

## A Food-Led Recovery?

### Kangaroo Island, Fire and an Ambivalent Future for Tourism

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Doi: 10.23918/ijssesv9i3p247

**Abstract:** In January 2020, Kangaroo Island burned. This island at the base of South Australia was ravaged by bushfires. From this tragic event, how can regional development be enabled through a realignment of foodscape and landscape? Food and food tourism activate an intricate bundling of texts and resultant literacies. This article layers an analysis, and builds a textured theoretical surface on a specific landscape. To assemble a project nestled in Kangaroo Island, post-disciplinary knowledge is accessed from food tourism, gastronomic tourism, popular cultural studies, claustropolitan sociology, cultural geography, regional development and creative industries. This article is not a case study. Instead, post-disciplinary theory is frontloaded, to shape and construct a frame for food tourism beyond cliches of regional development.

**Keywords:** Kangaroo Island, Regional Development, Island Studies, Tourism Studies, Gastronomic Tourism, Food Tourism, Australian Bushfires

#### 1. Introduction

History is codified and curated to validate specific narratives of colonization. Landscapes are discovered, named, mapped and organized. This topographical tattooing serves to displace, marginalize, over-write and disorganize colonized people, geographies, traditions, languages, faith structures, and behaviours. So much history from the disempowered, the powerless and the local is lost, occasionally captured through surviving residues – scraps - of music, cloth, food or popular culture. Yet the methodologies deployed to release meaning from these undulating textual systems are rarely empirical, repeatable or available for a singular interpretation. These readings and interpretations align – albeit temporarily - signifiers and signifieds, form and content. So many of these textual systems are discarded, marginalized or misunderstood as they move through time. Visual history dominates and erases the sonic sources from the past. But occasionally the visual scars are present, and summon a much wider and more granular story. This article explores the foodscape, how food hooks into and through a landscape, while recognizing that it is punctuated by ambivalence, inequalities, displacement and despair.

Received: July 14, 2022

Accepted: August 17, 2022

Brabazon, T. (2022). A Food-Led Recovery? Kangaroo Island, Fire and an Ambivalent Future for Tourism. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Educational Studies*, 9(3), 247-269.



Figure 1: Kangaroo Island and Fire (Photography by Tara Brabazon)

This photograph is from Kangaroo Island. While the green fields at a distance promise opportunity for grazing and agriculture, the foreground signifies a different story.



Figure 2: The burning (Photography by Tara Brabazon)

These photographs were taken in June 2020. This date is important, as they are a record of the conditions of the landscape six months after a horrific bushfire burnt through the Island. The blackened edges bleed beyond the photograph, and convey a story of crisis, trauma and tragedy. The bushfires, commencing on January 3, 2020, attacked 210,000 hectares, just under half the entire island. Two people were killed. Over 60,000 livestock and 87 homes were destroyed. Even six months later, the scars were visible to the camera, offering a memory of loss and destruction.

This article acknowledges these images and widens the vista to explore the capacity of tourism to enable recovery even in challenging times. Food is important to this analysis. Food is receiving attention from

empowered disciplines and theorist. From Food Science to Food Studies and Gastronomic Tourism, food is commodified. This commodification accords value. Popular culture is dominated by cooking shows that occasionally align with travel programmes: *From Paddock to Plate* (Moran, 2013), *Farm to Fork* (2022), or Rick Stein's series through the Mediterranean, France or Italy (Stein, 2022). This is high popular culture (Brabazon & Redhead 2015) or Thinking Pop (Brabazon, 2008), controlling, framing and managing the messy, excessive and complicated lived experiences of food, including understanding the contradictions of scarcity (for some) and overabundance (for others). The global inequalities of agricultural industries and the intricate economic instabilities of rural regions are masked through the standardization of corporate supermarkets, and 'shopping' for food.

Gatekeepers configure and confirm the narratives and stories that circulate in popular culture and scholarship. There are places on the margin – and behaviours and texts that operate in un/popular culture (Brabazon, 2021) – that activate diverse ways of thinking, writing, reading and being. Food, food tourism and translocalism weave an intricate bundle of texts and literacies. This article engages this post-disciplinary project, deploying Mobility Studies, food tourism, gastronomic tourism, popular cultural studies, claustropolitan sociology, cultural geography, regional development and creative industries, and applies these textured knowledge systems to Kangaroo island, through its 'recovery.' This analysis commences with an exploration of movement in ideas, money, people and goods.

## 2. Mobility Studies

Even through a pandemic and the lexicon of social distancing, life is based on movement. Transportation systems move bodies through space. Communication systems move ideas through space. Popular cultural platforms allow music, photographs and social media to travel. Attendant with this mobile connectivity – moving through space and time - is mobile failure. After the COVID-19 pandemic, cities are more complex. With the threats from pandemic restrictions and regulations, it is more difficult to move around our world. It is no surprise that – in the last twenty-five years – Media Studies has been influenced by Mobility Studies. The late Professor John Urry was the intellectual doula for this post-disciplinary paradigm, through the Centre for Mobilities Research at Lancaster University (CeMoRe, 2022). Mobility Studies scholars were interested in how people, money, goods, services and ideas move. These goods and services include food and food tourism.

Globalization allows the movement of people and money. But tourism – and food – are paradoxical. Food tourism – and food branding – require specificity, localism and distinctiveness. But they also require the trans-local movement of tourists, goods and money. John Urry, in his theorization of global complexity in the early 2000s, recognized that, "such a mobile economy of signs produces complex redrawings of the boundaries of what is global and what is local" (2003, p. viii). Yet while 'flow' was a key trope amongst the cosmopolitan sociologists, the impact of September 11, the Global Financial Crisis, COVID-19 and an array of climate emergencies – from fire to flood – has crushed and inhibited this mobile economy of signs. This important work from John Urry demands recalibration, revisioning and revisiting through the lens of claustropolitanism (Brabazon, 2021). The disorganization of this mobile economy summons chaos, as transportation, commerce, and communication systems are disrupted.

Mobility is a marker of class and power. Those who hold power have the choice to move. Those who lack power are immobile. Decisions about mobility are not only statements about power, but have consequences on congestion, pollution, the environment, and quality of life. Most of the technological platforms that have become part of popular culture, whether cars or mobile phones, are a node or point where humans encounter technology in their daily lives. Most often, mobility affirms atomization and individuality, and particularly, the right of the individual to consume without consequences, borders or limits. The long-term decline in public services has an impact on those with the least choices, and the least ability to move through space.

Identities, categories and labels only work through the development of boundaries. Most of the modes of exclusion and discrimination are visual. Eyes see and interpret a difference, and place it in a hierarchy. There is an “Empire of the Senses” (Howes, 2005). Seeing and visuality are granted a higher priority than the other senses of smell, touch, taste and hearing (Campbell & Vidal 2019). The vocabulary to describe what is seen is of a greater scale, particularly when compared with taste. The vocabulary in response to food is more limited. That is why food media are hyper-visual, from food programmes on television through to food photography. Consumers, citizens and scholars can rarely share the taste of food, but can share – through signifiers, signified and codes - the look of food. That is why food is photographed and posted on social media sites such as Instagram. These visual systems are mobile and aggregate, building into a foodscape. These foodscapes are distinct from a landscape. As both are “contested spaces” (Zuev & Bratchford, 2021), the visual sociology summoned through foodscapes necessitate the deployment of intricate postdisciplinary expertise. Digitization has expanded the scope of visuality, and the capacities of Mobility Studies. To evoke these differences, I activate the next theoretical texture of this article: translocalism

### **3. Translocalism**

Translocalism has an engaging intellectual history. As globalization has intensified in its ambivalent trajectories, translocalism has been revisioned. Often used by migration historians to explain how migrants understand the spatial configuration of their old and new home, this concept attempts to understand the specificity of the departure and arrival location. Most frequently aligned with the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973; 1983; 1989), this concept offers a bridge across the humanities and social sciences. This term, with its origins in the 1980s, gains immensely from revisiting and reframing as post-pandemic globalization continues to transform, twist and agitate.

Clifford Geertz recognized and affirmed the value of the local. He stated that, “the shapes of knowledge are always ineluctably local, indivisible from their instruments and encasements.” (1983, p.4). Researching culture as a ‘text,’ specificity and distinction were recognized, rather than arching back to ‘general principles.’ A singular scholar, Geertz trampled many truths from many disciplines. He was best housed in anthropology. Positivists attacked him for his critiques of scientific methods. Marxists dismissed his lack of attention to power and resistance. Postmodern scholars configured his interpretation as too literal and descriptive, lacking interpretative energy and flair (Kraidy & Murphy, 2008). As Mobility Studies grew in importance through the 2000s, migration became more complex and arduous after September 11. Globalization gained increasingly diverse definitions and shapes when understanding the movement of people, goods and money. Therefore, scholars required a new trope and theory that

recognized distinctiveness and local specificity, but that also enabled an understanding, mapping and tracking of new models of interconnectedness, particularly enabled through digitization.

Translocalism describes the social and spatial processes that form and tracks the identity, goods, services and ideas across boundaries. It reveals how mobility changes our understanding of self, space and place. In disciplinary terms, translocalism has been deployed in anthropology, geography, history, area studies and development studies. Translocalism is aligned with a range of potent and popular concepts in the world at the moment, including mobility, connectness, flow and transfer. At its most basic, translocalism probes how people, money and ideas move, while maintaining the integrity and distinctiveness of the local environment. This concept remains important to the theorization of food, economic and social development. Food is produced in one location and consumed in another. How researchers understand that location of production in the context for its consumption is the basis of food tourism. Translocalism is a way to understand – with clarity and precision - socio-spatial interactions. Brickell and Datta described this as “situatedness during mobility” (2011, p.3). This phrase confirms that our narratives – our imaginings of a place - remain with us as we move. But these imaginings are also invested in products, like food, as they move.

Translocalism challenges the easy binaries of space and place, rural and urban, core and periphery, and problematizes nationalism and the nation state as the foundational model and structure to understand identity, economics and power. Local experiences can transcend the national, and build links with other locals. A Cornish pastry can be bought in Perth Australia and Perth Scotland. A champagne from Champagne can be consumed in London England or London Ontario. Food carries localism – intense specificities – through the cycles of consumerism. A place is consumed – based on an imagining of that place – that also actions translocalism.

Translocalism critiques easy globalization. This concept demands more of us as scholars and citizens, to understand the local conditions in their texture and richness, and enacts the heavy lifting required to research the movement of ideas into a meaningful context, rather than just assuming that a concept, person, goods or history can be ripped from one place and slotted into another. In a time where digitization enables easy movement, translocalism asks that we as scholars and citizens pause and consider the context of ideas and whether or not they can or should move. For food studies scholars, including gastronomic tourism researchers, this consideration of translocalism is incredibly important. This concept demands that scholars respect origins, respect situated knowledge, and do not assume that simply because an idea, term, image, food or wine can move that it should. It also probes whether the knowledge created in one location can travel intact to another. Translocalism is not a celebration of movement, mobility, digitization or globalization. It asks that researchers track and develop methods to understand movement, including its costs and opportunities. With these foundations in place, this article now develops the disciplines that deploy this theory, probing Tourism Studies and its alignment or disconnection from Island Studies.

### **3. Tourism Studies and / in Island Studies**

In 2001, *Tourist Studies* became a self-standing journal, published by SAGE (2022). This journal formalized – and codified – an interdisciplinary field that was built between diverse paradigms and theories in the humanities and the social sciences, spanning from Literature (capital L) through to regional

development and economics. The editors of this journal also confirmed their debt and interest in media and cultural studies theories. This inter-disciplinary relationships encircling tourist (or indeed, tourism) studies has been productive. Through tourism, the past is reorganized and sold in the present. Any consecration of the past involves ongoing reconstruction and the ‘invention of traditions’ (Hobsbawm & Ranger 2012).

Tourism is a discourse that encloses tourists through the creation of a semiotic corridor for their translocalism, encouraging particular ways of understanding the world, or more precisely inventing a world that is constructed, politicized and layered. Mobilizing an imagined authenticity (Bennett, 1993), tourism is a framework that emphasises particular components of a landscape and history, while shielding and burying others. There is no single, universal tourist experience. The key moment in tourism is departure: the overt separation from daily life and its patterns. A series of rituals signify a leaving of one space and the transfer to another. These rituals of packing, passport checks, verifying COVID-19 vaccinations, and security barriers separate daily life from tourism. These markers are often commodified, becoming a set of services such as hotels, transportation systems and restaurants, and summon experiences. Goffman’s “frontstage” is crucial to tourism (1959). While – as Bennett has shown (1993) – the goal is authenticity, tourists are dissatisfied, because they know enough to realize they are experiencing a construction, a front stage. Therefore, the punctuation of tourism remains irony: the highest level of satisfaction occurs when the tourist believes they have failed to be a tourist.

Food is part of the construction of authenticity in a tourist experience, fulfilling the patterns and realities of daily life, and then commodifying the experience. It occupies a significant role in clustering ideologies of localism, exoticism, difference and disconnection from the everyday, while enacting a behaviour – eating – that is part of daily life. The photographing of food – and the uploading of these photographs through social media – intensifies the visibility of tourism and frames – literally – the distinctiveness of the experience. Tourists can visit a place that supplies food, but also food carries familiar experiences to a new location. Food is a translocal product. It can offer a slice of exoticism in daily lives. There are also economic imperatives for this movement. Foodscapes can be a driver of economic growth. Comunian, England, Faggian and Mellander argue that in the creative or knowledge economy, “production and consumption typically occur in the same locations” (2021, p.45). Food is both a confirmation and a critique of this fascinating maxim. Food summons a clustering of meaning and place, but then moves that clustering to an alternative location. Such translocalism is enhanced through food media, such as Instagram and Twitter, and food communication systems, such as the comment culture on Facebook. It is important to remember that these ‘new media’ platforms are built on an array of traditional interfaces and their dissemination strategies, such as newspapers and television programmes. Tourism relies on a desire to see, photograph and consume that which is different. Yet any part of knowledge is only granted the status of truth if it fits into familiar knowledge systems. This includes any affirmation of difference. Food tourism takes a particular component of a familiar culture and explodes its significance.

Noting the interdisciplinary infusion of Tourism Studies in the early 1990s through cultural studies, media studies and tourism studies, an emerging interdisciplinary alignment arches out to Island Studies. While undertheorized, a powerful revisioning of Tourism Studies is actioned through Island Studies. Barney Samson demonstrated the powerful transformations of island-based research through liquid modernity

(2020). This was a strong re-engagement with Bauman's research (2006, p.188). While Bauman used 'liquid' as a metaphor for a period or epoch, Samson reconfigured this research through the lens of the specificity of space and place, particularly islands. Some are remote. Others are disconnected. Islands are places of otherness. This otherness is volatile and ideological, framing 'natural history' to suit and shape the changing modes of belonging and citizenship in xenophobic times.

Samson's work is important to Tourism Studies. But further, innovations are activated through Sophia Davis in her investigation of "Island thinking." She probes "the motif of the island" and "the imaginative appeal of the island" (2020, p.1). These historical geographies reveal provocative readings of the landscape and identity. The tropes of sea and sky converge to construct an iconographic palette that is different from the heritage and seclusion of the countryside. The range of commercial enterprises that emerge in and through island tourism development includes accommodation, from large corporate hotels that pepper the islands of Hawaii through to family guesthouses in Stewart Island, at the base of Aotearoa / New Zealand. The economic infusion of tourism presents economic and sustainability challenges, but as Yang et. al. confirmed, an "integration" of attractive locations and economic development can enhance, "the island's local population growth, environment improvement, completion facilities and functional upgrading" (2016, p.261). This is necessary as there are profound logistical challenges for island residents, particularly with regard to transportation of food and essential goods. While tourism can assist touristic consumption, locals can suffer. The pandemic revealed the delicacy of these logistic networks.

The infusion of new income streams from tourism is a great benefit to island economies. However, the life of residents, rather than the lifestyle of tourists, remains a concern (Croes, 2016). Income is not a metric of meaning and purpose in life, and while tourism development and economic growth seems useful, the life of residents is key. When aligning Island Studies to Tourism Studies, Tony Bennett's trope of authenticity is displaced, if not subsumed, for isolation. Islands summon popular cultural references from *Gilligan's Island*, *Fantasy Island*, and *Hawaii 5-0*. While isolation is marketable and attractive for those living in the gridlocked metropolis, it actions consequences for the residents who live on islands and must await the delivery of goods. If food is already difficult to supply, the tourist population can provide an unwelcome drain on resources. For example, Norfolk Island, the furthest eastern point of Australia and a long way from the mainland, suffered incredible shortages during the COVID-19 pandemic (Convery, 2020). While tourists from Australia continued to travel to the Island, being one of the few 'Australian' locations to visit during the lockdown, food shortages for residents intensified. Therefore, while isolation is attractive and exotic, the economic consequences in terms of the reliable supply of goods, particularly building materials and food, are also stark. Tourists consume. That is their job. Yet this consumption displays the structural challenges for island residents. Therefore, discussions of economic development through island tourism remain complex and volatile.

Food remains a proxy for the gifts and challenges of island tourism. To create distinctiveness and isolation, food matters. Kirstie Petrou and John Connell described, "the cultural work of food" (2017, p.225). This powerful phrase shows how food can occupy an ambivalent and provocative positioning when retheorizing colonial relationships. But the challenge with island tourism is that many other ideologies – beyond the wash of authenticity and isolation – bubble through it. For example, rurality is part of many islands, with agriculture being a necessity to ensure some form of food security. Yet rurality – like urbanity – does not

nestle easily amid island-based tourism. Rurality is an ideology. Yet it frames a series of key economic, social and cultural debates, particularly with regard to rural poverty and rural development. If researchers can – as Robert Chambers recommends – start to agitate the “cores and peripheries of knowledge” (2013, 4), then translocalism in and through food offers a model and strategy for a new way of thinking about how places move through commodification. Food tourism, even though the fetishization and commodification of difference and exoticism, offers alternative income streams for farmers. This is a powerful and critical area for future research.

There are scholarly challenges to address to complete such work. As Chambers has confirmed, “For academics, it is cheaper, safer and more cost effective in terms of academic output to do urban rather than rural research” (2-13, 7). Rural development is complex, intricate and important politically, economically and socially. It is more difficult, but it enables an array of industries. The next section of this article funnels tourism studies and island studies into the enabling industries for food tourism.

#### **4. Slow Food and Translocalism**

Food is politics. Politics is food. Food production and consumption are marinated by neoliberalism. Resistance to supply chains exist to ensure that farmers are paid properly, through both the Slow Food movements and “agri-food activism” as actioned in states such as California (Guthman, 2008, pp. 1171-1183). Globalization - as a word, trope and business principle - is a carry bag for a range of excesses and exploitations masked through the desire for productivity and efficiency (Brabazon, 2022). Yet localism is not a relief and release from the toxicity of globalization, as it is corporatized and globally marketed to add authenticity and specialness to food. Neoliberalism in the food industries is unevenly applied, varying from the discarding or marginalization of water and land rights, through to technology use and automation, and exploitative labour practices. The consequences of ‘consumer choice’ are becoming clear. ‘Taste’ has limitations. Particular foods are worthy of branding and destination tourism. Others are not. Anna de Jong and Peter Varley demonstrated the lack of touristic attention to foods configured ‘working class’ (de Jong & Varley, 2017). For example, there is a focus on single malt scotch from the Isle of Skye, but not a deep fried mars bar in Glasgow.

Only particular foods summon authenticity, isolation, difference and localism that can be hooked into tourism. Food tourism has been - appropriately – a slice of tourism studies for four decades, since Belisle’s research of tourism and food production in the Caribbean (1983). This field encompasses event tourism – such as food festivals – but also tourists visiting food producers and restaurants. It has many descriptions, including gastronomic tourism, gourmet tourism, food and wine tourism, or tasting tourism (Ellis, 2018, p.252). Food tourism is a multi-industry formation. Yet, as shown through this article, theoretical work is required to manage the complexity of colonization, food security, conspicuous consumption and the post-pandemic economy. Food is important in a range of moral panics: obesity, fitness, health, landfill, environmental waste, and nutrition. As revealed by George Orwell, food punctuates class (1958). Similarly, the differences between the phrases ‘food tourism’ and ‘gastronomic tourism’ are overlaid with two others: fast food and slow food. The ideological weave between these binary oppositions encompasses diverse histories of industrialization, masculinity, femininity, work and leisure.

The Slow Food movement has intervened in the ideologies of food, and these ideologies have then moved into popular culture, particularly the genre of food tourism programmes. Addressing the authenticity of ingredients, the distinctive nature of local preparation, and enjoyment of eating food, the Slow Food Movement is a mode of resistance and defiance against speed, fast food, and globalized culture. But it is also a marketing strategy for translocalism. The authenticity in one location is moved to another, and then commodified. Slow food began in Italy with Carlo Petrini in 1986 (2003). It now exists in 122 countries, over a thousand *convivia* – local chapters – around the world. Each *convivium* promotes local farmers, local produce, local markets, local flavours and local events. The farm and farmers matter to this conversation. While farming has been associated with continuity and generational succession, the last forty years have seen radical transformations of agriculture, with fewer and larger farms. Agribusiness requires the deployment of a local landscape in an international context, with Susanne Stenback and Cecilia Bygdell describing, “the farmer as an actor in a global setting” (2018, p.64).

The history of the Slow Movement is tracked in one fascinating book by Carl Honoré. This book was titled *In praise of slow* (2009). A Canadian journalist, he critiqued what he termed, “the cult of speed.” The slow movement has now progressed to Slow Retail (O’Brien, 2017), Slow Travel (Dickinson and Lumsdon, 2010), Slow Designs (Fuad-Luke, 2008), and Slow Cities (Mayer & Knox, 2006). These movements are anti-globalizing and anti-homogenizing. The question remains why food was – and is – the foundational focus of the slow movement. There are reasons. Food is a substance that keeps humans alive, granting nutrition and pleasure. It is a metaphor for life. Ponder the clichés: Bread is the staff of life, food for thought, or the milk of human kindness. Different places, races, religions and communities prepare food differently. This distinctiveness occurs through particular local cooking processes and practices, different ingredients that are grown and derived from the local agriculture, methods of preparing that food, and particular ways of manufacturing raw produce. These distinctions matter for marketing and branding, as food is an international business. After industrialization, the food processing industry and refrigeration meant that goods could be prepared and exported around the world. In the twentieth century, supermarkets arrived. It was a self-service approach to food. Through the economies of scale and refrigeration, decent quality food could be delivered at low prices. The consequence of this development for farmers was that supermarkets demanded more goods at lower prices, with little profit margin for the farmers themselves (Bowlby, 1997). Therefore, part of the aim of the Slow Food movement was to critique the corporatization of food and food capitalism, with the imperative to increase the payments to farmers, and reduce refrigeration. This was an attempt to truncate and transform the industrialization of food.

Slow Food activates knowledge, hierarchies of value, and the configuration of food literacy (Vidgen & Gallegos, 2014). Local produce is filled with stories about food communities. These stories provide the link between food and tourism, using the ideology of translocalism. But these stories can also feed elitism. Slow food and gastronomic tourism are middle class movements. Affluent consumers enjoy local consumption and local production. However, disempowered communities that require the business from industrialized nations in Europe and North America to redistribute international wealth through trade rather than aid, are being blocked because of the commitment to the local. That is why a retheorization of translocalism offers an alignment between two specific local environments, configuring different relationships between oppression, liberation or resistance (Ma 2002, pp. 131-152).

Middle class urban professionals are appropriating the food, appropriating the practices and stories, to grant their consumerism greater meaning. While the slow food movement enacts a critique of consumerism and shopping, it actions this critique through consumerism and shopping. It is an important goal, to slow the speed of consumer culture. However, this imperative is achieved by fetishizing some products over others. Eating fast food rather than slow food is not ‘about’ choice. It requires an understanding of the context in which that choice is made. Fast food is eaten because long hours are being worked, stress levels are high, both parents are in paid employment, and family structures are less stable. Food is not isolated from the rest of our lives. Fast food provides a quick fix for the problems that exist in work, leisure and family life.

The tourism that is built on slow food activates a specific mode of food literacy. That is why gastronomic tourism, rather than food tourism, is often deployed as a phrase. Gastronomic tourism is about knowledge, a disconnection from daily meals, and a form of elitism. The food system – like all systems in our globalized world - is based on capitalism. That means inequality, injustice and uneven distribution are part of the system. The market economy is a competitive economy. Whenever there is competition, there are losers. In the case of food capitalism and the market economy, the losers in the system either eat too much food of inferior quality, or eat little food of any kind.

Food is an intervention – good or ill - in any discussion of communication systems. Food speaks. Bodies speak. The task in studying food as a communication system is to ensure that injustices of bodily size are acknowledged and managed, but that the food regime that pumps some populations with calories and leaves others to starve is called to account. Food matters, but not in the way that that gastronomic tourism may suggest. Food is the transformation of animals, vegetables and minerals into something that is eaten. Food Studies takes this transformation and explores what happens after the food is eaten. Therefore, the next section probes what happens next in the economy, culture, social systems, bodies and tourism.

## **5. Protecting the Brand: The Costs of Gastronomic Tourism**

Food tourism requires branding and marketing, based on a narrative that connects a place with the production of food and beverages. It is also economically crucial to a place. One third of tourist spending is on food (Telfer & Wall, 2000). Food is either part of the travelling experience – so a secondary purchase – or the primary rationale for travelling. Food festivals and local food experiences are integral and integrated into tourism, creating an event that transforms a place into a destination.

Such transformations matter: rural areas are confronting a series of challenges: depopulation, an aging population profile, health provision, educational provision, and loss of economic viability. A series of policy levers have been activated, via resilience and sustainability theories and revitalization and regeneration protocols (Williams et al., 2021). Agricultural economics requires understanding changing land use. The key challenge since the industrial revolution – which has shaped rurality – is that more food was required, and it had to be produced by fewer people. Therefore, food production and logistics were integral to industrialization and colonization, and central to globalization. Therefore, ‘the local’ and ‘the regional’ maintain a role in what Bell and Valentine describe as “the selling (and buying) of this authentic exotic” (2013, p.190) Taste, like culture, is highly ideological. The local areas that gain profile, branding and legal protection are often in Europe and protected through the legal and economic power of the

European Union (Brabazon, 2014). This is local knowledge for global consumption. However, conflictual geographies emerge. When the word ‘authentic’ is used in food packaging, it captures a distinctiveness of place and culture that marinates, inhabits and enlivens wine, cheese, coffee, olives or lavender. These words not only build the construction of a place, but the framework through which it is consumed.

For example, Euro terroirs hook food into a region, requiring a legacy of 75 years, a body of knowledge, and a sustained current practice of food production. This localism is founded on colonial power and resists – through legal protections - the success in the food and wine industries of the ‘new world.’ That is, formerly colonized nations. Whenever celebrating the local – burgundy (or Burgundy) and champagne (or Champagne) – there is an assumption that these regions produce authentic goods. The origin and the authentic are confused, and inelegantly conflated (Brabazon, 2014). Therefore, a range of legal structures protect (and reinforce) the links between place and product.

Food is not only derived from a place. It makes a place. Other industries are conjured through this making of a place, particularly tourism. While tourism is economically important, it also holds an andragogical function, teaching consumers about the place in which food is grown and made. This particular form of ‘the local’ and ‘the regional’ is not only protected. It is legally enforced through AOC (Appellation d’Origine Controllee). The French wine industry is based on the AOC, linking wine production to a specific region. Food is also inserted into this system, with Roquefort cheese and Normandy camembert being examples. This is a long-term strategy to control and tighten the relationship between food and beverage and a place. The first French Law in this area emerged in 1919: the Law for the Protection of the Place of Origin. The European Union’s Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) finds its origins in this French AOC system.

The ‘new world’ – formerly colonized nations – has had to respond to these movements. In 1993, Australia passed legislation to permit registration of “geographical indicators” such as regions. The reason for the introduction of this law was so that Australia could fulfill the requirements of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations with the European Union. The Australian Agreement recognized “reciprocal protection” of wine names. The names that could no longer be used in Australia were chianti, madeira, malaga, cava and beaujolais. Some words were given a transitional period to stop their use: burgundy, chablis, champagne, port, sauternes, sherry and claret. Australia received little from this agreement. One hundred and three (103) Australian locations were recognized by virtue of the Protected Geographical Indicators. These included Northern Territory, South Eastern Australia, Rutherglen, Barossa valley, Margaret River and Mudgee. This is European colonization by other means. The assumption was that non-European goods were not ‘authentic’ and were ‘inferior’ to the European goods. These European foods and wines had the right of translocalism. They activated an intact production and consumption relationship, being able to move between places and on to consumers with an intact textual system. Champagne only emerged from Champagne in France, not the Barossa Valley. ‘Sparkling wine’ is not champagne, because it does not come from Champagne (Brabazon, 2014).

The longer the history, the more intricate and interesting the story for branding and marketing, and food tourism. These laws regulate a particular way of labelling and structuring the world. It is not only an association of place and product, but a statement that a product is of quality because it is from that place. This is a colonial configuration and imposition of language, religion, traditions and history, to the

detriment, loss and displacement of Indigenous languages, religions, traditions and history. This appellation is an ideological bundle from the European Union that tethers region, authenticity, origin, difference and quality. The economic value of these labels is not only in the sale of products but also the rural tourism emerging from it, including visiting wineries and cheese manufacturers. This is rural tourism. This is terroir tourism. But it means that all non-European local places have to find alternative strategies to fight back and create a meaningful translocalism for food and wine production and consumption. Without the EU behind them, how does food and wine tourism develop? That is the focus of the last section of this article.

## 6. Kangaroo Island Tourism

On January 4, 2021, “Kangaroo Island” was granted a “Protected wine name” and a “Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)” (UK Government, 2021). Part of the post-Brexit trade agreement between Australia and the United Kingdom, Kangaroo Island was recognized as distinctive location for wine production. Brexit transformed – and is transforming – the economy of the United Kingdom. Funding streams and markets can no longer be taken for granted. The former colonies that were discarded as Britain joined the Common Market in 1972 were suddenly – again – integral to the economic future to the former colonial master.

While Kangaroo Island was granted this PGI, why was it configured as important by Australia, and this value acknowledged by the United Kingdom? Kangaroo Island is an island at the base of the continent of Australia, 112 kilometres, southwest of Adelaide, the capital of South Australia. This simple geographical description enfolds many histories, including an Indigenous history and naming: Karta Pintingga (Island of the Dead). The colonial naming was derived from the sighting of the kangaroos on the island.



Figure 3: Kangaroo Island's kangaroos (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)

The island is also washed with the narratives of whalers and sealers through the 19th century. From its permanent colonial settlement in 1836, it has been island of agriculture and fisheries, particularly for the southern rock lobster. Its economic foundation was – and is - agriculture, fisheries and tourism. Primary production is present (agriculture). Tertiary production is present (tourism). But the manufacturing layer is lacking.

Kangaroo island is Australia's third largest island, smaller than both Tasmania and Melville Island. It is tourism that aligns and integrates the economic past, present and propulsion of Kangaroo Island, with nature-based tourism dovetailing with food tourism to create an economic foundation. This tourism is an economic necessity, as the population of the Island is small, reported in the 2016 Census at 4,702 people (ABS, 2017). As with many regional and remote locations, the population is reducing and ageing, as younger people search for more diverse economic and social opportunities. The towns on Kangaroo Island are small, spanning from Kingscote to Penneshaw, where the ferry terminal is located. The facilities are basic, including a general store, supermarkets, banking and hotels.

Agriculture spans sheep and cattle farming, grapes and wine, honey, wool, meat and grain. When combined with the fisheries, this foundation is important for the development of tourism. There are also 'value add' industries, including a eucalyptus oil distillery. Wine is also important, with 30 wine growers and 12 wineries. Considering the PGI granted to Kangaroo Island, it is important to note that the first wine was only made in 1982. This was a KI-Barossa blend. The Florance vineyard created Eastern Cove Cygnet in 1990 as the first wine produced completely from the region. Therefore, this appellation is recent, but confirms a branding of the wine, particularly for tourism.

These primary industries are key to employment, the economy and also enabling the tertiary industries around food tourism. Tourism is the foundation for economic development at Kangaroo Island, and also the connective tissue between industries. Attracting – pre-COVID - just under 190,000 visitors per year, a quarter of those visitors were international, particularly from Europe. Through the cessation in international numbers because of the pandemic, domestic visitors increased rapidly (Tourism SA, 2021). Beyond food and wine, nature tourism is a focus through Seal Bay Conservation Park, Flinders Chase National Park, Kelly Hill Caves, and Kangaroo Island Wildlife Park. Like so much of Island Tourism, the meeting of land, water and sky is evocative, photographic and memorable.



Figure 4: Sunset Kangaroo Island (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)

The beaches are clean, uncluttered and available for a diversity of water-based activities.



Figure 5: Kangaroo Island Coast (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)

Activities can be including swimming and snorkelling, but also walking.



Figure 6: Kangaroo Island Coast (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)

The challenges with transportation remain – as is common with most islands – the most difficult to solve. Getting to and from the Island is an issue. There is a ferry service that has run through multiple companies and operators, and an expensive flight run by REX and Qantas.



Figure 7: The car ferry to Kangaroo Island (Photograph by Tara Brabazon)

While tourist and regional development initiatives may emerge, if tourists cannot travel to the Island, then this remains a clear barrier. Elite hotels exist(ed), with the Southern Ocean Lodge noted as one of the best in the world, before it was destroyed in the bushfires of 2020. Cheaper options are also available, but these markets are distinct in terms of their economic and social relationship to different sectors of food tourism.

Artisanal food is now a key tourist market: seafood, cheese, wine, craft beer, and Kangaroo Island Spirits, including gin, vodka and liqueurs. Event tourism also creates horizontal integration with the creative industries. ART FEASTival aligns art and food, and is run between September and October. From such initiatives, the structures for food tourism and branding are present. There is transportation infrastructure (although expensive), accommodation of diverse price ranges, event tourism, and emerging primary industries tethered to tourism as value-add experiences. As confirmed by MacConnell in his early research, authenticity matters (1973). Authenticity is not real. It is an ideology. But this ideology for authenticity proliferates through social media. This simulacrum of interfaces allows a re-representation of Kangaroo Island for consumption by prospective visitors. This authenticity is part of the package. On Instagram for example, the handle is @authentickangarooisland (2022).

A connective industry between food and the environment is carried by the Ligurian honey bees. Kangaroo Island enfold the only pure and disease-free population of this bee, with the exportation of queen bees an important industry for the Island. However, the honey is not only sold as a foodstuff, but as a foundation for beauty products.



Figure 8: Honey-based products (Photograph by Jamie Quinton)

Besides beauty treatments, the honey is also configured as for medicinal purposes, in the form of a tincture.



Figure 9: Honey-based tincture (Photograph by Jamie Quinton)

Kangaroo Island is branding the honey in its multiple forms. This product is the archetype of translocalism: logging the specificity of the location and moving it through the consumption of branded goods.

With the focus on nature, many small and medium sized enterprises base their businesses around wildlife, including the viewing of owls and hawks. The Raptor Domain features daily shows.



Figure 10: Predator-based tourism (Photograph by Jamie Quinton)

While wildlife and nature are marketed for tourists, requiring a visit to the island, local cuisines, foods and beverages activate translocalism. Products include King George whiting, oysters, sheep cheese, marron, Ligurian honey and small batch wines, ciders, beers and gin. While available to purchase on the Island, a designated website facilitates the purchase of a wide range of Kangaroo Island foodstuffs, beverages and honey-based products for skincare (KI Online, 2022).

In the European Union, these foodscapes or foodways are legally protected. For other nations, summoning and disseminated these stories is more challenging. One small but emerging area of these food tourism stories involves island foods. Modelled from the considered branding of Jersey and Guernsey, these islands are not only known as tax havens but sites for high quality dairy produce based on Jersey and Guernsey cattle. Jersey uses agriculture as a base branding for tourism, which is second only to their financial sector for its economic impact. Guernsey, even though also affiliated with high quality milk and cream and a particularly high quality orange butter, was also built on their financial district. The agricultural industries of focus for Guernsey - tomatoes and cut flowers – were highly competitive and in decline. So Jersey’s translocalism operates more effectively than that in Guernsey.

Islands – as small and distinctive geographies - offer the capacity to use the name as the brand. Similarly, the Isle of Skye is known for its distillery. Indeed, the URL – [www.isleofskyewhisky.com](http://www.isleofskyewhisky.com) (2022) – reinforces the product geography through digitization. The Isle of Skye has managed this integration with great effectiveness. The only scotch whisky distillery on an island is Talisker Distillery, on the shore of Loch Harport. Therefore, the scotch whisky is the island. The branding is the sea. The distillery value adds through tourism, running an open bar from 11am to 4:15pm, alongside a series of whisky and chocolate tours. The Isle of Skye therefore is a fully integrated tourism experience (Talisker, 2022).

Australia has similar examples with King Island, near Tasmania. King Island cream and cheese has taken much of their branding from Cornwall’s dairy industry: fresh air, sunshine, high quality, elite and expensive produce. King Island is the exception. While part of Tasmania, its branded food identity is distinct. Only 1500 people live there, with two major townships, Currie and Grassy. The economy is based on the production of cheese, lobsters, kelp and beef. Beef is confronting difficulties, as the Island’s

abattoir closed in 2012. Less well known is the Dolphin mine, one of the largest tungsten reserves in Australia. Mining must be underplayed in the 'story' of the Island, as the branding requires clean, pure and authentic dairy produce. King Island is an incredibly successful foodscape, revealing clear translocalism. Yet the concrete and conscious movement from food production and into food tourism has been less well developed. King Island and the Barossa for wine are probably the two most successful food branding enterprises in Australia. Margaret River in Western Australia is probably trailing as a third option, with innovative relationships formed between wine, slow food and also lifestyle tourism, through surfing in particular.

What can Kangaroo Island do to enable a profile? Importantly they have an advantage over King Island, because the tourism and food industries developed independently. Therefore, the next stage is concrete policy and programmatic work to build the matrix between the two industries. Event tourism is the clear and successful way to do that. There are strong models such as in the Swan Valley in Western Australia. A wine and food region that is not as well branded as Margaret River, the Swan Valley has created a series of events including an array of music events to provide a focus for domestic and international travel, with wine and food entwined into the experience (Brabazon, 2011).

The differential success of island foodscapes and tourism raises the key question: how are foodscapes rendered transmobile? In other words, how can the production and consumption of a particular foodstuff hook into the landscape, offering the ideology of authenticity and thereby enabling tourism? It is a delicate and intricate process, to take food production and move it beyond a location, to develop revenue for produce, and also attract tourists to see where the food is made and created. Kangaroo Island maintains the characteristics of a successful foodscape. It requires a creative industries matrix to plait the relationships between food, wine, spirits, environmental tourism, art tourism, and a diversity of environmental experiences. Translocalism can provide conceptual modelling for Kangaroo Island businesses so that this small place, a minor chapter in the history of South Australia, can sell food, wine and experiences to the world. Currently, there is a lack of focus. There is potential, but integration is required. Slow food products are produced, including chilli sauce, pickled garlic and seasoning.



Figure 11: Kangaroo Island Sweet Chili Sauce (Photograph by Jamie Quinton)



Figure 12: Kangaroo Island pickled garlic (Photograph by Jamie Quinton)



Figure 13: Asian flavours (Photograph by Jamie Quinton)

While these goods use Kangaroo Island as a hook and brand, their capacity to align the products into a foodscape is more challenging. What is the connection between ‘Asian flavours’ and an island at the base of South Australia?

The current challenge is the toughest. COVID-19 has become a blinker to other international tragedies. Before Wuhan hit the news cycles, large tracts of Australia were ravaged by bushfires. Kangaroo Island suffered through profound loss of livestock and land, and life. Trauma summons powerlessness and helplessness. The loss of a home, livelihood or community also creates a loss of relationships. The issue for islands such as Kangaroo Island is how to maintain a ‘clean and green’ environmental branding, while sustaining agricultural industries and the challenges of bushfires and catastrophic climate events.

With all the attention to the knowledge economy and – indeed – the Knowledge Society (Aarrevaara, Finkelstein, Jones, & Jung, 2021), sustainability has re-emerged as a band aid or salve for the climate crisis. From ecological sustainability to digitization, from smart manufacturing to the reduction of the carbon footprint of supply chains, food matters. Further, how food moves – and how people move to food – also matters. Food is appropriated. It is colonized. Like the knowledge economy itself, it is fraying and fragmenting in its toxic dance with postfordism (Ford, 2021). Food is a proxy for consumerist excess and social injustice. It also offers a reminder that food requires a context of both production and consumption, and they must be aligned and understood. Food literacy remains pivotal to an ethical, sustainable regional development.

Part of this food literacy remains understanding the climate emergency that is rolling change through the landscape via floods, tsunamis, and fire. The pull between preservation and development, conservation and tourism, is yet to be resolved. The 2020 bushfires, ravaging half of the island, and burned between January 3 and January 21. Over 80% of koalas died in the fires (Gorton, 2020).



Figure 14: Kangaroo Island and the burning of the landscape (Photograph by Jamie Quinton)

Therefore, all the attention to branding, regional development, island specificity and terroir is lost if environmental stability is lost. If hotels burn, if the kangaroos, koalas and birds are cremated in bushfires,

or their habitat damaged, tourism and tourists decline. These special, specific and small places lose their branding and economic viability. While the pandemic has marginalized many other economic and social realities, the meaning of movement, and the movement of meaning, require renewed attention. This requires ethical, sustainable regional development, and a confirmation of the economic costs – as much as the benefits of tourism.

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