12. Conclusion: Endings and Beginnings

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Part 5

Mobile Mapping
12. Conclusion: Endings and Beginnings

Twelve months after my walk with Mohammed, I was sitting on a tram which ran along Queensway as it stopped briefly outside the HSBC Building. Facing backwards at the rear of the tram, the Lippo Centre was in view through the open window, and I looked at it, remembering our conversation and Mohammed’s love of tall skyscrapers that did not show up properly on 3D maps. In this space and time, however, the Lippo Centre towers appeared somehow different, and an old woman noticed me staring and prodded me to get my attention.

‘These buildings,’ she said pointing towards them. ‘They are called the Koala Buildings.’

‘Koala?’ I must have looked surprised because she grabbed my chin and pointed my face towards them again.

‘Look, like the Australian animals. Koalas.’

It only took a second or so and I saw them in a curious convergence between the two cities, large glass koalas climbing up the trunk of the building.

By way of another moment, in Ghostly Matters, Avery Gordon (2008) describes a list she asked a class to make of the reasons that Toni Morrison gives in The Bluest Eye for why dreams may die. The list the class made was expansive and seemingly arbitrary: from systems of power and supremacist violence to emotions like hatred and disappointment; from the meteorological to lost teeth and furniture without memories. Of this list, Gordon writes:

This turns out not to be a random list at all, but a way of conceptualizing the complicated workings of race, class and gender, the names we give to the ensemble of social relations that create inequalities, situated interpretive codes, particular kinds of subjects, and the possible and impossible themselves. (Gordon, 2008: 4)

The koalas climbing up the Lippo Centre may, too, fall into this description. The struggle is not in holding the answer in the palm of the hand, the struggle is in the searching and knowing that there is no answer (no single answer).
Figure 12.1. *The Lippo Centre.* Photo taken from the back of a tram outside the HSBC Building at 1 Queen’s Road, Central.
which alone can comprehend the impossible intertwining of knowledge, experience and being as they become mediated through technologies, bodies and spaces. Like a bird in an egg and an egg in a bird, the circular logic of discourse, not least of cartographic reason, appears to have no beginning and no end. Yet, somewhere in the designs of fix-points, equals signs, universal characteristics and intersecting lines, there are experiences, tactics and hauntings which bubble and surface, warping and disrupting the quest for an absolute geometry that displaces the openness of space. Like the koalas, the moments that led Gordon to a project of hauntings were that ‘ghostly things kept cropping up and messing up other tasks [she] was trying to accomplish’ (Gordon, 2008: 8). ‘Messing up’ is also a good phrase to describe the gradual emergence of this book: what was at first an account of neat lines and clear boundaries, of total systems and infinite calculability, an account of cartographic reason expressed through imaginations and impulses became messed up by the everyday business of living by the people with whom I walked and those that appeared unexpectedly on trams, in archives, in landscapes.

The question that Gordon asked her class is as equally profound as the answers they gave: by starting from dreams we can begin to understand their disappearance and the negative space that their absence casts. This is a complicated, haunted surface, in which the expectations of consistency and clarity towards academic research are laid aside to reveal fragile complexity and deep anguish: those other things for which there are not necessarily words, and not necessarily theories or tools. If we were to ask a similar question here of the stories woven together throughout this volume, we, too, would find an account of scattered objects and moments, violences and emotions, spaces without times, and times without spaces. We could ask Why do dreams die?, or we instead could ask How can space be open?, or Why are lines drawn? and Why do points pierce the surfaces of our experiences?, or indeed, What is mobile mapping? The answer may well be the same.

The opening chapters of this book offered some idea of what may appear in our search: coordinate (fix) points, intersecting lines and invisible grids drawn all over the globe; copper bolts, clocks and sextants; binary codes, hexagrams and all things described in numbers. Yet, as the trajectory changed (or even started again from a different angle) deep into the lived spaces that we produce, it became clear that these things, this list of ideas and objects, only centre the world as far as we let them. As we wandered through Sydney and Hong Kong, stories breathed life into experience, unveiling the chaos, openness and potentiality of space that already exists against the cartographic and digital desire for systems of fixity and order – we only have
to search. There is evidence that we are not trapped in the embryonic sac of discourse, within which the twins of Leibniz and Descartes share DNA. If we start within this space of discourse, we become bound to stretch, and to lash out and to try to pierce the membrane and hope that what waits on the other side is not an eternal empty darkness, but maybe hope, maybe potential, maybe openness. In this divergent search in the corners of experience, waypoints do not help, nor do maps, or compasses, hourglasses or sextants, algorithms or codes.

We need different models beyond texts and contexts of understanding the everyday relations brought forth by cartographic reason, and so we can turn, as we have here, towards the spatial and the social. However, in this search and throughout these stories, something always appeared in the corner of the eye, disappearing at any attempt to focus upon it. This absent presence, arguably, is a kind of haunting, wherein ghosts cast shadows:

If haunting describes how that which appears to be not there is often a seething presence, acting on and often meddling with taken-for-granted realities, the ghost is just the sign or the empirical evidence if you like, that tells you a haunting is taking place. (Gordon 2008: 8)

Instead, as we attempt to understand what happens in space, between cartographic reason and everyday life, we can look to something else: absences in the map (Harley, 1988a) and poetic presences in space (Bachelard, 1994), haunted memories (Huysssen, 2003) and the ghost in the machine (Ryle, 2009). Gordon describes the ghost as a social figure: a person, or a metaphor, or inscribed deep into storytelling. Haunting is a sociological construction, brought about by and through people.

Given the experiences in these stories, we must ask if a ghost can also be a spatial figure, not just apparent in the sociological imagination but an apparition in the spatial imagination? To this end, Gordon continues onwards with her description of how haunting may appear through ghosts:

The ghost or the apparition is one form by which something lost, or barely visible, or seemingly no there to our supposedly well-trained eyes makes itself known or apparent to us, in its own way, of course. The way of the ghost is haunting, and haunting is a very particular way of knowing what has happened or is happening. Being haunted draw us affectively, sometimes against our will and always a bit magically, into the structure of feeling of a reality we come to experience, not as cold knowledge but as a transformative recognition. (Gordon, 2008: 8)
This what we have learnt by starting from space first, from outside and the other, from openness and possibility, is that the convergence of the rationalists is only a speck in the multiple, heterogeneous spaces produced by bodies, landscapes, memories, stories and maps into which we are drawn willingly or otherwise. Bodies move, and spaces shift, landscapes surprise and failure is imminent: difficult, terrible seething absences and silenced presences sit, dispersed, waiting, haunting. These stories have unearthed other answers to the questions of dreams, lines and mobile mapping. Unauthorised readings of argot spaces are enacted through hidden stairs, the Koala Buildings, sand dunes, forked roads, colourful flags, bike paths and impromptu translations. Past are passed across space from one person to another with only sound waves as witnesses, whispers of clandestine marriages, graffiti walls, visa waiting times, the feeling of the landscape, four-breakfast cats, storm fronts, getting in and sacred spaces. Remnants of palimpsest histories linger in boundary stones, names carved in boulders, abandoned brick kilns, Tank Streams, stolen rocks, and monumental landings. Reminders of past incursions and the colonial present appear, too, old ferries dock at new piers, bank towers become market indexes, public spaces are transformed by electronic gates and market stalls grow to shopping centres.

Or, we could also go the other way: from space to mapping, and mapping to space.

Part 2: Space/Sydney was in search of spaces: finite moments in infinite complexity, the paradoxical and obtrusive. We searched for the spatial practices in mobile mapping, brought forth through heterogeneity, possibility and morphologies always in occurrence. We exercised in the backstreets with Marianna as she evokes the transformative potential of everyday space by wandering through the same landscapes week after week. We spun around and through Martin Place to Moore Park with Kyja, unsettling new spaces with old spaces (and old spaces with new spaces). We looked through cliffs and found a hidden route to the Harbour Bridge with Tanija, and troubled the representation of spirituality in art, map and landscape architecture with Sarah. With Nick, we felt the shape of the roads and the hills, drove north with Shaun and his GPS, and Cliff told us a story of misreading spaces between maps and landscapes. Ben imagined his way through space, getting more lost with maps than without and, finally, Cassie reimagined maps altogether, peering into people’s lives (and her own) and finding her own way.

What then of cartography and code? Part 3: Cartography/Cities tried to make some sense of the philosophical, historical and geographical
trajectories of cartographic reason from lines to numbers. It discussed how lines have come to permeate the cartographic imagination, but that not all lines are equal, or even – and that even reason becomes unreasonable. Then, we discussed how numbers increasingly have become implicated in the representational structures of the world, renegotiating materialities and visualities. We saw, too, how the intertwining Enlightenment philosophies of Descartes and Leibniz have reconverged in new territories, with different implications and interpretations in a digital world.

In *Part 4: Digital/Hong Kong* we turned these thoughts back to the intricacies of everyday digital mappings – not just of cartographic reason but the minute rationalities of drawing lines, writing names and representing manifold landscapes on flat surfaces in a digital age. We started with Daren at Gage Street wet market, as he struggled to map the names of the landscape onto the names of the cartography. We then explored spatial bordering practices and their intersection with data, culture and economies with Ellen, and next, how economies transcend and/or reify cartographic lines with Ravi. After Ravi was Vicki, as we traced the contours of Soho and The Peak district on our way up to Victoria Peak, and the intersections between mapping, cartographic reason and the experience of journeying with Taylor. Mobility was central to mapping with Camille, as we travelled along the escalator system looking up, and looking down, tracing the porous boundaries of public and private space, and moving shorelines with Magdalena and the diminishing length of the trip across Victoria Harbour on the Star Ferry. Finally, with Mohammed, we saw mapping move from points to lines, to two-dimensional figures to volumetric and vertical interpretations of space, the transition from modern to hypermodern to postmodern cartographies (cf. Mitchell, 2008).

What does it mean to engage with maps and mappings in the geo-coded world? asks Pickles (2004) in the conclusion of *A History of Spaces*:

Map after map, layer after layer, identity after identity, combing and recombining, crashing and compounding, erasing and reconfiguring [...] sedimentations, striations, inscriptions, projections, gorings, scalings [...] markings on the multi-subject that is walking through the garden to check the mail. Codings and recodings producing subject and world along axes of difference, as dwelling, access, flow, consumer, owner, borrower, neighbour; indemnities and codings that multiply subjectivities in interesting and always unexpected overdetermined ways. We are, in this sense, over-coded as multiply coded shifting, decentered identities. That is, we are rhizomatic. (Pickles, 2004: 180)
Perhaps we are overcoded and overdetermined, subjugated by cartographic eyes and impulses, anxieties and logics, and by association, the geographic, terminologies, imaginaries and categories of the world. To shift in this circular logic, again like an egg-in-bird-in-egg, is to be caught up in the tangled identities cast upon our lives and our stories by cartographic reason. Pickles turns to critical cartographies for the future – cartographies that reimagine and remap the boundaries and lines of identity/difference, inclusion/exclusion, knowledge/power, cartographies that shatter logic in digital experiments and bring forth the tenacious ambiguity of difference à la Farinelli and Olsson.

Yet, perhaps there is a different answer to the critical tensions within cartography and cartographic media, which lies entirely outside the discourses inherent to the tradition. Throughout these stories, the Janus-faced agents of representational hope and obliteration (constellations of the cartographic and the otherwise-dispersed) arrived in different 'here-and-nows' (Massey, 2003), intertwining with the flows of bodies and memories. These moments of appearance shifted from little blue dots to sticky notes, kilometres per hour to blue-green snakes, sporting fields to disobedient landscapes, ambivalent Pinyin to asking people where to go and from Cartesian fixity to Leibnizian mobilities to something else again, something different, something silent, something ... some thing.

The genealogical project taken on by Foucault towards the end of his life traced the 'insurrection' of 'subjugated knowledges' (Foucault, 2003). What precisely constitutes a subjugated knowledges is a collection of descriptions, knowledges that are: ‘naïve’, ‘insufficiently elaborated’, ‘below the required level of erudition’, ‘noncommonsensical’ and ‘local’; and knowledges that ‘have, in a way, been left to lie fallow, or even kept in the margins’ (ibid.: 7-8). The genealogy of subjugated knowledge is ‘a meticulous rediscovery of struggles and the raw memory of fights’ (ibid.: 8): it is visceral and at times, brutal, but also, usually, epistemological. This is a very particular description in its own ambiguity, yet one that is perhaps too distant for the threads of sadness, attention, anger, intuition, treachery, feeling and hopefulness that wound around and through the everyday moments of encounter with cartographic reason discussed in this book. All the same, it is a good starting point, because it opens up without seeking to close, and because it allows us to underscore that the shudders of subjugated knowledges (and whatever else they may be) have a far reach, even to those clasped in the inextricable grasp of discourse. Furthermore, like Massey and Gordon, Foucault’s description emphasises that even beyond the limits of representation, these moments speak – in a way.
Most importantly, however, Foucault’s work on subjugated knowledge turns us towards a word of caution that Foucault stresses at the very beginning of his lectures at the Collège de France:

[O]nce we have excavated our genealogical fragments, once we begin to exploit them and put in circulation these elements of knowledge that we have been trying to dig out of the sand, isn’t there a danger that they will be recoded, recolonized by these unitary discourse, which having first disqualified them and having then ignored them when they reappeared, may now be ready to re-annex them an include them in their own discourses and their own power-knowledge effects? (Foucault, 2003: 11)

In other words, aren’t we afraid that, now we have identified an intensity of occurrences that perhaps exist anterior to the rules of lines and points, they may collide and eventually be dissolved into the scripture of cartographic reason? Are we not afraid that by discussing these things in their specificity, by assigning them names and giving them a status, a relationality, a place in academic and geographic lexicons that we, too, re-inscribe the same brutalities of representation and order that caused them to surface in the first instance? This is a real and paradoxical concern – one which is central to how we conclude here in both spirit and in practice – and one that pivots at the question of ‘subjugation’ itself.

One difficulty is that we have little vocabulary with which to comprehend what mapping means in the age of mobile media, especially compared to what it has always meant. Certainly tactility, hapticity and embodiment – the swipes and the taps and the twirls and the awkward fixation of putting a finger on the screen – can be catalogued with ever-increasing detail. We can create new words to capture the minutiae of processes of moving through cartographic space or cartographically moving through space. We can name each of those bubbling feelings – of space, of loss, of the way, of ‘y’know’, of hope, of heaviness, of ‘not-right’ or ‘odd’, of disquiet, of ‘secrets’, ‘swamps’, ‘birds’, and having ‘his name’, of luck and of change. Or we could let it go – and accept that by creating such a taxonomy of the othered and the haunting, the absent and the hyper-visible tension that permeates a space we are bringing it into the fold under the terms that have already been set by the finger and the eye, by lines of power whose territory reaches all the way up to the limits of language (Olsson, 2007; Olsson, 1980; Olsson, 1991b). And so I will refer to these things here as simply things, although at times they might be different, because this word allows for some understanding while promoting enough vagueness and ambiguity to slip from the desire of
calculation and control. Why should we bring these precious stories, these examples of a ‘delicate empiricism’ which have been carefully and gently placed in our care and curatorship, into another fold, without permission and use them to create new systems of interoperability, of equivalencies and of generalisation?

These stories have taught me that we must give up on the project of toponymies and taxonomies of experience. We must learn to resist the cartographic impulse to categorise, calculate and control. Rather, we must tell stories, in which the multifaceted refractions of these experiences can be viewed through a prism that has no limitations on difference and less likelihood of repetitions. As equally as there is a space and a role for these desires, we must also recognise that by entrapping ourselves in the nets that they cast, we miss the occasions in which the epistemes of rationality and the discourses of cartographic reason amount to violence against the lived realities that are dwelled.

The encounters in these stories are what they are. At times this has required a mode of interpretation – but this interpretation is my own and where possible I have tried to trace the trajectories of cartographic reason and space where they seem to appear. I do not and cannot pretend to understand and elucidate the complexity of spaces inhabited by each of the people who so generously gave me their time. Nor can I hope to understand their intentions by way of their words and their actions. Gordon's assertion that 'life is complicated' is not too far away from Massey's that the modernist project of generalizable theory sits uneasily against the multivalent and simultaneous ‘ongoing stories of the world’, and to assume an authority on the everyday lives of people based upon a collection of stories and a constellation of events, moments and encounters is completely counterposed to the purpose of this work. Authenticity is lost the moment it appears, a flash in the pan, which cannot be resurrected or reconstructed. The stories as they are told in this book are but one reading, a collection of cumulative experiences during a short journey through two cities. Through ghosts and haunting, it is possible to avoid ‘de-contextualised relativism’ or ‘free-pluralism’ (Gordon, 2008); it is possible to say something meaningful without saying something that re-enacts the violence of boundaries (Pickles, 2004).

If anything, stories like these are merely magnifications of themes felt in moments of mobile mapping – but fall far from the promise of cohered and holistic descriptive clarity. The objective of total description, or any attempt to capture and to cast into stone, or ink, or pixels, or algorithms the completeness of experiences as they occur and are remembered – really to map all the dust as it settles and before it is blown up again – is an exercise
in futility, an impossible exactitude in science. This is a deep description but it is not complete, nor does it desire to be: by no means is the ambition of these stories to create a 1:1 map of a territory, already imagined with a cartographic eye, or to draw all things under a single binary system.

Until this point, we have shied away from the discussion of modernism and post-modernism that seems to be required of a piece of writing such as this. In casting distinctions between grand narratives and small stories, we should talk about these long-form theoretical fields that span the globe, tendrils of thinking that can be lumped together, haphazardly, as unified bodies of thought. Before this book, the discussions over universality/difference unfurl (Butler et al., 2011; Serres, 2011), and no doubt they will continue on after. Yet, I rather view this as a distraction from the point: have we ever been (post)modern (cf. Latour, 1993)? Having been embroiled in the stories here, in their unambiguous diversity, and the subsequent attempts to make sense of what they may mean, then/now/together/alone, in the debates about space and experience and the defining philosophies of our age, I tend to side with Gordon and Massey against the demand to position yourself and your writing on this particular battleground. Subtly, both scholars argue that neither the modernist positivities nor a postmodern critique of representation solves the very present problems of capitalism, domination and neo-liberal desire. Postmodernism applied too enthusiastically as something new, or something continuing (Jameson, 1991) becomes something of an accidental hypocrite. Drawing on Bauman, Gordon critiques the ‘antighost’ project of postmodernist desire to represent, to capture and to express all ‘that resembles modernity’s positivities more than it concedes’ (2008: 13); drawing on Laclau, Massey (2005) laments the assertion that a crisis of representation necessarily equates to a crisis of spatiality, and by association, the assertion that the only way we can understand space is through the limitations, the closure and the stasis of representation. For the moment, in understanding the bridge between cartographic reason and mobile mapping we are limited in what we can do and what we can say – we become bound by the limits of representation, and pushing them further and farther only tells us more of the systems about which we already know.

And so it is impossible to be sure. Gordon suggests, however, that she is sure of one thing: ‘it’s not that ghosts don’t exist’ (Gordon, 2008: 13). We can take this promise to make a possibility that space holds potential in spite of systems of representation, and that somewhere all the collisions, misunderstandings, tactics and strategies, missteps, detours and multiplicities offer us the briefest glimpse at what may exist outside the chiasm-of-thought-and-action of cartographic reason. Chasing total certainty down the
rabbit hole of lines and points is, as Olsson (2007) adeptly states, abysmal. Chiasms become chasms, and we remain stuck.

By starting from the outside (and the other) the allure of epistemological reason might be decentred. This is why we have started from space, waded through cartography and ended with code – to give space a chance, in the way that Massey (2005) means. There reaches a point where we need to stop waiting for openness and potential to make itself known and reconsider the role that we have in shaping possibility – most especially in cartography. But this does not mean surrendering to models of generalizability and interoperability: this does not mean capitulating to the terms of cartographic reason. What these stories have unveiled is that the heterogeneity, the resolute complexity and eternal chaos of space has an inherent value and vitality in how we shape and are shaped by the world. They are surface inscriptions of deeper actions and embodiments, bubbles on the water, the top few layers of an archaeological dig into what mobile mapping means, and what it can do.

When we cease to look at texts and start to look at processes, experiences, ontologies and discourses, the geo-codes, binary systems and algorithms that calculate space in new and automated ways are not emphatically different from the triangulations, geometries and rationalities that came before. It is a mistake to assume that it is a taken-for-granted reality that the authority of cartographic reason rests upon a particular mathematical or scientific method (Feyerabend, 2010). Rather, this authority is predicated upon a persistent and unyielding insistence for a uniformity of spatial experience. This is expressed in the desire for totalising spatial epistemologies and results in a strange ontological transformation as they come to associate their own being-in-space with the signs and symbols of cartographic reason by way of little blue dots, street addresses, pass-cards and geographic data.

By placing space first, these stories inadvertently became a political project counter to the ‘dead and the fixed’ interpretation of space by Foucault (Massey, 2005). They also became a political project to open up different ways of understanding mapping and maps by way of experience and understanding, performance, embodiment, memory and affect. Understanding space in this way, by carefully warding away the limitations of a Cartesian-Leibnizian rationality, there are also opportunities to rewrite history, away from the rusty, dusty archives of colonial mapping projects. By arguing space away from the ‘dead and the fixed’ (Foucault, 1984) into the lively, open and transformation, Massey also opens up time away from the General History critiqued by Foucault (Foucault, 2002a; Foucault, 2002b). The unities of one space, common places and single histories become a veritable mosaic of
multiplicities, interrelations and coevalness (Massey, 2005). I thought at the beginning of this project that structuring the work this way would take on a descriptive axiom – that it would be possible to merely describe what we see and go from there. But I was fooling myself – the project was political from the start as I wilfully and desperately searched for a way of comprehending the role of the mobile map beyond the technological determinism and constructivism of the interface. It is impossible to move beyond this entirely – the words and the gestures that we use are bound up in the histories of science and technologies, from code and algorithms, coordinates, hard drives to disks, to screens and buttons. Yet, these stories reveal that in the intercoding of discourse, representation and experience, knowledge is not subjugated, as Foucault suggests. There is agency to be found, to produce our own representations and give power to the everyday embodiments, emotions and affects – transformative recognitions – without subjugating them to words, lines and numbers. In blossoming flowers, and hidden staircases, and family myths, manifold translations and staying outside (and sometimes going inside) the gates, ghosts appear in a realm beyond the conventions of epistemology and discourse as they are understood by Foucault. And so space it is then, ‘which is neither a container for always-already constituted identities not a completed closure of holism’ (Massey, 2005: 12). Space is our opportunity to understand without categorising, to suggest rather than conclude, to see rather than catalogue, to feel rather than describe. This incompleteness and ambiguity of space is central to the possibility – not of a redemptive politics – but of hope: ‘This is a space of loose ends and missing links. For the future to be open, space must be open too’ (Massey, 2005: 12).

This leads to my final remark: that while haunting may take on ‘the lost subjects of history’, the seething and the lingering fragments of the lived brutalities of colonialism and capitalism, not all ghosts are filled with trauma and sadness. Indeed, the process of uncovering hauntings, of pointing to the occluded and excluded knowledges and experiences, may equally erupt as a process of joy as despair. Ellen’s determination to find happiness in being locked out of Noah’s Ark (and likewise getting into the garden at LOHAS Park), for instance, is not diminished by the violence of private spaces. Similarly, Sarah’s experiences of loss in Hyde Park, and Shaun’s outburst at the erasure of names and people are too easily read as the sadness of ‘native informants’, rather than stories about radical desires to undermine or undo the power of cartographic reason. These are not resistances in the sense of counter-mapping (cf. Dalton and Mason-Deese, 2012) or critical cartography (cf. Crampton and Krygier, 2006; Krygier and Wood, 2009): they
are not maps against cartographic reason or the unbearable surveillance of the cartographic eye. Ambitions like this are difficult in cities like Hong Kong and Sydney because they risk basing epistemological authority in colonial discourse that is always, irreparably, hegemonic. It is important to note that in cartography, haunting does not always irrupt in the ways that we expect. There is joy, too, in getting lost. Although cartographic reason casts shadows of doubt on everyday navigations and intuitions, hesitations in remembering the way and uncertainty in recognising street names and landmarks, the expression of getting and being lost, of finding new things, and the way out again, emerged as a theme again and again: from Marianna, at first point, finding a permaculture garden to the end where Mohammed laughs at impenetrability of the Google 3D map, and his own navigational ambivalence.

As we shift towards digital technologies, this has become a more urgent, and perhaps more serious project, as new modes of surveillance enter into the public and private domains. Much has been written of the brutal intersection of cartographic reason and spatial power, tracing its tendrils of erasure and conquest. To understand these geometries of power at a global and urban scale is an important project, which may help up comprehend what it means to be mediated, to know space, and, indeed, to experience it. But on the other side of the scale, in the everyday and the habitual, these abstract systems of power become lived realities. To live cartographic reason is quite another thing entirely, and for this reason, it is equally important to open up a discussion about what it means to be in a space shaped by cartographic eyes, imaginations and impulses, about the roles that maps do and don’t play in our lives. This implicitly involves tracing the everyday vernacular practices that are developed impromptu, spontaneously and surprisingly to live with these powerful discourses.

There is a futurity through the ghosts that inhabit space – through the lively presence of absence – as equally as we can imagine a future filled with the cartographic media, maps and landscapes produced through the logics of cartographic reason. This is a more difficult task because it starts with the unknown – a map that erases itself rather than carves out its own shape – until it eventually becomes a space of possibility. The actions of the here-now become embedded into spaces that fold in and open up: the beyond-the-limits of representation, the more-than-representational, the not-quite-representational lingers and shifts and irrupts. Furthermore, by understanding cartographic media through a lens of mobile mapping rather than by focusing on cartography or media there opens up more possibility to understand the vast and deep array of practices that defy, revolt and
undermine the potent discourses that have been so exhaustively critiqued by geographers and media theorists alike.

This space is of humility, as we encounter the important and influential other things that exist outside but shape our lives, even if we don’t and can’t find names for them. To discuss without naming, to encounter without capturing, to evoke without closing: this is a project for next time. And it must be a project pinned on possibility and hope – the sheer determination to encounter out not only the networks of power but also the modes of resistance on their own terms: ‘It seems to me, it is quite reasonable to take some delight in the possibilities it opens up’ (Massey, 2005: 14).