ABORIGINAL PLACENAMES

NAMING AND RE-NAMING THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE

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NAMING AND RE-NAMING
THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE

Edited by Harold Koch and Luise Hercus

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WARNING: Readers are notified that this publication may contain names or images of deceased persons.

Contents

NSW & ACT

Victoria

South Australia & Central Australia

Northern Australia

List of Figures

List of Tables

Notes on Contributors

Val Attenbrow is a Principal Research Scientist in the Anthropology Unit, Research Branch, at the Australian Museum, where she has worked since 1989. Her research interests focus on the Aboriginal archaeology and ethno-history of south-eastern Australia, in particular on land and resource use patterns, subsistence and material culture. She has undertaken major fieldwork projects in Upper Mangrove Creek on the New South Wales (NSW) central coast and around Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour). Her interest in Aboriginal placenames developed during research for her book *Sydney's Aboriginal Past* (2003).

Paul Black is a Senior Lecturer in Applied Linguistics at Charles Darwin University. After completing a doctorate on comparative Cushitic at Yale in 1975 he came to Australia to undertake salvage work on south-western Cape York Peninsular languages, including Kurtjar, providing the basis for a comparative study of Norman Pama in 1980, as well as the present paper. In the 1980s he taught speakers of Australian languages at the School of Australian Linguistics, and in 1990 he moved into his current position, in which he still publishes occasional comparative work on Australian languages.

Claire Bowern is Assistant Professor of Linguistics at Yale University. After undergraduate work in Linguistics and Classics at The Australian National University, she completed her PhD at Harvard on historical reconstruction of Bardi verb morphology. She has done extensive fieldwork on Bardi and has recently started working with speakers of Yan-nhangu, a Yolngu language from Eastern Arnhem Land. She is the editor with Harold Koch of *Australian Languages: Classification and the Comparative Method* and is currently working on a five-year National Science Foundation grant to reconstruct Pama-Nyungan language and prehistory.

John Bradley is a Senior Lecturer in Anthropology and Deputy Director of the Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies at Monash University. He holds a PhD in anthropology form the Charles Darwin University. His work is interdisciplinary and ranges from cultural resource management, species management, in particular marine mammals. He has worked with the Yanyuwa

people of the south-west Gulf of Carpentaria for 30 years on issues associated with language preservation, land and sea claims and emotional ties to homelands. His current research interests extend to animation as a way of preserving language and culture and the cross-generational transfer of knowledge.

Ian D. Clark is an Associate Professor in Tourism in the School of Business at the University of Ballarat. He completed his PhD in western Victorian Aboriginal historical geography at Monash University in 1992. He has worked extensively with The Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages and in 2002 published the *Dictionary of Aboriginal Placenames of Victoria*. He has been employed as the research fellow in history at Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and as manager of the Brambuk Aboriginal Centre in Halls Gap. From 1989-1991 he worked as a senior researcher in the then Victorian Tourism Commission and conducted the research and oversaw the implementation of the submission to restore Indigenous placenames in and around the Grampians-Gariwerd National Park. His research interests include the history of tourism, Aboriginal history and placenames.

Mark Clendon is an anthropological linguist and independent researcher associated with the University of Adelaide. He has worked extensively with Western Australian languages and published articles on their grammar and symbolism, and on linguistic prehistory. He has transcribed and translated traditional and historical texts for publication in the Western Desert language, as well as Worrorra, Nyangumarta and Warnman. He is currently engaged in a major Nyangumarta oral history project as well as preparing a comprehensive grammar of the north Kimberley language Worrorra.

Luise Hercus is a Visiting Fellow in Linguistics, in the School of Language Studies, The Australian National University. She has been studying Aboriginal languages for the last 47 years, mainly in the Lake Eyre Basin. She has worked with speakers of languages which are now no longer in use, such as Kuyani in South Australia, Malyangapa in NSW and Wemba-Wemba in Victoria/NSW. She has produced grammars and dictionaries for a number of languages, as well as papers on Aboriginal traditional knowledge of songs, mythology, and geography. She edited, with Flavia Hodges and Jane Simpson, *The Land is a Map: Placenames of Indigenous Origin in Australia* (Pandanus Books, Canberra, 2002).

Amanda Kearney is a Lecturer in Anthropology, School of Social Sciences and International Studies, University of New South Wales. She holds a PhD in anthropology from the University of Melbourne, Australia. Her work is interdisciplinary, and facilitates a socially complicated approach to people's relationships with place, memory and identity over time. Amanda's principal research interests are Indigenous Australian cultural engagements with

homelands, material culture studies, and the politics of place. Her current research interests extend into emotional geographies, and intangible cultural expressions.

Richard Kimber is a historian and writer from Alice Springs who has spent the past 30 years working with central desert Aboriginal communities, travelling widely with traditional owners. During his time in central Australia he has worked as a secondary and tertiary teacher. He was the first Sacred Sites officer appointed in the Northern Territory, in 1974. He was senior Papunya Tula Artists Coordinator from 1976 to 1978 and has worked on behalf of various Aboriginal groups to assist in presentation of their land claims and Native Title claims.

Harold Koch is a Visiting Fellow in Linguistics in the School of Language Studies, The Australian National University, where he has recently retired from his teaching position. Harold has been involved in Aboriginal linguistics since the 1970s, after completing a doctorate on comparative Indo-European linguistics at Harvard in 1973. His research has focused on Kaytetye and the other Arandic languages of Central Australia and issues in the historical-comparative linguistics of the Australian languages in general. He co-edited, with Claire Bowern, *Australian languages: classification and the comparative method* (John Benjamins, Amsterdam, 2004). During the last few years he has been investigating the historical documentation on the Indigenous languages and placenames of south-eastern New South Wales.

Laura Kostanski began to research the area of toponymy when undertaking her Honours degree in History at Monash University in 2003. She recently completed her PhD at the University of Ballarat under an Australian Research Council - Postgraduate Award (Industry) project which investigated the restoration of Indigenous toponyms in the Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park in the early 1990s. Her research focuses on exploring the wider cultural and social significance of toponyms and on developing theories to define the attachments, identities and dependencies people form with places and their names. She co-convened, with Ian Clark, the 'Trends in Toponymy Conference' at the University of Ballarat in 26-30 November 2007. Laura is currently employed with the Office of Geographic Names, Victoria.

Dr R. Marika passed away in May 2008, a few days before her fifthieth birthday. Her death is a tragic loss for her family, the Yolngu community and the many people who were enriched by her life. Acknowledgements of her contributions to reconciliation and education included honorary doctorates awarded by Charles Darwin University, The Australian National University, and the Order of Australia. She was a passionate advocate of bilingual education and was instrumental in the development of 'both ways education'. She wrote

numerous scholarly and general articles, and the other two authors of the present chapter benefited immensely from collaborating with her. An obituary appears in the journal *Australian Aboriginal Studies*, 2009, vol. 1.

Patrick McConvell is a Research Fellow in the School of Language Studies, The Australian National University, working on projects on Australian Indigenous kinship, and international comparison of language change among hunter-gatherers. From 2000 to 2008 he was Research Fellow, Language and Society, at AIATSIS, Canberra, and before that taught anthropology at the Northern Territory University and Griffith University, and has worked in Indigenous language programs in schools in Western Australia. He has carried out linguistic and anthropological fieldwork in the Victoria River District of the Northern Territory, and in the Kimberley and Pilbara of Western Australia.

John McEntee gained an interest in linguistics at Pulteney Grammar School, Adelaide. Over the years, this interest in languages was further enhanced with a study of Asian languages, particularly Sanskrit. For over 40 years he has worked in the pastoral industry in the Flinders Ranges, South Australia, and has been privileged to learn about the Aboriginal and European natural history of the area. The knowledge handed down from his Adnyamathanha teachers has led him to develop an in depth understanding of the local people and environment. In 1972, he began recording Adnyamathanha language and culture, and in 1992 published an Adnyamathanha - English dictionary.

Paul Monaghan has a PhD in linguistics from the University of Adelaide, for which he focused on land-language issues in the north-west of South Australia. He has worked in a number of roles in the sphere of Aboriginal language and culture, including as consultant anthropologist at the South Australian Museum, where the contribution to this volume was written. He has also developed a number of Aboriginal language and culture documentation projects on the Far West Coast of South Australia since 2004. Based in Sydney, he is currently engaged in setting up the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Data Archive at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Jim Smith is an independent researcher and works as a heritage and environmental consultant. His Masters degree research was a study of historical non-Aboriginal pathways and routes through the Blue Mountains region and his doctorate a review of the cultural landscapes of Gundungurra people. He is particularly interested in mapping the places where Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal histories intersect. A summary of his recent research is the chapter 'Seeing Gundungurra Country' in *Blue Mountains Dreaming*, Eugene Stockton and John Merriman (eds) 2009, second edition.

Jakelin Troy did a PhD in linguistics at The Australian National University on the history and description of NSW Pidgin. She also worked on reconstructing the language of the Sydney area and in 1993 published *The Sydney Language* as one of the AIATSIS dictionary project books. She has worked for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs NSW, and served for several years as the Director of the NSW Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre. In this capacity she organised a number of workshops on placenames for Aboriginal communities, in conjunction with the NSW Geographical Names Board and the Australian National Placenames Survey.

Michael Walsh has carried out fieldwork in the Northern Territory, mainly in the Darwin-Daly region since 1972. This has been a mixture of academic endeavours as well as consultancies since 1979 mainly relating to Aboriginal land issues. From 1999 he has been involved in the revitalisation of Aboriginal languages in NSW. From 1982 until the end of 2005 he was part of the teaching staff of the Department of Linguistics, University of Sydney. Since then, as an Honorary Associate, he has continued his research interests especially through a large ARC grant involving a team of linguists and musicologists running from 2004 to 2009 (http://azoulay.arts.usyd.edu.au/mpsong/).

Melanie Wilkinson has a PhD in linguistics from the University of Sydney. This was a description of Djambarrpuyngu, one of the Yolngu language varieties. She began working with Yolngu in 1980 and since 1991 has worked as an advisor with schools in the East Arnhem area for the Northern Territory Education Department. During this time her work has focussed on support for Bilingual and Two-Way Learning programs as well as Indigenous Language and Culture programs. She is based in Nhulunbuy/Yirrkala.

Nancy Williams is an anthropologist who received her PhD from the University of California. She has worked with Yolngu people since 1969 and has published books and articles on Yolngu land tenure, dispute management, and cultural and natural resource management. She has taught at the University of Washington, the Northern Territory University, and the University of Queensland, and is currently an Honorary Reader in the School of Social Science at the University of Queensland.

Greg Windsor holds a Bachelor of Spatial Information degree and is currently undertaking postgraduate research through Charles Sturt University focusing on the recognition of community regions within NSW. Greg has worked with the NSW Department of Lands for nearly 20 years. Since June 2000 he has held the position of Secretary of the Geographical Names Board of NSW and is currently the Secretary of the Committee for Geographical Names of Australasia (CGNA). Greg has presented papers for the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), and has presented course material at a

United Nations Training Course in Toponymy. Greg is currently employed as a Senior Project Officer for the Common Spatial Information Initiative (CS2i); his responsibilities include the rationalisation of spatial imagery across government and the review of legislation dealing with addressing.

Acknowledgements

Introduction: Old and new aspects of Indigenous place-naming

HAROLD KOCH AND LUISE HERCUS

This book is a sequel to Hercus, Hodges and Simpson (eds) 2002, *The Land is a Map: Placenames of Indigenous Origin in Australia* (Pandanus Books and Pacific Linguistics, Canberra). As with the earlier volume, many of the papers originated as papers presented to workshops on placenames that were organised at the instigation of the Australian Placename Survey project at Macquarie University and/or the meetings of Geographical Names Boards. Both volumes involve interdisciplinary perspectives on Australian placenames of Indigenous origin.

The "naming and re-naming" in the subtitle highlights the fact that both old/traditional and new/contemporary aspects of place-naming are reflected in these studies. Four general themes can be discerned: (1) the contrast between the traditional systems of toponymy of Indigenous societies and the Anglo-Australian nomenclature that has been overlaid on the Australian landscape; (2) attempts, in several Australian jurisdictions, to discover and/or re-instate Indigenous names for geographic features, including newly formed entities such as national parks; (3) interpretations and evaluations of older documentary sources on Indigenous placenames in the light of modern methods and insights; (4) the continuing role of placenames in the memory of Indigenous social groups.

The papers are organised on a roughly geographical basis, beginning with Sydney and continuing in a clockwise circle around the continent. The first section includes five papers on New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. The first paper, by Val Attenbrow, discusses Aboriginal placenames for some 90 locations around Port Jackson and Botany Bay that were recorded by officers of the First Fleet and early surveyors – whether or not they were adopted into the English nomenclature system (such as Parramatta, Woolloomooloo, Bondi, etc.). The paper discusses each of the written sources (including what is known about the Aboriginal people who supplied the information), issues of local identification of particular sites, spellings, etc. The paper includes maps and

complete lists of placenames. The following paper by Jakelin Troy and Michael Walsh discusses issues in the reinstating of some of these same placenames. As an exercise in applied philology, it describes the practical problems of deciding on the phonetic content of the names that are attested in a range of different spellings, and discusses issues in deciding on a workable spelling to institutionalise as the placenames are adopted into official nomenclature, as is made possible in the recent policy of the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales. This policy is put in perspective by Greg Windsor's paper, which describes the policy, its background, and planned future initiatives.

Jim Smith's paper provides considerable detail on the toponymy of a small area, not far from Sydney in the Blue Mountains territory of the Gundungurra, using the valuable documentation provided by the recently discovered papers of grazier Alfred Leonard Bennett, which contain plentiful information supplied by Werriberrie, also known as Billy Russell, a knowledgeable Gundungurra elder (c. 1835-1914). This information gives us a glimpse into the rich mythology that lies behind Aboriginal toponymy. It also provides a healthy corrective to popular modern explanations given for famous sites such as Katoomba.

What follows, in Harold Koch's contribution, is an exposition of the methodology of reconstructing the pronunciation and meaning of Aboriginal placenames that derive from languages no longer spoken and imperfectly recorded. Several senses of the 'meaning' of placenames are disentangled (location of the site, etymology or literal meaning, etiology or story behind the name). The reconstruction methods that are needed come from the disciplines of history and linguistics. The latter supplies techniques to explain and deal with vagaries in the transmission of pronunciation across the linguistic gulf that divided European recorders from Aboriginal speakers. If these techniques are successfully applied, it should be possible to account for most of the spelling variants that are found. Examples are supplied from the region around Canberra and, more widely, south-eastern New South Wales—including a discussion of the name 'Canberra' itself.

Three papers deal with Victoria. Laura Kostanski studies a collection of popular twentieth century books on Aboriginal placenames. She analyses the ideology behind the use of Aboriginal placenames by Anglo-Australians and their role in forging a national identity in post-federation times. She demonstrates that there was little concern with the authenticity of these expropriated names in their Aboriginal context. Laura Kostanski and Ian Clark further discuss colonial uses of Indigenous placenames – the imposition of the colonisers' understanding of geography on top of a land populated with prior Indigenous names. They use the term "Anglo-Indigenous" for placenames of Indigenous origin that were used for colonial cartographic purposes. They introduce the metaphor of the landscape as a palimpsest, i.e. a parchment from which the original writing

has been partially erased to make room for another text. They then proceed to discuss the recent Victorian policy of favouring the bestowal of traditional Indigenous names on unnamed topographical features and even features already named (as an extra name). In particular they discusses modern attempts (from 1989) to name sites within the Grampians National Park – expounding on the approach to finding names, conflicts that have arisen, and proposals to evaluate the pedigrees of proposed Indigenous names. Ian Clark's paper is concerned to show that when documenting Aboriginal placenames in regions such as western Victoria, where Aboriginal languages no longer prevail, it is still possible to reconstruct something of the microtoponymy that characterises Aboriginal languages, thanks to fairly detailed recording of placenames by early observers such as G. A. Robinson, Dawson, and Stone.

The third section includes five papers dealing with South Australia and Central Australia. Paul Monaghan shows how Norman Tindale was a pioneer of the detailed study of placenames. He examines a section of Tindale's large manuscript data for the southern part of South Australia. He describes Tindale's sources and critically assesses his methods. John McEntee presents a study of Lake Callabonna, formerly called Lake Mulligan. Relying on information derived from Adnyamathanha people, he argues that the name Mulligan is of Aboriginal (rather than Irish) origin, and supplies the likely meaning and its justification. Luise Hercus' first contribution tells us what can be known about the traditional Arabana placenames in an area to the west and north-west of Lake Eyre – whether they have been retained on European maps, were superseded by European names, or remain unnamed on modern maps. She provides both the literal meaning of the placenames and the mythological stories behind the names. Worthy of particular mention is the number of places that come from myths about noxious insects – ants, lice, mosquitoes and march flies. Hercus' second paper deals not with particular sites but with the nomenclature of larger areas in the far north-east of South Australia. She shows that Aboriginal people traditionally labelled tracts of country, not only according to the tribal groups that occupy them ('Wangkungurru country'), but also from the point of view of natural features or landforms ('high sandhill country') as well as mythology ('territory of the Two Boys'). Richard Kimber closely analyses some early records concerning places in Central Australia, then proceeds to give us his reflections on several issues of traditional knowledge and naming of places based on his own decades-long interaction with Aboriginal people from desert areas.

The final section contains six papers on northern areas of Australia. Some of these deal largely with linguistic aspects of placenames. Others focus on the social significance of placenames to the Aboriginal communities.

Claire Bowern gives details of the naming system used among the Bardi people of the north-west point of the Dampier Peninsula in northern Western Australia.

At the highest level of hierarchical organisation are "area names"; within each area there are a number of booroo ('camps') associated with particular "families"; each booroo in turn contains multiple specifically named localities within it. She further discusses the etymological sources of placenames – whether they derive from common nouns, are borrowed from foreign languages, are said to have been bestowed by culture heroes, or are otherwise associated with mythological events – and shows how placenames are used in verbal interaction and how they function in the grammar of the language.

Mark Clendon describes the names of 'countries', or clan estates, in the territory of the Worora-speaking people of Western Australia's north-west Kimberley region, where clan names are derived from the names of these countries. He describes the persistent and immutable nature of placenames that survive even when their associated lineages die out. This is possible because of permanent links between the land and its mythology, which are illustrated by the analysis of an important North Kimberley myth which provides a mandate for traditionally-observed legal processes of succession to vacant country.

Patrick McConvell examines the use the locative ('at') case form in the citation and neutral form of placenames of languages of Victoria River District of the Northern Territory. A common feature of languages in this area is the use of expressions that literally mean 'exactly at (placename)'. Given the fact that this naming pattern is shared between languages regardless of whether they belong to the Pama-Nyungan family of languages, the question arises as to whether the distribution of the pattern across languages is the result of the historic adoption by speakers of one group of languages of the pattern used by those of another linguistic group. This paper is an exercise in the exploration of linguistic and cultural prehistory using the evidence of placenames.

The paper by Melanie Wilkinson, (the late) Dr R. Marika and Nancy M. Williams follows the history of the interaction between traditional Yolngu and European understandings of place with respect to a small geographic area on the Gove Peninsula in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory. It describes the traditional cosmogony-based naming system of the Yolngu people, names bestowed by Macassan and European (Dutch and English) explorers, and naming associated with the establishment of a mining industry since the 1960s (including the name 'Gove'). The paper concentrates on the documentation of disputes over names such as Gove and Nhulunbuy, but also names within the new township. This paper places in sharp relief the differences between traditional Indigenous and introduced Anglo-Australian naming practices and philosophies. Also included is a fairly comprehensive description of linguistic characteristics of placenames in Yolngu languages and how these differ from English placenames. In this paper

too we are reminded that it was a dispute over precisely this piece of land that contributed, via the famous bark petition, to the establishment of Land Rights legislation in the Northern Territory.

John Bradley and Amanda Kearney explore what they call the 'emotional geography' of an economically and mythologically important place called Manankurra. This 'big place' continues to occupy a central place in the minds and discourse of Yanyuwa people who now reside 60 kilometres away at Borroloola, Northern Territory. This site is important as the source of the of the cycad palm, which was deposited there by their tiger shark spirit ancestor. The continuing relevance of this place in story, song, and social identity is explored, as well as the actions of the Yanyuwa to maintain and re-establish links with this homeland.

Paul Black analyses all the placenames recorded during research on the Kurtjar language of south-western Cape York Peninsula in the late 1970s. He describes the linguistic structure of those names that can be interpreted, in terms of: derivation from simple common nouns, names formed by compounding and/or affixation, names that include a locative ('at') suffix, and names that consist of descriptive clauses. Special attention is given to the variant forms of the locative suffix that occurs in placenames. Altogether 75 names are discussed.

The papers assembled here give a general picture of how placenames stemming from the distant past of Aboriginal cultures – but preserved through their adoption into the Anglo-Australian toponymy system, through early recording by interested educated Europeans, or through the memory of Aboriginal people – are now, after some 200 years of European presence, coming to be understood, appreciated, and in some cases restored to official recognition.

NSW & ACT

CHAPTER 1

Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson and Botany Bay, New South Wales, Australia
Sources and uncertainties

VAL ATTENBROW

Introduction

Around Sydney Harbour (Port Jackson[1]) and Botany Bay and the intervening coastline (an area I refer to as coastal Sydney), Aboriginal names were recorded for over 100 places, though names can be linked with any certainty to only 89 locations. For the other names the specific locations to which they belong are presently unknown or unresolved. Some names, such as Bondi, Parramatta and Woolloomooloo, were adopted by the colonists and are still used today, but for many other locations the placenames given by the British colonists persisted.

The lists of Aboriginal placenames included in this paper (Tables 1.1 and 1.2, Figures 1.1 and 1.2) were compiled as part of my research into the Aboriginal occupation of the Sydney region (Attenbrow 2002[2]). These placenames relate to specific locations, i.e. geographical features, and are not the names of clan or language group territories. They were originally recorded or first reported by a number of people over a period of 123 years – from 1788 to 1911. Because of this long history and the contexts of recording, I encountered several problems and issues in compiling the list of placenames; they concerned: ensuring the names had an Aboriginal origin, which involved identifying when and by whom they were first reported; identifying clearly an association between a placename and a specific location; and how the names should be written. However, before discussing these issues, the historical context in which the names were recorded is briefly outlined.

Figure 1.1: Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson and Botany Bay from historical sources. See Table 1.1 for key to placenames and sources.
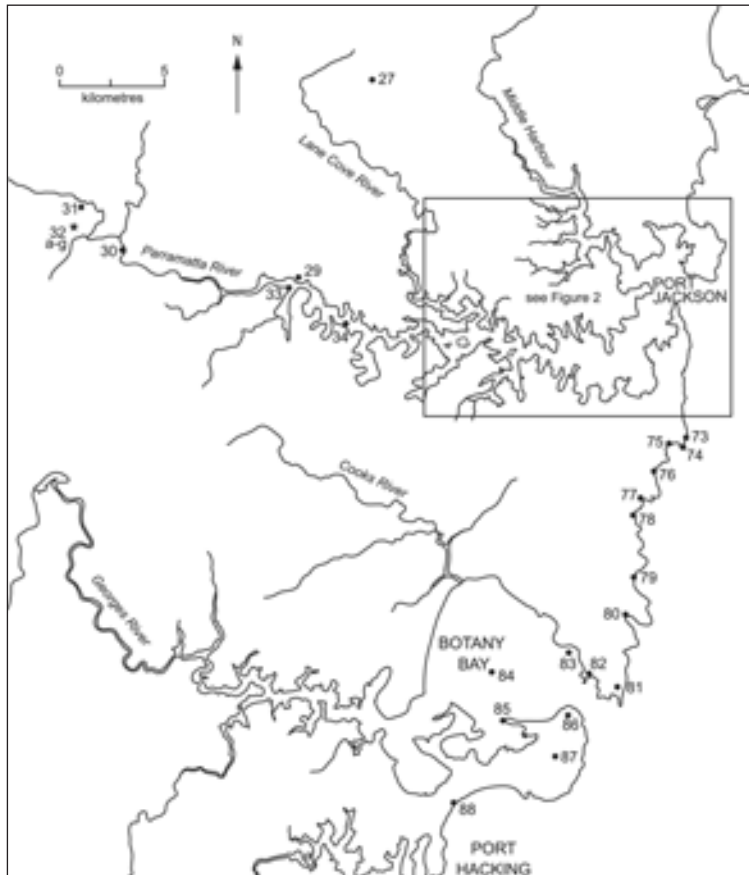
A brief historical background

In January 1788 the British First Fleet landed on Australia's south-eastern coast. Captain Arthur Phillip was to establish a penal colony, and on board the 11 ships were over 1000 people – marines, officers and other officials, as well as convicts (Phillip 1790a[1892]: 298). The first settlement was established in Port Jackson, in a small bay they called Sydney Cove. The initial reactions of the local Aboriginal people to the British were mixed – sometimes openly antagonistic with shouting and angry gesticulations and at other times curiously friendly and showing them to freshwater (Bradley 1786-1792[1969]: 59; Tench 1789: 53-54[1979: 35]). At first the local inhabitants[3] came in and looked around the colonists' camp but then they almost totally avoided the area.

Figure 1.2: Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson from historical sources. See Table 1.1 for key to placenames and sources.
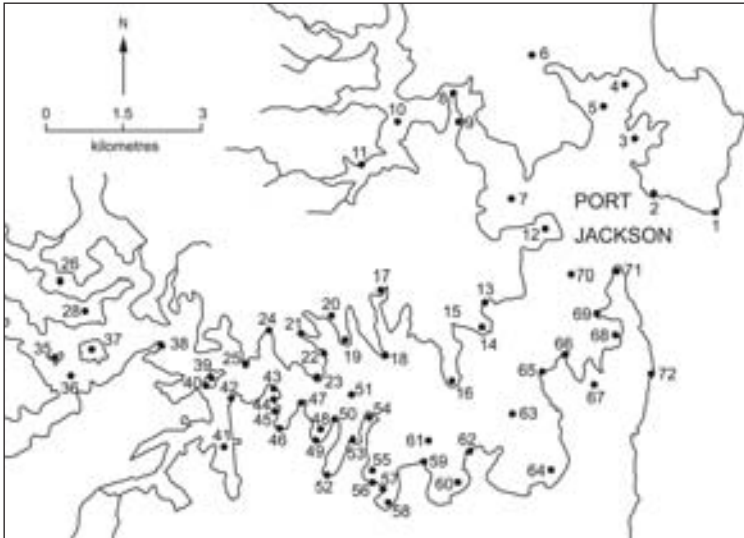
Phillip had hoped that the local inhabitants would freely visit the colonists' settlement, or that a family would reside with them so they could learn the local language, enter into a dialogue and learn more about their way of life. However, this situation, in which meaningful dialogue was absent, continued for almost two years (Phillip 1790b[1892: 308]; Tench 1789: 136[1979: 73]). As a last resort, a young man called Arabanoo was captured in December 1788 and brought to live in Sydney town (Phillip 1790b[1892: 308]). However, Arabanoo died in April 1789 during an epidemic thought to be smallpox. During the epidemic, a young boy and girl, Nanbaree and Booroong (Arbaroo), were brought into the town (White 1790[1962: 19]). Both survived the disease and acted as informants and communicators between the two groups for some time (Collins 1798[1975: 112]). The epidemic, however, had a disastrous impact on the local population – in just over a year, well over half the original inhabitants of coastal Sydney were estimated to have died (Phillip 1790b[1892: 308]).

In November 1789, Phillip captured two men Colbee and Bennelong (Phillip 1790a[1892: 300]), though both escaped shortly afterwards. Despite these and subsequent events, a strong and lasting association developed between both men and the colonists. The subsequent series of events, during which Phillip was speared in September 1790, was the major turning point in relationships between colonists and local inhabitants, and also marked the end of the local inhabitants' independence and self-reliance (Hunter 1793[1968]: 204-205).

In the early 1790s, the colony expanded rapidly – demographically and geographically. The occupied lands no longer provided a viable subsistence base for the surviving Aboriginal population who could not continue a traditional way of life in the areas settled by the British. As a result of being dispossessed from their lands, many people left the coastal Sydney area. By 1800, few of the original inhabitants of Sydney Harbour lived around its shores. However, as relatively peaceful relations came to exist between the colonists and those who remained, people from neighbouring regions came to live in Sydney town and its associated settlements. These included Bungaree and his family who came from Broken Bay. People who now camped together came from much wider and/ or different geographical areas than in pre-colonial times and group composition, in terms of the clans and language groups that people came from, was quite different. Camps existed in many different places in the Sydney region until the early 1900s – including the foreshores of Sydney Harbour, Botany Bay and the intervening coastline.

Figure 1.3: Port Jackson – Botany Bay: Number of Aboriginal placenames recorded in each period.
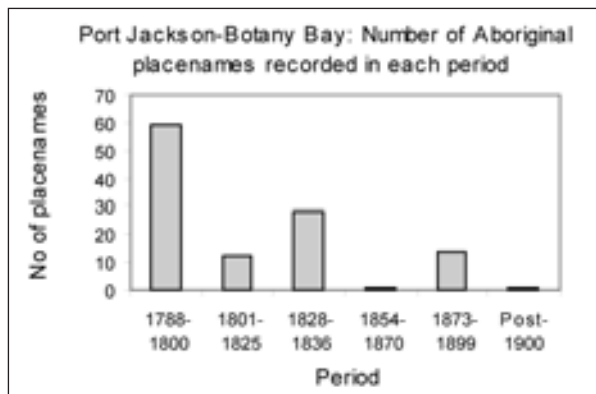
The Aboriginal placenames

In the 18th and 19th centuries, numerous Aboriginal placenames were recorded for locations in coastal Sydney. Eighty-nine locations are listed in Table 1.1 and shown on Figures 1.1 and 1.2, but there are many more recorded placenames than locations listed as some locations have more than one name recorded for them. Insufficient information is available in the historical documents which I consulted for me to definitely associate 18 placenames with specific locations and these are not included in Figures 1.1 and 1.2 and Table 1.1, but are listed separately in Table 1.2.

Some Aboriginal placenames, such as Woolloomooloo, Bondi, Coogee, Maroubra, Parramatta and Toongabbie, continued in use, whilst for other locations a placename given by the British colonists has persisted and their Aboriginal name has remained known to only a few local residents, historians, linguists and other researchers. However, in 2005, based on information in Tables 1.1 and 1.2, the NSW Geographical Names Board Dual Naming Project re-introduced Aboriginal placenames to several locations in Port Jackson which since British colonisation had been known only by a British placename (Attenbrow 2006; Jopson 2003; Skelsey 2004; *NSW Government Gazette* no. 3, 7 January 2005: 40-41).

The Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson and Botany Bay were recorded at different times over a period of 123 years by a number of people. Except for one placename, the earliest references I found for each of the Aboriginal placenames were in documents dating from 1788 to 1899. After 1899, although numerous lists of placenames were published, only one additional placename is reported for the Port Jackson–Botany Bay area. The documentary sources in which the Aboriginal placenames have been found are discussed below, as well as some of the problems and uncertainties that exist because of their history of recording. All reported placenames have been written as they appear in the sources with their diacritics and no attempt has been made to identify how they should have been written.

Documentary sources

First Fleet officers began recording Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson and Botany Bay in 1788 – the first year of British colonisation. The recording of other placenames continued, but it appears that the first documented reporting or acknowledgment of an Aboriginal placename for a specific location occurred principally in three periods: from 1788 to 1800, 1828 to 1836, and 1873 to 1899 (Table 1.3, Figure 1.3). However, it should be noted that the date of the first identified written record of a placename is unlikely to be the time when the placename first came into use.

1788–1800: First Fleet records

Just over half the placenames (60) were recorded initially by officers of the First Fleet between 1788 and 1800 during various interactions with the local inhabitants (Table 1.3). Three of the earliest manuscripts that include Aboriginal placenames were written between 1790 and 1792. They contain much information about the Sydney language including extensive vocabularies, an orthography, comments about grammar with examples of short sentences,

and people's names as well as placenames (Figures 1.4 to 1.6). Two of these manuscripts were compiled by Second Lieutenant William Dawes (1790, 1790-1791[4]). His 1790 manuscript also has a rough sketch map on the inside front cover with Aboriginal placenames for several locations near Sydney Cove (Keith Smith in Jopson 2002). The third document (Vocabulary… c.1790-1792) contains word-lists which have been attributed to Governor Arthur Phillip, Captain David Collins and Captain John Hunter (Troy 1993: 45; 1994a: 14-15). Most of the placenames recorded in the period 1788–1800 come from this third document.

Some of the placenames in these three documents are mentioned in other reports, letters and publications of the time: David Collins (1798[1975], 1802[1971]), Governor Arthur Phillip (1790b[1892], 1792[1892], in Hunter 1793[1968]), Daniel Southwell (1788[1893]) and Watkin Tench (1793[1979]). However, Phillip's report of 2 October 1792 and Southwell's letter of 12 July 1788 add two further placenames – 'Toon-gab-be' west of Parramatta, and 'Woo-la-ra' for the area around 'The Look-out' on South Head, respectively. Although most of the Aboriginal placenames are reported in word-lists (e.g. Dawes 1790, 1790-1791; Vocabulary … c.1790-1792) or included in descriptions of events of the time (e.g. Collins 1798[1975]; Tench 1793[1979]), a few (Parramatta, Toongabbe, Wooloo Mooloo) were marked on maps as well (e.g. Grimes 1796; Hunter 1796, 1798). These were Aboriginal placenames that had been adopted by the British for their own settlements.

1801–1825: D'Arcy Wentworth and others

The principal written document known for this period is amongst the 'Papers of D'Arcy Wentworth…' which have dates ranging from 1801 to 1825. Unfortunately, the list of placenames is undated. The 18 placenames, written on a single page, include seven which were previously recorded (though there are variations in spelling and sometimes in location to earlier reports) as well as eleven new names (Wentworth 1801-1825).

Other people who recorded Aboriginal placenames in this period include Francois Peron (1809: 275) who visited Port Jackson in 1802 with the French Baudin expedition, and the artist Joseph Lycett (1824). Both refer to the location Woolloomooloo – as 'Wallamoula' and 'Wooloomooloo' respectively. In this period, maps produced by James Meehan, the Assistant Surveyor of Lands (1807, 1811) indicate Aboriginal placenames in the vicinity of Sydney Cove.

Figure 1.4: Example of information recorded in Dawes 1790-1791: 26, including the names of places and Aboriginal people from whom he learnt the Sydney language.

Figure 1.5: List of Aboriginal placenames as recorded in Dawes 1790-1791: 44.

Figure 1.6: List of Aboriginal placenames as recorded in Vocabulary 1790-1792: 37-38.

1828–1836: James Larmer and others

James Larmer is the principal source of Aboriginal placenames for this period. He arrived from England to work with the NSW Surveyor General's Department in 1829 and retired in 1853. His list of 'Native names of points of land in Port Jackson' was reproduced in two typescripts (Larmer 1832[1853]; Stack 1906), and two articles published at the end of the 19th century (Larmer 1832[1898]; Aboriginal Names of Places… 1900). In Table 1.1, to save repetition, references for the 34 placenames in Larmer's published lists are included for only the 1898 publication, though there are variations in the spelling of some names in each of the documents. In the 1898 version, this is due to damage to the document from which it was copied (which was acknowledged). Other variations are of a nature which suggest they are transcription or typographical errors. Larmer's published list of 34 placenames included 24 which were not in earlier documents.

Stack (1906: 46, 51–53) includes other placenames which he says were "taken from notes made by Mr Surveyor Larmer in 1833". Nine of them are in the Port Jackson–Botany Bay area and include the names 'Coogee' and 'Bondi', which also appear in Larmer's fieldbook sketches as 'Great Coogee' and 'Bondi Bay' (Larmer 1829: 58, 64). 'Wolomoloo' also appears several times on sketch plans in Larmer's 1830 fieldbook (p. 8, 16-21) as well as 'Woolloomooloo Estate' (p. 67).

The names 'Bondi'/'Bondi Bay', 'Coogee' and 'Wolomoloo' are shown on maps produced in this period – Berni 1828; 'Map of the Town of Sydney' 1831 and 1833; Caporn 1836.

Of the 34 placenames in Larmer's published list, 32 are also documented in the papers of Major T. L. Mitchell (n.d.) with some variations in spelling. A note in the State Records NSW catalogue for Location SZ1002 suggests Mitchell copied Larmer's list.

Jervis (1945: 399) says Larmer's 1832 list included the Aboriginal name of Careening Cove as 'Weeawyai', as well as 'Weye Weye' for Careening Cove Head. However, neither Larmer's 1832[1898] published list nor the typescripts (Larmer 1832: 36-37; Stack 1906: 49) include 'Weeawyai' (only 'Weye Weye' as Careening Cove Head). Interestingly, 'Weeawyai' is recorded in Mitchell's list (n.d.: 420) whereas 'Weye Weye' is missing. The original of Larmer's 1832 list was not available at the time of this research.

1854–1870: W. A. Miles and Joules Joubert

Only one previously unrecorded Aboriginal placename was documented in this period. Joules Joubert, a property owner and resident of Hunters Hill, wrote in a letter dated 27 October 1860 that he had "at last found the Native name of the Peninsula … – '*MocoBoula* two waters'". This is the only document in which this name occurs. The name 'Coogee', although used some 20 years earlier by Larmer, appears only now to be acknowledged by W. A. Miles (1854: 41) as an Aboriginal placename.

An undated County of Cumberland Parish Map for Willoughby incorporated Aboriginal placenames from Larmer's list. Comparison with other dated maps suggests it was made in the 1860s.

1873–1899: Numerous publications

It was not until the end of the 19th century that many more Aboriginal placenames were reported. In contrast to earlier lists, most of which were hand-written manuscripts, these lists are published in journals such as the *Town and Country Journal* and the *Science of Man* (later *Australasian Anthropological Journal*) as well as local newspapers e.g. the *Sydney Morning Herald*. In this period Larmer's 1832 list was published in *Journal of the Royal Society of NSW* (1898). Also, Obed West, a local resident, land-owner and businessman, included Aboriginal placenames in a series of small articles for the *Sydney Morning Herald* which were subsequently published in booklet form (West n.d.[c.1882]; Marriott 1988: xiv).

Whilst these late 19th century lists repeat placenames given in earlier sources, they include an additional 15 placenames not found in earlier documents, particularly for locations along the ocean coastline between Port Jackson and Botany Bay. Again there are variations in spelling and some uncertain provenances. Several lists and articles were written by the Hon. George Thornton (1892[1893], 1896, 1899), as well as 'Sydney Cove' (1878a, 1878b, 1878c) which may have been the pseudonym for Obed West. (Marriott 1988: 21-22). A map produced by W. H. Huntingdon in 1873 is acknowledged as a source of information about Aboriginal placenames in Port Jackson Aboriginal Names (1910), but this map has not been relocated.

Post-1899

Of the many lists of placenames published after 1899, only one additional Aboriginal placename for the coastal Sydney area appears: 'Mugga' for Long Bay (Metropolitan district) (Aboriginal Names and Meanings 1911: 214).

Aboriginal sources

None of the authors made direct statements about the source of their information. However, the entries in William Dawes' manuscripts (1790, 1790-1791) show clearly that he obtained information about the language spoken around Port Jackson direct from conversations with several local Aboriginal people who were frequent visitors to the British settlement. (e.g. Figure 1.4; see Dawes 1790-1791: 808, also 812, 813) These people included Bennelong and his wife Barangaroo, as well as Patyegaráng, a young woman who was Dawes' chief informant and teacher (Troy 1992).

It is tempting to suggest some of the placenames in the manuscript referred to as Vocabulary... (c.1790-1792) were given to the British colonists by the Aboriginal man called Arabanoo (who the colonists called Manly, until they learnt his name). My speculation is based on a passage written by Watkin Tench for New Years Day 1789:

> 1st January 1789. To-day being new-year's-day, most of the officers were invited to the governor's table: Manly dined heartily on fish and roasted pork;…

> To convince his countrymen that he [Arabanoo] had received no injury from us, the governor took him in a boat down the harbour, that they might see and converse with him: … At length they began to converse. Our ignorance of the language prevented us from knowing much of what

passed; it was, however, easily understood that his friends asked him why he did not jump overboard, and rejoin them. He only sighed, and pointed to the fetter on his leg, by which he was bound.

In going down the harbour he had described the names by which they distinguish its numerous creeks and headlands: he was now often heard to repeat that of *Weè-rong* (Sydney), which was doubtless to inform his countrymen of the place of his captivity; and perhaps invite them to rescue him. (Tench 1793: 13[1979: 142]) (my underlining)

Certainly, most placenames recorded in the manuscript are for bays and headlands. Flynn (1997: 28–29) argues on similar grounds that it was Bennelong who told King of the eight placenames between Parramatta and Prospect (nos. 32a–g in Table 1.1, Figure 1.1) as they walked there together in April 1790.

Placenames in publications by the First Fleet officers would have been known to the 19th century sources, though they are unlikely to have known of the manuscripts by Dawes (1790, 1790-1791) and Vocabulary… (c.1790-1792), which probably went back to England with Dawes in 1791 and with another First Fleet officer in 1792 respectively, and were only found in the School of Oriental and African Studies Library in 1972. Larmer's unpublished and published lists (1832[1853], 1832[1898]; Aboriginal Names of Places… 1900; Stack 1906), acknowledge the Aboriginal origin of the placenames but there are no details about the people who provided information. Larmer would have been amongst the surveyors who, in 1829, were instructed by Major Thomas Mitchell to record Aboriginal placenames, probably in response to a communication of 23 June 1828 from the Colonial Secretary (Havard 1934: 121; Millin 1945: 314). Larmer would have met Aboriginal people as he was surveying the coastline, and he may have seen names on earlier maps. Stack (1906: 46) notes that Larmer "had a wide knowledge of the Aborigines in the Coastal districts in the neighbourhood adjacent to Sydney".

Of the late 19th century authors, George Thornton and Obed West both mention they had contacts with Aboriginal people (Swancott n.d.: 11; Thornton 1892[1893]: 2, 5, 1896 in Organ 1990: 358; West n.d.[c.1882]: 29). Even though their writings date to the late 19th century, these men lived in Sydney during the early part of the century. George Thornton MLC was born in 1819 and died in 1901. He was a member of a committee that, in 1858, distributed blankets to Aboriginal people in the Sydney area. In the early 1880s he was a councillor of the NSW Aborigines Protection Association and a founding member of the NSW Aborigines Protection Board. Obed West was born in 1807 and died in 1891. He lived in the east Sydney district all his life and wrote several journal and newspaper articles on Sydney's early history. Huntingdon came to Sydney much later, but was associated with the Rev. William Ridley, a missionary to

Aboriginal communities in the Sydney region in the late 1800s (Port Jackson Aboriginal Names 1910: 34; Huntingdon 1911: 167-168). In discussing the origin of the name 'Woolloomooloo', Huntingdon (1911: 167) mentioned 'Ricketty Dick' as one of the Aboriginal people with whom the 'old colonists' spoke. Ricketty Dick, who died in 1863, was a member of a community that lived around Sydney town, Rose Bay and South Head and included Queen Gooseberry (one of Bungaree's wives) (Jervis and Kelly c.1960: 66-67; Attenbrow 2002: 135).

By 1800, after the original populations were drastically reduced in number, particularly by the 'smallpox' epidemic but also other diseases, dispossession and hostilities, there appear to have been few of the original inhabitants of lower Port Jackson living around its shores. Many people in the groups who camped around Port Jackson in the early 1800s were from other areas. For example, Bungaree and his family, who lived on the northern shore of Port Jackson, came from the northern side of Broken Bay, some 35 kilometres to the north. These people from other areas may have learnt the placenames from survivors of the Sydney clans. However, it is also possible that from this time on some Aboriginal placenames recorded for Port Jackson were given by people who did not originally come from the Port Jackson or Botany Bay area, and who perhaps gave locations or localities their own placenames.

The apparent clustering in the recording of placenames in different periods may also be due to the differential survival of written documents, to date. Future researchers may find earlier sources for placenames presently known only in post-1800s documents, as well as finding reports of other placenames.

Problems and uncertainties

Several problems were encountered, particularly when attempting to associate the Aboriginal placenames with specific localities, or in deciding how they should be written down. With regard to the latter, it was decided to include all spelling variations in Tables 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4 as they were written in the sources. Problems and areas of uncertainty arose for a variety of reasons, as outlined below.

1. Where an Aboriginal placename was recorded several times by different authors, each author often gave a different spelling (e.g. nos. 39, 46, 47, 52, 62, 64 and 77-78 in Table 1.1). This was perhaps due to the recorders' varying levels of linguistic expertise and experience, to the way individual recorders heard the placenames spoken, or the orthography they used. William Dawes' orthography in his 1790-1791 manuscript indicates he had some language training.

2. In some early manuscripts (e.g. Figure 1.5, see Dawes 1790-1791: 817; also 1790: 772 (inside front cover); Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 360; Wentworth 1801-1825) the handwriting is indistinct or illegible, which makes it difficult to determine the spelling of some names; e.g. Table 1.1 nos. 3 and 7, and Table 1.2.

3. The sketch map on the inside cover of Dawes' 1790 notebook has seven placenames written on it. Only two of the placenames on the sketch are well-provenanced in other documents (the island marked as 'Memel' or 'Mιmιl', i.e. Goat Island, and 'Dara' or 'Tara' (Dawes Point). Suggested locations for the other placenames are thus based on comparing the sketch map with other early maps and noting their relative position of other named points of land (Table 1.1 nos. 39, 40, 42, 44, Table 1.2).

4. A seemingly erroneous association is given between an Aboriginal placename and a British placename, both of which are more securely associated with other locations, e.g. in Wentworth's 1801-1825 list 'Warang' is associated with Rose Bay rather than Sydney Cove (Table 1.4).

5. The British placename, or description of a location associated with an Aboriginal placename, is ambiguous or not specific enough to identify the exact location to which it belongs (Table 1.2).

6. Some early British placenames have changed and their current names not yet identified so that the Aboriginal placename cannot be matched to a current place (Figure 1.6, Table 1.2).

7. More than one location has the same British placename, e.g. 'Breakfast Point' (at Mortlake, Balmain and Greenwich) and 'Long Bay' (in Middle Harbour and Malabar) (Table 1.1 nos. 10 and 34 respectively).

8. More than one Aboriginal name was recorded for a location, e.g. 'Gomora' and 'Tumbulong' for Darling Harbour, and 'Pannerong' and 'Ginnagullah' for Rose Bay (Table 1.1 nos. 41 and 64 respectively).

9. Aboriginal names, which may be variant spellings of the same name, are associated with more than one location, e.g. 'Kayoomay', 'Kay-ye-my' and 'Kay-yee-my' with Collins Cove and Manly Bay (Table 1.1 no. 4).

10. Variations in spelling due to transcription or typographical errors during copying and publishing, e.g. in the various versions of Larmer's list (1832[1853], 1832[1898], Aboriginal Names of Places… 1900; Stack 1906; and Mitchell n.d.). In Larmer's 1832[1898] published version, it is noted that the copy from which they were transcribing was damaged and some names were incomplete; this may be the reason for 'Yarrandab' for Macleay Point in the 1898 version but 'Yarrandabby' elsewhere, as it is listed in Larmer's unpublished 1832[1853] typescript as 'Yarrandabby' (Table 1.1 no. 57). However, for other placenames, variations may be due to transcription errors. 'Givea' given as the name for the south head of

Botany Bay in Stack (1906: 52) may be mis-copying of 'Gwea', i.e. 'iv' for 'w' (Table 1.1 no. 88), which Collins (1798[1975]: 453) said was the name for the southern shore of Botany Bay, and today is usually accepted as the country of a clan, the Gweagal.

11. Incorrect recollections by an author, particularly the late 19th century authors, e.g. the north head of Botany Bay is given as 'Bunnabee' by Larmer (in Stack 1906: 52) but as 'Bunnabi', 'Bunnabee' and 'Bunnabri' at different times by Thornton (1892[1893]: 7, 1896 in Organ 1990: 358, and 1899: 210 respectively) (Table 1.1 no. 81). Similarly, are 'Yaranabe' and 'Eurambie' incorrect recollections of 'Yarrandabby', although the former two names were recorded as the placename for Darling Point, and the latter for Macleay Point (Table 1.1 nos. 59 and 57 respectively).

Tables 1.1, 1.2 and 1.4 include all placenames, variations in spellings and locations that I found in documents that date from 1788 to 1850, but only the first occurrence of additional placenames in later documents up to and including 1911. Issues relating to some individual placenames are discussed below (the number beside the name indicates the location number in Table 1.1 and on Figures 1 and 2).

Booridiow-o-gule (34)

'Booridiow-o-gule' is associated with Breakfast Point in Vocabulary… (c.1790-1792: 362) (Figure 1.6) which may be present-day Breakfast Point at Mortlake on the Parramatta River, but could also be Yurulbin (present-day Longnose Point, Birchgrove) or Greenwich Point. Bradley (1786-1792[1969]: 76) referred to a point where breakfast was cooked during a survey of the upper part of Port Jackson on 5 February 1788 as Breakfast Point; the index to the facsimile edition suggests the point was "Long Nose Point" [sic] in Port Jackson (Bradley 1786-1792[1969]: 462). However, Breakfast Point is also marked as the name of Greenwich Point on an 1827 'Chart of part of New South Wales' by Joseph Cross (Russell 1970: 49).

Cooroowal (11)

In 1899 'Cooroowal' was listed as the Aboriginal name for a place called 'Fig Tree Point' (Thornton 1899: 210). Later, it was listed against 'Fig Tree Point, Middle Harbour', without explanation (Aboriginal names… 1908: 128). However, it is also possible that 'Fig Tree Point' as listed by Thornton referred to Sommerville Point, Balmain, which earlier on was also called 'Figtree Point' (Millin 1945: 323). 'Cooroowal' could even be outside the Sydney region as the 1899 and later lists included placenames that were in the Illawarra region as well as the Sydney

region. Confusingly, in Aboriginal names… (1910: 137) it is listed as "*Cooroowal* (wild fig tree), Fig-tree Point (Middle Harbour), Wollongong", but this list also has Wollongong beside the names Cubba Cubbi (Middle Head) and Currungli (Spring Cove) which are definitely Port Jackson names/places.

Gomora (41)

'Gomora' was recorded as the Aboriginal placename for Long Cove in Vocabulary… (c.1790-1792: 362). David Collins' (1798[1975]: 17, 194) descriptions suggest 'Long Cove' was the name for Darling Harbour up to September 1792 at least, and Port Jackson Aboriginal names (1910: 35) says Darling Harbour's "original names were Long Cove and Cockle Harbor".[5]

By the 1840s 'Long Cove' was the name of present-day Iron Cove (maps by W. Meadows-Brownrigg c.1846-1851 and James Willis 1868, reproduced in Kelly and Crocker 1977: 26-28). On these maps Darling Harbour is marked as Darling Harbour. In 1945 Millin (1945: 323) said that "Iron Cove is sometimes called Long Cove" (see also Jervis 1945: 394). It seems most likely that 'Gomora' was the name for present-day Darling Harbour (which had several name changes), rather than Iron Cove as I suggested in Attenbrow 2002: Table 2.1.

Gurugal (14)

Larmer (1832[1898: 229]) and Mitchell (n.d.: 420) listed 'Gurugal' and 'Gurrugal' respectively as the name for a location called 'West Head'. Today, the name 'West Head' makes one think of West Head in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park overlooking Broken Bay, which is associated with the name 'Garigal'. However, in these 19th century sources the name is firmly listed as a place in Port Jackson. It is unlikely that 'Gurugal' is a different spelling of the name Dawes (1790–1791: 817) and Vocabulary… (c.1790–1792: 361) record for 'Inner North Head' – i.e. 'Garangal' and 'Car-rang-gel' respectively (as suggested in Attenbrow 2002: Table 2.1), as they are probably different phonologically (Koch pers. comm. 2006).

Millen (1945: 332) has 'Gurugal' as the name for Chowder Head, and in the context of other headlands at the mouth of Port Jackson being called 'North', 'South' and 'Middle Head', it is possible that 'West Head' was an earlier name for Chowder Head, as it is 'west' of the others. Millen notes that Georges Head was already named by 1801, so in 1832 if Larmer knew 'Gurugal' was the name for Georges Head he would have listed it as such and not as 'West Head'. A County of Cumberland parish map possibly dating to the 1860s, which includes Larmer's Aboriginal placenames, has the name 'Gurugal' adjacent to Chowder Head.

Kaneagáng and Kowang, and other placenames on Dawes' 1790 sketch map

Seven placenames are written on the sketch map on the inside cover of Dawes' 1790 notebook, only two of which are well-provenanced in other documents: the island marked as 'Memel' or 'Mımıl', i.e. Goat Island, and 'Dara' or 'Tara' (Dawes Point) (Dawes 1790: 727 reported by Keith Smith in Jopson 2002). The map has neither a north point nor a scale. By comparing the sketch map with other early maps and noting the relative position of the named points of land, quite definite associations can be made (e.g. Table 1.1 nos. 40, 42 and 44, even if the latter name is difficult to read). The other two placenames 'Kaneagáng' and 'Kowang' are less certain and are thus listed in Table 1.2.

Kayyeemy, Kayyemy and Kayoomay (4)

The actual locations associated with both of these placenames are much debated. Early documents and maps are not consistent or specific enough in their locational details to say which of the bays in North Harbour was originally called 'Collins Cove' and which was originally 'Manly Bay'. It thus cannot be said with certainty which of the bays were called 'Kayoomay' and 'Kayyemy', or whether the latter name was used to refer to the whole of North Harbour.

Both 'Kayoomay' (as Collins Cove) and 'Kay-ye-my' (as Manly Bay) are listed on the same page in Vocabulary… (c.1790-1792: 362) (Figure 1.6). Phillip (in Hunter 1793[1968]: 466) states that "the place where the Governor was wounded", i.e. where he was speared in September 1790 was 'Kay-yee-my'. This comment taken together with a description of events that took place at Manly Bay (p. 459) indicates 'Kay-yee-my' was the name for Manly Bay. Other writers of this time, however, refer to the place where Phillip was speared as Collins Cove (Bradley 1786–1792[1969]: 225-226) or Manly Cove (Tench 1793[1979]: 176-177). This suggests there was either confusion over the exact place where Phillip was speared, or confusion/indecision at the time as to what the different bays in North Harbour were to be called. Early maps vary in the placement of the names of Collins Cove, Manly Cove and Manly Bay (e.g. Hunter 1788a, 1788b; Grimes 1796; and Freycinet 1802 in Swancott n.d.: 10-11).

Local historians Shelagh and George Champion (1993) concluded from their research that Phillip was speared in present-day Manly Cove. Accordingly, Manly Cove could be either 'Kayoomay' or 'Kayyeemy'/'Kayyemy', or both. After 1788, the whole of North Harbour was referred to as Manly Bay, which suggests the name 'Kayyeemy' could equally have been the name for North Harbour.

Kogerrah (58)

'Kogerrah' is listed as the placename for Rushcutters Bay in 'Port Jackson Aboriginal Names' (1910: 35), for which the source was W. H. Huntingdon's 1873 map. West (n.d.[c.1882]: 22) also said the name for Rushcutters Bay was "Kogerah", adding that it was "a name also applied to a place near George's River".

Kudgee, Coojee, Kooja, Koojah or Bobroi (77 and 78)

Sources which acknowledge an Aboriginal origin for the name 'Coogee' and situate it in present-day Coogee Bay are, except for Miles (1854: 41), late 19th century or later; they give the name as 'Kudgee', 'Kooja', 'Koojah' or 'Coojee'. Local resident Obed West, however, was adamant that the name 'Coogee' belonged to Gordons Bay and that the Aboriginal name for present-day Coogee Bay was 'Bobroi'. (West n.d.[c.1882]: 28)

Miles (1854: 41) simply said it was "a small bay between the large bays of Port Jackson and Botany Bay called by the natives 'Kudgee' or 'Coojee'". However, a yet earlier use of the name on a sketch plan in Larmer's fieldbook (Larmer 1829: 58), without referring to an Aboriginal origin for the name, shows present-day Coogee Bay as 'Great Coogee'. Maps dating from at least the 1850s to 1885 mark Clovelly Bay as 'Little Coogee Bay' (Kelly and Crocker 1977: 25, 28, 34, 40; see also discussion in Lynch and Larcombe 1976: 13-16).

Maroubra (79)

In late 18th century documents, Vocabulary… (c.1790-1792: 348) listed 'Mo-roo-berra' as "a natives name", Southwell (1788[1893: 697]) gave 'Moo-roo-bǎrah' as a "Man's Name", and Collins (1798[1975: 489, 492]) referred to a man called 'Mo-roo-ber-ra' in discussing ritual combats. None of these authors referred to the man's status or country.

It is not until the late 19th century that it is referred to as a placename, using several different spellings, e.g. "Maroubra or Merooberah" (Larmer 1833 in Stack 1906: 52), 'Mooroobra' ('Sydney Cove' 1878b), 'Maroobera' (Thornton 1892[1893]: 7) and 'Merooberah' (Thornton 1896 in Organ 1990: 358, 1899: 210). These 19th century placename lists vary in their descriptions:

- in 1878 'Sydney Cove' reported that 'Mooroobra' was "The name of the chief of the tribe who lived at that spot (just south of Coogee)";
- in 1892, George Thornton gave a similar description: "another chief of a tribe a little south of Coogee was called 'Maroobera', and the beach is still called so after him";

- in 1896, Thornton (in Organ 1990: 358) described 'Merooberah' as being "the native name of a pretty sandy beach a few miles south of 'Koojah', that being the name of a tribe and also their chief, who inhabited that particular locality";
- in 1899, Thornton (p. 210) said 'Merooberah' was "A pretty sandy beach south of Kooja. The beach was named after the tribe which inhabited that particular place".

The name 'Maroubra', in its various early spellings, thus changed from being simply the name of a man, to a place named after a chief of a 'tribe', and finally a place named after the name of the 'tribe'. In other parts of Australia it is common for a person to have a personal name which is also a placename which they share with others; in those contexts, the name is not necessarily the name of a clan that is a land-owning group. The late 19th century changes in the origin of 'Maroubra' as a placename may reflect embellishment of the explanation for the origin of the placename over time. However, comments and spellings in Thornton's later writings suggest he was prone to speculation and may have had a 'bad memory' in some cases.

Mugga for Long Bay – Middle Harbour or Malabar (10)

In 1911 'Mugga' was listed as the Aboriginal placename for "Long Bay, Metropolitan district" (Aboriginal names and meanings 1911: 214). In her local history of Northbridge, Leslie (1988: 20) wrote that the Aborigines called Long Bay in Middle Harbour 'Mugga'. However, it is possible that Aboriginal names and meanings refers to Long Bay at Malabar on the coast between Maroubra and Cape Banks, as this list includes placenames from all over New South Wales with only one other coastal Sydney name – nearby Maroubra Bay. However, an earlier source (West n.d.[c.1882]: 29), gives 'Boora' as the Aboriginal placename for Long Bay which he says is between Maroubra Bay and Little Bay.

Pannerong, Bungarong, Ginnagullah or Warang for Rose Bay (64)

The Aboriginal placename for Rose Bay was recorded initially as 'Pannerong' (Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 362) and 'Pannerrong' (Collins 1798[1975]: 489-490). Wentworth's later 1801-1825 list has 'Bungarong' against Point Piper, the western headland of Rose Bay. Much later, towards the end of the 19th century, 'Ginnagullah' is reported as the Aboriginal name for Rose Bay (Huntingdon 1873 chart in Port Jackson Aboriginal names 1910: 35).

The placename 'Warang' against Rose Bay in Wentworth (1801-1825) would seem to be an error, given the spelling is essentially the same as some versions of the name recorded for Sydney Cove (Table 1.1 no. 46).

Tubowgule, Toobowgulie, Tobegully, Jubughalee and Jubùghallee (47)

The 1790s and 1807 sources for the name of Bennelong Point, whilst varying in spelling, all have a 'T' at the beginning of the name. Larmer's 1832 spelling with a 'J' is probably his adoption of a different letter of the alphabet for the Aboriginal sound 'dj' (Troy 1994a: 23-27).

'Jubagulla' written against Dawes Battery in Wentworth's (1801-1825) list appears to be an error. However, it may not be. In addition to the battery on the west side of the cove, Dawes was in charge of constructing a small redoubt on the east side of Sydney Cove which stood from 1788 to 1791, and then in the early 1800s a second battery was built on what is now called ''Bennelong Point' (McGuanne 1901: 10; see also Watson 1918: 384). Wentworth may thus have been referring to 'Dawes Battery' on Bennelong Point.

Wareamah or Biloela for Cockatoo Island (37)

Vocabulary… (c.1790-1792: 361) lists the placename for Cockatoo Island as 'Wareamah'. The name 'Biloelo' or 'Biloela', which has been cited by some (Millin 1945: 336) as the Aboriginal name for Cockatoo Island, has not been included in Table 1.1. 'Biloela' was the name given to the Public Industrial School and Reformatory for Girls established on Cockatoo Island in 1871 (Jervis 1945: 402; State Records NSW 2006). In reporting this, Jervis suggests that, although *biloela* was an Aboriginal word meaning 'cockatoo', it was taken from the Rev. Ridley's book on Kamilaroi language[6] and was not a coastal Sydney word.

Willárrá, Woo-lā-rǎ or Bungarung for Point Piper (62)

Larmer (1832: 35, 1832[1898: 228]) reported the Aboriginal name for Point Piper as 'Willárrá'. Earlier, Wentworth (1801-1825) had listed 'Bungarong' against Point Piper. However, 'Pannerong', probably a variation in writing 'Bungarung', was recorded more than 100 years earlier in Vocabulary… (c.1790-1792: 362) and Collins (1798[1975]: 489-490) as the name for Rose Bay. Point Piper is part of the western headland of Rose Bay, which may be the reason for Wentworth's association.

The name 'Willárrá', if a written variant of 'Woo-lā-rǎ', may have referred to a larger area than just Point Piper (Watson 1918: 374), as the latter (Woo-lā-rǎ) was recorded as the name for 'The Look-out' (Southwell 1788[1893: 699] which was at Outer South Head (Bradley 1786-1792[1969]: Chart 6), known today as Dunbar Head.

Conclusions

For Port Jackson, Botany Bay and in the intervening coastline, more than 100 Aboriginal placenames were recorded between 1788 and 1911 in a wide range of documents. For many of the placenames, the association between the name and a location known today by a British placename is clear and unambiguous. For other placenames, however, an association with a specific location and/or its spelling is less clear, ambiguous or in some cases unknown. These problems and uncertainties arise for a variety of reasons, and in many cases are unlikely to be solved. Variations in spelling a placename probably occurred because of the First Fleet authors' lack of understanding of the sound system of Aboriginal languages or the general lack of linguistic training of most. However, the late 19th and 20th century authors also often provide slightly different spellings and sometimes slightly different locations to the earlier writers, but provide no reasons for the alternative spellings or locations they use. The alternative spellings may be different interpretations or mis-readings of original hand-written lists by either the authors or the publishers, or typographical errors. Incorrect recollections may also account for some variations in spelling and location, particularly where the placenames are reported in the reminiscences of late 19th and 20th century authors.

Over half the Aboriginal placenames were recorded in the period 1788-1800, but previously undocumented names continued to be reported until the end of the 19th century. From documents found to date, it appears that there were three main periods when Aboriginal placenames for Port Jackson and Botany Bay were documented: 1788-1800, 1828-1836 and 1873-1899, with much smaller numbers reported in the intervening periods, and only one after 1900. Whether the placenames recorded in the periods after 1800 were names used by the pre-1788 inhabitants of the region, or names introduced by people who came in from neighbouring regions is not stated anywhere but is a possibility. Research by others no doubt will in time add further sources with Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson and Botany Bay. These may include additional placenames, earlier use or recording of presently known placenames, and more certain information about the Aboriginal people from whom the placenames were initially obtained.

Acknowledgements

Table 1.1: Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson and Botany Bay from historical sources. See Figures 1.1 and 1.2 for locations. [All variations in spellings and locations in documents dating up to 1855 are included; only previously unreported placenames with sources and other selected placenames are included from post-1850s documents. Diacritics are as written in original sources. Letters in square brackets with a question mark were written unclearly; words/letters in square brackets are my suggestions for illegible or omitted words or letters.]

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
1	*Bora*	North Head – outer	Wentworth 1801–1825	North Head
1	*Boree*	North Head – outer	'Sydney Cove' 1878c: 641	North Head (Sydney Harbour)
2	*Garangal*	North Head – inner	Dawes 1790-1791: 817	N[orth] do [Head]
2	*Car-rang-gel*	North Head – inner	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 361	North Head
2	*Carrangle*	North Head – inner	Wentworth 1801–1825	Quarantine Ground
3	*Biri[mbinne ?]* [writing illegible]	Collins Beach	Wentworth 1801–1825	Collins Flat
4	*Kayoo-may*	Manly Cove [see text]	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 362	Collins Cove
4	*Kay-ye-my*	Manly Cove or North Harbour [see text]	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 362	Manly Bay
4	*Kay-yee-my*	Manly Cove or North Harbour [see text]	Phillip in Hunter 1793[1968]: 459, 466	Manly Bay; 'The place where the Governor was wounded' [in September 1790]
5	*Canna*	North Harbour	Wentworth 1801–1825	Manly Beach
5	*Kun'-ná*	North Harbour	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	North Harbour
5	*Kunnà*	North Harbour	Mitchell n.d.: 420	North Harbour
5	*Cannae*	North Harbour	Huntington 1873 map referred to in Port Jackson Aboriginal Names 1910: 35	Manly Beach
6	*Jilling*	Balgowlah	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Fincham's, North Harbour or Balgowlah Township
6	*Jilling*	Balgowlah	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Balgowla Township

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
7	No[m?]ble [writing illegible]	Middle Harbour	Wentworth 1801–1825	Middle Harbour
7	Warrin gá	Middle Harbour	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Middle Harbour
7	Warringà	Middle Harbour	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Middle Harbour
8	Burra-brú	The Spit, Middle Harbour	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	The Spit, Middle Harbour
8	Burrabru	The Spit	Mitchell n.d.: 420	The Spit
9	Parriwi	Parriwi Head, The Spit	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Point East of Spit
9	Parriwi	Parriwi Head, The Spit	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Pt East of Spit
10	Mugga	Long Bay, Middle Harbour (or possibly Long Bay, Malabar [see text])	Aboriginal Names and Meanings 1911: 214	Long Bay (Metropolitan District)
11	Cooroowal	Fig Tree Point in Long Bay, Middle Harbour (or possibly Somerville Point, Balmain; or Wollongong area [see text])	Thornton 1899: 210	Fig Tree Point
12	Kuba Kaba	Middle Head	Dawes 1790-1791: 817	Middle H[ead]
12	Caba-caba	Middle Head	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 361	Middle Do [Head]
12	Cã-ba Cã-ba	Middle Head	Collins 1798[1975]: 513	The middle head of Port Jackson
13	Koreé	Chowder Bay	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Chowder Bay
13	Koree	Chowder Bay	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Chouder [sic]
14	Gurugal	Chowder Head [see text]	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	West Head
14	Gurrugal	Chowder Head [see text]	Mitchell n.d.: 420	West Head
14	Gurugal	Chowder Head [see text]	County of Cumberland Parish map, Willoughby, n.d. [probably 1860s]	Gurugal inserted on map adjacent to Chowder Head
15	Taliangy	Between Bradleys Head and Middle Head	Dawes 1790-1791: 817	[?? illegible] water (on list between Bradley's Point and Middle Head)
15	Tal-le-ongi-i	Between Bradleys Head and Middle Head	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 362	Bradley Point

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
16	*Booragy*	Bradleys Head	Dawes 1790-1791: 817	Bradley's Point
16	*Bùrroggy*	Bradleys Head	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Bradley's Head
16	*Burròggy or Broggy*	Bradleys Head	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Bradley's Point
17	*Goram bullagong*	Mosman Bay	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Mossmans Whaling Establishment Sirius Cove
17	*Gorambùllagong*	Mosman Bay	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Mossmans Whaling Estt
18	*Wulworrá-jeung*	Robertsons Point	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Robertson's Point
19	*Kurrá bá*	Kurraba Point	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Point west of Robertsons
19	*Kurrábá*	Kurraba Point	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Point West of Robertsons Point
20	*Wurru-birri*	Kurraba Point western side	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	McLarens Store
21	*Wéyé Wéyé*	Careening Cove, head of	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Careening Cove Head
21	*Weeawya*	Careening Cove	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Careening Cove
22	*Wudyong*	Wudyong Point	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Point east of Milsons
22	*Wudyong*	Wudyong Point	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Point east of Milsons
23	*Ciar Billie*	Kirribilli Point	Lycett 1824: Plate 3 caption	the one next above that [i.e. Bradley's Head, as looking west]
23	*Kiarabilli*	Milsons Point–Kirribilli	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Milson's Point
23	*Kiarabily*	Milsons Point–Kirribilli	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Milsons Point
24	*Quibéreé*	Lavender Bay	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Hulk Bay
24	*Quiberee*	Lavender Bay	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Hulk Bay
25	*Warung áréá*	Blues Point	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Billy Blues Point
25	*Warrungarea*	Blues Point	Mitchell n.d.: 420	Billy Blues Point
26	*Turramurra*	Lane Cove district	Larmer 1832–1833 in Stack 1906: 53	Turramurra – Big Hill – Lane Cove district
27	*Turranburra*	Lane Cove River	Thornton 1899: 210	Lane Cove River
28	*Moco Boula*	Hunters Hill–Woolwich peninsula	Joules Joubert 27 October 1860	Native name of the Peninsula beginning at the mouth of the Lane Cove River

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
29	*Mar-ray-mah*	Charity Point, Meadowbank	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 362	Dinner Point
30	*Paramatîn*	Parramatta	Dawes 1790-1791: 806, 808	Translated as 'from Parramatta' in short sentences
30	*Para-matta*	Parramatta	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 360	Rose Hill
30	*Parramatta*	Parramatta	Phillip 13 February 1790b[1892: 309]	'Rose Hill which the natives call Parramatta'
30	*Parramatta*	Parramatta	Phillip in Hunter 1793[1968: 531]	Parramatta; 'the name given by the natives to the spot on which the town was building'
30	*Par-ra-màt-ta*	Parramatta	Tench 1793: 132 [1979: 239, n2, 325]	'the name of the settlement at the head of the harbour' … 'Par-ra-màt-ta the native name of it'
30	*Parramatta*	Parramatta	Hunter 1796 and 1798 maps	Parramatta marked on map in its present location
30	*Par-ra-mat-ta*	Parramatta	Collins 1798[1975]: 137	'Par-ra-mat-ta being the name by which the natives distinguished the part of the country on which the town stood'
31	*Toon-gab-be*	Toongabbie	Phillip 2 October 1792[1892: 645]	3 miles to the westward of Parramatta
31	*Toongabbee*	Toongabbie	Grimes 1796 map	Toongabbee marked on map near Prospect Hill; at start (SE end) of Road to the Hawkesbury
31	*Toongabbe*	Toongabbie	Hunter 1796 and 1798 maps	Toongabbee marked on map near Prospect Hill
31	*Toongabbie*	Toongabbie	Collins 1798[1975]: 189	the settlements beyond Parramatta (… distinguished by the name of Toongabbie)
32a	*Wau-maílle / War-mul*	To the west of Parramatta	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 360	'In going to the westward from Rose Hill, you walk in ten minutes to …'

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
32b	Malgray-matta / Mal-gra-mattar	To the west of Parramatta	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 360	'In going to the westward from Rose Hill, you walk … in nineteen [minutes] to …'
32c	Era-worong / A-rar-woo-rung	To the west of Parramatta	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 360	'In going to the westward from Rose Hill, you walk … in seven [minutes] to …'
32d	Carra-matta / Car-rar-mattar	To the west of Parramatta	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 360	'In going to the westward from Rose Hill, you walk … in eighteen [minutes] to …'
32e	Boolbane-matta / Bul-barn-mattar	To the west of Parramatta	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 360	'In going to the westward from Rose Hill, you walk … in five [minutes] to …'
32f	Carro-wotong / Kar-rar-wo-tong	To the west of Parramatta	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 360	'In going to the westward from Rose Hill, you walk … in twenty-nine [minutes] to …'
32g	Mar-rong / Mararong	Prospect	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 360	'In going to the westward from Rose Hill, you walk … in seventeen [minutes] to Mararong – Prospect Hill'
33	Arrowanelly	Homebush Bay – originally an island on western side near mouth but now joined to river bank	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 360	Island at the Flats
34	Booriidiow-o-gule	Breakfast Point, Mortlake (or possibly Yurulbin [Longnose Point, Balmain] or Greenwich Point [see text])	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 362	Breakfast Point
35	Gong-ul	Spectacle Island	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	8th or Spectacle Island
36	Ar-ra-re-agon	Snapper Island	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	7th island
37	Wa-rea-mah	Cockatoo Island	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	6th or Cockatoo Island

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
38	*Yerroulbin*	Yurulbin (Longnose Point prior 1994)	Larmer 1832[1898: 228]	Long Nose Point
38	*Yerroulbine*	Yurulbin (Longnose Point prior 1994)	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Long Nose Point
39	*Memel* (or *Mimil*)	Goat Island	Dawes 1790: 727 (inside front cover) reported by Keith Smith in Jopson 2002	Memel (or Miiil) is written on a rough sketch map inside an island
39	*Me-mil*	Goat Island	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 361	5th island
39	*Memill*	Goat Island	Phillip in Hunter 1793[1968]: 470	Memilla (at Memill)
39	*Me-mel*	Goat Island	Collins 1798[1975]: 497	Goat Island
39	*Milmil*	Goat Island	Larmer 1832[1898: 228]	Goat Island
39	*Milmil*	Goat Island	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Goat Island
40	*Wari wal*	South-western end of Goat Island	Dawes 1790: 727 (inside front cover) reported by Keith Smith in Jopson 2002	Wari wal is written on a rough sketch map adjacent to the south-western end of Memel/Mimil [Goat Island]
41	*Go-mo-ra* [see text]	Darling Harbour	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 362	Long Cove
	Tumbulong	Darling Harbour	Larmer 1832[1898: 229]	Darling Harbour
	Tumbulong	Darling Harbour	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Darling Harbour
42	*Coodye*	Millers Point	Larmer 1832[1898: 228]	Jack the Millers Point
42	*Coodye*	Millers Point	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Jack the Millers Point
42	*Ilkan máladál*	Millers Point ?	Dawes 1790: 727 (inside front cover) reported by Keith Smith in Jopson 2002	Ilkan máladál is written on a rough sketch map adjacent to what could be Millers Point
43	*Tara* (or *Dara*)	Dawes Point	Dawes 1790: 727 (inside front cover) reported by Keith Smith in Jopson 2002	Tara (or Dara) is written on a rough sketch map on a point of land that suggests it is Dawes Point
43	*Tar-ra*	Dawes Point	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 362	Do Do [Sydney Cove] W Point

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
43	*Tarra*	Dawes Point	Meehan 1807 and 1811 (maps)	Tarra is inserted on northern side of Campbells Cove on western side of Sydney Cove
43	*Tárrá*	Dawes Point	Larmer 1832[1898: 228]	Slaughter House Point
43	*Tarra*	Dawes Point	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Slaughter House Point
44	*Melia-Wool*	Campbells Cove ?	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 362	A small cove within [presumed within Sydney Cove]
44	*Lin…?…noor?* [writing illegible]	Campbells Cove ?	Dawes 1790: 727 [inside front cover) reported by Keith Smith in Jopson 2002 as Lineagirnoor	This name is written on a rough sketch map in a relationship to Tara that suggests it is Campbell's Cove
45	*Talla-wo-la-dah*	The Rocks – west side of Sydney Cove	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 362	Where the hospital stands
46	*War-ran*	Sydney Cove	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 352	'War-ran-jam-ora' translated as 'I am in Sydney Cove'
46	*War-ran*	Sydney Cove	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	Sydney Cove
46	*Weé-rong*	Sydney Cove	Tench 1793[1979: 142]	Sydney
46	*Warrane*	Sydney Cove	King in Hunter 1793[1968]: 412	Sydney Cove
46	*Warrang*	Sydney Cove	Meehan 1807 and 1811 (maps)	Sydney Cove
47	*Tu-bow-gule*	Bennelong Point	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 362	Sydney Cove E Point
47	*Tubow-gule*	Bennelong Point	Phillip in Hunter 1793[1968: 476, 487]	The eastern point of the cove [Sydney Cove]
47	*Too-bow-gu-liè*	Bennelong Point	Collins 1798[1975]: 492–3	The point [near First Govt House]
47	*Tobegully*	Bennelong Point	Meehan 1807 and 1811 (maps)	On map name is placed on western shore of Farm Cove
47	*Jubughalee*	Bennelong Point	Larmer 1832[1898: 228]	Bennelong Point
47	*Jubighallee*	Bennelong Point	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Bennelong Point
48	*Woggan-ma-gule*	Farm Cove	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	Farm Cove
48	*Woccanmagully*	Farm Cove	Meehan 1807 and 1811 (maps)	Marked on map in Farm Cove

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
49	Cockaroo	Royal Botanic Gardens	Wentworth 1801–1825	Government garden
49	Cookaroo	Farm Cove Beach	Thornton 1899: 210	Farm Cove Beach
50	Yu-ron	Mrs Macquaries Point	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	East bank of do [Farm Cove]
50	Yurong	Mrs Macquaries Point	Meehan 1807 and 1811 maps	Name placed on peninsula on map
50	Urong	Mrs Macquaries Point	Wentworth 1801–1825	Lady Macquarie's chair
50	Yourong	Mrs Macquaries Point	Larmer 1832[1898: 228]	Mrs Macquarie's Point
50	Yurong	Mrs Macquaries Point	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Mrs Macquaries Pt
51	Mat-te-wan-ye	Fort Denison, Pinchgut Island	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	4th or Rock Island
51	Mat-te-wan-ye	Fort Denison, Pinchgut Island	Collins 1802[1971: 10]	'The small island which is situated in the middle of the harbour, and named by the natives'
51	Mattewai	Fort Denison, Pinchgut Island	Larmer 1832–1833 in Stack 1906: 51	Pinch Gut Island
52	Walla-mool	Woolloomooloo Bay	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	Cove next to Farm Cove
52	Wooloo Mooloo	Woolloomooloo	Hunter 1796 map	Name inserted on map on land adjacent to Farm Cove
52	Walloomooloo Bay	Woolloomooloo Bay	Meehan 1808 and 1811 maps	Name marked in bay
52	Wallamoula	Woolloomooloo	Peron 1809: 275	'Not far from a contiguous creek, a spot which the natives call Wallamoula, is the charming habitation of Mr Palmer, the commissary general'
52	Wooloomooloo	Woolloomooloo	Lycett 1824: Plate 4 text	Half a mile from the town of Sydney, to the south-east of Government House
52	Wolomoloo	Woolloomooloo	Larmer 1830: 8, 16, 18–21	Names marked on sketch plans as 'Wolomoloo', 'Wolomoloo Estate', 'Wolomoloo Bay'
52	Wolomoloo	Woolloomooloo	Caporn 1836 map	Name inserted on map east of Hyde Park

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
52	*Wolomoloo*	Woolloomooloo	Map of the Town of Sydney 1831 and 1833	Name marked on map east of Hyde Park
53	*Ba-ing-hoe*	Garden Island	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	3rd or Garden Island
54	*Derawun*	Potts Point	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	East point of do [ie cove next to Farm Cove]
55	*Carraginn*	Elizabeth Bay	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	Next cove [cove next to cove next to Farm Cove]
56	*Jerrowan*	Elizabeth Point	Larmer 1832[1898]: 228]	Elizabeth Point
56	*Jĕrrowan*	Elizabeth Point	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Elizabeth Point
57	*Yarrandab* [see text]	Macleay Point	Larmer 1832[1898]: 228]	Mr McLeay's Point
57	*Yarrandabby*	Macleay Point	Larmer 1832[1953]: 35]	Mr McLeays Point
57	*Yarrandabby*	Macleay Point	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Mr McLeay's Point
58	*Kogerrah*	Rushcutters Bay	Huntington 1873 chart referred to in Port Jackson Aboriginal names 1910: 35	Rushcutter Bay
58	*Kogerah*	Rushcutters Bay	West n.d.[c.1882]: 22	Rushcutter Bay
59	*Yaranabe*	Darling Point [see text]	'Sydney Cove' 1878a: 545	Darling Point
59	*Eurambie*	Darling Point [see text]	Thornton 1899: 210	Darling Point
60	*Dienda gella*	Double Bay	Wentworth 1801–1825	Double Bay
61	*Be-lang-le-wool*	Clarke Island	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	2nd do [island coming up the harbour]
61	*Billong-ololah*	Clarke Island	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Clark [sic] Island
61	*Billòng-olòla*	Clarke Island	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Clark [sic] Island
62	*Willàrrá*	Point Piper [see text]	Larmer 1832[1898]: 228]	Point Piper
62	*Wallàra*	Point Piper	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Point Piper
63	*Bo-a-millie*	Shark Island	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 361	1st island coming up the harbour
63	*Boam bill-…* [word incomplete – mutilated in binding]	Shark Island	Larmer 1832[1898]: 229]	Shark Island

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
63	Boam billy	Shark Island	Larmer 1832 in Stack 1906: 49	Shark Island
63	Boambilly	Shark Island	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Shark Island
64	Pannerong	Rose Bay	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 362	Rose Bay
64	Pan-ner-rong	Rose Bay	Collins 1798[1975]: 489–490	Rose Bay
64	Bungarong	Rose Bay [see text]	Wentworth 1801–1825	Point Piper
64	Pan-Ner-Rong	Rose Bay	Larmer 1832–1833 in Stack 1906: 51	Rose Bay
64	Ginnagullah	Rose Bay [see text]	Huntington 1873 chart referred to in Port Jackson Aboriginal names 1910: 35	Rose Bay
65	Burrowwo	Steel Point (Shark Point)	Larmer 1832[1898: 228]	Rocky Point (South of Vaucluse)
65	Burrow way	Steel Point (Shark Point)	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Rocky Pt south of Vaucluse
66	Môring	Vaucluse Point (Bottle and Glass Point)	Larmer 1832[1898: 228]	Vaucluse Point
66	Moring	Vaucluse Point (Bottle and Glass Point)	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Vaucluse Point
67	Coulong	Vaucluse	Wentworth 1801–1825	Vaucluse
68	Courmangara	Watsons Bay	Wentworth 1801–1825	Watson's Bay
68	Kutti	Watsons Bay [Kutti Beach]	Larmer 1832[1898: 228]	Siddons and Watsons
68	Kutti	Watsons Bay [Kutti Beach]	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Siddons & Watson's Residences
69	Mit-tă-lā	Laings Point, Watsons Bay	Southwell 1788[1893: 699]	The Green Point
69	Metallar	Laings Point, Watsons Bay	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 362	W[est] point of Camp Cove
69	Ku-bung hárrá	Laings Point, Watsons Bay	Larmer 1832[1898: 228]	Lang's Point [sic]
69	Kubungarra	Laings Point, Watsons Bay	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Laings Point
70	Ba-rab-bă-ră	Sow and Pigs Reef	Southwell 1788[1893: 699]	The Mid-Rock
70	Bir-ra-bir-ra	Sow and Pigs Reef	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 362	The rock in the Channel
70	Birrur bi-... [word incomplete – mutilated in binding]	Sow and Pigs Reef	Larmer 1832[1898: 229]	Sow and Pigs

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
70	Birrur birra	Sow and Pigs Reef	Larmer 1832–33 in Stack 1906: 49	Sow and Pigs
70	Birrur Birah	Sow and Pigs Reef	Mitchell n.d.: 419	Sow and Pigs
71	Burra.wǎ-rā	South Head [inner]	Southwell 1788[1893: 699]	Inner South Head
71	Bara woory	South Head [inner]	Dawes 1790-1791: 817	S[outh] H[ead], ie South Head
71	Barraory	South Head [inner]	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 361	Inner Sth Do, ie South Head
71	Burrawarre	South Head [inner]	Wentworth 1801–1825	South Head
72	Woo-lā-rǎ	South Head [outer], Dunbar Head, Vaucluse	Southwell 1788[1893: 699]	The Look-Out
72	Tar-ral-be	South Head [outer]	Vocabulary... c.1790-1792: 361	South Do, ie South Head
73	Marevera	Murriverie Pass	West n.d.[c.1882]: 26	Between Ben Buckley and Bondi
74	Benbuckalong	Ben Buckler	West n.d.[c.1882]: 26	Ben Buckley
75	Bondi	Bondi	Berni 1828	Bondi Bay
75	Bondi	Bondi	Larmer 1829: 64	Bondi Bay written on sketch map in present day Bondi Bay
75	Boondi	Bondi	Larmer 1832–1833 in Stack 1906: 52	Bondi or 'Boondi'
75	Bondi	Bondi Bay	Sydney Gazette 29(No. 1985) 16 June 1831: 4(col. 1).	Bondi Bay
76	Cramaramma	Tamarama	West n.d.[c.1882]: 28	The bay known as Nelson's
77	Coogee	Coogee	Larmer 1829: 58	Great Coogee written on sketch map in present-day Coogee Bay
77	Koojah	Coogee	Larmer 1832–1833 in Stack 1906: 52	Coogee or 'Koojah'
77	Coogee	Gordons Bay [see text]	West n.d.[c.1882]: 28	The bay north of the bay now known as Coogee
77-78	Kudgee or Coojee	Gordons Bay or Coogee [see text]	Miles 1854: 41	A small bay between the large bays of Port Jackson and Botany Bay

No on FIG. 1.1	NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – PRESENT	REFERENCE	NAME/LOCATION – IN SOURCE
78	*Bobroi*	Coogee	West n.d.[c.1882]: 28	The bay where the two hotels are
79	*Merooberah* [see text]	Maroubra	Larmer 1832–1833 in Stack 1906: 52	Maroubra or 'Merooberah'
80	*Boora*	Long Bay	West n.d.[c.1882]: 29	Between Maroubra and Little Bay
81	*Bunnabee*	Botany Bay – north head	Larmer 1832–1833 in Stack 1906: 52	North Head of Botany Bay
82	*Wadba wadba*	Botany Bay – north head, near Bare Island	Dawes 1790-1791: 815	The name of country near Bare island
83	*Currewol* (also *Curriwul* and *Cooriwal*)	Frenchmans Bay, La Perouse	George Hill and unnamed correspondent in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 January 1883: 5, cited in Nugent 2005: 53, Fn34.	The beach near the 'Black's Camp' at La Perouse.
84	*Yarra*	Yarra Bay, La Perouse	West n.d.[c.1882]: 31	Yarra Bay
85	*Ka-may*	Botany Bay	Vocabulary… c.1790-1792: 362	Botany Bay
86	*Bunna Bunna*	Bonna Point, Kurnell/Quibray Bay	Thornton 1899: 210	Bonna Point, Botany Bay
87	*Kundal*	Captain Cook's Landing Place, Kurnell peninsula	Larmer in 1832–1833 Stack 1906: 52	Captain Cook's Landing Place, Botany Bay
88	*Givea* [probably *Gwea* - see text]	Botany Bay – south head	Larmer in 1832–1833 Stack 1906: 52	South Head of Botany Bay
89	*Goonoomarra*	Cronulla to Kurnell	Thornton 1896 in Organ 1990: 358	Beach and sand hills about Port Hacking

Table 1.2: Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson and Botany Bay from historical sources: names for which a location was not determined or unresolved.

ABORIGINAL NAME	NAME OR INFORMATION – IN SOURCE	REFERENCE	COMMENTS
Kaneagáng	*Kaneagáng* is written on a rough sketch map inside a 'point of land' adjacent to two well-provenanced placenames – an island marked as *Memel* or *Mimil* (Goat Island) and *Dara* or *Tara* (Dawes Point), and three other points of land.	Dawes 1790: 727 (inside front cover) reported by Keith Smith in Jopson 2002.	Smith equates *Kaneagáng* with *Yurulbin*, but depending how the map is oriented and interpreted, i.e., if *Ilkan máladál* is Millers Point and *Kowang* is East Balmain, it could be Darling Point on Pyrmont peninsula.
Kowang	*Kowang* is written on a rough sketch map inside a 'point of land' adjacent to two well-provenanced placenames – an island marked as *Memel* or *Mimil* (Goat Island) and *Dara* or *Tara* (Dawes Point), and three other points of land.	Dawes 1790: 727 (inside front cover)	Depending how the map is oriented and interpreted, i.e., if *Ilkan máladál* is Millers Point and *Kaneagáng* is Darling Point, it could be part of East Balmain peninsula. If *Cow-wan* (see below) where Lt Gen. Ross had a farm, is another spelling of *Kowang*, this would support it being part of East Balmain peninsula.
Yéra yérára	Do of a pond of [tol.?] water between it & [where fishing party ?].	Dawes 1790-1791: 815	Possibly Yarra Bay, La Perouse (No. 84 in Table 1.1), but this entry is one of three on a single page. It comes after *Wadba Wadba* which is said to be near Bare Island (No. 82 in Table 1.1), but before *Panjárañ* which is Captain Parker &c dined – – –. The phrase 'where fishing party' is ambiguously placed. It is possible that the description after *Yéra yérára* ends after the '&'. The three names listed together could be interpreted as '*Yéra yérára ... between it = Wadba Wadba & Panjárañ*, and if so could be referring to a lake associated with the Waterloo and Lachlan swamps.
Ngangoon	Bush or Rush? point [initial letter unclear]	Dawes 1790-1791: 817	

ABORIGINAL NAME	NAME OR INFORMATION – IN SOURCE	REFERENCE	COMMENTS
Too roo magoolie	a small cove	Dawes 1790-1791: 817	
Karamúng	? well of ? water [writing illegible]	Dawes 1790-1791: 817	
Ng'algara	ditto … ?? [writing illegible]	Dawes 1790-1791: 817	
Talia	??? [writing illegible]	Dawes 1790-1791: 817	
Tuberai	Another do [Head]	Vocabulary … c.1790-1792: 361	
Weeaggy-wallar	a little sandy bay	Vocabulary … c.1790-1792: 362	
Boor-roo-wan	an island	Vocabulary … c.1790-1792: 362	Some late 19th century and subsequent lists associate *Booroowan* with Garden Island, but Vocabulary … c.1790-1792: 362 lists Garden Island separately with another name - *Ba-ing-hoe*.
Tarrangera guy	where the fishermans hut is	Vocabulary … c.1790-1792: 362	Possibly somewhere in Sydney Cove as this name is listed after other placenames in Sydney Cove
Cow-wan	Ross Farm	Vocabulary … c.1790-1792: 362	Listed after *Gomora* Long Cove. *Cow-wan* may be another spelling of *Kowang* (see above). Lt Gen. Ross had a farm at Balmain, and thus *Cow-wan* may be part of the East Balmain peninsula.
Pa-rein-ma	The Point called the docks	Vocabulary … c.1790-1792: 362	
Boum[bana?]kine [letters illegible]	Greens Flat	Wentworth 1801-1825	
Corumbla	Long Beach	Wentworth 1801-1825	
Cullagala	North West Flat	Wentworth 1801-1825	
Yamba	a point near Botany Heads	Thornton 1899: 210	

Table 1.3: Port Jackson – Botany Bay: number of Aboriginal placenames recorded in different periods, sources of information and geographic areas. (Note: there are more provenanced placenames than listed in Table 1.1 and shown in Figures 1.1 and 1.2 as more than one name is known for some locations.)

Period	Sources of information	Geographical area	No. of placenames – previously unrecorded		
			Prov-enanced	Unprov-enanced	Total
1788-1800	The First Fleet journalists: Daniel Southwell 1788 Arthur Phillip 1790b, 1792 William Dawes 1790, 1790-1791 Vocabulary… c.1790-1792 (attributed to Phillip, King & Collins) Watkin Tench 1793 Arthur Phillip in Hunter 1793 Philip Gidley King in Hunter 1793 David Collins 1798, 1802 Maps by C. Grimes 1796 John Hunter 1796, 1798	Port Jackson – north and south shores and islands along Parramatta River Parramatta–Toongabbie area	46	14	60
1801–1825	D'Arcy Wentworth 1801-1825 Francois Peron 1809 Joseph Lycett 1824 Maps by James Meehan 1807, 1811	Port Jackson – north and south shores Woolloomooloo Vicinity of Sydney Cove	9	3	12
1828–1836	James Larmer fieldnotes: 1829, 1830 James Larmer typescripts: '1832' and E. Stack 1906 James Larmer published 1898 and 1900 *Sydney Gazette* 29 (No. 1985) 1831 T. L. Mitchell n.d. Map of the Town of Sydney 1831, 1833 Maps by P. L. Berni 1828 and W. G. Caporn 1836	Port Jackson – north and south shores North Harbour Middle Harbour Coastline between Port Jackson and Botany Bay	29 (but see text)		29

Aboriginal placenames

Period	Sources of information	Geographical area	No. of placenames – previously unrecorded		
			Prov-enanced	Unprov-enanced	Total
1854–1870	W. A. Miles 1854 Jules Joubert 1860 Co. of Cumberland Parish map Willoughby n.d. (ca 1860s)	Coastline between Port Jackson and Botany Bay Hunters Hill peninsula Port Jackson north shore	1		1
1873–1899	'Sydney Cove' 1878a, 1878c Obed West n.d.[c.1882] George Thornton 1892[1893], 1896 in Organ 1990, 1899 Map by W.H. Huntingdon 1873 in Port Jackson Ab'l Names 1910	Coastline between Port Jackson and Botany Bay North Head (outer) Lane Cove River Farm Cove Beach Rose Bay Botany Bay–Kurnell peninsula	14	1	15
1911	Aboriginal Names and Meanings 1911: 214	Long Bay (Metropolitan district)	1		1
Totals			100	18	118

Table 1.4: Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson and Botany Bay from historical sources: erroneous associations.

NAME – ABORIGINAL	NAME – IN SOURCE	REFERENCE	CORRECT ASSOCIATION
Jubagulla	Dawes Battery	Wentworth 1801-1825	Bennelong Point [see text]
Warang	Rose Bay	Wentworth 1801-1825	Sydney Cove
Boum billie	Shark Beach	Wentworth 1801-1825	Shark Island

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Endnotes

1. Port Jackson is generally known as Sydney Harbour, but Sydney Harbour is only one of three harbours within Port Jackson, the others being Middle Harbour and North Harbour.

2. Tables 1.1 and 1.2 and Figures 1.1 and 1.2 include some additions and amendments made since Attenbrow 2002: Table 2.1 was published.

3. I use the term 'the local inhabitants' as coastal Sydney was inhabited by numerous clans, each affiliated with a specific area of land, and I am talking generally about more than one clan. There is also much debate about the name and number of language groups and/or dialects in the region (Attenbrow 2002: 22-35).

4. Dawes 1790-1791 is an undated manuscript bound with Dawes 1790 and Vocabulary... c.1790-1792. Dates within the undated Dawes manuscript (see Figure 1.4) indicate it was compiled during 1790 and 1791. I have therefore cited it as Dawes 1790-1791, as other recent researchers have.

5. 'Cockle Harbor' probably refers to Cockle Bay, which was the term commonly used in historical accounts.

6. Ridley, W. 1875, *Kámilarói, and other Australian Languages*, Thomas Richards, Sydney: 20 lists "cockatoo – bīloëla or morāi".

CHAPTER 2

Reinstating Aboriginal placenames around Port Jackson and Botany Bay

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Background

In recent years a process to reinstate Aboriginal placenames in New South Wales (NSW) has been set in place. In doing so consideration has been taken of similar efforts elsewhere in NSW e.g. Armidale (Reid 2002) and in other parts of Australia e.g. Adelaide (Amery and Williams 2002). In NSW this reinstatement process has been led by the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales. Through their efforts Dawes Point (the southern foot of Sydney Harbour Bridge) became the first place to be dual-named as Dawes Point/Tar-ra in 2002. The next was South Creek in the Hawkesbury River district which took on the additional name of Wianamatta in 2003. During 2003 the NSW/Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Committee of the Australian National Placenames Survey (ANPS) began a process of reinstating Aboriginal names in the Port Jackson and Botany Bay area. Crucial to this process was research carried out by Val Attenbrow of the Australian Museum (2001, 2002; cf. chapter 1 this volume). One by-product of Attenbrow's interest in investigating the Aboriginal presence in Sydney was a careful assemblage of information on Aboriginal placenames including variant spellings taken down by outsiders from the earliest days of contact. The NSW/ACT Committee formed a subcommittee consisting of David Blair and the authors: one of their more important tasks was to review the evidence and attempt to reconstruct the original phonetic form of these placenames.

Written representation and phonetic accuracy

General discussion

Many Aboriginal words have passed into Australian English (Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990) but often there is a significant gap between the written representation and the original pronunciation.

First we will consider five terms that passed into Australian English and thus see actual examples of this gap.

Table 2.1: Some Aboriginal terms now in Australian English

	Term	Comment
1	<Dharawal [State Recreation Area]>	a language of the Illawarra cf. placename Thirroul
2	<Dharug [National Park]>	another spelling of the Sydney language Dharuk
3	<Garrawarra [State Conservation Area]>	
4	<quandong>	from Wiradjuri /guwandhaang/
5	<bombora>	from Dharuk /bumbora/ cf. Dharawal /bumbura/

The first term, <Dharawal>[1], is a fairly close rendering in spelling of the phonological shape of this term. However it is quite rare for a non-specialist to pronounce the word accurately. The initial sound, spelled as <dh>, is common enough in Australian Aboriginal languages and is referred to as a lamino-dental stop/plosive. It has a similar pronunciation to the <d> in the English word <width>. We would expect that only specialists in the study of Australian Aboriginal languages would give this pronunciation for the initial sound – everyone else would pronounce it as a 'normal d' as in <dog>. Even when the specialist gives the 'correct' pronunciation most people are not going to notice the difference. Although this and the following term <Dharug> may show <dh> they are likely to be pronounced as though they had been spelled <Darawal> and <Darug>. Considering next the vowels, these are usually pronounced by non-specialists in a way that, rarely if ever, coincides with the original. The vowels in <Dharawal> would very likely have been pronounced like the vowel in the English word <but> as would the first vowel of <Dharug>. The second vowel of <Dharug> would probably have been pronounced like the vowel in the English word <put>[2]. The final sound of <Dharug> was probably 'k' as in the English word <rook> which is in fact a good written representation of the second syllable of this term. So why is it spelled with a <g>? Phonologically[3] there is no contrast between /k/ and /g/ in most Australian Aboriginal languages, so there is no need to reflect such a contrast in the spelling. In English the contrast is crucial and the spelling reflects this.

The term <Garrawarra> may well have come from an original Aboriginal source in which the vowels were mostly like the vowel in <but>, but many people pronounce this term with the first and third vowels as for <a> in <apple>.

The next two terms, <quandong> and <bombora>, refer, respectively, to a type of fruit and to a kind of ocean wave formation (Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990). For these we know the phonological shape of each word and it can be seen that there is a considerable gap between written representation and the original pronunciation. For the first term the Wiradjuri (from central NSW) original has three syllables while the Australian English version has just two. The /dh/ of the original has been heard as /d/, the final vowel /aa/ is long (like <a> in the English word <father>), and the preceding vowel /a/ is short as in <but>. The other term, <bombora>, is sourced from Dharuk, the language of the Sydney area (Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990) but also has a Dharawal (south coast NSW) equivalent (Eades 1976). Whatever the original vowels might have been, the current pronunciation in Australian English is not the same as the original, with the first vowel being rendered as in <bomb> and the second as in <or>.

We turn now to some examples from Gamilaraay (north central NSW) (Ash, Giacon and Lissarague 2003: 237-8).

Table 2.2: Gamilaraay placenames

	Usual spelling	Dictionary entry
1	<Barwon [River]>	from /baawan/
2	<Boggabilla>	from /bagaybila/
3	<Pilliga>	from /biliga/
4	<Blue Knobby>	from /buluuy nhaaybil/
5	<Brigalow>	from /burrigila/
6	<Brewarrina>	from /burriwarranha/
7	<Dungalear [Station]>	from /dhanggaliirr/
8	<Timbumburi [Creek]>	from /dhimbambaraay/
9	<Collarenebri>	from /galariinbaraay/
10	<Goodooga>	from /guduuga/
11	<Coonabarabran>	from /gunabarabin/
12	<Coonamble>	from /gunambil/
13	<Gunnedah>	from /gunidjaa/
14	<Condamine [River]>	from /gundhimayan/
15	<Goonoo Goonoo>	from /gunu gunu/
16	<Gwydir [River]>	from /guwayda/
17	<Mirramanar [Station]>	from /murrumanamanaa/
18	<Narrabri>	from /nharibaraay/
19	<Wee Waa>	from /wii waa/

All these examples are placenames in use and are derived from Gamilaraay, a language well documented by Ash, Giacon and Lissarrague (2003). It is here that we can see the considerable gap between written representation, current pronunciation by most speakers of Australian English and the original. As we have already seen, the Aboriginal contrast between /dh/ and /d/ is not recognized – as in <Dungalear>, <Timbumburi> and <Condamine>. Another Aboriginal contrast, /nh/ versus /n/, is also not appreciated: /nh/ is like the <n> in the English word <tenth>. So the placename, <Narrabri>, originally began with a /nh/ while <Brewarrina>'s <n> was actually /nh/.

Most Aboriginal languages do not allow certain consonant clusters which are common in (Australian) English. These include /bl/ and /br/ so that <Blue Knobby>, <Brigalow>, <Brewarrina>, <Collarenebri> and <Narrabri> all had an additional syllable where a vowel 'intervenes' between the /b/ and the /l/ or /r/. Curiously the consonant cluster in <Coonabarabran> has no obvious basis in the original.

In the placename <Mirramanar> not just one but two syllables have been dropped from the original. In this and many other examples there is considerable discrepancy between the original vowels and those of a typical Australian English pronunciation. One of the few terms among these examples that very closely approximates the original is <Pilliga>. At the opposite extreme is <Blue Knobby> where a fancied resemblance to two English words has resulted in a major transformation of the original. For these examples we have the advantage of a careful account by trained linguists who have been through all available sources and reached a definite conclusion. But what if we could only rely on the modern spelling of the placename but then had to attempt to reconstruct the phonetic past? If we were guessing, these would be our guesses:

Table 2.3: Comparison of actual pronunciations with hypothetical pronunciations based on usual spellings

Usual spelling	Our guess	Actual
Barwon	bawON	baawan
Boggabilla	bOgabila	bagaybila
Pilliga	biliga	biliga
Blue Knobby	??	buluuy nhaaybil
Brigalow	bVRigVlV	burrigila
Brewarrina	bVRVARVNa	burriwarranha
Dungalear	DaN(g)VlVR	dhanggaliirr
Timbumburi	DimbAmbARV	dhimbambaraay
Collarenebri	gOlVRVNVbVRV	galariinbaraay
Goodooga	gVdUga	guduuga
Coonabarabran	gunabaRabURVN	gunabarabin
Coonamble	gunambVl	gunambil

Usual spelling	Our guess	Actual
Gunnedah	gANVDA	gunidjaa
Condamine	gOnDVmVN	gundhimayan
Goonoo Goonoo	guNu guNu	gunu gunu
Gwydir	guwayDV	guwayda
Mirramanar	miRVmaNa	murrumanamanaa
Narrabri	NaRVbURV	nharibaraay
Wee Waa	wiwa	wii waa

These are not wild guesses but are based on knowledge of the phonology of Australian languages in general and NSW languages in particular. To give just one example, it is quite rare for words in a NSW Aboriginal language to begin with /n/. Thus if we see a placename starting with <n> it is reasonable to assume that the original was another kind of nasal – perhaps /nh/or /ng/. This educated guess is captured by using <N> to represent an unknown nasal quality. The guess that an initial <n> is unlikely to be /n/ is borne out by the example of <Narrabri>, where <n> has been used although the original had /nh/ (note that the guesses use capitalisation differently from standard spelling). To capture a possible variation between /dh/ and /d/ we use <D>; once again the strong tendency is for words in NSW languages not to use initial /d/ as borne out by <Dangalear> and <Timbumburi> where the original was /dh/. Many Australian languages have two r-sounds, one like Australian English <r> and the other a tap/flap or trill, the latter as in Scots English. The examples from Gamilaraay demonstrate that the spelling of the placenames is by no means a reliable indicator. In <Brewarrina> the first r-sound is spelled as <r> but turns out to be a trill, /rr/, while the second r-sound is spelled as <rr> and happens to be the flap/trill, /rr/. In <Dangalear> and <Timbumburi>, <r> represents an original /rr/ in one case and /r/ in the other. For this reason one is often left with the uncertainty of <R> indicating an unknown rhotic quality. The representation of vowels raises major problems, some of which are set out in Thieberger (2005). In our view, of all the vowels <o> shows the greatest variability, so we address this is in a separate section.

- A   could be /a/ but not certain
- U   could be /u/ but not certain
- V   unknown vowel quality
- R   unknown rhotic quality /r/ ~ /rr/
- D   unknown anterior stop quality /d/ ~ /dh/
- N   unknown nasal quality /n/ ~ /nh/ ~ /ny/ (especially finally) ~ /ng/
- ?   not clear what we can say!
- O   (for the story of O see the next section)

The story of O

The <o> appearing in spellings of Aboriginal words shows perhaps the widest range of phonetic variants as set out in the following table. Most examples are drawn from Dixon, Ramson and Thomas (1990).

Table 2.4: The variable phonetics of <o>

billabong	<o> = /a/
Quondong (also spelled quandong)	<o> = /a/; <o> = /aa/
bombora	<o> = /u/
dingo	<o> = /u/
bora	<o> = /uu/
brolga	<o> = /a/
kurrajong	<o> = /u/
Yolngu; yothu	<o> = /uu/
bondi = 'club'	<o> = /u/
Bonalbo < /bunalbung/ (Sharpe 1995: 187)	<o> = /u/
Woonona	<o> = [u] as in <boot>

In sum, the spelling <o> has been used for the vowel qualities represented in the English words: *but, part, put, boot*.

The Sydney Harbour names

Background

Figure 2.1: Map detail of Sydney Harbour (from Attenbrow 2001, see also 2002: 8)

By now it should be abundantly clear that there can be considerable discrepancy between a written representation and phonetic accuracy. This poses particular problems for the Sydney Harbour area because the language of this area, sometimes referred to as Dharuk (Troy 1993) had fallen out of daily use during the nineteenth century. Unlike Gamilaraay where there is a strong base of documentation and one can call on older Aboriginal people for verification and assistance, for Dharuk the situation is more difficult. Nevertheless we have been able to draw on research by Attenbrow (2001, 2002) and Troy (1993) to strengthen our account.

Another task for the previously mentioned subcommittee (consisting of Blair and the authors) was to devise spellings which would encourage non-specialists to give as close a rendering to the phonetic original as possible. First we scanned the full range of spellings presented by Attenbrow (some sample spellings are given in Table 2.5 below) and attempted to make an educated guess about the phonetic original. As with the Gamilaraay exercise, for the Sydney Harbour region we can be quite confident about some and rather diffident about others. Basically the more capital letters and question marks the less clear we are about the phonetic original. It was partly on this basis that some possible candidates for dual naming ended up being culled from the list. Where the original phonetics was fairly well understood a suggested spelling was put forward. In October 2003 a meeting of representatives from Aboriginal communities with interests in the Sydney basin was convened at the Tranby Aboriginal Cooperative in Glebe. This meeting considered the list, the suggested spellings and the reasons for culling some potential dual naming candidates from the list.

Reasons for culling

We started with a list of potential candidates for dual naming and then went through a process of culling some of the names from the original list. Here we set out some of the reasons for culling:

1. Original pronunciation unclear
   Where the original pronunciation remains unclear we have recommended deferral of the placename in question until more research can resolve the issue. This applies to these places around Sydney Harbour: nos. 14, 17, 49, 51, 58, 21, 43, 47, 55

2. Already named
   One place, Dawes Point/Tar-ra, had already been dual-named: no. 41

3. Retain former spelling
   For three placenames we decided to retain the former spelling: nos. 18, 22, 50. Basically an existing spelling had become entrenched and it was

felt that there would be little chance of a proposed alteration being taken up; e.g. no. 22 Kirribilli is one of the best known Aboriginal placenames in Sydney. Notwithstanding that the phonetic original seems almost certain to have had an additional syllable, a practical approach was taken to retain an entrenched spelling even if it is 'incorrect'.

4. Remove to avoid confusion
    For another three placenames it was necessary to remove them so as to avoid confusion: nos. 40, 56, 59. The early sources indicate rather clearly that no. 40 should be pronounced like <coogee> but the place is Millers Point on the northern side of Sydney Harbour and this would be in competition with an established suburb name, Coogee, south of the Harbour!

The result of the culling process was to remove 16 names from an original 36 candidates. In this way 20 candidates for dual naming were eventually accepted and gazetted.

Table 2.5: The Sydney Harbour names (adapted from Attenbrow 2001; see also Attenbrow 2002: 9-13; drawing on Troy 1993)

VA ref	Reference spelling	Attenbrow spellings	Suggested phonetic original	Suggested spelling	Introduced name	Comments
11	Kuba Kaba	Kuba Kaba, Caba-caba, Ca-ba Ca-ba	gabagaba	gubber -gubber	Middle Head	some concern expressed by Aboriginal people because of a perceived connection with 'gubba' a term for 'white people' (Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990: 169) altered to gubbah gubbah
12	Koree	Koreé, Koree	gORi	goree	Chowder Bay	
13	Gurugal	Gurugal, Gurrugal	gARAgal		Chowder Head	
14	Taliangy	Taliangy, Tal-le-ongi-i	DaliyAngi		Bradleys Head/Middle Head	
15	Booragy	Booragy, Bürröggy, Burrõggy or Broggy	buRagi	booraghee	Bradleys Head	
16	Goram bullagong	Goram bullagong, Gorambùllagong	goRambUlagOng		Mosmans Bay	
17	Wulworra-jeung	Wulworrá-jeung	wAlwORa-?		Robertson Point	
18	Kurraba	Kurrá bá, Kurrábá	gARaba	gahrabah	Kurraba Point	Retain former spelling
19	Wurru-birri	Wurru-birri	wARabiRi	warrabirrie	Kurraba Point (West)	
20	Weeawya	Wéyé Wéyé, Weeawya	weyeweye ??		Careening Cove	
21	Wudyong	Wudyong, Wudyong	wAdyOng		Wudyoung Point	
22	Kiarabili	Kiarabilli, Kiarabily	giyaRabili		Kirribilli	Retain former spelling – although 'wrong'
23	Quiberee	Quibéreé, Quiberee	guwibARi		Lavender Bay	
24	Warrungarea	Warung area, Warrungarea	waRVngaRiya		Blues Point	
39	Tumbulong	Tumbulong and Go-mo-ra ?	DAmbAlOng		Darling Harbour	
40	Coodyee	Coodye	gudyi	coogee	Millers Point	Scrap 'cos confusing
41	Tar-ra	Tar-ra, Tarra, Tárrá	DaRa	Tar-ra	Dawes Point	Already adopted

VA ref	Reference spelling	Attenbrow spellings	Suggested phonetic original	Suggested spelling	Introduced name	Comments
42	Melia-Wool	Melia-Wool	mVliyawul		Campbells Cove	
43	Talla-wo-la-dah	Talla-wo-la-dah	DalawVlaDa		The Rocks (West)	
44	Warrane	War-ran, Weé-rong, Warrane, Warrang	waRVN		Sydney Cove	
45	Tobegully	Tu-bow-gule, Tubow-gule, Too-bow-gu-liè, Tobegully, Jubughalee, Jubùghallee	DVbVgali		Bennelong Point	
46	Woccanmagully	Woggan-ma-gule, Woccanmagully	wAganmagali		Farm Cove	
47	Cookaroo	Cookaroo	gugaRu	googahroo	Farm Cove Beach	
48	Yurong	Yu-ron, Yurong, Yourong, Yurong	yuRVN	yurong	Mrs Macquaries Point	
49	Mat-te-wan-ye	Mat-te-wan-ye, Mat-te-wan-ye	maDAwanyA		Fort Denison	
50	Wooloomooloo	Walla-mool, Wallamoula, Wooloomooloo	wAlAmUlA		Wooloomooloo Bay	Retain former spelling
51	Ba-ing-hoe	Ba-ing-hoe	baying-?		Garden Island	
52	Derawun	Derawun	DVRawAn		Potts Point	
53	Carraginn	Carraginn	gaRVdyin		Elizabeth Bay	
54	Jerrowan	Jerrowan, Jèrrowan	dyVRVwan		Elizabeth Point	
55	Yarrandab	Yarrandab, Yarrandabby	yaRandabi		Macleay Point	
56	Kogerah	Kogerah	gUgVRa		Rushcutters Bay	? Scrap 'cos confusing
57	Yaranabe	Yaranabe	yaRanabi		Darling Point	
58	Be-lang-le-wool	Be-lang-le-wool, Billong-ololah, Billòng-olòla	bVlVng- ?		Clarke Island	
59	Wallara	Woo-lã-rã, Willárrá, Wallàra	wVlaRa	wallahra	Point Piper	
60	Boambilly	Bo-a-millie, Boam bill …. [word incomplete – document damaged], Boambilly	buwam(b)ili		Shark Island	

Determining the phonetic original

We are basing some of our guesses on Eades' (1976) observations about Dharawal/ Dhurga and neighbouring languages. Basically the phonemic inventory for Dharawal/Dhurga is indicated in Table 2.6; we have replaced Eades' symbols with ones that we consider to be more user-friendly.

Table 2.6: Phonemic inventory for Dharawal/Dhurga

b	dh	d	dy	g		vowels: i, a, u ± length
m	nh	n	ny	ng		
		l				
		r				
w			y			

Importantly there is no contrast in rhotics, so the decision about how to represent it/them should be based on purely practical considerations like readability by the average person. The contrast between /d/ and /dh/ is a concern because the sources for this exercise remain mute; e.g. nos. 14, 41. The vowel length contrast is also a problematic because we cannot make a definite decision about what is short or long based on these data. Finally the nasals can be tantalising. We suspect that the nasal in no. 44 is /ny/, but we cannot demonstrate this conclusively.

Some pragmatic principles for representing Sydney placenames

1. Disregard contrast in anterior consonants; i.e. /nh/ and /n/ written as <n>

2. Disregard vowel length; i.e. /aa/ and /a/ not distinguished.

3. Assume no rhotic contrast. Although many languages have this contrast apparently Dharawal and Dhurga do not (Eades 1976); see also Busby (1980).

4. Mostly disregard stress but try to place stress on the first syllable.

Table 2.7: The Sydney Harbour names – adoptions and exclusions

Suggested spelling	Adopted spelling	Introduced name	Comments
gubber-gubber	Gubbah Gubbah	Middle Head	Adopted. some concern expressed by Aboriginal people because of a perceived connection with 'gubba' a term for 'white people' (Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990: 169) altered to gubbah gubbah at request of Sydney basin meeting
goree	Gooree	Chowder Bay	Adopted
??	Gooragal	Chowder Head	Adopted
DaliyAngi	??N/A	Bradleys Head/ Middle Head	? Original pronunciation unclear – recommend deferral
booraghee	Booraghee	Bradleys Head	Adopted
	Goram Bullagong	Mosmans Bay	Adopted
wAlwORa-?		Robertson Point	Original pronunciation unclear – recommend deferral
gARaba	Gahrabah	Kurraba Point	Retain former spelling
wARabiRi	Warrabirrie	Kurraba Point (West)	??
	Weeyuh Weeyuh	Careening Cove	Adopted
wAdyOng		Wudyoung Point	??
giyaRabili		Kirribilli	Retain former spelling – although ''wrong''
guwibARi	Gooweebahree	Lavender Bay	Adopted
waRVngaRiya	Warungareeyuh	Blues Point	Adopted
DAmbAlOng	Tumbalong	Darling Harbour	Adopted
gudyi	Coogee	Millers Point	Rejected as confusing
DaRa	Tar-ra	Dawes Point	Already adopted
mVliyawul	Meeliyahwool	Campbells Cove	Adopted
DalawVlaDa		The Rocks (West)	??Original pronunciation unclear – recommend deferral
waRVN	Warrane	Sydney Cove	Adopted
DVbVgali	Dubbagullee	Bennelong Point	Adopted
wAganmagali	Wahganmuggalee	Farm Cove	Adopted
gugaRu	Googahroo	Farm Cove Beach	??
yurong	Yurong	Mrs Macquaries Point	Adopted
maDAwanyA	Muddawahnyuh	Fort Denison	Adopted
wAlAmUlA		Wooloomooloo Bay	Retain former spelling
baying-?		Garden Island	Original pronunciation unclear – recommend deferral
DVRawAn	Darrawunn	Potts Point	Adopted
gaRVdyin	Gurrajin	Elizabeth Bay	Adopted
dyVRVwan	Jarrowin	Elizabeth Point	Adopted
yaRandabi		Macleay Point	??

Suggested spelling	Adopted spelling	Introduced name	Comments
gUgVRa		Rushcutters Bay	? Rejected as confusing
yaRanabi		Darling Point	
bVlVng- ?		Clarke Island	Original pronunciation unclear – recommend deferral
wVlaRa	Wallahra	Point Piper	Rejected as confusing
buwam(b)ili	Boowambillee	Shark Island	Adopted

The meeting at Tranby in October 2003 expressed a general concern with the failure to provide 'meanings' or stories for the placenames. We were at pains to point out that some placenames may never have had a meaning or story associated with them and even if they had, that information may have been lost (see also Walsh 2002). However it is intended that any such information will be added to the database of NSW placenames – as it becomes available.

Balancing phonetic accuracy with a practical spelling

It will be clear that phonetic accuracy is not always possible but what is perhaps less obvious is that it might not even be desirable. Some spellings can seem forbidding to the non-specialist and this is obviously inimical to the aim of promoting the general acceptance of dual naming. Therefore there needs to be a balance between phonetic purism and what might be called toponymic pragmatism. The former is exemplified by some work carried out by Harold Koch on Aboriginal placenames in Canberra and south-east NSW (2002, 2005, this volume). The latter seeks to provide a written representation which closely approximates the original pronunciation (to the extent that can be determined) but which does not necessarily meet the expectations of specialists in linguistics. This is a practical approach motivated by a desire to make dual naming work. It is the approach preferred here (see also Nick Reid (2002) on creating Aboriginal placenames in the Armidale city area).

Conclusion

It is hoped that this adoption of Aboriginal placenames in the Sydney Harbour area will encourage attempts to reinstate Aboriginal placenames across NSW. In 2004-2005 a series of community consultations has been carried out at a number of centres: Coffs Harbour, Canberra, Wellington, Armidale, Lightning Ridge, Blackheath, Nowra – in 2004; Casino, Newcastle, Deniliquin, Coffs Harbour and Yass – in 2005. The Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy, on behalf of the ANPS NSW/ACT Committee, has supported these consultations with financial

assistance from the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs major grants scheme and from the Commonwealth through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services. These consultations have also benefited from assistance in planning and coordination from the NSW Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre. We anticipate more of these consultations in the future and are hopeful that Aboriginal communities will foster proposals for new instances of dual naming in NSW.

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Endnotes

1. Spellings are shown in pointed brackets, <…>, while phonological material is shown in oblique/ slanted brackets, /…/.

2. Note that the two English words <but> and <put> do not rhyme despite their similar spelling. This is just one of the problems with English spelling (one 'just knows' which vowel sound goes with which word) which creates further problems when they are employed to represent another language.

3. Phonology looks at the sound distinctions which are meaningful <u>within</u> a particular language. In many Australian Aboriginal languages there is a meaningful contrast between /dh/ and /d/ while in English there is no such contrast. In English there is a meaningful contrast between /t/ and /d/ (<tale> versus <dale>) but there is no such contrast in most Australian Aboriginal languages.

CHAPTER 3

The recognition of Aboriginal placenames in New South Wales

GREG WINDSOR

Introduction[1]

The State of New South Wales (NSW) is located in south-eastern Australia; it covers an area of approximately 801,600 square kilometres and has a population slightly over six million people. NSW was first declared an English possession by Captain James Cook on 22 August 1770. In 1901 the Australian Federation created the Commonwealth of Australia, which in turn constituted NSW as a State within its own right.

Prior to the colonisation, Australia was occupied by 600-700 Indigenous territorial groups speaking about 250 languages and many more dialects. Britain took possession of Australia under the international legal doctrine of 'terra nullius', believing that the land belonged to no other sovereign power. To the Indigenous peoples who occupied Australia, however, the land had great cultural, spiritual and economic significance. As with other colonised countries the Indigenous inhabitants of Australia were subject to massacre, displacement and disease in the years after colonization (NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs n.d.).

In 1966 the NSW Government established the Geographical Names Board of NSW as the statutory body responsible for place naming within the State. The Board was constituted under the *Geographical Names Act* 1966, which enabled it to assign names to places, to investigate and determine the form, spelling, meaning, pronunciation, origin and history of any geographical name; and to determine the application of each name with regard to position or extent (*Geographical Names Act* 1966).

The history of recording Aboriginal placenames in NSW

It is important to acknowledge that there are two systems of placenames in NSW and in fact the whole of Australia. Firstly, there is the system developed by the introduced bureaucracy after colonisation. Further, there are networks of placenames that date back millennia that were used by the respective Aboriginal peoples. Hercus and Simpson (2002: 1) call the first system the "Introduced System" and refer to the second as the "Indigenous Placename Networks".

Early European explorers of Australia failed to recognise the existence of these Indigenous Placename Networks and subsequently assigned European names to features that commemorated important events, people and places from their own culture.

Some early exceptions did apply, with various Aboriginal word and placename lists being compiled by Second Lieutenant William Dawes in the late 1780s and several maps showing various Aboriginal names published by surveyors such as Grimes and Meehan in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

By the 1850s Aboriginal placenames were starting to be recorded and used as a matter of course. This can be attributed to directions given by the then Surveyor General, Major Sir Thomas Livingston Mitchell. It is said that Mitchell gave directions to all surveyors under his control that Aboriginal names should be used and recorded wherever possible. This directive is supported by various letters sent by him to his subordinate surveyors. In a letter sent to Assistant Surveyor Elliot in 1828, he states:

> You will be particular in noting the native names of as many places as you can on your map of that part. The natives can furnish you with the names for every flat and almost every hill, and the settlers select their grants by these names. The names of new parishes will also be taken in most cases from the names of the natives… (Mitchell 1828)

A general directive published in the Regulations for the Guidance of Licensed Surveyors 1864 reinforced Mitchell's correspondence. It stated:

> 37. Where euphonious aboriginal names can be ascertained, it is desirable that they should be suggested by the Surveyor for new parishes. (The Survey Department of NSW 1864: 4)

Further, the printed forms supplied to all surveyors to furnish their monthly progress report in 1828 carried the following footnote: "Native names of places to be in all cases inserted when they can be ascertained" (Selkirk 1923: 60).

As indicated by Mitchell in his letter to Elliot, settlers were also promulgating the use of Aboriginal names. In 1847 an *Order In Council*[2] provided squatters the right to convert their illegal occupation of crown land to leasehold. To do this they had to describe their run, which invariably meant Aboriginal placenames had to be used as no other descriptors were available. This action meant that Aboriginal placenames would be recorded on official documents and demonstrated that these names were in common use by the general community at that time.

At the turn of the twentieth century there was a renewed attempt to collect as much information as possible about Aboriginal culture. This interest was fuelled by theories of social Darwinism, which are sometimes referred to as the 'Dying Race Theory'. Various Government policies at that time arose from this notion of "the disappearance of Aborigines as a distinct group" (Wilson n.d.).

Consequently several attempts were made to collect information about Aboriginal placenames. The most ambitious of these was a survey carried out by the Royal Anthropological Society of Australasia (RASA). In the late 1800s the RASA sent surveys out to every police station in NSW. These surveys solicited the help of local police officers to collect information about Aboriginal placenames and their meanings. Figure 3.1 depicts the survey form used for this exercise. This information was eventually collated and published in RASA's journal titled *The Science of Man*.

In the 1990s the Geographical Names Board discovered over 3600 original RASA documents. This collection of documents included all the original responses to the survey, letters and manuscripts, diagrams and press cuttings of the time.

Caution has to be exercised when using this historical information. With the exception of Dawes, who provided a key to the orthography of his word lists, most attempts at recording Aboriginal placenames gave a confused insight into the words' orthography and pronunciation. As no Aboriginal language was written, we now have to rely heavily on word lists compiled by authors who, on the whole, had no linguistic training and, in some circumstances, a poor grasp of written English, to reconstruct authentic Aboriginal placenames in areas where traditional knowledge has been lost.

Figure 3.1: RASA survey form

To add extra confusion, Mitchell wanted to ensure all Aboriginal names collected were euphonious. He issued to all surveyors a circular outlining a set of rules to be used for the collection of these names, as follows:

1. That where g begins a syllable it is never to be followed by h.
2. That the vowel u is always to be used instead of the diphthong oo excepting in the last syllable when the accent is upon it.
3. That no name is to terminate with h.
4. That two r's are to follow the accented syllable only and no other.

By avoiding thus unnecessary consonants and diphthongs, names to which some have given fourteen letters may be written in nine, as Beraweree for Bherrahwherree, Gulangulah for Ghoolangoolah, Bhroulhee for Brulee, Culapatamba for Coulahpatamboh, and many other words in which there are letters as superfluous as gum trees on the hills. (Mitchell 1829)

Since its inception in 1966 the Board has deliberately encouraged the preservation of Aboriginal placenames. This is demonstrated by the Board's published guideline which states "Names of Aboriginal origin or with an historical background are preferred" (Geographical Names Board of NSW 2001). The Board is also bound by legislation to compile a dictionary of Aboriginal placenames (*Geographical Names Act* 1966, Part 5, Section 1, Subsection g).

In the early 1990s the Board believed it could do more to recognise Aboriginal placenames and appointed a new member to represent the views of the Aboriginal community as a whole. Mr Aden Ridgeway was appointed to the Board at this time as a nominee of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council.

In 1992 the Board embarked on a public debate regarding the implementation of a dual naming policy. It was envisaged that this policy would allow the recognition of the traditional Aboriginal placenames alongside those names recorded in the introduced system. Reports in the press were misleading and implied that introduced names were to be discontinued and replaced by the traditional Aboriginal placenames. Several interviews with Board members failed to change public opinion and finally the then Minister for Land and Water Conservation, George Souris, announced that he was "against dual naming because of the confusion he believed it would cause" (Robinson 1993).

Whilst the Board did not back away from its commitment to give preference to Aboriginal placenames, it took another eight years and a change of Government before the Board was to again investigate the development and implementation of a dual naming policy.

In 2000 the Board was motivated to examine once more a dual-naming policy. This decision was driven by several factors, which included:

- A change in community perception
- A receptive government, and
- The receipt of several naming proposals to reinstate various Aboriginal placenames.

The Board had judged that community perception had changed since its last attempt to introduce a dual naming policy in 1993. The reconciliation walk across Sydney Harbour Bridge demonstrated this change in perception. Over 200,000 people marched across the bridge on 28 March 2000 in a show of solidarity for the cause of reconciliation between white and Aboriginal Australia (Byrne 2000).

A receptive Government also meant that a policy of this nature was more likely to succeed. The Minister responsible for the Geographical Names Board at this time, Kim Yeadon, reported to Parliament that:

> Dual naming is a step forward on the path towards reconciliation. It will ensure that Aboriginal place names are recognised as an integral part of our heritage and will positively facilitate the preservation of that heritage. As with all acts of reconciliation, this initiative enriches all of us, indigenous and non-indigenous. This initiative will not only recognise and celebrate the unique link that Aboriginal people have with land and water, it will enhance the cultural heritage of New South Wales for everybody, adding an additional layer of meaning and significance to many of our favourite places. (Yeadon 2001)

In the meantime the Board had received a proposal to recognise the traditional Aboriginal name of a creek on the western outskirts of Sydney. This creek had an introduced name of 'South Creek', which dated back some 200 years. The proposal, however, presented proof of a traditional Aboriginal name, 'Wianamatta', which predated the introduced name.

These combining factors provided the stimulus for the Board to develop its policy; however, careful consideration on the policy development process was required to ensure its successful implementation.

The Board, with Ministerial approval, set up a dual name subcommittee (the subcommittee). The subcommittee had nominees from peak bodies representing Aboriginal communities, State Government, Local Government, emergency services, historians and academia. This subcommittee was charged with developing a policy that was culturally appropriate, cost effective and workable.

The policy and procedures used by the Board to formalise and record Aboriginal placenames

General procedures

The *Geographical Names Act* 1966 outlines the procedure required for the Board to formalise geographical names within NSW. The Board is bound by this legislation; thus the formalisation of a placename, be it a singular or a dual name, must comply with this Act.

The Act states that the name must be considered by the Board. If the Board deems the name to be appropriate it then must be advertised in the local press and the NSW Government Gazette (the Gazette). This advertisement invites the general public to submit comments over the proceeding four weeks on the proposed name. If no objections are received after this period the name is officially recognised by way of notice in the Gazette. If an objection is received the proposed name is referred to the Minister responsible for the Board for a final decision. If approved, the name is officially recognised by way of notice in the Gazette.

The Board acknowledged that further safeguards had to be introduced into this process if culturally significant Aboriginal placenames were to be recognised as dual names under the Act. Consequently the Board and its subcommittee developed the dual naming policy and related procedures which provided detail on topics such as; the consultative process with Aboriginal communities, what constitutes a dual name, how the names are to be officially recognised, who determines the orthography of a dual name, and how dual names should be presented. The following information was extracted from the Board's policy and procedural documents on dual naming.

The consultative process with Aboriginal communities

All dual naming proposals require the support of the Local Aboriginal Land Council and, where relevant, tribal elders of the area. In some (rare) circumstances, a proposal may also need approval from a Regional or State Aboriginal Land Council.[3] If the geographical feature covers more than one Aboriginal Land Council area (e.g. a river), approval is to be sought from each relevant Council.

A written proposal should be sent to the Local Aboriginal Land Council with details of the geographical or cultural site for which a dual name is being proposed. Proponents should specify the exact location, proposed name and spelling of the site within the proposal. Proponents should ask the Local Aboriginal Land Council to help establish a meeting to discuss the proposal with

local elders and representatives from established Aboriginal families. A copy of the proposal should also be sent to the Regional Aboriginal Land Council for comment.

Proponents should allow ample time for reply because the Local Aboriginal Land Council may need an unanticipated meeting to consider the proposal. If there is no response from the Local or Regional Aboriginal Land Council within three months, the Board can submit the proposal to the NSW Aboriginal Land Council for approval.

Once approved, public comment is sought through press advertisements as outlined in the *Geographical Names Act* 1966. The Board will also advertise the proposal in the *Koori Mail* (an Aboriginal newspaper covering NSW).

What constitutes a dual name?

Since June 2001 the NSW State Government has supported a dual naming policy for geographical features and cultural sites. This community-driven system acknowledges the significance of Aboriginal culture and, in doing so, represents a meaningful contribution to the process of reconciliation in NSW.

A dual name may be used for the naming of physical or environmental features of significance to the local Aboriginal community when an official name already exists.

A dual name must be indigenous to the local area within New South Wales. It can only be assigned where there is definite evidence, preferably of a historical nature, in the form of written or oral tradition that the feature has two names.

Address features, such as suburbs or localities, cannot have a dual name. If a location were to be dual named it would be designated as either a rural or urban place.

How the names are to be officially recognised

Both the introduced name and the Indigenous name shall be gazetted and recorded as a name within its own right. Each name shall be linked to the other in the NSW Geographical Names Register and given a status of 'Dual Assigned'.

Who determines the orthography of a dual name?

The orthography and/or spelling of a name should reside in the hands of the traditional owners, or the organisation that represents them. If there are none,

the submission should be referred to identified experts in the area of Linguistics and/or Orthography. All names should be represented by characters in the Roman alphabet and/or Arabic numbers (e.g. A, B, C/1, 2, 3).

Wherever possible traditional owners should be encouraged to seek the advice from experts in the area of linguistics and/or orthography on the spelling and pronunciation of a name before concurring with a proposal.

How dual names should be presented

For presentation purposes the introduced name shall be in standard font and the Indigenous name shall be in italic font except where only an Indigenous name is used, in which case it shall be in standard font. When shown together the two names will be separated with a forward slash (/). The Board does not preference the order in which the names are to be displayed when shown together.

Technical issues

After the development of the Dual Naming Policy the Board recognised that it required further advice to make informed decisions regarding dual name proposals and future strategies relating to Indigenous placenames.

On 3 April 2003 the Board established its Technical and Scientific Sub Committee (TSSC) to inform it on such issues. The Board turned to the Australian National Placename Survey (ANPS) to help in this endeavour.

The ANPS is based at the Macquarie University Sydney and is seen as one of the leading academic organisations in the field of toponymy in Australasia. ANPS is tasked with the collection of all Australian toponyms in a manner that recognises established principles for the research and documentation of history, geography, linguistics, cultural knowledge, surveying and mapping (Australian National Placename Survey n.d.).

ANPS established its New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory committee to take on, among other things, this advisory role to the Board. This committee consists of experts in linguistics, archiving, anthropology, Indigenous issues and toponymy. This group, along with the NSW government funded Aboriginal Language Research and Resource Centre (ALRRC[4]) has been instrumental in resolving issues surrounding the spelling and pronunciation of proposed dual names and consulting with local Aboriginal communities.

Education and training

After the implementation of the dual naming policy it became apparent that promotion was required if community based proposals were to be developed and submitted to the Board. The Board again turned to the ANPS and the ALRRC for assistance.

The ANPS's parent organisation, the Asia Pacific Institute for Toponymy (APIT) and the ALRRC successfully gained funding to host a series of workshops throughout NSW. These workshops are designed to train members of local Aboriginal communities in the processes of recording Aboriginal placenames and researching their linguistic and cultural background. The workshops allow participants to have a clear understanding of how to prepare submissions to the Board in cases where they may wish to name a feature previously without an official name, to change an existing official name or to establish a dual name.

The project has the full support of the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs who funded the workshops through its Major Grants Program 2003-2004.

Among other outcomes, the workshops were directly responsible for the formalisation of 20 dual names within the Sydney Harbour area and the ongoing submission of other proposals.

Issues to be considered in recording and publishing Aboriginal placenames

It is important to acknowledge that once Aboriginal placenames are gazetted by the Board they become part of the introduced system. As this is the case there are several issues that have to be considered when formalising these names. These include:

• what Aboriginal placenames should be recognised,
• how should the names be pronounced and spelt,
• what consequence does formalisation or gazettal have on ownership and what happens with culturally sensitive information?

The question of what Aboriginal placenames should be recognised is extremely complex. Judgements on ownership and cultural restriction have to be made when considering this issue.

Rob Amery and the Kaurna Language and Language Ecology Class suggest that:

> Indigenous languages are regarded in a fundamentally different way to large world languages like English. They are regarded as 'owned' entities in the same way that songs, ceremonies and land are owned. (Janke 1998: 20)

Once an Aboriginal placename becomes legally gazetted by way of the provisions outlined in the *Geographical Names Act* 1966 the name then becomes like any other in the introduced system and would be seen to be in the public domain.

If what Rob Amery and the Kaurna Language and Language Ecology Class state is correct, that being the Aboriginal placename (as an extension of language) is owned, then each Aboriginal Community should be conscious that if one of its placenames is proposed as a geographical name then the rights it may see it has over that name may be diminished. As this is the case, Aboriginal communities should only concur with a proposal if they are happy for the names to be used without restriction in the broader community.

This is particularly important if the Aboriginal placename has *secret/sacred*[5] limitations placed on it. Concurrence should not be given to Aboriginal placename proposals if such limitations exist on a particular name and the Aboriginal community does not want these limitations violated.

It is not envisaged that all Aboriginal placenames should be recognised in the introduced placename system. Only names that the Aboriginal community deem not to have secret/sacred limitations and names that can be used in the public domain without any ownership restrictions should be considered.

Once it is established what Aboriginal placenames can be recognised in the Introduced System, decisions have to be made on the placename's spelling and pronunciation. For instance, should the placename take a form which is only easily read and pronounced by trained linguists, or should it be spelt in a way that everyday Australians can grasp and pronounce in a way which sounds akin to what was originally spoken, but without the technical idiosyncrasies which were apparent in the original word?

The TSSC discussed this issue at length and noted NSW Hansard which stated:

> This initiative will not only recognise and celebrate the unique link that Aboriginal people have with land and water, it will enhance the cultural heritage of New South Wales for everybody. (Yeadon 2001)

Therefore the TSSC recommended that proposed dual names should be spelt and pronounced in a manner that everyday Australians can grasp and pronounce. It also recommended that if this approach is taken all historical reference information and the reference orthography used to reconstruct the placenames should be recorded against each name. This requirement was seen as being necessary so future generations could establish how the name's orthography was established.

The Board now recognised that the Dual Naming policy is not envisaged to be used as a tool to collect and preserve all Aboriginal placenames. It noted that some names would not be collected due to ownership and secret/sacred limitations and further, the names that where collected may vary slightly in pronunciation from what was originally spoken. Investigations commenced on the development of a system which allowed the collection of Aboriginal placenames in a manner that was sympathetic to these issues.

Planned future initiatives to recognise placenames in the Aboriginal Naming Network

The Board commenced research on establishing a methodology that could effectively recognise the Indigenous Naming System of NSW. A partnering arrangement between the Board and ANPS is proposed to create a dictionary of Aboriginal names for NSW. This dictionary would recognise all names that would be made available to it by the Aboriginal community and look at all cultural issues regarding the use of these names.

The objectives of the project would be:

1. Collect and preserve a minimum of 200 Aboriginal names per year
2. Recognise and respect any cultural restrictions on these names
3. Preserve Aboriginal languages through a holistic approach to linguistic adaptations in tribal areas.

It is proposed that the Department of Lands would supply office space and desktop computers, along with some guidance and toponymic references from the Board's Secretariat, whilst ANPS would supply its database for the collection of information, students studying various related courses through Macquarie University to help resource the project and initial training for project team members (based on standard training as given to ANPS volunteer researchers).

Traineeships would be offered to Aboriginal people to help support the project. These traineeships would be cycled to reflect the area of activity (e.g. if work is being done in Wiradjuri country, preference would be given to a trainee

representing this group). ANPS may also look at the possibility of recognising this training by a certificate issued by the Macquarie University, which could lead on to further tertiary studies.

It is further proposed that a position to manage the project would be offered to an Aboriginal person to ensure that cultural sensitivities are considered.

The project could start by collecting information already available through web dictionaries and local experts. Once exhausted, a proactive search could take place within Aboriginal communities.

It is envisaged that the project will:

- Recognise and respect cultural sensitivities in the collection of this information
- Empower the Aboriginal community in the area of Aboriginal naming
- Give a consistent approach to the preservation of Aboriginal languages
- Raise the profile of the government in both the areas of Aboriginal Affairs and History preservation
- Ensure consistent orthographies for Aboriginal placenames within their respective countries
- Develop one repository of the Aboriginal Naming Network in NSW
- Meet the legislative requirement outlined by the *Geographical Names Act 1966*
- Allow the Board to process more, well researched, culturally appropriate dual naming and Aboriginal naming proposals, and
- Complement ANPS initiatives and utilise its database.

It is proposed that a submission could be created by both the Board and ANPS to seek funding from key Aboriginal representative groups and State and Federal government for the resourcing of the project. The partnering arrangement could also seek support from all parties who were involved in the Dual Naming Sub-Committee as well as the Minister for Lands. Corporate partnering could also be negotiated through organisations such as the Macquarie Dictionary to help co-fund the project.

Conclusion

Since colonisation many attempts have been made to recognise Aboriginal placenames. Motives for these attempts range from the need to describe land for procurement, to the collection of information as a cultural oddity, to legitimate recognition of the original placenames as a mark of respect for Aboriginal people.

Whatever the motive, the collection of these names has been problematic. The interpretation of language and subsequent transcription into the Roman alphabet has led to the corruption of many of these placenames. Furthermore, the publication and recognition of sacred/secret names has driven a further wedge between the white and Aboriginal cultures.

Through the help of organisations such as the ANPS and the ALRRC the Board has recognised that Aboriginal placenames can only be collected when effective consultation is carried out with the local Aboriginal community, education and empowerment is offered to those communities and cultural and intellectual property rights are respected.

Building on this knowledge NSW has implemented a dual naming policy which, within the last four years, has recognised over 20 important Aboriginal placenames. The Board, ANPS and the ALRRC have also conducted Aboriginal placename workshops in most regions within NSW. These workshops are designed to educate and empower the local Aboriginal community so further names can be recognised and preserved.

The Board determined that not all Aboriginal placenames could be recognised as part of the Introduced Naming System if cultural and intellectual property rights are to be respected. As this is the case future strategies are being investigated so the Aboriginal Naming Networks can be preserved for posterity.

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Endnotes

1. This paper was originally presented at a conference on minority/indigenous placenames organised by the Frisian Academy and the Dutch and German Speaking Division of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), at Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, Frisia, The Netherlands, 15-16 April 2005.

2. An Order signed by the Queen in Council. The *Sale of Waste Lands Act* 1846 empowered the Queen in Council to make rules and regulations for the occupation of Crown lands.

3. The New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) was established under the *Land Rights Act 1983* (NSW). It is a self-funding statutory authority responsible for protecting and promoting the rights and interests of the Indigenous people of NSW. The State's Land Council network operates as a three tiered system consisting of the peak body, NSWALC, its Branch offices, 13 Regional Aboriginal Land Councils (RALCs) and 120 Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs). Every four years Land Council members vote for a Councillor to represent their region. Those 13 men and women make up the democratically elected arm of the NSWALC, providing guidance for the organisation and assisting it in meeting its objectives under the *Land Rights Act*.

4. The NSW Aboriginal Languages Research and Resource Centre (ALRRC) has been established by the NSW Government within the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs to play a key role in the preservation and revitalisation of Indigenous languages in NSW. It exists to foster and facilitate the recording, retention and understanding of those languages and to help Indigenous communities regain and strengthen access to their languages as a pathway to revitalising their culture.

5. Secret/sacred refers to information that, under customary laws, is made available only to the initiated; or information that can only be seen by men or women or particular people within the culture (Janke 1998: 317).

CHAPTER 4

New insights into Gundungurra place naming[1]

JIM SMITH

Introduction

The Gundungurra (also spelled Gandangara) language group lived to the south-west of Sydney. Their country included the catchments of the Wollondilly and Cox Rivers and some adjacent areas west of the Great Dividing Range.[2] Their neighbours were Dharug, Darkinung, Wiradjuri, Ngunawal and Thurrawal speaking peoples.

The recently discovered papers of grazier Alfred Leonard Bennett (1877-1942) contain previously unpublished traditional Gundungurra stories and hundreds of Gundungurra words, placenames and placename meanings not known from other sources.[3] Bennett's main informant was Werriberrie, also known as Billy Russell (c.1835-1914). Russell spent most of his life in the Burragorang Valley and nearby areas of the Southern Highlands. Bennett published a booklet of Russell's recollections (Russell 1914).

Russell said, in referring to his mother Wonduck, that she was "named after the place where she was born, near Richlands, which was the general custom in the tribe of my race" (Russell 1914: 9). Russell's uncles Myangarlie and Boyu were born at places with those names near O'Connell Plains and Tuglow Caves respectively. His cousin Dundowra (George Riley) was born at that place near Bullio (Russell 1914: 21; Bennett c.1908-1914 unpublished notes).[4] Hundreds of Gundungurra personal names are recorded in 'blanket lists' and other sources. The majority of these names reflect Gundungurra placenames that, like Wonduck, Myangarlie, Boyu and Dundowra, will probably never be precisely located.

The placenames discussed in this paper lie along the Dreamtime journey of Gurangatch and Mirragan (Mathews 1908; Smith 1992). The Gundungurra used the term *gun-yung-ga-lung* or 'far past times' to refer to this period of landscape,

animal and plant and law creation during which placenames became established. The epic pursuit of the 'rainbow serpent' Gurangatch by the quoll Mirragan began in the upper Wollondilly River and ended at Joolundoo waterhole in the upper Fish River 170 kilometres away.[5] The majority of placenames recorded by A. L. Bennett from Billy Russell occur in the lower Cox River, between Kedumba Creek and the Nepean River. It is possible that Russell had a special family or cultural link with this area. He was named after the creek in this landscape that was known for its *werriberri* or 'tree ferns'.

Interpretation of the placenames in Bennett's notes is made challenging by Russell's practice of locating them by naming the early twentieth century non-Aboriginal owners of the places referred to. A detailed knowledge of local history is required to map them accurately. In addition, many Aboriginal placenames have been moved from their original locations by non-Aboriginal people. An example of this is the non-Aboriginal usage of the locality name Joolundoo. This name was first published in a local newspaper in 1907 when it was announced that the name 'Jelleindore' had been selected for a new post office located some three and a half kilometres south-east of what is thought to be the location of the waterhole (Anon. 1907). Whatever had been the extent of the country referred to by Gundungurra people as Jelleindore/Joolundoo was ignored as the non-Aboriginal people served by the post office adopted their own definition of the Jelleindore locality. When the 'Blue Talisman' gold mine began operating in the early 1930s, three and a half kilometres from the waterhole, it was said to be located at Jelleindore (Anon. 1933). Other examples in this paper include the movement of the name 'Billagoola' eight kilometres to the south and the name 'Katoomba' 15 kilometres to the north-west of their Aboriginal locations.

Using the placename information recorded by Bennett, supplemented with that from Mathews and other sources, for the 50 kilometre stretch of the lower Cox River between the Kowmung and Nepean Rivers, it is possible to partially reconstruct the environmental, historical and mythological associations for Gundungurra people of this cultural landscape (see Figure 4.1).

Places in the Aboriginal cultural landscape of the lower Cox River

Meeoowun (location no. 1[6])

Gurangatch travelled underground to this *boombi* ('spring') from the Cox River (Mathews 1908: 205, undated notebook 8006/3/10: 24). The fine dark red soil around this small chalybeate spring contrasts starkly with the surrounding sandy loam.[7] It would have been an important landmark to travelling Gundungurra as well as a source of ochre. In 1833 surveyor William Govett reported to Thomas Mitchell: "The Native names of the three conical Hills … which also you requested me to get is Mouin but they are not named separately" (Govett 1833). The "three conical Hills" are now called the Wild Dog Mountains but only the most northerly is officially known as Mt Mouin. The top of this Mt Mouin is two kilometres from the waterhole and the southern end of the Meeoowun range is another three and a half kilometres further away. The Meeoowun mountains appear to have derived their name from their proximity to the waterhole. Wallace gives similar examples from South Australia, saying "Even a prominent feature such as a Mountain is not named for itself, but is known by the name of a nearby water source" (Wallace 1988: 111). Bennett recorded 'Mouirwin' for 'Medlow Gap', which is the saddle between the Wild Dog Mountains and Narrowneck peninsula.

Black Dog Track (location no. 2)

The 'Black Dog' track was the name given by early settlers to the Aboriginal pathway between the Cox River and Megalong Valley, via the mineral spring and Meeoowun mountains (Barrett 1993: 84). The Dreamtime journey of Gurangatch and Mirragan proceeded down the Wollondilly River and upstream along the Cox with sidetrips to Reedy Creek and the Meeoowun waterhole.

Karrangatta (location no. 3)

In R. H. Mathews' version of the legend of Gurangatch and Mirragan, Gurangatch "formed the waterhole Karrangatta. In order to dodge his enemy he burrowed underground, coming out on Mee-oo-wun mountain now written Mou-in where he made a deep hole or spring" (Mathews 1908: 205). It is likely that Gurangatch's route, although he travelled underground, left the Cox at the same point as the only practicable route for Aborigines travelling on foot to Mouin, i.e. the 'Black Dog' track. Throughout the legend, Gurangatch's deviations from the Wollondilly and Cox indicated side tracks to important areas of Gundungurra country. At the base of the Black Dog track is a waterhole which persists through

droughts. Mathews recorded that "the water is always moving and turning", perhaps showing the continuing presence of Gurangatch in the pool (Mathews undated notebook 8006/3/10:24). The waterhole lies beside a high dark coloured cliff, called by the early bushwalkers "Black Dog Rock" (Dunphy 1969). On the ridgetop above the Black Dog Rock cliff is a distinctive conical projection which would have been a prominent visual marker for the location of Karrangatta waterhole from far away. Bennett recorded *kurrang* for 'cloud'.

Kowmung (location no. 4)

The name 'Kowmung' for this major tributary of the Cox was first recorded by surveyor H. C. White in 1833 (Barrett 1994a: 26-27). Jim Barrett, in his history of the Cox River, raises the question of why White was given a different name to that apparently given to the same river (Barnalay) by the Gundungurra people met by Thomas Jones in 1818. Barrett (1993: 27) suggests that White, who spent most of his time in the upper Kowmung may have recorded the name used for the upper reaches of the river and Jones the name for the lower portion.[8]

A correspondent to *Science of Man* said that Kowmung meant 'scum on the eyes' (Anon. 1899). Bennett recorded this condition as *gummung*. Father Richard Coughlan spent considerable time in the Burragorang Valley from the 1940s and had close contacts with some of the early families in the district. He recorded the meaning of Kowmung as 'sore eyes' (Coughlan 1973: 54). This is almost certainly independent confirmation of the *Science of Man* record. Why the Kowmung River should be associated with a trachoma type of eye malady is unknown. Perhaps there was a Dreamtime character who contracted this condition at the Kowmung River. Alternatively there may have been a resource in, or beside part of, the Kowmung River which was a cure for sore eyes. A possible candidate would be the plant *Centipeda cunninghamii* which was widely used by Aboriginal people to cure eye infections. Maiden (1898: 1127) described it as growing "on the banks of rivers and creeks and in moist places".

Kiaramba pathways (location no. 5)

Three likely Gundungurra travel routes between the Cox River and Kiaramba Range are shown.[9] The westerly route takes a steep line directly up to Mt Cookem; the easterly route follows the ridge later taken by the Cedar Road. Between these is the route taken by the early settlers' bridle trail called 'Moody's track'. There were several other possible routes, e.g. from 'Apple Tree Flat' near Karrangatta waterhole, and the Policeman Range from Kedumba waterhole.

Kedumba/Godoomba/Katoomba (location nos. 6, 7)

The first record located using the word 'Kedumba' is a Crown Survey plan by Robert Dixon dated 1828. It shows 'Kedumba Creek', draining what we now call the Jamison Valley, at its junction with the Cox River (Dixon 1828). A survey dated 14 November 1859 was made by Thomas Evans in response to applications for grants of land upstream of the Kedumba Creek/Cox River junction (Evans 1859). Evans referred to these portions as being located "at Kedumba", indicating that the name then referred to a locality, rather than just the Kedumba Creek. The Parish including this land was later named Kedumba. These Parish maps showed the dual Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal names "Kedumba or Jamieson's Valley Creek". (The misspelling of 'Jamison' as 'Jamieson' began to appear at this time.)

The word 'Godoomba' appeared in a letter from surveyor William Govett to Surveyor General Thomas Mitchell in November 1833. Govett said "that part of the country where the Cascade Creek from the Weatherboard Inn joins the Cox is called Gŏdōōmbă" (Govett 1833). 'Cascade Creek' is now called 'Jamison Creek', which is a tributary of the river now known as 'Kedumba River'. Govett's description includes a note of uncertainty about the extent of the country described as 'Godoomba'. Which 'part of the country' around the creek junction is being referred to? The actual junction of the Kedumba and Cox Rivers is a fairly minor geographical feature. Govett may have been referring to the broad flat area that opens up beside the Cox River just downstream of the Kedumba River junction or to the lower part of the Kedumba River catchment (i.e. what we call the Kedumba Valley).

Mitchell did not use 'Godoomba' as a placename on his 1834 map of New South Wales (Mitchell 1834). The compiler of the *Australian Atlas* of 1843 showed 'Godumba' signifying country to the north-east of the Jamison Valley Creek (or Kedumba Creek) junction with the Cox River (Baker 1843).

Recognition of the word 'Katoomba' as an official placename came about through the efforts of James Henry Neale (1828-1890). Neale was the MLA for the Hartley electorate between 1869 and 1872 (Connolly 1983: 245). He became an enthusiast for the tourism promotion of the natural beauties of the Blue Mountains. He is said to have 'discovered' Katoomba Falls by following the creek down to the cliff edge (Anon. 1942). On 2 February 1874 the railway station closest to the falls had been named 'The Crushers'. Neale was said to have felt that "such an outstanding place deserved a name in keeping with itself" (Anon 1932). He was also described as "an industrious collector of native names" ('E. D. H.' 1896: 1250). Neale arranged a picnic near the top of the Katoomba Falls in about 1876, to which he invited an Aboriginal woman. She was known as 'Bet' or 'Princess Betsy' and was described as a member of the 'Kanimbla Tribe', then living at Hartley (Anon. 1919). This picnic has become an important part of

local folklore and is still regularly described in current tourist brochures for the area. No description of the picnic's events by Neale has been located. However, Harry Peckman, who was present, told the story in interviews during the rest of his life. Peckman (1846-1934) was a local coachman and bush poet (Low and Smith 1993). The earliest account by Peckman of the role of Bet, that has been located, is from 1896, some 20 years after the event. Peckman said that Bet told Neale:

> that the region of the falling waters which tumble over the cliff all around Katoomba was known by that name and that the river to which they all flowed in the valley was Katumba and so the upper lands were called Katoomba as the old natives had called them. ('E. D. H.' 1896: 1250)

Neale lobbied the railway authorities to change the name of the local railway station from 'The Crushers' to 'Katoomba'. The earliest written record of the word that has been located is in a letter from surveyor John Deering to the Surveyor General, dated 20 July 1876 (Deering 1876). The railway station name was changed to 'Katoomba' on 9 July 1877 (Forsyth 1982: 114). The earliest published map located showing Katoomba is by Eccleston du Faur issued in 1877 (du Faur 1877).

The first published meaning of the word 'Katoomba' appeared in May 1880. At that time there was considerable local agitation about the fact that the area around the top of Katoomba Falls appeared to have been alienated. A petition was being circulated urging the government to resume this land and gazette it as a public reserve. It was in this context that it was published in the *Town and Country Journal* that "the name is Aboriginal and in that tongue signifies 'falling together of many waters'" (Anon. 1880b: 840). The truthful and graphic character of the name the visitor will readily acknowledge". No Aboriginal informant was named. Thus, the alleged meaning of an Aboriginal word was called into service to support a tourism promotion of the area. Neale was one of the group agitating for the government to declare the area around the falls a reserve and had helped to prepare the petition (Citizens and Sydney and others 1880). On 2 November 1889 'Katoomba' was gazetted as a municipality with a legally defined area.

When Harry Peckman's account of the origin of Katoomba's name was published by a journalist from the *Sydney Mail*, Billy Lynch (c.1839-1913), a local Gundungurra man, was also interviewed. He said that 'Katumba' was the name for "the waters below Katoomba" ('E. D. H.' 1896: 1250-1251).

In 1899 William Littleton Gaudry (1839-1903) of 'Colong' station in the Burragorang Valley wrote to the *Mountaineer* newspaper about the meaning of

'Katoomba'. His source was "Two old full bloods, George Riley and William Russell, the last of the Burragorang Tribe" (Gaudry 1899a: 1899b). Riley (c.1832-1906) and Russell said that the name 'Good-doom-bah' applied to the junction of Katoomba (i.e. Kedumba) Creek and the Cox River. They said that the meaning was "the roots of a particular fern used as food". Gaudry also argued against other alleged meanings of 'Katoomba', i.e. 'falling water', 'running water' and 'beautiful view' by quoting Riley and Russell who said that the Gundungurra words were *walway* for 'falling water', *gungnun* for 'running water' and *mulli* for 'beautiful' (Gaudry 1899b). Bennett independently confirmed that *wolway* (his spelling) was the Gundungurra word for 'waterfall'. Despite Gaudry's authoritative Gundungurra sources, the 'falling water' meaning had become too well established in the public's mind to be replaced by a new meaning of little romantic appeal for tourists.

In the early 1900s R. H. Mathews visited Aboriginal Reserve number 26 in the Burragorang Valley, collecting Gundungurra legends and language information (Mathews 2003). The community then included the Gundungurra families of the Rileys and Sherritts and Billy Russell. Mathews, while recording the legend of Gurangatch and Mirragan, was told of one of the landmarks in the story: "[Gurangatch] resumed his course up the Cox to the junction of Ked-oom-bar Creek now called Katoomba by the Europeans" (Mathews 1908: 205). This is an unambiguous reference to Kedumba Creek, which was often referred to as Katoomba Creek.

Between 1908 and 1914, A. L. Bennett recorded this meaning for 'Kedumba' from Russell:

> a place where the Kadoomb fern grew. Kadoomb a large fern growing in the sandy banks of the creek in quantity the young fronds of which baked in native fashion and used as cabbage also a kind of mucilaginous food or starch like food was made from the roots. (Bennett, unpublished notes, 1908-1914)

Katoomba as a placename can perhaps best be understood by comparing it with two other placenames a short distance downstream of the Kedumba Creek/ Cox River intersection. There is evidence from Gundungurra informants that the placenames 'Billagoola' (location no. 13) and 'Gudgabung' (location no. 18) each referred to a locality comprising a waterhole, a nearby tributary and the area around the junction of the tributary. In similar proximity there is another large waterhole, a nearby upstream tributary called 'Kedumba Creek' and a locality around the tributary and its junction with the Cox which Billy Russell and George Riley said was named 'Good-doom-bah'. Their identification of this restricted locality as 'Katoomba' agrees with both William Govett's unnamed informant of the 1830s, who said that 'Godoomba' was the area round this

junction, and the compiler of the 1843 *Australian Atlas* who showed 'Godumba' in this area. Russell and Riley appeared to regard 'Kedumba' as a 'microtoponym' of similar significance to Billagoola and Gudgabung.

Did Gundungurra people use the word 'Kedumba'/'Good-dom-bah' for the whole 16 kilometres of Kedumba Creek including the area above the cliffs later occupied by the town of Katoomba? When Billy Lynch said that 'Katumba' was the name for "the waters below Katoomba" ('E. D. H.' 1896: 1250-1251) he used the, by then, well established name for the white man's township of Katoomba as a reference point to locate the true 'Katumba' in the valley below the town. Lynch's view, reported immediately after his interview, is probably more accurate than Harry Peckman's memory of what Betsy said 20 years earlier. Part of Betsy's statement agrees closely with Lynch's: "the river to which they [the falling waters] all flowed in the valley was Katumba". However, Peckman said that Betsy also included in the locality name of Katoomba "the region of falling waters which tumble over the cliff all around Katoomba" as well as the "upper lands", i.e. the area above the cliffs. No other known Gundungurra informant confirmed this. It should be borne in mind that Lynch and Betsy belonged to the Therabulat or middle Cox River band of the Gundungurra and may have had a different understanding of the placename 'Katoomba' to that of the Burragorang band men Russell and Riley.

Russell's description of how the Katoomb fern was used as food agrees closely with the documented use of the common Bracken Fern (*Pteridium esculentum*) (Cherikoff 2000: 121-124). However, Russell gave Bennett a different name, *guddawa*, for the Bracken Fern.

Was there another edible fern species that was found in abundance around the creek junction? An obvious candidate would be one of the *Blechnum* or 'water fern' species. One species from this genus of ferns was reported as a staple Aboriginal plant food. This was *Blechnum indicum*, the 'Bungwall' of south-eastern Queensland (Bancroft 1895: 25-26). There are four common species of *Blechnum* in Gundungurra country. It appears that only one species, *B. cartilagineum* has been recorded as being eaten by Aboriginal people (Backhouse 1843: 371). Russell said that the Katoomb was a 'large' fern and *B. cartilagineum* is the largest of the local species, growing to 1.5 metres high. Unfortunately, it is not possible to know what species of ferns originally grew around the Cox/Kedumba junction as the area has been submerged, as part of Lake Burragorang, for over four decades. No survey of the flora there appears to have been done before the construction of Warragamba Dam. However, Cambage found *B. cartilagineum* to be common in the Burragorang Valley during his early twentieth century surveys there (Cambage 1912: 565, 576).

This species is widely distributed throughout Gundungurra territory. It is difficult to believe that, in the vast expanse of Gundungurra land, there were no other areas of high abundance of this species. This suggests the possibility that the placename 'Katoomba' could have been a 'generic' one that could have been applied to any area where the Katoomb fern was found in profusion. Billy Russell said that Katoomba was "a place where the Kadoomb fern grew" not <u>the</u> place where it grew [author's underlining]. There may have been other places called 'Katoomba'.

Reedy Creek (location no. 8)

Adjacent to the present road crossing of Reedy Creek is a large permanent waterhole, fed by the hanging swamps of Muggadah (Kings Tableland). Gurangatch rested in this hole on his journey (Mathews 1908: 205). Mathews' notes describe it as "a deep waterhole with reeds around the edges" and recorded *birrigooroo* for 'reeds growing along creeks'. (Mathews undated notebook 8006/3/10: 23). The locality name 'Muggadah' was not recorded by early settlers but it is the name used by the Gundungurra Tribal Council for Kings Tableland (Gundungurra Tribal Council 2002). By following the Kedumba River upstream, Gundungurra people entered what we call the Jamison valley, characterised by its geographically distinctive concentration of waterfalls (*wolway*) over 100 metres high. The Gundungurra name of the prominent peak in the middle of the Jamison Valley, now called Mt Solitary, was recorded by Govett (1833) as 'Munmie'. Bennett wrote it as 'Munmee'.[10]

Muggadah pathways (location no. 9)

From the lower Kedumba River there were four passes, utilising breaks in the cliffline, that allowed Aboriginal people access to Muggadah. The most northerly of these was called by the earliest settlers the "Goat Track" (Smith 2003).

Billagoola (location nos. 10, 12, 13) – see also Figure 4.2

In 1828 Robert Dixon surveyed a land grant for John Farrell (Barrett 1995: 26). Farrell's land, on the northern side of the Cox River, was described as 'Black Gooler'. The word has been spelled in various ways including 'Gula', 'Goola', 'Golnar', 'Coola' and 'Colar'. Thomas Mitchell did not use this name on his 1834 map (Mitchell 1834). He did, however, show the area on the other side of the Cox from Farrell's land as "Black's Hollow". The later Parish Maps showed the creek which joins the Cox opposite Black Gooler called 'Butcher's' or 'Black Hollow Creek'. Butcher's Creek commemorates a cattle duffer who frequented the area.

The name 'Gooler' was widely used by later settlers. Reg McMahon named his property near the junction of Popes Creek and the Cox 'Black Gooler' (Barrett 1990: 9). This was on the opposite side of the Cox to John Farrell's grant. Also on this side was the site for 'Black Colar' school purchased in 1895 (Parish of Bimlow Map 1938). Beside the school site was William Dennis' property which Billy Russell described as being at 'Black Goola' (Russell 1914: 15). About four kilometres south of this is Popes Mountain which was also known as 'Black Golnar' (Lee 1971: 9). Further away is Black Coola Mountain, eight kilometers to the south of the Cox. A trigonometrical station 'Black Coola' was gazetted near here in 1894 (Parish of Bimlow Map 1938). This process of placenames derived from Billagoola shifting southwards is probably a result of the typical process of non-Aboriginal people moving Aboriginal placenames away from the localities where they originally applied.

One of Bennett's Gundungurra informants, Richard Lord, said that *goola* was the word for 'diver, shag, cormorant'. It is important, when studying early vocabularies, to be aware of the vernacular names of animals and plants in use by the local non-Aboriginal community of the time. In this context, the 'diver' is the Australasian Grebe (Ben Esgate pers. comm.).[11] Western scientific taxonomy places the cormorants or shags into a different family to that of the Grebes. However, Lord appears to indicate that the word *goola* is a general one that covers the local birds that dive in water for food.

Bennett and R. H. Mathews recorded *billagoola* for the Gundungurra name of the 'black shag' (Mathews 1908: 206). Early twentieth century non-Aboriginal vernacular usage of 'black shag' referred to the bird now known as the Great Cormorant. The *billa* part of *billagoola* evidently specified which of the *goola* class of birds was referred to and is probably a reference to the *belar* or *Casuarina cunninghamii* tree in which it roosts (Dixon et.al. 1990: 131-132). Mathews (1908: 206) and Bennett recorded *goolagwan-gwan* and *guruguanguan* respectively for the Grebe. Here the qualifying part of the *Goola* bird's name is at the end, and appears to be a repetition of the word for excrement.[12]

References in the unpublished notebooks of Mathews and Bennett and in the version of the story of Gurangatch and Mirragan that Mathews published make it clear that 'Billagoola' was the name for both the waterhole on the bend of the Cox (opposite the Black Gooler flats surveyed by Dixon) and the nearby tributary of Black Hollow Creek (Mathews 1908 and undated notebook 8006/3/7: 72). Mathews' Gundungurra informants told him that the name of Billagoola Creek had been "corrupted to 'Black Hollow' on our maps". Versions of the word *Billagoola* recorded by Mathews and Bennett are *Blagola* and *Blagoola*. It does not appear too unlikely that Dixon, on hearing the placename as '*Blagoola*', interpreted it as 'Black Goola'. It seems more remarkable, however, that the

surveyor who heard the word as '*Blagola*' interpreted it as 'Black Hollow'. There are probably many other examples of non-Aboriginal people who thought that they were hearing English words when given Aboriginal placenames.

If Dixon's record of 'Gooler' for the flats opposite the junction of Butcher's Creek reflects actual Gundungurra usage, then this provides further evidence of the extent of locality referred to by the name.

Camping Cave (location no. 11)

This large cave beside the Cox River was known as the 'Bushrangers Cave' for its association with the cattle duffers known only as Butcher and Bullock who operated in the Burragorang from the 1820s (Barrett 1995: 37).

Warrumba (location no. 15)

Bennett gives: "Pearce's Creek – Warrumba – a big Tortoise". The species is the Eastern Long-necked Tortoise. Pearces Creek flows through a break in the cliffline on the northern side of the Cox. It provides a negotiable route to Kings Tableland.

Coober (location no. 17) – see also Figure 4.2

One of the earliest grants of land in the Burragorang Valley was made to Sarah Harrex in the late 1820s (Barrett 1995: 40). Harrex's application has not been located but it is likely that, in common with many similar applications, she described the location of the land by what she understood to be the Aboriginal name for the area. When her 150 acre (60ha) lot was surveyed by Robert Dixon in 1828 it was described as 'Coober'. When the first Parish map was compiled for the area it was called the 'Parish of Cooba'.

A. L. Bennett obtained this information from Billy Russell: "Kooba – Big Stringy Bark – a tree with very thick bark, grows near R. O. R. Coxes River". "R. O. R." is 'Robert O'Reilly'. His holdings were on both sides of the Cox and to the east of Harrex's land (see Figure 4.2). Bennett sent a sample of the tree identified as *cooba* by Russell for identification by R. T. Baker of the Technological Museum. Baker identified it as "Cooba – Stringybark 'Kedumba' – *Eucalyptus wilkinsoniana*" (Baker 1911). Baker had described this as a species in 1900 but it is now recognised as a variety of *E. eugenioides* – the Thin-leaved Stringybark (Chippendale 1988: 151).

It is likely that the *coober* variety was common along the lower Cox River. It was important for Aboriginal people as a source of bark sheets for shelters. Any

area with good stands of *coober* could have possibly been described as *coober* country. The fact that Russell used Robert O'Reilly's land as the reference point is an indication that the area known to Gundungurra as 'Coober' on the lower Cox may have overlapped with the Gudgabung locality.[13] In a letter of March 1828, John Farrell described the land he wanted (three kilometres to the north-west of Harrex's land, in the area later known as Black Gooler) as being located at Coober (Barrett 1995: 16). If there were Coober trees on the Black Gooler bend of the Cox then Mr Farrell may not have been mistaken in referring to this area as Coober. Coober and Billagoola country may have overlapped. There could have been some flexibility in Gundungurra placename usage. It is possible that one spot could have had several placenames depending on the context in which it was being talked about.

Coober country had other associations for Billy Russell. In his *Recollections* he said his stepfather was called 'Muroon', "which is the name of the wild cucumber vine bearing oblong berries, called *Moon-bir*, and which are of a brown colour when ripe, the vines are rather plentiful in stringy-bark country" (Russell 1914: 9). *Muroon* is *Billardiera scandens*. Bennett also recorded that the name of one of Russell's uncles was "mumbirr … name of native cucumber". Thus both Billy Russell's stepfather and uncle were closely associated with the important food plant which is plentiful in Coober country.

Cooba is also a Wiradjuri word for a species of wattle, *Acacia salicina* (Dixon et al. 1990: 135). This word was adopted into Australian English and was used, even outside the normal dry-country range of *A. salicina*, to describe other wattles with 'willow-like' leaves. This is one of a number of examples where the same word appears in Gundungurra and a neighbouring language, but is used to describe two completely different plants.

Gudgabung (location no. 18)

Bennett's notes have the following references to this placename:

a. "Gudgabung – the name of Peter O'Riellys [sic] and the Green Wattle of Billy Russell=the Parish Map".
b. "Gudgabung – a lagoon near Peter O'Reilly's".
c. "Kudgabung – green Wattle Creek".

In Russell's *Recollections* (1914: 19) he states: "A man named Tom Green[an] lived at Gudga-bung in Green Wattle creek."

The locations of Peter O'Reilly's and Tom Greenan's properties are shown on location no. 2. There is a widening of Green Wattle Creek beside Peter O'Reilly's property that may have been the Gudgabung lagoon. Greenan's property,

though which Green Wattle Creek flows, is only a few hundred metres from O'Reilly's. Peter O'Reilly's neighbour Robert O'Reilly gave his address in 1885 as 'Cudgebung' (Anon. 1885: 307).[14] If all of these records reflect Gundungurra usage, then 'Gudgabung' was the name for 'Green Wattle Creek', a lagoon on the creek and the general vicinity of the area round the junction of Green Wattle Creek and the Cox. Gudgabung, like Kedumba and Billagoola, appears to be a locality name for the area around a waterhole by that name.

Wollondilly/Condongbarrow (location no. 19)

The lower reaches of the Wollondilly may have been called 'Condongbarrow' or 'Condonora' (Barrett 1993: 27). The name 'Wollondilly' was first recorded for the upper reaches of the river. Thomas Jones recorded 'Condongbarrow' and 'Condonora' for the lower Wollondilly in 1818. Condonora was an early name used for Gundungurra people.

Gunnadarel (location no. 20)

'Gunnadarel' appears to have been the Gundungurra name for Lacy's Creek, at least in its lower reaches (Russell 1914: 19).

Bulla Mullar (location no. 21)

Bennett records 'Bulla Mullar' ('A Devil Place') as the origin of the locality name 'Bimlow'. Another early recorded version of this placename is 'Bimmillo', the name used by John Lacey in an application for a grant in the area (Barrett 1995: 24–26, 43). The name may have been a 'generic' one that could be applied to other 'devil places'. In 1833 William Govett, while exploring the Kowmung River, was given the name 'Buhimmelah Rock' for a riverside feature (Barrett 1994b: 69). This is possibly the same word expressed in the renderings 'Bulla Mullar' and 'Bimmillo'. Buhimmelah Rock is 22 kilometres from Bimlow.

Gaung Gaung (location no. 22)

R. H. Mathews (undated notebook 8006/3/10: 23) recorded this name for one of Gurangatch's waterhole resting places "a little way above Pocket Creek junction". There may be a relationship between the name of this pool and the name of the Australasian Grebe. This was recorded by Mathews (1908: 206) as *goola gwan gwan,* where *gwan* is the word for excrement. This pool may have been named after the large amount of bird excrement around it.

Muggaroon (location no. 23)

Bennett recorded:

a. "Muggaroon – Crawfish" and

b. "Muggaroon (Crawfish) Pocket Creek, Blacks Camp, Coxes [sic] River".

The common freshwater crayfish of Gundungurra country are the Australian Crayfish (*Euastacus australiensis*) and the Sydney Crayfish (*E. spinifer*) (Merrick 1993: 61-62, 76-77). They would be more likely to be found in small side streams, like Pocket Creek, than in larger rivers like the Cox, due to predation by large fish.

The traditional Aboriginal camping area around Pocket Creek was the site where the St Joseph's Farm Aboriginal community became established in the 1870s (Smith 1991: 11-25).

Gogongali (location no. 24)

Bennett recorded: "googongali – small fern, growing by Peter Fitz's". In Russell's *Recollections*, he said "Mr Jack Fitzpatrick of Burragorang is somewhere about my age. I can remember his father at his farm, Go-gon-gal-li on the other side of the Warragamba River. Old Mr Fitz senior was called Burrung-gullut by us" (Russell 1914: 19). "Mr Fitz Senior", Peter Fitzpatrick, acquired land in 1850 on the western side of Gogongolly Gully Creek near its intersection with the Cox (Barrett 1995: 111). Gogongali Creek was also known as Shoebridge's Creek after one of the area's settlers (Pearce 1991: 22). A number of small fern species have edible rhizomes and/or frond tips. Cribb (1994: 159) records a fern with an edible rhizome, *Lygodium scandens,* from south-east Queensland with maidenhair-like leaves, but Bennett recorded *googah* for the local Maidenhair Fern. Alternatively the creek may have been known for an abundance of other small non-edible fern species.

Pathways (location nos. 15, 24, 25)

Pocket (Muggaroon), Pearces (Warrumba) (Map no. 15) and Gogongali creeks cut through the cliff line on the northern side of the Cox River sufficiently to create negotiable routes to Kings Tableland and the Central Blue Mountains via Erskine Creek. The routes shown are partly based on a map 'Gundungurra Pathways' published by Jim Barrett (1993: 105).

Kouroong (location no. 26)

Bennett interviewed some non-Aboriginal early residents of the Burragorang Valley and Southern Highlands in his search for local Aboriginal vocabulary. Occasionally he recorded historical material as well. One example came from William James Maxwell (1832-1914):

> Mr W. Maxwell remembers that when he was about 12 years of age and living at gogongoli creek (nortons flat) a fierce battle between the Burragorang and Coxes River Tribes took place between the Wild Blacks of the tops and was fought somewhere about the Warragamba River. (Bennett, unpublished notes, 1908-1914)

Billy Russell said "Kouroong – where a fight took place in gorge through which the Warragamba flows". This battle occurred about 1844. Bennett recorded that *couroong* meant 'old skeleton or bones, skulls'. If this place was named after the bones of Gundungurra enemies killed in 1844, it is an example of an Aboriginal placename established in the post-contact period.

Werriberri (location no. 27)

Bennett recorded "Werriberri – Fern tree. Were-a fern". His informant Billy Russell was born beside Werriberri creek a few kilometres north of The Oaks (Russell 1914: 10). There are four species of tree ferns found in Gundungurra territory: three species of *Cyathea* and *Dicksonia antarctica*. *Cyathea australis* is the commonest of these and was probably the species found along Werriberri Creek (Fairley and Moore 1989: 33). The inner edible starchy pith of this plant can only be accessed by killing the tree fern. The rolled up tips of the fronds were eaten (after cooking) in some areas also (Cribb 1975: 134-135).

Warragombie (location no. 28)

'Warragombie' was the name first recorded for the lower Cox River, and it was formalised by Governor Macquarie (Macquarie 1979: 21). The name later changed to 'Warragamba'. It was almost certainly the Dharug name for the river. If the Gundungurra had their own name for this stretch of the river, it does not seem to have been recorded.

Gulguer (location no. 29)

Billy Russell said that 'Gulguer' ("meaning a falling or shooting down or swilling round, which causes the water to make a large round hole") was the name of Bent's Basin (Russell 1914: 22-23). He said it was one of the lurking places of Gurangatch.

Deerubbin (location no. 30)

Deerubbin/Dee-rab-bun may have been a Dharug word for part of the Hawkesbury River (Collins 1975: 357). Alternatively, it may have been their word for rivers in general (Keith Smith pers. comm. 2006). The Gundungurra used the same word (*dyirraban*) for one of the yam species found in riverside habitats (Mathews 2003: 29). The Dharug and Gundungurra may have used other names for this section of the Hawkesbury/Nepean.

Werriberri's birthplace (location no. 31)

Billy Russell was born about here, on the upper reaches of Werriberri Creek close to the later township of The Oaks.[15] This creek had an early dual name, being known also as 'Monkey Creek' for its koala population.

Gurrabulla (location no. 32) and Boonbal (location no. 33)

Gurrabulla waterhole was the last resting place of Gurangatch on the lower Wollondilly before it joined the Cox. Bennett recorded *gurradhulla* for 'a junction of watercourses'. 'Boonbal' is the next named waterhole upstream (Mathews, undated notebook 8006/3/10: 23). Boonbal is just downstream of the Brimstone Gully Creek junction.

Murro-lung-gulung (location no. 34) and Mullindi waterhole (location no. 35)

In his *Recollections*, Billy Russell said "Luke Gorman … lived at Upper Burragorang, at a place called 'Murro-lung-gulung' which means that a hand was stamped on a rock cave at this place" (Russell 1914: 20). He appears to use 'Murro-lung-gulung' as a locality name rather than just for the hand cave itself. This would seem to follow the Gundungurra place-naming principle that localities take their name from a prominent environmental or cultural feature of the area. *Marrola* was recorded as the Gundungurra word for 'hand' and *ngunung|a* for 'belonging to here' (Kohen 1993a: 138-139), so 'Murro-lung-gulung' may convey the meaning of 'place of the hands'.

Another Murro-lung-gulung place was near the property of James Pippin. The Pippins were early settlers in the valley and appear to have established good relationships with the Gundungurra people. Their descendants claimed that James Pippin (1818-1917) "was a blood brother to the local native tribe and was protector of the Red Hands Rock" (Barrett, 1994: 93). One source said that Pippin was "initiated into the Burragorang tribe" (Dunphy n.d.).[16] A possible reason why Pippin could have been 'adopted' into the Gundungurra clan system is indicated by two quotations from R. H. Mathews:

> There used to be a gurangaty in a waterhole called Mullandi, called the "deep water", opposite the "Hands" – these hands are on a little creek which runs down into Mullandi.

> Mullindee waterhole – before going on a Pirrimbir expedition the men used to go and swim in this hole, to make them strong and clever.[17] (Mathews, undated notebook 8006/3/10: 19, 24)

It appears that a source of spiritual power for Gundungurra warriors existed in the connection between the Hands Cave and Mullindee waterhole. Gundungurra people may have reasoned that James Pippin, the landowner who controlled access to these powerful sites, needed to be incorporated into their social system in a relationship of mutual obligation so that he could appreciate the importance of the Mullindee waters to them.

'Mullindi' appears to have also been a general word for 'deep water' as well as the name of this particular waterhole. Mathews made a marginal note: "deep water is Mullindi" (Mathews 8006/3/10: 20). A. L. Bennett recorded "Mulundi Hayes School Burragorang now spelt by Education Department Malumbi, deep water, W. Russell."

It was dangerous for Aboriginal people from other areas to go near Mullindi waterhole. Mathews recorded:

> Mullindi=big hole in Wollondilly at Burragorang in which dwells the gu-ra-ngaty – this monster draws under any strangers who may approach the margin of the pool. (Mathews 8006/4/Folio Box 1, folder 11)

Mathews also recorded a peculiarity of Gurangatch's behaviour: "Gurangaty had a great down on left handed people. If they passed near his waterhole they had to carry the fire in their right hand" (Mathews 8006/3/10: 24).

Kweeoogang (location no. 36)

An article by the author (Smith 2006) explains how the name of this waterhole was moved by the prolific twentieth century nomenclaturist Myles Dunphy to

become the officially approved name for a peak 32 kilometres to the north-west of the waterhole, Mt Queahgong.[18] Mathews does not give the exact location of Kweeoogang waterhole and it has been located on the map beside the land of Maurice Hayes who called his property 'Queahgong' (Etheridge 1893: 48). A collector of local folklore, William Albert Cuneo, claimed that the feature called 'The Bluff' on current maps was called 'Mt Queahgong' (Cuneo n.d.: 3). This Mt Queahgong is over three kilometres south south-west of the waterhole and at the top of a cliff some 150 metres high. This name appears never to have been used on any published map. There is a possibility that 'Kweeoogang'/'Qheahgong' was an Aboriginal locality name that covered both the waterhole and the clifftops three kilometres away. So this case may be similar to the naming relationship between the Meeoowun waterhole (location no. 1) and Meeoowun mountains and Kedumba waterhole (location no. 7) and the Kedumba/Katoomba clifftop area. Bennett recorded *que que gang* for the 'soldier bird' (noisy miner). This suggests a possible meaning for the Kweeoogang placename.

Junba (location no. 37)

Although Mathews' notebook (MSS 8006/3/10: 23) appears to locate Junba waterhole between Gaung Gaung (location no. 22) and Billagoola (location no. 13) he may have glossed over some of the complexity of Gurangatch's journey. John Fitzpatrick, when applying for a mail delivery contract in 1877, gave his address as 'Janba' on the Warragamba River (Barrett 1995: 82). He was then residing at Portion 6 Parish of Cooba.[19] It is not likely that Fitzpatrick moved the name from its true location. His father Peter was a fluent speaker of Gundungurra and was highly respected by the local Gundungurra people (Russell 1914: 19). Peter Fitzpatrick was familiar with the Warragamba River area from the 1830s and he and his son purchased land in the area from the early 1850s (Barrett 1995: 41).

The order of waterholes in Mathews' notebook could still be correct if Gurangatch 'doubled back' from Gaung Gaung to Junba before proceeding to Billagoola. Similar reversals occurred on other parts of the journey. *Junba* appears to be one of the Gundungurra words for the Long-finned Eel. Bennett recorded both *yamba* and *yumba* for the 'big black eel'.

Conclusion

Although we have from Bennett and Mathews a fair amount of information about places along the lower Cox River, this would be only a small proportion of what would have been known to the original Gundungurra inhabitants. What we do know allows us a rare glimpse into the complexities of an Aboriginal cultural landscape which can now only be known through historical records

and the memories of the few survivors who once knew it. There would have been so many named landmarks along this 50 kilometre stretch of river that any Gundungurra person who shared the same mental map of this area with another person would have had no difficulty in describing exactly the location of any event or of arranging to meet at any place along the river.

Some general principles of Gundungurra place naming emerge from the study of this cultural landscape. The lower Cox River includes three localities where a waterhole, nearby tributary and the locality around the waterhole all apparently shared the same placename. Probably it was the waterholes, formed during the Dreamtime and places of continuing practical importance to Gundungurra people that were first named, with the nearby tributaries and general locality deriving their names from the waterhole. Most of the placenames are words in everyday use for trees, plants and animals. 'Joolundoo', 'Gurrabulla' and 'Mullindi' appear to be placenames that describe common topographic features: rivers, river confluences and deep water. That is, there is a 'generic' quality to Gundungurra placenames. In theory, any area with an abundance of a plant or animal or with some particular geographic feature could have been named with the word for that species or feature. It is possible that some placenames only had currency within individual clan areas. Where placenames originate in areas which experienced early and severely disruptive European settlement it can be almost impossible to define accurately the areas covered by Aboriginal locality names. A. L. Bennett's work with Billy Russell allows some insight into the multiple spiritual, environmental and ethnographic layers of meaning in the placenames of the Lower Cox River.

R. H. Mathews, in introducing the Gurangatch and Mirragan story, described its starting point: "the waterhole and the country around it being called Murrau-ral"[20] (Mathews 1908: 203). We rarely have enough information to be able to say how much of 'the country around' topographic features takes its name from the primary site of the name. There was probably some flexibility in the naming of localised areas of country rather than rigid boundaries. When going down the Cox, the changing locality names given by Russell are a fairly consistent average distance of about two kilometres apart. Whether this gives some idea of the extent of country covered by a Gundungurra 'microtoponym' is not clear. Russell does not explain why specific localities were identified with particular common species. *Warrumba* tortoises and *muggaroon* crayfish were found in all the tributaries, *gogongali* and *katoomb* ferns grew right along the river. *Cooba* trees were abundant throughout the area. These places may have had associations with Dreamtime stories about these species. Neither Russell nor any other Gundungurra informant gave any information as to whether what we call the Cox/Warragamba River changed its name as it passed through these various localities.

'Cooba' is a good example of the layers of meaning that can be conveyed by an Aboriginal placename. Bennett's action in having this tree identified by both a Gundungurra authority and an expert in western scientific taxonomy is exemplary. Because of this we know that *cooba* is a 'Stringybark' tree, a species that provided bark sheets for shelter. Cooba country could be located in space for Gundungurra people in a number of ways: by its location between Warrumba and Gudgabung Creeks, by its position in the Dreamtime journey of Gurangatch and Mirragan, and by its position in relation to various Gundungurra travel routes. In this latter respect, Cooba lies between the paths to Kiaramba ridge that leads to the Great Dividing Range and paths to Dharug country in the Central Blue Mountains and to the Wollondilly River route to the Mulwaree Plains. An example of the personal significance that placenames could have for individual Aboriginal people is the naming of two of Billy Russell's family members after the *Billardiera* vine which is common in Cooba country.

The waterhole names associated with the journey of Gurangatch and Mirragan provide an example of the survival rate of Aboriginal placenames. Of the 11 locality names in this article that describe resting places of Gurangatch, only two are in regular use today. However, very few of the bushwalkers who pass Mt Mouin or locals and visitors in Katoomba would be aware of the origin of these names in the Gundungurra Dreamtime.

Because of the friendship between A. L. Bennett and Billy Russell and the careful recording of the Gurangatch and Mirragan story by R. H. Mathews, the lower Cox River is one of the best documented Aboriginal cultural landscapes within 100 kilometres of an Australian capital city. Regrettably Arthur Phillip's choice of the site of Sydney as Australia's first settlement led to the submerging of most of this landscape 170 years later to create a reservoir for the city's water supply.

Figure 4.1: Gundungurra cultural landscape map showing the lower Cox River and its tributaries with known placenames and some Aboriginal pathways. The Dreamtime journey of Gurangatch and Mirragan proceeded down the Wollondilly River and upstream along the Cox with sidetrips to Reedy Creek and the Meeoowun waterhole. The junction of the Wollondilly and Cox Rivers is about 90 kilometres from the centre of Sydney.
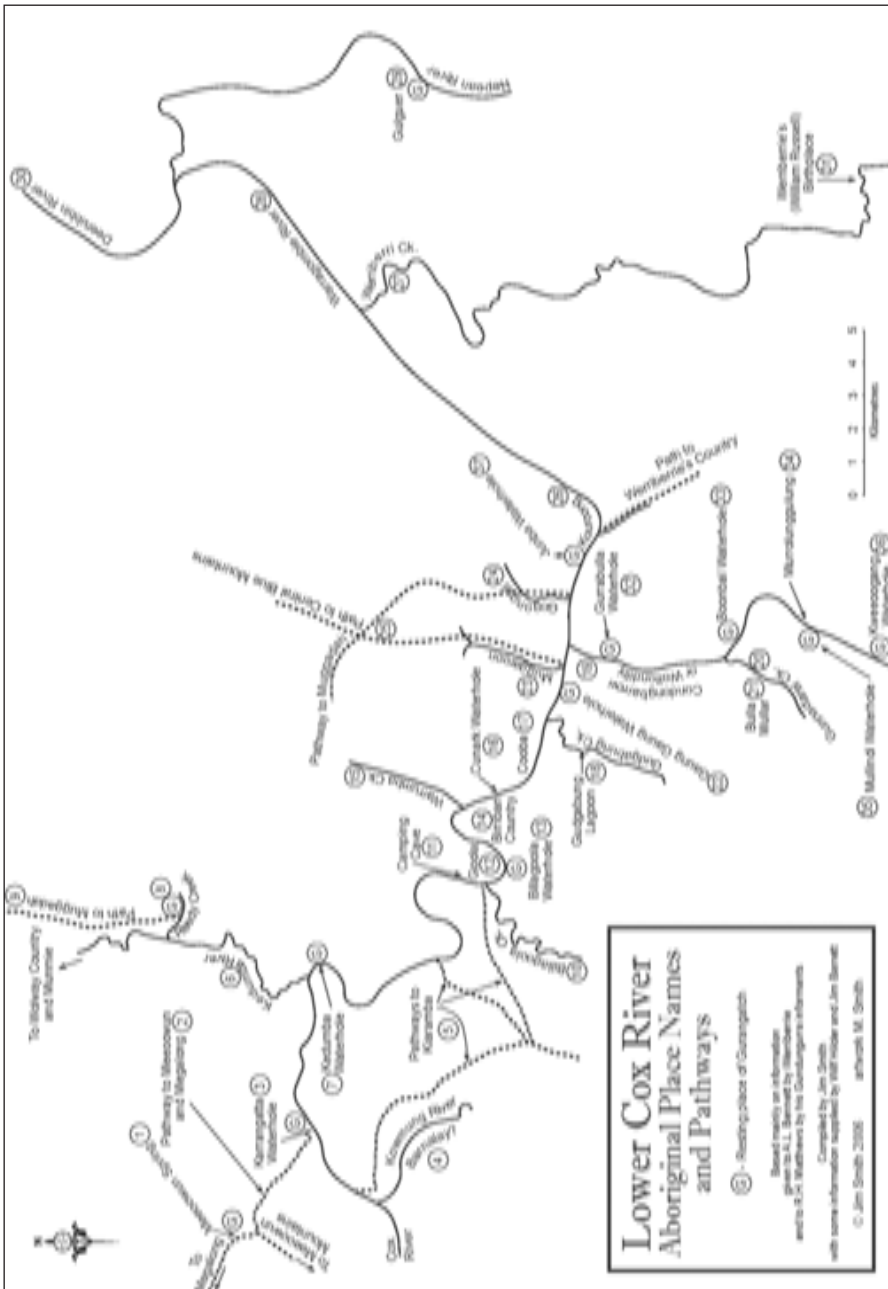
Figure 4.2: Part of the lower Cox River showing the Black Gooler and Coober land grants of the 1820s, the southwards 'migration' of Gooler-related names after settlement and the settlers around Gudgabung creek whose properties were used by Gundungurra informant Billy Russell to describe the Coober and Gudgabung localities.

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Endnotes

1. Jim Barrett's published histories of the Burragorang Valley have provided much of the historical framework for interpreting the often cryptic notes of Bennett and Mathews. He has read and commented on some sections of this article and provided copies of rare maps and unpublished material. The author is also grateful to the descendants of A. L. Bennett for allowing access to his research. Jim Kohen has encouraged the author's research on the Gundungurra for the last 15 years. Wilf Hilder was the author's companion on bushwalks along Gundungurra trails. Michael Jackson advised the author on some of the Aboriginal routes.

2. A more detailed discussion of Gundungurra associations with country appears in the author's Ph.D. thesis (Smith 2008). A map of the Gundungurra Tribal Council's Native Title Claim area can be obtained from the Tribal Council at 14 Oak Street Katoomba 2780. Documentation on Gundungurra boundaries is contained in Johnson (2004).

3. The unpublished Bennett papers are still held privately by his descendants. They were compiled mainly in the period 1908-1914. They are unpaginated. A description of the papers, and a biography of Bennett will appear in the forthcoming Gundungurra dictionary compiled by the author and Jeremy Steele.

4. All other material sourced from Bennett and Russell in this paper is from these unpublished notes, unless indicated otherwise.

5. A map of the journey is in Smith (1992). Bennett recorded *dulan* as the Gundungurra word for rivers in general. *Dya* is the Gundungurra first person singular possessive suffix. Joolundoo could be derived from *dulandya* and mean literally 'my river'.

6. Location numbers refer to locations marked on Figure 4.1.

7. In Smith (1992) this area is described as a volcanic vent, however, recent geological advice is that the red soil is Limonite or hydrated Iron Oxide. Chalybeate springs in the Southern Highlands were bathed in for therapeutic purposes by non-Aboriginal people but it is not known if they were used by Gundungurra people.

8. Jones travelled along the Cox River from Glenroy to the Nepean. He was given the Aboriginal names of three major tributaries of the Cox by Gundungurra people. These are thought to be the Jenolan River, Kowmung River and Wollondilly River. However, Jones' original report has not survived. His employer Sir John Jamison rewrote Jones' notes in an ambiguous manner making it difficult to be certain which Aboriginal names relate to these rivers. Barrett's interpretation is followed in this article.

9. The terrain of the area discussed in this article is extremely rugged and precipitous with many constraints on human movements such as vertical cliffs. The locations of Aboriginal travel routes are deduced from early settlers' accounts, the existence of early bridle trails and the locations of Aboriginal sites and resources. Most of the Aboriginal pathways shown on Fig. 4.1 have been traversed on foot by the author to assess their practicability and verify the locations of associated Aboriginal sites. Most of these routes were later used by bushwalkers and are shown on Dunphy's 1969 map of Gangarang.

10. Mt Solitary has also been referred to by the Aboriginal name of 'Corowal' or 'Korrowall'. The earliest reference located for this usage is Anon. (1880a). From the early 1880s the dual Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal names e.g. as 'Corowal or Solitary Mount' appeared on maps.

11. Ben Esgate (1914-2003) spent his life exploring the Blue Mountains and became an acknowledged authority on its natural history. When shown the Gurangatch and Mirragan legend he unhesitatingly identified the 'diver' as the Grebe and said this was the local bushmen's name for this species in his youth. His identification is confirmed by Morris (1898: 122).

12. In a number of NSW languages, some names of waterbirds incorporate the word for excrement, a reference to the habit of these birds of leaving large deposits of droppings beside the pools they frequent (Ash et al. 2003: 95).

13. Robert O'Reilly's portions on the north side of the Cox later became known as 'Curramutta' property. Bennett recorded *Kurramutta* for the 'Honey Suckle (near swamps)', i.e. *Banksia paludosa* or *B. robur*. It is not known if 'Curramutta' was used as a locality name by the Gundungurra.

14. This reference contains many hundreds of Aboriginal placenames from New South Wales.

15. Russell said he was born "where Mrs Felix O'Hares' farmhouse now stands" (Russell 1914: 10). The location of the O'Hare property is shown in den Hertog (1987: 30).

16. This information was given to Dunphy by R. Doyle on 21 August 1932.

17. Mathews recorded the Pirrimbir revenge ritual from "Thoorga" [Dhurga] informants in the Narooma area (Mathews 1905: 239-252). This account does not include any mention of bathing as part of the ritual although his notes on Mullindee waterhole refer to Thurrawal speakers bathing in a hole in Bomaderry Creek as part of these expeditions. Mathews may not have recorded the Gundungurra word for the revenge ritual. Amongst his Gundungurra notes (8006/3/10: 16) is the note "Gure is revenging party". However in his notebook (8006/3/4, Volume 2: 37) "gurre" is given as a Dhudhuroa word, from a Victorian language.

18. Ironically, Dunphy's name was approved in 1931 by Surveyor General Hamilton Mathews, the son of R. H. Mathews (Thompson 1986: 122).

19. Fitzpatrick applied for Conditional Purchase of this land in 1874.

20. The name for this waterhole, which was described as one of Gurangatch's camping places, includes the Gundungurra word for a camp, as recorded by Bennett, *mura*.

CHAPTER 5

The methodology of reconstructing Indigenous placenames
Australian Capital Territory and south-eastern New South Wales

HAROLD KOCH

Figure 5.1: Canberra area modern placenames. Photograph by Grace Koch.

Aim and overview

The aim of this paper[1] is to show how and to what extent, by using linguistic and historical methods, it is possible to reconstruct placenames of Aboriginal origin in those parts of Australia where direct knowledge of the language of the placenames has been lost. The examples are drawn largely from the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and to some extent the adjacent area to the south which goes by the name Monaro. This section discusses what we mean by reconstruction and what aspects of a placename we should try to reconstruct

(meaning and pronunciation). Also sketched are the issues of transmission of a placename from a traditional Aboriginal system to a different Anglo-Australian system: 'intercultural transmission' involves transfer across a linguistic and cultural barrier, and 'historical transmission' through time within the Anglo-Australian system of geographical nomenclature. The next section 'Historical transmission' describes how methods from the discipline of history can help us understand the original bestowal of the name in the Anglo-Australian system as well as changes in the locational referent, pronunciation, and spelling of the name. The section 'Intellectual transmission and the linguistic reconstruction of sounds' shows what the discipline of linguistics brings to the reconstruction of the original pronunciation and explanation of the variant spellings, giving reasons for the massive variability that is typically found. The method of comparing and matching is applied in detail to a number of examples. Following this 'Reconstructing the etymology' shows how to go about reconstructing the 'meaning' of placenames, based on the evidence of early testimony as well as the (cautious) use of wordlists. The final section summarises the methodology that has been presented and applies it to the name 'Canberra'.

On reconstruction

What do we mean by reconstruction?

Reconstruction is a method for gaining knowledge of the past that is not available through direct transmission. The results of reconstruction are nearly always incomplete and are always to some extent hypothetical.

Why do we need to 'reconstruct'?

In many parts of Australia there has been a break in the continuity of Aboriginal languages and in the transmission of knowledge about the names traditionally associated with places in the lands occupied by the speakers of those languages. Nevertheless we may have available placenames that are still in use that were derived from such languages – although their pronunciation may have been altered and their local reference may have shifted. Further names may be available that are no longer in use but were nevertheless recorded in writing at some time since the coming of Europeans to that area. If our goal is to understand these names from the viewpoint of the traditional culture from which they were taken, we need to engage in the historical exercise of 'reconstruction'.

What are we trying to reconstruct?

The typical questions asked of placenames of Indigenous origin are about their meaning and about their form:

- What is the meaning of the name?
- What is the correct spelling of the Indigenous name?

Let us first examine more closely the question of meaning. Placenames, like other proper nouns, do not have a 'meaning' or semantic content of the kind that most other words in a language have.

> Proper nouns have no inherent semantic content, even when they are homonymous with lexical words (*Daisy*, *Wells*), and many, perhaps all, cultures recognise nouns whose sole function is to be proper (*Sarah*, *Ipswich*). Typically they have a unique intended referent in a context of utterance. (Coates 2006: 312)

The 'meaning' of a placename thus reduces to its *locational referent*, i.e. the place to which it refers – what kind of place, its geographical extent and its precise location. For example, Victoria is a politically constituted geographical area, a state, in the south-eastern part of the geographically defined political entity called Australia.

Yet when people ask about the meaning of a name of Indigenous origin, they usually are not asking about its locational referent but about what I will call its *etymology*. It is a question about the meaning of the elements that constitute the name, what their non-name meaning is (cf. Reed 1977 and RASA 1900[2]). Thus, regarding Victoria, the question of meaning in this sense is that *victoria* is a Latin word meaning 'victory'. But the question of the origin of its meaning may extend to a further question: how is this meaning related to its locational referent? In other words, how did the name come to be associated with the place? This demand may be partially satisfied by supplying the information that the state name Victoria is derived from the name of the British queen, Victoria (whose name etymologically meant 'victory'), who was the sovereign at the time of the constitution of Victoria as a separate British colony. So there is an association behind the name, a story that explains the bestowal of a particular name. I will call this question regarding meaning the *etiology* of the name.

Now, with placenames of Indigenous origin, we can rarely expect to have information about the story behind the name. Nevertheless we do have a few examples of names bestowed by Europeans who in colonial times named a place after an Aboriginal person. Thus the Tarra River of Gippsland was named after the Goulburn Aboriginal Charley Tarra, who was part of the exploration party led by Angus McMillan (Watson 1997: 169). Or, according to one tradition,

the name of a property in the modern Australian Capital Territory, Congwarra (near the site of the Tidbinbilla Space Tracking Station) was named after an Aboriginal elder of the same name.[3] Indigenous names of this kind reflect European patterns of name bestowal.

The bestowal of placenames in traditional Aboriginal societies follows a different pattern. In Aboriginal societies whose nomenclature patterns are known we find that many (but not necessarily all) placenames allude to mythological stories. They may refer directly, with various degrees of lexical complexity. For example, a name may explicitly translate 'magpie', 'belonging to magpie', or 'where the magpie attacked'. On the other hand, a name may refer only in a very oblique fashion. Such is the case of the Kaytetye placename 'Artarre' – 'tail feathers (of emu or turkey)', which alludes to a story where in the Dreaming two men (really carpet snakes) decorated their bodies by inserting emu tail feathers into their belts and performed a dance to attract a woman, who was really the sun, with disastrous consequences: the two men still stand there memorialised in the form of a couple of trees on a hillside near a creek. To know that the placename "means" 'tail feathers' is of little help without knowing the story behind the single word. In other words, the etymology without the etiology is rather useless; this is, however, what is usually given as the 'meaning' (e.g. in Appleton and Appleton 1992).

In long-settled areas of Australia, where the traditional languages have been poorly documented, we have very little hope of ever recovering the 'meaning' in the sense of the mythological story to which the name alludes – unless there is some mythological knowledge either preserved by the relevant Indigenous community or found in the historical records of the early European settlers who learned it from the local Indigenous population.

I suggest that the proper questions we should be asking, in the process of reconstructing Aboriginal placenames, instead of those given (as dot points) above, are those listed below, of which the first three concern meaning and the last two concern the form:

- What is its *locational referent*? i.e. what specific place did the name originally refer to?
- What is its *etymology*? i.e. what is the ordinary-language meaning of the word in the relevant language?
- What is its *etiology*? i.e. what is the story behind the name? or, How did a particular word come to be the name of the particular place?[4]
- What was the *pronunciation* of the placename in the language from which it was taken?

- What would be an appropriate *spelling* of the name in an orthographical system that accurately represents the phonology of the relevant language?

How much meaning can we expect to reconstruct? I suggest that we will typically be able to reconstruct at least an approximate locational referent for a placename, especially if it was bestowed on the basis of a named Aboriginal location in the vicinity, but that this location may not be very precise. Regarding etymology, we may sometimes be able to posit a tentative meaning, but we should not normally expect to be successful, given the incomplete documentation of many languages and the fact that not all Aboriginal placenames have a clear etymology even in the traditional culture. With respect to the etiology, I would claim that only rarely could we expect to have access to this knowledge in regions of Australia where Aboriginal traditions have been disrupted.

Until the coming of Europeans to their homelands, the placenames used by Aboriginal people each had a function within an indigenous system of nomenclature, referring to sites (and presumably their surrounding area) that had significance for the location of resources, way-finding, personal and group identity, and traditional beliefs (from which the name may have been originally bestowed). When early settlers established a homestead or even a temporary stock station and needed a name to register their land selection and to distinguish it from that of their neighbours, they took a name used by the local Aborigines for some site in the vicinity (whose specific local reference and significance was probably often unknown to the newcomers) and applied it to a feature (homestead, whole property) that had significance in their own economic and legal system. The significance of the name in the European nomenclature may have undergone subsequent changes – for instance being transferred from the name of a property to that of a town or a river, a range of hills, a parish, a trig station, a nature park, or even a satellite tracking station. The form of the placename would have been imitated by the first Europeans who learned it from the local Aboriginal people, and it most likely suffered some distortion in pronunciation in the transmission across the linguistic divide. Different Europeans may have interpreted the Aboriginal word in different ways, or even if they had the same interpretation they may have spelled it in different manners. Other Europeans may have learned the name from Europeans but reproduced it differently in pronunciation and spelling – either unconsciously or deliberately. Some may have learned the word from its written form and introduced a new pronunciation based on the spelling.

The changes in the referential meaning and the spelling of placenames within the European system of nomenclature can be traced to some extent through the record of written documentation. The function of the placename in the earlier Aboriginal system of nomenclature, on the other hand, is largely inaccessible to us now. Our best evidence for recovering information on (especially the

pronunciation and location of) Aboriginal placenames comes from the period of time – which may have lasted for several decades – during which there was an overlap in the use of the land between the traditional Aboriginal residents and the initial European settlers. This conception of the transmission of placenames is illustrated visually in Figure 5.2, where an originally Aboriginal placename and its reflected European placename is put on a timeline (appropriate for the ACT – see below).

Figure 5.2: Transmission of placenames over time

Aboriginal system			
European system			
Time line	1825	1860	2005
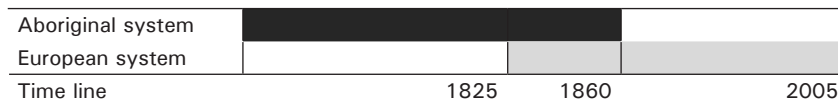
The first European settlers arrived in the regions now called the ACT and the Monaro in the 1820s.[5] The first European land-holders each took up a large area of land and many of them named their properties with Aboriginal names. The gold rush at Kiandra in 1860 brought great movements of people through the district. The *Robertson Land Act* 1861 also led to the influx of many small landholders, most of whom, unlike the earlier large landholders, would not have had learned about their land directly from the local Aborigines. In recovering aspects of the Aboriginal nomenclature, therefore, greatest reliance should be placed on those historical sources that reflect knowledge dating from the 1820s until around 1860. In general, *earlier* documents can be assumed to better reflect the knowledge of the first Europeans who acquired placename information first-hand from members of the traditional cultural community. Furthermore, placenames have often undergone changes over time: they sometimes shifted in their local reference and came to be used to refer to slightly different places. They have also sometimes undergone changes to their pronunciation, some of which may be due to pronunciations based on spellings rather than on imitation of the Aboriginal pronunciation.

Intercultural transmission and historical transmission

There are two processes that need to be reconstructed if we are to reconstruct aspects of the traditional Indigenous placenames from their present-day usage. We might designate these processes 'intercultural transmission' and 'historical transmission'. The names were transmitted from the Indigenous language and cultural system into the early Anglo-Australian system during the period of cultural overlap. This process of intercultural transmission typically involved a lot of misunderstanding, loss of information, reinterpretation of form and meaning, etc. Subsequently through historical transmission within Anglo-Australian culture the placename may have undergone changes in locational

referent, pronunciation, and spelling. It is obvious that, before an attempt is made to reconstruct the intercultural transmission of a placename, one should undo the effects of historical transmission to recover the form and sense of the placename as it was first used in the Anglo-Australian system. The interpretive process of undoing the effects of historical transmission, which is a prerequisite to the reconstructing the intercultural transmission, requires primarily the methods of the discipline of history, whereas unravelling the intercultural (and especially interlingual) transmission depends largely on the methods that stem from the discipline of linguistics.

Historical transmission

What history offers

The historical study of documents can be expected to provide information on the circumstances of the bestowal of the placename in the Anglo-Australian toponymic system, answering such questions as: which Europeans first claimed the land as their property; when and by what authority was the claim recognized; when was the land surveyed; what use was it put to; when and by whom was a topographic feature (river, hill, etc.) named; when was a town gazetted? Historical sources can also yield information about changes in the application of names to sites, supposed sources and 'meanings' of placenames (including whether it was from an Aboriginal or a European source), the chronology of attestations of a given placename (in possibly differing spellings) in documents. Historians may be able to evaluate the relative reliability of various historical witnesses.[6]

It is primarily historians who have the tools to investigate such primary sources as land title records, correspondence with Colonial Secretaries, surveyors' reports and maps, unpublished diaries, etc. For my work on placenames I have largely relied on secondary sources produced by historians, such as: local histories (e.g. Hancock 1972; Fitzhardinge 1975, Gillespie 1991; Andrews 1998; Moore 1999), biographies (e.g. Wilson 2001[1968]; Clarke 1986), editions of travellers' journals (e.g. Lhotsky 1979; Robinson 1998), and compilations of historical documents (Young, Mundy and Mundy 2000).

Historical evidence for changes in the locational referent

It is important to realise that the local referent of a placename undergoes changes over time. The local reference may shift somewhat, as shown below; it may also

undergo considerable expansion in its scope. (The most dramatic changes of referential scope can be found in the name 'Canberra' – see the section 'Changes in locational referent'.)

Given the shift in local reference, it is important that reconstruction should begin with the *earliest* documented local referent. The earliest application of the placename to a site within the European landscape should be closer to the Aboriginal use of the placename than later local applications of the same name to related but different sites. Nevertheless, even if we assume that the first European to apply the name to the spatial domain relevant to European interests derived it from an Indigenous source, we still cannot be certain that the local Aboriginal people from whom the name was learned applied it to the exact same referent.

I think it is a fair assumption that the Europeans who first gave an (Indigenous) name to a pastoral property would have applied the name in the first instance to the focal area where the homestead was located, then extended this name to include the whole property. The same name may later have been applied to other natural features (plain, creek, mountain or range of hills) or institutions (towns, churches, post offices, schools) in the vicinity of the focal name. It is not unusual for a name in the European system to end up with a range of related designations. For example, the name 'Tidbinbilla', first applied to George Webb's pastoral run, came to be associated with a mountain range, a river, a nature park and a Space Tracking Station (see further below).

Consider the name 'Queanbeyan'. This name was first applied to Timothy Beard's Quinbean station, from 1828, on the south side of the Molonglo River near its junction with the Queanbeyan River, i.e. around Oaks Estate. When in 1838 a town was newly gazetted some distance upriver, the name 'Queanbeyan' was applied to it. The name also came to be applied to the river that flows through the town. Knowledge about the earlier application of a name is necessary for any attempt to reconstruct its local referent in the system of traditional Aboriginal nomenclature.

Another placename that has undergone a shift is 'Pialligo'. Pialligo was the site of a 1620-hectare property selected in 1825 by Robert Campbell's overseer, James Ainslie. This estate was later called Duntroon, after an ancestral Campbell property in Scotland. The Pialligo name was later applied to a parish and now designates a suburb located near the Canberra airport. What was its original designation? According to one historical source, "The aboriginal name of the open plain on the northern slopes of which was built the homestead of Duntroon, was Pialligo" (Gale 1927: 10). One might wonder whether the name applied to the whole area of the plain or whether there was a more specific referent for the name, e.g. a particular site in or beside the Molonglo River

(such as a traditional camping ground[7]); Mount Pleasant itself or a particular site on its slopes; or even Mount Ainslie. We would also like to know the source of John Gale's information. (Given the European settlers' preoccupation with unwooded plains which could provide pasturage for their livestock, one might reasonably surmise that they would have soon have extended any Aboriginal placename near their pasturages to the whole of the relevant plain.)

'Tharwa' is reported to be the Aboriginal name for the hill, first named Mt Currie by Alan Cunningham in 1824 and later re-named Mt Tennant after the bushranger John Tennant, who had his refuge there during 1827 (Moore 1999: 3, 144). We cannot know whether the Aboriginal name applied to the whole hill, a site on it, a site in the vicinity, or variably to all of these. In 1837 the name was applied in the European domain to a grazing property licensed to George Webb (Moore 1999: 32), who had built a home "on the ridge just north of the present site of Tharwa village" (Moore 1999: 59). In 1882 Tharwa became the official name of a postal receiving office (from 1894 a post office) at the Cuppacumbalong property (Moore 1999: 191). It has long been the name of a village.

Another property name for which we have a hint of more specific place referent in Aboriginal toponomy is 'Gegedzeric', near Berridale NSW, which was established by Richard Brooks in the late 1820s. George Augustus Robinson, the Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Port Phillip District, passed through the area in 1844 and noted: "Mr Brook's station at Je.jetheric, the name of hill near homestead" (Robinson 1998: 131). Here the property was apparently named after the hill near which its homestead was built. The name was also applied (perhaps by the Europeans only) to the adjacent creek: "Buckly is on same creek as Brooks, called Jejetheric creek" (Robinson 1998: 132). More recently the name was applied to a church, St Mary's Gegedzerick. This case is instructive: without the testimony of Robinson (which may have been based on the word of local Aborigines, whom he met there), we might conclude that the Indigenous name applied to a feature near the homestead rather than to the creek, but we would not know that it applied to the hill.

Historical evidence for an Aboriginal origin

The historical sources may tell us whether a placename had an Aboriginal origin or was carried over from an overseas, typically European, name.[8] Usually European names are obvious and are not easily confused with possible Aboriginal words, and they typically have a fairly obvious motivation. Thus Robert Campbell's Duntroon and Arthur Jeffreys' Acton reflect family estates in Scotland and Wales respectively, Henry Hall's Charnwood recalls a forest in England, and Herbert's Naas was presumably named after the garrison town in

Ireland. Anna Maria Bunn is said to have named St Omer (near Braidwood) after a village in France where her mother died. In the absence of clear documentation, however, we should not be too quick in assuming a European origin. I mention two cases in point.

'Woden' was the name given by Dr James Murray to a previously unnamed property in the Jerrabomberra area (near present-day Hume) that he purchased in 1837. The name is identical to the name of a pagan Anglo-Saxon god (German *Wotan*, Scandinavian *Odin*). To my knowledge there is no direct evidence that Murray named the place after the Germanic god – in spite of the confident assertion that he did: "This name was plainly the choice of a scholar as Woden was the Nordic God of wisdom, among other things. Dr Murray was to spend his life in the pursuit of wisdom" (Wilson 2001[1968]: 81). Unless there is documentary evidence, such as a diary entry, to confirm this origin, I believe we should treat it with scepticism, especially since it does not match the pattern of other European name bestowals. If a plausible Aboriginal source were available, it should be given equal consideration, given the Surveyor-General's policy that Aboriginal names should be bestowed where possible (see Windsor this volume). Below (in the section 'Etymological suggestions based on wordlists alone') I suggest an Aboriginal source, which I claim deserves consideration equal to that of the European source.

Historical evidence for changes in pronunciation and spelling

Testimony of European pronunciation not reflecting that of Aborigines

For some placenames there is documentary evidence that the name used by Europeans does not accurately reflect the pronunciation of the Aboriginal word from which it was derived. Thus George Bennett's 1834 comment "Yas (or according to the aboriginal pronunciation, Yar) Plains" (Bennett 1967[1834]: 165) alerts us to the fact that the final *s* of European pronunciation is a substitute for some kind of *r*-sound – probably a trill. Statements of early settlers such as "Giningininderra (to give the locality its full aboriginal nomenclature) Plains" (Samuel Shumack, quoted in Gale 1927: 83), "Boroomba should be Booraroomba" (Mowle 1891: 2), or "Giribombery (alias Giridibombera)" (Lhotsky 1979: 71) likewise alert us to the fact that at least some Europeans realised that their usual pronunciation of a placename did not accurately reflect that of the Aborigines.

Changes in spelling and pronunciation

Some of the variant spellings of a placename reflect a change over time in the pronunciation of the name by Europeans. Good historical method requires that only the spellings that represent the earlier pronunciations should be the basis for reconstructing the original pronunciation. There are several ways in which the *form* of placenames may be subject to change over the course of time. The name may become shorter, more 'euphonic', more English-like, etc.

One kind of simplification is the dropping of reduplicated syllables. The early Canberra property whose name has stabilised as 'Ginninderra' – although a post office opened there in 1859 used an official spelling 'Gininderra' (Gillespie 1991: xix) – is first recorded as having the first two syllables reduplicated; this reduplication was subsequently lost by a simplification of the name. The name is spelled 'Ginninginninderra' in the 1833 NSW Calendar and General Post Office Directory (Watson 1927: 37); 'Ginnin Ginninderry' [Creek] on Thomas Mitchell's 1834 map of NSW (Fitzhardinge 1975: Illustration 1 opp. p. 16); 'Ginnin-Ginnindera' in 1834 by Lhotsky (1979: 65). These spellings all point to a six-syllable word something like 'Ji.nin.ji.nin.de.ri/a' (there is some doubt about the last vowel). There is some evidence for an early pronunciation with just five syllables, part of the second one being dropped out:[9] 'Ginginninderra' was used in a 1831 letter by Catherine (Mrs G. T.) Palmer to the Surveyor-General (Gillespie 1992: 6), and 'Jin Jin in derring' in G. A. Robinson's 1844 journal (Robinson 1998: 206). The antiquity of the pronunciation 'Ji.nin.ji.nin. de.ri' is guaranteed by an Aboriginal king plate that bears both the name of John Langdon, the original grantee of the land (after 1828), and an inscription "Mickey King of *Gin and Gin and Derry*" (Gillespie 1992: 9). It appears that the four-syllable form of the name was institutionalised only with the 1859 post office, some 30 years after the placename came to be used in the European mapping system.[10] Another example of a reduplicated name that has been shortened is 'Lacmalac' near Tumut: "the Aboriginal name for Lacmalac was 'Melacmelac'" (Snowden 2004: 39).

Another kind of shortening of placenames involves dropping out a single syllable, especially when two adjacent syllables were partially alike. The example cited below (see below in 'The danger of not using early sources') of 'Coolalamine' being replaced by the shorter form 'Coolamine' illustrates this process. A similar reduction has taken place with 'Booroomba', a property established by James Wright for his father-in-law, William Davis, in 1842 (Fitzhardinge 1975: 8), whose Aboriginal source had an extra syllable – 'Booraroomba' (Mowle 1891: 2) or 'Boorooromba' (Wright 1923: 31).[11] Given a longer and a shorter version of the same name, we should consider the longer one to be more authentic. Thus for the placename 'Jerrabomberra', which was spelled 'Jerrabombera' on Sir Thomas Mitchell's 1934 map of NSW (Fitzhardinge 1975: Illustration 1 opp.

p. 16), we have from Lhotsky's journal of the same year "*Giribombery* (alias *Giridibombera*)" as the name of Mr Palmer's farm (Lhotsky 1979: 71). A decade later G. A. Robinson spelled it 'Jerry Bunbery' (Robinson 1998: 203). I would take the longer form (and the forms ending in *a*) to be intended as the proper name, with a pronunciation probably **Jeridibanbera*.

An example of a placename becoming over time more 'euphonic', i.e. easier for English speakers to pronounce, is Bumbalong, a property near Michelago on the Murrumbidgee River. This was first recorded as "the Bunbilling run" in the 1830s and 1840s, but from the 1860s the property and local parish name were spelled 'Bumbalong' (Moore 1999: 119, 121). Note that the non-homorganic consonant cluster *nb* has been replaced by the more user-friendly sequence *mb*. Further, it seems that Australian placenames favoured the word-final sequence *-along* (cf. also Adelong, Binalong, Bukalong, Cambalong, Cuppacumbalong, etc.).[12] One specific form of euphonisation is turning a long placename into a reduplicated structure, consisting of a shorter sequence that is repeated. Thus Tilba Tilba's earlier form was recorded by Commissioner John Lambie in 1839-40 as 'Tolbedelbo' (Andrews 1998: 134) and by Stewart Ryrie in 1840 as 'Tulbedelbo' (Andrews 1998: 186). It appears that the second half had its vowels altered (*e* to *i* and *o* to *a*) and then the whole was repeated; since such a form is obviously easier to remember than the original, the substitution is a kind of simplification. Suggan Buggan, on the Snowy River in Victoria, would seem to have undergone the same process, judging from several early reduplicated spellings – 'Soogum boogum' from G. A. Robinson (1998: 130), 'Chungan Bungan' from John O'Rourke, interviewed in 1910 (Young, Mundy and Mundy 2000: 176) – beside the 'Toogunbuka' of Ryrie's 1840 Journal (Andrews 1998: 175).

Aboriginal names sometimes came to be spelled as if they were English words, and sometimes even acquired a rationale for the English term (by a process that linguists call 'folk etymology'). Thus Terence Aubrey Murray's property was named 'Collector' apparently after the name of a waterhole on Collector Creek. His biographer says of the name of the farm:

> Besides an obvious anglicizing of the ancient aboriginal word of Colegdar, there is another likely reason for the hastening of its debasement. With geographic logic, it became the place where wool-draymen collected so that they might form a train for mutual help… (Wilson 2001[1968]: 39, cf. p. 34).

Similarly the South Coast name 'Bodalla', earlier 'Botally', was sometimes spelled 'Boat Alley' (Gibbney 1989: 82), which appears to give it an English meaning.[13] Equally pseudo-English is a spelling such as 'Queen Bean' for 'Queanbeyan' (Robinson 1998: 114).

Another example of the Anglicisation of spelling is 'Delegate' in the Monaro. Table 5.1 gives some early spellings, all of which make it clear that this was not the English word *delegate* that it later came to resemble. In fact the one spelling with initial *Dz* suggests that the placename actually began with an un-English sound – probably a laminodental sound.

Table 5.1 Early spellings of the placename Delegate

Spelling	Date	Source	Reference
Dilighet	1834	Lhotsky: heard at Limestone Cottage (Duntroon)	Lhotsky 1979: 70
Dziliket	1834	Lhotsky: copied from a manager Bath at Cooma	Lhotsky 1979: 105
Delicate	1838	Eyre, resident at upper Molonglo	Eyre 1984: 169-170
Dilligett	1840	Ryrie Journal II	Andrews 1998: 169
Delecate	1841	John Irving: "sketch of My Station on Delecate River Mannara"	Andrews 1998: 126
Delegat	1844	Robinson	Robinson 1998: 134
Delegat	1846	Lambie: itinerary	Andrews 1998: 128
Deleget	1860	J. C., letter to editor, Melbourne Age, 16 February 1860	Moye 1959: 5

Aboriginal placenames may be partially adapted to English. Thus beside early spellings of Tidbinbilla as 'Tidbinbilly' and 'Tin.min.bil.le' we find 'Timman Billy' and 'Timan Valley' (see (7) below). The last examples suggest that the name was sometimes treated as a sequence of two words, in which the substitution of *Valley* for *Billy* made it look like a plausible English placename.[14] Another example is Wambrook, a property in the Monaro. This was recorded as 'Womerob' by Lhotsky in 1834, who copied the name from a manager Mr Bath at Cooma (Lhotsky 1979: 105). In 1839 Land Commissioner Lambie rendered it as 'Wambrooke' (Andrews 1998: 131). By the late 1840s it was being spelled 'Wambrook', according to Hancock's "Alphabetical list of squatting runs in Monaro" (Hancock 1972: 53). I suggest that it was probably 'Wamirub', with the middle vowel sometimes omitted; then English speakers inserted a *b* in the *mr* sequence for ease of pronunciation (as in *number* vs. German *Nummer*) and the final *b* was changed to *k* to make at least the latter part of the word look like an English word, even a plausible placename ending in *brook*.

A clear case of the changing spelling of a placename is 'Gungahlin', now the name of northern residential district within Canberra. The name was first applied by William Davis to a parcel of land which he acquired in 1861 adjacent to his Ginninderra estate and on which he built a substantial homestead in 1862.

> In 1862, William Davis called his new home Goongarline… Later it was sometimes spelt Gungahline. During the Crace family's occupancy of the homestead and for some years afterwards, however, Gungahleen was the spelling used and the official name given to the school that was established in the area was Gungahleen School. (Gillespie 1991: xix)

The historic order of the spellings of the name is known: 'Goongarline', 'Gungahline', 'Gungahleen', 'Gungahlin'.[15] We can assume that the earliest form represents the closest approximation to the pronunciation of the Aboriginal word at its source.

The danger of not using early sources

The dangers of ignoring early sources, and general guessing at the etymology of a placename on the basis of inadequate knowledge, can be illustrated by the example of 'Cooleman'. This is the name of an early property and associated plain, mountain, creek and cave in the upper Murrumbidgee region. John Gale, long-time editor of Queanbeyan newspapers and author of a history of Canberra (Gale 1927) surmises that the name was derived from *coolamon*, a term for a wooden dish which came into English from an Aboriginal language of southeastern Australia.

> This plain [Old Coolaman Plain] is very extensive, formed of undulating ground, well-grassed and abundantly watered – a large creek flowing through it, besides containing springs and gilghi holes, from which latter circumstance, probably, it derived its name – *coolamon* being the aboriginal word for a large water vessel which these gilghies somewhat resemble in shape. (Gale 1985: 27)

Gale does not state from which language he knows the word. Nor does he claim to have derived this information from local Aboriginal tradition. For Gale's etymology to work, it must contain a word from the local language. This is not documented. In fact the word *coolamon/guliman* is known from Kamilaroi in northern NSW (Ash et al. 2003: 94; Dixon, Ramson and Thomas 1990: 184). This word apparently entered the early NSW pidgin that developed as a contact language between Aborigines and early settlers and from Pidgin English became widely known among English-speakers, including Gale (for NSW Pidgin see Troy 1994).

The worst problem with Gale's etymology, however, is that he did not start from the likely original form of the placename. The name originally contained an extra syllable, and the final syllable apparently rhymed with English *coal mine* rather than *Coleman*, according to the evidence of T. A. Murray, who established the station in 1838 (Gale's visit was much later, about 1875).

> The main station and its out-stations which Murray established at Cooleman Plain he called Coolalamine. This was the native name by which he knew the pastures. Later the station became known as Coolamine, while the physical features of the locality came to be spelt differently. Thus two spellings survive: Cooleman Plains, Cooleman Mountains and

Cooleman Cave, but Coolamine station. Neither reproduces the ancient Aboriginal sounds, though Coolamine station preserves all but one syllable of it. (Wilson 2001[1968]: 109)

Gale's etymology is purely hypothetical and is based on insufficient knowledge. It illustrates the dangers of (a) not starting from the earliest documented pronunciation and (b) relying on knowledge of Aboriginal words which may not have existed in the relevant local language.

Intercultural transmission and the linguistic reconstruction of the sounds

Reconstructing pronunciation: Methods from linguistics

Anyone who approaches the task of reconstructing placenames is immediately faced with the problem of variant spellings – beyond those that reflect European simplifications and adaptations over time. How are the variants to be explained? Is there a rule of thumb that can be applied mechanically, such as always preferring the very earliest spelling? The answer is not simple, since there are a number of different causes of the variability, which is a natural consequence of linguistically untrained people attempting to both perceive the sounds of a foreign language and represent them in written form using a spelling system that only imperfectly represents the sounds of a very different language – English.

The discipline of linguistics, especially its sub-branch phonology, yields insights into these factors. These transmission factors include:

a. variable pronunciation of the phonemes of the Aboriginal language
b. unfamiliar phonemes of the Aboriginal language, which are variably perceived by European recorders
c. unfamiliar sequences of sounds of the Aboriginal language, which are variably interpreted by European recorders
d. variable degrees of attention paid to phonetic details by European recorders
e. differential use of the English spelling system to represent the same sound
f. different dialects or languages of the European recorders

Each one of these factors can contribute to the different spellings of a placename. Linguistic reconstruction involves undoing the effects of these variables, accounting for the variants, and positing the most likely sequence of phonemes that the different writers were trying to represent using the spelling system provided by English.

Variable Aboriginal pronunciation

A fundamental principle of linguistic organisation is that the sounds of speech are organised to 'contrast' with one another. The principle of contrast means that words can be distinguished by the fact that they differ with respect to one or more of these distinctive sounds, which linguists call 'phonemes'. Thus English *pit* and *pet* differ only by the 'vowel height' of *i* and *e*, whereas *pit* differs from *bit* only by the fact that the *b* is voiced but the *p* is voiceless (and aspirated). Languages differ in which distinctions of sound they make use of. Thus most Aboriginal languages do not use the difference between *i* and *e* or that between *p* and *b* to distinguish between words; rather *i* and *e* are part of the range of what is treated as a single vowel phoneme and *p* and *b* are likewise variant pronunciations of the same phoneme that just requires closure of the lips and the nasal passage (unlike *m* which also uses closed lips but allows air to flow through the nose). The vowels *u* and *o* are likewise not distinguished, nor the consonants *t* and *d*, *k* and *g*, *ch* and *j*. Thus, to take a hypothetical example, a word that is phonemically /bindu/[16] might be pronounced, and recorded by English speakers, as [bindu], [bendu], [bindo], [bendo], [pindu], [pendu], [pindo], [pendo].[17] In this case there are objective differences in the pronunciation of the same Aboriginal word – these differences being irrelevant to the speakers but noticeable to English hearers because English makes use of the phonetic differences. This mismatch between the Aboriginal and European languages accounts for a lot of the variant spellings. Spelling variants such as *Gudgenby* and *Cudgenby* illustrate the irrelevance of *g* vs *k* (which can also be spelled by *c* in English) and are an example of English spelling over-differentiating the sounds of the Aboriginal language.

Un-English Aboriginal phonemes differently perceived

Aboriginal languages typically make use of pronunciation distinctions which are not made in English.[18] Thus there are typically two *r* sounds, one that is a lot like the normal English sound and the other that is a trill as in the Scottish pronunciation of English. Both would probably be spelled with an *r* by English speakers and the distinction would not be shown in writing. Here English spelling under-differentiates the sounds of the Aboriginal language.

In many languages there is a significant difference between an English-like *t* or *d* (which are treated as equivalent in the Aboriginal language) and one that is pronounced with the blade of the tongue against the upper teeth. It might sound something like the *dth* in *width*. European recorders may hear the sound as (a) a normal *d* or *t*, (b) a voiced *th* as in *this* or *bathe*, or (c) something un-English that requires a special notation such as *dh*. A placename such as 'Tharwa' or 'Thredbo' suggests that this dental sound was noticed and treated as

the (somewhat different) English *th* sound. On the other hand, this sound seems to have been noticed only by Stewart Mowle for Brindabella, which "should be Berindhabella" (Mowle 1891: 2), and Tumut, which "should be Dumudth" (Mowle 1891: 2).[19]

Even more trouble for English speaker was caused by a palatal sound that was pronounced something like *j* or *ch*, but with a shorter phase of audible friction when the oral closure is released (if English *ch* sounds like *t* + *sh*, the Aboriginal sound is more like t + t + sh). The proper effect can be gained by pressing the tip of the tongue against the back of the lower teeth and then saying *ch*, with the blade of the tongue making contact with the roof of the mouth. This sound may be treated as an English voiceless *ch* or voiced *j* (which might be spelled as *g* as in *George* or *dg* as in *bridge*). On the other hand it may be heard, without any friction, simply as *t* or *d* or even as *k* or *g*. If it is perceived as different from any English sound, it may be represented by a combination of letters such as *ty* or *dy* or *dj* or *tch* or *djh*. The un-English nature of this phoneme was recognised by Stewart Mowle, who spelled it *djh* (as in *djhatu* 'moon') and the Polish scientist, John Lhotsky:

> several syllables also commencing with the letter *j* would be far more accurately rendered by the Polish *dź*, which has no exact equivalent in the English tongue. (Lhotsky 1839: 157)

For sounds like this it is the variety of spellings which alerts us to the likely presence of an un-English sound. Thus the placename 'Michelago' has variant early spellings with the second consonant represented as *k*, *ck*, or *c*, in 'Micalago' (all of which point to a perception of *k*), *tt* (by G. A. Robinson, who obviously perceived a *t*), and *c* ('Micilago'), *cc* ('Miccelligo'), *ch* ('Michaligo') – which suggest identification with English *ch*. An Aboriginal sound which would account all for these different perceptions would be the palatal stop described above. Another placename for which a palatal stop can be inferred is 'Tidbinbilla' – see the discussion at (7) below and note Stewart Mowle's (1891: 2) comment: "Tinnimanbilly should be Tchinbinbille".

Aboriginal languages have a parallel palatal nasal sound, which sounds something like the *ny* in *canyon* or the *ni* in *onion*, but with the same tongue configuration as for the palatal stop. This sound caused trouble especially at the beginning of words. A placename in the Monaro was spelled both as 'Umeralla' and 'Numeralla'; these presumably aim to represent initial sounds *yu-* and *nyu-* respectively. I infer that the word began with *nyu-* but some recorders missed the nasal part and only heard the *y*. I argue below (in 'Different Aboriginal combinations of sounds differently interpreted') that the placename 'Namadgi'

probably began with this *ny* sound, some recorders hearing only the nasal ('Namadgi', 'Namwich') and others only the palatal glide *y* ('Yammoit'). Again, it is the variable spellings which alert us to the palatal nature of the sound.

Another sound that gave trouble to English speakers was the trilled *r* when it occurred at the end of the word. G. A. Robinson wrote it *r.r* – his full stop usually indicates syllable division. The placename 'Yass' presumably ended in this trill, which was partly devoiced. This sound is probably what lies behind Hume and Hovell's spelling 'Yarrh' (see Watson 1927: 18). According to Mowle (1891: 2), "Yass should be Yarr".[20] When the trilled *r* occurred before another consonant, some recorders heard a short vowel between the consonants. Variant spellings such as 'Burobong', beside later official 'Burbong', for a property near the Molonglo River east of Queanbeyan, alert us to the trill, which is spelled *rr* in most Aboriginal orthographies – thus we reconstruct the name as **Burrbang*.

Different Aboriginal combinations of sounds differently interpreted

Another factor leading to variable spellings is the fact that the sound in Aboriginal languages may be ordered into sequences that are unlike those of English. English has the velar nasal *ng* sound (as in *sing* and *singer*) but it never occurs at the beginning of a word, as it does commonly in Aboriginal languages. Word-initial *ng* is typically misheard by English (and other European) recorders. Sometimes it was ignored altogether; other times it is represented as another nasal *n*, *ny*, or *m*; or it may be heard as *k*, *w*, or *y*. Since Aboriginal words rarely begin with a vowel, and often begin with *ng*, and *ng* was a consonant that was often missed, one can suspect that placenames recorded with an initial vowel – such as Adaminaby, Arable, Adjungbilly, Ajamatong, Amungula – actually began with *ng*. Thus for 'Ironmungie' (with anglicised spelling) near the Victoria-NSW border, with early spellings 'Inemongee' and 'Eiemmondgy' – apparently perceived as **ayanmandyi* – we would plausibly reconstruct **Ngayanmandyi*. See also Ulladulla in (6) below.

The combination of *n* with a following *b/p* or *g/k* is more common in Aboriginal languages than in English. European recorders sometimes substituted the more natural sounding sequence *mb* for *nb*. Thus if we find a variant spelling with *nb* it is likely to be a more authentic reproduction of the Aboriginal pronunciation. Hence G. A. Robinson's (1998: 203) spelling of 'Jerrabomberra' as 'Jerry Bunbery' may be more accurate with respect to *nb* than is the usual *mb*.

When a palatal consonant such as *dy/ty* or *ny* followed a vowel *a* or *u*, an automatic transitional vowel *i* was often heard and reflected in the spelling, while the palatal consonant was written as if it were simply *d/t* or *n*. The spellings thus suggest an analysis *ait*, *ain*, *uit*, *uin* – with a diphthong plus consonant – instead

of just a vowel followed by a palatal consonant (in our spelling system): *ady*, *any*, *udy*, *uny*. This is the source of spellings like 'Kalkite' *(-ady)*, 'Jindabyne' and 'Goongarline' *(-any)*, 'Wamboin' (*-uny*), and 'Yammoit' (vs 'Namwich', with the glide *i* interpreted as the main vowel and the vowel *u* as a glide *w*, for what I reconstruct – at (5) below – as *Nyamudy for the placename usually spelled 'Namadgi'). The name 'Wamboin', which is probably not a local placename but taken from the Wiradjuri word *wambuny* 'kangaroo', shows the vowel *u*, which has a common variant pronunciation as *o* followed by a palatal nasal, with a transitional glide that is interpreted by English speakers as combining with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong *oi*, while the palatal nasal *ny* is interpreted as a simple *n*.

Sequences in Aboriginal languages of vowels (*a, i, u*) plus glide (*y, w*) plus another vowel are often interpreted by English speakers in terms of diphthongs such as *ai*, *au* which are sometimes followed by another vowel and sometimes not. Thus a sequence *aya* is interpreted *ai.a*, i.e. a diphthong plus vowel, and may be spelled as *ia* (as in *via*), or *ya* (as in *Ryan*) – as 'Pialigo' vs 'Byalegee' for the name now spelled 'Pialligo'. A sequence like *awu* is likely to be perceived as just the diphthong *ou*, as in 'Bend<u>ou</u>ra', a property near Braidwood (Clarke 1986: 59). A sequence *iya* is perceived as simply *i.a*, without the intervening glide, as in 'Quinb<u>ea</u>n', the earliest spelling of 'Queanbeyan'.

Differences in attention to phonetic detail

Some of the spelling variants are the result, I suggest, of the differential attention that recorders devoted to phonetic details, even though they were capable of hearing the proper sounds. Thus Stewart Mowle was exact in noting especially the dental pronunciations (spelled with *dh* or *th*) missed by other recorders, insisting on 'Doomut-th' for 'Tumut', and 'Berindhabella' for 'Brindabella', and 'Condhoware' for others' 'Condore'. Yet he was apparently inattentive in his version of 'Queanbeyan' to both the place of articulation of the nasal (*nb* rather than his *mb*) and the quality of the vowel in the unstressed second syllable. His spelling 'Cuumbean' presumably is intended to convey a pronunciation something like ['ku am 'bi an], with four syllables and the stress on the first and third. Other people's spellings – 'Quinbien' and 'Queenbeenn' (Cross 1985: 1) and 'Queen Bean' (Robinson 1998: 14) – suggest rather [ku in bi an], or a form that combines the first two syllables into [kwin] and/or the last two into [bin]. Since English tends to reduce a vowel in an unstressed syllable to an indistinct sound as in *the*, speakers of English when hearing an Aboriginal word, would not pay attention to the quality of the unstressed vowel and would repeat it to themselves as the indistinct vowel, and write it down accordingly. The same tendency can be seen in Mowle's 'Arr<u>a</u>lumna' (and modern 'Yarr<u>a</u>lumla') vs. the

common earlier spelling 'Yarr<u>ow</u>lumla' (also 'Yarrolumla') and probably in the difference between the *a* in the second syllable of 'Jerr<u>a</u>bomberra' vs the version with *i* recorded by the Polish scientist Lhotsky in 'Gir<u>i</u>bombery'.

Different spelling options provided by English orthography

Even if different European recorders intended to write the same sound – and perceived this sound as one shared with the English language – there is still scope for variable spellings, since the English spelling system does not provide a one-to-one relation betweens sounds and letters.

There is a one-to-many relation between certain sounds and their orthographic representation. Several of these will be illustrated, with examples from placenames. The sound [k] can be spelled as *c*, *ck*, or *k*. This accounts for the variability of the first letter of 'Kongwarra' vs 'Congwarra' and 'Kowan' vs 'Cowen'. Similarly the [j] sound can be spelled as *j*, *dg*, or *g* (before *i* or *e*). This accounts for the difference between 'Jerrabomberra' and 'Giribombery', 'Ginninginninderra' and 'Jin Jin in derring', 'Murrumbi<u>dg</u>ee' and 'Murrumbee<u>j</u>a' (J. J. Moore letter of 16 December 1826 quoted in Fitzhardinge 1975: 5). The long vowel [u:] can be represented by *u* or *oo*; thus the explorer Hovell's 1824 diary says of the Tumut River: "The natives called the river *Doomut* or *Tumott*, which is the aboriginal meaning the 'camping place'" (Snowden 2004: 16, italics added). Similarly a long [a:] can be spelled with either *ar* or *ah*, as reflected in early spellings of Gungahlin as 'Goong<u>ar</u>line' and 'Gung<u>ah</u>line'. The indistinct short vowel shwa [ə], which in English is typical of unstressed syllables, may be rendered as *a* or *er*, as seen in 'Cupp<u>a</u>cumb<u>a</u>long' vs 'Cupp<u>er</u>cumb<u>a</u>long' and 'Cupp<u>er</u>cumb<u>er</u>long'. The sequence [yu] can be spelled *yu*, *u*, or *eu*: this accounts for the different beginnings of the names 'Uriarra' vs an 1844 spelling 'Yule Yarra' (Salisbury 2000: 265, from St John's burial register); 'Eucumbene' vs 'Ucumbean' (Hancock 1972: 51-53) vs 'Yuiquimbiang' (Lhotsky 1979: 105); and 'Eurobodalla' vs 'Urabadella' (Andrews 1998: 133). We've seen above how the Aboriginal language sequence [aya] was perceived as [ai.a] and spelled with either *ia* or *ya* in 'Pialligo' vs 'Byalegee'.

The English spelling system also involves many-to-one relations between sounds and letters. This results in ambiguous spellings whose intended sounds may be irrecoverable. Thus the sequence of letters *ng* can represent (a) the single sound of a velar nasal [ng], as in *singer*; (b) the sequence of sounds [ng+g], as in *finger* or *hang-glider*; or (c) the sound sequence [n + g], as in *ungrateful* or *in-group*. Thus from the different spellings 'Goongarline', 'Gungarline', 'Gungahleen', 'Gungahlin' we cannot tell which of the three possibilities was intended by the early recorders. The same applies to 'Bungendore' and 'Bungendow'.

Dialect differences between European recorders

More difficult to assess is the contribution of the different dialects spoken by the Europeans who wrote down the placenames. The only relevant difference in consonants between English speakers would have been between those from the north and west of the British Isles who pronounced an *r* at the end of a word (as in *car*) and before a consonant (as in *cart*) and those who didn't but interpreted *r* in this position as an indicator of the length of the preceding vowel. An *r*-less speaker might nevertheless perceive an *r* sound in an Aboriginal word and might still spell a name *Dharrwa* (if that was the original form) as 'Tharwa'. But if the placename was only *Dhaawa*, with a long vowel but no *r*, only an *r*-less speaker would spell it with *ar* as a representation of the long *a*. If we don't know the dialect of the first recorder, and there are no variant spellings, we are unable to decide whether the Aboriginal name contained an *r*. In 'Goongarline', which was later spelled 'Gungahline' and 'Gungahleen' (and now 'Gungahlin'), the *ar* marks a long vowel later spelled with *ah*; at any rate the sequence *r* + *l* does not occur in most Aboriginal languages. The combination *er* in unstressed syllables is pronounced like the *u* of *fun* only in *r*-less dialects of English; speakers of such dialects sometimes used *er* to indicate a vowel in unstressed syllables of Aboriginal placenames, such as 'Cupp<u>er</u>cumb<u>er</u>long' vs 'Cuppacumbalong'.

Perhaps of more consequence for placenames is the variation with respect to the vowel spelled *u*. Speakers from the northern parts of the British Isles pronounced the *u* of *butter* like the *oo* of *book* in Southern British English. For northern speakers presumably *u* would never have been used to represent the vowel of *sun*, but might have been used to spell the Aboriginal *u* vowel for which others English speakers would have used *oo*. Thus a placename spelled 'Burra', if recorded by a northern dialect speaker, might be the same as the one given as 'Boo.rer' by G. A. Robinson as the home of a Limestone Black (Robinson 1998: 204). (Applying this principle may be difficult, since it may not be known which European first recorded the name, which part of the British Isles they came from, exactly what dialect they spoke, and, even if these are known, what were the particular features of their dialect during the time they were growing up.[21])

The spelling of a placename, once it is established, may influence the pronunciation by people who learn it from a map. Thus a name with an original *soon*-like pronunciation can, if it is spelled with *u*, come to have a *sun*-like pronunciation. This has happened to the placename which was first spelled 'Goongarline' but changed to 'Gungahleen in the usage of later owners (the Crace family) and the local school (Gillespie 1991: xix).

A dialectal (especially Irish) pronunciation of the usual English diphthong *ai* as *oi* is obviously what accounts for the spelling of 'Jindabyne' (also spelled 'Jindabine', 'Jindebine', 'Jindibine', 'Jinderbine', 'Genderbine') as 'Jindaboyne' (see (1) below).

Comparing the variant spellings

Collecting variants

Whereas for historical reconstruction of the transmission of a placename through its period of European use it is early records which are most valued, for reconstructing the name across the linguistic divide it is rather the number of variants that is important. Especially for reconstructing pronunciation there is safety in numbers, since different recorders made different mistakes in hearing the sounds of words that were in a foreign language as well as using different strategies for spelling the perceived sounds of the placename. We are especially interested in collecting as many different spellings as possible, provided they are each likely to represent different European perceptions of the same word as heard from Aboriginal speakers (and not just a replication of a name learned from other Europeans who had already decided on a pronunciation).

Matching sounds

The basic procedure is one of matching. We line up the sequence of sounds used in the alternative spellings of the word so that sounds that occur in the same relative position in the word are lined up in a single column (some spellings may leave out a sound or use two letters to represent one sound). For each of the resulting sets of 'corresponding' sounds we propose an original sound from which each of the attested reproductions is plausibly explained in terms of either a faithful replication or an alteration resulting from one of the transmission processes described above in 'Reconstructing pronunciation: Methods from linguistics'. Ideally we should aim to propose some reasons for each deviation from the reconstructed original sound. A fundamental principle used here is one taken from the study of the copying of manuscripts, which is expressed in Latin as *lectio difficilior potius* 'the more difficult reading is preferred'. That is, we start from a sound from which the other versions are explicable in terms of simplifying 'scribal errors' (as they would be in manuscript copying) or understandable mis-replications of aural perception, spoken imitation and orthography representation. The procedure is illustrated in the following paragraphs.[22] The reconstructed word is given in the final line.

When it comes to reconstructing the form of a placename, there are several targets. (The proper spelling is not strictly one of these – since spelling did not exist in the oral culture from which the name was derived.) Do we reconstruct the pronunciation or the phonology, i.e. the sequence of phonemes which were relevant in the source language? I suggest that we try to reconstruct the pronunciation, and if we know enough about the phonology of the language, we can then also reconstruct the phonemic representation of the word.

System of sounds used in reconstructions

The set of presumed consonant phonemes (distinctive sounds) for south-eastern NSW languages is given in Table 5.2, with a suggested spelling of each phoneme. Some of the ways that consonants may be spelled in early sources are given in Table 5.3. The likely vowel phonemes are given in Table 5.4, along with English words which illustrate their normal values. The mid vowels (*e* and *o*) are included, even though they are likely to have been non-distinctive variants of the high vowels *i* and *u* respectively. If there was a distinctive set of long vowels these can be spelled *ii*, *uu*, and *aa*, with values of English *beat*, *boot*, and *Bart*. The stress (or emphasis) was usually on the first syllable. It is assumed that every syllable begins with a consonant sound.

Table 5.2: Consonant system and one possible standard way of spelling the sounds

	lips	tongue tip	tongue blade & teeth	tongue blade & palate	velar
Stops	b	d	dh	dy	k
Nasals	m	n	nh	ny	ng
Laterals		l	(lh)		
Trill/tap		rr			
Approximant	w	r		y	

Table 5.3: Consonant spellings used in early sources

Stops	b,p	d,t	dh,th,dth,t,d	ch,tch,dg,dgh,djh,jh,g h,j,t,d,c,k,g	k,c,ck, g,gg
Nasals	m	n	nh,n	ny,n,ng,ni,ne	ng,n,m,Ø
Laterals		l	l		
Trill/tap		rr,r,l			
Approximant	w,u	r,rr		y,i	

Table 5.4: Vowels of Aboriginal languages, with English words illustrating their values

	Front	Central	Back
High	i pit		u put
Mid	(e pet		o port)
Low		a part	

Examples of reconstruction

This section will illustrate reconstruction of pronunciation with several examples discussed in detail. We begin with the relatively easy example of Jindabyne. Variant spellings are given in (1). We will work across the columns of corresponding letters.

(1)	J	i	n	d	a	b	i	n	e
	J	i	n	d	e	b	i	n	e
	J	i	n	d	i	b	i	n	e
	J	i	n	d	er	b	i	n	e
	G	e	n	d	er	b	i	n	e
	J	i	n	d	a	b	y	n	e
	J	i	n	d	a	b	oy	n	e
	*Dy	i	n	d	a~i	b	a	ny	

First, the difference between *J* and *G* simply reflects two different options for spelling the Aboriginal *dy* sound, which is identified by all recorders with the English *j* sound. In the second column, the difference between *i* and *e* reflects variability in the pronunciation of the Aboriginal phoneme *i*, whose pronunciation ranged over *i* and *e*. The variable spellings of the second vowel reflect the fact that it was in an unstressed syllable, was probably pronounced with less prominence, but more importantly, was in a position where English would have an indistinct shwa vowel. The *a* and *er* spellings reflect this indistinct vowel and probably indicate lack of attention on the part of the recorders. One might be tempted to conclude that the spellings with *i* and *e* therefore reflect a more accurate observation of an Aboriginal *i* phoneme. Our confidence in such a conclusion is weakened, however, by the fact that the spellings with *i* and *e* are from G. A. Robinson, who also used the spelling 'Jindabine'. At the end of the word, the spelling *ine* (and the later *yne*) obvious indicates an intention to spell a diphthong *ai* followed by an English-like *n*; this is likely to reflect an Aboriginal vowel *a* followed by a palatal nasal *ny* with a transitional glide that sounds like *i*. The spelling with *oy* (in *RASA Manuscripts* 1900) presumably reflects a substitution of *oi* for *ai* that is characteristic of speakers of certain English dialects, especially that of Ireland.[23]

Example (2) gives spellings of the early name of Duntroon station, which is now a nearby suburb spelled 'Pialligo'. The difference between initial *p* and *b* simply reflects the variability in what was a single phoneme in the Aboriginal language. The letter *i* in this position before a vowel is likely to signal the sound of the English diphthong *ai*, as in *violin*. The *y* of Stewart Mowle's (1891: 2) 'Byalegee' points in the same direction. Since Aboriginal languages do not have diphthongs, this sequence is interpreted as the vowel *a* followed by a consonant *y*. The difference between single and double *l* would not be relevant in an Aboriginal language;

in English it is just a signal that the preceding vowels is not to be pronounced as the *ei* diphthong of *pale*. We can reconcile the vowels of the third syllable if we assume the *a* stands for a sound *ei* or better a Scottish-like *e:* as in *lake* and both *i* and *e* for *i:* as in *leek*. The recorders were probably aiming for the quality rather than the length of the vowel sound, so it need not be reconstructed as a long vowel. The consistent *g* presents no problem, but since *k* and *g* are not distinctive the phoneme could be represented by either letter; using *k* in the spelling system allows us to reserve *g* for the *ng* sound, while using *nk* and *ngk* unambiguously for combinations of a nasal and a velar stop. The representations of the final vowel are hard to reconcile; the most consistent spelling is *o*, which would suggest the phoneme *u* which can be pronounced as the *o* of *halo*. The spelling with *a*, as in *sofa*, could indicate lack of attention to the vowel of an unstressed syllable and substitution of the English indistinct vowel that would be used in this position.[24] Mowle's *ee* is a problem. If it were based on a misreading of a handwritten *u*, it would fit with the *o* spelling. Otherwise it may represent an English habit of using *i* interchangeably with the indistinctive shwa vowel (of *sofa*). If we plump for the spelling *o* as the truest reproduction and treat both *a* and *ee* as careless replications of an unstressed word-final vowel, we can reconstruct the phoneme *u*. Our second last line indicates the reconstructed phonetics and the last line represents this in terms of the likely phonemes spelled according to our conventions. The slash in *p/b* and *i/e* indicates variants in the Aboriginal system.

(2)	p	i		a	l	a	g	a	
	p	i		a	l	a	g	o	
	p	i		a	ll	a	g	o	
	p	i		a	l	i	g	o	
	p	i		a	ll	i	g	o	
	b	y		a	l	e	g	ee	
	*B/P	ai		a	l	i/e	g	o	phonetic
	*B	a	y	a	l	i	k	u	phonemic

In (3) the different spellings of the Monaro pastoral runs (for which see Hancock 1972: 47, 53) are likewise confined to the vowels. The last syllable uses two notations to indicate what was perceived as a long *a* (as in *bar* or *bah*); the perceived length may simply reflect a real long vowel phoneme in the original language or merely indicate that the vowel is not the reduced vowel found a similar position in English words such as *member*. The first vowel is apparently perceived either as the *o* of *tow* or the *u* of *too*, followed by an indistinct vowel, possibly spelled with *e* or not perceived at all. The uncertainty of the Aboriginal vowel is shown by the V (for vowel) of the reconstruction. Since vowels do not occur adjacent to one another in Aboriginal languages, we posit a glide *w* after

the *o*/*u* sound, which is spelled *u* in the orthography we are using. The most likely sequence of phonemes in **Muwinba*, but **Muwunba* and **Muwanba* are also possibilities.

(3)	M	ow		e	n	b	ar	1840	Lambie
	M	o		e	n	b	ar	1844	Robinson
	M	ow		e	n	b	ah	1848-50	
	M	oo			n	b	ar	1848-50	
	*M	o/u		V	n	b	a:		phonetic
	*M	u	w	i	n	b	a		phonemic

Example (4) gives spellings for the property called 'Micaligo' and village now spelled 'Michelago'. Here the first spelling can be taken as a mis-hearing of the first nasal consonant and an interpretation of the name as a combination of English *nickel* and *eagle*. It shows that the first and third syllables were stressed; the second and fourth show the indistinct vowels of English unstressed syllables. The consonants *m*, *l* and *g* are consistent in the other sources. The first vowel is consistently spelled as *i* in *miss*; the third vowel suggests variability between vowels with the quality of *i:* (of *leek*), *i* (of *lick*), *e* (of *leg*), *ei* or Scottish *e:* (of *lake*). The last vowel shows *o* (of *leggo*). The second vowel shows the most variation in spelling; one recorder, G. A. Robinson even spells it four different ways (unless his handwriting has been misinterpreted). This is partially caused by the lack of attention paid to unstressed vowels. The best guess would be the front (*i*/*e*) vowel, since this is heard by the Pole Lhotsky, Lambie, Eyre, and Robinson with his *e* and *y* spellings. The greatest problem is the second consonant, for which Robinson heard *t*, Lhotsky and Ryrie the *k* sound (even if spelled with *c* before *a*), and the Deputy Surveyor apparently *ch*. We cannot be certain whether Lambie's *c* (before *i*) and Eyre's *cc* (before *e*) is meant to indicate the *k* or the *ch* sound or something un-English. This variability is indicative of the palatal stop phoneme *dy* of Aboriginal languages, which occurs here in its voiceless variant *ty*.

(4)	N	i	ck	e	l	ea	g	le	1833	NSW Calendar
	M	i	k	e	l	e	g	o	1834	Lhotsky
	M	i	c	i	l	a	g	o	1839	Lambie
	M	i	ch	a	l	i	g	o	1839	Deputy Surveyor
	M	i	c	a	l	i	g	o	1840	Ryrie
	M	i	tt	a	l	a	g	o	1844	Robinson
	M	i	tt	e	l	a	g	o	1844	Robinson
	M	i	tt	y	l	a	g	o	1844	Robinson
	M	i	tt	o	l	ay	g	o	1844	Robinson
	M	i	cc	e	ll	i	g	o	1840s	Eyre
	M	i	c	a	l	a	g	o	1848-50	list of runs
	*M	i	ty	i/e	l	i/e	g	o		phonetic
	*M	i	dy	i	l	i	k	u		phonemic

Example (5) matches several terms that may refer to the name now known as 'Namadgi', as in the Namadgi National Park – gazetted in 1984 and covering the southern 40 percent of the ACT (Garnett and Hyndes 1992: 5) – and Mount Namadgi, a bogong moth aestivation site where there are "well defined Aboriginal stone arrangements" and where "evidence … of Aboriginal activities is the most visible within the high country area" (Garnett and Hyndes 1992: 11) – which was not so named until around 1980 (Alder 1989: 34). In May 1829 Assistant Surveyor R. Dixon "met … several tribes from Moneroo and Nammage" (quoted in Flood 1980: 9, 301). In 1833 Lhotsky saw the "Namadgi range" from Duntroon.

This name was also used to designate the local Aboriginal group. About 1827 William Edgar Riley witnessed a "Corobborie at Tuggranon Isabella Plains"; his write-up of the event begins with the words: "The Namitch tribe of natives was assembled here" (Lamb 2006: 256). A list of Aboriginal people receiving blankets at Janevale (Tuggeranong) in 1834 gives 'Namwich' as the name of the tribe of 60-70 people whose district includes the "mountains beyond the Murrum-bid-gee" and the Limestone Plains (quoted from Jackson-Nakano 2001: 55, who identifies Namwich with the name 'Namadgi'). G. A. Robinson, touring through the area in 1844 (see Mackaness 1941, Robinson 1998) called the group the Yammoit-mittong or "the Yammoit Tribe"; since he generally used *mittong* as a term designating 'group', this suggests that 'Yammoit' is the name of the place with which they were associated. He also once referred to the 'Nam mit tong' tribe (Robinson 1998: 204); this spelling may hide a version of the same name, perceived this time as *Nammit*, with one of the two *mi* syllables omitted by mistake from an intended *Nammit mittong*. He also lists, in his census of the group met at Yarralumla on 12 September 1844, the home of a Jemmy Bo.lore. re as 'Yamoke tower'; this name, I suggest, may consist of an element *tower*, probably something like *dawurr*[25] added to the same placename that he spelled 'Yammoit' in the group name.

(5)	n	a	m		i	tch		Riley 1827
	n	a	mm		a	ge		Dixon 1829
	n	a	m	w	i	ch		Janevale blanket list 1834
	n	a	m	a		dg	i	Lhotsky 1833
	y	a	mm	o	i	t		Robinson July 1844
	y	a	m	o		ke		Robinson Sept.1844
	n	a	mm	i		t		Robinson Sept. 1844
	*Ny	a	m	o	(i)	ty	(i)	phonetic
	*Ny	a	m	u		dy		phonemic

The variability of the first letter suggests the palatal nasal sound *ny*, with either the palatal (*y*) or the nasal (*n*) feature of sound being perceived, but not both. The spellings of the last consonants suggest a palatal stop sound that was heard as an English *ch*, *j*, *t*, or *k*. The i-quality that accompanies palatal sounds was perceived either after the sound (in 'Namadgi') or as a transition from the preceding vowel sound *u/o* (in 'Yammoit' and 'Namwich'); in the latter the sequence *ui* was interpreted as if *i* is the main vowel and *u* is the glide *w*. The middle *a* of 'Namadgi' would reflect the lack of attention paid to the vowel of an unstressed syllable, as would the *i* of 'Nammit', if this form is real.

Example (6), Ulladulla, illustrates, among other things, the principle of *lectio difficilior*. Surveyor Florance's first record of the harbour (also called Wasp Harbour), based on a survey of May 1828, was spelled with an initial *w*. The first settler, Thomas Kendall, wrote in a letter of July 1828 to the Surveyor General that it was "called by the natives Nulladolla"; he heard an initial *n*. Alexander Macleay, writing to Surveyor General Major Mitchell in September 1828, also spelled it with an initial *n*, 'Nulla Dollo'. Hoddle's survey of December 1828 gave the name as 'Ulladulla', with no initial consonant. This variability points persuasively to the velar nasal sound *ng*, which does not occur in this position in English, was frequently not heard at all, or perceived as just an *n* or as something else, for example *w* by Florance. The *ng* sound is the most difficult of the various initial sounds we might reconstruct, and is therefore the sound most likely to have been replicated incorrectly by various substitutions or by omission. The variability between Florance's *rr* and the *ll* of other recorders suggest that the Aboriginal sound in this position in the name may have been something unfamiliar to English speakers, such as a tap *r*, which was perceived as an *l* perhaps under the influence of the earlier *l* in the word. A tap *r* would have been a variant of the Aboriginal *rr* phoneme, which might also be pronounced as a trill. The first vowel appears to be the rounded vowel of *toll* or *tool* (*o* and *u* were usually freely varied in Aboriginal languages), according to Florance (my source attributes both spellings to Florance). If this is correct, the *u* of Thomas Kendall, who was from Lincolnshire, and Alexander Macleay, who was from Scotland, must represent the north-country English accent in which *dull* rhymes with *pull*. Both Lincolnshire and Scotland are north of the line from Merseyside to The Wash which marks the southern limit of the consistent pronunciation of *u* as *oo* (Wells 1982: 251, 336).[26] The third vowel of this placename must be a kind of *a*-vowel, spelled *o* by Kendall and Macleay but *u* (as in *dull*) by Hoddle. Florance's *e* suggests a slightly different sound, probably the sound of *derrick*. This must have been an optional variant of *a*, since the other recorders' spelling with *o* or *a* points rather to just the *a* sound. I suggest that the *a* was optionally moved to the *e* position under the influence of the preceding consonant. But for this to have been the cause the sound was unlikely to have been an ordinary *d*, but rather a laminodental *dh*, produced with the body of the tongue high in the

mouth. This appears to be confirmed by the reported Aboriginal pronunciation "Ullatha Ullatha or Ullada Ullada" (*Shoalhaven Holidays* n.d.: 43), where *th* and *d* indicate different perceptions of a kind of voiced *th*.[27] Finally, the last *o* of Macleay's 'Nulla Dollo' may represent a misreading of Kendall's *a*, especially since it appears that Macleay purchased his land without having visited it. The modern pronunciation of the name with the first *u* as in *gull* must be a based on the spelling. The fact that a derivation of the name from *holey dollar* was considered indicates that the first vowel of 'Ulladulla' was once pronounced more like *goal* than like *gull*, which supports the reconstruction given above.

(6)	W	o	ll	ah	d	e	rr	ah	May 1828	Florance	Nulladolla 1988: 4
	W	oo	ll	ah	d	e	rr	ah			Nulladolla 1988: 5
	N	u	ll	a	d	o	ll	a	Jul.1828	Kendall	Nulladolla 1988: 7
	N	u	ll	a	D	o	ll	o	Sep.1828	Macleay	Nulladolla 1988: 12
	U	ll	a	d	u	ll	a		Dec.1828	Hoddle	Nulladolla 1988: 5
	U	ll	a	th	a						
	U	ll	a	d	a						
*Ng	u	l	a	dh	a	rr	a				

There are many problems with reconstructing the name which has been institutionalised as 'Tidbinbilla' – see (7). For the first consonant, variants with *j* and *tch* show that a palatal sound was missed by those who rendered it by plain *t*; Mowle's spelling with *tch* indicates that he sensed that it was somewhat different from the sound of English *ch* – if English *ch* consists of the stop *t* followed by a fricative *sh* (*t* + *sh*), the Aboriginal sound had a longer stop phase, *t* + *t* + *sh*). Wright's variant *e* for the first vowel (as well as for the second vowel) shows the inherent variability in the pronunciation of the Aboriginal phoneme *i*, which had *e* as a possible pronunciation. For the second vowel, the evidence of several witnesses points to *i* (as in English *bin*); spellings with *a* that – according to church records (Salisbury 2000: 156, 158, 258) – were used in early names of the property established by the Webb family, 'Timman Billy' and 'Timan Valley', would then reflect lack of attention to the quality of a vowel in an unstressed syllable. The same may apply to spellings with *a* as the final vowel, since there are several earlier spellings that suggest rather the *i* sound. The biggest issue for reconstruction is the second and following consonant: there appears to be support both for a pronunciation with *db* and for one with *nm*, with simplification by omitting the *n* or inserting a vowel between the consonants for ease of pronunciation (in the form 'Tinnimanbilly'

condemned by Mowle). If we accept Mowle's 'Tchinbinbille' as the 'correct' spelling of the Aboriginal name, we should reconstruct *Dyinbinbili*; but then it is hard to explain how this came to be pronounced by Europeans with *db* and *nm* rather than just *nb* and *mb* (as in 'Canberra'). It is possible, it seems to me, that an *n* in this position, after a stressed vowel, could variably be pronounced as *dn* (as happens in other Aboriginal languages); thus the name would have been heard as either *Dyinminbili* or *Dyidnminbili*. The latter form would cause processing difficulties for English ears and possibly lead to interpretations such as the common *Dyidbinbili* or even Mowle's *Dyinbinbili*. The case for *n* being optionally pronounced *dn* is strengthened by the report that local land-owner George de Salis consistently pronounced the name as *Tidnambilly* (Jackson-Nakano 2005: 41), and by variability between *womme* and *wobme* given by Robinson (2000: 193-194) for 'beat' in his Maneroo wordlists.

(7)												
T	i	d		b	i	n	b	i	ll	y	1841	Census, Moore 1999: 220
T	i	n		m	i	n	b	i	ll	e	1844	Robinson 1998: 205
T	i			mm	a	n	B	i	ll	y	1850	Salisbury 2000: 156
T	i	nn	i	m	a	n	b	i	ll	y	1840s	Mowle 1891: 2
J	e	d		b	i	n	b	i	ll	a	1850s	Wright 1923: 38
J	e	d		b	e	n	b	i	ll	a	1850s	Wright 1923: 61
Tch	i	n		b	i	n	b	i	ll	y	1840s	Mowle 1891: 2
T	i	d		b	i	n	b	i	ll	a	1800s	county map, Moore 1999: vi
T	i	dn			a	m	b	i	ll	y		de Salis
*Dy	i	dn		m	i	n	b	i	l	i		phonetic
*Dy	i	n		m	i	n	b	i	l	i		phonemic

Reconstructing the etymology

Prerequisites

Attempts to answer the question of what a particular placename 'means' should only be attempted after its pronunciation is reconstructed. Otherwise a meaning is supplied for a phantom name! An example of etymologising from a false pronunciation was given above in 'The danger of not using early sources' with respect to Cooleman, for which John Gale's starting point (roughly *Kulaman* in our orthography) lacked a syllable and had the wrong final part of the name attested earlier as *Kulalamany*. Likewise, denials of proffered etymologies are also sometimes made on the basis of a faulty starting pronunciation. Thus

Appleton and Appleton (1992: 55) cast doubt on the supposed Aboriginal origin of the name 'Canberra' on the grounds that "no such word has been recorded in any Aboriginal language". This conclusion may need revision in the light of our reconstruction in the final section.

There a basically two kinds of evidence for positing the meaning of a placename. The first is early testimony based on information provided by the relevant Aboriginal people. The second is comparison of the reconstructed name with attested vocabulary of the relevant language. The greatest certainty is achieved when both kinds of evidence are available and support each other, as in the case of Jimenbuen discussed below.

Assessing the reliability of testimony

It is not easy to know whose testimony about meanings of placenames can be trusted. I suggest two factors that add to our confidence. In the first place, reliance should be placed on the word of the family of the earliest settlers who lived in the named area, provided that they interacted with the traditional Aboriginal occupants of the land – such as the Crisp family of Jimenbuen. Secondly, considerable trust should be accorded to visitors who got their information directly from Aborigines. Thus George Augustus Robinson, the Chief Protector of Aborigines in the Port Phillip District, travelled through south-eastern NSW in 1844 and talked to several groups of Aborigines, using Aboriginal go-betweens. Unfortunately, he does not seem to have been very concerned about the meanings of placenames. This seemed rather to be a preoccupation of scholarly-minded people around the turn of the century (1900), when this information was no longer readily accessible (see note 2).

We need to try to discover the source of the meanings reported. If we cannot trace them back to reliable witnesses, we can remain justifiably sceptical. Certain further criteria can aid us, however. We should be suspicious of offered meanings which describe the function of a place as a 'camp' or 'meeting place'. Thus we discount meanings such as Wright's "meeting place" for Canberra (his 'Kamberra') (Wright 1923: 58) and "the place where all males are presumed to be made young men" for Tidbinbilla (his 'Jedbinbilla') (Wright 1923: 38). Even more implausible as an etymology is the functional description of William Davis' Gungahlin as "white man's house" (quoted approvingly by Gillespie 1992: 253) or 'Kundul' (now Kurnell) as "place where Captain Cook landed" (Hon. G. Thornton in *RASA Manuscripts* 1900). Furthermore we can be suspicious of meanings that simply describe the topography of the place – 'water', 'hill' – since known Aboriginal placenames typically do not directly indicate these obvious

features. Thus some of Mitchell's (1926: 35) reported names in the Monaro, such as 'camping or resting place' for Adaminaby and 'camp' for Woolway, can be discounted.

On the other hand, placenames that are reported to refer to an animal species are more likely to reflect the mythology-based naming strategies that characterised Aboriginal nomenclature. Thus Mitchell's (1926: 35) 'big fat kangaroo rat' for 'Jimen Buen' (as he writes it) is exact (see 'Etymologies based on testimony and wordlist data' below). His 'plenty ants' for 'Ironmungie' may likewise accurately include a reference to some kind of ants (the *-mungie* part, though, is found in several other placenames in the lower Snowy River area). Some of his other suggestions include creature names, but also unnecessary references to '(resting) place'. Thus his 'Chakola' "place for lyrebirds" (*ibid*.) is just 'lyrebird' in several languages of southeastern New South Wales; his "Boonyan (now Bunyan) 'pigeon's resting place'" (*ibid*.) cannot be confirmed, but at any rate would be just 'pigeon'; his "resting place of the native companion" for 'Billilingera' (Mitchell 1926: 76) is likewise not confirmed, since none of the attested Ngarigo words for 'brolga/native companion' has any form resembling the placename. (It is possible that the placename alluded to a story about brolgas without naming the bird; i.e. Mitchell's information may reflect the etiology, if not the etymology, of the placename.) On the other hand, the suggestion that Kurruducbidgee near Braidwood, also known as Larbert and spelled 'Kouraduck-bidgee', means "river of native companions" (Bernard McLean in *RASA Manuscripts 1900*) receives confirmation from Dharrawal wordlists, where 'native companion' is given as *gooradawak* (Ridley 1887: 418) and *guradhawak* (Mathews 1903: 277).[28] In addition to creature names, body parts are known to play a large role in Aboriginal place-naming strategies. A suggested meaning 'my elbow' for the South Coast site 'Turlinjah' (E. C. Branch in *RASA Manuscripts 1900*) is plausible, and can in fact be confirmed by wordlist data in the form of Robinson's (2000: 166) Biggah (Bega) *tal.leen.jer* (probably to be reconstructed as *dhaliny-dya* 'elbow-my') beside Mathews' (1901-1902: 68) Dhurga *dhurl´-leeng* (probably *dhaliny*).

Comparing placenames to known vocabulary

This procedure consists of trying to match the reconstructed placename to ordinary vocabulary items that have been recorded for the language of the area in which the placename occurs. Several limiting factors make this exercise less than totally satisfactory. In the first place are the uncertainties and ambiguities of pronunciation that may remain even after the reconstruction has been made. Secondly, the wordlists that have been recorded probably suffer from the same clumsy spellings, etc. and are likely to be at least as dubious in their phonetic interpretation as the placenames. Thirdly, the amount of available vocabulary is

likely to be only a fraction of what was in the language when it was fully spoken. Finally, there is the possibility that the placename lacked a known etymology, since not all placenames are expected to be transparent.

How much can we expect to etymologise?

We should not be too optimistic about how many placenames we might find meanings for. To see why let us explore some calculations. In no language do all placenames have a transparent meaning – although it must be admitted that languages probably differ in the degree of transparency of their placename vocabularies (cf. Walsh 2002). Let's assume that only 50 percent of placenames can be expected to have a transparent meaning. Now let us assume for a language like Ngarigo of the Monaro that some 200 placenames can be found that are of apparent Aboriginal origin. We would expect even in the ideal circumstances to find meanings only for 100 of them (using the 50 percent figure). We would like to compare the placenames to the general vocabulary of the language. How many words would that involve? A fair estimate might be about 3000. But we do not have a complete vocabulary. Combining all the available vocabularies might yield only about 300 words. Hence we have only 10 percent of the general vocabulary to compare with 200 placenames, of which we might expect only 100 to be in principle relatable to general vocabulary. The consequence of having only 10 percent of the general vocabulary available is that we can expect to find etymologies for only 10 percent of the placenames that have general meanings, that is 10 placenames. (If the percentage of transparent placenames was 100, we could at best expect to find meanings for only 20 placenames.)

We could extend our results by looking at the vocabularies of neighbouring languages. There is usually considerable overlap between the vocabularies – especially for flora and fauna – of adjacent languages. A term that is undocumented in one language may have been recorded for a nearby language. See the example of Arable below.

Etymologies based on testimony and wordlist data

The greatest certainty about the meaning of a placename is gained from the combined evidence of reliable testimony and confirmation from a wordlist from the area. An example of an eminently successful etymology of this type is Jimenbuen, a property near the Snowy River in the Monaro region. Here we have available reminiscences from the family of the earliest settler family. William Crisp, the son of the first settler, Amos Crisp, reported that his father with his brothers and sisters in the 1830s

> passed through Queanbeyan and Cooma and across the Snowy River
> to Jimen Buen … the name of which was later changed to Jimenbuen.
> 'Jimen Buen' is said to mean, in the local Aboriginal dialect, 'big fat
> kangaroo rat'. (Andrews 1998: 109, quoting from Crisp 1947: 20)[29]

This interpretation can be confirmed from the available linguistic sources. We have fairly meagre wordlists for the Ngarigo language of the Monaro: the fullest documentation is by R. H. Mathews (1908: 338), who records 'kangaroo rat' given as *dyimmang*. As late as 1962 the professional linguist Luise Hercus was able to record some remembered words of Ngarigo from Aboriginal people living in Orbost, Victoria; she gives *djimung* as "kangaroo-rat, *Bettongia sp.*" (Hercus 1986: 244). So the first half of the modern placename is confirmed.[30] What about the rest? It so happens that the word for 'fat' (substance and/or property apparently) is given for a number of sites in and around the Monaro: Bulmer (1887) gave it as *bewan* and Mathews (1908) as *be:-wan*.[31] This word can be represented in phoneme transcription as /piwan/ or /biwan/ (depending on one's orthographic preference for voiceless or voiced symbols); it was apparently pronounced as [byuwan].[32]

Now consider the order of the two elements. In most Aboriginal languages the qualifier word (corresponding to an adjective in English) is placed after the word it qualifies. So the meaning 'fat kangaroo-rat' would be expressed as 'kangaroo-rat fat'. (The same order would be used if the meaning were 'fat of the kangaroo-rat'.) Note that this placename is a phrase, not just a single word.

So here we probably have the etymology of the name, i.e. the meaning of its elements. It means 'fat kangaroo-rat', or possibly 'fat of the kangaroo-rat'. But we still lack knowledge of the etiology of the placename, i.e. the story that would explain why this particular name was given to this place. It is also worth noting that we do not know – although perhaps Amos Crisp did – what specific site on or near the property named Jimenbuen (or its homestead) was associated with this name. Was it a waterhole in the Snowy River, a certain hill, or what? Thus, of the three desirable elements of the meaning of the placename, we have the following results: (a) the etymology is clear; (b) the etiology is completely unknown; and (c) the spatial referent is known only imprecisely. The form was presumably *dyimang biwan*, with stress on the first syllable of each word, with the consequence that the vowel of the second syllable was spelled with an *e* that reflects a weaker pronunciation of /a/ in an unstressed syllable. The early recorders apparently missed the fact that the first part of the name ended with *ng* rather than *n*. An English spelling which would more accurately reflect the reconstructed name would be 'Jimang Buan'.

Etymological suggestions based on wordlist data alone

Even in the absence of testimony about the meaning, it may still be possible to make plausible guesses about the likely meaning on the basis of relevant wordlists.[33] Here are some examples.

A property north-west of Canberra that in the nineteenth century was held by pioneer Henry Hall had the name 'The Mullion'; 'Mullion' was also used as the name of a parish in County Cowley (Moore 1999: vi, 96). This is plausibly derived from *maliyan* or *malyan*, the word for the wedge-tailed eagle, commonly called 'eaglehawk', which is attested for a number of languages of the region, including Wiradhuri (*mul.le.yan* in Robinson 2000: 178, McNicol and Hosking 1994: 90), Ngunawal (*mul.yun* and *mul.le.yal* in Robinson 2000: 208 and 209 respectively, *mulleun* in Mathews 1904: 304), Wolgal (*maliang* in Howitt 1996[1904]: 102), Dharrawal in the Illawarra (*mulyan* in Mathews 1901: 130), and Yuwaalaraay, Yuwaalayaay, and Gamilaraay in inland northern NSW (*maliyan* in Ash et al. 2003: 106).

Burrinjuck, near Yass, which is sometimes given the folk-etymological spelling 'Barren Jack', seems to be Ngarigo 'crayfish', which is attested as *barrinjook* (du Vé 1887: 430), *barranjerk* (Bulmer 1887: 558), *pur.run.juc* (Robinson 2000: 195).

Carrott, a pastoral run in the Monaro near Jindabyne (Hancock 1972: 51) appears to reflect the well-attested Ngarigo word *karrid* 'cold'.

For 'Woden', I would like to propose a possible Aboriginal etymology. A plausible Aboriginal source of the name 'Woden' is the word for 'possum', *wadyan* (or possibly *wadhan*), which is attested ten times for the languages of Aboriginal people extending from Yass through Queanbeyan and the Monaro to Omeo in Victoria. Some spellings suggest that the first vowel could have an *o*-quality (*wod.jun*, *woy.jun*); the second vowel is sometimes written with an *e*-vowel (*watjen*, *widgen*); and it is not unheard of for a palatal *dy* sound to be heard as a plain *d* (cf. terms for 'black duck' given as *bud.en.bal* vs *boojangbung* and *boothunba*, or *bindi* vs. *binjey* or *bindhi* for 'belly'). If 'Woden' is indeed derived from an Aboriginal language, it is possible that its spelling was influenced by that of the Germanic god's name (as the spelling of 'Canberra' was probably influenced by the English placename 'Canbury').

A famous snow-belt property in the upper Murrumbidgee region is called 'Curango'[34], which is known to be a shortened form of 'Curangorambla' (which survives in the name of a creek and a mountain range). This name is plausibly reconstructed to **Kurangkurambla*, which could be interpreted as **kurang-kurang-bula*, with the second *ng* assimilated to the labial pronunciation of the following *b*, and the first vowel of *bula* omitted. The first part then looks like the word *kurang-kurang* which is given as 'rainbow' in wordlists for Ngarrugu

(Mathews 1908: 337), and the (Ngunawal) language of Yass (Robinson 2000: 210) and as 'Milky Way' in the 'Limestone' vocabulary (Robinson 2000: 270). The final element *bula* is a suffix meaning 'two' in many languages. Thus the name might mean 'two rainbows'.

Etymological suggestions based on linguistic evidence other than wordlists

A property in the Monaro, near Jindabyne, called 'Biggam' (Hancock 1972: 51) was spelled 'Biggon', by Lhotsky in 1834 copying a list from a manager named Bath (Lhotsky 1979: 105), and 'Bigga' by Land Commissioner Lambie in his 1839 census tours (Andrews 1998: 132). Lhotsky (1979: 106) elsewhere, but not in his vocabulary (Lhotsky 1839), mentions that the Monaro Aborigines eat *biggon* ''yams … a root of a sort of Sonchus''. This term, which he spells the same as the placename, therefore has a chance of being the source of the name, given this snippet of lexical information, even though it is not given in a source that is devoted to language.

An even better case for an etymology based on a word not found in wordlists is Arable. Arable is a property in the Monaro, west of Cooma. It should be noted that this spelling is identical to an English word, which we can assume has influenced the spelling. Other early spellings include: 'Arabel' recorded in 1834 (Lhotsky 1979: 105), 'Arrable' recorded by Land Commissioner John Lambie in the 1839 census (Andrews 1998: 124), 'Arrabel' recorded in 1844 (Robinson 1998: 173). This name can be correlated with a vocabulary item mentioned by the naturalist George Bennett, who was told by Aborigines in the Tumut River area in the 1830s that fat crows that fed on bogong moths were called *arabul* (Bennett 1967[1834]: 272-273). Allowing for the indeterminacy of the vowel of the final syllable, this seems to be the same word – even though none of the wordlists for languages of the region give this as the standard word for crow. We are left with a plausible hypothesis that the placename Arable might have derived from some association with bogong-eating crows. This deduction appears to derive support from some un-sourced testimony, since an editor's note in Lhotsky 1979 (note 168 p. 230) says that Arable ''has been stated to be Aboriginal for 'crow'''.

Choosing linguistic sources for placename etymologies

Up to this point we have ignored the question of which language or what linguistic sources should be consulted in looking for etymologies of placenames. Obviously one should look first to the language known to be spoken in the immediate area. But in south-eastern Australia the documentation of languages is patchy, and it is not always easy to determine the geographical extent to

which a particular language was traditionally spoken. Another issue is the fact that linguistic varieties in an area tend to have considerable overlap in their vocabularies. Hence it may be hard to judge which samples are to be considered dialects of the same language – where the linguistic criterion for separating 'dialects of a language' from separate languages is usually based on a quantitative measure of difference in grammar and vocabulary, with differences in grammar usually being given more weight than vocabulary differences. Finally, the traditional names of language varieties (dialects, languages) are often not known.

For the region of Canberra and the Monaro, we need to consider three potential groups of source material, as indicated on Table 5.5. We have wordlists, and a short grammar by Mathews, for the Yass/Ngunawal language. For the Monaro we have six sources of vocabulary but no grammatical information. In between, in the Canberra area, we have a disparate set of sources, the longest of which, the recently accessible 'Limestone' vocabulary of Robinson, was recorded at Yarralumla from people identified as Yammoitmittong, or Yammoit mob – which I interpret as 'Namadgi people'. The Queanbeyan wordlist, thought to be from the famous early Canberra personality Nellie Hamilton, has long been seen to reflect the same language as the Monaro wordlists, that is, Ngarigo. The Robinson material supports this conclusion. Although we lack a grammatical description, we do have some personal pronouns, which are grammatical words. The Queanbeyan and 'Limestone' vocabularies agree with the Monaro sources in having the unique form *ngayamba* for 'I', whereas the coastal languages have *ngayaka*, *ngayalu*, or *ngayadha*, and Ngunawal has a completely different form *kulangka*, which is shared only by the closely related Gundungurra language of the Southern Highlands.

Table 5.5: Linguistic sources for the Canberra and Monaro area

language	source name	date collected	reference
Ngunawal	Yass	1844	Robinson 2000
	Yass	-1887[35]	Curr 1887: No. 196
	Ngunawal	-1904	Mathews 1904
Canberra	Molonglo	1830s	Eyre 1845
	Limestone	1844	Robinson 2000
	(Canberra)	c.1840	Mowle 1891
	Queanbeyan	-1887	Curr 1887: No. 195
Ngarigo	Menero	1834	Lhotsky 1839
	Maneroo	1844	Robinson 2000
	Moneroo	-1887	Bulmer 1887
	Moneroo	-1887	du Vé 1887
	Ngarrugu	-1908	Mathews 1908
	Southern Ngarigu	1960s	Hercus 1986

The etymology we propose for a placename can differ according to which linguistic source is used. 'Mugga Mugga' is the name of a hill in the southern part of Canberra. It was also the name of a nineteenth century home on the slopes of the hill (inhabited for many years by the Curley family) and still open to tourists as Mugga Mugga Historic Cottage. If we start from the name 'Mugga', we can easily reconstruct a form *Maka*. A word *maka* is attested in as a generic term for snake in Curr's and Mathews' Yass/Ngunawal vocabularies and Larmer's (Larmer 1898) Bateman's Bay, as 'black snake' in Robinson's Maneroo, and 'carpet snake' in Mathews' Thurrawal from the Illawarra. But Lhotsky's Menero vocabulary gives it as 'lizard'. Robinson gives 'lizard' as the meaning of the reduplicated *maka-maka* in the Yass language. Meanwhile the generic term for snake in the Monero language, according to several wordlists, including that of Queanbeyan, is *dyidyukang* or *dyidyikang*. In searching for an etymology of 'Mugga Mugga', do we rely more on vocabularies of Ngunawal/Yass or on those of Ngarigo/Monaro? Should we start from the simple form *maka* or the reduplicated form *maka-maka*? Depending on these choices we could have the following meanings: snake, a specific kind of snake, or lizard. Unless we can find testimony from early sources or knowledge preserved in the Aboriginal community (independent of the wordlists), we cannot have any certainty.

Partial etymologies: Identifying elements without meaning

It is relatively common to find parts of words that recur in a number of placenames within an area. It is likely that these elements had a meaning. Although we might not be able to recover the meaning of these elements, we may nevertheless be able, by comparing names of partially similar form, to conclude that certain names consisted of two elements and to identify sets of placenames that had related meanings. Some recurrent final parts of names in this area are: -*bili* (Tidbinbilly/Tidbinbilla, Adjungbilly), -*berra* (Canberra, Yeumberra, Jerrabomberra), -*dra* (Kiandra, Kydra), -*beyan* (see next paragraph), -*bi* (Gudgenby, Goodradigbee) and, further south, -*dibby* (Wollindibby, Gelantipy), -*byra* (Ingebyra, Coocoobyra), -*adbo* or -*edbo* (Thredbo, Bredbo, earlier Braedbow, Byadbo).

Two adjacent pastoral runs in the Monaro district east of Cooma, 'Kybean' and 'Kydra' (Hancock 1972: 47) seem to involve the same root *ky-* (presumably *kayi-* in Aboriginal phonology) followed by two separate elements -*bean* and -*dra*, which recur in other placenames (cf. Queanbeyan and Kiandra). Although we do not know the meaning of the elements, we can surmise that the names consist of two elements each. Looking at 'Queanbeyan', we can therefore surmise that *Quean-* was a separable element. Phonological reconstruction suggests a form *Kuwinbiyan*. The first European site with this name, Timothy Beard's 1828

holding on the Molonglo River some distance from the township of Queanbeyan gazetted in 1838, was only a few kilometres distant from a place named 'Kowen' (also spelled 'Kowan', 'Kohan', 'Kohn', 'Cowen', 'Cohen', 'Coen') – the area was also called 'The Swamp', 'Dirty Swamp', 'Glencowan', 'Glenbirnie' and 'Glenburn' (Cross 1985: 50-51). This name can be reconstructed as *Kuwin*, which is identical to the first element of *Kuwinbiyan*. It is conceivable that the latter name, Queanbeyan, consisted originally of a modification of the name 'Kowen', meaning perhaps a specific site by the river in a more general area called *Kuwin*.

Reconstructing the etiology

To be certain of the story behind the name we need evidence that comes from the Aboriginal people of the area. Unless we have some testimony to this, we remain in ignorance. At best we can suspect elements of a story from the supposed 'meaning' that has been offered in our sources. (What is offered as 'meaning' may be the etymology or literal meaning of the word, or a description of the topography or function of the site, or an element of etiological story behind the naming of the place.)

To illustrate: Mitchell (1926: 76) reports that 'Billilingera' (a property near Cooma) is said to refer to where brolgas stay, as noted above in 'Assessing the reliability of testimony'. But the name is not relatable to known words for 'brolga' that are found in wordlists. The name may rather conceal a story about brolgas, and allude to it by means of a word that refers to some particular aspect of the story. Similarly, 'Booroomba' (reconstructable as *Bururumba* or *Burarumba*), a property in the ACT west of the Murrumbidgee, is said to mean ''wallaby jumping over a rock'' (Cross 1985: 68, Gillespie 1992: 253). Perhaps this 'meaning' simply refers to the red rock wallabies, which lived (and were shot) in great numbers in this area (Moore 1999: 71). On the other hand it may conceal a word or words referring to this event, even if not does not directly denote 'wallaby', 'jump', or 'rock'.[36]

Summary and application of methodology to the name 'Canberra'

In this final section we summarise the methodology and show how it applies to the name 'Canberra'. This is appropriate both because of the amount of information available (providing something to say on almost every aspect of our procedures) and because of the importance of the name, being the only name of an Australian capital city that is derived from an Indigenous placename.

The evidence of history

Study of the historical record throws light on the bestowal of the placename within the Anglo-Australian context, its locational referent and its changes, the history of spelling, reports on its pronunciation, etymological source and meaning.

Name bestowal, de-bestowal, re-bestowal[37]

The name was bestowed by Joshua John Moore, the first pastoralist with interests in the Canberra area, whose superintendent John McLaughlin (an ex-convict from Dublin) in December 1824 moved livestock from Moore's Baw Baw station near Goulburn to the Canberra area, where he camped at Acton ridge beside the Molonglo River, at the site of the present National Museum of Australia. On 16 December 1826 J. J. Moore wrote to the Colonial Secretary, asking to purchase the land which he had been occupying, describing its location in these terms:

> The land which I wish to purchase is situate at Canberry, on the E. Bank of the River which waters the Limestone Plains, above its junction with the Murrumbeeja, adjoining the grant of Mr. Robert Campbell, snr.

In 1831, after John MacPherson was granted 640 acres immediately to the west, along the Molonglo River from Sullivan's Creek to Black Mountain, Moore wrote in protest to the Surveyor-General about his desire to retain

> the one thousand acres in my possession situate on the Molongoo River called and known by the name of Canburry, and bounded on the South by the Molongoo River, and on the West by Canburry Creek.

The property was then surveyed by Hoddle as a 1000-acre block between parallel lines running magnetic north from the Molonglo River to about Haig Park, with its western boundary on the Acton Peninsula east of the mouth of Sullivan's Creek and its eastern boundary around Regatta Point. In 1837 Moore purchased a further block of 742 acres to the immediate north of his existing holding. In 1843 the property was purchased by Arthur Jeffreys, who renamed it 'Acton'. The property was resumed by the Commonwealth in 1911, and the original homestead, which was built around 1830 and called 'Canberry Cottage', was included in an expanded Acton House, which survived as government offices until it was demolished in the 1940s to make way for the Canberra Hospital.

Meanwhile the name 'Canberra', de-bestowed in 1843 as the name of a property, survived as a general name for a wide area, and was re-bestowed in 1913 as the name of the site selected as Australia's new federal capital.

Changes in locational referent

The history of the name 'Canberra' provides us with some of the most spectacular changes of referential scope of a placename.[38] While the specific site referred to by its Aboriginal precursor is not known, the name 'Canberra' itself was first applied in the European domain to the pastoral property claimed by J. J. Moore in the 1820s, with its main buildings located on a ridge beside the Molonglo River at the site of the current National Museum of Australia. The name was also applied in the first decades of European occupation to the plain lying north of the Molonglo River and between the Black Mountain-O'Connor Ridge and Mount Pleasant-Mount Ainslie-Mount Majura range; Sullivan's Creek was called 'Canbury Creek'. The area called 'Canbury'/'Canberry'/'Canberra' extended eastward on this plain as far as the church of St John the Baptist (established in 1841) and a blacksmith shop and post office (near Blundell's Cottage) on the Duntroon estate. The placename was sometimes applied as well to the area south of the Molonglo River to the area of Klensendorlffe's farm (including the area around Albert Hall, the present parliament buildings, and as far as Red Hill which was once called 'Canberra Hill'). 'North Canberra' referred to the area of Lyneham, including St Ninian's Church and the Old Canberra Inn. Meanwhile the original Canbury property was re-named 'Acton' in 1843 by a new owner, Jeffreys, after his family's historic property in Wales. Much later, in 1913, since the name 'Canberra' was selected as the name of the federal capital, its scope has expanded as the city has grown.[39]

In reconstructing the original scope of the placename, do we start from the whole Canberra Plain which was mostly occupied by Moore's property or the focal part of this property, where its original huts and homestead were built? Given the principle that placenames tend to expand their reference to encompass and even exceed the legal entity, I would opt for the narrowest scope as being closest to the original designation. This was the conclusion drawn by an early historian, Frederick Robinson:

> Canberra, therefore, stood originally for the area enclosed by Black Mountain westerwards (with Canbury Creek at its foot) and the Molonglo southwards, or more definitely (as seen from Dixon's Survey of 1829) for the river promontory at Acton, where Moore's huts were placed. (Robinson 1927: 4)

History of spelling of the name

As indicated in the citations in 'Name bestowal, de-bestowal, re-bestowal' above, J. J. Moore spelled the name of his property as both 'Canberry' and 'Canburry'. The spelling 'Canbury' was used, along with 'Canberry', by surveyor Hoddle in 1832 (Murphy 1987: 14), and was widely in use in the early years of European

settlement. This may have been influenced by English placenames ending in -*bury*, including a town called Canbury in Kent (now within the greater city of London). The Polish scholar John Lhotsky, who visited in 1834, spelled the name 'Kembery'. The registers of St John the Baptist Church, which begin in 1845, show 'Canbury' at first, with 'Canberry' becoming more frequent from 1858, and 'Canberra', first used in 1857, becoming the usual spelling from 1862 (Salisbury 2000: 4). The Rev. Pierce Galliard Smith, the long-serving minister of St John's, who was appointed in 1855, is credited with introducing the spelling 'Canberra' for both the church and the school attached to it, a usage which was followed in the name of the post office established in 1863 (Body 1986: 41). This spelling was also used for the subsequent federal capital.

Reported source: Is the name Aboriginal?

Historians have accepted that Canberra is of Aboriginal origin for two reasons. First, the normal practice was to name unsurveyed land in the first instance after its local Aboriginal name.

> Canberra is, without any doubt, a native name. When Moore used it in 1826 only a handful of white men were in the district. All other names used by him, and in Dixon's first survey of 1829 (except Mt. 'Ainsley'), are obviously native – Pialligo, Yarrowlumla, etc. (Robinson 1927: 5)

Second, early testimony says so. John Lhotsky, visiting in 1834, mentioned both the Kembery Plain and the Kembery River "as it was originally called by the natives" (Lhotsky 1979: 55, 61). The Canberra historian John Gale "unreservedly accept[ed] Dr. Lhotsky's statement that the original of the name of Canberra was a native name", according to the argument of a letter "Canberra – a native name" by R. H. Cambage published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (Gale 1927: 27). There is also the testimony of Stewart Mowle, who worked for T. A. Murray at Yarralumla from 1838.

> Stewart Mowle, who came to the district in 1838 and knew the natives well enough to converse with them, has recorded that natives themselves pronounced Canbery (or Kemberry) as Gnabra ... S. M. Mowle, List of Aboriginal names in the South, 1891, National Library. (Wilson 2001[1968]: 61)

An Aboriginal source is also assumed by those who claimed that Canberra was the name of an Aboriginal tribe. W. Davis Wright, who grew up at Lanyon in the 1840s, claimed that Canberra was the name of the local Aboriginal tribe, that one of their focal areas was at the Canberra/Acton site, and that the name was pronounced *Kamberra* (Wright 1923: 57-58). Similarly, W. P. Bluett, who got his information from John Blundell (born 1838) and Mrs John MacDonald

nee Webb (born 1842), claimed that the "Nganbra-Pialligo tribe" consisted of two groups, the "Pialligo blacks", who camped at Pialligo, and the "Canburry or Nganbra blacks", who camped at the foot of "Black's Mt" close to "Canburry Creek" (Bluett 1954).[40]

A further argument for an Indigenous source comes from the variety of spellings. If the name were English, it is hard to see why the spelling should vary so much. On other hand:

> The uncertain quality of the middle and final vowels of the name, as evidenced by the varied spellings – Canberry, Canburry, Canbury, Canberra, is also easily explained from its aboriginal origin. (Robinson 1927: 5)

In spite of this evidence for an Aboriginal origin, there have still been more recent defenders of a European origin of the name 'Canberra' (see Murphy 1987 for a summary of theories and an attempted defence of a link with a place in the London suburb of Kingston-upon-Thames).

Reported meaning: What is its etymology?[41]

W. D. Wright, who, as noted above, claimed that 'Kamberra' was a tribal name, is also responsible for the suggestion that the name meant 'meeting place'.

> The correct rendering of their tribal name was Kamberra. Their corroboree ground was at Kamberra, as far as I can gather the exact spot being near the Canberra Church [sic[42]], where the Administration Offices are now erected at Acton, Canberra, and by Canberra Church toward the old Duntroon dairy. It served also as their general and best known meeting place. (Wright 1923: 57-58)

This was followed by Massola (1968), whose entry for Canberra says, "from Nganbirra, a camping place".

The other widely known theory is that the name meant 'breasts'. John Gale was told at Andrew Cunningham's funeral at Lanyon in 1887 by Rev. Canon Champion of Bungendore that a very old swagman familiar with the area had heard from the blacks "that the English equivalent for Canberra was 'a woman's breasts'"; this was suggested by the two hills Mr Ainslie and Black Mountain (Gale 1927: 14).

Other proposals that have been offered, without supporting evidence, are Mawer's suggestion that the name is "a corruption of the Ngunawal version of corroboree" (Mawer 1983: 13), an Aboriginal word for 'kookaburra' (reported in

Murphy 1987: 16), or an Aboriginal word meaning 'The Head' (Frederic Slater, reported in Murphy 1987: 14, who later claimed it was rather Celtic for 'Head Town').

Reported pronunciation

The historical record hints at some differences in pronunciation of the name. The first difference affects the final vowel. When Rev. Pierce Galliard Smith, rector of St John's church, began using the spelling Canberra, the squire of Duntroon, George Campbell emphatically used the underlined spelling 'Canberry' in a written note to Smith (Murphy 1987: 15). Secondly, *mb* was used instead of *nb* by Wright (see above) and by Lhotsky. Thirdly, the first vowel seems to have been regularly pronounced with the short English *a* of *can*, but Stewart Mowle insisted on a long vowel, which he spelled either *aa* or *ar*:

> The native name of Canberry is Caanberra … The first syllable is long phonetically – Karnberra. (S. M. Mowle diary of 21 July 1838, quoted in a letter from his son Aubrey Mowle 17 March 1913; reference in Murphy 1987: 14).

Fourthly, the initial consonant is given as *ng* for his tribal name 'Nganbra' by Bluett, relying on the memory of old-timers (see extract above). The same pronunciation is presumably behind Stewart Mowle's 'Gnabra', which he claimed was the Aboriginal pronunciation (Wilson 2001[1968]: 61) – assuming that *gn* is an attempt to represents the *ng* sound and that he forgot to write the *n* before *b* – "he wrote in his diary that the place name was pronounced *Karnberra*" (Wilson 2001[1968]: 186) and elsewhere wrote the name as 'Caamberra' (Mowle 1899: 47). Mowle's apparently contradictory evidence makes sense if he meant that the Aboriginal name began with a nasal sound *ng* but Europeans pronounced it with a stop sound *k*, and that the first vowel was pronounced originally long as in *carnage* but was pronounced by Europeans with the vowel of *can*.

The accent was apparently on the first syllable, and the vowel of the second syllable was indistinct and often elided. Lady Denman, at an official ceremony 12 March 1913 naming the federal capital, "in a clear English voice which left beyond doubt both the name and its official pronunciation, said: 'I name the capital of Australia, Canberra.' The name… she pronounced 'Canb'ra', with the accent on the first syllable…" (Wigmore 1963: 62). Earlier evidence for the omission of the second vowel comes from an 1840 marriage witness who spelled the name 'Canbrey' (Robinson 1927: 5).

Insights from linguistics

Reconstructing the pronunciation

Using the variant attested spellings and the methodology proposed here we aim to go beyond the pessimistic conclusions of Watson:

> The most noticeable of these [placenames of the aboriginal inhabitants] is the name of the city, Canberra. In 1826, J. J. Moore spelt it *Canberry*, but, in 1831, he spelt it *Canburry*. John Lhotsky, in 1835, spelt it *Kemberry*. The department of the surveyor-general, in issuing deeds, in 1837, spelt it *Canberry*, and in 1838, *Camberry*. S. M. Mowle, who resided in the district form 1838 to 1852, spelt it *Caamberra*. W. Davis Wright spelt it *Kamberra*. It is impossible now to determine the original correct pronunciation or the meaning. The official pronunciation, now adopted, is with the accent on the first syllable and as if it was spelt Canbera. (Watson 1927: 17 [italics added, HK])

To reconstruct the likely original pronunciation we begin with a matching of the variant spellings – see (8). For each set of corresponding sounds we propose an original sound and try to explain all deviations from this by plausible transmission processes of the kind discussed above.

The only segment for which we have absolute unanimity is the *b*. The variability of the preceding consonant – *nb* vs. *mb* – is easily resolved by the principle of *lectio difficilior* and the lack of attention: the *nb* sequence, common in Aboriginal languages but more rare in English, can be assumed to have been simplified by the substitution of *mb* in the usage of some speakers.

(8)	C	a	n	b	e	rr	y	1826	Moore
	C	a	n	b	u	rr	y	1831	Moore
	C	a	n	b	u	r	y	1832	Hoddle
	K	e	m	b	e	r	y	1834	Lhotsky
	C	a	m	b	e	rr	y	1838	Suveyor-General
	C	a	n	b		r	ey	1840	Robinson 1927: 5
	K	a	m	b	e	rr	a	1840s	Wright 1923
	C	a	n	b	e	rr	a	1857	Rev. Pierce Galliard Smith
	C	aa	n	b	e	rr	a	1838	Mowle 1838
	C	aa	m	b	e	rr	a		Mowle 1899: 47
	Gn	a		b		r	a		Mowle 1891
	Ng	a	n	b		r	a		Bluett 1954
	Kg	a	m	b	u	rr	y		Gillespie 1991: xviii
	*Ng	aa	n	b	i	r	?		

The first consonant is also explained by the principle of *lectio difficilior*: the sound *ng* is common at the beginning of words in Aboriginal languages but impossible in European languages. It is easy to see that if it were reproduced at all in English (it is often simply omitted in early wordlists), it would be replaced by a sound that does occur word-initially. On the other hand, if the Aboriginal word began with *k*, it is impossible to understand why anyone would report that it was pronounced otherwise. Mowle's *gn* (of 'Gnabra'), Bluett's *ng* in his 'Nganbra' tribal name, and a spelling 'Kgamburry' reported by Gillespie (1991: xviii) are taken to represent the velar nasal sound usually spelled *ng* in Aboriginal orthographies.

Regarding the first vowel, Stewart Mowle's various comments make it clear that this was the vowel of *car* rather than that of *can*. This agrees with what we know of Aboriginal phonologies, which tend to have the [æ] sound only as a variant of /a/ when adjacent to a palatal sound, especially *y*. Yet the name was popularly pronounced with the vowel of *can*, and this pronunciation was institutionalised by Lady Denman in the official proclamation of the name of the federal capital in 1913. The *can*-sound is easily explicable as a spelling pronunciation. One might ask why it was spelled *Can-*, to which one might ask in reply: how else could it have been spelled? Perhaps using *aa*: but this is rarely used in English. But why did they not spell it *Carn-*? This is explicable if it was first written down by an Irishman who would have pronounced *r* after a vowel; since *ar* was not available to him, he could only use the spelling with just *a*. In fact the name was probably first written by John McLaughlin, J. J. Moore's Dubliner overseer (Mawer 1983: 11). A further reason for spelling the vowel with a simple *a* is the fact that the vowel of *can* in Irish English was in fact pronounced closer to the sound of Modern Australian *car* than to that of modern *can* (see Wells 1982: 129, 422). Other English speakers, such as his boss J. J. Moore, would have naturally replaced his [a] with their own [æ], making allowance for his Irish accent. The *e* of 'Kembery', written in 1834 by the Polish Lhotsky, is explicable by his accent; lacking the English sound of short *a* in *can*, he would have substituted the *e* of *ken*. In the various spellings of this vowel we see the role of the dialect or accent of the European recorders: an Aboriginal central low [a] (as in Southern British *car*) may have been copied by an Irishman using a vowel pronounced more to the front of the mouth, which in turn was reproduced by other English speakers as the [æ] of *can*, which in turn was reproduced in the Polish scholar's accented English as the *e* of *ken*.

According to Mowle's evidence the first vowel was pronounced long (see 'Reported pronunciation' above). If it were a short *a*-vowel as in *cut*, it is likely to have been spelled with the letter *u*. Many Aboriginal languages had distinctive long vowels; a spelling *aa* is how a long *a* is typically represented in modern orthographies.

The second vowel is spelled with *e* or *u*. The forms with *-bury* may have been influenced by English placenames such as Canterbury and Oldbury; at any rate they do not justify a pronunciation *-boori*, for which there is no other evidence. Moore's early spelling 'Canburry' probably indicates the indistinct vowel that occurs in English before an *r* in an unstressed syllable, or simply inattention to the vowel quality in this position. On the other hand the *e* of the earliest spelling may indicate that Moore's Irish overseer McLaughlin was alert to vowel distinctions before *r*, as in *tern* vs *turn* – unlike the majority of English speakers (see Wells 1982: 200). The reconstructed sound is thus [e], which in an Aboriginal language that did not distinguish between [i] and [e] would be taken as a realisation of the /i/ phoneme.

Most Aboriginal languages distinguished two kinds of *r* sound, one like the normal English *r* and the other a sound which varied between a trill and a tap, which is often spelled *rr* in modern orthographies. The variable spelling with single or double r, however, do not allow us to draw any conclusion regarding the sound to reconstruct, since there is no evidence that the European recorders were aware of the difference, and English spelling thus consistently under-differentiates these sounds. An argument could nevertheless be made in favour of reconstructing the English-type *r* here, from the facts that (a) the occasional absence of the preceding vowel is better explained as being absorbed into the more vowel-like *r* than the tap, and (b) the *r* is never mistaken for an *l* or a *d*, as sometimes happens with the un-English kind of *r*.

The final vowel presents real difficulty. The *y*-versions predominate in earlier sources, and support reconstruction of a vowel *i*. But a spelling with *a* was deliberately introduced by Rev. Pierce Galliard Smith. One might suppose that this reflected a growing appreciation for its Aboriginal pronunciation. Spellings with *a* are also used consistently by those witnesses who were most knowledgeable about Aboriginal people – Stewart Mowle, William Davis Wright and William Bluett. If the original vowel was *a*, how do we account for the *i*-pronunciations? The influence of English placenames ending in *-bury* is one possibility. Another is the tendency to vary the pronunciation of vowels in unstressed syllables between a neutral shwa vowel (which would be spelled with *a*) and a high front vowel [i] (which would be spelled with *a*). Note the variation between 'Jerrabomberra' and 'Jerry Bunbery' (Robinson 1998: 203), 'Ginninderra' and 'Ginninderry' (see 'Differences in attention to phonetic detail' above). There is the further possibility that the name really ended with a trill *r* (spelled *rr*). Then the different vowels may represent different interpretations by Europeans of the short vowel-like sound heard after the trill. The perceptions of [i] would be natural if the vowel preceding the *rr* was [i] or [e]; the *a*-spelling would represent the neutral vowel of English unstressed final syllables. It is

even possible that *a*-forms represent a different word, the locative case form of the placename, *Ngaanbirr-a* 'at Canberra' vs. *Ngaanbirr* 'Canberra'. It is sometimes the locative case that gets borrowed as the name of a place.[43]

Finally, the position of stress on the placename can be reconstructed to be the first syllable, as claimed already by Robinson (1927: 5): "Nor is there any doubt that in pronunciation Canberra should be accented on the first syllable, and almost omit the 'e' in the second." This is also the official pronunciation (Watson 1927: 17), as established in the official announcement of the name by Lady Denman (see 'Reported pronunciation' above).

In summary, we can plausibly reconstruct the name as *Ngaanbira*, with some uncertainty regarding (a) the length of the first vowel (*aa* or *a*), (b) the nature of the last consonant (*r* or *rr*), and (c) the quality of the final vowel (*a*, *i*, or nothing).

Reconstructing the locational referent

Given the tendency for the post-contact reference of a placename to expand and designate especially the 'plains' so loved by early pastoralists, we expect the original reference to be more localised and to be some named feature in close proximity to the focal point of the first European activity. Since the name 'Canberra' was first applied to J. J. Moore's pastoral run centred on Acton ridge beside the Molonglo River and near the junction of this river and Sullivan's Creek, earlier named 'Canbury Creek', we would expect the Aboriginal name to designate some place near this complex. There is testimony that there was a camping place, of Wright's "Kemberra tribe" and Bluett's "Canburry or Nganbra blacks" – located, according to Bluett (1954: 1) at the foot of "Black's Mt" close to "Canburry Creek", i.e. in the area now called 'Black Mountain Peninsula'. There was a deep waterhole in the Molonglo River at its junction with Sullivan's Creek (Bill Gammage pers. comm. 13 November 2006). It is likely that 'Canberra' reflects the name of the Aboriginal camp, which in turn may have been based on the waterhole, the creek-river junction, or even Black Mountain.

Exploring the etymology

The meaning 'meeting place' suggested by Wright can be dismissed as being simply a functional designation of a named place that was used as a camping place rather than being itself a name.

Assuming an Indigenous source of the name, can we equate it with any word attested in Aboriginal wordlists? Not really. Nevertheless, the claim of Appleton and Appleton (1992: 55) à propos of 'Canberra' that "no such word has been recorded in any Aboriginal language" now needs to be qualified. For the

starting point should not be Canberra but rather a reconstructed pronunciation something like *Nga(a)nbira*. In fact, a form *nganbirr*, which is a conceivable reconstruction if we assume a final trilled *r*, is attested in the Gamilaraay and Yuwaalaraay languages of northern inland New South Wales, in the meaning "crosswise, across … Used to describe things that are 'across' something"[44] (Ash et al. 2002: 122). Although these languages are rather distantly related to the Canberra language, they would surely have shared some vocabulary with it. The etymology is not very persuasive, however, given the distance of the language from Canberra and the fact that the form does not match our reconstruction exactly.

We need to explore the supposed meaning 'breast' reported by Gale. This cannot be confirmed from wordlists. The word for 'breast' (or 'milk') is attested in wordlists from Queanbeyan, Ngunawal, the Monaro, and Dharrawal and Dhurrga on the south coast as *ngaminyang*, which does not resemble *ngaanbira*.

One further question is whether the structure of the name 'Ngaanbira' might provide a clue to its linguistic analysis, i.e. whether we can identify component elements without meaning (see 'Partial etymologies: Identifying elements without meaning'). The recurrence of the *-berra* part has been noted before: "Other local place-names, without doubt native, have a similar form: Jerrabomberra, Yeumberra, Bimberi" (Robinson 1927: 5). For the first of these see 'Changes in spelling and pronunciation' above. For Yeumberra (on the Murrumbidgee), I have found alternate spellings 'Yeumburra', 'Uemberra', 'Umberra', 'Umburra'. For Bimberi I have not found any old (pre-1860) references. It appears that we can reconstruct at least three placenames in the area that end in the same sequence, which might have been a derivational suffix with a particular meaning: **Ngaan-bira*, **Jiridiban-bira*, **Yum-bira* or **Yuum-bira*. Neither the meaning of the supposed suffix nor that of the root can be further identified and associated with a meaning.

Etiology

There is no record of any story that would explain the Aboriginal placename. It is possible, however, that Gale's reported meaning 'breast' (see 'Reported meaning: What is its etymology?' above) may contain an oblique reference to a mythological story, since body parts do often figure in Aboriginal myth-based toponymy. Nevertheless the story, if there was one, remains irrecoverable.

Conclusion

We hope to have shown that it is possible to make some informed guesses about the pronunciation and meaning of Aboriginal placenames, provided there is a reasonable amount of documentation both of the Anglo-Australian history of the place and of the local Indigenous language. Historical records must be used sensibly, and careful thought needs to be given to the processes of interlingual transmission, especially of the pronunciation of the name, and the historical transmission of the application of the name to locations in the Anglo-Australian domain. There are limits to what information can be recovered, with respect to the precise local referent, the etymology, and especially the etiological story behind the name.

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Endnotes

1. This paper incorporates material presented in four workshops as: 'Placenames in the ACT and southeastern NSW' (Canberra, 5 December 2002), 'Linguistic Reconstruction of Placenames' (Canberra, 12 June 2004 and Yass, 16 May 2005), and 'ACT Place Names: Towards reconstructing their original Indigenous form' (Canberra, 1 October 2005).

2. The (Royal) Anthropological Society of Australasia in the 1890s circulated a questionnaire which asked for "the Native Names of places with their meanings or the reason why the blacks gave such names to the separate localities". Some results were published in issues of *Science of Man*. The 1900 set of manuscripts have been microfilmed and were issued as *RASA Manuscripts* in a CD-ROM by the Geographical Names Board of NSW in 2003. This work will be referred to in this paper as *RASA Manuscripts* 1900.

3. "The Congwarra run is believed to have been named after an Aboriginal elder called Kongwarra who often camped in the locality. Some early references to the run spell the name Kongwarra and others Congwarrah" (Moore 1999: 79). We need to bear in mind, however, that Aboriginal people sometimes were named after a place.

4. A related question, how it came to be bestowed as a name in the English nomenclature system, is part of the historical study that should serve as preliminary to the kind of reconstruction I am primarily interested in here (see the section 'What history offers').

5. In 1825 J. J. Moore first obtained permission to occupy the land on which he set up a station probably already in 1823; his letter requesting purchase of land at 'Canbery' was dated 16 December 1826 (Gillespie 1991: 8-9).

6. Historians, however, are not necessarily good judges of the linguistic abilities of early recorders of Aboriginal placenames.

7. According to Bluett (1954: 1), "one group camped at Pialligo and was known to the early settlers as the Pialligo blacks".

8. One should not overlook possible Asian sources of names, especially from British India. A recent discovery is that 'Waniassa', the name of Thomas Macquoid's estate in the Tuggeranong Valley, was transferred from the name of his earlier home in the Krawang district of northeastern Java in the village of Waniassa/Wanajasa (Lamb 2006).

9. A possible explanation is that the second vowel of the sequence *jinin* was unstressed and so short that it may not have been heard, which would have caused the two *n*'s to be run together in a way that they sounded like a single consonant.

10. This example also shows that, while the shortened version is later than the longer versions, there are two longer versions. We cannot separate them chronologically and simple-mindedly declare the earliest to be the most genuine.

11. The same name seems to be behind a place on the western side of Lake George, spelled 'Purrorumba' on Thomas Mitchell's 1834 map of NSW (Watson 1927: 18) and on a map of parishes in County Murray (Moore 1999: Map 8).

12. The jocular 'Didyabringabeeralong' reflects this preference.

13. One source even claims that 'Bodalla' means "a haven for boats" – and that 'Urobodalla' (Eurobodalla) means "another haven for boats" (D. J. Stinson in *RASA Manuscripts* 1900)!

14. A similar situation obtained in England, where Anglo-Saxon placenames compounded with *-field* were sometimes adapted to a more French-sounding name in *-ville*.

15. The Rev. P. G. Smith's diaries provide an additional spelling 'Goongahleen' – in 1880 during the Crace era (Cope 2006: 78).

16. It is customary for linguists to represent phonemes (contrastive sounds) between slashes and variant pronunciations (called 'allophones') in square brackets.

17. In principle we could add variants with *t* in place of *d*; in practice, however, it is usually the voiced sound (i.e. *d*) that occurs after a nasal sound like *n*.

18. See Table 5.2 for the sounds that are expected in Aboriginal languages in this part of the country.

19. Cf. Clarke (1986: 278): "When he accompanied a parliamentary delegation in 1891 to Tumut, or Doomut-th as, with his obsession with the original Aboriginal pronunciation, he insisted on calling it".

20. Another example of a final trill being perceived as having an *s*-like quality is given by Charles Throsby, in his letter of 9 September 1820 to Governor Macquarie, which mentions a "large space of water called by the natives Ber-ree-warz or Bur-rur-wars, which I saw when at Jervis Bay" (Gale 1927: 22) – possibly St. George's Basin.

21. See the discussion of Ulladulla at (6) below for an application of this principle.

22. This procedure is also described and illustrated in Austin and Crowley (1995). Parallels with the 'comparative method' for reconstructing ancestral languages from differently diverged descendants are explored in Dench (2000).

23. Jones (2006: 329) quotes an 1886 comment from the English pronunciation expert, A. J. Ellis, that "Irishmen are noted for giving *eye* a shade of *oy*".

24. Similar variation is seen in the alternation between 'Umeralla' and 'Umarally', 'Tidbinbilla' and 'Tidbinbilly', 'Canberra' and 'Canbury'.

25. Cf. the property 'Breadbatoura' established near Cobargo on the south coast in 1835 (Gibbney 1989: 26).

26. Similarly the first Catholic priest in the area, Father James O'Doherty, from Ireland, wrote the placename 'Mollymook', which was also spelled 'Mollymoke', as 'Mollymuck' – using *u* for the same *u/o* sound.

27. This form introduces a complication, however, in the absence of the final *rra* syllable. Perhaps it was a locative suffix.

28. The term given for the expected local language Dhurga, is the slightly different form *koor´-a-dhoo* (Mathews 1901-1902: 69).

29. Cf. Hancock's comment that the property name that Crisp spelled *Jimenbuan* meant 'big fat kangaroo rat' (Hancock 1972: 107 fn 1).

30. The linguistic evidence suggests that the word ends in *ng* rather than the *n* of the placename; there is some doubt about whether the second vowel is *a* (as given by Mathews or *u* as given by Hercus); Crisp's vowel *e* probably reflects an English pronunciation with an indistinct vowel.

31. A reduplicated form of the word for 'fat' is presumably also the basis for the placename *Puenbuen* northwest of Bega on the south coast.

32. Diana Eades comments on the equivalent word in Dharawal, the language of Wollongong area, claiming that /byuwan/ 'butter, fat' is the only word that starts with a sequence of two consonants (Eades 1976: 77). I suggest rather that the word was really /biwan/ in terms of the Aboriginal phonemes, was pronounced as [biuan], which in turn was heard by English speakers as [byuan] and consequently spelled *buan*, with *u* representing the sequence [yu].

33. The Victorian Aboriginal Placename Project explicitly sought such information from professional linguists familiar with the relevant languages (Clark and Heydon 2002: 8).

34. For a history of the property see Merritt (2003).

35. This notation means 'before 1887'.

36. The word for 'rock' or 'stone' is given as *bura* for the languages of Bega and Bateman's Bay, but not the inland area.

37. The following account is taken primarily from Mawer (1983). Other detailed sources are Robinson (1927) and Fitzhardinge (1975).

38. The names of Canberra's satellite cities, Woden, Belconnen, Tuggeranong and Gungahlin, have likewise undergone considerable expansion from former property names.

39. Of course the name 'Canberra' is also now also used, metonymically, for the federal government.

40. This theory that Kamberra/Nganbra was a group name has been followed in recent work by Jackson-Nakano (2001, 2005).

41. See Murphy (1987) for a survey of proposed meanings of the name.

42. He must mean the rectory, since Canberry Cottage was used for many years as the residence of the church's minister.

43. Thus I analyse the South Coast placename 'Bergalia' (near Moruya) as being from the locative **Burrgili-ya*, the uninflected form being reflected in Howitt's Bugelli-Manji clan name and John Hawdon's Burgaily squattage (see Gibbney 1989: 14, 25).

44. The word is derived from a verb *nganbi-* 'lean'.

VICTORIA

CHAPTER 6

Toponymic books and the representation of Indigenous identities

LAURA KOSTANSKI

Always it is the names that work the most powerful magic … They tell us not only where we want to go but where we have come from; clues to our past and the forces that have shaped the land we live in.

Brian Jackman, *Sunday Times Magazine*, 1988

Introduction

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Surveyor-General of the colony of New South Wales, Major Thomas Mitchell (1838: 174), had expressed the desire to use Indigenous names for places because they were the only ones deemed suitable to describe the Australian landscape. I have termed this colonial phenomenon of utilising Indigenous names for colonial places a process of *Anglo-Indigenous toponymy*, wherein the names once used exclusively for Indigenous landscape purposes were captured by colonial powers and used for their own means of identifying the landscape (Kostanski 2003, 2005). Towards the close of the nineteenth century when that formerly 'untamed wilderness' of Australian land had been claimed by colonists, a further process of Anglo-Indigenous identification developed in the form of homogenising the multiple pre-1788 cultures into one amorphous identity. In a sense, at this stage in the development of Australian identity, localised Anglo-Indigenous identification began to narrow into a more exclusively colonial and Australian phenomenon.

This paper will show how the nation-building project that characterised post-1901 Australian society can be linked to changing promotions of placenames of Indigenous origin. Ann McGrath (1989: 34) argued that this process led to the development of a contemporary cultural vacuum, where today Indigenous cultural heritage is discussed in an ill-informed manner. By tracking the development of generalist published toponymic reference books (and word

books which included lists of toponyms) the progression of multiple Indigenous identities becoming recognised as one fused identity, an 'Australian Aboriginal' identity, can be found. Eighteen toponymic reference books have been located for this paper, spanning a publishing period of 96 years from 1907 to 2002. It is proposed that the majority of toponymic reference books created in the twentieth century were informed by a culture of nation-building.

It should be noted that throughout the twentieth century there have been many distinguished historians and linguists who have researched Indigenous languages and their toponyms with careful diligence. These publications have been of tremendous use in promoting and preserving Indigenous cultures. They will not be the focus of this paper, which will prefer to look at the general reference publications which strayed from academic knowledge, and tended towards 'mainstream' audiences. This trait of publishing for a mainstream Australian audience had different effects on the reference publications and their representations of Indigenous cultures and languages.

Translation

One of the first comprehensive series of toponymic books to be published, which detailed different Aboriginal languages of Australia and their vocabularies, was compiled by Robert Smyth in 1878. Smyth collected vocabulary lists from local guardians of the Aborigines and settlers who wrote the names down, as he said, "exactly as the blacks pronounced them" (Smyth 1878: lxviii). Smyth proposed that the collections of

> native names of the hills, rivers, creeks and other natural features [would] be accepted as important and valuable contributions and as such are likely to assist towards a better comprehension of the peculiarities of the Australian languages. (Smyth 1878: lxii)

Smyth was an ethnologist, and his work was influenced heavily by his preoccupations with studying the Aboriginals of Australia as representatives of an ancient world.

In the preface to his first book, Smyth explained that he set out to detail information of the "people who had formerly owned the soil of Australia" Smyth (1878: v). Smyth insisted that different areas of the Australian landscape were referred to through different Aboriginal languages, and as such he made clear that multiple histories of landscape identification existed prior to colonial occupation. Indicating that Indigenous people were the former owners of the Australian landscape, and that at the time of writing "many of those that [had] formerly inhabited the banks of the River Murray, [had] disappeared" (Smyth 1878: xix),

Smyth asserted that his book was an attempt to "preserve some remnants of the history of the Australians" (Smyth 1878: vi). The 'disappearance' of the local Indigenous groups, and thus the vanishing of their oral traditions, obviated the need for colonists to materially record what they knew of Indigenous landscape interactions. This was in some ways the final chance for the settlers to record the meanings of various Indigenous traditions and nomenclature that they had adopted for their own use and incorporated into their own local vocabularies.

In his writings, Smyth argued that many of the placenames appropriated by colonial culture "have been mutilated or so altered as to be no longer of any significance" (Smyth 1878: lxviii). Therefore, Smyth was acknowledging the existence in Australia of an Anglo-Indigenous placename production, wherein the primary aim of adopting an Indigenous name for colonial landscape identification reflected an imperialist vision, overlooking or little concerned with the true meaning and significance of the names. Ronald Berndt (1970: 7) asserted that this form of cultural ignorance on the part of the colonists led to the socio-cultural impoverishment of the Indigenous people they were dispossessing. Thus, it can be stated that by using Indigenous names, without a complete understanding of their significance, colonists were undermining the importance of Indigenous landscape interactions.

Nine years later, Edward Curr published a similar book, comprising four volumes, which detailed various Indigenous dialects and their vocabularies. In much the same manner as Smyth, Curr's books contained detailed lists of various Indigenous languages' vocabularies with their English translations. Each list provided details of the compiler and explained the location of the language in Australia. Curr stated in his introduction to the work that in their publication, he was attempting to "demonstrate from the materials collected a number of facts connected with the long past history of this section of the human family" (Curr 1887: xi). Curr espoused the notion that "generally, the only reliable records of the early history of a savage race are its languages, customs, and physical characteristics, but particularly its languages" (Curr 1887: 3). Through providing multiple Indigenous word lists, and in some cases extended linguistic translations, Curr was emphasising, like Smyth, that various overlapping interactions of the landscape by Indigenous people had occurred prior to the claiming of the land by colonial powers. Curr's main purpose was to contribute to an understanding of the origins of the Aboriginal people, on the assumption that their vocabularies could eventually be linked with those of people in other continents. In his work, Curr was also asserting that a rich national identity of Australia could be appreciated through the understanding of the multiple Indigenous cultures evident in Australia at the time of colonial expansion.

Sam Furphy has recently indicated that "aboriginal culture and heritage has been employed to confer Australian national identity" (Furphy 2002: 59). It can be stated that Curr's attempts to publish a 'history' of the Indigenous tribes of Australia, was, in a sense, an attempt to bring a cultural and historical richness to the formative Australian identity of the late nineteenth century. Denis Byrne argued that at the time of Smyth and Curr's publications "settler Australia was almost homogenous from an ethnic standpoint… what it lacked was historical depth" (Byrne 1996: 95).

The publication of these books highlights the attempts of some of the colonists to give depth to a formative Australian identity. They were arguing that multiple Indigenous cultures would provide the temporal depth new settlers so desired. As Joshua Fishman has asserted, in the process of nation-building the dominant culture often attempts to incorporate elements of a "far more distant (indeed, purely figurative) kin" to give them a historical identity that might not otherwise exist (Fishman 1972: 6). But while Smyth and Curr belonged to an ethnographic tradition concerned with accumulating detailed knowledge about local cultural differences among Aboriginal peoples - a concern with human diversity more generally - this was not the aim of new colonists in their own history making. As will now be discussed, Aboriginal knowledge served a different function for some of the writers of nomenclature reference books post-1901.

Federal translation

In 1900, E. J. Forbes addressed a meeting of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia (Victoria), at which he outlined his desire to create geographical name boards for each state across Australia. He expressed the hope that these boards would control the creation of new Australian placenames; identify and correct placenames with spurious etymologies; and provide a regulatory method of placename spelling. Of the many points that Forbes raised in his speech, two can be said to have been extremely important in the later development of toponymic books. The first of these was that English appellations such as Swan Hill possessed the "valuable quality of accurate description and interesting record conveyed in our own language" (Forbes 1900: 26). The second of the points was that in the future any Australian Aboriginal word could be employed to describe place (Forbes 1900: 27). Forbes explained that this was the best methodology to employ in relation to the choice of Aboriginal placenames because there was such an extensive Australia-wide list of Aboriginal words compared to those lists confined to their original area. Thus, Forbes was asserting that the Australian identification of place needed to be asserted through English descriptions or non-specific Indigenous words.

Present at Forbes' address was Alan Wright who responded by stating that:

> If the mere fact of Australian aboriginals having once wandered over this country entitles our languages to recognition, what are the claims of our own countrymen? For the anglo-saxon has been the real maker of Australia. History has no parallel for the progress and prosperity presented, all compressed into the limits of a single century… their towns … should be designated by names, not given by the natives themselves, and often unavoidably incorrect, nor taken from the dialects of an extinct race who had no part in the work. (Wright cited in Forbes 1900: 27)

McGrath proposed that Wright was a Victorian who "argued that the colonising people should not separate "history" and "geography" and the only valid history was that of the colonisers" (McGrath 1989: 33). Indeed, McGrath argued that it was at this time in Australian history that the act of naming was seen by some as an assertion of their proprietorial rights. In fact, when Forbes and Wright's speeches of 1900 are compared to the outlines of Smyth's and Curr's works, a divide in the political philosophy of the two periods is evident. In contrast to the hopes outlined by Smyth and Curr, a multifarious promotion of Aboriginal cultures did not develop. Rather, a single, homogenous ideal was created in toponymic reference books with the impetus of people such as Forbes and Wright. It can be argued that post-federation, Australians were wanting to understand their land ownership in a singular, united and easy to comprehend manner, which was a part of what Eric Hobsbawm (1990: 102) referred to as a process of "cementing group cohesion". More recently, Mark McKenna has noted that

> once the colonies federated on 1 January 1901 and the framework for the writing of a national history was in place, the desire to forget the violence of the frontier, or to at least dismiss it as an inevitable by-product of a far greater good, became stronger. McKenna (2002: 63)

This process of beginning a national history created new representations of Indigenous peoples and groups in Australia.

Nomenclature industry

One singular, self-serving colonialist approach to recording and preserving history is evident in the writings of John George Saxton in 1907. Entitled *Victorian Place Names and their Origins*, Saxton wrote in the preface that the aim of the book was to "provide a keynote of the past history of the State of Victoria, Australia" (Saxton 1907). The toponymic history presented by

Saxton was extremely generalist in nature. Aboriginal placenames were listed alphabetically in the left column of each page and on the right hand side were English translations. In contrast to Smyth's and Curr's publications, no references were provided by Saxton to specify the Indigenous languages of origin for the words, nor did he acknowledge the original language areas. Fishman (1972: 44) asserts that the individuality of a culture resides in its language. Following from this line of reasoning it can be argued that by removing the individuality and peculiarity of the languages and by forming them into one homogenous Aboriginal identity, the diversity of Indigenous cultures was erased from the dominant Australian culture, represented in Saxton's book. This homogenisation was a process of creating one group of 'others', one 'Aboriginal Australia'. Furphy has argued that nomenclature books such as Saxton's overlooked the importance of distinguishing various Indigenous dialects because they believed that "this diversity was not an important consideration when searching for a potential house name, and that no distinction between languages needed to be drawn in this context" (Furphy 2002: 60). Obviously, the promotion of forgotten meanings of placenames, which could add a formative depth to the national identity, was undertaken at the cost of linguistic accuracy.

From the example set by Saxton, other writers began to publish their own reference books on Australian placenames. Many took the same format as that adopted by Saxton, with a long list of toponyms on the left hand side of the page, and the English translations provided on the right without indication as to which Indigenous language they came from. The intentions and purposes of the books, the representations of Indigenous history and culture, the homogenisation of Indigenous language, and the reference books' own use of reference lists are fascinating topics to explore for the purposes of understanding the influences of these publications.

Intentions

In contrast to Smyth's and Curr's works, Archibald Martin stated that the intention of his placename book was to create "a first-rate gift book for anyone going on a journey or to keep on your shelves and bring out when places and people who lived in them are talked of and argued about" (Martin 1944: preface). Indeed, in the archives of the National Library of Australia a collection of manuscripts relating to the toponymic book writer, Les Blake, contains an inscription on the front page of the typescript for his book which states that "Sir Henry Winnecke, late Governor of Victoria told me: 'I always carry a copy of this book in the glove box of my car'" (Blake: Series 2, Folder 536: Box 88). Obviously the intentions of Martin to write a generalist reference work in the 1940s carried right through the genre of these books, even into the 1970s. In 1955 Rex Ingamells noted that

the purpose of his book was to create a "list for the entertainment and use of modern Australians who feel sufficient interest in the original Australians to delight in these echoes from their speech" (Ingamells 1955). These "echoes of speech" could provide modern Australians with words that according to Sydney Endacott "would 'run trippingly', and have a meaning or reference that might be used to name a particular place or thing" (Endacott 1973).

Two conclusions can be made from these discussions of mellifluous placenames. Firstly, by discussing the names only for their tonal qualities, not their cultural background, the toponymic book writers were trivialising the cultural importance of the placenames. Secondly, it was writing such as this that urged readers to recognise that multifarious Indigenous culture in Australia was dead and now a single homogenous identity could be formed through the use of Indigenous words for Australian places and homes. This is reflective of a phenomenon which cultural geographer Peter Jackson (1989: 53) described as "hegemonic" in nature, that is, an attempt by those with power to enforce a "norm".

Byrne (1996: 87) argued that the existence of multiple Indigenous cultures was acknowledged in the post-federation period as a threat to colonial culture and its perceived right to be inhabiting Australia. Thus, rather than acknowledge Indigenous culture, and remain under threat of being considered illegitimate, colonists had to own the Indigenous interactions. Alexander Reed promoted this colonial approach by stating that his books were aimed at continuing a tradition where the toponyms were the "eternal totemic ancestors" of the Indigenous cultures (Reed 1967). Reed was espousing the notion that placenames were now totems of a dead Aboriginal culture to be used by the colonial powers. In so doing, he was promoting the idea that colonial culture owned Indigenous culture, and could utilise it any way it liked. Indeed, Paul James has observed that new societies use "traditional myths" to create a nationalist sentiment. It is, according to James, a method triggered by a "legitimation crisis" (James 1996: 128). Thus, in addition to the notion of creating group cohesion, we can interpret these early toponymic reference books as examples of an attempt to legitimise white control of the landscape through the appropriation of Aboriginal cultures and traditions.

Justine Kenyon pushed the notion of Anglo-Indigenous identification by claiming that for Australians searching for a house name with an Indigenous flavour:

> Words may be made up. For instance, all words for ground or earth also indicate camp. Thus Lar, Larne, Langi all mean ground, camp or home, and may be used as a prefix similarly to that fine name Langilogan, or Mr. Logan's homestead. (Kenyon 1951: 3)

Now not only were different Aboriginal languages to be used, but they could also be transformed in any manner. This manipulation of Indigenous words for placenames was stated by Endacott (1973: foreword) to be the foundations of "the growth of a distinct national feeling". Jeremy Beckett (1988: 206), the Australian anthropologist, espoused the notion that writers often utilised Aborigines in forming a contemporary national ideology, and that was the only reason they used them. Indeed, Beckett insisted that nationalising forces such as writers never envisaged the incorporation of distinct Aboriginal cultures into the national identity; they only needed them as an 'other' to give meaning to 'us'. This utilisation of Indigenous cultures in developing a national identity is a process which can be seen in nomenclature books. For instance, Ingamells proposed that

> since most aboriginal speech has passed forever, never to be spoken again in proper dialect, here are simply memorials that may be freely used and may fitly lend colour to our transplanted European life in this country. (Ingamells 1955: foreword)

In addition, Endacott stated that the use of "musical aboriginal names" for homes and places "would be desirable with advantage to the furthering of the growth of a distinct national feeling" (Endacott 1973: preface). Even as recently as 1994, when the *Macquarie Aboriginal Words* book was published, the editors implored readers to "reflect the distinctive character of the Australian landscape, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are an obvious and wealthy store of such names" (Thieberger and McGregor 1994: vi). Another manner in which these books helped the process of cultural homogenisation was with their vague representations of Indigenous languages, a practice which continued until the publication of *Dictionary of Aboriginal Placenames of Victoria* by the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation of Languages in 2002.

It has been noted (Strang 1997: 219) that Aboriginal placenames refer to specific ancestral stories. Thus, the cultural heritage of a place can reside in the language-specific placename. Therefore, in discussing placenames of Indigenous origin, one needs to consider the language and cultural background of the name in order to appropriately translate the meaning into English. Considering the format of the toponymic books, this is an ideology that was not addressed within the word lists themselves, yet this type of definition of Indigenous culture was almost always represented in their introductions. For instance, James O'Callaghan wrote that "the words may have belonged to one or other of the many native languages then existing". Furthermore, he argued that many placenames had spurious beginnings; that different languages were present Australia-wide; and that some placenames had been corrupted into unrecognisable forms from their original. Yet, given his acknowledgement of and explanation about multiple Indigenous cultures having existed in Australia

pre-1788, O'Callaghan concluded his introduction by stating that "if a name did not originate in the place which bears it, information as to such origin is interesting, but unnecessary" (O'Callaghan 1918: 6). Thus, O'Callaghan's word lists were plunged into linguistic obscurity, where English translations were provided for Indigenous words without any identification of the languages of origin, and only occasional references to the sources of information.

Unfortunately, O'Callaghan was not alone in this trend of acknowledgment and simultaneous denial. Moreover, it was a trend that was to persist across the century. In 1940, William Thorpe warned readers of his book that "the multiplicity of dialects explains the frequent occurrence of different names with the same meaning" (Thorpe 1940: 1). Simultaneously, Thorpe did not explain the different dialects, nor did he attempt to acknowledge them next to the translations provided in the word lists further on in the book. More interestingly, by the 1950s, the multiplicity of languages once referred to in these texts, was now beginning to be defined as either "nine dialects" by Kenyon (1951: 3) (so you could pick a house name common to your area), or given a "regional key" by Ingamells (1955). By 1967, Reed had developed these generalisations into state boundary lines, indicating next to each placename the state of its location, whilst still acknowledging that:

> There were at least five hundred languages or distinct dialects, many of which have never been recorded … it must be remembered that a single word may have had more than one meaning in one language, and that the same word may have borne an entirely different meaning in another. (Reed 1967: foreword)

Whilst the lack of acknowledgment of local Indigenous languages in these books caused the promotion of a homogenous Aboriginal identity, the structure of the toponymic books has also frustrated the process of placename verification, by providing spurious, scant or, at times, no reference lists.

Referencing problems

The only toponymic reference book produced which gave any indication of the exact sources of the translations was O'Callaghan's (1918), who quoted often from Smyth (1878) and Curr (1887), and interlaced this information with private, unpublished material from local sources. O'Callaghan would place a direct reference next to each toponymic translation, thus aiding the reader in following up the sources and also allowing the reader to find more information on that particular toponym.

During the early part of the twentieth century, books by Saxton (1907), Thorpe (1921, 1940), Martin (1944) and Kenyon (1951) contained no references at all. The lack of referencing in these books can cause spurious etymologies to arise (Kostanski 2005) and acts as a hindrance to researchers. It is a hindrance because it does not allow the researcher to verify where the translations came from. Thus, there can be no method applied to these books in sorting the correct translations from those that are spurious. In effect, poor referencing in these books allows the promotion of both correct and spurious etymologies to a wide and general audience, with no distinctions being possible to be made between them.

By 1967 references were being mentioned by Reed in the introduction to his book. Then from Aldo Massola in 1968 onwards these types of toponymic books had extensive reference lists. Yet, the rigour with which these lists were compiled remained less than sound. Of these later editions, the most interesting reference lists were compiled by Massola (1968) and Blake (1977). Both of these referenced the previously published toponymic books by Martin (1944), O'Callaghan (1918), Reed (1967), Saxton (1907), Smyth (1878) and Curr (1887). Obviously, Massola and Blake were making extensive use of the prior research undertaken by toponymic authors. In addition to these toponymic reference book sources, Massola's references were quite extensive and he appears to have utilised many journal articles for information. On the other hand, Blake (1977: 295) referenced a "selection of local histories checked" which was an interesting methodology considering many of these local histories he 'checked' would have utilised the same reference books as Blake had also done. Interestingly, accessing Blake's manuscripts at the National Library of Australia (Blake: Folder 215, Box 237), and paying particular attention to the drafts of his book, provides substantial evidence of his lack of referencing rigour. It is obvious that Blake did not methodically substantiate his placenames translations. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the proofs of his book, in which no mention of referencing for each name was made. Thus, the lack of referencing was not stipulated at the publisher's discretion, rather by Blake himself. It would appear that even as late as the 1960s authors such as Blake were following the same methodology stipulated by Saxton in 1907, and thus continued to perpetuate the ideology of homogenisation of Indigenous landscape interactions.

Conclusions

The toponymic reference books published during the twentieth century were far from innocuous in their representation and treatment of Indigenous cultures. These books are still held in State and local libraries across Australia, usually in the general reference sections. The information contained within the

publications is still being utilised by local historians and people with an interest in the toponymic history of Australia, and as such the scope and influence of these books' contents is far-reaching.

The toponymic books discussed in this paper have almost exclusively represented Indigenous Australian cultures from a colonially-tainted perspective, one which has prized the Indigenous toponyms for their ability to give a depth to Australian national identity. This national-building tendency tended to influence the toponymic reference writers to homogenise Indigenous culture into one amorphous entity, a process which at once removed the individuality of Indigenous languages (and thus cultural identity) and enforced non-Indigenous landscapes as the 'norm'. Certain elements of this singular Indigenous entity were selected to be discussed within a colonial framework, with no real consideration given to the original non-Anglo-Indigenous meanings. Recent toponymic publications are working on correcting the oversights made by the toponymic writers of the twentieth century, and hopefully there will be a flow-on effect in Australian national identification with Indigenous cultures.

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CHAPTER 7

Reviving old Indigenous names for new purposes

LAURA KOSTANSKI AND IAN D. CLARK

Introduction

George Seddon (1997: 15) theorised that the words of the landscape carry "cultural baggage" that may "imply values and endorse power relations". This notion of power relations being borne out through placenames is nowhere more evident than in Australia. Since the time of early European exploration of Australia the landscape has been mapped from a colonial cartographic perspective. European explorers, surveyors and settlers brought with them to Australia a colonial understanding of land tenure, and with this the existing Indigenous understandings of the landscape were overwritten. The landscape was almost a palimpsest (the place where a text has been overwritten or erased to make way for another text), constantly being overwritten to suit the needs of the colonial government. In the act of mapping Australia the colonists began to take control of the landscape, and one of the most important and powerful ways they did this was to name places in the landscape. Sometimes names were taken from those of the colonial officials, or borrowed from places 'back home'. In other instances where the landscape was deemed 'too foreign', Indigenous languages and their vocabularies were used to create new colonial places from the landscape of space (Carter 1987). This use of Indigenous names by the colonial powers transformed the names from being exclusively Indigenous in origin, to becoming *Anglo-Indigenous* in nature (Kostanski 2005). The term 'Anglo-Indigenous' is used because the names were used for colonial cartographic purposes, and were symbols of colonial places. Thus, in essence the names which had been used to describe Indigenous landscapes were now used for the colonial landscape and their meanings had been altered permanently.

This paper is concerned with the recent and current official government use of Indigenous names, those names which the authors describe as Anglo-Indigenous. There are many important linguistic programmes that work with Indigenous

groups throughout Australia, which focus on recording the Indigenous names that are used in their traditional ways. These programs (McKay 1992) record the traditional spiritual meaning of the names, and in most cases these meanings are recorded for the sole use of the Indigenous groups, and specific sub-groups of them. We will not be discussing these Indigenous names, and so to make the distinction, the names we refer to, the ones used for government purposes, are those that are Anglo-Indigenous.

The act of naming transforms space into place (Carter, Donald and Squires 1993) and toponyms act as cultural symbols and artefacts which, with the passing of time, become cultural relics. In Australia the toponyms are predominantly relics of colonial and Indigenous landscape interactions – relics which can be investigated to uncover their historical importance and value in shaping community identities.

There are many policies in Australia which govern the contemporary official government use of Indigenous toponyms. These policies are derived from the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names resolution which:

> recommends that all countries having groups of aboriginal/native people make a special effort to collect their geographical names along with other appropriate information;
>
> recommends also that, whenever possible and appropriate, a written form of those names be adopted for official use on maps and other publications. (Natural Resources Canada 2004: 22)

In Victoria this resolution is presented in the following policies and principles as outlined by the Registrar of Geographic Names:

> 2.1.2 PRINCIPLE 2 – Recognition and use of Indigenous names
>
> The use of traditional Indigenous names is encouraged and preferred for unnamed features, subject to agreement from the relevant Indigenous communities.
>
> The use of a word from an Indigenous language may also be used as a geographic placename. The use of Indigenous geographic placenames or words should be undertaken in the context of the Guidelines for the Recording and Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Place Names formulated by the Committee for Geographical Names in Australasia.

2.1.5 PRINCIPLE 5 – Assigning names to unnamed features

Naming authorities should give priority to names drawn from relevant Indigenous Australian languages, names covered by Principle 3, or unofficial historical names, when assigning names to existing topographical features that have neither an official nor an unofficial name. Within these options, consideration might be given to names that recognise groups of people or types of names previously under-represented in the 'namescape'. Where more than one name amongst the above options is considered appropriate, dual naming may be used.

Some geographical features in Victoria have neither an official or unofficial name e.g. some peaks in the Great Dividing Range, some minor tributaries at the headwaters of river systems. If it is decided to name features such as these, then the sense of connection criterion outlined in this Principle should be adopted.

2.1.11 PRINCIPLE 11 – Dual names

Naming authorities may assign dual or multiple names to places, in those instances where it is appropriate to give official recognition to names drawn from two or more cultural backgrounds. The most common combination would be a name drawn from a relevant Indigenous Australian language and an Australian English name. There should not be any restriction on the language source for names used in selecting dual names, provided Principle 3 is observed and provided Australian English is used. (Department of Sustainability and Environment 2004)

Thus, at this point in time, features in Victoria can be dual named with both an Indigenous and a non-Indigenous toponym to symbolise the place. Where once there had been only Indigenous names related to specific areas, colonists came through in the nineteenth century and claimed the landscape through their own procedures of mapping and naming. In recent times consideration has been given to reinstating the Indigenous names, in an effort to represent Indigenous cultural heritage in the landscape.

Yet, just because this ideal exists in government guidelines and policies does not mean that the process of implementing these practices is straightforward. More than 150 years of colonial landscape domination and historical understandings of the landscape have meant that the official recording of the Victorian, and Australian, landscape is, and has been, represented from a colonial cartographic perspective. This perspective has negated Indigenous understandings of place for more than 150 years in Victoria, with the consequence that efforts now being made to reinstate Indigenous names are perceived by many as an attempt to instate a 'counter-landscape culture'.

Colonial understandings of the landscape

One case study which can best exemplify the influence that nineteenth century colonial cartographic and toponymic practices have had upon the understandings of the constituents of Australian landscape and place is that of the Grampians (Gariwerd) debate of the early 1990s. In the early 1990s there was an effort from the incumbent Victorian state government to reinstate the Indigenous names of significant sites and features within and around the Grampians National Park in Victoria.

Prior to 1836, the Grampians landscape was understood solely by Indigenous groups. The Buandig, Wergaia, Dhauwurdwurrung, Wathawurrung, Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung all had names for features within this area. The traditional custodians of these landscapes are the Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung (see the maps in Figures 7.1 and 7.2).

In these landscapes, features and sites were identified by names linked to ancestral stories, which enabled the inhabitants to travel across the country along clearly defined routes (Young 1992: 256). More than this, the names gave identity to the Indigenous groups and the land was (and still is) a part of them. Stephen Davis and Victor Prescott note that for Indigenous people in Australia

> the land was given form by ancestral beings who traversed the landscape, conferring territories and naming each locality. Each named locality within the total territory can be identified by senior custodians of the territory. Names are recited in a particular order. When asking a senior custodian the extent of his territory he will, most often, name all localities on the territory to which the ancestral being travelled and performed all the daily activities of life in the creative epoch. The names are recited in the order in which they were visited. This naming of localities matches the order in which names appear in the song cycle during the performance of rituals involving clans from the wider ritual group with which the clan identifies. (Davis and Prescott 1992: 71)

Pertinently for this paper, as Ian Clark explained,

> the 'Grampian Mountains' were central to the dreaming of *buledji Brambimbula*, the two brothers *Bram*, who were responsible for the creation and naming of many landscape features in western Victoria. Many of the Aboriginal placenames… are believed to be conferred by mythological Ancestors, and as such they are memorials to these mythic heroes. (Clark and Harradine 1990: 21)

Figure 7.1: The Jardwadjali landscape (Clark 1990: 256−257)

Table 14: Jardwadjali Clans

No.	Clan name	Approximate location
1.	Apsley Clan	Lakes Bringalbert and Downbobberty
2.	Barbardin balug	Between Rose's station and the Wimmera River
3.	Bernet	North of 'Ledcourt' at/near Wimmera River
4.	Bulugdja	Lake Buloke
5.	Bung bung gul gundidj	Wannon Falls, near Wannon and at Bochara
6.	Congbool and Yat Nat Clan	Balmoral
7.	Darkogang gundidj	Wando River, at 'Muntham' station
8.	Djappuminyu	'Carr's Plains' on the Richardson River
9.	Djura balug	Horsham
10.	Djurid balug	Mt. Arapiles
11.	Kallutbeer	Unknown
12.	Kanal gundidj	'Kout Narin' station
13.	Karrebil gundidj	At 'Cashmere' and 'Wando' stations
14.	Konongwootong gundidj	'Konongwootong' station
15.	Koroite	Koroite valley
16.	Konenicen balug	Wimmera River between clans 2 and 25
17.	Kum balug	Unknown
18.	Larnaget	Swamp northeast of 'Ledcourt' station
19.	Lil lil gundidj	'Wonwondah' station
20.	Mideriber gundidj	West of 'Cashmere' station
21.	Moody balug	Unknown
22.	Murra murra barap	Mt. Zero
23.	Ngarum ngarum balug	Southwest of Mt. William
24.	Pellerwin balug	Dundas Range
25.	Pobbiberer balug	Wimmera River, east of clan 16
26.	Rockburrer balug	Glenelg River, near 'Wando' station
27.	Tuan balug	Wimmera River, near Longerenong
28.	Tukallut balug	Victoria Range
29.	Tunder balug	Unknown
30.	Ullswater Clan	Ullswater
31.	Wanemollechoke	Unknown
32.	Welleetpar	Unknown
33.	Whiteburer gundidj	Victoria Range
34.	Worrercite	Dundas Range
35.	Yamneborer balug	Victoria Range
36.	Yareen me yoke	Unknown
37.	Yetteker balug	Unknown

Figure 7.2: The Djabwurrung landscape (Clark 1990: 108)

Figure 4: Djab wurrung Language Area & Clans

Table 7: Djab Wurrung Clans

No.	Clan name	Approximate location
1.	Bankneit	Unknown
2.	Bar gundidj	Wimmera River at 'Woodlands' station
3.	Beeripmo balug	Mt. Cole
4.	Boner balug	Mt. Cassell
5.	Buller buller cute gundidj	Junction of Salt Creek and Hopkins River
6.	Bulukbara	Lake Bolac
7.	Carthonong gundidj	Caramut
8.	Cart cart worrate gundidj	Plains between 'Narrapumelap' and 'Nareeb Nareeb' stations
9.	Currue balug	Source of the Wimmera River, and at 'Glenlogie' station
10.	Eurer burer	Unknown
11.	Gnareeb gnareeb gundidj	'Nareeb Nareeb' station
12.	Jacalet	Part of 'La Rose' and 'Mokepilly' stations
13.	Kolorer gundidj	Mt. Rouse
14.	Konegilwerring gundidj	Swamp on the Hopkins R., 10 miles north of Lake Bolac
15.	Mingalac gundidj	Mt. Stavely
16.	Mitteyer balug	Barton Morass or Nekeeya Swamp
17.	Mutterchoke gundidj	Mt. Abrupt
18.	Neetshoere balug	Mt. Willam, 'Barton' station, and Mt. Moornambool
19.	Parn balug	Large hill five miles southwest of 'Allanvale' station
20.	Peeripar balug	Fiery Creek, 20 miles south of 'Mount Cole' station
21.	Poit balug	'Allanvale' station, Great Western
22.	Punnoinjon gundidj	Lake Buninjon
23.	Puppellenneerring	Fiery Creek, 30 miles south of 'Mt. Cole' station
24.	Tappoc gundidj	Mt. Napier
25.	Teerel balug	North of Mt. Langi Gheran
26.	Terrumbehal gundidj	Between Hopkins River and Fiery Creek
27.	The Gums clan	'The Gums' station east of Penshurst
28.	Tillac gundidj	A river northwest from Mt. Rouse
29.	Tin balug	'La Rose' and 'Mokepille' stations
30.	Tonedidgerer balug	'Burrumbeep' station
31.	Toel balug	Mt. William
32.	Toorac balug	Mt. Pierrepoint
33.	Uelgal gundidj	'The Grange', near Strathkellar
34.	Ural balug	Plains, seven miles southeast of 'Burrumbeep'
35.	Utoul balug	Mts. Cole and Langi Gheran
36.	Watteneer balug	Between Mt. William Swamp and Nekeeya Swamp
37.	Weeripcart balug	Under the Grampians, 6 miles from 'Mt. William' station
38.	Worrembeetheer gundidj	Mt. Bainbridge and 'Kanawalla' station
39.	Wurcurri gundidj	Mt. Sturgeon
40.	Yam yam burer balug	South of 'Barton' station at head of Mt. William Creek
41.	Yourwychall gundidj	Between the Wannon and Grangeburn Rivers

The mountain ranges themselves were known as 'Gariwerd' by the Jardwadjali. As Luise Hercus explained,

> *Gariwerd* is a compound noun. *Gar* means 'pointed mountain' and is cognate with the word for 'nose'. The –i is the particularizing suffix, which translates into 'the'. *Werd* means 'shoulder' and appears in '*werdug*' (pronounced werdook) 'his shoulder', the correct form for 'Wartook'. The compound simply means '<u>The</u> Mountain Range', and is descriptive and specialized for the mountain range Mitchell subsequently named 'The Grampians'. (Luise Hercus cited in Clark and Harradine 1990: 23)

In 1836, Major Thomas Mitchell, the Surveyor-General of New South Wales, came to the area, and he named it the 'Grampians'. His use of a non-Indigenous name was unusual, as Mitchell wrote in his journal.

> The great convenience of using native names is obvious … so long as any of the Aborigines can be found in the neighbourhood … future travelers may verify my map. Whereas new names are of no use in this respect. (Mitchell 1838: 174)

Thus, in 1836 Mitchell admitted that English vocabulary was limited as an identifier of Australian geographical knowledge. Indeed, Mitchell often attempted to obtain names from the local Indigenous people of the areas he was travelling through. Yet, before reaching the Gariwerd area, Mitchell's travelling group had killed seven Indigenous people on 27 May 1836 at a place Mitchell would later call Mt Dispersion. After the massacre the word spread to other Indigenous groups in western Victoria to avoid Mitchell's party. So, when Mitchell could not locate Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung people in Gariwerd to obtain their names, he set about his own naming practices:

> In adding this noble range of mountains to my map, I felt some difficulty in deciding on a name. To give appellations that may become current in the mouths of future generations, has often been a perplexing subject with me, whether they have been required to distinguish new counties, towns or villages, or such great natural features of the earth, as mountains and rivers.
>
> I have always gladly adopted aboriginal names, and in the absence of these, I have endeavoured to find some good reason for the application of others… (Mitchell 1838: 185)

It is at this point in Mitchell's travels that the process of transforming culturally-defined space into place can be best exemplified. For Mitchell's camp the landscape of the Djabwurrung and Jardwadjali was unknown, unmapped and uncategorised in any European manner that was familiar to them. Thus, this landscape was culturally defined by the Europeans as space. Through the

process of exploring the area, different European meanings were attached to the landscape by Mitchell and his group, and symbolised through the use of names. One prime example of this was in the use of the name Mount Zero, which Mitchell used to name the mountain where he slept on the night the temperatures dropped to zero degrees centigrade. According to Clark and Heydon (2002: 261), for the Muramuragundidj clan of the Jardwadjali this mountain was known as 'Mura Mura' 'little hill', which indicates a completely different understanding of the landscape from that of Mitchell's. Another obvious example, which is the focus of this paper, was Mitchell's use of 'Grampians' to define that mountain range known primarily by the Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung until that time as 'Gariwerd'.

So it was that in 1836 the Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung understandings of the landscape were overlaid with European understandings, as evidenced in the toponyms. Cowlishaw (1998: 32) posited that the landscape in Australia is a palimpsest. The European names became the official government records of the landscape. Maps, addresses, electorates and government zones all came to identify with the area as 'The Grampians' in essence. The Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung were dispossessed from official records by an act of toponymy. As Stuart noted, the explorers "were superimposing their own form of knowledge for their own purposes" (Macintyre 2002: 4). Simon Ryan (1996) noted that the creation of maps was the production of knowledge which was "invariably an exercise of power" (Ryan 1996).

By 1989, the official geographical understanding of the Gariwerd/Grampians area had changed from that experienced by the Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung prior to 1836 and Mitchell's party in 1836. The area was known officially in 1989 as the 'Grampians National Park' and the remaining Indigenous cultural heritage of the National Park was the joint responsibility of five Aboriginal communities. These groups were the Goolum-Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative, the Gunditjmara Aboriginal Cooperative, the Framlingham Aboriginal Trust, the Kerrup-Jmara Aboriginal Elders Corporation and the Portland-Heywood Community, who formed Brambuk Incorporated.

The Honourable Steve Crabb, Minister for Tourism in Victoria, noted that "given the Aboriginal heritage of the Grampians, many existing placenames are inappropriate" (cited in Clark and Harradine 1990: 6). Crabb, through the Victorian Tourism Commission, commissioned historical geographer Ian Clark and rock art consultant Ben Gunn, to research the Indigenous names of Grampians features and submit a proposal for which Indigenous names should be considered for reinstatement. Thus began a process of renaming the National Park and features within it that raised much attention from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous locals and non-locals.

Within six months of Crabb's announcement of Indigenous placenames being reinstated and European names being removed, over 17,898 signatures had been collected in petitions which demanded that the existing (European) names be retained (Napthine 1989). Numerous letters to the editors of national and regional newspapers were submitted and published, the vast majority of which were resistant to the name change proposal. Politicians entered the debate, with many discussions held as to the suitability of the proposal to change the name of the Grampians. There was much discussion about whether the name 'Grampians' would be completely removed and replaced with the name 'Gariwerd'. At the time of the debate, there was no legislation available which allowed for dual naming, and so the idea of reinstating the name 'Gariwerd' meant at the time that the name 'Grampians' would be removed from the landscape.

This proposal invoked a strong reaction from the local non-Indigenous community, who protested by stating, among other things, that "changing the name would remove our history" (Birch 1992: 232). The placename 'Grampians' had provided the locals with a vocabulary for defining their distinct geography, and they were not willing to part with this part of their identity. Indigenous acceptance of dual naming was announced relatively late in the public discussions and by that time local non-Indigenous resistance to name changing, including the adoption of dual naming, was intense and inflexible. An understanding of this psychological process is offered by cultural geographers working in the field of *place attachment*.

Place attachment is described generally as "the bonding of people to places" (Altman and Low 1992: 2), or the "emotional link formed by an individual to a physical site that has been given meaning through interaction" (Milligan 1998: 2). Understanding of the community reactions to the Gariwerd debate can be explained by the definition of place attachment being a "framework for both individual and communal aspects of identity, and has both stabilising and dynamic features" (Brown and Perkins 1992: 284). Thus, in a world where place attachment gives a *raison d'être* for local community identity, the perception that attempts are being made to change the name of that place, or the symbol of that identity, will undoubtedly threaten local residents, especially if that change is perceived to be coming from government authorities.

A complication of this place attachment is the fact that the non-Indigenous community in the Grampians region felt attached to non-Indigenous understandings of the landscape. The non-Indigenous community was not familiar with the Indigenous Jardwadjali and Djabwurrung landscapes of Gariwerd, and the most common human reaction to the unknown is fear and rejection. Problems in the Grampians case study could be related to the cultural geography theory that:

> One dimension of the person's experience of environmental stability lies in the affirmation of the belief that the properties of his or her day-to-day physical world are unchanging. The individual's recognition of these properties at any given moment in a given situation serves to confirm their continuity from the past, and in turn this perceived continuity portends that they will occur again in the future. The perceived stability of place and space that emerges from such recognitions correspondingly validates the individual's belief in his or her own continuity over time. Since the individual's place-identity mirrors a physical world, the continuing recognition of that world over time gives credence to and support for his or her self-identity. (Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff 1983: 66)

Essentially, if we take this theory on place identity, it could be extrapolated to insist that the perceived stability of place and space is represented through the unchanging values of the toponym. When this toponym is highlighted for change, the people involved in using the toponym as a symbol of their place identity could be said to face a threat to their self-identity. Thus, in the Grampians, in an effort to reinstate Indigenous names, the process was also affecting the place identity and toponymic identity of many local non-Indigenous residents. Of course, to not reinstate the Indigenous names was continuing a process of colonial landscape identification which negated the toponymic identity of the Indigenous communities.

Perhaps one way to overcome the problem of the rejection of Indigenous landscapes by non-Indigenous communities would be to increase the educational promotion of Indigenous heritage areas. This promotion could lead to a greater understanding of Indigenous cultural landscapes by non-Indigenous people and, in turn, this could mean that government and non-government organisation attempts to reinstate Indigenous toponyms are not as strongly rejected, because people are familiar with the ideas.

In addition, the problems encountered in the Grampians (Gariwerd) debate were also due to the fact that the Indigenous communities were not consulted about the process from the onset. Thus, in essence they were disempowered from the decision-making processes. To alleviate these problems it is necessary to ensure that all Indigenous naming projects include and promote the best interests of the Indigenous communities who are the cultural custodians of that particular landscape. Whilst the names are being considered and promoted as official for the landscape by Indigenous groups, it must be remembered that these names are being made to conform to colonial cartographic practices, and this renders them Anglo-Indigenous in nature.

Dual naming and colonial/Indigenous landscapes

In 1977 the then Place Names Committee of Victoria received a proposal to rename Mt Niggerhead and other similarly named features such as Niggerhead Creek and Niggerhead Aqueduct. After investigating the matter the committee resolved "that no further action be taken on the matter". Yet, in the intervening years calls to remove the name 'Niggerhead' have been constant. For example in 1987 one non-Indigenous correspondent to a local parliamentary member expressed embarrassment over the name. The following year ministerial correspondence requested consideration be given to renaming Mount Niggerhead to Mount Wells, Mount Brown, or Mount Kiewa. In its response to this proposal the Shire of Bright objected to any form of renaming on the grounds that "the placenames are of historical significance [and] should not be changed merely because of the social values of today". In 1993, the Place Names Committee received the suggestion that Mount Niggerhead be changed to the 'Koori Heads'. Aboriginal Affairs Victoria offered to assist the committee to undertake consultation with the Aboriginal community and expressed a desire that all Victorian placenames that contained the word 'Nigger' would eventually be changed. The Place Names Committee rejected the suggestion of 'Koori Heads' and resolved to secure a more appropriate name.

In 1994 an anonymous person, asserting representation of Indigenous interests in the area, offered three suggestions for renaming The Niggerheads (*Warrakarntj* 'snowgum'), Niggerhead Creek (*Dtjarrmalung* 'platypus'), and Mt Niggerhead (*You You* 'boobook owl'). Consultations ensued over the next three years with various government agencies and shires but these came to nothing when another group of Indigenous interests rejected the earlier suggestions and repudiated the credibility of the proposer of the 1994 names and his claim to speak for country, preferring The Niggerheads be renamed 'The Yaithmathangs' after the name of a local Aboriginal clan. Support increased for this new name from particular agencies; however in 2002 the process stalled as the two relevant Indigenous groups involved could not reach a consensus on the appropriateness of names. In 2004 a Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee was formed to discuss the renaming issue. Deliberations are ongoing.

The Mt Niggerhead issue highlights the problems involved with removing or 'cleansing' from the namescape a toponym that is considered by some to be offensive but by others to be historically appropriate. It should be noted that the use of the word 'nigger' to refer to people of Indigenous descent was common in Victoria during the early part of the nineteenth century (Dwyer letter cited in Bride 1898). Other contemporary issues of this debate surround the appropriateness of names that are proposed in contexts where 'traditional' Indigenous toponyms for the place under consideration have not survived: the lack of consensus between stakeholders in the process, especially in situations

where a consensus is considered critical to the success of the process. Another related issue is that of Aboriginal land tenure and the difficulty of determining appropriate toponyms in situations where land tenure is itself disputed. The final issue is that of 'inventing' Aboriginal toponyms – is it any different to the process of the invention of non-Indigenous toponyms?

One critical issue in this discussion has been the appropriateness of the name 'The Niggerheads'. Preliminary research by Lisa Arnold (2002) into the name was unable to settle on one interpretation of how the name came to be conferred. The word 'Nigger' is derived from the Latin *niger*, French *nègre*, and Spanish *negro* meaning 'black', and historically has been used to refer to black people, especially Africans. When used to refer to black people its use is generally considered pejorative and derogatory. 'Niggerhead' in this context may refer to a formation that appears to take the shape of a black person's head. However, what complicates this discussion is the fact that Niggerhead is the common name for a grass, *Enneapogon gracilis*, and geologically the common name for black basalt. The term has also been used, historically, to refer to a stick of tobacco. Other uses include a reference to rows of bollards on wharves, and as a printing term as a guide to trimming and folding.

One reason that explains the length of this community discussion has been the lack of consensus for change. The relevant local government authority has met on four occasions and has failed to support the push to change the name. The Alpine Shire Council has expressed its view that although it does not support a change, if an Aboriginal name is going to be adopted it stressed the necessity that it be given a name that is easily pronounceable. The *Alpine Observer* in late 2000 and early 2001 conducted a poll via their website and a postal poll and some 54 percent of respondents opposed a change. At meetings of relevant Aboriginal organisations there has been support for a name change, although it is possible to find support for the existing name as an important historical artefact that highlights the views of its time.

Rating system for Indigenous names

Whilst it can be a problem not to have one Indigenous language area for one non-Indigenous place, multiple names for one area can lead to problems too – even if there is only one Indigenous language in the area.

During the Midlands State Forest Name Review, undertaken by the researchers and the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) during late 2004, problems were encountered during many aspects of the dual naming research. One of these problems was the fact that Indigenous

toponyms and landscape understandings differed immensely from official government landscape boundaries. One specific example of this was in the Linton area of State forests.

The contemporary Linton State forest areas occupy the traditional land of the Wathawurrung (see Figure 7.3).

Figure 7.3: Linton State Forest areas (Kostanski and Clark 2004)

As can be seen in the maps, the language spoken in the Linton State forest areas is Wathawurrung. This paper will now focus attention on the forest areas to the north-west of the cluster. What we will focus on is the fact that colonial State forest boundaries were based on colonial understandings of the landscape and did not reflect Wathawurrung understandings. Thus, where there are

multiple State forest areas, with one non-Indigenous name, there can be up to three Wathawurrung toponyms known to exist in oral and written records (and doubtlessly more officially unknown too).

In order to apply dual names it is necessary to have one Indigenous name and one non-Indigenous name for a contiguously bounded feature. Essentially, the researchers, the DSE and the Wathawurrung community (represented by the Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative (BADAC)) were faced with the dilemma of deciding how to proceed with the dual naming in this area. Were we to choose one Indigenous name for each non-Indigenous one? Did we need to distinguish between the Indigenous names and only promote those which were historically 'relevant'? Could dual naming involve applying multiple Indigenous names to each non-Indigenous one? And most importantly, were we participating in a process of cultural homogenisation by taking Indigenous words and toponyms that were specific to only one particular place, and applying it to a much larger area?

As part of the historical research and compilation of the Wathawurrung names, the researchers, in association with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV) and the Surveyor-General's and the Forestry Divisions of the Victorian Department of Sustainability and Environment, devised a scoring system to be given to the Indigenous names, to allow a distinction between the pedigrees of particular placenames (refer to Table 7.1).

Table 7.1: Rating system for Indigenous placenames

Rating	Meaning
5	Aboriginal placename has known meaning; relates to a clan name; there is at least one variant source.
4	Aboriginal placename has partial meaning; at least one variant source.
3	Aboriginal placename has partial meaning and only one variant source.
2	Aboriginal placename meaning is not known; there is at least one variant source.
1	Aboriginal placename meaning is not known; there is only one variant source.

This scale has been developed from toponymic research in Indigenous languages areas where the language is no longer extant and significant cultural knowledge has been lost. In areas where languages are extant, researchers need to adapt this table to reflect the reality that some toponyms have no known meaning or are opaque (see Walsh 2002). Also, it must be remembered that some traditional Indigenous names are only names, without an inherent 'meaning'. In both situations (where names are extant or not) it might be worthwhile for researchers to estimate the degree of opacity in the languages they are researching.

The current table allows for multiple possibilities in toponymic practice. It is based on the premise that to reinstate Indigenous names some research needs to be undertaken into the etymology of the names. In the process of researching the names,

various characteristics can be identified, such as meaning, relation to the local language, and so on. From these characteristics the 'pedigree' of the name can be deduced. This is important to note, because as BADAC expressed, they knew that there would be controversy surrounding the dual naming proposals, and they wanted to be assured that the Indigenous names they were promoting were credible and not able to be discredited by the non-Indigenous community. It is hoped that the production of this table for rating will aid in future projects on the reinstatement of Indigenous names.

During the State forest name review, based on the table, it was recommended to BADAC that the names with a scoring of five be considered for dual naming, where a European name was already in existence. BADAC agreed to this, as they believed that only names which could be historically traced and evidenced should be applied, as this would stave off any controversy. Yet, discussions were had as to the application of one Indigenous name per European name, where multiple Indigenous names existed. One example of this can be seen in the naming of the Linton State forest. Information gathered for the Linton state forest can be seen in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: Information for Linton State Forest (Kostanski and Clark 2004)

Linton	
Status:	Official Placename (LOCB, RSTA, TPEX)
History:	Map of 1884 shows Linton as a township of 'Lintons' amongst an area of Timber Reserve. Map of 1937 shows township of Linton, just south of Forest Reserve area.
Discussion:	"Named after Mr Linton of Linton Parks. Gold was discovered upon his station. The diggings and the township took his name. McGrath, p. 118" (O'Callaghan 1918, p. 63). "Mary Linton, owner of Emu Hill homestead" (Saxton 1907, p. 42). "Fossickers in feb 1855 found gold on property Linton Park, owned by Mrs Linton, widow of squatter Joseph Linton; area first known as Linton's Diggings". (Blake 1977, p. 159)
Rating:	5
Indigenous Names	
Kay.jap	
Language Area:	Wathawurrung
Translation:	Unknown
Discussion:	Recorded in Robinson's Journal (10/8/1841)
Rating:	1
Nawnight-widwid	
Language area:	Wathawurrung
Translation:	'widwid' is 'toy throwing stick' (Smyth 1878:192)
Discussion:	This name refers specifically to Black Hill, Scarsdale (this name is recorded in map of 1885)
Rating:	4
Molongghip	
Language Area:	Wathawurrung
Translation:	Unknown
Discussion:	This name was recorded in Smyth (1878:193)
Rating:	1

Essentially, based on discussions with BADAC, and the use of the scale for Indigenous names, the name *nawnight wid-wid* was chosen to be dual named with Linton. The scale for testing the pedigree of a proposed Indigenous name could also be used with non-Indigenous names in areas where multiple possibilities for naming arise.

Conclusions

This paper has discussed the various aspects of colonial use of Indigenous names in Victoria. Problems associated with dual naming were identified, especially where the colonial geographical area overlaps multiple Indigenous language areas (cross-lectal). During the study it was found that sometimes where there was a paucity of information on Indigenous languages for a particular State Forest area, Indigenous names have needed to be 'invented'. Considerable discussion was given to the development of a rating system for the use of Indigenous names in contemporary naming projects (where doublet or triplet intralectals exist). The overall intention of the paper was to present methodologies for working through various problems that can be encountered when working with projects that involve official government implementation of Indigenous names in the Australian landscape. Reference was made to specific case studies, such as the renaming of rock art sites in the Grampians National Park during the 1990s, the protracted yet contemporary Mt Niggerhead debate, and the recent Midland State forest naming project.

Ultimately, this paper has asked more questions than it has answered. It will be interesting to see over the next few years how the government resolves these problems of dual naming. If the nation as a whole is to be serious about recognising Indigenous cultures, then the names need to be properly recognised as symbols of Indigenous heritage and culture. How we go about applying Indigenous names to a landscape that is officially understood from non-Indigenous perspectives is an issue that will require much debate in the future.

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CHAPTER 8

Reconstruction of Aboriginal microtoponymy in western and central Victoria

Case studies from Tower Hill, the Hopkins River, and Lake Boga

IAN CLARK

Introduction

In an analysis of the state of knowledge of Aboriginal local organisation, Tindale (1963) observed that there had been very few maps produced showing the distribution of Aboriginal placenames within Aboriginal language areas. Strehlow (1970) shared Tindale's surprise that so little attention had been given to Aboriginal placenames. Yet Stanner (1965) considered it was only possible to conduct basic studies of local organisation in a few places and in a restricted range of environments. According to Stanner (1965), the mapping of spatial organisation should attempt to delineate at least ten sets of data. The first step he identified as the mapping of the distinctive habitats recognised by Aboriginal people. Thus, the first layer of entries in certain regions would be an Aboriginal ecological classification seen in a broad patchwork of names such as 'scrub people', 'sand hill people' and 'yam people' that would reflect systematic observations of topography, flora and fauna, and geographical dynamics. The second layer would contain placenames by the hundred or thousand. Taylor (1976) believed the skills necessary to map local organisation included those of explorer, botanist, anthropologist, geographer, linguist, and cartographer and observed that most field workers had made little more than token efforts. Recently Peter Sutton observed that there "are surprisingly few comprehensive and linguistically sophisticated accounts of group and territorial naming systems in the ethnographic literature for Australia" (Sutton 2003: 60).

Stanner alludes to the fact that a given region or isolate of study in traditional or classical Aboriginal local organisation contained hundreds or thousands of placenames. The Hillier map of Aboriginal placenames of north-eastern South Australia is an example of the dense profusion of named Aboriginal sites in a given area (see Jones 2002). The extent of toponymic knowledge traditionally known is hinted in the following excerpt in Robinson's journal of travelling with a Bargundidj man named Ulotebeen:

> I started from Lynot's with the Bar conedeet native to give me information but as it was raining hard I cantered on at a brisk pace and my Aboriginal friend run'd and kept pace with me. He was armed with spears. He kept chatting about his country and calling out the names of different localitys and said his country was good country. I answered in the affirmative which afforded him satisfaction. (Robinson Jnl 30 July 1841 in Clark 2000a)

Little mention is made in this literature of reconstructing the name-scapes of now extinct Aboriginal formations. From 2000 until 2002, the author was responsible for a major project concerned with the documentation of Victorian Aboriginal placenames (Clark and Heydon 2002) and sponsored by the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages. This project was a major collaboration between historical geographers, linguists, and community language workers, and some 3400 placenames were collated. Where possible, Luise Hercus and Barry Blake, the linguists involved in the project, provided modern broad phonetic transcriptions for each placename. It was found that in regions where Aboriginal languages no longer prevail, such as in western and central Victoria, it was still possible to reconstruct something of the detailed microtoponymy characteristic of Aboriginal languages.

Microtoponymy literally means the study of minor or small placenames, and in this paper is used to refer to the study of those names of features that are part of a larger geographical entity, such as the name for the bank on a lake, or for a feature on a bank of a lake, or a waterhole in a river, or the name of a feature on the side of a mountain. Thus a microtoponym is the name of a feature that is itself part of a larger named entity. Some of these findings will be discussed in the remainder of this paper and examples will be drawn from western and central Victoria, focusing on three physical geographical phenomena – a river (the Hopkins River); a volcanic maar (Tower Hill), and a lake (Lake Boga). Each of these three examples is primarily sourced from a different recorder working in a different period, and it is possible to make observations of the unique contributions each has made to the recovery of microtoponymy. Details concerning the placenames of the three areas are given in Tables 8.1-3 in the Appendix.

Robinson and the Hopkins River

The Hopkins River rises in what is now cleared farming land between Mt Langi Ghiran and Ararat in Djabwurrung country (Clark 1990). The name 'Hopkins' was conferred by New South Wales (NSW) Surveyor General Major T. L. Mitchell in September 1836 after Sir John Paul Hopkins, a military friend. The river transects three language areas (Djabwurrung, Giraiwurrung, and Dhauwurdwurrung) (Clark 1990), and some 25 placenames have been documented that apply to junctions with other streams, waterholes, the confluence of the river, and other localities along its course (see Table 8.1) (Clark and Heydon 2002). Three of these names are considered to be Djabwurrung, three are considered to be either Djabwurrung or Dhauwurdwurrung/Giraiwurrung, and the remaining 19 are considered to be Dhauwurdwurrung/Giraiwurrung. Of these 25 names, Robinson is a primary source for 20, Dawson (1881) for four, and Smyth (1878) for the remaining name. As far as it is possible to do so, the names are listed in geographical order from the source of the river to its confluence.

The personal journals and papers of public servant, George Augustus Robinson (1788-1866), provide an important primary source for research into Indigenous placenames in Victoria. Robinson was the Chief Protector of the Port Phillip Aboriginal Protectorate Department from 1839 until early 1850. The protectorate conducted the first attempt to record information on the Aboriginal people of Victoria. Protectorate officials were expected to collect "the aboriginal names of mountains, lakes, rivers and other localities; the difference of language, customs, and habits of each tribe" (Cannon 1983: 453). Robinson was perhaps the European with the most experience of travelling throughout the Port Phillip District in the early colonial period, and in total, he spent almost three years of his 11-year appointment travelling. During this time, Robinson assiduously kept a personal journal (Clark 2000a,b). On the basis of the amount, type and range of information it contains, Presland's (1989: 10) assessment is that "the journal is unique in Victoria".

Robinson was a self-educated London contractor and jobbing builder *cum* bricklayer (Plomley 1956: 24). Biographer Vivienne Rae-Ellis (1988: 5) has noted that he received basic skills in reading and writing during his childhood, and, as he grew older, "his hunger for knowledge developed rapidly and he satisfied his innate curiosity by reading diligently". Robinson immigrated to Tasmania in 1824 and from 1829 was employed to 'conciliate' and collect the surviving Tasmanians onto refuges such as that at Flinders Island where he served as commandant. His ten years of daily contact with Indigenous people in Tasmania equipped him to ask questions concerning spatial and social organisation, and linguistic identification. When Robinson wrote Indigenous words he often broke them up into syllables as an indication of their pronunciation, although Plomley (1966: 6) has noted that "the frequent occurrence of different spellings

of the same word'' in Robinson's journals is important because these give some clue to those parts of the original sound which were but little apparent to Robinson. Such differences of spelling indicate not only different interpretations by Robinson of some speech sound, but also the variations in sound when the word was spoken by different individuals, of the same or different tribes.

Plomley also observed that as ''Robinson became more familiar with the native language and mode of speaking, his phonetic interpretations would have become more exact'' (Plomley 1966: 6).

As an amateur ethnographer, Robinson took every opportunity to collect information about the Indigenous peoples he met with, particularly on their political relationships, such as language and clan names, and linguistic information such as vocabulary. Professor Barry Blake's analysis of Robinson's collection of Aboriginal vocabularies from south-eastern Australia is that it

> is perhaps the largest source of information on the languages of the area that we have, certainly it is the most varied. It covers practically every area of Victoria as well as some adjacent areas of South Australia and New South Wales. (Clark 2000b: 6)

Blake's assessment of Robinson's value from a linguistic perspective is as follows:

> We can be thankful that Robinson was interested to record languages, but we regret that he confined his attention to vocabulary and did not extend his interest to grammar. Overall he was a reasonably good recorder of Aboriginal words by the standards of his day. His glosses seem to be accurate when compared with a variety of other sources, and his glosses for items of material culture such as spears, baskets, fish traps, etc. are often detailed and supported by illustrations. His ability to hear the sounds of words was reasonably good. … Robinson did not normally pick up dental t as opposed to alveolar t so he writes *tal.line* for thalayn 'tongue'. Nor did he detect dental n or dental l, but then neither did anyone else in his day. With r-sounds, no nineteenth century observer distinguished the r-sound of English and a trilled or flapped r of the type found in Scottish English, and none of them picked up retroflex or r-coloured consonants consistently. … Robinson's biggest deficiency was his inability to hear the ng sound at the beginning of a word. He usually omits it entirely. Occasionally he substitutes 'n'. But despite these deficiencies Robinson's corpus is extremely valuable. (Clark 2000b vol. 2: 6)

Besides vocabulary, Robinson recorded Indigenous toponymy, and his journals and papers provide some 300 Indigenous placenames and a further 280 clan names derived from placenames (see Clark 2005). In relation to hydronyms (toponyms of hydrographic features), Dawson observed:

> It must be noticed that rivers have not the same name from their source to the sea. The majority of Australian streams cease to flow in summer, and are then reduced to a chain of pools or waterholes, all of which, with their intermediate fords, have distinguishing names. The river which connects these waterholes in winter has no name. Every river, however, which forms one continuous stream during both summer and winter has a name which is applied to its whole length. For example, Taylor's River, or Mount Emu Creek, is called 'Tarnpirr', 'flowing water', from its source in Lake Burrumbeet to its junction with the Hopkins. At the same time, every local reach in these rivers has a distinguishing name. (Dawson 1881: lxxviii)

Robinson did not provide glosses for any of the 20 names he recorded. Nevertheless Dawson (1881) and Chauncy (in Smyth 1878) provided glosses for every name they provided. Nine glosses are provided by Barry Blake (2000), Luise Hercus (1999), Sharnthi Krishna-Pillay (1996), and the author.

Dawson and Tower Hill

Tower Hill is a basaltic maar volcano and is presumably named because its crater towers above the surrounding plain. Robinson learned on 28 April 1841 that the 'small eminence' was called by local Europeans 'Tower Hill'. He also learned that a 'native village' was to be found there. The Tower Hill complex falls within one language area (Dhauwurdwurrung) (Dawson 1881; Clark 1990), and some 11 placenames have been uncovered for features as diverse as scrub, flats, craters, the crater's lake, and lake banks (see Table 8.2) (Clark and Heydon 2002). All 11 names are sourced from the ethnography of James Dawson (1881). This ethnography is the result of extensive study of the Aboriginal languages of western Victoria conducted by James Dawson and his daughter, Isabella, from 1844. In March 1870 Isabella Dawson published a sketch in *The Australasian* of the dialect of the original inhabitants of the Port Fairy district (Dawson 1870). James Dawson explained in the preface to his 1881 publication that:

> Some time afterwards our attention was directed to the formation of a vocabulary of dialects spoken by aboriginal natives of Australia, and a request was made that she 'would assist in collecting and illustrating all connected with their history, habits, customs, and languages'. (Dawson 1881: iii)

In terms of placenames, Dawson observed:

> It is deeply to be regretted that the opportunity for securing the native names of places has, in many districts, gone for ever. In most localities the aborigines are either dead or too young to have learned the names which their fathers gave to the various features of the country; and in those parts where a few old men are still to be met with, the white inhabitants, generally speaking, take no interest in the matter. With very few worthy exceptions, they have done nothing to ascertain and record even those names which appertain to their own properties. How much more interesting would have been the map of the colony of Victoria had this been attended to at an earlier period of its history. (Dawson 1881: lxxviii)

The work of the Dawsons has several strengths: they were able to question their Aboriginal informants in their own languages, and the vocabularies they compiled are extensive. They acknowledged the special assistance of Yaruun Parpur Tarneen and her husband Wombeet Tuulawarn "for their patience and their anxiety to communicate information" (Dawson 1881: v). Others who contributed include Weeratt Kuyutt and Kaawirn Kuunawarn. R. M. W. Dixon (Papers) describes Dawson's work as perhaps the fullest and most sympathetic account of any tribe in southern Australia.

Stone and Lake Boga

Lake Boga falls within the country of the Wembawemba dialect (Hercus 1986, 1992; Clark 1990). There are 15 placenames that are found in the literature (Stone 1911; Clark and Heydon 2002): three variant names for Lake Boga and 12 microtoponyms (see Table 8.3). All of these placenames are derived from the writing of A. C. Stone (1911), with the exception of 'Boga' which is sourced from the journal of Major Thomas Mitchell. Mitchell's expedition visited Lake Boga on 21 June 1836 and his account of their visit confirms that the lake was utilised by local clanspeople. At the lake they found

> the huts of natives who had fled on Mr. Stapylton's approach, having left their fishing spears, skin cloaks, shields, &c. They soon appeared on the lake in twenty-four canoes, all making for the little isle in the centre.

Hoping to "learn the native names of these lakes and to obtain some information respecting the rivers", Mitchell left three of his Aboriginal guides – Piper and "the two Tommies" – at the lake. However, they were attacked by a party of a dozen armed men, and in self-defence Piper wounded one of the men and, as they retreated, he reloaded and killed the wounded man. Piper

failed to learn any local toponymy and Mitchell expressed much displeasure at his actions. It was to fall to A. C. Stone, a baker at Lake Boga who had employed Wembawemba speakers in his bakery, some 50 years after Mitchell's attempt, to record the names that Mitchell was desirous of learning in 1836. Stone reflected on the situation when he first resided at Boga:

> When I took up my residence at Lake Boga, no mallee had either been cut or rolled down, and the Murray flats were but sparsely occupied, but I was immediately struck with the local evidences of a one-time large population of aboriginals, and I determined as far as it lay in my power to collect all the information I could first hand, as I was, unfortunately, forced to the conclusion that if it was not done then it would be impossible later on, in consequence of the ravages of the fell destroyer. (Stone 1911: 433)

Luise Hercus regards Stone's work a "detailed and most important contribution", "that gives us a certain time depth" and who because

> of his special relationship with people at Lake Boga … was able to gather the kind of data on material culture and traditional matters that no casual observer could have noted, and he wrote down his findings with great care: his work is unique in Victoria. (Hercus 1992: 13-14)

Only the name for the lake itself has been recorded as having multiple names, and of these three names, Boga is likely to be an exogenous word conferred by Mitchell in 1836. Parker (1854) noted that Boga was not the 'true native name' for this lake, and confirmed that *boge* was a Wembawemba word meaning 'to swim'. This is not supported, however, by Stone (1911) or Hercus (1986, 1992). Barry Blake (1984: 87) has posited that *bogey* or *bogie* meaning 'to bathe oneself' is a "Port Jackson word still in common use in Aboriginal English and in Australian Pidgin". The two names provided by Stone appear to be an intralectal doublet with one placename transparent and the other opaque. Stone provides glosses for eight of the toponyms he recorded. In the case of six names, Stone was able to learn 'the story' of their origins, as follows:

> Lake Boga Aboriginal Legend to Account for the Treeless State of Lake Boga, and the Mournful Wail of the Stone Plover:

> At one time, long years ago, there was a very large redgum tree growing in the lake, and its branches supported a tremendously large nest, the property of an immensely large pair of wedge-tailed eagles ('Nurrayil'). One fine day a young mother wandered carrying her baby, a long way round the lake, and far from the camp, when, feeling tired, she sat down and amusedly watched her baby playing in the warm sand, when suddenly, and without warning, the larger of the two eagles swooped

down and, seizing the baby, carried it away over the water to its eyrie in the red gum tree. The poor mother, seeing her baby suddenly lost to her for ever, commenced a mournful wailing, which the curlews or stone plovers ('Will') in sympathy took up, and have continued ever since. The disconsolate young mother then hurried back to the camp and reported the occurrence, upon which the doctor or medicine-man ('Barngnull') directed that every person with a canoe was to proceed to the tree, and after cutting it down to tear it into little pieces, and to boat it all away to the river, where it was to be thrown upon the water to be carried away. The doctor then decreed that no more trees should grow in Lake Boga. The tree in falling hollowed out with its branches a big depression near the river, which they called 'Geranyuk' (where branches and leaves fell). The large gnarled lump on the tree trunk struck and hollowed out a big hole at the entrance to the lake, which they named 'Wherpook' (where butt fell). (Stone 1911: 461)[1]

'Gourkk', or Battle of Blood (Railway station site, Lake Boga):

Many years ago a very sharp bit of fighting took place on the site of the railway station at Lake Boga, between the Tyntynder and Boga tribes, and in consequence of the quantity of blood spilt it was called the 'Battle of Blood', or 'Gourrk'. (Stone 1911: 462)

Kangaroo or Murdering Lake ('Dinger'):

Many years ago a shepherd's hut stood at 'Wherpoo' (where carbuncle on trunk of big redgum struck), the entrance to Lake Boga. One night the natives sought to obtain some cheap mutton by spearing, but the shepherds in charge became alarmed, and, as was the custom in those old days, used their firearms to such effect that 'Nyarramin's' uncle (Peter) was mortally wounded, and died, and was buried at 'Darnoowongatch' (N.E. bank of Boga). The two shepherds were transferred to Kangaroo Lake… (Stone 1911: 464)

Conclusion

This paper has examined the evidence for microtoponymy in Victorian languages through conducting three case studies, each from distinct sources and from distinct time periods. George Robinson recorded placenames along the Hopkins River in 1841; James Dawson collected placenames of Tower Hill from the mid 1840s until the late 1870s; and A.C. Stone gathered placenames around Lake Boga, presumably from the early 1880s. All three recorders were able to speak the local languages and it is this ability that sets their work apart.

In the cases of Dawson and Stone this study has shown that it was still possible to document something of the microtoponymy that characterises Aboriginal languages, many years after the first years of European settlement. In the case of Lake Boga it has been possible to learn something of the traditional stories that provide explanations for the origin of some of the names. Clark and Heydon (2002) recorded some 3400 Indigenous toponyms in Victoria, and the three cases presented in this paper are part of that database. In Victoria, clusters of microtoponyms have been found to be more commonly hydronyms, especially those relating to rivers, streams and lakes. The paper has shown that despite an incomplete data set, it is possible to reconstruct something of the detailed microtoponymy that characterised Aboriginal languages in Victoria.

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Endnotes

1. According to Luise Hercus (pers. comm.), *geranyuk* means literally 'its leaves' and *werpuk* means 'tree trunk'.

Appendix: Lists of placenames

Table 8.1: Hopkins River microtoponymy

Existing placename	Traditional Aboriginal name	Variant spellings	Meanings	Sources
Hopkins River, waterhole at Burrumbeep, or upper reaches of river	Tonedidjerer	Tonedinejerer, Tone.dine. jer.rer, Tone.did.jer.er	Uncertain; clan name Tonedidjerer baluk	Robinson Jnl 10 Jul. 1841 in Clark 2000a; see Clark 1990: 132
Hopkins River, at Burrumbeep, Kirk's station	Borroinyel-o	Bor.rime.yel.lo, Bur.rime. yel.lo	'night moon'	Robinson Jnl 13 Jul. 1841 in Clark 2000a; Robinson in Clark 2000: 125; Blake 2000
Hopkins River – at Gibbs' station	Lappeet	Lap.pe.cat, Lap.peet	'salt'	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a; Blake 2000
Hopkins River – locality	Porronedermite	Por.rone.der.nite	Uncertain	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a
Hopkins River – locality	Perrenarrerwarrer	Per.en.ar.rer.war.rer	Uncertain	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a
Hopkins River – locality	Bura	Por.ry, Burrah, bura	'kangaroo', 'red kangaroo'	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a; Scott in Smyth 1878: 181; Hercus 1999
Hopkins River – locality near Webster's station	Yeddy, Yereim	Yed.dy, Ye.re.im	Uncertain	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a
Hopkins River – Salt Creek junction	Baller baller cort	Bal.ler.bal.ler.cole, Buller buller cate, Bul.ler.bul. ler.coort	Uncertain; clan name Baller baller cort gundidj	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a; Clark 1990: 113
Hopkins River – locality	Lapeeyt parreeyt	Lab.be.cut.per.rete, Lapeeyt parreeyt	'salt water'	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a; Blake 2000
Hopkins River – locality	Woerrer	Wo.er.rer	Uncertain	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a
Hopkins River – locality	Worrocubberrin	Wor.ro.cub.ber.rin	wurru = lips	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a; Blake 2000
Hopkins River – locality (where Robinson saw a weir before reaching Farie's station)	Weerrang	Weer.rang	Possibly, 'thread made of fur', or 'cord made of bark or hair'	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a; Scott in Smyth 1878: 184; Krishna-Pillay 1996: 210

Existing placename	Traditional Aboriginal name	Variant spellings	Meanings	Sources
Hopkins River – locality at Farie's station	Warerangjele	Ware.rang.je.le	Uncertain	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a
Hopkins River – locality	Pannitarngite	Pan.ni.tarn.gite	Uncertain	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a
Hopkins River – locality	Wornghome	Worng.home	worn may = wurn = hut	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a
Hopkins River – locality	Allopan	Allo.pan, Al.lo.burng, Allo-bank	Uncertain	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841, 23 Mar. 1842 in Clark 2000a; Dawson 19 Mar. 1870
Hopkins River - locality	Moporh	Mo.por.rer, Moperer, Mopohr	Uncertain; clan name Moporh gundidj	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a; Clark 1990: 54-55; Hercus 1999
Hopkins River – locality	Lapeeyt	Lap.pe.cat	'salt'	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a; Blake 2000
Hopkins River – waterhole near Framlingham Aboriginal station	Poonong poonong	Puunong puunong, Puunong, Puunuung, Bunung, Buno, Kurang	'ti-tree'	Dawson 1881; Mathews 1904; Hercus 1999; Blake 2000
Hopkins Falls	Tangang punhart	Tung'ung buunart	'eels bite the stones'	Dawson 1881: lxxxii
Hopkins River – tidal estuary	Tuuram	Tuuram, Torramnue, Tooram	'salmon'; 'good fishing place'; clan name Tuuram gundidj	Dawson 1881: lxxxii, McLeod 1981: 10; Blake 2000
Hopkins River – lower reaches	Pang	Barng, Bangat, Parng	'no'	Robinson in Clark 2000b: 274 sketch; Chauncy in Smyth 1878: 212; Hercus 1999
Hopkins River – lower reaches	Pookar	Pukrruhng, Poorrang, Pookara	'river'	Lane in Smyth 1878: 187; Blake 2000
Hopkins River – mouth, near Point Ritchie	Moyiil	Moy.jil	Uncertain	Robinson Jnl 28 Apr. 1841 in Clark 2000a
Hopkins River – mouth	Wirpneung	Wirpneung	'mouth of river'	Dawson 1881: lxxxiii

Table 8.2: Tower Hill microtoponymy

Existing Placename	Traditional Aboriginal Name	Variant Spellings	Meanings	Sources
Tower Hill	Koroitj	Kor.rite, Koroitch, Kooright	'nettles', 'suggestive of volcanism'; 'smoking, hot ground';' a small fish'; 'forest kangaroo'; clan name Koroit gundidj	Robinson Jnl 24 Mar. 1842, 6 Apr. 1842 in Clark 2000a; Lane in Smyth 1878: 186; Dawson 1881: lxxx; Dawson 19 Apr. 1870; Mulder 1909: 11
Tower Hill – scrub between Tower Hill Flat and lake	Murrheaal	Murrheaal	Uncertain	Dawson 1881: lxxxi
Tower Hill Flat – scrub on west side	Yaal	Yaal	Uncertain	Dawson 1881: lxxxiv
Tower Hill Flat – west side	Taeraa mukkar	Taeraa mukkar	'sweet root like a parsnip'	Dawson 1881: lxxxii
Tower Hill Island	Parrang kuutcha	Parrang kuutcha	'name of an edible root found there'	Dawson 1881: lxxxi
Tower Hill Island – crater	Yatt Mirng	Yatt mirng	'white eye'; 'wide open', 'hole in the ground', 'eye'	Dawson 1881: lxxxiv; Hercus 1999
Tower Hill Lake	Kurruk baruum	Kurruk barruum, Kuuro baruum	'grandmother of lice', 'grandmother louse'	Dawson 1881: lxxx; Blake 2000
Tower Hill Lake	Mitjil	Mirch hiil	'mitj' = 'skin'	Dawson 1881: lxxx1; Blake 2000
Tower Hill Lake – west bank	Koroitj	Koroitch	'a small fish', 'nettles'	Dawson 1881: lxxx; Lane in Smyth 1878: 186
Tower Hill Lake – East bank	Mum ngamat	Muum gnamatt, Mum ngamat	'bottom of the sea', 'sea-bottom'	Dawson 1881: lxxxi; Hercus 1999; Blake 2000
Tower Hill Lake – outlet	Kuuro baruum	Kuuro baruum	'grandmother of lice'	Dawson 1881: lxxx; Blake 2000

Table 8.3: Lake Boga microtoponyms

Existing Placename	Traditional Aboriginal Name	Variant Spellings	Meanings	Sources
Lake Boga	Boga	Boga, Boge	'to swim', 'big'; 'after Bogan tribe of Aborigines'	Mitchell 21 Jun. 1836; Parker 1854: 13; Feldtmann 1973: 154; Blake 1977: 150
Lake Boga	Muyimer	Muymer	Uncertain	Stone 1911: 435; Hercus 1992: 97
Lake Boga	Kurrm	Gourrm, Goorm, Korm, Coorm, Kooem, Koorm	'milk', 'breast of woman', 'water of lake is white from clay base'; local clan named 'Kurrmtyanyuk'	Robinson in Clark 1990: 409; Parker 1854; Gummow in Smyth 1878: 176; Stone 1911; Hercus 1986, 1992
Lake Boga, N.E. bank	Darnoowongatch	Darnoowongatch	Uncertain; where Peter is buried	Stone 1911: 464
Lake Boga, Railway station site	Kurrk	Gourrk	'blood', 'because of an ancient battle', 'battle of blood', where Boga and Tyntynder tribes fought	Stone 1911: 435, 462; Hercus 1992
Boga, Lake entrance	Werpuk	Wherpook Wherpoo	'Where butt of gum fell', 'where butt fell', 'where carbuncle on trunk of big redgum struck'	Stone 1911: 435, 461, 464; Hercus 1992: 97
Boga – Stewart's	Thanultarwinang – puletj	Tdunooldarwin nung boolutch	'leaning trees'	Stone 1911: 436; Hercus 1992: 54
Boga – Pepper's	Wharparr	Wharparr	'willow trees'	Stone 1911: 436
Boga – Long Lake Hill	Nyuranggal	Newrungl	Uncertain	Stone 1911: 436; Hercus 1992
Boga – Davie's Swamp	Geranyuk	Kiranyuk	'when leaves and branches fell', 'where branches and leaves fell'	Stone 1911: 435, 461; Hercus 1992: 97
Boga – Davie's Hill	Doornum	Turnem	'deepest basin of lake'	Stone 1911: 436; Hercus 1992
Boga – Cornish's Hill (Road)	Cooangetch	Cooangetch	Uncertain	Stone 1911: 435
Boga – Cornish's Hill (bank of lake)	Nerrim-nerrim	Nerrim-nerrim	'steep bank'	Stone 1911: 435
Boga – A.C. Stone's	Yendchemile	Yandye-mile	'mile = Murray River'?	Stone 1911; Hercus 1986: 188, 1992: 69
Boga – Fish Point	Gerrt	Tyert	Uncertain	Stone 1911: 436; Hercus 1992: 59

SOUTH AUSTRALIA & CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

CHAPTER 9

'Aboriginal names of places in southern South Australia'
Placenames in the Norman B. Tindale collection of papers

PAUL MONAGHAN

Introduction[1]

In 1927, Norman B. Tindale (1900-1993), as Honorary Secretary of the recently formed Anthropological Society of South Australia, received a letter informing him that:

> I shall be very pleased to prepare a paper for your Society on native place names in South Australia; there is much to be said on the subject … Please get it out of your mind that I am a walking encyclopedia on the subject of the aboriginal dialects. My long suit is geographical nomenclature, & I have never posed as an authority on the native language. There is no such authority in South Australia, because the blacks have largely disappeared, & the written records of their language are, as you know, miserable in the extreme, so that study offers no reward … I shall endeavour to interest your members in my own way. I want to prove to them, among other things, how utterly unreliable is the distribution of native names on our map as denoting or marking or fixing the territorial bounds of the different tribes. (Rodney Cockburn letter to N. Tindale 14 October 1927)

Tindale's correspondent on this occasion was Rodney Cockburn, noted for his 1908 publication *Nomenclature of South Australia*, in which he listed the derivations of 1200 placenames in the state. Not surprisingly, given the sentiments expressed in the letter to Tindale, most of the placenames included in *Nomenclature* reflect colonial rather than Indigenous naming practices (Stewart Cockburn 1999[2]).

Tindale was not one to blink at a challenge. By this time, he had already begun what was to be his major work: the mapping of Aboriginal tribal boundaries in Australia. Edgar Waite, the Director of the South Australian Museum (hereafter SAM), provided the impetus for Tindale's mapping project when he challenged "the validity of limits or boundaries" recorded by Tindale during his first field trip to Groote Eylandt and the Roper River in the Northern Territory (NT) in 1921-1922 (see Tindale 1924-1936: iii; 1974: 3). Tindale's initial response to Waite's challenge had its first public airing when, at a 1927 meeting of the Anthropological Society, Tindale presented a map showing the distribution of the "Native Tribes of South Australia" (*The Register*, 5 July 1927: 10). This map can be seen as an early prototype or section of his later tribal map of Aboriginal Australia. The tribal map of Aboriginal Australia, with its accompanying catalogue of tribes, was first published in 1940 and was revised to accompany Tindale's *Aboriginal Tribes of Australia* (1974). For his tribal mapping project, contra Waite, Tindale has often been credited with debunking the myth of the "free wandering Aborigine".[3]

It is not difficult to imagine that, for Tindale, the sentiments expressed by Cockburn in his letter presented a challenge of a similar order to that posed by Waite. At the time of writing, it has not been possible to track down further reference to Cockburn's intended presentation to the Anthropological Society. Despite this, by considering the body of work produced by Tindale during the many years of his association with the SAM (1918-1965 and beyond into retirement[4]), it is clear that he amassed a significant weight of counter-evidence against Cockburn's views. As will be shown in this paper, Tindale not only recorded placenames directly from the lips of knowledgeable Aboriginal people or 'survivors' in the parlance of the day – according to Tindale's figures over 2000 for the south-east of South Australia alone – he recorded at times a wealth of associated cultural detail, conducted archival research, and at times employed placenames and related knowledge as clues in his delineation of tribal territories and boundaries for the tribal mapping project. One of Tindale's final projects, incomplete at the time of his death, was a proposed gazetteer of Aboriginal names of places in southern South Australia: it was intended to preserve a substantial part of this rich cultural heritage and to present it to the interested public.

This paper offers ways to approach this important part of Tindale's legacy. Specifically, it surveys the manuscript materials relating to the proposed gazetteer that were bequeathed to the SAM, it examines Tindale's methods, highlighting major strengths and potential weaknesses and, finally, it also considers the usefulness of this material for contemporary researchers and others with an interest in Aboriginal heritage.

Overview of the project

The 'Aboriginal names of places in Southern South Australia' project, to use Tindale's working title (here after 'the project'), was conducted by Tindale in retirement with the support and encouragement of the Geographical Names Board of South Australia. It was intended that Tindale would produce from his voluminous research materials:

1. lists of Aboriginal placenames organised under tribal headings to be entered into the official gazetteer of the state (including details such as location, type of physical feature, derivation, and meaning); and

2. a 'special gazetteer' to be published separately as a book and providing useful supplementary information (such as the methods of recording, the linguistic and geographical characteristics of the names, and their functions in traditional society).

For Tindale, the project offered the chance to bring together materials gathered by him over a 60 year period. More specifically, the project was to include materials relating to the area south of a line drawn from Port Augusta to the New South Wales (NSW) border (see Figure 9.1). This area includes the following tribal groups as determined by Tindale:[5]

Danggali	Meintangk	Ngarkat	Potaruwutj
Erawirung	Narangga	Ngawait	Ramindjeri
Jarildekald	Ngadjuri	Ngintait	Tanganekald
Kaurna	Ngaiawang	Nukunu	Warki
Maraura	Nganguruku	Peramangk	Wiljakali

Figure 9.1: Section of the map of tribal distribution accompanying Tindale (1974)
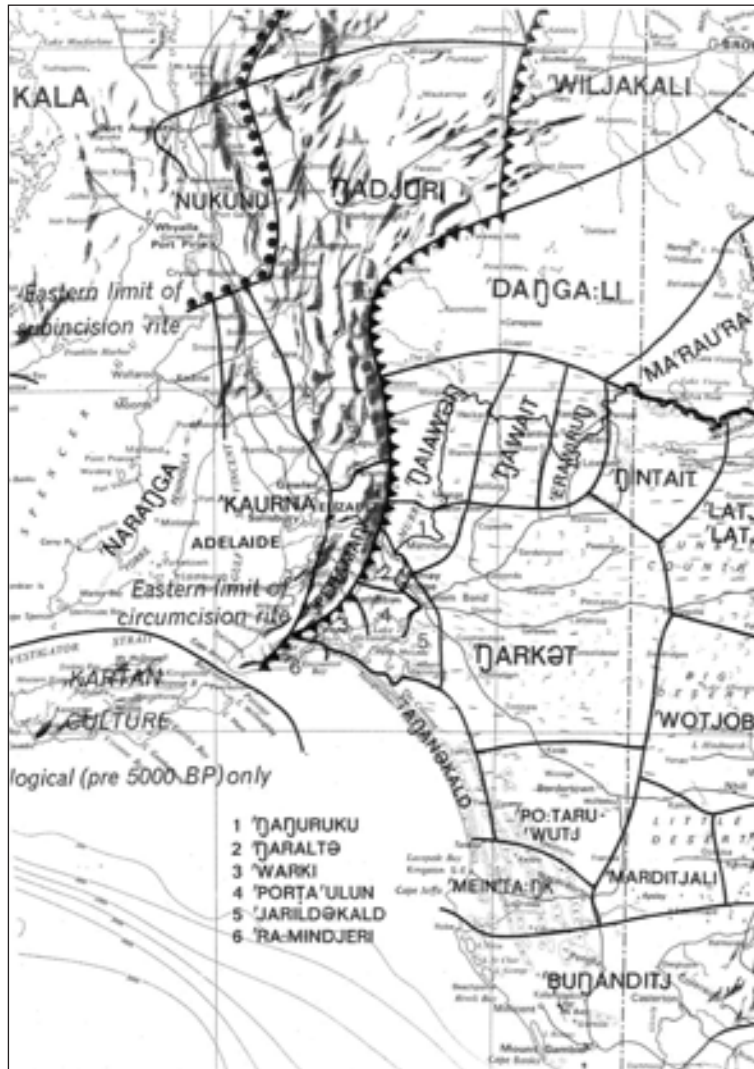
Tindale compiled the placename data onto index cards, filed under the above tribal headings. In the process, he drew on his own manuscript materials, published literature and maps, and archival materials. An individual card may carry a placename; a tribal designation; a Tindale manuscript, map, literature or archive reference; a derivation; a meaning; geographical details and cultural information. In some cases, however, details are sparse (see Figure 9.2).

**Figure 9.2: Examples of Tindale's placename index cards
(SAM AA 338/7/1/46 and AA 338/7/1/13)**
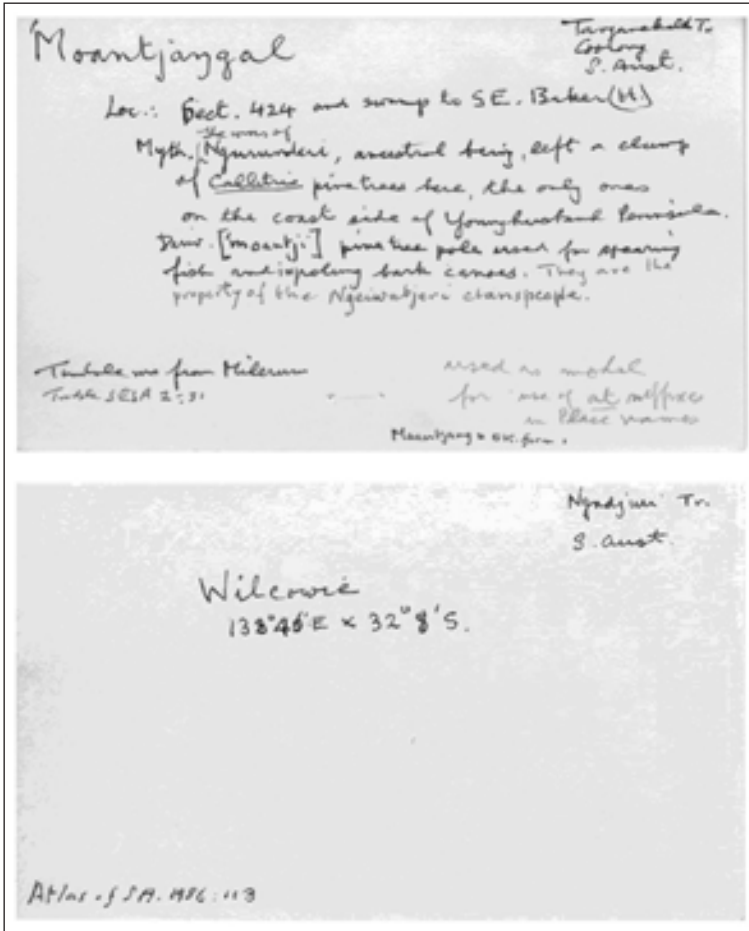
According to Tindale's estimate, 95 percent of his placenames were recorded from the lips of Aboriginal people. For many areas he was limited by availability of living informants, and where he relied mainly on published and archival sources the cards tend to be fewer and the entries less detailed. An overview of the index cards as a work in progress is shown in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1: Tindale's placenames

Tindale Tribe	Main sources	No. of cards	Main Tindale informants	Main source details	Comments	SAM reference
Bunganditj	Published, Tindale & archive	5cm	Clarence Long	Smith (1880) D. Stewart (1901) R. Noble (1901) Tindale journals	Cards often contain etymological, ethnological or geographical notes.	AA 338/7/1/5
Danggali	*Atlas* & Tindale	0.4cm		*Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	No language records. Most cards drawn from the *Atlas*.	AA 338/7/1/43
Erawirung	Published & Tindale	1.8cm		Tindale journals and a range of literature sources, including *Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	Many of the cards are drawn from the *Atlas*.	AA 338/7/1/6
Jarildekald	Published & Tindale	9cm	Albert Karloan Clarence Long	Taplin (1879) Tindale journals	Most cards from Tindale ms materials; cards often contain etymological, ethnological or geographical notes.	AA 338/7/1/6
Kaurna	Published & Tindale	7.5cm	Clarence Long Albert Karloan Ivaritji	Teichelmann & Schürmann (1840); Wyatt (1879) and a range of minor published sources. *Atlas of South Australia* (1986) Tindale journals	Cards often contain etymological, ethnological or geographical notes. Tindale revised some spellings and recorded names from informants.	AA 338/7/1/12
Maraura	Tindale	3 cards		Tindale journals	No placenames included	AA 338/7/1/19
Marditjali	map	1 card		County Macdonell map, Lands Dept.	Taken from a map	AA 338/7/1/43
Meintangk	Tindale	2cm	Alf Watson Clarence Long	Tindale journals	Chiefly Tindale ms materials, cards often contain etymological, ethnological or geographical notes.	AA 338/7/1/19
Narangga	Published, Tindale & corresp.	3cm	Louisa Eglinton Gladys Hughes	J.H. Johnson (1930-31) Hill and Hill (1975) D. Mack (1988, correspondence) Tindale journals *Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	Tindale re-recorded data with Eglinton, Johnson's informant; D. Mack was a research associate. Cards often contain etymological, ethnological or geographical notes.	AA 338/7/1/13

Tindale Tribe	Main sources	No. of cards	Main Tindale informants	Main source details	Comments	SAM reference
Ngadjuri	Published & Tindale	2.5cm	Barney Warrior (Waria) Grannie Giles	Berndt & Vogelsang (1941) P.T. Noble in Taplin (1879) *Atlas of South Australia* (1986) Tindale journals	Placenames mostly drawn from *Atlas*. Warrior's contribution was minor.	AA 338/7/1/13
Ngaiawang	Published & Tindale	1.8cm	Robert Mason	Tindale journals Moorhouse (1846) *Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	Drawn from a variety of published sources and Tindale ms materials, cards often contain etymological, ethnological or geographical notes.	AA 338/7/1/43
Nganguruku	Tindale	2cm	Robert Mason	Tindale journals *Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	Chiefly Tindale ms materials, cards often contain etymological, ethnological or geographical notes.	AA 338/7/1/43
Ngaralta	Tindale	1.3cm	Albert Karloan Pinkie Mack Clarence Long	Tindale journals *Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	Some entries relate to the name of a clan, the general location of their territory or boundary points.	AA 338/7/1/19 AA 338/7/1/43
Ngarkat	Published & Tindale	2.5cm	Alf Watson Albert karloan Robert Mason Clarence Long Grannie Unaipon	Day (1915) Tindale journals *Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	Cards often contain etymological, ethnological or geographical notes. Records a named boundary point.	AA 338/7/1/19 AA 338/7/1/43
Ngawait	Published & Tindale	1cm		Tindale journals *Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	Mostly drawn from Tindale ms materials.	AA 338/7/1/43
Ngintait	Cards not located					
Nukunu	Published & Tindale	1cm		Tindale journals *Atlas of South Australia* (1986)		AA 338/7/1/43
Peramangk	Published & Tindale	1.1 cm	Clarence Long Albert Karloan Grannie Giles Robert[?] Mason	Tindale journals *Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	Tindale remarks that most placenames were gained from members of other tribes.	AA 338/7/1/19 AA 338/7/1/43

Tindale Tribe	Main sources	No. of cards	Main Tindale informants	Main source details	Comments	SAM reference
Portaulun	Tindale	0.9cm	Albert Karloan Pinkie Mack	Tindale journals	Mostly drawn from Tindale ms materials. Cards often contain etymological, ethnological or geographical notes. A few cards report named boundary points.	AA 338/7/1/44
Potaruwutj	Tindale & survey maps	4.5cm	Clarence Long Alf Watson	Tindale journals Variety of survey maps listed	Cards rich in detail, often containing etymological, ethnological or geographical notes. Often contain references to Hundred maps. Some names refer to regions rather than to 'discrete' places. A number of cards relate to boundaries.	AA 338/7/1/47
Ramindjeri	Published & Tindale	4.5cm	Reuben Walker Albert Karloan Clarence Long	Meyer (1843) Tindale journals *Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	Cards often contain etymological, ethnological or geographical notes.	AA 338/7/1/17
Tanganekald	Tindale	14.5cm	Clarence Long Albert Karloan	Tindale journals	Mostly from Clarence Long. Cards often describe the social function of a place, associated story, type of geographical feature, Hundred location and etymology often provided.	AA 338/7/1/46
Warki	Cards not located					
Wiljakali	*Atlas*	3 cards		*Atlas of South Australia* (1986)	All cards taken from *Atlas*, contain little information.	AA 338/7/1/43

From Table 9.1, one gains an indication of the relative quantities of placenames collected.[6] Leaving to one side the empty categories Ngintait, Warki and Maraura (whose three cards contain only general vocabulary), the categories range from one card (Marditjali) to 14.5 centimetres of cards (Tanganekald). Apart from Tanganekald, the other main categories include Jarildekald (9cm), Kaurna (7.5cm), Bunganditj (5cm), Potauwutj (4.5cm) and Ramindjeri (4.5cm). Significantly, it would appear that Tindale's principal informants, Clarence Long (or Milerum, a Tangane man) and Albert Karloan (a Jarilde man), between them provided Tindale with the bulk of the placenames. How this was done and what it means will be considered in the following section.

Before moving on, it is worth noting that the 'special gazetteer' component of the project is also incomplete. Tindale's papers include 180 pages of gathered notes entitled "Draft for text", much of which is handwritten with pages often containing no more than a paragraph or two. It does, however, include copies of finished cards provided to the Geographical Names Board (Tindale 1991a). 'Draft for text' is an important frame through which to view the index cards, and it informs the discussion below. Draft sections include: water and camps, Aboriginal name of Adelaide, tribal boundaries, notes for Potaruwutj placenames, mode of gathering and recording placenames, stability of names, places of special importance, and post-contact Aboriginal placenames, to list only a few (see the SAM web catalogue for further details).

Methods

On turning to consider Tindale's methods more fully, one faces the basic questions of how the original data was collected and how Tindale filled out and organised the cards. The latter question has already been partly addressed above, so in this section the discussion will focus on the former.

As a general observation, Tindale was a fastidious record keeper. According to the historian Tom Gara, Tindale kept a journal "every day of his life, whether he was in the field, working at the Museum or at home on the weekend" (Gara 1995: 135). Accordingly, Gara suggests, "all the information that Tindale recorded during his fieldwork is, or should be, documented somewhere in his journals" (Gara 1995: 138). Certainly the field journals relating to the 1930s, a period in which Tindale conducted 'salvage' work in the south-east of South Australia, are a rich and detailed source of information. Most relevant to this analysis are the fieldnotes, vocabularies, song texts, and stories from which Tindale extracted placename data. Importantly, Tindale also took maps into the field and those relating to the south-east of South Australia held at the SAM are often heavily annotated (see South Australian Museum AA 338/16 and 338/24).

Orthographics

Tindale's desire to create useful and lasting records, as indicated by his fastidious approach to journal keeping, is also evident in his linguistic records. Over the years he used a variety of orthographic systems to record data. During early fieldwork in the 1920s he followed the system recommended by *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* (Freire-Marreco and Myers 1912), a system originally developed by the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) for recording foreign placenames for British maps. In the early 1930s he began to use an orthographic system developed specifically for ethnological and linguistic work in Australia (see Tindale 1935a: 261-265; 1963: 372-373). This system, the 'Adelaide University Phonetic System' (AUPS), was adapted from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) by a committee consisting of Professor J. A. FitzHerbert, Charles Chewings and Tindale in 1930-1931.[7] Although the AUPS became Tindale's preferred system, he at times used Geographic II, a later version of the original RGS system, the main benefit of which was that it contained only symbols found on a typewriter (Sutton 1979). Indeed, Tindale was less than completely satisfied with Geographic II; he found that it afforded "only a moderate degree of accuracy" (Tindale 1947). Most of the placename index cards were written in the AUPS system, often referred to by Tindale as "International Phonetic". The following Figure 9.3 displays an early version of the AUPS.

Figure 9.3: An early version of the AUPS

When approaching Tindale's linguistic records it is important to appreciate that he tried to record what he heard phonetically and did not attempt to phonemicise his spellings. That is, to pick a common example, Tindale recorded both voiced and unvoiced consonants from the series [p, t, k] and [b, d, g] as he heard them. From Louisa Eglinton,[8] the principal informant for the Narangga section of the project, for example, Tindale recorded both <Pandalawi> and <Bantalawi> for the gazetted placename 'Pondalowie'. Modern spelling systems for Aboriginal languages in South Australia, as developed by linguists, aim for the representational ideal of one graph per distinctive sound; in this case, a single graph can be used to cover the variation between [p] and [b] or [d] and [t] as recorded by Tindale. The main point for people wanting to use Tindale's placenames is that many require phonemicising if they are to be used consistently, either <Pantalawi> or <Bandalawi> in this case, and, moreover, choices should be consistent with the spelling systems current in language maintenance and revival projects where they exist. As a final comment on this point, it should be noted that in his placename card files Tindale often filed word-initial voiced consonants under the word-initial unvoiced consonant headers (i.e. <b> filed under <p>; <d> under <t>; and <g> under <k>). He did this, presumably, to make data handling easier, but he may have found that word-initial unvoiced consonants were the more frequent variants.

Apart from recording the speech of informants, Tindale also used the AUPS to transcribe words found in published and archival sources. A word of warning is required in relation to this practice. While this was done, no doubt, to remove variation (most of the early recorders of placenames and general vocabularies were influenced by English spelling practices), it may give the misleading impression that Tindale's re-transcriptions were guided by the speech of an Aboriginal informant. It is certainly important to note that Tindale did re-record published and archival materials with informants (as discussed below), but this should not be assumed for all the placenames in the card files.

Finally, it is worth making a brief and general comment about the reliability of Tindale's field recordings. At the time Tindale made his recordings there were few full speakers of the various languages of the south-east of South Australia available. During a recording session with Albert Karloan in 1940, for example, Tindale observed:

> Karloan's Jarildekald is rusty from disuse & he stumbled over his phrases several times; once breaking into English. There are some obvious lapses in his text but on hearing it played over he expressed pleasure at it, saying it was fine to hear the language spoken again. Few of his people now use it. (Tindale 1938-1956: 31)

Tindale received some assistance with his transcriptions from Professor FitzHerbert at the University of Adelaide, although the latter's contribution is not well documented (for one of the few references in Tindale's journals, see Tindale 1934-1938: x). While it is no longer possible to check Tindale's transcriptions with full speakers of the languages in question, there is a small number of wax cylinder and acetate disc recordings relating to the south-east of South Australia, with Tindale's transcriptions, held at the SAM that would no doubt repay close study. Until this is done, it is worth noting that I have checked Tindale's vocabulary recorded at Ooldea (SA) in 1934 with current Gugada (also written 'Kokatha') speakers, and have found that the recordings are good given the limitations of the AUPS and Tindale's aims.

Sources

As indicated in Table 9.1 above, for the placenames card files Tindale drew on a variety of sources: fieldwork, published literature and maps, and archival documents. While many of the card sections contain elements drawn from all of these sources, some sections were compiled predominantly from fieldwork and others were complied predominantly from maps. As a general rule, one would expect data arising from the former to be richer and more reliable than data arising from the latter. This is often the case, but there are complicating factors, as will be discussed below in 'Filling in the gaps'. Certainly Tindale's preference was for fieldwork with knowledgeable people, as he wanted to record as many of the placenames as possible from the lips of Aboriginal people.

Fortunately, many of the materials drawn upon by Tindale for the project are held at the SAM and are catalogued on the website. They include:

- field journals (series AA 338/1);
- research papers supplementary to the journals (series AA 338/2);
- collected vocabularies and placenames data (series AA 338/7 – AA 338/10);
- songs and texts (recorded in journals, series 338/1, and in published papers); and
- maps (over 200 listed in series AA 338/16 & 338/24).[9]

Tindale's use of the various sources can be illustrated by considering three sections of the project: Tanganekald, Narangga and Ngadjuri.

Tanganekald

For the most detailed section of the project, Tanganekald, Tindale worked primarily with Clarence Long (Milerum) throughout the 1930s. The following extract from a report of fieldwork conducted by Tindale during January to June

1934 is worth considering for a number of reasons: it provides insights into Tindale's methods, it includes a brief history of his work in the Lakes-Coorong region, and it illustrates the range and depth of the collected materials.

> Detailed study of surviving natives of southern South Australia was commenced in June 1931, during a week spent at Point McLeay. Milerum (Clarence Long) the last full blooded adult survivor of the Tangane Tribe, was encountered.

> Work was continued in 1932 when a visit was made to the South East and over a period of several weeks Milerum was questioned at the South Australian Museum when several legends, vocabularies and twenty songs were transcribed.

> Several other natives were met on the Murray River and at Lake Alexandrina in 1933, and Taratap (where I spent three weeks, Christmas 1933) also produced useful information and specimens of aboriginal handiwork.

> On February 10th of this year [1934], a grant from the Australian National Research Council made it possible for Dr Fry and me to travel through the South East of the State under the guidance of Milerum.

> With the aid of detailed maps (inch to the mile Hundred maps) it was possible to record 1,100 native placenames, crossing places on the Coorong, clan and tribal boundaries, camping places and many localities appearing in the legends previously collected at Adelaide. The coast was followed southeastward from Port Victor, where Milerum's geographical knowledge commenced, to his own country near McGraths Flat (where specially detailed notes were secured) and thence to Guichen Bay, the southern-most outpost of the country he knows. Journeys inland to Blackford, Taratap, Tilley Swamp and others at Salt Creek, Wood's Well and between Meningie and Cold and Wet, completed a survey of his country and its borderlands.

> The accuracy of this Tangane man's geographical knowledge has been checked, as far as an overlapping portion at the north-western end of the area is concerned, by the independent data supplied by a Yaralde tribe native.

> At the conclusion of the South Eastern trip, Milerum's services were retained at Adelaide, from March 6th to 28th while further data was transcribed. (Tindale 1934-1938: 179-180)

The report goes on to mention work with a Ramindjeri man, Rueben Walker, at Goolwa (21-22 April) and, significantly, a Jarilde man, Frank Blackmore, who

visited Tindale in Adelaide (12-25 May) and "supplied useful confirmatory data with regard to Milerum's knowledge of placenames and legends", as well as further details on Jarildekald culture.

To borrow a surveying metaphor, it is clear that for this section of the project Tindale attempted to triangulate his field data, and this certainly adds to its strength. For a detailed account of this work see Tindale's field journal (Tindale 1934-1938); a more accessible summary appears in the newspaper article 'Vanished Tribal Life' (Tindale 1934).

The following map of the Hundred of Glyde (see Figure 9.4) is one of those used by Tindale during this work. Note that a simplified version appears in Tindale (1974: 67).

Tindale enjoyed a productive working relationship and friendship with Milerum over a 10-year period. Each year, after the shearing season, Milerum would travel to Adelaide and spend time with Tindale at the SAM.[10] Such was the richness of these interactions that in his final years Tindale was also working on a monograph entitled 'The World of Milerum'.

Figure 9.4: Section of the Hundred of Glyde (SA) with Tindale's annotations (SAM AA 338/24/32)

Narangga

For the Narangga section of the project, Tindale operated in a slightly different mode by re-recording published materials with the help of the original Aboriginal informant. In 1935 Tindale travelled to Marion Bay on the Yorke Peninsula to interview Louisa Eglinton, who had provided vocabulary and placenames to J. Howard Johnson, a local pastoralist, between 1898 and 1900. These materials, an approximately 350-word general vocabulary and approximately 50 placenames, later appeared in *The Pioneer* newspaper (Johnson 1930-1931).

During sessions with Louisa, Tindale used the AUPS in seeking to record more phonetically accurate versions of the published materials, as well as adding to their number. With regard to placenames, Tindale's concern for accuracy is clearly apparent in the following journal entry:

> there were many placenames in her country but she has forgotten some. I went over a map & jotted down all the ones she could remember & then checked over Johnson's list with her; the dual check was most useful & added several new ones as well as localizing practically all the old ones. The principal point in dispute was the site of Ilarawi ('ilara = dwarf beings). This is marked on the map Section 11B Warrenton as (Hillderowie) and on Section 2 at Stenhouse Bay as 'Emu Waterhole'. Her statement that it was between Rhino Head & Badara suggests that the former is the correct place'. (Tindale 1935b: 11-13)

Tindale's published results of the field trip appeared in the following year (Tindale 1936) and include the map given in Figure 9.5.

Figure 9.5: Map of native placenames on Southern Yorke Peninsula (Tindale 1936: 56)[11]

Finally, while the data gathered at Marion Bay in 1935 form the core of the Narangga section of the project, Tindale added placenames from literature sources in the 1980s (see the index card file SAM AA 338/7/1/13 for details).

Ngadjuri

The Ngadjuri section of the project differs most notably from those described above in that it is based almost exclusively upon published materials. A few cards are sourced to Tindale's informants Barney Warrior (Waria[12]) and Granny Giles, but most appear to have been drawn directly from the *Atlas of South Australia*, a volume published to accompany the 150th year of European settlement in the state (Griffin and McCaskill 1986). Many cards consist merely of a placename with map coordinates and a tribal group identifier (see Table 9.1). There are a number of points to be made in relation to this practice. Firstly, the data are not as rich as those noted above. Secondly, there are doubts as to their reliability, and this is particularly apparent with supplied derivations and meanings.

Although for the Ngadjuri section Tindale drew upon other writers, such as Cockburn (1908) and Day (1915), for derivations and meanings, it would appear that often Tindale provided them himself. As with other sections of the project, the Ngadjuri cards are filed along with a separate section of general vocabulary, in this case a Ngadjuri vocabulary compiled mostly from Berndt and Vogelsang (1941). Apparently Tindale proceeded by searching through the general vocabulary for etymological clues and thus arrived at a derivation or meaning for a particular placename. To put it in the most charitable of terms, there is an obvious element of speculation involved in this practice. Admittedly, placenames are often at least partially transparent when they contain the common morphological element <-owie> 'water', indicating a rockhole, for example (see Hercus and Potezny 1999). Indeed, Tindale created lists of geographical features to help him to determine meanings for names; such lists may include Aboriginal terms for 'hill', 'forest', and so on. There is, however, much room for error in this approach. In the extreme, one may read transparency into names or, to put it in Tindale's terms, derive 'rational meanings' (Tindale 1974: 40-41) where otherwise there is obscurity, effectively inventing a meaning to satisfy one's preoccupations.[13] It should not be denied, however, that a careful approach (such as that discussed by Amery 2002: 178-179) can be productive for current language revival or maintenance projects. Again, one needs to exercise caution when dealing with these types of materials.

Given the lack of fieldwork conducted by Tindale with Ngadjuri people, this section of the project appears relatively shallow. Certainly there are many unknowns, most notably: who provided the placenames to surveyors, when were they recorded, and who recorded them? For other sections of the project there

is evidence that Tindale attempted to ascertain such details. He endeavoured to find out from the relevant authorities, for example, whether or not Karloan provided placenames during a survey in the Lakes region in 1902, as claimed by the latter.

Finally, it is worth noting a problem of circularity in Tindale's methods. That is, for Ngadjuri (and for some other sections of the project), Tindale drew placenames directly from a published map and then assigned them to a tribal category on the basis of the boundaries represented on his 1974 tribal distribution map. In effect, Tindale is assuming the identity of the placenames in advance. The main point here is that the identity of placenames for a given area may benefit from an approach that is based on linguistic rather than ethno-cartographic considerations. At the very least, each card should be treated on an individual basis and with caution.

Filling in the gaps

In the discussion of the Ngadjuri section, a number of limitations with Tindale's use of published source materials have been outlined. A number of problems associated with Tindale's use of informants also deserve mention. For some sections of the project, circumstances forced Tindale to use informants who had some knowledge of an area but were nevertheless 'outsiders'. With regard to the Ngaiawang area, for example, Tindale noted

> the placenames of this tribe were not gathered in the early days, except along the Murray River itself, and there is little in the way of links between the vocabulary as published by Moorhouse (1846) and such placenames … What we have learned about the Ngaiawang comes indirectly, chiefly from the few Nganguruku survivors who managed to survive … [and who] kept their aboriginal status as fisherman and food gatherers well into the twentieth century. (Tindale 1991a: 30)

Similarly, for the Peramangk area, "most of the remembered placenames have come through Nganguruku sources and through the knowledge of Milerum on pronunciations of placenames already on our maps" (Tindale 1991a: 114).

Milerum provided placenames for a number of sections of the project, including: Bunganditj, Jarildekald, Kaurna, Ngaralta, Ngarkat, Peramangk, Potaruwutj, Ramindjeri and, of course, Tanganekald (see Table 9.1). For a number of these sections, such as Bunganditj, Potaruwutj and Tanganekald, he was the principal informant and the information provided by him reflects his particular life experiences: he was a senior Tanganekald man, his mother was Potaruwutj, and he learned of Bunganditj language and culture in his youth (see Tindale 1986). For other sections of the project Milerum's links to country

are less clear: while Tindale recorded placenames from him for a wide range of areas, it would appear that often Tindale had him pronounce words from maps (as indicated in the above quoted passage). From Tindale's records it is often unclear whether Milerum is providing 'new' data or merely offering a pronunciation for re-transcribing purposes. So, there is a degree of ambiguity in the materials that needs to be taken into account.

Problems associated with Tindale's use of 'outsiders' have already been noted in the literature. Amery and Williams (2002) note that many of Tindale's Kaurna placenames are coloured by the linguistic practices of his non-Kaurna informants; some display Ngarrindjeri suffixes while others appear to contradict expected phonotactic patterns (e.g. words in Kaurna do not begin with <r> or <l>). In the index card files, the former category is by far the larger of the two. Amery and Williams rightly point out the need for caution with such placenames. From my reading of materials relating to the project, it appears likely that Tindale was aware of at least the first of these problems: on index cards and related notes he shows some understanding of the various locational suffixes used in a number of language in the south-east of South Australia. As indicated above, Tindale sought to record what he heard as accurately as possible, and in fairness to him it is important to appreciate that the materials found in the index card files were left in a working rather than a finished state and that contemporary conclusions about the data need to be tempered by this fact. That close attention needs to be paid to Tindale's sources is further reinforced when derivations are considered. Amery (2002: 172-173) discusses Tindale's derivation of <Jatala> (Yatala), the site of a prison to the north of the City of Adelaide. The 'Jatala' placename is identified as Kaurna, and on the card Tindale notes that "the name seems to be linked with the verb ['jat:un], to steal" (see Figure 9.6). But, as pointed out by Amery, ['jat:un] is "clearly a Ngarrindjeri word". To extend Amery's analysis, it is worth noting that Tindale gives two sources: "Moorhouse 1846: 63" and "Tindale ms from Mason 1964". Moorhouse (1846: 63) lists 'yattun' with the English gloss 'to steal' and on the inside cover of Tindale's copy of this work one finds the note: "additional notes in this copy are from discussions with J. Mason, aboriginal of the Nganguruku tribe in the 1950s and 1960s". In this case it is clear that both sources relate to the River Murray region, and it appears likely from the text on the card that Tindale arrived at the derivation by his own means. As a general observation, Tindale's signposting of his sources makes contemporary re-analysis and appraisal easier for many of the cards.

Figure 9.6: Jatala placename card (SAM AA 338/7/1/12)
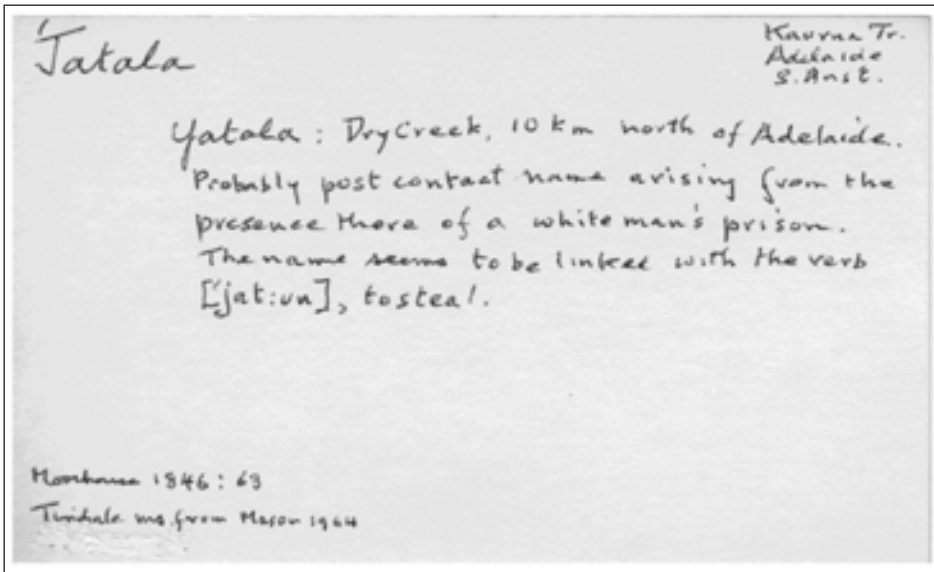
The <Jatala> card also leads to the point that Tindale generally tried to avoid post-contact placenames. While there is clearly a link here between the project and Tindale's larger tribal mapping project, which aimed to represent the distribution of Australian tribes at the time of first contact, this appears also to have been influenced by the Geographical Names Board. In a letter of official confirmation of the project, the Board's Secretary informed Tindale that he should focus on "names of proven South Australian origin given to localities by the early inhabitants" (Medwell 1986). This limit on data collecting is worth bearing in mind for its own sake, but is also leads to the contentious issue of the relationship between the placenames and tribal boundaries. As this is a complex matter worthy of a separate paper, I will restrict the discussion to a few general observations that may be of use to people wanting to consult the materials.

I began this paper by quoting Rodney Cockburn, who expressed to Tindale his opinion on "how utterly unreliable is the distribution of native names on our map as denoting or marking or fixing the territorial bounds of the different tribes". Problems associated with the term 'tribe' and determining the precise nature of tribal boundaries now comprise a sizable literature.[14] In his work Tindale often attempted to use placenames to delineate tribes, both to locate boundary points and to indicate past, often pre-contact, tribal movements, and this aim was not always easily or successfully achieved (for problems encountered in the Western Desert region, see Monaghan 2003). In many cases, Tindale had to rely upon ecological data to determine the location of tribal boundaries (see Tindale 1974). As has been pointed out above, for the south-

east of South Australia, Tindale faced a number of significant difficulties in his research owing to its salvage nature and to a lack of available informants for particular areas. Certainly his aim to record pre-contact placenames, and particularly those that functioned as cultural boundary markers for areas that had experienced the general pattern of social and cultural disruption associated with colonisation, was both ambitious and problematic.

In the current era of Native Title, tribal boundaries serve new political functions and I do not want to comment directly on Tindale's use and placement of them – typically they serve the interests of some groups and not others. Rather, it is sufficient for present purposes to consider, if only in passing, the basic question of whether or not Tindale signposted links he made between placenames and tribal boundaries. The answer is that many of the cards do carry notations indicating that they mark cultural boundaries, either at a clan or tribal level (especially those found in the Tanganekald section). It is apparent that some of this information contributed to the tribal boundaries as they appear on the map in Figure 9.1. Thus, it should be possible in some cases to reappraise the information used by Tindale to delineate his tribal boundaries.

Conclusion

The main point to be drawn from this discussion is that Tindale's placename card files are not entirely useful on their own and need to be considered against his field journals, papers relating to placename research, maps and relevant literature and archival sources. A number of strengths of the material have been outlined as have a number of potential weaknesses. On the plus side, Tindale worked closely with a number of informants to amass over 2000 placenames in the south-east of South Australia. Many of the names are accompanied by a rich store of associated ethnological and geographical data. There is no doubt that these texts, including annotated maps, constitute important heritage materials. It should also be appreciated that as well as accuracy in his field recording Tindale was thorough in his literature and archival searches. The major limitation of the work arises from its incomplete state and its salvage nature. In a number of areas caution is required: in particular Tindale's use of sources and derivations based upon conjecture.

At a number of points in this paper I have gestured to the incomplete state of the project. So, how far towards completion did Tindale get? According to his own estimates, on 29 January 1991, a time close to the end of his working life, Tindale considered that he was at the halfway point of the project (Tindale 1989-1991: 287). Indeed, Tindale did extract all of the placenames in his manuscript materials and many of the placename cards appear only partially filled out.

Such is the richness and value of Tindale's legacy that the materials discussed in this paper are not sitting in the archive gathering dust. In 1988 Tindale provided two draft sections of the project, Narangga and Jarildekald, to the Geographical Names Board. According to Bill Watt of the Land Services Group, a division of the South Australian Government, consultations are currently underway with both the Narangga and Ngarrindjeri communities to negotiate the inclusion of these placenames, where appropriate, onto the official gazetteer of the state (pers. comm. 12 September 2005). It is hoped that further work by linguists on the materials will contribute to this process. As for the remaining placenames, the Land Services Group has developed a Tindale database containing approximately 2000 entries; these represent the sum of Tindale's placename card file entries. Watt plans to locate each of the places as effectively as possible and no doubt Tindale would have been pleased to know that this work is continuing.

Perhaps the final word should be left for Tindale, who, towards the very end of his last journal took a moment to reflect upon his spellings and "phonetic name writings". They are "relatively good – perhaps as good as can be passed on to the future" (Tindale 1991b: 129-131).

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Endnotes

1. This paper has come about through research conducted at the South Australian Museum Anthropology Archive during 2004-2005. As one of a number of research consultants employed to provide content for the museum's website, my particular task has been to document and describe linguistic materials held in the Norman B. Tindale collection. The principal aim of the website is to provide a useful on-line catalogue for researchers and to facilitate access to the museum's collections. As such, the descriptions are necessarily limited and it is intended that this paper, by providing an overview of Tindale's placename work and an analysis of it, will serve as a useful supplementary guide. The Tindale section of the web catalogue can be found at: www.samuseum. sa.gov.au/tindale. My thanks extend to Philip Clarke, Tom Gara and Mandy Paul for helpful comments during the preparation of this paper.

2. Stewart Cockburn presents a revised and substantially expanded version of his father's work.

3. For a critical account of the development of Tindale's tribal mapping project, see Monaghan (2003).

4. For a brief biographical summary follow the 'Archives' link on the SAM website (http://www. samuseum.sa.gov.au). Further biographical details can be found in Jones (1995) and Walter (1988).

5. The spelling of tribes in this paper follows that of Tindale (1974).

6. Note that the figures in Table 9.1 are only approximate. Tindale's placename cards and general vocabulary cards tend to overlap in places. Moreover, the tribal categories are often not discrete: within a particular section words from neighbouring groups may appear, apparently for comparative or etymological purposes. These features reinforce that fact that the project is a work in progress. Note also that the listings of 'main Tindale informants' and 'main source details' have been taken from information appearing on the cards. An examination of the cards will reveal informants not mentioned in Table 9.1, and a number of 'minor' literature sources, particularly for Kaurna, have not been listed.

7. FitzHerbert was Professor of Classics at the University of Adelaide; he was trained in philology and active in research on Australian languages (see Monaghan 2008). Chewings, a geologist and pastoralist in the Northern Territory, was at the time compiling an Arrernte vocabulary.

8. This person also appears in the literature as 'Louisa Egginton'.

9. Note that there is further unaccessioned, and at this stage only partially examined, material in the SAM that may prove relevant to the project. Note also that many of the published sources relied on by Tindale, too numerous to list here, are found in his catalogue of tribes (Tindale 1974), listed under the various tribal headings.

10. For Milerum's biographical details see the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entry penned by Tindale (1986).

11. The original map with Tindale's annotations is found at SAM AA 338/16/11.

12. Warrior was a senior Ngadjuri man who also worked with Ronald Berndt (see Berndt 1987).

13. Tindale's etymological practices could at times go wildly astray. Consider the following example of his drawing conclusions based upon spurious etymological premises, albeit with regard to the tribal name 'Djerag' in Western Australia. In the following passage he attempts to show that the

term 'Djerag' is a post-contact construction and not a valid tribal name: "one of the classic cases of nomenclatorial confusion is the effort of the learned student of kinship systems who possibly misread his own field notes, so that the geographical term Durack Range, named after the Durack family of white pioneer settlers in northwestern Australia, became Durack Ra., Durackra, Durakra and, finally, the Djerag tribe, as an arbitrary phonetic system, using only voiced consonants, took the 'tribal name' into its grip" (Tindale 1974: 38). However, as McConvell (2002: 272) points out: "*jarrak* is the term for 'talk, speech' in a number of languages in the area, and this is the origin of the term".

14. Problems associated with the notion of tribe and the precise nature and placement of tribal boundaries are discussed in Peterson (1976) and Sutton (1995), for example.

CHAPTER 10

Why Mulligan is not just another Irish name
Lake Callabonna, South Australia

J.C. MCENTEE

Introduction[1]

When one looks at the current maps of the area to the north of Lake Frome (named after the explorer Edward Charles Frome), one can notice a couple of features known as Mulligan Hill and Mulligan Springs. These features are in the vicinity of Lake Callabonna, which originally bore the name Lake Mulligan. This was noted to be a corruption of the Aboriginal word *mullachan* (Manning 1986: 143). Lake Callabonna is known for its fossil reserve containing the remains of the extinct giant marsupial Diprotodon. Scientists were evidently led to the fossil area by Aboriginal informants, and excavations were undertaken by the South Australian Museum during 1893 (Pledge 1994: 66).

Discussion

Investigation into the Aboriginal name of Lake Callabonna was made by the author with Pearl McKenzie during the early 1990s. Mrs McKenzie said that Lake Callabonna was known in Adnyamathanha as *Malakanha* meaning 'a type of string bag'. The word was usually shortened by dropping the final vowel, so the name was said as *Malakanh*. When talking to Mrs McKenzie there was some confusion as to whether the names on the map came from an Irish surname Mulligan or from an Aboriginal source.

Geoffrey Manning, in his book *The Romance of Place Names of South Australia*, writes about Lake Callabonna:

> Originally thought to be part of the 'horseshoe' configuration of Lake Torrens disproved by A. C. Gregory, in 1858. It was first known as Mulligan, a corruption of the Aboriginal word mullachan, the meaning of which was not recorded. (Manning 1986: 34)

Manning also mentions that the Aboriginal name 'Callabonna': "was suggested by Dr. Stirling, in 1894, who failed to record its meaning, but a pastoral station on the eastern shore carried the name" (Manning 1986: 34).

Dr Edward Stirling was the South Australian Museum director responsible for organising the Lake Callabonna excavations of 1893. Stirling's published report (Stirling 1900: v) records that Callabonna Station homestead was situated on Callabonna Creek which runs into the Lake. It is ironical that this proximity led Stirling to successfully push for the renaming of Lake Mulligan as Lake Callabonna, in the mistaken belief that Mulligan was not a 'native name' (Jones pers. comm.). Stirling's report includes a footnote to this effect, worth quoting in full:

> It may be well to state, perhaps, that the so-called Lake in which the fossils were found has been hitherto usually spoken of as Lake Mulligan. That name, however, has never been officially conferred or recognised, and, indeed, it will not be found on any of the maps of South Australia. There prevails a very proper sentiment, unfortunately not always carried into action, that the native names of localities should as far as possible be retained. In this particular instance the euphonious native name Callabonna, which applies to a large watercourse leading into the Lake and to an adjoining sheep run, seemed appropriate in all respects, save that the association of sound and idea might erroneously suggest the possession of scenic beauties by an area which is not only waterless, but also almost unsurpassable for barrenness and utter desolation. The name suggested by the writer, however, has been approved by the South Australian Executive, and in future the locality is to be known officially as Lake Callabonna. (Stirling 1900: i)

The word 'Callabonna' is derived from Yadliyawarra language *kardla* 'fire' and *pirna* 'big' (Hercus pers. comm.). As happens frequently in languages of this area, the pre-stopping of nasal and lateral consonants is generally omitted in compound nouns. So *Kardla-pirna* becomes *Karla-pirna*, i.e. 'Callabonna'. A paddock name appearing on an early pastoral map of the area is spelt as 'Cadlabeena'. Gil Coulthard (pers. comm.) has heard the placename *Kardla-pirna* or *Ardla-pirna* from old-time cattle drovers working in the vicinity of Yandama and Boolkaree Creeks, but could not say exactly where the locality was.

Mulligan Springs, near Lake Callabonna, was discovered by Robert Stuckey in 1860. He mentioned that the Aborigines called it 'Mulligan' (Manning 1986: 143). It is interesting to note that Mulligan Spring was known to speakers of the Pirlatapa language as *Kurnuwanta,* possibly derived from *kurnu* 'one' or 'other' and *wanta* 'passing by' (Hercus pers. comm.), and among older generations of Adnyamathanha speakers as *Urnuwanda* (Gil Coulthard pers. comm.). The two versions of the name of the spring are really the same word, because in the Adnyamathanha language initial *k* is always lost.

The word *Malaka-nha* is composed of *malaka* meaning 'string bag' plus the location suffix *-nha*. This is a woven string bag with long shoulder straps. There seems to be some uncertainty as to whether the straps were located on one side of a person's neck and the bag allowed to drop onto the opposite side of the body. The bag usually hung at the person's side about the region of the upper thigh to the hip.

While the Aboriginal story of Lake Eyre representing a stretched-out kangaroo hide has been reasonably well known for a long time (Siebert 1910), considerably less is known about the representations of other lakes in the region. Pearl McKenzie's late husband, John, told the author about the dangers of any of the large playas of inland South Australia. He thought of them as traps because of the risk of breaking through the thin salt crust in some areas and becoming bogged in the black, oozy mud beneath the surface. Indeed, the Adnyamathanha name for Lake Frome is *Munda* meaning 'trap' – in two ways. On the one hand, the possibility of being caught in the mud, and secondly, if one studies the shape of the lake from directly above (via satellite imagery) it bears the shape of the trap-net known as *munda*, along with its draw-string, represented by the narrow channel at the northern extremity of the lake, to close the mouth of the trap.

Turning the attention back to Lake Callabonna, and looking from directly above, it is possible that this lake represents the string bag known as *malaka*. The lake proper is the woven bag, and the narrow channels stretching southwards towards Lake Frome represent the carrying straps or *yabma*. Unfortunately, it is no longer possible to draw on the first-hand knowledge of the elders of some of the Aboriginal groups of this area to verify this information. However, material recorded by Schebeck from Andy Coulthard, tells of the wanderings of the ancestor *Virdni Murunha*: "there at Mulligan he was sitting while making his way towards the Flinders Ranges. He sat and manufactured a net bag. Then he travelled over the hill to *Mudlupanha*" (B. Schebeck pers. comm.).

John McKenzie also told of the wanderings of *Virdni Murunha* around the eastern shore of Lake Frome.

Interesting information on the old placename *Malakanha* comes from far afield. Study of the culture from western New South Wales by Jeremy Beckett has shed more light on some placenames in South Australia. A version of the story of the 'Two *Ngatyi*' or mythical snakes traveling from the Paroo near Wanaaring in New South Wales towards the Flinders Ranges was related to Jeremy Beckett by Alf Barlow, a Malyangapa man in 1958. Alf Barlow said: "Then went again they come to a salt-lake, *Maliga* Lake. They went into the neck of the Salt Creek, *Mangunguru*. Here some other *ngatyis* stopped them and drove them back" (Beckett MS) .

'Salt Creek' is the name given on modern maps for the biggest of the main channels, 'the strap' stretching southwards from Lake Callabonna towards Lake Frome, and the 'neck' is presumably a curved narrow section of this channel. It appears that *Mangunguru* was either the name for the Salt Creek or for this particular locality.

Furthermore, a map of inland Australia drawn by Justus Perthes Gotha in 1862 (in *Petermann's Geographische Mittheilungen*) shows Lake Callabonna (or perhaps Mulligan Springs) with the name as 'Malakana'. A later map by Gotha of 1867 again gives the name 'Malakana'.

Conclusion

There can be little doubt that 'Mulligan' is a corruption of an Aboriginal word. It was most reassuring to learn this from the early maps of the area drawn up by Justus Perthes Gotha in 1862 and 1867 using the name 'Malakana'.

The completely independent information from Jeremy Beckett's manuscript shows how the stories of the travels of Ancestors linked Aboriginal groups together, and led to people having knowledge of distant places and placenames.

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Endnotes

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CHAPTER 11

Murkarra, a landscape nearly forgotten

The Arabana country of the noxious insects, north and northwest of Lake Eyre

LUISE HERCUS

written in memory of and at the behest of 'The Wood Duck Boys'

Introduction: Placenames in Arabana country

Aboriginal names fared worst in the areas explored early

John McDouall Stuart during his 1858 expedition bestowed European names in rapid succession on some of the most important places in Arabana country on the west side of Lake Eyre North in South Australia. He wrote:

> As this is the largest creek that I have passed, and is likely to become as good as Chambers Creek … I have called it 'The Blyth', after the Honourable Arthur Blyth. (Stuart 1865: 73)

Arabana people once called it *Karla Tyurndu* 'the wide creek'.

> To the northwest is another isolated range like this. … I have named it 'Mt Kingston' after the Honourable G. S. Kingston. (Stuart 1865: 73)

This was once called *Anintyurla*, the name of an Arrernte Rainman. The range represents him travelling back north carrying a precious rain-stone.

> Struck a large, broad valley, in which are the largest springs yet seen, and the country around is beautiful. I have named these 'The Freeling Springs' after the honourable Major Freeling. (Stuart 1865: 75)

These springs were called *Yardiya* 'spindle'. The two Ancestral Snakes created these springs, and stayed nearby making hairstring.

> Crossed a broad gum salt creek. I have named this 'Peake Creek' after
> C. J. Peake, Esq. M. L. A. (Stuart 1865: 73)

This part of the Peake Creek was once called *Kalturruka* 'breaking up a wind-storm by means of incantations' and it referred to events in the Rain History.

Every single one of the new names, unrelated to the nature of the landscape as they are, has survived and appears on modern maps, whereas the original Aboriginal names are in danger of being totally forgotten, and with them the story they have to tell about the country. These names given in an instant by an explorer have replaced age-old names and traditions.

Figure 11.1: The country west of Lake Eyre. Map by Colin Macdonald.
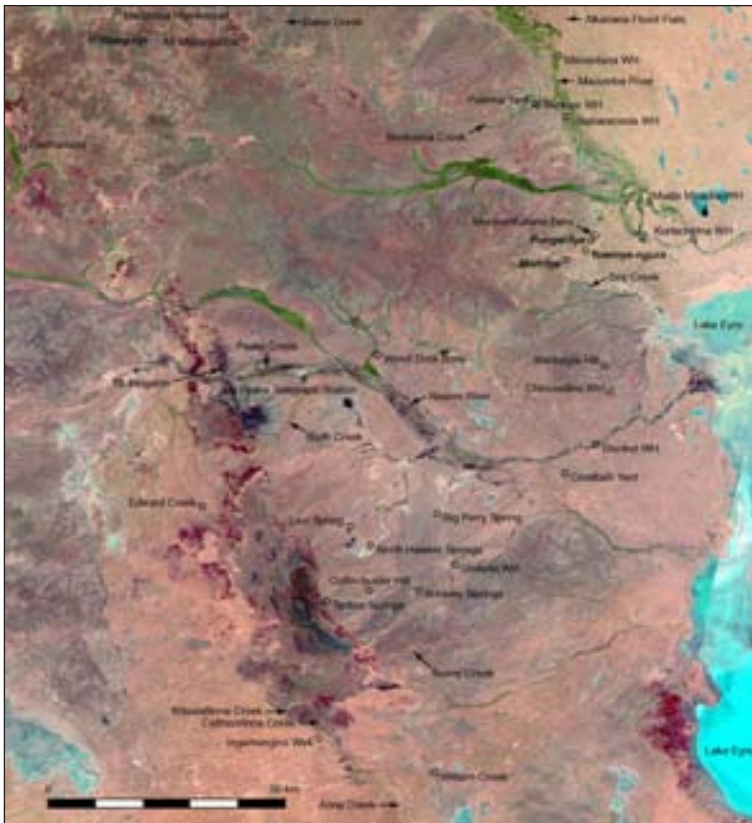
The main European route through Arabana country initially more or less followed Stuart's route and went through the spring country immediately east of the Davenport Range and the Peake and Denison Ranges (see Figure 11.1). Along

this main European route the Arabana names, as illustrated by the examples from Stuart's journal, have largely been replaced by European-inspired names. This applies also to the immediate surrounds: thus nearly all the names of the many springs on the east side of the Davenport and of the Peake and Denison Ranges are European, replacing names that evoked visions of mythology. Examples are:

Tarlton Springs was once *Yatyaparranha* 'finches' spring. Only one of the small springs there has absolutely clear and fresh, non-saline water. This is where in the Dreamtime the two big Yellowbellies came out of the ground, and the story of the Fish and Crane began.

Levi Spring was named after a man who brought up sheep from Adelaide to this location before 1864 (Petermann 1867: 440). It was originally called *Akernte* 'carrying pad, worn on one's head'. This is an Arrernte name, given by the two Ancestral Snakes *Yurkunangku* and *Kurkari* who created this spring and who had come from Arrernte country: there is a circle of tall rocks by this spring.

North Hawker Springs was *Wibma-malkara* 'Dreamtime initiation ground'. The whole area is spectacular on account of the barren saline surroundings of the springs. The lower reaches are totally inaccessible by motor vehicle on account of the crumbly soil overlying a base of black ooze and soft mud. Particularly on the upper reaches there are large slabs of gypsum lying about, which glisten brightly in the sunlight. A hill nearby has many dark rocks, which represent the bodies of boys who have been burnt by initiation with fire.

Brinkley Springs was originally called *Wurrunha* 'crane', because the lone box-tree there represented the Ancestral Crane. The list could go on and on.

Later developments

In the late 1880s the railway line was being built on the west side of the ranges and Oodnadatta was reached in 1891. This brought yet more European names for most of the main sidings in Arabana country, like William Creek, Box Creek and Edward Creek, but the impact was not as drastic as on the old main route. On this west side of the ranges many more Aboriginal names survive, along the railway line and the new main road that accompanied it. Although memories of the old stories are fading, these names still tell of their old mythological associations. Thus we have Calthoorinna Creek, from *Kalathuranha* 'turkey', Willyalalinna Creek, *Ulyurlanha* 'old woman creek' and Ingamungina Well, *Inka-mangu* 'yam-forehead': in the 'History' the Rainbow People had found lots of yams in this place and marked it out as their patch. When they came back to collect the ripe yams they found only the little bare stumps, the 'foreheads' of the yams – the Sleepy Lizards had crept in quietly and had stolen the lot.

It seems that, unlike the original explorers, people in the latter part of the nineteenth century fortunately did not have the feeling that this was all new country, which needed to be named. However, even during this period names related to European people and station activities replaced many more of the original names, and so we find names like 'Lambing Creek', 'Shilling a Creek' (someone lost a shilling there in the 1870s) and 'Coffin-Buster Hill'.[1] This applies particularly to places that were important for the pastoral industry. Thus in the area north of the Neales up from Blanket Waterhole we find 'Bronco Peg Yard', 'Woolshed Waterhole', 'Susan Dam', 'Dinnertime Waterhole', 'Canteen Waterhole', 'Wood Duck Bore' and many others.

Neglect of the original names is not surprising as there was little understanding of the nature of the link between country and myth, even amongst the most enlightened. Thus we read in Spencer and Gillen:

> Like all savage tribes the Urabunna people appear to feel the need of accounting for every prominent natural feature in their country and they therefore have recourse to the invention of myth. (Spencer and Gillen 1912: 24)

Nearly 100 years later, when traditions are in grave danger and when in many areas it is too late, we can see that the country inspires the myth, and that the myth is not somehow imposed onto the country.

In the remote areas, the last areas to be explored, names are in danger of being forgotten

Aboriginal placenames in the most remote areas fared better than in the vicinity of stations, but many features that are very characteristic of the landscape remain unmarked on modern maps, though they figure in the mythology and are an integral part of the overall vision. In the areas beyond normal pastoral activities such as the Macumba below Christmas waterhole, all the names are Aboriginal. There is however now another danger: with the movement of Aboriginal people away from those more inhospitable areas, the myths and with them the unmarked placenames in remote country could fall into oblivion. The situation of the names in *Murkarra* 'the Land of Noxious Insects' is an example of this.

'The Wood Duck Boys'

In Arabana country, as in most other places, small local groups clung to their own traditional country until circumstances forced them to leave. There were

people living until about 1900 at the *Katanha* 'louse' waterhole and surrounding areas on the Macumba, in 'the Land of Noxious Insects', far away from what was by then the location of the main station. Further south there were also people living around Wood Duck Outstation, close to 'the Land of Noxious Insects'. The best known of the Wood Duck people was Wood Duck Charlie who guided Gregory (Gregory 1906: 35). The bulk of the population had by then, however, moved to where they could get rations, to sidings on the railway line and to the main stations, Macumba, Peake and Anna Creek. The situation is described by Spencer and Gillen:

> Nowadays the remnants of the Urabunna tribe are gathered together at the few outlying cattle stations, such as the Peake, where in return for clothes and 'tucker' they help in the work of the station. They have long since, except in a very small way, given up the performance of their old ceremonies – even the ordinary corroborees have dwindled down to a mere nothing – and only the older men know anything about, or indeed take any interest in, matters of tribal lore. (Spencer and Gillen 1912: 18)

This information stems from a visit by Spencer and Gillen to the Peake in August 1903. The visitors could not know that at that very time there were certainly young people on the station who took a keen interest in 'tribal lore'. Mick McLean was there: he was able to show us nearly 70 years later where exactly Spencer and Gillen had camped. Mick, along with the other older teenagers, had been ordered by his elders to keep right away and on no account to talk to the visitors. It was certainly not lack of interest that was keeping the young people away.

The mythology of the areas at a great distance from the main stations was particularly endangered. When Wood Duck Station closed down in 1904 there was no permanent Aboriginal (or white) settlement to the east of those main stations, and people gradually lost touch with the areas closest to Lake Eyre. Fortunately in the 1960s there were still people who remembered the stories and names of that landscape. Mick McLean (Wangkangurru) and Arthur McLean (Arabana, both named after Archie McLean, a later station manager) had done their very harsh initial training in station work at Wood Duck. They called themselves 'the last of the Wood Duck Boys'. They knew that country in great detail, and wanted the stories and the names of the places to be passed on. Among their favourite names and stories were those of the noxious insects.

The noxious insects and their country

The places connected with biting insects belong to an area on the north and north-west side of Lake Eyre: they are all on the Noolyeanna map-sheet (Topographic map 1:250 000 SG 53-16 South Australia), an area now without a single permanent habitation.

The Hillier-Reuther map of 1904 is particularly vague about this area, because it was geographically so little explored at that time. Nevertheless, this 1904 map shows written in large letters to the west of the Kallakoopah the name 'Murkara' – the large letters indicate an area name (see Hercus this volume 'Some area names in the far north-east of South Australia'). The Reuther volume on placenames has the following explanation:

> *murka* 'ant', *-ra* 'many'.

> This is the name of the local district, signifying 'Ant Country'. Kirkikirki wandered through this countryside and gave the district the above name on account of the numerous ants. (Reuther 1981, vol. VII entry no. 1176)

Linguistically the explanation is not quite accurate, as *murka* means 'ant-egg' and *-ra* should be *-rra* and is not a plural marker. It is the abbreviated form of the word *-warra* 'side' when used as the second member of a compound. In this context *warra* means 'direction', 'general area'. The name therefore means 'ant-egg area'. It was known to the Wood Duck Boys, but mainly in connection with the story of *Kirrki*, the Kestrel (Hercus and Potezny 1993). It is nevertheless highly likely that this term *Murkarra* was the original name of the whole of 'the Land of Noxious Insects.'

Three pairs of insects are involved:

- Lice (Head-Lice and Body-Lice)
- Ants (Bull Ant and Green Ant)
- Mosquitoes and Marchfly

In the myth none of these insects travel far, they are all localised Dreamings. The Lice and the Ants do not interact with any major travelling Ancestors; only the Mosquitoes and the Marchfly are connected with a major myth, the Rainbow Brothers.

Lice

The northernmost of the biting insects are the lice:[2] *Katanha* 'head louse' waterhole, as mentioned above, was an important camping site until the early twentieth century. Winkie's waterhole (see Kimber this volume) was once

Pintyirrinha, 'body louse (waterhole)' near Ullabaracoola waterhole on the Macumba. The nearby Petirina Yard, marked on the map, represents the Arrernte name *pitherre* for the same sort of louse: the area is on the southern edge of the Alkaowra flood flats, which were shared by the Arabana with Wangkangurru and Lower Arrernte people.

In the opinion of the Wood Duck Boys, both the waterholes connected with Lice had verses by which one could send a plague of lice upon one's enemies. Women owned the body-louse curse, while men owned the head-lice curse. As it happened, the Wood Duck Boys remembered only the women's *Pintyirrinha* body-louse verse, and recalled a spectacular, entertaining and no doubt very rude 'Women's Body-Louse dance' connected with this waterhole. They had seen it a number of times and could therefore sing the main verse. There is another waterhole a little further north, in the channel to the west of Mierantana waterhole, which is called *Thantanha* 'picking (lice)'. This belongs to the same myth. None of the Louse sites with the exception of Petirina appear on modern maps.

Ants

Two vicious ants, *Muku* the Green Ant and *Kalthu* the Bull Ant belonged to the area on the lower Macumba from about seven to about 20 kilometres below the Kurlachidla *Karla-tyidli*[3] 'creek-branch' waterhole, where the two branches of the Macumba re-unite. There are a few small and almost perennially dry waterholes where the two Ants live out their own story, which was still remembered in the 1960s. These waterholes are not named on modern maps. A brief outline of the story is as follows:

Muku the Green Ant in his gigantic ancestral version killed and ate only lizards and was happy like that. *Kalthu* the Bull Ant, who was even more ferocious in his ancestral shape, killed dingoes, usually two at a time but got *Muku* to gut them and cook them for him. Their main camp on the lower Macumba was by a waterhole named *Minti-thakarna* 'pegging together the cleaned out abdomen of an animal ready for cooking'. They ranged as far up the Macumba as Mudlamirka *Madla-mirrka* 'dog scratching' waterhole, which is marked on maps. In the end *Muku* got tired of having to do the gutting and cooking day after day. They had a fight and it ended with *Muku* the Green Ant cutting the Bull Ant nearly in half – that's why he looks almost cut in half today. This happened at a waterhole called *Kudna-purrunha* 'full of guts', i.e. 'guts left in', the place where *Muku* decided to stop doing all the gutting and cooking.

Mosquitoes and marchfly: The travels of the Rainbow Brothers to the Land of Noxious Insects

The third set of insects, the Mosquitoes and the Marchfly, have connections with a longer myth, that of the Rainbow Brothers.

The story of the Rainbow Brothers concerns a much larger area and there were songs connected with it. They are mentioned in other myths when the paths of various ancestors cross the path of the Rainbow Brothers. These Brothers are envisaged as buoyant young characters. When they see the Ancestor *Thunpila* (the Ancestor carrying a dead body) at the *Parrangali* Swamp east of Coober Pedy they sing a verse taunting him: 'at the mouth of the *Parrangali* Swamp, who are you, you ugly foreign devil?' Only one other verse from their history has survived, and only a couple of placenames could be recorded apart from their journey among the noxious insects.

The outline of the story is as follows. The Rainbow Brothers originated in a cave, called the *Wampityi* (Rainbow) cave, close to the road near the new Macumba Homestead. The location is not marked on maps, but is still well known and one man of Lower Southern Arrernte/Wangkangurru descent is nicknamed *Wampityi* because he was born there. It is one of the many sites that do not appear on modern maps. The Brothers set off to find more of their own people and they went to a big *Wilyaru*[4] ceremony at the *Kutakuta* 'spotted nightjar' waterhole on Baker's Creek, a southern tributary of the Macumba that was once named 'Midlarkunha Creek' because it comes from Mt Midlarkunna *Midlarkunha* 'little crow'.

They saw the great fire advancing from the Macumba *Maka-Wimpa* 'fire track' and they got out quickly, travelling to the south-east still looking for more of their own people. *Nhiki* 'here (we are)' called some Rainbow people at the Neckeena *Nhikinha* waterhole. The Two Brothers stayed there for a while and then travelled on to the south-east to a big now unnamed box-swamp once called *Pungaritya* 'bent tree good for building humpies (*punga*)'. On the edge of this swamp is a small watercourse called *Manti-karlanha* (*manti* ?, *karla* 'creek') where there is now the Muntee Kullana Bore. Continuing their journey south from here the Rainbow Brothers struck trouble: they had entered the domain of the Mosquitoes.

They came to Boy Creek *Utaka* 'now then!' (see Figure 11.2). In the middle of the creek are the Mosquitoes *Yuwinya* rocks with a porous-looking crest, which were said to be the main home and breeding place of the Mosquitoes. These rocks (see Figure 11.3) were prominent when Arthur McLean took us there in 1969 – one could imagine swarms of mosquitoes coming out from them. Since then erosion has caused the creek to silt up so much that only the tops of the

rocks were visible in 1994 (see Figure 11.4). It seemed likely that before too long this site would disappear and by now (2008) it may already have done so. This is very sad, as it was much loved by those who knew it and was the source of jokes and entertainment.

Figure 11.2: Utaka, Boy Creek, Laurie Stuart looking at one of the many stagnant pools. Photograph by Vlad Potezny.

Figure 11.3: The Mosquito Rocks in 1969. Photograph by Graham Hercus.

Figure 11.4: The Mosquito Rocks in 1994. Photograph by Vlad Potezny.

The Mosquitoes set off in pursuit of the Rainbow Brothers. The Brothers kept on running and came to a flat-topped hill, which was called *Purrthakanha* 'they bit'. Here the mosquitoes swarmed over the Brothers, whose blood is still there as a small ochre deposit said to be on the western side of the hill.

Matters only got worse for the Brothers as they fled south. There is a conical hill some two kilometers to the west of the modern track: this is called *Murrilya* 'marchfly' and represents this fierce biting insect. The enraged Marchfly joined in the chase (see Figures 11.5 and 11.6). The Brothers ran to a sandhill, which is right by the modern road. This sandhill, called *Yuwinya Mudlu* 'Mosquito sandhill', is the only one in the area and has lots of bushes growing on it: in the story the Brothers ripped out bushes to try and beat off the Mosquitoes. None of these places, not the Mosquito Rocks, the sandhill, the flat-topped hill nor the Marchfly hill are named on modern maps, yet all except the rocks are still quite conspicuous features of the otherwise flat landscape.

Figure 11.5: The Marchfly Hill. Photograph by Vlad Potezny.

Figure 11.6: Where they were bitten. Photograph by Pamela Macdonald.

By this stage the insects began to get weary of the chase. The Brothers ran all the way up the rough rocky hill called *Wadla-alyalya* 'loose rock', 'Wadlalgiya' of modern maps, above the Barlow waterhole. They spent the night there and rushed on the next morning to the sandhill by the Chincardina waterhole *Tyingkardanha* 'breaking wind': it is so called because that is what they did out of sheer relief when they realised the insects were no longer following. The Rainbow Brothers still wanted to put more distance between themselves and the insects and so they travelled on to the south, towards another camp of

their own people staying at a waterhole on *Ngapa-marra* 'new water', the lower Neales River (see Figure 11.7). This waterhole is now called 'Blanket Waterhole', but once it was called *Pilparu Palthiyangunha* 'split by lightning'. Behind all those clouds of biting insects thunderclouds had been following the Rainbow Brothers, and the storm caught up with them just when they had joined their own people at Blanket Waterhole. Lightning struck and split the camp in half. This is a most spectacular site: there are multi-coloured rocks, containing mica, on both sides of the Neales River. These represent the Rainbow people, and in the early 1900s there was apparently a tall and narrow dark rock standing up in the middle of the waterhole, and this represented the thunderbolt. It is said to have been swept away by a flood. The Rainbow Brothers just escaped and continued their travels.

Figure 11.7: Blanket waterhole, the rocks representing the Rainbow people. Photograph by Pamela Macdonald.

As is evident from the stories of just this small stretch of country, 'the Land of Noxious Insects', the myths interact in an intricate way to provide descriptions of the coming-into-being of the landscape: all the striking landscape features are fitted into a web of stories. As traditional people travelled around they recalled these stories and the whole landscape was alive. The original names that have survived give us a glimpse of this.

When the basis of a name disappears

The fate of the Mosquito Rocks raises the question: what happens when a feature that has been an essential part of a placename and of a story disappears?

People were far too attached to their stories to allow this to be the end, and the relationship between site, name and myth was much more complex than a one-to-one relationship. People lived within the myth; it was part of their view of life. If the feature was a tree, a nearby tree or bush took over, regardless of the fact that it might be of a different species.

In the *Kudnangampa* story from the area around Lake Eyre South (Hercus 1978) the Kuyani Ancestor killed the Serpent and watched it still writhing in the Bubbler Spring *Pirdalinha* 'killing' (in Arabana): he is still there by the side of the spring as a tree. It is said that long ago this was a mulga tree, but a needlewood (which has now also died) had 'taken over', and this was of no consequence to the storytellers. A similar situation applies at *Pultyarla* 'gibber-bird' hill, a site important in the Emu History and in the *Urumbula* Native Cat History. This place is not shown on maps, though it does appear, but not in quite the right location, on the Hillier/Reuther map of 1904. It is about seven kilometres to the south-east of the Petirina Yard. The surveyor Bill Jeffery, Arthur Warren (Arabana) and I went there in 1977 on a field-trip with Sydney Stuart, the main singer of the time for the *Urumbula* Native Cat Song Cycle (which is in Arrernte). There is an isolated tree on top of the *Pultyaranha* Hill. The *Urumbula* verse for this site is about a witchetty bush, *Acacia kempeana*. We went all the way up to the top of the hill – only to find that the tree there now was a needlewood, without a shadow of a doubt. This did not perturb Sydney Stuart, who went on happily singing the *atnyeme* 'witchetty bush' verse – the fact that it really was now a needlewood simply did not matter.

A more drastic example is the Coward Spring just off the main Marree-Oodnadatta road, west of Lake Eyre. This was a major site, an 'over-night camp' in the *Urumbula* Native Cat Cycle. It was called *Pitha-kalti-kalti* 'crooked box tree', because of the very special box tree that once grew there in the middle of a bare saline area. The tree had been felled in the very early days of European settlement for making fence-posts, much to the distress of Arabana people, and no tree has managed to grow there since. This made no difference to the name of the place: those few who still remember placenames still call the spring *Pitha-kalti-kalti*.

So even if the silt totally overwhelmed those Mosquito Rocks, the name would traditionally still be there: people might have transferred it to smaller twisted stones by the side of the creek. Laurie Stuart, then aged 84, the most senior Arabana man who was with us on the 1994 visit, though not familiar with the story, implied this: wandering along the bank he saw some of those smaller stones and said "look, here are some more of those Mosquitoes".

This shows that placenames are not only important as showing a glimpse of the Aboriginal view of the landscape, they are even historical within the

framework of the Aboriginal landscape and may refer to features of long ago. This is all the more reason why they should be saved from oblivion. Even in the most remote areas placenames are endangered, especially those that do not feature at all on modern maps. Their loss would leave all of us in a depleted landscape.

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Appendix: Lists of placenames

The following lists refer only to placenames which have been mentioned in the text.

Table 11.1: List of Aboriginal names which have remained on maps

Map Spelling	Arabana
Alkaowra	*Alkawira*
Calthoorinna Creek	*Kalathuranha* 'turkey'
Chincardina	*Tyingkardanha* 'breaking wind'
Ingamungina Well	*Inka-mangu* 'yam forehead'
Kurlachidla Waterhole	*Karla-tyidli* 'creek branching'
Macumba	*Makampa, maka-wimpa* 'fire track'
Midlarkunna (Mt)	*Midlarkunha* 'lesser crow'
Mierantana	*Mayarranthanha* from *mayarru* 'rat'?
Mudlamirka	*Madla-mirrka* 'dog scratching'
Muntee Kullana Bore	*Manti-karlanha*
Neekenna	*Nhikinha* 'here'
Petirina (Yard)	*Pitherre* 'body louse'
Ullabaracoola	*Yura-parkulu* 'two men'
Wadlalgiya	*Wadla-alyalya* 'loose rock'
Willyalalinna Creek	*Ulyurlanha* 'old woman'

Table 11.2: List of Aboriginal names superseded by European names

Original Name	Map Name
Akernte 'carrying pad'	Levi Spring
Anintyurla 'the Arrernte Rainmaker'	Mt Kingston
Kalturruka Karla 'broke up (the windstorm) creek'	Peake Creek
Karla Tyalpa 'creek food'	Anna Creek
Karla Tyurndu 'the wide creek'	The Blyth
Mardi-mangu-mangu 'hairstring on forehead'	William Creek
Midlarkunha Karla 'little crow creek'	Baker's Creek
Miltyirrinha, var. *Milyki-thirri* 'eye gravel(?)'	Dinnertime Waterhole
Ngapa-murilya 'water dried up'	Umbum Waterhole
Ngurla-apukanha 'he (the Ancestor Thudnungkurla) got down there long ago'	Edwards Creek
Papu-thukurlunha 'egg-hollow'	Big Perry Spring
Pilparu-palthiyangunha 'split by lightning'	Blanket Waterhole
Pintyirrinha 'body-louse'	Winkie's Waterhole on the Macumba
Pirdalinha 'killing'	Bubbler Spring
Pitha-kalti-kalti 'the crooked box tree'	Coward Spring
Thundirithanha 'drowned'	Wood Duck (old outstation)
Tyalpiyangunha '(they) cooled down'	Coolabah Yard
Utaka 'now then!'	Boy Creek
Wurrunha 'crane'	Brinkley Springs

Original Name	Map Name
Wangiranha 'nitre-bush'	Woolshed Waterhole in Sunny Creek
Wibma-malkara 'Dreamtime initiation ground'	North Hawker Springs
Yardiya 'spindle'	Peake Telegraph Station and adjacent Freeling Springs
Yatyaparranha 'finches'	Tarlton Spring

Table 11.3: List of names of places that are unnamed on maps

Arabana	Place
Kaparra-yaltitya	Also known as 'Coffin-Buster Hill', north of Umbum waterhole, in the Arabana spring country
Katanha	'Louse' waterhole on eastern Macumba channel
Kudna-purrunha	'Full of guts', waterhole in lower Macumba
Kuta-kuta	'Owlet nightjar', rockhole on Baker's Creek
Minti-thakarna	'Pegging together the cleaned out abdomen of an animal ready for cooking', waterhole in lower Macumba
Murrilya	'Marchfly', pointed hill near Boy Creek
Parrangali	Swamp east of Coober Pedy
Pultyarla	'Gibber-bird', hill to the south-east of Winkie's Waterhole on the Macumba/Alkaowra
Pungaritya	'Bent tree good for building humpies', box-swamp near Muntee-kallana Bore
Purrthakanha	'They bit', mesa and ochre deposit near Boy Creek
Thantanha	'Picking (lice)' waterhole in channel west of Mierantana
Wampityi	'Rainbow' cave on the Macumba road
Yuwinya-mudlu	'Mosquito sandhill' near Boy Creek
Yuwinya-ngura	'Mosquito camp', rocks in Boy Creek

Endnotes

1. This is a small rise on the old track north of Umbum waterhole halfway to Big Perry Spring. It does not appear on modern maps, and seemed to be known only to Aboriginal people. In the 1960s Arabana people practically always used the English name: the old name was 'Kaparra-yaltitya' (meaning uncertain, though the first part is from *kaparra* 'come on'). It forms part of the Fish and Crane History.

2. There may be a distant connection between these Lice and a Louse site with a similar story on the Finke below Mt Dare.

3. *tyidli* is an archaic form of *thidli* 'side-branch', 'finger'.

4. The *Wilyaru* is the main secondary initiation ceremony by cicatrisation. It was widespread in north-eastern South Australia. There is an account of an Arabana *Wilyaru* ceremony in Spencer and Gillen 1899, appendix B: 640ff.

CHAPTER 12

Some area names in the far north-east of South Australia

LUISE HERCUS

Introduction

Area names are a prominent feature of Aboriginal landscape terminology in at least some parts of Australia. This has been discussed for instance by Bowern (this volume). The aim of the present paper is to show that this applied also to the far north-east of South Australia. In the north-east of South Australia and adjacent regions these area names are important in that they transcend 'tribal' divisions. They show that Aboriginal people, though they feel they 'belong' to a particular tract of country traditionally, do not view the whole landscape as compartmentalised. A particular tract is viewed as part of a larger landscape both from the point of view of natural features as well as from the point of view of mythology.

This aspect of the area names has led to a certain amount of confusion with the notion of 'tribal' associations. Mick McLean, the most senior of the Wangkangurru people I had the fortune to speak with in the 1960s was quite clear in his mind:

antha	*Wangkangurru*[1]	*mikiri-nganha,*	*Munathiri-nganha*
I	Wangkangurru	well country-from	high sand dune country-from

'I am Wangkangurru, from the country where we have wells (i.e. the desert country), from the high sandhill country.'

To him, his 'tribal' association was Wangkangurru, and the further explanations simply gave more detail of the area where he came from. His particular area, the 'high sandhill country' belonged to a local group of Wangkangurru people. Some area names however denoted much bigger regions, and they could be shared by several 'tribes'. The area around the lower Warburton, the lower part of the Macumba and the lower Kallakoopah was usually referred to by the Killalpaninna missionaries as the 'Salt Creek country'.

It was shared by Arabana and Wangkangurru to the west, Thirari people to the south-east, and Ngamani and Yarluyandi people to the north-east – not always amicably – as described for instance in a sad story told by Horne and Aiston (1924: 83ff). Wangkangurru people called the area *Marru-papu*: if they came from there they described themselves as Wangkangurru *Marru-papu-nganha* 'from *Marru-papu* i.e. the 'Salt Creek' country'. The same type of description would have been given by a Ngamani person that came from the eastern part of that area, i.e. 'I am a Ngamani person from the 'Salt Creek' country'. An area name may belong to a region that is entirely within one particular 'tribal' country, but it may also refer to a region that forms part of the country of several 'tribes'.

Figure 12.1: The far north-east corner of South Australia, showing area names. Map by Colin Macdonald.

Roderick Wilson, in his unfortunately unpublished thesis of 1981, interpreted the area names as names of subdivisions of 'tribes'. In a way they are, but they may refer to subdivisions of several tribes – a person may be a 'gibber-dweller' and be Diyari or Yawarawarrka: 'gibber country' is an interpretation of the term 'Paridiltya' (see below) used by J. G. Reuther (1981, hence forward referred to simply as 'Reuther') in his volumes VIII-IX which list personal names. Howitt (1996[1904]: 45) speaks of the 'Paritiltja-kana', the 'Paritiltja men' as a subdivision of the Diyari. Wilson however, in his thesis realised that the

description referred "to a much larger area than that intimated by Howitt" and he worked out with perspicacity that the term denoted a wide and not even continuous area of similar gibber terrain (Wilson 1981: 55).

We are fortunate in the case of the far north-east of South Australia in that we have an early record of these names: a number of them are shown on the map drawn in 1904 by H. J. Hillier, the school teacher at Killalpaninna, from the data provided by the missionary Reuther. For further details on this map, see Jones (2002).

Area names refer to country that is special either in landform or in mythology. They represent a different notion from the so-called 'tribe'. It is interesting to note that the Hillier-Reuther map does not in fact give the names of 'tribes', only the names of areas, and it is likely that this reflected to some extent the way in which his informants thought about the country. N. B. Tindale had a special interest in boundaries and may have felt that this was somehow a gap, and on a copy of the map in the South Australian Museum he inserted the relevant names of 'tribes'. He may of course have just been using the Hillier map as a working document to develop and elucidate his ideas on tribal boundaries.

There is almost an obsession with the need for an explanation for every placename. The popular books, particularly the multiple editions of the Reed books, as shown by L. Kostanski's paper in this volume, bear witness to this. However, just as placenames are sometimes not analysable, the same applies to area names. In both cases an original 'meaning' may well have been lost in the mists of time. The area names that are analysable are landform names and mythological names and some are both.

Landform names as area names

Landform names descriptive of vegetation

Marda-purru-purru

This name, 'Mardaburuburu' in Reuther's spelling, is the traditional term for what is now called Sturt's Stony Desert. *Marda* is the Yarluyandi and Mithaka word for 'stone'; *-purru* is the usual 'having', 'full of' suffix in the Wangkangurru language of the Simpson Desert. It is used in Yarluyandi fixed locutions with the same meaning, and with the reduplication of *-purru* the name *Marda-purru-purru* means 'very full of stones'.

This is clearly a landform name that transcends several so-called 'tribal boundaries', and it is written over a wide area on the Hillier-Reuther map. The form in which a name is given on this map obviously reflects the language of the person from whom Reuther got the information. In this case he notes that it was Yarluyandi. The *Marda-purru-purru* area also includes some Yawarawarrka country: the Yawarawarrka word for 'stone' is *mardra* (Breen 2004b: 43). Yawarawarrka people would have pronounced the name just slightly differently from Yarluyandi, but the name was otherwise the same: both Yarluyandi and Yawarawarrka used the suffix *-purru* 'having', but only in fixed locutions (Breen 2004a: 116).

Kurla-purru

The name 'Kurlaburu' in Reuther's spelling belongs to an area to the south-east of Goyder Lagoon. *Kurla* is the Wangkangurru-Yarluyandi name for 'sandhill-canegrass', so the name '*Kurla-purru* would appear to consist of a noun + suffix and would mean 'full of sandhill canegrass'. The area is traversed by large sandhills where the canegrass forms big clumps, which retain the sand around them.

There is some doubt about the accuracy of this explanation, as much of the area is in Yawarawarrka country, and in that language *kurla* means 'burr', 'bindi-eye' (Breen 2004a: 36). This explanation too has some support on the ground: there is no shortage of burrs.

The matter is further complicated in that Reuther must have heard the name from Diyari people and he gives a quite different explanation based on Diyari. He states that *kurla* refers to 'the thigh of an animal', and that *buru* means 'limb, piece, portion, whole' (Reuther, VII: 1027), so that the full meaning is given as 'to leave the legs or bones whole (i.e. intact)'.

The *Kurla-purru* area is not near Diyari country and is right alongside *Marda-purru-purru*, the country 'very full of stones'. The 'full of canegrass/bindi-eyes' explanation is therefore far more likely. If we accept this explanation it would simply be another example of the naming of an area according to vegetation. As noted by others, especially Nash (1997), this is a common phenomenon: "There is widespread evidence that in Aboriginal thought tracts of country are identified by distinctive flora" (Nash 1997: 189).

What we are emphasising here is that the notion of these areas in the north-east of South Australia is a separate concept from 'tribal' area.

Descriptive names involving body-parts

There are a number of landform names that contain words for body-parts: they show a vision of the land as a living body. Most striking are the following two names:

Patharra-midlha-midlha (Wangkangurru), Reuther's 'Pataramidlamidla',

and

Mudlha-mudlha-patharra (Karangura, Yarluyandi, Ngamani), Reuther's 'Mudlamudlapatara'

They are identical in meaning, and thereby illustrate most clearly the fact that area names cross 'tribal' boundaries. They mean '(area) which has box-trees growing at the end of the sandhills'. If one wanted to be technical, these names, like so many placenames, are possessive (bahuvrihi) compounds.

Patharra means 'box-tree' in all the languages of the region, and *midlha/mudlha* means 'nose': *midlha* is the Wangkangurru form of the word. In Wangkangurru (Hercus 1994: 98), as well as in languages very closely related to Diyari, repetition of nouns conveys a diminutive, so 'nose-nose' means 'the very tip of the nose'.

A mountain or hill of any sort is often viewed as a 'head': the traditional name of the Olgas, *Kata-Tjuṯa* 'many heads', is well known. In some languages the actual term for 'head' is even used to mean 'hill', for instance in the Kulin languages of Victoria (Hercus 1986: 201). There is an interesting discussion of the head/hill polysemy in the central-north of the Northern Territory by McConvell (2002: 284). The 'nose' of a sandhill in the Simpson Desert area means the 'tip' of a sandhill, the protruding part of the 'head'. There are very few box-trees in the Central Simpson Desert: there is simply not enough moisture. In these more easterly regions, there is just slightly more rain, and the maximum drainage is to the very tip of the sandhills. This applies even more conspicuously to the places where the outermost channels of Eyre Creek just occasionally carry some water, and box-trees therefore do grow at the tip of sandhills as they face in towards those channels.

Reuther obviously heard the names from both Wangkangurru and Yarluyandi speakers, as both forms of the name appear on the Hillier map. The Wangkangurru form does not feature in his Gazetteer but the Yarluyandi form does. This entry says:

Mudlamudlapatara, Jeljendi:

(this) is the name of a 'district'.

mudla = 'the place where sandhills terminate'

mudlamudla = denotes the termination of many[2] sandhills

patara = 'gum-tree'.

meaning: 'gum-trees at all the sandhill terminals'.

Along the boundary of this 'district' the sandhills end and ranges begin, on the latter are stands of gum-trees. Hence the name. (Reuther, VII: 2406)

Reuther – and presumably also Hillier – never had a chance to see this country, where there are no ranges, but Reuther's basic interpretation still stands.

The following name applies to an area further south, but is just mentioned here because it is typical of the landscape-body connection.

Paṟi-diltya (Reuther's 'Paridiltja')

This name is another nominal possessive compound. It was explained by Reuther:

(This) is the name of a district. Pari or kajiri = 'creek'; diltja = 'sinews', 'muscles, tributaries'. Meaning 'a creek with tributaries'.

By this the Cooper's Creek is meant, with its tributaries. In this 'district' (or region) many tributary creeks run into the Cooper; also (one could say) the Cooper wends its way through the midst of them. The district has therefore been named accordingly. (Reuther, VII: 1705)

This name means 'area which has creeks that are (like) sinews'. It conveys a good picture of the gibber plains, which are crossed by watercourses, the smallest of which are often called 'gutters' by Aboriginal people. These watercourses, dry except after the rare heavy rains, are distributed across the body of the landscape like sinews.

The name of the Strzelecki Creek given by Reuther shows a similar vision of the landscape as a body. It is 'Mandra-parkulu', 'three stomachs', i.e. 'three deep waterholes'. (Reuther, VII: 1090)

Muna-thiṟi

Wangkangurru people use this term to refer to the Central Simpson Desert. Reuther gives the following explanation:

'Muna' = a sloping bank, 'tiri' = flat

Meaning 'for the sloping banks to terminate in a flat'.

(This) is the name of a country region. In this region the sandhills terminate on flat (country) and turn into gibber plains... (Reuther, ?:)

This explanation does not quite give the right picture: *muna* is the ordinary Wangkangurru word for 'human chest', and *thiri* means 'flat area'. This is the land of the highest sandhills: between them are wide plains. The first white explorer who travelled through this country, D. Lindsay, constantly comments on these plains in his journal, for instance: "we went for 'Beelpa' or 'Baalbia', another native well over a very good plain with saltbush, cottonbush and bluebush" (Lindsay 1886: 3). The sandhills rise like heads from these plains, which are viewed as the 'chest' of the landscape, and the name means '(region) where the base of the sandhills (i.e. 'the chest') is flat'.

Muna-warliri

The senior Wangkangurru people never mentioned the name of this area, though part of it must have been in their country. The name is one of the relatively few noted by Reuther from the Wangkamadla people who adjoined the Wangkangurru to the north and east. It appears on the Hillier-Reuther map as 'Munawaliri' and is explained as:

> Muna = a steep bank, waliri = the foot of a hill. Meaning 'steep banks at the end of the sandhills'.
>
> In this area the sandhills extend as far as the Salt Creek which has breached them at this spot. Here lay the territory of the two Kankuwuluna(s), and here the Wonkanguru, Wonkatjari, Wonkamarla and Jeljujanti (tribes) dwell. (Reuther, VII: 1061)

The 'Salt Creek' in Reuther's writing is usually the Warburton, i.e. the lower Diamantina, but here it appears to be also used for a tributary, the lower Georgina or Eyre Creek.

The name '*Muna-warliri*' is parallel to '*Muna-thiri*'. The word *muna* means 'chest' and *warliri,* though not well attested, means 'bank', 'incline', so the whole compound means 'region where the base of the sandhills (the chest) is undulating'. In the eastern Simpson Desert and especially across Eyre Creek the sandhills are not quite as high as in the centre: it is more undulating sandhill terrain.

Area names based on mythology

The territory of the 'two Kankuwuluna' *Kangkuwulunha*

In the notes quoted above, Reuther refers to the *Muna-warliri* area as being also the 'territory of the two Kankuwuluna', and he makes it quite clear that this 'territory' is shared by a number of 'tribes': 'here the Wonkanguru,

Wonkatjari, Wonkamarla and Jeljujanti (tribes) dwell'. The 'territory of the two Kankuwuluna' obviously spans across many 'tribal boundaries', and it is in fact a huge region on the eastern side of the Simpson Desert. This is confirmed by Reuther's comments on another area name, 'Ngamara' (Reuther, VII: 1443). 'Ngamara' is a much smaller stretch of land: he had heard about it from 'Judlajudlanja', i.e. Ulaloinya people who came from the north-eastern edge of the Simpson Desert around present-day Ethabuka and Carlo: "this area (Ngamara) is in the province of the Kankuwulanas". The translator adds a footnote: "this appears to be Reuther's first reference to this tribe".

'Kankuwuluna' is not the name of a 'tribe' at all. The name belongs to two most important mythological beings, the Two Boys, usually referred to now by their Wangkangurru name *Thutirla-pula* 'Boys-two'. They were also known as *Karuwali,* 'Big boys'. *Kangku* means 'boy', 'uninitiated youth', and -*wulu* is the dual marker: this applies to a number of languages on the eastern side of Lake Eyre and further north, including Diyari, Ngamani and Yarluyandi. -*nha* is the widespread proper noun marker.

The story and the songs of the Two Boys represented one of the most important Central Australian traditions, far-reaching in location, ritual and association. The Two Boys killed many colourful birds and put the feathers into their big bag. They travelled east from Dalhousie Springs near the Northern Territory border in South Australia: they went by a circuitous route right across the country of the Simpson Desert Wangkangurru to the country of the Ngamani, Karangura, Yarluyandi, Mithaka, Wangkamadla, Wangkayutyurru and Antekerrepenhe. They brought with them the use of feathers in lieu of paint for important ceremonies, especially the *Warrthampa*, which was the main ceremony for the eastern people.

The 'territory of the Kankuwuluna' refers to that large area on the east side of the Simpson Desert where they travelled and spread the *Warrthampa* cult. It is an area name based on mythology.

Warda-warda (Reuther's 'Wodawoda')

This name is derived from the same myth, that of the Two Boys. *Warda-warda* is only a small area on the eastern side of Goyder Lagoon. The name means 'ceremonial head-dress made of feathers', and Reuther (VII: 2407) associated it with emus. The area is, however, on the track of the Two Boys. They had travelled underground during the easternmost part of their journey through the desert and emerged at the Goyder Lagoon Waterhole. They were allowed to take part in a *Warrthampa* ceremony and they said to the local people 'throw away your paint' and they showed these people how to make colourful headgear and other decorations from feathers. The local people then decided to have a series

of ceremonies using the new type of decoration at various sites around the flat country below the Kooncheree sandhill. This is why that whole area was known as *Warda-warda*.

Kawuka (Reuther's 'Kauka')

Reuther gives the following explanation from 'Jeljujanti' people:

> Kauka = a bush species,
>
> Ngardutjelpani here came across this species of bush, and named the place after it. (Reuther, VII: 817)

'Ngardutjelpani' is Reuther's name for the Ancestral Swan and so he clearly associates Kawuka with the Swan myth.

Wangkangurru-Yarluyandi people still use this name to refer to a large stretch of land, rather bigger than indicated on the Reuther map, on the channels of the lower 'Georgina', i.e. Eyre Creek, and on Goyder Lagoon. This area is subject to periodic flooding and is a major waterfowl breeding ground. According to the myth, *Kuti* the Ancestral Swan created these cane-grass and lignum swamps so that she could lay her eggs, which hatched into all manner of waterbirds from swans and pelicans to the smallest of the little stilts that run along the water's edge. The name *Kawuka* does not appear to be further analysable, and Wangkangurru-Yarluyandi people do not associate it with any species of bush. Apart from cane-grass and lignum there does not appear to be any other type of plant that is characteristic of this waterfowl breeding area. *Kawuka* is clearly an area name that is associated with mythology.

Wabmara-kudna (Reuther's 'Womarakudna')

Wabmara means 'wind' in Wangkangurru and *kudna* is the Wangkangurru form of the widespread word *kuna* 'faeces'. The meaning of the whole compound is 'massive dust-storm', i.e. 'what comes out from wind'. The preferred term in Wangkangurru is more specific: it is *Kanyakarla-kudna* 'what comes out from the hot north wind'. It is not the normal word for 'dust-storm' in Wangkangurru, but a figurative and poetic expression used mainly in recitals of mythology. An exact parallel is *maka-kudna* 'a cloud of smoke', from *maka* 'fire', literally 'what comes out from a fire'. This too was not used as the ordinary word for 'smoke', it was a figurative expression for 'a cloud of smoke'. This metaphorical use of the term *kudna* 'faeces' appears to have been widespread, but because it was stylistic we would expect it to be recorded only in languages where we have extensive data.

We have examples in the most comprehensive of dictionaries, the one by Reuther of Diyari. In this language the word for 'wind' is *watara* and the word for 'fire' is *turu* in Reuther's spelling:

item 930 *watarakudna* = 'a very thick duststorm'

item 929 *turukudna* = 'a pillar of cloud; a column of smoke' (Reuther, IV)

A similar expression is found away to the south in the brilliant dictionary of Parnkalla from Eyre Peninsula by Schürmann. In this language the word for 'fire' is *gadla* (Schürmann 1844: 4): 'gadla gudna the clouds of smoke produced by a running fire'.

The area name *Wabmara-kudna* or *Kanyakarla-kudna* is to some extent descriptive. It refers to the southern Simpson Desert. There is no doubt that this area is prone to the most horrendous dust-storms. The north wind gets there after blowing over hundreds of kilometres of dunes, and so it can truly be labelled 'dust-storm country'. The main reference in the area name, however, is to The Great Dust-storm of the Dreamtime. It happened when the Waterbirds, who had been chasing the Fish, were travelling through this part of the desert. The Ancestral Crane hid from the others, he held up his firestick towards the sun and 'charged' that stick by means of songs to make the sun hotter and hotter. He then called up the north wind to bring a huge dust-storm in order to 'perish' all the other waterbirds. This is one of the main myths of the Simpson Desert.

An area name that is not analysable: *Marru-papu* 'The Salt Creek country'

This name refers to the area around the lower Macumba, the Kallakoopah and the Warburton as they approach the north of Lake Eyre. The waterholes in that area are not permanent and become very saline as they dry out, and people had to rely on soaks. The name *Marru-papu* does not appear on the Hillier-Reuther map of 1904, nor in Reuther's list of placenames. It is, however, a term frequently used by Wangkangurru people. What the name means is totally unclear. The term *papu* is well-known: it means 'egg' in Wangkangurru. There is a word *marru* in Wangkangurru: it means 'beyond', 'on the other side'. People joked about the etymology: Mick McLean, who had learnt something of Western Desert languages over the years, thought it would be strange if the name meant 'kangaroo-egg' from the Western Desert word *marlu* 'kangaroo'. It seemed that *Marru-papu* was one of the names that are simply not analysable.

The work of Reuther, however, gives some indication of a possible origin of the name. Many people from the Salt Creek country came to Killalpaninna. In

his volumes VIII-IX Reuther gives the names of many people who were or had been at the mission. He notes the language group, place where they were born and other details. The majority of these people were born before white contact. Reuther here uses a term 'Maruwapu' which he interprets as 'the Salt Creek area' and he sometimes specifies the location further by adding 'Diamantina', i.e. 'the Warburton' of modern maps. Because the rivers flow together north of Lake Eyre this name includes the lower reaches of the Macumba and it includes the Kallakoopah, which is a branch of the Warburton/Diamantina anyway. There are 25 persons whose place of birth is given as 'Maruwapu' with the occasional explanation 'on the Salt Creek'. The majority of these are Wangkangurru people, but there are about half a dozen Arabana, a couple of Ngamani, and two Diyari. There is a further group of people whose place of birth is not specified and who are described as 'Maruwapula', 'inhabitant of Salt Creek' and this again includes some Arabana and Diyari. The area name 'Maruwapu' obviously refers to exactly the same region as the Wangkangurru *Marru-papu*. It is simply the Diyari/Ngamani/Thirari name.

In spite of being mentioned so frequently 'Maruwapu' does not appear on the Hillier-Reuther map as an area name, though it is given as the name of a specific location with the following explanation:

maru = 'plain; level ground'

wapu = 'a basin-like valley or gorge'

meaning: 'for the basin-like valley to be a level plain'.

Kuruljuruna found this plain, hemmed inside of the local sandhills (and shaped) like a basin. He therefore gave it the (above) name. (Reuther, VII: 1164)

The word *maru* 'plain' is not known in Wangkangurru, but *wapu* 'basin-like area' is a standard Wangkangurru word. We can only guess that the Wangkangurru area name *Marru-papu* represents some kind of popular etymology of 'Maruwapu' – or that the reverse happened, and that the Diyari/Ngamani/Thirari name represents a popular etymology of an ancient and unanalysable Wangkangurru name. All this is just speculation, and the origin and meaning of the area name must remain a mystery.

Summary

In the north-east of South Australia, the area, be it large or small, to which a person belonged, formed an important part of his/her identity. It constituted a very special kind of personal association, different from the 'tribe'. How far this system of special personal association extended remains uncertain. There is

certainly evidence for a similar situation on at least parts of Cape York Peninsula, with area names transcending linguistic boundaries (P. Sutton, pers. comm.). For the north-east of South Australia it has been possible to investigate the area names thanks to the long memories of Aboriginal people and thanks to the great work of Reuther.

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Endnotes

1. There are three r-sounds in Wangkangurru and adjacent languages, and the following orthography has been adopted in both papers in this volume: r = front tap, rr = trill, r̲ = retroflex glide, like r in English.
2. Reuther took repetition to imply plurality. Unfortunate wording like 'sandhill terminals' is due to his translator, P. Scherer, who followed literal accuracy to the extreme, as shown in this extract where he puts 'this' in brackets because it was not there in the German original. This preoccupation is often to the detriment of idiomatic English.

CHAPTER 13

Placenames of central Australia
Early European records and recent experience

RICHARD KIMBER

Early European records 1839-1901

Introduction

> The naming of places usually has some significance with them. A hill, a waterhole or a watercourse may be helpful as landmarks, or as drinking places in their journeys, consequently they bear a name, but objects that serve no useful purpose to them will have no name. It has often been a puzzle to travellers to obtain the native name of some feature of interest. To the native that object may have no interest, and for that reason may never have been named; or, if so, the name being so rarely used, is only known to the old men, who are the geographers of the tribe. 'Locality' is 'largely developed' in all of them as an instinct, and from earliest youth the perceptive and reasoning faculties are trained for the dual purposes of getting about the country and tracking everything that walks or creeps for food. Locality and perception, then, are specialised in every native; in some more than in others. It is a hereditary trait, developed through many generations, and thereby much specialised. (Chewings 1900: 3)

So wrote the central Australian explorer-pastoralist-geologist Charles Chewings in 1900.

How these understandings had developed in the previous 60 years is the subject of the first part of this study, which looks at early European explorers, travellers and bush workers in Central Australia.

Central Australia is defined as that area between Oodnadatta and Tennant Creek in a south-north line, and from border to border east-west in the Northern Territory, with an equivalent extension into northern South Australia, and a bit of blurring about the edges.

Governor Gawler 1839, Sturt, Giles and Warburton

In October 1839 Governor George Gawler of Adelaide, South Australia, from which city and colony all early explorers of central Australia, Leichhardt excepted, set out, "actively promoted the application of Aboriginal placenames". They were to be "inserted in the public maps" when "clearly proved to be correct" (Amery and Williams 2002: 255-256). This order by Government Gazette was followed where the Europeans and local Aborigines had long enough associations for each to learn the others' languages. It was not possible, however, to follow the order when neither could understand the other, which was the normal situation at first contact beyond the frontier of invasion-settlement. The order was also not followed: when the explorers deliberately dissuaded any major contact, as with Sturt in 1844-1845 and many others; when their sponsors desired their own or other European names (not excluding state governors) to be perpetuated, as with Giles in the early 1870s; when the explorers thought it prudent to name features after their sponsors or other well-known figures (e.g. Warburton in the early 1870s); or when the explorers wished to acknowledge other members of their party, including horses or dogs, or members of their own family (probably universal).

Stuart 1860, Jarvis 1864-1866, and John Ross and Alfred Giles 1869-1870

The first Europeans to enter what is central Australia from the South were John McDouall Stuart and party in 1860. During earlier probes well to the south in 1858-1859, Stuart refers to the many Aboriginal names already on record as a result of the work of earlier explorers. He used an Aboriginal man as a member of one expedition, which allowed him limited recording of more Aboriginal placenames, and managed minor discussion with Aborigines who had previously had brief contact with Europeans (Hardman 1975). However, when traversing central Australia he only had other Europeans as members of his party, so his only references which use Aboriginal words (not local Aboriginal placenames) of any kind were clearly learnt from much further south; "mulga scrub", "kangaroo" and "wirilies" (wurlies) are examples (J. B. 1983).

Stephen Jarvis followed Stuart's route north in 1864, having heard from Arabana Aborigines who were at Mount Margaret that there was a very large permanent water called 'Macumba' in the vicinity of present-day Oodnadatta –

the latter a placename derived from a clump of mulga several kilometres north of the town, and meaning 'mulga blossoms', which was not recorded until much later (sighted reference by Jarvis; see also Manning 1986: 122, 157).

Jarvis and his stockmen took stock to the waterhole in the drought which followed in 1865-1866. Then in 1869 and early 1870 the station-manager and explorer John Ross, apparently guided by an Arabana man, formed a sheep-station called 'Manaria'/'Mannaria' in the same area (Alec Ross 1928; Symes 1958: 54-55). 'Manaria'/'Mannaria' is the modern Manarrinna, the name of a hill and a big waterhole on the Woodmurra/Frew Creek near the far north-west corner of Lake Eyre. The first Arabana central Australian placename recorded by any European was thus 'Macumba' in 1864-1866. This name means 'the fire-track' and applies to the Macumba River (Hercus and Simpson 2002: 18; Manning 1986: 122). It was probably not formally recorded until some years later. Moravian and Lutheran missionaries at Killalpaninna and Kopperamanna may well have been the first to do so (see e.g. Jones 2002).

In 1870, when exploring hundreds of kilometres ahead of the Overland Telegraph Line construction crews, Ross mentions Koorakarinna Waterhole on Frew's Creek – for the first time on 16 August 1870. It is actually a little way to the south-east of the Frew on the Koorakarina Creek. Presumably it had been named during the 1864-1869 period, as with Algebuckina Waterhole and 'Cadnia-owie' Creek and Hill much further west, by the present Oodnadatta track: these are referred to on 16-17 November 1870 (Ross n.d.). Alfred Giles, a member of the expedition, kept a much more detailed – though not normally dated – account, in which he stated that the name for Frew's Creek was 'Cookoolinah' (Giles 1995: 18) and, in addition to Algebuckina Waterhole refers to the 'Adminga Creek' (Giles 1995: 65): this name has survived in a more correct form as Abminga, which means 'snake-track' in Lower Arrernte.

'Koorakarinna' and 'Cookoolinah' are one and the same creek, but at different locations: Arabana people referred to the lowest part of the Koorakarinna Creek, near where it floods out, as *Kukurlanha*. In Arabana *kukurla* was the name of a plump little bandicoot, *Isoodon obesulus*. Unfortunately the placename 'Cookoolinah' has not survived on modern maps: the area around the *Kukurlanha* (lower Koorakarinna) Creek was of special importance to Arabana people because of a manganese quarry, and that was probably why the lowest portion of the creek had a special name. This shows how easily Aboriginal names can get wiped off the map, even when they have been recorded.

Giles also mentioned two waterholes which could easily be mistaken for Aboriginal placenames, namely "'Winkey's Waterpool', named after the blackfellow who showed it to Mr. Ross" (Giles 1995: 65); and 'Wow-wow

Waterhole' on Giles Creek (east of Alice Springs), named so because the Arrernte Aborigines met there "had a peculiar way of terminating their sentences with a loud 'Wugh wugh' or 'Wow wow'" (Giles 1995: 30).

It is quite clear that Ross was able to make himself understood to Arabana Aborigines who had previously had minimal contact at Umbum station (south of the Oodnadatta area), and both his and Giles' accounts of contact with Eastern Arrernte Aborigines at waters near the flood-out end of the Todd River country indicate that Ross did his best to talk to them. However, while unable to comprehend the spoken language, he understood them when they used sign language to indicate the direction of other waters, and when they also used signs to indicate that they wanted the Ross party and their horses to leave the waterhole.

A cautiously friendly meeting on a waterhole on the Waite River (north-north-east of Alice Springs) on 25 December 1870 resulted in the record: "a fine young boy of 6 years conversed with me and I only wish I could understand what he said" – a point also made or intimated about other occasional meetings.

W. C. Gosse 1873

W. C. Gosse and his party explored broadly west of Alice Springs. His first Yankuntjatjara word, *carpee* (i.e. *kapi*) for water, was recorded on 4 August 1873 at Ayer's Rock, as he called Uluru, being otherwise unable to comprehend the language (Gosse 1973: 11). Further south, on 8 November 1873 in the Musgrave Ranges in northern South Australia, he recorded the creek-line and water connection as follows:

> These natives call a creek 'caroo'; they pointed down this calling out, 'carpee caroo! carpee caroo,' to make us understand that water was further down. (Gosse 1973: 19)

This appears to be the first clear record of other than the hand-sign indications of the nature and whereabouts of a 'creek' and 'water' in any central Australian language, and was a step in the learning of placenames that is often enough implied in the records, but was not essential if an explorer met Aborigines who led them to or were camped at a water, and the parties were able to make themselves well enough understood to one another. Gosse later gives other examples upon his return to the vicinity of the Overland Telegraph Line which are of this nature, the guides having had minor prior contact with Europeans of the Overland Telegraph Line, and presumably being local Antakirinya people (Tindale 1974: 210, map).

On the Alberga River he refers to the "emu drinking place", apparently his own description rather than a translation of an Aboriginal name, before meeting Aborigines who "spoke of some water lower down the creek, calling it 'Powi'". He camped at 'The Alberga Olarinna Well' (apparently already established as a European well at a traditional water of that name). He was guided to Appatinna Waterhole "which I have called by its native name", and similarly to Murdarinna Waterhole, and was then further guided to Carpamoongana Waterhole on the Hamilton Creek (Gosse 1973: 20-23).

'Larapinta', the Finke River, 1872-1890

Between 4 and 12 August 1872, while camped at Charlotte Waters Telegraph Station, the explorer Ernest Giles was the first 'outsider' to record the Arrernte name for the Finke River. He had discussions during this time with Southern Arrernte Aborigines, who had begun to learn English through contact with Europeans associated with the telegraph line and repeater stations, and recorded:

> During our stay at the Charlotte I inquired of a number of the natives for information concerning the region beyond, to the west and north-west. They often used the words Larapinta and plenty black fellow. (Giles 1979 vol. 1: 7-8)

Although he did not immediately comprehend what 'Larapinta' meant, on 28 August 1872, when well north on the Finke, he noted in his diary that he met two Aboriginal men who had evidently had a fleeting association with Overland Telegraph Line construction workers or staff:

> We made an attempt at a long conversation, but signally failed, for neither of us knew many of the words the other was saying. The only bit of information I obtained from them was their name for the river – as they kept continually pointing to it and repeating the word Larapinta. This word, among the Peake and Charlotte natives, means a snake, and from the continued serpentine windings of this peculiar and only Central Australian river, no doubt the name is derived. (Giles 1979 vol. 1: 17)

Although the modern spelling is different, Giles was correct in his Arrernte name for the river, but not quite correct in its meaning. Certainly the course of the river is perceived as having been made by a gigantic mythological snake but, as will be seen, that is not the literal meaning of Larapinta (this original spelling is retained in the name Larapinta Drive, a deliberate choice of name for the main exit road west from Alice Springs, as it takes one to the Finke River at Hermannsburg. Other Arrernte street-names in Alice Springs appear to have been chosen much more randomly from an old glossary).

During the period 1872-1877 the first pastoral properties were established on the Finke River, one of them being Hermannsburg Mission. As soon as possible the Lutheran missionaries and lay-workers began learning the Western Arrernte language, and during an early reconnaissance of the area in July 1876, Heidenreich appears to have been the first to have confirmed the Western Arrernte name of the Finke River.

> After evening devotion they sprawled out to sleep on the sandy river-bed of the Finke River, which (Heidenreich says) the native people called the earth's Milky Way on account of its multitudinous white sand, and from which the heavenly Milky Way was thought to derive. The native name for the Finke was 'Lara Beinta.' (Scherer 1975: 44)

Scherer, who translated the old German records, adds that 'Lara Beinta' "[properly] — means 'Salt River'" (Scherer 1975). This translation is widely accepted, in that, except in flood, the Finke contains certain waterholes that are constantly salty ('Salt Hole' is the European name of one of the largest, a short distance north of Glen Helen in the head-water country), and during drought even the normally long-lasting fresh waterholes become brackish — a fact recorded in detail by missionary L. Schulze (1891: 211-213). In a very brief note Schulze also touches on the Western Arrernte belief about the Milky Way: "The Milky Way they term 'Ulbaia' — i.e., water-course" (Schulze 1891: 221). The word *ulbaia* is an alternative for *lara*, and in modern linguistic orthodoxy the words are spelt *ulpaye* and *lhere* (Henderson and Dobson 1994: 729).

However, aside from surveyor-explorer Charles Winnecke's variant spelling of June 1886, 'Larra-Pinta' (Winnecke 1890: 1), another complexity was also noted in the early records. On 1 July 1886, Rev. H. Kempe of Hermannsburg Mission wrote a letter to F. E. H. W. Krichauff, who translated it and had it published. He noted "The Finke is called 'Lirambenda'. 'Lira' is creek, and 'mbenda' permanent water and spring" (Krichauff 1886: 77).

These few examples indicate the difficulty for researchers attempting to interpret placenames from limited old ethnographic records, particularly once a language has become extinct — a point well made by several writers in Hercus et al. (2002).

Tietkens 1889

Although, as indicated, the explorer Ernest Giles and then the Lutheran missionaries at Hermannsburg had begun to consider the meanings of Aboriginal placenames, it required the local Aborigines to have had considerable contact with Europeans, and therefore to have learnt considerable 'bush English', before the few *interested* Europeans generally began to comprehend anything about

the meanings of placenames. The explorer W. H. Tietkens, who had shared many experiences on great explorations with Giles, provides an interesting little glimmer on such understandings, yet in the main simply accepted the placenames without attempting to obtain further details.

Tietkens had as one of his exploration party "a black-tracker (Billy, from the ranks of the native police at Alice Springs)", who – later evidence reveals – was a Matuntara man from considerably further south in the Erldunda area. It is clear that he was of great assistance to the party throughout, but that, although he had been west at least to the general Glen Helen area (he identified Mount Sonder for Tietkens), he did not provide Aboriginal placenames throughout the early western travel.

Their first camp was north of Alice Springs at Painta Spring, then by following the northern side of the ranges westwards they came to the second of the Glen Helen homesteads, on the Davenport Creek. Here there was a small resident group of Western Arrernte Aborigines as well as the European manager and station-hands. On 10 April 1889 Tietkens recorded:

> Interviewing the most intelligent natives I ascertained the native names of the principal local geographical features to be: Mount Sonder, Oorichipima; Mount Razorback, Oora-tunda; Mount Giles, Um-bat-thera; Davenport Creek, Indianana; Haast's Bluff Range, Nyurla; Mount Zeil, Willatrika, Mount Crawford, Mareena; creek under Mount Sonder, Oorachilpilla. Oora means fire, and it is somewhat singular that Mounts Sonder and Razorback and the creek of Mount Sonder should all commence with this word. (Tietkens 1993[1891]: 11)

One might say that Tietkens was correctly sniffing the breeze at this time.

Their route then lay westerly via the Arumbara Creek, Nyurla (Haasts Bluff), and then, from an Aboriginal guide from Glen Helen "who was now further in this direction than he had ever been before", Tietkens learnt that they were at Mareena Bluff, at the northeastern end of which was "a spring called Enditta" (Tietkens 1993[1891]: 13. See later for Winnecke's spelling, 'Mereenie', which is the Luritja owner's pronunciation of the time of the Western Arrernte's Mareena).

This was the last of the Aboriginal placenames recorded until, upon their return from Lake MacDonald on the Western Australian border on a more southerly route, they arrived at Erldunda station. Here the European manager told Tietkens that "the highest point in the Erldunda Range is called Ippia by the blacks" (Tietkens 1993: 61). The country now being known to Billy, he guided them to Koolida Spring (later recorded as Coolatta), one of several springs in close proximity, then Elinburra Springs, and via the "many pretty places there"

of his country, as Billy put it, to Imbunyerra Soakage, then into the station and Overland Telegraph Line country at Eringa Waterhole and Charlotte Waters (Tietkens 1993[1891]: 63-67).

Charles Winnecke 1877-1894

Charles Winnecke, as surveyor-explorer, probably traversed as much country in central Australia as any explorer in the period 1870s-1890s. His recording of placenames is as illustrative as any explorer-surveyor of the era under consideration.

When he had been preceded in his survey work by earlier explorers and early pastoralists, he simply plotted the names as they had already been recorded. Most of these were European placenames – the earliest Europeans not having been able to comprehend the traditional owners and vice versa – but by 1878 a few in the vicinity of Alice Springs had been given their Arrernte names. These were Mount Undoolya and Undoolya cattle-station to the immediate east of Alice Springs; Painta Springs to the close north; and nearby Puerta Curla (Winnecke 1882: 2-3). 'Painta' means 'salt', as earlier noted; thus while it was probably descriptive of the water and was not necessarily the original placename, it has, over the intervening 125 years, become the name accepted by local Arrernte people and Europeans alike. (Mounted Constable W. H. Willshire provides an early alternative, 'At-no-rambo' (Willshire 1888: 27), which is probably the original old Arrernte name, but it appears to have fallen out of use.

In his further extensive travels north and east of Alice Springs, both around the northern fringes of the Simpson Desert and north to Tennant Creek, then east across the southern Barkly Tableland country to Queensland, Winnecke was unable to record the names used by Aborigines who were encountered at waterholes and native wells, which is a pity. His only reference of linguistic interest, recorded on 17 October 1878, is to a native well a considerable distance north-east of Alice Springs:

> In a short time, seeing no water coming in to the well, they commenced making a horrible noise, constantly shouting 'Murra co-ki-ja', and getting more and more excited. (Winnecke 1882: 6)

The situation improved remarkably when, on his return to survey work in the Queensland border country in 1883, he began to use Aboriginal guides. This led to an extensive list of references, which, because they include a wider range of physical features than waterholes (though the latter predominate), are now considered.

Winnecke's first Aboriginal assistant was 'Moses', who must have been of the Yarluyandi people of the extreme south-eastern Simpson Desert country judging by his knowledge of country and by the information from Tindale (Tindale 1974: 212, map). He appears to have been a young man, probably in his mid-twenties, although he would have been in at least his mid-thirties if he is, as is possible, the one-and-the-same 'Moses' associated with W. C. Gosse's explorations of 1873 (Gosse 1973[1874]: 1). One can presume that he had left his country in the late 1860s while he was a boy, the family presumably drawn to the exciting potential (as against dangers) of the sheep and cattle stations which were being developed at that time in what later became known as the Birdsville Track country. His task, as was the case with local Aborigines employed by all explorers, was to "point out some waters" along the intended route, which was to link with recent exploration-survey work in the Queensland-South Australia-Northern Territory corner country. Thus, on leaving the Birdsville Track at Cowarie station, Moses guided the party to Kirrianthana Waterhole near the junction of the Derwent Creek with the Warburton River. Then, after a tortuous route at the end of which "a high sandridge, about one mile to the north-east of the well, – called Minkakunna" almost certainly acted as Moses' latter-stage directional guide, to Pooliadinna Well. They next climbed Minkakunna "from which an extensive view all round was obtained" before travelling towards "a well – which he called 'Mickery Pompomponah'". Winnecke does not at this stage appear to have realised that 'mickery' was the term for 'well' in the language of his guide: it is an early European record of the word. While he knew the general location of the well, and was able to guide Winnecke to two small waters (the names of which Winnecke unfortunately does not record) along the traditional travelling route, Moses became 'lost' when nearing it because "he had not seen it or been in this country since he was a little boy". Winnecke, using plans drawn up by a previous surveyor, was able to lead them on to the well. Since it is an early description of a 'mickery', Winnecke's account of 18 August 1883 is now given.

> [We] arrived at the waterhole, which is caused by a break in a sandridge; it is almost circular, and about thirty yards in diameter, and from six to eight feet deep when full; at present it only contains about an inch of liquid and putrid mud, with which, however, we were glad to fill our casks; it has a most vile taste, and caused us all to vomit violently. (Winnecke 1884)

Their route now took them via Minna Hill (previously trigged) to a waterhole "which the natives called Matamurna and Murdamaroo", but which Winnecke called "Warman's Well, after my camel-man". Murdamaroo is the name that has survived on modern maps, not the name of the camel-man.[1]

At this stage Moses deserted the party, not it seems because he was at the limits of his known country, but because Winnecke intended to travel north-westerly into a region Moses had previously "declared – to be all salt lakes and sandridges". This is an interesting comment, which suggests that Moses knew well the nature of the country, probably through knowledge told to him by his parents and grandparents, but also quite possibly because in his childhood he had learnt that it was only visitable after exceptional rains.

Thereafter Winnecke, in pushing north-westward proved the truth of Moses' knowledge and, after visiting Poeppel's Corner on 24 August and continuing north-north-west for nearly two days, veered north-north-east and east for four more days before striking "the Mulligan River at the most westerly bend, and near a fine large and permanent waterhole".

Following this, in September-October 1883, he used another Aboriginal guide when travelling westerly from Sandringham station, situated on Bindiacka Waterhole on the eastern Simpson Desert edge.

> I have a black boy, who has been named 'Blucher', mounted before me on my camel; he has expressed his willingness to act as our pilot into the country to the westward; but as he cannot speak a word of English, and moreover his only knowledge of the country consists in what has been told him by other natives, I presume he will not be a very valuable acquisition to the party. (Winnecke 1884: 5)

Winnecke probably over-stated the case a little, and effectively acknowledged his error by indicating that 'Blucher' was an excellent go-between with Aborigines who were met during travels. He clearly understood their language and was able to assist Winnecke to a considerable degree.

Their route took them from Bindiacka via Boboreta Claypan and Biparee Springs to Boolcoora Spring, near which were Tintagurra Claypan and Springs. Although he lost his perceptions of locality in a dust-storm, and passed one group of springs he appeared not to know, 'Blucher' was able to additionally name Montherida Spring, Alnagatar Spring, Cunja Spring and Apinga Creek – the latter virtually on the Northern Territory-Queensland border. After this 'Blucher' conversed with Aborigines who were encountered, which resulted in the party being guided to waters. These, as they continued westerly into the Northern Territory and for a time north along a creek, were Woonunajilla Swamp, Walcataman Waterhole, Tinnargee Waterhole, Mircirrow Waterhole, Wonadinna Waterhole, Mur-pronga Waterhole and Alanajeer Waterhole. Here 'Blucher' became very ill, and desired to return to Bindiacka. There is no doubt that this was a genuine illness, but it also undoubtedly marked the limits of country with which his kinfolk had any strong ties. They were then in the

near eastern vicinity of the Hay River, which Winnecke named, along with several prominent hills, after Europeans. All other points west to the Overland Telegraph Line were those earlier named by him and Surveyor Barclay after Europeans (Winnecke 1883: 6-8).

Although Winnecke appears not to have had any interest in what the traditional names meant, and in any case may well have been unable to understand 'Blucher' had he attempted to indicate a meaning, the advantage of having a local area Aboriginal guide and go-between to record central Australian Aboriginal placenames is well illustrated by this journey.

The focus on waters is a natural one in desert country, but their variant nature is indicated, and in central Australian terms Winnecke was one of the earliest to also record that a prominent sandhill could have a name.

By 1894, when Winnecke was survey leader of the Horn Scientific Expedition to central Australia, some of the Arabana and Southern Arrernte Aborigines had had 30 years of contact with Europeans; the majority by far of the rest had had 10 to 24 years contact; and the remaining few groups had almost certainly had intermittent peripheral contact (see Stirling 1994: 12 for a complementary note). Although Winnecke applied a large number of European names to features, he also noted that "[throughout] the journey I have endeavoured to obtain the aboriginal appellations for all objects [physical features] seen" (Winnecke 1995: 40). Thus certain of the Aboriginal placenames previously recorded, as well as several in a western loop between Watarrka (Kings Canyon) and Glen Helen, were recorded for the first time. Illustrative of the earlier references is his report that "Idracowra is the native name of Chambers Pillar, and Udrat-namma for the old station" (Winnecke 1995[1897]: 17). During the loop westerly from Kings Creek he used two local Aboriginal men, Mennamurta and 'Arabi Bey' (a word-play on his true name Arrarbi) as assistants to the party, and was thus able to learn that the Luritja name for Giles' Tarn of Auber was 'Toonker-bungia' (which today is recorded as Tjunkupu). He recorded the name Babamamma for the range whose highest point he named Mount Tate, and additionally named Mereenie Bluff, Range and Valley, "– the name 'Mereenie' – [as with all other traditional names] derived from the natives", Tooringoa Waterhole, Oolooroo Waterhole, "a large rain water hole, called Oondoomoolla", and Annaldie Waterhole (Winnecke 1995[1897]: 33-40). He unfortunately became confused about the names for three key features near present-day Papunya, stating that "the words given by different natives are totally at variance" (his ability to understand the guides was insufficient for him to comprehend the significance of the differences), and that they "seem to have no particular name for these imposing geographical features" (Winnecke 1995[1897]: 40). Consequently he named them "Mount Edward, Mount William, and Mount Francis after the brothers, Messrs. Edward, William, and Francis Belt respectively, and the range

to which they belong the Belt Range.'' Winnecke's further record of Aboriginal placenames was Ana-loorgoon Soakage, Koondunga Cave, Arumbera Creek and Andantompantie Waterhole, after which they reached Glen Helen and his Aboriginal guides returned to their home country on Tempe Downs station.

As is evident throughout the preceding records, Winnecke did not record the meaning of the names. This was left to other members of the Horn Scientific Expedition, namely the anthropologist, Sir Edward Stirling; the local ethnographer Frank Gillen (in charge of Alice Springs Telegraph Station); and zoologist Professor (later Sir) Baldwin Spencer, who evidently drew a little of his knowledge from accompanying Aboriginal guides, and confirmed and added to that knowledge with the assistance of Gillen. Even so, direct translations of the placenames were not attempted at this time so much as a recording of the details of the associated mythology (e.g. see Spencer 1994[1896]: 50 for a brief account of the mythology of Chambers Pillar and nearby Castle Rock).

Stirling and other ethnographers to and beyond 1894

Sir Edward Stirling, anthropologist to the Horn Scientific Expedition, appears to have been the first to apply a scientific ''System of Orthography for Native words'', drawing it directly from the Royal Geographical Society of London (Stirling 1994: 138-139). Although he introduced this orthography, and it was used in the Horn Scientific Expedition's publications (with the exception of Winnecke's account), it was rarely followed by the ethnographers of the day. Part of the problem was that many placenames, over the majority of central Australia, had already been formally applied to the maps. Furthermore, the Lutherans naturally enough followed a Germanic tradition, characterised by the *y* sound (of English 'yes') being written 'j' as in 'ja' (German for 'yes'). Meanwhile, most other ethnographers used a system based on the value of letters as they are used in English. Virtually no-one understood that Aboriginal words often started with consonant clusters such as 'nd': hence, in trying to record this sequence, English recorders almost universally commenced the word with 'Un', as in Undoolya/Ndolya (to retain two older spellings). Furthermore in words commencing with 'ng' (the velar nasal ŋ) this nasal is omitted altogether or written as 'gn'. The examples can be multiplied many times over, but it is to Stirling's credit that he at least introduced the idea of scientific recording.

Spencer, Gillen, Cowle and Byrne 1894-1899

By the time of the publication of the Horn Scientific Expedition's volumes in 1896, many Aboriginal placenames, particularly waters of any kind – but also major features such as mountains, rivers and creeks – were known to Europeans. However, the fine detail of the Aboriginal landscape was barely comprehended

at all, in part because strenuous and prolonged hours of work allowed little time for investigation, and in part because Aborigines were considered 'primitive' and therefore with little to offer beyond excellent tracking skills, and assistance as house-maids, shepherds and stockmen. Although he still considered Aborigines primitive (as with almost all other Europeans of the era), Sir Baldwin Spencer of Melbourne University had been stimulated by his experiences on the Horn Scientific Expedition. He was the first to consider the possibility that Aborigines had far more complex societies, including links to the land, than any other outsider had previously realised. He also knew that if he were to scientifically comprehend these matters he needed assistance. Thus three intelligent men, who had been friends in the Centre for one to two decades, were enlisted as Spencer's field assistants. These men were F. J. Gillen, officer-in-charge at Alice Springs Telegraph Station, and formerly at Charlotte Waters for 12 years; Mounted Constable C. E. Cowle of Illamurta police camp, well to the south-west of Alice Springs; and P. M. Byrne of Charlotte Waters Telegraph Station (e.g. see Gillen 1968; Mulvaney et al. 2000; Spencer and Gillen 1968). Between them they contributed hundreds of additional placenames, often with comments on their totemic significance; but it is equally clear that they omitted many more names to allow the narrative to flow. Numerous examples of the finely detailed understandings of the landscape exist; one abbreviated representative illustration, which gives both the placenames and several other sites by description only, now follows.

> At Thungalula – the kangaroo made a large *Nurtunja* [ceremonial pole] and carried it away to Ilpartunga –, a small sand-hill arising where the animal lay down, and a mulga tree where the man camped. Travelling south –, they came to Alligera, where the kangaroo planted his *Nurtunja,* a large gum tree now marking the spot. Hearing a noise, he raised himself up on his hind legs –. A [tall] stone – now represents him standing on his hind legs. After this he scratched out a hole for the purpose of getting water, and this hole has remained to the present day. Travelling south, he came to – [another site], and here erected the *Nurtunja* for the last time, as he was too tired to carry it any further, so it was left standing and became changed into a fine gum tree, which is now called *Apera Nurtunja*, or the *Nurtunj*a tree. (Spencer and Gillen 1968: 198).

It was this kind of detail, repeated in numerous variations for the travelling routes of the many creator ancestors, which caused Mounted Constable Cowle to make comment to Sir Baldwin Spencer. His note, written on 28 May 1900 independently of the Charles Chewings observation in the same year used at the commencement of these notes, complements the Chewings statement.

> I believe that every water hole, Spring, Plain, Hill, Big Tree, Big Rock, Gutters and every peculiar or striking feature in the Country, not even

leaving out Sandhills, *without any exception whatsoever* is connected with some tradition and that, if one had the right blacks at that place, they could account for its presence there. (Mulvaney et al. 2000: 140)

All that was substantially, though not entirely, lacking now was a translation of the majority of the placenames. This was to come in the next 60 years, notably through the works of Rev. Carl Strehlow of Hermannsburg Mission, Geza Roheim and T. G. H. Strehlow. Their contribution could be the subject of another study; my intention, however, has been to consider historical aspects of Centralian placenames only up to the year 1901.

Were tracts without placenames a normal state of affairs?

The emphasis on any study of placenames takes away the consideration of areas without recorded placenames. While it is common to assume that in the last 50,000 years all of Australia was at some stage investigated and lived on by Aboriginal peoples, and in general terms I subscribe to this view, there are sizable 'blank spots'. While it is possible that these 'blank spots' exist because no early recorders discussed placenames with the Aboriginal people who traditionally lived in these areas, in central Australia I think the issue is at least worth considering.

It seems clear that certain inaccessible places had no placenames other than the general defining one. For instance, although large salt-lakes had at least one name, and a named mythological being or beings associated with them, and any islands, prominent features about their edges, and claypans or other waters in their near vicinity also had names (personal records of Pintupi placenames for and about Lakes MacDonald and Mackay on the Northern Territory–Western Australia border), they had either no or very few sites over the broad expanse of their surface. Lake Mackay is unusual in that, when it dried out in past decades, there was a direct south-west to north travelling route across a section of it, which necessitated a family group carrying water and wood for a fire at one night camp before they reached the further shore. However, as I understand, there were not specific named campsites on the Lake along this route. Similarly, there are considerable areas of range country, which, while having numerous named features when viewed from the valleys, plains or accessible high points, also have large sections which are unnamed. They may be accessible enough for the occasional hunting of euros and wallabies, or the collecting of native tobacco, but there are also sections which are too dangerous to climb to or about. That they were created by some mythological ancestor is normally recognised, but whatever waterholes, rock-shelters, crevices or other natural features occur

in such inaccessible places cannot ever have been directly named. Thus while saddles, high points, high caves and other distinctive features may be perceived as the travelling route, home or resting place of some mythological ancestors, and have a placename, the majority of a range may be described more in the nature of being, as a Pitjantjatjarra man told me, 'Pulli-pulli', literally 'stony hills-stony hills'. (These difficult-of-access and inaccessible areas act as refuges for flora and fauna, along with the deliberately managed and protected key fall-back waters and special sacred sites. In the case of the large salt-lakes, after great rains they contain water and food of a quantity and quality sufficient to allow migrating water birds to breed in large numbers, the majority of the birds being naturally protected from human predation by the water and deep mud barriers.)

Numbers of the early explorers' journals also state that there were a considerable number of other areas which were not visited, and therefore must not have contained named sites. Some of Giles' and Warburton's accounts outside of central Australia are quite compelling in a general sense, even if they are also to some extent disputed: but a number of areas within central Australia were also postulated as uninhabited. For instance, in the south-eastern Simpson Desert, the Aboriginal guide 'Moses' as mentioned previously, left Winnecke's 1883 expedition because he perceived that Winnecke was going to push north into an area he had warned Winnecke about. As Winnecke recorded on 17 and 21 August 1883:

> Moses – seems to dislike the country to the northward, and tried to persuade me to leave it alone; he declared it to be all salt lakes and sandridges. I believe he was afraid to venture into the country to the north. (Winnecke 1884: 2-3)

It may be argued that 'Moses' knew and was afraid of the country precisely because he was correctly able to indicate its general nature. However, this may have been a handed-down oral history derived from generations of fruitless probes into the region; and knowledge that the traditional way to travel was to walk east to known waters and loop about the salt-lake and sandridge waste before coming back to wells in the vicinity of Poeppel's Corner. Thus there must have been the potential for it to have been an area that, even if occasionally visited after extraordinary soaking rains, was substantially avoided because it actually did not have any long-lasting drinkable waters, and was therefore too difficult and unproductive to exploit. Certainly Winnecke, who travelled about the edges of the Simpson Desert more than any other early European explorer, and who had already learnt over several years to follow the direction of Aboriginal smokes and the flight of birds to water, recognise Aboriginal burnt patches and track people, and estimate from high points the fall of land and likely places for water, found it as 'Moses' had indicated it would be. He was to travel for four days over salt-lake and sandridge country before travelling

almost six more days over purely sandridge country: the total distance was 205 miles (approximately 300 kilometres) between located waters. A few selected quotations are illustrative, the first from the area approaching Poeppel's Corner from the south-east.

> 22-8-1883. The sandhills or ridges passed over to-day are similar to those previously described; a few small flats in between them produce a little old and withered grass, cottonbush, saltbush, and bluebush. We also saw a few low wattle bushes to-day. The salt lakes seem to increase in number, and apparently extend some distance to the north. (Winnecke 1883: 3)

Similar descriptions follow, except that "gidgea [gidgee] timber" increases in the swales, and spinifex makes a first appearance. On 24 August he records: "A very extensive view is obtained from this [very prominent] sandridge; barren sandridges are visible and extend to the distant horizon in all directions" (Winnecke 1883: 4).

While it is known from the Wells and Lindsay accounts that there were a few native wells in the *near* vicinity of Poeppel's Corner, Wells also found from his Aboriginal guide that he was obliged to travel further east and north to locate any waters at all, while Lindsay's route was effectively east-west returning via a known line of native wells. However, Winnecke proceeded on his north-north-west way over red sandridges (noting the change in colour from white to red), using occasional very high sandhill points to scan the country ahead. There is no indication that he saw any animals throughout this region. Eventually, with the camels very fatigued and still no sign of water, he veered north-north-east, and on the 27th passed "over jumbled spinifex sandhills and sandy valleys". While the vegetation increased, there were still no signs of Aborigines or water. Winnecke concluded on 29 September, the day before he reached a waterhole on the Mulligan River:

> The sandridges passed over during the last few days are similar to those previously described. This country is a perfect desert – I am almost certain that this country has never been visited by natives. (Winnecke 1883)

One can debate this statement, yet it was made by an observant explorer and appears to have been confirmed by the only others to visit the area prior to the last migrations out of the southern Simpson Desert in the period to 1899-1901 (e.g. see Hercus 1985; Hercus and Clarke 1986).

Without referring specifically to the journals, I believe that Davidson's similar 1901 perception of sizable tracts of the Tanami where very old spinifex existed are indicative of a largely avoided area; and that, as Hann and George

found in 1905-1906 and Finlayson in the 1930s, portions of the country between Bloods Range and Warman Rocks in the south-western part of the Centre were also of similar harsh nature, and therefore generally avoided. However, John Ross's 1870-1871 comments of a similar nature with regard to parts of the north-eastern MacDonnell Ranges are less likely to be correct, though they are interesting as an early note about country that he perceived as not to have been of use to Aborigines.

My own experiences when travelling widely in the Tanami Desert with Warlpiri, Mayatjarra and Kukatja (Luritja) people, and in the Gibson Desert– Great Sandy Desert interface with Pintupi people, is that there are numbers of small areas of about 200 square kilometres or so that are considered dangerous and/or 'rubbish' country because they have no water and very little food potential. Traditionally the walking routes went about such areas, or they were passed over quickly by a very direct route: they were similar to the totally unproductive route over the firm salt-surface of Lake Mackay, where the purpose was to reach a known site near the distant shore-line with water, shelter, firewood and food-potential as soon as possible. They have no placenames in themselves, but are affiliated on the periphery into the foraging zone of named sites. These named sites are as though fitted with a dimmer-light: when a severe drought occurs people are more-and-more constrained to the vicinity of the waterhole to conserve energy, whereas after good rains they expand out and away from the waterhole.

Another aspect which almost certainly requires further investigation is Chewings' view. He fully accepts that many localities, such as those which "may be helpful as land-marks, or as drinking places on their journeys", had placenames. However, he also commented:

> [Objects] that serve no useful purpose to them will have no name. It has often been a puzzle to travellers to obtain the native name of some feature of interest. To the native that feature may have no interest, and for that reason may never have been named. (Chewings 1900: 3)

Clearly not every bit of rock, bush or tree could have a distinctive placename, any more than it could in any other society and country, so Chewings must be correct in a sense. However, counter to his view, is Mounted Constable Cowle's 1900 perception that

> <u>every peculiar</u> or striking feature in the Country –, without any exception whatsoever is connected with some tradition and –, if one had the right blacks at that place, they could account for its presence there. (Mulvaney et al. 2000: 140)

It seems to me that both points of view are correct. In the latter instance "<u>every peculiar</u> or striking feature" from an Aboriginal point of view need not be similarly perceived as "peculiar or striking" by Europeans (though a site such as Chambers Pillar is). Much of central Australia is not particularly "peculiar or striking" from either an Aboriginal or European perspective, even if viewed and accounted for very differently. Although there are invariably more Aboriginal placenames than European ones in a given area, considerable tracts of sand-plain, generally similar sandhills, extensive iron-stone gravel areas, and so on, do not have other than general descriptive terms applied, such as *rira* for the gently rolling gravelly country of the Gibson Desert–Great Sandy Desert interface, or 'too much tali' ('too many sandhills') for areas of country in between known and named waters. Similarly, as indicated above, the various rock-faces, and piles of boulders, of a range of hills rarely have individual names in themselves: they are viewed as part of a broader 'Dreaming' ancestor-created feature with a general placename which incorporates a few more distinctive placename sites. The well-known Tjoritja (modern spelling Tyuretye) Hills between the Old Alice Springs Telegraph Station and the original town square of Alice Springs are a case in point. Some features within and about the Hills do have placenames, but most are perceived as part of a complex generally known as Tjoritja. The same applies to many other ranges and hills in the vicinity of Alice Springs, where there are probably more placename sites on record than in any other part of central Australia (see Wilkins (2002: 24-41) for an insightful discussion of placenames in and about Alice Springs).

Elsewhere in central Australia the geological features which are less distinctive in general nature have fewer, sometimes far fewer, names for an extensive area. Thus the Cleland Hills has seven named features (one a generally applied name, 'Nose' to a high point, which is otherwise called by its European name, Mount Winter, or sometimes incorporated in with the name of the nearest large rock-shelter site) and two which appear to have been forgotten. The Highland Rocks – a low and mostly gravelly line of hills with occasional areas of more prominent rocky tracts – have two key named sites (Nyanalpi and Yarritjarra), with two more which appear to have been forgotten. In the case of the latter two, they were referred to as 'Pakuru-gulong', meaning that they were part of the major Pakuru Bandicoot 'Dreaming' of the entire line of the hills, by the last deeply knowledgeable man who had been born at the key western site Yarritjarra (named Wickham's Well by the 1930s explorer-prospector Michael Terry). He had known the two other names in his youth but could no longer recall them.

In brief summary, the richer in water-supplies and useful products a natural 'block' of country, such as a range of hills, is, the greater the likelihood of a dense number of placenames existing. Conversely, the more arid, featureless and also otherwise inaccessible the country, the less likely are placenames to be found.

Learning site names, and difficulties in revisiting sites

I travelled in 1971 with an extended family group between Papunya and Yuendumu in a somewhat overloaded Holden sedan. There were 14 of us inside it, and when the hunter of the group shot a full-grown emu and said, "All the same 15", I had to agree. East of Central Mount Wedge, at the highest point of the road, we paused on the rocky ridge-top, and Henry Tjugadai Tjungurrayi, the senior man and proud grandfather, lifted up his baby grandchild (about six months old), held her so that she was facing south and said, "Papunya, Papunya!" then, turning her so that she faced north, exclaimed, "Yuendumu, Yuendumu!" Everyone laughed with delight at this grandfatherly care and enjoyment of the baby and its happy nature. However, it also illustrates an important point about direction, which is that one keeps it by occasionally glancing behind at discernible known high-point features (mounts in the range immediately south of Papunya), as well as keeping in line by known high points ahead that indicate the whereabouts of the destination.

While it is mostly the women who carry the children to toddler age, and who strongly and obviously influence their learning about all kinds of matters, importantly including social relationships and kinship terms by the age of three, the men also have a role. Both men and women carry the small children in a variety of ways once they are no longer being carried by the women in a coolamon (wooden baby-carrier) and totally dependent on breast-feeding. Depending on age, size, health, alertness or need for sleep they may be held on either hip, conventionally 'piggy-backed', and straddle one or other shoulder or both. Less often the adult places both hands behind his or her back to act as a 'step' on which a child stands; or the adult, with both arms holding the child in, carries the weary or sleeping child horizontally across the small of the back. I believe that this variety of ways of carrying assists Aboriginal children to have a wider range of perceptions of the natural world. It assists in peripheral vision, and teaches people to constantly study and fine-tune to horizons as well as to what is closer at hand. Much of this early learning is to do with studying the natural environment, learning the values of different plants and the tracks and habits of the different insects and larger animals, and learning about the waters and other benefits such as shade, wood-supplies and soft sand at campsites.

When a particular site with an elevation is visited, the learning is specific, but not forced. Thus when visiting a Pintupi country rock-hole on the side of a small rocky outcrop that is part of the Ehrenberg complex, the late Turkey Toison Tjupurrula's son, who was about eight years old, not only learnt the location, nature and name of the rock-hole water for the first time, but Turkey also encouraged his son to come to where he was sitting. Holding him gently, he

pointed out the distant Kintore Range as a home-country site. While he was still explaining the details some zebra finches flew to the near tree, intent on drinking at the rock-hole, at which Turkey's son broke away from the instruction, picked up a stone and threw it at the zebra finches. Since this is what boys do, Turkey did not try to instruct him more in learning about the country.

When adults are being instructed, the same general process applies. Refinements increase, for many sites in sandhill country do not have distinctive high mounts or other features beside them to act as guides. There are innumerable variations in how sites are located, though a majority rely on some known distant feature that can be studied from a high point, and act as a starting-point directional guide to a site in between. If in sandhill country, the east-west trend of the sand dunes in western central Australia is itself a major directional pointer. For instance, when travelling from a small Perentie Dreaming Hill to the near south-west of the Ehrenberg Range to the westernmost Honey-Ant site of Atillili, the late Big Peter Tjupurrula and other senior Kukatja and Pintupi men stood with me on the crest of the Perentie Hill. Big Peter emphasised two points that the senior man of the group, Old Bert (Nyananya, Old Parta or Partaliri) Tjakamarra, had told him: that I must keep a saddle in a far hill to the east as my directional objective, and that shortly before we reached the hill we would sight a large bean-tree, which stood on the edge of Atillili Rock-hole. He reiterated these details about the saddle and the bean-tree, encouraging me to point to the saddle and repeat the two points, then we set off. A sandhill acted as a good general guide. However, when we reached the vicinity of the rockhole, neither the bean-tree nor the rock-hole could be seen. The senior man of responsibility for the site, Old Bert Tjakamarra, was most upset, while the other men felt sorry for him. Old Bert got out of the Toyota, and I accompanied him on what seemed like a lost cause while the other men waited.

We walked along the edge of the sandhill, which was quite low, until Old Bert saw some small dark rocks. He decided to climb to the crest of the sandhill at this stage, as the direction of the now nearby saddle in the hill indicated that we should look to the near south, but we still could not see the tall bean-tree. Old Bert was now very upset, but I suggested that we must be close because he had known where it was in his youth. We walked down the slope of the sandhill towards light mulga, and suddenly Bert sighted another clue. Here there was a line of 'natural' rounded black boulders streaked with white, most of them not much bigger than large loaves of bread. These were the Honey Ant ancestors! The young men! He was now excited, but also puzzled why he could not see the bean-tree. While animatedly talking, and while both looking for the tall bean-tree, we disturbed a wedge-tailed eagle. It flapped slowly up from a grove of light mulga, and Old Bert again became excited. We hurried towards where the eagle had first come into view, and there was the rockhole. The great towering

bean-tree of his youth, last seen perhaps 50 years earlier, was now an ancient fallen tree, with only a tall stump, still sprouting, as a reminder of its former grandeur. Old Bert began singing the Honey-Ant song with all his passion and might as I raced back up the sandhill and drove the vehicle to the vicinity of the rock-hole. Here all of the other Kukatja and Pintupi men joined Old Bert in song.

Atillili Rockhole was in flat granite, impossible to see unless within about 20 metres, and perhaps only two metres in diameter. After they had finished their singing the men joined Old Bert in excited discussion and, since it was a hot day, some lay prone (as is customary) to drink at the water. After he had drunk, Tjunkata Nosepeg Tjupurrula knelt to take a mouthful, held it in his mouth as he tilted his head back, and sprayed the water into the air so that it fell as a cooling shower all over him. All of the men had learnt to do so in their childhood when there was more than was needed for drinking in the hot weather.

And now it was time to move on to the key site, Tatata, guided by ridges in the southern slopes of the Ehrenberg Range; glittering quartz which marked where the Honey-Ant leader had been pleasurably dragged back to his Tatata home by the younger Honey-Ant men after his visit to Atillili, where the bending 'arm' branch of a large mulga tree, now dead when it had been thriving in his youth, pointed directly to the Tatata Rockhole.

An important point about such travel is that, while a direct as possible line may be kept for practical purposes, it is also important at special times to follow the route prescribed by ancestral creator beings, and it is conventional to follow routes additionally prescribed by customary uses of the land, and knowledge of both ease and difficulty of bare-footed walking across the land. This point was observed by considerable numbers of early explorers and other travellers, who rarely understood the reasons for a tortuous or serpentine route rather than a direct route as they could manage by compass.

This kind of difference between Aboriginal people and other Australians was succinctly summed up by the late Tjunkata Tjupurrula who, as with many central Australian Aborigines in the 1970s, was bemused by the fact that Europeans 'made work' when there was no apparent reason to work – and, conversely, paid 'sit-down money' (unemployment benefits) to those who did not work: "White-fellows make work. When they come to a big mountain they make a tunnel. Blackfellows just walk around."

From my experiences in the period 1970-1993 I have learned that the difficulties in finding sites increase markedly when no-one at all has visited a site which is only known by repute; people were under about five years of age when they last visited a site 30 or more years previously; the route is transverse to the trend of the sand-dunes, and no near high points are available as direction

pointers; rains have caused major tree growth that obscures the visibility in traditionally open country; or, conversely, bushfires have destroyed much of the vegetation, including individual 'sign-post' trees or clumps of trees. However, in the latter instance most of such trees appear to be naturally protected by being on largely bare sandhill sections or on rocky ground with little grass to carry a fire.

While these kinds of problems must have occurred less often in the pre-European past, it is nonetheless reasonable to assume that on occasions they were difficulties. Clearly, though, the more often a site was visited by numbers of people in pre-contact times, the more often the fine details of approaches to it and the site itself were likely to be remembered.

Could placenames be lost to, or forgotten by, traditional owners prior to European contact times?

Remembering fine details, and forgetting at least some of them, are part of the human condition for all societies. Aboriginal knowledge of placenames was most refined, and there were means of keeping the placenames constantly alive (e.g. by regularly visiting sites, by the singing of song-verses associated with a mythological trail in correct order; by the consideration of sacred objects in correct order; or by the repetitive telling of stories by rapid sketching on the sand). Nevertheless, the populations with generally good knowledge – let alone the highly refined knowledge of the oldest alert-minded senior women and men – were quite small. Charles Chewings' quotation, in its extended form, reads:

> It has often been a puzzle to travellers to obtain the native name of some feature of interest. To the native that object may have no interest, and for that reason may never have been named; or, if so, the name being so rarely used, is only known to the old men, who are the geographers of the tribe. (Chewings 1900: 3)

That the 'right' or correct senior men of local association and knowledge were required is emphasised by Cowle (in Mulvaney et al. 2000: 140), and clearly in many instances the older women as well as older men either knew directly of such sites or generally understood where they were located.

At this point it is worth mentioning that, although general knowledge of sites, including of sites sacred to men on the one hand and women on the other, was known to both the oldest men and women, the men did not know the fine details of the women's world any more than the women knew the fine details of the men's world (e.g. see Strehlow 1978: 38-39). However, I believe, on the basis of privileged travel with men, women and children of various central desert

peoples, that a wider variety of sites and general areas were known to men than to women. The difference probably owes its origins to the need for men and women to hunt and gather in different localities: women took care of children more often than men, as was necessary when quiet was needed while men were hunting the at times relatively rare kangaroos, emus and other large game. In my experience it is certain that the majority by far of high and relatively difficult-of-access sacred named places are known directly to men only, while lower accessible sites are generally shared by all members of a community, or far less often divided into men's and women's sacred sites.

This altitude knowledge is not a universal 'rule', as women traditionally also climbed quite high to obtain red ochre at Karku in Warlpiri country; to the base of sheer scarp faces and to high rock-shelters in many range sections, mounts and hills throughout central Australia to obtain prized native tobacco; and in the George Gill Range and other sandstone ranges to the large rock-shelters high in the ranges for family and group shelter during wet weather, and to exploit the resources in their near vicinity. Nonetheless, as a general principle, from the mounts of the south-western Simpson Desert to those in the Tanami and Great Sandy Deserts, I believe that the high rocky country, mostly beyond the large easily accessible waters, was primarily the province of men.

Discussions in the 1970s with senior men who had spent their early manhood and middle age in pre-contact situations indicated that, at best, about 13 years occurred between visits to sites of particularly difficult access, while at times as long as 50 years might pass. The same must have been the situation with women's major sacred sites. Knowledge of even such major important sites as these has increasingly been substantially or totally lost during the century and more of contact with the wider society. This must also have been the case, if far less frequently, in pre-contact times during extended periods of aridity which made visits problematic; or because of serious fighting over an extended period. Major epidemics or droughts may have resulted in so many deaths that there was loss of corporate knowledge and consequent focus on a more limited suite of sites than prior to the disaster. There may also have been some catastrophe such as loss of a major access water because of a land-slide or earthquake.

In the case of major, and always named, fall-back rock-hole or native-well waters which are men-only sites, I have been independently told by Eastern Arrernte, Kukatja (Luritja), Warlpiri and Pintupi men that the men traditionally took water-bowls to the sites, filled them, and took them to nearby areas where middle-aged or older fit women carried them one to two kilometres back to the main camp. In such instances the senior women knew the name and general direction of the site, but not the details, which may be quite remarkable in 'natural' forms, paintings, engravings, sacred store-houses, stone arrangements and so on. As an alternative, at a Pitjantjatjarra men's site, the women were

permitted to walk in along the only easy-of-access walking pad to fill their bowls with water, but had to keep their eyes averted so that they did not see paintings in a low rock-shelter or a sacred 'natural' stone in the nearby small water-course (see Strehlow [1971: 341] for similar comments). There appear to be fewer equivalent women's sites; nevertheless, as the senior Aboriginal men must know their location to be able to avoid them, I have also had indicated to me by senior men the location of Warlpiri and Pintupi sites where women alone are permitted to go, or where women are the main users of such sites.

In contrast to this there are sites about which all members of a family, and often many more people, know, yet which are worth mentioning. This is particularly so in the case of places of conception in the central areas and birth in the western areas of central Australia. As Frank Gillen wrote on 14 June 1901:

> Each man woman and child of this tribe [of the 'Kaitish' of the Barrow Creek area] is associated with some natural feature such as a tree or rock this feature marks the spot at which their Alcheringa ['Dreamtime'] ancestor died – Every person now living is the reincarnation of an Alcheringa individual. Generally the natural feature is a tree and it is carefully tended by the man or woman with whom it is associated and who speaks of it as his or her Ilpilla. Often a clear space is swept around its base and dry pieces of bark are picked off and thrown aside. (Gillen 1968: 119)

The following are my own complementary perceptions derived from travels and discussions with senior central Australian men and women over the last 32 years.

In such instances as Gillen described, the knowledge of the site tends to be lost in a century, yet because most conception-sites, and most births, were and often still are in the vicinity of a known water, the tendency for nearby old trees to be revered is very great. This also applies to old trees along a watercourse or other approach route leading to a named water; to large trees at the entrance to a gorge, or along the line of an outflow watercourse or about a claypan; and to distinctive individual trees, clumps of trees, and lines or circles of trees in almost any situation. Old coolibahs, redgums, ghost gums, mulgas, tea trees and fig trees are commonly regarded in this way, and elsewhere old corkwood, desert oak, bloodwood and other large old trees are similarly revered. In some instances, particularly in the vicinity of important waters, certain bushes and tussocks of grass are also perceived in the same way. Whether at some stage in the care of a living individual or not, they are invariably incorporated into the local mythology, which is eternally present.

An important point about this is that it is accepted that old trees die so that, in the case of those trees that are associated with mythological beings rather than a living person (though as above-indicated the two can be inextricably entwined), nearby younger trees are considered the potential replacements, being regarded as the young brothers or sisters, or daughters and sons, of the older trees. However, in the case of men's sacred sites, and at major fall-back waters sacred to all, only old men (in my experience) are normally considered able to nominate the particular replacement tree in any instance of the death of an important tree, the replacement tree being determined not just by proximity, but also by the peculiar individual form of it, which indicates a direct association with the local mythology. This same individuality is applied to stones on a hillside, or at the base of a hill, since – again in my experience – only old men are considered to have the wisdom to be able to determine their significance, to make choices for collection as sacred objects, or to use in adding to or making a stone arrangement complementary to others in existence at a site. Senior women, of course, are the key determinants at those sites specific to women only, but also are the key people when all local senior men are deceased, and where the mythology involves travels and deeds by mythological women.

Few of such trees, or other features such as boulders, are given individual placenames, although some do exist. They are instead more likely to be part of the mythological detail of a locality – the birds which tried to dam the water, the travelling initiates, the dancing women, the travelling emus, the leader of the dingo pack and his followers, and so on.

When, as some of Strehlow's informants stated and demonstrated, they alone as individuals in pre-European times of instruction had learnt song-verses and ceremonies (Strehlow n.d.; implicit in Strehlow 1971), then the chance of loss of knowledge of placenames associated with these same songs and ceremonies must have been very great indeed. Any single unexpected death would have resulted in a treasure-trove of individual knowledge being lost, and any catastrophic event would surely have resulted in very considerable loss of a major group's collective knowledge, including that of placenames. (See Campbell 2002 for a discussion of the impact of smallpox epidemics and other diseases. Although accepting that these disease catastrophes were linked to Macassan, then to European, contact in the last 220 years, the same situation must have prevailed in pre-contact times, if to a lesser extent, because of endemic diseases or drought.)

As final comments on the loss of knowledge, Frank Gillen is quoted from his diary of June 1901:

> The old men are perfect store houses of knowledge and unless the younger men show a special and reverent interest in such matters the old fellows remain dumb as oysters. (Gillen 1968: 123)

He also believed that in some instances the singers of songs did not know the meanings of the words (Gillen 1968: 116-117), and noted that "unfortunately the old men have recently died without imparting any of the important traditions connected with the totem and these traditions are lost forever" (Gillen 1968: 123). Such losses of understanding of meaning, and loss of traditions, must also have meant loss of knowledge of sites of association.

In summary, I believe that while the retention of finely detailed knowledge was normal, so too was the occasional loss of knowledge of the names and whereabouts of sites. Key sites of significance such as drought-refuge waters, or major sacred sites, were unlikely to ever be forgotten so long as numbers of people resided in an area, though the emphasis on their mythological significance at times changed.

Discovering, rediscovering and naming sites

Although the landscape was eternal in central Australian Aboriginal beliefs, we must accept that new names were bestowed on sites in the past, including – as indicated above – that conception and birth-sites could be named by living individuals by taking into account the pre-existing knowledge of the landscape.

Long-term climate understandings, as well as archaeological and ecological knowledge, clearly indicate that regions, or large parts of regions, were abandoned for centuries, if not for thousands of years. People who later re-discovered a landscape would therefore have come upon evidence indicating that past ancestral groups had occupied it. In such instances the evidence at the time of rediscovery as well as that left centuries before, may well have suggested a meaning for a site. For instance, if emus were seen to be regularly visiting a waterhole, and clear but ancient engravings of emu tracks were prominent near the water, then one can envisage that the site might well be re-named as an Emu Dreaming site. Whether this was in fact the original meaning or not could never be known, but the new naming would certainly have a good chance of being related to an earlier one. The same would apply to many other sites.

One can also accept that there was every chance that, with a population rebuilding after a catastrophe and with good seasons to allow the widest possible travel, any sites lost might well be rediscovered, and their names recalled, perhaps through knowledge of an intact song cycle. The same would almost certainly apply if one group permanently took over for safe-keeping the neighbouring territory of a group which became extinct for some reason or other (e.g. an older generation dying, with no young males born or surviving, and the women marrying out of their country over two or three generations); or if a group invaded another's country and, in the ensuing fighting, the majority

of adult males were killed. Regardless of how much knowledge remained and was able to be reactivated (e.g. see Spencer and Gillen 1927 vol. 1: 120-123 for the significance of sacred objects in association with country), in many such instances placenames, songs and ceremonies of association must have had to be totally reinvented. In any *total reinvention* a core of principles would have been applied, and though it seems improbable to me that the original forgotten name could have been reinstated, let alone the same mythological details, songs and ceremonies, this would not have mattered in the long term. The positive dynamics at work in Aboriginal society would have meant that the new information was readily accepted, because it would still have derived directly from the Dreaming, even if a particular person was acknowledged as the composer of the new name, song or ceremony.

Another possibility is that some entirely new travelling ceremony, highly prized by all who received it, may have resulted in additions to, or replacements of, pre-existing placenames by names derived from the new mythology and ceremonies. The site Kolba on the Hale River has some such possibility, in that the Wedge-tailed Eagle song of association was known to only one man in Strehlow's time, its significance apparently having almost totally been lost because of the predominant significance of the travelling Quoll ancestors (sighted diary reference). Sites where a wide range of engraved and, probably to a lesser extent, painted motifs are to be found also suggest changing focus over centuries, if not thousands, of years, and here one can envisage either the name changing, its meaning and mythological association changing, or both the name and the mythology changing. As the late N. Tjupurrula said of Alalya, to the far south-west of Alice Springs, "too many Dreamings, Tjakamarra". Certain of the Dreamings were still known – Emu, Sunrise, Dingo and Snake included – and certain of the "peculiar or striking" features, as well as paintings and engravings of association, were also known, but much knowledge had also been lost in the preceding century (and, in the case of the engravings, centuries).

An alternative to this, of which I am aware occurred at a small site in Warlpiri country, is that it became associated with the larger nearby site, which is approximately two kilometres distant. Although all of the senior men knew of the existence of the small site, the one senior man who had certainly learnt its name in his youth had forgotten its name. No-one present seemed concerned by this, because the nearby large site was the rock-hole which was the key to food exploitation of the area, and associated with it were paintings, engravings, stored sacred objects and stone arrangements. Thus the former small site which had lost its name became as though a small suburb of the larger.

The case of previously unknown sites in well-known territory, which have been discussed by senior Warlpiri, Luritja and Pintupi men with me over the last 33 years, also gives an idea of what traditionally transpired. These sites

were revealed by a flood, during drilling for oil and through drilling for water (a windmill was erected at the latter site). The form of each new site was discussed in whispered fear and excitement by the senior men, a 'Dreaming' association made as a result of over-all knowledge of the 'Dreamings' of the near country and close study of the form and colour of each revelation, and each was incorporated into the pre-existing mythological trail to a nearby site. Of these only the Warlpiri site, being in between two tolerably distant sites on the same trail, has been given a separate name, linking the name of the ancestral being with water. In yet another instance a small, newly European-made hollow in Pintupi country, the result of grader work to make a track, was perceived as the home of a mythological water-snake ancestor because of 'naturally' occurring marks left on the surface by rainwater.

None of these sites has yet had songs or ceremonies of association developed for them, and it seems unlikely to me that this will occur, given general inaccessibility and, for complex reasons, loss of much of the traditional knowledge by the younger generations.

However, in an instance where a far west Western Warlpiri site, unknown to the Pintupi men with whom I was travelling (we had inadvertently travelled north of a known walking route), was discovered, the men considered what site it must be by the following means. First, because it was almost totally obscured by a sandhill, it was understandable that they did not know of its whereabouts, yet its crest allowed them a perspective on distant rocky hills to the south and west well-known to them because they included the birthplace of one of the men and were otherwise on a traditional west-east walking route. Much animated talk followed, identifying these sites and discussing the 'Dreaming' associations. From this discussion and the singing of a 'travelling' song of association with one particular distant site, a site name was determined. The Pintupi men knew, from the nature of the song, from previous associations with Western Warlpiri, and from their general understandings of the landscape, that there must be a good water supply here. While the younger men of the group believed that, by the 'sign' of a millstone and a worn area of rock, they had located the small adjoining rockhole that gave the site its significance (though upon scooping out the sand it was found to be dry), the senior man of the party was sure that another long-lasting water must be available. This man, Arthur Patuta Tjapananga, commenced an examination of the northern exposed area of rock surface while everyone else remained on the crest naming the distant sites and their traditional owners, discussing previous visits to them, and recalling past experiences at them.

At a call from Arthur we gathered where he sat. He pointed to some small green plants near a centimetres-long crevice too small for any person's hand then, using a straight, slender dry stick from a nearby bush, poked it into the

crevice and moved it so that we could hear the sound of splashing water. We all laughed and smiled with delight at the discovery of the permanent water. Arthur explained that, traditionally, it was drawn from its reservoir inside the rock by binding soft tussock grass to the end of the stick, poking it into the crevice, then withdrawing it quickly and squeezing the grass 'sponge' into a *piti* (wooden water-carrying bowl).

Such examples as have been given need no further discussion. Clearly there is a core of information at work.[2]

Moving site names

A suggested potential for change

In that sacred objects were associated with specific sites, I speculate that their long-term movement (see Spencer and Gillen 1927: 120-123) must have had the potential to give weighting to the mythology they depicted and, in rare circumstances, to have altered the mythological weighting given to a 'temporary' storage site that became permanent. This in turn could possibly lead to a change of name. I have no clear evidence of this, but it would seem potentially likely if both sites were on the same mythological trail, and one which was formerly important became abandoned for some reason, e.g. an earthquake destroyed the water or, as in two instances in Warlpiri country, on the one hand destroyed a major 'natural' feature of significance, and on the other destroyed a ridge-top approach to a sacred cave, thereby rendering it inaccessible. In the case of abandonment of a site, the whereabouts of the locality and its site-name would almost certainly become lost to memory quite quickly unless it were a very prominent feature.

Forced and legitimising placename change

A direct change of a series of names was recorded by Norman Tindale in 1933, with follow-up discussion in 1957. As the broad record of movements of people that he records suggests probable loss of association with sites, and therefore loss of placenames, on the one hand, and changes in names on the other, the greater part of the reference is quoted. Tindale indicates that the severe drought of 1914-1915, and loss of native game animals, were the main reasons for these movements, which suggests the likelihood of similar changes having occurred in the past.

> To the west [of the rain-favoured Musgrave Ranges] it was so dry that most of the Pijandjara tribespeople were forced to shift eastward and by 1916

had usurped the territory of the northern hordes of the Jangkundjara, permanently driving them away from the eastern Musgraves. There was a forced southward shift of the Jangkundjara people by from 140 to 160 miles (225 to 250 km). (Tindale 1974: 69)

Much more information on other movements is given before he continues:

The Pitjandjara men now claim the Ernabella end of the Musgrave Ranges as within their territory. One old man informed me in 1933 that, in relating the stories of his tribe to children, he and other older men had arranged stones near Ernabella and had transferred place names and locations of some myths to the new area, so that children could see them. This seemed to be a stage in the actual legitimization of their claims to the country. (Tindale 1974: 69)

This clearly indicates one traditional way of Aborigines making name-changes. However, in his continuation of the comments Tindale indicates that many placenames and the totemic mythology could be lost, but that some of the pre-existing placenames were simply adopted by the invaders.

In 1957 when discussing this matter with some western Pitjandjara men on Officer Creek, – I learned that there were no real totemic places in the eastern area that they were gradually acquiring because of the defection of Jangkundjara migrating to the railway town of Finke and nearby ranches (stations), and indeed they still had only a few names, mostly taken over by hearsay from the Jangkundjara. (Tindale 1974: 69)

The preceding notes indicate that quite a complex situation could prevail, with placenames being moved, sites and placenames presumably being lost and forgotten, and placenames being learnt from others, but having limited meaning.

Site change because of a ritual disaster

Strehlow gives details of a Wedge-tailed Eagle ceremony held "at Uralawuraka, east of Charlotte Waters, in the 1850's or 1860's". During the course of it women and children were able to make use of the nearby water, but were at no stage permitted to witness the actual ceremonies – though they could glimpse the top of a tall ceremonial pole when it was illuminated in the distance by large fires. (In equivalent situations at which I have been privileged to be present, and which I suspect also prevailed during the Uralawuraka ceremonies, the women and children are not permitted to see the ceremonies or hear the songs, so that the Uralawuraka women's and children's camp must have been about 500 metres away at closest, and if a breeze was blowing that carried the sounds of the men's singing, would have been moved further away.)

At one stage 'an unfortunate accident' occurred at the ceremonial ground which, being considered sacrilege by the senior men present, resulted in two or three young men being put to death, and everyone then fleeing from the area. Strehlow continues:

> [None of the site specific eagle commemorative ceremonies] were ever held again either at Uralawuraka or at Akar Intjota. Men belonging to the eagle totem in this area had to be content with performing merely those eagle acts that belonged to them personally. Had no European settlers come into the Centre, it might have been possible for the local group leaders to revive the – [particular] festivals after a lapse of many decades. (Strehlow 1970: 112-113)

This tragic circumstance suggests a way that site names could be lost, although in this instance they were not. However, the late Walter Smith, a man of Arabana descent who had spent his youth at Arltunga (east of Alice Springs), told me a variation of this account. I estimate the events to have occurred c.1860 (that is, similar to the Strehlow estimate). Walter had heard the story in its general outline from old Simpson Desert men, born in the 1850s-1870s, such as Sandhill Bob from the Plenty River, Kolbarinya from the Hale River, and Lalai Lalai from the Poodiniterra Hills. However, he had also been told of the ceremony's short-term revival. It was achieved as follows.

After some 50 or so years there were very good rains and the surviving youngest men who had been present, now very old, determined that the festival should be revived. They discussed the matter with other Eagle men who had rights south and north of Uralawuraka and Akar Intjota and, while the songs and many details of the ceremonies were well-recalled, two problems remained. One was where to hold the ceremonies and, because of residual fear of the site at which the executions had occurred, it was decided to move them to the next site north. The other problem was that none of the men of knowledge could clearly enough remember the body patterns needed for a key element of the cycle. This was resolved by the men calling upon a very old woman, who by that time was living in Oodnadatta. She initially claimed no knowledge at all, as it was clear that such details were restricted to men and, having been present at the women's and children's camp at the time, she knew that deaths had occurred and was fearful for her own life. However the senior men were able to assure her that they only wanted her help, and that she would not be punished in any way.

The ceremonies were revived in c.1910, as previously indicated at the next relatively minor site north, which had sufficient water to become the replacement location for Uralawuraka. This method of solving a problem indicates how a site-name and associated songs and ceremonies could be moved and how the prior site could lose its ritual significance.

Site name change because of death of a key person

Strehlow indicates that all Arrernte people had at least two names, one of them sacred and rarely used, and that those people from key sacred sites might well have as many as four formal names, in addition to other terms of reference (Strehlow 1971: 123, 384-385, 387-388). The same is the case with many, if not all, Warlpiri and Pintupi people with whom I have travelled. Similarly the mythological creator beings could have more than one formal name (Strehlow 1971: 550), and the key elements in a ceremonial song could have 'substitute' words, some of metaphorical nature (Strehlow 1971: 179). The variant names are often greatly different in nature, particularly when poetic imagery is used, so that ceremonial pole, box gum tree and Milky Way can all mean one and the same thing (Strehlow 1971: 179). This suggests that sites almost certainly had alternative names – to make an analogy, perhaps similar to the Adelaide suburb of Glenelg also being referred to as, or directly associated with, Holdfast Bay, 'the Bay', the Patawalonga River mouth, 'the Pat', and 'the Home of the Tigers' or 'Tigerland' (the latter two in reference to the local football team). There are even the alternative references, well enough known in the Adelaide area, such as 'we're going to visit the Proclamation Tree/the Old Gum Tree', which do not need reference to Glenelg for people to at least generally know of the location, as used also to be the situation with 'the Big Gum Tree' as a meeting place at the Adelaide suburb of Glen Osmond. Local area people normally know all of such references, whereas the further away people live the less likely they are to know more than one or two key references.

In that a person's name could derive directly from a site and mythological creator ancestor of that site, and a person's name was not allowed to be mentioned directly for a considerable time after death (two years is about the time in my experience), this suggests the possibility that a site from which a person derived his or her name must also have had to be referred to alternatively or obliquely after a person's death in at least some instances. Although a name-change would not be at all likely to be permanent in such an instance, the possibility remains that it might have been.

I can recall only one instance of this being specifically mentioned to me. This was while visiting a Pintupi site in Western Australia in the 1980s. The late Uta Uta Tjangala, senior man of knowledge and authority at the time, explained that the particular rockhole had once been known by another name – I believe in either his father's or grandfather's youth – but that, after a man of the same name had been speared to death there, the 'new' name had been applied. No-one at all any longer used, normally mentioned, or in many cases even knew, the old name. Thus I estimate that, in an oral history tradition, a deliberate change of placename would, in normal circumstances, result in loss of collective memory of the original placename in approximately a century.

I suspect that such placename changing was quite rare, in that any site along a 'Dreaming' trail, extensive walking trail or 'song line' tended to be 'fixed' in the way that a site on another country's pilgrimage or old trading route trail is. Although linguists are the only people likely to be able to shed light on such matters, it seems to me likely that some of the archaic references in songs refer, either directly or through metaphor, to older 'extinct' site names.

Site name additions as the result of memorable events or as revealed in dreams

Sites such as these can be either pre-existing geographical features, or Western-world created (such as a station building or bore). In the case of it being event-oriented, similar naming occurs to that in the broader society, sometimes in the local language, sometimes in a form of 'bush English' or sometimes in conventional English. Such names often drop out of use after one generation if only associated with a few people (e.g. Uta Uta Tjangala directed me to a place where he and his brother had camped during heavy rain, which was 'two tree camp'), but can become longer lasting. For instance, a site on the outskirts of Alice Springs has an Aboriginalised pronunciation of 'monkey' as part of it, and probably derives from where a monkey, brought to Alice Springs in the late 1880s or early 1890s, was riding a horse, fell off and was killed.

A revelation in a dream, particularly if translated into a song about a dream-revealed site, is likely to result in an addition to a known body of knowledge about a group's country, which may include the creation of a site-name in the local language. I do not have any good records of such placenames, but from occasional volunteered comments believe that it is not an unusual occurrence, particularly when noted 'doctor' people are involved. Such people, who may be men or women (though men appear to be more commonly recognised), are believed by others, and themselves believe, that they have greater ability than most people to both have and interpret dreams.

In conclusion, site-name changes are made for a variety of reasons, including the result of group movement and the need to assert ownership of sites previously owned by others; because a calamity has occurred which renders a site unusable for some time, so that a near site becomes the replacement focus of activities; because a person of the same name as the site has died and a replacement reference is needed given Indigenous mourning practices; and almost certainly as a result of the changing focus of mythology and ritual at a site over time. Loss of site-name knowledge through deaths of elders prior to them transmitting details, inaccessibility of a site as a result of such as an earthquake or flood, and loss of memory are counterbalanced by revelations about other sites. These might be trees which become significant because people are born beneath their

protecting canopy; outcrops uncovered by the same earthquake or flood which has destroyed or made inaccessible other sites; sites – whether part of the local geography or human-built – where contemporary dramatic events occur; or sites which are dreamed into existence.

Acknowledgements

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Endnotes

1. This site is about 45 kilometres west of Clifton Hill Station at the very furthest edge of the Warburton flood plain, in what was certainly Ngamani country. The two forms of the Aboriginal name are just variants representing Ngamani *Marda-marru-(nha)* 'Stone-flat' + optional proper noun marker *-nha* (Luise Hercus, pers. comm.).

2. I would argue that a very different cultural core, with some of the same key elements, was at work when the first Europeans entered central Australia. Since they were unable to speak the languages of the Aborigines, and vice versa, and as the majority of first-contact Aborigines avoided them or were simply absent from the traversed landscape, they had to make their own way. Their main concern was to find water and food, and in that they were guided by the lie of the land and observed weather and the behaviour of animals, they were similar to the initial Aboriginal explorers of Australia. However, they had the advantage of also being to observe evidence of Aboriginal occupation and, less often, were able to encourage Aborigines to show or guide them to water. Their placenames often included a general descriptive term which indicates the essentially significant nature – Finke *River*, Chambers *Pillar*, the MacDonnell *Ranges*, the Burt *Plain, Glen* Hughes, Ormiston *Gorge*, *Mount* Giles, Alice *Springs*, Ayers *Rock*, *Tarn* of Auber – while at the same time honouring their European supporters, families and placenames.

NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

CHAPTER 14

Naming Bardi places

CLAIRE BOWERN

Introduction

In all cultures, toponyms (or placenames) are important, for they form an integral part of our history and culture. When learning an Australian language, knowledge of the placenames is vital to becoming a fluent speaker. This is especially true of the Bardi language. In Bardi, toponyms are often used instead of relative directional words or deictic markers when giving directions or describing locations. They appear frequently in narratives; it is impossible to follow a conversation or story in Bardi without a good knowledge of the names of places.[1] Older Bardi people also consider placenames to be among the most important aspects of their culture. During the planning for the Bardi dictionary, for example, the senior man who started the project was adamant that mythology and placenames were the most important things to record. Other old Bardi people have expressed concern that younger people no longer know many of the placenames and so cannot describe where they have been; the older people feel this lessens their connection to the land.

In this paper I will explore some topics associated with placenames in the Bardi language and in Bardi country. I look at the structure of naming organisation and argue that the analogy of 'suburbs' in a 'city' is useful to describe the relationship between *booroo* names (see 'Booroo' below) and area names in Bardi country. Then, I make some notes on social organisation and how it relates to place and topographical organisation. Next, I look at the language of the names themselves, their etymology and relationships to story and myth. Finally, I make some comments on current naming practices, including the inclusion of Bardi names on English topographic maps.

The organisation of places and placenames

Bardi traditional country comprises the tip of the Dampier Peninsula, to the north of Broome, and the offshore islands at the western end of the Buccaneer Archipelago. It includes the former Sunday Island Mission and the current communities of One Arm Point and Lombadina/Djarindjin, and the outstations surrounding these communities, as well as the tourist resort at Kooljiman (Cape Leveque). To date, the Bardi dictionary and dictionary supplement contain 535 different placenames, and we still have many blank spaces on the map. On 14 June 2005, the High Court of Australia granted Native Title to Bardi and Jawi people over traditional country on the Dampier Peninsula and the surrounding sea (although not the off-shore islands).

Bardi placenames fall into a number of different types. The types are arranged hierarchically, although not all levels in the hierarchy have a name in Bardi. This organisation can be thought of as somewhat parallel to addresses in English. When we write an address we give the street, the suburb or town, the state and the country. Streets are contained in suburbs, which are divisions within cities. Bardi places are similarly hierarchical – although there were no streets and towns in traditional times, there were districts, areas, and named places and landscape features within these larger areas. In this section I describe placenaming practices.

'Areas'

The broadest named type of placename in Bardi is the 'area'. There seems to be no term for this in Bardi (nor in the other related languages of the area), although the areas themselves are named. Areas in the northern part of the Dampier Peninsula tend to be about a day's walk from one side to the other. There are six main 'areas' where Bardi is spoken.[2] The areas are shown on Figure 14.1.

The northern part of the Dampier Peninsula, north of Beagle Bay, is divided into four roughly equal quadrants (or 'areas'); Goolarrgoon is the north-western area comprising the resort area of Cape Leveque and environs. Goowalgar is the area south of Goolarrgoon, as far as Pender Bay. An alternative name for this area in Robinson (1973: 103) is 'Olonggon', which means 'in the south'. On the eastern side of the peninsula, there is Ardiyol,[3] the area including the community of One Arm Point, and Baanarrad, centred around Galan (Skeleton Point).[4] These names can be etymologised as containing the compass points *goolarr* 'west', *baani* '(south-)east' and *ardi* 'north-east'. The *-goon* of 'Goolarrgoon' is the locative marker. I have no etymology for Goowalgar.

Figure 14.1: Area names where Bardi is spoken
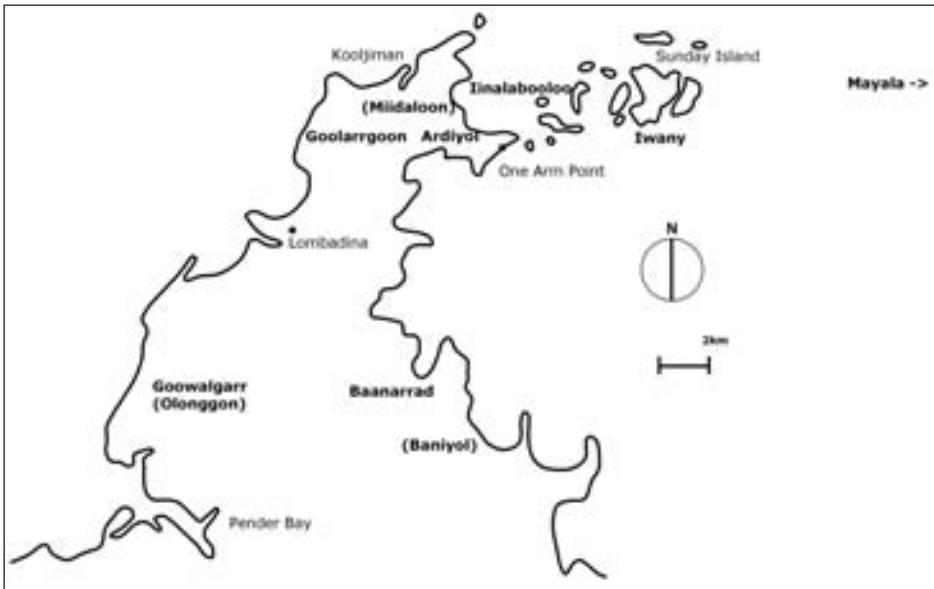
The fifth 'area' is Iwany, which comprises the three islands together called 'Sunday Island' on English maps. It also includes the islands immediately to the north (such as Ralooraloo) and the islands/rocks in Sunday Strait. The sixth area is Iinalabooloo, the islands between Sunday Island and the mainland. Iwany has no recognisable etymology,[5] but Iinalabooloo is from *iinalang-bulu* 'island-dweller'.[6] Another term which may be an area name is Mayala, the name for the islands of the Buccaneer Archipelago east-north-east of Sunday Island.

Perhaps surprisingly, given the usual fuzziness of boundaries in Aboriginal naming systems, the area names seem to be clearly defined (although I do not know if this was also the case in pre-mission and pre-land claim days). Of course the island areas (Iwany and Iinalabooloo) have defined boundaries (the 'areas' do not appear to include the surrounding sea; Sunday Strait, for example, does not seem to be part of Iwany), but old people are also quite definite about the end of Goowalgar (the southern shore of Pender Bay) and the 'border' between Goowalgar and Goolarrgoon. This is in contrast to the locality names (see Foreign placenames), which are less categorically defined.

The 'area' terms are also relevant to a discussion of marriage patterns. In all cases where the *booroo* or area of each spouse is known, they come from different areas. Iwany people seem to have had a preference for spouses from Baanarrad or Ardiyol, and Goowalgar people tended to take their spouses from Goolarrgoon. Some Iwany men married Mayala women, particularly Oowini women from the islands off Wotjalum.

Booroo

Within each area, there are a number of *booroo*. The word translates as 'camp, ground, place' and also as 'time, tide', as in *ginyinggon booroo* 'in that place, at that time'.[7] The group of people who are identified with a particular *booroo* can be roughly equated with the Yolŋu *bäpurru* or 'family' (for which see below). That is, the *booroo* was a patrilineal estate, a place which would be owned by a group which formed an important part of Bardi social organisation.

Booroo are geographically much smaller than 'areas'; for example, there are at least 15 *booroo* in the Goolarrgoon area. The *booroo* names are often also island names; thus Jayirri is both an island and a *booroo*, as is Jalan. Other islands may contain several *booroo*, as for example Sunday Island (Iwany) does.

'Owners' of places are determined patrilineally, and thus fishing and camping rights to particular places are determined by who one's father is. Bardi people also have certain rights in one's *ngiyalmoo*, or mother's country. In the older texts people (particularly men, but also women) are often called by their *booroo* names. The following names are found in the Laves' corpus of Bardi from the late 1920s (Laves n.d.). In some cases the location of the *booroo* has been lost and is recorded only in the name. In other cases, such as Albooloogoon and Narrigoon, the *booroo* location is known.

1. Albooloogoonbooroo
   Gabinyoogoonbooroo
   Galooroonbooroo
   Gamilbooroo
   Goolijoonkoonbooroo
   Gooloorroonbooroo
   Ilordonbooroo
   Joorrbaanbooroo
   Ngiyalbooroo
   Ngoorrgoonbooroo
   Yalyarinybooroo
   Narrigoonbooroo

The late Nancy Isaac has described this practice as like using a 'surname' or alternative designation for a person, although it should be noted that nowhere in my texts are people called by more than one name. One's *booroo* appears to be the primary point of identification for senior Bardi people. For example, older Bardi people tend to answer the question 'where are you from' with the *booroo* and perhaps the area, whereas younger Bardi people tend to give the community, such as 'One Arm Point' or 'Djarrindjin'.

These days some *booroo* names are well known, but many have been lost. The *booroo* names for Sunday Island (Iwany) are only known to the oldest Bardi people. In this case, 'Iwany' is now used the way that 'Jayirri' is used, even though 'Jayirri' was a *booroo*/island name and 'Iwany' was an area term. That is, 'Iwany' is now treated like a *booroo* name rather than an area name. On the other hand, several *booroo* names, such as 'Ngamoogoon',[8] 'Gambarnan' and 'Boolgin' are still frequently used.

A set of example *booroo* names for the Goolarrgoon area is given on Figure 14.2. For further information, see Robinson (1973) and Smith (1987).

Figure 14.2: Booroo names in the Goolarrgoon area
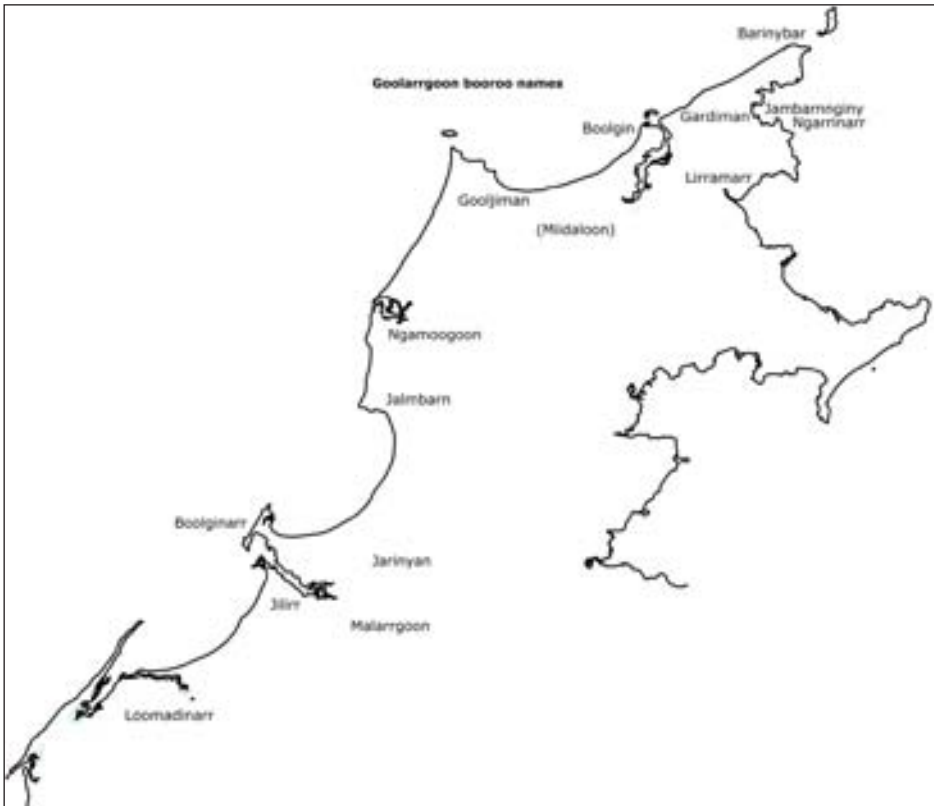
Locality names

Each *booroo* contains multiple specifically named places within it. These may refer to different topological features, such as tidal creeks (*iidarra)*, rocks (*goolboo*), reefs (*marnany)*, caves (*gardin)*, hills (*garrin*) or small bays, or they may refer to a piece of land behind the shore. Occasionally they also refer to

man-made features, such as the large permanent fish traps (*mayoorroo*) around One Arm Point. Locality names typically refer to a feature, but the name will also be applied to the ground surrounding that feature. Thus 'Jaybimilj' refers specifically to two submarine depressions (where fish congregate) in the tidal channel between Iwany and Oombinarr; however it also refers to the stretch of the passage where the depressions are located (the passage as a whole is called 'Jaybi'). See Figure 14.3 for the location of these places. Most locality names are not analysable, although some brief comments are made below in 'Etymology and lexical categorisation of placenames'.

There are few recorded locality names away from the coast line. I do not know if this is a result of loss of traditional knowledge[9] associated with the shift to English, or if it is a relic of older naming practices. I mostly suspect the latter – in the Laves texts, for example, places inland are usually referred to by their *booroo* name, whereas more specific locality names are used for areas along the coast. Bardi people are primarily coastal dwellers and seemed to have seldom camped inland. This makes sense in an area where the sea is a far more fruitful resource than the land, and where there is no permanent surface water (cf. also Smith 1983, 1984, 1987).

While *booroo* names are unique within Bardi country, locality names are not. Thus there is only one *booroo* called 'Albooloogoon', but there are multiple places called 'Mardaj'. Where disambiguation is necessary, the *booroo* name is given as well. Thus 'Jayirri Mardaj' is 'the Mardaj on Jayirri'. 'Iilon' is another common name. The places named 'Mardaj' are all reefs, and places named 'Iilon' are all valleys slightly inland away from the coast.

It is tempting to think of the *booroo* names as 'big names' and the locality names as 'small names' (see Keen 1995) as in Yolŋu and several other Aboriginal areas. In such systems, the 'big name' places are focal sites; they refer to a specific topographic feature and the area around it, although how far the name extends from the focal site is not fixed. Such sites are also often important ceremonial sites and are *riŋgitjmirri* (in Dhuwala), or associated with exchange networks between specific groups. 'Small name' places refer to specific features. Bardi placename organisation differs from this in several ways. Firstly, most *booroo* names do not appear to be focal, although some are; that is, they do not tend to refer to a specific feature and the area around it. Locality names have this characteristic, but *booroo* names do not. Secondly, *booroo* and locality names appear to be thought of hierarchically – thus a locality can be said to be 'inside' a *booroo*. This is not the case for small and big names in Arnhem Land. Small names can occur inside big named places, but they do not have to. Locality names appear to have the properties of both small and big names – thus their

range may extend or contract depending on the knowledge of the speaker or how specific they wish to be. See Figure 14.4 for the non-secret locality names around One Arm Point (Ardiyooloon*).*

Figure 14.3: Some locality names on Sunday Island
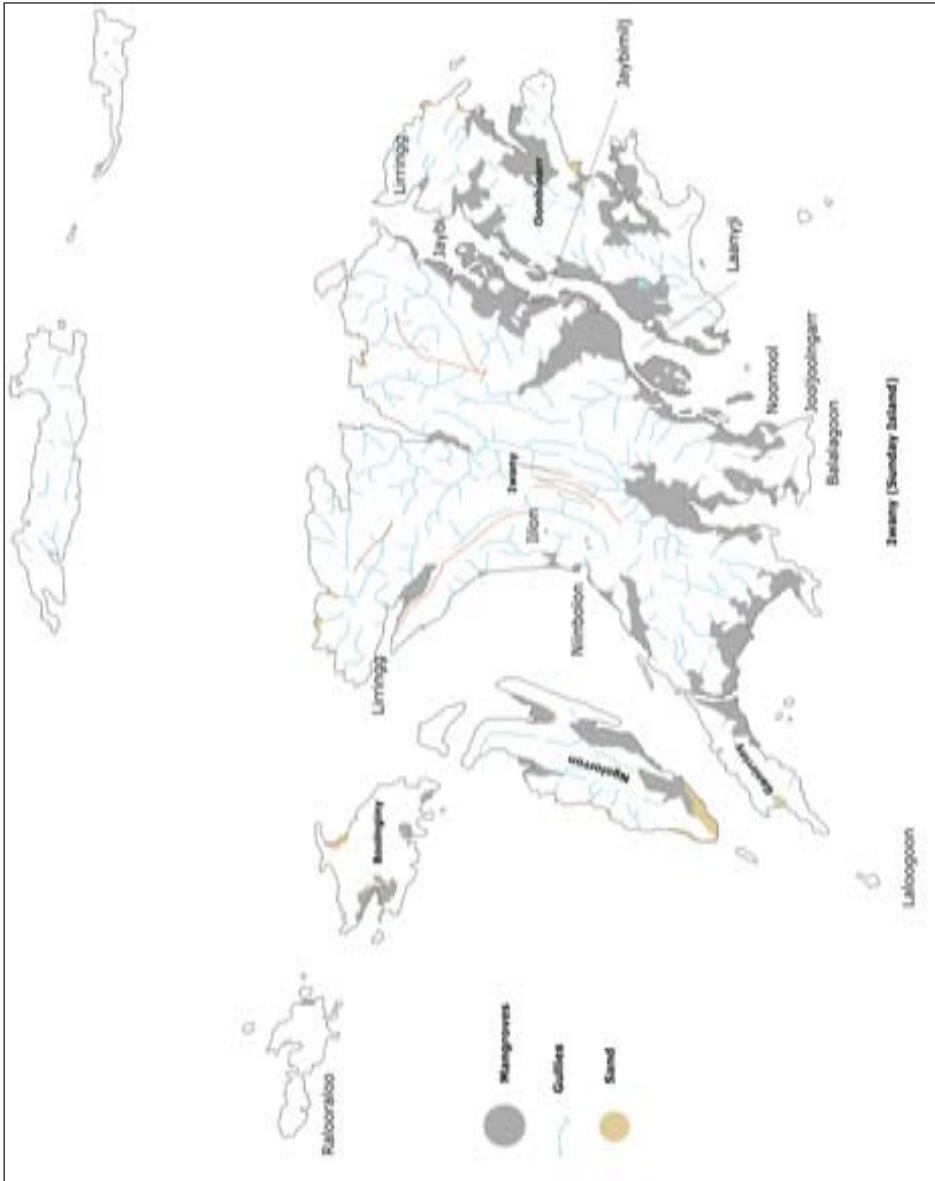
Figure 14.4: Non-secret locality names around One Arm Point community (Ardiyooloon)
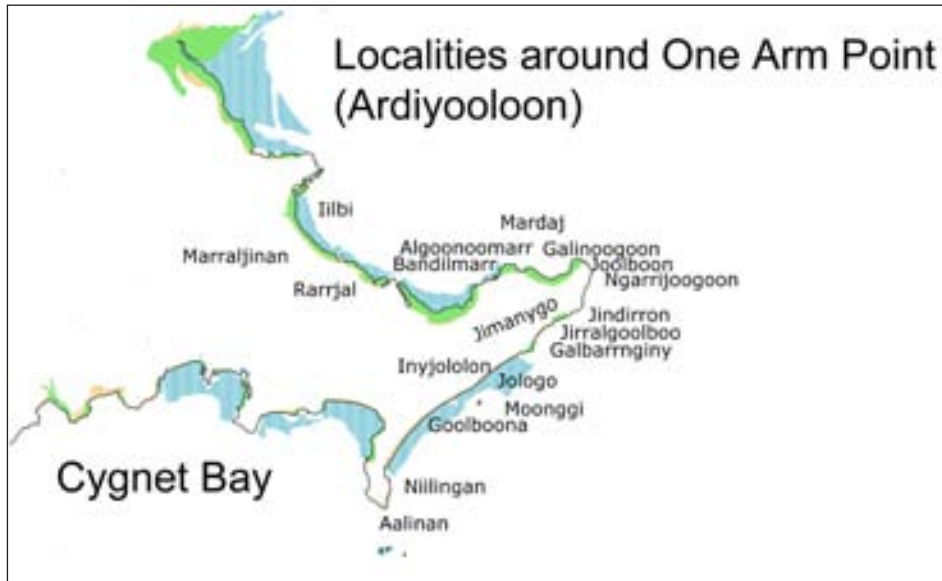
Multiple names for places

I have not encountered any places (*booroo* or localities) in Bardi country with more than one Indigenous name, although there are multiple instances these days of the Bardi name and the European name coexisting. The One Arm Point Community/Ardiyooloon is a good example. Gooljiman/Cape Leveque is another.

It has not been possible to do extensive research involving Bardi names for places outside Bardi country. I do not know to what extent Bardi people have their own names for places outside Bardi country and to what extent they use the names in the neighbouring language. In all examples I have, Bardi people use a name which is clearly not Bardi. The place *Bolg*, for example, which is close to Beagle Bay in Nyulnyul country, is known as 'Bolg' to both Nyulnyul and Bardi speakers (see Figure 14.5).[10] The same is true for placenames I have recorded in Worrorra-speaking areas, as far as I have been able to substantiate (for example, 'Barndijin', in the area of Kunmunya Mission).

Language names and placenames

A comment is warranted on the relationship between area names and language names. The terms for the languages of the Dampier Peninsula are all Indigenous names. The names are constant from language to language and have no etymology. This is in contrast to some parts of Australia, where languages (and ethnic

groups) are known by their words for 'this' (e.g. Dhuwal, Dhuwala, Djinaŋ and Djaŋu in Arnhem Land) or 'no' (such as Waŋaaybuwan and Gamilaraay in New South Wales).

The relationship between language names and placenames is not straightforward. Language and land are inextricably linked through creation stories; the same culture hero who named the places and showed people water on the islands also told people what language they speak. The text is given in examples (2) and (3) in the next section. The places are named in a particular language, and people from a particular place speak a particular language. Thus one finds statements that 'Goolarrgoon people speak Bardi' or 'Goolarrgoon people are Bardi' but not that 'the Bardi language belongs to this area'. Thus language names and area terms seem to be to some extent independent. For example, although Goowalgar is a Bardi area, the Bardi of Goowalgar speakers is often described as 'Bardi coming up Nyulnyul' or 'Bardi mixed with Nyulnyul'. Language terms also have much less clear boundaries than the area terms do.

Other names for places

A few other terms are also in frequent use. *Gaanyga* 'mainland' always refers to the Bardi-owned area of the Dampier Peninsula, not the 'mainland' in general (as opposed to an island). *Nyanbooroonony* 'the other side' always denotes the Wotjalum area on the opposite (eastern) side of King Sound from the Dampier Peninsula. This would seem to be similar to the use of 'the hill' in US English to refer to the Capitol in Washington, DC, or 'the lake' in Canberra to refer to Lake Burley Griffin (never, for example, Lake Tuggeranong or Lake George).

Etymology and lexical categorisation of placenames

Having described the system of placename organisation in Bardi, I now turn to the etymologies of the placenames in the language. Most *booroo* terms seem to have no etymology. A few contain the locative marker *-goon* (e.g. Ngamoogoon, Ngarrigoon) but the roots have no known etymology. The following comments apply mostly to locality names.

Descriptive names

Some locality names are clearly relatable to Bardi common nouns. 'Laanyji' 'seaweed' is one, an area of thick seaweed on the south-eastern part of Sunday Island, near the channel between Oombinarr and Iwany (see Figure 14.3). There

is also a locality with the name 'Noomool', 'seaweed'. Boolngoorr, a peninsula on the northern side of Jayirri island, is homophonous with *boolngoorr(oo)* 'middle', and it is between two other peninsula (see Figure 14.5).

Figure 14.5: Examples of descriptive locality names

In addition to the placenames where the name is obviously descriptive, there are many Bardi placenames which are relatable to common nouns but where the significance of the name is not apparent. 'Aalinan' (also known as Gilbert Rock) may be related to *aalin* 'fish hawk' (the suffix *-an* is the Jawi purposive suffix, cognate with Bardi *-ngan*). A few islands are paired into *boordiji* 'big' and *moorrooloo* 'small', such as Boordiji Ngaja and Moorrooloo Ngaja ('Big *Ngaja*' and 'Little *Ngaja*' respectively) in Mayala.

While many names are topographically descriptive, there is little evidence, if any, for a classificatory system of the type frequently found in European placenaming (as pointed out for other Australian languages by Hercus, Hodges and Simpson 2001: 15). A few placenames involve the word *nankarra* 'forehead', which is also used for promontories. There is also a certain amount of body-part/topographic feature polysemy (e.g. 'ridge' = 'back' (both *niya*)), but this

body-part polysemy is not nearly as extensive as in some other languages (such as in the Yolŋu subgroup). Locality names do not seem to be classified into, for example, 'mountain' names (compare English Mount Hagen, Mount Ainslie), 'island' names (Treasure Island, Bathurst Island, Long Island) or river names (the Mississippi River, the Snowy River).

Placenames with *-ngarr*

These names are associated particularly with Worrorran-speaking areas. They are consciously associated with the islands in the Mayala group. For example, when we were trying to identify the places of names given in stories in the Laves corpus, on several occasions Jimmy Ejai and Bessie Ejai (my consultants) said that a place must be in an area "because it sounds that way, that language has *-ngarr* on its places".

Placenames with *-ngarr* are not restricted to the islands shared with Worrorran areas, however, nor to the parts of Bardi country which strictly border it. They occur on Sunday Island (Iwany) and a few do occur on the mainland. 'Jooljool<u>ngarr</u>', for example, is a place on Sunday Island.

Foreign placenames

The islands in the Buccaneer archipelago (Mayala) are Yawijibaya and Unggarranggu[11] country, but Bardi people have traditional rights of fishing, trochus gathering and access to various places. Some of the placenames in this country are clearly not of Bardi origin. *Blog,* for example, is the only word in the Bardi dictionary to contain an initial consonant cluster. The reef where Jooloo met the Moonyjangiid people is always called Brue Reef (or, occasionally by English speakers, Blue Reef, but Brue Reef seems to be the older, correct name). Bardi people say it is the English name, but no one has used the old Bardi name for it in living memory.

These days many placenames of English origin are also used by Bardi people. The area around One Arm Point (Ardiyooloon) contains several localities with both English and Bardi names, such as Factory/Bandilmarr, Hatchery/Algoonoomarr, Airstrip/Jimanygo, and Middle Beach/Galbarrnginy (see Figure 14.4). Further south, 'Skeleton Point' is more frequently used than the Bardi name 'Mardnan'; the same is true for Cunningham Point/Garramal. However, some places are always called by their Bardi names, such as 'Jologo beach' (the swimming beach at One Arm Point). The English name 'Middle Beach' is only used by visitors to the community.

Names given by Galaloong and other culture heroes

Many placenames in Bardi country are said to have been placed there by the Bardi culture hero Galaloong. The relevant text (in a version told by the late David Wiggan to Gedda Aklif) is given below:

2. *Jarri inanggalanan Galaloong boonyja booroo Nyoolnyool Banyiyola, nyalabalboora nirirr injoonoo. Booroo injoombarna irrnga, inamana irrnga booroo ginyingg aamba, irrngirrngi arrooloongan booroo barnanggarr.* …
Galaloong has been everywhere, Nyulnyul country and Bardi country, he's been along the edge of everywhere. He's been counting the names, this man 'put' the placenames, and we use those names now. (1-2)

3. *'Ginyinggamba joogarra ngaanka Bardi.' Ginyinggon barnin injoonoojirr, 'barnin arraman barnimorr. Oola joogarra jiibi inin, biidini joogarra oola niiminiimi, joogarra oola,' injoonoojirr.*
'This is your language, Bardi,' (he told them). Then he told them, 'do things this way. Here is your water, your rockholes, your soakages in the ground and in the sand,' he told them. (10-11)

A set of other (gender-restricted) names for certain localities was given by another culture hero. Some discussion of this topic can be found in Worms (1949, 1952, 1957).

Placenames and songs

Unlike some of the better-known Aboriginal culture areas (e.g. Arandic, Arabana, etc.), Bardi placenames are seldom overtly associated with a particular song or narrative story, or if they are, it does not form part of the name. For example, the southernmost bay on Iwany, Balalagoon, is strongly associated with a mythological raiding party of people from a Worrorran-speaking island (identified only as part of the Mayala group) who attacked people camped at Jooljoolngarr but who turned into dugongs when fleeing. The place has strong associations with the story – for example, the place is frequently described (in English) as ''Balalagoon, you know, the place where those men turned into dugongs''. The place is not, however, named specifically from that story, and if Balalagoon means anything, it would be most likely related to *balala* 'spinifex fishtrap'.

This is not to say, however, that Bardi people do not have song lines similar to those documented for northern and central Australia. Many song lines beginning in Worrorra and Ngarinyin country to the north-east of the Dampier Peninsula pass through the Dampier Peninsula. Some of these stories do not appear to be gender restricted in Worrorra, but they are in Bardi and are not

further discussed here.[12] Some localities have gender-restricted names and are associated with initiation rituals and with key events in the lives of culture heroes.

Placenames seldom appear in song language, even when the songs describe events located in specific areas (such as the events told in Billy Ah Choo's *ilma*, or public song cycle). Even though *ilma* songs are set within a narrative framework, they are episodic in that each *ilma* verse describes an episode of the story in very abstract and metaphorical language. Prose interpretations of *ilma* verses always contain the places where the *ilma* verse is taking place, even though the *ilma* verses themselves almost never do. In the one case I have found of a placename in a song text, the song name for the place is different; it is 'Balalbalal', whereas the usual name is 'Balalbalalngarr'. See Bowern (in preparation) for more details about Bardi song language.

Giving directions and describing places

In the previous section we considered the etymology of various placenames and their relationship to other parts of the Bardi lexicon. Let us now turn to the role of placenames in grammar.

Saying where something is

Placenames are used much more frequently than the deictic system (or absolute directions such as compass points) when giving directions or describing a journey. My inquiry on how to get to Lalaram from One Arm Point, for example, was answered by a list of the main places between Sunday Island and Lalaram. Compass points are seldom used either, although they do sometimes appear at the beginning and ends of texts. This is illustrated with the beginning of the story about *Iidool*, by the late David Wiggan, which starts with a woman travelling north and looking east and west for a 'promise husband' for her daughters. The placenames and direction terms are in bold:

4. 1:   ***Nyoon*** *inanggalanan gooyarranyarr bo.* **Biyambarr** *nyalabon* **ardi** *abarrabarr injoonan, arra oolalana aamba gorna aamba darrgal. Aamba oolalana arra.*

         A woman lived **there** [nyoon] with her two daughters. She wandered in the **Biyambarr** area, **north-east** [ardi], because she hadn't found a proper man (for her daughters to marry). She didn't see any men.

    2:   *'***Barda** *ngankayagoorr,' injoonoojirr boyinirr.*

         'I will take you both **away**,' she said to her daughters.

3:   *'**Goolarr** ngankayagoorr barda **baanarr** ginyingg aamba nganggimi aamba balngarrinjoon joogarr aamba.' injoonoojirr.*
'I'll take you **west** [goolarr] and away **east** [baanarr] I'll look for this man, a promise husband for you.' She said this to them.

4:   *Ginyinggo **nyalaboo** roowil ingirrinyan, nyalab garra garra garra garra, nyalaboo boor boonyja boor nyalaboo **Garnmanyi** jarri **Barndijin**.*
She walked **this way** [nyalaboo], she walked and walked and walked until she got to **Kunmunya** [Garnmanyi], on **Barndijin Station**.

In the first line, the narrator tells us that the woman wanders around in the Biyambarr area, and that it's *ardi* 'north-east' of One Arm Point. Then in line three, the woman uses *goolarr* 'west' and *baanarr* 'east' as generic directions for where they will look for a husband of the appropriate marriage class for the daughters. Then in the next line the narrator uses the relative directional term *nyalaboo* 'this way' (towards the speaker) and two placenames, Garnmanyi 'Kunmunya' and Barndijin. The result is thus a combination of very generic directions (e.g. *barda* 'away [from speaker]') and specific locations, which are not very helpful for someone who does not already know where all these places are. Of course, until recently, anyone listening to the story would have already known the relative location of all of these places.

Use of English directionals

When older Bardi people give directions, they often use the following words, which are not used in the same way that they are used in standard English:

5.   inside
    outside
    the other side
    this side

'Inside' refers to a place that is inland, or up the hill, from a coastal site. 'Outside' is the opposite, and is a place which is off-shore. It is not used for locality names within *booroo* names; for example, Mardaj is not said to be 'inside' Jayirri. 'This side' is always the mainland and surrounding islands of the Dampier Peninsula, while the 'other side' is always Yawijibaya/Umiida country. I assume that the English usage is a direct calque of Bardi *nyanbooroonony* 'on the other side'.

Placenames in grammar

The word *ninga* 'his/its name'[13] can refer to both a person's name and the name of a *booroo* or locality. In example (2) above, for example, the speaker tells us that Galaloong counted and put on the map the *irrnga booroo*, literally 'their-names place[s]'. Placenames have a few features which set them apart from other nouns in the grammar.

Bardi placenames cannot productively bear the locative case *-goon*. The phrase 'at One Arm Point [Ardiyooloon]', for example, is translated as *Ardiyooloon,* not **Ardiyooloonkoon*. Many placenames appear to have the locative case marker as part of the name, so the lack of locative marking may reflect an avoidance of double-inflection. Alternatively, since many words for topographic features (e.g. *garrin* 'hill', *morr* 'road') do not take locative inflection either, it may be a semantic restriction rather than a morphological one. Placenames can take allative and ablative inflection, which would further argue against the analysis of null locatives as a prohibition on double-inflection. Some examples are given below: (6) and (7) show zero locative inflection of a location noun and a placename respectively. (8) shows allative inflection on a placename.

6. *Wayibalajininim jagoord ingirrini biila* **ginyingg** *morr (*ginyinggon morr)*.
   'The group of white people returned on that path.' (Metcalfe 1975: 83)

7. *Niimana jarda aarli* **Ardiyooloon**. *Gorna aarli marlinngan*.
   'We have many fish at One Arm Point. They are good fish for eating.'

8. *Arra marl oolirrgal roowil ingirrinyana barda garr joodinyko*
   Nilagoonngan.
   'Without stopping, they continued to Nilagoon.'

A locative marker *-i* has been recorded on a few placenames. It is only permitted on placenames, and not on other nouns:

9. *Marroogoon*, **Galani** *nyoonoo, baarnka, Jibaji aarlon inanggalanana*.
   'At Marroogoon, at **Galan** there, outside, Jibaji was fishing.'

English names in Bardi country

When Europeans came to Bardi country and made maps of it, they used some of the Bardi names in addition to making up their own. The survey maps of Bardi show both European names (mostly English, and a few French) and attempts at spelling Bardi. There are several tourist maps of the Dampier Peninsula, although most also cover at least the Western Kimberley and give few placenames in Bardi country. Those that are given are always the English names ('Curlew Bay', 'Thomas Bay', 'Goodenough Bay'). There are 1:250 000

scale maps of the whole of Bardi country, and 1:100 000 maps of parts, including One Arm Point and Sunday Island. In the following discussion, 'the maps' refer to Geoscience Australia's 1:100 000 and 1:250 000 topographic maps.[14] They were made between 1973 and 1983.

Names of European origin

Many of the bays and islands in Bardi country, and a few of the high points of land, were named after topographical features (e.g. One Arm Point, High Island) or after people (Dampier Peninsula, Cape Leveque) or their ships (Beagle Bay, Cygnet Bay). One Arm Point is so named because the peninsula is curved like the 'arm' of a semicircular bay; however, there is no corresponding arm at the opposite side of the bay. High Island rises steeply from the sea. The Dampier Peninsula is named after William Dampier, who landed in Bardi country in March 1689 to replenish supplies of water. Cygnet Bay, the bay where he stopped, is named after his ship.

Adaptations of Bardi names

Some names on the Geoscience Australia maps are clear English renditions of Indigenous Bardi names. 'Poolngin', for example, is clearly 'Boolnginy'. The final *ny* in the Bardi orthography represents a palatal nasal, which has been missed in the English rendition of the name. 'Alorra' is 'Ngolorron', missing the initial *ng* or engma (a frequent change in Anglicising Indigenous names). 'Lalowan' is another adaptation, from 'Laloogoon'.

A further few names are clearly Bardi, but refer to the wrong place. For example, 'Tyra' Island is clearly Bardi 'Jayirri', but the name on the Geoscience Australia map refers to 'Manboorran', the smaller island to the south. 'Jayirri' itself is given the name Jackson Island.

Two names, Tyra (= Jayirri) and Tallon (= Jalan) appear to show depalatalisation. The modern Bardi name has a palatal stop [j], while the name is recorded on the map with <t>. Some of the oldest wordlists have this correspondence in some words, and the Jawi dialect of Bardi also has this correspondence in some forms (cf. Jawi *dool* ~ Bardi *jool*, both 'kneel'). The forms on the topographic maps could be evidence of a now-completed sound change which had not reached Jawi at the time the names were recorded, or they could be mishearings.

Ralooraloo, on the published maps as 'Salural', may be a typographical error. Bardi trills are often devoiced, and sound to speakers of European languages like an *s*, but devoicing would not occur in this position. It is most likely to be a typographical error, or a misreading of handwriting.

In one case, it is impossible to tell whether the name is Bardi or English. There is a resort at a place called Middle Lagoon, which in Bardi and Aboriginal English is pronounced [Miid(a)lagoon]. This name could be either the Aboriginal English pronunciation of 'Middle Lagoon', or 'Middle Lagoon' could be the English adaptation of an Indigenous placename 'Miidalagoon'. Note that there is no lagoon in the vicinity, so if it is English the origin of the name is a puzzle. 'Miidalagoon' would be an unlenited form of 'Miidaloon', a name that occurs twice elsewhere in Bardi country. Another name where the direction of borrowing is uncertain is Chile Creek, which is Bardi 'Jilirr'.

Assorted misunderstandings

Finally, some names in the area have come about through misunderstandings of the Bardi names for the places.

The former mission and now Community of Lombardina/Djarridjin (or Djarrinyin) is one example. It is variously spelled 'Lombadina' or 'Lombardina'. The original name seems to have been based on 'Loomarrdina', the area where Jilirr creek enters the sea. At some point, however, it appears to have been etymologised as 'Little Lombardy'.

Metcalfe (n.d.) records a place called 'Oolarda', given as the Bardi name for 'Dish Island'. The Bardi name is actually 'Diiji' (and probably not related to English 'dish'), which seems to have been later associated with English 'dish' and back-translated into Bardi as *oolarda* (coolamon). It may have been a pun amongst Bardi people when Metcalfe was compiling his dictionary.

Conclusions

Thus in conclusion, we have surveyed some of the issues involved in studying Bardi placenames. We have seen that toponyms are organised hierarchically, and that this type of organisation is rather different from that seen in some other, well-studied, parts of Indigenous Australia. We have also seen that Bardi placenames come from many sources, although not all of them are identifiable. We have also examined how toponyms form a distinct subclass of nouns in the language.

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Endnotes

1. Research for this paper was carried out with funding from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (G2001/6505 and G2003/6761) and the Endangered Languages Foundation. Their support is gratefully acknowledged. I owe an immense debt to the Bardi people who have taught me their language and their placenames, who took me out to show me their country and who when we came back made me say where we had been to make sure I knew the placenames. An abbreviated version of this paper first appeared in *Placenames Australia*, June 2005.

2. The Native Title determination in June 2005 found that the first four areas under discussion (Goolarrgoon, Goowalgar, Baanarrad and Ardiyol) were traditionally Bardi, while Iwany and Mayala belonged to other groups; in particular, that Iwany belonged to Jawi people, who were found to be a distinct group at the time of European settlement in Western Australia (1829) and whose interests would not necessarily be served by the awarding of a claim where Bardi people would have primary jurisdiction over the land (since very few people these days identify as Jawi). I am not affiliated in any way with the land claim and strongly disagree with several aspects of the judgment, including the treatment of Bardi and Nimanburru as one cohesive social group on linguistic and cultural grounds, to the exclusion of Jawi. Therefore in this paper I am discussing both 'Bardi' country and 'Jawi' country, and treating Bardi and Jawi as two groups who shared ceremonies, language, and conventions for naming places.

3. The cognate word in Nyikina, 'Wardiyabulu', is the general word for the people belonging to the Northern Dampier Peninsula. The *-yol* portion of 'Ardiyol' is cognate with the *-booloo* of 'Iinalabooloo'.

4. The name of this area in Robinson (1973: 103) is *Baniol* (i.e. *Baniyol*). I suspect that this represents a potential dialect difference between the Bardi people he worked with and those that I worked with.

5. It could be related to the word *iwany* 'it is finished' (*i-* third person singular present tense, *-bany(i)-* 'finish, die' (the lenition of $b > w$ is regular in this position)), although this is contrived; there are no other placenames named after verbs. Earlier sources occasionally record the name as 'Irrwany'.

6. The nasal is lost regularly before a stop. This word contains the same suffix (*-bulu*) as in Ardiyol.

7. Note also that *jina booroo* has grammaticalised in Yawuru to mean 'someone's niche, speciality', like *-iidi* in Bardi. Bardi *booroo* thus has the semantic range of Arrernte *apmere* or Djirbal *mija*, with additional meanings (Hercus, Hodges and Simpson 2002). *Booroo* is also used interchangeably with the word *baali* 'boughshed, shelter', in the meaning of 'camping place'.

8. The late Katie W. Drysdale (a senior Bardi woman born about 1905) used to make the comment that the name of this *booroo* used to be *Manoogoon*, not *Ngamoogoon*. I have been unable to verify this.

9. The elderly Bardi people I worked with no longer made regular visits to the country outside One Arm Point community, and when travelling along the road with them I was only ever given *booroo* names, not localities. In contrast, the late Nancy Isaac could recite hundreds of locality names from the coastal areas of her mother's and father's country, even from places she had not visited in more than 10 years. It may also be significant that the culture hero who names Bardi places in the text in (2) below goes 'along the edge of everywhere'.

10. I have also recorded a variant, 'Bulgu', but it is not certain that this is the same place. 'Bolg' would be a spelling of the form which had gone through Nyulnyul sound changes, and the Bolg/Bulgu pair would be a counterexample to the claim that Bardi people use the name for the place from the language of the area.

11. This name is also spelt 'Oogarrangg(oo)' (the Bardi name for the people) and 'Unggarrangg'.

12. The stories in particular involve the 'Rainbow Serpent' (or sea snake), whose name in Bardi is *Oongoodoog*. The word itself is not restricted and refers (for example, as in the lemma in Aklif 1999) to a large underwater serpent who lives off Sunday Island and occasionally steals people. Goodara's mother, Wirrgoorr, was the last person to be taken in this way, in about 1910 – her story is told by Nancy Isaac in Bowern (ed.) (2002).

13. *Ni-* is the third person singular possessive prefix; the root is *nga*. The plural is *irrnga*.

14. The relevant maps are: 1:100 000 maps: 3465 Leveque, 3565 Sunday Island, 3464 Pender, 3564 Cornambie; 1:250 000 maps: SE51-2 Pender, SE51-3 Yampi. 1:1 million map: Broome SE51.

Aboriginal placenames

CHAPTER 15

Dog-people
The meaning of a north Kimberley story[1]

MARK CLENDON

Introduction: On the stability of placenames over time

Some Australian Aboriginal placenames are etymologically transparent or at least analysable (see McConvell this volume) while others are not. The opacity of those that are not may be due to their being named in either an archaic variety of their owners' modern language, or in a quite different language, the language of some previous owners.

The land is eternal but its human occupants are, in the broader scheme of things, ephemeral. If a human lineage becomes extinct, who inherits the land which that lineage once owned and occupied? How do successive occupants name the land and its places? These issues are salient not only to *Volkswanderung* scenarios in European prehistory; in Australia large-scale prehistoric population movements across the continent in response to long-term climate changes raise the same questions (see e.g. Sutton 1990, McConvell 2001, McConvell and Alpher 2002, Clendon 2006).

Places in Aboriginal Australia tend to be points on a map. Over most of the dry zone (west of the Dividing Range and north of the River Murray) people travelled between quite precise localities, usually ancestral dreaming sites and the billabongs, creeks, rivers and waterholes which provided them with the wherewithal to live in those places. Famously, Central Australian dot paintings make use of this geography by indicating waterholes and other comfortable and sustaining places as concentric circles with linear pathways connecting them across more economically barren ground. 'Places' in arid Australia less frequently take the form of two-dimensional countries; that is, of extensive *areas* of land named in the way that such owned areas are named in Europe and elsewhere.

Named 'countries' of this sort may be found in some regions, however, and in this chapter I will look at a set of such countries in Western Australia's north-west Kimberley region. Here Worora-speaking people lived in a land partitioned into at least ten discrete, named countries, each owned by an extended family or clan. It is difficult to estimate population numbers and areas of land precisely, but from historical records it would appear that (i) Worora-speaking people numbered about 300 at the time of their first sustained contact with Europeans in 1912; (ii) they occupied an area of very roughly some 5000 square kilometres, (iii) each Worora person belonged to a clan, and (iv) each clan owned and occupied one of about ten (perhaps more) countries. From this it is evident that the area of land named as a country was on average about 500 square kilometres in extent, but this was probably extremely variable, and dependent upon terrain.

It is equally evident that clan size was relatively small: about 30 on average, which is probably the same as many modern extended families that have been in Australia for a few generations. As small lineages they must have been prone to extinction from time to time; indeed Love (1935: 230) claims that he knew of two extinct Worora clans at the time of writing.

Worora clans and clan countries

The terrain in this part of the Kimberley is steep, rugged and arid. The land is hot and dry for most of the year and subject to very heavy monsoonal downpours in the summer. After the wet season groundcover is luxuriant and waterways are full, but relentless heat soon reduces this abundance drastically.

Worora-speaking people lived traditionally in extended family groups (=*rambim*)[2] which were located in specific geographical areas to which family members belonged, and which they owned. Membership of these extended families or clans was by patrilineal descent, and residence was virilocal. Clans were exogamous and sociocentrically named, their names being derived from the names of the countries in which they were located, with only one exception that I know of. So for example people from the land of Loolim[3] could be referred to as *arrlooliya*, with third person plural prefix *arr-* and plural suffix *-ya*; they could refer to themselves as *ngarrlooliya* 'we who belong to Loolim' with first person inclusive plural prefix *ngarr-*; a man or boy could be referred to as *iloola*, with masculine prefix *i-*, and a woman or girl could be referred to as *nyiloolinya* with feminine affixes *nyi-* and *-nya*.

Worora country extends from Collier Bay in the south up to the Prince Regent River (Malandum mana) in the north, and some 50 or so kilometres inland, as well as a greater distance up the Prince Regent River. This is very roughly an area of

some 5000 square kilometres,[4] within which Love (1917[1915]: 21) estimated the number of Worora-speaking people at about 300 in 1915, three years after the first mission was set up there. In 1935 Love (1935: 230-231) listed ten Worora-speaking clans, plus another two that were extinct.[5] The clan countries Love lists are listed in Tables 15.1-3, with the collective titles of the clans occupying them. Where I have been able to verify phonemic representations, they are as given in Table 15.1.

Table 15.1: Worora-speaking clan countries listed by Love (1935), with phonemic representations

Country	Clan name (plural)	Masculine (singular)
Loolim mana	Arrlooliya	Iloola
Larrinyim mana	Larrinyuwaaya	Larrinyuwaaya
Wurnbangku wunu	Wurnbangkuwaaya	Wurnbangkuwaaya
Malandum mana	Arrbalandi (Adbalandi)	Imalandu
Meegrarlba mana[6]	Arrigrarlya	Igrarlya
Mamangurraama mana	Arrbangurraaya	Imangurraaya
Yawijaba mana	Yawijibaaya	Yawijibaaya

The determiners *mana* and *wunu* identify the gender of the country names, as either terrestrial (*mana*) or celestial (*wunu*) (Clendon 1999). The Montgomery Islands (Yawijaba mana) are not listed by Love, but I have included them here. *Yawijibaaya* people used a speech variety noticeably different from Worora, but the two were mutually intelligible.

In 1935 the site of the Presbyterian mission, *Kunmunya* (phonemic Karnmanya), appears to have been located in the country of an extinct clan called *Karnmanyawaaya*. Another clan listed by neither Love nor Blundell (1980) is called *Arnngarrngoyu*. This clan occupied the upper (freshwater) reaches of the Glenelg River, above the zone affected by tides. It was unusual in that the word *Arnngarrngoyu* referred to the human members of the clan, while the name of the country they occupied was called by the phonologically unrelated term Malamalorn (Table 15.2).

Table 15.2: Other Worora-speaking clan countries

Country	Clan name (plural)
Karnmanya mana	Karnmanyawaaya
Malamalorn mana	Arnngarrngoyu

Other clan names, the phonological forms of which I have been unable to verify directly, are listed in Love (1935: 231) as follows (without his diacritics):

Table 15.3: Worora-speaking clan countries listed by Love (1935), unverified phonemic representations

Country	Clan name (plural)	Masculine (singular)
Ilam	Ilangaria	Ilangara
Kanbu	Kanbungaria	Kanbungara
Tjilanma	Tjilanbaia	Tjilanbaia
Mi:tjili:m	Aritjili:a	I:tjili:

The suffix which Love transcribes as *-ngaria* in the plural and *-ngara* in the singular is the Worora Associative/Characterising suffix *-ngarra ~ -ngarri*, with plural form *-ngarriya* (Love did not recognise the rhotic contrast in Worora). On his map on page 230 the placename Ilam is transcribed 'ILA:M', indicating a long second vowel. The scaly-tailed possum (*Wyulda squamicaudata*) is called *ingkanamre* in Worora. But it has another name as well, *irlaangalya*, which in all likelihood identifies this totemic ancestor as being associated with a particular clan country, probably Love's 'ILA:M', which by this reasoning would be 'Irlaam' in phonemic transcription. The clan titles would then be phonemic *Irlaangarra* and *Irlaangarriya*. The clan title suffix which Love uses, *-baia*, is a post-consonantal allomorph of the gentilic suffix *-(bw)aaya*, seen above in the titles *Yawijibaaya*, *Larrinyuwaaya* and *Wurnbangkuwaaya*. The prefixes *ar-* and *i-* on the titles *Aritjili:a* and *I:tjili:* are third person plural *arr-* and third person singular masculine *i-* as noted above.

From this it is clear that all but one of the clan titles reviewed are derived from the country names, just as, for example, the adjectives *Australian*, *British* and *American* are derived from the placenames Australia, Britain and America.

However, there does appear to be a problem in arriving at a definitive list of Worora-speaking clan countries. In Blundell's (1980) account clan size was extremely variable, with anything from two to 35 members, and there is no reason to doubt that these are realistic figures. At the lower end of the scale they indicate how precarious was the hold that some clans had on their land and their existence. Love's figures for both overall population and clan numbers are also likely to be reliable, as he was there at the time of first European contact, he understood and spoke Worora, and he was in a position to question Worora people directly about their demography as a present, experienced reality. At the same time, my own experience suggests that it is perhaps possible that Love failed to record all of the Worora-speaking clans, and that there may have been one or two more than the ten he lists.

It may be a mistake, in any case, to imagine that a definitive list of Worora-speaking clans is a feasible objective. As descent groups they may have been in a more-or-less on-going state of fission, amalgamation or extinguishment. It is likely, for instance, that a particularly large clan, such as *Adbalandiya*, might at some future time have split into two or more smaller groups, to each

of which the term =*rambim* might then have applied. It is possible that some of the 'clan' groups shown by Blundell on maps may have had 'sub-clan' status, or status as some other kind of local group. For instance, a particular family group might be identifiable by its location near, or totemic affiliation to the site of a particular culture hero. Blundell (1980: 104) includes, for example, a group called '*Wodojngari*' (phonemic *Wadoyngarri* [spotted nightjar-ASSOC]) '(people) associated with (the place of) the spotted nightjar'. This term may possibly not have referred to a clan, in the sense intended by Love; but on the other hand we have absolutely no information about how inclusive was the reference of the word =*rambim*: could the members of one extended family also be named as members of another, superordinate descent group? And if so, would both groups have been referred to by the word =*rambim*? The implications of these questions might make it very difficult indeed to calculate clan numbers precisely.

Dogs on the threshold

The relationship between people and their country is perhaps set out most clearly (as far as Worora listeners would have been concerned) in a story called *Dilangarri* (*dila-ngarri* [dog-ASSOC]) 'associated-with-dogs' or 'dog-people', published in Utemorrah (2000: 21-30). Although Daisy Utemorrah recorded this story in Worora, *dila* means 'dog' in the neighbouring and apparently related language Ungarinyin: the Worora word for 'dog' is *kanangkurri*. It is therefore clearly a story that would have been traditionally known to both Worora and Ungarinyin speakers; almost certainly to Wunambal speakers as well, and was probably current throughout the north-west Kimberley more generally. The following is a précis of the story:

> In the Dreaming a group of people called *Dilangarri* 'dog people' lived with their giant dogs. These were magical dreamtime dogs. The parents used to leave their children and dogs at home when they went out to find food. They used to warn their children against tickling the dogs and making them laugh, because if the dogs laughed they would talk. Eventually the children did just that, they tickled the dogs and made them laugh and talk. As soon as the dogs spoke the humans all disappeared: children and adults wherever they were at that time vanished underground. Later their *Wanjurna* ancestor came looking for them, and could not find them. He asked where they had gone. The dreamtime dog-ancestor told him that the human children had made his dogs talk, and so he had caused all the humans to disappear. Grieving for his people, the *Wanjurna* threw the dog up into the moon, where he can still be seen. Then he found two other people from a different place and told them to go to the land where the *Dilangarri* people used to live.

He told them that they would found a family who would live in the land forever, and take the name of the *Dilangarri* people. And this is what happened. (Utemorrah 2000: 21-30)

There appears to be a persistent relationship between language, dogs and fire in north-western Australia, if not elsewhere as well. In a Nyangumarta (Pilbara) story called *Yukurru muwarrpinikinyi, marrngu jama wanikinyi* 'Dogs used to talk, and men were silent' a talking dog sacrifices himself by being burned in a fire so that his human companion can acquire speech, which he had hitherto lacked. A couple of things can be noted in this story: Human and canine speech is in complementary distribution; which is to say that humans and dogs cannot *both* talk – it has to be either one or the other. The man cannot speak until the dog has been consumed by fire, and once the man speaks, dogs can no longer speak. Human beings acquired speech by depriving dogs of it: language is an artefact that can be held at any one time by either but not both of the companions.

In both Lévi-Straussian structuralist formulation and the terms of Victor Turner's symbolic anthropology (e.g. Turner 1978) dogs and fire are both intermediary or liminal (threshold) entities: dogs are intermediary between the human and non-human worlds, being animals who live often intimately and affectionately with humans, and who communicate (non-verbally) with humans, yet who are not human. Dogs cross the space between the human and the non-human realms.[7]

Fire is a liminal entity bringing elements of the (indigestible) non-human world across into the human world by the process of cooking. And indeed verbs of cooking in north-western Australia usually display a somewhat different semantics to that of their English translations: here cooking means 'to render something fit for human consumption'; hence ripened fruit is said to have been 'cooked' in the sun, and wild tobacco leaves are 'cooked' by being rolled in lime to prepare them for chewing (Gwen Bucknall pers. comm.). Cooking imagery goes further in depicting the transfer of entities from the natural world across into the human world. In a traditional Ngaanyatjarra story recorded in Glass and Hackett (1979: 20-28) a stick-insect dreaming ancestor cooks a group of promiscuous, unenculturated 'natural' people to institute the four marriage sections of Western Desert society, and so end the 'chaos' of random sexual liaison. In Aboriginal culture[8] cooking defines our humanity: unless we are brought across from the unpredictable wildness of nature into the world of human culture we will not be able to function decently as social beings. In the Nyangumarta story this transfer is effected by dogs: a concrete example of what Deborah Bird Rose learned from Tim Yilngayarri (Rose 2000: 45-49), i.e. that 'dingo makes us human'. So in the Nyangumarta story language has to be 'cooked' in canine embodiment in order to become part of human culture.

When compared, the Worora and Nyangumarta stories display what Lévi-Strauss refers to as a series of 'inversions': "as often happens when crossing a cultural and linguistic boundary, the myth turns over: the end becomes the beginning, the beginning the end, and the content of the message is inverted" (Lévi-Strauss 1995: 57). Nyangumarta and Worora are on opposite sides of such a cultural and linguistic boundary, and examination of these two stories shows that every element is inverted, even causality. In the Nyangumarta story dogs die *in order for* humans to obtain language. In the Worora story humans die *as a result of* dogs having obtained language:

Worora	Dogs speak ⟶	Humans die
Nyangumarta	Dogs die ⟶	Humans speak

And again in the Worora story men and dogs are in complementary distribution: language cannot be owned by both of the companions at the same time.

Resurrection

When the Dog-people 'disappear' in my English translation, that event in Worora is denoted by the preverbal infinitive *yawarrarra* '(a number of people) descend, sink; drown'. This word is related formally and semantically to *yawak* '(one person) sinks, falls', *yawurlak* '(one person) sinks, drowns' and *wurluk* 'swallow'. In Worora coming-into-being is consistently depicted by images of ascent, and going-out-of-being by images of descent. When child-spirits appear to their parents to announce their conception, they are said to *bariy* 'rise' before their parents from the deep, sacred pools (*wungkurr*) where child-spirits dwell. Dreamtime *Wanjurna* ancestors also come into existence by ascending (*bariy*) or bursting up (*kurruk*) out of the ground, and then return by descending at last back into the earth. And in stories people go out of existence in a metaphor of descent, an image of sinking under the ground as if under water.

Along with control over fire, language is also one of the things that define our humanity: it is a uniquely human attribute and sets us apart from the natural world and the other creatures that inhabit it. In the Nyangumarta story humans come into existence, in the sense of acquiring an attribute that makes them uniquely human, when they acquire language. In the Worora story the reverse happens: humans go out of existence when they return language back to the dogs who gave it to them. In this sense the Worora and Nyangumarta stories really are inverse halves of the same mythic understanding, that dogs hold a special place in human society as liminal beings who in the Dreaming gave their owners their humanity: dingo really does make us human.

The point of this part of the story is that the *Dilangarri* clan go out of existence; they are extinguished completely and without heirs. The *Wanjurna* ancestor then chooses two other people to be the founders of a new family. We are not told who these people are; they were probably related to the previous owners in the sense that all Aboriginal people can trace real or classificatory relationship to just about every other Aboriginal person. But what is certain is that the man and wife chosen by the *Wanjurna* are not *Dilangarri* themselves. *'Anja nyirrimaade Dilangarri anja ngarru kaajenga?'* they ask him: 'Those Dog-people of yours, where have they gone?' The *Wanjurna* does not reply directly. Instead he says: *'Nyirrerndunyini bija wangalaalunguyu kurleen wurrangunjaarndu arrke, Dilangarri kaajaninya. Dambeem mana marramnyaana nyirrkanangka mana. Dilangarri maa nyirramnyaneerrimaade.'* 'Now when you two give birth to children, let them be Dog-people. You (plural) will keep this country as your own, with the result that you (plural) will now be Dog-people.' The grieving *Wanjurna* wants to resurrect the name of the Dog-people; he says: *'Dilangarri arrkumbu maaji waraarrkaarr angayanda'* 'I will cause the name of the Dog-people to be recalled/brought back.' The man and wife will now take on both the land and the title of its former owners: they will *become Dilangarri* themselves.

Blundell (1980: 113-115) and Blundell and Woolagoodja (2005: 70) describe how the country of an extinct clan could be taken over or adopted by members of a related and neighbouring clan, who would then take on the clan titles, totemic emblems, ritual responsibilities and overall identity of the extinct clan, and legally 'become' that clan in an act of social resurrection. This is apparently what happened in the case of the *Larrinyuwaaya* clan, which died out but was revived in just this manner. Larrinyim lies on the coast north of Collier Bay and on either side of the Walcott inlet. Sam Woolagoodja, who took on the resurrection of the clan, came from the area of Cone Bay on the tip of the Yampi Peninsula, where according to McGregor (1988: 83) a speech variety called Umiide was formerly spoken. The language recorded by Sam's son Donny Woolagoodja in Blundell and Woolagoodja (2005), while clearly related, is different in some ways from the language recorded by Daisy Uttemorah and others (Clendon 2000). I have not been able to ascertain how closely Sam Woolagoodja was related to the *Larrinyuwaaya* people whose line had ended. But that was probably not directly relevant in the long run: some family connection would have been able to have been established, probably without much difficulty, to accommodate the social priority of resurrecting a clan name to inhabit the country, to keep its *Wanjurnas* 'fresh' and to maintain and care for its ceremonial centres and ossuary caves. The details of such acts of resurrection were probably negotiated by the principal stakeholders on a case-by-case basis as occasion required, but the legal mandate for such a procedure was provided by the story *Dilangarri*, and possibly by other stories as well.

Conclusion

Here then is a concrete illustration of the primacy of residence in a particular place for the constitution of family identity. In this ideology extended families are the ephemeral human manifestations of eternal places. In essence and from an emic perspective clans are not ''social cells with territorial correlates'' as Keen (1997: 271) puts it, but territories with human occupants. Land, the manifestation in geography of a supernatural human ancestry, in this ideology is prior, and human groups are identified in terms of it.

None of the Worora country names are etymologically transparent; they are all 'just names'. In the past this may have been otherwise: Worora placenames are typically expressive, not infrequently taking the form of nominalised sentences: *Jilinya Jaarr Nyangkawana* 'Where the spirit-woman travelled upstream', *Wurrulku aaku ngarlangarlangarri* 'Augustus Island of the talking water' and *Imalala Jujurr Ingkaarrbanga* 'Where they carried the handsome man' are three examples of placenames commemorating events in the Dreaming, in geography and in local history respectively.

Linguistic boundaries appear to have had little emic significance for social geography, and every traditional Worora person would have been trilingual in Worora and the neighbouring languages Wunambal and Ungarinyin. When a clan lineage became extinct its country could be transferred to the ownership of a family who spoke a different speech variety, as may have been the case with the recent example of Larrinyim, or even a different language altogether.[9] In this way the ownership of countries could pass from lineage to lineage and from language to language legally and peaceably, with a clear mandate from the Dreaming and without the need for discord; and quite outside of an invasion-and-migration kind of scenario which might at first present itself to a modern observer. Note however that the names of countries, like the countries themselves, appear to be immutable. The eventual outcome would be etymological opacity and a placename that originated in a possibly long-extinct language.

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Endnotes

1. I would like to thank Heather Umbagai and Janet Oobagooma of Mowanjum for their advice and assistance in preparing this chapter. Any errors are of course my own responsibility.

2. An equals sign (=) before a Worora morpheme indicates that the form cannot be uttered on its own, but needs agreement-class affixes in order to become an utterable word (so in this case an example would be *ngarambim* 'my patriclan', with first person singular prefix *nga-*). Note that =*rambim* 'clan' is cognate with *dambeem* 'place, camp, home, country'.

3. The root shape of this word is =*looli*: the placename contains the terrestrial class-marking suffix *-m* (see Clendon 1999).

4. Area extrapolated rather hesitantly from Blundell (1980: 107).

5. Blundell (1980: 107) lists 14 clans for 1912, and elsewhere she lists twice that number (up to 29 (Blundell and Layton 1978: 237, Blundell 1980: 104), although this figure almost certainly includes clans speaking other languages). If Blundell's figure of 14 clans is accurate, the average size of a clan country would have been 357 square kilometres, with 21 clan members.

6. Also referred to as both Grarl and Grarlya.

7. Liminal: "occupying a position on, or on both sides of, a boundary or threshold" (Oxford English Dictionary).

8. And in other cultures as well: cf. Lévi-Strauss 1969.sssss

9. Cf. McConvell's (2002: 267) invocation of customary process as a factor in language spread.

CHAPTER 16

'Where the spear sticks up'

The variety of locatives in placenames in the Victoria River District, Northern Territory

PATRICK MCCONVELL[1]

Introduction

In the Victoria River District (VRD) of the Northern Territory, the citation and neutral form of many placenames is marked with the locative case, both in the Pama-Nyungan (PN) languages (Eastern Ngumpin) and in the non-Pama-Nyungan (NPN) languages (of the Jarragan, Mindi and Yangmanic[2] families). In the central area of the district both the PN languages (Ngarinyman, Birlinarra, Gurindji) and the NPN languages (Jaminjung, Ngaliwurru, Nungali) there is often an additional element added to the locative, which in the modern languages has a variety of functions including 'exactly' (for discussion of semantics of such suffixes, McConvell 1983; Schultze-Berndt 2002). The actual form of the elements is unrelated in the different families but the patterning is highly similar.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate how these patterns – LOCATIVE and LOCATIVE+EXACTLY – came to be distributed across language families linguo-genetically and typologically distant from each other. If there was structural diffusion what was the source and how did it occur?

Firstly it is pointed out that the locative patterning is not universally present in the district. In the Mudburra territory in the south-east it is very rare and another placename suffix, not found elsewhere in the district, is common, which has cognates in a similar function in a wide area of Pama-Nyungan. This provides a hint that the locative pattern may have been borrowed by other Ngumpin languages because of contact (adstratal or substratal) with the NPN languages.

Before approaching this question however, it is necessary to examine just how similar the use of locative is across the languages. Use of locative as part of placenames is widespread among NPN languages not only in the VRD but commonly in the Kimberley, Top End and Arnhem Land. In these languages, generally, the locative form is used as the citation/neutral form AND as the locative form. In the PN languages with locative placenames, however, the locative form is not used in the locative function – another locative suffix is added. This does not negate the hypothesis of structural diffusion from the NPN languages but shows that the pattern was not simply copied in all its detail, but was adapted to the PN grammar.

The paper then moves to looking at the LOCATIVE+EXACTLY pattern in more detail. This has not been reported from other regions to my knowledge. Again while at first sight the PN and NPN neighbouring languages which have this formation appear to mirror each other, there are differences. Most placenames consist of either a nominal or a coverb[3] with this pair of suffixes. In Jaminjung/Ngaliwurru, there are other placenames which do not have a LOCATIVE suffix, but simply an EXACTLY suffix, which in these languages can signal secondary predication; this is not possible in the Ngumpin languages. In a few names in the PN languages there are phrasal placenames with the configuration:

 NOMINAL+LOC-COVERB+LOC+EXACTLY

While no phrasal placenames have been so far collected in pure Jaminjung/Ngaliwurru, there is one curious example of a code-switched placename in which the first part is a Ngarinyman noun with LOCATIVE and the second is a Jaminjung coverb with EXACTLY – following the different pattern of Jaminjung grammar above.

These patterns could also suggest a different hypothesis, that the current placename derivations reflect not only older locative patterns in PN but also patterns of non-finite subordination in the respective languages. The presence of -LOC+rni (= the EXACTLY morpheme in Ngumpin) as a form of non-finite subordination in Warlpiri, a Ngumpin-Yapa language closely related to Ngumpin, might suggest an inherited rather than borrowed source for the LOC forms.

Locative-marked placenames

Inherent locatives

In many areas of Australia a sizable proportion of the placenames bear locational case marking in citation form. This is true of both Pama-Nyungan and non-Pama-Nyungan languages, although it is more prevalent in the latter.

For instance Harvey (1999: 174) cites the following example from the Wardaman language in the north-east of the VRD.

1.   Wardaman   *Jarrug-ja*
                egg-LOC

The normal interpretation of this inflected noun would be (a) below.

a.   'at the eggs'
b.   'where the eggs are'

However, as Harvey points out, the (b) interpretation is more likely. This type of locative refers to a Dreaming being or an object left by such a being. Harvey considers this interpretation as "deriving from a headless relative clause with an existential meaning" and this analysis is endorsed by Baker (2002: 109). However even if correct, and notwithstanding the extended discussion of why unmarked placenames function as locatives (Harvey 1999), this does not explain clearly why the locative can have a non-locative function in some of these languages, such as Wardaman.[4] It is not the case, for instance, that other locatives apart from placenames can be interpreted as nominative/absolutive noun phrases in these languages. Harvey's discussion revolves more around the parallels between absence of locational case-marking on placenames in these Australian languages and in colloquial English such as 'I'm going down the beach'.

Harvey (1999) lists a number of languages where "place names generally fail to take locational marking in circumstances where other nominals would bear it". The NPN languages are as follows: Alawa, Gooniyandi, Mangarayi, Marra, Ngalakgan, Ngandi, Nunggubuyu, Wardaman and Warndarang. They are shown on Figure 16.1.

Additional NPN languages with this pattern include probably all NPN languages in the Kimberley: Bardi (Nyulnyulan), Worora (Wororan), Kija and Mirwung (Jarragan). Harvey's list is shown together with these, and a few PN

languages having this feature, on Figure 16.1. Some of these Kimberley languages also have inherent locatives (a locative suffix incorporated into the placename as its citation form).

Figure 16.1: Languages with inherent locative placenames
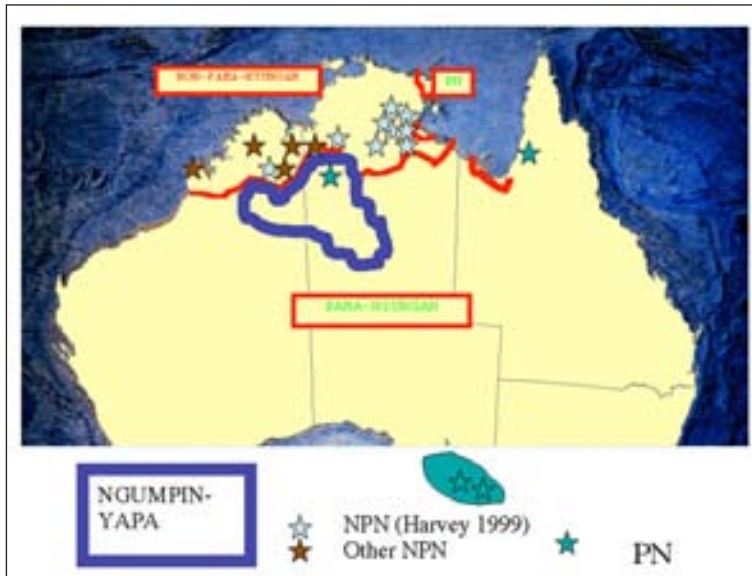
A Bardi example is the following (Aklif 1999: 81, 150, 179)

2. Bardi   Jilarnboo-goon
              porcupine_fish-LOC
   'Evans Rocks'

In the eastern Mirndi languages, there is no evidence in published sources of inherent locative suffixes, nor of absence of locatives on placenames used with locative function in Jingulu (Chadwick 1997; Pensalfini 2003). In Wambaya, a Mirndi language further east, the situation appears to be the same, although one placename in Nordlinger's wordlist (1998), *Ganjarrani* (a Gudanji placename), may be analysable as including *-ni* the locative suffix (*ganjarra* is not glossed).

Jaminjungan, the western branch of Mirndi, has quite a high proportion of inherent locatives, particularly the LOCATIVE+EXACTLY variant which will be discussed below.

Not all NPN languages north of Mirndi have the inherent locative type of system. 'Place' suffixes in Kunwinykuan (Harvey 1999) are distinct from the locative type.

A cursory glance at published descriptions of PN languages in Central Australia (Arandic), Western Australia and the south-east does not turn up any examples of inherent locatives in placenames, although discovery of examples through more directed research should not be ruled out. Apart from the examples in central Ngumpin languages in the VRD, to be discussed, inherent locatives do appear in two other regions – Cape York Peninsula (Yir Yoront, cited by Harvey from Alpher (2002)) and South Australia around Adelaide.

The selective sampling of inherent locatives carried out here is summarised on Figure 16.1.

In these languages placenames are marked locative in their citation forms and in their unmarked forms, e.g. when used as intransitive subjects.

Zero-locatives

In some – but not all – of these languages the inherent locative forms are also used for the locative function ('at', 'in' a place) even if the locative morphology is archaic and cannot be omitted. The presence of this distinction in the syntactic behaviour of inherent locatives in different languages is the basis of a typology which we shall examine in more detail in relation to VRD languages.

A second major difference between languages is that in some languages (mostly NPN), placenames which are neither locative currently, nor can be reconstructed as locative, function as locatives in the syntax. I will refer to this situation as 'zero-locative'. Whether this is confined to placenames or occurs with other spatial nouns varies between languages (Harvey 1999 cites cardinal direction terms as behaving similarly to placenames in some languages) and is not investigated comparatively across Australia here. There is some overlap between the case of 'archaic inherent locatives' and the 'zero-locative' situation which would require detailed examination for each language. Koch (1995: 47-48) also discusses locatives in Australia as developing into 'morphological zeroes' in contexts like placenames.

Unmarked placenames functioning as locatives also occur in some dialects of Aboriginal English/Kriol.

3.   I been sit down Darwin.

This usage appears to be a substratum effect: where locative is used in the traditional languages of the area, a preposition generally *longa/la* is used in the pidgin/creole variety.

4.   I been sit down la Darwin.

Sometimes in NPN languages the locative is not the current form but an archaic form, as in the PN language Yir Yoront. For instance Baker (2002: 125; see also Heath 1981: 92) points out that in Roper River languages the form with the oblique prefix *nya-* is used for placenames, which was probably the older way of marking locative. In the modern languages there is additionally a locative suffix, and this occurs with some placenames. This appears to point to a historical layering of different forms of placename formation, although Baker does not go into the 'stratigraphic' implications of this.

Placenames as indicators of previous occupation

Baker (2002: 123) shows that in Ngalakgan terrritory, transparently Ngalakgan names intermingled with Alawa and Marra names, which are not however synchronically transparent. He interprets this as pointing to a prehistoric move into this area of the Ngalakgan group, although this could not be recent, based on linguistic evidence.

Harvey (1999) also points to a number of examples in the 'Top End' of the Northern Territory where movement of groups into the territory of others yields a layering of different types of placename structures as well as different language sources for the component elements of the names.

Hercus et al. (1997: section 4.1.1) note the similarity of the formation of Kaurna and Ngarrindjeri names, both featuring inherent locatives (the latter more consistently than the former). Some Kaurna names appear to be phonologically adapted forms of the Ngarrindjeri forms with the appropriate Kaurna locatives added. Although they do not make this proposal, this may be due to Kaurna taking over Ngarrindjeri names. In Central Australia, areas which are currently the territory of speakers of Western Desert dialects have placenames which are clearly adaptations of earlier Arandic names, reflecting eastward spread of the Western Desert language in the last millennium (cf. McConvell 1996).

Placenames in the VRD

In what follows the placenames of the VRD will be analysed to determine the extent to which the inherent LOCATIVE and LOCATIVE+EXACTLY patterns, which are found in both PN and NPN languages, are the result of the adoption of the pattern by one group from the other. Secondly the distribution of these patterns and other examples of 'foreign' patterns and roots in placenames will be analysed to determine if some languages have taken over the country of other language groups in recent prehistory.

Language families and subgroups in the VRD

The VRD at first European contact in the 1880s and in the succeeding century exhibits a great deal of superficial similarity in culture and social practices. The different groups engaged in intensive contact, intermarriage, and ritual and subscribed to a roughly parallel set of laws and customs. However the languages, despite quite substantial borrowing, were fundamentally different, and some aspects of the kinship systems remained different despite superficial similarity. Not only does the major divide between Pama-Nyungan and non-Pama-Nyungan languages pass through the middle of the region, but there are three distinct NPN families represented which are substantially different from each other in vocabulary and grammar.

Figure 16.2 shows the language families and groups in the Victoria River District.

Figure 16.2: Language families and groups in the VRD

The Eastern Ngumpin languages

The Eastern Ngumpin languages are a branch of the Ngumpin-Yapa subgroup of languages, established using the comparative method as exhibiting a set of common innovations (McConvell and Laughren 2004). Geographically Eastern Ngumpin languages occupy a 'bulge' into the northern riverine region from the

territory of the other branches of Ngumpin-Yapa, Yapa and Western Ngumpin, which occupy the semi-deserts of the Tanami and Great Sandy Deserts to the south.

Among the Eastern Ngumpin languages, the central members Gurindji, Birlinarra and Ngarinyman are closely related, with Mudburra distinctively different.[5]

The Jaminjungan (Western Mirndi) languages

The Jaminjungan languages lie immediately to the north of Eastern Ngumpin around the lower Victoria River and they are the source of most of the borrowings and structural influence on Eastern Ngumpin. It has been shown that Jaminjungan languages are a branch of a wider Mirndi family which includes Jingulu, Wambaya and other languages in the Barkly Tablelands (Chadwick 1984, 1997; Harvey 2008).[6] The two branches are discontinuous, being separated by Wardaman and Eastern Ngumpin.

Jaminjung and Ngaliwurru are said to be dialects of a single language (Schultze-Berndt 2000). Nungali, to the east, which no longer has any speakers, appears to be more conservative, retaining nominal class-prefixation which varies for case.

The Jarragan languages

These languages are centred in the East Kimberleys and are distinctively different from either Jaminjungan or Wardaman; they may be more closely related to Bunaban in the west. The northern languages Miriwung and Kajirrabeng do come into the Northern Territory in the north-west. Two extinct languages in the territory now covered by western Ngarinyman – Nyiwanawung (cf. Rose 1990, 2000) and Jiyilawung (Tindale 1974; Mathews 1901)[7] – may have been Jarragan, but no details of the languages are known.

Wardaman

Wardaman is the most south-westerly of a group of related languages to the west and north and south of Katherine, including Daguman, Yangman and Wagiman. They may be part of, or closely related to, a broader Gunwinyguan family.

The role of placenames

Traditional function

Indigenous placenames throughout the VRD are thought by local Aboriginal people to be associated with the deeds of the Dreamings, the creative figures which roamed the land at a distant era. The stories of the Dreamings are still told and many are celebrated in song and ritual, but much of this lore and knowledge is being lost. Many of the placenames have meanings which relate to events in these Dreaming stories, although some have no transparent meanings, perhaps because they are too old and relate to words and languages which are no longer remembered. Those which have meaning may be a single item like a noun, but more often have some kind of morphology like a locative suffix or a 'having' suffix, or some kind of suffix whose meaning is obscure.

The roots of placenames are also used (with different suffixes) as personal names of people. This indicates a special relationship between the named individual and the named place. Often the place is part of a songline within the traditional country of the individual's clan estate.

Historical impact of Indigenous placenames

As compared to other areas of Australia, rather few Indigenous placenames have been adopted in the Victoria River District by the European settlers; rather names of early settlers or evocations of the early settler history generally providing the source of contemporary names. Nevertheless there are several dozen Indigenous placenames which have been used for some time and which are found on maps of the region (not spelled using any systematic orthography).

Contemporary significance of placenames

Since the 1970s there have been some attempts by white authorities to assign Aboriginal names to places in the VRD, particularly Aboriginal settlements. For various reasons (detailed in McConvell 2002a) the wrong names have usually been given to places, and the standard of spelling has not significantly improved from the early days, although better information has been available.

A substantial amount of land in the VRD has come into the hands of Aboriginal people since the 1970s through the *Northern Territory Land Rights Act*, although this has not been always matched by the Aboriginalisation of the placenames or the use of systematic spelling. In the last decade, several cattle station properties have been acquired by the Northern Territory (NT) government as National Parks, primarily the very large Gregory National Park,

which includes several small Aboriginal communities inside it or near to it (see Figure 16.3). Recently the NT government has embarked on a 'joint management' strategy to allow Aboriginal participation in running the park along with the Parks and Wildlife Service. It remains to be seen what level of recognition of Aboriginal traditional knowledge and naming of places will take place.

Figure 16.3: Gregory National Park

Linguistic prehistory of the VRD

It has been proposed that the Eastern Ngumpin languages moved north into the Victoria River District in the late Holocene, probably around 2000 years ago, but the chronology requires stronger evidence than currently exists (McConvell 1996; McConvell and Smith 2004). It has also been hypothesised that this spread was based at least in part on language shift by resident populations, who were most likely speakers of the three non-Pama-Nyungan language families described in the previous sections (McConvell 1997, 2001).

Linguistic evidence for spread based on language shift includes:

a. massive borrowing of riverine flora and fauna terms;

b. strong structural influence of the northern complex verbs on the Eastern Ngumpin verbs while the basic deep differences in grammatical type were maintained (McConvell and Schultze-Berndt 2001);

c. adoption of key kinship terms from the north as the kinship system adapted.

Economy and technology of the Eastern Ngumpin speakers is a blend of the southern desert culture from which their language arose (by hypothesis) and that of the northern NPN speakers. Seed-grinding technology and some of its accompanying terminology spread from south and west into the VRD, but other aspects of the terminology, and other technologies such as the fire-drill, are more in tune with the autochthonous VRD patterns (McConvell and Smith 2004). The evidence in this field as presently assessed does not point unambiguously in the direction of language shift by NPN speakers to the Eastern Ngumpin languages nor to heavy migration by PN speakers and displacement of the previous population. Biogenetic studies can be called upon to shed light on such questions, but evidence on these questions is not available in sufficient detail for this area to be of assistance.

Adoption of placenames and placename structures from the northern languages would be another indication of Eastern Ngumpin language spread with substrate influence, but as already noted this is not a straightforward matter and will be examined in more detail in this paper.

Glossonyms and ethnonyms

For most of VRD, glossonyms (language names) and ethnonyms (names of groups of people) are identical. One exception is the term Karranga which signifies the language, whereas Karrangpurru is generally used to indicate the group (with the *-purru* suffix indicating 'group'), although Karrangpurru can also be used to mean the language (as Ngaliwurru with the same suffix can indicate both language and people).

There are five recognisable ethnonymic stuctures which are used for language groups in the VRD (displayed on Figure 16.4):

a. a root of obscure meaning with a suffix *-man*. McConvell (2002b, in press) argues that these roots are mostly characteristic interjections in the respective languages. *-man* is a semi-productive suffix in the Yangmanic languages from which this structure appears to be derived;

b. a root of obscure meaning with the suffix -*pung~-wumg*, derived from Jarragan languages, and applied to them, with the exception of Jaminjung (?< *Jaminji-wung*);

c. the root *ngali* ('good', 'all right') with a noun class prefix in the case of Nungali(wurru) and the 'people' suffix -*purru~-wurru* in the case of Ngaliwurru;

d. a root with the form of an archaic environmental term (*pirli-mat* 'hill-MAN?'; *jiyil* '?spring') and the suffix -*jurrung;*

e. a version of the Yangmanic (Wardaman) word *korrong* 'south' either as a bare stem or with the suffix -*ji*.[8]

Additionally there is the ethnonym *Birlinarra*, which appears to be constructed from *pirli* 'stone, hill' and an otherwise unattested suffix -*narra*.

The placenames based on 'south' in Wardaman are immediately to the south of the current territory of Wardaman with the exception of Kuurrinyji (Gurindji), which is separated from Wardaman by Birlinarra and Karrangpurru. Possibly at the time when the ethnonym Kuurinyji arose, languages ancestral to Wardaman and Kuurrinyji were contiguous. Various scenarios might be proposed but one is that Birlinarra and Ngarinyman which are closely related to Kuurrinyji, split off from the ancestral language located around the upper Victoria River, and occupied the sandstone hills to the north, creating the separation and leading to the adoption of a placename based on the term for 'rock, hill' (McConvell 2002). Ngarinyman has been expanding west even up until the early 20th century, replacing languages now extinct which were probably Jarragan.[9]

Structure of placenames

Placenames are divided into the following categories for discussion. Here 'meaning' indicates the intension of whole or parts of the toponym as a lexical item (e.g. 'having a fig-tree') and 'reference' indicates the onomastic extension of the term (the place it refers to).[10]

1. Opaque – neither the meaning of the term as a whole nor parts of it are known to current speakers.

2. Semi-transparent – either the whole or parts of the toponym have no meaning for current speakers in the current language, but they may be interpreted by comparative historical linguistics, or occasionally by speakers attributing an 'old meaning' to the placename or part of it.

3. Transparent – the whole toponym has a meaning for current speakers, whether it consists or one or more morpheme.

Figure 16.4: Ethnonyms in the VRD
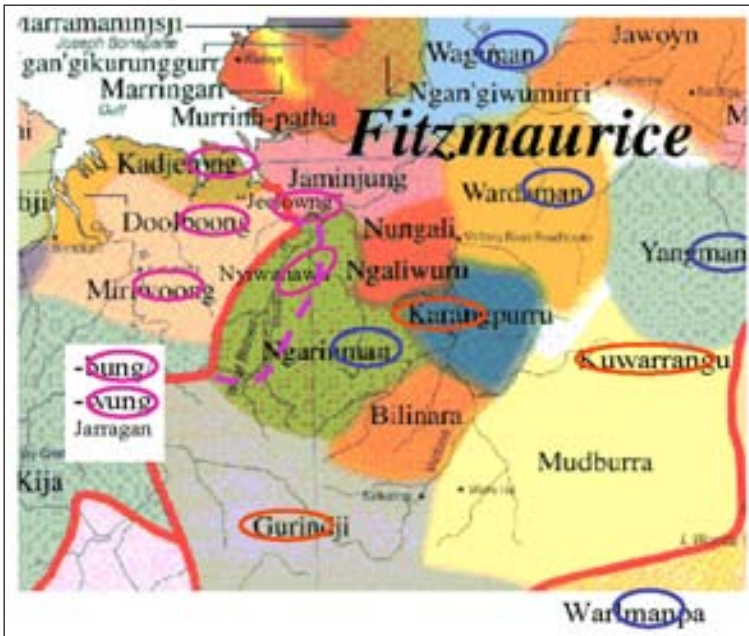
Increasing opacity over time is a property of all long-lived naming systems and is not confined to Australian Aboriginal languages by any means. Many English placenames are semi-transparent in that the form and meaning of elements has changed since they were first coined and some of the component stems and affixes have not been used for some hundreds of years in the everyday language. Much the same is true of Aboriginal placenames, but we do not have the written documentation that can help us to discover the meanings of the names in most cases.

Opaque

Fully opaque placenames are relatively rare in the VRD, but of course as knowledge recedes the composition and meanings of placenames become inaccessible. Tindale (1974) correctly points out that opaque names are old, but that is a relative matter and it may take only a generation or two for information to be lost. Examples of such names in Ngarinyman are *Pukaka* and *Layit,* associated with Flying-fox dreaming in the mid-Wickham River.

There may be names which could contain more than one morpheme, but since the morphemes involved are not regularly found, this could only be a

suspicion rather than a proven fact. For instance the name *Lipananyku,* the large waterhole at Wave Hill settlement, may have once been segmentable (-*ku* may be a suffix, for instance), but that is only speculation.

Semi-transparent

These can be divided into three sub-types:

a. those with an archaic stem
b. those with an archaic affix
c. those with an archaic stem and archaic suffix.

A simple example of the (a) type is the Gurindji placename *Warrijkuny* discussed in McConvell (2003). It is clearly segmentable as follows

5. *warrij*   *-ku*   *-ny*
    crocodile   DATIVE   NOMINALISER
    'belonging to Crocodile'

There is a transparent connection since the story of Crocodile is associated with this place and is still known. The only archaism here is that the word for 'crocodile' in the placename has the form *warrij,* not *warrija,* the current form for 'crocodile'. The latter is clearly a relatively recent loanword from Mudburra and the older form *warrij* is found in Ngarinyman. This indicates that the placename must have been coined before the borrowing of *warrija.*

More common is the situation where the meaning of the stem is no longer known although the suffix is of a common type found with placenames – such an example is that of *Ngaliminya* in the next section, where -*nya* is very likely to be the common suffix, but people generally no longer seem to know what *Ngalimi* is (presumably a noun), and so far investigations of vocabularies of neighbouring languages have been unable to assist.

There are quite a number of suffixes in the languages of the VRD which seem to attach to stems to form placenames but are not interpreted as having a particular meaning.

Two found in Gurindji/Birlinarra/Ngarinyman are the following, exemplified here from the southern Ngarinyman area in the south of Gregory National Park (in the case of 6a) and from central Daguragu station.

6. Eastern Ngumpin placename suffixes of obscure meaning and origin
a. *-malulu* e.g. *Janka-malulu,* in which the first element is *Janka* 'woman' and refers to a Women dreaming area

b. *-maliny* e.g. *Warna-maliny,* in which the initial stem is *warna* 'snake' (not the most common word for this meaning today); the area is connected to the *Jurntakal* giant poisonous snake Dreaming.

Both these suffixes occur over a wide area and seem to refer to creeks, but what specifically, either in terms of geography or mythology, remains unclear. Possibly they are related to each other. The basic suffix could be *-malu*. The suffix *-ny* could be related to the Mudburra placename suffix *-nya* discussed below (Mudburra has a regular sound change of *a*-augmentation to consonant-final stems). The *-lu* is an 'exactly' suffix in western dialects like Wanyjirra similar in meaning to *-rni*. There are some other examples of *-lu* being used as a placename suffix without a preceding locative in western dialects Malngin and Wanyjirra, where the locative placename construction is absent e.g. *Ngalja-lu* (frog EX) 'Frog Dreaming'.

Transparent

Stems with no affixation which have a clear present meaning are relatively rare as toponyms but do occur, e.g. *Karrikurn* 'yellow ochre'. In this case there is also yellow ochre at the site.

Many placenames consist of a stem (usually a noun, sometimes a coverb) with a known meaning equivalent to its current use, and a currently used suffix, or more than one suffix. The suffix may have its normal everyday meaning such as Gurindji/Birlinarra/Ngarinyman *-jawung~-yawung* 'having' as in:

7. *Jampa-yawung* 'having a Leichhardt tree'

A place with a name like this may have a Leichhardt tree, or may have had one at some point, but the name is no longer simply a description – it has undergone the process of *onymisation* – conversion to a term which is mainly a referential label. Even such labels which tend to be descriptive may refer to the Dreaming, or mythological time, rather than the present or recent past.

Affixes may not have their normal function but may have a special function with placenames, as will be discussed with LOCATIVE and LOCATIVE+EXACTLY. Some such suffixes may be optional – both LOCATIVE and EXACTLY are known to be omitted on occasion but this is rare in the VRD.

Placenames with locative in the VRD

Distribution of locative pattern

Some kind of inherent locative (including the LOCATIVE+EXACTLY type) is found on a proportion of placenames throughout most of the VRD, Nowhere is this pattern categorical, but varies between around 20-40 per cent of the placenames in the central zone (Gurindji/Birlinarra/Ngarinyman, Jaminjungan and Wardaman). As we shall see, it becomes rare in the south-east (Mudburra) and western dialects related to Gurindji (Malngin, Wanyjirra and Nyininy). In the Jarragan languages in the west, however, locative is found with a great many placenames, and especially in Kija this seems more like a grammatical rule, that placenames shall take locative endings even in citation forms. Miriwung tends in this direction but there appear to be more cases of placenames not in the locative. Of a list of 221 Miriwung placenames compiled by Kofod (n.d.), 97 (44 per cent) are inherently locative in form (with the LOC suffix *-m* or allomorphs). Of these many are transparently formed from current Miriwung stems, like (8).

8. Miriwung

a. *Banaggam* 'hill at dam near Coolibah Pocket'

b. *banaggang* 'nightjar' (Kofod 1978; *-ng* is the general nominal non-feminine suffix).

There is another feature already mentioned above, the zero locative, which is independent of the 'inherent locative' trait. In some languages placenames may function as locations without overt (additional) locative marking whether or not they have inherent locative marking. This feature seems confined to some of the NPN languages, never occurring in PN languages.[11]

In Mudburra country, in the south-east of the VRD, inherent locative marking of placenames is vanishingly rare. On the other hand there is another placename suffix which is quite common. Figure 16.5 shows the western limits of the distribution of this suffix which corresponds quite closely to the western boundary of Mudburra traditional territory. The examples of placenames with *-nya* are as follows:

9. Mudburra *-nya*

    Wirntiku+nya   'Curlew Dreaming Place'

    Karu+nya   'Child Dreaming Place'

    Kirrawa+nya   'Goanna Dreaming Place'

    Janga+nya   'Sickness Dreaming Place'

A gap in the distribution: Mudburra -nya

Figure 16.5: *-nya* and LOC distribution

There is some evidence supporting the idea that *-nya* may be an old placename suffix within the Pama-Nyungan family. In Nyangumarta (and other Pilbara languages) *-nya* is commonly found on names; e.g.

10. Nyangumarta placenames with *-nya*

a.   *Wanangkuranya* – rocky outcrop near Marble Bar

b.   *Mikurrunya* – hill at Strelley turnoff

< *miku-rri* 'get jealous' (the associated Dreaming story is about jealousy)

In the Western Desert dialects (particularly southern) *-nya* is an absolutive suffix used on all names (primarily personal names). A suffix **-ny(a)* is reconstructable to proto-Pama-Nyungan which is the source of accusative and dative suffixes on pronouns and names in some languages, and is probably the source of the same suffix as an absolutive on names. This seems a more likely source for the Mudburra *-nya* than other look-alikes in the area, such as the West Mirndi feminine *-nya*.

Implications of the distribution

In terms of our initial question of where inherent locative originally came from, this distribution of *-nya* versus LOCATIVE on placenames is evidence which tends to weigh on the side of LOCATIVE on placenames being diffused from the northern NPN languages into the central eastern Ngumpin languages (Gurindji/Birlinarra/Ngarinyman) either by contact or by substratal influence (retention by NPN speakers as they shifted to PN languages). In this scenario, the Mudburra pattern of absence of inherent locative would be a result of failure

of this diffusion to reach Mudburra. Similarly the *-nya* placename suffix could be interpreted as an older pattern which was not replaced by the new inherent locative marking.

Eastern Ngumpin (PN) plain locatives

Turning now to the main topic of this paper, the inherent locative marking of placenames, we shall look first at plain locative marking then at the rarer LOCATIVE+EXACTLY formation.

Gurindji-Birlinarra-Ngarinyman

These languages are closely related and occupy a central column in the VRD, from around the headwaters of the Victoria River and Hooker Creek north to around Victoria River Downs and the western tributaries of the Victoria River. Ngarinyman also extends further west to the East and West Baines Rivers, although this may be relatively recent (as discussed further below). They all have plain LOCATIVE placenames as well as the LOCATIVE+EXACTLY type. Both of these types fade out in the west of the associated dialect chain (Malngin, Wanyjirra and Nyininy). This distribution might also be taken as support for the idea that the LOCATIVE patterns diffused from NPN languages in the north.

McConvell (2004: 47-48) proposed that the LOCATIVE type was relatively productive in these languages and was therefore used to form placenames from the name of the Dreaming known to have been at a site, where the original name had been forgotten or tabooed due to death or ritual secrecy. (See also Merlan 1998 for attribution of information to newly discovered sites near this region). The example given in McConvell (2004) was:

11. *Jantura*   *-la*

    bustard   LOC

    'Turkey Dreaming place'

This behaviour was shown to be consistent with the fact that Ngarinyman plain LOCATIVE names are found in the north of traditional Ngarinyman country. Putatively they were assigned relatively recently because older names were forgotten or suppressed, and since Ngarinyman was the lingua franca in the area in recent times, this is the language used. On the other hand, names with the LOCATIVE+EXACTLY structure are confined to traditional Ngarinyman country prior to the expansion of Ngarinyman as a lingua franca. This more complex formation is not used for ad hoc bestowal of names in the way the plain LOCATIVE is.

Figure 16.6 shows the distribution of such Locative names both south and north of the Ngarinyman traditional boundary.

Figure 16.6: Locative and locative-exactly placenames on the Ngarinyman-Ngaliwurru boundary

The following are some representative examples of LOCATIVE placenames in Ngarinyman country. The positions are shown on Figure 16.7.

12. Ngarinyman placenames with LOCATIVE

a. *Lapa- ngka*   'Little Corella-LOC'

b. *Wirnirni-la*   'Emu chick-LOC'

c. *Kumuyurra-la*   'Butcher bird-LOC'

The characteristic of these placenames and the locative examples on Figure 16.6 above are that they are constituted from the name of a Dreaming animal (mostly birds in this sample but this may be fortuitous). Other placenames with LOCATIVE+EXACTLY have more varied roots, indicating other elements of the scene in Dreaming stories, coverbs representing actions etc., types which are not found in the plain LOCATIVE type of placename.

LOCATIVE placenames do not show any particular geographical distribution as compared with LOCATIVE+EXACTLY forms except that there is an area in the west which has LOCATIVE but not LOCATIVE+EXACTLY forms.

Figure 16.7: Ngarinyman/Birlinarra/Gurindji locative placenames (small sample)
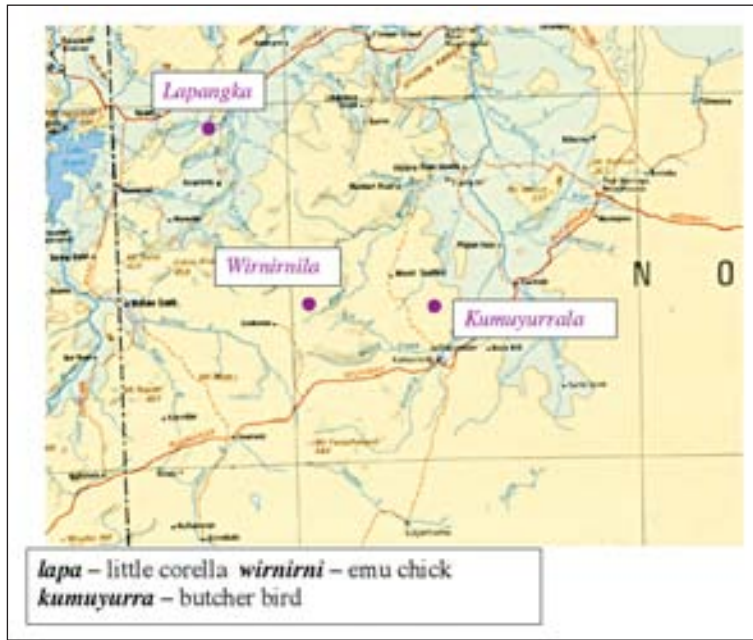
There are a large number of Jaminjungan (Jaminjung, Ngaliwurru and Nungali) placenames with the locative suffix (in Ngaliwurru -ni following a vowel and -ki following a consonant, shown in Figure 16.8), as well as those with the LOCATIVE+EXACTLY pattern. Most of them are of the same type as those illustrated for the Eastern Ngumpin languages – the name of a dreaming with the locative suffix. However at least one, *Kaljaki* (below), is formed from a coverb representing the action of the dreaming *kaljak* 'insert into hole' *+ki* locative (with degemination of the *k*). This item is an exception to the generalisation proposed for the Eastern Ngumpin locative placenames that they are not formed from coverbs and that the LOCATIVE+EXACTLY pattern is used in such cases. However this seems rare.

Jaminjungan (NPN) Locative placenames

Figure 16.8: Jaminjung/Ngaliwurru locative placenames
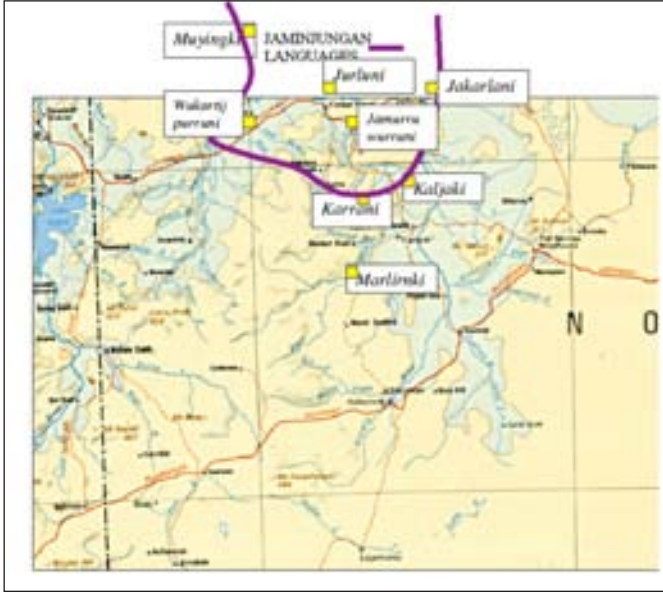
13. Jaminjungan Locative Placenames

a. *Karra-ni*   Spider-LOC
    Head of Slatey Creek

b. *Muying-ki*   Black plum-LOC
    billabong near Legune Station

c. *Jamurru-wurru-ni*   Green plum-PL-LOC
    Roller Creek, east of Timber Creek

d. *Wukartij-purru-ni* Rock Wallaby-PL-LOC
    Auvergne Crossing

e. *Jakarla-ni*   ?-LOC
    rock face northwest of Victoria River Crossing, also name for the location
    of the Pub

f. *Jurlu-ni*   ?-LOC
    across from Timber Creek a bit upstream from Yurlyuli

g. *Kaljak-i*   'insert into hole'-LOC
    Sundown Hill

h. *Marlirn-ki*   ?-LOC
    on Depot Creek.

And many others, e.g.: *Yirrbangki, Karlbangki, Wirliyingki, Wamanki, Wangkangki, Waninyjanki, Minjilini, Yuntuluni, etc.*

While the great majority of these kinds of placenames are within or very close to what is today considered Jaminjungan territory, a few are found to the south in what is currently seen as Ngarinyman country; e.g. *Marlirnki* (above), which is some 20 kilometres south of what is now thought of as the southern boundary of Ngaliwurru. This is likely to be a remnant name indicating that Jaminjungan languages once occupied an area farther south than they currently do.

Placenames with 'exactly' suffixes

Just as common as the placenames with plain locative, in both the Eastern Ngumpin and Jaminjungan languages, are those with a combination of a locative with a following suffix glossed here 'exactly'. These types are exemplified respectively in (14), Birlinarra being Eastern Ngumpin and Ngaliwurru Jaminjungan.

14.

a. Birlinarra
    "Old Man Dreaming Place"
    Marluka-la-rni
    old.man-LOC-EX

b. Ngaliwurru
    "Place where Python Dreaming tied up her topknot (*wangurtu*)"
    Wangurtu-ni-wung
    topknot-LOC-EX

The EXACTLY suffix in VRD languages

The Gurindji suffix *-rni* (*-parni* following consonants and *-warni* following liquids) has been described (McConvell 1983: 18ff) as functioning to modify expectations, and its function seems to be identical in all the Eastern Ngumpin languages. While some instances may be accurately translated into English as 'only', many are not, and there is a range of translations depending on context (i-vi in Table 16.1 below).

Table 16.1: Meaning of Eastern Ngumpin *-rni*

i. 'only'
ii. 'exactly'
iii. 'even'
iv. intensive
v. 'still'
vi. 'all the time'

McConvell (1983) regards all these translations and functions as deriving from a single meaning. Unlike English 'only' in which the expectation is modified to a lesser target by the assertion, with *-rni* the expectation can be modified to something greater ('even') or something more specific ('exactly, precisely'), also, not just to a lesser target. It is used also temporally to modify expectation of some event already having been completed ('still') or to modify expectation that an event has a limited time span more generally towards it being continuous ('all the time').

In the Non Pama-Nyungan languages Wardaman *-peng ~-weng* and Jaminjungan *-pung~-wung* have somewhat similar ranges of meaning to Eastern Ngumpin, but in Jaminjungan the suffix additionally functions to mark secondary predicates (Schultze-Berndt 2002).

It is not immediately obvious how this suffix relates to placenames. Harking back to Harvey's suggestion that X-LOC in a placename signifies 'where the X is' one might think X-LOC-EXACTLY renders 'where the X *still* is' using a temporal sense of the expectation modifier, given that local people generally consider that some essence or power of the Dreaming inheres in sites visited by the Dreaming. This explanation is not totally convincing and we will return to the question of the origin of this type of word formation at the end of this essay.

LOCATIVE-EXACTLY placenames in Eastern Ngumpin

There are numerous examples of this pattern and only a small sample is given on Figure 16.9, drawn from around the eastern and western boundaries of where this type of placename is found. These include example (14a) above and those in (15) below. They include both nouns naming the animal, some other object associated with the dreaming and coverbs related to the Dreaming action.

Figure 16.9: Gurindji/Birlinarra/Ngarinyman LOC-EX placenames

15. Placenames with Locative-Exactly in Eastern Ngumpin

a. *Jiwayirru-la-rni*   'bower_bird-LOC-EX'

b. *Karna-ngka-rni*   'spear-LOC-EX'

c. *Pula-ngka-rni*   'call_out[archaic coverb]-LOC-EX'

d. *Warlmayi-la-rni*   'spearthrower-LOC-EX'

e. *Kurrpu-karra-la-rni*   'dive-ACTION-LOC-EX'

f. *Karu-ngka-rni*   'child-LOC-EX'

   For (f) compare the Mudburra form *Karu-nya* discussed above in (9).

   In the western dialects of Gurindji like Wanyjirra, the *-rni* suffix is replaced by *-lu,* which has the same range of functions as a discourse suffix as in Eastern Gurindji, Birlinarra, Ngarinyman and Mudburra *-rni*, and can be glossed EXACTLY, abbreviated to EX. In the western parts of Gurindji country around the headwaters of the Victoria River on present-day Riveren station, near the boundary of Wanyjirra dialect in the west, the placenames have the suffix sequence LOC+-*lu* instead of LOC+-*rni,* for instance:

16.

a. *Jalwa-ngka-lu*   Heron- LOC-EX

   Revolver Creek Junction, upper Victoria River

b. *Jarnpa-ka-lu*   Grub/Featherfoot LOC-EX

   Head of creek running south-east into upper Victoria west of Buchanan Springs

This seems to be a transitional region as locatives in placenames disappear altogether further west, although some names with *-lu* and without locative are found (see note 12).

LOCATIVE-EXACTLY placenames in Jaminjungan

Here are a few examples.

17.

a. *Karra-ni-wung*   Spider-LOC-EX

   Hill overlooking the walking track near Timber Creek

b. *Jipij-ki-wung*   bird sp-LOC-EX

   near Marralum, salient rock left of road to M.

   Red Ochre place, Dreaming little bird Jibij

c. *Lirrimi-ni-wung*   Centipede-LOC-EX

   Hill behind *Garraniwung*, Timber Creek area

d. *Wungung-ki-yung*   Owl-LOC-EX

   near *Munbug*, has a bottle tree that is fallen over

   Dreaming for Owl (*Wungung*) who is looking back for Goanna (Goanna Dreaming at Laltha) at this place.

There appear to be no clear examples of LOCATIVE+EXACTLY placenames based on a coverb in Jaminjung. This would go along with the rarity of LOC on coverbs in Jaminjungan placenames; a historical explanation is attempted towards the end of the paper.

Jaminjungan placenames with EXACTLY and without LOCATIVE

A different type of placename formation in Jaminjungan is the adding of the EXACTLY morpheme without LOCATIVE. This is not possible in Eastern Ngumpin.[12] At least some of these are formations with coverbs and may relate to the rarity of the Locative with coverbs already observed. In these forms, *-pung* becomes *-puk* by Nasal Coda Dissimilation where the final *ng* is preceded by a nasal-stop cluster (see McConvell 1988). It does not appear that this is a current phonological rule in the Jaminjungan languages but it must have operated at the time of placename formation or afterwards.

18. NAMES WITH *-PUNG* WITHOUT LOC

a. *Mun-puk*   face-down (coverb)-EX

    mud flats near junction north of East Baines River (on Auvergne station)

b. *Wularriny-puk*   ?-EX

    Waterhole on East Baines, downstream from Bulla

c. *Yalunjuk < Yalunju+wung*

d. *Mampuyuk < Mampi+wung?*

Nungali – gender and case in prefixes

Nungali alone of the Jaminjungan languages has retained a four-class system for nominals expressed by prefixes (Bolt, Hoddinott and Kofod 1970: 69).[13]

19. Nungali gender/case prefixes

CLASS		ABS	ERG/LOC	DAT
I	masculine	*ti-*	*nyi-*	*ki-*
II	feminine	*nya-*	*nyani-*	*kanyi-*
III	neuter	*nu-/ni-*	*nyi-*	*ki-/ku-*
IV	plant	*ma-*	*-*	*ki-*

Case inflection is expressed by use of different prefixes, and for some case functions also suffixes. For the neuter class of nominal the locative is expressed by just the prefixal desinence:

20. Nungali

a. *ni-yawa*   'foot'

b. *nyi-yawa*   foot LOC

According to Bolt et al. (1970) Nungali nominals which do not take prefixes normally express case by means of suffixes only. The locative is said to be *-ki* (1970: 72), although it is likely that it is also *-ni* following vowels as in the other Jaminjungan languages.

There are a few placenames that look Nungali both with *ni-* and *niya-* (absolutive) and *nyi-* (locative) scattered around. On the east at the border with Wardaman there are Nungali placenames in the same area as clearly Wardaman names; e.g. (21a-b) on the same hill.

21.

a. *nyi*   *-ma-ni-wung*

  LOC/NEUT   ? LOC EX

b. *parnangka*   *-ya*

  nightjar   LOC (Wardaman)

(22) is an example in an area which is on or outside the western edge of Nungali country and what looks like a Nungali form with a locative prefix and suffix. The regular word for this eucalypt has a regular masculine Nungali prefix *ti-*; a prefixed form (*timarlan*) has also diffused throughout the VRD as the tree name, alongside the plain root (*marlan*).[14]

22. Nungali

  Nyi   *-marlan - purru-ni*

  LOCI river.gum PL LOC

  (Timber Creek area)

There is also a Wardaman placename *Timarlam-beng* with the same stem and a suffix related to the Jaminjungan *-pung/-wung*. The regular word for the tree in Wardaman is *timalan* 'Eucalyptus camalduensis' – no doubt a loanword from Nungali. The change of final *-n* to *-m* in the placename is inexplicable.

Niyampula, hills associated with Possum Dreaming in present Ngarinyman territory, is possibly Nungali or a related language. The folk etymology given by Ngarinyman people is that it is derived from Ngarinyman *niyan* 'flesh', which seems unlikely although this word also could be an old loan with a class prefix. There could be an old root **yampu(la)* or **jampu(la)* – if the *-la* is a Ngarinyman locative suffix this would be an interesting example of mixing of morphology from two languages. Example (23) appears to have a suffix *-rti* (which is possibly an allomorph of Jaminjungan LOC).

23. *Wuyuwurti*

  rock face upstream from Nawulbinybiny, can be seen from Victoria Highway; also name for Old Victoria River Crossing

  Wuyuwuj (Black Whip snake) dreaming, *Wuyuwuj* was menstruating there and then caught by a *Lunggura* (Blue Tongue) man in a cave; sacred place for women only

Phrasal placenames

There are some phrasal placenames in Gurindji and Ngarinyman country which consist of a noun marked locative followed by a coverb also marked locative.

This is the same pattern as used in subordinate clauses in these languages. In the following name of a place on Wattie Creek in Jiyiljurrung Gurindji country, the clause is intransitive and the noun is the subject.

24. Gurindji

'Where the devil died'

mararla-la   tuk-kula

devil-LOC   die-LOC

There are a few Ngarinyman non-finite phrasal names with nominal marked LOC and coverb marked LOC+*rni*, but I have not seen any Jaminjungan equivalents.

25. Ngarinyman "Where the spear sticks up"

Karna-ngka jirrp   -kula-rni

spear-LOC stick.up LOC-EX

Stand of trees south of Wickham River

There is also one (possibly unique) phrasal name which combines both languages, Ngarinyman and Ngaliwurru.

26. Ngarinyman/Ngaliwurru mixed "Where the spear sticks up"

Karna-ngka that   -puk

spear-LOC   stick.up -EX

On East Baines River

Here both the lexical item and the suffix are Ngarinyman in the first word, and both are Ngaliwurru in the second half (the use of a Jaminjungan sound *th* in the coverb further reinforces the language difference), so there is a 'code switch' between the two words in the name. Interestingly the locative is found with the Ngarinyman noun, and the EXACTLY morpheme -*puk* (-*pung*[15]) with the Ngaliwurru coverb. This fits in with the placename formation in Jaminjungan noted earlier, that coverbs take this suffix in placenames rather than locative as is possible for Eastern Ngumpin languages.

In many languages to the north of the Victoria River District placenames can be formed from finite clauses without any additional affixation. This is also possible in Ngarinyman, although rarely, as in (27).

27. Ngarinyman whole clause placename

Wudu-rlu-rla-nyunu-bayarla

hill a long way (maybe 50 kilometres) west of Yarralin Community: the name refers to the two women who have lice on them that are biting them – if you go touch the rock you'll get lice too.

This is as recorded by Caroline Jones, who is unsure of the parsing of the morphology (pers. comm.). Possibly it is as follows: [16]

> wudu -rlu =wula-nyunu baya-la
> louse-ERG 3DUA-RFL bite-PRES 'the two lice are biting themselves'

In Malngin, a western variety similar to Gurindji it is possible to have a phrasal placename consisting of the subject noun (including ergative suffix where appropriate) and a coverb – no inflecting verb – as in (28)

28. Malngin phrasal placenames
a. ''Where the nail-tailed wallaby stands up'
   Kururungkuny warawarap
   n-t.wallaby stand
b. 'Where the Bluetongue made a gap (by throwing a boomerang)''
   Luma -ngku tingkalp
   bluetongue-ERG make.gap

Recall that the use of locatives in placenames disappears in the Malngin area.

In south-western areas (Wanyjirra) there are also some phrasal names with finite verbs (not coverbs) without locative. In this example the verb form is not the current verb form in that language, but is identical to the present tense form in Birlinarra; this is probably an archaism.

29. Wanyjirra
    'Where the hat stays'
    Kumununga karra
    ritual.hat stay.PRES

Evidence of previous occupation

Jaminjungan names in Ngarinyman country

The presence of Jaminjungan names in Ngarinyman country has already been noted in relation to *Marlirnki* above. The evidence for names with Nungali features in Ngarinyman country is not strong, and it may be that this involves

not Nungali as such but an earlier stage of Jaminjungan languages more generally when gender prefixes were still in wider use. However, aside from this there are some indicators that Nungali speakers originally had a more westerly distribution, including at least the Timber Creek area. What evidence there is of Jaminjungan placenames in Ngarinyman country indicates possible Jaminjungan occupation of an area as far south as the mid-Wickham River at a distant time, probably at least hundreds of years ago.

Names with Miriwung/Kajirrabeng -*m* LOC

Figure 16.10: Placenames with Jarragan -*m* Locative

To the west of the Jamijungan languages are the Jarragan languages of the East Kimberley (see Figure 16.10). Today the Miriwoong and Kajirrabeng have recognised territories inside the Northern Territory borders, and there is evidence that at least one other group existed (Nyiwanawu) in the nineteenth century along the West Baines River, in part of Amanbidji (Kildurk) station and neighbouring western Victoria River Downs, which probably spoke a Jarragan language but which succumbed to a combination of settler violence and internecine warfare (Rose 1990). Early sources (Mathews 1901, relying on information from N. H. Stretch, in turn obtaining information from a speaker of this language) name another language in this region also – Geelowng – probably *Jiyilawung*. The glossonymic suffix does not definitively prove that the language named is Jarragan, because people can adopt exonymic glossonyms from other language groups as their own, as probably happened with *Jaminjung,* which

seems to have had the *-wung* suffix at some time in the past. However it is an initial clue that Jarragan languages were spoken further east than their current domain and the evidence below about locatives in placenames tends to support that view.

All the Jarragan languages appear to have a strong tendency to mark placenames with a locative suffix.[17] They do not add any further locative when a meaning 'at X place' is required – that is, they are of the zero-locative type. In the northern Jarragan languages which are the ones relevant to us here, the locative suffix following a vowel is *-m* with allomorphs *-me, -mi, -be* following consonants. As expected there are quite a number of placenames in *-m* in the north-western corner of the Northern Territory where the Miriwoong and Gajirrabeng territories are. However there are also such *-m* placenames to the east in what is now Jaminjungan and Ngarinyman country. The westernmost examples are in the area probably previously inhabited by the Nyiwanawu and subsequently used by Ngarinyman mainly. Even further east however there are a few such names which may indicate that Jarragan languages were spoken over a wider area of Jaminjungan and Ngarinyman country at some more distant time in the past.

30. Placenames with Jarragan locative *-m*

a. *Jaljini ~Jalyinim* Mount Razorback

b. *Jinmiyam* Kneebone; Gajerrawoong or Jaminjung country? (Legune area)

c. *Kurrpijim* Bulla Community

d. *Papikurnam* On West Baines, Kildurk

e. *Jurum* On West Baines, Kildurk

f. *Julngayim~ Tulngayim*[18] Argument Gap (Kildurk area)

g. *Thukparrim* On Pinkerton Range

h. *Lumukem* near Nyunyuarim?

Bluetongue place, met up with Walujabi – Blackheaded Python (Kildurk area)

Lumuke- is the Jarragan word for 'bluetongue' (Kija *lumuku-l* (fem)). This confirms the presence of this language family in the area. This site is well outside current Jarragan territory and probably beyond the 19th century Nyiwanawu area.

(31a) is even further east in the southern central area of Ngaliwurru country, with the *-am* Locative suffix of Jarragan, suffixed to the name of a small brown bird (sp.?). There are other placenames formed from this bird species name, the plain stem (b) in Karrangpurru country and the Ngarinyman LOCATIVE+EXACTLY formation (c). Their locations are shown on Figure 16.10.

31.

a.   *Tuwak-am*

Bird sp. LOC   Bob's Yard

b.   *Tuwak*   East of Jasper Gorge

c.   *Tuwak-kula-rni*

bird sp. LOC EX   near Jutparra

Even further south-east is the site *Takam* near *Jutparra*. The meaning of the root here is unknown but the *-m* has a Jarragan appearance. Final *-m* is very rare in Ngarinyman, especially in nominals.

Hypotheses about placename locatives(+exactly) in the VRD

Structural diffusion from Non-Pama-Nyungan (especially Jaminjungan) to Pama-Nyungan (eastern Ngumpin)

The formation of placenames from locative forms of nouns for Dreaming beings and objects is fairly common in the area of NPN languages north of Eastern Ngumpin, Jaminjung, Wardaman and Jarragan. It is not found in other Ngumpin-Yapa languages or even in Eastern Ngumpin languages to the immediate east and west (Mudburra, Malngin) but only in the Central Eastern Ngumpin languages Gurindji, Birlinarra and Ngarinyman. The most attractive hypothesis therefore is that this pattern was borrowed from NPN, and probably Jaminjungan, into these languages, but the actual morphemes involved were not borrowed.

Locative placenames elsewhere in Pama-Nyungan

One might raise an objection that the locative means of forming placenames is also found in some Pama-Nyungan languages elsewhere, and that therefore it could be an inherited pattern in a few Eastern Ngumpin languages but lost elsewhere in PN languages of the region.

So with the Yir-Yoront tract name Puyvl which has an archaic locative suffix *-vl*, the citation form is also used as a locative as in (28) (Alpher 2002: 135)

32. *Ngethn   oylt artm   athan ngathn oylt nhinvnh Puyvl*

we   there mother my   we   there stayed [place]

'We, my mother and I, were staying there'

When such names occur with other locational cases, allative and ablative, the locative is retained prior to the other case marking; e.g.

33. *I   pal   thalvnh Puyvl+uyuw*

  there hither returned [place] ALL

  'They were coming back this way towards Puyul'

This latter behaviour is reminiscent of the use of the Locative suffix prior to other case-marking in southern Western Desert languages such as Pitjantjatjara

34. *Alice Spring-ala-kutu*

    LOC-ALL

Alpher suggests that the accretion of the locative to placenames has been a process of 'historical drift', citing Lauriston Sharp recording names without locatives in 1933 which Alpher recorded as having obligatory locatives in 1966.

A similar historical drift might have happened in South Australia: Teichelmann and Schürmann record some placenames without locative but the bulk of 'Kaurna' placenames are regularly marked locative. However the 'drift' in this case may well have been influenced by a more well-established pattern of locative marking in the Ngarrindjeri languages. As far as I know, such a contact explanation is not available for Yir-Yoront, but may be for locative marking in the PN languages of the VRD. We return to this issue at the end of the paper after looking at VRD placenames in more detail.

Inheritance of locative subordination within Ngumpin-Yapa

Another potentially relevant factor is that LOCATIVE is also used a means of marking non-finite subordination in Ngumpin-Yapa. In Gurindji for instance one can add locative to a coverb[19] to indicate a simultaneous action by the main clause subject, as in (35). If the main clause verb is transitive, the coverb is usually ergative-marked instead.

35. *makin-ta   ngu=rna jarrakap marn-ani*

    lie.down-LOC CAT=I talk   say-PST.IMPF

    'I was talking while lying down'

If the clauses do not share an NP referent, the subject may also be present with locative marking.

36. *Jangala-la makin-ta ngu=rna jarrakap marn-ani*

    J.-LOC lie.down-LOC CAT=I talk   say-PST.IMPF

    'I was talking while Jangala was lying down'

Coverb and object NP can also take locative marking in a subordinate non-finite clause where the object of the main clause is coreferential with the subject of the subordinate clause as in (37a). An alternative is to use allative marking as in (37b). This kind of pattern is areal but appears to originate in some Pama-Nyungan grouping (McConvell and Simpson 2009).

37a. *Jangala ngu=rna paraj pu-nya ngarin-ta jaart-karra-la*

    J.   CAT=I find pierce-PST meat-LOC eat-ACT-LOC

b.   *Jangala ngu-rna paraj pu-nya   ngarin-jirri jaart-karra-yirri*

    J.   CAT=I find pierce-PST meat-ALL eat-ACT-ALL

  'I found Jangala eating meat'

The interpretation of placenames could therefore be different based on this background of locative subordination. *Makinta* could mean 'when/where [someone] was lying down' and *Jangalala* could mean 'when/where Jangala did something'. This is quite amenable to the kind of interpretation placenames with locative actually have in relation to Dreaming events. This is a distinctly different from the interpretation in terms of headless existential clauses offered by Harvey.

There are several problems with this solution however. The locative strategy for non-finite subordination is common in Ngumpin-Yapa languages (e.g. Jaru, see Tsunoda 1981: 172 ff), but the locative placenames phenomenon is quite restricted to the central Eastern Ngumpin languages, as we have seen. In order to probe this problem further we need to look at LOCATIVE+EXACTLY constructions.

LOC + EX subordination in Ngumpin-Yapa

LOCATIVE+EXACTLY placenames formation is even more restricted and more puzzling. It occurs only with the central Eastern Ngumpin languages and with the Jaminjungan languages, not in the other NPN languages to the north, nor in any other PN languages that I know of.

However one quite salient fact is that the combination of locative case marking with a morpheme *-rni does* occur, in the southern Ngumpin-Yapa language Warlpiri, marking a certain type of non-finite subordination.

This is one of a number of types of subordinating suffixes which are used to mark coreferentiality of subjects, or objects, or absence of such coreferentiality. The LOC+*rni* form is used among other functions as the default form appropriate

when there is no relevant coreferentiality in a main clause. It is therefore most appropriate for expressing a general meaning of 'where X happened/where X did something'.

Let us suppose for the moment then that such a clause type were present in early Ngumpin-Yapa, and while it was lost as a productive syntactic mechanism in the Ngumpin branch, it was retained in placenames. This hypothesis seems to be counter to the earlier idea being pursued that the locative pattern could have been borrowed from Jaminjungan into eastern Ngumpin, but as we shall see below, there may be a way of reconciling these two approaches.

It raises other issues too. In Warlpiri *-rni* apparently does not have the meaning 'EXACTLY' (etc. − note the range of senses discussed earlier) but only functions as a formal syntactic marker of a type of non-finite clause linkage with the LOCATIVE, defined by Hale (1995: 42) as follows in (38) with the example (39).

38. Warlpiri *-ngkarni/-rlarni*

'relative: main clause arguments not coreferential with subordinate subject (the latter inflected for dative case)'[20]

39. *ngalapi-nyanu ka manyu-karrimi kirda-nyanu-ku karli jarnti-rninja-rlarni*

child-his   AUX play-PRES   father-its-DAT   boom trim-INF-LOC+rni

'The child is playing while its father is trimming a boomerang'

Simpson (1991: 391) clarifies that LOC+rni clauses in Warlpiri 'describe an action which happens at the same time as event denoted by the argument-taking predicate in the nominalised clause'. This contrasts with another type of clause linkage, sequential, which is marked by *-rla,* which is the same form as for the Warlpiri locative case suffix, exemplified in (40).[21]

40. Warlpiri

wati-ngki kuyu purra-nja-rla nga-rnu

man-ERG meat cook-INF-LOC eat-PST

'The man cooked and ate the meat'

It is possible, then, that the *-rni* element was added to the locative at some earlier stage of Ngumpin-Yapa to provide the simultaneous, continuous interpretation, rather than sequential, since this appears to a key sense of this element. The *-rni /-parni* element is also found as an 'emphatic' marker including this kind of meaning in Walmajarri (e.g. in texts in Hudson 1978: 88-92). In Jaru this suffix is replaced by *-lu*, as noted for western dialects of Gurindji, but the range of meanings is similar including 'keep …-ing, still now' (Tsunoda 1995: 210). This distribution of *-rni* EXACTLY in the west and east of Ngumpin–Yapa

but not in the central languages is found with other elements also. A plausible interpretation of this distribution is that the morpheme in question is old in the sub-group and has been replaced by innovation in the central languages.

One might claim that this *-rni* suffix did begin as an expectation modifier and continued (and perhaps expanded) that function in Ngumpin while it also took on the function of marking a type of non-finite subordination also, at which time it also transferred to placenames. The grammaticalised syntactic function solidified as a cross-clause marker in Yapa (Warlpiri) but was lost in favour of the kinds of plain case marking illustrated above for Gurindji, in the other languages. In Jaru, plain locative marks non-finite subordination, and as in Gurindji, both the object and verb are marked locative as in (41). In (42) the verb is replaced by a 'preverb' (similar to Gurindji coverb, but with less freedom in position, see Tsunoda 1995: 173). According to Tsunoda, this construction is used when the main object is coreferential with the subordinate subject, and there is an alternative with the Allative replacing the Locative, as in Gurindji but seemingly more rare.

41. Jaru

    ngumbirr-u mawun nyang-an ngaba-ngka nganu-ngka

    woman-ERG man see-PRES water-LOC drink-LOC

    'A woman sees a man drinking water'

42. Jaru

    ngumbirr-u yambagina nyang-an manyan-da

    woman-ERG child see-PRES   sleep-LOC

    'A woman sees a child sleeping'

The emergence of LOC + EX placenames as compromise solution

Let us assume then that at a certain stage of Ngumpin there was both a locative and LOCATIVE+EXACTLY non-finite subordination mechanism and that both of these were applied to yield placenames from events in the Dreaming stories. So phrases like 'water-LOC drink-LOC' could be interpreted as 'where [some being] drank water'. More to the point single nouns or coverbs could have either LOCATIVE or LOCATIVE+EXACTLY added to yield placenames like X-LOC (EX) 'where X did/was doing something, or had something done to it/her/him' or in the case of a coverb 'where some being did X'.

As far as we can tell, however, these patterns are not similar to or very compatible with Jaminjungan grammars at the relevant period. Neither

Jaminjungan nor the other NPN families in the region would have had a gerund/coverb nominalisation pattern at all, and certainly not with locative case-marking or LOCATIVE+EXACTLY. However two factors could have disposed Jaminjungan to adopt this pattern:

a. the common use of locative forms of placenames as citation forms, and along with it in some NPN languages the 'zero-locative' rule of not adding further locatives to such forms;

b. the use in Jaminjungan and possibly other NPN languages of the region of expectation-modifying (restrictive) markers as grammatical markers of secondary predication and subordination.

Schultze-Berndt (2002) discusses the Jaminjungan *-pung,* which is similar in range of meaning to *-rni* in central Eastern Ngumpin but is moving in the direction of being a secondary predication marker. Further evidence that this played a role is in the discussion above of the use of *-pung* alone on coverbs to form placenames.

A fascinating example of how placename formation processes intertwined is the 'code-switched' example (26) *Karna-ngka that-puk* 'where the spear stands up', where the noun has just locative marking and the coverb just EX marking. On the other hand the almost parallel fully Ngarinyman example (25) *Karna-ngka jirrp-kula-rni* 'where the spear sticks up' has only LOCATIVE on the noun but LOCATIVE+EXACTLY on the coverb. In a subordinate construction in Ngarinyman omission of the locative case-marker on the coverb would be ungrammatical.

Thus it would seem that although the fundamental LOCATIVE+EXACTLY construction came from Ngumpin-Yapa (PN), the parts of it were sufficiently congruent with preexisting elements in Jaminjungan to allow a compromise in which LOCATIVE+EXACTLY became a standard placename pattern in Jaminjungan too. Traces of its origin remain for instance in the apparently relatively small number of LOCATIVE and LOCATIVE+EXACTLY placenames based on coverbs in Jaminjungan. Another factor influencing the situation may have been the relationship to other placename formation strategies involving subordination markers, e.g. the subordinating/relativising morpheme *-ngarri* in Jarragan and Worrorran. The notion of adding a subordinating morpheme to form placenames could have been calqued from Jarragan into Ngumpin initially, then the specific LOCATIVE+EXACTLY construction calqued from Ngumpin into Jaminjungan later. Finally, another factor smoothing the path to this convergence may have been the semantics of the *-pung* and *-rni* elements, both of which carry an element of 'still' – continuity in time against the odds. When people see the stand of trees that represent the spears thrown at the sites called (25) and (26) in the Dreaming long ago, surviving *still* is surely in their mind.

Typology of inherent locatives in placenames

Alongside these questions of the origin of particular placename formations, and interacting with them, is the issue of the syntactic behaviour of placenames. The notion of zero-locatives was introduced earlier and within the VRD alone we can see various settings of this feature. In the Jarragan languages it is quite prominent. In the Eastern Ngumpin languages it is virtually absent and where placenames with inherent locatives occur in a locative function, a second locative (or other locational marker) is added as in (43a) below. In Wardaman however, zero-locative is usually found as in (44), and this also extends to placenames which do not contain a Locative.[22]

43. Gurindji

a. *Kujarra ngu-wula mamangkurl*
    two   CAT-3du.s become.country
    wani-nya   Karu+ngka+rni -la.
    fall-PAST child–LOC-EX-LOC
    'Two (Dreaming children) 'went down' at Children-Dreaming-Place (Wave Hill)'

b. *Ngu-wula ya-ni   Karu+ngka+rni -yirri*
    CAT-3du.s go-PAST child-LOC-EX-ALL
    'They both went to Wave Hill'

44. Wardaman

a. *Yurrb we-ndi julu-ya*
    stand 3sg-PAST hill-LOC
    Barnangga+ya / Bijbarnang
    bird sp.-LOC [place]
    He stood on the hill Mt. Gregory / Bijbarnang

b. *Wurr-yanggi Barnangga-warr / Bijbarnang-garr*
    3pl.go-PAST bird sp.-ALL [place]-ALL
    'They went to Mt. Gregory / Bijbarnang'

Table 16.2 provides an overview of the typology of placename behaviour in the VRD languages.

Table 16.2: Distribution of features of placenames in VRD languages

IL= Inherent Locative; EX = EXACTLY suffix; PN = placename; LOC = locative case ending; Loc = locative function; ? = no clear data obtained

	MUDBURRA	MALNGIN	GURINDJI/ BIRLINARRA/ NGARINYMAN	JAMINJUNG/ NGALIWURRU	MIRIWUNG	WARDAMAN
IL with EX suffix	-	-	+	+	-	-
EX suffix, no IL	-	-	-	+ [coverbs only?]	-	?
Coverbs form IL's + Nominals only -	-	-	+	+	?	?
Other cases forms added to IL form + root -	-	-	+	?	-	-
LOC case added to IL form in Loc function + IL form used in Loc function -	-	-	+	?	-	-
IL form citation /default	-	-	+	+	+	+
Any PN used with LOC as loc	-	-	+	? +/-	?	-
Phrasal						
Phrasal with IL marking + Phrasal without IL marking -	?	-	?	?	?	-
Phrasal with LOC+EX marking on coverb, LOC on noun	-	-	+	?	?	?
Phrasal with EX on coverb, LOC on noun	-	-	-	+ [?only code-switched example]	?	?

This array confirms the distinctiveness of the Eastern Ngumpin languages and Jaminjungan languages together in having the LOCATIVE+EXACTLY type of placename formation, despite the linguogenetic unrelatedness of the languages. The explanation for this remains difficult but a detailed hypothesis about the interaction of the languages leading to this result has been outlined in the last section, where the role of non-finite subordination/secondary predication in the history of placename formation is discussed.

A wider grouping of languages – including all the NPN languages of the region but not all the Ngumpin (PN) languages - has the feature of a significant number of placenames being what has been called here 'Inherent Locatives'. Nevertheless the behaviour of such placenames is distinctively different in the different languages. The NPN languages largely follow the 'zero-locative' pattern in which inherent locatives (and other placenames) do not generally add locative case-marking in locative function, but the Ngumpin (PN) languages do. This indicates that while the PN languages may have been influenced by NPN neighbours to mark placenames locative, they did not adopt the 'zero-locative' grammar.

It has been shown that the LOCATIVE+EXACTLY pattern of placename formation may be some kind of hybrid made up of elements from both the Pama-Nyungan Ngumpin languages and the Jaminjungan languages during their extended period of contact and the spread of the Ngumpin languages north. There are intriguing hints that the LOCATIVE+EXACTLY pattern is related to another pattern of marking especially coverbs in placenames with the EXACTLY suffix only, not just in Jaminjungan but perhaps in the other NPN languages of the region with even some parallels in some PN dialects. Further data and analysis, including on the rather rare instances of clausal and phrasal placenames, are needed to shed light on this.

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Endnotes

1.   An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Placenames workshop held at Geoscience Australia, Canberra, 2005, and thanks go to the audience there for useful comment. I thank Eva Schultze-Berndt for unpublished data on Jaminjungan and Ngarinyman. Part of the work on this paper was funded by NSF grant BCS-0902114 'Dynamics of Hunter-Gatherer Language Change'. Thanks also to the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies for support for work on the project.

2.   The relevant language for the VRD is Wardaman, which is usually classified together with Wagiman and Yangman, outside the district (a family referred to by Evans (2003: 2) as Wardaman/Wagiman. Some authors had included these languages in the Gunwinyguan family (Evans 2003: 13).

3.   In the region under discussion both NPN and PN languages have a small number of simple verbs and most verbal concepts are conveyed by complex verbs which consist of an inflecting verb and an uninflecting coverb, which are separate words. For further discussion and examples see below.

4.   Merlan (1982) analyses the clausal placenames of Mangarrayi as headless relatives, and cites some parallel examples which are not conventionalised placenames, but these are not locative-marked and are quite different from the locative-marked placenames under discussion here.

5.   Karranga was not recorded before it died out in the mid 20th century. It may have been close to Mudburra with heavy Wardaman influence. There is a dialect chain between Gurindji and the languages to the south and west, Kartangarurru, Wanyjirra, Nyininy and Jaru.

6.   The proposal of a single Mirndi family relies heavily on shared detailed and irregular morphology. The list of lexical cognates found in both the eastern and western branches is quite small at this stage however (Harvey 2008).

7.   The territory of Jiyilawung as described by Mathews' unidentified correspondent is similar to that now ascribed to the Kajirrabeng/Kajirrawung, so it is possible that this is a name-change which occurred in the early 20th century.

8. E.g. *gardaalanji* 'people of Brunette Downs area (Nordlinger) < *gardaala* 'gidgea tree' and possibly the ethnonym *Gudanji* < guda 'rock'. This suffix appears to be complex, with the final element being the masculine suffix *–ji* as this alternates with feminine *–nya*; the 'dweller' morpheme would then be *–iny-* probably (Nordlinger does not differentiate *nj* and *ny)*.

9. A complication is the fact that the north-eastern dialect of Mudburra is known as Kuwirrinyji (Kuwarrangu is also identified as a Jingulu dialect influenced by Mudburra: Pensalfini 2003: 6-7). This may point to a scenario where Wardaman called this Mudburra dialect 'southern' and the Mudburra in turn called their Gurindji neighbours 'southern' (although they are actually more east according to current positions).

10. See also Walsh (2002) for discussion.

11. In travel narratives it is possible to find sequences like 'we camped, X, we travelled downstream, Y', where X and Y are placenames without case-marking. As flagged by the comma, however, this is more like a separate presentational phrase, 'we camped, that was X', etc. Unlike in the languages with zero locative it is possible to incorporate the placename in a clause with a verb and mark it overtly locative.

12. There is a possible exception to this generalisation in the Malngin area to the west of Gurindji, where there is a site *Ngalja-lu* 'Frog dreaming'. *Ngalja* is 'frog' and *–lu* is the western equivalent of *–rni*. Locative on placenames is very rare in the western dialects.

13. There are also remnants of an older class-prefix system in a number of Mirndi languages, both Jaminjungan and Barkly, including *jV-* masculine, and *na-* feminine. These are the prefixes adduced as the source of such gender prefixes in the diffusion of much of the subsection system by McConvell (1985). For more details of the old set of prefixes see Harvey (2008). Traces of this system are detectable in placenames with *ni-ya-* where *–ya-* is a lenited version of *jV-*.

14. Given its distribution the root *marlan* may be originally Pama-Nyungan. Why it was borrowed into Jaminjungan then the prefixed form diffused back into Pama-Nyungan languages is not clear: an explanation in terms of ecological zones is not promising since the tree is found throughout the semi-desert and riverine areas.

15. The form with *–pung* was recorded independently by Eva Schultze-Berndt as *Garnagathardbung*.

16. The fact that the subject is dual and the object is reflexive is odd here. If the lice on each woman were considered as separate collectives and 'lice' are an inalienable part of the women, this may be explained.

17. Harvey (2002: 38) mentions *–m* locative suffixation in Miriwung, but only in relation to 'land tenure names', which are, he claims, based on plant names. He accords the locative the same headless existential relative interpretation as in his 1999 article.

18. This *j/t* correspondence is found in other words.

19. It is also possible to add locative to the gerund form of an inflecting verb in *–u*, but use of a coverb without an inflecting verb is much more common.

20. Note that this case assignment as well as the absence of locative from the object is different from Gurindji; Nash (1986: 234) also notes that younger speakers use ergative instead for subjects in transitive subordinate clauses.

21. Sources on Warlpiri do not give the *–ngka* allomorph for this type, unlike for the *–ngkarni/-rlarni* and *–ngkajinta/-rlajinta* types.

22. Use of inherent locative placenames in the locative function and replacement of the locative by another case marker in different locational functions – which I describe here as the zero-locative pattern – is also reported in South Australia for the PN languages Kaurna and Ngarrindjeri (Hercus et al. 1997).

CHAPTER 17

'This place already has a name'[1]
MELANIE WILKINSON, DR R. MARIKA
AND NANCY M. WILLIAMS

Introduction

The title of this chapter was the response of Yolŋu people to the appearance of road signs with English language names in the Gove Peninsula in the early 1970s. Nhulunbuy is the Yolŋu name for the area that a mining company had chosen for a town site, and the Gove Peninsula, like the entire Yolŋu-speaking area was – and is – saturated with Yolŋu placenames. Yolŋu people objected to the substitution of an English placename for Nhulunbuy and ultimately a dispute arose. Some episodes of the dispute were public and some occurred in a bureaucratic penumbra.

In their classic study of Cheyenne law, Llewellyn and Hoebel (1941: 29), lawyer and anthropologist, asserted that not only law "but the hold and thrust of all other vital aspects of the culture, shine clear in the crucible of conflict". We believe that placenames are a vital aspect of culture, and we show that the critical naming events we focus on here were marked by conflict. For both Yolŋu and the recently arrived Europeans, the explanation of the origin of names and the process of their application to particular places were ultimately based on explicit claims and publicly sanctioned rules. We describe the dispute that arose during the process of Europeans giving names to places in order to demonstrate the vital role of placenames in both cultures.

The setting

The geographic focus of the dispute about names is north-eastern Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory of Australia. The Aboriginal people involved are linguistically labelled Yolŋu, a coastal people anciently in place, and those recently arrived are predominantly from continental Europe and the British Isles. The parameters of this conflict analysis may be further specified. The location

is a small geographic area on the Gove Peninsula, the central physical feature of which is a hill. The relevant events for the Yolŋu occurred during a very ancient time (*ŋurrunaŋgal/djiwirrtjiwirr/buḻanbuḻan*), and for the Europeans, certain events that occurred during a relatively recent time span – from 1963 to the present. References disputants made during that period to earlier events, in order to legitimate those in the later period, are also examined.

Tenure of the land is traditionally Yolŋu and the Yolŋu names within the area derive from Yolŋu cosmology; however, events relating to tenure change in Australian law occurred in 1968: from being part of the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Reserve, it became subject to leases granted to Nabalco, a mining consortium that included CSR and the Swiss company Alusuisse. The lease that is pertinent to the present discussion is a town lease, a form of special purpose lease. Following that change in tenure (from the point of view of those who executed it, but not including Yolŋu people) names derived from European sources, including some specific to Australian settler culture, were given to the area. As well, some similarly derived placenames that had been applied in the nineteenth century were validated by Australian government instrumentalities.

The acts and events framed by these parameters are described in the following order: Yolŋu accounts of the origin and meaning of the placenames; relevant Northern Territory statutes and regulations governing geographic placenames; a chronology of naming events in the area from 1803 to 2006, with particular focus on events between 1963 and 1984 that pertain to the peninsula and its features and the hill and immediately surrounding area (the town); comments based on linguistic analysis of the names; and finally, tentative remarks concerning what linguistic, historic, and ethnographic analysis may reveal of the origin and formation of proper names (i.e. onomastics – see below) of the diverse peoples involved.

Data sources

The sources of the data are Yolŋu oral histories and published accounts of oral histories, interviews with Nabalco executives and former executives, Nhulunbuy Corporation files, Nhulunbuy Community Library files, Gove Historical Society files and personnel, information in the Northern Territory Place Names Committee's files in the Lands Planning and Environment Department in Darwin, and interviews with the Secretary and former Secretary of the Place Names Committee.[2] Among the files were newspaper cuttings as well as memoranda and correspondence. Additional data could no doubt be located in Commonwealth Archives and from further extended interviews with

people who played a role in the naming events that are the subject of this paper. Nevertheless, we believe that the data so far acquired provide a reasonable basis for the inferences we draw.

Figure 17.1: Photo of Wuyal in a bark petition presented to the Commonwealth Parliament in 1968 regarding the naming of Nhulunbuy. The original painting is by Dundiwuy Wanambi (dec). Used with permission from AIATSIS, Canberra.

Figure 17.2: Guide to places associated with Wuyal's movements in the Nhulun area (locations are approximate)

Yolŋu placenames

The description of the origin and meaning of Yolŋu placenames in the area under discussion is based on work in progress by Dr Marika and Melanie Wilkinson. It concerns the hill of Nhulunbuy (Nhulun)[3] and the journeys and activities of the Ancestral Beings directly connected to it, in particular those of Wuyal, for it is in these travels, and the events that occurred during them, that the origin of placenames is found.

The country of the Gove Peninsula is affiliated with clans of both Dhuwa and Yirritja moieties speaking Dhaŋu, Dhuwala, Dhuwal, and Dhay'yi language varieties. The examples and accounts here are in Dr Marika's language, Rirratjiŋu,

one of the Dhaŋu languages.[4] The focus is on the Dhuwa stories connected with the immediate area of Nhulunbuy itself. We do not consider the adjacent Yirritja lands and, to that extent, the story is partial.

Dr Marika draws on oral accounts by her father and father's brothers as well as published records attributed to her father (Roy D̲aḏayŋa Marika) and one of her father's brothers (Dhuŋgala Marika).[5]

Dr Marika stays close to these accounts, but adds explanations of the significance of names as the accounts unfold. It needs to be noted that the men gave the explanations after 1968 and the establishment of the town and the town centre on the town lease.[6] For an artistic representation of Wuyal, see Figure 17.1, which is a picture of the bark painting of Wuyal submitted to Parliament in 1968 with the petition on the back (see 'The 1968 Bark Petition' below). Some of the key places Dr Marika mentions are shown on the aerial photo in Figure 17.2.

> Wuyal, Birrinydja̱lki or Gandjalala, the Sugar Bag Hunters, were spirit people who were originally Wäwilak and then Mandhalpuy. Wuyal went from Mandhalpuy country to be Marraŋu and he went to the Marraŋu place Raymaŋgirr (a place to the southwest), and in his travels he also changed his identity to D̲äṯiwuy, Marrakulu, Golumala, and Rirratjiŋu. We, these five clans, sing of his adventures and the travels of Wuyal as he danced and named places of significance in the homelands of these clans. He roamed the area looking for Dhuwa sugarbag (wild honey) called Yarrpany, a special sweet honey for Dhuwa people, following after the bees (*dawurr*). We dance in movements depicting those of Wuyal as he moved and looked for sugarbag. The places he trod mark his country and the places he stopped are sites of significance.
>
> As Wuyal was marking the track with his footprints he gave names to the land as he passed through. He gave many names. Some of these names are names of people now living (*e.g.*, Gandjalala, Gu̱nḏitpuy, Birritjimi, Wandjukpuy). Our names come from the places and things to which Wuyal and other Ancestors gave names as they passed through on their journeys.
>
> As Wuyal came up the path to Nhulun he was covered in *raman* (literally feathered down), the fluff of a sort of wattle, stuck all over him with the honey he was eating. He walked and climbed to the top of Nhulun carrying large dilly bags (*dhawar*) and small dilly bags (*buyuminy*). He also carried a stone axe *(d̲akul* or *djalpaṯ*) and a flint stone spear

(*dhama̱ta*). Its shaft was special, it had a *gu̱ndit* (stone flint) in it which made a rattle when it was shaken. He walked using his spear thrower (*mawurrwurr*) like a walking stick. He named the hill Nhulun.[7]

As Wuyal climbed he saw the rocks and the edge of the steep side of Nhulun, he said, "*Dhaŋum nyäkum goyum ba̱ndam Mirriki Walarriny Yurrwi̱la Yomunbi Ma̱tpu Ma̱tpu-wekarra*." ("This steep side up here is called Mirriki, Wa̱larriny Yurrwi̱la, Yumunbi, Ma̱tpu, Ma̱tpu-wekarra.")

Wuyal climbed up to the top of the hill. There he danced and held up his spear and thrust it back towards Djurruwu (a Telstra Tower stands there now) in the south where he had come from. He said, "*Ŋunham nyäku ma̱tpum goyum*." ("Over there also lies my escarpment Ma̱tpu.") Ma̱tpu is thus a term that is used to describe any escarpment that belongs to Wuyal, not just the steep side of Nhulun.

He collected honey on top of the hill and put it in his dilly bag (*buyuminy*). He continued to dance. In turn he looked to the south, to the east, the west and the north and thrust his spear in each direction. He named the following places he saw below:

- *Dja̱narrawuy*: The area at the back of what is now the cemetery up to the area opposite the golf course; it is *Gupa Gäluru* (salt pans at the back of East Woody). *Dja̱narra* is the name of Wuyal's or Gandjalala's spear.

- *Ŋarrku'wuy*: An area at what is now the speedway up to the turn-off into town; this area was cleared by the Ancestral Wallaby creating its *Molk* (sacred ground).

- *Wirriyay'wuy*: Nhulunbuy West excluding Gayŋuru, the Town Lagoon. *Wirriyay'* are small birds belonging to the Golumala clan.

- *Wandjukpuy*: Area behind what is now Captain Cook shopping centre, including the blue metal quarry and industrial area.

- *Gu̱nditpuy*: Rocky area opposite *Wandjukpuy* near what is now the quarry. It is where Wuyal dropped the bag with the flints and axe heads (*gu̱ndit*).

Wuyal lifted his spear and pointed it north toward Gäluru (East Woody) and thrust his spear forward, as if to throw it. He decided to go there. He walked down the hillside, his chest covered with stringy bark (*ga̱dayka*) leaves, leaves of the Dhuwa tree where he could find his *yarrpany*. In his left hand he carried his special spear thrower. You can see this today in the dances the Dhuwa men do, and also in bark paintings. His body covered with stringy bark leaves represents the land which belongs to him. It is covered with those trees.

Wuyal came to Dhamitjinya (the rocky island at Gäluru) and there he mixed the honey he had collected with the fresh water from the middle of the rocky island. He used the grass that grew there (ŋaṯpul) to strain the honey after it was mixed and then he drank it. He saw some oysters there and gave them names, as well as the trees, the creek, rocks, and sand.

Other special names were given to the local mangroves, currents, waterholes, and things Wuyal left behind. Special names were given for the honey. The liquid honey and water mixture has foam on the surface and is called *Malpitjiŋu, Djukurr-wirrakpirrak, Yupiṉŋu, Biḻinŋu, Marriwana, Djuwalarri.*

He left his water carrier at the freshwater site Djepulupulu on Dhamitjinya (the rocky island at Gäluru). You can still see the fresh water there today.

From there he looked east and saw the swarm of honey bees at a place called Rombuy (point to the west of Dhamitjinya), near Bekpuy (the next point). He went there following the honey bees and on to Lombuy (Crocodile Creek), where there is a big depression caused by the bees swarming. From there he went to Birritjimi (Wallaby Beach), where he did a special dance.

The last place he stopped was at Ḏimbukawuy, where he left his dilly bag, in the form of an enormous granite rock and associated smaller ones. From there he moved on to country the other side of Melville Bay, to Yuḏuyuḏu and on over to Djirrikinyin, Barrkira, Gurka'wuy.

Other Dhuwa areas near Nhulunbuy are associated with Wititj, the Ancestral Rainbow Serpent. Gäyŋuru (Town Lagoon) is one of those places, a Gälpu *riŋgitj,*[8] right up to Wirrwawuy (Cape Wirarawoi) and on to Gaḏalathami (Town Beach/Surf Club area).

The song and stories of Wuyal emphasise journeys made throughout the Dhuwa places he travelled giving meaning to the land through songs, stories, paintings, rituals, and the laws that we have practiced continuously in order to maintain our connectedness to our land and our individual identities as traditional land owners and caretakers of our land. Sacred art and ritual are connected to Nhulunbuy: in singing the sacred verses we trace and tread the ground that Wuyal sang as he journeyed through a great area, making connections with the flora and fauna, leaving landmarks such as the rocks at Ḏimbukawuy.

We follow in the footsteps of Wuyal and other ancestral creators. We are tracing and treading in their likeness. Our ancestral heritage, through

the stories, paintings and verses provide metaphors that we use to interpret our experiences in the world today. In this way our ancestral realities become today's realities.

Songs and stories, rituals and paintings, can also be narratives; the mind stores all this knowledge, which is interpreted through singing or painting or stories. They are an assertion of ownership. Our knowledge has been handed down from generation to generation. We have practiced these things through all our generations and are still governed today by the ways handed down from the Ancestors.

Individuals are affiliated with particular songs, dances, rituals and language, in the same way as they are to clan and country – through shared substance. The associations produce strong emotions in Yolŋu people. An example that pertains to Nhulun is contained in the report of a Yirrkala school workshop, in which Roy Marika told part of the Wuyal story:

As Roy was talking we could see that he was relating back to time and for a moment the time stood still for us. He was transported back to time, just by singing … We were all feeling the power surge through our bodies. It was an awesome, magical feeling. It was [as] if our elders, who [had] long since gone, [were] actually there with us, because in Roy's mind they appeared there as if it was only yesterday. (Yirrkala School Literature Production Centre 1989: 9-10)

Statutes and regulations governing placenames in the Northern Territory

In the Northern Territory, as in all states and territories of Australia, formal processes exist by means of which placenames are approved and gazetted.[9] Procedures of the Place Names Committee for the Northern Territory are currently governed by the *Place Names Act 1980* as amended in 1983 and 2004.[10] In 1945 the *Nomenclature (Public Places) Ordinance* was enacted and it was amended in 1966.

In 1967, the 1945 and 1966 Ordinances were repealed and a new ordinance changed the composition and operation of the Place Names Committee for the Northern Territory. In 1973, the 1967 Ordinance was amended, changing the definition of a public place and the ability of the Committee to recommend the altering the [*sic*] name of a public place.[11]

Rules of Nomenclature that governed naming in the 1960s have so far not been sighted; however, contemporary correspondence, memoranda and news

reports allow us to infer that they were essentially the same as 'The Rules of Nomenclature 1995' (see note 2).[12] The fact that Nhulunbuy town lease is not technically governed by these rules emerged inconsistently in the records sighted. 'The Rules of Nomenclature 1995' included the following:

- Original (or first published) geographic names (i.e. as distinct from Aboriginal names) should be given preference.

- Names in local usage should normally take precedence (depending on establishing the extent of usage of the name).

- Names which have geographical significance or are names of early explorers, discoverers, settlers, naturalists, surveyors, etc. are generally acceptable.

- Dual names of a physical feature may be used (i.e. one may be an Aboriginal name where no official or recorded name exists).

- Where dual names are contemplated, some research into the local English name and the known Aboriginal name for the feature must determine which name should be dominant or have priority for official use.

- Changing of long established place names is generally not preferred, except where necessary to avoid ambiguity or duplication.

- The use of Aboriginal names is encouraged.

- Known recorded Aboriginal place names should be made clear where possible with a historical background, identifying origins, etc., more particularly in their areas of current occupation and traditional association.

- Places should not be named after living persons (the Northern Territory Rules of Nomenclature 1945 did allow place names of living persons).

- "Names should usually have brevity, be euphonious and [be] easily and readily pronounced" (Item 19 in The Rules of Nomenclature 1995).

Non-Yolŋu names on the Gove Peninsula

At least three non-Indigenous peoples gave names to places in northern Australia before the twentieth century: the Macassans, the English and the Dutch. Macassan traders from Sulawesi called the north coast of Australia 'Marege''[13] and gave Macassan names to places and features in the area of the Gove Peninsula as well as to other places in or near the Yolŋu area.[14] According to O'Brien, in 1837 George Windsor Earl defined the boundaries and named the Arafura Sea "after the great parent tribe of the Arafuras of New Guinea" (O'Brien 1991: 1). However, O'Brien's research into the origin of the name 'Arafura' led him to conclude that it is derived from the indigenous name for "the people of the

mountains in the Moluccas" (O'Brien 1991: 3). While 'Marege" has not survived as a placename either in common or official use in northern Australia, 'Arafura' has wide currency in both domains.

Other placenames are attributed to Europeans on their voyages of discovery. The earliest widely known record of 'Arnhem' as a name for an area of land in Australia is contained in Matthew Flinders' 1814 record of his voyage around Australia at the turn of the nineteenth century. Here, 'Arnhem' was "the land of Arnhem": Flinders writes that "Zeachen is said to have discovered the land of Arnhem and the northern Van Diemen's Land, in 1618 and he is supposed … to have been a native of Arnhem in Holland" (Flinders 1966[1814] vol. 1, section 1: x). However, Flinders doubts the veracity of this attribution, *inter alia* noting that "no mention is made of Zeachen in the recital of discoveries which preface the instructions to Tasman" and that in January 1623 Jan Carstens in command of the *Arnhem* was murdered along with eight of his crew in New Guinea, but the *Arnhem* and the *Pera* "prosecuted the voyage, and *discovered* 'the great island ARNHEM and the SPULT'" (Flinders 1966[1814] vol. 1, section 1: x-xi). Flinders himself appears to have named Cape Arnhem; he says, "the furthest part [of land] then seen was near the eastern extremity of Arnhem's land, and this having no name in the Dutch chart [which he was following], is called CAPE ARNHEM" (Flinders 1966[1814] vol. 2: 220).[15] Dutch archives, however, contain records of seventeenth and eighteenth century navigators giving the name 'Arnhem' (or cognate terms) inconsistently to places in the area.

In 1803 Flinders named a number of features in the area of the Gove Peninsula, including Point Dundas, Drimmie Head, Melville Bay and Mount Saunders.[16] In naming Melville Bay, Flinders wrote:

> This bay is unnoticed in the Dutch chart, and I name it MELVILLE BAY, in compliment to the right Hon. Robert Saunders Dundas, viscount Melville, who, as first lord of the Admiralty, has continued that patronage to the voyage which it had experienced under some of his predecessors. It is the best harbour we found in the Gulph of Carpentaria." (Flinders 1966[1814] vol. 2: 224-225)[17]

Of the hills that Flinders named, he said that Mount Saunders was a "flat topped hill" and Mount Dundas, the nearer more woody hill, was also flat topped and steep at its north end (Flinders 1966[1814] vol. 2: 220). All these places are within the Gove Peninsula and their names remain in use today. Indeed Mount Saunders is Nhulun.

With the arrival of an increasing number of non-Aboriginal people in the twentieth century came a rapid increase in the application of English or European placenames. The name Gove was first given to the airstrip constructed

during the Second World War in honour of Pilot Officer William Gove. According to Callaghan, a local historian who had consulted Royal Australian Air Force, Department of Aviation and Australian War Museum sources, Gove was a navigator on a Hudson bomber, and was killed on 20 April 1943 when his Hudson collided with another Hudson shortly after take-off at Milingimbi. The air base on the peninsula was fully operational in January 1944, and handed over to the Commonwealth's Northern Territory Administration in 1957 (Callaghan 1988: unpaginated first page of Introduction).

Mineral exploration on the Gove Peninsula, which earlier had been sporadic, increased during the 1950s and by the early 1960s it was apparent that a major bauxite mining operation was anticipated. Contracts were negotiated in 1958 and 1969, but neither came to fruition (K. Eggerking pers. comm. 20 August 2007). Although the lease agreement between the Commonwealth government and the mining company Nabalco was not signed until 1968, the Methodist mission organisation had been aware of the negotiations taking place since at least the late 1950s (Wells 1982: 25). According to Edgar Wells, superintendent of the Yirrkala Mission as of 1962 (Wells 1982: 41-42), meetings of church, government, and mining officials held in early 1963 had ratified an agreement to mine. Wells was concerned at the lack of Yolŋu representatives and the possibility that the mission lease would be included in the area of a proposed mining lease. He says that he received a letter from Wandjuk Marika, a senior Rirratjiŋu man, with three other clan leaders as added signatories, in which they said "they wished 'all *balanda* [non-Yolŋu people/Europeans] … to keep out of Melville Bay, Cape Arnhem, Caledon Bay and Bremer Island'". The letter added that "'Notices will be placed at all these places' proclaiming the areas as belonging to the Aboriginal people." (Wells 1982: 19).

The contest over names begins

By 1963, considerable opposition to the mining development and the lack of consultation with Yolŋu had become public (see Berndt 1964). Yolŋu leaders sent two bark petitions to the Commonwealth Parliament in August 1963, one dated 14 August and the second dated 28 August.[18] The petitions, as summarised by the Select Committee that, as a result, reported on the "Grievances of Yirrkala Aborigines, Arnhem Land Reserve", prayed that:

(1) the House will appoint a committee accompanied by competent interpreters to hear the views of the people of Yirrkala before permitting the excision of any land from the Aboriginal Reserve in Arnhem Land,

and (2) no arrangements be entered into with any company which will destroy the livelihood and independence of the Yirrkala people. (Commonwealth of Australia, House of Representatives 1963: 7)

Thirty-five thumbprints on three sheets of paper were appended to the petition presented on 28 August (K. Eggerking pers. comm. 20 August 2007). According to Wells, the thumb prints were "sent as reinforcement after the signatures on the petition on 14 August were discounted by a member of the House of Representatives" (Wells 1982: 108).

The Parliamentary Select Committee held hearings in September 1963 and reported to Parliament in October. Berndt gives a somewhat optimistic summary of the "major points" of the Committee's recommendations as:

a. the recognition that these Aborigines have land rights, even if they are not legal rights in Western European terms …

b. that all sacred sites were to 'be set aside … for their exclusive use, although the term 'sacred' was not defined. (Berndt 1964: 262-263)

While the report did not acknowledge that Yolŋu had land rights that were recognised in Australian law, the effect of the petition, including the fact that a Parliamentary committee had consulted with Yolŋu leaders, further encouraged Yolŋu in their determination to gain official recognition of their ownership of their land. Recognition of the names on the land was intrinsically related.

By 1963, the issue of names on the Gove Peninsula was arising from other sources. In April 1963, the Director of National Mapping wrote to the Surveyor-General of the Northern Territory, following a request that he had received from the National Geographic Society regarding the name Gove. He wrote that the name "'Gove Peninsula' is being used nowadays following recent interest in [extensive bauxite deposits] in the area, but does not appear on any official map." He continued, "Gove as a locality name has obviously been derived from the airstrip established there during the war". In June 1963, the Surveyor General advised the Director of National Mapping that:

The name "Gove Peninsula" has been approved for that area of Arnhem Land east of a line drawn from the mouth of the Giddy River in Melville Bay to the mouth of Wonga Creek in Port Bradshaw.

The aerodrome is "Gove" and not "Yirrkala" which is the Methodist Overseas Mission, located on the coast northwest of Miles Island … The Nomenclature Committee wish to preserve the name "Gove" for the aerodrome.[19]

At the time, the issue of names was exercising the Yolŋu as well, as is evident in the following exchange. A. R. Miller, Surveyor General, wrote the following letter to H. C. Giese, Northern Territory Director of Welfare, on 4 November 1963:[20]

SURVEYS AT YIRRKALA

I refer to your letter of the 30th October, 1963 together with copy of a complaint by Rev. E.A. Wells.

I have obtained a report from Mr Senior Surveyor R. T. Smith regarding survey activities at Yirkalla in October.

The surveys effected are part of the National Survey and there was no need for pin-pricking comment by the reverend gentleman. Apart from so called "Sacred Areas," the land is vacant Crown Land, and right of entry is contained in Section 11 of the Licensed Surveyors' Ordinance. As stated by Mr R.T. Smith, the only clearing effected was the minimum required for the operation.

MT. SAUNDERS. A change of name for this feature to "Nulanboi" cannot be considered even though the reverend gentleman considers the existing name offensive to the local clan. Mt. Saunders was named by Matthew Flinders, Commander of H. M. S. Investigator in 1803 and published on Admiralty Chart 2982 dated January 1[st,] 1814. In addition the following features were named and published-:

Mt. Dundas -   Point Dundas
Mt. Bonner -   Cape Arnhem and Drimmie Head

It will be appreciated that these names are deep in Australian history and any attempt to change any of them will be strongly resisted.

In December 1963, the Northern Territory Director of Welfare wrote to the Surveyor General regarding the "Re-naming of Mt. Saunders, Gove Peninsula", apparently in response to a letter that Edgar Wells wrote in February 1963 (and in light of the response from the Surveyor General to him in November 1963):[21]

Rev. E. A. Wells has written further (see folios 293 and 294, file 63/2/29) requesting that Mt. Saunders be re-named Nulanboi. It would be appreciated if you would bring this before the Nomenclature Committee for consideration as Mr. Wells considers that in doing this he is presenting the wishes of the Aboriginal people of Yirrkala. Perhaps their wishes might be met by having the word 'Nulanboi' included in

brackets after the name Mt. Saunders. I do not know whether or not this would cut across the principles that the Nomenclature Committee follows in these matters.

In March 1964, the Director of Welfare again wrote to the Surveyor-General:[22]

On 5th December last we asked whether it would be possible for the word 'Nulanboi' to be included on maps (after the name Mount Saunders).

Could you tell me, please, whether it has been possible to take this action, in order that the people at Yirrkala might be informed of the outcome of their request that Mount Saunders be renamed Nulanboi.

A month later, in April 1964, the Surveyor-General wrote to the Director, Division of National Mapping:

Representations have been made to the Director of Welfare to rename Mt. Saunders on Gove Peninsula and substitute the native name ''NULANBOI''.

The Nomenclature Committee is opposed to a change as Mt. Saunders, Mt. Dundas, Mt. Bonner, Cape Arnhem and Drimmie Head were originally named by Matthew Flinders in 1803: reference Admiralty Chart 2982 dated January 1st, 1814.

There is no objection, however, to the name ''Nulanboi'' appearing under ''SAUNDERS'' in small type and it will be appreciated if you will keep this in mind when preparing the next map of the area. A copy of this memo is being forwarded to the Director of Military Survey, Canberra.[23]

This appears to be the warrant for Mount Saunders remaining the official name for the hill that the Yolŋu know as Nhulun – at least as of 1964.

Plans for the mining development had included the creation of a town in which employees of the company would live (as well as – among other things – an alumina plant and bulk loading facilities). During 1968 some of the preliminary site-clearing work had begun. One of the Select Committee's recommendations was that ''the Yirrkala people be consulted on the location of the proposed town'' (Commonwealth of Australia, House of Representatives, 1963: 21). We have not yet located records of such consultation, although they certainly may exist. It appears, however, that the name of the town remained in contention.

Disputed names

The town's name: Nhulunbuy, Mount Saunders or Gove?

On 21 January 1966, the District Postal Manager, Port Augusta, wrote to the Director, Department of Lands in Darwin, asking for the appropriate name for the proposed post-office on the Gove Peninsula:[24]

> It is anticipated that an early approach will be made for a post office to serve development of the bauxite deposits by Nabalco Pty Ltd.
>
> If such an application is received and is successful, would you please indicate whether the name 'Gove' would be acceptable.

The Acting Surveyor General, V. T. O'Brien, replied that:[25]

> The site for a town area on the Gove Peninsula has not yet been finalised and will depend to a large extent on the site chosen for the port in the area. Opinions are divided between Melville Bay and Rocky Bay.
>
> The Nomenclature Committee would not be prepared to consider an official name for the Post Office until the official name for the town has been fixed. This may not be resolved for some time.
>
> As most mail is addressed to the camps at Gove, there appears no reason to object to the temporary use of the name Gove, until the town site is declared and named. It is possible that the town site may not bear the name GOVE depending on the final location, and this is the reason we are not in a position to apply the official name as yet.

More than a year and a half later, on 25 October 1967, the Acting Surveyor General again advised the District Postal Manager that:[26]

> A site has not been decided definitely for the new town in the [Gove Peninsula] but it will probably be in the vicinity of Mt. Saunders, and this is one of the names by which the site may be known …

While Mount Saunders was used in early plans to refer to construction areas, it was Nhulunbuy and Gove that became the focus of the naming dispute. References to Mount Saunders Village and Mount Saunders Construction Camp are made in correspondence between Nabalco and the Place Names Committee in 1970 when describing the area of Nhulunbuy South (see Appendix 2). It is also the name used in the Gove Bauxite Development Feasibility Report (1968). Plans for the township there are all shown as Mount Saunders Township.

In fact, 'Gove' was the name recommended by the Place Names Committee in July 1968. The 'Explanatory Memorandum' issued by the Place Names Committee provided its reasons for recommending the name Gove:

> The Place Names Committee has considered at its Third Meeting on 31st July 1968, proposals to name the Townsite on the Gove Peninsula.

> Representations of the Aboriginals at Yirrkala have suggested the name NHULAMBUY for the future town and the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs [W. C. Wentworth] has written to the Minister of the Interior about the use of Aboriginal names within Reserves in the N.T.

> The Mining Company, Nabalco, prefer GOVE which is already well known throughout the world, and requires a name which is short, simple and concise. They recommend GOVE as it has appeared on all official maps of the area, and is in use by Aboriginals at Yirrkala.

> The Welfare Branch has indicated that it favours GOVE which is already in general use and accepted by the Post Office. It is difficult to spell the Aboriginal Place Name (NHULAMBUI) in a non-phonetic way that ensures correct pronunciation by the general public.

> The Committee feels that the Aboriginal name can be included effectively in the Townsite itself by a street, park or beach name and accordingly recommends for the approval of the Administrator-in-Council that the name GOVE be adopted for the new mining townsite on the peninsula of the same name.

> The name 'Gove' originates from Pilot Officer W. H. J. Gove, who was killed on service at Millingimbi in 1943. ('Explanatory Memorandum', Business Paper No. 1467)

An article in the *Northern Territory News* on 20 August 1968, cited an interview with the Northern Territory Administrator, Roger Dean (who had been Chairman of the Parliamentary Select Committee), and reported his approval of the name. The article was headed "New town has a four letter name" and began "A simple, four-letter word has won out over a complex Aboriginal one in an unofficial contest to provide an official name for the mining township on Gove Peninsula in the Gulf of Carpentaria". It then quoted the "Explanatory Memorandum" in full.

The mining project on the Gove Peninsula was regarded as an immensely important development by the Commonwealth government. It was touted as the largest capital investment in the history of Australia and involved, among other things, as noted above, leases granted by the Commonwealth to the consortium of companies undertaking the project. For that reason, and no doubt others,

anything that was related to the development was newsworthy. Thus the *Northern Territory News* reported on 21 August 1968, the date that the official name Gove was gazetted, "They're not happy with Gove 'name' decision". The subheading of the article was "The new mining township to be built on the Gove Peninsula, 400 miles east of Darwin, was sacred ground of the Aborigines living at Yirrkala Mission". The article continued:

> And the Aborigines would continue to call the area Nhulambuy despite Administrative Council's decision to name the township Gove, said Superintendent of the Yirrkala Mission, Rev. W. Fawell yesterday.
>
> The 650 Aborigines, who live at the mission, suggested the name of Nhulambuy but it was rejected by the Council on the grounds that the name was not easy to pronounce.
>
> Yesterday the Superintendent of the Mission, Rev. W. Fawell, told the News that the Aborigines living at Yirrkala were 'not at all happy' with the decision.
>
> Both the president [Roy D̲ad̲ayŋa Marika] and the vice-president [Daymbalipu Mununggurr] have voiced their protests to the Rev. Fawell.
>
> '…it was a poor excuse for the reason given that the town had to be called Gove.
>
> 'Many Aborigines find difficulty in pronouncing the word Gove' he said.
>
> 'They tend to pronounce it Cove. There are many names in Australia, which are not easy to say,' he added.
>
> Rev. Fawell said, however, that the town will provide an outlet for the agricultural products of the mission.
>
> But he said he still failed to understand why the Administrator should name the town Gove – a name already used for the airstrip and the Peninsula. (*Northern Territory News*, 21 August 1968)

By this time, the dispute about the name was escalating both in terms of the number of individuals and organisations involved and the emotional tenor of the reported exchanges, as the article in the following day's *Northern Territory News* indicated. The heading was "Gove name a decision 'against' aborigines" and the sub-heading was "Yirrkala Aborigines may lose their confidence in Government promises following a decision to name a new mining township Gove". The article quoted from an interview with Rev. Gordon Symons, referred to as Superintendent of the Methodist Overseas Mission based in Darwin

and the Mission organisation operating the Yirrkala Mission, "400 miles east of Darwin and on Gove Peninsula where Nabalco is spending $280 million to develop bauxite deposits".

> Mr Symons said yesterday the decision to name the town Gove was most unfortunate.
>
> 'The name [Nhulambuy] should have been chosen,' he said.
>
> 'The Aborigines themselves have never used the name Gove for the town area. They have always called it Nhulambuy.
>
> 'The name should be adopted officially in acknowledgment that it is their country being used for the mining operations.
>
> The decision to call the town Gove will certainly not help increase their confidence that the Government will observe their wishes,' Mr Symons said. (*Northern Territory News*, 22 August 1968)

An editorial comment in the *Northern Territory News* two days later was sympathetic to the view that the Aboriginal name should be retained:

> GOVE township was named that way instead of Nhulambuy [sic] because the Aboriginal name for the area is too hard to pronounce, according to an official statement this week. The statement has already drawn protests. The name is given official strength in a formal notice in this week's Northern Territory Gazette. The same issue records some presumably easy names for hills in Central Australia. These include Djuburula Peak, Djabangardi Hill, Djakamara Peak, Nabangardi Hill, Djambidjimba Mesa, and Naburula Hills. (*Northern Territory News*, 23 August 1968)

After the Yirrkala Village Council learned that the name Gove had been gazetted, Roy Marika, President of the Council, wrote a letter. The letter was headed "TRANSLATION", and copies were sent to individuals in the mission organisation, in government, and in the public service.[27] This is the letter:

> Dear Sir:
>
> Upon hearing that the Aboriginal name Nhulunbuy had been rejected as a name for the Mining Township, the Yirrkala Village Council met to discuss the matter. We are very upset and decided to write to you to let you know what we think hoping that you will be able to help. The following points were made at the meeting:
>
> This is Aboriginal Country and for many years the name Nhulunbuy (and no other) has been used. One of our dream-time ancestors, Wuyal,

gave the name Nhulunbuy to this part of the country. We want the name Nhulunbuy to stand. The old men of Yirrkala as well as the younger people remember the name Nhulunbuy from the time they were little children.

We have been unhappy for some time over the fact that we have not been consulted about a number of things being done and, as a result, some of our sacred sites have been damaged. And now, even though we sent the name Nhulunbuy to the authorities in Darwin, our request has been rejected.

We don't want a street or a park named Nhulunbuy, because streets and parks cover only a small area of ground and the name Nhulunbuy refers to a large area, named originally by Wuyal. We certainly don't want a beach named Nhulunbuy. The beaches all have names already. As he danced, singing, along the beaches, our dream-time ancestor Wuyal named them all a long time ago, before any white man came to this country.

There are other Aborigines belonging to Duwa clans in other parts of Arnhem Land who are also interested in this particular area. They are relying upon the Yirrkala Aboriginal leaders to look after their interests of this area. They would not be at all pleased with us if they were to hear that Wuyal's word had been ignored and the name he gave changed.

The name Gove is not used at all by the Yirrkala Aborigines. Maybe we say it when talking to a white man who doesn't know our language or customs, but that is because he wouldn't understand anything else. At any other time we always refer to that area as Nhulunbuy.

We didn't think this would be too hard for white people to learn and pronounce. As a matter of fact we find English names hard, but nevertheless we try to pronounce them. We hoped that white people would be willing to do the same. As long as we have minds to think with, tongues to speak with, and eyes to see with, surely there can be an effort on both sides to understand each other's language and customs.

The *Northern Territory News* continued to report events relating to the naming dispute. On 27 August 1968 it reported the contents of Roy Marika's letter and provided the names of people to whom it was sent. The heading of the article was "'We don't want Gove' Aborigines tell Canberra":

Yirrkala Aborigines have written to Federal Ministers and Territory Administrator, Mr Roger Dean, protesting against selection of Gove as the name for a new mining town near the mission. Ministers to receive

written protests from the Yirrkala village council will be the Minister for the Interior, Mr Peter Nixon, and the Minister in charge of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Bill Wentworth. The council has also written to the superintendent of Methodist Overseas Missions, Rev Gordon Symons, telling him of its protests. In their letter to Mr Symons, the council members said they were very upset at the choice of the name Gove.

The name Nhulumbuy, rejected by the Administrator's Council as too hard to pronounce, had always been used for the proposed town area by Aborigines in the area. The council members said Aborigines never used the name Gove except in some conversations with European visitors. "We find European names hard to master, but we are willing to try," the councillors said. "We would hope the Europeans would try with our place names. It needs effort on both sides to gain mutual understanding," they added. (*Northern Territory News*, 27 August 1968)

The next day the *Northern Territory News* suggested that the tide was turning in favour of the Yolŋu. In large font, the *Northern Territory News* reported that the Place Names Committee would reconsider its decision:

The Northern Territory Place Names Committee will be asked to reconsider its recommendation that a new mining township near Yirrkala Mission should be named Gove.

The Administrator, Mr. Roger Dean, said yesterday he would refer the matter back to the committee following protests from Yirrkala Aborigines, who want the town called Nhulumbuy.

This is their "dreamtime" name for the town site, near Mount Saunders on Gove Peninsula.

The Superintendent of Methodist Overseas Missions, Rev Gordon Symons who has spearheaded opposition to the Gove name, has welcomed the reconsideration decision…

Yesterday Mr Dean said Nhulumbuy had never been officially suggested as a name for the township.

However, in view of the protests which followed the announcement that Gove had been chosen, he would ask the Place Names Committee to reconsider its decision…

[Mr Symons] was sure the Yirrkala people would be willing to change the spelling of their name to make it easier for Europeans.

The spelling Nulumboi would be simple, and lead to correct pronunciation, Mr Symons said. (*Northern Territory News*, 28 August 1968)

A series of telegrams between Canberra and Darwin attest to the effect of the Yirrkala Village Council's letter. The following is a telegram (slightly edited for ease of reading) from the Department of Interior in Canberra to the Administrator of the Northern Territory (undated in the Place Names Committee file inspected, but clearly sent during the last week in August):

… Minister, Prime Minister and Minister in Charge of Aboriginal Affairs have received strong representations from Roy Dadaynga Marika as President of Yirrkala Council and also from Reverend Gordon Symons saying that name Nhulunbuy had been given to township area by one of the dreamtime ancestors and no other name has been used by Aboriginals. They are upset at name Gove.

Minister mentioned this to Griffin in Canberra on 29 August and indicated that he clearly thought that name Nhulunbuy (which incidentally is spelt by Symons Nhulambuy) should be given formally to township even if as in case of Groote a different name is used in practice for the mining project.

Have noted report in 'Northern Territory News' of 28 August 1968 that you would refer matter back to place names committee. Would appreciate confirmation and also telex advice of outcome so that representations can be answered…

On 4 September, Administrator Dean sent the following telegram to the Department of Interior in Canberra:[28]

Reference your 2955 of 2nd September about naming of Gove. I have received representations on this matter from the Reverend Gordon Symons and Roy D. Marika. At my news conference on 3/9/68 I said that I had given the committee the correspondence I had received for its consideration and for any further advice it may wish to give the Administrator's Council. I shall now provide the Committee with a copy of your telegram.

The Committee is arranging to meet before the next meeting of the Administrator's Council which it proposes to hold on the 16th September. The committee will no doubt offer its advice to the A.D.C.O in view of the representations that have been made and the members of the A.D.C.O. will then advise the Administrator. I shall let you know the outcome of this when the meeting is concluded.

The telegram of 2 September would appear to be material to the events that follow and to an explanation of the reversal of the earlier decision regarding the official name. Unfortunately that telegram has not been sighted.

On 19 September, the Secretary of the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department responded to a Memorandum from the Secretary of Interior Department of 17 September requesting urgent advice:[29]

> … concerning whether the administrator in Council has the power to replace the name of 'Gove' recommended by the Place Names Committee, with another name, as the name of a site for a township, under the provisions of the Northern Territory Place Names Ordinance 1967.
>
> 2. In my view, the answer to the question is 'No'; but see paragraph 6 below.
>
> 3. The Committee is constituted under section 5 of the Ordinance and is given the power to make recommendations 'in relation to the naming of and altering of names of public places' in a report to the 'administration under section 9 of the Ordinance …'
>
> …
>
> 5. In regard to the other question which you have raised in relation to the same matter, my view is that the rejection of the name recommended by the Committee would result in the township not having a name <u>for the purposes of the Ordinance</u>.
>
> 6. I have, in the foregoing, treated the Committee's recommendation as having been validly made. I should add, however, that I have some doubt whether a 'township' or 'site for a township' can be regarded as a 'public place' for the purposes of the Ordinance.

A legal loophole seems to be suggested: if 'renaming' from 'Gove' to 'Nhulunbuy' is problematic, then it can be argued that the name 'Gove' was a nullity in the first place; i.e. no name has been *legally* given, therefore no name need be changed.

The 1968 bark petition

The next relevant dated document to which we have had access is an article in the *Northern Territory News* on 9 October 1968. Headed "A new Gove bark petition", it reported that:

> The Aboriginals of Gove, 400 miles east of Darwin, have had a second bark petition presented to the Commonwealth Parliament.

The first petition, presented about six years ago, resulted in the parliament appointing a special committee to ensure bauxite mining in the area did not interfere with Aboriginal sacred sites.

The committee was lead [sic] by the present Administrator, Mr Roger Dean, then House of Representatives member for Robertson in NSW.

Yesterday's petition asked the Parliament to ensure the new mining township was named Nhulunbuy and not Gove.

This followed a decision by the Administrator's Council last month to name the town Gove – the only name officially suggested.

When Aboriginals protested, and asked for retention of their own name Nhulumbuy, Mr Dean asked the Place Names Committee to reconsider its decision.

The petition yesterday was written on the back of a bark painting showing a warrior armed with a spear and a woomera.

Signed by six Aboriginals, and marked by 11 others, it asked for retention of their dream time name, and suggested the spelling should be changed to Nulunbuy to make it easier to spell and pronounce.[30]

The petition was presented to Parliament by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Gough Whitlam. (*Northern Territory News*, 9 October 1968)

We have not located information about events in the Northern Territory that immediately followed presentation of the petition to Parliament. However, the then Chairman of the Place Names Committee, E. F. Dwyer, wrote to the Assistant Director Postal Services Adelaide referring to correspondence of 27 February 1969 (some four months following presentation of the bark petition), advising him thus of the name 'change': "The Minister for the Interior has directed that the town to be established on the Gove Peninsula shall be known officially as 'NHULUNBUY'".

And minutes of a meeting of the Place Names Committee on 19 March noted that the Committee "has no objection should the Administrator change originally recommended name of GOVE to NHULUNBUY".[31]

The dispute about the official name and the actors involved passed into the ephemera of popular culture. In April 1970, the first issue of *The Projecter* which became a weekly local newspaper in Nhulunbuy included the following item under the heading "A Dark Secret":

Some time ago, when Nabalco and the Department of Interior were looking for a name for the town at Gove, the boys at the Interior came

up with the idea of Nhulunbuy. Eventually their idea was adopted. A few days ago a senior officer of the Northern Territory Administration in Darwin received a phone call from somebody from the Department of Interior who wanted to know if the N.T.A. had ever heard of a place called Nhulunbuy. (*The Projecter*, no. 1, April 1970)

Names within the Nhulunbuy (town) area

The process of naming areas and streets within the new town began with its planning and construction, from 1969 through 1972. The naming, done by the newly arrived non-Yolŋu, did not result in overt conflict with Yolŋu,[32] but because it reveals much about the process used by the namers we have included a description of the process and the rationale for the names in Appendix 2. For most of the life of the town only three Yolŋu names can clearly be identified in the official names for places (streets and so on) within the town lease area – the name for the town itself, Nhulunbuy, Wuyal Road and the Rotary Marika Lookout.[33] During 2006 and 2007 two further Yolŋu names appeared. One is Malpi Village, the name for a Rirratjiŋu Association housing development, and the other Bunggalwuy (sic) Close in another new housing development.[34]

Comment

Placenames in their linguistic context

We focus here on a linguistic description of the placenames, both Yolŋu and English, occurring within this paper, including those within Nhulunbuy (see Appendix 2). All Yolŋu examples are given in Dr Marika's own language, Rirratjiŋu, but we believe the grammatical claims made about placenames are shared with other Dhaŋu, Dhuwal and Dhuwala varieties, if not all Yolŋu varieties. The description here of Yolŋu placenames captures the commonly occurring placename structures, but does not claim to be comprehensive as far as more marginal structures are concerned. The description of English placenames draws on linguistic descriptions by Quirk et al. (1985), Allerton (1987), Huddleston (2002), and Anderson (2003, 2004).

Both Yolŋu and English use nominals[35] and nominal construction types for their placenames. While both languages draw on nominals for their placenames, the Yolŋu sample favours single words while the English sample favours two. There is a concomitant greater range in the structural types of names in English. We have not yet found grammatical evidence in Yolŋu languages for establishing a special proper names category separate from other nominals, whereas there is

evidence for this in English. Two key characteristics associated with the distinct grammatical category of proper nouns in English, namely those in relation to the use of determiners and expression of number, are not grammatical features of nominal expressions in Rirratjiŋu and other Yolŋu languages.

Semantically, Yolŋu placenames are like English placenames and other proper nouns in that their 'meaning' is what they name. They share with English the property of being referential, uniquely identifying a place (or person, etc.) rather than denoting a general class which is the property of common nouns.

Overview of the grammar of Yolŋu placenames

In the examples in this paper, and reflecting much more widely occurring patterns, Yolŋu placenames are overwhelmingly single words. These are of two kinds. Some are simple stems, e.g. Gäluru, Dhamitjinya, Birritjimi and Djurruwu. Others combine a root with the associative suffix (-*puy, -buy, -wuy*) e.g. Nhulunbuy, Lombuy, Wandjukpuy. They align grammatically (morphosyntactically) with two general word classes, locational nominals and general nouns. There are some minor grammatical differences between placenames and these general word classes.

Simple stem placenames have the same grammatical properties as general locational nominals. A key characteristic of these stems is that the bare stem, rather than the locative case suffix (-*ŋa*), is used to mark locative case e.g. *Gäluru* 'at Gäluru'.

The associative suffix is a regularly occurring suffix coding a range of relations between nominals. Amongst the broad range of relations by which it codes that something is 'associated' with something else, is location. For example, to describe a shrub that grows at the beach, the word for beach would occur with the associative suffix.[36] The suffix is also used to derive new nouns e.g. *muḻkurrwuy* 'pillow' [*muḻkurr* 'head']. Its appearance in placenames is not out of keeping with these two regular functions of the associative suffix.

Placenames incorporating the associative suffix are distinct from both derived nominals with the associative and locational nominals. In derived nominals with the associative, the associative suffix is retained before further suffixes. This does not occur with placenames where further suffixes are attached directly to the base stem (e.g. Nhulun-, Lom- or Wandjuk-). Unlike locational nominals, these stems do require the locative suffix to express locative case, e.g. *Nhulunŋa* 'at Nhulun'.[37]

Further details of these grammatical features and example constructions are given in Appendix 1.

There is one name that is a combination of words, namely, *Maṯpu-wekarra*. This is a combination of a proper noun *Maṯpu* 'name of certain Dhuwa cliff-faces/escarpments linked to Wuyal' and an adjectival noun *wekarra* 'long'. This compound structure does not occur widely in proper names, but there are other examples.

Overview of English placenames grammar

The English placenames in this paper, as in the Yolŋu sample, are all nominals. A limited number of single word placenames occur in our sample, e.g. Gove, Nhulunbuy, Darwin, Canberra, Australia and Sulawesi.

The majority are compounds involving two words. The most common structure involves a generic common noun as a head indicating a kind of location, e.g. mission, airport, road, avenue, street, beach, head, creek, bay, peninsula and island, preceding the noun specifying the name (Yirrkala Mission, Gove Airport, Thunderman Road, Sinclair Street, Town Beach, Drimmie Head, Wonga Creek, Melville Bay and Bremer Island; for details of street names applied within the township of Nhulunbuy see Appendix 2). In a second smaller group of compound names, the generic location term is ordered before the specifying noun, e.g. Cape Arnhem, Port Augusta and Mount Saunders. Three hills are introduced with Mount, a special placename term in English, only found in placenames of hills/mountains (Mount Saunders, Mount Dundas and Mount Bonner). 'Port' is also found following the noun in Gove Port.

There are also longer placenames in which two words are found preceding the generic common noun. These involve proper names made up of two personal names, e.g. Matthew Flinders Way, or a binominal placename, e.g. Melville Bay Road, Mount Saunders Township (a proposed name) and Cape York Peninsula.

A few two-word compounds occur, which involve adjectival modification, e.g. Central Australia, Western Europe and New Guinea. The final group of placenames contains those incorporating the article 'the' (phrasal names in Anderson 2003: 386). These include the Northern Territory, the British Isles, the Arafura Sea and the Giddy River. Gove Peninsula occurs in the paper with and without 'the' but today 'the Gove Peninsula' appears to have broad acceptance. Another structure with 'the' includes postmodification using 'of' as in 'the Gulf of Carpentaria' and 'the Port of Gove'.[38] Alignments between the semantic class of the English placenames and their grammatical characteristics are given in Appendix 1.

Placenames and other proper names in Rirratjiŋu and English

As well as placenames, proper names in English include personal names, geographical locations, both natural features and man-made features, names for certain animals, e.g. pets and racehorses, ships, planes and vehicles, machines, social organisations and institutions, publications, works of art, languages and dialects, and, more marginally, periods of time (see Quirk et al. (1985), Allerton (1987) and Anderson (2003)).

Yolŋu proper names include those for places, people and dogs, social groupings of various kinds as well as special categories of names used in particular contexts. We have seen from Dr Marika the high cultural value attached to certain names because "our names come from the places and things to which Wuyal and other Ancestors gave names as they passed through on their journeys" (see section 'Yolŋu placenames' above).

We have described placenames that refer to pre-existing geographical features, such as the hill Nhulun, and to representations of things featuring in the activities of the Ancestors, e.g. Dimbukawuy, the rock form of Wuyal's dilly bag.

Across the Yolŋu region the range of phenomena named in this way includes:

Sites. These may be for particular features of the landscape, e.g. hills, rivers, islands, rocky outcrops, beaches; but, as we have seen, names are not given on the sole ground that they are significant geographical features.

Flora and fauna including specific parts of them, or in particular states.

Particular states of natural phenomena such as clouds, water, fire, wind, rain.

Ancestral beings and spirits and parts of them, beings with particular qualities e.g. expert at hunting, a robber, generous, a boss, deaf.

Implements, artefacts, tools, shelters, fire – the 'man-made' environment.

While personal names share the same significant origins in the ancestral past as placenames, they are grammatically distinct from placenames. This is an outcome of their human reference which, even in common nouns, is grammatically distinguished in Rirratjiŋu and other Yolŋu languages from non-human referring nominals (see Appendix 1 for details). Sometimes a personal name is derived from a place. Examples in our sample include Birritjimi and Gayŋuru. While this makes

it possible for a personal name and placename to be identical, the grammatical marking of each will be different in many contexts, e.g. Birritjimiŋa 'at Birritjimi (the place)' vs Birritjimiwura 'with Birritjimi (the person)'.

Within proper names there are some that are less clearly linked to events of the Ancestral Beings. Placenames within this domain have not appeared amongst those presented so far. An example near Yirrkala is the beach known as Ganarri'mi 'Shady Beach'. This name is from the *gan̲arri'* 'Beauty Leaf (*Calphyllum ionophyllum*)' trees growing there.[39] There are also terms for broad geographical domains, e.g. Miwatj, the eastern portion of the broader Yolŋu area, extending from Yirrkala to Bawaka. Within Yirrkala[40] itself areas are known by words that also common general nouns, e.g. Raki 'an area of Yirrkala'[41] [*raki* 'rope, string'], Dhal̲akarr 'area in Yirrkala around the boat ramp' [*dhal̲akarr* 'a particular kind of space'], and Raŋi 'Beach Camp' at Yirrkala [*raŋi* 'beach']. As with placenames, there is a range of terms by which people can be called in addition to those personal names linked to the ancestral past.[42]

Names from a person's ancestral heritage were also traditionally given to dogs. In recent times these have been extended to cats, cars, boats, houses and new social institutions such as councils. Sometimes this will involve placenames; e.g. 'Galmak' is the name of a sacred dwelling place of an Ancestral Being used for a house. 'Marŋarr' is the name for Yirritja places where Macassans anchored and used as bases for collecting and preparing trepang. It has been used to name a council, thus Marŋarr Council.

Proper names, including placenames, that are linked to the ancestral past are used in a range of language contexts. In addition to their use in everyday speech, they are a prominent feature in songs and the calling out that occurs at focal points during ceremonies.

Yolŋu make a broad distinction between 'inside' and 'outside' names.[43] Those personal names (*yolŋu yäku* 'person name') and placenames (*ŋayi yäku* 'country/place/camp/home name') used in everyday speech are viewed as 'outside' names.

Songs contain both 'inside' and 'outside' names. The stories of the Ancestral Beings are closely related to the song cycles, although the language of songs is quite distinct from that of stories and everyday speech. Only some of the words in them are used in everyday speech. As Keen explains,

> The language of Yolŋu manikay and bil̲ma songs was related to speech, but consisted of cryptic phrases and clauses, and included lists of proper names and special song-words (including verbs) and archaisms. Unlike myths, songs were not strictly narratives but strings of descriptive expressions, as well as lists of names. But they indirectly implied a narrative through the succession of topics related to a myth. (Keen 1994: 239)

Examples of such lists of names in Dr Marika's account are those for the steep slope/escarpment of Nhulun and those for the liquid honey (see section 'Yolŋu placenames' above). In ritual song the special names for the liquid honey refer to water with foam on it in the rivers that flow past Gäluru and Lombuy and toward the small islands Marrawili and Yilipawuy.

The names "called out at key points in ceremonies [that signify] at once a *wangarr* ancestor, a place and a group" (Keen 1994: 71) are a special named category of 'inside' proper names. They are called *bundurr* or *likan* 'elbow' names.

Restrictions apply as to who can possess or talk about particular domains of knowledge in the Yolŋu world and this applies to the meanings or referents of proper names (see Keen 1994: 239; Walsh 2002: 43). Analysis of Yolŋu proper names, particularly those having to do with the ancestral past, has to accommodate this restriction of full knowledge of proper names to those with rights to them.[44] The important point, however, is that everyone will have some of this knowledge and assume it exists for all such names.

This fundamental connection of proper names to the events of the ancestral past does mean that the number of 'meanings', i.e. referents that can be normally expected of a proper name, is different for English and Yolŋu. English speakers can generally expect a proper name to uniquely identify one of the categories that has a proper name, e.g. a person, a place or an institution. There can be occasional overlap when a personal name is applied to a place, e.g. Darwin. Yolŋu speakers, in contrast, can expect there to be multiple referents to many proper names. All personal names would be expected to have a least one other type of referent in addition to the person named, namely the linked phenomenon from the ancestral past. This may be less marked in the case of placenames, particularly with the simple stem names, but would be the case when a personal name is also a placename. In the more complex stems with the Associative there is room for a different kind of ambiguity. For example, *wirriyay'wuy* can be a placename or a common noun 'associating' something (e.g. their noise or a story about them) with small birds.

Onomastic comparison

Transformations are the stuff of Aboriginal cosmogony; not creation, in the sense of something coming into being *ex nihilo* – from nothing – for something was always there. Tamisari (2002: 92) uses the term 'morphogenesis'. The widely described modes of transformation generally begin with an assumption that the basic features, the lineaments of the universe, were in place and the transforming beings gave them shape and meaning. For Yolŋu an essential aspect of transformation was naming.

The agents of transformation in the Aboriginal world have been variously translated. Dreamtime Heroes, Ancestral Creators. Spirit Beings, Ancestral Beings and Ancestral Spirits are among those that have been used in the Yolŋu context. The word *waŋarr* refers to the spirit beings that existed at a time in the very distant past when the Yolŋu cosmos was given shape and meaning. These spirit beings manifest attributes of human beings and of other species, but they are neither anthropomorphic animals nor zoomorphic human beings. They are spirits, essentially human, and their activities provide a pattern of life for the first true human beings. As they travelled through the land and sea they bestowed names. Yolŋu refer to the travels and the names in order to communicate the kinds of interests they hold in land and waters and with other people. The manner in which Yolŋu control access to the meanings of the names also provides some insight into their role. The act of a spirit being in naming is a religious act of bestowal from which Yolŋu derive a number of interests, including those of ownership. The land and sea and all the features of land and sea as well as all the human beings who have owned or will ever own them derive aspects of their identity from the act of naming and from the names themselves. Few features of the perceived universe are not named.

Whether the role that names play for Yolŋu is singular we are not sure. But all anthropologists who have worked with Yolŋu have recorded aspects of the significance of names and naming – among others, Warner (1958: 18, 380-381, for example), Thomson (1949: 47) referring to the *djirrikay* as the caller of 'big names', the Berndts, the Morphys, Keen, and Tamisari. A chapter in Williams' (1986) study of Yolŋu land tenure is titled "And then there was the word".

Tamisari speaks of morphogenesis, "the processes of transformation, and especially imprinting, metamorphosis and externalisation[, as] intrinsically connected with names and the action of naming", and of how the Ancestral Beings'

> shaping of the ground involves the act of naming and, conversely, how names thus embody ancestral morphogenetic processes … like designs, songs and dances, names are manifestations, and as such they are visible marks or, as Yolngu would say, the footprints of the 'Ancestral Beings'. (Tamisari 2002: 92-93)

In contrast with the naming processes of Yolŋu, those put in place by settler Australians in the Northern Territory are premised on the assumption that the naming of places is an act of current (principally) non-Aboriginal people, even though some of the names have historical warrant. Yolŋu personal names may be derived from placenames (via certain relatives) and places may not be named from persons,[45] while in 1995 the Northern Territory Rules of Nomenclature stipulated that places may be given personal names (of certain categories of people and currently no longer living).

For Yolŋu, places may have multiple names; the more important the place is, the more names it has. In contrast, the 1995 Rules of Nomenclature stipulated that places should have only one name (with the exception of possible dual names of features).

The Rules of Nomenclature further stated that "[t]he use of alternate/ alternative names should be discontinued and resolved by recommending one form or the other in the renaming process under existing rules". Although in the Yolŋu domain, names that were bestowed do not change, in everyday usage an alternative name may be used following the death of a person with the placename.

Yolŋu have formal religious institutions to maintain names of places and knowledge about them as well as processes to change the ones that may be publicly used. This knowledge is central to members of society. On the other hand, in the Northern Territory secular institutions manage the process of determining and recording placenames. The names, but not the context of their naming, is everyday knowledge.

Placenames are officially sanctioned by both groups. For Yolŋu, sanctions are based on religious law. Spirit beings and contemporary social practice associated with them sanction placenames. For settler Australians in the Northern Territory, the formal processes for approving placenames involve the administrative agency of The Department of Planning and Infrastructure, the Place Names Committee and the *Place Names Act* enacted by the Northern Territory Parliament. This does not strictly apply to names given within private lease held areas such as Nhulunbuy. In those areas the right to give names rests with the lease-holder (see Appendix 2).

Placenames link Yolŋu to their origins and ongoing cultural practice through ritual. They are located in domains of high cultural value and are fundamental to individual identity. The domain of placenames in non-Aboriginal society is secular, even mundane, although as the dispute in the case of Gove vs Nhulunbuy reveals, no less politically and personally charged. This is most clear in the issues surrounding what came to be referred to as the 're-naming' of Gove and the fact that although names could be officially changed (through a process that involves a name being rescinded by Parliament), the process was minimally described in the Rules of Nomenclature, that is, in comparison with the rules for approving names.

Concluding comment

The dispute focussed on the naming of Nhulunbuy demonstrates that in the 1960s and 1970s placenames were a vital aspect of both Yolŋu and white Australian societies, despite the fact that one was sanctioned by religious institutions and the other by secular institutions. They were, however, societies not equal in political power. The dispute revealed that the actions each took to defend their ability to control the processes involved both mechanisms and rationales that were consistent with their institutions. Yolŋu employed tactics that they believed had been successful in previous conflicts with the dominant society, that is, they invoked the authority of the sacred endowment of names and made a visual representation in the form of a bark painting of Wuyal as their warrant to preserve the original name, Nhulunbuy. White Australians employed tactics available in legislation and related regulations to impose a different name. Both administrative and legal tactics came into play. Initially white Australians relied on the procedures of official place-naming in the Northern Territory jurisdiction that were publicly supported by officers in several branches of the Northern Territory Administration. Subsequently when Yolŋu succeeded in escalating the dispute to involve officers of Commonwealth departments and Commonwealth politicians, both legal devices (the advice that the town lease was not a public place and was therefore not necessarily subject to legislation and regulations governing placenames, since these only pertained to public places)[46] and ultimately political response to what was beginning to appear to be wide public support for the Yolŋu position were in play. Politicians directed administrative officers by various means (partly documented in archives) to reverse the earlier decision to effect a change in name (among other things, asserting that Gove was the original name and any other name would reflect a change from the original name), publicly responding in a manner which would suggest a benefit to Aborigines and thus would be popularly supported. Finally, it was made to appear that the decision to retain (or change, from the publicly proclaimed official administrative perspective) the name Nhulunbuy was a unilateral decision of a Cabinet Minister, perhaps involving the Prime Minister.

This dispute, like all disputes, had no absolute and final determination. In various contexts, Yolŋu still act to maintain the integrity and consistent use of the name Nhulunbuy, despite the fact, for example, that in 2006 the East Arnhem Tourist Association's website (http://ealta.org/nhulunbuy.html) contains a heading "Nhulunbuy or Gove" and the following text: "Nhulunbuy is the name of the town and Gove is the name of the Peninsula that the town is located on. You will hear the two names used interchangeably but they mean the same place".

Appendix 1: Details and examples of grammatical characteristics of Yolŋu placenames

Yolŋu placenames that are simple stems

Placenames consisting of simple stems appear to have morphosyntactic properties that are identical with a closed class of locational nominals which include *djinawa* 'inside, under' and *galki* 'near'. This class is distinct from other nominal classes in never occurring with the locative case suffix *-ŋa* (*-ŋur, -ŋura*).[47] The bare stem is used for locative case. This class also occurs with a more limited range of case suffixes than other nominals, namely those with a locational sense: ablative *-ŋuru* (*-ŋur, -ŋuru*), allative *-ḻi* (*-lil, -lili*) or rarely *-yu* (*-y, -yu*)[48] and perlative *-murru* (*-kurr/-gurr/-wurr, -kurru/-gurru/-wurru*) as well as the associative *-puy/-buy/-wuy* in adnominal[49] contexts. The following examples show some of these characteristics for the placename Gäluru and the locational nominal *djinawa'* 'inside, under'. Example (1) shows the use of the bare stem as the name in a verbless clause. Examples (2) and (3) show the use of the bare stem in locative case, and (4) and (5) provide examples with the allative. Examples (6) and (7) show the contrasting use of the locative case suffix with the general noun *raŋi* 'beach'.

(1)   *Dhaŋum*   *yäku*   *ŋayi*   *Gäluru.*
      this/here-PROM[50]   name   place/camp   Gäluru
      The name of this place is Gäluru.
      This is the place with the name Gäluru.

(2)   *Dhaŋum*   *ŋali*   *nyena*   *yaka*   *Gäluru.*
      this/here(S/O/LOC-PROM)   we two(S/O)   sit:PRES   IMP   Gäluru(LOC'at')
      We are (sitting) here at Gäluru.

(3)   *Dhaŋum*   *ŋali*   *nyena*   *yaka*   *djinawa'.*
      this/here(S/O/LOC-PROM)   we two(S/O)   sit:PRES   IMP   inside(LOC'at')
      We are (sitting) here inside.

(4)   *Ŋali*   *ŋarruŋa*   *Gäluruḻi.*
      we two(S/O)   go:PRES   Gäluru-ALL'to'
      Let us go to Gäluru.

(5) *Ŋali* *ŋarruŋa* *djinawa'l̠i*.
we two(S/O) go:PRES inside-ALL'to'
Let us go inside.

(6) *Dhaŋum* *ŋali* *nyena* *yaka* *raŋiŋa*.
this/here(S/O/LOC- we two(S/O) sit:PRES IMP beach-
PROM) LOC
We are (sitting) here at the beach.

(7) *Ŋali* *ŋarruŋa* *raŋil̠i*.
we two(S/O) go:PRES beach-ALL'to'
Let us go to the beach.

Yolŋu placenames incorporating the associative suffix

Placenames including the associative suffix align with the general noun class. They are distinct from the simple stem placenames on two counts. First they occur with the locative suffix in locative case rather than the bare stem. Secondly they involve a suffix that is a regularly occurring adnominal suffix, the associative (ASS). The following examples show these characteristics for the placename L̠ombuy. Examples (8), (11) and (12) show the use of these placename in a verbless clause identifying the place, (9) gives an example in locative case, and (10) an example with the allative.

(8) *Dhaŋum* *yäku* *ŋayi* *L̠ombuy*.
this/here-PROM name place/camp L̠ombuy[Lom-ASS]
The name of this place is L̠ombuy.

(9) *Dhaŋum* *ŋali* *nyena* *yaka* *L̠omŋa*.
this/here(S/O/LOC)- we two(S/O) sit:PRES IMP Lom-LOC('at')
PROM
We are (sitting) here at Lombuy.

(10) *Ŋali* *ŋarruŋa* *L̠oml̠i*.
we two(S/O) go:PRES Lom-ALL'to'
Let us go to L̠ombuy.

With some of these associative marked placenames, speakers will allow variation in the citation form of the name between the root and the root plus the associative suffix. Thus:

(11) *Dhaŋum*   *yäku*   *ŋayi*   *Nhulunbuy.*
      this/here-PROM   name   place/camp   Nhulunbuy
      The name of this place is Nhulunbuy.

   Or:

(12) *Dhaŋum*   *yäku*   *ŋayi*   *Nhulun.*
      this/here-PROM   name   place/camp   Nhulun
      The name of this place is Nhulun.

This variation in the presence or not of the associative is unique to a subset of stems within this category of placenames.

With general nouns, the ASS suffix functions as both an adnominal case marker and to derive nominals.

In its regular adnominal function, the associative case is used to express wide a range of relations or 'associations' between two nominals including time, function/purpose, location, cause and 'what a story is about'. It is its use to code locational associations that is implicated in its use in placenames. The example given in note 36 is repeated here:

(13) *Dhaŋu*   *dharpa*   *raŋiwuy,*   *yaka*   *ḏiltjiwuy.*
      this   tree/shrub   beach-ASS   NEG   bush/back-ASS
      This shrub is [found/grows at] the beach, not the bush.

An example of a derived general noun is *muḻkurrwuy* 'pillow' derived from *muḻkurr* 'head'. However, the locative form 'on/near the pillow' is *muḻkurrwuyŋa* [*muḻkurr-wuy-ŋa* 'head-ASS-LOC']. This contrasts with the locative form of placenames which do not retain ASS suffix; e.g. *Lomŋa* in example (9). A form such as *Lombuyŋa* is not possible. So while the associative case suffix appears to be fossilised is many placename stems, they are not grammatically identical to general nouns derived using the associative case suffix.

The appearance of the associative in placenames is thus not out of keeping with the use of the associative with nominals of the general noun class, first to code the relationship of location, and secondly to derive new nouns. However as we have seen they are distinct from derived noun stems in that they do not retain the ASS case marker. They are also distinct from regular adnominal expressions using the associative in not occurring with a head nominal, although they could all be said to assume *ŋayi* 'camp, place, home' and are given this as their hypernym *ŋayi yäku* 'placename'.

Morpho-syntax of Rirratjiŋu personal names in comparison with placenames

The morphosyntax of personal names is distinct from that of placenames. The distinction between human and non-human referring nouns is fundamental to morphological marking in Rirratjiŋu and other Yolŋu languages. Personal names are treated as regular human-referring nominals. This can be illustrated using the suffixes described for locational nominals and placenames in examples (2-7) and (9-10) above. These suffixes are in fact a subset of those occurring with non-human referring nouns. Human-referring nouns[51] have different forms of the locational suffixes, e.g. human locative *-gura, -kura, -wura* and allative *-guḻ, -kuḻ, -wuḻ* (compare non-human locative *-ŋa* and allative *-ḻi*). When a name is used for both a place and a person, e.g. Birritjimi, the morphology often clarifies which is meant. Thus *Birritjimiwuḻ* 'to Birritjimi (the person)' but *Birritjimiḻi* 'to Birritjimi (the place)'. There are some contexts where it could be ambiguous, e.g. *Dhaŋu Birritjimi*. 'Here is Birritjimi (the place or the person)'.

Alignments between semantic and morphosyntactic characteristics of English placenames

There are some broad alignments between the semantic class of proper names and morphosyntactic characteristics of the proper name. Thus names that generally occur with *the* are:

- names of rivers (the Giddy River – but contrast creeks as in Wonga Creek)
- seas and oceans (cf. the Arafura Sea, the Gulf of Carpentaria)

Names that generally occur without *the* are:

- countries and states (Central Australia, Sulawesi – but contrast the Northern Territory)
- cities and towns (Yirrkala, Darwin)
- mountains (Mount Saunders)
- location names combining a proper noun and common noun describing a place (Cape Arnhem, Thunderman Road)

Two morphological constraints on the morphosyntactic possibilities for proper names are:

- plural forms of names always occur with *the* (cf. the British Isles).
- names with modification involving *of* always occur with *the* (e.g. the Gulf of Carpentaria) with *of* linking a common noun and a proper noun.

In most grammatical analyses for English, proper name are categorised as a type of noun, thus the terms proper nouns and common nouns. Anderson (2003, 2004) has recently argued for the categorisation of proper names as a subclass of nominals which he calls determinatives. He claims, on the basis of certain functional/semantic characteristics, that proper names align more closely with pronouns and determiners, also considered determinatives, than with common nouns. This perspective has not been adopted in the very general description of English placenames we present.

Appendix 2: The naming of places within Nhulunbuy

Names appearing within the township of Nhulunbuy up to 1984

The special purpose lease for the town of Nhulunbuy was granted to the Gove Joint Venturers by the Commonwealth on 30 May 1969 and construction of the town was completed in 1972. However, construction of infrastructure for the mining development had commenced in 1968. According to Alan Black,[52] a former senior employee of Nabalco, the creation of the town began with a study involving Nabalco, represented by Black, the Northern Territory Administration, represented by Noel Lynagh, and an officer of the Commonwealth Department of the Interior. Black said that the objective of the study was the development of a town that would become a regional centre for Arnhem Land.

Agius McNally Holmwood, a firm of planners, had been employed by Nabalco in 1966, and they initiated and controlled the planning and construction standards between 1966 and 1972 (Agius n.d.). The architects and engineers were called the 'Town Group' as distinct from the town's administrators, according to Black, who was the first Town Administrator. With the establishment of the Nhulunbuy [Town] Corporation, Black became its Chairman, a position he held from 1969 to 1972.

Black attributes the selection of names for streets and areas within the town to the members of the Board of the Nhulunbuy Corporation. He said that the procedure they followed was to seek the approval of Nabalco, the Commonwealth and the Yirrkala Village Council. He said he believed that Roy Marika, chairman of the Village Council, had approved their approach of using names of local significance. However, Janie Mason, the editor of the local weekly newspaper (then called *The Nhulunbuy Newsweek*), in a series of articles in 1973 on the significance of street names, makes no mention of Mr Marika's role in their selection. The names were

selected as a series defined by the type of street or road, i.e. whether a major road, an encircling road, a cul-de-sac, etc. It was the Board's intention that all names should represent some local or locally significant entity.

Figure 17.3: Nhulunbuy Town Map
(East Arnhem Land Tourist Association Inc.)

In his capacity of Town Administrator, Alan Black wrote to the Secretary of the Northern Territory Place Names Committee on 9 November 1970 advising the Committee of the names that had been chosen. He wrote:[53]

Attached is a list of names of streets and public places which will be used in the town of Nhulunbuy and forwarded for your information.

The list covers the area of the town now under construction and as the necessity arises, further lists will be forwarded for the information of the committee.

Although Nhulunbuy will have a large international Community, it was considered appropriate to keep the names distinctly Australian in character and the names were chosen with this in mind.

The attached list, in which names are organised into various categories, is as follows:

Town Park

Arafura Park

Town Oval

Nabalco Oval

Town Beach

Town Beach

Main Road – Prospect to Dundas Point

The Melville Freeway

Way (1) – Primary Distributor from Melville Freeway

Matthew Flinders

Crescents (4) – Australian Gemstones

Garnet

Ribbonstone

Carnelian

Jasper

Terrace (1) – Opposite Swimming Pool and adjacent to beach

Mirimina (an aboriginal myth)

Lanes & Walks (3)

Ilpilya (an aboriginal myth)

Nadubi (an aboriginal myth)

Mawalan (a deceased chief of a Yirrkala tribe)

Avenues (12) – Native Flora

Tamarind

Corallita

Lacebark

Mimosa

Quandong

Casuarina

Sandalwood

Eugenia

Hakea

Gungunnu (sic)

Bottlebrush

Cassia

Closes (15) – Native Flora

Geebung

Myall

Dryandra

Bunya

Duranta

Mallee

Nandina

Grevillea

Wilga

Pandanus

Karo

Solandra

Lillipilli

Tuckaroo

Melaluka (sic)

NAMES OF STREETS AND PLACES – NHULUNBUY

Roads (5) – Local Names

Singing Rocks

Thunderman

Weyal (sic)

Arnhem

Banyan

Streets (9) – Crew of "Investigator"

Westall

Allan (sic)

Thistle

Bell

Franklin

Wolsey

Sinclair

Douglas

Bauer

Circuits (4) – Ships of Navigators associated with Arnhem Land

Providence

Pandora

Chesterfield

Beagle

   Black wrote to the Chairman of the Place Names Committee four months later advising him that the naming within the town lease had been completed. It is clear that some communication between Black and the Place Names Committee had occurred in the interim. Thus, on 2 March 1971 he wrote:[54]

> The naming of areas and streets within Special Purpose Lease 214 [the town lease] has now been completed as far as possible together with areas for Nabalco installations and a list of the names is attached for the information of the Committee.

> The name "Melville Freeway" was first used when the road was a dirt track and we were very keen to retain a name which grew up with the Project.

> However, we appreciate your thoughts in respect of the use of "Freeway" and the road will be named "Melville Bay Road."

> The streets chosen for Nhulunbuy South have prominent associations with Alusuisse and were chosen for a specific purpose. Consequently, we would not wish to change these at a later date.

> When the designs are completed for Nhulunbuy North and Nhulunbuy East, the streets will be named in a pattern similar to the other areas and we would welcome any suggestions the Committee may have for a suitable pattern which could be used.

The attached list of names and their origins is as follows:

NAMES OF AREAS

Nhulunbuy South	the area presently known as Mt. Saunders Village and Mt. Saunders construction camp
Nhulunbuy North	the proposed extension known as area No. 2
Nhulunbuy East	the proposed extension known as area No. 3
Wallaby Beach	the housing area now known as Wallaby Beach
Prospect	the area surrounding the airport and including the old prospecting camp
Port of Gove (or Gove Port)	the marine terminal (the Gove Port is now internationally known and recognized)
Melville	the bauxite treatment plant area

NAMES OF STREETS

Melville Bay Road	main road from Prospect to Melville Bay
Iluka Terrace	the street at Wallaby Beach
Chippis Road	
Fusina Close	
Feldegg Avenue	
Satral Avenue	
Enalu Road	
Aisa Street	
Isal Strest	
Sava Street	
Boxal Street	
Atlanta Street	

The Chairman of the Place Names Committee replied to the Town Administrator on 19 May 1971 (the letter is undated, but subsequent correspondence refers to a letter of this date in a way that supports the inference):[55]

Thank you for your letter 50/3 of March 12 1971 and the attached list of street and area names.

The Committee endorses the area names suggested, but with the exception of the Melville Bay Road, can make no comment upon the other names as no supporting details were provided. It would be appreciated if these details could be supplied.

The Committee has adopted as one of its nomenclature guides that the names of living persons will not be used. This has not always been the situation in the past.

In considering street names in new areas the Committee endeavours to preserve the names of the early pioneers, explorers and navigators both of the surrounding areas in the case of most towns and the whole Territory in the case of Darwin, and it was suggested that your Company could follow this precedent.

It was further suggested that you might consider using the names of service personnel, who died on active service while based at Gove. Other suggestions were the use of euphonious aboriginal names of local flora, fauna and tribal legends, some of which you have already used.

On 28 May the Town Administrator replied to the Chairman of the Place Names Committee and supplied him with the rationale for the selection of names:[56]

Further to your letter dated 19th May, 1971, we advise that the names of streets – with the exception of Melville Bay Road and Iluka Terrace – attached to your letter dated 2nd March are abbreviated names of some subsidiaries and affiliated companies of Alusuisse. These names have been used in Nhulunbuy South.

Thank you for you suggested patterns for further names for other areas, and a list will be forwarded to you at a later date for Nhulunbuy north and Nhulunbuy east.

We agree with the precedents which have been established for naming streets and Nabalco has followed the guide lines which have been given to us. We are sure you will agree there is no question that Alusuisse is a pioneer in this area.

Iluka Terrace is the only residential street at Wallaby S/Beach and as this is the aboriginal word commonly used for "near the sea" it was considered an appropriate name for the street.[57]

No further correspondence concerning the naming of streets and areas in Nhulunbuy has been sighted in the files of the Place Names Committee in Darwin. A pamphlet published in 1984 by the Nhulunbuy Corporation, *Information Booklet/Nhulunbuy*, contains a partial list of "street and place names and the reason for their choice" (1984: 6-12), which is almost identical to the series published by Janie Mason in *The Nhulunbuy Newsweek* between July and

August 1973. This list suggests that it may have been derived in part from the same sources as the list available on the then Northern Territory Lands Planning and Environment website.[58] They are as follows:

Aisa Street: named after a metal extrusion plant in Brazil

Boxal Street: named after the aluminum can factories of Alusuisse (in Switzerland, France, Germany, and the Netherlands)

Chippis Road: named after a Swiss village where there is an aluminum smelter; the offices of Swiss Aluminium are registered in Chippis and Zurich

Enalu Road: named after the acronym for Alusuisse Engineering Limited, a subsidiary of Swiss Aluminium Ltd

Feldegg Road: named after street in Zurich where the head office of Swiss Aluminium Ltd is located

Fusina Close: named after the location of one of the Alusuisse Italian smelters and power stations

Husnes Avenue: named for an aluminium smelter in Norway

Isal Street: named after an aluminium smelter in Iceland

Satral Street: named after an Alusuisse production plant in Belgium

Sava Street: named after an Alusuisse subsidiary in Italy

There is one point of variation between the 1984 list and that in the original names proposed to the Place Names Committee in 1971 and described in the 1973 *Nhulunbuy Newsweek* articles. The original list contained Atlanta Street but not Husnes Avenue. Atlanta Street is described as "a projected alumina/aluminium complex in Northern Germany" (*Nhulunbuy Newsweek*, 1973 vol. 1, no. 48). The sign for Atlanta Street was manufactured (Phil Herdman pers. com.), but by 1984 Husnes Avenue had come into being. Perhaps it was decided to select the name of something already in existence.

Comment on non-Yolŋu names for the town area

The lists that the Nhulunbuy Town Administrator supplied to the Place Names Committee were chosen on the basis of cross-cutting criteria. The former Administrator said that they were derived from the nature of the area (and in some cases the purpose of the area) and/or the characteristics of the street or road (e.g. crescent, lane, close) to which categories of 'objective entities' were

applied. Thus the crescents were to be named for Australian gemstones, the avenues and closes for native flora, lanes and walks for Aboriginal entities, roads for 'local names', streets for members of the *Investigator*'s crew, and circuits for the ships of navigators associated with Arnhem Land.

The 'local names' which were to be applied to roads are anomalous – or at least puzzling. 'Thunderman' is presumably the English translation of *Djambuwal*, an important figure in Dhuwa moiety mythology (and is the attribution given in the 1973 series), 'Arnhem' had long been applied to an area much larger than 'local', and 'Banyan' is presumably the name of a tree with wide distribution that includes south-east Asia. While all the materials providing information about the source of the name Banyan simply include it within the category flora, there is a possible basis for its inclusion as a 'local name' in connection with some events at the time. A banyan tree was involved in controversy in the early days of construction when one associated with Wuyal was bulldozed and another with significance at the plant site only just preserved. (Ted Egan was District Welfare Officer in the region between 1967 and 1969 and was directly involved in these events, which he reports on in his autobiography (Egan 1997: 243-244)). In a Nhulunbuy Corporation note on file about names in the Nhulunbuy area (D.7.5), R. S. Marika refers to the destruction of the tree as he explains the significance of Wuyal:

> Then he [Wuyal] went towards Wallaby Beach. There he danced his last dance, and he turned into a Banyan tree which was at Wallaby Beach. The people of Yirrkala were very upset to see the tree knock down. That tree reminds us about Wuyal.

'Singing Rocks' is inscrutable, although it has been suggested that it may have been a monolingual English-speaker's interpretation of the Aboriginal English phrase 'we sing these rocks'. The then extant Lands Planning and Environment list attributed the name to a 'feature of local significance', an attribution that conveys minimal information.

The lists available so far and the maps that have been published diverge in some ways that are trivial (e.g. obvious misspellings such as 'Melaluka' for 'Melaleuca', 'Asia' for 'Aisa' and 'Gungunnu' for 'Gungurru', Westal for Westall and Franklyn for Franklin),[59] and in some ways that are significant for a project in comparison. Thus with respect to the names of ships, *Beagle* is on the 1970 list as one of the "ships of the navigators associated with Arnhem Land". In the 1984 list, its importance is said to lie in the fame of its onetime passenger, Charles Darwin, although its master, Lt Stokes, is credited with charting the north Australian coast west of Cobourg Peninsula. The Department of Planning and Infrastructure register list refers to the Beagle's significance as "the novel and unprecedented one of passing through old London Bridge – the first rigged

man-o-war that had floated upon the Thames – in order to salute the coronation of King George the 4th". The *Beagle* was also said to be important for having surveyed Clarence Strait, the Adelaide and Victoria Rivers, and Darwin and Bynoe Harbours. None of these feats has particular significance for Arnhem Land, and certainly none for the Gove Peninsula.

Of the other ships and/or their navigators on the Administrator's 1970 list, only the *Providence* is tangentially relevant to the local area: Matthew Flinders (according to the Lands Planning and Environment List) was a young officer on board the ship commanded by William Bligh. *Pera* is not on the 1970 list, but was given as the name of a circuit added to the area that continues to be referred to as 'Contractors' (for the earlier 'Contractors' Village'). *Pera* has the best claim for association with the local area, since it was apparently one of the first of two ships recorded to have sailed into the Gulf of Carpentaria (Flinders 1966[1814] vol. 2: x-xi).

The names in Nhulunbuy South that were connected with Nabalco and which the Town Administrator argued should be permanently retained on the basis of the claim that Nabalco was a pioneer in the area, are diverse – and explained almost identically in all sources from the original correspondence to the Place Names Committee in 1971 onwards including the 1984 Nhulunbuy Corporation Publication and the Department of Planning and Infrastructure website. In order to make any inferences based on the selection of these names and their use in a circumscribed area of Nhulunbuy, further data on the circumstances in which they were put forward are needed. The only additional placename that currently exists in Nhulunbuy South is 'Recreation Close', which runs along part of an oval and is said to have been so designated when it led to a community hall, later used as a Boy Scouts hall. With some minor variations, there is clear concurrence in the list of names to be found on the current Department of Planning and Infrastructure (formerly Land Planning and Environment) website register,[60] the 1984 Nhulunbuy Corporation Booklet, and the earlier 1973 *Nhulunbuy Newsweek* material (1[43]:18, 13 July 1973), all of which reflect the names originally proposed. The 1973 *Nhulunbuy Newsweek* introduction to a series on Place Names in Nhulunbuy explained to the new residents of Nhulunbuy that the original selection of names was processed through the Place Names Committee "by Nabalco". The introduction further explained that:

> The Place Names Committee, Lands and Survey Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory, lays down broad outlines for the naming of all streets, places, etc. in the Northern Territory. The Committee recommends and makes suggestions. Names of living persons may not be used. Final approval of the names is obtained from the Committee before the place names are published.

However, while most council areas are required to gazette placenames with the Northern Territory Government through the *Place Names Act*, this was not a requirement for privately leased land, which was the situation for Nhulunbuy under the Act that was in place at that time. The right to give names rested with the leaseholder and their obligation to the Government in regard to placenames was simply to provide them for general information purposes. We have ample evidence that this took place with respect to the names put in place during the 1970s.

Table 17.1 summarises the names actually occurring in the various categories proposed and the relationship between those that were proposed and those that were actually used. The table also includes several street names put in place since those originally proposed; they are discussed below in the section 'More recent names'.

Table 17.1: Categories of placenames proposed and used in Nhulunbuy

1970/1971 Categories	Number proposed	Number in 2007	Comments
Native flora			Most additions in this category made by 1984: Acacia, Banksia, Lobelia, Magnolia, Jasmine, Raintree, Ferntree Closes; Wattle Close added since 1984
found locally (and elsewhere)	10	15	
found in Australia	11	11	
not native to Australia	7	10	
Total	28	36	
Australian gemstones	4	2	
Terraces, lanes and walks ('Aboriginal Myths' and one local indigenous name)	4	1	Only one name, Nadubi, is currently extant; Ilpilya and Mirimina were no longer in use by 1999; Mawalan was never used.
'Local names' (includes one Yolŋu word, Wuyal, three English terms attributed to local Aboriginal themes (Thunderman, Singing Rocks), possibly Banyan, and Arnhem)	5	7	Bunggalwuy (sic) Cl (off Leach Rd) (2007) (Since corrected to Bunggulwuy) Malpi Village (new housing development) (2006) Names approved but still to appear in 2007: Ngarrku Village (new housing development) and BingaBinga for the street in Malpi village
Crew of Investigator Franklin is spelled Franklyn and Westall as Westal on current signs. In the 1984.list they appear as Franklyn (sic) and Westall.	9	5	5 of the original number proposed were never used (Allan, Thistle, Bell, Douglas and Bauer); one not proposed, Whitewood, was added by 1973
Ships of navigators associated with Arnhem Land	4	6	2 added by 1973: Pera and Klyn Circuits
Alusuisse connection	10	10	1 of the proposed names was never used (Atlanta) and 1 added (Husnes) by 1984

1970/1971 Categories	Number proposed	Number in 2007	Comments
Others not included in specific categories in the 1970/1971 correspondence:			
Named from what the road gives access to (Melville Bay Rd)	1	2	1 added (Recreation Close, beside an oval in Nhulunbuy South)
Historical figure of discovery (Matthew Flinders Way)	1	1	
Categories of later names not found in the 1973 or 1984 material but found on current street signs and current maps. Much of our information on the sources of these names is from Phil Herdman (pers. comm.).			
Historical figures in Northern Australia. These names appear in the Place Names Register of the Dept of Planning and Infrastructure but without any information as to their origins.		5	All are in the area known as the Industrial Estate: John Flynn[61] Drive, Durack Close, Miller Close, Traeger Close, Buchanon (sic) Road. In place since the late 1980s.
Local identities Dartnall and Ovcaric do not yet appear in the Place Names Register		5(or 6)	Dartnall Place (near the Bakery); Ovcaric Street (in the Industrial Estate): (Both on maps from 2001) Dargaville Rd (in Ngarrku Village): Walling Cl (In Ngarrku Village); Leach Rd (off Wuyal Rd) (2007)
?Fish /Local Fauna		1	Barramundi Close (2007)

Comments on Aboriginal names in the 1970 list

Aboriginal names in the original 1970 list were to be used for 'lanes and walks' and a 'terrace'. One, 'Mawalan', originally proposed for the walk parallel to and between the swimming pool and the town beach, was for the 'deceased chief of a Yirrkala tribe'. Mawalan was head of the Rirratjiŋu clan at the time of his death in 1967, and the then Town Administrator[62] thought the name was not used because Yolŋu prohibited its use so soon after his death, as mentioned above. With respect to 'Ilpilya' and 'Nadubi', when interviewed in October 1999, Black thought that they might have been supplied by somebody at the Yirrkala Mission, or that they might have been taken from a book by Anne Wells, the wife of Edgar Wells, Superintendent of the Yirrkala Mission during 1962-1963.[63] Search for these or similar names in her 1971 book produced the following: Bilipinya (A. Wells 1971: 17ff.) is the name that the Djaŋ'kawu gave to their first camping place when they arrived on the mainland from Burralku. Climbing up from the beach at Bilipinya, "they heard the call of the black cockatoo Nadthili" (Wells 1971: 18). Could 'Ilpilya' be a rendering of 'Bilipinya'? And could 'Nadthili' be a rendering of 'Ŋatili'? Both are problematic, but transcriptions of other Yolŋu names in the book make them nevertheless possible sources. Questioning Yolŋu for possible local links for these two names, as well as for Mirimina (proposed name for the Terrace), has revealed nothing relevant. However a Google search

produced a possible source for Nadubi. That search led to a 2004 art exhibition depicting a work from Kurnbalanja (Oenpelli) of 'Nadubi, an evil spirit woman who has stingray barbs protruding from her joints'.[64] This information pertains to the western boundary of Arnhem Land, country of Kunwinjku people who have not traditionally had close affiliations with Yolŋu.

Nadubi Walk still stands as a sign for a walkway between Chesterfield Circuit and Wuyal Road. The most recent map on which this name has been found however, is in a Nhulunbuy Corporation Information booklet dated July 1984. The map in the December booklet produced in the same year does not show any named walkways, yet this is the publication providing information about all the street names. The walkway alongside the swimming pool to have been given the name Mawalan is shown as Mirimina Walk in the July 1984 booklet. Running alongside the other side of the swimming pool up to Franklyn (sic) Street was Mirimina Terrace. Ilpilya Walk is shown as the walkway between Chesterfield Circuit and Dryandra Close. By 1999 both Mirimina Walk and Mirimina Terrace had disappeared. Mirimina Terrace was incorporated into the swimming pool grounds, and Mirimina Walk fenced in. We have one map which we can date between 1984 and 1999 that shows Ilpilya Walk,[65] but do not have further details as to when the name, and any possible signage, fell into disuse.

Other names are included here as 'Aboriginal' although they were not indicated as such in the 1970 list. They are Thunderman (Djambuwal), Wuyal, Singing Rocks and possibly Banyan (see section above: 'Comment on non-Yolŋu names for the Town Area').

In the information provided for the flora names from the 1973 *Nhulunbuy Newsweek* articles and in subsequent documents, a small number are described as Aboriginal in origin, i.e. Geebung (Close) and Bunya (Close). They are not from local languages, and the attribution of Iluka to a New South Wales source suggests a view that there is a single Aboriginal language.

In general, the evidence of naming by recent European arrivals indicates minimal interest in the expression of local Indigenous culture. By 2005 only three Yolŋu words occurred amongst the placenames in the town lease area, the name of Nhulunbuy itself, Wuyal Road and Rotary Marika Lookout (honouring Roy Marika, a Yolŋu leader prominent in the land rights movement in the 1960s).[66]

More recent names

Several street names have been put in place since those discussed above. Most of them are listed in the last two rows of Table 17.1. It is presumed these date from 1984 onwards.

The descriptions of the placenames in the 1973 *Nhulunbuy Newsweek* articles reveal an attempt to relate the choices to the local context. Despite being described as 'native flora' in the original proposal, about one fourth of the flora names selected are not native to Australia, and the rest are divided between those that occur locally and those that occur in other parts of Australia. It appears that the people living in Nhulunbuy in the early 1970s tried to relate the names to their immediate environment. Thus the explanations that accompany the names include comments about related species in Australia, locally, or about the possibilities of growing them in Nhulunbuy gardens. This desire for the 'localising of names' by the new inhabitants is reflected in the majority of the most recently named streets: Ovcaric St, Dartnall Pl, Dargaville Rd, Walling Cl and Leach Rd. These streets are named for people who could be described as 'local identities' in the recent life of the town. The first two have been on maps since 2001 and the latter three were chosen in 2006 and appeared on signs in the first quarter of 2007.

Names added up until 1984 retain the categories established in 1970-1971. Names added since then have introduced new categories. Examples of local identities have just been given. Included in the 'local identities' are a number of names for people who were still living at the time the names were chosen. This is outside the Place Names Committee's Rules of Nomenclature and Guidelines and advice received by the Corporation from the Place Names Committees during the 1970s. Another new category is that of historical figures of Northern Australia used for streets in the Industrial Estate.[67] The only additional placename in Nhulunbuy South, where streets were originally named with Alusuisse connections, is 'Recreation Close'. This runs along part of an oval and is said to have been so designated when it led to a community hall, later used as a Boy Scouts hall. This, like Melville Bay Rd is named for what it gives access to.

Of the five new street names selected in 2006,[68] one is a Yolŋu name, albeit misspelled – Bunggalwuy (for Bunggulwuy) Close. In the *Arafura Times* the name is attributed to traditional owners of the area "with Bunggal (sic) meaning 'dancing ceremony' and Wuy meaning a 'place'" (*Arafura Times*, 1 November 2006: 8). The last of the new names is Barramundi Close, introducing yet another new category. With only one example, we cannot be certain about a category but fish or local fauna are possibilities. With the establishment of Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation in 1992, a Yolŋu organisation responsible for managing recreation areas which are

outside the town lease, signs have appeared that include the original Yolŋu name together with later non-Yolŋu names: thus 'East Woody (Gäluru)', 'Town Beach (Gaḏalathami)', and 'Wirrwawuy' (for 'Cape Wirawawoi' on topographic and other maps of the area). Moves to develop a tourist industry have also played a role in naming, and there is a growing tendency for Yolŋu names to appear on recent maps produced by the North East Arnhem Land Tourist Association (see Figure 17.3). These maps are widely used locally.

The use of Yolŋu names is not a general feature of contemporary signage within the town lease; for example, until 2005, Mount Saunders remained signed only as 'Mount Saunders' in contrast to recent maps that provide both names, i.e. 'Nhulun' and 'Mount Saunders'. In 2005, Dhimurru Land Management Corporation worked with Nhulunbuy Corporation to have signs made and posted indicating the location of the mountain and its lookout tower, signs that give the name 'Nhulun' primacy. In 2006 a new housing venture, undertaken by a Yolŋu organisation, has been given the name 'Malpi Village'. Committee Members of the Rirratjiŋu Association have also approved the use of the name BingaBinga for the street in Malpi Village as well as Ngarrku Village for another housing development.[69]

In the names for local businesses, sporting associations and the like 'Gove', 'Nhulunbuy', 'Arnhem' and 'Arafura' feature prominently.[70] Only a handful of business names and sporting teams incorporate Yolŋu names. One large local business, Gove Industrial Supplies, should be noted for going against the trend in changing its name to include a Yolŋu placename, becoming 'Gorrkbuy Industrial Supplies'.

The actions of Indigenous organisations within Nhulunbuy and local moves to develop a tourist industry appear to have produced a greater recognition of Yolŋu placenames in recent years. It will be interesting to see whether the choice of Bunggalwuy (sic) Close marks a serious change in naming strategies by the Nhulunbuy Corporation.

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Endnotes

1. This paper is developed from a paper with the same title originally drafted for the conference *Place-names of Indigenous Origins* at The Australian National University in 1999. The conference was sponsored by AUSTRALEX (The Australian Association for Lexicography), the pilot National Place Names Project and the Australian Language Research Centre.

2. To Stuart Duncan, Secretary of the Place Names Committee, our sincere appreciation for encouraging us to write the paper, for generous assistance in locating files in the Place Names Committee archives at the Northern Territory Department of Planning and Infrastructure, providing us with useful documentation, and for commenting on earlier drafts of the paper. Nancy Williams thanks Alan Black, first Town Administrator of Nhulunbuy, and Ted Egan, historian and previous Administrator of the Northern Territory, for enthusiastically and generously responding to questions during telephone interviews. Vernon O'Brien, earlier chairman of the Place Names Committee, provided us with otherwise unavailable documents and made himself available for interview. Dr R. Marika acknowledged the teaching and support from many of her family including her late father Roy D̲ad̲ayŋa Marika, Mawalan, Läŋani, Dhuwarrwarr, her mother Djerrkŋu, her recently deceased younger brother as well as Witiyana, Mayatili and the team at Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation. Many people who have lived in Nhulunbuy shared documents as well as their memories about the naming of Nhulunbuy. Thank you all. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of Jane Dermer from Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation, Phil Herdman and Howard Smith of the (East) Arnhem Land Historical Society and Chrys McDuffie of the Nhulunbuy Corporation in particular.

3. Nhulun and Nhulunbuy have been accepted spellings since 1969; however, up to and during the time of the dispute described in this paper a number of variants were in circulation and the spelling itself became an issue. The spelling of Nhulunbuy follows the orthography used for regional Yolŋu languages. The 'Nh' represents a lamino-dental nasal, often pronounced with an alveolar nasal 'n' by English speakers. The 'u's represent vowels close to that in English 'hood'. A common mis-pronunciation uses the vowel as in English 'but'. The last syllable is closer to English 'boy' than 'bye'.

4. Dhuwa clans owning the land and sea in the Nhulunbuy and surrounding areas and their languages are Rirratjiŋu (Dhaŋu), Golumala (Dhaŋu), Marrakulu (Dhuwal), D̲ät̲iwuy (Dhuwal), Gälpu (Dhaŋu) and Djambarrpuyŋu (Dhuwal). Adjacent to these territories are Yirritja lands owned by Gumatj (Dhuwala), L̲amami (Dhaŋu) and Dhal̲waŋu (Dhay'yi) clans.

5. One record is contained in a Yirrkala School Literature Production Centre publication resulting from a workshop during which children were taken to the places where Dr Marika's father, Roy Marika, a renowned Rirratjiŋu leader, told them the story of Wuyal, the Sugar Bag Hunter. The other is a tape recording made by Muwarra Ganambarr, a D̲ät̲iwuy leader.

6. Some of the descriptors are given in terms of use areas created by non-Yolŋu lessees and non-Yolŋu functions. Compare these also with the naming pattern proposed in 1971 for Nhulunbuy: South, North, and East (see Appendix 2).

7. The place is referred to as both Nhulun and Nhulunbuy. The longer form includes the associative suffix, which has the forms –*buy*, -*puy* and –*wuy* and refers to Nhulun and the area associated with it (see section 'Overview of the grammar of Yolŋu placenames' and Appendix 1).

8. *Riŋgitj* is a small piece of country belonging to a clan within another group's territory. *Riŋgitj* are important in linking clans of the same moiety together – in this way they are similar to embassies.

9. The procedure for officially recognising placenames varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The Secretary of the Northern Territory Place Names Committee emphasised in 1999 that the 'Rules of Nomenclature' which the Committee had used throughout its existence were never more than "guidelines"; that is, they never had statutory force (Stuart Duncan, pers. comm.).

10. http://notes.nt.gov.au/dcm/legislat/legislat.nsf/linkreference/PLACE%20NAMES%20ACT? opendocument

11. The current *Place Names Act (*with amendments*)* is available on line. Amendments include *Northern Territory Rules of Nomenclature, 2001*, which differ from the 1995 rules of nomenclature that we infer were in force in the 1960s and 1970s.

12. The 1995 Rules of Nomenclature were obtained from the Northern Territory Department of Land Planning and Environment website in 1999. For current Rules of Nomenclature, see: http://nt.gov.au/placenames/policy/nomenclature.shtml.

13. Macknight (1976: 33) says: "The area of the Northern Territory visited by the Macassans was known to them as Marege'". The origin of this name is obscure, though it is recorded in many sources. Matthes, in his Macassarese dictionary, says that it really applies to the Aborigines and this usage is recorded by direct observers. 'Marege' was clearly distinguished from the Kimberley coast, which was known as 'Kayu Jawa'. Dr Marika recalls Wandjuk Marika telling her the name the Macassans used was Butha-marrigi. It also appears in a translation of a text from Wandjuk by his daughter Rärriwuy (Cooke 1995: 17).

14. Macknight (1976: 90) refers to names of Macassan origin in Grays Bay and on Groote Eylandt.

15. Powell (2000: 246)*,* says: "'Arnhem Land' is first referred to in instructions given to Pool in 1636". Gerrit Pool was sent out in command of two ships by Anthony van Dieman, Governor of Batavia 1636-1645. Sheehan (2006: 4-6) finds subsequent scholarship contradictory, but notes that Van Colster in the *Arnhem* may have discovered Arnhem Land in 1623.

16. He also named Dhambaliya, east of Nhulunbuy, 'Melville Isles', but that name was later changed in favour of the Tiwi Island which had been given the same name, because the latter was larger. Dhambaliya was then given the name 'Bremer Island' after an earlier failed settlement on Melville Island by Captain Bremer, who later became Sir John. Recognition at the time of the confusion as to the island on which the settlement had actually been located did not result in any change, and Dhambaliya remained Bremer Island. [This account is based on materials in National Archives Item 172059.]

17. After Earl defined and named the Arafura Sea, Melville Bay was of course no longer within the Gulf of Carpentaria.

18. According to Schwarz, who had access to Parliamentary archives, and sighted the "thumb print petition", "The number of petitions actually created in 1963 is confusing. Reverend Wells … speaks of 'Five major copies [that] were to be completed' [Wells 1982:81]. It appears, however, that only two were painted and the remaining petitions are typed copies held in the Parliamentary archives. In most literary accounts, however, only the image of the second painted panel stamped 28 August, 1963, is reproduced and it is commonly referred to as 'The Petition' or 'The first petition', thereby confusing the status of the first panel, stamped 14 August, 1963, as a petition in its own right … It seems that the existence of the first panel, the so-called Dhuwa panel, has become obscured, and I have found only two published images of it [one is in Wells 1981:36] … Perhaps for this reason the second panel has come to be known as 'The Bark Petition'. It should be noted as well that Wandjuk [Marika 1995:105] refers to the 1968 Petition as the 'second bark petition' thus suggesting that the two 1963 panels are indeed one work. On the other hand, Parliament refers to the three panels (two from 1963 and one from 1968) as 'three bark petitions.'" (Schwarz 1999: 96). Eggerking (pers. comm. 20 August 2007), who has recently sighted all copies of the petition and

relevant archives, states that Anne Wells typed five petitions at one time and all were signed at that time. Parliament did not regard the three pages of thumbprints as part of the petition because none of the sheets of thumbprints contained the prayer required by the standing orders for each page of a petition. All copies are held in the Parliament archives.

19. Correspondence from A. R. Miller, Surveyor-General, Lands and Survey Branch, to Director of National Mapping, 25 June 1963 S101B pt. 3, Northern Territory Place Names Committee files.

20. Melville Bay and Gove Surveys F649 S385 PT 1, Northern Territory Archives.

21. Northern Territory Place Names Committee file.

22. 63/2729 61/2000, Northern Territory Place Names Committee file.

23. 61/2000 14 April 1964, Northern Territory Place Names Committee file.

24. Correspondence in Northern Territory Place Names Committee files.

25. S101B(3) Northern Territory Place Names Committee file.

26. Correspondence in Northern Territory Place Names Committee files.

27. Northern Territory Place Names Committee files. The translator is not named.

28. To Swift Dept Terr AA85016/0849K/4.9.68 555/D2140, Northern Territory Place Name Committee file.

29. 67/6088 71/7063F 68/3328, Northern Territory Place Names Committee Files.

30. In fact, the Yolŋu text does not include this orthographic alternative, although the translation (certified as correct) does.

31. The name 'Gove Harbour' was gazetted in 1987 (Northern Territory Gazette G38 dated 23 September 1987).

32. One proposed name was opposed, according to Black, the town's first administrator, because it was the name of a then recently deceased clan leader (Mawalan), and consequently was not used.

33. The local Rotary Club constructed and named the lookout on Nhulun. The name was put in place prior to Mr Marika's death. It is named for Dr Marika's father, Roy D̲ad̲ayŋa Marika.

34. Correctly Bunggulwuy (Buŋgulwuy in the Yolŋu orthography). By the time this went to press a new sign now stands with the correct spelling.

35. Nominal is a term for word classes typically associated with noun phrases and may include in its membership other classes such as pronouns, adjectives, demonstratives, common nouns and proper nouns.

36. *dhaŋu   dharpa   raŋiwuy,   yaka   d̲iltjiwuy*
    this   tree/shrub   beach-associative   not   bush-associative
    This shrub is [found/grows at] the beach, not the bush.

37. While there are none in our sample, there are placenames incorporating the locative suffix. These behave like those with the associative suffix in that further case suffixes are attached directly to the root. In these placenames the citation and locative case forms are identical.

38. 'The Port of Gove' was only ever proposed as a name (see Appendix 2).

39. In *Gan̲arri'mi -mi* is the proprietive ('having') suffix.

40. Strictly speaking, 'Yirrkala' does not apply to the whole of the Yirrkala community. It has been extended in its application to the township. The same is true of 'Nhulunbuy'. Similarly the term 'Miwatj' has been given a broader application in its use in names for new institutions, e.g. 'Miwatj Health'.

41. The term *raki* was used because of a special string associated with the Maŋgalili clan who live in that area.

42. These include kin terms, avoidance address terms, subsection terms and 'nicknames'.

43. Yolŋu terms for the 'inside' names include *djinawa'* 'inside' and *dharrpal* 'sacred/secret', *mad̲ayin* 'sacred', *dhuyu* 'sacred/secret/forbidden, while those for 'outside' names include *warraŋul* 'outside', *garrwar* 'top, surface' and *yänaŋu* 'not forbidden, profane'.

44. Writers have approached this restriction in various ways. Tamisari (2002) does not provide the actual name in her descriptions. Keen adopts English names as ''pseudonyms, based on the Yolŋu practice of naming people after ancestral beings and their analogues; most are names of species associated with the appropriate patrimoiety'' (Keen 1994: vii-viii). Two Yolŋu teachers, Gurruwiwi (1988) and Gondarra (1988), writing on Yolŋu names of children at their school, provide the names – but only general meanings, e.g. *ŋayi* 'place', *wata* 'wind', *wäyin* 'land animal', *bäru* 'crocodile', *gortha* 'fire', *ŋarali'* 'cigarette'. They do not give the moiety or specific group or events with which the names are associated. This is similar to the 'common noun glosses' of personal names included in the Yolŋu Matha Dictionary in Zorc (1986), although many entries there are given no gloss at all.

45. This may be a widely shared feature. Hunn reports that the Sahaptin-speakers of the Columbia Plateau ''reject *biographical* place-names, that is, those named for historical individuals, an aversion shared by the Dena'ina''. Moreover, he adds, ''This is in stark contrast to the English immigrant's decided preference for such names. Nearly half of our English sample of Washington State place-names are biographical.'' (Hunn 1996: 22).

46. We note that in 1973 (closely following the outcome of the dispute), the Place Names Ordinance was amended, changing the definition of a public place and the ability of the [Placenames] Committee to recommend altering the name of a public place (http://notes.nt.gov.au/dcm/legislat/legislat.nsf/linkreference/PLACE%20NAMES%20ACT?opendocument).

47. The Dhaŋu form is given first, followed by Dhuwal and Dhuwala forms.

48. The ergative-instrumental-temporal suffix is occasionally used to mark the allative case on placenames. The only attested forms are after vowels with the *-y* or *-yu* variant of the suffix (also *-dhu* and *-thu*). For Djambarrpuyŋu see Wilkinson (1991: 585). Yirrkalayu has been noted by Schebeck (pers. comm.).

49. In Dhaŋu, Dhuwal and Dhuwala languages the suffixes which code relationships between nominals, i.e. 'adnominal suffixes', and those that code relations between verbs and nominals, i.e. 'relational suffixes', are largely distinct. The most productive adnominal suffixes are the proprietive *-mi (-mirr, -mirri)* and the associative.

50. Glosses used in Appendix 1: PROM: Prominence, S: 'subject' in intransitive clauses, nominative case. O 'object' in transitive clauses, accusative case, LOC: Locative, PRES: Present, IMP: Imperfective, ALL: Allative, ASS: Associative, NEG: Negative

51. Human referring nouns also formally distinguish the subject of a transitive verb (with the ergative suffix *-dhu/-thu/-yu*) from the subject of an intransitive verb (the bare stem) and the object of a transitive verb (with the accusative suffix *-nha*). Non-human referring nouns use the bare stem for both subject of intransitive verbs and objects of transitive verbs but mark the subject of a transitive verb (with the ergative suffix *-dhu/-thu/-yu*).

52. Telephone interview on 14 October 1999.

53. 68/3944, Northern Territory Place Names Committee file.

54. 70/756, Northern Territory Place Names Committee files.

55. L5.70/756 68/3944, Northern Territory Place Names Committee files.

56. 70/756 L5/70/756, Northern Territory Place Names Committee files.

57. So far no Yolŋu word (or phrase) that means 'near the sea' has been found which is remotely like *Iluka*. It is presumably possible that some Aboriginal language speaker other than Yolŋu – perhaps a Nabalco employee – was consulted and provided this name. Iluka is listed in Tyrrel (1933) as ''Near the sea. N.S.W.'' and in Kennedy and Kennedy (1989) as ''*NSW* Aboriginal name meaning 'near the sea'''.

58. The current relevant website is http://www.nt.gov.au/placenames/register/index.shtml

59. Several of these misspellings are retained in current street signs.

60. http://www.nt.gov.au/placenames/register/index.shtml/

61. Coincidently John (Gerard) Flynn was also the name of the third Town Administrator 1974-1975.

62. Alan Black, pers. comm. 15 October 1999.

63. *This Their Dreaming*, published in 1971, is an account of Yolŋu elders painting the Yirrkala Church Panels in 1963. People at Yirrkala and Nhulunbuy in 1970 could have had access to a pre-publication copy. Wells 1961 did not provide any possible sources, although they may exist in other books Anne Wells published before 1970.

64. Crossing Country Exhibition 2004, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney http://www. artgallery.nsw.gov.au/sub/crossingcountry/ 2_EXHIBITION/exh_highlights8.html

65. The name there actually looks to be 'Ipliya' but as the typing of 'Dryandra' and 'Ilpilya' overlap it is hard to make out. 'Ipliya' is in fact the version in both the 1984 booklet of December as well as in the 1973 series of the *Gove Gazette*, but 'Ilpilya' is shown on the map in the July 1984 booklet.

66. The local Rotary Club named the lookout on Nhulun the 'Rotary Marika Lookout', which is indicated on some maps as the 'Roy Marika Lookout'. The name was put in place prior to Mr Marika's death. It is now also signposted as 'Roy (Malpi) Marika Lookout'.

67. We would like to acknowledge Phil Herdman of the (East) Arnhem Land Historical Society for information relating to the origins of these names.

68. The signs for these streets appeared as this was going to press in the first half of 2007. Bunggalwuy has since been corrected to Bunggulwuy.

69. Both these names refer to the wallabies making or resting in their domain, their sacred molk. The names are Ŋarrku and Biŋgabiŋga in the Yolŋu orthography.

70. In the 2006/2007 Northern Territory phone directory for addresses in Nhulunubuy there are 29 beginning with Gove, 18 with Nhulunbuy 10 with Arnhem or Arnhemland and four with Arafura.

CHAPTER 18

Manankurra

What's in a name? Placenames and emotional geographies

JOHN J. BRADLEY AND
AMANDA KEARNEY

Introduction

A thousand kilometres south-east of Darwin, as the 'crow flies' is Borroloola. Sixty kilometres east of Borroloola is the place Manankurra; occupying the east bank of a large bend on the Wearyan River. In the late afternoon sun the eastern banks of the river at Manankurra glow in deep ochre shades of yellow and red, while saltpans span the horizon, reaching out to the sea, the very essence of Yanyuwa life and Law. The white barked eucalypts stand starkly pale, skeletal against the solid trunks and olive green fronds of giant trees appearing as if from an ancient world. These are cycad palms; they stand in crowds along the river bank and retreat into the east, south and west. It is the cycad palms that are the focus of this place, that give meaning to its name. They are the first point of introduction to this place and their physical and cultural significance crosses the boundary of land belonging to the Yanyuwa and Garrwa people, neighbouring Aboriginal groups in the south-west Gulf of Carpentaria, northern Australia. Manankurra holds power in place and in all time, with a rich and complicated narrative of engagement for the Yanyuwa, as Indigenous owners.

As a place Manankurra has never been known by any other name. It still appears on maps, admittedly written in the older style orthography (Manangoora) (Bradley et al. 1992). Manankurra is *wirrimalaru*[1] – a 'big place' – and still, despite not being permanently inhabited by Yanyuwa people for many decades, occupies a central position in the minds and musings of people today. It is defined by an emotional geography that makes it the social and ritual centre of Yanyuwa country. It is described as being 'big', 'like politicians' (Annie Karrakayn pers. comm. 1988). In this paper we turn to the physical and social

characters of Manankurra, to draw on the compelling details of the emotional geography that accompanies the name 'Manankurra'. The naming of place is a powerful act, a privilege acted out by Yanyuwa ancestors a long time ago. The power of this act is not lost on Yanyuwa people today, for placenames are more than remnants of an earlier time; they deny any notion of an innocent or arbitrary history (see Kearns and Berg 2002: 285). Instead, names are embedded and implicated in the very way that Yanyuwa people engage their homelands, how they transmit narratives today and how they educate their children and visitors to their country. The Yanyuwa rarely adopt 'whitefella names' (non-Indigenous placenames) that have been imposed across their homelands since European contact began in the late 1800s. Manankurra itself has not been re-authored or given any other name, despite this happening elsewhere. A resistance to ever renaming this place highlights the tension of a contested landscape in post-contact times, in which two or more elocutions of the land and sea are often found, betraying a history of ongoing colonisation and Indigenous struggles to claim and author their own homelands (see Kearns and Berg 2002: 286). Kearns and Berg (2002: 286) recognise a similar practice in New Zealand, noting that Maori resistance to naming occurs on at least two levels: the creation and deployment of alternative names and the use of alternative pronunciations for established names. To understand this struggle we turn to memory and the act of remembering a placename and the events that mark its narrative journey: the emotional geography of this place. Memory and remembering re-invigorate place, irrespective of land tenure, visitation or access arrangements. The primacy no longer resides in a physical connection with Manankurra, for this is no longer possible for most Yanyuwa. Today, it is the emotional and political geographies, made up of events, moments and circumstances that draw this place close again, and trigger remembering. It is held that Manankurra, like other powerful places, is always there, it always endures (see Figure 18.1).

There are times when Manankurra is brought back onto centre stage and into the forefront of people's memory and lives, while at other times it sits quietly in the individual and group memory. This is for a complex range of reasons. Remembering is at once an act of identity enforcement, land, place and ancestor articulation, and the enacting of Law. For this place, "memory crystallizes and secretes itself" (Nora 1989: 7 in Hoelscher and Alderman 2004: 350), a process that began when the ancestors called the name 'Manankurra'. Remembering is dynamic and central in the maintenance and contestation of Yanyuwa homelands as part of a political identity in the world today (e.g. Hoelscher and Alderman 2004: 348).

Figure 18.1: Placenames within a four kilometre radius of Manankurra. Adapted from a ground drawing by senior Yanyuwa women Dinah Norman Marrngawi, Eileen McDinny Manankurrmara and Ida Ninganga. This ground drawing illustrates the complexity of landscapes and placenames, and in naming the placename Manankurra you implicate many other places and also bring their biography into being and remembrance.

↑ North				
	Wukuri	Mirrinda		
	Lhunurnda		Mungkukurinda	
	Liwarnnya		Mungkurrangatharrngu	
				Muwarra
	Liwurriya			
Wukurlijirla		Malamalaburri	Lilanmarrila	
Jikangarrma		*Manankurra*	Maabayn	
	Arlkujarra			
Jarramba	Likarrila		Rudinya	
		Ngayurruwijila		
Kawajbawilangka		Liwarlamuwa	Yunbanbalaya	
			Wanmari	

Emotional geographies and place

An emotional geography concerns the social and sensory relations that define place. Patterns in human engagement have an effect on place, the individual and group. The experiential processes of cultural habitus, that ultimately shape cultural identity, are dominant in shaping emotional encounters with place. Yanyuwa relationships with their homelands and ancestors are defined by an understanding that humans have an effect on country only to the extent that they are emotionally engaged with it (Bradley 1997: 177).[2] Emotion is the affective state of consciousness that is experienced in engagements with homelands and for the Yanyuwa these can range from love, nurturing concern, fear, anger, bewilderment, sadness and loneliness. Emotional engagements shaping human interactions with place are a key feature of Yanyuwa oral histories and contemporary narrative. When speaking of country Yanyuwa people often express their relationship to the land and sea as one of kin, affection, warmth, closeness, fear and responsibility. This is because all Yanyuwa people hold specific relationships, roles and responsibilities as bestowed on them through paternal and maternal descent. These relationships govern the place of an individual, family and clan group within the Yanyuwa world of meaning. They anchor the individual to country and carry great emotional and political weight for Yanyuwa people as they are pivotal to Yanyuwa Law and cultural autonomy.

An approach that blends emotional and political geographies of place is not unlike Davidson and Milligan's notion of an 'emotio-spatial hermeneutic', in which "emotions are understandable – 'sensible' – only in the context of particular places" (Davidson and Milligan 2004: 524). Recollections of place, one's relationship to it, and the calling of placenames represent articulations of emotion that are "spatially mediated in a manner that is not simply metaphorical". It is as Davidson and Milligan write: "emotional relations and interactions weave through and help form the fabric of our unique personal geographies" (Davidson and Milligan 2004: 523). For the Yanyuwa, placenames are spoken and brought into being for cultural, political and emotional motivations. The form and expression a placename takes – as called by the ancestor and all successive generations of people – reflects and contributes to the constitution of their community and that of their neighbours. Of the Tiger Shark Ancestor, who called and created Manankurra, Yanyuwa woman Dinah Norman says:

> *Nya-mangaji adumu ka-arri baji kilu-wundarrbanthaninya Manankurra na-wini awara Manankurra bajawarnu jangambala-wundarrbanji Manankurra.*

> The Tiger Shark (ancestor) he was there and he called into being Manankurra, the name of the country is Manankurra and it is in this same way that we are naming the place Manankurra. (Dinah Norman Marrngawi pers.comm. 1986)

Etymologically the name 'Manankurra' is said by the Yanyuwa to be a 'name from the beginning', a name 'that the Tiger Shark put there'. It is possible that the name 'Manankurra' contains the *ma-* food class prefix (see Bradley et al. 1992) and the verb root *-kurra-* meaning 'to bury', and thus would relate to the process of burying halved cycad kernels (*ma-mawirl*) in trenches to leach out the poison. The Yanyuwa rarely engage in etymological processes such as this but more often assert that placenames are not transparent in their translation, and simply 'are', because the ancestors made them so. As Kearns and Berg explain, a placename involves a "proclamation of cultural politics" and not an exercise in linguistics, rather, "placenames can be considered to be one of the material and symbolic artefacts of culture" (Kearns and Berg 2002: 283, 284).

According to Yanyuwa belief, the cycad palms (*ma-rnbaka*) that spread out from the central focal site of Manankurra were deposited there by the Tiger Shark Spirit Ancestor (Yulungurri) who travelled from the southern Gulf of Carpentaria in the formative period popularly known in the West as the Dreaming (Bradley 1988a) (see Figure 18.1). This Tiger Shark is associated with the Yanyuwa Rrumburriya semi-moiety, a clan grouping to which certain individuals trace their descent. For the Yanyuwa there are four kinship groupings or semi-moieties, which match onto four lines of patrilineal descent.

Each person traces their descent accordingly and is given membership into one of the four clan groups, Mambaliya-Wawukarriya, Rrumburriya, Wuyaliya or Wurdaliya. Manankurra is considered Rrumburriya clan country. Some 10 kilometres upstream, on the Foelsche River, is the equally important site of Rocky or Kalalakinda. This site is associated with the Garrwa Wurdaliya semi-moiety, the Garrwa being a neighbouring language group. For the Garrwa people the distribution of the cycad palm over their country is the result of the activities of a group of human-like Spirit Beings (Ngabaya). Ngabaya acquired the cycad from the Tiger Shark Ancestor and in doing so gained control over the power songs associated with the toxic cycad fruit, and the knowledge to process this resource. In Yanyuwa narrative the distribution of cycads beyond Manankurra and into Garrwa country is explained as follows:

> And there was to the south a Spirit Man at *Kalakakinda* [a place at Rocky on the Foelsche River] and he spoke to the Tiger Shark saying, 'Hey! Give me your power songs for the poison that the cycad fruit contains,[3] you live in the water, you are an inhabitant of the sea, while I am a man, a fully initiated man, give the things I ask for to me!' It was in this way the Spirit Man spoke and the power songs belonging to the cycad fruit came to belong to the [Garrwa] *Wurdaliya* people. (Bradley 1988a: 14)

The area of land that encompasses the central focal site of Manankurra, and the greatest stand of cycad palms, is called by the general Yanyuwa regional placename of 'Ma-wirla' (see Figure 18.1). The term defies word-for-word translation; rather, it carries meanings of a place with abundant vegetable food, a place where many people could come together for ceremonies and for other important events. The following quotation, that comes from a senior owner of the Manankurra area, directly addresses the cycad palm as a site of social signification that at once includes and transcends its value as a food item:

> That cycad food that is the food that reared me from the time I was a baby to my womanhood. Truly it is good food, when one eats that food one becomes replete, not like the bread of whitemen it does not fill you. The cycad food on the other hand fills people, they grow strong and they are healthy, I was reared on that food, all of us old people we yearn for that food, truly it is a food with a quality of excellence. (Minnie Wulbulinimara pers. comm. 1980)

Also associated with Manankurra is the song-line (*kujika*) of the Tiger Shark.[4] This begins at Manankurra and travels back out to the sea and the islands (Yanyuwa Families et al. 2003). People often comment that the Tiger Shark sang his song backwards, beginning his journey as such:

> The eye, the well [water source] of the Tiger Shark is there at Manankurra, it is there that the Tiger Shark climbed up singing, the shark was at the well singing, he was sending his song back to the country where he had travelled, we are naming the well Dungkurrumaji, my father's name. The Tiger Shark was at the well singing and so it is we are singing the well and the trees that surround it, then we are singing the double-barred finches and the bar-shouldered doves that come to drink at the well. Onwards then we are carrying the song and we are singing the very tall cycad palms which have as their personal name Yulungurri, the same as the shark, then we are singing the white barked gum tree which is named in the song as Karrijiji, same name as my father's brother. We are singing northwards, and we descend down into the depths of the river. We are singing the mouth of the shark. Down in the depths of the river we are singing, we sing the bundle of soaking cycad and we follow the high tide when the current is flowing strongly downstream. We continue singing northwards and then we are climbing, up onto the riverbank, onwards now along the riverbank we are singing. We are singing the tall steep sides of the eastern riverbank, it is the mainland, yes we are still singing on the mainland, we are singing the camps for the old people. We are singing the children who will not stop talking, we sing the bark canoes and the old man making the fishing net, the cycad bread and the footpaths along the top of the riverbank. Then onwards and northwards we follow the path of this song; in its fullness and completeness we are singing it … (Ron Ricket Mururndu pers. comm. 1988)

There is certain intensity to this narrative, one of constant movement, the continuous use of present tense, and the speaker imagines himself following the path of the song. The song at once embodies the Tiger Shark, and the singer, reinforcing the identities of both through singing action. The very singing of the song makes important claims to kinship and naming, thus activating relationships and emotion in the present day. The song line is not of the past, it can only be of the present as it rolls across the tongue of its singer. For the Yanyuwa, songlines are always described using present tense verbs, never past; the actions may be of the past but what was left there is always of the present. Songlines are described as: *ja-wingkayi* 'he is moving', *ja-wulumanji* 'he is running', and *ja-wujbanji* 'he is flowing', indicating the affective consciousness of the singer who brings these actions into being by singing them. For those with the mouth to sing, the eyes to see and ears to hear, Manankurra is a permanent reminder of the body and knowledge of the Tiger Shark.

In another emotive narrative of Manankurra, Eileen McDinny Manankurrmara, a senior owner for this place, recalls that:

This food of strength, this cycad food or great importance, all of the old people they used to gather together here at Manankurra, they would come from the south and all the islands. They would gather here because of this cycad food, they would gather it and wrap it up in paperback bundles or paperback dishes. We grew up on this food … I was taught by my aunt, she who was named Manankurrmara. Alright listen to me again, I will tell you it was not just the Yanyuwa speakers and the Garrwa speakers who wanted this food, the whitemen who used to live here, old Bill Harney and Horace Foster and Andy Anderson when they had no flour or food left it was this cycad food they would eat … white and black together we all ate this food … This food, this cycad food is for us, it is of great importance, and it was important for those who lived a long way away from this place, they used to come here for the fighting grounds that are here in the north and they used to fight with boomerangs and duelling clubs, those who used to eat this food; this food my senior paternal grandfather … Oh this dear country of mine Manankurra it is too quiet it was not like this in past times, this country here at Manankurra and the islands to the north and south to Kalalakinda and west to Wubunjawa all of these places moved with people, they are now all dead, this country is too quiet, once there were the sounds of people singing, laughing, swearing and crying, there is nothing, now there is only us and we live west at Borroloola. (Eileen McDinny Manankurrmara 1986 in Yanyuwa Families et al. 2003: 185-187)

People still care deeply for Manankurra. While the placename may be used in regular conversations about country and old times, any direct and detailed conversation about Manankurra requires certain etiquette. People often begin by asking; 'Is it alright if I call the name of that place?' – *yamulhu barra karma-wandarrbala na-wini awara*? This is a question usually asked by someone who is deemed junior to the listeners. It gives the listeners the chance to say 'yes, keep going' or sometimes to abruptly say, 'No, you do not know that place!' – *kurdardi, yinda manji barra ki-awaruwu!* In such instances, the presumption that underpins the outright calling of a placename is tantamount to saying that you know many levels of knowledge about that place as well. In many respects Yanyuwa people empower Manankurra more because this part of country, more so than others, has been reorganised and challenged by outside influence, to which Yanyuwa people responded by maintaining and persisting in the Law for Manankurra.

The right to name or call a place, even one as well known as Manankurra, is highly contested. It depends on familiarity, knowledge and permission. To call a name without authority can result in the individual being seen to act out of order, in which case he or she does not know what that place contains and

does not comprehend its Law. Unfortunately this is often the case with drunken people who offend the sensibilities of those who know and are able to call the name of a place. It is also an issue for younger people who do not know how to call the name or sing the *kujika* – song-line – of country because they have never been there. What is witnessed then is a distinction between the ability to know a name and the power to bring a name into being. The separation of knowing and being is reflected in people's memories of Manankurra and one can get a sense of the individual's experience of this place by the manner in which the person tells their story. Knowing a place and practising its Law brings it into being, in an entirety that cannot be achieved by a word only. It is knowledge of Aboriginal Law that is essential to the naming and calling of Manankurra.

Ultimately 'memory' and the power of remembering becomes the crucial pivot of all this, because it is by dint of reliance on memory that connections are made. Educating young people in Yanyuwa language and song, in formats they can comprehend, are some of the means by which elders transmit Law across generations. Meaning of the highest prestige comes when the interconnectedness of things is fully realised. The interconnectedness of things, all elements that contribute to the status, nature, engagement and management of place, is differentially understood today. While it can be fully realised by elder Yanyuwa people and those who have experienced something of life and Law at Manankurra for many years, for younger people, their notion of interconnectedness calls upon other elements. For younger generations it is politics, their own histories and those of their families and talk of an 'old days', so different to today, that defines their relationship and connectedness to place. Connections remain by virtue of their birthright and kin. Younger Yanyuwa people work towards an understanding of Manankurra that is the same but different to that held by their old people and the ancestors. Negotiating these meanings is an ongoing struggle to define Yanyuwa identity in a rapidly shifting and highly politicised social, political and economic Australian cultural landscape. It is the vital link between places and the inter-generational sharing of memorial narratives that has ensured an endurance of Yanyuwa identity and cultural autonomy in a world of invading elements and acts of colonial dispossession.

Through the act of remembering, people trigger emotional and political engagements with Manankurra. This involves drawing on their position in the world in relation to their old people, while mindful of their future. It is not merely an act of looking back at times past. This distinction is imperative to understanding the ongoing importance of Manankurra after years of physical alienation from this place. In line with phenomenological thinking, people's experience of the world is dually embodied in a physical and social encounter. Places represent the physical while the terms on which place is apprehended relate to the social. How Yanyuwa people perceive Manankurra is telling of who

the Yanyuwa are. As Merleau-Ponty observed, perception (of place) is more than a sensory stimulation but is an action that involves a construction of meaning; that is, "something (a meaningful object) is seen by somebody (a perceptual subject)" (Crossley 1994: 9). As sentient, practical and affective beings, human agents encounter the world in terms of perception, engagement and experience. As Crossley (1994: 14) writes, the seer and the seen are relationally constituted and the relationship is an embodied one. If as Merleau-Ponty (1962) writes, perception "occurs not in the head but in front of the subject and it brings the perceiving subject as well as the perceived object into being" (Crossley 1994: 14), then Yanyuwa people, as the perceptual subject, and Manankurra, as the perceptual object bring each into being.

Indigenous narrative linked to Manankurra extends far back to ancestral times. Oral testimonies stand to represent the times of the old people, and transmission of these narratives is held to be one of the greatest responsibilities residing with today's elders and learned individuals. Early ethnography and anthropological accounts have also contributed to the record of Manankurra over the years (see Avery 1978, 1983; Avery and McLaughlin 1977; Baker 1989, 1990a, 1990b, 1992, 1993, 1999; Bradley 1988a, 1988b, 1991, 1995, 1997, 2001, 2006; Bradley et al. 1992; Kearney 2005, 2008, 2009, Kearney and Bradley 2006). Manankurra has always been an important base for the Yanyuwa. From here, people would travel to mainland locations and to the offshore islands. Access to marine resources coupled with the available mainland resources in the area, have long made it an optimal location for long term visitation and camping. Manankurra satisfied all the requirements of a 'big place' in that it has the close juxtaposition of fresh drinking water and associated mainland resources with easy access by river to marine resources and for meetings with neighbouring groups.

1918 saw the establishment of permanent non-Indigenous settlements at Manankurra. The first European to permanently reside in the area established what was to be a long-term salt production enterprise (Baker 1999: 47-49). The salt works at Manankurra created seasonal employment for Aboriginal people in the region, particularly Yanyuwa and Garrwa people. Efforts to tap into a labour source, coupled with a tendency on the part of Europeans to settle at locations on Yanyuwa country known either for their resource richness or ability to support large numbers of people camping in the area, is not uncommon in the post-contact history of the region (see Baker 1990b). The availability of key resources in and around the Manankurra area was clearly an influencing factor in European settlement across the landscape. In a feed-through effect, the presence of Europeans at Manankurra and the establishment of seasonal employment in many senses shaped the nature of Yanyuwa settlement and visitation of existing and new camps in the area. Commercial salt production

ceased around 1941, by which stage the Yanyuwa people had established a large campsite on the eastern bank of the Wearyan River, across from the European settlement at Manankurra.

The cross-cultural encounters at Manankurra began in the early to mid 1900s. These times in themselves were relatively unproblematic and the contact not so pervasive that Yanyuwa people and their neighbours significantly changed the patterns and habits of their daily and ceremonial lives. Aboriginal people took up work around Manankurra, but maintained the habit of seasonal movement across the land and seascape. It was after the 1940s that this habit of settlement and people's practices and engagements with Manankurra began to shift. After the 1940s Yanyuwa people established a large campsite on the eastern bank of the Wearyan River, across from what had become a dominant European settlement at Manankurra. The establishment of a new camp, at Liwurriya, across the river expresses the relative closeness and distance characterising Yanyuwa and European relations at this time. Cultural competition over the Manankurra area created the context for a geographical shift in people's daily and ceremonial lives. Subsequently, visitation to the Manankurra area, including permanent settlement at Liwurriya, eased after the 1950s when people were living on a permanent basis in the township of Borroloola – established as a colonial outpost in the late 1800s. Since this time intense discussion and memorialising of Manankurra has occurred. The reasons for people leaving Manankurra and Liwurriya as permanent or semi-permanent settlements are complex and the move is best understood as the result of a series of influencing factors, rather than any one cause, brought to bear in post-contact times (see Baker 1999).

Today Manankurra is contained within a pastoral lease. Granted in 1964, the lease consumes the traditional country of Yanyuwa and Garrwa people. Speaking of these land arrangements, one senior Yanyuwa man defiantly and sadly stated:

> Long time people have been there for ceremony, but nothing today … he been good before but no more … I'm sorry for country. Aboriginal land, white man lease over the top, but you can't get him under ground, you can't get that one. They been cheeky [dangerous] longa that station, you can't kill em that lease. Manankurra still there and still strong … we want that land for ceremony and *kujika* [songline] white man taking all the land from Aboriginal people. (Dinny McDinny Nyilba pers. comm. 2002)

There remains a degree of impassioned resentment towards land arrangements at Manankurra. Interestingly this is not directed at the actual leaseholders, but rather focuses on overall processes of ongoing colonisation of Yanyuwa homelands. Many elders speak of their relationships with the lease-

holders in terms of kin and family connections, alluding to the cross-cultural relationships that are very much a part of the lived history of Yanyuwa lives and country. Senior Yanyuwa and Garrwa men have often stated with great force that the current lease-holder is 'okay for country', but simultaneously will emphasise that Manankurra is a proper Yanyuwa place, and that despite decades of contest as to the 'ownership' of this area, people have not lost sight of this rightful ownership.

Part of what has triggered or propelled Yanyuwa engagements – of the emotional and political kind – with Manankurra in recent years are the challenges to Yanyuwa cultural authority over this place. This has been matched by such actions as a proposal, on the part of Yanyuwa men and women, for a land excision within the leased area. This concerned a piece of land located near the old camp of Manankurra. This cultural assertion was made in a commitment to uphold responsibility for the land's physical and emotional wellbeing. The proposal was a complicated affair and the pastoral leaseholders expressed great concern over this action. Much of this was fuelled by a nationwide concern concerning Indigenous land rights in northern Australia. It was a desire to be back on 'country', to manage and engage through intimate presence that motivated the proposal. Yanyuwa elders today still recall this event, recalling that there are too many outsiders at Manankurra, fuelling a "jealousy for land" that situates Yanyuwa interests as peripheral (Annie Karrakayn pers. comm. 2004).

In 1988, a group of Yanyuwa people participated in a walk from Borroloola to Manankurra. This event was recorded on film in *Journey East/Buwarrala Akarriya*. The film tracks the journey of Yanyuwa families crossing through savannah country, over rivers, moving through the country of their ancestors. Travelling to Manankurra was a profound moment for all who took the journey, and in 2006 young and old Yanyuwa people still speak of this, and remember the individuals, the places, the excitement and their arrival at the Wearyan River. Amongst this group of travellers were older men and women, young adults, teenagers and children. Pivotal to the journey was the presence of three young boys or *rdaru* – young initiates. Taking initiates on this journey was deemed an act of proper Law necessary to portray the manner in which the 'old people' moved through country in times past. People recall that as they moved closer to Manankurra smoke rose into the sky, signalling that people were there, waiting for their arrival. It is recalled that the journey "was like heading to a capital city, just like the old days the smoke was burning on the horizon, it was like the past in the present" (Bradley 2006). Upon her return to Manankurra, Dinah Norman Marrngawi, who holds the powerful bond of *nyankarra*[5] to this area of her mother's country, recalled "we think of old people and been crying for that country".

Manankurra, although physically alienated from most Yanyuwa people's lives today, is invariably re-engaged with the onset of circumstances or events that trigger remembering. In recent times, events have caused this place to remain a part of the Yanyuwa cultural and emotional landscape – through memory. Features that revive Manankurra are the assertion of land rights and demands for a land excision, circumstances and events such as the physical alteration of the landscape and cutting down of cycads by non-Yanyuwa people, filming *Journey East*, exceptional flooding of the Manankurra landscape, the onset and expansion of commercial crabbing and fishing industries along the Wearyan River, and the death of several elders strongly associated with Manankurra and neighbouring *ma-wirla* country. Each of these is in turn underlined by an emotive dialogue fuelled by rumour, gossip and innuendo surrounding the pastoral lease, occasional visits of lease-holders to Borroloola and the presence of researchers, anthropologists, lawyers and archaeologists who desire to know more of Manankurra and the wider region. All of these factors prompt people to recall their 'master story' of Manankurra, which informs an ongoing emotional geography of this place.

A placename ignites memory, etiquette, relationships, fondness and sadness. Whether it is a young man who travelled this country as an initiate, a woman whose namesake or bush name[6] derives from the ancestors of this place, an older man who now stands as appointed custodian of this place, or a young child who hears stories of the old days from his or her grandmother, this place remains a part of Yanyuwa people's lives. Emotive narratives informed by cultural habit and experience are the 'connective tissues' that link people's memory of Manankurra to a place in the east of Yanyuwa homelands. "Remembering is not random" (Sharp 2002: 54), and memory has more to do with who stores the information and the way things are stored than what is stored. While the nature of memories may vary across generations, the consistency is that all Yanyuwa people know Manankurra, they know the Tiger Shark Ancestor and they understand to some extent what this place has always been. As it is so intimately linked to identity for these people, it is suffused with notions of value, affect, and strength.

Yanyuwa people have over 1500 placenames across their homelands and the forces of memory are so powerful in some people that they can call into being events associated with a vast number of them. In more recent times this has been undertaken and witnessed in people's participation in the litigated process of land claims. Knowledge and Law associated with all of these places has emotional dimensions, and becomes the means by which groups of people and individuals negotiate the world around them. These negotiations, especially in relation to that which is considered sacred, include the legitimacy of claims to privileged knowledge, connections to place and people, to the past, the present

and also the future. Caring for country in Yanyuwa culture is about both feeling emotionally attached to a place; and engaging to effect change in the world around, to care for it, to encourage the presence or absence of animals, ancestors and seasonal shifts, through *emotionally engaging* with Law, ancestors and a discrete body of knowledge that is Yanyuwa Law (Bradley 1995, 2001; Rose 1996, 2000; Rose and Clarke 1998).

The events of the past have shown that the Yanyuwa people attempted to retain an attachment to place, firstly with resistance and accommodation of a non-Indigenous presence in the region (which saw them work alongside and for Europeans in the region), secondly by shifting their physical proximity to place (by moving across river to Liwurriya), and lastly by keeping strong emotional and conceptual links to place in the face of physical exile. The act of asserting a position within a contested space is a recurrent theme across colonial landscapes, where the land is the greatest object of desire and to which foreign elocutions of place become commonplace. Yanyuwa accounts of their homelands assert the position of several powerful places such as Manankurra. By virtue of their identities Yanyuwa people remember their homelands, the status and Law attached to place. In doing so they perpetually re-inscribe a social memory to place and infuse the placename with a wealth of meaning that is equal parts drawn from the stories of the 'old people' and today's affective and political consciousness.

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Endnotes

1. In the Yanyuwa language, *wirrimalaru* means something of great importance or power. Governments and their various departments are considered to have *wirrimalaru*; Dreamings and their related ceremonies are also said to have *wirrimalaru*. The concepts applied by the Yanyuwa to this word cover both the sacred/spiritual and secular nature of their world (Bradley 1988a: 32).

2. Throughout this paper the term 'country' is used. This term is a means of expressing both land and seascapes at once. It is drawn from experience in working with Yanyuwa people and their view that the land and sea are not separate, as Yanyuwa woman Dinah Norman Marrngawi says, "country is all country".

3. The cycad fruit has extremely toxic and carcinogenic qualities (see Whiting 1963; Beaton 1977; Hooper 1978) and meticulous labour-intensive methods are required to prepare it for eating. The songs referred to in this quote relate to the 'power songs' that carry healing capacities for those who may have eaten untreated cycad fruit, or drunk of the water in which still toxic cycad nuts had been soaking (Bradley 2006).

4. *Kujika* is a song cycle and/or Dreaming path. These song cycles are sung during ceremonial performances. Each semi-moiety has a number of song cycles, all sacred, some secret and sacred.

They tell of the journeys and actions of the Dreaming ancestors as they crossed the land. There is a sense in which these song cycles are still thought to be resonating through the land as the following statement highlights: "*kujika ja-wingkayi ja-wujbanji barra yurrngurmantha ki awarala*" — "the song cycles are moving, they are flowing continually within the land" (Bradley et al. 1992: 167). These songs tell the story of the Dreaming as they travelled over the country, everything the Dreaming did is contained in these songs, as one Yanyuwa man said, "they are like maps, they tell us about country, they are maps which we carry in our heads" (Mussolini Harvey 1988 in Bradley 1988a: xi).

5.   *Nyankarra* translates to 'I am being for her that country all the time'.

6.   Bush names, referred to as *na-wunyingu* in Yanyuwa language, are names given to individuals, and are derived from one's father's and father's father's country. These names intimately link a person to a place and are seen as a part of the heritage of any one place. A women whose father's and father's father's country is Manankurra can be given the bush name 'a-Manankurrmara', which translates as 'she who keep the country Manankurra constantly active'.

Figure 19.1: Map of Kurtjar traditional territory
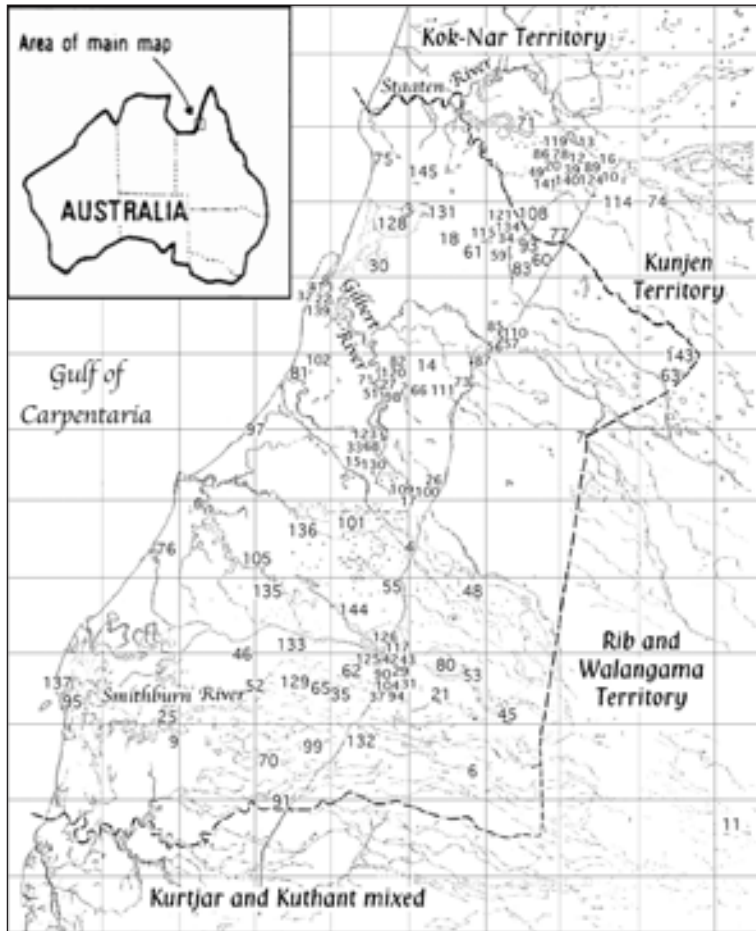
CHAPTER 19

Kurtjar placenames
PAUL BLACK

Introduction

This is a study of placenames recorded during research on the Kurtjar language of south-western Cape York Peninsula in the late 1970s. After introducing the language and its speakers' knowledge of placenames (see below), the paper discusses those names for which etymologies can be proposed, including ones which are homophonous to common nouns (see 'Names from common nouns') as well as those formed by compounding and/or affixation (see under headings 'Names formed as compounds' to 'Descriptive clauses'). Especially numerous are ones involving the many allomorphs of the locative suffix, including one found only fossilised in placenames (see 'Names formed with a locative suffix'). Descriptive clauses used to designate a few sites are also discussed, whether or not they represent proper names (see 'Descriptive clauses'). The nature of the names is quite similar to that in nearby languages, as will be illustrated by the occasional citation of names from Koko-Bera, to the north, although the unusual phonological development of Kurtjar poses special problems for the analysis of some names (see 'Notes on phonology and transcription').

The language and the data

The traditional territory of the Kurtjar is in south-western Cape York Peninsula, along the Gulf of Carpentaria coast from near the Staaten River to south of the Smithburn River; the accompanying map (Figure 19.1) is a modified version of one in a manuscript by Black and Gilbert (1996). The data discussed here was gathered during a general study of the Kurtjar language between 1974 and 1979. At this time it seemed that the language was no longer in general use, although there were still about a dozen people, mostly elderly, who could speak it with some fluency. Judging from how limited knowledge of the language was among younger people it seems likely that the language had not been in general use since the 1930s, when some of the people still spent most of their time on the cattle stations in or near traditional Kurtjar territory. Apparently most of the

people had been moved to the town of Normanton in the 1950s or so, returning to Kurtjar territory mainly when they had seasonal employment on the cattle stations there.

Accordingly, my initial work on the language in Normanton (and briefly in Canberra) did not provide a particularly good basis for studying placenames, although occasional names did appear in stories or elicited examples. In mid-1978, however, I and two other Australian Insitute of Aboriginal Studies[1] researchers were able to accompany two Kurtjar speakers, Rolly Gilbert and Butcher Pallew, on a two week expedition into Kurtjar territory. This allowed us to visit several dozen named sites while gathering the names of many others, for a total of over 150 names. Those whose locations were determined are represented by numbers on the accompanying map, although the full list of names and their numbers is not presented here.

Considering the limited and variable contact Kurtjar people had with their traditional country in the decades prior to the research it was not surprising that their knowledge of placenames was similarly limited and varied. Indeed, the above two Kurtjar speakers complemented each other in an important way because Rolly Gilbert had spent much of his early life in the more northern area, including Macaroni Station, while Butcher Pallew was more familiar with the more southern part, including Delta Station. Accordingly not all of the placenames were familiar to both of these speakers, but it nonetheless proved possible to confirm a majority of them with other Kurtjar speakers, especially thanks to later assistance from Halo Ward in Normanton. Most of the names were subsequently listed in Black and Gilbert's (1996) unpublished dictionary of the language.

Some of those names relate to places said to be outside Kurtjar territory, usually in the neighbouring Kok-Nar territory to the north, but those that seem to have a Kurtjar etymology are nonetheless considered below.

For comparative purposes occasional forms are also cited from other languages, notably Koko-Bera (indigenously Kok-Kapér), a language of the coastal area near Kowanyama, to the north. This data is from fieldwork I carried out in 1978-79 and in 1998 and which was reported in an unpublished dictionary by Edwards and Black (1998). It is interesting to contrast the knowledge of placenames in this area with that of the Kurtjar: it was generally quite good for the local area, throughout which people still travelled, camped and hunted because it had been set aside as an Aboriginal reserve. As with the Kurtjar, however, it was far more limited and variable for the cattle station areas immediately south of the reserve. It is difficult for people to maintain knowledge of their traditional country when they seldom have access to it.

Notes on phonology and transcription

Kurtjar has a somewhat unusual phonology for an Australian language, and the practical orthography used here (from Black and Gilbert 1996) may seem a bit awkward. The vowels in the practical orthography are as presented in Table 19.1.

Table 19.1: Kurtjar vowels

	front	central		back
	unrounded	unrounded	rounded	rounded
high, short, lax		i		
high to mid, short, lax	e		oe	o
mid, long, tense	ee		ooe	oo
low, short, lax		a		
low, long, tense		aa		

As in many Australian languages there is a contrast between front, low central, and back vowels that occur both short and long, but for Kurtjar these have been written as *e*, *a*, and *o* respectively, because long *ee* and *oo* are clearly mid [e:] and [o:], and even short *e* and *o* were recorded as mid (if high mid) [e] and [o] respectively for some speakers, if lax high vowels [ɪ] and [ʊ] for others. Kurtjar also has a mid to high central vowel [ɵ] written short as *oe* and long as *ooe*; despite the spelling the rounding is not great, so that e.g. Kurtjar *ooen* 'faeces' sounds rather like the Australian pronunciation of the English word *earn*. There is also a schwa vowel written *i*, which some speakers may not always distinguish from short *e* and/or short *oe*; I have attempted to maintain the distinction by writing short *e* and *oe* in forms where they seemed to be distinguished from *i* on at least some occasions, although this is the least reliable aspect of the transcription. Occasionally speakers exhibit more striking variations in vowels, as in a placename known to one speaker as 'Manakorr' and to another as 'Manokirr'. Note also that *ua* (and long *uaa*) represents a diphthong whose onset is a high, central, unrounded vowel rather like the schwa *i*, even though it seemed less misleading to write it with initial *u*.

Table 19.2: Kurtjar consonants

	bilabial	lamino-dental	apico-alveolar	lamino-palatal	retroflex	dorso-velar
stops	p	th	t	ch		k
fricatives	bh	dh				gh
nasals	m	nh	n	ny		ng
lateral			l			
trill			rr			
tap			r		rd	
glides	w			y		

For the consonants (see Table 19.2), reasonably common symbols are used for the stops *p*, *th*, *t*, *ch*, and *k*, the nasals *m*, *nh*, *n*, *ny*, and *ng*, the liquid *l*, and the semivowels *w* and *y*. There are three contrastive fricatives: a bilabial *bh* that can always be voiced [ß] but is often voiceless [ɸ] when not intervocalic, a voiced laminodental *dh*, and a voiced velar [ɣ] written *gh*. There is a three-way contrast between rhotics: a single *r* represents an alveolar tap, double *rr* is used for an alveolar trill, and *rd* represents a retroflex that varies between a glide and a tap. In the orthography the name Kurtjar would be rendered as 'Korchard'.

To appreciate the etymologies of occasional placenames it helps to have some understanding of how Kurtjar developed historically (Black 1980). For example, it may not be obvious how *ooen* 'faeces' < **kuna* could be the root for the name 'Nuaangk' (example 30 below) unless you know how the latter could developed from an earlier **kuna-ngka* through the loss of the first syllable after its vowel was copied into the second, the loss of the final vowel, and the lengthening of the remaining vowel; similar changes, as well as the lenition of earlier **t* to *r*, can be seen in **kutaka > ruaak* 'dog'. It may also help to know that the Kurtjar fricatives *bh*, *dh*, *gh*, and the tap *r* generally result from the lenition of earlier stops **p*, **th*, **k*, and **t* respectively, but that *gh* was also added after originally word final **l* and **rr* to yield *lgh* and *rgh* respectively. Note also that the *gh* is often elided in such final clusters, possibly always by some speakers, so that a placename recorded as 'Lmeer' (name 7 later) is essentially just an alternative pronunciation of *lmeergh* 'ironwood tree'.

Koko-Bera has a simpler system of consonants that Kurtjar, without the fricatives and with only two rhotics, an alveolar *rr* and a retroflex *r*. Its vowel system is quite different, with five main vowels *i*, *e*, *a*, *o*, and *u* that can take contrastive stress (marked acute) rather than length. In many unstressed syllables a sixth, schwa-like vowel is written as *v* following Alpher's (e.g. 1991) practice for the nearby Yir Yoront language. The contrast between the schwa and the main vowels is at best marginal, and in some environments speakers vary as to whether they have schwa or something closer to one of the main vowels (as in *ngvlthórr* or *ngolthórr* 'black'), but it is convenient to be able to write schwa where the choice of which main vowel to write would be entirely arbitrary.

Nature and origins of the names

In terms of their general nature Kurtjar placenames seem much like those attested for other languages in south-western Cape York Peninsula. To illustrate this I include examples from Koko-Bera as I list these characteristics below:

a. Placenames constitute a morphologically distinct subclass of nouns in that they do not take overt marking for the locative case, whether or not they already include a locative suffix (see (d) below). As a Kurtjar example, 'Aalgh' can mean either 'Hull Creek' or the locative 'at Hull Creek'; the allative, on the other hand, has a suffix -k, i.e. aal-k 'to Hull Creek'. Similarly, Koko-Bera 'Pirrvków' is either 'Shelfo' or 'at Shelfo' (a place in Oykangand country, inland from the Koko-Bera).

b. While the origin of many names remains unclear, others seem to be derived from common nouns, often animal or plant names. Some of those are simply homophonous with common nouns, without compounding or affixation (see 'Names from common nouns'). For Koko-Bera fewer examples are known than for Kurtjar, but one is 'Makérr', literally 'wind', the name of a small lake.

c. Some names are formed as compounds (see 'Names formed as compounds'), as in Koko-Bera 'Thangvlkór', a compound of 'mouth' (*thaw*) and 'sand' (*ngvlkór* or *ngolkór*), the name of a site at the mouth of Topsy Creek.

d. Some names contain affixes, especially the locative case marker (see 'Names formed with a locative suffix'), but also other affixes (see 'Names formed with other suffixes'); a Koko-Bera example of the latter is the name 'Penpéw', literally 'for *penp*', where *penp* is a grass species (*Heteropogon triticeus*).

e. The derivation of some names remains problematic even though they seem to be formed from common nouns; Kurtjar cases are treated in 'Names of uncertain derivation'.

f. Occasionally places seem to be designated by descriptive clauses, whether or not they represent proper placenames (see 'Descriptive clauses'). Some of these names are related to story sites, but no information on any 'dreaming tracks' was obtained. Koko-Bera examples include 'Pa-pulényvrr kunt' '(they) killed two people', a place where two men (*pa-pulényvrr*) were killed (*kunt*), and 'Kóy wandàngvmvnt' '(it) dropped a fish', the place where a bird in a traditional story dropped (*wandángvmvnt*) a fish (*koy*).

g. There has also been some borrowing of placenames between English and Kurtjar (see 'Borrowed names'). An example of a Koko-Bera name borrowed into the local English is 'Makérr' (in (b) above), which is anglicised as 'Magera'.

Names from common nouns

Where names are homophonous with common nouns it usually seems fair to assume they are derived from those nouns, although chance similarity is not of course impossible. The following appear to be derived from names of animals. Here and elsewhere information on the likely etymology is followed by information on the designated place. Note that English placenames have been placed in quotes when they were given by Kurtjar speakers but were not found on a published map of the area.

1. *Bhookirr* 'skink lizard' (probably *Ergenia* species), a place on Spring Creek at the crossing of the old main road to Macaroni Station.

2. *Ncherdang* 'crab species', whether 'soldier crab' or 'sand crab', location uncertain.

3. *Rbhoord* 'magpie, butcher bird' (various genera), a swamp between Macaroni homestead and Vanrook Creek containing an emu story site.

4. *Rdoork* 'short-necked, humpy-backed, freshwater tortoise', Mosquito Waterhole, near the Gilbert River.

5. *Rtheelgh* 'young of bony bream' (or possibly any tiny fish), a place in the Macaroni homestead area.

   The following seem to be from names of plants:

6. *Kuaard* 'wild mango bush' (*Barringtonia acutangula*), Yellow Waterhole near Middle Creek.

7. *Lmeer* 'ironwood tree' (also *lmeergh*), the name of both Shady Waterhole and of Lotus Vale Station.

8. *Nthen* 'a tea tree species', 'stinking leaf, small leaf, forest, or black tea tree', a place near Vanrook Creek north of Davidson's Well, on Macaroni Station.

9. *Waanchirgh* 'tree species with a milky sap', 'Graham Yard' (probably not the one shown on printed maps), in northern Delta Station.

   The following are derived from other nouns or at least homophonous with them:

10. *Maanth* 'clothing', a waterhole between Delta homestead and the Smithburn River.

11. *Rbheel* 'the sound of women clapping hands (one placed on top of the other) against the upper leg to accompany a corroboree', Ross Creek.

12. *Rdeemp* 'bark (of tree)', Vanrook Creek at the location of an old cattle crossing, in Kok-Nar territory.

13. *Rdook* 'noise', a place on the Gilbert River.

Names formed as compounds

A few names are clearly compounds. The following seems a reduplication of *morr* 'white apple' (i.e. *Eugenia eucalyptoides*); note that in this and most other compounds the two elements are separated by an epenthetic schwa, written *i*:

14. *Morrimorr*, a camping and burial site on a sandridge near Delta Station homestead.

The following names end in *ngkuaath* 'big', whose vowel becomes short because it is no longer in an initial syllable:

15. *Morringkuath* 'big white apple (*morr*)', a place near or the same as Morrimorr (14 above).
16. *Nyomokingkuath* 'big mussel (*nyomok*)', a coastal area extending north-east from the present site of Old Coast Well.
17. *Rdoolingkuath* 'big waterhole (*rdool*)', a waterhole in a swamp south-west of Myra Vale homestead, the location of a file snake story site.

The following names end in *mpaak* 'two', whose vowel similarly becomes short:

18. *Ngookimpak* 'two young woman (*ngook*)', a swamp on the west side of Davidson's Well on Macaroni Station, near the *ngook* 'young women' story site.
19. *Rreerimpak* 'two birds, probably gannets (*Sula* species) (*rreer*)', a pair of waterholes adjacent to Two Mile Yard on Macaroni Station.
20. *Rrokimpak* 'two hawks (*rrok*)', a lagoon in Middle Creek.

Names formed with a locative suffix

Forming placenames through the addition of a locative suffix is especially common in Kurtjar, and this may relate to why placenames do not take overt marking for the locative case, as noted in (a) in the introduction to this section. Kurtjar has a wide range of locative allomorphs, including the following, in which *V* is usually *a* or else the schwa *i*, but occasionally some other vowel:

a. -*Vngk* is the most productive and least marked set of allomorphs;
b. -*Vk* is fairly common, especially on animate nouns;
c. -*V(n)th*, and -*V(n)ch* are also common, the variants without nasals generally being found just after stems ending in homorganic nasal-stop clusters, such as after the *mp* in *dhaghirramp-ith* or -*ich* 'in a bark humpy';
d. -*Vnt* is rare, with no attested variant -*Vt*;
e. -*Vmp* only seems to be found fossilised in placenames, but its variant without the nasal, -*Vbh*, is also attested on one other type of noun.

f. *-Vl* is found on just a few forms; and

g. *-t* is found on some nouns with final *n*, presumably just those that ended in *n* before final vowels were lost in the prehistory of the language.

Such a range is not unusual in languages of this area; for example, cognates to most of the above are found in Koko-Bera, in Kok-Nar immediately to the north of Kurtjar (see Breen 1976b: 249), and in Kukatj to the south-west (Breen 1976a: 155).

The following Kurtjar placenames appear to contain the widespread locative *-Vngk*:

21. *Maralingk* 'at the lily pads (*maral*)', a place on the Smithburn River.

22. *Mpeechirangk* 'at the Leichhardt tree (*mpeechirgh*)', 'Leichhardt Swamp' on Delta Station.

23. *Nchaardingk* 'at the cane grass (*nchaard*)', a place with a pair of small waterholes just south of the Smithburn River.

24. *Nchaarkirangk* 'at the spear (*nchaarkirgh*)', Flying Fox Waterhole on the Smithburn River.

25. *Walcharringk* 'at the saltwater (*walcharr*)', 'One Tree Swamp'.

26. *Wenchangk* 'at the end (*wench*)', a place near Gilbert Lagoon.

27. *Wordiwordingk* 'at the jellyfish or hornet (*Wordiword*)', a place near the coast on Delta Station.

28. *Yangardingk* 'at the (so-called) cedar tree (*yangard*)', a burial ground along the lower Gilbert River.

Placenames that may end in the same suffix attached to otherwise unattested stems include Dhakarringk, Dhamangk, Lbhirdangk, Merbhangk, Morrinthongk, Mpooedhirringk, Rbhirdangk, Walntardingk and Woomingk. A similar allomorph also appears to be found in the following two placenames, whose relation to the relevant unsuffixed roots is obscured by the sort of historical changes noted above in 'Notes on phonology and transcription':

29. *Nthoongk* 'at the base, bottom, or buttocks (*oonth*)', a lagoon in Middle Creek.

30. *Nuaangk* 'at the faeces (*ooen*)', Picaninny Waterhole, near Wyaaba Creek in Kok-Nar territory.

The variant *-Vk* is found on several placenames based on animal names:

31. *Mpoordik* 'at the white ant (bed) (*mpoord*)', a place along the lower Gilbert River.

32. *Reekilak* 'at the Burdekin Duck (*reekil*)', 'Alligator Head', near Spring Creek on Delta Station.

33. *Rkeelik* 'at the sparrow hawk (*rkeel*)', a place on Delta Station.

Other names that may end in the same suffix attached to otherwise unattested stems include Milak and Kooempak.

The following two names appear to contain the locative suffix -*Vnth*:

34. *Laabhinth* 'at the spear rod tree (*laabh*)', a place on 'Kelso Creek' (labelled 'Snake Creek' on a published map).

35. *Rmaanginth* 'at the pandanus (*rmaang*)', a place in the lower Gilbert River area.

Other names which could contain the same suffix on otherwise unattested stems include Ngkiyakinth, Rdaarminganth, Rkuaaminth and Wakakinth. The name 'Warbhith' ends in *Vth*, but this is not an especially good candidate for the nasal-less variant of the suffix since the latter normally occurs after a stem-final homorganic nasal-stop cluster.

The only placenames that may contain the locative -*Vnch* have stems that are otherwise unattested, namely Bhanardinch, Rdeekirranch and Yentirrench. There are no good candidates for ending in the variant -*Vch*.

The following two names appear to contain a locative suffix -*Vmp*, although this is not the normal locative of the nouns involved:

36. *Raghichamp* 'at the sandpaper fig (*raghich*)', a place near the junction of the Gilbert River and Middle Creek.

37. *Rdeerrimp* 'at the whitewood tree (*rdeerr*)', a place on the Smithburn River downstream from the original location of Lotus Vale homestead.

Other names which could contain the same suffix on otherwise unattested stems include Wompenimp and conceivably Mpaamp (if from a root *aamp*) and Rdeemp (if from a root *eerd*). Such a locative is not otherwise attested in Kurtjar, but it may well be a fossilised form inherited from an earlier protolanguage, since cognate suffixes are found in other languages of Cape York Peninsula. In Koko-Bera -*Vmp* and similar variants (-(v)*yvmp*, -*nyvmp*) are in fact the most productive locative allomorphs, being found even on loanwords; e.g. *táp-vmp* 'in a tub'. The Kok-Nar language immediately to the north of Kurtjar similarly has a locative -*imp* (Breen 1976b: 249).

While Kurtjar is not otherwise attested as having a locative -*Vmp*, its expected nasal-less variant -*Vbh* (considering that Kurtjar *p* is rare except after nasals) was attested on one word, *dhooerd-abh* 'in an anus'. Kok-Nar is similarly attested as having a nasal-less suffix -*vp* after *miny* 'animal'; see Breen (1976b: 249). One Kurtjar placename could perhaps contain a fossilised -*Vbh* locative on the word *rdool* 'waterhole', whose normal locative is *rdol-ongk*:

38. *Rdolobh* 'at the waterhole (*rdool*)?', 'Billy Can Swamp'.

Locative -*Vnt* is clearly attested only on *leeliny-ant* 'on powdery soil', although *mokong-int* 'poor' was also attested with -*Vnt* marking the ergative, which is always homophonous with the locative in Kurtjar. Possibly it may also be found in the following placename, although the meaning of the putative stem seems atypical of those on which placenames are commonly based:

39. *Rdaabhint* (cf. *(maan) rdaabh* 'hoarseness, laryngitis'), a certain small pool of water.

Alternatively any name ending in *nt* could perhaps contain a reflex of locative -*t* after stem-final *n*, as is clearly the case for the following name:

40. *Raamint* 'at the lancewood (*raamin*)', 'Staaten River Camp', on the south bank of the Stataten River, in Kok-Nar territory.

Other names ending in *nt* include Marinchint and Thooent.

Finally, the following appear to contain a fossilised locative suffix -*Vl* that is otherwise attested only in a handful of words, such as the locative/ergative forms *maal* (< **pama-lu*) of *aam* (< **pama*) 'person', *ney-al* of *ney* 'what', and *nhebh-al* of *nheebh* 'one'. These are not the normal locatives of the stems involved in the following, however.

41. *Looenal* 'at the white berry (*looen*)', a place at or near Mosquito.
42. *Ngkeengil* 'at the wild cucumber (*ngkeeng*)', either of two places near the northern limits of Kurtjar territory, distinguished by adding the words for 'large' (in 'Ngkeengil ngkuaath' 'Bell Swamp') and 'small' (in 'Ngkeengil cheekird', a small waterhole just across the road on the north side of 'Possum Mill').
43. *Waliwinchal*, possibly 'at the water (*waal*) end (*wench*)', 'Leichhardt Waterhole'.

Other names which could perhaps contain the same suffix on otherwise unattested stems include Bheenchil, Kontal, and Rdeewirkal.

Names formed with other suffixes

A few nouns appear to contain suffixes other than the locative. The following is formed with the normal comitative suffix -*ilim*/-*alim* 'with':

44. *Neekircherghilim* 'with a bean tree (*neekirchergh*, i.e. *Cathormion umbellatum*)', a campsite along Macaroni Creek south of Macaroni homestead.

The following are likely to contain fossilised forms of a semblative suffix that is generally attested as *-ighard* '-like'. If that reflects a stem-final vowel followed by earlier *-karV*,[2] after an original final consonant we could expect reflexes of shape *-kVrd*, as in the following two placenames:

45. *Lkeenkard* 'like the moon/white grub/fish species (*lkeen*)?', a sand ridge in the coastal area of northern Macaroni Station.

46. *Mpaarkird* 'like a goanna (*mpaargh*)?', a place of uncertain location.

In two placenames the same suffix could seem to follow a verb with a past perfective ending *-n*, although that construction is not otherwise attested:

47. *Yuaarrinchinkard* (cf. *yuaarr* 'bloodwood' and *nchi-n* 'become broken' or perhaps 'climbed'), a place on Macaroni Station. (The meaning 'become broken' seems more likely than 'climbed' because the latter normally requires the object climbed to be in the locative, as in *yuaarr-ingk nchi-n* 'climbed (on a) bloodwood'.)

48. *Rrangkithibhankard* (*rrangk-ith* could be the locative of some noun *rrangk* as required by *bha-n* 'entered'), a place just downstream from the old Delta-to-Macaroni road crossing of the Gilbert River. Perhaps the same *rrangk-ith* is found before *rda- y* 'throw' in the verb *rrangkithirda- y* 'change skins (said of mythical animals)'. The attested noun most similar to *rrangk* is *rraangk* 'butterfish' (probably 'Mouth Almighty', *Glossamia aprion aprion*), whose normal locative *-ich* has sometimes been found to alternative with *-ith*, but the literal meaning 'entered (into) a butterfish' for the placename, and especially 'threw in a butterfish' for the verb to 'change skins', do not seem particularly compelling.

Other names that could perhaps contain a reflex of the same suffix *-karV* after a stem-final *n* include Meerding(in)kard and, if an explanation for the *o* vowel can be found, Nkoolminkord.

Two names could perhaps contain a derivational suffix *-arr/-irr* that makes an uncertain difference between various pairs of forms, such as *lchirgh* or *lchirgharr* 'many', *meen* 'different, other' and *meen-arr* or *men-ar* 'wrong one', *moerrangk* 'morning, tomorrow' and *moerrangkarr* 'early in the morning' (or possibly 'since this morning'), and *rduaath* 'wood shavings' and *rduaathirr* 'wood dust (e.g. from a rotting log)'. The first name below would seem to be a variant of *wengk-arr* 'properly, in a good way' that retains the long vowel of the root *weengk* 'good':

49. *Weengkirr*, a place in Twelve Mile Creek between the Norman River and Walkers Creek.

50. *Lngkirarr* (or *Nkirarr*) (perhaps 'sandy'? cf. *lngkirgh* 'sand'), a Kurtjar camp across the Norman River from Normanton in the early 1900s.

The following is a compound in which the second element, *yoempi-ncherr* 'taker' is derived from the verb *yoempi-lk* 'take' by the addition of an agentive suffix *-ncherr/-ncharr/-nchirr*:

51. *Kuaaniyoempincherr* 'grass (*kuaan*) taker', a campsite on south bank of Staaten River (in Kok-Nar territory).

Whether or not the meaning seems sensible, the following placename appears to involve a variant of the same suffix on the verb *a-* 'see, hear':

52. *Kuaabhanchirr* 'boy (*kuaabh*) seer/hearer (*a-nchirr*?)?', 'Big Fish Hole'.

The following placenames seem to involve the same suffix on one of three verbs with a root *i-*, as discussed further below:

53. *Lbhaangirrincharr* (cf. *lbhaangirr* 'large size bony bream'), a lagoon immediately south-east of Staaten River crossing (in Kok-Nar territory).

54. *Lnthaakincharr* (cf. *lnthaak* 'smaller jellyfish species'), a place in the coastal area of Delta Station.

55. *Ngkaabhincharr* (cf. *ngkaabh* 'brolga'), a place in the northern part of Macaroni Station.

The name 'Mawincherr' could perhaps represent a similar formation involving an otherwise unattested root *maw*. That *-ncharr* and *-ncherr* can represent the same suffix in similar environments is clear from the fact that both were attested in *thirirdancherr* or *thirirdancharr* 'whale', literally 'smoke (*thirgh,* here *thiri-*) thrower' (cf. the imperative *rda-y* 'throw'). (A second word for 'whale' is *kuaanidhincherr*, literally 'grass (*kuaan*) burner (*dhi-ncherr*)'.) After *i* the variant *-ncharr* also seems to be found in *ghaath-i-ncharr* 'corpse, dead person' (cf. *ghaath* 'dead') and in *Rrangkithibhankardincharr*, a name used to refer to a man buried at the place Rrangkithibhankard (name example 48 above).

Since *-charr* is otherwise attested only after a verb root, it seems that the preceding schwa *i* in these forms and the placenames (53) to (55) above is either a verb root *i-* or else an epenthetic vowel or a reflex of a stem-final vowel that has replaced a verb root *i-* (we saw that the non-schwa root *a-* was retained in (52), even with a long vowel in the preceding syllable). The verb 'be, stay' (imperative *i-k*) is a good candidate in the case of *ghaathincharr* 'corpse' (then literally 'dead stayer') and especially *Rrangkithibhankardincharr* literally 'stayer at Rrangkithibhankard'. A second possibility is a verb (imperative *i-rk*) used to derive verbal meanings from nouns, as in *rdooek i-rk* 'tell a lie (*rdooek*)' and

oow i-rk 'reject' (cf. *-oow* 'nose'). In placenames (53) to (55) a third possibility could be the verb 'eat' (imperative *i-lk*), even though the irregular agentive form *ninchirr* was attested for 'eater' as a distinct word.

Names of uncertain derivation

Some placenames are surely derived from nouns, but by mechanisms which remain unclear. The largest group of placenames of uncertain derivation consist of a noun followed by an otherwise unattested element *-intak* or (after *l*) *-ntak*:

56. *Dhongkualkintak* (cf. *dhongkualk* 'emu'), a place on Middle Creek at the present site of Bottom Yard (cf. 57 below).

57. *Leemilntak* (cf. *leemil* 'galah'), Goose Lagoon or 'Goosey', along the Gilbert River.

58. *Lowothintak* or *Lowochintak* (cf. *lowoth* or *lowoch* 'spirit of deceased person appearing as a light, minmin light'), a place in the Lotus Vale area.

59. *Mbaalbhilntak* (cf. *mpaalbhil* 'blue-tongue lizard'), 'Black Scamp (or Black's Camp?) Waterhole' probably the same as Blackfellow's Lagoon in the Smithburn River.

60. *Rriyorringkuathintak* (cf. *rriyorringkuath* 'emu'), the same place as *Dhongkualkintak* (56 above).

61. *Waardinhintak* (cf. *waardinh* 'white gum tree', probably 'ghost gum' (*Eucalyptus papuana*)), a place of uncertain location between the Smithburn and Gilbert Rivers.

Other placenames ending in *-intak* include Noorbhinhingintak, Rdaarkingintak and Waardintak. Possibly the final *-ak* could be a locative suffix following an uncertain element *-(i)nt*, perhaps a fossilised genitive cognate to the Koko-Bera genitive *-Vnt* and still found within the normal Kurtjar genitive *-ngint*, which has an oblique (including locative) form *-ngintak*. In that case names (56) and (60) could mean 'at the (something, perhaps the place?) of the emu'. Another possibility is that these names could be formed as compounds whose second element is *ntak* or *ntaak*, but no such form is otherwise attested.

The following three names seem to be derived from nouns with the addition of otherwise unattested elements *-iny*, *-in*, and *-iyan*:

62. *Lmpeerdiny* (cf. *lmpeerd* 'guttapercha' (probably *Excoecaria parvifolia*)), a waterhole along west bank of lower Gilbert River, probably in Gilbert Pocket.

63. *Rdaachin* (cf. *rdaach* 'bulgama tree' (*Hakea* species)), a pair of small waterholes on either side of the road south from Macaroni homestead.

64. *Weerdiyan* (cf. *weerd* 'fire, firewood') a waterhole in the Smithburn River downstream from Myra Vale.

The following name may also begin with *weerd* 'fire, firewood', perhaps followed (after an epenthetic *i*) by an unattested verb *mordicho-n* in the past imperfective:

65. *Weerdimordichon*, a rise west of Waukanaka, on Macaroni Station.

The unattested verb could involve either some unknown element *mo-* followed by *rdicho-n* 'died' or else *mord* 'curled, twisted, tangled, folded' followed by an otherwise unknown element *-ichon*. Known verbs that appear to be compounds involving some element *mord* include (in their imperative forms) *mordinchi-lk* 'growl' (cf. *nchi-lk* 'climb') and *mordirdi-ngk* 'spear (in the Koncham auxiliary language) ' (cf. normal Kurtjar *rdi-ngk* 'spear').

Descriptive clauses

Four Dreaming (or totemic) sites were referred to by descriptive clauses which may or may not be the proper name of the site. All four expressions follow the pattern Noun-*a*-Verb-Past to refer to the totemic animal (Noun) having entered (*bha-nh*) the ground at the end of its story. I will translate the expressions as '(where) the animal went in', although the actual function of the *-a* (or *-am* if the speaker pauses before the verb) may simply be to mark focus on the element preceding the verb; as a different sort of example, it was found after *naangk* 'now, next' in '*Naangk-a[m] ri-nh cilang-ibh*' 'Now [they] went down'. The four sites are:

66. *Mpaamiy-a-bha-nh* '(where) the stinking turtle went in'.
67. *Mpeerchilgh-a-bha-nh* '(where) the stingray went in'.
68. *Nchilngkuath-a-bha-nh* '(where) the black-headed python went in'.
69. *Chacharr-a-bha-nh* 'where the rainbow snake went in', a place near Vanrook Creek.

Such a construction was also used to refer to three sites or parts of sites that were attested as having other proper names:

70. *Rdoorng-a-bha-nh* '(where) the file snake went in', another way of referring to *Rdoolingkuath* (see 17 earlier).
71. *Ngook-a-bha-nh* '(where) the young women went in', the depression where the women entered the ground at Ngookimpak (18 earlier).
72. *Dhongkualk-a-bha-nh* '(where) the emu went in', the depression where the emu entered the ground at Rbhoord (3 earlier).

One site is referred to in such a way based on a postcolonial incident:

73. *Chaynaman-a-rrigha-ny* '(where they) killed (*rrigha-ny*) a Chinaman', on Duck Creek.

Borrowed names

A few placenames were simply borrowed from English. Those given as (74) and the first variant in (75) differ from normal Kurtjar words in having final vowels; presumably the *n* was added to the second variant in (75) to avoid this irregularity. While (76) can apparently be used to refer to any town, and not just Normanton, the fact that it takes zero locative marking identifies it as a placename.

74. *Mirdanta*, Miranda Station.

75. *Talta* or *Taltan*, Delta Station.

76. *Taawin*, Normanton (or any other town).

Some Kurtjar placenames seem to have been borrowed into English, although the English versions are largely attested from the Kurtjar speakers who provided the Kurtjar names. In any case, 'Ngkook' was described as 'Anggoke' waterhole, near Delta homestead; 'Wilkinyakird' is 'Waukanaka' Lagoon, and 'Woomingk' is 'Wamakee' Waterhole.

Conclusion

It seems that Kurtjar placenames are as often meaningful as not, unless the more meaningful names simply tend to be better remembered. Of the some 150 placenames attested for Kurtjar, it has been possible to suggest etymologies for nearly half of them, although the 75 numbered forms above do include some additional descriptive clauses, as well as some names whose origins are not fully clear. In any case, exploring the possible etymologies also seems useful for what it may suggest about earlier stages of Kurtjar, for example, that there may once have been an locative -*Vmp* (as in names 36 and 37) and conceivably a genitive -*Vnt* (see names 56 to 61) as found in nearby languages, or that the locative -*Vl* might once have been more widely distributed than as it was attested in recent years (see names 41 to 43). It thus raises questions for comparative studies of somewhat broader scope.

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Endnotes

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2. It is possible to reconstruct a morpheme of similar shape with the meaning 'not', for which the Kurtjar reflex as a separate word is *aard*.