FENOMENA

JURNAL PENELITIAN ISLAM INDONESIA

ISSN: 1412 5420

Volume 9. Nomor 1, April 2010

FENOMENA
Merupakan jurnal berkala, terbit dua kali dalam setahun setiap bulan April dan Oktober. Redaksi mengundang para dosen, peneliti untuk menyalurkan hasil penelitiannya dalam bentuk artikel ilmiah. Tulisan masih orisinil, dan belum dimuat di media lain. Naskah diketik dengan satu setengah spasi, dan panjang tulisan 13-17 halaman kerta A4 (lebih lanjut lihat petunjuk bagi penulis).

ALAMAT REDAKSI

FENOMENA
Jurnal Penelitian Islam Indonesia
Jl. Jumat No. 94 Mangli Jember.
Tlp. (0331) 487550-427005. Fax. 427005
Email: redaksi_fenomena@.yahoo.com

DAFTAR ISI

PEDOMAN TRANSLITERASI ARAB-LATIN

I. KONSONAN

ا = a	ز = z	ق = q
ب = b	س = s	ك = k
ت = t	ش = sy	ل = l
ث = ts	ص = sh	م = m
ج = j	ض = dl	ن = n
ح = h	ط = th	و = w
خ = kh	ظ = zh	ه = h
د = d	ع = ‘	ء = ’
ذ = dz	غ = gh	ى = y
ر = r	ف = f	ة = t

II. VOKAL PENDEK

ـُ = u

ـِ = i

ـَ = a

III. VOKAL PANJANG

ـُو = û

ي = ī

اَ = ā

IV. DIFTONG

ـَو = au

ـَيْ = ai

V. PEMBAURAN

ال = al

ال ش = al-Sy...

و ال = wa al

THE CULTURAL RELATIONS OF WATER IN REMOTE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN TOWNS

Oleh:
BEN WADHAM
School of Education Flinders University
Ben.wadham@flinders.edu.au
EILEEN WILLIS
School of Health Sciences, Flinders University
Eileen.willis@flinders.edu.au
MERYL PEARCE
School of Geography, Flinders University
Meryl.pearce@flinders.edu.au

Abstract

Air adalah sumber alam yang semakin jarang ditemukan, dan penurunan curah hujan menyebabkan masyarakat harus beradaptasi untuk hidup dalam kekeringan, dan kondisi lingkungan dan sosial yang sangat berbeda. Pada perumahan penduduk di Australia Selatan yang terpencil, air cenderung sebagai satu-satunya sumber alam yang dipergunakan sehari-hari sehingga mengharuskan mereka memperhatikan hubungan mereka terhadap air dan akses serta kecukupannya. Inilah hal-hal yang perlu diperhatikan. Akan tetapi, gaya hidup, identitas, rasa memiliki dan komunitas telah sedemikian terbentuk dengan adanya air dalam kebiasaan setiap orang. Air juga menjadi masalah sosial dan pengaturannya timbul dalam hubungan budaya.

Key words: *water; culture; commodification; water flows; sustainability*

INTRODUCTION

The Council for Australian Governments (COAG) released it Water Reform Framework in 1994. This Framework established the basis for the implementation of the National Water Initiative (NWI) Agreement signed in June 2005. The National Water Initiative reflects the globalising influence of neo-liberal economics in its tireless pursuit of the commodification of global culture. Water too becomes a commodity under the National Water Initiative, subject to the imperatives of market principles, including user pays and mutual obligation.

Ethnographer, Jane Kenway (2006: 42) cites the Editors of the journal *Ethnography* (Willis and Trondman, 2000) who argue that:

There is now an urgent need for the detailed and grounded empirical study of the myriad changes that are remaking the face of 'late modern' societies as a result of sweeping restructuring of economy, society, culture and politics across the globe.

The NWI and its market imperatives have practical embodied implications for people and communities on the ground. Our interest has been in the way that economic globalisation, through policies such as the NWI, are shaping local and regional communities. In this paper we consider the ways in which the commodification of water, alongside the challenges presented by drought and climate change, influence community relations, and the traditional concern of rural sustainability.

Drawing on Alston and Mason (2008) we see water as material and symbolic, economic and cultural. Water is often understood in its materiality: as a natural resource that is finite, increasingly scarce, and in need of management. The significance given to the commodification of water and, to a lesser extent, the environmental uses of water, or environmental flows, overshadow the social significance of water in establishing and maintaining communities. The understanding of water must be expanded to inherently include waters' symbolic and cultural values also.

Water mediates community relations, its value and meaning is not simply a result of human and social interaction but it also constitutes changing social relations. Borrowing from Nathan (2007) we call this notion the 'social flow'. Elaborating on this notion of social flow we argue that 'water' has two principal meanings. First, 'water' represents the material resource, this is the common understanding of the term. Second, it refers to the cultural relations of water, its symbolic value and the manifold relations of water that include access and equity, and its cultural and material capital. Water is a material and cultural resource that is contested. Water is a site of struggle within rural and/or remote communities struggling for a sustainable future.

The idea that rural communities in Australia are in crisis is not new (Davison, 2005: 38-55). Leading researchers in the field Chris Cocklin and Margaret Alston explain:

> Falling commodity prices, cost-price squeezes, metropolitan-centred social and economic policies, extreme weather patterns, alternating periods of flood and drought, population migration and changes in the pattern of ownership of rural economic enterprises each contribute to a potent mix of forces. (Cocklin & Alston, 2003: 1)

Such questions have always surrounded the inhabitation of the Australian inland, and questions of sustainability have always been present. The commodification of water throws up new challenges for communities as they readjust to the imperative of water marketisation.

Drawing on the literature of critical ethnographies and critical globalization studies our approach seeks to understand the cultural relations of water with a series of regionally proximal remote South Australian towns. These towns sit above the Goyder Line, a line established by the Surveyor General, George Goyder during the settlement of northern South Australia.

Geroge Goyder, Surveyor General of South Australia was an inspector of mines, a surveyor of lands and towns, and provider of pastoral leases. His work ranged from South Australia to the Northern Territory; he was once praised by his superior Major A.H. Freeling for spending up to 10 months of the year in the field. Even if some of Goyder's views were perceived as contentious by graziers, farmers and miners, for example his 10 inch isohyet was coined the 'Goyder line of foolery', his reputation was sound and his judgments generally accepted. It was against his advice that the South Australian government, in a context of scarce agricultural land, and extraordinarily good seasons and crop yields, disregarded the line and opened the land up for farmers, even if only for a decade or so. Now, many ruins scatter the landscape above the Goyder line, and despite historical moments of good rainfall his theory of unviable agriculture above this latitude has been generally correct (See figure 1). Settlers have come and gone. Yet there are those that remain and persist within this dry and changing environment. How do they perceive their future in times of drought, the rising cost of living and the uncertainties of potential climate change? Given the changing climate

conditions does the Goyder line concept increase its applicability to all economic activities above the line?

It remains a key question however, is life above the Goyder line sustainable. At times of enduring drought, the tightening of water supply and governance, and the deterioration of the traditional industries of train transport, grazing and pastoralism, it is tourism that appears to be carrying the weight of sustaining a life in this region. Yet, tourism as an occupation is not available to all, nor desired, and it too brings significant changes to the cultural landscape.

THE STUDY

The Region in Question

The South Australian Outback is an area that covers approximately three quarters of the State with a population or around 14,000 (ABS 2002). While the Australian outback is promoted as an exciting tourist destination, and residents in remote towns and roadhouses provide the necessary services to visitors, a significant impediment to future economic development is the low population of this region, the lack of water due to the arid climate and the current drought, the long distances between towns, and the high cost of infrastructure provision such as housing, hospitals and schools as well as essential services such as sewerage, electricity and water. The provision of quality and equitable water supplies is further exacerbated by a lack of uniformity and standardisation in service delivery, with most towns and communities outside the jurisdiction of the State's major water provider; SA Water (Keneally, 2005).

Parachilna, Blinman, Baltana and the outback station Angorochina, all located about 500 kilometres from Adelaide and 70 kilometres south from the initial field trip. These towns are the hub of pastoral activity, servicing local stations, as well significant tourist destinations to the popular Flinders Ranges. Figure 1. below maps the region.

Insert Figure 1. Remote towns in the Flinders Ranges in South Australia

Copley and Lyndhurst

Copley and Lyndhurst are approximately 570 kilometres north of Adelaide, and 5 kms and 47 kms respectively north of the mining town of Leigh Creek. Both towns are in close proximity to the Flinders Ranges, a popular tourist destination in South Australia, and are considered part of the Australian outback.. Copley was first established in 1882 as a service stop on the Great Northern Railway line, providing a supply depot for the railway maintenance gangs and serving the pastoral runs of the north Flinders Ranges (see map below). It is the gateway to the Gammon Ranges and the Strezlecki and Oodnadatta Tracks and as such most businesses in the town service the tourism industry. Copley has an attractive caravan park and large hotel, a mechanical repair workshop, a café and a general store and a bed and breakfast business. Population numbers range from between 80 to 100 with approximately 50% of residents having an Aboriginal background.

Families at Copley send their children to the local school at Leigh Creek, or onto boarding schools in Pt Augusta, and other regional centres or Adelaide. There is a growing elderly population in Copley partly because Flinders Power does not allow unemployed or retired people over 50 years of age to live in Leigh Creek so some mine workers retire to Copley. Copley has approximately 40 houses; half are owned by SA Housing Trust and rented by Aboriginal families, the remainder are privately owned or occupied.

Lyndhurst is a smaller town to the north of Copley and Leigh Creek. It was established in 1878 as a railway siding. Lyndhurst is located at the crossroads of the Strzlecki and Oodnadatta Tracks. There are about 30

residents in Lyndhurst, and on surrounding properties, in 12 households with 66% of the population Indigenous. If the surrounding stations and Talc Town are taken into account the population serviced by the town is about 100 people. Talc Town – a town of about 4 households just 4 kms from Lyndhurst is also supplied by the Flinders Power pipeline. There are two businesses in the town – a hotel and a shop, but most people work outside of Lyndhurst on surrounding stations, or at the Leigh Creek Mine or at services in Leigh Creek.

Lyndhurst and Copley water supply comes from the Aroona Dam approximately 5 kms from Leigh Creek and owned by Babcock and Brown Power (NRG Flinders Power when the research was undertaken). In the 1990s the Leigh Creek mine was sold by the Electricity Trust of South Australia (ETSA) to NRG. In 2007 Babcock Brown Power subsumed NRG Flinders Power into their organization. As part of the sale agreement the company was required to provide water to Copley, Lyndhurst, Myrtle Springs and Leigh Creek Station. As a result of this agreement water from Aroona Dam is piped to the main road at Copley from there it is the responsibility of the Copley and Lyndhurst Progress Associations to pipe it into town and to each household, public building or business. Leigh Creek coal mine began serious mining operations in 1943 in an attempt to make South Australia more self-sufficient in its energy needs. The town Copley supported the mine until the development in Leigh Creek of a civic area for those workers and their families involved in mine activities. Babcock and Brown Power currently operates Leigh Creek and produce over 2.5 million tones of coal per year.

Parachilna, Angorichina and Beltana

Parachilna was established as a town in 1863, partially because of its proximity to a government water well. A railway station was completed in Parachilna in 1881 as part of the northern track to Leigh Creek through Beltana. Parachilna is now a roadhouse location marked by the Prairie Hotel and tourist activities. Parachilna is the location of the eastern entrance into the Flinders Ranges through Blinman.

Beltana is described by some as a semi-ghost town. It was established in 1873 and is about 540 kms north of Adelaide. Beltana developed from the Beltana Pastoral Company and the Sliding Rock Copper Mine. The township developed significantly with the landing of the railway in 1881 and the influx of mining families. By 1940, 64 trains per week were passing through Beltana but the town declined with the opening of the Leigh Creek coal mine, the realignment of the railway and the main road. Beltana has a population of around 4 and is adjacent to an Aboriginal community. Angorichina was established as a pastoral station in the Northern Flinders Ranges.

The water supply for Parachilna, Angorichina and Beltana comes from a variety of sources. Angorichina is completely self-sufficient relying on bore, well and water tank. The tourist station is located on a water line that has provided swimming opportunities for visiting tourists. Similarly, Beltana is entirely reliant upon well, bore and water tank. Parachilna however, has recently been provided with a water plant by SA Water after the decline of the Parachilna Gorge pipeline. Rainfall and temperatures are recorded at the Leigh Creek centre. Mean rainfall at in this region is around 223 mm/annum. Monthly average temperatures range from 30-35 C degrees from Nov to March and 16 to 26 C during the winter months. The mean days of rainfall per month range from 2 in the summer months to 5 in the winter months.

Four major themes emerged from the interviews with the residents in these six towns/stations. These were water gover-

nance, understanding of water, the implications for tourism, sustainability and climate change. Embedded in these themes were ideas about water conservation and the possibilities for innovation.

WATER SUPPLY

Copley water supply comes from the Aroona Dam approximately 5 kms from Leigh Creek and was owned at the time of interviews by Flinders Power. Water is provided at a cost of 0.97 Kl by the company to the Copley and Lyndhurst Progress Associations, a cost consistent with metropolitan prices. The water quality is considered to be excellent. As one member of the Progress Association noted:

we have excellent water supply and quality drinking water, it's as good as anything you'd get out of a tap in Adelaide. Turn on a tap, the water comes, supplied out of Aroona Dam, ... the supply, the water quality is managed by the mine, very well managed.

The water pipeline from Leigh Creek to Lyndhurst is supplied and maintained by Flinders Power to Northfield – about 15 kms from Lyndhurst. From Northfield the Lyndhurst Progress Association is responsible for the maintenance of the pipeline. The pipeline is about 50 years old and according to the chairperson it regularly develops leaks requiring vigilance on the part of the volunteers from the Lyndhurst community who maintain the pipeline. The Progress Association has bought equipment for repairs and any extra pipe. Recently, the Outback Areas Community Development Trust (OACDT) upgraded a section of the pipeline close to the town.

The towns that surround the Parachilna hub have different sources of water supply. In Beltana water supply is sourced locally from water tanks, bores and wells, but is not regarded as of good quality:

The bore water here, I think, is 1300 parts per million of calcium salt, which you could drink; calcium salt is a lot better than sodium salts and a hell of a lot better than magnesium salts, otherwise you'd really go through the toilet paper wouldn't you? You don't want Epsom salts in the water.

During the drought many of these sources have dried up, although there is still sufficient water for residents to remain in the town. In Angorichina the situation is the same, although the Parachilna River runs through the station and has been used as a source of supply over the years for different activities. Parachilna and Blinman have more established water sources. Parachilna, for example, has sourced water for many years from Parachilna Gorge. This has recently been supplemented by a SA Water Super-Treatment Effluent and Wastewater Plant (funded by the SA Tourism Commission) that irrigates a local woodlot. In 2007, a new bore was also sunk by SA Water on the eastern side of the highway with accompanying pipe and infrastructure upgrades. A key local resident suggests:

the bore's only been going for a couple of years, the supply seems quite good and I think that the aquifers out here on the plains are better than up in the ranges.

However, residents also have installed water tanks for their own use and to supplement the town supply as a conservation measure.

I don't know what the outback areas community development trust have put in and most of the small communities have put in tanks, we've just started installing four new rainwater tanks for the community, just to have that bit of extra water on hand for fire fighting.

A common perception was that bores and wells were not a sure bet given it was difficult to assess their water capacity and that

storage and conservation methods needed to supplement the larger water sources. Certainly, many residents across the research spoke of an anxiety of lowering water tables and hence a need to establish more certain stocks of water from water storage.

WATER AS A CULTURAL FIELD: THINKING ABOUT SOCIAL FLOW

Critical theories are valuable for understanding the cultural relations of water because water is a site of cultural struggle. Indeed, given climate change, reductions in rainfall and changing regimes of governance, water is increasingly scarce and contested. Water is a resource necessary for survival, but it is also an economic resource used for development, industry, business enterprise, and residential needs. Water is also a system, a form of capital within a field of cultural relations. To paraphrase Mary Douglas, when she describes the social relations of dirt, in Purity and Danger (1966:35-9) *Where there is [water] there is a system. [Water] is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter...* In other words to understand the cultural relations of water we must understand it as a cultural and material resource within symbolic and economic relations.

When we think of water as a cultural product we are drawn to consider the 'field' of water. In this field water is a form of capital that is being struggled over for access, for consumption, for distribution but also for identity, community and social space. By understanding water as a site of struggle we are interested in the different relations of that field. In this sense it is the ethnographic sociology of Pierre Bourdieu (1977 1985, 1988) that influences our approach to understanding water as a cultural product.

We are also focusing on the way the NWI, as an expression of the forces of economic globalization, are impacting upon the local social relations, hence we also draw from the ideas of place-based global ethnography. Kenway (2006: 35) explains this methodology investigates the way that changing global forces are changing the local landscape, in this case the rural landscape. This supports the notion that studies of globalisation must move past their abstraction and study their embodied effects on locales (Kenway, 2006:42). The notion of place, is critical, and Massey explains that space and place are co-constitutive of community and social relations, not simply a result but also productive of community relations.

To explore these locales in an ethnographic fasion, in an attempt to understand the way that 'water' changes social and cultural relations we look to Nuijten (2005) who describes the role of power relations in natural resource management with a 'force-field'.

The concept of force field helps us to analyze the weighting of different kind of socio-political networks, the influence of law and procedures, the role of formal organizational structures, the role of various discourses and different positions of power (2005:2-3)

We are interested in the stakeholders and the structures and forms of governance. Theories of governmentality, arising from the Fouculdian notion, complement our understanding of water governance as field of struggle (Dean and Hindess, 1998). A governmentality of water seeks to know the subjects, their rationalities of water, how water is valued as a form of capital, the way water is problematised, and the strategies and practices used to manage water. When a resources becomes scarce or the economy of a resources shifts (eg to User Pays – commodification), then the tensions of cultural reproduction and transformation shift. By beginning to understand the way that the changing relations of water are implicated in community change and struggle we gain insights into managing the impact of climate

change on Australian communities. As Alston and Mason, (2008), Nancarrow and Syme (2001), Syme and Nancarrow (2001) and McKay and Bjornlund (2001), have emphasized water must be managed with the ideals of fairness and equity in mind, as well as making "transparent the way the commodification of water has fractured and divided communities" (Alston et al, 2008:3).

GOVERNING WATER: WATER AND CULTURAL CONTEST

Firstly, we consider the stakeholders. In this case the key stakeholders we considered were large industries including mining and pastoralists: smaller enterprises such as tourist operators, hotels and accommodation services and local businesses; government, at all levels, and private enterprise associated with water services including SA Water; and finally tourists, who included international tourists, families, and 'grey nomads'. Many of these stakeholders wear the hats of their livelihood as well as that of resident. Stakeholders inhabit particular positions within the field, they possess and bring to the field particular cultural backgrounds and dispositions.

GOVERNANCE

A defining structure of any community in Australia is the relationship between the 'free citizen' and the bureaucracy of governance. In the region this study was undertaken the local citizenry were touched by various forms of bureaucracy. These included the self-determining local Progress Associations, and/or Aboriginal Councils (eg Aroona Council in Copley), the Outback Economic and Community Development Trust, and a proliferation of State and Federal statutory and quasi-governmental bodies. The principal tension that water produced in this context was a dichotomy between freedom and regulation. This was mediated by a more general tension between having water supplied, serviced and managed by an independent body (SA Water), as opposed to the local Progress Associations, which drew heavily upon already time poor locals engaged in their own economic activities.

The onerous nature of working for the local Progress Association and supplying the town's water was mentioned by a number of respondents who argued that there was a trade off between autonomy and remote management by another bureaucracy:

I think it is an advantage to us to be incorporated in many ways, it allows us a certain amount of freedom to operate without bureaucratic strangulation and there is always the risk that this will be removed and we go under the banner of some distant bureaucracy, completely unaware of how life is lived up here, that is always the threat that alright, there are certain disadvantages but maybe they outweigh the so called advantages, to be autonomous.

There was a clear skepticism of government intervention, remote management, and the visiting bureaucrat or contractor even though the obligation of local management through Progress Associations was demanding and in some cases also an economic burden.

For one Beltana resident the idea of any form of government intervention in water supply was preposterous:

No. We don't want any government interference. One of the glorious things about this town is I pay no council rates, I pay no water rates, I pay no electricity bills. I would sooner take to a shovel and I have, and fill in a hole, I would sooner supply my own water and supply my own electricity rather than get involved in huge bureaucracy.

On the other hand some locations reaped the benefits of greater governance. For example, Parachilna recently received an

SA Tourism Commission funded, SA Water maintained effluent plant and SA Water recently sunk a bore for Parachilna improving and upgrading their water supply infrastructure. Management options for these residents would need to consider the maintenance of local autonomy with structured bureaucratic support.

Skepticism of bureaucracy also structures the water supply in this region. Leigh Creek residents (at the time of the study in 2007) did not pay for water, although they did receive a water use statement. One Copley resident (who paid for water) noted:

The towns' [Leigh Creek] people do not have to pay for water, there is no control and there is no check on leakages, running taps, anything like that, its only now that they're starting to worry about it with the extent of drought....they've only just now started to install meters on houses...a study showed that the usage of water, per household at Leigh Creek versus Copley and Lyndhurst, it was four times...

For the residents of Copley and Lyndhurst the cost of water was contingent upon the management of the Leigh Creek mine, and induced self-regulating water behaviour. This division between those with free water, and those who had to pay, those of the mine and those of the general community, and the managers and the managed were clear line of tension in the community. This tension was enhanced by the changing climate and the changing economic relations of water.

The more marginal the resident and their position in the community the greater their sense of water vulnerability. Copley and Lyndhurst residents spoke of being subject to the Leigh Creek water protocols ... *you've got no security of supply, we don't know if the coal mine is going to continue or not, we rely on Leigh Creek for a lot of community services as well.* Among some residents, particularly those engaged in environmentally sustainable solutions there was a level of resentment toward the taming and development disposition of the Leigh Creek coal field corporation. It was perceived that Leigh Creek residents were privileged, both socially and in terms of their water supply:

I believe that a study showed that the usage of water, per household Leigh Creek vs Copley and Lindhurst, it was four times, well if you don't pay for it, you may as well leave your tap running, hell you don't care; wash your car, there's no control of it, there's no restrictions on washing vehicles, or houses or lawns or anything. We don't have any restrictions, it's purely the financial restriction and we're all aware of it. I don't wash any of my cars, they can wait till it rains...

For some Copley residents the development of, and ownership of Aroona Dam was a point of contention. An Aboriginal resident noted that buying water from Leigh Creek, sourced from an Andamdunytna sacred site (Aroona Dam) grated on him, given his sense of prior ownership and dispossession of this traditional property.

TOURISTS AND TOWNIES

One way in which water identity is established is in relation to perceptions of city people. In this conceptualisation the regional community becomes undifferentiated and whole, in relation to the city community. There is a common assumption that bush people are by definition water reflexive and city people are constructed as a problem to managed:

Adelaide will drink our rain water no problems at all. It's amazing how lazy people are. We've changed a few of the ways we do things; we had the rainwater tanks plumbed into a lot of the cabins, but you could not train people with signage, different taps that that's rain water, that's bore water. The rainwater tank will always run out. We've discon-

nected them, put jugs and buckets in and said help yourself to the rainwater, they're all full. Its just people being lazy, simple as that.

A common account of excessive water use was that if it was available then it would be used. Urbanites required intense scrutiny around their water use. Indeed a strategy was to make people work to get their water hoping that people were too lazy to go and find it if it wasn't readily available.

For the roadhouse and station owners the 'caravaners', who were often described as predominantly 'grey nomads' also posed difficulties with water use:

Normally it'll be 9.30 in the morning; you'll see Ma and Pa in their $120,000 Land cruiser and the proper outback caravan. The minute they pull in, it costs you money. They've been out on the road for 7 – 10 days, so as soon as they pull in, the first thing they do is charge up all their batteries on their reverse system, the generator nearly stalls, you've got to start a bigger generator. The second thing they do, they've got their own washing machine, they start washing all their clothes, the third thing, they start filling up all their water tanks and the next morning they've gone and they're set for another 10 – 14 days; empty all their rubbish in your bins and that can hurt, because some of them can take 500- 600 litres of water. How can you police that? A lot of vans just plug into your tap, you don't know where the water is going; you don't know what they're filling. The power, you can with circuit breakers but how do you say 'hey you're taking too long in you're shower, see a lot of them have showers in their vans and they just plug into your water, but it costs us more than we're getting for it; for that service.

The station owners, whose primary aim is to have people stay and use their accommodation subsequently provide water and other services to tourists that do not ultimately put capital into their business. The attitude of tourists to water is also one that is contradictory; they attempt to be self-sufficient but draw huge amounts of water for drinking, cleaning and storage before taking off into the landscape.

An increasing strategy is to develop conservation technologies:

I get Stateliner buses pulling up with 43 seniors, who queue to go to the loo. I've got a dual flush system, but that's a hell of a lot of water going through to where? If I could bite the bullet and spend $10,000 or whatever it's going to cost me to put in a composting loo in each side, I'd do it.

There is a paradox to tourist excesses however, in that without visitors tourism would become unsustainable. Indeed drought and climate change more generally have already change the demographics of visitors to the region. These tensions between local tourist operators and visitors are further enhanced by disparities in the governance of the different operators. Depending on one's 'corporate' status, as either remote town or station, some operators have access to subsidy while others, such as the Angorichina station, do not. The commodification of water, coupled with drought, exacerbates these tensions and inequalities.

SUSTAINABLE LIVING: DIFFERENTIATING THE RURAL COMMUNITY

Many local residents questioned the viability of a range of enterprises, in particular pastoral activities. In this case an existing tension between different groups of locals, established by their economic status, is enhanced by water scarcity and water commodification:

I think the pastoral activities in this sort of country is no longer sustainable... It appalls me, just driving up here, you see some

places that are still over – stocking and you'll see one side of the road there's a reasonable amount of vegetation; other side there's nothing. How can they be allowed to do this?

This is further borne out by the realization that pastoralists in the region were turning to tourism to supplement their pastoral traditions.

... if they didn't have the ... hotel, I wouldn't doubt [Pallava] would supply them with an adequate living. I would think ... if it wasn't for some mining that takes place on their land, they would be hard pressed to make a living... Sometimes some people probably deny that that is the case, but I think that this area is, well, right for the government to say 'sorry, Mr Goyder was right, this area up here is not sustainable for pastoralists, take your sheep away'.

Residents at Parachilna and Leigh Creek provided accounts regarding the questionable sustainability of pastoral and mining activities. The critique of local corporate enterprise describes a community tension between the development activities, seen as unsustainable, and more general, local economic and community enterprise seen as attempting to be sustainable.

There are quite a few wells in Copley, mostly all dry, and there are about 19 metres down, so that's an awful long way down, and most of the wells have been filled in and covered over. I think the reason it is so far down is because the miners have been using so much of it ...the bore water, so the water table has dropped dramatically since the mining began; all the wells in the town, I believe, were quite sustainable until that time.

Concern regarding the sustainability of the water supply given the low average rainfall over the last 5 years and the low water level at Aroona Dam, was a common experience.

Questions of sustainability bring into relief the distinction within these communities. These distinctions are principally defined by one's economic location, general resident, roadhouse or station owner, tourist operator or pastoralist. Indigenous Australians, are also located in this broad field or economy of water, yet their position is marginalized largely because it exists through a government support economy.

CONCLUSION

A key practice in Western constructions of identity and community is the tendency to generate divisions based on constructed ideas of unity. The imperative of this logic is the generation of a sense of self, or an identity, that is exclusive of Others to varying degrees. Under conditions of stress or scarcity this logic of identity becomes heightened. This logic is dualistic in character and generates hierarchies of oppositions (Young, 1990) that work to preserve the subjects endogenous notion of self and community over another.

The selection of interview accounts regarding water concerns demonstrates accounts that water talk creates notions of us and them within communities. While these lines of tension exceed the three discussed in this paper: governance, tourists and townies and sustainability, they do identify a field of community relations that are reproduced and transformed by the changing capital of water and the subsequent changes in water relations. These lines of tensions include issues pertaining to the implications for all residents of the commodification of water and its changing regime of governance under the National Water Initiative (and more local responses); the driving paradox between water scarcity, water cost and industrial activity and corporate privileges; and regional identity (or territory) in which local residents identify visitors as problems with regards

to water management and regional sustainability. In order to manage water relations in these communities further attention must be drawn to the way water shapes cultural (and community) relations in a changing water climate, including the economic and symbolic elements of water.

REFERENCES

Alston, M. & Mason, R. (2008) Who determines access to Australia's water? Social flow, gender, citizenship and stakeholder priorities in the Australian water. Rural Society, 18(3): 215-219.

Alston, M. & Mason, R. (2008) Who turns the taps off? Introducing social flow to the Australian water debate. Rural Society, 18(2): 131-139.

CSIRO (nd) Howard River environmental flows and social values: A project to support water planning in the Howard River catchment. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, NT. Retrieved October 19, 2007 from http://www.terc.csiro.au/resources%5CHowardRiver_Flows_A4.pdf

Bourdieu, P. (1977) Outline of a Theory of Practice, Cambridge: Cambridge

_____ (1985) 'The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups', Theory and Society, 14(6), 723-44.

_____ (1988) Homo Academicus, Cambridge, Polity Press

Dean, M. & Hindess, B. (1998) Government, Liberalism, Society, in M. Dean & B. Hindess (eds), Governing Australia: Studies in Contemporary Rationalities of Government, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Douglas, M. (2002) *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, Routledge Classics: London

McKay, J. & Bjornlund, H. (2001) Recent Australian market mechanisms as a component of an environmental policy that can make choices between sustainability and social justice. *Social Justice Research*, 14(4): 387-403.Nancarrow, B.E. and Syme, G.J. (2001) Challenges in implementing justice research in the allocation of natural resources. *Social Justice Research*, 14(4): 441-452.Nathan, E. (2007) *Lost waters: A history of a troubled catchment*. Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press.

Syme, G. J. and Nancarrow, B.E. (2001) Social justice and environmental management: An introduction. *Social Justice Research*, 14(4): 343-347.Young, I.M (1990) The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference in L.J. Nicholson (ed) *Feminism/Postmodernism*, Routledge, New York

Figure 1: