Performing Place, Practising Memories

ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIANS, HIPPIES AND THE STATE

ROSITA HENRY

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Performing Place, Practising Memories

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Aboriginal Australians, Hippies and the State

Rosita Henry

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CONTENTS

List of Figures and Maps vi

Preface viii

Acknowledgements x

Introducing Place: Fieldwork and Framework 1

CHAPTER 1
Colonising Place: The Mutilation of Memory 30

CHAPTER 2
Countering Place: Hippies, Hairies and 'Enacted Utopia' 76

CHAPTER 3
Performing Place: Amphitheater Dramas 111

CHAPTER 4
Commodifying Place: The Metamorphosis of the Markets 140

CHAPTER 5
Planning Place: Main Street Blues 159

CHAPTER 6
Dancing Place: Cultural Renaissance and Tjapukai Theatre 181

CHAPTER 7
Protesting Place: Environmentalists, Aboriginal People and the Skyrail 217

CHAPTER 8
Creating Place: The Production of a Space for Difference 239

References 250

Index 266

FIGURES AND MAPS

Figures

1.1. Aboriginal Camp at Kuranda, 1904. Collection: John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland. 39

1.2. The Mona Mona mission before it closed in 1962. Collection: John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland. 44

2.1. Dancing at the Amphitheatre, c. 1982. Photographer: Mark Williams. 101

3.1. The Australian National Folk Festival, Kuranda Amphitheatre, 1990. Photographer: Mark Williams. 122

3.2. Plan of the Kuranda Amphitheatre, 1997. Courtesy of the Kuranda Amphitheatre Society. 134

4.1. Market Stall, Kuranda, 1997. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 150

4.2. Market Stall, Kuranda, 2011. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 151

4.3. Market Signs, Original Kuranda Markets, 2011. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 152

5.1. Tourist Buses, Kuranda, 1995. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 164

5.2. 'The Ark' in the main street of Kuranda, 2011. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 171

6.1. Young Aboriginal Buskers, Kuranda, 1999. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 197

6.2. Plan of the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park. Courtesy of Tjapukai; Redrawn by Rurik Henry. 204

6.3. Dancers Making Fire on Stage, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, c. 1996. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 207

6.4. Women Dancers, Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park, 1996. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 209

7.1. Skyrail from a Kuranda Street, c. 1996. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 218

7.2. Skyrail Protest, 1994. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 219

7.3. Djabugay Elder Florence Williams Fighting for Native Title, c. 1997. Photographer: Rosita Henry. 234

Maps

I.1. Location Map. Map drawn by Rurik Henry. 3

I.2. Kuranda and Aboriginal Settlements. Map drawn by Rurik Henry. 8

I.3. Kuranda Village. Adapted from a watercolor by Rosemarie Rusch. 10

PREFACE

This ethnographic study focuses on the small Australian town of Kuranda – marketed for tourists as 'the village in the rainforest' – and explores how political identities are generated. It is a study of the way people constitute themselves in relation to place, and the way they construct, communicate and contest the identities produced within the contexts of a bureaucratic state order and a network of global economic and political forces. The study is not about any particular culture or sub-culture in isolation – neither the various waves of European settlers nor the Aboriginal population – but the practices of all categories of people, viewed at the intersection of their socio-political constitution and engagement. The ethnographic task at hand is to explore the fields of sociality of people who call Kuranda home, in order to discover their various practices of place-making.

The book is built around a number of linked analyses of conflicts, or 'social dramas', that have arisen in the town in connection with both public and private spaces. In turn, these social dramas foster theatrical and other staged performances that allow people to reflect upon their social situations. I explain these performances as practices that enable people to celebrate the ways in which their particularistic identities articulate with universal values. Through public performances and everyday spatial tactics, people resist state projects, but they also contribute to the cultivation and propagation of state effects. They play with identities so as to produce a sense of local community – a sense of place – that works both with and against the state.

The role of the state in relation to Indigenous Australians has recently become an issue of intense debate among anthropologists and other scholars, following the heavy-handed intervention of the Australian federal government in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory after the release of the *Little Children are Sacred* report by the Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse (2007). In the wake of the report's release, anthropologists were quickly condemned for having spent years keeping silent about sexual abuse and other expressions of violence in Aboriginal communities, as well as for having written ethnographies that obfuscated the severe 'dysfunction' of many of these communities. Consequently, the pendulum has begun to swing in the opposite

direction, and increasing attention is being paid to abjection and suffering in Aboriginal communities.

In contrast to this ethnographic trend, the present book concerns the entangled lives of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents of a community that one cannot define as remote. While this community's proximity to a thriving regional city does not guarantee that the people here are free from chronic health problems, poverty, violence, sexual abuse, and the effects of alcohol and drug addiction, my aim has been to give equal emphasis to the pleasure and the sense of joyful hope for a better future that Aboriginal people have conveyed to me.

Rosita Henry
Townsville, April 2011

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I decided that I was going to 'become an anthropologist' while I was still in high school. For this decision I owe a debt of gratitude to my friend Maggie Wilson (nee Leahy). As best friends through our high school years, we spent all our time together in the boarding school we attended talking about our families and our childhood days. I was fascinated by Maggie's experiences growing up in Papua New Guinea in a village near Mt Hagen. Over the years, Maggie continued to encourage me, even lending her expertise as a filmmaker to help me record festival performances while I was conducting fieldwork for this book, until she passed away suddenly in April 2009.

In my research and writing for this book, I have had the benefit of the generous support of many colleagues at James Cook University. I am indebted firstly to the late Jeffrey Clark, who helped reawaken my passion for anthropology after I had spent a long time away from academia immersed in mothering and child care. Even at the height of his illness, Jeffrey found the time to provide encouragement and advice about the early period of my fieldwork, begun in 1993.

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I am grateful to my parents, brothers and sisters, and in-laws for all the help they gave me in Kuranda while I did my fieldwork, providing me with a network of contacts and keeping their eyes and ears open for me at times when I could not be there. I especially thank my sister Rosalie who provided me with accommodation and nurturing and spent many an evening with me lending her own insights into the people and place. Rosalie spent numerous hours helping me to transcribe taped interviews and in general acting as a most valuable research assistant. I am also especially grateful to my sister Rosemarie for her generous help over the years in photocopying material for me, providing me with contacts, and using her wonderful talents to draw the maps, as well as to my brother Ricardo for insights and archival materials on the Kuranda Amphitheatre.

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Portions of chapters 4, 6 and 7 in this book were published in journal articles (Henry 1994, 1998, 2000). These have been included courtesy of the *Australian Journal of Anthropology* and *Aboriginal History*.

Introducing Place

Fieldwork and Framework

> *The Kuranda Experience is a trilogy of the old, new and ancient, a journey through time which begins at your doorstep and ends in unforgettable memories.*
>
> —Tourist brochure, 'The Kuranda Experience', c. 1997

'Meet me at the bottom pub'. It was 1993 and I had telephoned to arrange a meeting to discuss my research proposal with a person from the Kuranda community. I had been advised by other townspeople to talk to her, as she had a degree in anthropology and was said to know something about the Aboriginal people of the area. I was keenly aware of the phenomenon of the 'white broker' as described by Collmann (1988) and that there were many such brokers in Kuranda: non-Aboriginal people who competitively defined their own identities according to the relative length and depth of their relationships with and knowledge of Aboriginal people. How would these white interlocutors feel about my ethnographic study with 'their' people? Would this woman see me as a competitor? By asking me to meet her at the bottom pub, I felt she was testing me. How would I relate to the Aboriginal patrons with whom she regularly drank and played pool in a side room attached to the main bar?

I have to admit that I did feel apprehensive, but this had nothing to do with the woman or her Aboriginal friends. Rather, what worried me was the culture of Australian pubs. It was a culture with which I was unfamiliar. Would it be okay for me to order a glass of lemonade, since I do not particularly like alcohol? Should I offer to shout a round of drinks? What were the rules of engagement?

In the end, the meeting with the woman and her Aboriginal friends went well, perhaps partly because I quickly explained that my study was not going to be about any particular culture or sub-culture in isolation, but about the town itself as a home-place. I stressed that I was just as much interested in the various waves of European settlers as I was in the Aboriginal popula-

tion. One young woman in the group, eager to contribute to my research, informed me that while Djabugay was the tribe for Kuranda, more generally people called themselves Bama or Murri. She preferred to call herself a Murri, saying that Bama, which actually means 'the people', sounded too much like 'bummer'. She seemed taken with the idea that I was also going to focus my study on the *migaloos* (white people), who could be found mostly at the 'top pub', according to her. (The two hotels had names but locals referred to them in terms of their respective locations at the bottom and top ends of the town.)

Spatial Practices

This book presents the results of over ten years of intermittent fieldwork (very little of it in either of the pubs mentioned above) that followed that meeting at the bottom pub in Kuranda, a small town located in the hills above the city of Cairns in tropical northern Australia (see Map I.1). The ethnographic task I set myself was to explore how place is created through the spatial practices and public performances of protest and celebration by a people in intense socio-political engagement with one another.

At the time I began my research in 1993, Kuranda – also known as 'the village in the rainforest' – sat somewhat uncomfortably within the Mareeba Shire. The Mareeba Shire – which was, after my fieldwork was complete, amalgamated with neighbouring shires into the Tablelands Regional Shire – had an area of 52,585 square kilometres and a population of approximately 18,638.[1] Its economy is predominantly based on primary industry (beef and dairy cattle, tobacco, sugar, timber, mining, and fruits and vegetables, with orchard crops including mangoes, avocados and lychees), in contrast to Kuranda, where the major industry is tourism.

Australian ethnographies of rural towns by anthropologists are few (see for example Cowlishaw 1988, 2004; Merlan 1999; Babidge 2004, 2010). While anthropologists generally acknowledge that Aboriginal lifeworlds are constituted within the broader forces, structures and discursive practices of the Australian nation-state, at the local level most anthropologists have tended to focus their ethnographic attention specifically on the Aboriginal 'domain' (von Sturmer 1984). My aim in this book is to give equal attention to the deeply intertwined spatial practices of all people associated with Kuranda, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, especially the settlers who arrived as part of the counterculture movement during the 1970s and 1980s.

I began fieldwork in Kuranda the year after the Australian Federal government passed the Native Title Act in response to the Australian high

Map I.1. Location Map.
Map drawn by Rurik Henry.

court decision in Mabo v. the State of Queensland (1992). The decision overturned the legal fiction that Australian lands had belonged to no one prior to European settlement. In the wake of the high court decision and the subsequent legislation, the Djabugay in Kuranda made an application (on 26 May 1994) for a determination that native title exists in the Barron Gorge National Park. This was the first native title claim in Australia over a national park. It was not until 17 December 2004, over ten years later, that the consent determination was finally made.[2] In this exciting time that promised dramatic change for Indigenous Australians, I wondered

how people at the grassroots level in rural Australia were dealing with the idea of native title in relation to their hometowns. My research in Kuranda therefore turned to the dynamics of the relationship between people and place in the face of these legal and political changes and the state bureaucratic processes that were rapidly developing to deal with them.

Kuranda as 'the Field'

My connection with Kuranda goes back to my childhood, and members of my extended family have lived in the Kuranda area since the late 1970s. Both the spatial and temporal boundaries assumed in the anthropological concept of the field are here challenged. When, in such a situation, does fieldwork begin, and when could it possibly end?

Kuranda has been part of the world of my imagination since I was about five or six years old, when we lived in the Atherton tablelands and would regularly drive past the township to visit my grandparents in Cairns. I have vivid memories of travelling in the back of my father's old truck through the green tunnel of trees that enveloped the endlessly winding and stomach-churning single lane road down the range. This sensation of travelling through a green tunnel in order to get to or from Kuranda is one I have since found that I share with many local people. It is an important trope in the arrival stories of new settlers, and the preservation of this tunnel-like entrance and of the rainforest that surrounds Kuranda is a key issue of concern in planning disputes in the town.

I also remember many a railmotor (train) trip from the tablelands boarding school I attended during my high school years through the Barron Gorge to catch a flight from Cairns to Port Moresby, where my parents lived at that time. One of my friends at boarding school was from Kuranda. In our final year at school we would visit her family over the school holidays and her brothers would drive us to Cairns to go dancing at a nightclub called 'The House on the Hill'.

Kuranda was just a place I regularly passed through, yet it always held a fascination for me. As a child, I was drawn to the bewitching beauty of the waterfalls and the green fecundity of the rainforest, which I imagined to be a fantasy playground for fairies. As I grew older, it was the excitement presented by another world – the world of the hippies I saw lounging at the Kuranda railway station, mingling with Aboriginal people outside the post office and the Shell petrol station or hitchhiking to the beach and Cairns – that captivated me. I did not know then that Aboriginal Australians had long been the subject of many anthropological studies of Otherness. From the point of view of a teenage girl, it was the hippies who were

the exotic Other. They represented not just localised primitive wilderness but the world outside, a somewhat dangerous, globalised and cosmopolitan world that offered an escape from parochial rural Australia and my repressive Catholic boarding school. By the 1970s, Kuranda had become a recognised destination along a global hippie trail, as well as a haven for the so-called counterculture. Eventually, even my own parents were to join the movement. With my eight younger brothers and sisters, they settled on a block of land at the edge of the rainforest, built a tin shed for a house, dug a pit toilet, cooked outside on a wood stove, used a battery operated television and solar power for lighting, planted fruit trees and a vegetable patch for subsistence, and sold their surplus at the Kuranda markets. But this all happened after I had left home to study anthropology at the Australian National University in Canberra and after I had already identified Kuranda as a potentially fruitful field site for future research.

Thus, while I did not officially begin fieldwork for this study until 1993, my ethnography is informed by a much longer history of connection with the town. Although I had never lived in the town, the fact that my parents and younger siblings had made it their home meant that I was considered a local. I had the trust of both the 1970s hippie settlers, whose experiences were similar to those of my family, and of the Aboriginal people who knew my parents and who were old school friends of my siblings, nieces and nephews. Therefore, my study could be classed as falling within the genre 'anthropology at home'.[3]

However, I did not see myself as going to Kuranda to study either an already defined place or a given category of people. Rather, I wanted to immerse myself in a field of sociality. The ethnographic task, as I see it, is to expose relationships and strategies of power by exploring the fields of sociality that give expression to them. The idea is not to start with a given totality or identity, whether real or conceptual, but to explore how such totalities (identities) are generated through performance and constituted through discourse so as to become materially powerful. I therefore see my research as an exploration of the 'articulatory practices'[4] which operate to partially 'fix' the Kuranda people/place nexus as 'an objective and closed system of differences' (Laclau & Mouffe 1985: 125). I have also argued elsewhere (Henry 1999) that doing fieldwork does not mean going to a particular geographical site. It means placing oneself in a field of sociality so as to enable one to understand how totalities come to be fixed as objective systems in the first place. Going into the field means we place ourselves within a 'situational field' (Van Velsen 1967; Gluckman 1971) and within a social network that allows us to more fully experience – and thus understand – the processes by which peoples and places are, in fact, made. My interest is in moments when social conflict and antagonism come to the fore be-

cause it is these moments that reveal the limits of how categorical identities can be fixed socially. It is in these moments that the self can be found in the other and the other in the self (Fuary 2000); and the other can be very close indeed: one's sibling, one's friend, one's spouse, one's neighbour.

Kuranda People

In terms of the population of Kuranda, the main categorical distinction that locals make is between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.[5] However, I stress that although I use the terms Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal in this study (and indeed do compare and contrast Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal responses to particular issues), my project is not a culturalist exploration of two different value systems. Rather, my focus is the overall social situation in which, and through which, the oppositional categories of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal are in fact constituted. The aim is to understand how categorical identities are produced and articulated, not to take them as given.

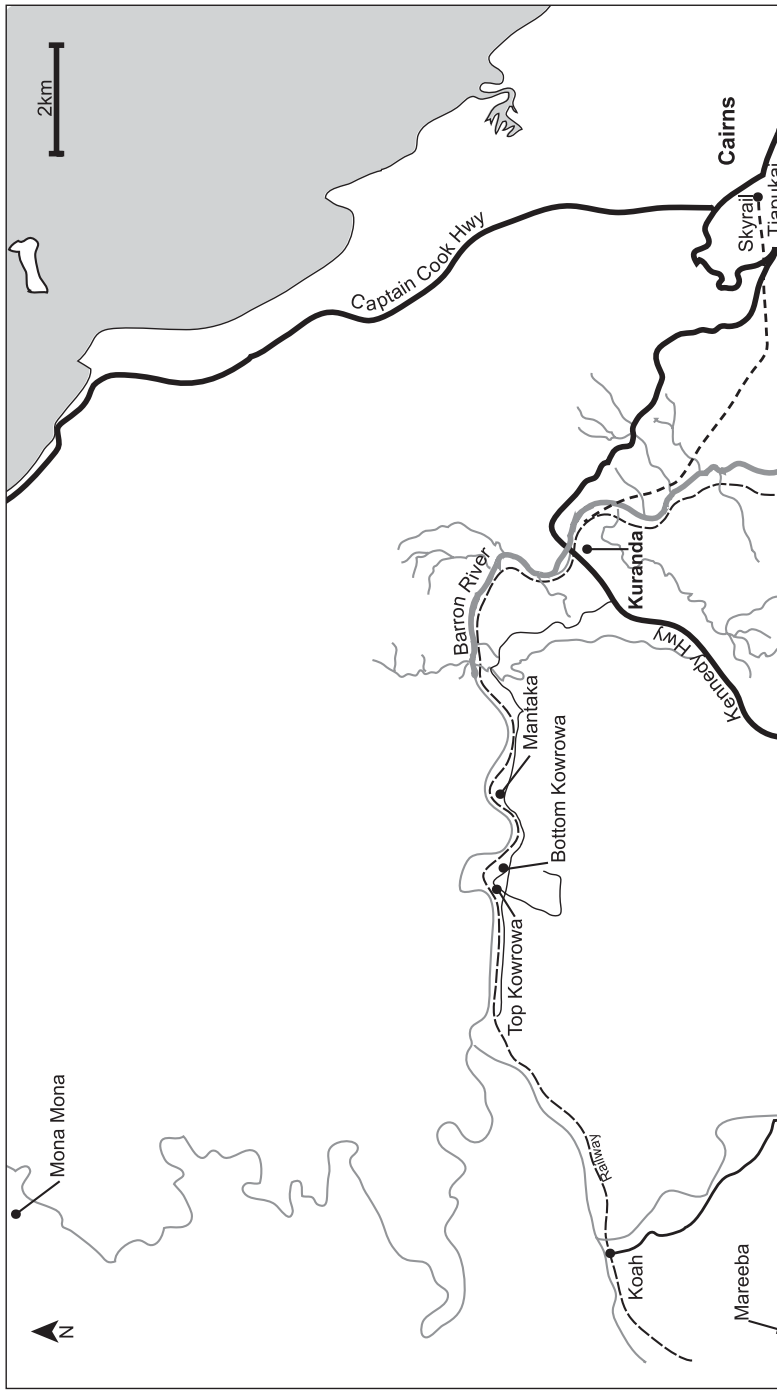
Non-Aboriginal residents of Kuranda tend to categorise themselves chronologically according to their length of residence and the values that brought them to settle in the area. There are the early settlers and their descendants who have lived in the area since the beginning of this century. There are the people who moved into the Kuranda region during the 1970s and 1980s – mostly from urban areas in the south of Australia and from Europe and America – in search of an alternative lifestyle. Then there are the more recently arrived residents who moved to Kuranda as a result of economic development and the growth of the tourist industry in Cairns. For some of these latter people, Kuranda is merely a dormitory suburb of Cairns. They work and play in Cairns and tend not to become involved in Kuranda activities. Others, however, particularly those who own businesses in Kuranda, have become big players in village politics.

In part, Aboriginal people categorise themselves and are categorised by others according to whether they are 'traditional owners' of the Kuranda area or 'historical people' displaced from their own tribal territories during the days of forced removal of Aboriginal people to reserves and missions. This distinction is made widely in Queensland and elsewhere in Australia. It is linked to contemporary land rights discourse as expressed in the Aboriginal Land Act of 1991 (Qld) and the Native Title Act of 1993 (Cwlth), which both make a distinction between traditional and historical association with land.[6] This distinction has been raised as a factor in a number of land disputes among Aboriginal people in Kuranda and elsewhere (see Finlayson 1997; Martin 1997; MacDonald 1997; and B. Smith 2000).

According to the 2001 Australian census, Kuranda has a total population of 1,456. About 15 per cent (214) of the town's population identified as 'Indigenous', which includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (although only sixteen of these identified as Torres Strait Islander). However, as with the non-Indigenous population, those Indigenous people who identify with the town mostly live outside the town boundaries. Thus, the census figures for Kuranda represent only a portion of the people who identify with Kuranda as their place. Aboriginal people mostly live in small settlements along the Barron River at Kowrowa, Mantaka and Koah, as well as at the old Mona Mona mission site (Map I.2). On the basis of the number of Indigenous people counted in the census collection districts[7] in which these settlements are situated, the total Indigenous population relevant to my study is estimated to be 725 (of these, 61 identified as Torres Strait Islander). Non-Indigenous Kuranda people living outside the village are more widely spread than Indigenous people. They tend to live dispersed on rural properties or on acreages in rural-residential subdivisions. Some properties operate as tenancy-in-common or as group-title.

Taking into account the people who live outside the census collection district of Kuranda but who still associate themselves in one way or another with the town, I estimate the total population, significant in terms of my study, to be approximately 4,500. Yet there are many people involved in the making of Kuranda as a place who do not actually live there. Kuranda is not only made by its local residents, but also by the hundreds of thousands of tourists who arrive from all over the world each year, as well as the itinerant travellers and the network of so-called 'new agers' who turn up to squat, generally during the dry season.

Although many townspeople think of tourism as being a recent phenomenon, the town has been a well-known tourist destination since the turn of the century. Visitors came not only for the beauty of the rainforest environment but also to satisfy their curiosity regarding the Aboriginal people who were living in camps on the edges of Kuranda town until 1916, after which they were removed to the nearby Mona Mona mission. Erik Mjoberg (1918: 26), the Swedish entomologist who led a scientific expedition to Queensland in 1912–13, observed that Kuranda Aboriginal people were a curiosity to tourists who would 'visit their camps in order to buy for just a few coins, a boomerang, a woven basket or some similar object'. During the early twentieth century, the town became popular with adventurous honeymooners, who would travel up the Queensland coast by steamship and then to Kuranda by train to see the Barron Falls and go boating on the river or walking in the 'scrub', as the rainforest was then called. Other tourists came to Kuranda for the sake of the dramatic train journey past thun-



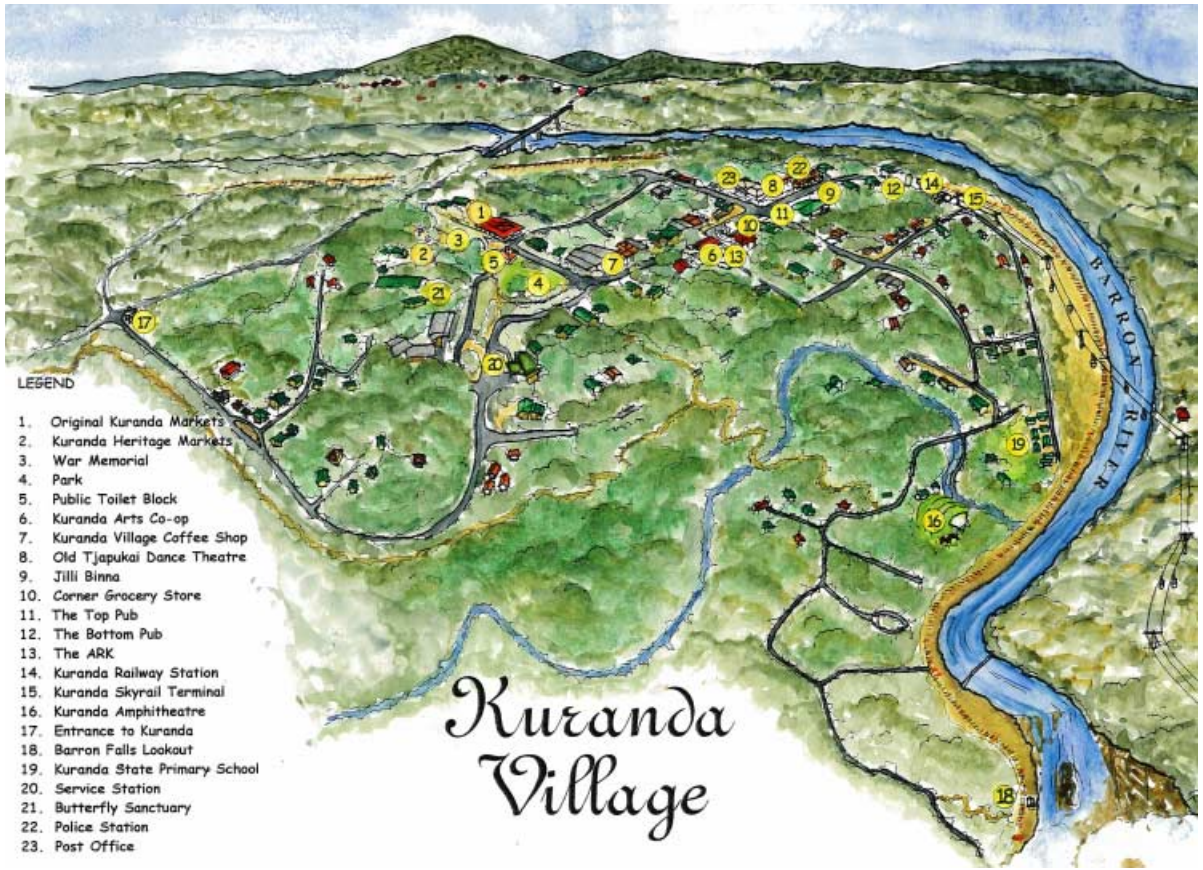
Map I.2. Kuranda and Aboriginal Settlements.
Map drawn by Rurik Henry.

dering waterfalls and through fifteen tunnels from Cairns to the Barron Gorge and beyond. During the 1950s, tourists were also encouraged to visit the Mona Mona mission as part of specially arranged bus tours in order to purchase arts and crafts produced for sale by the Aboriginal inmates.

The Village in the Rainforest

Kuranda has been marketed for tourists as 'the village in the rainforest' only since the late 1970s. This representation of the town as a village is significant in the Australian context, where even the smallest of country towns are not usually referred to as villages. The 'village in the rainforest' was partly a marketing ploy to attract tourists and partly a means by which new settlers to the area – refugees from the urban jungles of Australia and overseas – sought to redefine Kuranda as their home place. One could be tempted to argue that the village concept reflects their nostalgic search for some kind of Durkheimian *Gemeinshaft.* However, this would be too simplistic an explanation. Although, as Newton (1988: 55) notes, the counterculture movement was heavily characterized by 'rural nostalgia', the village concept in Kuranda is an expression of a discourse that I suggest is best captured by the term 'rural cosmopolitanism'. While the village concept celebrates a notion of community and glorifies ideas of small-scale neighbourliness and homeliness, many of the 1970s and 1980s settlers dreamt of recreating Kuranda as a bohemian enclave in the fashion of the inner city villages of New York, London and Paris. The meaning that became attached to the concept of village in Kuranda exemplifies the way in which the global and the local actually assume and entail the existence of one another. The global is often defined in opposition to the local, but in fact only finds expression in the local. Similarly, while a cosmopolitan is thought to be a person of the world, a cosmopolitan identity is dependent on the existence of local places.

While the village concept in Kuranda conceptually captures the global in the local, this rural cosmopolitanism – or rural bohemianism – masks an economic rationale. The marketing of Kuranda as a 'village' was also a strategic move on the part of the Kuranda Chamber of Commerce; and the village concept in Kuranda cannot be fully understood without a consideration of the essential role that business and attempts to capture the ever elusive tourist dollar play in the town.[8] In the wake of the tourists came developers, entrepreneurs and other business people wishing to benefit from the industry. This book reveals how the townspeople confronted both one another and outsiders in their attempts to make and keep Kuranda as a home place.



Map I.3. Kuranda Village.
Adapted from a watercolor by Rosemarie Rusch.

Social Dramas

The core of the book is presented in the form of a series of connected case studies, focusing on key 'hot spots' of social conflict in the town. These include an open air community performance venue, the local tourist market, the main street, a cable car route through a national park and a World Heritage listed area, and an Aboriginal dance theatre and cultural centre (Map I.3). The term 'hot spot' has been widely used with reference to areas and situations that have a concentration of crime and fear (Nasar & Fisher 1993: 187). I use it simply to convey the idea that competing discourses – local, national and global – concentrate at certain sites that then become the focus for political practice. I focus on those social dramas in Kuranda that generate moments of transformation from everyday practice to performance, since, I argue, it is in these transformative moments that identity politics comes to the fore. One of my key questions is how and why everyday political practice comes to be transformed into performances of cultural identity and difference. I argue that it is through the detailed examination of situated moments of transformation from practice to performance that the *substance* of identity politics can best be understood. In particular, my study focuses on issues of dispute in Kuranda regarding the planning and use of public space. I should make it clear at this point that the presentation of events and issues covered is selective. Although I have quoted extensively in an effort to present the views of Kuranda people as fairly as possible, my own editorial hand is obviously present in the overall pattern of presentation and in determining which dramas to cover and which voices to include. I suspect that some townspeople will object to the way I have represented particular issues. My project is not to tell the 'true' story of Kuranda, but rather to try to understand what the many and varied stories about Kuranda mean in terms of how identity categories are made and how community is envisioned.

I acknowledge and trace my approach to the influence of Turner's (1996 [1957]) concept of social drama and the extended case study method developed under the auspices of the Manchester School of Anthropology. This method has been discussed in some detail by Van Velsen (1964, 1967), who prefers to call it 'situational analysis'. Such case studies are not just a particular way of presenting ethnographic data; in themselves they provide a means of theorising the social. They do not simply provide illustration for more general abstractions; they are 'a constituent part of the analysis' (Van Velsen 1967: 140). The seeds of this type of analysis were sown by Gluckman (1971 [1940]) in his *Analysis of a Social Situation in Modern Zululand,* and grew into fruition in landmark ethnographies by Mitchell

(1956) on the Yao and Turner (1996 [1957]) on the Ndembu. Their focus on particular cases of dispute (or rather on a series of cases) within the villages they chose to study sprang from dissatisfaction with British structuralism. Yet they did not depart entirely from the idea of structure. As Van Velsen (1967: 141) puts it: 'We seek to relate the deviations from structural regularities to regularities of a different order, namely the interpretation of a social system in terms of conflicting norms.' This is where my analysis differs from theirs. I do not use the extended case study method and situational analysis in order to study either the relationship between behaviour and norms or the deviation of practice from structure. My case studies are not about 'norms in conflict' (Van Velsen 1967: 146) because they do not rest on any notion of norms as *a priori.* Rather, they are about practices of place and performances of identity as creative acts in themselves, both constitutive and challenging of structure. The situations I discuss are not simply assumed to occur *within* places, as in the Manchester School, but to be constitutive of them as well. My case studies are literally situational analyses because they are about the practices and performances that allow people to *situate* themselves in relation to one another *through* place, but within a social field of global interconnection. One of the fundamental aims of my study is to tackle the problem of understanding the relationship between local situations and wider political and economic contexts, including 'the rise of the network society' (Castells 1996). As Grewal and Kaplan (1994: 11) note, 'the parameters of the local and the global are often indefinite or indistinct – they are permeable constructs. How one separates the local from the global is difficult to decide when each thoroughly infiltrates the other'.

The Concept of Place

Edward Casey (1997) demonstrates how place came to be increasingly ignored in favour of space in Western philosophical thought. He attributes the demotion of place to the speculations of Newton, Descartes and others 'for all of whom space was conceived as continuous extension in length, breath, and width and, thus, as mappable by the three-dimensional coordinate system of rational geometry' (Casey 1997: 185). Places came to be conceived of as spatial sites and therefore as mere positions relative to one another. However, a renewed interest in place as *lived* experience surfaced in the writings of Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger and others. This renewed focus on place is based on the recognition of the capacity, both cognitive and corporeal, of human beings to constitute their own lifeworlds and to

produce their own 'social space' (Lefebvre 1991). It is this capacity that I explore in this book.

Many fascinating analyses of Aboriginal Australian concepts of space and place and of time and temporality have been produced (e.g. Munn 1970, 1973; Myers 1986; Glowczewski 1989; Swain 1993; Rumsey and Weiner 2001). However, few ethnographers have focused on how concepts of and relationships to place are created and transformed in sites where Aboriginal practices of everyday life become utterly entangled with those of settler Australians and others. As Merlan (1999: 77) puts it, 'contemporary spatial practices, ways of living in place that are vitally relevant to its ongoing construction, [remain] insufficiently examined'.

Among others, Austin-Broos (2009), Babidge (2004, 2010), Rowse (1998), Povinelli (1993, 2002), Trigger (1992), Morris (1989), Collman (1988), and Sansom (1980) provide excellent studies of local and regional expressions of the dialectical engagement between Aboriginal peoples and the state. Strang (1997) compares and contrasts the place values and environmental ethics of Aboriginal people and pastoralists in Cape York. Finlayson (1991) examines Aboriginal families and households in Kuranda and how people harness the labour of white interlocutors or 'bosses' as a means of interfacing with settler society. Merlan (1999) considers transformations in the spatial practices of Aboriginal people in the town of Katherine in the Northern Territory, and Cowlishaw (1988, 2004) has addressed such issues in relation to the town of Bourke in New South Wales, as well as more recently in the western suburbs of Sydney (Cowlishaw 2009). Nevertheless, more of a balance is required in ethnographic description to account for the everyday practices and performances of non-Indigenous Australians in relation to the places that Indigenous people *share* with them.[9] Therefore, much of my study focuses on the spatial practices of the various waves of settlers in the Kuranda area. Through their spatial practices, these settlers created the networks of 'relatedness' that enabled them to imagine place as an encompassing local 'community'.

Spatial Practices and Performances

Anthropologists and other scholars have found it useful to investigate many different types of human activity in terms of performance. I use the term performance very generally to embrace events that are to various degrees planned and rehearsed before being presented. These include community meetings, protest demonstrations and marches, busking and street theatre, festivals, and sports matches, as well as community theatre productions,

dance and music concerts, and ritual performances. The concept of frame – introduced by Bateson (1955) in his essay 'A Theory of Play and Fantasy' and adopted by Goffman (1974) – has been applied in the interdisciplinary field of performance studies to define performance as a mode of being that is distinct from everyday practice. Yet, as I reveal in the following chapters, in certain contexts the performative mode appears to dominate the very practice of everyday life.

It has been argued that what distinguishes performance from everyday practice is consciousness – in other words, that performance is a self-conscious activity. As Blau (1990: 250) writes, 'What is universal in performance … are the marks of punctuation which are inflections (or economic indices) of *consciousness* even in performance which, like autistic play, speaking in tongues, or Sufi whirling, seems to occur without it.' The consciousness of practice that leads to performance, however, need not take the form either of a cognitive awareness of practice or of a situation reflected upon and explained through the use of language. Consciousness is also a particular orientation of the body in the world (Kapferer 1997: 222) fed by body memory and place memory. Consciousness does not necessarily refer merely to the cognitive awareness of the particular practice one may be performing at any given moment, but also to a bodily recognition of being *in connection* with a place and *in relationship* with others in that place.

In the process of their practices and performances, people bestow agency on places, so much so that they come to experience those places as inherently powerful and materially determinative of collective identity. This idea of identity in place I link to Heidegger's (1971) concept of dwelling (as explicated in his lecture-essay 'Building, Dwelling, Thinking') and Bachelard's (1969) notion of 'intense inhabitation'. Place-making is a practice of being-in-the world. Heidegger (1973) explores this concept as *Dasein* (human being as a 'there-being') in *Being and Time*. As Kule (1997: 102) observes, 'It is obvious that Heidegger's principal term *Dasein* incorporates this idea of belonging to place.' *Dasein* is not something that is already given, but is rather an existential possibility articulated through dwelling. To dwell is also to 'build', meaning not simply to construct something, but also to care for and cherish it. It is through dwelling that we make places. Heidegger (1971: 157) elaborates this idea as follows: 'To say that mortals "are" is to say that "in dwelling" they persist through spaces by virtue of their stay among things and locations. … The relationship between man and space is none other than dwelling.' In other words, we make space significant by 'dwelling', by building, by investing time in it, so that it ceases to be space. Space is transformed into place by dwelling. Yet, what does dwelling entail? How do we dwell? I stress that dwelling can be nothing but human *social* engagement, and as much as it evokes notions of 'caring' and 'heeding', such engagement

or being-in-the-world inevitably generates situations of social conflict in which the tensions and contradictions of identity politics come to the fore.

Identity and Difference

Collective identity is sometimes treated as a simple matter of free choice from a given corpus of traits, rather than as a dynamic and continuous process that is subject to structural constraints. In its contemporary use, the term 'identity' tends to be used to refer to characteristics that mark boundaries so as to create categories of difference. However, as Moore (1994: 2) writes, 'Identity and difference are not so much about categorical groupings as about processes of identification and differentiation. These processes are engaged for all of us, in different ways, with the desire to belong, to be part of some community, however provisional.' The social dramas I explore in Kuranda reveal that the very idea of 'community' itself generates social conflict. Kuranda people attempt to deal with difference by enveloping it or encompassing it in the sameness of community. Yet, these very strategies of power and practices of encompassment actually work to reproduce difference. Such processes of identification and differentiation can only be understood as historical processes; they are not divorced from the social situation or from the political and economic circumstances and modes of power which generate them.

Although both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Kuranda perceive Kuranda as a town relatively free of racial division, racialism is deeply imbedded in its history. Kuranda people represent their town as being harmonious in terms of race relations in contrast to other Australian places, and they work to make it so through various performance strategies. They attribute this harmony to the values and practices of the so called 'hippies', the new settlers of the 1970s and 1980s who identified with the global counterculture movement. This idea is celebrated in the documentary film *My Place, My Land, My People: People of Kuranda,* directed and produced by Mark Eliot (1989). The documentary features Aboriginal performer David Hudson, who states: 'Kuranda, the way white and black mix, it could be an example to other communities in Australia or throughout the world.' In the film, Kuranda is represented as a place where 'everybody works in harmony', where people are 'more open minded' and 'more accepting', and where there is 'an easier mix'. In this book I do not set out either to prove or disprove 'the truth' of such representations of Kuranda. Rather, my task is to show how, through their practices and performances, the townspeople work to create such representations and to cultivate Kuranda as a 'magic' place, benign and racially harmonious.

Kuranda Histories

Most Kuranda people readily direct anyone making inquiries regarding the history of the town to the Australian bicentennial publication *Kuranda: The Village in the Rainforest, 1888–1988* (Humston 1988). I visited many a Kuranda home in the course of my fieldwork and was continually referred to this book. Descendants of early settlers would bring it out and establish their authenticity by pointing with pride to the photographs and names of their forebears set in ink for all to see. In the typical form that local histories take, the book begins with a discussion on the origin of the name Kuranda, followed by a section on the physical environment and climate. This is followed by a chapter on the Djabugay people, the 'traditional rainforest Aborigines of the Kuranda area'. Here we see reprinted the relevant section from the anthropologist Norman Tindale's (1974) map of tribal boundaries in Australia and some photographs of items of material culture (huts, baskets, swords, shields). Also included, from the *North Queensland Naturalist,* is a paper by Douglas Seaton (1957) entitled 'The Initiation Ceremony of the Tjapukai Tribe'. In the second section of the book, Humston lists 'events around Kuranda before the first survey' in 1888. Among them are: the foundation of Cairns in 1876; the building of a road up the range suitable for dray traffic in 1877; the spearing of travellers and packers by Aboriginal people; a list of selectors who took up land in the area; the construction of different stages of the railway; and the opening of the first hotel. Other sections of the book concern the building of the railway line and the schools, the development of early industries such as timber, coffee, and tourism, a history of Mona Mona (the mission station to which Aboriginal people were removed under government legislation), and the impact of the World Wars. Although it recognises a prior and continuing Aboriginal presence in the Kuranda area, the book is primarily a celebration and legitimation of the history of white settlement.

Other publications on the history of the Kuranda area focus on the achievements of the early explorers' charting of tracks through the mountain range to the coast and the prospectors' discovery of gold and tin to the west; the establishment of timber industry; the building of the range road and the construction of the railway line from Cairns through Kuranda to the tablelands and beyond; the Barron Falls hydro-electric scheme; and the trials and tribulations of the settlers in establishing plantations, farms and stations (see, for example, Broughton 1991; Pike 1984).

Apart from these local histories, there are also reputable histories of North Queensland by scholars such as Bolton (1963). These accounts represent a history of economic development, of engineering feats, and of the construction of buildings, bridges, roads and railways. They celebrate ori-

gins and progress, 'man against nature' and the 'taming of the wild'. Such accounts are in general based on primary documentary sources that include government records such as the reports of the various Protectors of Aboriginals, as well as the diaries of explorers and other travellers and early newspaper reports. These primary sources portray Aboriginal people not only as a 'people without history' (Wolf 1982) but also as a people who, rather than *make* history themselves, have history *made for* them. Aboriginal people remain voiceless in these primary documents, their experiences blanketed by the all-powerful written word of colonial bureaucrats and lawmakers.

However, more recently there has been a trend among historians to make Aboriginal people present in their writings. For example, excellent histories of Aboriginal-European relations in the region have been produced by Loos (1982), May (1994), Reynolds (1982, 1987), and Bottoms (1999). Noel Loos (1982) addresses the issue by specifically searching the archives for evidence of Aboriginal resistance. His focus on resistance is based on his recognition that Aboriginal people expressed their own agency in the face of European invasion. Loos's work is a politically important resistance work in itself, and it must be read in the light of the fight against the discourse of *terra nullius* in the lead up to the Mabo decision (Mabo v. State of Queensland 1992) and the subsequent recognition of native title in Australia. Evidence of Aboriginal resistance to European colonisation implies a customary law of trespass and property rights in land.

Bottoms (1990, 1992, 1993, 1999) addresses the issue of inclusion of by liberally peppering his texts with Djabugay words and place names. Such a technique has recently become popular as a means of writing Aboriginal people into history and granting them a voice. Bottoms (1999) worked closely with Djabugay people to write his book *Djabugay Country: An Aboriginal History of Tropical North Queensland,* which is based on archival sources as well as on oral history. Its publication is authorised by members of the Djabugay elders group, whose signatures appear in the foreword.

History grants primacy to the written text, or more generally to an archive of material signs. Yet the repository of social memory is not just the texts and the material deposits. This is just one kind of transmission across time. Oral transmission of 'narrative knowledge' is another kind. There are also other ways of remembering that are not granted a hearing by the dominant discourse about what counts as knowledge.[10] Edward Casey (1987) distinguishes these 'mnemonic modes' as different forms of recollection – 'reminding', 'reminiscing', and 'recognizing', as well as 'body memory' and 'place memory' – which are 'beyond the confinement of the mind considered as the exclusive receptacle of remembering' (Casey 1987: 141). My analyses of social dramas in Kuranda and my discussion of various performances associated with key places in the town address these different

'mnemonic forms'. I liberally include throughout this book transcribed extracts of recollections that I recorded during field interviews with Kuranda people. My aim is to convey the flavour of the ways in which people reminisce about events in their lives, the turns of phrase they use to map their life journeys and voice their connections to place. These narratives are themselves a kind of spatial practice; they are 'spatial stories' that crystallise time in place. They 'carry out a labor that constantly transforms places into spaces or spaces into places' (de Certeau 1984: 118).

Narratives of Place

When I asked older residents of Kuranda what they knew about the settlement history of the area, their immediate response was to recall where particular buildings were located and who lived where. Their accounts were narrative maps of how the townscape has changed and about the flow of movements in, out and through this townscape. They expressed how difficult travelling used to be, telling stories of trips up and down the range by horse and dray, by car or by train, and of big wet seasons when the range was closed and it was impossible to get down to Cairns. People recalled – not just for me as ethnographer, but among themselves – images of the townscape and landscape and of their bodily experiences of being there. They related stories of dramatic accidental deaths in the community: someone killed when the bridge collapsed, a woman burned to death when her dress caught fire, a drowning in the Barron River, a suicide attempt in the Barron Gorge. Some of the more recent settlers who arrived during the 1970s and 1980s as hippies or alternative lifestylers enthusiastically related origin stories: how they first arrived in Kuranda, how they built their houses, and how they cultivated social relations with others in the town. They also readily told stories of their direct experiences of state power, stories of police drug raids and harassment by the shire council.

Mission Days

Aboriginal people responded to my questions by conveying an intimate knowledge of the changing townscape and of settlers' spatial practices. With older people, however, the focus of discussions tended to return again and again to accounts of life at Mona Mona mission. These stories were tinged with nostalgia and a yearning to return. Older residents mostly reminisced about growing up on the mission, including stories of the dormitory days and their memories of the 'old people', their parents and grandparents, who were living in camps on the mission and who were permitted to visit them

only on Sundays. They fondly remembered hunting and fishing trips, treks across the range to the sea, holiday camps on the Barron River, rodeos on the mission, the Mona Mona rugby team and the brass band. Another common topic was the work experiences the people at the mission had as bakers, cooks, farm hands, timber cutters and millers, as well as outside in the forestry industry, on the railways, and as domestic labourers. People remembered how hard they worked and how little they received in return, as well as how the mission controlled access to their wages and allocated their spending money. They talked about living 'under the Act'[11], and those who had received exemptions from the legislative provisions readily produced their passes as proof of the regime.

Although there were recollections of cruelty and hardship, the days at the Mona Mona mission were remembered with wistful fondness. Few people who grew up on the mission expressed any bitterness they had harboured for wrongs done to them during the mission period. Such feelings tended to be more often articulated by members of the younger generation, many of whom never experienced mission life first hand. Younger people today think of themselves as the product of this history and as still suffering because of it. Since the closure of the mission in 1962, there has been continuing discussion and debate among Aboriginal people in Kuranda regarding mission life. The debate became public in 1996 when a woman who had grown up on Mona Mona revealed to a journalist from the *Cairns Post* (31 October 1996: 1–2) her experiences of disciplinary measures used by the missionaries. Her accusations against the missionaries created a furore among other people who had grown up on the mission. She claimed that she had witnessed public floggings and that as punishment for alleged misbehaviour her front teeth were forcibly extracted, her head was shaved, and she was forced to wear a sack to church over her bare skin. She also said that she had often been hungry, was regularly caned, and was locked in the community jail along with other children when she tried to run away. Other Mona Mona people were distressed that she had allowed this account of her experiences of mission life to be published. Her claims that the missionaries had treated Aboriginal people with 'extreme cruelty' were rejected in particular by many of the older residents, two of whom contacted the *Cairns Post* with a reply that was published the following day (1 November 1996: 2): 'Kuranda Aboriginal elders yesterday said disciplinary measures used by church missionaries at Mona Mona in the 1950s and 60s may have been severe, but they taught their people to respect the law … The elders spoke out yesterday after [a] former Mona Mona resident … claimed she had suffered extreme cruelty as a child at the hands of the missionaries.' One of the elders told me that some of the forms of discipline this former resident claimed to have experienced had indeed been practiced,

but 'only in the very early days' of the mission.[12] She said that the woman had not experienced these punishments first hand but had constructed her account for the journalist from stories she had overheard her elders tell. Extraction of teeth, she argued, had never been carried out as a form of punishment, but only for genuine dental health purposes.[13] Yet the woman was not necessarily lying when she reported these experiences as her own. Her account might be interpreted as a traumatic memory of violence embodied through intergenerational transfer. Importantly, this debate reminds us that 'remembering is oriented not to the past, but to coming to terms with the past in a present that is continuously troubled by it' (Argenti and Schramm 2010: 17).

The disagreement about the oppressive nature of the disciplinary practices of the missionaries also reveals tensions among Aboriginal people concerning ideas of complicity and resistance. There is much concern, among younger people in particular, that the elders have been 'brainwashed' and that they do not recognise their own oppression. In Foucauldian terms, they see the elders as complicit in their own domination by their 'docility', caused by the 'disciplinary blockade' of the mission. One young man told me that in his view, many of the elders had been 'blocked' from seeing that they were treated badly during the mission days and that they continue to be oppressed today. Yet docility and resistance are not fixed or diametrically opposed ways of being in the world. Resistance and docility flow into one another. People who grew up on the mission have memories of the institution that are both happy and painful. The tension between docility and resistance is not just a tension between different people, or between categories of people. Individuals embody both docility and resistance simultaneously, and in their lives they have to deal on a daily basis with the ambivalent experience of being subjects of both power *and* autonomy.

Round-ups and Massacres

As well as reminiscences of life on the Mona Mona mission, Aboriginal people also recount narratives about 'round-ups' and 'massacres'. Such narratives are qualitatively different from the quasi-narrative reminiscences about the changing townscape. This narrative structure of massacre stories – together with the recognition that these stories are owned by particular families or are attached to people with the right to tell the story – marks their significance as part of a body of cultural knowledge for which Aboriginal people seek recognition as having a truth-value equivalent to written historical records. People whose ancestors were among those rounded up in the Kuranda area to be taken to the mission retell the stories the elders told them about places they used to hide,[14] about the violence of the po-

lice, and about the massacres of Aboriginal people by white settlers. Collins (1981: 20) was told the following story by Cecil Brim:

> The policeman (from Kuranda) came up there (Speewah). We were well known to him. Some people used to run away from the policeman. They didn't want to go to the mission in those days. The policeman caught us and we walked from there to Kuranda. We saw all the dilly bags and spears at the police station that the people had to leave behind. We then went up to the mission and saw our mob there and we started to talk language …

Cecil Brim also told his eldest daughter, Marita, about how her ancestors were taken from Speewah to the mission. Other members of the Brim family know of the Speewah 'round up', but it was Marita to whom I was referred for oral history accounts of their family history before the mission days. Marita recounted a narrative passed on to her by her mother who had been 'kidnapped' by a policeman from a camp at Mt Carbine and taken to the Mona Mona mission. Her mother's father was a white man. He knew where she was camped, and came there one day with a 'black tracker' while the adults were away from the camp and only the children were home. The children had been told to hide from strangers. According to Marita, the policeman first called out and then set fire to the camp in order to make the children reveal themselves. The police took her mother because she was considered 'half-caste' and it was the practice to remove such children from Aboriginal influence. As Marita reasoned:

> My mother was half-caste, fair-skinned. In those days the mission was really the place for all the half-caste children. They said they had white man's brains and the government thought they might turn against them or something and they took them all off their parents (Marita Hobbler, pers. comm. 4 January 1995).

The recording of such accounts of round-ups and massacres are important to Aboriginal people in Kuranda not only because they tell 'their side' of the history of European settlement, but because they have contemporary currency in helping to establish rights to land. Through a politics of memory, people place themselves and thus contest the relations of power and domination that they experience and that determine the truth-value of the histories currently in operation. Massacre and round-up stories as a genre are part of a discourse of identity that celebrates Aboriginality on the basis of a shared experience of violence.[15] Another example of such a narrative is the massacre story based on the memories of Granny Buttercup, which is today told in the film screened for tourists in the history theatre at the Tjapukai

Aboriginal Cultural Park. In their narratives and reminiscences, Aboriginal people that I talked to in Kuranda generally framed their experiences in terms of a wider context of relatedness to one another and collective experiences of being in a 'state of domination' (Foucault 1988b:19).

The Politics of Memory

The politics of memory, as it plays out in Kuranda, expresses itself partly in terms of a conflict between history as a factual record of a given past and other forms of evidence of the connection between people and place. In *An Explorer's Guide to Kuranda,* a small booklet published for tourists, Ron and Anne Edwards (1994: 1) note that 'Kuranda does not have a great deal of history. It has plenty of gossip, in fact gossip is one of the town's main activities, but there is very little history.' Whether the authors were aware of it or not, this statement addresses an important issue of debate within the social sciences: What is history, and how is it different from other discourses about the past? How is history distinguished from gossip, and what is the relationship between the two? History carries an authenticity that is not granted to gossip. History assumes truth-value and social recognition as factual reality. It is thought of as being a record of a given real past, whereas gossip is thought of as an ongoing construction, an invention of the past motivated by interested human action.

Memory, similarly, is thought to be by definition 'a personal activity, subject to the biases, quirks, and rhythms of the individual's mind' (O'Meally and Fabre 1994: 5). This 'helter-skelter and dreamy impressionism of human memory' is not granted the same authority as is history with its events linearly ordered in time. It is not difficult to provide a list of defining features that distinguish history from memory. What is more interesting and important, however, is how the distinction between these two is *made*. History is given its authority over memory by the social recognition granted to it as objectively recorded reality. How is the truth-value of history *produced*?

The concept of history has been problematised by a number of social thinkers, including historians (see, for example, White 1973). Key issues that have been raised – and that continue to be debated – include epistemological questions regarding truth and objectivity, the relationship between history and human consciousness, the nature of 'events' and the link between disparate events, the relativity of historical knowledge, and the distinction between history and myth. With regard to the question of truth and objectivity, for example, Levi-Strauss (1966: 257) pointed out in *The Savage Mind* that 'historical facts are no more *given* than any other. It is the historian, or the agent of history, who constitutes them by abstraction'.

The distinction between myth and history has been addressed in connection with anthropological analyses of Aboriginal Australian narratives of colonial encounters (see for example Morphy & Morphy 1984; Rose 1984, 1994; Sutton 1988; Maddock 1988; Merlan 1994; Austin-Broos 1994, 2009; Beckett 1994; and Kolig 1995, 2000). Disregarding the finer definitional points in this debate, the emergence of the 'myth-history antinomy' (Merlan 1994: 151) as an issue for anthropologists is based on a questioning of the notion of a totalising History. This questioning has led to 'an awareness of the negotiability of history' and a recognition that 'narrative histories' are 'never, simply, factual accounts' (Austin-Broos 1994: 133, 136).

There has been a recent upsurge of interest in Indigenous history in Australia following public debate among historians and others concerning the truth-value of histories about European invasion and its consequences for the Indigenous population (see for example Attwood and Foster 2003). In what have become known as the 'history wars', Australian public intellectuals have responded to conservative historian Keith Windschuttle (2002), whose views echo anxieties among white Australians about the origin myth of frontier settlement as the basis of Australian nationhood, as well as about government policies concerning immigration, Aboriginal land rights and multiculturalism. However, it is not only the relationship between Indigenous peoples and settlers during the early colonial period that is fiercely contested, but also the very relationship between past and present. In seeking to explain social conditions in Aboriginal communities in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, scholars continue to debate the causative relevance of colonial history (see Pearson 2000; Martin 2001; Sutton 2001, 2009). For example, Aboriginal scholar Noel Pearson (2000: 146) questions the taken-for-granted view that 'Aboriginal social problems' are but a legacy of a history of 'racism, dispossession and trauma' and argues that they are a factor of more recent government welfare policies.

Shaping the Past

Much has been written on the idea of the past as constructed in the present and of tradition and/or history as 'invented' (e.g. Herzfeld 1982; Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983; Handler & Linnekin 1984; Friedman 1992a, 1992b; Haley & Wilcoxon 1997). It is important to remember that while historical 'events' are constructed retrospectively, this does not mean that the phenomena we take as the substance for the events we construct did not have some real occurrence and material impact on people's lives. Moreover, such phenomena continue to be part of the reality of lived experience, for as Laclau & Mouffe (1985: 96) write, 'a discursive structure is not a merely "cognitive" or "contemplative" entity; it is an *articulatory practice* which constitutes

and organises social relations'. Historical representation is grounded in people's shared experiences of events. Thus, I do not subscribe to a relativist perspective that renders all event-constructions equivalent. After all, 'history is itself a mode of demonstrating the relativity, temporariness, and temporality of phenomena' (White (1973: 79). To this I would also add the *spatiality* of phenomena. As Ulin (1995: 526) writes: 'Not all discourses of an imagined and relativised past have an equal chance of being advanced and recognised as authoritative. … The effort to gain recognition for an interpretation of the past involves a political struggle for self-identity and mutual recognition that should not be trivialised by a postmodern equivalence of discourses.' The social dramas in Kuranda explored in this book reveal that not only is the *substance* of interpretations of the past contested, but there is also a question as to which interpretations should be granted discursive authority. In these dramas, protagonists struggle for the truth-value of their own histories to be recognized. The different narratives about the relationship between the past and the present, as elsewhere in Australia, are hotly contested as both Indigenous and settler Australians 'seek to appropriate their power' (Attwood and Magowan 2001: xi).

The Structure of the Book

In *The Order of Things* (1970), Foucault argued that his investigations are understandings of the present, as opposed to explanations of the past. They are concerned with the descent (*Herkunft*) as opposed to the origin (*Ursprung*) of practices (Foucault 1988a: 140, 145). Foucault calls his approach to history a 'micro-physics of power' (1977: 139), and it is with this approach to history in mind that I write the first chapter of this book. My task is to make present practices and social dramas in Kuranda intelligible by tracing their descent. I rely not only on primary and secondary documentary sources, but also on the 'narrative knowledge' and recollections of Kuranda residents since, as Taussig (1992: 163) notes, it is in 'the coils of rumour, gossip, story, and chitchat where ideology and ideas become emotionally powerful and enter into active social circulation and meaningful existence'. However, narrative knowledge is not just a matter of words and of representation, but also of practice, as expressed through bodily actions, habitus, and performance.

In Chapter 1, I trace the transformation of the lifeworld of Aboriginal people in the Kuranda area through European colonisation. I discuss the colonising and disciplinary practices that were and continue to be directed at an erasure of place memory. I argue that such practices in effect operated to mutilate memory[16], so as to make Aboriginal people subjects in a state

of domination, or 'docile bodies' (Foucault 1977: 135). In other words, the mission worked as an instrument of both corporeal and 'symbolic' violence in an attempt to generate a new Aboriginal habitus (Bourdieu 1990: 53).

I move on, in Chapter 2, to consider the second wave of European settlement in the Kuranda area, which began in the late 1960s and continued throughout the seventies and into the early eighties. I discuss the context of the arrival of these new settlers, as well as the relationships they developed with the established residents of the area, both the older settlers and the Indigenous people. I examine the practices these new settlers – some of whom were then called 'hippies', 'hairies', 'counter-culturists', or 'alternative lifestylers', among other less complimentary names – used to construct place. Emplacement for these people was, I argue, the freedom to practice individual autonomy within the embrace of a particular concept of community. In order to reveal the political and historical conditions for this practice, I examine the relationship the settlers had with the local shire council regarding building regulations and alternative land tenure arrangements (such as tenancy-in-common and group title). I explore the responses of Aboriginal people and the already established settlers to the place-making activities of these new settlers.

The next chapters of the book constitute a series of linked case studies, or situational analyses, of social dramas connected with particular places in, or associated with, Kuranda. I analyse these social situations in terms of performances that address tensions between identity and difference as well as place and product. The first of my case studies, Chapter 3, focuses on the construction of a community performance venue, the Kuranda Amphitheatre. I analyse this social situation in terms of two types of performances associated with the amphitheatre – performances produced specifically for the stage and social dramas generated beyond the stage – through both of which people attempted to place themselves in relation to others in the town.

In Chapter 4, I focus on disputes regarding the village marketplace as another hot spot of contested identity in Kuranda. I trace the metamorphosis of the markets from periodic community events – ones run by 'hippies' who existed outside of a monetary economy – to the key privately owned tourist attraction in the town. The social dramas associated with the development of the Kuranda tourist markets reveal the tensions that arose between the hippies' attempts to make Kuranda their own and the forces of commodification already established in the town. The changes in the markets articulate political and economic forces that Kuranda people experience as originating on the outside, in the global realm, and that they attempt to accommodate as well as to resist. In chapter 5, I explore processes of town planning and management in Kuranda by relating a series of

disputes that arose in relation to the main street and the development of the town as a tourist village. Through such explanation, I reveal how place becomes an ongoing and dynamic agent in a politics of memory through which people make and remake themselves as social beings and negotiate the future of their home town. Planning, however, is also a form of disciplinary practice. While demonstrated engagement in strategic planning people allows people to achieve recognition of their claims, this very process draws them further into the structure of state governmentality. Ironically, Kuranda townspeople, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, have found themselves increasingly swept into this disciplinary process in their attempts to achieve some autonomy of control over their placeworlds.

Chapter 6 focuses on the connection between performance and identity politics in the context of the Tjapukai Aboriginal Dance Theatre in Kuranda and its development into the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park in Cairns. I discuss the strategies and relationships of power that gave birth to this tourist attraction, as well as the cultural performances by means of which Aboriginal people both accommodate themselves to categorical identities and redefine themselves within a political context that demands that they establish their authenticity in terms of cultural continuity. These performances became an opportunity for Aboriginal people to challenge the paradigm that requires cultural continuity to be established and evidenced through the rules of classical customary law in order to achieve state recognition of native title. Dance and other performances assert the embodied nature of culture and glorify the forms of remembering that this paradigm neglects. I refer here to what Casey (1987: 147) has termed 'body memory … how we remember in and by and through the body'. Because cultural performances emphasise this embodied acquisition of culture, Aboriginal people use them to assert the continuity of connection to place that is otherwise denied them.

In Chapter 7, I explore the articulation of different Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal responses to a tourist development: the Skyrail, a cable car from the bottom of the range to Kuranda through the Barron Gorge National Park and Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. I focus on a particular moment of protest action within the Skyrail dispute. Such moments, I suggest, are the key to understanding how political identities are made. In my analysis of this protest situation, I show how place is produced situationally within the performance of a dialectical play between processes of identification and differentiation.

Finally, Chapter 8 provides a discussion of the contradictions that link the various social dramas and staged performances that I examine in this book. I conclude that these dramas give expression to processes of differentiation and identification in which social actors engage with one another

politically in order to define themselves in relation to the various agents, projects and effects of the state (bureaucratic and corporate), as well as to claim a role in constituting their own place-worlds.

Notes

1. Estimated resident population as of June 2003. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Regional Population Growth, Australia and New Zealand, 2002–03' (ABS cat. no. 3218.0).
2. This is the first claim over a national park in Queensland to be successful without litigation. The consent determination states that under their traditional laws and customs, Djabugay People have *non-exclusive* native title rights and interests in Barron Gorge National Park. There are 'other interests' that, in the event of a conflict, prevail over Djabugay native title rights. The other interest holders in Barron Gorge National Park include: the State of Queensland, the Wet Tropics Management Authority, Skyrail Pty Ltd, the Cairns City Council and the Tablelands Shire Council, Powerlink, Ergon Energy Corporation, Stanwell Corporation, and the public who can access the Barron Gorge National Park for recreation purposes.
3. As the virtues and limitations of focusing one's ethnographic lens on one's own society have already been well debated, I do not dwell on them here. See Messerschmidt (1981), Handler (1985), Rabinow (1986), M. Strathern (1987), Eipper (1990), Okely (1992 and 1996), Morton (1999). This literature can be linked to works on 'indigenous anthropology', the idea of the 'native anthropologist' (see, for example, Fahim 1982; Choong 1990; Narayan 1993; Hastrup 1996; Motzafi-Haller 1997), and the 'auto-critique of our own knowledge constructions' as relates to self/other, subject/object dualism (Moore 1996: 8).
4. Laclau & Mouffe (1985: 96–142) define an 'articulatory practice' as a discursive structure which 'constitutes and organises social relations'. Because there can be no such 'real object' as society, no 'essentialist totalisation', articulatory practices operate to constitute society only through the partial fixing of meaning achieved through the construction of 'nodal points'. Articulatory practices work in tension against the 'polysemy that disarticulates a discursive structure'.
5. I mostly use the term Aboriginal in preference to Indigenous in this book, as Indigenous Australians include both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. There are few Torres Strait Islander people living in the Kuranda area, and this study particularly focuses on Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people in Kuranda sometimes used the terms Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal when talking to me, particularly in the more formal context of recorded interviews. More casually they would use terms such as *bama* or *murri* (Aboriginal) and *migaloo, white* or *whitefella* in reference to non-Aboriginal people. The term *migaloo* tended to be avoided by Aboriginal people when I was in their company, and on a number of occasions people apologised for using it, as the term is considered derogatory.

6. Section 4.03 (1) of the Aboriginal Land Act lists 'traditional affiliation' and 'historical association' as two of the grounds on which a land claim may be made. The Native Title Act, on the other hand, excludes historical association as a basis for claim, unless historical association can be shown to amount to native title.
7. Queensland Census Collection Districts CD3030303, CD3030304, CD3030305, CD3030311, CD3030312, CD3030314.
8. The re-imaging of Kuranda as a village can be compared in this respect to the south Australian town of Hahndorf, which is marketed as a pioneer German village. I have heard tourists in Kuranda make this comparison.
9. See McIntyre-Tamwoy (2004) for an excellent discussion of the issue of shared places in relation to cultural heritage values.
10. I use the term 'hearing' here intentionally to refer indirectly to a social context in which Aboriginal people are forced to provide evidence of their rights to land in tribunal hearings or courts of law.
11. There were actually several legislative instruments: the Aboriginal Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act of 1897, which provided for the official creation of reserves and for the removal of Aboriginals to such reserves (sections 4(a), 4(b), and 9); its successor, the Aboriginals Preservation and Protection Act of 1939; and finally the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Act of 1965, which, although it repealed some of the earlier 'protection' provisions, still maintained the reserve system in Queensland.
12. Mission policy, with regard to the actual form that punishments took, changed according to the superintendent in charge at any given time. Finlayson (1991: 114) notes that an ex-resident recalled having her hair shaved several times as punishment for swearing, and another remembered that the policy at one stage was for someone from the child's own family to be forced to publicly administer twenty cuts on the back with a cane. Other punishments meted out included up to two weeks in the mission gaol on a diet of bread and water. For what were considered more serious offences, such as illegitimate pregnancies, offenders were sent away to Palm Island. According to Finlayson (1991: 115), marriages were sometimes held in private in response to illegitimate pregnancies. No family members were allowed to attend, and the expecting mother was forced to wear sackcloth and to have her head shaved.
13. I have tried to protect the privacy of individuals by avoiding naming them, unless they have given their consent for me to do so.
14. For example Syd Gray, son of Djabugay elder Mrs Enid Boyle, recorded in 1981 that his mother and her husband, Mr Jimmy Boyle, talked about a waterfall where people would run to hide from the white man. See Gray, S. (1981). 'Oral history about Mona Mona mission and Kuranda area' (outline of taped interview held at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra; archive numbers 006690 - 006691; collection number: GRAY_S01).
15. Accounts of the removal and institutionalisation of Aboriginal children and first hand accounts from members of 'the stolen generation' have been docu-

mented by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families. The report (Wilson 1997) led to a renewed effort on the part of some settler Australians to take part in reconciliation measures, among these the circulation in Australia of 'sorry books' that settler Australians were encouraged to sign, the emergence of 'National Sorry Day', and finally the government apology delivered by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd on 13 February 2008.

16. The phrase 'mutilated memory' has also been used by Gruzinski in the title to his paper 'Mutilated Memory: Reconstruction of the Past and the Mechanisms of Memory Among 17th Century Otomis' (1990).