the historical continuity underlying contextually particular modes of Aboriginal survival. By the same token, it is also incapable of analysing Australian colonising strategies as separately motivated initiatives deployed *against* Aborigines. In the process, the continuity of settler-colonisation — its status as structure rather than event — becomes lost. Aboriginal discourse is, therefore, peripheral to my present concern, which is to characterise the settler-colonial mentality as it is constituted prior to — which is to say, as it enters into — practical processes. Thus I am deliberately repeating a familiar historiographical structure, one which Rowley and others effectively discredited in the 1970s. Unlike the marginalisation or suppression of Aboriginal discourse in traditional Australian historiography, however, its avoidance here is open and acknowledged. It is intended to emphasise the continuing historical contest of settler-colonisation, a contest to which the separation of Aboriginal and settler identities is central. As such, it is strictly an *Australian* history. This definitional focus provides a way to keep sight of the continuities that reconcile shifting official strategies.

A one-sided analysis of Australian strategies for dealing with Aborigines might seem to run a number of avoidable risks. Most obviously, it might seem to negate Aboriginal agency, reducing a complex, ubiquitous and emergent set of power-exchanges to a sterile binarism of dominators and dominated, one which could only represent domination as unidirectional and, accordingly, as total (cf. Foucault 1980:88-89). If I were analysing the settler-colonial relationship or (heaven forbid) the practice of Aboriginality, this would clearly be the case — my analysis would be guilty of constructing Aboriginal people, as Beckett (1988:192) has put it, "in their absence". But I am not analysing such things. Rather, in the logic of elimination, I am analysing what might be called the settler-colonial will, a historical force which ultimately derives from the primal drive to expansion which is generally glossed as capitalism. Though capitalism has energetically constructed and thrived upon a host of alterities, it is not ultimately dependent upon them. In the final analysis, its greedy dynamic is internal, self-generating and autochthonous. In the same sense, settler-colonial expansion was prior to the myriad uses to which it has put Aborigines and Aboriginalities. This is not the same as saying that Australian history would have developed in the same way if there really had been no prior owners. It is simply to isolate a distinctive and constitutive settler-colonial characteristic which preceded the process of mutual formation that has been in train since the invasion commenced. Thus the logic of elimination is not some extrahistorical teleology, unfolding independently of human practice. It is, however, a force that cannot be reduced to Australian motives — no matter how profoundly the parties to the Australian colonial

relationship have impacted upon each other, this alone is not enough to account for the logic of elimination.

In its relative independence from Australian historical factors, therefore, the logic of elimination constitutes a settler-colonial residue. My point is that this must be the case. Otherwise, assertions of Aboriginal agency would perversely reinscribe assimilationism. This becomes clear when we turn the discussion around. No doubt, as well as the logic of elimination, there are Aboriginal residues, traits which lie beyond the interpellations and fertile of internal colonisation. To say this is not, of course, to deny European agency. If anything, it is to emphasise it, since it is in relation to European agency that Aboriginal residues emerge as such striking cultural achievements. In other words, Aboriginal residues exist in spite of, rather than as a result of, colonisation — they are something for which, however much we try, the colonisers cannot take credit. By the same token — to turn the discussion back again — Aboriginal people are in no way responsible for the logic of elimination. Thus it is important not to confuse agency with complicity. In analysing the settler-colonial mentality as it enters into dealings with Aborigines, I am not only engaging in a kind of white-Australian auto-ethnography. By the same token, I wish to resist the axiomatic assimilationism which pre-empts any rigorous analysis of Australian contact history. If the idea of the frontier has anything left to express, it is that contact presupposes independence.

Emphasising the binary ideology of the frontier runs counter to the strategic pluralism which, as will become clear, is central to the specific manner in which the logic of elimination is currently implemented in Australian government policy. As will be argued, this policy is currently striving to blur the fundamental polarity of settler-colonisation by means of an intermeshing of binary and plural (or exclusive and inclusive) representations. In relation to this state strategy, the binarism of frontier ideology has its merits after all. Conversely, it could be said that latter-day official pluralism celebrates the very divisions that the concept of the frontier ideologically suppressed. The key to such complexities is the relative status of the divisions concerned. Thus the "truth" of the frontier was that the primary social division was encompassed in the relation between natives and invaders. This notwithstanding, the suppression of divisions within settler society was an ideological effect of the concept of the frontier. Correspondingly, though the "truth" of present-day multiculturalism is a racially divided society, the reduction of the primary Aboriginal/settler divide to the status of one of the divisions within settler society is an ideological effect of multiculturalism. The efficacy of this play between exclusion and inclusion will become clearer as the discussion proceeds.[9] For the moment, the point is that, unusual though it may seem in a "post"colonial critique, one of the critical effects of settler-colonisation is that thinking against its grain can mean recuperating an empirical binarism. This takes us to the shifting modalities of settler-colonisation.

3. Confrontation, Carceration and Assimilation

I propose to divide Australian settler-colonial strategies into three basic modes: confrontation, carceration and assimilation. Of these, the first and the last represent opposite ends of a basic transformation during which Aborigines shifted from being external to being internal to settler society. This fundamental shift is constituted and denominated by the idea of the frontier.

The first two modes, confrontation and carceration, have been well described in the literature so a summary characterisation will suffice. Confrontation, the phase in which territory is first seized, is principally characterised by indigenous mortality, attributable to four main (and mutually supportive) agencies; homicide, sexual abuse, disease and starvation.[10] Though conditioned by ecological factors, this phase was very short. As the settler, anthropologist and Victorian government official Edward Curr put it,

> In the first place the meeting of the Aboriginal tribes of Australia and the White pioneer, results as a rule in war, which lasts from six months to ten years, according to the nature of the country, the amount of settlement which takes place in a neighbourhood, and the proclivities of the individuals concerned. When several squatters settle in proximity, and the country they occupy is easy of access and without fastnesses to which the Blacks can retreat, the period of warfare is usually short and the bloodshed not excessive. On the other hand, in districts which are not easily traversed on horseback, in which the Whites are few in number and food is procurable by the Blacks in fastnesses, the term is usually prolonged and the slaughter more considerable ...

> ... The tribe, being threatened with war by the White stranger, if it attempts to get food in its own country, and with the same consequences if it intrudes on the lands of a neighbouring tribe, finds itself reduced to make choice of certain death from starvation and probable death from the rifle, and naturally chooses the latter. (Curr 1886:100-101, 103-4.)

In addition to the differences in firepower, Aboriginal resistance to the settler-colonial invasion, though invariably offered (Broome 1982; Morris 1989; Read 1988; Reynolds 1981), was hampered by a number of factors. Chief among these were the ravages of introduced diseases — smallpox, syphilis, typhoid, whooping cough, diphtheria, tuberculosis, measles, dysentery, influenza and the rest — against which they had not developed immunities (Butlin 1983, Campbell 1983:198; cf. Crosby 1986), the activities of native police or troopers recruited and armed by settler authorities to put down different Aborigines (Rose 1991; Rosser 1991; cf. Fels 1988), and other intranecine conflicts resulting from refugee crises occasioned by the invasion (Rowley 1978:36-7).[11] In the event, the standard pattern was one of decimated but largely pacified survivors improvising a variety of livelihoods in the pores of the now-established settler society, which generally regarded them with distaste. In the second, carceration phase, these survivors were generally gathered at

fixed locations, either by the lure of rations or by coercive measures,[12] a procedure which, whilst no longer directly homicidal, continued the effect, consistent with the logic of elimination, of vacating Aboriginal country and rendering it available for pastoral settlement. In keeping with both social-darwinist premises and the tangible evidence of their decimation, these people's sojourn on the missions, stations and reservations where they had been gathered was seen as a temporary expedient, since they were a dying race (the social-darwinist rationale for this being that, unstiffened by selection as they were, they would be entirely unfit to survive in the presence of their immeasurably distant future). Though couched in philanthropic rhetoric ("smoothing the dying pillow", etc.) which contrasted strongly with the homicidal sentiments expressed in the first phase, the premise of the dying race was no less consistent with the logic of elimination.

During both these phases, the colonists exploited native labour. The example of the Native Mounted Police, who were used extensively in the Port Phillip District, Queensland and the Northern Territory, has already been mentioned. Beyond this, though, settler-colonisation relied upon Aboriginal labour at every stage and in every site of its development. Aborigines guided, interpreted for and protected explorers. They cut bark, built fences, dug, planted, maintained, shepherded, stock-rode, mined, pearl-dived, sealed and performed every conceivable settler-colonial task except governance.[13] Above all, they kept house and provided sexual services, whereby pastoralists "bred their own labour" (Bleakley 1961:317; McGrath 1987:68-94; Huggins 1988). Thus it is not the case that, in practice, settler-colonisation *only* eliminated the indigenes (since some Aborigines survived the confrontation phase, their labour naturally became exploitable). It is rather the case that the exploitation of indigenous labour constitutes a contradiction, rather than an integral component, of settler-colonisation. In practice, moreover, the exploitation of indigenous labour was subordinate to the primary project of territorial acquisition. Settler-colonists came to stay. In the main, they did not send their children back to British schools or retire "home" before old age could spoil the illusion of their superhumanity. National independence did not entail their departure. Thus even though, being established too late and too far north for convicts to be available, the northern-Australian cattle industry relied heavily upon Aboriginal labour, it represents an exception which does not disturb the rule (accordingly, no sooner were equal wages introduced in the 1960s and 1970s than Aboriginal labour was dispensed with and relegated to container-settlements at a revealingly rapid rate. [Berndt and Berndt 1987; Rowse 1993a]).[14]

In addition to the question of labour, as stated above, one element in the foregoing stands out as particularly refractory to settler-colonisation. White men's sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women produced offspring who, growing up (as they almost invariably did) with their maternal kin, could be accounted native rather than settler. Moreover, far from dying out, this section of the Aboriginal population threatened to expand exponentially. Crucially, in other words, the sexual element of the invasion negated the logic of elimination (again, therefore, the irrepressible genderedness of the situation goes well beyond the realm of metaphor). In other colonial situations, where native (as opposed to imported) labour is at a premium,

groups with shared ancestries can be accounted settler-become-native (as in the case of Latin American *mestizaje* [Bartra 1992; Canny and Pagden 1987; Mörner 1967,1970]) or something separate from either native or settler (as in Guillaumin's sharp specification [1988:27] of South African "coloreds" as a "class formed by people belonging in fact to one *and* the other group [which] is declared to belong to neither one nor the other but to itself".). In Australia, by contrast, as the logic of elimination would indicate, the only category whose expansion was tolerable was the settler one. In other words — and in stark distinction to situations in which a metropolitan society depicts itself as being contaminated from within, as in the case of Nazi Germany — the answer to the problem of "miscegenation" could only be absorption into the settler category.[15]

As the nineteenth century progressed, the romance of the dying race steadily gave way to the spectre of the "half-caste menace". This process broadly coincided with the discursive shift from an evolutionist teleology in which Aborigines figured as developmentally retarded to an essentialised racism, characteristic of modernity, which operates on the basis of genetic attributions. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Australia became a national as well as a geographical entity. This was not a natural convergence. At one stage, New Zealand had been included in the projected federation, whilst, at another, Western Australia had not. Nationalist rhetoric notwithstanding, therefore, before 1901, "Australia" was a natural rather than a cultural category. Hence Edward Curr's abovementioned *The Australian Race*, published in 1886, was about Aborigines, who were part of the natural features of the land-mass upon which the several colonial polities were constituted. Accordingly, at a single stroke (the last one of 1900) colonists became, and Aborigines ceased to be, Australians — an inversion which was formalised by the exclusion of "aboriginal natives" from the provisions of the new constitution. Thus "the half-caste menace" straddled the boundary between nature and culture, threatening the basis upon which the citizenship and geography of the new nation-state were predicated.

The official response to the "half-caste menace" was the assimilation policy, whereby people of combined descent were not to be accounted Aboriginal — which is to say, they were to be accounted settler. As administratively implemented, this meant the separation of people "of mixed race" from their natal kin. This policy was first effected by a Victorian statute of 1886, which introduced a racial criterion, which had no precedent in Australia, whereby "half-castes" were to be expelled from reserves.[16] This legislation inaugurated the official strategy of assimilation, which constitutes the third mode of Australian settler-colonisation. As will be argued, this strategy signals the demise of the frontier. This demise — or, which is the same thing, the geographical completion of the invasion — is also a prerequisite to the establishment of the nation-state, with its stable territorial basis. For state ideological purposes, therefore, we can date the demise of the frontier from Federation. This is not to say that there were no nomadic groups left anywhere (some survived until well into the 1950s). It is not even to say that frontier massacring was at an end (this practice continued at least into the 1920s). Rather than an empirical claim in relation to an inherently indeterminate condition, to equate the end of the frontier with the

beginning of the nation-state is to make a statement about official ideology. From 1901, despite the remaining blanks and smudges on the map, Australia's political and geographic constitutions were officially treated as homogeneous.[17] Thus it is no coincidence that the few years around the founding of the nation-state should witness a rash of assimilationist legislation.

For the purpose of establishing cultural continuities, the crucial shift is that from carceration to assimilation. As already observed, it is easy enough to reconcile carceration with the homicidal activities of the confrontation stage — though associated with markedly different rhetorics, both had the effect of vacating Aboriginal territory in a manner consistent with the logic of elimination. Thus the link between carceration and assimilation establishes a continuity between the confrontation stage and assimilation.[18] Moving on from there to the other end (as it were) of assimilationism, we enter into the present, into and beyond the era of self-determination and land rights that was introduced in the 1970s. To complete the cultural continuum, therefore — which is to say, to preserve the strategic uniformity linking present-day government policy to the initial invasion — it will also be necessary to show the conformity between assimilationism and current policies.[19] To move on from the first two fairly straightforward modes to analyse the cultural logic of assimilationism, we will start again from the concept of the frontier.

4. In From the Frontier

The salient ideological effect of the frontier was that it rendered spatial coexistence anomalous. As a linear metaphor that expressed the invasion's zero-sum polarity, the frontier divided "us" and "them" into discrete and homogeneous domains whose relative proportions were constantly shifting in favour of "us". This does not, of course, mean that there were no Aborigines left "this side of the frontier". It simply means that their presence was anomalous. In fact, though massacres in the conventional sense — the indiscriminate killings of numerous people on single occasions — were standard practice, they were not daily events. Nonetheless, they were continuous with the routine process of casual homicide whereby Aborigines were killed on sight in the vicinity of sheep or cattle runs,[20] so the definition of massacre needs to be extended to include a serial or cumulative dimension. Chronologically too, therefore, the clear division effected by the frontier is misleading. All the same, even allowing historical leeway for the consolidation of the initial invasion, a number of Aborigines managed to survive within the margins of settler society. In many cases, their resourcefulness was abetted by tensions or contradictions within colonial ranks. For instance, the near-realisation of genocide in Van Diemen's Land was one of two signal scandals of the day (the other being the slaughter of the so-called "Cape Kaffirs") which strengthened the hand of a liberal-philanthropic faction in the British House of Commons who had been buoyed by the success of their campaign to put an end to slavery in the British empire. Prompted by the Exeter Hall group, the Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1838 issued instructions for protectorates to be established in the Port Phillip District and in
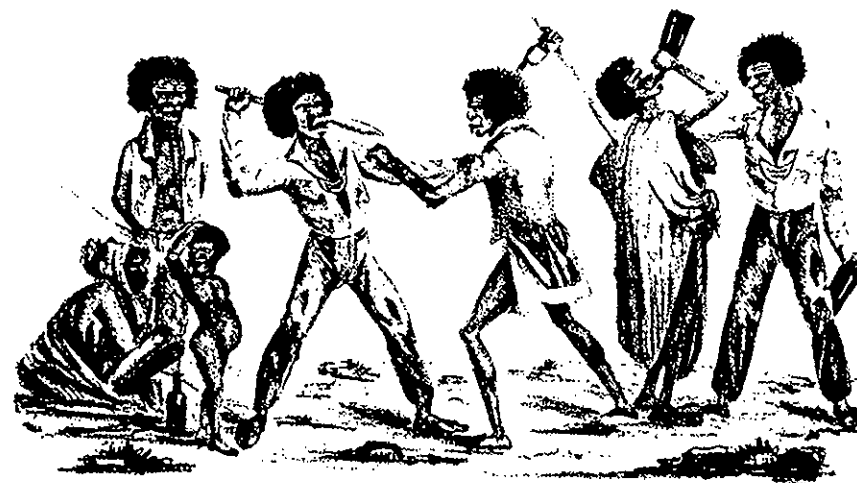

Figure 1. Top: W.H. Fernyhough, *Natives of New South Wales Drinking 'Bull'*. Bottom: *Charles Rodius, Scene in the Streets of Sydney.*

Figure 2: Eugen von Guerard, *Natives Chasing Game* (1854).

Queensland. Under a variety of names and institutional guises, Aborigines were then "protected" (or, as the wags put it, colonists were protected from them) by means of a series of institutionalised inducements which were provided on stations and reserves set aside for the purpose (Christie 1979:81-106).

Once land is set aside for them, however temporary an expedient for managing a dying race it is seen to be, Aborigines have begun to move into settler society. This development did not disturb a representational tradition of noble savagery which had flourished since the early days of the invasion. Nobility was, however, a function of distance. Thus romantic depictions of savage life coexisted with an opposing, vicious-savage idiom which had both wild and domesticated modes.[21] In the former, predictably enough, a treacherous, anonymous and warlike savagery was counterposed to the steadfastness of resisting pioneers. The domestic counterpart to this threat was a kind of Hogarthian grotesque which, though still vicious, substituted absurdity for menace and bottles for spears, as in the ragged spidery degenerates whom Fernyhough or Rodius depicted leering, importuning, fighting and collapsing in Sydney streets (Fig. 1). In this domestic mode, however, the field of difference is narrower. Where, after all (the question resounds through these pictures) did the bottles come from?

In addition to agreeing as to native viciousness, neither the steadfast-pioneer nor the degenerate-spider idiom fails to signify colonisation. An opposing, romantic genre, which can (but does not have to) omit all signs of Europeans, is an iconography produced by people who do not live in proximity to its Elysian savages' empirical substrates (nobility, again, is a function of distance). The significance of the vicious genre's routine incorporation of some sign of the invasion is that, in the absence of so much as a partly glimpsed chimney stack or an overturned billy, savages are outside history — without a target, they cannot be marauding. It may, therefore, seem contradictory that settler-colonisation should produce pictures of Edenic savages who were monarchs of all they surveyed (Fig. 2). The romantic genre is, however, an urban discourse which, in the course of the twentieth century, has sustained an official Aboriginality which is an important element in the Australian state's construction of itself. The romantic genre is important to national ideology because the parallel coexistence that it depicts is consistent with the legitimating illusion that Australia was not founded upon homicide and theft. Correspondingly, the vicious genre furnished a justification for these foundations, which were ideologically insulated within the liminal space of the frontier. This should not, of course, disguise the frontier's ideological function as a limit of otherness which contained the colonising society through its subsuming of internal divisions. This function was not dependent upon geography. Indeed, it not only survived the frontier's loss of empirical reference but kept intact the parallel coexistence of the romantic genre.

The most important feature of this imaginary coexistence is that space is not shared — as observed, the Aborigines are always somewhere else. Thus the frontier's loss of empirical reference simply made it entirely, rather than partly, mythic. This occurred at around the same time as the discipline of anthropology,

which constituted settler-colonial society's principal source of authorised knowledge about Aborigines, underwent a major paradigm shift. Over the first quarter of the twentieth century, the structure of the dominant anthropological narrative changed from the stadial teleology of social-darwinist evolutionism to the plurality of timeless homeostatic isolates that were constructed by structural-functionalism. As appropriated into settler-colonial practice, these two representational idioms differentially underwrote the logic of elimination. Whilst evolutionism sustained the expansive colonialism of the frontier, structural-functionalism was congenial to internal colonialism's more settled regimes. Both modes of anthropology rendered it anomalous that Aboriginal people should exist in the same space as whites. These points require elaboration.

Evolutionism's spatial implication, the premise that another country was the past, did not mean that different societies would never meet up. Rather, it meant that, when they did do so, the consequence for the lower party to the encounter would be that the developmental history separating the two would be flattened out. Thus the impact on the lower party would be proportionate to the scale of the developmental gap. According to this rationale, Aborigines confronted their far-distant future in the form of the whites, a strain whose superiority exemplified the cumulative operation of selection in a whole range of ways, from cranial enlargement to the attainment of abstract thought. Thus the ensuing doom of the Aborigines was a result inscribed in the natural order of things and bound to accrue once others had reached a level of progress which enabled the crossing of barriers that were at once both geographic and phylogenetic.

Thus evolutionism performed one of the basic functions of ideology, that of naturalising. Though, in common with many other facts of nature, the spectacle of extinction was undoubtedly cruel, it did not figure as the consequence of any volitional human activity. Rather, it was a foregone conclusion whose implementation, being in higher hands, left no more to be done than the alleviation of its symptoms. The philanthropic project of smoothing the dying pillow (Harris 1990:549-553) was, therefore, a way of stating that spatial coexistence was anomalous in a language that was common to evolutionism and to settler-colonial policy. The concrete institutional expressions of this anomalousness were the missions and reservations on which Aborigines were sequestered. Less direct than the elimination methods of the confrontation phase, they were nonetheless antechambers of extinction, so their operations did not conflict with the logic of elimination. Thus the significance of expelling certain Aborigines on the basis of their having some European descent is that, for official purposes, this meant that such people ceased to be Aborigines. Needless to state, this remained an official fiction, since, on the practical day-to-day level, Aborigines and colonists knew full well who each other were.[22] As in the case of the frontier, however, descriptive inadequacy is not the point. In constructing an Aboriginal category defined on the basis of racial purity, the policy initiated by the 1886 Victorian Act split Aborigines into two groups, of which only one was treated as Aboriginal. At a stroke, in other words, a substantial proportion of the Aboriginal population was officially eliminated.

Various points might be made here. Firstly, so far as Australian ideology is concerned, the assimilation policy was not held out as a strategy for eliminating the Aboriginal population. On the contrary, it was almost invariably couched in a rhetoric of improvement which echoed the missionary project of uplifting and civilising. Whether reserve rejects of the 1880s or stolen children of the 1960s, they were to be privileged with the same opportunities as Whites.[23] Secondly, the idea of introducing a hard and fast division between Aborigines, or even between officially constructed Aborigines and Whites, was not only unworkable. It was not even meant to work. The rhetoric of improvement notwithstanding, the practical logic inspiring the construction of a racially homogeneous Aboriginality was that it provided for an ever-dwindling category.

This last consideration explains how child abduction, the centrepiece of the developed assimilation policy, constituted a refinement of the 1886 Victorian act. Simply excluding certain Aborigines left the excluded in a kind of official limbo somewhere between the authenticated Aborigines remaining on the reserves and the White population. The problem with such legislation is, therefore, that, as noted above, it fails to work in practice, since it does not alter the identities which govern the daily transactions of local life. The outcome is a liminality — a category which is officially not Black and descriptively not White — which came to be spatially symbolised in the image of the "fringe-camp". It is, obviously, impossible to conceal from fringe-dwelling adults their kinship with the rest of their family who are (ideally at any rate) back on the reserve. With abducted children, however, the situation is different. Moreover, so long as reserves remained practically porous, so the thinking went, they would continue to provide abductable children, whilst it was axiomatic that racially homogeneous children would not be born in the fringe-camps. "Ultimately", as Professor Cleland put it to the 1937 national Conference on Aboriginal welfare, "if history is repeated, the full bloods will become half castes." (Commonwealth of Australia 1937:21) Given the refinement of child abduction, therefore, within the space of two or three generations, assimilation completes the project of elimination. Since, put this way, the pattern seems so obvious, the question arises of the mechanism which permitted such a logic to coexist with official expressions of enlightened concern. Thus the question is one of ideology, or, more precisely, of the extent of ideology's effects. For, without wishing to engage in a naïve humanism, the Australian experience provokes inescapable questions as to the extremities that rationalisation can encompass. Even leaving aside the intimate procedures involved in massacring, the disease component of the confrontation phase meant that pioneering colonists moved about a landscape that was alive with a suffering which so harrowed every sense that their descriptions of it are as shocking as the death of Damien, only generalised. Much closer to the present, how are we historically to situate ideologies which enabled officials with a post-World War Two awareness of the implications of racial hygiene to drive away cars full of terrified "mixed-race" children? — officials who, in some cases, still (in 1994) work in Aboriginal affairs?

5. Anthropology and Ideology

With regard to ideology, the significance of evolutionary anthropology is that it gave an impartial scientific warrant to (which is to say, it naturalised) the binary opposition between pure types which the idea of the frontier represented. More specifically, the paradigm shift in anthropology encompassed the same shift from externality to internality as that encompassed in the colonising typology that is being set out here. Thus we come closer to appreciating the ways in which, in the Australian context, the two cardinal modes of anthropology differentially underwrote the the logic of elimination.

I say "cardinal" because it is clearly not the case that anthropologists unanimously participated in shaping government policy. Throughout the history of Aboriginal anthropology in Australia, there have been major factions and schisms — one has only to think of Howitt versus R.H. Mathews; Spencer versus Carl Strehlow; Donald Thomson versus Radcliffe-Brown; Elkin versus Thomson (or even, more mutely, versus the half-life of Radcliffe-Brown); Tindale and his South Australian Museum colleagues versus almost everyone,[24] and so on. Thus what is significant in the present discussion is not anthropology as practised, still less anthropology as some of its practitioners might have wanted it to be (or tried to make it). To view the question thus would be to coin a sociological version of the intentional fallacy (an error whose denunciation tends to reconcile anthropologists). Anthropology is, of course, significant as a *discourse appropriated into state practice*. In this regard, professional schisms, far from weakening the political efficacy of a co-opted anthropology, grant it further legitimacy as the outcome of open debate. For social and historical purposes, we are concerned with effective outcomes. In the discussion to come, we will shift from the nineteenth century and evolutionism to twentieth-century political developments in which structural-functionalist anthropology has played a formative role, in particular to land-rights legislation. In this regard, the first Commonwealth land-rights legislation was substantially influenced by an understanding of Aboriginal land tenure which had been derived from Radcliffe-Brown and was held with significant unanimity by the anthropologists Stanner and R. Berndt, a view whose previous failure to impress Justice Blackburn, in the Gove land rights case of 1971, had resulted (*inter alia*) from its inconsistency with the Yirrkala plaintiffs' own account.

Structural-functionalism, whose principal exponents were Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, both of whose first significant anthropological publications were on Australian Aborigines, dominated British social anthropology from the 1920s on. Radcliffe-Brown held the first Australian chair in anthropology, which he took up at the University of Sydney in 1926. In a series of articles published in 1930 and 1931 in the journal *Oceania*, which he founded, Radcliffe-Brown enunciated a structural-functionalist model of Australian Aboriginal social organisation that was to mould anthropological representations of Aborigines for a generation. By way of Stanner and Berndt, the Gove case and the Woodward Commission, this model was to find its way into Commonwealth land-rights legislation in 1976. Though the details of

Radcliffe-Brown's model are exceedingly complex, the narrative features that rendered it amenable to ideological appropriation are relatively straightforward.

As its name would suggest, the principal characteristic of the societies that structural-functionalism (re)constructed was system. They were contained, internally balanced, regularly functioning wholes. As has been noted on a number of occasions, this insistence upon equilibrium lifted the societies that it constructed out of history. This is not merely to say that the model was synchronic as opposed to diachronic. The requirement for systemic coherence also precluded the intervention of external factors. To put it at its simplest, the model suppressed the consequences of colonisation. It made all native societies into the small-island ones that many of the model's early exemplars represented. Above all, this entailed the screening-out of economic life, which settler-colonisation had comprehensively reconstituted. Ritual and kinship discourse were not so thoroughly affected. It only required a single survivor from a people who used to live elsewhere[25] for its kinship system to be reconstructed through anthropological investigation. Similarly, rituals could often be performed, albeit modified, in altered circumstances. In other words, as one of his staunchest supporters had to admit, Radcliffe-Brown's model endorsed the prescriptive ideologies of its informants: "One obvious difficulty with this position is that the stated norms and customary usages are not necessarily a good guide to what people actually do... It is surely always best to distinguish a normative form, the sum of various conventions, and a statistical form, the sum of observed actions of various kinds" (Kuper 1977:4). The outcome was a metaphysical bias, a characteristic tendency to dwell upon prescriptive abstractions (religious beliefs, classificatory kinship nomenclatures, etc.) which, in an ironically unDurkheimian manner, transcended social processes.[26] This is not to say that the model makes no reference to traditional subsistence practices. Rather, traditional subsistence practices are the *only* ones that it refers to. The outback safari stereotype of the hunter returning to camp with a wallaby draped over one shoulder[27] blandly disguises the wholesale ecological and economic transformation engendered by pastoral grazing (it would be a different story indeed if the hunter had a calf over his shoulder).

In sum, then, structural-functionalism constructed a set of contained social isolates which were impervious to historical change and dominated by ritual and kinship discourse. By way of shorthand, I will refer to this composite representational product as *homo superorganicus*.[28] Ideologically, the great breakthrough achieved by *homo superorganicus* was an otherness within, a heterotopia which was there but not there. Australian anthropology's heterotopia *par excellence* is the Dreamtime, an ethnographic invention (Wolfe 1991) whose Edenic resonances have commended it to a global imagination. Citing Australian ethnography, for instance, the German anthropologist Hans Peter Duerr was still intoning in 1981 that "the 'dream-time' is always and never. You might say that the term 'dream place' does not refer to any particular place and the way to get to it is to get 'nowhere'" (Duerr 1985:121).

In the wake of invasion, pacification and the consolidation of pastoral settlement, Aborigines who survived the extinguishment of their traditional mode of production

were put to work to serve the requirements of the introduced economy. Yet other aspects of Aborigines' precolonial lives did not necessarily conflict with their participation in the settler economy. Accordingly, these aspects did not need to be effaced or reconstituted to the same extent (in this regard, missionaries' intrusions usually exceeded the dictates of settler-colonisation). Thus the colonising society remade indigenous life in its own likeness, imposing upon Aboriginal societies a severance between economic and other social spheres which was characteristic of European capitalism. Upon this severance (or disembedding) of economic life, ritual and kinship patterns of the incorporated culture became residual, since they did not function to reproduce the dominant economic sphere. In other words, "Blackfella business" became what was left over — wet-season business, by definition (or, rather, by elimination) marginal and non-pragmatic. Appropriated into settler-colonial discourse, this innocuous remainder provides *homo superorganicus* with its empirical alibi, a truncated life-world whose continued coexistence need not pose a threat.

In relation to settler-colonisation, therefore, structural-functionalism had the ideologically valuable consequence of constructing Aboriginal and settler societies as occupants of discontinuous spheres, with the Aboriginal one hovering in an apparently self-sufficient ritual space which did not conflict with the practical exigencies of settlement. In the wake of the geographical and theoretical paradigm shifts of the early twentieth century, though spatial coexistence remained anomalous, the pristine savagery which evolutionism had located over the frontier persisted as the authentic ritual Aboriginality of structural-functionalist anthropology. Though, from the panoramic perspective of the analyst, this means that the authentic Aboriginality must exist nowhere, this is not the native's point of view. Rather, for local Australian subjects, Aboriginality is severally constructed as somewhere else.

In the cities of the south-east, where the majority of the Australian population lives, authentic Aboriginality is located, somewhat vaguely, to the north and west. You can visit it, and — if local Aborigines are prepared to co-operate — even find it. Here again, this much is only to be expected. To cite an ethnographic observation of my own, however, the phenomenon obtains in bush and outback Australia too. Though, in racist outback pubs, it is initially surprising to hear the virtues of "bush Blacks" or "the real Blackfella" being extolled, the classification rapidly makes sense. Without the ever-absent good Black, there would be no basis for condemning the ever-present bad Black. Indeed, the Aboriginalisation of Kakadu, though virulently opposed by Australian racists at the time, has since come to invest the mythical good Black with a concrete locale.

6.   Repressive Authenticity

From the beginning, authentic Aboriginality has been an official way of talking about the repression of Aboriginal people. With half an eye to Herbert Marcuse (1965), therefore, I will term this strategy "repressive authenticity". Repressive authenticity cannot be understood by studying the symbols that it promulgates. Rather, the

reverse is the case, since attracting attention to its symbols is the whole point of the strategy, a diversionary ruse that works by pointing away from its practical effects. To understand repressive authenticity, we have to attend to the consequences for those whom it renders inauthentic — historical Aboriginal people who do not embody the construction.

To cut a rather obvious progression short, this leads us back to binary oppositions — authentic Aboriginality is everything that "we" are not and vice versa. Thus inauthenticity results from straddling this dichotomy, a situation that can be expressed genetically, culturally or both.[29]   Settler society was unified in contradistinction to the Aborigines and vice versa; the two categories mutually constructed each other. Thus hybridity was repulsive because, in threatening the Aboriginal category, it thereby threatened the settler one as well. This received its most public expression where "miscegenation" was concerned, to the extent that "mongrel" remains one of the most potent insults in the settler repertoire. Though readily obfuscated by race, the essential feature of settler society was not, however, its colour but the fact that it was the expropriating party. Thus ambiguity as to whether people were Whites or Aborigines should be understood as an ambiguity as to whether or not they were being expropriated, with corresponding implications for the legitimation of settler-colonial society.

Ideologically, therefore, representations based upon race or colour obscure the primary historical relationship of invasion. Given a dichotomy of White and Black, Chinese, Indians and others can be anomalous. But Chinese and Indian children were not officially abducted on racial grounds, so their anomalousness was of a secondary order, one peripheral to the primary terms of the underlying invader/invaded opposition. Where Asians were neither White nor Black but neither, "half-castes" were neither White nor Black nor neither.

Repressive authenticity represents a complex set of relationships as a simple dichotomy. Shared features are anathema. Since the feature most crucially shared by Aborigines and colonisers was an exclusive economic interest in the same land, it is only to be expected that the symbols of Aboriginality which figure most prominently in repressive authenticity are precisely those which least conflict with settler-colonial economics. In underwriting the mythical Aboriginality of repressive authenticity, therefore, *homo superorganicus* did not merely endorse a misleading idea. Rather, it sustained the most material of constructions, whereby a population was to be genetically eliminated. The genetic counterpart of the ritually constituted stereotype was, of course, the "full-blood". Moreover, the genetic and cultural codes recapitulated each other. For instance, it had long been asserted (e.g. Howitt 1904:50) that "half-castes" were not admitted to Aboriginal ritual or marital categories. Indeed, complicity in the logic of elimination was even alleged of Aborigines themselves, who, it was claimed, killed off "half-caste" babies at birth (Beckett 1988:198, n.10). Thus the genetic coding of assimilationist rhetoric disguised the multidimensional construction of inauthenticity. In the twentieth century, many very dark children were abducted, on social rather than racial pretexts (usually some version of parental neglect, even though, in some cases, "being an

aboriginal" was considered sufficient for the purposes of the relevant certificate [Read 1983:6]). Correspondingly, where a child was lighter, no amount of ritual eminence could have made it Aboriginal. In short, genetics was an all-purpose metaphor.

Genetics had also been the pretext on which the 1886 Act had provided for the break-up of the Victorian reserves. At this point, it is necessary to keep in mind that to view the legislation as breaking up communities is to view it from an Aboriginal perspective. From the perspective of the legislators of the colony of Victoria, the only way out was in. To repeat, there was no Aboriginal category within colonial society, merely a non-social anomaly which was quarantined off to die away on missions and reserves. If this anomaly were not to die, there would be no social category for it to occupy. In other words, the non-social could either disappear by natural means or be made social. To leave a reserve was to join society. This is why the 1886 Victorian Act inaugurated the national policy of assimilation.

The 1886 Act marks the onset of an official panic which, over the following half-century, engulfed the continent as the realisation set in that the dying of the dying race was not merely slowing down but reversing. In fact, more than just reversing — given settler-colonial society's inability to moderate the sexual bombardment that non-Aboriginal men were visiting upon Aboriginal women everywhere, the so-called "half-caste menace" was threatening to explode uncontrollably. As we have seen, the sexual component of the confrontation stage was antithetical to the other three. From the outset, the chronic negator of the logic of elimination had been the White penis. The consequence was a disruption of the course of genocide. The missions and reserves were central to this disruption, giving anomaly the security of a physical shelter. For analytical purposes, the key moment in this whole process is the switch from "dying aborigine" to "half-caste menace". This switch expressed a transformation in which missions and reserves changed from being sanitary disposal outlets to being sources of contagion, a crisis whose remedy was assimilation.

But notice the profundity of the categorical rearrangement that assimilation conceded. For all its ostensible belligerence, official talk of a "half-caste menace" merely made two anomalies where there had previously been only one. Where, before, there had been a duality which counterposed a mythic Aboriginality over the frontier to the settler-colonial subject on this side and produced the short-term anomaly of the dying Aborigine, the "half-caste menace" brought duality this side of the frontier. For the duality in which the "half-caste menace" was anomalous was not one between Whites and mythic figures over the frontier, but, rather, one between Whites and *"full-bloods" on the reserves*. In other words, a contradictory effect of the sexual dimension of the invasion was the eruption of an officially conceded authentic Aboriginality on this side of the frontier. As will emerge, this concession provided the demographic ground for the inclusive discourse of Aboriginality which, in the wake of the achievement of nationhood, the Australian state would contradictorily combine with the logic of elimination.[30]

The narrative structure of repressive authenticity is that of the excluded middle. The more polarised the binary representation, the wider its intervening catchment of empirical *in*authenticity. This is why, to appreciate the operation of repressive

authenticity, it is necessary to reverse its values, to see it as the positive production of genetic or cultural inauthenticity, a condition which it is appropriate to eliminate. In its genetic application, repressive authenticity mobilised the figure of the "full-blood" to construct an official polarity which licensed child-abduction. In its present-day culturalist application, repressive authenticity converts invadedness into a welfare issue. Accordingly, though the official rhetoric of land rights (or, for that matter, of the two-dollar coin) is ostensibly benign, the rarefied traditional Aboriginality that it promulgates is still conducive to the logic of elimination. This continuity reveals the synecdochic fullness of identity politics, which are in no sense superstructural or epiphenomenal (as in "mere" identity politics). On the contrary, the sum of settler-colonial history is simultaneously present at each imposition, enactment or refusal of an Aboriginal identity.

The battleground of repressive authenticity is that of Aboriginal "post"colonial identities, which strive to historicise the mythical duality that the discourse proclaims. The further from the pole of mythic authenticity that an Aboriginal identity can be asserted or reclaimed, the greater the ideological danger that it presents. An Aboriginality that can be identified but not seen represents the ultimate threat to legitimation. At the price of conceding a limited Aboriginality, assimilationism created a non-category, a new *terra* (or, rather, *corpus*) *nullius* that could legitimately be claimed for society. According to this logic, part-Aboriginal meant non-Aboriginal. Taking the children away was not represented as cutting them out of families and communities but as bringing them into them. As observed, the only way out was in; a single movement whereby children out of the reserve had no social existence until it had been completed. In other words, the car rides were rites of passage — insulated journeys from out of non-existence into social existence as orphans, more like circumcision than excision.

Though on different sides of the paradigm shift, the dying aborigine and the car rides were alike facilitated by anthropology's ideological appropriation. This is so even though the mode of subjection that anthropology subtended differed markedly between evolutionism and structural-functionalism. Whilst the evolutionist paradigm constructed a rationale for domination which accounted for the death of colonised subjects, structural-functionalism recruited living subjects for colonial society by disqualifying them from a mythical parallel realm.[31] Though one excluded and the other included, therefore, they had the identical effect of eliminating the non-social.

Thus we are beginning to move back to the problem of the contrasting discourses of exclusion and inclusion. Having reconciled genetic and cultural strategies, we can start to discern the genealogy of the benevolent turn in current Australian government policy on Aborigines. For, though inauthenticity could be constituted culturally, genetically or both, it is not the case that the cultural and genetic narratives were procedurally as well as structurally symmetrical. As opposed to genetic heredity — an individual attribute whose temporal units of change cannot be reduced to less than one generation — cultural authenticity constitutes a generalised condition that can be vitiated very rapidly.

It is important not to be misled by the biological cast of assimilationist rhetoric. For all the talk of "half-castes", "full-bloods" and the like, Aboriginality was an ideological rather than a biological threat. Given a cultural criterion for Aboriginality, the dying Aborigine could be already dead.[32] Though seemingly self-evident, this observation is basic to an understanding of assimilationist ideology. This is because it detaches Aboriginality from the body. No matter how much, say, Tamils or Maldivians might look like Aborigines, they could not pose the same genetic threat. That threat was, rather, posed by something invisible — a fetishised particularity residing behind the bodily surface. As observed, the essential difference between Whites and Aborigines was the relation of invasion, a fact which the various discourses on race and colour sought to disguise. Beneath assimilationism's biological phrasing lay a mystical fear of invadedness being passed on in the genes. To explain this, it is first of all necessary to distinguish the cultural and biological criteria that assimilationist rhetoric sought to confuse.

To start, appropriately, from the primary social reality of invasion, colour or non-European race are extraneous factors. This does not mean that White Australia was not racist — it simply means that racism which was not predicated upon the invasion (which is to say, racism which was not directed against Aborigines) was secondary.[33] In other words, Aboriginality is a matter of history: the indigenous group can be defined as the group that settler-colonial society has attempted to eliminate in situ (other groups have alternative social bases, so elimination could not be achieved within Australia.[34]) Thus the primary object of White-Australian hostility should not be defined in terms of race or colour but in terms of prior entitlement, of being there from the beginning (ab origine). In this context, the significance of a genetically constructed notion of race is that — unlike, say, consciousness or memory — it is mathematically divisible. Parents are halves, grandparents are quarters, and so on. This simple fact was institutionalised in assimilationism's oddly precise racial quantifications — the fine calibrations of "quadroon", "octoroon" and the like. The precision is odd because it had no bureaucratic substance. People were not generally deemed to be "octoroon" because state records showed that they had one Aboriginal great-grandparent. Rather, they were so deemed because that was the snap judgement of some official on the spot. Why, then, the elaborate fiction of mathematical finesse? This question takes us- to the core issue of Aboriginal identities, and of the Australian state's attempts to eliminate them.

Despite appearances, genetic arithmetic was not a measure of static racial proportions. Rather, it was a colour-coded lap count along the course of elimination. This course lasted three generations (Fig. 3), respectively termed "half-caste", "quadroon" and "octoroon", there being no fourth-generational, one-sixteenth category. Beyond octoroon, therefore, one had been bred White, a condition officially vouchsafed by scientifically-couched assurances that Aboriginal genes were not liable to produce atavistic throwbacks in subsequent generations.[35] With each succeeding generation, then, this spectrum of bodily markings provided for the anomalous Aboriginality to be halved as a result of the sexual activities of White men. Thus

THREE GENERATIONS
(Reading from Right to Left)

1. Half-blood—(Irish-Australian father; full-blood Aboriginal mother).
2. Quadroon Daughter—(Father Australian born of Scottish parents; Mother No. 1).
3. Octaroon Grandson—(Father Australian of Irish descent; Mother No. 2).

Figure 3: A.O. Neville, *Australia's Coloured Minority* (1947), Facing p. 72.

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there was no tolerance of a "three-quarter" category, which would have involved a "half-caste" "going back to the black".[36] Similarly, the status of being "half-caste" was not deemed to result from having two "half-caste" parents but from having one who was "full-blood" and one who was White. The "half-caste" with two "half-caste" parents shared with the three-quarters and the one-sixteenth non-categories the property of taking more than three generations to be bred White. Thus they were extending the life of the fringe-camp. In other words, the system sought to impose a negative or reducing exogamy, a *nubium* without exchange whose target was not Black genes but Aboriginal community, not physical but social relations.

Genetic arithmetic constitutes a particularly precise form of applied structuralism in which anomaly can be proportionately expressed as the degree of overlap between two ideally discrete sets. Yet, since such a formula assumes symmetry, it ignores power (this is a major difference between academic structuralism and the empirical duality that I am recuperating here). For the whole point of assimilation was not that mixtures of Black and White were anomalous. On the contrary, as the abductions demonstrate, it was quite acceptable to introduce Black into the White. It was the converse — White augmenting the Black — that was anathema. This asymmetry demonstrates that genes *per se* cannot have been the problem. Thus we need a refinement that can account for two concurrent oppositions: a real — asymmetrical — opposition, together with its ideological disguise — a balanced polarity in which anything interstitial was anomalous.

The distinction in question is expressed in logic as the difference between a contradictory and a contrary opposition. A contradictory opposition includes the whole world and excludes middle terms. An example is White versus non-White. A contrary opposition admits middle terms. An example is White versus Black. As the arithmetic of assimilation demonstrates, colour (or race) is a contrary opposition; it has degrees and proportions. Accordingly, it cannot account for the asymmetry whereby, though the category "White" can stand admixture, the category "Black" cannot. As before, therefore, we should return to the relation of invasion, governed by the logic of elimination. Here, the opposition is straightforwardly contradictory: one or the other, invader or invaded. To specify the cultural logic of assimilationism in relatively formal terms, therefore, we can say that the asymmetry in the contrary (race/colour) opposition demonstrates the priority of the contradictory (invasion-related, zero-sum) opposition, with which the insolubility of the Black category is consistent. Thus we can say that the official rhetoric of assimilation misrepresented the contradictory relation of invasion as a contrary one of race. A revealing clue to the working of the system is provided by the fact that White families who received abducted children were either not told the children's background or, more usually, instructed to conceal it from them.[37] The outcome could not be clearer: what was being assimilated was *the colour not the Aboriginality*. The Aboriginality was to be left behind, insulated from the abducted body by secrecy and by the series of rites of passage (car-ride, reception centre, children's home, etc.) which intervened between fringe-camp and White society.

Culture results from sharing history. The Aboriginality left behind in the camp constituted a cultural archive in which the illegitimacy of the Australian state was comprehensively inscribed.[38] As observed, unlike genes, such consciousness is not mathematically divisible. Durkheim made the same observation in relation to another sacredness when he noted that it does not take a whole flag to symbolise a nation — in the right circumstances, the merest of tattered remnants, like each single drop of wine in a communion chalice, has all the power of the whole. Analogously, the issue of the social is an issue of consciousness, which, unlike genes, is indivisible. You cannot be only seven-eighths or three-quarters identified, any more than a state can be only seven-eighths or three-quarters legitimate. On operative, social-definitional terms, then, Blackness was not disguised. Rather, by a spurious embodiment, Aboriginality was disguised as Blackness. In other words, history — invadedness, non-socialness — is essential, whilst biology is accidental. Kinship is historical. Thus abduction was actually a purer form of the logic of elimination than massacre, since, like a kind of social neutron bomb, it abstracted only the non-social essence, leaving intact a bodily vehicle that could still be employed for labour and other social purposes. Since the requirement for legitimacy rendered massacres relatively inefficient, abduction represents a purer solution to the same social imperative.

In declaring that Aboriginality was a quantity that came in four reducing proportions, assimilationism precluded the one-sixteenth category. That is to say, it denied the possibility that a child born as a result of a sexual encounter between a White man and an "octoroon" woman could live with its family in the native camp.[39] Beyond even the furthest calibration of anomaly, then, was a being that looked White and lived Aboriginal, with Aboriginal kin, an Aboriginal history and, accordingly, an Aboriginal consciousness. Since consciousness is indivisible, genetic arithmetic should be seen as an exercise in containment. The implications of an irreducible, non-proportional historical consciousness are startling — in the case of the one-sixteenth person, for instance, it means that one Aboriginal unit prevails over fifteen White, with succeeding ratios proceeding in a series 1>31, 1>63. . . . On this basis, White society becomes reinvaded in the space of the very three generations within which the Black was meant to be bred out, which renders the Australian state's legitimacy still dependant upon the practical realisation of assimilationist mathematics.[40] Hence, as stated above, the further from the pole of mythic authenticity that Aboriginal identities can be asserted or reclaimed, the greater the ideological threat that they pose.

The threat which assimilationist mathematics strove to contain received cultural expression as a fear of engulfment which attributed supernatural (or, at least, hyper-Mendelian) potency to "miscegenation". For instance, Bates (1938) attributed the widespread blondness among Aboriginal children to the genetic legacy of two Dutch criminals whom the navigator Pelsart had marooned on the west "Australian" coast in 1627.[41] In official discourse, this hyperpotency figured as a threat to the integrity of both White and Black. Without a deconstruction[42] of the assimilationist duality, the following statement seems to contradict itself. It was made by B.S. Harkness, a New South Wales state government representative at the national conference on

Aboriginal welfare which was held in Canberra in 1937. Without explanation, I have presented this statement to a number of lecture groups. In each case, a clear majority believed that there had been some mistake; that its two sentences negated each other. Yet it made perfect sense to the 1937 delegates:

> It is awful to think that the white race in the Northern Territory is liable to be submerged, notwithstanding that on this continent 98 per cent of the population is of British nationality. If we remain callous we shall undoubtedly see the Black race vanish. (Commonwealth of Australia 1937:14)[43]

Repressive authenticity should, thus, be understood in relation to the threat posed by a multiplex, heterogeneous and, above all, *historical* set of Aboriginalities which refuse to be contained within the ideal polarity that the logic of elimination requires. Though, in recent years, Australian state strategies have been culturally rather than genetically coded, their logic has remained consistent. In this culturalist sense, the first Commonwealth land-rights legislation continued the logic of elimination that the initial invasion expressed. Though heralded as overdue justice for Aborigines, this legislation did not repudiate the principle of *terra nullius*. On the contrary, rather than acknowledging entitlement on the basis of continuous residence of immeasurably longer standing than the common law itself, the Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act of 1976 breathed juridical life into the ritually-constituted *homo superorganicus* of the anthropological imagination, specifying almost exclusively ritual criteria for entitlement. Thus we will turn now to consider the relationship — a particularly direct instance of political appropriation — between this legislation and structural-functionalist anthropology.

7. Radcliffe-Brown's Horde: In Theory and Out of Practice

Radcliffe-Brown's model of Aboriginal society, "The Social Organization of Australian Tribes", was serialised through the first (1930-31) volume of the journal *Oceania*. Despite significant anthropological disputation over it — including reservations on the part of no less than A.P. Elkin — forty six years after its initial publication, it was a received version of this model that came to be enshrined as the Australian government's first land-rights legislation. This came about as a result of the weight that land-rights commissioner Woodward attached to the anthropological advice of Professors Ronald Berndt and W.E.H. Stanner, according to which the "local descent group", a version of Radcliffe-Brown's "horde", constituted a coherent land-owning unit in Aboriginal society.

Despite Stanner and Berndt's assuredness, however, the concept of the horde was by no means uncontroversial. In fact, Stanner himself was a central figure in a major anthropological debate over the spatial definedness (or lack of it) of the horde, which can reasonably be said to have continued to the present day.[44] In general, however, this debate has turned about ethnographic claims and counterclaims as to the extent to which Radcliffe-Brown's model of the horde finds empirical realisation as a geographical determinant which coincides with other principles of Aboriginal social

organisation. Thus it has largely missed Radcliffe-Brown's theoretical motive for constructing the horde. As becomes clear from a close reading of his series of articles,[45] the horde was the means by which he presented Aboriginal social organisation as determined by ritual and kinship discourse in a manner which marginalised material or usufructory practices. This effect was enabled by the fact that the horde mediated between the superorganic and the material principles of Aboriginal social life, embodied in the "clan" and the "family" respectively. Since it linked the family, which was the locus of physical production and reproduction, to the clan, which combined ritual (totemic) and kinship (exogamous) principles, the horde appeared to co-ordinate the material and the ideal dimensions of Aboriginal society. This appearance was, however, misleading, since, despite being unambiguously specified (Radcliffe-Brown 1930-31:34, 435, 438) as providing the material basis to social life, the family actually played no part in what Radcliffe-Brown termed "social structure" — the abstract, diagrammatically couched *system* that it was his theoretical object to construct. Behind the geographical indeterminacy of the horde lay the fact that, when Radcliffe-Brown referred to the "social", what he meant was not collective life as a whole but the superstructural complex of marital and ritual categories that his model sought to systematise. This theoretical erasure of material processes rendered the model congenial for state appropriation, since it harmonised with the settler-colonial erasure of their practical conditions.

It was not so much that Radcliffe-Brown was hostile to the subsistence production that the family effected. It was rather that, systemically speaking, there was not much to be said about it. Compared to the gordian intricacies of his diagrams, families were structurally simple and homogeneous (being patrifocal or Cyclopean — which is to say, ironically enough, being nuclear) and exhibited none of the morphological variation that distinguished kinship systems. In short, since variety stopped where material production and reproduction began, routine existence offered Radcliffe-Brown nothing to theorise about. In the event, it was not that he denied pragmatic factors. It was simply that his model had no place for them — it stood for something else, "social structure". As a result, nor did it have a place for the consequences of a colonialism that could transform the pragmatic basis to family life whilst leaving intact the prescriptive representations regulating kinship systems.

At this stage, it should be noted that, for all his protestations to the contrary, Radcliffe-Brown was engaged in historical reconstruction. Hence he made no bones about the colonial impact. He just left it out of his theory. As opposed to a social process to be described, colonisation came between the anthropologist and his social structure, which lay emphatically behind it. Thus the ethnographic difficulties involved in giving an account of local organisation in Australia were "greatly increased when the country has been occupied for some time by the white man, for the local organization is the first part of the social system to be destroyed by the advent of the European and the expropriation of the native owners of the land" (1930-31:35). Such terminology (especially the unqualified reference to "owners") was by no means uncontroversial in 1930.[46] Thus it is not as if Anarchy Brown was simply an apologist for colonialism. Indeed, it is not even as if there was anything

intrinsically oppressive about reconstructive history. It is, rather, that his theory was one thing for the purpose of salvaging precolonial history and quite another when it came to be appropriated by the Australian state for the purpose of delimiting Aboriginal entitlement. In this latter context, rather than a method for recovering the past, it became a means of invalidating the present. For, once operationalised, the theory's blindness to pragmatic existence rendered claimants' entitlement to land dependant upon their conformity to an ideal model which, as we have seen, excluded those who had been touched by history.

In excluding history, *homo superorganicus* replaced it with temporalities of its own, ritual time and an untheorised pragmatic one. Ritual time is not so much the ever-present possibility of Eliade's eternal return as one limit of an oscillation which moves between the scattered and the condensed. Pragmatic subsistence takes place in family groups — minimal, undifferentiated clusters, scattered over the landscape, whose cellular symmetry evinces none of Radcliffe-Brown's social structure. Ritual, however, brings it all together — or, to be more faithful to ideology, brings it all back together. In ritual space, clan alignments, cosmology — the whole superstructure — presents at once. An archetype on parade, its temporality is at once both episodic and eternal. It persists in a static parallel realm which is impervious to the vagaries and mutations of pragmatic existence. The same property makes it amenable to the diagrammatic regime of the page — it holds still. Hence the ever-popular ethnographic "camp", whose layout expresses a whole society and its cosmology, is not a feature of workaday life (at least, it only becomes so when settler-colonisation imposes a pragmatic stasis which ironically parodies the structuring of the model).

Structural-functionalism's theoretical universalising of ritual temporality came to acquire the most concrete of practical implications in the Gove land-rights case (Milirrpum vs. Nabalco 1971), when Aboriginal land rights were first pleaded in an Australian court. As already noted, the model of Aboriginal society — including its system of territorial entitlements — that the lawyers for the Yirrkala plaintiffs presented was fundamentally that of Radcliffe-Brown, which the anthropologists Stanner and Berndt were recruited to authorise to the court. The ensuing debacle, in which the plaintiffs testified to a social life whose routine formations contradicted the two expert witnesses' version of how they should have been organising themselves, has been influentially attributed to an empirically misleading boundedness on the part of the horde concept. (e.g., Hiatt 1982; Gumbert 1984; cf. Maddock 1980:30-55) It is unnecessary to enter into the technicalities involved since, behind the problem of territorial definedness, lies the dominance of *homo superorganicus*, which no amount of boundary-fiddling could resolve. Since the Yirrkala plaintiffs did not spend their pragmatic lives in the anthropologists' ritual temporality, they spent most of their time in the wrong time. In finding for the mining company, the judge could scarcely have put this more clearly. He was unable, he held, to

> feel satisfied that a band spent a significantly greater portion of its time in the territory of any clan than in that of another, or that a band regarded itself as based in the territory of any particular clan (Blackburn 1971:171).[47]

To cut a long but well documented story short, the court found against the Yirrkala plaintiffs. The following year, in the wake of the Vietnam moratorium and the Aboriginal Tent Embassy on the lawns of Parliament House, a Labor government was returned for the first time in nearly quarter of a century. Amidst a flurry of reforms, which included an overnight disengagement from the Vietnam war, one of its first actions was to commission Edward Woodward, who had been the unsuccessful leading counsel for the Yirrkala in the Gove case, to hold an enquiry which would report back to the government on procedures for implementing Aboriginal land-rights legislation (i.e., its brief was how best to effect land rights, not whether or not they were desirable). Woodward maintained his commitment to the model that Stanner and Berndt had presented at the Gove case, with the result that, with one highly significant exception, his recommendations bore the clear imprint of Radcliffe-Brown, prescribing ritually-determined grounds for Aborigines to lay claim to certain categories of public (mainly Aboriginal-reserved) land in the Northern Territory. The significant exception (which had been provided for in the Letters Patent setting up the Woodward Commission) was a needs criterion whereby pragmatic exigency could constitute grounds for land grants to the dispossessed ("town campers", "station Aborigines", etc.). Before the Labor government could pass the Woodward Commission's recommendations, it was ejected by the coup d'etat of 1975, whereupon the incoming conservative coalition passed them substantially unchanged except for the removal of the needs criterion.[48] Thus the Northern Territory (Land Rights) Act of 1976 constitutes the formal moment at which the Radcliffe-Brownian paradigm became appropriated by the Australian state. In its wake, a largely new breed of anthropologists, encouraged by generally sympathetic (in the case of Mr Justice Toohey, particularly sympathetic) land-rights commissioners, did their best to allow Aboriginal claimants to broaden the terms under which land rights could be recognised, especially in so far as both pragmatic and matrilineal entitlements were concerned. Despite these efforts, which met with some success in relation to the gender issue, the crucial definition of "traditional owner", though loosened, remained an emphatically ritual concept (Neate 1989:302-303).

8. From the 1976 Act to Native Title

Cultural logics are more diffuse and more resilient than the formal provisions of juridical or legislative determinations. Thus we may abolish *terra nullius* at a stroke, but this does not simultaneously dismantle the cultural, economic and myriad other structures of practical disenfranchisement that the doctrine expressed. To keep sight of the long-run continuities in Australian cultural logic, we should avoid being diverted by the tortuous unfolding of land-rights pleading through the 1980s. We should also avoid controversial developments which did not eventually change anything, such as the Hawke government's 1986 post-election abandonment of a pre-election pledge to introduce national (as opposed to just Northern Territory) land-rights legislation, or the much-publicised Coronation Hill case of 1991 (which was

not decided on the basis of the 1976 Act). The first change of an order comparable to the introduction of the 1976 Act started in June 1992 with the full bench of the High Court's judgement in the Mabo case and culminated in the passing, in December 1993, of the national legislation to which that judgement had given rise. The formal significance of these developments, which have almost universally been heralded as a turning-point in the history of the nation, was that they officially revoked the doctrine of *terra nullius* (or, more strictly, denied its applicability, which is not the same thing as revoking actions historically premised upon it). To maintain our focus on the relevant cultural logic, therefore, we should compare the narrative structure of the Mabo legislation with that of the 1976 Act so as to assess the significance of the changes that were introduced. To what extent can we conclude that they were more than formal? — which is to say, regardless of their perceived significance at the time, to what extent can they be said to have affected the elementary structures of settler-colonisation?

In this regard, the key provision of the Native Title legislation is that, to qualify for native title, Aborigines have to prove "traditional connection" with the claimed land.[49] In other words, native title is not available to those groups (a substantial majority) who have been removed from their land. The fundamental political consequence of the specifications attaching to traditional connection, like its predecessor traditional ownership, is that they shift the burden of history from the fact of expropriation to the character of the expropriated.[50] Indeed, to the extent that the empirical details of the Mabo case itself were to constitute any form of precedent, the legislation would restrict land-rights entitlement to an even narrower category. This is because the colonial formation in the Torres Strait, which was the basis of the court case, is quite different from that which has constituted the rest of Australia. Rather than the negative articulation of settler-colonisation, the Torres Strait Islands were primarily colonised on the basis of native labour, which, rather than being applied to the land, was employed offshore, principally for the purpose of pearl-lugging (Beckett 1977). Accordingly, the land functioned primarily as a condition of the reproduction of labour, a factor which has enabled the pragmatic subsistence-appropriating structures of Torres Strait societies to evince a considerably higher degree of continuity and equilibrium than those on the mainland. It would, of course, require an implausible level of political ineptitude for the full implications of this distinction to inform the application of the concept of traditional connection. None the less, there is nothing to suggest that traditional connection will be interpreted more widely on a national level than traditional ownership was interpreted in the Northern Territory. Indeed, there is nothing to suggest that the territorial beneficiaries of Mabo will not be so narrowly defined that, rather than removing *terra nullius*, the legislation will come to be seen as its fulfilment, as marking the point where *terra nullius* had completed its historical task.

From where I write (in July 1994) it is, of course, hard to say just what traditional connection will constitute. Though this remains to be judicially determined, we can at least see that it is unlikely to stray far from — and may well offer less than — the basic character of the 1976 Act's traditional owner. For this, we do not need a crystal ball. The question is not so much what we can see in the future as what we do not see in the present. Since we do not see a dismantling of the logic of elimination, we can be confident that it will not go away. On this basis, we need to look more carefully at the acknowledgement of native title. In particular, we should bear in mind that, in denying native title, terra nullius also precluded its extinguishment — *you can't extinguish something that isn't already there.* As a formula for extinguishment, the Native Title Act refurbishes and reinvigorates the logic of elimination for a new (presumably republican) century.

This is not to deny that many Aborigines might well experience improvements to their material conditions as a result of Mabo. Nor is it to deny that, in revoking *terra nullius*, the High Court made it necessary for the government explicitly to come out and legislate for *terra nullius*, if that had been what it wanted, rather than continuing to rely upon the doctrine's de facto incorporation into official culture.[51] But might we not, by the same token, view the legislation as a response to a constitutional crisis? In removing *terra nullius*, the judgement removed the ideological foundation of settler-colonisation. But this can only mean that it necessitated a different formula for legitimating the occupation of the land. Thus the ideologically charged interval between the judgement and the passing of the legislation marked a legitimation crisis whose containment consisted in a declaration that some native title would be recognised but most would be "extinguished" through being made an object of compensation.[52] On this basis, the legislation represents an altogether internal symptom of contradiction which does not necessitate a resort to liberal philanthropy for its explanation.[53] Moreover, its primary narrative feature — a structural bifurcation separating a category to be accorded territorial entitlement from a category to be compensated by a range of measures generally glossed as "social justice" — reproduces the primary ideological binarism that has historically characterised settler-colonial society. To situate the post-Mabo order in the cultural context of the long run, therefore — which is to extend the analysis into the present — we need to situate this structural bifurcation in relation to the logic of elimination.

9. Inclusion, Exclusion and the Nation-State

Analytically, to recap, it can be seen how the logic of elimination, most crudely manifest in the initial massacres, persisted into assimilationism by way of a series of strategic transformations. This continuity proceeded from Australian society's primary determination as a settler-colonial state, founded upon what has been termed a negative articulation. So far as the present is concerned, over the key question of land, Australian policy continues to be exclusive rather than inclusive in that, at the price of a minor enfranchisement, the bulk of the Aboriginal population is eliminated from the reckoning. This is achieved by means of a culturalist version of the assimilation strategy which, earlier in the century, conceded the minimal constituency in the idiom of genetics. The culturalist analogue to "full-bloodedness" is a fragile Edenic trap from which the only way out is down. In either case, authentic

Aboriginality is constructed as a pristine essence, a quantity of such radical historical instability that its primary effect is to provide a formula for disqualification.

It remains, therefore, to relate this discourse of exclusion to the discourse of inclusion whose interplay with it has already been noted. For, where territory is not involved, the Australian state has shown itself willing to devote not only large amounts of money and bureaucratic energy to Aboriginal welfare but also to devolve significant control over expenditure on Aboriginal affairs to Aboriginal people. In areas such as health, penal reform, education, housing, employment and related welfare issues, the triumvirate made up of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission, the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and the Committee for National Reconciliation marks the emergence of a striking level of official concern in relation to Aboriginal issues. This concern has in large measure resulted from Aboriginal political mobilisation — the campaign leading up to the 1967 Referendum, the Yirrkala bark petition, the Gurindjis' land-rights struggle, the establishment of community-controlled health and legal aid centres, the Tent Embassy, the campaigns against the Brisbane games and the Bicentenary, the solitary resistances of those who have died in custody, to mention just some of the more conspicuous activities of the last third of a century or so or so.[54] In relation to organised Aboriginal resistance, especially since this has been mobilised in an increasingly supportive international context, it is easy enough to see the discourses of exclusion and inclusion (or land rights and welfare) as a twin-track strategy which seeks to protect the territorial basis of the settler-colonial state by limiting concessions to the welfare area. In many instances, this strategy is belied by obvious ploys in the rhetoric in which it is publicly framed. For instance, the current responsible minister, Robert Tickner, repeatedly refers to his government's welfare initiatives as being "Aboriginal community-based", as if a territorially expropriated community could have a geographical determination.[55] Needless to state, Tickner does not refer to police stations as being "Aboriginal community-based" although he would be equally justified in doing so. His strategy is not, of course, demographic but political — it is to install "community-based" (as opposed to the "community-controlled" which Aborigines ubiquitously demand) as an electorally viable signifier for racial equity. The "community-based" formula betrays a desire that welfare might substitute for territory as a basis for social organisation (a specifically dependant mode of social organisation at that). Correspondingly, the demand for community control constitutes a refusal of dependency which, albeit in a less fundamental realm than that of territory, nonetheless demands official acknowledgement of a separately constituted — which is to say, an extranational — sovereignty.

In response, the government has conceded an increased measure of "community" control. But the operative construction of "community" could hardly differ further from that current in the domain of federal land-rights legislation. For, in order to exercise the control that has been conceded, it is necessary for Aboriginal office-bearers to be elected by Aborigines whose names appear on the electoral roll, an acknowledgement of the settler-colonial state's legitimacy which the majority of Aborigines avoided until registration became automatic.[56] In other words, the

criteria for Aboriginality that determine community membership for the purposes of exercising control in the welfare domain significantly include ratification of the settler-colonial Constitution. As opposed to a ritual continuity which is by definition external to Australian society, therefore, the inclusive discourse of the welfare domain is an assimilatory strategy of citizen-construction ("Aboriginal Australians"). This distinction can be seen with particular clarity in the area of service-delivery, where, as Tim Rowse (1993a) has described, Aboriginal people are assimilated into all levels of welfare bureaucracy with the result that, neither at the point of local service delivery nor at that of central administration, is it possible to distinguish (phenomenally, in terms of personnel) an oppositional Aboriginal "side" from an official White one. This situation should be contrasted with land rights, where members of applicant communities are clearly plaintiffs, to the extent that any comparable participation in decision-making would be held to constitute a conflict of interests.

Thus it is easy enough to distinguish an inclusive welfare discourse from the exclusive one of national land-rights legislation. As stated, however, the main point is not to distinguish the two but to assess their interplay, to appreciate how they constitute alternate aspects of the one process.

It is significant that inclusive discourses on Aboriginality have proliferated in Australian state practice in concert with the development of pluralist or multiculturalist strategies for assimilating the (in Anglo-Celtic terms) heterogeneous waves of migrants who have succeeded each other since World War Two. Just as the nation-state which assimilated Aborigines was a different society from the settled colony which had introduced reservations (which was different again from the invading parties who had prepared the way for settlement) so did the ethnically diverse society in which the policy of Aboriginal self-determination was introduced differ from the overwhelmingly Anglo-Celtic fragment which had first resorted to assimilationism.[57] In constructing new Aboriginalities, White Australia has reconstructed itself. But the question remains as to whether these shifts are of a comparable order. Should we see the shift to multiculturalism as being commensurate with that to nation-statehood? So far as Aboriginal policy is concerned, it seems clear that we should not. For, given a differentiated polity, to differentiate is to assimilate. In other words, what has changed is not the assimilationism but the ethnic profile of that whose mimicry constitutes assimilation — assimilation just looks different. As argued above, colour (to which can be added ethnicity, language, religion, etc.) constitute second-order differentiators which are categorically subordinate to the primary historical relationship of invasion which distinguishes Aboriginal from settler (some settlers are Black, some are disadvantaged, some are both).

Despite arguing that an empirical or prediscursive binarism (the relation of invasion) should be recuperated, I have critiqued the binary structure (excluded middle) of repressive authenticity. Thus the issue of binarism needs to be clarified.

The difference is one of scope. The Australian state has acknowledged the binary relation of invasion in its post-Mabo land-rights legislation. It seeks to restrict the beneficiaries of this acknowledgement. To effect this restriction, it limits the category

of native-title beneficiaries to those who can meet certain criteria for *un*invadedness. Rather than a change of heart, therefore, this formula entails a ratification — even a redoubling — of the history of oppression, since it provides that *the more you have lost, the less you stand to gain*. To fall within land-rights criteria, it is necessary to fall outside history. In this light, the welfare "track" of the twin-track strategy of inclusion/exclusion signifies the state's refusal to recognise invasion as a structure rather than an event. Correspondingly, national land-rights legislation represents an agreement to relent rather than to redress — which is to say, an agreement (however qualified) to allow history not to start.

So far, we have only dealt with one half of a dual ideology — that projection outwards, or onto the margins, of an authentic Aboriginality whose separation from history de-authenticates historical Aborigines within, converting the historical structures of their invadedness into secular welfare problems. How does the other half of this movement operate? — how does the anthropologically constructed authentic Aboriginality of the margins become reimported into domestic discourse? Again, the answer relates to the construction of the nation-state.

It should, by now, be no surprise that the precontact stereotypes of repressive authenticity should figure on the money, postage stamps and related imprints of the settler-colonial state, even though that state is predicated upon the elimination of those stereotypes' empirical counterparts. This is because, as Andrew Lattas (1990, 1991, 1992) and others have pointed out, in order to produce a narrative that can bind it transcendentally to its territorial base — to make it, as it were, spring organically from the local soil — the settler state is obliged to appropriate the symbolism of the very Aboriginality that it has historically effaced.[58] Hence, as in Michael Taussig's (1987) Putumayo grotesque, internal contradictions reduce the invader to seeking salvation from the dispossessed. In the Australian case, the dilemma of state-formation can be simply expressed, in local terms, as the problem of how to be a Clayton's Britain, a Britain *sous-rature* that is simultaneously not-Britain. It is the problem of the fragment: how to be British for the purpose of expropriating Australians and Australian for the purpose of independence from Britain?[59] Solutions to this conundrum included symbolic juxtapositions whose absurdity pre-empted surrealism — regal insignia in which emus and kangaroos stood in for lions and unicorns, for example. The serious underside to this symbolism is, however, that it reverses the historical process of replacement. A human analogue to the heraldic kangaroo and emu was recently provided by the conspicuous inclusion in the architecture of Canberra's new parliament-house of a Warlpiri totemic design, drawn up by a Western Desert artist, sanctioned by the ritual owners of the design and turned into a mosaic by Italian ceramicists.[60] Reportedly, the design's representation of serpents converging upon a waterhole denotes a meeting place at the centre of things. Yet the Western Desert locale from which the design originates is some three thousand kilometres from Canberra, whilst those to whom such events really are central — the dispossessed Ngunnawal on whose country the national capital has been planted — go symbolically unregistered and can only manage a physical presence about the national capital (cf. Jackson-Nakano 1994). Thus the continuing dispossession (cum welfare-dependency) of historical Aboriginal subjects is effaced by the valorisation of an authenticated extrahistorical Aboriginality which, for its part, seals an eternal bond between the settler-colonial state and the land of the Ngannawal. Hence the romanticised indigenous stereotype simultaneously performs two vital ideological services — positively, it grounds the national narrative in the local soil; negatively, it effaces the disruptive counter-narrative embodied by the dispossessed.

This discussion overlaps with Renato Rosaldo's influential analysis of what he termed "imperialist nostalgia", that curious phenomenon whereby colonising agencies often celebrate native society as it was before they came and destroyed it: "Imperialist nostalgia revolves around a paradox: A person kills somebody, and then mourns the victim" (Rosaldo 1989:69). Whether or not such behaviour is paradoxical, Rosaldo unaccountably leaves its analysis at that, frustrating us with the descriptiveness of his exposition. What the colonial nation-state nostalgises (mimics, solicits, appropriates, etc.) is *not*, of course, the precolonial indigene as this subject "really was" — that would only conflict with the business of subjugating empirical natives. It is, rather, an imaginary precolonial subject who is none other than a fantasy the coloniser entertains about himself — i.e., the colonised are discursively recruited to fulfil the coloniser's own prophecies ("retrodictions"?) about himself. This phylogenetic narrative, in which the colonised first figured as the coloniser's ancestor but more recently came to share in a universal ancestry, constructs the coloniser as the legitimate heir and successor to the colonised. Colonialism does not appropriate a historical savagery; it replaces it with an expediently mythical one of its own construction. And the condition of this replacement is precisely the elimination, or *dis*placement, of the empirical savagery within civilisation.[61] For all his descriptive insight, Rosaldo misses how the displacement of empirical natives is simultaneously the production of colonial citizen-subjects (during the official era of assimilation, for example, it is not the case that abducted Aborigines were not produced as subjects, merely that they were not produced as *Aboriginal* subjects). It is, therefore, necessary to go beyond description and attend to the positivity, to the material social effects, of settler-colonial nostalgia.

When authentic Aboriginality is imported back into domestic discourse, it loses not only its history but its territorial specificity as well, surrendering both to the homogeneous space/time continuum of the nation-state (cf. Beckett 1988). In the process, it yields a distinctive national narrative that is simultaneously both European and autochthonous, both invasive and native (the Australian Natives Association is definitely not an Aboriginal club). In this light, the concession to Aboriginality contained in repressive authenticity makes further sense, since the discourse yields the state its specific residue. Authentic Aborigines and the Australian state construct each other.

This concession provides the key to the binarisms. As a *concession*, there is nothing specifically binary about it. It simply represents a cut-off point, a strategic resolution as to the limit within which heteronomy should be tolerated. Thus there is no point in attacking the binarism *per se*, since this cannot affect the primary issue of

the scope of the concession (i.e., of its narrowness). If, on the other hand, ignoring the binarism, we attack the *scope* of state discourses on Aboriginality — if, in particular, we insist upon history — then a whole range of *specifically Aboriginal* determinations (e.g. child abduction on racial grounds) spring into discourse. To do this, we have to demonstrate that, in a settler-colonial context, invasion is a structure rather than an event; that expropriation continues as a foundational characteristic of settler-colonial society.

Thus the reason for what might otherwise seem an incoherent insistence upon both critiquing an ideological binarism and recuperating an empirical one is that the ideological binarism misrepresents not the structure but the scope of the empirical (which is to say, historical) one. At this point, the theoretical inadequacy of the term 'empirical' becomes inescapable. This is because, precisely by being binarily structured, the state ideology derives much of its force from its resonance with historical reality. This resonance makes it much more potent than a groundless illusion. Thus it is quite misleading to counterpose ideological and empirical binarisms since, to this extent, both are empirical. Again, therefore, "the battleground of repressive authenticity is that of Aboriginal 'post'colonial identities which strive to historicise the duality" — historicise, rather than subvert or pluralise, which would simply be to fall for multiculturalism.

Since the discourses of inclusion and exclusion are mutually supplementary aspects of Australian state strategy, contestation of the Aboriginalities that they construct and promulgate goes on within the arena of state discourse. It concerns the figurations, domains and scopes of state-conceded Aboriginalities. Aborigines can exploit the contradictions of assimilationism by contesting within this arena (succeeding, for instance, in having an element of cultural sensitivity inserted into police procedures). My counterposing of an "empirical/welfare" Aboriginality to an "ideal/authentic" one is also staged within this public arena, being intended to contest a set of subject-positions which are discursively produced and given practical social form through the routine material workings of certain state bureaucracies and other institutional apparatuses. This proviso is important because it means that the analysis does not claim to encompass an Aboriginal residue. Contestation of state-constructed Aboriginalities ("traditional owner", "welfare case", etc.) goes on *within* state discourse and does *not* address an opposition between "public" and "private" Aboriginalities (cf. Weaver 1984). On the contrary, both state constructions are categorically public and produced by specific apparatuses (particular ministries, departments, commissions, etc.). Whatever may be the nature(s) of the specific residue(s) that provide Aborigines with bases for resistance (a matter on which I have nothing to say here), these bases should be distinguished from resources (in the form, say, of discursive contradictions) that Aborigines may or may not exploit in the realm of Australian state discourse.

The importance of the above proviso is that, given the analysis of the central role that imposed definitions of Aboriginality have played in the Australian state's attempts to eliminate Aborigines, it would discredit — indeed, completely invalidate — my position if my own analysis were itself to dispense a definition of Aboriginality, yet another normative subject-position for Aborigines to be contained in. To this it may be objected that, in replacing one external or essential determination of Aboriginality (colour, genetic status, etc.) with another (invadedness) this analysis has fallen into the same trap. But I am not stipulating that Aborigines' collective sense of identity is contingent upon their sharing a sense of invadedness (and, presumably, acting upon it). To repeat, I have nothing to say about what makes people Aborigines to themselves and to other Aborigines. What I have tried to do is foreground and dramatise the historical fact that Australian state discourse is principally structured to repress. As a critique of state discourse, the analysis only deals with Aboriginal people as constructed and/or appropriated (as in the case of the Western Desert artist) by that discourse. It makes no attempt to pursue them into areas of their lives that exceed such constructions. This procedure is entirely different from the invasive practice of prescribing proxy Aboriginalities, however gratifyingly oppositional these may seem.

The issue of appropriation might seem to beg the question of Aboriginal agency, which has been deliberately kept out of this analysis. Yet focusing on Aboriginal agency would not help us to understand the settler-colonial imperative, however much it might help us to appreciate its power (*The Other Side of the Frontier* did not, after all, explain *terra nullius;* it merely re-emphasised its indefensibility). The Native Title Act, like the 1976 Act before it, recruits a minority of Aboriginal people to the continuing invasion of the rest.[62] To make sense of this, the factor that we need to write in is not Aboriginal agency but the hegemonic channelling of agency that culminates in co-option. Nor should we be diverted by liberal invocations of enlightened self-interest on the part of the co-opted, depicted as making their own choices (and how patronising of anyone to suggest that they might not do so, etc., etc.). For our purposes, the issue is not the calculations of the co-opted but the strategic uses to which the co-opters put them. To say this is not, of course, to say that repressive authenticity is a one-way street. As a modality of power, it generates its own resistance. Thus Aboriginal people can strategically acquiesce in repressive authenticity to further their particular interests (and not merely in the juridical realm — consider, for instance, the arena of sexual conquest). The obvious danger with this, though, is that, in generating its own resistance, settler-colonial power also contains it. The symptoms of this containment are plain to see in Aboriginal communities which are being divided into groups whom white lawyers have picked out as likely candidates for traditional connection and those whom they have excluded from this reckoning. At first sight, it might seem reasonable to distinguish between the two groups along lines akin to Lyotard's (1988) distinction between the plaintiff and the victim, according to which the plaintiff's grievance is formally prescribed whilst that of the victim is discursively inexpressible. For our purposes, however, it would be a mistake to see plaintiffs and victims as different people. The set of victims includes that of plaintiffs — as members of Aboriginal communities, they are commonly subject to a single divisive strategy.

None of this means that the retaining of native title, where this occurs, cannot represent a significant Aboriginal gain. It does, however, mean that acknowledging

native title constitutes a state strategy for containing Aboriginal resistance. It is important to keep the two perspectives separate. As stated, my purpose has been to categorise the colonising strategies deployed in Australia. It has not been to categorise Aboriginal strategies of resistance, survival or anything else. The failure to distinguish between the two perspectives recapitulates assimilationism. Accordingly, though it is no doubt the case that, over the last twenty five or so years, a new phase of Aboriginal renewal has set in, this does not warrant a shift of focus from Australian state discourse to Aboriginal discourses. To do so would be to deny the fact that Aboriginal resistance has been a constant feature of the entire settler-colonial era. It would also be to promulgate a de facto assimilation which, by ratifying the deceptive philanthropy of official rhetoric, obscured the underlying continuity of the logic of elimination. In the absence of a credible treaty, Aboriginal and settler-colonial discourses remain distinct. This means that, just as Aboriginal "renewal" should be traced backwards through a continuous history of Aboriginal resistance, so should the assimilation policy be traced forwards through the continuing history of Australian settler-colonisation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTES

1. I use the term gender in Scott's (1988:42,45) sense, as "an integral connection between two propositions: gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power....gender is a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated. Gender is not the only field, but it seems to have been a persistent and recurrent way of enabling the signification of power in the West, in the Judaeo-Christian as well as the Islamic tradition". As will be made clear below, however, we should not conceptualise gender as being restricted to the realm of signification in so far as such a realm can be conceived as distinct from or merely ancillary to the instantiation of power. Gender happens as power.

2. In a similar vein, Montrose (1991) makes much of Ralegh's "Guiana is a countrey that hath yet her maydenhead".

3. A comparable attempt to express such a fusedness is Barthes' famous (1973:113) "passionified" roses.

4. A later example of the hazards of periodisation is Attwood's (1989) decision to begin his mission study after Victoria's "killing times", as if recent decimation could have failed to be the most decisive of cultural determinants.

5. "[The] subaltern critic therefore not only engages with the continuing practices of imperialism, but is constantly vigilant with respect to the hidden ways in which nominally radical, or oppositional historians can often unknowingly, or even knowingly, perpetuate the structures and presuppositions of the very systems which they oppose" (Young 1990:162-163).

6. Creole status — being born in the settler colony — is a significant element in the ideological insulation of the original seizure of territory. The frontier functions as a liminal zone which stands apart from the orderly flow of colonial succession. As diasporan exiles, the first invaders are neither of the mother country nor of the colony. The legitimate genealogy which the emergent nation-state continues passes through the succeeding generation of settlers or through those who emigrated to post-frontier regions (explorers, by contrast, are pre-frontier). Anxiety in regard to the effectiveness of this insulation still permeates Australian country music, which endlessly speaks (or sings) as native son, one who was born with the land in his blood. In keeping with the thoroughgoing genderedness of the settler-colonial project, this vascular condition does not, so far as I am aware, affect women.

7. Although Rowley's work should not be contrasted too neatly with that of Reynolds in this regard.See Rowley 1970:5-6, 112-14.

8. See, e.g., Barwick 1972; Reece 1987; McGrath 1987; Fels 1988; Attwood 1989; Reynolds 1981, 1991. Cf. Robinson and York 1977.

9. I am grateful to Jeremy Beckett, who, in commenting upon an earlier version of this paper, pointed out that, in stressing the discourse of exclusion, I had dealt inadequately with its contradictory relationship with the coexistent one of inclusion.

10. See, e.g., Butlin 1983; Christie 1979; Critchett 1990; Elder 1988; Green 1984; Jenkin 1979; Loos 1982; Markus 1974; Millis 1992; Pepper and Araugo 1985; Plomley 1991; Reece 1974; Reid 1983, 1990; Reynolds 1981; Rose 1991; Rowley 1970; Turnbull 1948 *et al.*

11. Insofar as it constitutes an apology for the invasion, the claim that more Aborigines died at the hands of other Aborigines than at the hands of Whites (Blainey 1975:108-109; Nance 1981) betrays a depressing paucity of historical reflection. It should surely be unnecessary to point out that the invasion could not but have produced refugee crises in regions where resources were already subject to unprecedented strain.There are no prima facie grounds for imagining that the consequences should have differed greatly from ones that have characterised comparable situations in Europe. The causal chain required to attribute such consequences to the invasion is hardly too long to tax a normal historical intelligence. For a more thoughtful canvassing of some of the complexities involved, see Rose 1991: 100-118.

12. See, e.g., Attwood 1989; Brock and Kartinyeri 1989; Brook and Kohen 1991; Christie 1979; Critchett 1980; Gunson 1974; Haebich 1989; McLeod 1982; Rosser 1978, 1985. This second phase might itself be subdivided into two modes, segregation and reservation, distinguished on the basis of the presence or absence of formal compulsion. Segregation, which is characterised by the lure (blankets, rations, social security payments, etc) maintains an aura of voluntarism which is lacking in explicitly

coercive measures providing for Aborigines' confinement to reserves. Whilst it may seem that there is little practically distinguishing this formal coercion from the indirect or de facto coercion of the lure, its significance becomes clear when it is compared to assimilationism, which initially consisted in a partial inversion whereby, rather than simply being confined to reserves, Aborigines could also be excluded from them.

13. See, e.g., Beckett 1977; Christie 1979; Curthoys 1982; Evans 1984; Haebich 1989; May 1983, 1986; McGrath 1978, 1987; Pope 1988; Reynolds 1990; Rose 1991; Rosser 1985; Ryan 1981; Tonkinson 1988.

14. This relegation had already obtained in the periods when Aboriginal labour was not needed, the settlements having constituted "enclaves where the Aboriginal family produced in safety the labourers of the future. From here they were to go into rural employment and here they were to return when not required. To the extent that they left their family on the reserve, they could be paid the wage of a single man" (Rowley 1972:221).

15. In the course of a most suggestive analysis, Ann Stoler (1989:645) has observed that, to "guard their ranks, whites had to increase their numbers and to ensure that their members neither blurred the biological nor political boundaries on which their power rested". It would be worthwhile to test this general statement against a range of particular colonial records.

16. The legislation followed upon widespread "agitation" on Victorian Aboriginal reserves — in particular at Coranderrk Aboriginal Station, which was near enough to Melbourne for inmates to be able to organise marches, deputations and petitions to the colonial parliament (Christie 1979:182-197).

17. In so far as *terra nullius* — or, nowadays, the radical title vested in the Crown — is concerned, it could be argued that this homogeneity obtained from 1770 or, at least, from 1788. This may be so. None the less, 1901 clearly constitutes a watershed in the normalisation of that principle.

18. "Irrespective of the high-flown speeches and numerous attempts at protection, the same form of solution was resorted to in every [Australian] colony regardless of its time or nature of settlement. It was a spatial solution used in the last resort. Short of total annihilation, either rapidly through murder, starvation and disease, or more slowly through genetic assimilation, the only possible resolution to totally conflicting goals appeared to be a spatial one. Thus began the establishment of reservations, of using officially decreed, separate space as a means of conflict resolution and the assuaging of conscience" (Gale 1990:219).

19. So far as its initial phases are concerned, the typology presented here is comparable to a number of earlier ones. For instance, Peter Read (1988:1) specifies four methods that Whites have adopted for "subduing the Aborigines" — extermination, concentration, separation and indoctrination —whose initial three terms would seem to be reducible to my first two (of which the second is anyway subdivided). I differ from Read in that I see indoctrination as but one aspect of assimilationism and in that I see assimilationism as continuing into the present. Accordingly, whilst acknowledging the shift — from an officially declared policy of assimilation to a welfare-colonialist approach — which Jeremy Beckett dates (more plausibly than Read's 1968) from the 1972 election of the Whitlam government, I cannot accept that this shift is of the same

order as Beckett's earlier three phases (act of dispossession, protective segregation, assimilation) with which mine otherwise broadly concur (cf. Beckett 1989).

20. An example was not long ago publicised by the Melbourne *Age*, quoting from a collection of letters between officials of the Port Phillip District Protectorate which the Victorian Government auctioned in 1991. On July 20th 1839, Assistant Protector Edward Parker wrote to Protector George Augustus Robinson: "in the month of July last, the Aborigines carried off a flock of sheep belonging to a Mr. Bowman. They were pursued by an armed party and (it is alleged) on their showing signs of resistance were attacked and slaughtered in great numbers. One of the persons engaged on this occasion informed me that upwards of 90 rounds of ball cartridge were expended. I am also informed by Mr. Yaldwyn, a magistrate of the colony, that after this occurrence, Mr. Bowman was accustomed to shoot every black man, woman or child whom he found on his run"(*Age*, 15th April 1991:6).

21. This dualism is, of course, closely cognate with more explicitly gendered ambivalences concerning nature and the female which were classically analysed in the 1970s (Ortner 1974; Summers 1975).

22. As Peter Read (1984:49) observed in relation to the New South Wales town of Yass in 1919: "Managers were instructed to discourage 'half-castes' from entering reserves; yet the townsfolk of Yass could not allow these same people, who by association and culture were commonly regarded as Aborigines, from entering the town."

23. As Elkin put it, in the introduction that he contributed to Neville's (1947) justification of assimilationism: "While we hold the mixed-bloods at arm's length, few of them will rise in the social and economic scale; they will be hangers-on and parasites. The circle is a vicious one. Let us break it. This means enforcing [*sic*] *through the same channels as in the case of our own white folk*, decent housing, cleanliness, regular school attendance in our schools (as at Alice Springs, for example), orderly behaviour and voting. At the same time, it means opening to them the door of opportunity through higher education, through training for professions (teaching, nursing, and others), through membership of trade unions (wherever this is barred), and in recreation and Church-life" (Elkin 1947:15, original emphasis. Cf. Hasluck 1953,1985).

24. Howitt 1908; Wise 1985:98-9, 131-2, 143; Elkin 1956, 1975; Jones 1987; McGregor 1993:362-69.

25. For Radcliffe-Brown's ethnography at the Bernier Island lock-hospital for Aboriginal victims of syphilis, see Grant Watson (1968:63-65).

26. Structural-functionalism's metaphysical or ritual bias has been criticised by a number of reformist anthropologists, often in a manner recalling Marx's critique of idealism. Thus Maurice Bloch's (1977) distinction between ritual and pragmatic discourse, which has influenced my approach here, could be rephrased in terms of superstructure and base without injustice. Though independently conceived, Bloch's position is reminiscent of Stanner's (1967:291) observation that the Durkheimian opposition of the sacred and the profane excludes the mundane, a critique which Stanner's student Jeremy Beckett (1988) developed in an article which, though conceived independently of Bloch's, managed to share its title. In my view at least, Edmund Leach's (1969) "dogma" is cognate with these analyses. One could go back further. For instance, the structural-functionalist emphasis upon classificatory kinship terminology, which Radcliffe-Brown derived from Morgan, had been dismissed by

Morgan's arch-rival McLennan (1886:273) as a mere "code of courtesies and ceremonial addresses in social intercourse", whilst, behind McLennan and Marx, one could invoke Enlightenment (or, to situate myself, Irish) anti-clericalism.

27. The prevalence of this stereotype was drawn to my attention by Lynette Russell, who was struck by it in the course of doing a content-analysis of the journal *Walkabout*.

28. Given Beckett's (1988:207) "homo religiosus", even I am inclined to think that this is one independent conception too many, though my memory of Beckett's term was not conscious when I thought up mine. Were the two concepts coterminal, I would quite happily adopt Beckett's, but, as will emerge, mine extends the ritual/religious reference to include reference to history (or the lack of it) and to classificatory kinship calculus.

29. "Aboriginal people are caught between the attribution of unchanging essences (with the implication of an inability to change) and the reproach of inauthenticity" (Beckett 1988:194). See also Jacobs 1988:32; Tatz 1982:10; Weaver 1984:208.

30. Cf. "Unlike the Indian, ... [the "half-blood"] ... could not be treated evasively because, whereas the full-blood Indian could be restricted to America's prehistory or history, could be safely confined to the past, the mixed-blood Indian belonged very much to the present and quite possibly to the future of America. The Indian, therefore, might be (in the White American mind) doomed to extinction, but the half-blood represented a new force, perhaps even a new race on the frontier. Since the frontier was, for nineteenth-century White Americans, inextricably (if ambiguously) related to the future of the nation, the half-blood, as a unique manifestation of the frontier, seemed a very immediate reality which could not be ignored" (Scheick 1979:2).

31. Despite the dominance of essentialist attitudes, the classic era in Australian Aboriginal anthropology boasted a few figures who took the cultural dynamics of "post-traditional" Aboriginal communities seriously. As early as 1935, for example, Caroline Tennant-Kelly (1935) reported that "half-castes" in Queensland were integrated into the ritual and kinship systems (I owe this reference to Russell McGregor [1993:329]). Marie Reay's pioneering contributions are probably more significant in this regard, however (see Reay 1945, 1951; Reay and Sitlington 1948). In the wake of Reay, the two contributions which, with hindsight, instigated the shift away from essentialism and towards more dynamic culturalist analyses were the work which flowed from Jeremy Beckett's M.A. thesis (Beckett 1958) and from Diane Barwick's Ph.D thesis (Barwick 1962). This kind of work should be distinguished from anthropological reports on "mixed-race communities" which sought to elucidate policy problems for assimilationism rather than to attain ethnographic insights into intra-community cultural processes (cf., in this regard, Bell 1956; Calley 1956, 1957; Fink 1957; Le Gay Brereton 1962).

32. And, therefore, impervious to a turn-around such as the increase in "full-blood" numbers after World War Two (Beckett 1989:125).

33. Thus racist categories that are sometimes deployed within Aboriginal societies ("yellafella", etc.) do not correspond to the primary form of Australian racism.

34. By the same token, nor could Aborigines be deported or repatriated in the manner of those Pacific Islanders who were expelled after December 1906 under the terms of the White Australia Policy. (Willard 1974:182-86) A corollary of the same general point is that, whereas migration constantly swells the settler population, migration or adoption into Aboriginal societies is precluded.

35. "Time and time again I have been asked by some white man: 'If I marry so-and-so (a coloured person) will our children be black?' As the law imposed upon me the responsibility of approving or objecting to the proposed marriage, I felt I had to give an answer to that vital question. The answer, of course, depended upon whether the woman was of purely [!] European-Aboriginal descent. If that was so, I felt I could safely reply that while no one could be definite in such a case, I thought the chances were all against it happening. That the children would be lighter than the mother, and if later they married whites and had children these would be lighter still, and that in the third of fourth generation no sign of native origin whatever would be apparent. Subject to this process a half-blood mother is unmistakable as to origin, her quarter-caste or quadroon offspring almost like a white, and an octaroon [sic] entirely indistinguishable from one ... While it is with the people of European-Aboriginal descent that I am most concerned here as regards intermarriage, the implications are that if a white man marries a coloured woman of Aboriginal descent also possessing some Negro, Asiatic, Indian or other coloured ancestry, then he must take a greater risk of atavism in any children of the union there may be" (Neville 1947:58-59; see also Bleakley 1961:318).

36. Where this possibility was officially acknowledged, the logic of the system became explicit: "The number of half-castes in certain parts of Australia is increasing, not as result of additional influx of white blood, but following on intermarriage amongst themselves, where they are living under protected conditions, such as at the Government aboriginal stations at Point Pearce and Point McLeay, in South Australia. This may be the beginning of a possible problem of the future. A very unfortunate situation would arise if a large half-caste population breeding within themselves eventually arose in any of the Australian states. It seems to me that there can be only one satisfactory solution to the half-caste problem, and that is the ultimate absorption of these persons in the white population" (Cleland in Commonwealth of Australia 1937:10). Bleakley was consistently less concerned about this issue (see, e.g., Bleakley 1961:315). In his 1928 report to the Federal Government (Bleakley 1929:17), he divided the inmates of the "Half-Caste Bungalow" in Alice Springs into four categories rather than the usual three, recommending that the "three-quarter-caste aboriginals" be treated as Aboriginals. Though admittedly exceptional, Bleakley's policy still strove to maintain the assimilationist polarity.

37. Pre-World War Two, abducted children were generally taken to boys' or girls' homes for training in menial occupations (as labourers or domestics) before being committed to White employers at the age of twelve or thirteen (Mulvaney 1989:199-205). For Margaret Tucker's experiences of this system, see her (1977:81-144) *If Everyone Cared* and the film "Lousy Little Sixpence" (Morgan and Bostock 1984). The concealment of the children's backgrounds has been abundantly confirmed in the course of over 250 interviews with Koori volunteers which Melbourne University history students have conducted in the course of an oral history project that I have co-ordinated since 1991.

38. It is important to distinguish between Aboriginality as a state discourse and Aboriginal people's own representations (for reasons that will become clear, I do not wish to adopt Weaver's private and public Aboriginalities). On the level of the Australian state, the eternal conundrum as to whether Aboriginality is biological, cultural or both is entirely misleading. Official Aboriginalities concern the legitimation

of the nation-state rather than the experiential identities of their ostensible referents. The biology/culture question thus deflects the problem of legitimacy, projecting it away from the agents and onto the victims of expropriation.

39. Aboriginal children with non-Aboriginal mothers could be dealt with according to standard procedures for children in need of care. Again, the point is not that Aboriginal children were the only targets for adoption in an era when state intervention into child-rearing was of an order comparable to the nineteenth-century regulation of working-class women's sexuality (see, e.g., van Krieken 1992). It is, rather, that Aborigines were so targeted on the ground of *race*.

40. This is, of course, an expression (or logical conclusion) of Australian state discourse rather than a statement about the empirical incidence of Aboriginal community endogamy.

41. "There was no mistaking the flat heavy Dutch face, curly fair hair, and heavy stocky build" (Bates 1938:107).

42. Since the term deconstruction is so generally abused, I will follow Eve Sidgwick in specifying the strict sense in which I employ it (her duality is sexual): "The analytic move it makes is to demonstrate that categories presented in a culture as symmetrical binary oppositions — heterosexual/homosexual, in this case [White/Black in mine] — actually subsist in a more dynamic tacit relation according to which, first, term B is not symmetrical with but subordinated to term A; but, second, the ontologically valorized term A actually depends for its meaning on the simultaneous subsumption and exclusion of term B; hence, third, the question of .priority between the supposed central and the supposed marginal category of each dyad is irresolvably unstable, an instability caused by the fact that term B is constituted as at once internal and external to term A" (Sidgwick 1992:9-10).

43. For insightful discussion ("The decline of the Aboriginal race and the rise of the half-caste problem were, in effect, opposite sides of the same coin") and useful references illustrating the White panic, see McGregor 1993:209

44. See, e.g., Hiatt 1962; Stanner 1965; Hiatt 1966; Meggitt 1962, 1963; Birdsell 1970; Sansom 1980:259-267; Maddock 1980:30-55; Gumbert 1981, 1984; Hiatt 1982, 1984; Rumsey 1989; Morphy 1990; Rowse 1993b:54-68.

45. Such a reading can be found in my Ph.D thesis (Wolfe 1994b:267-277).

46. It would still cause controversy during the pleading of the momentous Gove land-rights case (Milirrpum v. Nabalco) in 1971. See Maddock 1980:21-23.

47. Clan and band (which was based in Radcliffe-Brown's family) could not have broken the horde into ritual and pragmatic categories more clearly (clan:band::ritual:pragma). What is more, Blackburn went on explicitly to undo their union as it had been presented to him by Woodward on the basis of Stanner and Berndt's advice: "I consider that the suggested links between the bands and the clans are not proved. I find it more probable that the situation was not as Mr. Woodward contended, but rather that neither the composition nor the territorial ambit of the bands was normally linked to any particular clan. My finding is that the clan system, with its principles of kinship and of spiritual linkage to territory, was one thing, and that the band system which was the principal feature of daily life of the people and the modus of their social and economic activity, was quite another" (Blackburn 1971:171).

48. Maddock 1980:16; Peterson and Langton 1983:4. It should be noted that the Woodward Commission (1974:2) had provided for land rights to be recognized on the basis of need.

49. "The expression 'native title' or 'native title rights and interests' means the communal, group or individual rights and interests of Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders in relation to land or waters, where: (a) the rights and interests are possessed under the traditional laws acknowledged, and the traditional customs observed, by the Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders; and (b) the Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islanders, by those laws of customs, have a connection with the land or waters; and (c) the rights and interests are recognized by the common laws of Australia" (Native Title Act 1993, S.208 [1]).

50. It should, however, be acknowledged that, in the explanatory memorandum (part B) appended to the Act, it is stated that "In accordance with the High Court's decision, the use of the word 'traditional' in reference to laws and customs in this definition, is not to be interpreted as meaning that the land and customs must be the same as those that were in existence at the time of European settlement." Again, the application of this condition is still to be determined (in this regard, the outcome of the Yorta Yorta claim to Barmah State Forest will be interesting, since part of the claim involves the assertion that confinement on a reserve sustained traditional connection when the reserve was on confinees' traditional country. Acceptance of this principle could indeed put the cat among the pigeons). Though we have, therefore, to wait and see, the point is that, systemically speaking, what we are waiting to see eventuate could not be more unlikely — to wit, a tail-wagging-the-dog outcome in which legislation reconstitutes the elementary structures of settler-colonisation. In any event, the country at stake, unalienated crown land, remains predominantly on the margins, a fact which in itself excludes the majority of Aboriginal people from the reckoning.

51. "One of the most remarkable features of the period following the High Court's handing down of its decision in *Mabo* was the contrast between the public pronouncements of politicians and the plain words of members of the Court" (Pearson 1993:76-77).

52. As Woodward observed, in his second (1974:10) report to the Government, "Cash compensation in the pockets of this generation of Aborigines is no answer to the legitimate land claims of a people with a distinct past who want to maintain their separate identity in the future."

53. A point which is ruled out of debate by pre-emptive "questions" such as Rowse's (1993b:24) "How did a liberal tradition of respect for indigenous rights survive at all in twentieth-century Australia?".

54. For some examples and overviews from a vast literature on the modern Aboriginal political movement, see, e.g., Anderson 1988; Bandler 1989; Bennett 1989; M. Burgmann 1983; V. Burgmann 1993:24-74; Duncan 1989; Hardy 1968; Howard 1982; Langton 1982; McGinness 1991; Middleton 1977; Miller 1985:192-226; Nathan 1980; Rose 1991:225-258; Rowley 1986; Sykes 1989; Tatz 1979; Wanganeen 1986.

55. At the numerous public addresses by Tickner that I have attended, he has not failed to use the phrase.

56. Whilst I am not sure how one might demonstrate this avoidance by means of official documents, I have frequently heard it asserted both publicly and privately by Aboriginal

speakers. Moreover, it is consistent with the discreditingly low level of participation in ATSIC voting.

57. For overviews and examples of changing attitudes to immigration and assimilation, on which a vast amount has been written, see, e.g., Castles 1992; Easson 1990; Goot 1988; Lyng 1927; McAllister 1993; Yarwood 1964, 1968. For a useful bibliography on assimilation and integration up to 1979, see Price 1979:38-43.

58. In a different theoretical idiom, Nic Peterson (1990:16) expressed much of this as follows: "The success of the [assimilation] policy would end once and for all the chance to secure the insights Aboriginal societies and cultures could provide. With the [1960s] prosperity also went an increasing interest in Australian history and culture and a loosening of the ties with Britain which was to climax in the cultural and economic nationalism of the early 1970s... Aboriginal people and their cultures were a crucial icon of an independent Australian identity. But there was a firm preference for the schematic authority of normative accounts to the reality of the disorder and the poverty of many Aboriginal people's lives which gave the lie to the success, or even the possibility, of an assimilation policy."

59. Without disagreeing with Stuart Macintyre's summary observation (1986:122) that "The strength of the new nationalism was therefore undeniable but its meaning remained ambiguous", I would be inclined to exchange the 'but' for an 'and' — it was a positive, constitutive ambiguity, albeit demographically manifest as a spectrum of opinion. Terry Goldie (1989:12) made a similar point in relation to Canada: "The white Canadian looks at the Indian. The Indian is Other and therefore alien. But the Indian is indigenous and therefore cannot be alien. So the Canadian must be alien. But how can the Canadian be alien in Canada?". Canny and Pagden (1987) analysise the New World creole dilemma in historical depth.

60. For details and critiques, see, e.g., Lattas 1990; Weirick 1989; Williams 1993.

61. For a comparable analysis of the role played by archaeology and museology in constructing a Bolivian state which, though depending upon indigenous symbols, practically excludes empirical indigenous people from the urban centres, see Condori 1989.

62. "Sansom (1980:182) refers to the operation and use made by white 'brokers' within Aboriginal society. The white broker, he says, 'works within an established setting as an enabling mediator'. There are good grounds, especially in the light of developments since the implementation of the [1976] Land Rights Act, for extending the label to describe those *Aboriginal* people who become 'brokers', mediating between whites and other Aborigines. It would seem that such Aboriginal brokers would be able — much more so than white brokers — to mobilize assets, dictate terms, and demand 'payment' from their fellow Aborigines for performing various services. To this extent they probably combine aspects of both Sansom's 'white broker' and Paine's 'patron'." (Smith 1984:102, n.12) For analyses of comparable phenomena, see, e.g., Howard 1982; Mowbray 1986; Rowse 1992, 1993a; Tatz 1977.

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COMPTES RENDUS — LIVRES REÇUS