From the editor of the issue

One of the earliest publications in the field of Australian Studies that came into my hands was Peter Quartermaine's anthology *Diversity Itself – Essays in Australian Arts and Culture* (1986). I am now remoinded of that title as I endeavour to introduce the 2011 issue of *Zeitschrift für Australienstudien*. Why? – because what you have before you is indubitably a collection of great thematic diversity. No need to 'apologize' for diversity, I think; even in collections that purport to present contributions on only one area will we find those that stray from the straight and narrow – and often they provide the best read. Perhaps it is a typical European attitude that prefers self-imposed thematic shackles to the free roaming of the mind? In Europe it is an unquestioned principle that conferences must have a common thematic concern, while ASAL, which was founded in 1899 and serves as our guiding spirit, eschews such shibboleths. ASAL CFPs frequently contain the laconic statement "Papers on any aspect of Australian Literature will be considered". And why not.

A minority of the papers gathered in this volume were presented at the 12th conference organized on behalf of the German Association of Australian Studies in October 2010 in Klagenfurt. Mitchell Rolls' is one of them. His paper confronts the much-vaunted notion that white Australians were simply too uninformed about the status of the indigenous population to be moved into action. Citing a white activist who "was distressed by [her] ignorance" he points out that such sentiments do not point to Aboriginal distress, no, it is the whites who claim to suffer. About the claim of collective "ignorance" Rolls is skeptical. Since the 1920s at least the "Aboriginal problem" was always an integral part of a discourse of the national. Pictures in the print media (and in many film documentaries) were plentiful. It was less an issue of being uninformed, it was one of not wanting to listen. Most of the novels written in the pre-war period did tell, but as they were now deemed racist the same people who claimed they "had not been told" had labeled them "dangerous" and consigned them to a censorious memory hole. His argument then takes on a highly original and decidedly non-pc direction. The culture of "ennobling guilt" which

so many Australians of good intentions have embraced needs to be critiqued. Rolls maintains that it has created a hegemonic and patronizing discourse. He asks if those who wallow in Australia's collective guilt are not doing so because they love the warm feeling of shame. He is critical of their "narcissistic empathizing." Their discourse freezes Aboriginality in a permanent state of victimhood. The final twist of Rolls' fine paper addresses the question whether Australia's settler-society 'amnesia' concerning colonial treatment of the indigenous is not a standard feature of juvenile humans – and the settler era represents a juvenile phase in Australian history. He even argues that this is matched by certain aspects of systemic Aboriginal amnesia, such as the well-known culture of not naming deceased people.

A particularly delightful article is that by Eva Meidl. An Austrian Archduke with the name of Ludwig Salvator, one of the many European aristocrats keen to expand their geographical horizon, visited the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880 and then several other states. His travelogue contains some interesting observations; at one point he physically intervened when several "disgraceful rascals" attacked two harmless Chinese men walking the streets of Melbourne. Plus ca change …? "Delightful" is the word that also comes to mind when characterizing Michael Ackland's probing essay on one of Australia's best and best-known contemporary authors, Murray Bail. His novels and stories, from his irreverent re-working of "The Drover's Wife" to *Eucalypts*, have always shed an interesting light on collective Australian identity formation or identity critique. A novel title such as *Holden's Performance* immediately calls to mind the 'Holden' car which held such high hopes for Prime Minister Menzies' golden years. In an opening scene the aptronymically named Holden Shadbolt vomits and his vomit jells into the contours of Australia as it appears on our maps. As we follow Holden on his 'Bildungsroman' journey, so Ackland demonstrates, we are made aware of a rich spread of Australia's "know-nothingness" or its servitude to crazy British monarchs and dignitaries, all of which is punctuated by "acerbic comments" on the psychology of the nation's masses. Easily taken in by "mug politicians"

and "huckster salesmen" who can produce "a surf of words" devoid of meaning they resemble Australia's iconic animal, the bleating sheep.

Anne Koch offers a close reading of Alex Miller's award-winning novel *Journey to the Stone Country*, elucidating how Miller's vision of a future bi-cultural collective Australian identity is structured. It is a beautiful vision indeed and should not be put down or sneered at as hopelessly utopian. Judith Wilson's contribution addresses one of the core interest of our German Association: how did German scientists, philosophers, writers of the 18th and 19th Centuries view the Aborigine? In imitation of or in opposition to the British colonizers of "Botany Bay"? She mainly investigates two prominent sources of German knowledge-providers at the time: one the traveller and writer Georg Forster (1754-94), the others the adventurer and popular author, Friedrich Gerstäcker (1816-72).

Ildiko Dömötor is likewise interested in Australia's colonial times. Her foray into the question whether there was or was not a "Colonial gentlewomen's appreciation of rural Australia in the mid-19th century" is based on a wide range of epistolary material and concludes that the usual dismay of British colonials over the lean land soon gave way to a keen appreciation of its unique features. She hints that the "appreciation" may have been gendered: while the men.

Ms. J. Seipel, whose monograph *Film und Multikulturalismus* was reviewed in ZfA 24, contributes an essay titled "Einbindung von MigrantInnen in ein nationales australisches Kino", which provides a welcome overview of the role of female characters in the surge of "multicultural" Australian movies of the 1990s. She covers such important but relatively unknown films as *Floating Life, The Sound of One Hand Clapping* and *Fistful of Flies*.

And definitely not least if last in my survey there is Sybille Kästner's essay on an issue that has become a point of contention amongst ethnologists: were Australia's indigenous women only gatherers and not also hunters? It adds to the rich tapestry of this issue's themes. Sybille won GAST's dissertation award of 2010; she writes well and her

findings add a small but significant detail in our understanding of Aboriginal culture.

The editors also continue with ZfA's practice of giving considerable emphasis to reviews. We can be proud to have such a number of solid and reliable reviewers - they and their reviews are something to be proud of. As in our last issue, there is a review essay that looks at three separate by thematically related books: Oliver Haag's "Uncovering the German Aborigine." It investigates how German publishers have responded to the growing curiosity of mainstream Germans about Australia's indigenous population. My personal favourite amongst the reviews is Werner Senn's review of John Mateer's Collected Poems. It is an art to review poetry, but when a critical review is as deftly handled as here the result is pure reading pleasure.

Meanwhile, our Association continues to issue its bi-annual electronic Newsletter which bubbles with news, reports and debates on Australia's current affairs. Visit it on **www.australienstudien.org** and be part of our thriving community of Australianists abroad.

A.W., Klagenfurt, May 2011.

A.W., Klagenfurt, May 2011.

ESSAYS

Mitchell Rolls

The "Great Australian Silence," the "Cult of Forgetfulness" and the Hegemony of Memory

The anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner titled the second lecture of his 1968 Boyer Lectures "The Great Australian Silence." Between the late 1930s and mid 1950s Stanner contends the nation was practising "a cult of forgetfulness … on a national scale." The specific focus of Stanner's concern—general Australian historiography—is overlooked and his remark is now popularly understood to characterise a more broad sweeping "forgetting" of Aborigines. I have argued elsewhere that considerable information concerning Aboriginal history, the nature of dispossession, and contemporary circumstances was widely available and a constituent element of day-to-day life. Those iterating the populist cry of "Why Weren't We Told," the title of Henry Reynolds best-seller, are overlooking the range of material through an assortment of media that was in fact telling and to which they were exposed. Reynold's question therefore is the wrong one. The quest should be on revealing and understanding the mechanisms of suppression. To this end guilt and shame are the oft cited suppressive instruments, and Australia's maturity as a nation is said to remain burdensome so long as settler triumphalism suppresses an explicit account of Aboriginal-settler relations. In this discourse the processes of remembering and acknowledging emerge as beneficent universal virtues. However, one does not have to subscribe to notions of radical cultural relativism to wonder if the sort of imagined national redemption possible through frank acknowledgment of the fullness of our past is not in and of itself a hegemonic imposition of form. In considering certain aspects of traditional Aboriginal cultures and comparative autobiography this paper posits the ostensibly necessary

and moral force of remembering as a form of hegemony, and argues that notions of the nation's flawed past compromising a later maturity do not necessarily reflect traditional indigenous ways of understanding the aetiology of the present.

In 1951 the prolific journalist, author, and travel writer Colin Simpson[1] published *Adam in Ochre: Inside Aboriginal Australia*. (It was published in America in 1952, again in 1953, and 1954 saw its third Australian impression). It was one of the many books (amongst numerous other cultural productions) that turned its attention towards Aboriginal affairs during the period so evocatively described by the deservedly renowned anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner as the "Great Australian Silence." Stanner (1991:18-29, 24-25) contends that between 1939 and 1955 Australians were in the grip of "something like a cult of forgetfulness practised on a national scale." I have discussed elsewhere how the focus of Stanner's critique—general Australian histories and commentaries—has been overlooked (or conveniently ignored) so as to provide the specificity of his assessment a more all encompassing relevance (Rolls 2010; see also Curthoys 2008:247). So much is this the case that the title of Henry Reynold's (2000) best seller *Why Weren't We Told* is taken as axiomatic by those confessing a primal confrontation with the distressing nature of the history of Aboriginal colonial and settler relations and its enduring legacy. Despite Reynolds providing much in his text pointing to the need for his title to be heavily qualified, its introductory commentary and general thrust lends the title credence.

In his aforementioned *Adam in Ochre* Simpson is pointed about the moral culpability of settler Australians and cynical about the efforts of absolution. It is worth quoting at length from the chapter "They are not Dying Out:"

[1] Simpson was the journalist who revealed the Ern Malley poems published by *Angry Penguins* were a hoax. The revelation was brought to Simpson in his capacity as a leading journalist with the Sydney-based news magazine *Fact* by Harold Stewart's (one of the poets) confidante, Tess van Sommers, who was the unwitting whistleblower. See Thomson 2002.

> It is important that white Australians realize that the aborigines (sic) are here to stay. Once it is realized that they are not marked for extinction, the attitude towards them must change. If the patient is going to live, we can stop thinking about him in terms of the few well-chosen words for the card on the wreath that conscience dictates we must send. We were all set to write some pious sentiments about "man's inhumanity to man", meaning that we, the enlightened ones, bowed our heads with shame over the way grandfather fed poisoned flour to the tribe whose lands he took to run sheep—a piece of smarm that conveniently ignores the fact that we have been living on the proceeds of grandfather's bloody-handed pioneering ever since, and devoting only a pittance to the righting of the wrongs we talk so much about. Pity over what happened to the aborigines in the past has become the great Australian excuse for doing nothing much about them in the present (Simpson:187; see also 197).

Whilst it is true that "general Australian histories and commentaries" evincing sentiments like this, or other work more rigorously providing the corroborating evidence underpinning such sentiments, did not find their way onto educational curricula or syllabi at any level, more broadly such information was in wide circulation. Books, art exhibitions, magazines, newspapers and radio; low, middle, and high brow culture; all carried to a greater or lesser extent, and with greater or lesser vividness and sensitivity, accounts of Aboriginal dispossession and continuing nefariousness. The class and racial divides that fractured geographically so many country towns and inner and outer urban environments were there to be witnessed by everyone and wondered about by an enquiring mind.

Nevertheless, those now motivated by whatever impetus to turn their interests towards addressing the iniquitous position of Aborigines frequently proclaim a hitherto ignorance. As Chris Healy argues,

> Non-indigenous Australians imagine again and again that they have only just learned about indigenous disadvantage—mortality rates, poverty, health, housing and educational opportunities, high imprisonment rates, substance abuse or sexual assault, take your pick—as if for the first time. These endless (re)discoveries of, and about, Aborigines are only possible because non-indigenous Australians forget their own forgetting (Healy:203).

Sarah Maddison provides a typical example in her recent text *Black Politics*.[2] Pointing to the limitations of her 1970s-80s‟ education, which according to Maddison was exacerbated by her family's middle-classness, she states she became ‟distressed by my own ignorance." It was not until her twenties when she ‟really began to come to grips with what it meant to be Aboriginal in contemporary society." A more interesting admission shortly follows: ‟It seems shocking to write this now, but at the time I had just not ever really contemplated the impact of our colonial history on the people most affected" (Maddison:xxxvii). This admission—to a refusal of contemplation—suggests something other than ignorance and the failings of an education system underlying one's general awareness of Aboriginal disadvantage and its precipitating factors. And it is to matters associated with this refusal that I now turn.

Guilt and shame are the oft cited suppressive instruments; the ultimately destructive psychological forces that led settler-Australians to avert their gaze and enquiry away from Aborigines and their iniquitous state. Bernard Smith judged guilt culpable in his 1980 Boyer Lectures *The Spectre of Truganini*. For Smith, until a culture grows ‟firm ethical roots" it cannot develop let alone survive. From 1788 until shortly before 1980 settler Australian ‟guilty awareness" of ‟the crimes perpetrated upon Australia's first inhabitants" had ‟locked the cupboard of our history" (Smith:10). Subscribing to a Freudian analysis of traumatic experience Smith argues that Aboriginal dispossession and bloody frontier conflict is for most settler Australians ‟a nightmare to be thrust out of mind" (Smith:17). Amongst many others, the political scientist and opinion columnist Robert Manne (2001; 1998:7-41), and philosopher Raymond Gaita (2000:57-130), have also written at length on the role played by settler guilt and shame in inhibiting Australia's moral maturity. Common to most

[2] In respect of the Stolen Generations, so too does Robert Manne (2008). For a critique of Manne's "alibi of ignorance" (Wolfe 2008:32) see Wolfe (2008). Also writing of the Stolen Generations, Meaghan Morris states "It is important to clarify that many (I would guess most) white Australians 'were not "aware" of what was happening' *not* because we did not *know* it was happening (we did) but because we were unable or did not care to *understand* what we knew" (Morris 2006:107, Morris's emphasis).

writing on this matter is the belief that the past will remain burdensome so long as settler triumphalism suppresses a full accounting of Aboriginal-settler relations and addresses the foundational seizing of sovereignty (see Rowse in Attwood & Foster 2003:22-3). Most recently this was iterated in the jousting of the so-called history wars. According to Attwood and Foster (2003:17), "debates over the Aboriginal past of Australia … reflect a crisis over the moral basis or foundation of the nation …" (see also Gooder and Jacobs 2000). Such concerns have found expression throughout colonial / settler history. Reynolds' *This Whispering in our Hearts*, which brings to attention those of concerned conscience and its manner of expression, commences "Major moral questions underlie the history of Australian colonisation … They are questions which still concern us. They were there in the beginning" (1998:xi).

It seems needless to state but lost in much of today's moral posturing about Australia's history fact that suppression of detail troubling to nations and cultures is not peculiar to settler societies. Leela Gandhi (1998:4) explains how the "will-to-forget" is a common feature of decolonising nations, where often "a desire to forget the colonial past" arises. This "postcolonial amnesia is symptomatic of the urge for historical self-invention or the need to make a new start—to erase painful memories of colonial subordination". But as with settler societies, discomforting history continues to irrupt rendering ultimately futile the suppression of burdens past. The urge to foreclose specifics of the past (or present for that matter) in order to fabricate a less compromised foundation upon which to imagine a sanguine future is a feature of both settler and decolonising nations.

Mechanisms of forgetting, for differing reasons, are integral to traditional Aboriginal cultures too. Well known is the suppression of names of the recently dead. Television programmes featuring Aborigines or Torres Strait Islanders are obliged to carry a warning for indigenous audiences that the programme might broadcast names or images of those now deceased. Partly for this reason—suppressing the names of their recently dead—many traditionally-oriented remote Aboriginal societies and cultures have shallow genealogical recall, with

few remembering beyond the level of grandparents if that. As summarised by Basil Sansom (2006:154, 152-59), "The unremembering of persons is a letting go of history. When history is thus abandoned there remains no counter-evidence to the proposition that things as they are today are as they always have been." This points to another salient feature of Aboriginal societies and cultures. That which is new is incorporated into the eternity of the now of the Dreaming. In this way, for example, the water buffalo is not a recently introduced alien or pest but a particular manifestation of the rainbow serpent, which in itself is of comparatively recent origin, appearing for the first time, visually at least, c.3,000-6,000 years B.C. (Bowman & Robinson 2002:200; Altman 1982; Morphy 1998:50. As Sansom (2006:151) argues, for many Aboriginal groups "Emplaced traditions work … to eliminate all memory of any historical departures from once-established norms." This is of little consequence in respect to the maintenance of traditional cultural practices, but it is of consequence when suppression is practiced to effect shallow recall against the "actual vicissitudes of human history" (Sansom 160). Land rights claims are one area where this is evident.

> In the Finniss River case it became clear that the elders of an immigrant group felt duty-bound to edit history and withhold from their children the knowledge of an immigrant past. They returned history to the formula: "always was always will be" to assert that they had held the country they now occupied in all eternity and from the Dreaming (Sansom:160).

Although of a different magnitude, precipitated by a peculiar history but indicative of what seems to be a universal urge to deploy mechanisms of suppression to the service of particular interests, offending sections of the film *The Last Tasmanian*—in which Tasmanian Aborigines had earlier denied their identity as such, and used other descriptors to name themselves—were routinely blanked on video stock held by the University of Tasmania. It is inappropriate on the basis of moral, political or ideological principles to find favour with, say, the postcolonial amnesia of decolonising nations or the deployment of traditional amnesias for strategic purposes and fault the amnesia of settler societies. The will-to-forget and its corollary, a will-to-power, do not enjoy rectitude in the one instance and not the other,

for a similar order of self-interested tampering of the historical record is committed.

That holds true at least insofar as one subscribes to the redemptive value of historical disclosure, of the need to acknowledge the past in all its complex messiness in order for the nation to overcome its "legacy of historical shame" (Manne 1998:13). Such a linear, chronological notion of cause and effect with the present a sequel of cumulative pasts is not necessarily a universal. This can be illustrated through the example of autobiography. Autobiography is analytically apt for the nation is anthropomorphised in notions that it suffers unrelieved shame, carries a burden of guilt, and so on. Concluding *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson likens a nation's growth to the growth of an individual who suffers "characteristic amnesias" as s/he ages. Things like the consciousness of childhood which "cannot be "remembered"" are reconciled with the person one is now through narrative: "As with modern persons, so it is with nations" (Anderson 204, 205). Of pertinence is the characteristic of that reconciling narrative. In the Australian context Aborigines are made the subjects of a lineal narrative, or strategically adopt the subjectivity it offers. In this way they are somewhat ironically further encapsulated by the ideological apparatuses of the nation state.

Autobiography is "conventionally regarded as the coherent shaping of the past from the perspective of the unified self in the present" (Hamilton 1990:129). This is a western literary occupation and as such its form is beholden to the literary conventions developed within a western consciousness. This consciousness is crucial to the way in which the life of the self is perceived and portrayed, similarly the life of the nation. Discussing the narratives of lives that have survived from the Greek and Roman eras, Karl Weintraub asserts in contrast that

> [t]he ancients did not put a premium on the life devoted to settling the quandary: who am I? how did I come to be what I am? in what sense am I a distinctive personality? and what complex interplay of external forces and internal characteristics accounts for my specific configuration? There was no need to use autobiography as a basic quest

> for the self, or as a tool for self-clarification (cited in Brumble 1990:46; see also Gusdorf 29).

Post-Romantic western consciousness led to the posing of these questions concerning the self which have fundamentally determined the context and structure of modern autobiography. The privileging of egocentric individualism, and the historical reconstruction of life in sequential order, and the imposed teleological qualification or notion of progress upon this lineal depiction, are all features of conventional autobiographies.[3] So too is the notion that each event in life, *as in the life of a nation*, influences one's subsequent life, as well as the realisation that one's life, *or the nation's*, could have been other than what it has been (Krupat 261; Brumble 1990:16; Brumble 1985:708).[4]

David Brumble (1990:46) argues that autobiographical narratives which issue from pre-literate cultures differ from conventional narratives in much the same way as do the narratives of the ancient Greeks and Romans. He reached this conclusion following his study of the then 600 published Native American autobiographies (1986:283). Several of these, but one in particular, indicate how the self and life is perceived when an individual is unfamiliar with modern autobiographical traditions, and is not acculturated to a western consciousness.

Gregorio, a Navajo hand-trembling diviner and shepherd, led a remote and predominantly solitary existence. He returned to his community only once every two or three months (Brumble 1986:276-77). Story-telling was not part of his life, either in first-person oratory or in any other form. A psychiatrist, Alexander Leighton, and his wife, were collecting Navajo life stories in 1940. Gregorio witnessed this and volunteered his own 15,000 word story, which he told over several

[3]There are gender differences in how the self is depicted in many autobiographies. The privileging of egocentric individualism is not as apparent in women's narratives, or the notion of progress. However, these characteristics are still more evident in non-indigenous women's narratives than in black autobiographies (see Hooton:101-03, 374).

[4] Despite the challenges and opportunities posed by postmodernism and post-structuralism, few modern Western narratives have succeeded ultimately in emancipating themselves from such a reconstruction of the self.

days. Initially no attempt was made to rearrange Gregorio's story to fit within western narrative styles, and its first telling was kept intact (Brumble 1986:276-77, 282-83).

The differences between Gregorio's narrative and the narratives of acculturated Native Americans, or Native American narratives that have been subjected to some form of external control or interference (by a translator, transcriber, amanuensis, editor, or whoever) are many. Native American autobiographers who have had narrative control imposed upon them, even if not overtly—a simple question is all it takes to shape response—or who have had exposure to first-person story-telling traditions, produce narratives that closely resemble western autobiographical conventions. Gregorio's narrative lacks reflective self-consciousness and introspection. Childhood, that segment of life which Romanticism regarded as being critical in the shaping of the adult, is not mentioned at all. I'm arguing here that this is akin to omitting frontier history in an account of the nation. Events within Gregorio's life are not seen as determining, or in any way as shaping or altering the course of his life. A sense of progress is absent: one set of circumstances is not seen to lead into another. The early death of his parents, his marriage to someone he did not like, then remarriage to a "good" woman are events which simply happened. There is no association between an event and the life which follows (Brumble 1986:282-87). According to Brumble (1986:285), the chronological sequencing of events could be changed with no logical disruption to the narrative.

Discussing narratives of illiterate Native Americans, including Gregorio's, Brumble argues:

> we do not find these Indians telling stories in such a way as to suggest exactly how they came to be just the men or women they were. These Indians tell of deeds done, of hardships endured, of marvels witnessed, of buffalos killed, and of ceremonies accomplished. They do not relate their tales each to each; their tales are not designed to work together to convey a unified idea of the narrator as an individual, separate, distinct, and different from what he or she might have been (Brumble 1985:708. His emphasis).

In other words, life stories such as this stand in stark contrast to conventional western autobiographical narratives. Similarly, anthropomorphising the nation with notions of a flawed past (childhood) compromising its later maturity and with redemptive prescriptions deemed necessary do not necessarily reflect traditional indigenous ways of understanding the aetiology of the present. One does not have to subscribe to notions of radical cultural relativism to wonder if the sort of imagined national redemption possible through frank acknowledgment of the fullness of our past is not in and of itself a hegemonic imposition of form, an emotional, psychosocial tyranny. Or at least the imposition of a set of doctrinaire assumptions about confession, guilt, the need for its extirpation, and the fruits such extirpation will bring. We should be alert to Frantz Fanon's warning, albeit in another context, that "Like it or not, the Oedipus complex is far from coming into being among Negroes … This incapacity is one on which we heartily congratulate ourselves" (Fanon:151-52).

Critiquing the impetus for the movement for reconciliation between Aborigine and settler the respected anthropologist Peter Sutton writes that for Aborigines, or at least those furthest from urbane bourgeoisie sentimentality,

> Remorse scarcely enters the picture, nor does conscience, nor does a feeling of guilt. Those who will these states onto traditional Indigenous minds are projecting their own Eurocentrism in one of those many later refinements of the colonial impulse that are based on a misplaced good will…
>
> The non-indigenous reconciliationist's desire to engage in self-blame must seem unreadable, or at least merely exotic, to many Indigenous Australians. Blame in the classical Aboriginal scheme of things is consistently directed outwards to others not inwards to the self (Sutton:200).

To the extent that Aborigines embrace calls for the nation to atone for its colonial past, and many of the least disadvantaged and better educated appear to do so, it demonstrates both acculturation and the seductiveness of particular western forms. In a similar vein many recall and trace identity from ancestors that under traditional (classical) cultural practices would have long been forgotten. Not only is this a vital link on a personal level for many Aborigines, the need to

demonstrate such links is also a product of legislation, particularly the Native Title Act. One evidentiary requirement Aborigines need to demonstrate in applications for native title is that of unbroken cultural and genealogical continuity with the past.

Besides guilt and shame racism is touted as another of the instruments prompting a forgetting of Aborigines throughout the middle decades of the twentieth century. Literature in particular is signalled out for censure. Throughout the early part of this period very little literary fiction explored Aboriginal history or contemporary Aboriginal-settler relations. More popular work that was inclusive of Aborigines and Aboriginal issues, such as that of the prolific raconteur Ion Idriess, is held at best to be insensitive, at worst racist (see Shoemaker:39-98). Adam Shoemaker (56) argues that the "condescending conception of Aboriginal people which underlies Idriess's novels was one which was shared by the majority of Australians in the 1929-45 period." I have discussed in another paper how literature now suffering revisionist opprobrium when read in light of current moral and ideological concerns is not as straightforwardly nefarious, injurious or racist as critics portray (see Rolls 2010a). Of relevance here is that those now displaying, often ostentatiously so, sensitivity to Aboriginal welfare and history find further justification for their hitherto ignorance. Because Aborigines were not of particular interest to a sufficient number of authors, there were insufficient of the "right" sort of books to read, meaning those of some literary sophistication. The unstated inference is that this absence too was a consequence of guilt, shame or racism. On the other hand, admitting to reading those popular texts inclusive of Aborigines, such as Idriess's novels, is an admission of enjoying works now criticised for their racism. Of Idriess, Shoemaker (1989:139, 55-7) asks rhetorically "how many thousands of readers have accepted the implicit prejudices" against Aborigines.

Whatever the validity or otherwise of the above criticism, and fault certainly can be found, the salient issue here is that a great deal of popular work available between 1937 and 1955 was voicing issues—an Aboriginal presence, murderous frontier conflict, dispossession,

miscegenation, Aboriginal activism—avoided in that field of general historiography identified by Stanner as contributing to the "Great Australian Silence." There is a poignant irony that literature now critiqued on the grounds of how it represents Aborigines (and others including women) is some of the very literature that did the telling belying the defensive "why weren't we told." If reader discernment is allowed and not foreclosed, it is possible this popular literature helped in sensitising a reasonably broad readership to issues avoided by those with more delicate, effete or learned tastes.

As noted, confessional iterations of the ostensible awakening to Aboriginal-colonial and -settler history presume an ailing settler nation and collective black suffering. A growing body of literature, particularly in the US and much of it published by black intellectuals, is critiquing an enduring identity of victimhood assumed by black activists. White guilt is pivotal to realising the objectives of this identity. An incident in the lead up to the US election—when a journalist recorded Jesse Jackson uttering the throwaway line that he wanted to castrate Barack Obama—exemplifies this discussion. Shelby Steele, a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, provides an insightful analysis of Jackson's outburst. According to Steele, Jackson, a prominent and effective activist in the civil rights movement, eschewed pursuing equality "out of a faith in the imagination and drive of his people", and instead

> pursued equality through the manipulation of white guilt. Their [civil rights activists] faith was in the easy moral leverage over white America that the civil rights victories of the 1960s had suddenly bestowed on them … To argue differently—that black development … might be a more enduring road to black equality—took whites "off the hook" and was therefore an unpardonable heresy (Steele 2008:26).

Obama's ascension to Democratic presidential nominee embodied that "unpardonable heresy." Obama did not seek office or broad white electoral support by exploiting white guilt—indeed had he done so his campaign would not have enjoyed the necessary support—but through emphasising individual responsibility, education, judicious decision making, and tacitly demonstrating the opportunities available outside moral leverage as the mechanism responsible for extracting dues. In

respect to the significance of individual Aboriginal responsibility in overcoming inequality and welfare dependency, the Australian Cape York leader Noel Pearson has made similar claims to Steele (whom he cites in some essays. See Pearson 2007:20-58).

The interest in this paper is not in the identity mobilised by Aborigines but in settler investment in the seductive qualities of "an ennobling guilt" (see Turner:45, 44-58). Those claiming to have become recently aware of Aboriginal history—including those asking "Why Weren't We Told"—frequently empathise with Aboriginal suffering to the extent that Aboriginal pain and trauma becomes their own. As noted previously, in *Black Politics* Maddison claims to have been "distressed by [her] own ignorance." In this claim she is not bearing witness to Aboriginal distress, or at least not that alone; she *herself* is acutely suffering. Maddison goes on to explain how her "response to this growing awareness was a paralysing guilt. The more I learned about Australia's colonial history, the worse I felt." Taking her guilt to an Aboriginal elder she was advised to get angry instead and she did (Maddison:xxxvii-xxxviii), which on one level at least continues her narcissistic empathising.[5] Empathy per se, or the capacity to imagine walking in the shoes of another, should not be traduced. In respect to colonialism, however, the trauma iterated by today's individuals is not isolable from broader socio-cultural and socio-political currents and exigencies. Ideology shapes if not prefigures the confected memory of past trauma. David Lloyd explains how,

> [i]n the case of colonialism, the relation to the past is strictly not a relation to one's own past but to a social history and its material and institutional effects and in no simple way a matter of internal psychic dynamics. The problem emerges as to how the transition from the level of the individual to that of the social can be theorized, since it is not self-evident that there is any necessary relation between the psychological and the social that is not already ideological (Lloyd:216).

[5] See Cowlishaw (2004, 242-45) for discussion on the 'narcissistic desire … to improve the Indigenous population' (244) and the narcissist's investment in a 'victimized Aboriginality' (242). In a similar vein see Wolfe's (2008) critique of Robert Manne's (2008) propensity to make himself the subject of his recent writing on Aboriginal issues.

This helps explain (though of course not entirely) why subsequent generations frequently narrate conflicting and often contradictory responses to past trauma.[6]

Further, the communal "solidarity of remembered victimhood" (see Buruma 4) and the demotic sentimentalising of suffering in the manner of Maddison above—"[by] sharing the pain of others, we learn to understand their feelings, and get in touch with our own" (Buruma 7)—turns trauma into a romanticist aesthetic which manifests in the public sphere as a "heritage of suffering" (Hamilton 2003:95). Further again, the relation between broader ideological currents that pre-configure the psychological is pertinent not only to those (strategically) fomenting a community of anguish based on historical trauma, but also to many of those glibly adopting the mantle of the supportive activist. Paula Hamilton argues the confessional profession of ignorance—"Why weren't we told"—in light of the many and varied accounts of Aboriginal history over the last two decades, "obscures the transformation of a national consciousness which has already taken place to allow their articulation" (Hamilton 2003:92). Oddly enough, whilst on the one hand those confessing a hitherto ignorance appear to be embracing a believed-in historicity of the emergent explanatory narratives, on the crucial issue of memory and its articulation they negate history altogether. As Hamilton (2003:92) points out, "[t]he idea of "forgetting" encourages an empiricist explanation—as if memories were waiting under a rock to be found rather than constituted at a time of different questions."

Public utterances of ignorance in the manner of confession, and the crude Freudianism permeating the assumption that this in itself is healing, demonstrate adherence to popularly rendered western cultural forms, not an understanding of classical Aboriginal cultures. Writing of 1990"s reconciliation discourse, Haydie Gooder and Jane Jacobs (2000:238-39) note the "persistent assumption … that encountering

[6] See Bain Attwood (2001) for a discussion on how and why narratives concerning Aboriginal children separated from their families—the "stolen generations"—have changed over time.

"truth" and apologizing will function palliatively, and that from these two interlinked processes will emerge a healed nation" (see also Lloyd:218). That we assume a universal response to trauma that needs supporting by western psychoanalytical practices and/or psychological counselling services was demonstrated in another context when a colleague sought to interview Balinese in the aftermath of the 12 October 2002 nightclub strip bombing in which 202 people were killed, 88 of whom were Australians. Her human research ethics clearance required her to present the Balinese interviewees with an information sheet advising them that the interview would raise sensitive issues that could precipitate emotional trauma, possibly necessitating professional counselling. The Balinese thought this assumption absurd (pers. comm. 15 June 2010).

Changed circumstances necessitate different strategy and choices: culturally, psychologically and politically. Exigencies determine what is remembered and how, what is forgotten and how, and what functions the remembered and the forgotten serve. As Mark McKenna (2003:132) notes, "Different politics demand different memories." The practices of amnesia and recall are situational and fluid. This is as true for Aborigines as it is for others, including the broader Australian population. Theories that guilt or an unutterable shame are the catalyst for the "cult of forgetfulness" and the "Great Australian Silence" are compelling. The suppression of guilt (Freud) and the redemptive value of confession tap into powerful western discourses. These provide a ready explanatory apparatus that resonates as commonsense. They also facilitate the strategic adoption of a heritage of suffering. In order to better exploit settler guilt in the interests of leveraging attention to claimed rights and compensation for losses and historical trauma where restitution is impractical or impossible, "[w]e no longer create our own lives, we repeat the injuries of former times" (see Bruckner 141). That this strategy ultimately and quickly comes to the end of useful service is not the concern of this paper.[7] The theories

[7] On this point see Buruma 1999; Lloyd 2000; Sicher 2000; Steele 2006; Sowell 2006; Michaels 2006.

of guilt and shame, however, provide an unsatisfactory explanation for the concern identified by Stanner.

It is not difficult to demonstrate that at the demotic level in the era which Stanner proposed was characterised by a "cult of forgetfulness practiced on a national scale" there was very little forgetfulness (in respect to Indigenous presence) practiced, and that which was—whether by settler or indigene—might well have had its own therapeutic value. To wit in another context Aborigines suppress the names of the dead and erase from memory historical departures from erstwhile norms. It is hard not to conclude that a geopolitical middleclass (urban, educated) has captured this issue and retrospectively shaped it in light of their own concerns, sensibilities and pretensions. That relations betwixt black and white between 1939 and 1955 in the regions where that relationship was manifestly present was often fraught, sometimes violent, abusive and mostly gauche is not in doubt. Nevertheless, the trajectory of that relationship has not been adequately explained, with the propensity to read it in binary, racist or oppressive terms only. Finding guilt and shame responsible for apparent silences in the past and ignorance in the present diligently obscures how localised and specific any silence was. Given the underlying pop Freudianism it is tempting to join in and propose that guilt and shame better explains the unease of current discussants, not the generation before them, who at least in regional Australia were, however awkwardly and inappropriately, engaged in the ongoing process of negotiating the relationship between Aborigine and settler. The refrain "why weren't we told" captures something of the obscurantist's intent to avoid interrogating their own former aversions and to displace complicity. It aids the imposition of hegemonic models: western conception of a unified self formed cumulatively and coherently from his / her past; repressed trauma; therapeutic confession; the role of memory; guilt, shame and absolution. The noise generated by this ostensibly corrective hyperactivity stigmatises the previous generation and not only renders the protagonists deaf to the many and varied sounds of Aboriginal-settler relations between 1939 and 1955, the suppressive qualities of the clamour generates silences of its own.

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Michael Ackland

Politics, clichés and the "lurky country": Murray Bail's critique of national mythologies in *Holden's Performance*

From the outset of his career as a novelist, Murray Bail has been concerned with the perennial issues of Australian identity and the country's putative destiny. As the progeny of a predominantly white, Victorian settlement on the far rim of the Asia-Pacific region, Australians have been acutely conscious of their belatedness, isolation and reliance on a transplanted culture. These factors, together with continued dependence on powerful allies, have produced Australians" notorious "cultural cringe". Australia, too, throughout its relatively brief history of Caucasian settlement, has usually been acted upon, rather than taken decisive steps to shape its own destiny. Like Holden Shadbolt, the main protagonist of Bail's second novel, *Holden's Performance*, who is at times "unable to talk", the country "appeared to need a shove in the right direction. This was always his trouble, the problem" (159). For the first hundred and twenty years it meekly followed the dictates of Whitehall, until granted independent status at Federation in 1901. Thereafter it prided itself on loyalty to the British flag, and remained dependent on London for investment capital, as well as markets for its primary produce. Only the "shove" provided by Japan's attempt to extend its empire during the Pacific War moved the loyal Commonwealth member-state from the side of an isolated and encircled Britain to embrace the burgeoning superpower on the other side of the Pacific, the United States. Bail, in his early novels, is concerned with the antipodean nation that emerged victorious after the Second World War, and with national traits and blindness that threatened to rob the Great South Land of the glittering destiny that might have awaited it as a developed Western nation positioned near the rising economic epicentres of the Asia-Pacific region.

Bail's preoccupation with these issues emerges through his principal characters and in numerous colorful incidents. Midway through *Holden's Performance*, for instance, disaster unexpectedly strikes. A boisterous, drunken cinema patron is firmly and expertly removed from his seat by Shadbolt, in his role as bouncer. The rest should be mere routine, and so it is as Holden begins "frogmarching towards the revolving doors a wiry man with a flashy watch, hiccupping and protesting pedantically" (170). Virtual strangulation with his collar and tie assures compliance until they reach the foyer, where the man suddenly goes limp. Holden instinctively relaxes his grip. The proprietor, Alex Screech, true to his name thunders a warning, but too late: "Pitching forward the geography teacher from Broken Hill turned khaki and hiccupped at Shadbolt's feet a broad lava of vomit, and stumbled out into the fresh air" (170). Shock, horror. This seems by any measure a calamity for cinema premises that depend on extending a welcoming interior to would-be patrons—a catastrophic situation which Holden is about to attempt to rectify when his employer restrains him: "The vomit had almost stopped its spread, and as they watched it rapidly settled and adjusted here and there, suddenly accelerating at the edges, a matter of viscosity, of carpet drag, until it reached the final unmistakable shape—Australia" (171). All Holden has to do is remove his massive size-12 shoe from the mess to complete the familiar outline by producing the Gulf of Carpentaria:

> As they stared the uneven surface congealed into mountains and river courses, a pre-Cambrian, a vast desert of abandonment, plateaus there and mineral deposits, dun-coloured claypans, such emptiness, the rich wheat belts ragged among the mallee at the southern edges, while to the north, strips of spinach-coloured vegetation and what appeared to be mangroves. Bright red particles located the capital cities with surprising accuracy and many, though not all, major towns (ibid).

Wracked with consternation and indecision, the pair gazes down uncertainly on this disgusting yet fascinating conglomeration, as Bail deftly conjures up analogies. Viewed abstractly, "it sparkled there on the sea-blue [carpet], the jewel in the Pacific" (ibid), recalling colonial panegyrics to the continent's splendid destiny under white management. Aesthetically, too, it is a unique, unrepeatable yet nauseating creation. Even patriots are likely to find it "distasteful" (172), and "already some blow-flies were buzzing around the Northern Territory" (171). Nevertheless, its appearance is perplexing:

> (…) rich but empty, an extreme place, still to be civilised. When everybody knew it was the complete opposite: there were plenty of things to like about the place, you only had to look outside at the streets and shops, at the beach and the clear blue sky (172).

Serried clichés jostle with realities until the arrival of "the most fastidious of their regulars", the Goodloves, puts an end to speculation and indecision. Holden, who triggered this involuntary eruption, now moves quickly to limit its potentially calamitous effects. With a few strides he, like a primordial titan, detaches the glass lid of the confectionary counter and places it over the vomit. At a stroke, readers are told, "a disaster had been turned into a valuable asset" (172).

Enacted here in riotous miniature is a creation myth that raises the recurring questions associated with *terra australis*, or the great south land.[1] Will observers/discoverers find this startling spectacle a marvel or an abomination? Should it be effaced as a terrible mistake, or can a counter-case be made? Does it deserve, in brief, to continue to exist? And if so, what does it signify? What could its ultimate purpose be? In addition, there is the issue of its present state. The narrator's description is tantalizingly open-ended. Certainly it exhibits many of the standard tokens of development, as well as markers of modernity, but is it civilised in a profounder sense? Have mental horizons ever shifted beyond the mind-dulling sameness of beach and blue sky? Fittingly, it is at this cinema, too, that Screech poses related questions to his captive audience: "Now here's the crunch . . . Can you pinpoint your position in the larger story? What are you up to? Some people—most people—allow themselves to be simply taken along by events. Are you one of them? Listen" (148-49). Bail's novel performs a similarly admonitory function, exposing local foibles and parochial indsets, as well as the identity-endangering undertow exerted "by events".

This concern with national issues emerged first in interviews and non-fiction, then was a catalyst in the author's shift from short to longer fiction. Born in September 1941, Bail, like many intellectuals of his

[1] On this tradition see Ackland, 'Whence true authority' 1993, and Gibson.

generation, recalled the first two post-war decades with disdain and scarcely concealed loathing. It was, he has stated, "a drought time of conservatism, conformity and censorship, the R.G. Menzies era" (1988 xv). He experienced his hometown Adelaide as overwhelmingly reactionary, Protestant, and fiercely defensive of time-honored English standards: in short, "it was . . . so closed and strict" and philistine. "If I'd stayed in Adelaide, I couldn't have completed these things [his early books]" (Grealy). There conduct was firmly regulated, judgments were starkly black and white. Shades of grey or of black that would later fascinate him in communities overseas, or in the tantalizing canvases of Mark Rothko and Ad Reinhardt, were anathema. Society seemed obsessed with money and practicalities, while its characteristic wedding of small-mindedness with self-important pretensions was pinpointed years later when he noted of *Gulliver's Travels* that Jonathan Swift's precise co-ordinate of 30° 2" south "doesn't exactly match Lilliput on his map—the island is inland, somewhere in South Australia, perilously close to Adelaide" (1987, 1330). A similarly stultifying mind-set held sway in other state capitals and was a hallmark, according to Bail, of this "time of boredom and emptiness—of almost deafening emptiness" (Lysenko 38). The corollary of a land and people intellectually parched, culturally bereft, was a literature "somehow affected by a desert wind. I find most of it dry, curiously empty, akin to journalism", and in need of energetic overhaul (1977).

Boredom and constraint spawned a desire for movement and broader horizons, which were sought abroad and in European literature. During four years spent in London at the beginning of the seventies he encountered the origins of much that he had found most baneful in the antipodes. In particular, he bridled at the English emphasis on empirical, commonsensical and utilitarian approaches, which produced an "urge for classification. Everywhere" (*L*12), a "glut of words—at office and national level (*L*17), and "the peculiar ordinariness of the British" (*L*109).[2] Profound inertia was almost palpable ("Some days the stagnancy of the

[2] *L* indicates a page reference to *Longhand* (1989), which was reissued in an expanded form in 2005.

British and everything they've left standing resembles one of those chipped enamel tubs raised from the ground by iron paws" [*L*21]), while he noted how "the good sense and dreary stability of England, which extends into literature, provokes in me an opposing, forceful stance" (*L*65). Seeking an antidote to the Anglophone obsession with characterisation, he turned to European writers, claiming they "regularly go beyond, extending more readily into speculation, novels of elastic shape and size, to include ideas, comment, over-arching philosophies—invention" (2005, 34). Audacity, speculation and invention became his watchwords. Inspiration was found in authors as diverse as Kafka, White, Tournier, Roussel, Borges, Marquez, Calvino, Grass and Bernhard: all of them writers concerned as much with ideas "as with tracing the usual psychological contours" of protagonists, and with securing for themselves creative elbow room" (2005, 34). Meanwhile in London Bail jotted down Flaubert's admonition, at the time dubbed "premature advice": "Be regular and ordinary in your life, like a bourgeois, so that you can be violent and original in your books" (*L*28), as well as Bacon's assertion that "the peculiar difficulty" faced by art today was to defamiliarise reality boldly and to launch a visceral assault on its audience (*L*80). Other entries show a similar attraction to statements that envisage art in adversarial, iconoclastic terms.

His first assault on Australian complacency, self-satisfaction and post-war triumphalism came in 1975, when he burst upon the literary scene with *Contemporary Portraits and Other Stories*. Many of these works, Bail conceded, are "propositional", in the sense of "proceeding to answer a certain problem or to explore one" (Davidson 265), as well as far more concerned with issues of perception and revelatory incidents than with probing psychological motivation. Frequently the result is technically challenging, multi-layered artifacts. Some stories turn reader expectations on their heads, such as "Heubler", others make the act of imaginative creation as much a point of interest as the protagonists" lives, as in "A B C etc". Tacitly, too, they recognise frustration, incomprehension and distress as hallmarks of local existence. In "Cul-de-Sac" Biv's nearest approach to fulfilment is a lighted bedroom window, seen from afar, which shows a young woman undressing, in "Paradise" it is a prohibited roof-top garden for Hector. For the scrambling participants in "The Partitions" it is precariously glimpsed

from on high, while "The Dog Show" systematically erases the distinguishing traits between man and beast. Some characters virtually abandon the blundering struggle, or comedy, that passes for human interaction, and retreat to what they hope is a safe, though probably still vulnerable distance. Others are caught unawares, with their vacuous, unhappy lives utterly exposed. In a world over which the empirical sciences had promised mastery, Bail repeatedly depicts human beings as unfulfilled and defeated by existence—traits that recur in his early novels.

Ultimately Bail's ambitions, and in particular his desire for a comprehensive reckoning with Australian tradition, arguably dictated his shift from the short story to the novel. In 1980 he distinguished these fictional forms in terms respectively of compression and complexity. "By definition a short story should be a compression of something, a single facet or point of view, prejudices—or character assassinations, if you like—in which everything is carefully composed, a deliberate assembly of traits" (Sayers). Eventually he found that what he wanted to present demanded works with greater potential scope. "To me, the complexity of the world is the most interesting thing about it, and I have realized that I can best express my view of the world in the novel" (Sayers). He was also increasingly aware of the role of myth and imagination in shaping his homeland, in the past as well as the present. "Imaginary voyages to Australia", he noted in 1987, "continued long after the European occupation", and he stressed how "the enormous invisibility of the place, once the subject of geological myth", had "become a source for more elaborate literary myths" (1330), as well as the cradle of key local stereotypes that he would dissect in *Holden's Performance*.

Bail's first direct fictional critique of Australian traits and attitudes came in *Homesickness* (1980). Although it focuses on the peregrinations of tourists through diverse overseas museums, real and imagined, and through numerous countries, the fact that the group consists entirely of Australians, means that antipodean preoccupations and secular mythologies constantly intrude into the narrative. Invariably the tourists seek self-confirmation in what reminds them of home, such as the corrugated iron collection, or the red, bibulous nose of a Londoner that

uncannily recalls Uluru. A complementary obtuseness often marks their response to foreign cultures, as when the first African museum merely evokes for the Cathcarts parallels with the junk in their own garage (30). Unobtrusively but devastatingly, *Homesickness* captures a prevalent tendency towards self-deprecation ("We don't speak very well. Have you noticed how the Americans are so descriptive and confident? Our sentences are shorter. Our thoughts break off. We don't seem comfortable talking, I don't know why" [296-97]), as well as patriotic assertions of local achievement, singled out in graffiti, such as "Capt. Cook/Burke and Wills/Crap all over Burton" (137), or "Balls to tennis" and "Australians ace" (72). Also the quest for what is distinctively local is narrowed, in time-honored fashion, to such mesmerizing words as "kangaroo" and "boomerang", with Bail providing a serried bestiary drawn mainly from European letters:

> "Implacable kangaroos of laughter", wrote young Lautréamont—a fine metaphor. Very fine. Young Alfred Jarry had his supermale box with not one but several kangaroos. You find the noun leaping like a verb from the hallowed pages of Louis Aragon, Malraux in China, and Goncourt's Journal—yes, he reported eating authentic kangaroo meat during the siege of Paris. Another naturalist is Gide (349-50).

This page-long catalogue, sampled briefly here, is as much a testimony to the author's affinity with indefatigable classifiers and collectors of rare oddments, like his fictional characters Zoellner and Holland, as it is to the perennial fascination exercised by Australia's "visually surreal" marsupial (349). Yet even exhaustive endeavours to focus on what is quintessentially Australian cannot dispel the wide-spread, confidence-sapping fear, articulated by Violet, that

> we come from a country . . . of nothing really, or at least nothing substantial yet . . . Even before we travel we're wandering in circles", largely devoid of feelings, understanding, directive ideas or beliefs (393).

These attributes and their putative origins are a key concern of Bail's next novel, *Holden's Performance* (1987). A *Bildungsroman* that boldly subverts the genre, it traces its main protagonist's growth towards an adulthood associated not with insight, self-knowledge and independent decision-making, but with emotional and mental stultification and abject submission. Holden Shadbolt is a mixed creation, with sufficient psychological depth to give him individual status, yet with stereotypical

traits that lend his portrait national, even universal relevance. Characterised by blankness of expression and "know-nothingness" (13), Shadbolt, despite his great strength, endurance and generosity of spirit, remains a deeply flawed and stunted human being. He is, in many respects, an intensely ordinary, predictable figure, a veritable austral everyman, differing from the average only insofar as in him national characteristics, produced by atavism or life on the great south land, are sometimes pushed to extremes.

"Even by the standards of the landscape and a laconic people the drollness of this boy was something else again" (45). This drollness arises largely from his apparent indifference and taciturnity, so that irrespective of what "he saw or said or listened to his face remained as expressionless as his elbow" (45). Blinking is the main sign he gives of mental life, while his bovine passivity and obvious bulk translate into a powerful "impression of reliability" (46). Overall Shadbolt embodies paradoxes and tensions that arguably lurk beneath the gaunt, laconic archetype of the antipodean bushman. Apparently he has very few ideas, but he has a receptive, in Holden's case photographic, memory. He has extraordinary physical capacities, but seems incapable of initiating action, or realizing the vital, energetic alternative he occasionally imagines for himself. He evidently has feelings, yet he fails to show them, much to the frustration of anyone seeking emotional closeness or intimacy with him. The familiar figure, in short, is problematised, its often "impenetrable, invisible side" (69) made the object of protracted analysis.

Though at first sight purely an imaginative tour de force, Shadbolt's portrait is actually part of an ongoing tradition of speculation about the Coming Man, and his putative contribution to antipodean destiny. Climate and geography were once widely believed to impact directly on species, from humans to livestock, and alter their standard characteristics. Why, it was asked, should it be different in Australia? Moreover, if the all-conquering white man had been raised in dank, constricted England on poor vitals and worse weather, what greater racial progeny and feats might be witnessed in the New World, with its vastly expanded opportunities for everyone? Others were less sanguine.

Local conditions were often harsh and taxing beyond belief. In the outback drought and isolation took a terrible toll, physical as well as psychological. Add to these routine, mind-deadening labor and the likely outcome, according to Henry Lawson, was the tall "country lout" depicted in "Middleton's Rouseabout". Presented as the "type of a coming nation", Andy is distinguished by endurance, sound health and intellectual impoverishment: "Hadn't any opinions, /Hadn't any "idears"" (Ackland *Penguin* 1993 263). These attributes eventually enable him to take over his employer's station, after "Liquor and drought prevailed". Adumbrated here is a realm where succession is not necessarily associated with advancement, and where, to borrow Patrick White's resonant words, "the mind is the least of possessions" (558).[3] Shadbolt is Bail's updated version of the Coming Man and, in time-honoured fashion, a strong degree of correlation is assumed between his prospects and those of the nation. His life-story recounts the performance not only of an individual, but of a country seeking to find its way during the transformative years of 1933 to 1972, and affords a devastating satiric commentary on the perennial under-achievement of the land and its people.

Shadbolt is envisaged first and foremost as a product of Australian conditions. These may be conceived of under two broad headings: environmental and the struggle for existence. The first constitutes a primordial stratum, which can at best be built on or subtly directed, and which shapes an individual's physical, moral and intellectual being. It consists of dominant geographical and social conditions, from the ubiquitous harshness and aridity of the world's driest continent to the regimenting, grid-like pattern of Adelaide's streets, which inculcates order and plain thinking:

> Whole suburbs displayed maniacal obsessions with Methodism, with lawn manicure and precision hedge-cutting . . . There was a yes and a no, a right and a wrong . . . The real facts and direction of things, look, lay out in front: anyone could see that (3).

[3] For further discussion of links between these writers see Thomas, while Dixon provides additional commentary on the national myths dissected in Bail's second novel.

Apart from urban, topographical and climatic factors, the category of environmental influence also embraces such seminal ingredients as national archetypes and informing world-visions, which are imparted by Shadbolt's earliest mentors, Frank `Bloodnut" McBee and Vern Hartnett. They drum into him respectively "the logic of metals and engines" (63), and the primacy of word knowledge and empirical verification. Vern's precepts are straightforward. "Clarity and accuracy—master them" and "Never exceed the facts" (37). "Just by looking you can imagine . . ." from Shadbolt draws the blunt retort: "There's no imagining" (37). From this complete submission demanded before quantifiable, verifiable facts it is only a small step to accepting, years later, the key lesson of Colonel Light to Shadbolt as secret service trainee: "Thinking is only going to throw a spanner in the works" (296). Though allowing for personal "accidents", the "essence" of this upbringing and its results are thoroughly representative, as is underscored on the final page: "he embodies the qualities which have put this country on the map. Very much the local product" (353).

Secondary to the original environmental imprint, but crucial alike to individuals and nations, is the struggle for existence or, in Australian terms, for self-betterment and material well-being. This includes the daily conflict for power and resources, for status and breeding partners, which ensures alike species and national survival. Spurred on by the deprivations of the Great Depression and World War II, Australians post-war joined the other victor nations in the scramble for consumer plenty, and the "lucky country" again revealed its unsavory, complementary aspect as the "lurky country".[4] Selfless Shadbolt stands in stark contrast to a widespread drive for status and self-gratification. Hoadley's electors, for instance, are happy to accept federal munificence in the form of an expensive bridge to virtually nowhere, or a strip of state-of-the-art road that peters out at the edge of town, because it buttresses their inflated

[4] Donald Horne famously described Australia as the 'lucky country' (1971), which his contemporary, Harold Stewart, punningly subverted as the 'lurky country' (Ackland 2001, 194).

sense of self-importance. Similarly, Hoadley surrounds himself with the trappings of power, exudes self-confidence, and beds at every opportunity his female constituents. His capacity to exploit astutely the perks and lurks of each situation is only surpassed by McBee's. In both cases this helps assure their public success. Whereas Screech offers his audience only a "completely black-and-white world" (159) through newsreels, unsweetened by carnal pleasures or public largesse, and ends bankrupt, Hoadley, like McBee, gives the people what they want: "Technicolor and a happy ending" (159)—as well as belief in its imminent realisation. Meanwhile Shadbolt and his unenterprising contemporaries are happy to watch the energy of rest of world from afar, and be entertained by "powerful" narratives that virtually absolve them of the burden of interpretation or action (157). They quickly fall under the sway of the likes of Hoadley who, with his accoutrements of high office, including a government car bearing the Australian flag, personifies a virile nation on the move, and alert for windfalls.

Crucial to the fate of Holden and Australia, and a major component in their existential struggle, is what Bail terms "the pathology of power". In context the phrase refers to the representative traits of would-be autocrats "the world over" (255); however, this pathology is recognizable in the not dissimilar behavior of ordinary individuals and nation states. In both cases it involves a two-sided relationship that consists of autocrat and follower/slave, a role for which Shadbolt is especially suited. From the outset he displays innate respect for authority and seeks to win approval, while he typically projects treasured attributes on a commanding figure, then does his best to defend or otherwise sustain them. His eagerness to be of service, unfailing obedience and utter dependability, in turn, are invaluable to those in power. So is a tendency to inflate their achievements, or read inordinate capacities into a vacant stare. Obsequiousness, hero-worship and an uncritical "hanging-on-every-word" are ego-flattering, potentially inspiring, and at the very least meet one basic need: "the successful autocrat needs multiple listeners, and a few minutes with Shadbolt rejuvenated him" (200). Moreover, these characteristics are shown to extend to the masses and the nation, for they, no less than Shadbolt, gravitate towards the powerful and those with a definite, meaning-

conferring vision of the world, in response to perceived inferiority and vulnerability.

Hence Australia, as the novel underscores, does its best to be on the side of "the irrevocable march of history" (42). Allegiance to Britain, then the United States, is meant to assure this, while their financial and economic colonization of the continent, registered in spreading consumer goods, is regarded as a small price to pay for security. This shift, and its psychological underpinning, are revealed by the local preference in cars, initially for English "models of caution" (12), later for American, chrome-laden projections of affluence. McBee, ever alert to opportunities and epochal changes, is undoubtedly right when he links the dwindling local market share of British automakers to the empire's decline, and reads a new imperial ascendancy in the ever more spectacular, attention-grabbing models issuing from Detroit. Indeed, as *Holden's Performance* shows, so great is the U.S."s post-war sway that Australia seems awash in status-conferring American products. The daily business of government is carried out with American pens and Dictaphones, and even its devotedly anglophile prime minister, R.G. Amen, uses a Cadillac as his official vehicle. The United States is presumably the main source, too, of the consumer durables that McBee showers on Shadbolt's mother. In waiting-rooms around the nation *Punch* makes way for such American staples as *Reader's Digest* and *Life*, while the success of Hoadley's cinema chain is built around the wish-fulfilling romances and epics of Hollywood. Similarly, American war surplus becomes for McBee the first stepping-stone towards affluence, a GM dealership cements it. Although Amen may cling nostalgically to the mother country ("sitting on a park bench gazing at the British Embassy" [292]), it is U.S. know-how on loan that guards the nation's shores and, in the form of undercover agent Polaroid, senior government figures. Prosperity and protection increasingly mean linking individual and national fates to American goods, ideas and objectives.

This view of the submissive follower state is complemented by acerbic comments on the psychology of the local masses. Repeatedly the public is shown to esteem vivid impressions above substantive content, and to be agog at celebrity performers. McBee knows this from the scrap and

used-car yards. He rapidly makes himself master of the pantomimes of democracy and oratory, producing at will "a majestic surf of words, tossing in figures, and never failing to come up with a sparkling vitriolic phrase or two, which people in Adelaide called "pearls"" (126). The standard techniques of "mug politicians" are identical with those of the huckster salesman. Their evolved counterparts have charisma, based on well-gauged mannerisms and an astutely honed spiel. Hoadley has the unmistakable accoutrements of high office, and in bridges a sure-fire rural vote-winner. McBee in Canberra embraces national transport as well as multiple overlays of identity-conferring props, including a "mulga stick to take the weight off the old war wound, and between his raised fingers the tremendous uncircumcised cigar to attract the eye and torpedo any criticism" (256). Nowhere is a specific ideology or party affiliation mentioned. These are incidental compared with the driving self-interest of the autocrat. And the public succumbs. It is reverential before the powerful, such as Amen (Menzies) and Churchill, and rapturous before heads of state. A visit by an English monarch mesmerizes the gathered masses: "their ecstatic scribbled faces and sticky hands strained forward again", and Shadbolt finds "himself waving frantically too, smiling desperately" (154), as the cheering multitude holds "first borns aloft" or jiggles "miniature Union Jacks" (153). Shadbolt and the crowd are one in their unthinking adulation, in "irrational obedience" (158), while streets in central Sydney named after British dignitaries, and even an insane king, testify to the timelessness of this colonial hysteria, as will Shadbolt's later experiences as a bodyguard.

Overall Bail's verdict on what Harold Stewart caustically dubbed "the lurky country" is grim, but not unrelieved by hope of a brighter, more promising future. Certainly his major characters are often the means of demolishing hallowed, self-flattering Australian myths. If there is one thing, for instance, Australians supposedly cannot abide, it is a braggart or, as McBee stresses, a bullshit artist. Yet that is exactly what McBee is, and this upstart larrikin, who is able to transform a toe lost in a banal domestic shooting accident into a gory memento from "Herr Hitler" (275), is well received everywhere by his gullible fellow citizens. Similarly in Shadbolt, the heroic endurance and self-sacrifice, for which

the legendary Digger is celebrated, are shown to be merely an extension of undemanding life-habits, while his capacity to bear extreme exhaustion, his apparent indifference to pain, are not proof of a stoutly independent spirit, but reflect blunted responses and an unsleeping urge to be accepted by those identified with power and "a clear view of the world" (92). Bail, in *Holden's Performance*, categorically refuses to lend his voice to the usual chorus of national big-noting, whether it concerns the Ozzie battler, the notoriously insubordinate Australian soldier, the allegedly world-famous wit of its longest-serving prime minister, or the locally famed surf of Manly. But beginning on a small scale in "The Seduction of My Sister" (1995),[5] then reiterated in the ensuing novels *Eucalyptus* (1998) and *The Pages* (2009), Bail depicts at long last selected protagonists who are capable of genuine growth and of positively influencing the course of events. His earlier predominantly satiric vision yields to parables of Australian identity in which neglected heritages enjoy a renewed and prolonged existence, and young people move beyond the strictures of empirical knowledge and puritanical codes to embrace nature's rhythms and the regenerative powers of imagination and the human spirit. In the concluding words of *Eucalyptus*, "he felt his story beginning all over again" (255).

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[5] First published in 1995, the story was republished as the second of the two tales that constitute *Camouflage*.

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Ildiko Dömötor

Genteel pursuits in the bush: Colonial gentlewomen's appreciation of rural Australia in the mid-19th century

The writing of nineteenth-century Australian history is deeply concerned with the notion of settlers "relationship with the land. It is a widely held myth that the early colonists did not like Australia and perceived it as a hostile and alien land (Rickard 1996:41). It is often claimed that it was only by the end of the nineteenth century that the settlers learnt to appreciate the strange and peculiar beauty of Australia. At least this is how the Heidelberg School of artists and the writers associated with the *Bulletin* came to be interpreted. A number of scholars have questioned the validity of this argument and drawn attention to the variety of ways the bush was described in nineteenth-century non-fictional writing (see for example Frost 1975:185-205, Rolls 1993:162). What these critics neglected, however, was the comparative study of male and female responses. While some female examples do occur in critical writing they are there only to support general arguments. Very few critical analyses have been written about the female perception of the environment in the nineteenth century (see for example Bird 1989:20-35, White 1991:113-126).

In this paper I will seek to analyse how genteel women responded to rural Australia in the period between the 1840s and 1870s. In particular, I intend to investigate what activities were pursued by British genteel women in the Australian bush. Scholars have paid scarce attention to the depiction of colonial gentlewomen's recreational activities in rural areas (see for example Perkin 1993:93-112, Cumes 1979:240-247, Isaacs 1990:225-238). I will argue that there is a unique feminine attitude to the recreational and social aspects of the Australian bush as presented in gentlewomen's life-writings, such as memoirs, travel narratives, letters and diaries. Comparison between male and female experiences will be drawn in order to find out the

distinctive nature of the female attitude towards rural pastimes.

In examining the recreational and social aspects of genteel women's rural lives I will be focusing on those areas in the country that were commonly referred to as the bush. The word *bush* acquired a special meaning in the colonial context. The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives the following definition for this word:

> Woodland, country more or less covered with natural wood: applied to the uncleared or untilled districts in the British Colonies which are still in a state of nature, or largely so, even though not wooded; and by extension to the country as opposed to the towns.

The bush was an area that had different impacts on different people. There were areas that the Europeans found beautiful and others made little impression on them. It is this changing aspect of the land that Mary McConnel recorded on her journey from Brisbane to Cressbrook Station in 1849:

> we had a few, a very few, miles of pretty country […], but soon there was a sad change, when we reached what was called in irony "Bullock's Delight". It was a terrible piece of country. (1905:17)

The bush was not only judged by its aesthetic qualities but also by the many possibilities it offered for entertainment and relaxation. Activities such as taking a stroll, going for a ride, fishing and bathing were not considered as sport in the modern sense of the word. Recreational activities nonetheless provided plenty of exercise for genteel women. The bush also offered an excellent setting for social gatherings such as picnic parties and hunting expeditions. The warmer climate enabled the colonists to enjoy a more out-of-doors lifestyle than they did in Britain.

The favourable climate

While a number of English people left for Australia in search of a healthier climate, the bright Australian sun and the long hot spells did not appeal to many colonists straightaway - they needed time to get acclimatised. At the beginning Rachel Henning disliked sunny days because there were too many of them. She much preferred the cool autumnal days because they reminded her of England. She told her

brother-in-law Mr Boyce in a letter from Appin, New South Wales on 29 March 1855 that

> I like this autumn weather, for it feels like England. […] I was tired of the perpetual glare of sunshine. Fine days here bring me no pleasure as they do in England: they are too hot and too numerous, and besides, you cannot enjoy them by taking nice walks. (Adams 1963:27)

Rachel Henning found the summer heat unsuitable for outdoor activities. Her opinion was to change, however. Twelve years later she rejoiced in the salubrious climate:

> I wish I could send you a little of our sunshine. England is a far better country than this in many respects, but there is nothing like the bright warm Australian climate for comfort and also, I think, for cheerfulness. It is difficult to be out of spirits when the warm sun is shining. (Adams 1963:235)

It took some time before Rachel could accept the Australian climate and adjusted her new lifestyle to it.

In their writings many colonial men made reference to the climate, too. Unlike Canada and the northern states of America there was no harsh winter in Australia and thus the settlers could continue working in the open air all throughout the year. Bob Reece argues that the salubrious climate was appreciated by many men because it was advantageous for economic considerations. (Reece 1988:9) Edward Wilson, who visited the Moreton Bay settlement in the 1850s, pointed out that "the climate of Moreton Bay is favourable to vegetable, and other forms of animal life as it seems to be to man." (1859:21)

Gentility in the bush

Gentlewomen in colonial Australia did not make any comments on the economic consequences of the climate because they were not supposed to pay attention to such worldly affairs. Their lives revolved around family and the home. Genteel women's responsibilities were defined inside the home from where they were expected to derive self-fulfilment while remaining largely ignorant about the events of the outside world. Men, in contrast, performed public functions and were expected to play an active role in worldly events. This separation of the two genders on the basis of their expected realms of influence is

known as "separate spheres". (Rowley 1993:185)

Genteel women came from a common social background and shared a set of norms and rules that shaped their lifestyles. These ideals of "ladylike behaviour" were often referred to as "terms of gentility". (Rees 1977:10) Those women who aspired to these genteel ideals led a secluded life that disavowed taking an active part in any profession or trade. But gentlewomen were not completely without work in the sense that they had certain tasks and activities to perform. The term *accomplishment* was used to describe the kind of activities that filled the greater part of gentlewomen's daily lives. Genteel women were encouraged to pursue some accomplishments that included needlework, sketching, watercolour painting, music and flower arrangement. In addition to these genteel pursuits the rest of their time was occupied supervising the household staff, doing charity work and making social visits. Their activities were limited to these polite accomplishments because contemporary opinion held that female brains were not capable of intellectual work. (Altick 1974:51-54)

This study is embedded in Victorian theories of domestic ideology and gentility. Domestic ideology prescribed different spheres of interest for men and women. While men were to dominate the public world, women were to devote their entire lives to the private world of home and family. Notions of gentility influenced the way of life and thinking of many women throughout the nineteenth century. The colonial experiences of female settlers will be measured against these Victorian ideals.

Recreational activities in the bush

Emma Macpherson noted the importance of leisure hours in the life of gentlewomen in the bush. Her short experience of bush life in the late 1850s in Keera in New South Wales showed her the value of recreational activities after a hard day's work.

> Not that I mean to assert that existence in the bush is wholly void of its pleasures, for, independently of the happiness always following duties well filled, there is an intense appreciation of the hour or two's

> leisure, which those who have the whole day at their command can hardly understand. The evening ride over hill and dale, the strolls by the banks of the river, the perusal of some new book – which like angels" visits, come few and far between – are indeed sources of great enjoyment. (1860:200)

Recreational activities not only provided entertainment and relaxation but they also served to reinforce genteel values. Such pursuits emphasised the adoption of a British genteel lifestyle in colonial Australia. By listing her walks along the riverbanks as one of her main amusements Emma Macpherson wished to conform to ideas about gentility. Starting a new life in the Antipodes occasionally presented challenges to the colonists. At home genteel women were discouraged from active involvement in the housework. In the Australian bush, however, gentlewomen were often required to perform unladylike tasks. Emma Macpherson applied the word *duty* to describe physical work in and around the home. She therefore used her recollections to reaffirm her identity as genteel.

Apart from walkers, the bush was also a favourite area with horse riders. Riding was very popular among gentlewomen and therefore several colonial ladies recounted the pleasure horse-riding gave them during their life in the bush. Harriett Daly enjoyed riding in the vicinity of Palmerston in the early 1870s. She recalled in her recollections that

> we were able to make up riding parties, and to explore more fully the country about Palmerston. These rides were the greatest joy of our lives. After a hard day's work it was pleasant to mount our horses, ride out of camp, and along the bridle tracks. (1984:57-58)

Harriett Daly found these country excursions a liberating experience. Marion Amies notes that riding was a necessary skill in the bush for colonial ladies. While in general it was considered a form of exercise and displayed the rider's social status, horse riding had more practical implications in Australia. It was a crucial skill for those women who lived on isolated stations. The ability to ride secured them a link with the outside world. Those who could not ride were deprived of independence and social contact. Among other things they could not go visiting or even to church. (1988:553)

Lakes and rivers were also made use of for recreational purposes. Bathing and fishing were two other popular pastimes colonial women could indulge in. Mary Spencer took great delight not only in her walks but also in bathing during her short stay in Victoria in 1854. She noted in her diary that she often went bathing with Emily Josephine Clarke, the young daughter of her niece, when she was staying at the Junction north of Wangaratta. She wrote on 10 February 1855 that

> we frequently walk to the banks of the Murray where we bathe almost daily – no fear of being seen except by cockatoos, magpies or crows. We bathe in a kind of creek, formed by the windings of the river where there is a firm bed of sand. (Cooper 1981:51)

In the nineteenth century women and men swam separately.
Fishing was another popular pastime and quite a few colonial women recorded their fishing excursions. Elizabeth Ramsay-Laye was particularly fond of fishing. In her reminiscences she vividly described several occasions when she practised this pastime during the 1850s. She once went fishing in a creek near Castlemaine, Victoria and succeeded in catching a crawfish. (Ramsay-Laye 1861:44-45)

Social activities in the bush

Going for a walk in the bush not only supplied women with much needed recreation but it was also an excellent opportunity both to socialise with others and to get to know the area. Louisa Clifton often noted in her diary how large the party was with whom she went strolling at Australind during 1841. (Frost 1984:75) It must have been entertaining to take a walk in the company of other people but at the same time it was also a necessary precaution against losing one's way in the bush. Such incidents were often fatal and emphasised settlers" lack of familiarity with the surrounding environment.

Lucy Gray's journal recorded two years of station life in Hughenden on the Flinders River in northern Queensland in the late 1860s. Her husband was often away working on the cattle station and Lucy regularly spent her time in the bush on her own. One day she recalled that she found herself lost in the bush but luckily, her ordeal did not last long. She had the presence of mind to retrace her steps to the

familiar path. Eventually, she reached a place that she knew well where she met her husband and his workmates. But rather than admitting the agonies she went through, Lucy decided not to let the others know what had happened to her. She admitted in her diary that "they were surprised to see me out there at that time. Of course I did not tell them that I had lost my way." (1964:18). By not disclosing the details of her risky stroll in the bush Lucy Gray wished to retain her right to solitary walks. Had she described her struggle to find the way back she might have been discouraged from further explorations of the surrounding environment. Her strong defence of this pastime proves genteel women's insistence on rambles in the country. Lucy Gray was willing to overcome her fears so that she could devote her idle hours to this genteel activity.

Rambling in the bush was equally amusing for men. Edward Curr, for example, loved exploring unknown territory in Victoria "for a little change of life" in the 1840s. (Curr 2001:406) As a man, however, he was more mobile and could venture into farther places than most women. For Edward Curr walking in the bush implied not only a form of recreation and the act of observing nature but it also freed him from the drudgery of everyday station life. It was in a way an escape for him.

Another common recreational pastime was hunting. Tom Griffiths argues that

> in the imperial culture, hunting was an elite sporting and intellectual pursuit, class-conscious and recreational: it was a quest for sport, science and trophies, a "refined" hunting and gathering (1996:12).

When English people settled in the colonies they also transplanted the tradition of hunting. Hunting in Australia, though, took a slightly different form. Traditionally, fox was the chief prey of the hunters but this species was not to be found in Australia. Since the chasing of native animals, such as wallabies and dingoes, was seen as an undignifying pastime (Rolls 1997:41) foxes were introduced in 1845 to recreate the English environment. (West 2010:127)

Elizabeth Ramsay-Laye recorded a period in the 1850s when the

hunting of kangaroos enjoyed wide popularity. She was once invited for a visit to Mr G.'s property on the banks of the Yarra River. They saw some kangaroos on the hills that tempted their party for a hunt. So the following morning they took a dog with them and left for the bush in search of kangaroos. They saw several mobs but in the end killed only one kangaroo. Elizabeth boasted of her achievement in her narrative: "I am proud to say I was in at the death, and a more exciting run it would have been impossible to have had". (1861:147) Elizabeth considered this sport the most enjoyable outdoor amusement she had in the colony. Her reasons were as follows:

> it combined so much the exhilarating gallop on a good horse, and lovely scenery to admire when slowly riding, and so many new and interesting objects to attract the attention, with the wild excitement of following the graceful animals as they started off with such tremendous leaps as must be witnessed to be believed. (1861:187)

Besides the excitement of the chase the surrounding natural environment could also be appreciated during the ride.
Kangaroo hunting was also popular among men. But men pursued this activity not only for recreation and fun, but also for necessity. For James Hamilton the killing of kangaroos was a part of his job. He was a pioneer Victorian settler and he recorded in his narrative that while he was shepherding at Bringalbert, later known as Uram Uram Springs, in the 1850s he had to kill a great many kangaroos. In one particular year he killed as many as two thousand of them. He admitted that kangaroo hunting was not a "wanton sport" but a necessity because they ate too much grass. He pointed out that "as we were paying a big rent to the Government, […] we could not afford to feed kangaroos" (Hamilton 1923:22).

In addition to hunting parties, the picnic was another great social occasion in a rural environment. Both city-dwellers and small town residents enjoyed this form of entertainment. It was also English in its origins and was a "characteristic nineteenth-century institution." (Carter 1987:156) Ada Cambridge recalled that "picnics were our joy, also our forte" near Ballarat where they lived at the end of the 1870s. She was at that time enjoying a busy social life as the wife of the local parson. Ada also thought that the surrounding country was particularly

appealing to picnic parties (1903:137).
David Mackenzie devoted a whole chapter to "Bush Amusements" (2009:99-105) in his book entitled *Ten years in Australia*. He summarised the various options by writing that "the chief amusement you may freely enjoy in the bush are the following: fishing, hunting, shooting, riding, and reading." (2009:99) He then went on to describe each of these activities in detail. Refraining from adding any personal remarks he only noted that "in the bush we spend an active life, and enjoy the opportunity of blending the agreeable with the useful" (2009:104). After all it was men's responsibility to care for their family and for this reason idleness was not a desirable thing.

Conclusion

I have argued that the favourable climate of the Australian seaboard was not only an attraction for settlers and visitors seeking good health but it enabled colonial gentlewomen to participate in a great variety of outdoor activities. The bush provided space for recreational activities such as walking, bathing, fishing and riding. Informal social gatherings such as picnics and hunting expeditions also took place there. These pastimes enabled genteel women to feel at home in their new environment. Furthermore, these recreational activities affirmed colonial women's gentility.

Colonial men also took advantage of these recreational activities and accompanied their womenfolk on their walks or rides and they also participated in picnic parties and hunts. These activities must have provided a great means of relaxation after a hard day's work on the station. Gentlewomen also needed a rest but, as I pointed out, they tended to use these outdoor activities to affirm their gentility. Their walks and rides were therefore more than simple recreational and social activities.

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Sibylle Kästner

Von profanen Sammlerinnen zu sakralen sammelnden Jägerinnen. Anmerkungen zu Geschlechterstereotypen australischer Aborigines

Für T.H.

Stereotype Vorstellungen über Aborigines gab es – und gibt es noch immer – viele. Dazu gehört neben der Vorstellung, die Lebensform der Aborigines stelle eine primitive Frühstufe der Menschheit dar, z.B. das Stereotyp, Aborigines würden keinen Begriff von Privateigentum und Besitz kennen oder das Klischee, in ganz Australien (und ausschließlich dort) seien Bumerangs benutzt worden. Wie ein Blick in die ethnologische und archäologische Fachliteratur zeigt, hält keine dieser Vorstellungen einer kritischen Überprüfung stand (Hiatt 13-35; Stodiek u. Paulsen 53). Außer den genannten Stereotypen wurden mittlerweile auch Geschlechter-stereotype revidiert. Aborigines-Frauen werden beispielsweise nicht mehr als rechtlose Sklavinnen und Lastesel ihrer Männer betrachtet. Auch das Geschlechterstereotyp, das Aborigines-Frauen als profan und Aborigines-Männer als sakral darstellt, erfuhr wichtige Korrekturen (Berndt; Erckenbrecht 1993). Anders verhält es sich dagegen mit dem bekanntesten Geschlechterstereotyp von der Aborigines-Frau als Sammlerin und dem Aborigines-Mann als Jäger. Dieses Stereotyp stand bislang kaum zur Diskussion.

Der nachfolgende Beitrag geht der Frage nach, ob die Geschlechterstereotypen

Aborigines-Frau = Sammlerin / Aborigines-Mann = Jäger
Aborigines-Frau = profan / Aborigines-Mann = sakral

überhaupt Gültigkeit besitzen. Nach einer Einführung werden Ergebnisse eines Forschungsprojektes, in dessen Rahmen eine Revision der beiden Stereotypen erfolgte, vorgestellt und diskutiert.

Geschlechterstereotyp I: Aborigines-Frau = Sammlerin, Aborigines-Mann = Jäger

Im Gegensatz zum Stereotyp vom Bumerang, das lange Zeit fälschlicherweise als Aborigines-spezifisch galt, ist das oben genannte Geschlechterstereotyp eine regionale Variante des vermeintlich weltweit für alle WildbeuterInnen gültigen Stereotyps. Das Geschlechterstereotyp von der Frau als Sammlerin und dem Mann als Jäger stellt mehr als nur ein Stereotyp dar, es gilt geradezu als Universalie. Als Universalie mit Vergangenheit ("es war schon immer so" – behaupten z.B. VertreterInnen der Archäologie und Paläoanthropologie), als Universalie mit Gegenwart ("es ist noch immer so" – neben EthnologInnen und PrimatologInnen scheinen wir selbst den Beweis zu liefern, siehe Abb. 1) und als Universalie mit Zukunft ("es wird immer so bleiben") (Kästner in Vorb.).

Abb. 1: "I hunted, I gathered". Cartoon der australischen Illustratorin Judy Horacek (Quelle: Horacek 15). Abgedruckt mit Erlaubnis der Autorin.

Die vermeintliche Universalie Jagd als weltweite Männerdomäne wurde indes in Frage gestellt. Mittlerweile liegen aktuelle ethnologische Studien vor, die die Bandbreite jägerischer Aktivitäten von Frauen in verschiedenen wildbeuterischen Gesellschaften in Afrika, Nord- und

Südamerika sowie den Philippinen aufzeigen. Anhand dieser Studien wird insbesondere die interkulturelle Variabilität von Geschlechterrollen deutlich, die vom stereotypen Frau-die-Sammlerin–Mann-der-Jäger–Schema abweicht (vgl. Kästner 1998).

Der wissenschaftliche Diskurs über jagende Frauen blieb in der australischen Ethnologie im Wesentlichen ohne nennenswertes Echo. In kulturvergleichenden Studien und in der ethnologischen Fachliteratur wird weiterhin der Eindruck vermittelt, dass das Geschlechterstereotyp Aborigines-Frau = Sammlerin, Aborigines-Mann = Jäger in allen Aborigines-Gesellschaften die Regel sei. Während Aborigines-Männer als Großwildjäger gelten, werden Aborigines-Frauen primär als Pflanzen-Sammlerinnen betrachtet, die bei Gelegenheit ab und an Kleinwild sammeln (z.B. Murdock 96 Table C; Australien-Beiträge in Lee u. Daly). Die von Aborigines-Frauen beschaffte tierische Nahrung ist bislang, wenn überhaupt, nur am Rande wahrgenommen und erforscht worden (z.B. Bliege Bird u. Bird; Meehan).

Geschlechterstereotyp II:

Aborigines-Frau = profan, Aborigines-Mann = sakral

Wer sich intensiver mit dem genannten Geschlechterstereotyp beschäftigt, stößt auf ein weiteres Geschlechterstereotyp: das von der profanen Aborigines-Frau und dem sakralen Aborigines-Mann. Zwischen beiden Stereotypen scheint eine direkte Verbindung zu existieren. Aborigines-Männer gelten als diejenigen, die für alle religiösen Angelegenheiten zuständig sind. Die rituelle und politische Dominanz der Männer wird auf das männliche Primat der Großwildjagd zurückgeführt. Und da nur Männer Großwild jagen, können auch nur sie durch die Jagd und das Verteilen der Beute Prestige gewinnen (z.B. Bern 125; Sackett 224).

Das stereotype Bild von der sammelnden Aborigines-Frau und ihres jagenden Gatten taucht erstmals um 1800 in Reiseberichten auf, in denen die Lebensweise der Aborigines beschrieben wird (Urry). Das Bild vom sakralen Aborigines-Mann und dessen profaner Gattin

entstand erst später, nämlich zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts. Die spätere Entstehungszeit lässt sich dadurch erklären, dass es in Wissenschaftskreisen noch bis Anfang des vergangenen Jahrhunderts Zweifel gab, ob Aborigines überhaupt über eine Religion verfügten (Erckenbrecht 1998:18). Während das ‚ältere" Geschlechterstereotyp bislang kaum zur Diskussion stand, wurde das ‚jüngere" schon bald nach seinem Entstehen in Frage gestellt. Phyllis M. Kaberry belegte in *Aboriginal Woman: Sacred and Profane* (1939), dass Aborigines-Frauen in den Kimberleys ein ebenso reiches und ausgeprägtes Zeremonialleben besaßen wie die Männer. Dieses Bild konnte zwischenzeitlich durch weitere Feldstudien von Forscherinnen für andere Regionen bestätigt werden (vgl. zusammenfassend Erckenbrecht 1993:166-183). Wenig Korrektur erfuhr indes die Annahme, dass in der Religion eine Arbeitsteilung nach Geschlechtern existiere, die Frauen bestimmtes rituelles Wissen vorenthalte. So heißt es beispielsweise bei Bern (125), dass Aborigines-Frauen systematisch von Vermehrungsriten für pflanzliche und tierische Nahrung, die für Aborigines als unverzichtbarer Teil der Jagd gelten, ausgeschlossen seien. Auch magisch-religiöse Handlungen zur Beutebeschaffung, die sogenannte Jagdmagie, werden als reine Männersache betrachtet (Sackett 231-2).

Geschlechterstereotype in der Revision

Wie aus den obigen Ausführungen hervorgeht, waren es Forscher*innen*, die das Geschlechterstereotyp von der profanen Aborigines-Frau und dem sakralen Aborigines-Mann aufgrund der Erfahrungen infrage stellten, die sie im Rahmen eigener Forschungen machten. Bevor Kaberry in den 1930er Jahren zum ersten Mal gezielt als Frau unter Frauen Feldstudien durchführte, wurde kaum einmal detailliert über Aborigines-Frauen berichtet. Das Wissen über Aborigines ist u.a. auch deshalb unvollständig, weil die meisten Beobachtungen von Männern gemacht wurden, die sich auf das Leben von Aborigines-Männern konzentrierten, und weil lange Zeit nur Männer über Aborigines publizierten. Viele Quellen weisen einen *male bias* auf. Erst mit dem Aufkommen einer ethnologischen

Frauenforschung seit den 1970er Jahren wurde diese Schieflage etwas ausgeglichen (vgl. Erckenbrecht 1993).

Feldstudien stellen ein wichtiges Instrument zur Korrektur von Forschungsmeinungen dar. Anders als das Geschlechterstereotyp von der profanen Aborigines-Frau und dem sakralen Aborigines-Mann, dessen Revision maßgeblich durch Feldstudien erfolgte, kann das Geschlechterstereotyp von der sammelnden Aborigines-Frau und dem jagenden Aborigines-Mann nur noch sehr bedingt mittels moderner Feldforschung überprüft werden. Mittlerweile leben die meisten Aborigines in den Vororten großer Städte, nur wenige Aborigines führen ein Leben in Anlehnung an die traditionelle wildbeuterische Lebensweise, Ausflüge in den Busch finden meist nur noch sporadisch statt. Aus diesem Grund entschloss ich mich, eine feministisch-kritische Neuauswertung schon vorhandener ethnohistorischer und ethnologischer Quellen durchzuführen, die durch einen mehrwöchigen Feldforschungsaufenthalt in einer Aboriginal community in der Desert-Region abgerundet wurde.

Durch die Zusammenschau und Gegenüberstellung eines breit gefächerten Spektrums ethnohistorischer und ethnologischer Literatur sowie die Verwendung von Selbstzeugnissen von Aborigines-Frauen war es erstmals möglich, die tierische Beutebeschaffung der Frauen in all ihren Facetten eingehend zu betrachten, ihr erstmals eine Gestalt und eine Geschichte zu geben. Meine Forschungen über die Rollen australischer Aborigines-Frauen in Prozessen zur tierischen Beutebeschaffung verdeutlichen, dass altvertraute Vorstellungen über Geschlechterrollen und die soziale und rituelle Arbeitsteilung bei Aborigines in Frage gestellt werden müssen. Auch das Geschlechterstereotyp von der Aborigines-Frau als Sammlerin und dem Aborigines-Mann als Jäger ist Ausdruck eines *male bias* innerhalb der Aborigines-Forschung, die sich bislang hauptsächlich auf die Großwildjagd der Männer konzentrierte.
Entgegen noch vorherrschender Meinungen folgte die geschlechtliche Arbeitsteilung bei Aborigines nicht stringent dem Frau-die-Sammlerin–Mann-der-Jäger–Schema.

Aborigines-Frauen waren – in abgelegenen Communities in der Desert-Region, in Arnhem Land, den Kimberleys und auf Cape York sind sie es immer noch – nicht nur Pflanzen-Sammlerinnen, sondern auch diejenigen, die Fleisch beschafften. Indem sie sich regelmäßig auf die Suche nach tierischer Nahrung in Form von kleinen Säugern und Beutlern, Echsen, Schlangen, Eiern, Schalentieren und Insekten begaben, folgten sie einer mindestens 200 Jahre alten, in Mythologie und Ritual eingebetteten Tradition. Aborigines-Frauen kombinierten gewöhnlich die Suche nach pflanzlicher und tierischer Nahrung und setzten viele der Geräte, Waffen und Beutebeschaffungsmethoden ein, die auch Männer benutzten. Obwohl Frauen meist Kleinwild, Muscheln und Insekten im Visier hatten, machten sie gegebenenfalls auch Jagd auf Großwild wie Emus und Kängurus. Sie jagten entweder unabhängig oder nahmen direkt, z.B. als Treiberinnen, oder indirekt, etwa durch das Ausleihen von Jagdhunden, an Gemeinschaftsjagden teil. In den jeweiligen Sozialverbänden existierten unterschiedliche Arrangements, innerhalb derer die Frauen Zugang zu Großwild hatten. Während Frauen mancherorts aufgrund von Tabus gar kein Großwild jagen konnten, taten es andere erst mit zunehmendem Alter.[1]

Die Ergebnisse meiner Forschungen verdeutlichen außerdem, dass die These, nur Aborigines-Männer konnten durch die Jagd und das Verteilen der Beute Prestige gewinnen, verworfen werden muss. Neben eigenen Beutezügen, die der Fleischbeschaffung dienten, waren Aborigines-Frauen in Jagdprozesse der Männer und in gemischt-geschlechtliche Jagdprozesse involviert. Dadurch stand ihnen ein Anteil am Beutegut zu. Durch das Verteilen pflanzlicher und tierischer Nahrung, die sie entweder selbst erbeuteten oder z.B. durch indirekte Jagd erwarben, gewannen Frauen Prestige und festigten soziale und rituelle Bündnisse.

Auch die rituelle Arbeitsteilung in Prozessen der tierischen Beutebeschaffung wurde einer eingehenden Revision unterzogen. Die

[1] Aus Platzgründen wird hier auf detaillierte Einzelnachweise aller Fallbeispiele verzichtet. Sie sind aber in meiner zur Veröffentlichung vorbereiteten Dissertation, die 2011 im LIT-Verlag erscheinen wird, vollständig nachgewiesen.

Annahme, dass Aborigines-Männer in ganz Australien das Monopol zur Durchführung von Riten innehatten, die der Vermehrung von Pflanzen und Tieren dienen (vgl. Bern 125), ließ sich nicht bestätigen. Während es Sozialverbände gab, in denen Aborigines-Frauen tatsächlich von Vermehrungsriten ausgeschlossen waren, existieren zahlreiche Belege dafür, dass Frauen selbst Zeremonien durchführten und sich auch an gemischt-geschlechtlichen Vermehrungsriten beteiligten. Darüber hinaus führten sie magisch-religiöse Handlungen zur Beutebeschaffung durch. Diese Beispiele verdeutlichen, dass auch die rituelle Arbeitsteilung in Aborigines-Gesellschaften weitaus flexibler gehandhabt wurde als bislang behauptet.

Die tierische Beutebeschaffung der Aborigines-Frauen – meist das Sammeln, seltener die Jagd – stellte keinesfalls eine Ausnahme von der Regel dar, sondern war Ausdruck der sozialen gelebten Wirklichkeit und ökonomischen Praxis der Aborigines. Um sowohl die Flexibilität von Geschlechterrollen in vielen Aborigines-Gesellschaften zu verdeutlichen, als auch das Spektrum aufzuzeigen, in dem sich die Beutebeschaffung von Frauen in einigen Aboriginal Communities noch immer bewegt, sollten Aborigines-Frauen als ‚jagende Sammlerinnen" und ‚sammelnde Jägerinnen" angesprochen werden. Diese Klassifikation kommt der Eigenbezeichnung der Frauen als ''hunter" im Aboriginal English recht nahe.

Diskussion

Stereotypen sind häufig vorkommende Muster. Im Fall der beiden hier beschriebenen Geschlechterstereotype kann von einer Art Doppelmuster gesprochen werden, das in der Aborigines-Forschung zu einem einzigen Muster bzw. Geschlechterstereotyp verschmolz: der profanen Aborigines-Sammlerin und dem sakralen Aborigines-Jäger. Die Gültigkeit dieses Stereotyps als pan-australische Universalie konnte widerlegt werden. Damit wird der vermeintlichen Universalie Jagd als weltweiter Männerdomäne ein weiteres regionales Standbein entzogen.

Allerdings darf nicht außer Acht gelassen werden, dass Sozialverbände existierten, in denen Aborigines-Frauen offenbar von der Großwildjagd und/oder von Vermehrungsriten ausgeschlossen waren. Wie viele Sozialverbände dies betraf, lässt sich wegen des lückenhaften Forschungsmaterials nicht mehr feststellen. Von daher können auch keine Aussagen über die Regelhaftigkeit dieser Phänomene getroffen werden. Die Tatsache, dass alle der ehedem vermutlich 600 verschiedenen Aborigines-Gruppen als WildbeuterInnen lebten, gab lange Zeit Anlass zu der Annahme, Aborigines seien eine sehr homogene Ethnie. Neuere Forschungen heben dagegen die Vielfalt in der Einheit hervor (z.B. Altman). Die gleichzeitige Existenz von Aborigines-Gesellschaften, die Geschlechterrollen eher flexibel handhabten, und solchen, die ein rigides Geschlechterrollenschema lebten, kann als Ausdruck der kulturellen Diversität der Aborigines verstanden werden.

Wie oben schon angedeutet wurde, sind die vorgestellten Ergebnisse nicht nur für die Aborigines-Forschung relevant, sondern auch im Hinblick auf inner- und interdisziplinäre Übertragungen von Geschlechterrollenkonzepten von Belang. Für die Entwicklung des Faches Ethnologie und die ethnologische Theoriebildung im 19. Jahrhundert spielten Vorstellungen über Aborigines eine wichtige Rolle. Aborigines galten als *das* Paradebeispiel primitiver Wildbeuter, die sich auf der untersten menschlichen Entwicklungsstufe befanden. Die damaligen Vorstellungen über Subsistenz, Geschlechterrollen, Sozialstruktur und Religion der Aborigines waren indes nicht nur für die Theoriebildung der Ethnologie von Bedeutung (vgl. ausführlich Hiatt). Die gleichen Konzepte wurden damals auch unreflektiert von der Archäologie übernommen (z.B. Russell 239).

Im modernen ethnologischen Diskurs nehmen Aborigines keine wichtige Rolle mehr ein. Aufgrund ihres Status‟ – die Kultur der Aborigines gilt als älteste noch bestehende Kultur der Welt – werden sie aber weiterhin als Beispiel für besonders langlebige Traditionen betrachtet. Für viele ForscherInnen steht außer Frage, dass das Geschlechterstereotyp Aborigines-Frau = Sammlerin, Aborigines-Mann = Jäger nicht nur in der Gegenwart, sondern auch in der nahen und

fernen Vergangenheit verortet werden kann. Damit werden Angaben über Geschlechterrollen und die Organisation der Jagd bei Aborigines unhinterfragt direkt in die Vergangenheit projiziert, als hätte es über viele Jahrtausende hinweg keinerlei Veränderungen gegeben. Auf diese Weise wird das Geschlechterstereotyp von der sammelnden Aborigines-Frau und dem jagenden Aborigines-Mann nicht nur immer wieder neu reproduziert, sondern auch legimitiert. Dies wiederum hat Auswirkungen auf Geschlechterrollenkonzepte in der Zukunft.

Schluss

Die Revision der Geschlechterstereotype macht deutlich, dass das Bild der profanen Sammlerinnen, das vor allem Ausdruck eines *male bias* innerhalb der Aborigines-Forschung ist, ad acta gelegt werden kann. An seine Stelle tritt das wesentlich facettenreichere und dynamischere Bild der sakralen sammelnden Jägerinnen bzw. sakralen jagenden Sammlerinnen. Ob dieses Bild auch Entsprechungen in anderen wildbeuterischen Gesellschaften hat, oder ob es Aborigines-spezifisch ist, sollte im Rahmen weiterer Untersuchungen geklärt werden.

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Eva Meidl

Ludwig Salvator: *Reise um die Welt ohne zu wollen*

Much research has been undertaken as far as English-speaking travelers in the Victorian era are concerned. Clark's edited collection *Travel Writing and Empire* (1999) and Bassett's *Great Southern Landings: An Anthology of Antipodean Travel* (1995) are cases in point. These and other works about travel have an Anglo-centric framework with reference points located within the culture that is described. Travel writing has been one of the burgeoning new topics in international literary studies, yet travel writing about Australia by non-English speaking writers has not been addressed by scholars to any significant degree. Indeed, the field is so underdeveloped that only recently the works of important travel writers such as Archduke Ludwig Salvator are translated into English.

In the 19th century Austrian aristocrats were interested in the exploration of the world and for various reasons several high profile travelers came to the antipodes and wrote accounts of their journeys. This trend was set by Baron Carl von Hügel (1795-1870), who toured Australia between 1833-1834. Von Hügel's account of his journey through Australia was translated and annotated by Dymphna Clark. The Baron's example was followed by Archduke Ludwig Salvator (1847-1915) and Archduke Franz Ferdinand (1863-1914), later from 1889 heir presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne.

A believer in the benefits of scientific progress, Ludwig Salvator became a keen supporter of World Exhibitions, which he viewed as a peaceful competition between nations (Mader 2002). According to Nigel Leask (2002) "Museums, and to a greater extent popular exhibitions, shared with travel narratives the aspiration to make distant lands present." The 1876 World Exhibition in Philadelphia was

cause for Ludwig Salvator's first visit to the Americas. At that time he also visited California and published *Eine Blume aus dem Goldenen Land oder Los Angeles* in 1878, thereby establishing himself as a travel writer. This book was translated into English in 1929 by Marguerite Eyer Wilbour under the title *A flower from the Golden Land*. The 1880 World Exhibition in Melbourne was a must-see event for Ludwig Salvator and he asked the Emperor's permission to travel to the antipodes. He intended to travel to and from Australia via the Suez Canal, but because he could not secure cabin space on the return leg, decided instead to travel to Europe via the United States of America.

On his journey around the world to Australia, he wrote and published his travel itinerary called *Reise um die Welt ohne zu wollen (Journey around the World without wanting to).* The Archduke described his journey from Europe to Australia and within the Australian colonies first landing in Western Australia. He visited South Australia briefly and then went on to Melbourne to see the International Exhibition. From Melbourne he traveled to Tasmania where he stayed for ten days. He returned briefly to Melbourne and then continued his journey to New South Wales and Queensland before heading for New Zealand and on via the USA back to Europe. Like most of his books, *Reise um die Welt* contains many drawings by his own hand of the places he visited during his stay in Australia in 1881. This book was one of his most popular and it was re-printed three times (1883, 1884, 1886) after its initial publication in 1881.

During his lifetime Ludwig Salvator was feted all over Europe and both Americas for his numerous works and he was decorated and celebrated for his distinctions in the sciences. He was a naturalist, geographer, traveler, historian and writer. In his *Physical Geography*, Kant had argued that "more is needed for knowledge of the world than just seeing it. He who wants to profit from his journey must have a plan beforehand, and must not merely regard the world as an object of the outer sense." (cited in Bower 1981: 208). Ludwig Salvator did have a plan when writing his books about the places he visited. In 1869 his research tool, the *Tabulae Ludovicinae* was published in Prague. The *Tabulae Ludovicinae* is a set of comprehensive

questionnaires in several languages, covering such diverse fields as geological conditions of a region, agriculture, industry, marriage patterns, crime and even folk dress and customs. It is this scientific methodology that sets many of Ludwig Salvator's books apart from other travel accounts of his time. The Archduke was also a member of numerous learned societies such as the Academy of Science in Vienna, the Geographical Society of Italy, the Royal Geographical Society in London, the American Museum of Natural History, New York and many others. Praise was lavished on the prince from around the world and he was awarded gold medals and diplomas for his work. He was a friend and sponsor of many distinguished scientists such as the speleologist Alfred Martel and the entomologist Ludwig Schaufuss as well as writers such as Jules Verne, Gaston Vuillier and Charles W. Wood. In the twentieth century books were written about Ludwig Salvator and contemporary societies are devoted to the translation and studies of his many monographs. Annually, exhibitions of his works are arranged in various parts of Europe, yet Ludwig Salvator, who wrote two books about Australia, is virtually unknown in Australia.

As a prolific writer on the natural environment, particularly on Mediterranean islands, Ludwig Salvator took the opportunity to spend ten days in Tasmania to gather as much information as he could. The resulting 300-page book *Hobarttown oder eine Sommerfrische in den Antipoden* is written in German and was published in 1886 in Prague. It has been translated as *Hobart Town or a Summer Holiday Resort in the Antipodes* by Eva Meidl (2011). This book gives an overview of the state of the colony in 1881 ranging from its natural environment to its society and social institutions. However, integrating his personal narrative with the scientific overview he provided in *Hobart Town* was not entirely successful. Anecdotes and narrative drama had no place in his multifaceted travel account. While the narrative persona is minimized amidst the plethora of statistical information, Ludwig Salvator tackled the problem of aesthetic versus scientific representation by the inclusion of many beautifully rendered drawings by his own hand.

Nineteenth-century readers also expected literary amusement from travel books, an expectation that Ludwig Salvator's second book about Australia, *Reise um die Welt* fulfilled. Publishing his travel itinerary allowed Ludwig Salvator a greater engagement with the public than his more scientific work *Hobart Town*, which provided instruction to the exclusion of dramatic interaction with the people he met on his journey. In his scientific works Ludwig Salvator was keen to avoid the frivolity of amusement. Writing about nineteenth-century travel writers Nigel Leask (2002:300/301) points out that "Survey modality versus picturesque modality, scientific description versus personal narrative, travel books written for the library shelf versus travel books for the parlor table" was a problem. Archduke Ludwig Salvator was well aware of this problem and solved it by writing two books on his sojourn in the antipodes. The first edition of *Reise um die Welt* did not include any pictures and the pictures he included in the later editions are less detailed and lack the quality of those in *Hobart Town*.

As mentioned above, Ludwig Salvator's book *Reise um die Welt* was popular (3 re-prints) and seminal for the imaginations of armchair travelers, prospective migrants, aspiring entrepreneurs and scientists from German speaking countries. His narrative wanted to map Australia into German imaginations and his book worked as a guide for prospective travelers and indeed became part of an international itinerary for middle Europeans traveling around the world (Venice - Alexandria - Ceylon - Albany - Adelaide - Melbourne - Hobart - Sydney - Brisbane - Auckland - San Francisco - New York - Liverpool - Calais). By introducing international readers to the beauty of what he saw in narrative and pictures, Ludwig Salvator's travel narrative was an ideal mechanism by which to link European traditions to an Australian context. Engaging as his travel narrative is, it also provides a picture of an emerging nation through a cultural framework that throws a global perspective onto the Australian colonies. It opens insight into what Greenblatt (1991) terms representations of "wonder and marvel", which is "conveyed, [and] reported to an audience elsewhere". By this Greenblatt means "seeing turns into witnessing". Cross-cultural travel encounters such as Ludwig Salvator's travel accounts *Reise um die Welt* and *Hobart Town* were foundational for the

understanding and appreciation of early Australia by a non-English speaking audience.
Once in Melbourne Ludwig Salvator visited the World Exhibition almost every day and also took in the sights of the city which he described as "pleasant and cheerful" (Ludwig Salvator 1883:90). He offers a detailed description of the main Exhibition building and the temporary buildings, which were cooled by water trickling down from the roofs. Visiting all the exhibition courts, he was particularly impressed by the exhibits of the Australian colonials courts, which to him demonstrated a sheer fairytale-like development of the colonies.

For the European visitor the most interesting exhibitions are those of the seven Australian colonies, which competed to outdo each other. One is offered at once an overview of the development and the produce of every colony. Of course Victoria tops [the exhibits], followed by New South Wales, but also the others were not negligent. Even small Tasmania received some prizes. Considering the time frame of the colonies" existence, it seems impossible, that they have achieved such a truly fairy-tale like development (ibid. 106-107).

While Ludwig Salvator praised the Australian exhibits and deemed the exhibition an overall success, he was nevertheless very critical of poor exhibits from overseas. He felt that particularly the sections on art were an embarrassment to many European nations and that included his native Austria:

> In the industrial exhibition Austria is particularly richly represented taking on a prominent role. Unfortunately [Austria] contributes to the art exhibition with a meagre three items, all of them inferior. Otherwise there are only colour prints, many of which are housed in the industry section, where [the inferior items] should have been as well (ibid. 106).

Perhaps the long sea journey from Europe to Australia would have been considered detrimental to valuable artwork, or perhaps too expensive to insure adequately. Clearly the Archduke did not consider these issues as relevant, because he adds praise for Belgium, which had a "very rich art exhibition."

St Georges, Battery Point, Hobart (Salvator 1886: 219)

The progress of modernity in the Australian colonies was noted throughout Ludwig Salvator's travel diary. The advancement in the transport system caught his eye and he noted the signs "Walk over crossing" for pedestrians in Melbourne, Hobart and Sydney, even though he also noted, that often there was very little traffic. Streets illuminated through well-lit shop windows paid for privately and publicly as well as lamps at street corners met his approval; various advertisements amused him. A butcher shop in Hobart that had water trickling down its window fascinated him, as did the public transport systems in the cities he visited. Social progress too was duly noted, such as women being employed in the post-office in Melbourne.

Exposure of the negative side of British colonial rule in Australia was kept to a minimum, even though alongside praise for the prosperity and advancement of the colonies Ludwig Salvator also criticized the prevailing racism of the time. In Sydney he witnessed an attack on Chinese passers-by by some Australian youths:

> Young people traveling in a buggy behaved disgracefully by hitting with a whip two Chinese, who walked quietly. They retaliated by throwing

> stones. I shouted energetically towards the rascals who got frightened and disappeared into the carriage. As soon as the Chinese realized that someone stood up for them, they stopped throwing stones and walked on quietly (Salvator 1883:186).

Although Ludwig Salvator openly denounced racism and even intervened in the attack on the Chinese pedestrians, he nevertheless described the few Aborigines he encountered as

> poor depraved beings with broad noses and a piece of fur thrown around the shoulders. For one shilling they wanted to throw lances for us. Others stood at street corners and begged" (ibid. 71).

It appears that he saw Aboriginals only during his short stay in Western Australia, proving to his readers that the eastern Australian colonies were more civilized and not so different from Europe. His account of those few original inhabitants of the antipodes whom he met was however, less than encouraging. Just as aboriginal people were not a topic in Ludwig Salvator's travel account, convicts are also only mentioned briefly on his arrival in Western Australia.

The well-read Archduke knew of course that Australia's European colonization had been dependent on convict labour. While Australians during the Victorian era preferred to suppress the fact that the beginnings of their colonies were rooted in penal settlements, the fact that – if not nominally – the country had been founded by criminals played on the minds of foreign visitors. In 1881, when Ludwig Salvator traveled through Australia, transportation had stopped not quite 30 years before and the excitement of being amongst potentially dangerous people is revealed at landfall in Albany:

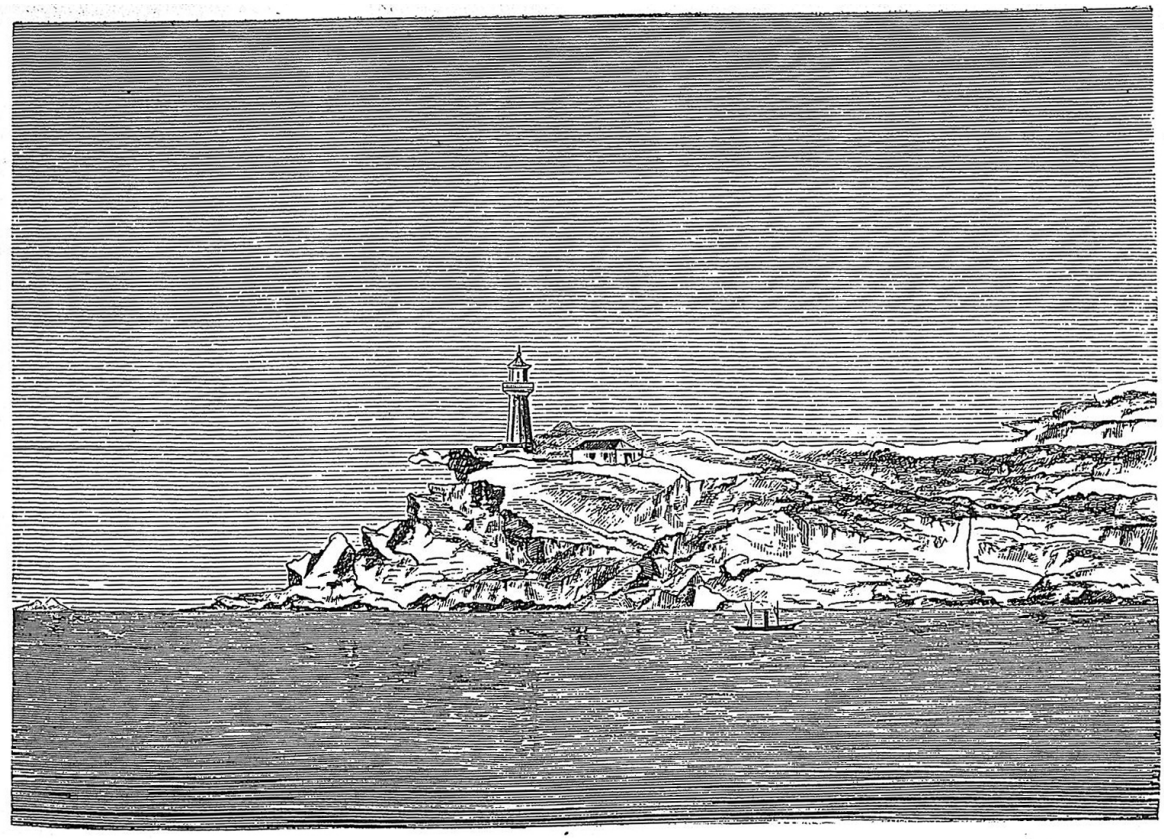
> We went to the bank, which, however, was closed. On the way there we passed two hotels ''Freemasons" Hotel" and ''London City Hotel". We entered the latter and asked here too for a money exchange facility, but to no avail. In an elegant salon we noticed two people with marked old criminal faces drinking beer. Because we did not notice anything resembling a hotel room, we hesitated to enter. The old guys called towards us: ''Come in, we will not hurt you!" (ibid. 71)

Having survived their first encounter with potential criminals, Ludwig Salvator and his entourage toured Albany. As always, when in a

foreign place, the pious prince first wanted to seek out the Catholic Church and in his travel log he entered the following incident in Albany:

> It became dusk; nobody was in the streets except for a boy who walked through a fenced plot. We called him to find out which was the Catholic Church. He showed us the above-mentioned building and answered to a second question if one could visit the church that the priest lived in the building further above which looked like a chapel with a cross on the top. We walked toward the house, the doors were open, but nobody was in view. – Suddenly a bearded man with an old top hat, grabbing a gun, appeared in the door – it was the priest. After seeing us and having recovered from his fright, he was willing to show us the church (ibid. 73).

The fear of being amongst criminals or trigger-happy people does not come forth in any other of Ludwig Salvator's entries. Indeed, he either felt completely safe, or he subscribed to the Australian conspiracy of not mentioning its tainted past. While he describes the achievements of Australian colonies at lengths, he hardly ever notes their numerous and sizeable prisons and convict buildings. The absence of the topic of Australia's convict past in *Reise um die Welt* might also be due to the fact that Ludwig Salvator spent most of his time in Victoria, which does not have such a horrible convict past as Tasmania or New South Wales.



Leuchtthurmspitze von Sidney. Zu Seite 165.

(Salvator 1883: 165)

When in Sydney, he traveled to Parramatta, but did not mention its historic significance as a penal settlement. However, on the journey to Brisbane, he noted the Trial Bay Goal at Smoky Cape called The Stockade, which was established in 1876. Inmates constructed the breakwater, which was completed in 1886. (The lighthouse at Smoky Cape was built some 10 years after Ludwig Salvator's visit. During World War I Trial Bay Goal was used as a German internment camp.)

Behind the Cape is a precipice that is crowned by a prison. This had been erected so that convicts would build the damn for the protection of the beautiful Trial Bay, which lies behind. Even today, this bay is often used by ships as protection against strong southeasterly winds. The Stockade is a large, stately building that can be seen from afar (ibid. 174).

Once in Brisbane, Ludwig Salvator was impressed by the view the Observatory (De Vries 2003:58/59) afforded, without noting its original, more sinister use. In 1828 the Observatory had been built as a windmill. It had been constructed by convicts to grind flour and maize and working there was a particularly cruel punishment for wayward convicts. The windmill became an Observatory in 1865 and it is of course quite possible that Ludwig Salvator was not made aware of its previous purpose. His books *Hobart Town* and *Reise um die Welt* were aimed at vindicating the Australian colonies and its inhabitants from their penal past and to promote the colonies to potential migrants.

The Austrian Archduke was a controversial figure. On the one hand he was passionate about the conservation of nature lamenting all the things that had to give way to progress, yet on the other hand shooting beautiful exotic birds so that they could be stuffed and taken to Europe was one of the objectives of his journey. Particularly in Tasmania and in New South Wales colourful parrots and other birds lost their lives to Antonio Vives, Ludwig Salvator's secretary, who seems to have been an expert shot. The prince preferred the more leisurely past time of drawing, when Vives was on the prowl. Climbing Mount Rumny near Hobart on 27th February 1881, Ludwig Salvator's diary entry reads:

> While I climbed up (…) and drew on the top of the mountain, several eagles circles within shooting range around me. In the meantime Vives walked through the valleys where he shot several very beautiful birds.

The picture Ludwig Salvator drew that day is a fold out picture of three pages included in *Hobarttown oder eine Sommerfrische in den Antipoden* between pages 262-263. On a hunting trip to Picton near Sydney not only birds, but also possums, koalas and a wallaby fell victim to the collectors of exotic fauna.

Ludwig Salvator was most impressed with Tasmania's tree ferns. At Fern Tree near Hobart he spent time wandering through the fern groves. "Here one sees the most beautiful tree ferns which developed in their fullest beauty in the untouched dome of the primeval forest"

(ibid. 128). He drew the grove including himself in his beautifully executed picture admiring the giant ferns.

Witnessing the destruction of these ancient plants by some locals he wrote full of scorn in his travel diary:

> We found the passengers of four or five coaches walking among the tree ferns and all of them carried young ferns in order to plant them in their gardens, even though the inscription on a sign warned that whoever damaged the plants would be sent to prison for three years (ibid. 128).

Intended for German-speaking audiences, Ludwig Salvator's book-length narrative of travel contributed to European imaginings of Australia in the 19th century. The reception assured by the prestige of the writer, *Reise um die Welt* enjoyed best-selling status and re-prints, as mentioned above. The complex relationship between the reader and the elite traveler was less obvious in this travel diary than in the more demanding and meticulously researched book *Hobart Town* where the holistic idealism of the romantic prince was synthesized with a quantitative and materialistic approach.

(Salvator 1886: 2)

Numerous texts under the category of nineteenth-century travel writing about Australia exist in the National Library of Australia and the Mitchell Library, but most have an Anglo-centric framework with reference points located within the culture they describe. Ludwig Salvator's books provide a view from the outside. While historians have taken recourse to travel writing from sources outside the English-speaking realm - particularly by early Dutch and French explorers, the insights of Austrian travelers during the Victorian era have been ignored. However, contemporary interdisciplinary approaches put new emphasis on the genre of travel writing, which informs colonial and postcolonial research. Nineteenth century Austrian travel writing with Australia as a topic covers the entire nineteenth century tracing the development of the Australian colonies from their infancy to thriving societies. Seen through non-British eyes, parallels were drawn by these travelers between European development and those of the Australian colonies and brought to the attention of readers outside the British realm.

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Anne Koch

Alex Miller's Utopian Vision of a Bi-Cultural Australian Identity in his Novel *Journey to the Stone Country*[1]

The concern of this paper is to present an important contribution to the current discussion of Australian identity made by the acclaimed Australian writer Alex Miller in his novel *Journey to the Stone Country* (2002). I am going to proceed in the following order: First I would like to acquaint you with Miller and his novel. This will then lead me to the focus of this paper which lies with Miller's utopian vision of a bi-cultural Australian identity. He develops this vision as a possible remedy to Australia's identity crises and presents it parallel to his protagonists' journey. I will first present the utopian model and then proceed to Miller's careful attempt to apply it to his protagonists' lives. Using the novel as a 'fictional laboratory'[2], the author not only conceptualizes a model of a new Australian identity, but he also translates it into a concrete context by letting his protagonists examine it. In the conclusion of this paper, I would like to emphasise the relevance of Miller's literary achievement for present-day Australian society.

Alex Miller was born in London in 1936 and emigrated to Australia as a young man in 1953. His emigration was mainly motivated by the wish to start a new life as an itinerant stockman. In the central highlands of Queensland his droving work brought him into close contact with the Murris, the Aboriginal people of this region. In their company, Miller was introduced to a stockman's life in the outdoors and indigenous knowledge of the land. This unusual insight into Aboriginal culture later

[1] The content of this paper, if not marked otherwise, is based solely on my exam thesis *The Quest for White and Black Australian Identity in Alex Miller's Novel Journey to the Stone Country*.

[2] I owe this term to Professor Norbert H. Platz, who further elaborates (2009) on the functions of *Journey to the Stone Country* as a 'fictional laboratory'.

enabled him to draw a realistic picture of the concerns of indigenous Australians in his work. Miller's move to Melbourne after his stockman years and his profession as a full-time writer did not disrupt his connection with the Queensland landscape and its original inhabitants. Upon a visit to Townsville in the 1990s, the author made the acquaintance of a white woman and her Aboriginal partner who took Miller on a journey to a sacred site, the stone country. Later, Miller chose these two people as models for his two protagonists in his novel *Journey to the Stone Country*. Furthermore, he adopted the landscape of coastal and central Queensland for his setting, letting his protagonists follow the same route to the stone country he took with his friends (cf. ABC 2004). Such a link between fiction and reality lends Miller's work an unusually high degree of authenticity and emphasises its relevance to the current discussion of Australian identity.

Alex Miller was introduced to the violence of Australia's colonial past soon after his emigration from England (cf. Miller 2008). As a white Australian, he intimately knows the feelings of guilt, displacement and the yearning for reconciliation which have pervaded Australian society for the past 30 or 40 years. The need to overcome the burden of the colonial past and to shape a united Australian nation is deeply felt in all quarters of society and seemed to experience a welcome relief with Kevin Rudd's official *Apology* in 2008. However, although the Rudd government implemented a programme called *Close the Gap* soon afterwards, which is aimed at overcoming the great difference "in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity" (Rudd 2008) between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians, Aboriginal people still remain on the fringe of society. The Australian Human Rights Commission reports that Aborigines still constitute the most disadvantaged and deprived group within the Australian society (cf. AHRC 2008). Certainly reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians can only be successfully effected if the Aboriginal people are fully integrated into Australian society, enjoying the same rights and duties as the rest of the nation, yet preserving their own identity as a people rich in tradition and culture.

Journey to the Stone Country recounts the story of Annabelle Beck and Bo Rennie who chance upon each other in the central highlands of Queensland and set out on a journey into their past. Gradually, they step back into the landscape that is deeply entwined with their family history and their own biography. Annabelle, the daughter of a white colonial family of landowners, left the country of her childhood at a young age, thus symbolizing non-indigenous Australia in its estrangement from the land. Bo, on the other hand, is the descendant of a white landowner and an Aboriginal woman who has handed down her indigenous knowledge of the land and the ancestors to her family. Thus Bo strongly identifies with his indigenous heritage and possesses important cultural knowledge. Unlike Annabelle, Bo has never relinquished his ties to his homeland. He has, however, endured decades of displacement following the forceful removal of his family from their farm. Upon encountering Annabelle, he feels the time for a return to his "heartland" has finally come. Taking these two characters as representatives of white and black Australia, one can conclude that both groups have to meet on the common ground of having to face uncertainties concerning their identity and ancestral ties. It is most significant that Miller depicts Annabelle's and Bo's quest as being inseparably linked. Only with Annabelle's arrival does Bo feel ready to return to his ancestral land; and it is only under his guidance that Annabelle finally manages to return to her homeland. Thus the author emphasises the importance of a collective Australian identity formation involving both cultures.

However, the protagonists' path is strewn with obstacles, the largest being the revelations of an old Aboriginal woman who unsettles Bo's and Annabelle's relationship by telling them of a massacre committed by Annabelle's grandfather against Bo's ancestral tribe. Nevertheless, Bo and Annabelle seemingly manage to overcome these obstacles by following the teachings of love and forgiveness of Bo's grandmother, Grandma Rennie. It is through this indigenous character that Miller evolves his utopian vision of a bi-cultural Australian identity.

Grandma Rennie's life and teachings are gradually recounted throughout the novel by her grandson Bo, for she is already deceased

at the time of the narrative. Her position in the novel is soon revealed as central as she proves to both sides that a life of reconciliation, equality, and love is possible, if the historical wrongs can be forgiven. Grandma's unusual ability to unite black and white seems to evolve from her own history. As the last child to be born in the sacred stone country she is raised in the traditional ways of her people outside the influence of the white colonisers. She is initiated, given a secret name and introduced to a deeper level of traditional knowledge through ritual. However, her untroubled childhood does not last long for she becomes one of the witnesses of a massacre committed by Annabelle's grandfather Louis Beck and his friend George Bigge. Grandma is forced to witness the violent deaths of her closest relatives and friends from a hiding place. She is traumatised a second time when, at the age of eight, she is separated from her parents and taken to a cattle station where she is put to work by the Bigge family. After she is first employed as a common servant, Grandma is later promoted to the position of companion for the two daughters of the family. Thus she becomes part of the white family and is allowed to live in equality with the Bigge girls and to be educated in the same accomplishments as they are. At the time of the narrative, the discovery of an old photograph offers material proof of her equal standing within white society:

> Assured and at ease, the black woman gazed steadily […] out of the stilled moment of past time, her hands folded in her lap, a necklace of beads or pearls at her throat. Her posture upright and formal, her pale gown narrowly waisted, her bosom buttoned firmly within the bodice of the dress, her dark hair parted severely down the centre. Her gaze was self-possessed and calm, as if she were in the most familiar surroundings among these white people and knew herself to be at home. She looked out of the photograph from her own world, an authority in her gaze […]. (303)

The photograph is the only glimpse Annabelle and the reader can catch of Grandma apart from Bo's accounts of her. It shows a woman whose Aboriginality is outwardly only discernible by her black skin – and even this Annabelle does not recognise at first sight: "At first Annabelle thought this young woman was sitting in the shade of the verandah coping. Then she realized she was not in the shade but was black."

(303) In this instance, even the colour of skin seems to be an uncertain indicator of cultural affiliations in Miller's novel. As the author himself has remarked in an interview: "It's not a black and white thing. It's not that black and white. You know, we find out. It transpires, it occurs, we discover." (ABC 2004) Avoiding distinct categorisation based on ethnicity, Miller argues that skin colour does not constitute cultural identity. His characters are not simply distinguishable by the colour of their skin; rather, they are revealed to be part of either - or both - groups by their actions, attitudes, traditions, and their overall perception of the world. Grandma Rennie's blackness has become nearly invisible as she seems to have been completely immersed in the white world. However, though her attire and bearing clearly associate her with white Australian culture, she has been able to preserve her indigenous identity. Before her elevation to equal status in the Bigge family, she set out on a secret journey to the stone grounds to perform rituals putting a curse on George Bigge in revenge for the massacre. Clearly, Grandma's capacity for forgiveness and intercultural love gradually grows during the years she spends with the Bigges. Though forced to live with one of the murderers of her own people, she nevertheless learns to accept the whites as fellow human beings. Her position as one of the family is presented as the cornerstone of her ability to choose love and respect over hatred and revenge.

Grandma's position within white society is further strengthened and secured by her marriage to Iain Ban Rennie, a white landowner. The relationship is based on a deep love, uniting them in a perfect fusion of black and white culture. While holding on to their core cultures, they both adapt to the other's lifestyle and beliefs. The couple do not see any difference between blacks and whites but treat everybody with equal respect and friendliness. "She always told us, what's good for one is good for everyone. And she'd share out the good things accordingly with whoever come along." (112) After his death, Grandma buries her white husband in the sacred ground of the stone country and performs indigenous rituals at his grave. In spite of the law preventing indigenous landownership at the time, she inherits Verbena Station from Iain and manages it with the help of her son.

Her open-mindedness and authority earn her the respect of the whole community, who treat her like any other landowner and welcome her into the social community of the nearby town.

It is of great significance that Grandma Rennie actively decides to pass on to her progeny only those views and values which will enhance intercultural harmony. Therefore, her experience of the massacre is not revealed to Bo or his siblings. Instead, she takes care to bequeath her knowledge of the land and indigenous culture to the younger generation, including white children, in the hope that the traditions will not be lost. As Bo recalls: "The way my Grandma seen it, brothers and sisters don't kill each other. And that's the way she lived." (360)

By creating Grandma Rennie, Miller has developed a utopian vision of a bi-cultural Australian identity in that he presents a character who has succeeded in uniting her Aboriginal heritage with the dominant culture of white settler society. Grandma is by no means the product of assimilation or cultural suppression. On the contrary, she retains her indigenous identity unblemished throughout life. Though the target of colonial cruelty, Grandma is also given the rare chance to become a respected member of the white community. This twist in Grandma's biography lays the foundation for her ability to unite her own culture with that of the invaders. Her marriage to a white landowner who possesses the same open-mindedness and adaptability is the epitome of her bi-cultural identity. Without obstruction, Grandma can pursue her indigenous heritage as well as life in the white community. Miller presents this ability of blending one's core culture with that of another people as one solution to intercultural conflict.

On a closer reading of Miller's novel, however, the impression is created that the viability of his vision can be questioned. The account of Grandma's life ends with her sister's betrayal and the consequent loss of Verbena Station. In the end, Grandma, whose life has been characterised by love and respect for everybody, falls victim to her sister's machinations and the Australian law. Asking a solicitor for help, she learns that, as an Aborigine, she had never been legally entitled to hold property or to marry Iain Rennie in the first place. In a

moment of need the marginality of Grandma's position within white society becomes apparent. Cornered by her sister and a corrupt solicitor, she does not experience any support or help from the community. All of a sudden, it seems questionable whether the respect and friendship she experienced from her neighbours were genuine, or whether, as Bo puts it,

> […] people must have decided Grandma Rennie's time was up and that she'd had a pretty good run for an old Jangga woman from the Suttor country. (256).

Annabelle's memory of her family's reaction to the Rennies" lifestyle on Verbena offers further proof that Grandma was never completely accepted as an equal by the white community:

> She was remembering her father telling them around the dinner table of the fights at Verbena and the strays along the creek. They had laughed to think of such a place and thought it peculiar and different. (262)

Having developed his bi-cultural ideal, Miller carefully tests its feasibility by applying it to the rather more realistic context of his protagonists, Bo and Annabelle. While Bo is familiar with his family history, Annabelle has to struggle with revelations about Australian history and her own ancestors. After her sensibilities towards white colonial wrongs have been awakened, she realizes how precarious the relationship between blacks and whites still is:

> Maybe they all hate us, she thought. Deep down. For what we've stolen from them. For what we've done to them. It was the first time she had considered such a possibility and she was a little shocked by the implications of it. To be hated, after all. It was unthinkable. (94)

While Bo was familiarized with white culture by Grandma Rennie, Annabelle does not have the advantage of a bi-cultural upbringing. On their journey she is gradually acquainted with Bo's Aboriginal perception of the land and of life in general. It is interesting to note that Miller presents Bo as the connector of the white woman with her past and identity. His indigenous wisdom coupled with Grandma Rennie's teachings pave the way for Annabelle to face her family's colonial past and to develop a new feeling of home and belonging. Thus, Miller reverts the historical notion that white Australian culture dominates Aboriginal culture (cf. Platz 284). Annabelle's open-mindedness and adaptability enable her to understand and value Bo's

culture and thereby to re-define herself. Gradually she learns to understand Bo's mindset and her own culture-based perception of the world. However, the cultural difference between them repeatedly puts Bo's and Annabelle's relationship to the test after they have become lovers. After an argument about the historical significance of an old homestead, Annabelle ponders the impact of their cultural difference:

> Were their pasts too similar and yet too different for them to understand each other? […] She thought of Thomas Carlyle boasting of reading a volume of Gibbon a day for six days when he was a young man. Such scraps of knowledge would be utterly foreign to Bo's mind. […] What might there be, she wondered, in Bo's mind that would be just as foreign to her […]? (178-180)

Annabelle's and Bo's attempt to establish a successful relationship permeates the whole novel. As a remedy to intercultural conflict Miller resorts to his utopia and offers his characters recovery through the example of Grandma Rennie. Following her lead, Bo and Annabelle even manage to overcome the shock of learning about the massacre committed by Annabelle's grandfather. It is this active choice of black and white to unite and to find a common ground upon which a new future can be built which Miller presents as the foundation for bi-cultural identity. By acknowledging and accepting the differences between the two cultures, both his protagonists establish inter-cultural identities which contain characteristics of both worlds. However, Miller's novel closes with an open end which leaves the reader in doubt whether Bo and Annabelle might succeed in establishing a new life together. Having offered a potential solution to Australia's identity crisis by developing his concept of a bi-cultural identity, Miller refrains from drawing a picture of its likely success or failure. Like the citizens in present-day Australia, his characters have only just started to redefine their existence and sense of belonging. Seeing that the chasm gaping between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians is still considerable, Miller's imaginative attempt to find a future-oriented solution to the Australian identity problem deserves attention. His remarkable vision of a bi-cultural identity offers valuable clues as to how Australians, without cultural loss on either side, might find out and define who they are.

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Einbindung der Repräsentation von MigrantInnen in ein nationales australisches Kino

You're here as migrants, not here to enjoy life
(Bing in *Floating Life*)

Im folgenden Artikel stelle ich narrative Einbindungen von Migrantinnen und Migranten in das Repräsentationssystem des multikulturalistischen Nationenprojekts Australien vor. Als Grundlage dient mir dabei die Analyse dreier ausgewählter Filme, *Fistful of Flies* (Monica Pellizzari 1996), *Floating Life* (Clara Law 1996) und *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* (Richard Flanagan 1997), die ich mit Theorien der Repräsentation von nationalen und migrantischen Gemeinschaften und narrativen Strategien australischer Erzählungen in Verbindung setze.

Multikulturalität, Multikulturalismus und Film

Ich unterscheide grundsätzlich zwischen den Begriffen Multikulturalität/multikulturell und Multikulturalismus/multikulturalistisch. Ersteren verwende ich für Gesellschaften deren Selbstbeschreibung definiert, dass ihre Mitglieder diverse regionale Herkünfte und Kulturen einbringen, wobei Kultur hier die Gesamtheit der Lebensweisen einer definierten Gruppe in einem spezifischen Bedeutungssystem und einen dynamischen sozialen Prozess bezeichnet. Der Begriff Multikulturalismus ist ein politisch-ideologischer und an Institutionen gebunden. Eine multikulturalistische Politik impliziert die offizielle Anerkennung kultureller Vielfalt, den Einbezug 'ethnischer Minderheiten' und dass soziale Ungleichheiten, die auf kulturell unterschiedene Herkünfte zurückgeführt werden, als staatliche Verantwortung erfasst und aufgefangen werden.

In Kanada, Neuseeland und Australien haben sich regierungspolitische Konzepte des Multikulturalismus etabliert (vgl. Stratton/Ang). Diese Nationen lassen sich aufgrund ihrer Ausgangslage als *settler societies* nicht auf die Konstruktion eines kollektiv geteilten Ursprungs zurückführen, wie dies bei den 'alten', europäischen Nationen meist der Fall ist. Multikulturelle nationale Gemeinschaften müssen eine gemeinsame Identität konstruieren, die verschiedene regionale und kulturelle Herkünfte verbindet. Dabei verstehe ich den Begriff der Identität – auch die Kategorien Gender und Ethnizität – als instabil, prozesshaft und von Machtbeziehungen durchzogen.

Filme wirken an der ständigen Konstruktion des Selbstbildes einer Nation sowie an deren Wahrnehmung durch Andere mit – sie sind Teil der Wissensproduktion von Identität, sowohl 'geschlechtlicher', 'ethnischer' als auch 'nationaler' Identität. Daher sind sie nützliche Quellen zur Untersuchung gesellschaftlicher Konstruktionen von Wirklichkeit und der politisch-ideologischen Einflussnahme auf die Repräsentationen einer Nation.

Ethnisierte Gemeinschaften und kulturelle Repräsentation

Nationen und 'ethnische Gemeinschaften' lassen sich als Repräsentationssysteme auffassen, die eine Vorstellung von Gemeinschaft konstruieren, mit der sich ihre Mitglieder identifizieren können. Die Gemeinschaft und ihre Mitglieder werden so analog durch Prozesse der Imagination hervorgebracht (Hall 1993:355). 'Ethnische Gemeinschaften' sind dabei in die Strukturen nationaler Repräsentation eingebunden, in dem Kräfte von Seiten der dominanten kulturellen Gruppe und der ethnisierten Gruppen mit- und gegeneinander wirken, so dass sich das System ständig verändert. Der Zugang ethnisierter Kulturschaffender zu diesem Repräsentationssystem wird von multikulturalistischen Regierungspolitiken reguliert, woraus Fragen der Legitimität folgen: Welche Gruppen haben Anspruch auf Förderung? Wer hat das Recht, eine kulturelle Gruppe innerhalb der Kulturindustrie zu repräsentieren? Wie soll eine 'ethnische Gemeinschaft ' repräsentiert werden? (Hall 2006:200)

In der Bemühung um Anerkennung als 'ethnische Gemeinschaft' stellen ethnisierte Gruppen sich selbst durch kulturelle Praktiken (Musik, Literatur, Film, Malerei, Kunsthandwerk, etc.) als klar definiert und identifizierbar her, indem sie eine kulturelle Identität, Gruppengrenzen und Souveränität beanspruchen und betonen. Dies kann als Ermächtigungsstrategie im politischen Widerstand gegen Unterdrückungsmechanismen gesehen werden. Skeptischen bzw. ablehnenden Haltungen gegenüber dieser Art von Identitätspolitik wird daher häufig vorgeworfen, den Kämpfen gegen Diskriminierung in den Rücken zu fallen. Doch die Kritik, dass im Rahmen von Identitätspolitiken die Herstellung einer kollektiven Identität nicht allein als Mittel politischer Kämpfe eingesetzt, sondern als deren Grundlage hergestellt wird, ist berechtigt. Denn der Mechanismus, der Identitätskategorien durch ihre Festlegung konstruiert, wird oft nicht ausreichend berücksichtigt, so dass Identitätspolitiken immer die Gefahr beinhalten, sich Ausschluss- und Homogenisierungsmechanismen zu bedienen. 'Ethnische Gruppen' eine stellen 'Gleichheit' ihrer Mitglieder auch her, indem sie andere als ethnisierende Identitätskategorien ignorieren oder als 'Nebenwiderspruch' vernachlässigen; Veränderungen, sowohl innerhalb der eigenen als auch in der nationalen Gemeinschaft, in die sie eingebunden sind übergehen; und sie re-produzieren Machtpositionen innerhalb der Gruppe, indem Werte und ideologische Grundhaltungen privilegierter und einflussreicher Positionen als die (einzig) maßgeblichen gelten (vgl. Yuval-Davis 119f; Erel 178).

Es sind diese privilegierten Mitglieder, deren Äußerungen in gesamtgesellschaftlichen Diskursen zu Ethnizität gehört und anerkannt werden. Denn auch von Außen werden 'ethnische Gruppen' in der Regel als homogen betrachtet, eine Wahrnehmung, die von identitätspolitischen Strategien nicht durchbrochen wird. Damit sind identitätspolitische Bewegungen in Unterdrückungsstrukturen eingebunden und stehen in ständiger Gefahr, diese durch die Re-Produktion ihrer eigenen marginalisierten – aber legitimierten – Position darin zu reproduzieren und zu stabilisieren (vgl. Steyerl 169).

Welche Rolle nehmen nun ethnisierte ProduzentInnen innerhalb der Kulturindustrie ein, und welche Funktionen werden ihnen zugewiesen? Es sind immer nur wenige Mitglieder marginalisierter Gruppen, denen Zugang zur Produktion und Anerkennung ihrer Arbeiten gewährt wird – und die damit die gesamte Gruppe repräsentieren. Dabei liegt es häufig im Interesse der Dominanzkultur, den Unterschied zwischen Normalität und dem Anderen als möglichst groß und bedeutungsvoll herzustellen. Nira Yuval-Davis stellt fest:

> These voices are constructed to be as distinct as possible (within the boundaries of multi-culturalism) from the majority culture in order to be able to be 'different'; thus, within multi-culturalism, the more traditional and distant from the majority culture the voice of the 'community representatives' is, the more 'authentic' it would be perceived to be within such a construction. (57)

Authentizität

Die Re-Produktion von Authentizität – sowohl aus einer Gemeinschaft heraus als auch durch die Forderung von Außen – unterstützt die Konstruktion, dass Identitätsgruppen in sich widerspruchslos, unveränderlich und 'natürlich' sind. Als Vorstellung einer 'wahrhaften' Repräsentation von Kultur ist Authentizität zugleich Äußerung und Mechanismus der Homogenisierung und Naturalisierung 'kollektiver Identität'. Im Rahmen von Identitätspolitiken nehmen die Konstruktion 'authentischer Selbstdarstellung' sowie die Autorität über deren Definition einen wichtigen Platz ein:

> "…there are those who take the position that only members of such minority groups have the authority, or at least moral right, to represent themselves. But who, institutionally speaking, decides the group membership and who interprets and legislates whether this authenticity has been achieved?" (Gunew 2)

Der Anspruch nach authentischer Repräsentation von Ethnizität in Verbindung mit dem eingeschränkten Zugang zur Kulturindustrie führt dazu, dass die Repräsentation ethnisierter Identität auf eine oder wenige Personen übertragen und deren (individuelle) Arbeit als authentische Darstellung für eine gesamte Gruppe verstanden wird. Intern verleiht diese Konstruktion den RepräsentantInnen eine machtvolle Stellung, nach außen eine Position politischer

Handlungsfähigkeit. Aber ihnen wird auch, wie Kobena Mercer beschreibt, die gesamte 'Last der Repräsentation' übertragen:

> Where subordinate subjects acquire the right to speak only one at the time, their discourse is circumscribed by the assumption that they speak as 'representatives' of the entire community from which they come. (205)

Mercer argumentiert weiter, dass diese Reduzierung die Festschreibung von minorisierten Gruppen als 'das Fremde' forciert und Diversität und Heterogenität in der Repräsentation ignoriert und unsichtbar macht.

Hybridität

Die Homogenisierung ethnisierter Gruppen wird häufig mit Ethnizitätsdiskursen verflochten, die migrantische Identitäten 'zwischen' zwei Kulturen verorten. Diese Vorstellung reflektiert eine unzulässig vereinfachte Interpretation des Konzeptes der Hybridität, das auf Homi Bhabha zurückgeht, die Komplexität und Ausdifferenziertheit seiner Theorie jedoch unterschlägt (vgl. u.a. Bhabha). Dieses verkürzte Verständnis von Hybridität schließt die Gefahr der Re-Mythisierung kultureller Ursprünglichkeit sowie die der Re-Konstruktion von Kultur als homogener Einheiten ein, da die ständigen Veränderungsprozesse sowohl innerhalb kultureller Gemeinschaften als auch im Austausch mit anderen ignoriert werden (vgl. Yuval-Davis 59). Den populären Multikulturalismus-Diskursen, wie sie auch in Australien geführt werden, bleibt die Gefahr eines strukturellen Mangels inhärent: In der sozialen Praxis sind es allein die ethnisierten Gruppen einer Gesellschaft, denen die hybride Identitäten zugewiesen werden, während der dominante Teil unverändert und stabil bleibt. MigrantInnen werden in der Position des Anderen festgeschrieben, wobei dieses Andere nicht zur Bedrohung werden darf. Ihnen wird die Herstellung einer hybriden 'ethnischen' Identität auferlegt, indem von ihnen erwartet wird, Herkunftskultur und Norm-Kultur des Einwanderungslandes zu verbinden. Im Kontext eines multikulturalistischen Nationenprojektes wird damit die Aufgabe der Konstruktion einer 'neuen', multikulturellen nationalen Identität auf die ethnisierten Gruppen übertragen. Ob dieses Projekt erfolgreich ist oder

nicht, bestimmt die dominante Gesellschaft anhand ihrer Zufriedenheit mit der Identitätsarbeit der Anderen.

Das Konzept der hybriden Identität wird ambivalent bewertet, einerseits erscheint die Positionierung im Zwischenraum als begünstigt, da hybriden Subjekten Verstehen und Handlungsfähigkeit in zwei oder mehr Kulturen zugeschrieben wird (vgl. Hall 1993:361f). Doch oft werden migrantische Identitäten als belastend interpretiert, da sie verschiedene Normen und Werte mit- und gegeneinander verhandeln müssen. Dies geht mit gesellschaftlichen Diskursen der Pathologisierung einher, wie Umut Erel feststellt: ”Die nationalen kulturellen Institutionen halten für ethnisierte Menschen keine Narrative einer positiven, ungebrochenen, homogenen Identifikation bereit" (179).

Doch die Forderung nach Authentizität der Repräsentation bleibt bestehen und so bleiben Kulturschaffende in der Reproduktion des Anderen verfangen. Die Authentizität hybrider Positionen – schließlich soll die Repräsentation 'echt' sein – wird durch die Verbindung mit 'eigenen Erfahrungen' der ProduzentInnen hergestellt: "Dem Verhältnis zwischen Biographie der Autorin und ihrem Text wird nicht die kleinste Lücke zugestanden [...] Leben und Werk der Minorisierten haben identisch zu sein" (Steyerl 161).

Konstruktion von Authentizität in MigrantInnenfilmen

Für das 'nationale Kino' Australiens lässt sich seit Ende der 1980er Jahre eine Entwicklung feststellen, die einerseits der zunehmenden Internationalisierung der Filmwirtschaft, andererseits dem sich verändernden Selbstverständnis der Nation zuzuschreiben ist. Filme wie die *period films* und *ocker comedies* der 1970er und frühen 1980er Jahre werden in ihrer weitgehenden Beschränkung auf die anglokeltische dominante Gruppe nicht mehr als adäquate Repräsentationen einer sich als multikulturalistisch verstehenden Nation anerkannt. Damit eröffnet sich eine Ambivalenz zwischen der Einbindung in eine nationale Filmgeschichte und Öffnung hin zu multikulturelleren Erzählungen.

Eine vergleichende Analyse der Film *Fistful of Flies*, *Floating Life* und *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* zeigt relevante thematische Gemeinsamkeiten, es werden Religion, (weibliche) Sexualität, Genealogie und Generationenkonflikte sowie psychische Störungen und emotionales Leid im Migrationsprozess erörtert. Dies gilt auch für andere Filme aus Australien mit ethnisierten Protagonistinnen, z.B. *The Heartbreak Kid*, *Only the Brave* und *Looking for Alibrandi*. Verortet in verschiedenen kulturellen Gruppen entwickeln die Filme ihre Narration jeweils um eine zentrale weiblich Figur und greifen damit auf Korrelationen zwischen Weiblichkeit und biographischem Erzählen in der australischen Erzähltradition zurück.

Fistful of Flies erzählt von der 16jährigen Mars und ihren Konflikten zwischen Selbstbestimmung und den psychischen und physischen Sanktionen ihrer Eltern in einer italienisch-katholisch geprägt Kleinstadtgemeinschaft. Erst nach einem Selbstmordversuch solidarisiert sich ihre Mutter mit Mars und gemeinsam konfrontieren sie den gewalttätigen Vater. *Floating Life* handelt von den Migrationserfahrungen der Hongkong-chinesischen Familie Chan um die zweitälteste Tochter Bing und den Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Einwanderungsgenerationen. *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* erzählt die Geschichte von Sonja, die sich mit ihrem entfremdeten Vater Bojan versöhnen will. Dieser ist nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg aus Slowenien immigriert, zusammen mit seiner Frau Maria, die sich aufgrund einer Kriegstraumatisierung selbst tötet.

Die Erzählungen der drei untersuchten Filme haben jeweils Australien als primären Handlungsort. Ihre Verortungen in vor- bzw. kleinstädtischen Milieus (*suburbia*) und die realitätsnahen Inszenierungen verweisen auf Erzähltraditionen der *social realist*-Filme. Filme dieser Kategorie werden als Auseinandersetzungen mit realen gesellschaftlichen Situationen, und somit als 'authentisch' verstanden (vgl. Dermody/Jacka 41). Dies wird verstärkt durch die Verbindung zu realen Ereignissen. Am deutlichsten wird dies in *The Sound of One Hand Clapping*, der als Gründe für die Immigration aus dem zentraleuropäischen Raum den Zweiten Weltkrieg und seine Folgen thematisiert: der Kalte Krieg, die Trennung Europas in 'Ost' und 'West'

sowie ihre Aufhebung 1989. Die Migration der Familie Chan in *Floating Life* verweist ebenfalls auf sozio-historische Veränderungen, auf die Rückgabe der ehemals britischen Kronkolonie Hongkong an China im Jahr 1997, die zu einer verstärkten Auswanderung insbesondere des Mittelstandes führte. Auch die Migration vieler Chinesinnen und Chinesen nach Hongkong und in andere kolonisierte Regionen bis in die zweite Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts wird erwähnt. Die Auseinandersetzungen mit Auswanderung und Fremdheitserfahrung werden so vervielfältigt. In *Fistful of Flies* werden keine Migrationsgründe benannt, doch weist der Film eine Besonderheit in der Darstellung migrantischer *communities* auf, da Diversität und Konflikte innerhalb einer scheinbar homogenen Gruppe angesprochen werden, hier die kulturellen und sozialen Differenzen zwischen Nord- und Süditalien.

Wie jede festgelegte Filmkategorie sind *social realist*-Filme auch von Erzählweisen anderer Gattungen beeinflusst. So knüpft *Fistful of Flies* thematisch an australische *coming of age* Filme wie *Puberty Blues* oder *The Year My Voice Broke* an sowie an sozialkritische, ironische Komödien beispielsweise *Malcom* oder *Sweetie*. *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* greift Elemente der *period films* auf, die vor allem in den 1980er Jahren das Bild des australischen Kinos geprägt haben. Sie folgten zeitlich dicht auf die Herausbildung bzw. Wahrnehmung einer nationalen australischen Kultur und den Beginn der öffentlichen Kultur- und Filmförderung Ende der 1960er Jahre. Damit nehmen sie einen wichtigen Platz in der australischen Filmgeschichte ein und beeinflussen das Selbstbildnis wie auch die Fremdwahrnehmung Australiens bis heute – und sei es in seiner Ablehnung (vgl. Dermody/Jacka 31ff).

Ein Merkmal vieler *period films* sind starke, aktive Frauenfiguren im Mittelpunkt der Narrationen, während die männlichen Charaktere fast ausschließlich reagieren und sich den gegebenen Verhältnissen anpassen (vgl. Dermody/Jacka 33). Auch in *Fistful of Flies*, *Floating Life* und *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* lässt sich eine solche Konzentration auf Frauenfiguren feststellen, die sich gegen psychische, soziale, familiäre oder kulturell begründete Zwänge auflehnen. Die

männlichen Figuren dagegen verkörpern häufig die Hindernisse, die sich den Frauen in den Weg stellen, und bleiben selbst unbeweglich und ratlos gegenüber Veränderungen.

Period films greifen 'nationale Mythen' auf, die das Selbstverständnis Australiens als Nationalstaat über lange Zeit bestimmt haben. Dazu gehört auch die Repräsentation von Landschaft als feminisiert, die besonders in *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* zitiert wird. In diesem Film finden etliche Sequenzen in – mehr oder weniger naturbelassenen – Landschaften statt. Hier lässt sich ein Rückgriff auf den Mythos der 'fremden Landschaft' feststellen, der in australischen Erzählungen und *period films* die Fremdheitserfahrungen (anglo-keltischer) Immigranten in einer unbekannten Natur verarbeitet. (vgl. Lake). In *Floating Life* weist Bing ihre gerade angekommenen Eltern und Brüder auf die Gefährlichkeit Australiens hin: Spinnen, Hunde und die Sonnenstrahlung sind tödlich, und im übertragenen Sinne bringt alles, was von Außen kommt, Gefahr – Einbrecher, Drogen, AIDS.

Alle drei Filme verwenden filmstilistische, narrative und intertextuelle Mittel, um ihre Erzählungen als realistische Abbilder von Wirklichkeit glaubhaft zu machen. Ausgehend von der These, dass die Herstellung von Authentizität für Migrationserzählungen grundlegende Bedeutung hat und in Wechselwirkung mit Gender steht, möchte ich das Zusammenspiel von Narration und Intertexten näher beleuchten.

Stilmittel

The Sound of One Hand Clapping setzt in den Anfangssequenzen Stilmittel zur Herstellung von Authentizität in konzentrierter Weise ein. So werden in den ersten Filmminuten zweimal Zeit und Ort des Geschehens mit Hilfe von Untertiteln festgelegt, auch die filmische Gegenwart: "Hobart, Tasmania, 1998". Dazwischen wird die Narration durch einen dokumentarisch wirkenden Einschub unterbrochen: grobkörnige Schwarz-Weiß-Bilder mit leichter Sepia-Kolorierung zeigen Bauarbeiten an einem Staudamm. Zusätzlich binden akustische Stilmittel die Erzählung in die sozio-historische Realität ein: während Sonjas Fahrt zum Staudamm hört sie im Autoradio einen Live-Bericht

über die Grenzöffnung in Berlin: "The Berlin wall, the great symbol of the cold war has fallen". Zwischen den gegebenen Informationen entsteht ein Netzwerk von Wechselwirkungen, in dem sich Bilder und Töne gegenseitig als realistisch autorisieren.

Im Gegensatz zu *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* verwenden die beiden anderen Filme keine zusätzlichen visuellen und akustischen Stilmittel, um ihren Anspruch auf Realitätsnähe zu betonen. Sie scheinen sich darauf zu verlassen, dass sie im Bezugsrahmen australischer Filmnarrationen als *social realist*-Filme und somit als Repräsentationen realer gesellschaftlicher Verhältnisse erkannt werden.

Um eine 'ethnische' Markierung der Figuren zu erzielen, nutzen die drei Filme jedoch übereinstimmende Stilmittel und Inszenierungen sowie diskursive Felder und greifen auf wohlbekannte narrative Versatzstücke der Konstruktionen von Ethnizität zurück:

> What counts as 'ethnic': the foreign name; the 'un-Australian' history; the first-person narrator delivering an authentic story, the alleged eye-witness accounts underpinning the foreign. […] The sense of a wider community is also absent because this would complicate the essential(ist) frame of reference. (Gunew 4)

Tatsächlich spielen alle drei Filme fast ausschließlich in der jeweiligen ethnisierten Gemeinschaft und konzentrieren sich auf eine Familie, Kontakte mit anderen (ethnisierten) kulturellen Gruppen werden bestenfalls am Rande thematisiert.

Authentizität durch Biographie

> Die drei von mir untersuchten Filme wurden durch öffentliche Institutionen subventioniert, wofür nicht nur Inszenierung und Inhalt eines Films geprüft werden, sondern auch Nationalität bzw. Ethnizität der MitarbeiterInnen vor und hinter der Kamera (vgl. O‟Regan 23ff). In der intertextuellen Analyse fällt auf, dass in Texten zu den drei Filmen (Pressematerialien, Kritiken, Festivaltexten sowie filmwissenschaftliche Schriften) das Spektrum nationaler und kultureller Herkünfte der Filmschaffenden hervorgehoben und mit den Erzählungen in Beziehung gesetzt wird, beispielsweise: "The crew was an extraordinarily multi-cultural mix, spanning fifteen nationalities" (Floating Life Press Kit:14).

Die Ethnisierung der Filmschaffenden steht in Verbindung mit gesellschaftlichen Diskursen zu Multikulturalität. Sie dient der Konstruktion einer 'Authentizität' der Erzählungen, die für alle drei Filme über biographische Daten stattfindet. Für *Fistful of Flies* und *Floating Life* werden dazu direkte Verbindungen mit den Biographien der Regisseurinnen Monica Pellizzari und Clara Law herangezogen. Clara Law stellt in einem Interview eine Verbindung zwischen ihrem eigenen Leben und ihrer Filmarbeit her:

> Caught between East and West has always been my dilemma. But it‟s come to the point where I find myself living comfortably in both cultures, enriched by both. And that‟s where Floating Life started: in coming to a realisation that you can actually talk about the two cultures happily. (Floating Life Press Kit:6)

Monica Pellizzari wird in einem Interview wie folgt zitiert: "The story of Fistful of Flies comes out of my cultural background as an Italo-Australian" (Fistful of Flies Press Kit:2). Diese ethnisierte Herkunft wird teilweise als direkter, emotionaler Auslöser für ihren Film konstruiert.

Um die Realitätsnähe und Authentizität für *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* herzustellen, werden, da Richard Flanagan keine ethnisierte Biographie hat, andere Nachweise bemüht:

> He grew up in a mining town on the west coast of Tasmania and spent time at the hydro-electricity power plant construction camp, where some of his story is set. He married a Slovenian, 'and a large part of my life has been spent in that cultural environment'. (Moving Pictures/Berlinale 33f)

Die drei Filme werden so zu Auseinandersetzungen mit Erfahrungen ethnisierter Frauen – der Regisseurinnen selbst bzw. einer dem Regisseur nahestehenden Frau – konstruiert. Diese Verknüpfung von biographischem Erzählen und Authentizität mit den Konstruktionen von Ethnizität und Weiblichkeit stehen, besonders in der australischen Erzähltradition, in Beziehung zu Multikulturalitätsdiskursen.
Narrative Konstruktionen von Authentizität reichen in Australien zurück auf literarische Werke der National Liberal-Bewegung des ausgehenden 19. und beginnenden 20. Jahrhunderts. Diese wurden über lange Zeit als realistische Darstellungen reproduziert und haben diesen Status teilweise noch heute. Etliche der zu dieser Zeit ent-

standenen Erzählungen wurden in *period films* verarbeitet, u.a. *The Getting of Wisdom* und *My Brilliant Career*. Beide Romane wurden von Autorinnen unter männlichem Pseudonym veröffentlicht und werden häufig in Bezug zu ihren Biographien rezipiert. Die Verbindung von Werken von Frauen mit biographischem Erzählen stellt diese Narrationen in die Nähe zu 'nacherzähltem Erleben' und damit zum Authentischen – mindert jedoch auch ihren kreativen Wert (vgl. Wimmer 408).

Im Kontext australischer Narrationstradition und deren Reproduktion in der Literatur- bzw. Filmgeschichtsschreibung lässt sich also eine Wechselwirkung zwischen Werk, Autorin/Filmemacherin und ihren Biographien, zwischen Weiblichkeit und der Konstruktion 'authentischer' Erzählungen erkennen.

MigrantInnenfilme und Multikulturalismus

Der Analyse von Intertexten und Kontexten zu den Filmen *Fistful of Flies*, *Floating Life* und *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* unter Einbezug relevanter Stilmittel folgend, lässt sich die Herstellung von Authentizität migrantischer Erzählungen als ein bedeutungsvolles Moment aufzeigen, in dem Ethnizität und Weiblichkeit in enger wechselseitiger Beziehung stehen. In multikulturalistischen Diskursen zur Kulturförderung kann die Ethnisierung von Kulturschaffenden sowie ihrer Werke Einfluss auf die Vergabe von Fördergeldern haben. Dadurch wird der Zugang ethnisierter Personen zur Kulturindustrie begrenzt und die Repräsentation ethnisierter Gruppen verbleibt unter Kontrolle dominanter kultureller Diskurse. Die Biographien der Filmschaffenden belegen deren Ethnizität, des Weiteren stellen Texte wie Pressematerialien, Kritiken und Festivaltexte durch die Nennung ethnisierter Herkünfte Bezüge zwischen biographischen Daten und Narrationen her. Damit wird die Authentizität ethnisierter Erzählungen begründet, die bei Regisseurinnen durch die in australischen Erzähltraditionen etablierte Verbindung weiblichen Erzählens mit biographischen Narrationen unterstützt wird. Die Form der Inszenierung bindet die Filme zusätzlich an Erzählformen der *social realist*-Filme und *period films*, die ebenfalls im Kontext 'authentischer'

Schilderung australischer Geschichte und Gegenwart stehen. Die Narrationen selbst, die durch die Perspektive einer weiblichen Hauptfigur den autobiographischen Aspekt herausstellen, bekräftigen die Rezeption als realistische Erzählung.

Die Filme, die ich dieser Analyse zugrunde gelegt habe, reproduzieren Vorstellungen und Bilder der jeweiligen ethnisierten Gruppe. Narrative und filmstilistische Strategien unterstützen dabei die Konstruktion von Authentizität. Die Filme haben, wie auch andere mediale Texte die Migrationserfahrungen und Ethnizität verhandeln, Einfluss darauf, wie bestimmte Gruppen wahrgenommen werden, welche Stereotype entstehen, verworfen oder bestätigt werden. Dies gilt sowohl für Selbstbilder einer ethnisierten Gruppe als auch für Fremdwahrnehmungen, und in diesem Wechselspiel re-konstruieren sich sowohl die ethnisierte als auch – durch Abgrenzung – die dominante Gruppe. Die Filme zeigen ethnisierte Figuren, wie sie zwischen Herkunfts- und Einwanderungskultur verhandeln. MigrantInnenfilme liefern also Repräsentationen der Herstellung einer 'hybriden' australischen Identität als 'ethnisierte Australierin'/'ethnisierter Australier'. Darüber hinaus dienen sie als 'Entwürfe', wie sich eine multikulturalistische nationale Gemeinschaft gestalten sollte. In diesem Aushandlungsprozess konzentriert sich allerdings die Problematisierung von Multikulturalität auf die ethnisierte Position, und die dominante australische, anglo-keltische Position bleibt von Veränderungen und Anpassungsforderungen weitgehend unberührt.

Dieser Artikel basiert auf meiner Dissertation *Film und Multikulturalismus*, der Abdruck erfolgt mit freundlicher Genehmigung des transcript Verlags.

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Filme

Fistful of Flies – Monica Pellizzari, AUS 1996.
Floating Life – Clara Law, AUS 1996.
The Sound of One Hand Clapping – Richard Flanagan, AUS 1997.
The Getting of Wisdom – Bruce Beresford, AUS 1978.
The Heartbreak Kid – Michael Jenkins, AUS 1993.
Looking for Alibrandi – Kate Woods, AUS 2000.
Malcolm – Nadia Tass, AUS 1986.
My Brilliant Career – Gillian Armstrong, AUS 1979.
Only the Brave – Ana Kokkinos, AUS 1994.
Puberty Blues – Bruce Beresford, AUS 1981.
Sweetie – Jane Campion, AUS 1989.
The Year My Voice Broke – John Duigan, AUS 1987.

REVIEW ESSAY

UNCOVERING THE GERMAN ABORIGINE

Oliver Haag

Jeannie Gunn, *Die kleine schwarze Prinzessin aus dem Never-Never,* trans. Leni Tschudi-Rüegg. Leipzig: Araki, 2010, 125pp, ISBN: 978-3936149395. € 12.90.

Anne Saunders, *Reisen in die Traumzeit. Eine Aboriginaleinweihung,* trans. Jan Leichsenring. Leipzig: Araki, 2009, 200pp, ISBN: 978-3936149371. € 14.50

William Peasley, *Die letzten Nomaden,* trans. Johanna Ellsworth. Leipzig: Araki, 2007, 173pp, ISBN: 978-3222125379. € 16.90

The translation of literature is not only of literary concern, but also one of politics and history, particularly so if translations involve racial representation (King). The matter of racial representation has become apparent in three recent translations of Australian books, all issued by Araki, a small Leipzig-based publisher. Araki's publishing programme includes Aboriginal-related books, one of them with an esoteric twist, German literature, and general esoteric literature. Part of Aboriginal-related translations in the programme are the Australian children's classic *Die kleine schwarze Prinzessin aus dem Never-Never* (original: *The Little Black Princess,* 1905); an esoteric book on inter-racial reconciliation entitled *Reisen in die Traumzeit* (original: *A Geomythical Journey*, 2001); and *Die letzten Nomaden* (original: *The Last of the Nomads,* 1982), a widely-sold book in Australia about the isolated life of two members of the Mandildjara people in the Gibson Desert.

The most challenging of the translations is Jeannie Gunn's *Die kleine schwarze Prinzessin aus dem Never-Never* (2010). Written more than a century ago, the first-person story is set in the Katherine district and revolves around the friendship between Jeannie Gunn, a white farmer's wife, and an Aboriginal girl named Bett-Bett. The story includes accounts of Aboriginal customs, social life and material culture, all of which is described in a jargon that can be considered racist, at least how we understand the term today. This includes derogatory terms, such as "nigger", "Piccaninny" and "lubra", some of them amended in the subsequent re-editions. Yet not only particular terms, but also the entire character of the story render the original text prejudiced. Gunn's book is sympathetic to the Aboriginal protagonists, to be sure, but describes Aboriginal people as awkward, childish and intellectually inferior to white people. Bett-Bett's uncle, for example, is depicted as too retarded to know how to put on the trousers that Gunn gives him to cover his modesty (Gunn 1906:13-14). Such racial references to imbecility, nudity and civilisation permeate the whole of the original text. Scholarship concludes that, although Gunn's text may have espoused a well-intentioned view of Aboriginal people at the time of its production, today it indubitably comes across as racist (Ellinghaus 1997; Larbalestier 1990).

Any translation of Gunn`s text thus inevitably replicates early twentieth century racist discourse. But in the German version the translator has not even tried to replace the most obnoxious racist terminology—only the word "nigger" is given as "Eingeborene" (Gunn 1906:xiv; Gunn 2010:10). Although less extreme than "nigger", the word "Eingeborene" still carries a racist connotation. Moreover, such humiliating words as "lubra" and "Piccaninny"—referring to Black women and children, respectively—have simply been kept on in the German translation. Another form of racist replication is the quite direct translation of Gunn's version of Aboriginal English. For instance, the sentence, "Spose me shut him eye quickfellow, that all right" (Gunn 1906: 17) has been rendered into German thus: "Wenn mich schließt ihm Auge ganz geschwind, macht nichts" (Gunn 2010:23). Literally translated into English this sentence reads, "If I close my eyes very quickly then it does not matter". This unidiomatic language

represents the Aboriginal protagonists as incapable of producing proper language, and also misrepresents Aboriginal English as a faulty version of Standard English. In German, the representation of racial minorities through faulty German is one of the most vulgar elements of racist discourse.

All of this, however, does not mean that such a text should not in principle be translated. The book is certainly of interest to academics and specialist readers interested in the history of racism in Australian literature. But any serious translation of Gunn's book requires proper contextualisation according to the text's historicity, ideally provided in a substantial introductory chapter. Alas, this is nowhere the case in the present German translation. Far from employing a critical approach to racial discourse past and present, the book is simply conceived of as suitable for children, with children being directly addressed on the blurb by the personal pronoun *du*. Clearly, a young, non-academic readership is the wrong addressee for such a book. But it gets even worse when the translator stresses in the epilogue the truthfulness of Gunn's accounts:

> Das vorliegende Buch ist der erste authentische Bericht, der über das Leben und die seltsamen Sitten und Gebräuche der Ureinwohner Australiens veröffentlicht worden ist. Er wurde vor mehr als hundert Jahren geschrieben und in der Zwischenzeit sind unzählige Publikationen über die Ureinwohner erschienen. Aber das Buch hat nichts von seinem ursprünglichen Wert und seiner Frische verloren. (Gunn 2010:120)

In English this passage reads,

> The present book is the first authentic account that was published on the odd mores and customs of the Natives of Australia. It was written more than a hundred years ago and, meanwhile, countless publications have appeared about the Aborigines. But this book has lost nothing of its original value and freshness (...)

The naïveté and obvious lack of any knowledge of Australian Aboriginal history and culture evinced in the translation of the text give the impression that the blatant racism in the book was not merely the product of the historic author, but also one of the modern translator and publisher.

Racial representation is also evident in *Reisen in die Traumzeit* (2007), which is strikingly reminiscent of Marlo Morgan's best-seller *Mutant Message Down Under* (1991), a literary hoax passed off as a true account by a white American woman seeking spiritual enlightenment among Aboriginal people. Written by Anne Saunders, a Scottish émigré to Australia, and self-published in 2001, *Reisen in die Traumzeit* (2007) tells of the author's epiphany to reconcile the Celtic race with the Aboriginal and Māori peoples. This epiphany, the author says, was instigated by her eagle totem, along with a couple of orders sent from the Pleiades. Having received the spiritual order, Saunders chronicles her experiences of healing the different pasts and of penetrating the boundaries between the Aboriginal, Māori and Celtic races. The reconciliation with the past—massacres and genocide are casually referenced—is played out on a spiritual level through engaging with ancient spirits and, little wonder, the healing is not resolved at the end of the book.

The book is far too removed from reality to be worthy of serious review. But there are remarkable forms of racial representation in this book. First, it testifies to esoteric discourse having embarked on the political process of reconciliation. The reconciliation thereby turns out to be a form of self-sufficient healing, that is, a healing of the author's own ancestral past and, potentially, her readership's ancestral pasts, leaving out the healing for Aboriginal and Māori peoples. Second, the author establishes a common nexus between Celtic (i.e., Scottish and Irish), Aboriginal and Māori peoples, since all three cultures, the argument runs, would have been characterised by a non-materialistic and highly spiritual lifestyle, with the Scots and Irish sharing the same historical suffering at the hands of the English as Indigenous New Zealanders and Australians (9, 10, 43). The reconciliation is thus achieved by the creation of a common racial bond between Nordic and Indigenous peoples, hence the adoption of a European Indigenous identity. This adoption also works for a German-speaking readership that can harken back to an idea of a close-to-Celtic, that is, Germanic Indigeneity.

The third form of racial representation in this book is through conceiving Aboriginal Australians as pure and endowed with spirituality. Reconciliation, the author argues, needs to be achieved through a direct relation with Aboriginal people, which in turn, she claims, could not be established on a rational level, but only by transgressing the boundaries of human intellect (13). Significantly, the author states that "the desert dwellers in all their simplicity, humanity and purity are still something special" (30; translation mine). Aboriginal people here are presented through the prism of traditionalism and racial purity, the latter bearing inevitable references to skin colour. It is difficult not to discern the racist content of the representation of Aboriginal people evinced in this piece.

Racial representation is less prejudiced in *Die letzten Nomaden* (2007), the German edition of *The Last of the Nomads* (1982), authored by William Peasley, a physician and anthropologist. The book rests on Peasley's true account of the married couple Warri and Yatungka Kyangu, who, having disobeyed Mandildjara marriage rules, escaped to the Gibson Desert. Until their death in the 1970s, the couple led an isolated and traditional life and became what is said to be the last of the desert nomads, long after the Mandildjara people had given up their nomadic customs. The book tells of Peasley"s efforts to find the elderly couple and document their traditional lifestyle.

In the German translation of *The Last of the Nomads* (1982) no racist terminology has been employed. As with the other two books discussed in this essay, the translation itself reads fluently. There are only a few awkward renditions, such as the word for "initiation", which is given as *Einweihungsprozess*, which carries the meaning of an induction to a potential secret. The correct word would have been *Initiation*. But such examples of misleading translation are rare.

The difficulty with this book thus lies less in the process of translation than in the conception of Aboriginality that it evokes in a German-speaking readership. The emphasis on the *last* of the nomads represents Aboriginal people as being part of the past and caters to an interest in the original and pure. Significantly, the book closes with the

words, "Ein Kapitel der australischen Geschichte war abgeschlossen, eine Ära war zu Ende gegangen" (167), meaning that with the end of the last nomads an era of Australian history also came to an end. Whereas this may have been the case with the two protagonists, the trope of the "last people" nonetheless implicates the notions of a vanishing race, running the risk of conceiving culture as a calcified and essentialist category (Birch; Lattas). No text is free of its socio-historical contexts. In the case of *The Last Nomads*, paradigms of assimilation, the dying race dogma and ideas of Aboriginal traditionalism would have needed to be critically analysed, at best in a substantial introduction. As it stands, the text can easily invoke the idea of the last Nomad as the true Aborigine.

For all their thematic differences, the three books published by Araki share one similarity—all of them portray Aboriginal culture exclusively as traditional and completely opposed to Western culture. Aboriginal Australians are thereby represented as part of the past and those of them who do not fit this stereotype are not represented as Aboriginal. Quite obviously, this obsession with traditionalist otherness panders to romantic ideas of a pristine and unadulterated people. It is the idea of the German Aborigine, the Aborigine that fulfils these romantic perceptions, that is fostered by the translation of such books, especially so if they are not critically annotated. With its restrictive focus on traditionalist stories, Araki has helped create the *German* Aborigine. Translation indeed is a highly political endeavour.

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REZENSIONEN / REVIEWS

Xavier Pons. *Messengers of Eros. Representations of Sex in Australian Writing.* Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009. 361 pp. $44.99 ISBN: 1443805238. **Reviewed by Susanne Braun-Bau**, Düsseldorf

On the cover of the present literary study the book is praised as a major achievement with the following words: "After decades of strict, puritanical censorship, Australian writers are free to address sexual issues." Its author Xavier Pons is the well-known as the editor of *Colonisations* (1985) and *Departures* (2002) and teaches at the University of Toulouse (France). He is a former President of the European Association for Studies on Australia and has lectured and completed research at several Australian universities. Pons is certainly temerarious to tackle this topic of sex and eros. Feminists will enjoy reading it and frown upon his necessarily male perspective.

It is always problematic to investigate the "Australianness" of a topic in this globalized world of ours as Pons sets out to do according to his title ("Representations of sex in Australian Writing"). While there can be no doubt that there must be something typical in the representation of its unique nature in Australian writing or in coming to terms with its individual history, the reader may wonder what might be so typically Australian with a universal topic such as love, sex or eros.

The introduction starts with the truism that sex can be seen as an expression of love, as the basic underpinning of a conjugal relationship etc., and that with its almost magical properties sex might even be presented as distinct from love. It becomes clear where the Australianness of the topic might be found when Pons claims that sexism merges with colonialism. He points out that there it is not only the exploitation of women by men, but also exploitations of Asians by

Europeans or as he shows in his chapter on "Black velvet", the exploitations of Aborigines by whites (see chapter on "Blackfella Loving"). As an instrument of oppression it makes women, as well as some male protagonists, victims of sex, leaving them disempowered and alienated. They are left with feelings that "books were more satisfying than lovemaking" (Meehan 4). Sex becomes a means to indulge in power games, to have it mostly on one's own terms and to feel in charge.

Pons thus develops his major thesis underlining it with the theory of poststructuralist and French philosopher Michel Foucault:

> Through the *topos* of sex, Australian fiction is able to explore a variety of power relationships and to confirm Michel Foucault's contention that power relationships are not in a position of externality in respect of other relationships such as economic processes, knowledge relationships or sexual relationships - they are immanent in them (5).

With his second thesis he attempts to focus on what is distinctively Australian in his topic:

> What Australian novelists seem to be saying when they write about sex is that its pleasures have less to do with the factors which usually come to mind, such as love, tenderness or, at the extreme physical performance and release, and more with a sense of being in control of one's desires, free of domination and compulsion (6).

He continues that this is a very suitable perspective in a postcolonial culture for the above mentioned reasons (colonial attitudes of whites, treatment of Aborigines etc.).

The study can be divided into four sections (Pons has only three): In the first three chapters it sets out to focus on establishing relevant concepts, i.e. desire, transgression, perversion, or obscenity. The second part (chapters four to eight) focuses again on particularly Australian concepts, i.e.

- Australian Fantasies: focusing on the work on Henry Lawson and Australian hedonism or Ockerism as well as the oppressive sexual culture of bushmen – a country devoid of desire and passion;
- the Australian Masculinities: concentrating on contemporary women authors in a strongly masculine land of mateship as revealed by the Australian Legend;

- Dance of the Emotional Void: focusing on contemporary erotic fiction, i.e. Ettler, McGregor and Jaivin, starting with a quotation by David Foster saying that "sentimentality is more offensive than porn" (121), how lesbian fiction tends to emphasize male hostility and that romance no longer plays a major role in contemporary fiction: "we jump straight into the sex, and then – if we feel like it – we start worrying about the relationship" (Foster). The reader encounters feelings of sexual alienation. Australia and things Australian mean deprivation and frustration (132);
- the Joys of Irresponsible Sex: introducing Norman Lindsay as one of the few writers who promoted sex as a creative and enjoyable activity (139) and desire as an important prerequisite if one wants to live up to its creative potential. That Pons seeks the support of Nietzsche's philosophy in one subordinate clause seems rather pointless.
- the Great Dirty Joke Black Velvet: white authors focusing on the treatment of the Aborigines, i.e. Prichard and Herbert; this is a solid interpretation of their famous novels Capricornia and Coonardoo focusing once again on the dignity of Aborigines and white Australian racism. Part of his analysis is hard to follow, especially when writing that Prichard was prepared to address Aboriginal sexuality but not its white counterpart (171). It is exactly because Prichard succeeds in describing how the white protagonist's passion for the Aboriginal girl is suppressed (nature imagery once again is important for this) that she succeeds.

The third section, chapters nine to fourteen, focuses on single novels or individual authors and their approach to specific sexual themes, as most of the chapter titles show. Pons interprets at some length: Beverly Farmer's *The Seal Woman* (a Danish woman in a personal crisis finds regeneration in Australia, becomes pregnant and is thus ready to carry on), and Christos Tsiolkas first novel *Loaded* (the not very Australian postmodern condition of a 19 year-old gay Greek Australian). The poems of A.D. Hope, according to Pons and Candida Baker, owe a greater part of their inspiration to Eros. In Hope's "celebration of sensuality" (241) metaphors and classical allusions make the purely sexual acceptable and "palatable" as earthly love (228f.): "Woman ! She is the earth: he digs his grave in her …" (223). The female body promises visionary knowledge. Thus Hope often uses landscape imagery to describe women. Sex becomes a temporary escape from man's relentless isolation and is in itself a creative activity (235, 240.)

Pons is concerned not only with an emotional void but with sexual abjection, child abuse, self-loathing and incestuous sex acts which become an almost symbolic representation of a corrupt society in *The Tax Inspector* by Peter Cary (Chapter thirteen: "The Angels are not winning"). In addition the fiction of David Malouf, who as Pons admits, hardly uses representations of sex in his writings but presents a world bathed in a homoerotic atmosphere, which he equates with Malouf's homosexuality. This seems a rather problematic approach when Pons explains deep emotional bonds between Malouf's protagonists as follows:

> There is always a danger that male bonding might be construed as homosexuality – this must of course be strenuously denied through homophobic statements and attitudes and through the turning of women into sex objects (272).

The danger starts once Pons tries to impose on each male relationship aspects of suppressed homosexual tendencies. Would he simply call them manifestations of deep friendships if the author was not gay? It is almost a little absurd how Pons tries to explain Malouf's reticence in tackling the sexual topic and his own homosexuality in his fiction. Why not presume that Malouf is simply not interested in these topics or finds them unhelpful? (see Knox cited on p. 24). It may be a more valid conclusion that a writer of Malouf's distinction is simply more interested in strong figures of identification for his readers and not interested in representations of sex. Like Patrick White before him, he explores other themes; for example the representation of psyche and imaginative insights through nature imagery. The inspiring chapter ten "Sex Encounters of the Strange Kind" focuses on three novels to concentrate on British colonialism in Australia and a struggle for domination with a paradigm of perverted human relations: Thomas Keneally's *Bring Lars and Heroes,* Richard Flanagan's *Gould's Book of Fish* and Philip Mc Laren's *Sweet Water … Stolen Land.*

The last three chapters focus on multiculturalism, "of having the exotic at home" (305), i.e. authors of - again Greek - or Chinese origin ("Exotic Pleasures") and indigenous writing ("Blackfella Loving") and the conclusion: "Letting it all Hang out".

What about the relationship between sex and literature? This is what chapter three sets out to explore. Pons starts with a quotation from David Lodge: "Literature is mostly about having sex and not much about having children. Life is the other way round" (61) Pons shows how an "array of discursive weapons", i.e. stylistic means like metaphor, understatement and so on, are used to write about the "unwritable".

A bit annoying is the fact that Pons sometimes maintains facts without really elucidating them, as for instance that in Beverly Farmer's novel ancient and modern mythologies converge to assert that the cosmos is both one and multiple, and everything is connected with everything else (185). He sometimes seems to get carried away with his interpretation and forgets his main topic as in the same chapter on *The Seal Woman* where he shows how the major paradigm of death and destruction is represented by blood and water. In this chapter he also asserts that Farmer achieves

> a sensuous, organic quality … which male writing seldom attains, and which appears for instance in the loving attention paid to visual details Much of it has to do with the use of imagery (190).

This is certainly not a literary trait which is necessarily female.
The study finishes with the voices of the Aborigines before coming to its conclusion. This is a really good chapter which mollified this reader. It is a well-written and perceptive chapter on the representation of sex in Aboriginal literature. Pons makes it very clear that they represent more than "(s)exploitation". He shows how these authors struggle to come to terms with the violation inflicted on their women by white invaders and their own men, too. Romance seems to be out of place here. Pons shows how indigenous authors use magic realism to address topics that are too painful for a realist depiction.

Pons renders many insights lucidly and intelligently to the non-specialist. He would have achieved a long lasting effect if he had used these findings about indigenous literature as the final point of his examination. As it is he states in the conclusion that the study traces an evolution from the "puritanical reticence of the Victorian age to the contemporary explicitness, if not crudity" (341). This "result" is not

exclusively or even typically Australian, which in a way makes his study of AusLit futile. It seems simply wrong if we consider the many Australian authors who would certainly not fit into this scheme (David Malouf to name only one, as Pons has himself shown). Pons‟ real insight in what authors gain in representing Eros and feelings in general is depicted with the image of Sisyphus and Albert Camus‟ remark that "one must imagine Sisyphus happy" (346). Sisyphus knew it was in vain but he still kept on trying to put that rock up the hill. There is not much space for happiness in this image. This is where, according to Pons, "artists come into their own, playing as they do a motor part in expanding our intellectual and emotional understanding of the world … and this goes for the morality of sexual representations too" (ibid.)

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Ouyang Yu. *Beyond the Yellow Pale,* Essays and Criticism. Melbourne: Otherland Publishing, owned by Ouyang Yu, 2010. 278 pp. ISBN: 978-0-9756092-3-1, Price: AUD 49.- **Reviewed by Heide Fruth-Sachs**, München

Bits and Pieces

This book was not love at first sight. The very small print looked dismissively unfriendly and promised tiresome reading. And much of it was. This self-published book contains a collection of thirty-one articles, essays, reflections, diary abstracts and interviews of different types and quality. Some are drafts only and should perhaps not have been published together with the more elaborate essays. Reading all this you sometimes asked yourself whether perhaps the author had felt a sudden necessity to clear his desk. Nevertheless, if you read further you find a lot of interesting information about the author, his background, his experiences as an immigrant (1991), as an Australian citizen (since 1998), as a poet, as a very sharp observer and critic of Australian culture (or non-culture, as he sees it).

Disillusion

Indeed, Ouyang Yu writes often aggressively and provokingly. His poem ***Fuck You Australia*** is meant to shock. The poem wants to highlight the fate of Chinese immigrants who have been repatriated. The form too is intended to irritate. The poet breaks the writing rules – "australia", "china"; and even "i" have no capital letters. One understands it as a visual expression of the diminished persona of the speaker. The poem has been published in some international literary journals. However, "...no Australian scholar has cared to lend an ear to it, let alone say anything about it, treating the background as nonexistent..."(231).

Ouyang's small i can also be found in other poems. Is the Australian citizen Ouyang Yu taking it out on "the language of the Enemy"(262) through subversive spelling? The answer is: yes. He also has coined

the metaphor "demoncrazy" for democracy intending to annoy the Australian establishment.

For years Ouyang Yu with his PhD in Australian and Chinese literature vainly tried to get a position in the academic world in Australia or New Zealand. He and many other intellectuals with a Chinese background who came to Australia after the Tiananmen-Square Massacre in search of freedom and democracy had to learn that they were not welcome as competitors for higher academic posts and not welcome either as authors who wanted to publish. In Ouyang Yu's opinion the reason was and always is rejection of the foreigner who is seen as a threat to the Western value system.

Similar experiences followed with publishing: Ouyang wittily calls himself a "multi-rejection author". [227.*To Be(long) or Not to Be(long): Issues of Belonging in a Malticultural* (another intentional misspelling) *Australia,* 2007] Only translation was left for him in order to make a living. He became very good at it. Quite rightly he quotes Walter Benjamin as saying "translation is the third language." Blatant irony with a sarcastic undertone is typical for many of Ouyang Yu's poems.

Career Counselling to a Student of English (26)

i know you speak good english
in fact you speak better english than most australians
i mean certainly most chinese
you can even write well
you write creatively which is fantastic
with your background
you ARE employable
as a translator and interpreter
on an on-call basis.....

Duality

For three years (2005-2008) Ouyang held a professorship at the university of Wuhan in China. As a traveller between two worlds his ability to highlight diversities between China and Australia sharpened (for him there are very few similarities, it seems). His two languages are his life and soul. He lives them "artistically and creatively as few can", but he is still haunted by a feeling of uprootedness. He calls it "...this neither-belonging-here-nor there-ness." (126)

It does not become clear whether Ouyang Yu lost his Chinese passport by leaving China for Australia as many of his countrymen did in the 1990s. As they tried to go back they discovered that they had no longer permanent resident status in their original country. Probably Ouyang shares their fate because he fought in China against his deportation to a distant province during the Cultural Revolution, and his younger brother died as a member of the Falung Gong movement. Considering the horrors of his past, maybe, sometimes – despite everything – Ouyang is not so unhappy with his permanent resident status in Australia.

Saved by poetry

After struggling between two, even three different identities for years (*"Speaking English, Thinking Chinese and Living Australian*" is the subtitle of his book *On the Smell of an Oily Rag,* 2009, which tackles problems of translation) Ouyang Yu settled for scanning, analysing and criticising Western and Australian ways of cultural and social management. His medium is poetry, which was his companion through disappointment, depression and despair and helped him to become a recognized artist. He rejects poetry that is caculated, difficult and "upper body". In his eyes much of"... Aussie poetry targets an academic audience..." (272). Today Ouyang is a well known writer in Australia. He is invited to literary festivals, travels to Denmark, to America, to England as a respected member of his trade. He has publishers. He is a self-made man through poetry. In spite of this, Ouyang is still angry. Anger is a trademark of his. Is it a pose? Sometimes the reader of these essays cannot be sure. Ouyang points

relentlessly at deficiencies in Australian democracy and challenges what he sees as ingrained attitudes of national arrogance. Doubtless Ouyang's persistence in becoming a recognized author must be admired. His success has been hard won.

Exclusion

Ouyang Yu states that there has been and still is a lot of injustice in the awarding of literary prizes in Australia. With the exception of a few Aboriginal writers, all the winners have been white authors since the foundation of the prizes. Ouyang calls the Miles Franklin Award: "a WW (white writers) preserve"(224). Some Australian-Chinese get shortlisted, but never win awards. For Ouyang

> ...It seems that Australia's literature equals white that equals right that equals best and the only allowance they've made is to the Indigenous people as they have to regularly cleanse their own conscience...(224)

Ouyang gives another example (*Not on my Agenda, 2005)* of how contemptuously Australian publishers treat the literary contributions of immigrants. In 2008 a journal of poetry with the subtitle 'Australian Issue' presented sixty-nine poets and essayists. Four were Aboriginal, "and the rest were all White...." So Ouyang concludes that

> ...poetry written by Australian writers of Asian, African, MiddleEastern, Southern and Eastern European and Latin American origin is not good enough, thus not fit for representing Australia in the international poetry scene and not worthy of the world's attention. (102)

Ouyang sees the reason for this exclusion in a "poetic racism – one that values the white Self over the coloured Other..."(103)

At present, Ouyang tells us, there is a trend in Australia towards Asian women writing (Jung Chun, Beth Yahp, Ang Chin Geok, Alice Pung), which is a positive development, but he regrets that "it also helps to create new stereotypes" because these books underline

> what Westerners in general think a Chinese family should be like: the stone-faced Asian father figure, who beats their daughters, wives and sons...while liberation comes through the 'great white future son- in-law.' (226)

It is clear that Ouyang is not in favour of this trendy writing. He mentions some books by Chinese women writers that were not successful but had so much more quality: Wang Hong, *Extremely Happy Parrots* or Shen Zhimin, *The Colourchanging Lake,* which was published in *Otherland.*

Male Asian writers like Frank Devin, Brian Castro and Timothy Mo, or Ha Jin have had and still have hard times in Australia. "Australians are not interested in Chinese literature". This is "reciprocated in China where few have any interest in Australian literature..." Adds Ouyang, acid-tongued: "It serves Australian literature right"(205)

Ignorance and Cultural Incorrectness

Ouyang accuses Australian officials of not giving a damn to this very day about the correct writing of Chinese names. He interprets this practice not only as ignorance but also as an expression of contempt. "Early Chinese settlers were all losing their surnames in Australia...."(149) The result was the loss of an important part of their identity. With Chinese names the surname is always written first, followed by the given name. In Western cultures it is the other way round. In China the family names often go back thousands of years and form a rich bond of age-old family tradition. Today, says Ouyang, "Melbourne White Pages are filled with Chinese given names turned into surnames." (149) This happens also to Chinese writers in indexes or bibliographies. Mostly no Chinese name is written correctly, He found himself registered again and again as Mr Yu. It was as if one constantly referred to Shakespeare as "Mr William"(150).

Ouyang Yu also accuses Australian writers of consistently negative and stereotypical representations of Chinese and Asian characters in novels and also in scientific books. He mentions Peter Watt, *Stonedragon,* John Biggs, *Disguises,* Colleen McCullough, *The Touch,* and even Murray Bail, Peter Carey, Tim Winton and Shirley Hazzard are not "more enlightened or sympathetic"(63).
(59-60) Too often white authors go to China "making book, making a name but making no friends..." (67)

Don't

Don't write me another book
In which you go to China just
To write a book or your character goes there,
for your intended purpose.....(69)

Censorship

In his essay *Bonking without Book or Book without Bonking: a Personal Encounter of Cultural Censorship (2007/8;35-47)* Ouyang writes about the power of Chinese editors to eliminate all passages in a book with erotic or sexual content. This happens even to translations of classical poets like John Donne. The same ban concerns disrespectful talk about superiors or politicians. The golden rule "not obscene, not pornographic, not ugly" must be obeyed.

Ouyang's opinion that a certain amount of censorship exists also in Australia, America and the UK is in a way true, but hopefully not to the same extent. Nevertheless, the example of Lao She's *Camel Xiangzi,* translated by Evan King as *Rickshaw Boy*, which became a bestseller is something to think about. Its American editor gave it a happy ending (without consulting the author) whereas the original ended sadly.

English

Ouyang Yu's statement "in many ways, English is a poor shadow of its Chinese language brother"(264) can only be a subjective view. He is at home in both languages and so are other Asian and Chinese writers in Australia. Their English may not always be up to the standard British model, but for Ouyang their English "contributes to the extension and enrichment of the English language"(107). Australian publishers see it differently. Their criterion in regard to Asian writers is still British English with its Received Pronunciation. Ouyang insists that the only criterion in judging a book should be "whether it touches the human heart and mind in a poetic way that transcends time and the boundaries of nation"(119).

Australian Government, Bureau of Meteorology, ed*. Climate of Australia.* Kew, VIC.: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2008. Hardcover. 300x260 mm, 224 pp. CD-ROM, AUD 64.95. ISBN 978-0-642-70601-0. **Von Reinhold Grotz**

Im Jahre 2008, einhundert Jahre nach der Einrichtung des Bureau of Meteorology, veröffentlichte diese Commonwealth-Institution ein Buch, das sicher noch über viele Jahre hinweg eine gute Informationsquelle für die klimatischen Verhältnisse in Australien sein wird. Dieses Werk mit seinen 103 Klimakarten, 96 Zeichnungen, 48 Fotos und 35 anderen Darstellungen ist nicht nur für wissenschaftlich Interessierte geschrieben. Es spricht genauso ein breites Publikum an, das sich über die typischen und manchmal extremen Wetterverhältnisse auf dem Kontinent und ihre Entstehung informieren möchte. Daher ist nicht nur das Typische – Klima ist ein statistischer Durchschnitt des Wettergeschehens über viele Jahrzehnte hinweg – in seiner regionalen Differenzierung beschrieben und in seiner Entstehung erklärt, sondern auch einzelne kurzfristige Wetterphänomene und Veränderungen während der jüngsten Dekaden kommen zur Sprache.

Mit diesem groben Überblick sind bereits wichtige Themen der vier großen Teile des Buches angesprochen. Der erste Teil umfasst allerdings ein Sammelsurium verschiedener Kapitel, die inhaltlich wenig miteinander zu tun haben. Dort ist beispielsweise geschildert, welche Klimate während weit zurückliegender geologischer Zeiträume vorherrschten und wie sich das heutige Klima in einen globalen Zusammenhang einordnen lässt. In einem nur zwei Seiten umfassenden Kapitel wird exemplarisch der Jahreszeiten-Kalender von Ureinwohnern aus der Nähe von Halls Gap in Victoria erläutert. Ähnlich kurz sind drei Klassifikationsmöglichkeiten des Klimas vorgestellt. Etwas substanzieller wirken die Klimabeschreibungen der einzelnen Bundesstaaten, wobei auf eine Differenzierung in verschiedene Teilräume Wert gelegt ist. Man könnte sich eine solche Betrachtung

auch als abschließende Synthese aus den nachfolgenden mehr analytischen Darstellungen vorstellen.

Als Einstieg in das Thema des Buches präsentiert sich dieser erste Teil also etwas heterogen. Der zweite Teil informiert dagegen – obwohl er mit nicht ganz 20 Seiten der kürzeste ist – über Ursachen, Phänomene und Wirkungen, die das Klima und das Leben in Australien bestimmen. Der Leser erfährt Grundlegendes über die Einordnung des Kontinents in die globalen Windsysteme und über die El Nino- sowie La Nina-Effekte, die für Trockenperioden, Überschwemmungen und die Häufigkeit von Zyklonen verantwortlich sind. Ebenso aufschlussreich und geradezu spannend zu lesen ist das Kapitel über die Veränderungen von Niederschlägen und Temperaturen während der letzten Jahrzehnte. Diese Fakten führen fast zwangsweise zu den Themen Klimawandel und Treibhauseffekt hin. Doch enthält der Text außer einer physikalischen Erklärung des letztgenannten Phänomens keine weiterführenden Aussagen oder Schlussfolgerungen für Australien. Dabei würde die seit den 1950er Jahren zu beobachtende Temperaturerhöhung um durchschnittlich ein Grad sowie die im selben Zeitraum registrierte markante Verschiebung der regionalen Niederschläge genug Stoff für eine ausführliche Diskussion bieten.

Dagegen fällt der dritte Themenblock des Buches mit einer mehr analytischen Darstellung der verschiedenen Klimaelemente sehr umfangreich aus. In einzelnen Kapiteln werden der Reihe nach Niederschläge, Temperaturen, Winde, Luftfeuchtigkeit, Verdunstung, Bewölkung, Sonnenscheindauer, Luftdruck, Nebel, Frost usw. abgehandelt. Auffällig ist, dass bei einigen Klimaelementen neben einer allgemeinen Darstellung der Messungen und räumlichen Datenverteilung der Auflistung von Extremwerten viel Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt wird. Ein Zweck oder eine Absicht ist nicht erkennbar, zumal im letzten Teil des Buches "extreme Wetter" gesondert und ausführlich beschrieben sind. Obwohl er eine Vielzahl von Karten, Abbildungen, Diagrammen und Fotos enthält, wirkt dieser dritte Themenblock beim Lesen ziemlich ermüdend. Er ist wohl mehr als Quelle zum Nachschlagen gedacht. Wegen des analytischen Ansatzes fehlen alle Hinweise darauf, was die beschriebenen Klimaelemente für

einzelne Landschaften und die dort lebenden Menschen und ihre Wirtschaft bedeuten.

Der vierte und abschließende Textteil ist – wie bereits erwähnt – extremen Wettersituationen gewidmet. Hier kommt der Leser, der nach spektakulären und medienwirksamen Ereignissen sucht, auf fast 50 Seiten voll auf seine Kosten: Tropische Wirbelstürme, Überflutungen, Dürren, Buschfeuer, (Staub-)Stürme, Hitzewellen u. a. Diese Erscheinungen werden nicht nur in ihrer Entstehung, ihrem Vorkommen und typischen Ablauf beschrieben, auch Einzelfälle sind genauer dokumentiert. So erfährt man beispielsweise, dass das Hagelgewitter, das am 14. April 1999 über Sydney niederging, das weltweit bisher teuerste mit Kosten von 2,3 Mrd Dollar war. Auch das extreme Hochwasser in Queensland im Januar 1974, das für Brisbane noch höhere Wasserstände brachte als die Überschwemmungen im Januar 2011, kommt zur Sprache. Bilder dieser Wetterkatastrophen, Karten und Listen ihrer Vorkommen mit Schadens- und Opferzahlen machen deutlich, dass Australien klimatisch gesehen bei weitem kein so "lucky country" ist wie Europa.

Der Band wird mit einem sehr kurzen Literaturverzeichnis für weiterführende Informationen sowie einem ausführlichen Glossar der Fachausdrücke abgeschlossen. Ein sehr detaillierter Index ermöglicht es, das Buch auch als Nachschlagewerk zu benützen. Den enzyklopädischen Charakter verstärkt eine dem Band beigegebene CD-ROM, die weitere 187 Klimakarten und etwa 1200 Klimatabellen über einzelne Städte und Regionen enthält.

Bei einem abschließenden Urteil ist die bereits eingangs erwähnte üppige, vielfältige und zumeist sehr gut gelungene Ausstattung des Bandes mit Illustrationen hervorzuheben. Sie erleichtern es auch einem naturwissenschaftlich weniger bewanderten Leser, die Inhalte besser zu verstehen. Die Texte sind klar formuliert und notwendige Fachausdrücke werden bei ihrer Einführung erläutert.

Dennoch lässt das auf den ersten Blick sehr ansprechende Buch einige Wünsche offen. Es wirkt in seiner Konzeption antiquiert. Überspitzt

ausgedrückt könnte man seinen Inhalt als buchhalterische Präsentation klimatologischer Fakten und Ereignisse und deren Ursachen bezeichnen, wobei ein Hang besteht, Spektakuläres und Extreme besonders herauszustellen. Dafür mag man in einem Buch für eine breite Leserschaft Verständnis haben. Aber eine Beschränkung auf die Beschreibung klimatologischer Daten und einzelner Wetterereignisse mit der physikalischen Erklärung ihrer Entstehung greift heute im zunehmend auch in Australien wahrnehmbaren Klimawandel zu kurz.

Zwar erwähnt der Direktor des Bureau of Meteorology, Dr. Geoff Love, in seinem Vorwort eine wachsende allgemeine Besorgnis über die größere Häufigkeit und Intensität von Dürren, von Wasserknappheit und die zunehmende Degradation von Landschaften, doch darüber erfährt man sehr wenig. Die Folgen bestehender klimatischer Verhältnisse und ihrer mittelfristigen Veränderungen oder die Dauerfolgen von extremen Wetterereignissen sucht man zumeist ohne Erfolg. Beispielsweise wäre der enorm hohe und dauerhafte Verlust von relativ fruchtbarem Oberboden durch Flächenfluten bei La Nina-Intensivregen oder durch Winderosion während langer Dürreperioden – beide führen zu großflächiger Degradation – wenigstens eine Erwähnung Wert gewesen. Andere Beispiele ließen sich anfügen. Auch die Erkenntnisse des Weltklimaberichts von 2007 (IPCC) sind im Buch nicht zur Kenntnis genommen. Der Bericht enthält einige für den Kontinent markante, oft auch hoch abgesicherte Prognosen für die nächsten Jahrzehnte, die hauptsächlich die wichtigsten Lebens- und Wirtschaftsräume im Osten und Südwesten des Kontinents betreffen. Diese Aussagen machen deutlich, dass Australien im Vergleich zu Europa viel stärker von den Folgen des Klimawandels betroffen sein wird. Mit dem Verzicht, zukünftig sich weiter verschärfende Probleme anzusprechen, ist leider eine Chance vertan, die Leserschaft für die hohe Verletzlichkeit des Kontinents zu sensibilisieren und so ein Bewusstsein für die Notwendigkeit politischer Änderungen und kostspieliger Schutzmaßnahmen zu schaffen.

Don Garden. Droughts, Floods & Cyclones. El Niños that shaped our colonial past. Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2009. 414 S. ISBN 978 1 921509 38 4. **Rezensiert von Boris Braun,** Universität zu Köln.

Der Variabilität des Klimas und ökologischen Bedingungen wurde in den Geschichtswissenschaften lange Zeit wenig Bedeutung beigemessen. Erst in den letzten Jahren hat sich dies verändert. Viel beachtete Werke wie Jerad Diamonds Collaps: *How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (2005) und vor allem Mike Davids Late Victorian Holocaust: *El Niños and the Making of the Third World* (2001) haben den Blick für die Rolle der Natur bei politischen, wirtschaftlichen und gesellschaftlichen Entwicklungen geschärft. Dem Klima und seinen Anomalien wird dabei zwar keine determinierende Kraft zugesprochen, aber sie verändern die Spielräume für menschliche Aktivitäten oder verschärften die Folgen (falscher) politischer oder wirtschaftlicher Entscheidungen. Don Garden, der bekannte Melbourner Umwelt-historiker, führt diese viel versprechende Forschungsrichtung weiter und legt eine detaillierte Studie zu den sozialen und ökologischen Wirkungen der El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts vor. Insbesondere untersucht er die Folgen der El Niño- und El Niña-Ereignisse 1864-1869, 1876-1878 und 1895-1903 für das östliche Australien, Neuseeland, Fidschi und Französisch-Polynesien. Garden zeigt, wie Dürren und Überschwemmungen in Australien, Überschwemmungen und Schneestürme in Neuseeland sowie tropische Wirbelstürme in Polynesien den kolonialen Erschließungsvorhaben in die Quere kamen und den Glauben an einen berechenbaren Fortschritt und die Überlegenheit europäischer Technologien regelmäßig erschütterten. Extreme Wetterereignisse haben die Entwicklung der jungen Kolonien immer wieder zurückgeworfen und es dauerte viele Jahrzehnte, bis sich die Kolonialisten auf die klimatischen Bedingungen im Südpazifik einigermaßen eingestellt hatten.

Die Folgen der klimatischen Variabilität durch ENSO-Ereignisse forderten im Südpazifik zwar nicht die Millionen von Hungertoten, die bei vergleichbaren Ereignissen in den dichter besiedelten Regionen Asiens und Afrikas zu beklagen waren. Dennoch verursachten die Extremwetterereignisse im Zusammenhang mit viel zu optimistischen europäischen Erschließungsplänen, institutionellen Mängeln und ungeeigneten Bewirtschaftungsmethoden auch in diesem Teil der Welt viel menschliches Leid bei den europäischen Einwanderern und vor allem auch der indigenen Bevölkerung.

Garden wertete in akribischer Kleinarbeit große Mengen an zeitgenössischen Dokumenten, Zeitungsberichten, Briefen und meteorologischen Aufzeichnungen aus. Um dem großen Untersuchungsraum und der im 19. Jahrhundert noch recht schütteren, keineswegs flächendeckenden meteorologischen Informationen gerecht zu werden, beziehen sich seine Analyse vor allem auf regionale Fallbeispiele. Die Schlüsse, die der Autor aus dem Material zieht, werden dem Leser mit hoher argumentativer Präzision und einer gleichwohl unterhaltsamen Sprache nahe gebracht.

In seinem Buch zeigt Garden eindrücklich die Potenziale einer Analyse schriftlicher Dokumente zum Verständnis früherer Klimabedingungen und deren Folgen auf. So kann Garden beispielsweise überzeugend nachweisen, dass die El Niño-Phase von 1876 bis 1878 nicht unmittelbar die Ursache für die katastrophalen Folgen der Dürre in Australien war, sondern vielmehr Landnutzungsänderungen die Anfälligkeit gegenüber Niederschlagsdefiziten erheblich erhöht hatten. Garden ist kein Meteorologe. Gleichwohl führt er im ersten Kapitel seines Buches kurz und auch für meteorologische Laien gut ver-ständlich in das ENSO-Phänomen und die immer wieder auftretenden Anomalien der tropischen Walker-Zirkulation über dem Pazifik ein. Auch liefert er zahlreiche Niederschlagsdaten, Klimadiagramme und Angaben zu Exporten landwirtschaftlicher Produkte, die auch jenen eher naturwissenschaftlich orientierten Lesern etwas bieten, denen klassische historische Quellen zu vage sind.

Dass sein wissenschaftlicher Ansatz und seine Befunde auch falsch verstanden werden könnten, ist Garden durchaus bewusst. Im letzten Kapitel des Buches spricht er diese Gefahren offen an. Er wendet sich entschieden gegen Skeptiker, die den derzeitigen, sehr wahrscheinlich in großen Teilen anthropogen verursachten Klimawandel abstreiten und hierfür gerne historische "Belege" früherer Klimaänderungen anführen. Garden stellt klar, dass die heutige Klimaerwärmung viel dramatischer und schneller verläuft als dies im 19. Jahrhundert zu beobachten war. Zudem sind El Niño-Ereignisse heute in der Regel häufiger und stärker in ihren Auswirkungen. Die großflächigen Überschwemmungen im Frühjahr 2011 in Queensland und im Norden Victorias können als Hinweis auf die Zunahme von Wetterextremen gedeutet werden. Laut örtlichen Angaben waren dies die schlimmsten Überschwemmungen in der europäischen Besiedlungsgeschichte Australiens. Klimamodelle prognostizieren, dass der Trend hin zu immer höheren Durchschnittstemperaturen und extremeren Wetterbedingungen auch in Zukunft anhalten wird.

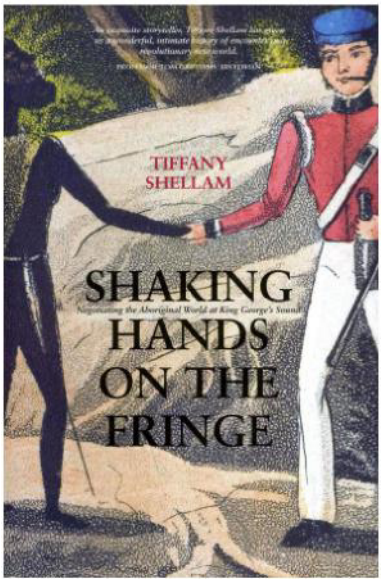
Garden wendet sich aber auch gegen simple umweltdeterministische Deutungen, die den Menschen im Wesentlichen als ein von naturräum-lichen Faktoren bestimmtes Wesen sehen und die Bedeutung des freien Willens sowie Einfallsreichtum und Kreativität unterschätzen. Sorgfältige, umsichtige Deutungen der Befunde sowie die umfassende Erfahrung des Autors als verdienter Historiker stellen sicher, dass die Argumentation trotz der offensichtlichen Gefahren nie zu einem vereinfachenden Umweltdeterminismus wird. Die bedeutende Rolle von Wetterextremen für den Gang der Geschichte wird von Garden anerkannt. Aber anstatt von simplen naturgesteuerten Ursache-Wirkung Zusammenhängen auszugehen, beschreibt er Naturereignisse vielmehr als "Bewährungsproben" für die kolonialen Gesellschaften, welche ohnehin problematische wirtschaftliche und soziale Entwicklungen "nur" besonders deutlich werden lassen.

Weder Australien noch Neuseeland oder die südpazifische Inselwelt waren jemals die "Paradiese", als die sie in Europa im 19.

Jahrhundert gerne gesehen wurden. Vielmehr war und ist das Wetter in diesem Teil der Erde besonders extrem und unberechenbar – was uns Anfang 2011 durch die schlimmsten Überschwemmungen in Queensland und NSW seit 1788 sehr drastisch vor Augen geführt wurde. Gardens Verdienst ist es, die Folgen dieser Variabilität für die kolonialen Erschließungsprojekte präzise sowie für Experten und historische Laien gleichermaßen gut nachvollziehbar dargestellt zu haben. Er thema-tisiert damit aber auch Klimaphänomene, die in der Zukunft wohl eher noch bedeutender werden.

Das Buch ist aufgrund seines ungewöhnlichen Querformats beim Lesen zwar etwas sperrig, aber der gut ausgestattete Anhang, sehenswertes Bildmaterial sowie das ausführliche Stichwortverzeichnis entschädigen dafür. Der inspirierende und spannende Text lohnt das Lesen ohnehin.

Tiffany Shellam. *Shaking Hands on the Fringe. Negotiating the Aboriginal World at King George's* Sound. Crawley: University of Western Australia Press, 2009, pp. xii + 267, AUD 29.95 paper. ISBN 9781921401268. **Reviewed by Oliver Haag,** Vienna.



This is an unconventional book. Emerging from a doctoral dissertation in history, it takes on a highly literary form, closely aligning itself to story-telling, while nonetheless being factually grounded. It deals with a geographically and periodically highly limited scope—the present-day Albany region of Western Australia, covering the early 1820s and 1830s—but nevertheless produces insights that are relevant to a new understanding of Aboriginal-British relations in the early colonial era. And it departs from any simplistic narrative that places Aborigines as the passive victims of British colonial endeavour. Far from it, Aboriginal people are portrayed as highly flexible subjects in a rapidly changing world of inter-cultural contact.

The study begins with the first contacts in 1821 between the British navigators and the Aboriginal people of the King George's Sound in the south-west of Western Australia. These contacts were already characterised by the strategy of befriending, which on both sides served as a means of enforcing and expanding the different interests in question. Aborigines benefited from British presents and the British benefited from local Aboriginal knowledge. This reciprocal benefit also prevailed in the first years of the British garrison which was erected in the area of today's Albany in 1826. In meticulously elaborated detail, the author identifies different spheres of interaction between King Ya-nup, the Aboriginal group of the area, and the British.

The British arrival certainly caused an indelible impact on the region. But whereas the British intruded into King Ya-nup Country, Ya-nup managed to retain an autonomous cultural and legal Aboriginal world outside the British one, so the author argues. They continued the practice of spearing—a complex form of retaliation on which the British had marginal influence; they were free to wear their traditional clothing and to perform their ancestral traditions. The British presence, at least initially, was thus rather of mutual benefit than exploitative: "The garrison at King George's Sound was a British possession without an Aboriginal dispossession" (68).

The King Ya-nup, Shellam expounds, used the British garrison for both economic and political purposes. It was considered a place of retreat from assaults by the Wills people, the rivalling Aboriginal group of the area; it offered new and exotic nourishment; and its ships enabled travelling and diplomatic missions to other regions, especially the Swan River Colony. The King Ya-nup, this study suggests, harnessed the British presence, rendering the relationship between the British and the King Ya-nup respectful. Orders were issued, for example, that the names of recently deceased Aboriginal people had not to be mentioned by any of the newcomers (118). Such an expression of respect seemed to have been unique in comparison to later inter-racial encounters.

With the transmission of contagious diseases, this constructive relationship, however, transformed into a destructive one. Ironically, it was the friendly relationship—the exchanges of blankets, garment and food—that, in the end, wrought havoc on the King Ya-nup. Nonetheless, as the author underlines, the history of first contact in this particular region needs to be understood as a one of mutual respect and benefit rather than destruction and violence: "I believe there is an ethical importance in celebrating moments of friendship, reciprocity and respectful interaction in Aboriginal relations with non-indigenous people" (216).

This endeavour to present a more balanced account of inter-racial Australian history in the early colonial period is part of a larger trend in Australian historiography to shift focus away from destruction of

Aboriginal societies towards the highlighting of Aboriginal agency. Henry Reynold‟s With the White People (1990) and Ann McGrath's Born in the Cattle (1987) are, arguably, important landmark studies in this respect. But this project of reinscribing political agency also runs the risk of rendering invisible the violent aspects of inter-racial contact. Shaking Hands on the Fringe indeed seems to suggest that contact in this particular region was entirely humane and respectful, whereas the destructive moments of contact are relegated to an act of nature beyond of any human control (disease transmission).

Yet the transmission of diseases might not have been that unforeseeable—given the prior knowledge of the devastating effects of disease transmission to the Indigenous populaces in the Americas, centuries before. In similar fashion, for all the political agency the author rightfully ascribes to the King Ya-nup, the power relationships between the British and the King Ya-nup were still asymmetrical. A thorough contextualisation of this history with current history debates in Australia might have been worthwhile to fully understand the author's endeavour to "celebrate the moments of friendship"— especially the focus on destruction that ensued from W.E.H. Stanner's famous denunciation of the "Great Australian Silence" but also the History Wars and the denial of inter-racial violence.

The story-telling technique that distinguishes the book would have also required more rigorous methodological examination. For example, the expression, "This large schooner, the Bathurst, like a swan and its cygnets, carried three smaller open boats" (4), is certainly beautifully written but historically problematic, for it is unclear who expressed this allegory. Is it the King Ya-nup or the British who conceived the arrival of the ship in such a way or is it the author who simply uses a fictional device in presenting her story?

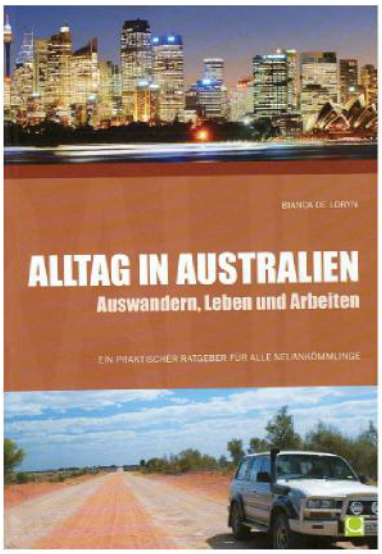
The following sentence is similarly ambiguous: "This story starts in late January 1830. The season of Metelok had begun and plentiful schools of salmon were seen swimming around the warm waters of King George's Sound" (103). The reference to the salmons does not

reoccur in the story and is, probably, part of a creative narrative technique. The adoption of fictional devices in academic history itself is certainly a very intriguing processes but it would have required methodological explanation and readers should not have been left guessing which parts of the story are fictional and which are not. Moreover, this technique suggests strongly that the author adopted an Indigenous mode of story-telling. Being a fresh and principally welcome approach, the adoption of such an approach would have nevertheless benefited from methodological and theoretical discussion.

Moreover, a detailed exploration of the reasons for the mutually beneficent relationship between the King Ya-nup and the British might have been worthwhile. Was this primarily because of the political strategies evinced by particular garrison commandants, because the British were dependent on the King Ya-nup, because of Aboriginal strategies or because of the relative lack of British power in this particular region?

Apart from this criticism Shaking Hands on the Fringe is a superb study. It filters skillfully the information contained in the British sources from which the author infers to the motivations and agency of Aboriginal protagonists at the time. It produces fresh knowledge and it presents academic history in compellingly creative manner. Seen from both its narrative technique and its new insights, this book is a recommendable read not merely to those interested in early colonial Australian history. But it also offers valuable incentives to all those engaged in the theory and methodology of practicing history.

Bianca de Loryn: Alltag in Australien – Auswandern, Leben und Arbeiten. Ein praktischer Ratgeber für alle Neuankömmlinge. Meerbusch: Conbook Medien Verlag, 2010. 312 S. ISBN 978-3-934918-38-2. **Rezensiert von Henriette von Holleuffer**, Hamburg.



Australische Lebensplanung als verpasste Chance? Kaum jemand, der dieses Buch in die Hand nimmt, wird nicht in die Versuchung geraten, sein bisheriges Leben in Europa neu zu überdenken und über die Möglichkeit einer Auswanderung nach Australien nachzudenken. Die Journalistin Bianca de Loryn hat einen praxisorientierten Ratgeber für all jene zusammengestellt, die aus beruflichen oder privaten Gründen eine Übersiedlung auf den Fünften Kontinent ins Auge fassen.

Der Kreis der Adressaten schließt Studenten ausdrücklich ein. Überdies lernen auch Leser, die (noch) nicht nach Australien auswandern wollen, mit der Lektüre dieses Buches verlockend Neues über den Fünften Kontinent und dessen Bewohner, Regionen, Klimazonen und Lebensgewohnheiten. Diskret stellt sich dieser Band als Werbung für ein Leben in Australien dar. Damit nimmt die Verfasserin eine historische Tradition auf: Seit dem 19. Jahrhundert haben deutschsprachige Autoren wiederholt Ratgeber verfasst, in denen die Auswanderung nach Australien beschrieben und/oder propagiert wurde. In Struktur und Pragmatismus knüpft Bianca de Loryn an die bewährte Richtlinie an, nicht nur den Prozess der Auswanderung zu illustrieren, sondern dem Leser ausführliche landeskundliche Hinweise zu geben. Dieses Konzept verfolgt die Autorin in systematischer Konsequenz und mit höchst lebendiger Darstellungskraft. Sie offeriert zugleich den neuesten Stand der Information über Australien. Der Band enthält einen

ausführlichen Anhang mit Erklärungen zu landesüblichen Abkürzungen und Redewendungen; ergänzend finden sich weiterführende Internet-Adressen. Ein griffiges Stichwortverzeichnis erleichtert die gezielte Lektüre.

Das Konzept des Buches orientiert sich an zentralen Fragen, die jemanden, der eine Ansiedlung in Australien verfolgt, bewegen. Wie wird man Australier? Wo siedelt sich der Geneigte am besten an? Welche Vorgaben gilt es bei der Regelung von Umzug, Geldfragen, Arbeitssuche, Firmengründung, Behördengängen, Autokauf, Gesundheits- und Altersvorsorge, Immobilienkauf, Hausbau oder Wohnungsmiete zu beachten? Was zeichnet die typische australische Gastronomie aus oder wie gestalten sich australische Konsum- und Freizeitgewohnheiten? Wer in 31 Kapiteln kompetente Antwort gibt, ist eine Autorin, die seit 2006 in Australien lebt und als Reiseberaterin in Cairns arbeitet. Besonderes Wissen hat sie sich im Zusammenhang mit der erfolgreichen Beantragung einer doppelten Staatsbürgerschaft erworben. Der Ratgeber profitiert zudem von den praktischen Erfahrungen des "Abenteuers eines Hausbaus" in Queensland, die die Autorin einfließen lässt. Checklisten, Merkkästen und Zusammenfassungen gliedern die einzelnen Kapitel und heben besondere Fragestellungen hervor, die den Alltag in Australien betreffen.

An den Anfang des Buches stellt de Loryn die Gewissensfrage: "Ist Australien etwas für Sie?" Zehn konstruierte Antworten lassen den Leser abwägen, ob sich Australien für den Einzelnen als das richtige Ziel für eine Übersiedlung anbietet oder nicht. Dabei kristallisiert sich die Abkehr vom gewohnten Denken über den Wert von Arbeit, Freizeit, Natur und gesicherter Lebensplanung als wesentliches Unterscheidungskriterium zu deutscher Lesart von Lebensqualität heraus. Es ist die intuitive Absage an die gewohnte Planbarkeit des Alltags, die entscheidend ist bei der Überlegung, dauerhaft in Australien zu leben. Da manche

Emigration auf dieser Formel fußt, ist es Anliegen der Autorin herauszustellen, welche besonderen Reize zu einem Leben speziell in Australien animieren. Vor allem die grandiose Natur, das daraus resultierende breite Spektrum an Freizeitmöglichkeiten und der außerordentlich hoch angesetzte Wert der Freizeit als wichtiges Gut individueller Lebensqualität werden von der Autorin hervorgehoben. Es fällt leicht, dieses von der nationalen Werbung apostrophierte Markenzeichen australischer Lebensart zu erkennen, aufzunehmen und in eine gewagte Kausalität zu stellen, die die Australier mit einer um drei Jahre längeren Lebenserwartung den Deutschen gegenüber statistisch überlegen sein lässt. Wiederholte Hinweise auf den offensichtlich gesunden Hang der Australier zum Hedonismus sind beabsichtigt. Der Autorin ist daran gelegen, aufzuzeigen, dass ein Leben in Australien dem flexiblen Neubürger eine echte Alternative zu den erstarrten Lebenskonzepten deutscher Arbeitnehmer bietet. Dieser landeskundliche Ratgeber gefällt auch deshalb, weil durch die Schilderung des Alltags in Australien deutsche Lebenskonzepte und Leitmotive in Frage gestellt werden.

Lange Wege in die ferne Hemisphäre führen durch wechselnde Klimazonen. Getreu dieser Erkenntnis fasziniert der Service der Autorin, gleich zu Beginn des Buches über neun Seiten Landeskunde dem Leser Hinweise an die Hand zu geben, den perfekten Wohnort in Australien zu finden. Es folgt eine reiche Faktensammlung zu Landschaften, Regionen und Orten. Dabei lernt der Australien-gereiste, dass die Touristenattraktion Sydney nicht zwangsläufig auch das Traumziel einer Auswanderung sein muss. Hohe Immobilienpreise, eine dichte Besiedlung und massive Verkehrsprobleme relativieren die Reize dieser Metropole in der südlichen Hemisphäre. Australische Lebensqualität suche woanders, wer ungebunden und frei von äußerem Zwang auf den Fünften Kontinent kommt: diese Erkenntnis begleitet die Beschreibung von Land und Leuten zwischen Timorsee und antarktischen Gewässern, zwischen Indischem Ozean und Südpazifik. Leider verzichtet

der Verlag an dieser Stelle auf den Abdruck einer geographischen Karte. Auch sind nicht alle Fehler bereinigt, die häufig geographische oder historische Faktensammlungen befallen: Perth liegt am Indischen Ozean; Alice Springs wurde 1871 gesichtet, aber nicht vor 1888 als feste Siedlung angelegt.

Es folgt der praktische Teil des Ratgebers. Gemäß der Absicht, Enttäuschungen zu vermeiden, folgt die Zusammenschau wichtiger Fakten über die unterschiedlichen Visum-Kategorien, deren Voraussetzungen und den Prozess der Beantragung einer Aufenthaltsgenehmigung. Der Leser lernt schnell, dass der Weg zu einem permanenten Dasein in Australien langwierig und kostspielig ist. Die Expedition durch das Labyrinth der australischen Einwanderungsbürokratie sollte bevorzugt derjenige wagen, der unter 45 Jahre alt ist, eine geforderte Fachausbildung, sehr gute Englischkenntnisse, Bereitschaft zum Lernen, Ausdauer und nicht unerhebliche Ersparnisse aufzuweisen hat. Was lernt der noch nicht entmutigte Leser? Den Jüngeren eröffnen sich über Studium, Ferienjobs oder Firmenpartnerschaften leichter Möglichkeiten, um in Australien zu verweilen. Wer hingegen sein 55. Lebensjahr erreicht hat, muss erhebliche finanzielle Reserven von mehreren Hunderttausend australischen Dollar erbringen, um den Status eines Dauergasts zu erhalten.

Das Buch folgt chronologisch dem Ablauf einer potentiellen Auswanderung. Dazu gehören die sinnvolle Planung des Umzugs und die vorherige Kalkulation über die Kosten eines Neuanfangs in Übersee. Dabei wird auch der geübte Weltreisende dazu lernen: Weihnachtsschmuck, Federbettwäsche, Fahrräder, Rasenmäher und Schuhe erwecken den Verdacht der australischen Quarantäne-behörde und werden daher oft vor Entladung kostenpflichtig begast oder bestrahlt. Geldfragen, Autokauf und Krankenversicherung widmet der Ratgeber separate Kapitel. Die Autorin gibt interessante Rechenbeispiele, die illustrieren, welche

einmaligen und welche laufenden Ausgaben auf Neuankömmlinge zukommen. Lesenswert ist vor allem das Kapitel über die Gesundheitsvorsorge, weil es in einem kurzen Abriss die Grundstruktur des australischen Medizinsektors vorstellt. Ein wenig erstaunt ist man über die Behauptung, das australische Pflegepersonal sei im Gegensatz zu den Ärzten deutlich weniger belastet. Der geschilderte humane Umgang mit dem Patienten passt gleichwohl in die gelassene Alltagswelt des Kontinents.

Zum Leben gehört eine Bleibe, ein Zimmer, eine Wohnung oder ein Haus. Auf über 30 Seiten gibt das Buch Einblick in typische australische Wohnformen. Hinweise beziehen sich auf Ausstattungen von Wohnungen und Häusern, Vertragsformen bei Miete oder Hauskauf, sowie auf soziale Gewohnheiten im nachbarschaftlichen Umfeld. Sehr nützlich sind die Ausführungen zur Finanzierung eines Hauskaufs oder Hausbaus. Fachbegriffe zur Kreditbeantragung, Überblicke über australische Bautechniken, behördliche Vorschriften und Gebührenordnungen werten das Kapitel zu einem Grundkursus über australischen Immobilienbesitz auf. Der Lerneffekt ist relevant, weil der Besitz eines Hauses, trotz großer Mobilität im Alltag, eine wichtige Komponente australischer Lebensqualität beinhaltet. Dazu gehört nicht zwangsläufig die Totalvernetzung moderner Kommunikationstechnologie: Nicht jede Wohnsiedlung besitzt konventionellen Internet-Anschluss. Australien ist noch immer ein Land der Weite und Abgeschiedenheit.

"Baby Bonus" und "Kindergeld" sind wichtige Stichworte, die Paaren signalisieren: Junge Familien sind als Einwanderer besonders willkommen. Konsequent lehrreich gestaltet sich der Überblick über das australische Bildungssystem, das zu Teamfähigkeit erziehen möchte – einer wichtigen Eigenschaft, die im australischen Arbeitsalltag oftmals höher bewertet wird als Kompetenz und Fleiß. Dies lernt spätestens vor Ort, wer die Tipps der Autorin zu Bewerbung und Arbeitsalltag nicht

ernst nimmt. Etwas kurz geraten erscheinen die Ausführungen zu Freiberuflichkeit und Firmengründung. Reichhaltigere Information erhalten angehende Studenten, für die dieser Ratgeber besonders interessant ist. Die kurz skizzierte Altersvorsorge dient der Abrundung eines Buchkonzepts, das primär Tipps zur Lebensplanung in Australien liefern soll. Am Ende der Lektüre bleibt die Erkenntnis, dass Australien noch immer vornehmlich ein Einwanderungsziel ist für jüngere Arbeitnehmer und potentielle Familien.

Das letzte Drittel des Ratgebers informiert ausführlich über Australiens Alltag und Lebensart: Ausführungen zu Natur und Umwelt, Handel, Küche, Verkehr und Polizei, Sport und Freizeit, Gesellschaft, Denkart, Geschichte und Tradition, Feiertage, Medien und Sprache kolorieren ein Werk, das ohne Bilder auszukommen scheint. In der Imagination des Lesers überschlagen sich die textimmanenten Vorstellungen: etwa jene vom anempfohlenen Kältetod giftiger Kröten im Gefrierschrank oder jene vom vermeintlichen Babymord im Outback im Jahr 1980. Das letzte Ereignis liegt am Rande eines gewagten Parforceritts durch die australische Historie, der nicht jede Hürde fehlerlos nimmt. Solchermaßen im Galopp durch Alltag und Landeskunde gehetzt, entwickelt der Neuling gleichwohl sein Temperament für Australien, um nunmehr – im Aussie-English trainiert – begeistert auszurufen: "That's a ripper!". In logischer Konsequenz endet der Auswanderungsratgeber mit allgemeinen Hinweisen zu Besuchen und zur Rückkehr nach Deutschland für diejenigen, deren australisches Abenteuer nur ein vorübergehendes Experiment persönlicher Lebensplanung ist.

Die Lektüre dieses attraktiven Bandes sei allen Auswanderungs-willigen, Studenten und beruflich Reisenden empfohlen. Den Leser erwartet nicht durchweg Neues, auch erzwingt das Buchkonzept Abschweifungen in allgemeine Wahrheiten und banal anmutende Feststellungen. In der Bilanz illustriert das Werk ein farbiges Mosaik des australischen Kontinents, der offerierten Chancen für seine Bewohner und der damit verbundenen Herausforderungen an

einwanderungswillige Reisende. Hierin liegt der Gewinn für den unkundigen Leser, der Australien entdecken möchte. Für den Australienkenner bietet das Buch eine angenehm handliche Zusammenschau vorhandenen Wissens. Zu wünschen wäre, dass bei der zweiten Auflage des Buches Fotos aufgenommen werden, die der Attraktivität Australiens visuellen Ausdruck verleihen.

Autorin und Rezensentin sind gleichermaßen interessiert wie versucht, die empfohlene Buchlektüre zum Anlass zu nehmen, um Lebensplanungen des geneigten Lesers zu erschüttern und zu fragen: 'Wann wandern Sie nach Australien aus?'

Jean-François Vernay: Water from the Moon: Illusion and Reality in the Works of Australian Novelist Christopher Koch. Youngstown, N.Y.: Cambria Press, 2007, 201 pp. AUD 84.95, ISBN 9781534043356. **Reviewed by Igor Maver**, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Christopher Koch, an internationally acclaimed Australian writer and two-time Miles Franklin Award winner, born and educated in Tasmania, has been writing fulltime since 1972. Probably his best known novel is *The Year of Living Dangerously*, which was made into a highly successful film by the Australian director Peter Weir that was also nominated for an Academy Award. In his book on Koch's writing Jean-François Vernay covers and most minutely analyzes his novels, which mostly seem to talk about binaries such as illusion and reality, East and West, past and present or the divided and dubious or double identities: from the early novels *The Boys in the Island, Across the Sea Wall, The Year of Living Dangerously, The Doubleman, Highways to a War to Out of Ireland*. It has to be added, however, that Koch's literary fame at this very moment does no longer rest solely on *The Year of Living Dangerously* (1978) set in Indonesia in the 1960s, but also on his most recent well-received spy novel *The Memory Room* (2007), which came out right at the time of the publication of this monograph under review. In *The Memory Room* Koch once again, as in several of his novels, interweaves the political and the personal and juggles the double nature of the protagonists, in this particular case the motivations of Vincent (based loosely on Koch's long-time friend and in reality a secret agent), who chooses to live the life of an Australian secret intelligence operative.

Koch, who at times also lived in England, is someone who has always been aware of the power of the media, of political intrigue, and Australia's (Austral-Asian) closeness to Asia and its developments. The fictionalization of Asia (as for example in the works by Blanche d'Alpuget, Brian Castro and others) is thus also one of his recurrent themes, although most certainly not the only

one. Although Koch rejected the notion of being a political writer, he is frequently concerned with Australia's relationship with its Asian neighbours, putting white Australians into tense political scenarios in South-East Asia. He says in a recent interview that South-East Asia was what you flew over on your way to Europe and now multiculturalism has helped bring people closer; yet it still interests him to see typical Australians dropped into these "exotic worlds" (web reference).

In the realism of *The Boys in the Island* (1958) Vernay sees the rise of the Australian poetic novel and it is true that Koch's novel, despite its surface realism, charts the inward journey of the "failed" character into the irrational forces of the psyche, the landscape of the mind, as Patrick White would have it. In the novel *Across the Sea Wall* (1965) Koch brings together the two worlds, Australia and Asia, the West meeting the East, which, as Vernay's book clearly shows, starts from the Orientalist stereotypical construction of otherness, but one that eventually turns into its opposite and mutual respect:

> With hindsight, Asia has proved a tremendous success with Australian citizens and has even superseded Europe in terms of identification. It has ceased to embody just mere backdrops to political intrigues in fiction and has gradually been recognized as a strong economic partner ... Australians need to deal with on a more intimate level (52).

Koch's probably most successful novel (and its film adaptation) *The Year of Living Dangerously* shows his fondness of historical novels but also "a Baroque-inspired *Weltanschauung*" (83), as Vernay puts it, one that introduces the Indonesian context of the theatre of life with stages, masks, stage effects, plots, puppetry, costumes, and the like, thus relativizing the concepts of illusion/appearances and reality. The novel *The Doubleman* (1985), a modern fairy-tale for which he won the Miles Franklin award, confirmed Koch's reputation, although it also earned him the first acerbic attack, in which he was accused of "xenophobia, male chauvinism, and misanthropy" (91). Vernay's narrative and psychological analysis interestingly leads him to maintain that

> *The Doubleman*, very much like the original function of the *Doppelgänger*, is therefore an evil figure, which highlights a spiritual conflict within Man. Yet, ..., the Double-man does not take over the identity of his victim as he is only interested in the individual's soul. (102)

He furthermore draws the conclusion that in several of Koch's novels the "flawed personalities in search of their alter egos must renounce to their *sui generis* identities and become their models' shadows in order to feel complete" (106). Moreover, Vernay correctly maintains that within the Australian context the use of an exclusively male alter ego figure may well just be a literary expression of the cult of male mateship, derived on the one hand from the hostile reality of bush life for men without female companionship and on the other from the idealisation of the laconic and lone male that in a new land in this way rebels against authority.

In *The Doubleman* the Australian postcolonial dilemma is clearly played out; regarding the question of the transplanted Europe in the Antipodes Vernay concludes in favour of the latter. The novel *Out of Ireland* (1999) deals with the recurrent Australian collective trauma, the one-time penal colony of Van Diemen's Land, which is depicted as a land of terror and, better still, "the land of the damned or as a terrestrial Hell – which generated the anti-Eden myth on which the palimpsest of the national psyche has been fleshed out layer upon layer" (153). Vernay brilliantly juxtaposes Dante's *The Divine Comedy* and *Out of Ireland* and concludes that Koch updated one of the founding myths of Judeo-Christian belief, namely man's damnation. Koch may not have written "Christian novels", as Vernay writes, yet he also sees in the last two Koch's novels discussed the writer's expression of the need for the expiation of sins, spiritual distress and "the crisis in religion" (172).

Jean-François Vernay in his book-length study of Koch demonstrates with an assured critical hand how some of his novels owe a lot to certain classic hypotexts (or pre-texts that served as models), ancient epics such as for example, *The Reincarnation of Rama* (an Indonesian religious play), or Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and how reality is and always will be a social and cultural construct: illusion

thus constantly in an ambiguous relationship. He is right in discovering a sense of *bovarysme* in the novels discussed, as well as "an undeniable postcolonial dimension, which challenges the Eurocentric perspective on Australia" (174). It is owing to his fine in-depth study of Christopher Koch's literary *oeuvre* that we now have a much needed book-length critical study of his work. For over a decade, Koch's oevre has fallen from literary grace in Australia – due to his alleged conservatism, anti-postmodernism and even male chauvinistic treatment of certain women characters. Koch is, regardless of this, a great Australian literary author, despite some of the shortcomings that Vernay does not sweep under the carpet; rather, he certainly makes an excellent scholarly case for Christopher Koch's writing.

Andreas Gaile: Rewriting History: Peter Carey's Fictional Biography of Australia. Costerus New Series 184. Amsterdam / New York: Rodopi, 2010. 348pp. € 89.80. ISBN 978-90-420-3071-8. **Reviewed by Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp,** University of Bonn.

Winner of the Association for Australian Studies' award for the best PhD thesis in 2006, Andreas Gaile's study of the work of Peter Carey, *Rewriting History: Peter Carey's Fictional Biography of Australia*, was highly acclaimed even before its publication last year. Carey's legendary status as a writer, along with Thomas Keneally, David Malouf, Colleen McCullough, Bryce Courtney, and Tim Winton, was confirmed by Australia Post last year with "a Stamp of Approval" (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 January 2010). He is Australia's most widely recognized writer at present, both nationally and internationally. AustLit cites an impressive list of awards to date, among them, famously, two Bookers, and no fewer than 899 titles on his work. Amid this mass of criticism and critics, Andreas Gaile, for his part, has stood out as a recognized expert on Carey's work since his impressive 2005 edition of critical essays *Fabulating Beauty:Perspectives on the Fiction of Peter Carey*, at the latest. In the introduction to the latter volume, Gaile describes Carey as "one of Australia's most outspoken critics" (xxii) and as a writer who has set out to chronicle his country's history in his fiction. It is this reading of Carey's fiction which also informs the study under review.

In *Rewriting History*, Gaile describes Carey's œuvre as a fictional biography of Australia, spanning the last 150 years, in which the writer aims both to counter "the historical apathy of a country where most of its citizens think there is so little history it is not worth investigating" (287) and to revise the master narrative of Australian history, to expose its gaps and distortions, with respect to, for example, the dispossession of

the Aborigines, the convict experience, or notions of Australianness with reference to gender and ethnicity. Carey's project, Gaile argues, is not intended to arrive at a more truthful version of Australian history, but to dismantle the authority of "official history" and alert the reader to its constructedness. At the same time, and despite the postmodern narrative techniques employed by the writer, Carey's serious engagement with history and historiography, understood by Gaile as an intervention in the country's history wars (287), is informed by a "humanist ethos" (22), an emancipatory vision and even "didactic purpose" (293) which make Carey side with the historic losers and ultimately invite the "utilitarian reading" (293) Gaile proposes in his study. Gaile even goes so far as to claim that Carey's fiction is "a positive contribution to Australia's attempt at coming of age" (293), employing, as with "maturity" (287), a biological metaphor which seems somewhat quaint. In any case, Gaile rightly claims to be presenting the first book-length systematic reading of the author's approach to and concept of history which, as he discloses, is inspired by Carey's explicit stance on Australian history and historiography, as voiced in his numerous interviews, in particular.

Gaile's analysis ties in with the postmodern interest in history and historiography; however, he does not base his readings on cultural memory theories, currently so popular, which is quite refreshing because cultural memory studies tend to repeatedly confront the reader with the same theoretical framework. Instead, Gaile locates Carey's rewriting of history more broadly within the philosophical context of postmodern, postcolonial and poststructuralist theorizing in the field of history, focusing on aspects such as the negotiation of truth, the foregrounding of the constructedness of both fiction and history, or the distortions of the imperial tradition of colonial history and their degrading effects on colonial subjects. His close readings of exemplary Carey fictions are always theoretically informed and considered, quite apart from the fact that his study

demonstrates a profound knowledge of Australian cultural history and current affairs.

The theoretical premises are spelt out in Part One of his study. Part Two, "Theorizing Carey's Fictional Biography" focuses on Carey's specific outlook on history and his narrative strategies. It begins with a chapter in which Gaile addresses Carey's transformation of history into "mythistory", borrowing the concept from historiography, and describing it as a kind of discourse which eschews the truth-and realism paradigms of traditional Western epistemology and allows an oscillating "between poiesis and mimesis, invention and representation, and ultimately, truth and lie" (43). The remaining three chapters in this part of Gaile's study explore Carey's strategies of dissolving the essentialist distinction between truth and lie – see the prominence of the confidence trickster or liar in the eponymous *Illywhacker*, the eponymous lovers in Oscar and Lucinda, both of whom are passionate and masterful liars, the many versions of the life of Jack Maggs, or the intricate deviations from the truth in *Bliss* -, his strategies of defamiliarizing reality, such as metafictional comments or elements of fantasy, and finally, the foregrounding of storytelling in the fiction of a writer who is renowned for the "profuse, celebratory, quality of his storytelling" (88).

Part Three, "Carey's Biography of Australia: Key Events in the Life of a Nation", focuses on the actual content of Carey's fictional biography, on Carey's narration of historical key issues, such as Aboriginal dispossession, the explorer myth, the convict system, and the mechanisms of colonization in both colonial and in postcolonial times. The titles of the individual chapters are occasionally obscure, as, for example, in the last two chapters of Part Three. Chapter eight is entitled "'Decolonizing the Mind' (I): Colonial Australia", and chapter nine, by analogy, ""Decolonizing the Mind' (II): Postcolonial Australia". The reader cannot infer from reading the latter title that chapter nine deals with American cultural imperialism in *The Unusual Life of Tristan*

Smith; as the slogan goes in advertising, Peter Carey's previous sphere of activity, the reader is thus left to "come in and find out".

Part Four, "Carey's Biography of Australia: Australian Identity", investigates identity constructions past and present with a strong focus on gender. The first chapter serves as a kind of introduction and addresses a number of issues and historical notions related to identity, such as language, the notion of the "cultural cringe", Russell Ward's legendary sketch of the typical Australian, and identity constructions in multicultural Australia. The following two chapters deal with Peter Carey's revaluation of the role of the sexes in Australian history and his reinscription of women into the Australian tradition. According to Gaile, "women are that group of Australian society which the author most clearly speaks out for" (283). Even "gender bending", an interesting feature of some of Carey's fiction, receives Gaile's attention, who traces the dissolution of gender boundaries in *Illywhacker, Oscar and Lucinda, True History of the Kelly Gang* and the short story "The Chance". In his concluding paragraph, Gaile notes, without going into detail that, in his more recent publications *My Life as a Fake and Wrong about Japan*, Carey has moved away from gender-related concerns towards another aspect of identity, namely the "Asianization" of Australia.

The "Postscript" summarizes the main arguments; in particular it testifies to the temporal gap between the completion of the study and its publication four years later, something which is evident in, for example, the fact that the introduction mentions Carey as the author of eight novels, whereas the postscript mentions him as the author of eleven novels. Gaile undertakes a critical reassessment of his approach which is motivated by the fact that, on the one hand, Carey's more recent novels have been criticized for an overload of fictional self-reflexivity and have therefore been less warmly received by readers than were his previous novels, and on the other by the demise to move

beyond postcolonialism, postmodernism, and poststructuralism" (286). Gaile argues in defence of both Carey's fictional investigations and postmodern critical theory, whose value he sees in combating essentialist thought and in questioning official history.

The textual analyses are convincingly informed by theoretical considerations, they are densely argued and offer perceptive insights into individual novels as well as points of comparison between them, even to readers who are familiar with Carey's fiction. The structure of the book is ambitious in that it does not work its way down a list of novels, ticking each one off, but is guided by narratological and thematic concerns. The fact that the subchapters to the four parts of the book are numbered consecutively all the way through, rather than each chapter beginning afresh, is unusual and confusing. Whilst this may be a result of Gaile's attempt to present Carey's biography of Australia as a continuous narrative, it complicates the reader's grip on the text nonetheless. The study closes with a comprehensive bibliography and a very useful index which helps the reader to find analyses of individual works easily, as well as central motifs or narrative features.

With respect to Carey's novels published since 2006 – *Theft: A Love Story* (2006), *His Illegal Self: A Novel* (2008), and *Parrot and Olivier in America* (2009) – Gaile notes that Carey has turned away from his project of writing the fictional biography of Australia. Not that this was its greatest merit, but in a way it makes Gaile's study a complete, not just provisional, analysis of a significant phase in the work of one of the most widely-read contemporary writers in English. The chapters on Carey's narrative strategies will serve as invaluable tools to analysts even of Carey's more recent novels and, most likely, of those to come.

David Callahan: *Rainforest Narratives: The Work of Janette Turner Hospital*. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2009. 370 pp. A$ 39.95. 978-0-7022-3727-0 **Reviewed by Marion Spies**

David Callahan does not only call his book *Rainforest Narratives* because the rainforest is one of Janette Turner Hospital's favoured metaphors (cf. Callahan 180), but also because Hospital does not believe in straightforward story telling. Instead, the Canadian-Australian writer uses fictional strategies which are as profuse and as entangled as the rainforest. And Callahan offers to be our guide through this forest. If this makes the reader think of Dante and his guide Virgil, it will fit, since Hospital is fond of making allusions to the *Divine Comedy*.

Callahan's introductory chapter could be published as an essay in its own right, in which he summarily - and convincingly - discusses some bones of contention critics pick with Hospital: identities, displacement, representation, language, and responsibility among them. These issues will be taken up again later.

The rest of Callahan's book is arranged chronologically; he studies all eight novels and three volumes of short stories Hospital has published so far. (He only briefly mentions the novel *A Very Proper Death*, which Hospital published as "Alex Juniper", and Hospital's *Collected Stories 1970-1995*, though.) He is of the opinion that Hospital deliberately only supplies fragmented information and out-of-sequence time schemes, leaving it to the reader to make sense of plots. In addition, she often structures her fiction as thriller narratives, and the reader has to figure out who has done what to whom. Therefore, the reader certainly needs a guide. And our guide plants signposts in each chapter,

which (1) summarize the issues involved in Hospital's books, (2) indicate the principal critical contexts, and (3) suggest possible interpretations.

Hospital's *The Ivory Swing* (1982) probably is the most dated of her novels, since it takes up issues that were highly topical in Canada in the 1980s, such as the difficulties of dealing with cultural difference, the limitations placed on women and how people resort to violence when they are faced with transgressive behavior. So, although the book is set in India, we mainly gain some insight into the ways Canadian women are restricted. To this effect, Hospital here and in later works makes use of twinned pairs. In one of those twinned pairs, the Indian woman Yashoda is killed because she violated Indian social norms, and her Canadian 'twin' Juliet 'kills' her marriage and her provinical Canadian life by stepping outside the patterns laid down for her by her family. This pair of twins already points to a major concern of Hospital's: she often sympathetically portrays tough women who are downtrodden but do not give up (cf. Callahan 164 and elsewhere).

Presumably because Hospital felt that she was "pigeonholed as a writer of the drama of intercultural dislocation" (Callahan 43), in her next novel, *The Tiger in the Tiger Pit* (1983), the story of a family reunion in Massachusetts, she focuses exclusively on white New Englanders and a white Australian. Callahan shows that in contrast to *Ivory Swing*, *Tiger* displays a much greater attention to structure and a sophistication of point-of-view and the use of time shifts. Callahan analyzes this novel in detail, because for him it is the first one to exhibit what will later become a core feature of her art - an intricate plot. Additionally, he points out that the patriarch Edward Carpenter is the first of the series of autocratic fathers in Hospital's work, and also the first of the series of absent fathers. Intricate in this novel are the various

interpretations of past events by different family members. They constantly challenge Edward's claim to reconstruct the past objectively (cf. Callahan 48); readers will have to cope with multiple versions of history in many of Hospital's works.
Borderline (1985) is philosophically and politically highly ambitious, as it takes up the issue of ethical responsibility (in this case for a refugee from El Salvador), which was already discussed in *Tiger*. On the surface, this book might be constructed like a woman-hunt, but - as Margaret Schramm suggests - it makes a lot of sense as well to interpret it as a postmodern work on absent subjects, including missing people, missing identities, errant fathers and subjectivities that are told by two different layers of narrator (cf. Callahan 75). Slithering memory and self-delusion are topics again, as is violence; the political background makes Hospital's point clear that violence is not restricted to third-world countries but can occur in Canadian middle-class society as well. Here again, Hospital takes the side of the suffering girl or woman who is punished for resisting male power.

In 1986, Hospital's first volume of short stories, *Dislocations*, was published. In his three chapters on Hospital's short stories, Callahan always singles out a handful of tales which exemplify the theme(s) he considers preeminent in the respective volume. In the case of *Dislocations* this is the experience of disjunction that arises from being located outside the familiar. The reader already knows this topic from *Ivory Swing*, and in *Dislocations* Indian and Canadian cultures clash once more. A new topic, chaos and fate, comes up as well; it will become prevalent later in *Charades*. The short stories in *Isobars* (1990), exclusively set in Australia, focus on violence and pain, how to deal with them and how to represent them. Similar to *Borderline*, the ethical imperative to be a moral witness is voiced as well. Callahan points out that in Hospital's work it is always women who demonstrate solidarity

towards fellow human beings. Traces of such a stance could already be seen in *Ivory Swing*. In *North of Nowhere, South of Loss* (2003) it becomes obvious that in the new millennium Hospital made her home in South Carolina, since the "nowhere" of the title frequently stands for a place in the American south, and the volume as a whole is concerned with both absent homes and adopted homes. As a new citizen of the American South, Hospital also gradually comes to realize that the trauma of the lost Civil War still is important there; we will see this in her later novels as well. Heritage and belonging are topics which are tentatively voiced here for the first time.

The grim depiction of realities in the United States once again makes Hospital speak for (in this case black) marginalized people. The problem Callahan has in those three chapters is that although he only analyzes a couple of stories, out of necessity he has to give a lot of plot summaries. It is not always possible to establish common themes in stories which might have been written over a long period of time.

Hospital's novel *Charades* (1988) has a Queenslander MIT physicist as its main character. In general, it is a book about "... how to act responsibly, how to represent the universe in ways that do justice to its complexity, and how to profit from the operations of personal and cultural memory despite their inherent instability" (Callahan 122). For these purposes, Hospital makes recourse to Werner Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle and his search for a Grand Unified Theory. The scientist Koenig and his friends, among them Charade (Scheherazade), are telling stories which are anything but unified. According to Callahan, Hospital thus aims to show " the inability of the scientist to transfer the consequences of his speculations from the abstruse realms of theoretical work to the concrete practice of the narratives out of which we build our realities..." (124). Hospital wants to tell her

readers that although people make connections that create new patterns, realities remain that do not fit together. Nevertheless, we have to try to bring them together. Hospital drives this point home with the help of the example of the Holocaust and its deniers. So she stresses our responsibility to discriminate between different realities and not to accept all of them as equally real. *The Last Magician* (1992) is all about Australian society. Here, the reader has to solve two kinds of mystery: "... what happened to Cat, who has not been seen for a long time, and what to make of the turbulent collage of reflection, intertextual allusion and teasing, double meanings, realist narrative, time shifts and moral outrage that the novel displays" (Callahan 176). The main setting is a 'rainforest' of a special kind, it is the Sydney underworld. This novel is a bitter comment on Australian myths such as 'the fair go' or 'the carefree childhood in a sheltered school'. Instead, there is "violence, inequality and difference" (Callahan 194) and a type of reality whose order is mysterious (cf. Callahan 200).

The spiritually barren outback community in *Oyster* (1996) with its pseudo-savior called Oyster ends with an apocalypse. Almost the only ones who survive unscathed are Aborigines. Here, Callahan seems at a loss when he tries to figure out the meaning of the book; he merely underlines Oyster's "manipulative destructiveness" (228), presumably because destruction will become a major concern in Hospital's next two books. Since Callahan is fond of stressing Hospital's debt to European and American cultural traditions (for example Dante, Boccaccio, Camus, Gluck, Bartok, Hawthorne), it probably has not occurred to him to look at Australian pretexts. But perhaps Randolph Stow's *Tourmaline* (1963) might be of service?

Due Preparations for the Plague (2003) was written before 9/11, when Hospital was already a resident of the United States. It was

considerably altered after the event, since it deals with the hijacking of an aeroplane by terrorists. Callahan works out that the plague is a metaphor for a type of death (through terrorism) one feels indiscriminately threatened by and which has the power to infect our imagination. This fear poisons our relation with the world (cf. Callahan 280).
One of the Orpheus figures in Hospital's latest novel, *Orpheus Lost* (2007, reviewed in ZfA 23), also has a poisoned relation with the world: The musician Mishka Bartok cannot relate to people in Boston but through family ties is connected to an Islamist fundamentalist network in Lebanon. Like in *North of Nowhere*, heritage becomes important; there are several people who believe "... that 'heritage' justifies murdering those whose 'heritage' is opposed to yours" (Callahan 300). This is true for American characters as well, who are described as fighting and killing in Vietnam and Iraq. But surprisingly, 'Orpheus'/Mishka comes back from the underworld of killing, which makes it possible for Callahan to somewhat abruptly end his book and his discussion of Hospital on a positive note: "... the book suggests, we need some version of the myth of renewal..." (Callahan 315).

There is no further summary or conclusion in Callahan's book. But he strove to sum up important themes in passing when he discussed *Orpheus*. And throughout the book, Callahan also made it clear what is important for him in Hospital's art. In short: She is very much influenced by European traditions, she does not favour linear plots, she loves thrillerlike plots, there is a deliberate oversupply of information in. She suggests that there is no perceivable order in the world, and although she is wary of assuming the voice of the Other, she is of the opinion that one has to take ethical responsibility. Callahan's interpretation is not the only feasible one, but it is conclusive and will certainly help many readers. Thank you, David; you are a true Virgil.

Peter Sutton: The Politics of Suffering: Indigenous Australia and the End of the Liberal Consensus. Melbourne University Press, 2009. $34.99, pb. 978 0 522 85636 1. **Reviewd by Adi Wimmer**, Klagenfurt.

The road to hell is paved with good intentions. (English proverb)

In 2003 I attended an Australian Studies conference in Portugal where Xavier Pons, former president of EASA and a distinguished scholar gave a paper with the apparently provocative title "Who Cares for the Aborigine?" (The general theme of the conference was "Australia: Who Cares?") In it, he dared suggest that certain problems in Australia's indigenous communities were home-made, like substance abuse. And then he also mentioned rumours of sexual abuses in those communities which often are a by-product. There were some astonishing responses from the audience. An academic from Perth expressed "extreme discomfort" at merely hearing such reproaches, an Aboriginal academic of UNSW said that all such rumours were "lies created by white racists", another academic later wrote to the EASA board (of which I was a member at the time) suggesting that the organization should make a public apology for Professor Pons's paper, and should carefully vet all future papers with an Aboriginal content, eliminating all those that were "disrespectful" of Aboriginal culture. Only that which was "empowering" of that culture should be given a platform.

One year later *The Australian* (and later, all other newspapers) reported that a social worker had resigned in protest from her job because of the many cases of sexual child abuse in her community, as well as wife bashing, that were blithely ignored by the ruling elders. Indeed, so she reported, one of these "elders" was a child abuser himself. When she confronted the elders she was told that if she dared report what she knew, she would be fired. The procedure that always worked, so she learnt, was to accuse any whistle-blower of "cultural insensitivity" and of having "racist views." The state department of Aboriginal Affairs would always take the side of the

elders. Her admission opened the floodgates of reporting on systemic sexual abuse in indigenous communities, and for months the matter was the main public discourse in Australia. In 2007 that discourse flared up again after a particularaly infamous case of child gang-rape in the community of Aurukun. Since nothing of substance had changed in the preceding three yeras, the Howard administration gave in to strong media pressure and took the drastic measure of sending police and army personnel into the self-governed communities to stop the abuses. This was called "The Intervention" and it had bi-partisan Canberran support but was viruletntly attacked by white liberals and some, but not all, Aboriginal leaders. (The major 'defections' from the denial camp were Marcia Langton, who wrote a preface to Peter Sutton's study, and Noel Pearson, Director of the Cape York Institute, who is at present the most prominent Aboriginal figure in Austrralia.) Simultaneous to it, several official reports were published, the most substantial being the "Little Children are Sacred" Report by the Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse. It was established on 8 August 2006 and its final report was published 15 July 2007.[11] The points made by the Inquiry were that "Child sexual abuse is serious, widespread and often unreported" and that

> the combined effects of poor health, alcohol and drug abuse, unemployment, gambling, pornography, poor education and housing, and a general loss of identity and control have contributed to violence and to sexual abuse in many forms.

The study concluded that "sexual abuse of Aboriginal children is happening largely because of the breakdown of Aboriginal culture and society."

Why this long introduction to a study by an anthropologist on a contemporary indigenous problem? Because Sutton's study focuses on how liberals (academics, artists, "bleeding-heart" activists and others) caused systematic censorship on what really went on, which resulted in "poor policy evolution" and finally a "dissemination of

[1] http://inquirysaac.nt.gov.au/report_summary.html

disinformation in Australian Indigenous affairs" (13). A key factor in all of this was the wide-spread implementation of the so-called "ethics code" in the 1990s, a code requiring all researches in Aboriginal Studies to agree to censorship or, better still, self-censorship. Sutton's concern, as he writes, is with

> the corrosive effect of ideological politics, or even merely white post-imperial guilt politics, on our ability to respond realistically and truthfully to the enduring crisis states so many Indigenous individuals continue to suffer (13).

In other words, political correctness has blighted the discourses of Aboriginality and has been responsible for hundreds of rape cases, hundreds of sexual child abuse cases. Hundreds? Yes indeed, a report in *The Australian* of November 2009 gave the number of newly opened court cases against abusive Aboriginal men in the Northern territory as 847. Not that Sutton fives this 'pc' camp a kid-glove treatment: he is scathing about academics who bathe in the warm sense of moral superiority, who glory to be on the side of the suppressed, who will trumpet their anti-racism from the citadels of academe. But who will not allow the truth to come into the way of self-righteousness. In one passage Sutton can barel conceal his contempt for those activists preferring to pursue wild claims for compensation (calling them "increasingly stratospheric rights and international convenants", 12) rather than paying the slightest attention to the protection of brutalized wives and children.
In an interview Sutton explained that he had "been driven into action by grief more than anything else."[2] It is the same introcution that Louise Nowra gave us for his heart-breaking study *Bad Dremaing*.

Aboriginal men's violence against women and children. I find it interesting that both authors had to claim first-hand knowledge of how indigenous communitites had degenerated into booze and violence, had to present friends who were lost to it, before daring to present a critique. Such has been the pressure of liberal activists in Australia that any critics of Aboriginal matters were told to shut up

[2] Ian Anderson. "Driven into Action". http://inside.org.au/driven-into-action/. 23 September 2009.

and to stay out. Even Sutton does not offer recommendations on how to fix the malaise.

The question that keeps bumping around in my head is why it took so long to address those ills? Sutton gave a paper with the same title as the book before a conference of anthropologists already in 2000, and his paper was published in 2001. No-one took a blind bit of notice. Everyone I know in Australia who has had only a small interest in Aboriginal matters has told me that rumours of the breakdown in Aboriginal communities were afoot already in the 1990s; cases of sexual abuse or wife bashing were known but not considered important enough to alert the public. Inga Clendinnen (2009) admits that she behaved no differently: "we would read, click our tongues and get on with our lives". But such behaviour is at odds with what we consider our hallowed duties. The academic consensus is that we have not only a right but a responsibility to speak out against wrongs; we "interfere", we "take action". Maybe this is very strongly the case in Germany and Austria; during the Nazi years academics stayed aloof and did nothing to stop the creeping barbarism in our culture and so we consider such a stance morally binding. But the same academics (and some of them are right here in my own country) who demand we collectively shoulder such responsibilities, most particularly and passionately those that will benefit women's rights, will propound the right of Aboriginal men to "settle their own affairs", free from "white interference". The underside of such non-interference was the untold suffering of women and children.

In 1937 George Orwell returned from the Catalan front of the Spanish civil war where he had witnessed the Stalinist repression of anarchists who were, like their murderers, fighting against Franco. He wished to publish an article about it in the *New Statesman* whose editor Kingsley Martin denied him the opportunity. It would be "playing into the hands of the enemy" was his reasoning. That is exactly what Australia's liberals also did when they heard of systemic sexual abuses in Aboriginal communities. To suppress the truth is the same as to lie; Sutton decided not to lie any longer. No

coincidence that Inga Clendinnen, Australia's most famous essayist, titled her review of Sutton's study "Truth tellers take charge".

I do not wish to create the impression that Sutton is critical of indigenous culture or even of indigenous daily practices. Far from it: even when he reports how a close friend killed his wife (after hours of drinking) does he praise the ability of the families to defuse the conflict: "Wik people move with practiced smootheness into crisis events. Everyone seemed to know what to do" (88). Unlike Louis Nowra, whose study he calls "negative" and "in places badly misinformed" he does not denigrate indigenous communities for their sliding into degeneracy. He blames the white community first for implementing a flawed policy of self-determination and then for not reacting when that policy was producing criminal results. He is most decidedly on the side of indigeneity when discussing the "Reconciliation" process, with which he finds a lot of fault. The respective chapter "On feeling reconciled" is not easy to read, though. Sutton is clearly supportive of Kevin Rudd's "Apology" of February 2008, but dismisses its effectiveness. It was all good for whitefellas, is his verdict, who wanted to be forgiven. But he is equally dismissive of the radicals who with renewed vigour pursue the quest for a treaty and billions of dollars of compensation: "it would be a serious mistake to assume that all Aboriginal poeple believe a signed document to mean anything significant" (199). At the end of this chapter I had the impression that Sutton did not know himself what should have taken place instead of the Reconciliation process.

Sutton's chapter on "Violence, ancient and Modern" is the longest; here Sutton presents valuable anthropological new research. Pre-contact Aboriginal Culture was more violent than even the early racist colonists reported, a subject that became taboo in the liberal discourse. An investigation of app. 1.200 archeological skulls unearthed all over Australia revealed that 24% exhibited trauma. The percentages varied: in one S.A. site the percentage was 44% for women and 9% for men, so clearly there had been a culture of hitting women on the head. The evidence from 350 British skulls of

the Neolithic period showed only 2% skull fractures, as did an investigation located in Central America.

Mitchell Rolls (first essay in this issue) convincingly argues that it was never a case of "why weren't we told" (thus the title of one of Henry Reynold's studies) but "why didn't we listen?" He is spot-on with this assessment. It is inconceivable that Henry Reynolds was shielded from the bad reports; he, like most of his followers, made a moral choice not to upset the failed policies that liberals like him had put into place. "Sorry is the hardest thing to say", in the words of an American pop song. To change that policy would have been to admit that the romanticized views on Aboriginal culture were in need of overhaul, and that their presentation of Aboriginal men as perennial victims was unsustainable.

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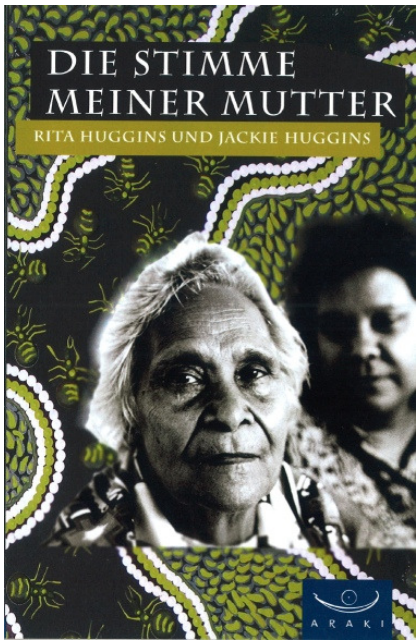
CREATIVE LITERATURE, POETRY, MEMOIR

Rita Huggins und Jackie Huggins: *Die Stimme meiner Mutter*. Araki Verlag, Leipzig, 2010, 157 Seiten, 30 Fotos, Paperback, ISBN 9783941848030. € 12,50. **Rezensiert von Elisabeth Bähr,** Speyer.



"Eine junge Mutter, Aborigine, wendet sich ungehalten ihrem plärrenden, fünfjährigen Kind zu, das auf dem Einkaufswagen sitzt: ‚Was willst du bloß?!" – ‚Landrechte!" schreit das Kind."

"Über jede Person, die im Reservat lebte, wurde eine Akte erstellt… Der erste Eintrag stammte von 1942, der letzte von 1974 - zweiunddreißig Jahre Überwachung!"

Indigener Humor und rassistische Unterdrückung sind die Antipoden im Buch *Die Stimme meiner Mutter*, einer Biographie über Rita Huggins, aufgeschrieben von ihrer Tochter Jackie Huggins.

Der gesamte Clan, in den Rita Huggins 1921 in der Kooramindanjie (Carnarvon Gorge, Qld) hineingeboren wurde – gestorben ist sie 1996, zwei Jahre nach der Erstveröffentlichung der Biographie – wurde mit der Brutalität eines Viehtransportes durch das Militär von dem dem Clan zugehörigen Land verschleppt, nach Hautfarben sortiert und in verschiedene Reservate gesteckt. Rita Huggins war damals ein kleines Kind und hat wenige Erinnerungen daran. Der Beginn der Biographie mit diesem Ereignis und einer Beschreibung der Bedeutung des Landes zeigt die Relevanz des Landes im Leben der indigenen Australier, die am Ende des Buches bei der Schilderung von Reisen nach Zentralaustralien und in die Kimberley wieder aufgenommen wird. Diese Reisen berichten aber auch von der Unterschiedlichkeit zwischen dem Leben der Schwarzen im Busch und in den Städten.
Rita Huggins wächst im Reservat Cherbourg, zunächst inmitten der Familie mit sieben Brüdern und sechs Schwestern auf.

Ihr Vater, weniger als andere indigene Reservatsbewohner von Angst vor der weißen Gewaltherrschaft geplagt, ließ sich wenig gefallen, weshalb er bei den Weißen als Aufrührer galt und gerade deshalb trotz seiner väterlichen Strenge großen Einfluss auf Rita Huggins hatte. Das Mädchen ging mit acht Jahren zum ersten Mal zur Schule, in der die hellhäutigen Kinder von den schwarzen getrennt wurden in der Annahme, dass die hellhäutigen besser lernten, was sich – wen wundert‟s – zum großen Erstaunen der Lehrer und Missionare als falsch erwies. Mit 12 Jahren wurde Rita vom Oberaufseher des Reservats zwangsweise in das Mädchenwohnheim einquartiert wegen ihrer Freundschaft zu einem Jungen, im Jahr darauf aus gleichem Grund sogar für einige Zeit ins Gefängnis gesperrt.

Mit 13 Jahren wurde Rita zu ihrer ersten Anstellung auf eine Farm geschickt, wo sie im Haushalt arbeiten und die Kinder beaufsichtigen musste. Bis auf ein geringes Taschengeld bekam sie ihr Gehalt nicht ausbezahlt, dafür aber zahlreiche Schläge. Später hatte sie mehr Glück mit ihren Anstellungen. 1946, also im Alter von 25 Jahren beantragte sie erfolgreich die Entlassung aus dem ‟Aboriginal Protection Act‟, um ein freies Leben führen zu können.

1951 heiratete sie Jack Huggins, den ersten indigenen Bewohner Queenslands, der bei der Post angestellt war, und zog zu ihm nach Ayr in Nordqueensland. Eines ihrer fünf Kinder, das Rita Huggins vor ihrer Ehe bekommen hatte, wuchs bei ihren Eltern auf. Der frühe Tod ihres Mannes 1958 führte zu einem Bruch in ihrem Leben. Sie zog nach Brisbane, vernachlässigte die Kinder, gab ihr weniges Geld für Vergnügungen aus, musste wegen Mietrückständen ihre Wohnung verlassen und zog von einer Bleibe zur nächsten. Die Nähe zu ihrer ausgedehnten Familie, die große Gastfreundschaft unter den indigenen Bewohnern und Rita Huggins‟ langjährige ehrenamtliche Arbeit für OPAL, einer konservativ-christlichen Organisation zur Integration indigener Bewohner unter Wahrung ihrer Identität, gaben ihr Halt.
1974 starb ihre Tochter Gloria, und Rita Huggins zog deren vier kleine Kinder groß. Sie gab den Alkohol und das Umherziehen auf und bekam ihre einzige außerhalb der Hauswirtschaft bezahlte Arbeit in einem Bildungsprojekt der University of Queensland als Vermittlerin zwischen

den Wissenschaftlern und Aborigines in den Kimberley. 1989 nahm sie an der Ersten internationalen Konferenz indigener Frauen in Australien teil und fuhr zur Folgekonferenz nach Norwegen. Die Biographie endet 1991.

Das vorliegende Buch ist keine reine Biographie, denn die Tochter fügt den von ihr aufgeschriebenen Erzählungen der Mutter Kommentierungen und Ergänzungen hinzu. Dabei handelt es sich entweder um eigene Erinnerungen an die gleichen von der Mutter erzählten Erlebnisse oder um zusätzliche Informationen zu den politischen und sozialen Hintergründen. Damit erweitert Jackie Huggins das Genre der Biographie bzw. Autobiographie, das seinen festen Platz in der indigenen Literatur seit spätestens 1975 innehat, in Richtung einer sozialhistorischen Dokumentation in leicht lesbarer Form.

Vor dem beruflichen Hintergrund von Jackie Huggins – sie ist Professorin am *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit* der *University of Queensland* und Gastprofessorin am *Australian Centre for Indigenous History* der *Australian National University* –, die viel über Geschichte und Identität indigener Australier/innen geschrieben hat, aktiv in der Reconciliation-Bewegung und vielen entsprechenden Organisationen war und ist, ist eine solche Art der Biographie nicht verwunderlich. Als 1956 Geborene gehört Jackie Huggins zu der Generation, die, in den Städten aufgewachsen, ein feines Gespür für Rassismus in jeglicher Form entwickelt hat und die in großem Widerspruch zum versöhnlerischen Umgang mit Mensch und Politik steht.

So sind auch die Absichten, die von Mutter und Tochter mit diesem Buch verfolgt werden, leicht unterschiedlich. Rita Huggins sagt in ihrem Vorwort:

> Dieses Buch ist als Hinterlassenschaft für meine Kinder und Kindeskinder und andere Familienmitglieder gedacht. Es wird aber hoffentlich noch mehr Menschen ansprechen, auch diejenigen unter den Weißen eingeschlossen, die wissen möchten, wie sich alles aus der Sicht der Aborigines anhört.

Jackie Huggins schreibt in ihrem Vorwort:

> Die Niederschrift dieses Buches war ein Versuch, das Augenmerk auf die Geschichte unseres Volkes zu legen.

Die Biographie macht die Unterschiedlichkeit des Lebens zweier Generationen von indigenen Frauen deutlich, die eine im Reservat aufgewachsen, die andere frei in der Stadt.

Die Übersetzung des Buches durch Dr. Juliane Lochner ist gut gelungen. Nur an wenigen Stellen scheint sie änderungswürdig. So spricht man nicht von Stämmen mit der Konnotation der Hierarchien in afrikanischen Ländern sondern von indigenen Gruppen oder Sprachgruppen. Es gibt auch keinen ‘‘Stamm Yirrkala‘‘, sondern eine Ortschaft Yirrkala mit Bewohnern verschiedener Sprachgruppen. Zudem hätte man die Übersetzung von ‘‘traditional people‘‘ in ‘‘Ureinwohner‘‘ vermeiden können sowie das Wort Traumzeit, denn beide Begriffe lassen entweder in die Irre führende Assoziationen zu oder sind von kolonialistischer Überheblichkeit geprägt.

Im Buch, zuerst 1994 von Aboriginal Studies Press in Canberra publiziert, in der vorliegenden deutschen Fassung des Araki Verlages vom Australia Council for the Arts unterstützt, fehlt die Karte des Reservats Cherbourg, in dem Rita Huggins aufgewachsen ist. Ihr Geburtsdatum gibt der Araki Verlag falsch auf dem Klappentext an, obwohl es im Text steht. Makaber ist eine Anzeige in eigener Sache, die von ‘‘Urmenschen‘‘ statt indigenen Australiern oder wenigstens Aborigines spricht.

Nam Le: The Boat. Camberwell, Vic.: Hamish Hamilton / Penguin Australia, 2008. 315 pp. ISBN 978-0241-01541-4. A$ 29.95. Also published in the USA by Random House / Knopf 2008. **Reviewed by Peter O. Stummer**, University of Munich

The Vietnam-born and Melbourne-raised author cultivates an impressive online presence on www.namleonline.com. On his website, the viewer is confronted with an intimidating breaker which threatens to engulf the onlooker on the beach. The next thing that strikes the eye is a quote from novelist Mary Gaitskill praising The Boat´s vision and power as "timeless." This introductory bow towards North American literary culture is then followed, on the next pages, by a long list of positive reviews published in American papers.

The bio provides a bunch of some 25 literary prizes. Laudatory comments are enlisted by, amongst many others, William Boyd and Peter Carey. The book has been translated into more than a dozen languages. Incidentally, the German version was taken care of by Sky Nonhoff with Claasen Verlag and characterised by one reviewer as "Erzählband des globalisierten Schreckens (Weidemann 2008).

The family had fled from Vietnam over the open sea in 1979. Luckily they made it to a refugee camp in Malaysia. There, baby Nam fell ill and the best chance of medical treatment was the hospitality offered by Australia. It was a hard life for the parents as they were unable to use their good qualifications in the new environment. The clever son turned out an achiever though and got many scholarships. He successfully read law and wrote an honours arts thesis in rhyming couplets, at Melbourne University, for Chris Wallace Crabbe. Through fellow-Australian-writer John Murray, he learnt about the Iowa Writers´ Workshop, won a Truman Capote Fellowship and was accepted in 2004. There, the teaching of Marilynne Robinson and, in particular, of Frank Conroy served as an eye-opener with regard to the intricacies of the short story. Grappling with the principal unintelligibility of another person´s psyche, he discovered what he calls the "ethical imperative." For, paradoxically in his opinion, the

only way of getting into somebody else´s skin, then, was through fiction (Cohen 2008).

Nam Le therefore comes across as fully transnational and one hundred percent globalised. In truly post-Demidenko fashion, he plays the ethnic card, but is quick to transcend it. In almost all of the many interviews, he seeks to relativise the notion of authenticity. The Australians love it; they instantly elevate him to stardom. Among many others, fellow short story writer Cate Kennedy is impressed by Le´s "dazzling virtuosity with narrative voice" (interview with bookseller Readings 29 May 2008.) The judges of the New South Wales Book of the Year 2009 award enthused about transnational literature going "wherever it wants" and appreciatively summed up the collection in the following manner:

> So it is that, in *The Boat´s* seven stories, we visit Tehran and the slums of Colombia; we inhabit the minds of aging American painters and Japanese schoolgirls; we hear the sound of ocker slang and formal Vietnamese address. Each created world is real, believable; each in turn makes the others seem strange and unfamiliar, almost dream-like (www.pla.nsw.gov.au/awards-shortlists/book-of-the-year)

It does not lack symbolic appeal that the collection hinges on the central story "Halflead Bay," the only one with a distinctly Australian perspective, which comprises almost eighty pages. The North and South American ones precede it and those with a Japanese or an Iranian reference follow. "Love and Honour and Pity and Pride and Compassion and Sacrifice," as the first, and "The Boat," as the last, provide the Vietnamese frame.

"Halflead Bay" is vastly reminiscent of Tim Winton´s *The Turning*. By its thematising adolescent anxiety, it reads vaguely like a pastiche. The port is doomed, the boy´s mother suffers from MS, and her demise is imminent. The atmosphere is characterised by an undercurrent of male violence. The disappointed father does not see his expectations fulfilled, as his son does not score high on the masculinity scale. He is no good at soccer and certainly no match for the town bully who gives him a severe thrashing on the suggestion of his shallow girlfriend the son has a romantic crush on. The gloom

is intensified when the protagonist turns out to be averse to killing any living creature, be it fish or seagull, against a background community where the killing of several `Asians´, as the text has it, is silently passed over. In such an environment a highly sensitive boy is clearly a fish out of water.

It stands to reason that this is the story where "strine" words and ocker slang, such as bogans, are demonstratively sneaked in. The Vietnamese stories purport not to exploit the author´s "ethnic background". They are, playfully, as postmodern and autobiographical as they are metafictional. They try to have the cake and eat it. However, the title story contradicts the self-reflexivity of the first, in its serious emphasis on tragedy, in the experience of Vietnamese boat people in their fight for survival.

What is really fascinating though in this collection is the role of the internet and to what extent Google is a partner in the writing. The notion of authenticity is thus intentionally undermined. "Cartagena," "Hiroshima" and "Tehran Calling" demonstrate, in particular, how `assiduous research´ boils down to sifting the World Wide Web.

In the first case, it is no big deal to provide all the local colour details by using the phrases "Medellin" and "streetkids in Colombia" in a digital search engine. The other two stories especially seem to have the American reader in mind. The predominantly positive response in the States proves that the strategy was successful. However, all the jingoistic rallying calls in Hiroshima before the blast are supposedly filtered through the mind of Little Turnip, the central figure, who is just a little girl. So it means stretching the readers" willingness to suspend their disbelief quite excessively. Moreover, the use of kami, with its Shinto background, to stand in for ancestors and community, together with all the garden details, can be easily gleaned from the internet; shukkei-en is the famous garden in Hiroshima and provides the information.

In the case of Tehran, the web is full of gruesome pictures to illustrate the self-flagellation practices under Ashura. And it is no problem to reconstruct the historical background with a few clicks. It is a different story though with regard to the Farsi term khafeghan

to signify a claustrophobic feeling. For here a precise source can be pinned down, since there exists an article on the net by Iranian journalist Ladane Nasseri, entitled "Iran va Jahan / Iran: Religion and Love" of February 14, 2006. It not only explains at great length all the connotations of the Farsi term, but contains all the details of the events on Mohensi Square with the kids´ cellphone enthusiasm for Valentine´s Day in the face of the religious militia. Here the question of plagiarism begins to rear its ugly head. Moreover, the American protagonist´s memory, and after all it is that of a lawyer in her mid-thirties, is definitely unreliable with regard to the fate of Canadian journalist Zahra Kazemi, who was tortured to death in 2003, as testified by witnesses. And what is more, in the midst of all the turmoil, her Iranian female feminist friend wants to stage a protest play against the hanging of a young girl for "unchaste behaviour." Both women come across as oddly incompetent and psychologically unconvincing.

Despite these inconsistencies, the collection was highly praised by hard-to-please US critic Michiko Kakutani and, what is more, named by up-and-coming Zimbabwean writer and lawyer Petina Gappah, on her blog, as a model for her own debut volume of short stories, *An Elegy for Easterly* (2009, Faber & Faber). All in all, Le´s procedure is also proof of a generation gap. Socialized by the Internet, he thus demonstrates a creative use of the Web. His is a digitized view of reality. Eventually, the real is manipulated by the virtual, or, put more crudely, the authenticity created in this way is revealed to be fabricated. None the less, I would maintain that the impressive diversity of the collection makes for fascinating reading, especially for all those who see themselves in the grips of an all-pervasive Google system and in the throes of some irresistible globalisation.

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John Mateer: The West. Australian Poems 1989-2009. Fremantle: Fremantle Press, 2010. ISBN 9781921361869. **Reviewed by Werner Senn**, University of Berne, Switzerland.

John Mateer (*1971), who is considered to be one of the leading Australian poets of his generation, left South Africa and came to Australia in 1989 where he has lived both in Melbourne and Perth. The volume under review is his sixth published in Australia. It offers a selection of texts from his previous five Australian collections published during those last twenty years, among them *Barefoot Speech* (2000), *Loanwords* (2002) and *The Ancient Capital of Images* (2005) as well as a number of new poems.

The texts are grouped by affinity rather than order of publication. In the absence of any references the reader unfamiliar with Mateer's earlier work is thus unable to trace and assess the writer's development. The volume nevertheless affords a welcome opportunity to gauge and appreciate the range and achievement of a poet who, in Martin Harrison's words in his introductory essay, "belongs in this larger world tradition of poetry written in and from displacement and exile" (p. 12). At the same time the fact that Mateer won the 2001 Victorian Premier's Prize for Poetry and was awarded the Centenary Medal for his contribution to Australian literature shows that he has also been able to "speak towards the centre of Australian culture" (Harrison, p. 11).

Indeed, as the title and subtitle suggest, the selection is also somewhat one-sided, omitting Mateer's work inspired by his world-wide travelling. Moreover, it is doubtful whether the author did his reputation a service by including a number of slight, if not banal, poems on his sexual experiences as a young man. Mateer's more mature work is pervaded by the powerful presence of the complex self of the author. His voice, which is rarely just neutral, dominates or intervenes on many occasions, takes sides or offers stringent or ironical comments. An exemplary instance of such self-positioning occurs in "Masks":

> Assailed by "the natives", those plants
> cultivated as evidence of wealth prior to Invasion,
> by their luminescence, their harsh insistence as of a persistent after-image,
> a spotfire crackling in a retinal forest, accosted by the relics of botanical glory,
> I see above me on the slope, my back to the Swan River and the Brewery Site
> down there, Africa far to the west, that I am a comrade of these exiles,
> these Gondwanaland trees that seem, transplanted in their orange gravel,
> like giant beer bottles presenting us with shrivelled desiccated flowers (144).

Similar emphasis on the presence of the speaker and the immediacy of his speaking occurs throughout the volume, e.g. "Now I'm down there beside the expansive glare, / looking at a trough of green water" (The Brewery Site, 88), or: "I sit cross-legged just outside the ring whispering a dharani" (One of the Earthrings at Sudbury, 111), or: "I'm walking down the colony's main street" (The Statue of Mokare, 129).

The effect of such present-tense "writing to the moment" (to use the 18th-century novelist Samuel Richardson's famous phrase) is to render the poet's experience more intense immediate and thus to enlist the reader's empathy. However, it is not blind identification that the texts seek to achieve but a reflective and also distanced response. Thus the invitation to empathize is countered by two stylistic devices that operate on the typographical level and suggest the opposite: numerous texts contain dashes or ellipses, many even end on such a "blank" and thus leave the reader to speculate, to fill in the gap. Like all poetic devices it can misfire if strained, as in: "The parody / of my saying __. She says, "It seems so ..."(29). Such withholding of information can be irritating, as in the last line of "Exile": "And I said nothing. I thought: __." (30). The other prominent feature is the use of italics which give the texts an extra dimension, whether it is interior discourse, unedited or unspoken thought, silent self-questioning, or additional "other" voices, alternative perspectives.

Reinforcing these effects Mateer's poetic language surprises us with striking, exuberant, often elusive, even stilted imagery that sometimes skirts the absurd: "death, mute death, heavy in my scrotum / like a jewel," (29). A suntanned beauty on a beach "is poised, like Chaos in a bonsai" (120). More often, though, the images are highly expressive and illuminating: After a bushfire the hardened cone of a banksia "can undo its silence / and open into one black yoni whose whole body is / dry parted lips naturally spitting out seeds" (67); fissured basalt rocks on the southern coast are "a whale's vertebrae abandoned" (78). The poet watches a drug addict,

> Bent-necked, with teeth clenching
> the strap to squeeze
> her hard arm, bring a vein
> to fruition for
> one slow injection. (40)

He sees "suburbs spreading / like the fat of age around emotion's / gut" (42), or catches sight of "the flung ventriloquist's arc of the Harbour Bridge" (140). Many texts give evidence of Mateer's acute and critical but also sympathetic observation of his chosen country of residence. There is a sense of non-belonging, of being a comrade of exiles, in many of these texts, as the first section, "Exile", seems to suggest. The section "Among the Australians" equally marks the speaker as a stranger: "This broad emptiness / I felt as a Greek in Alexandria" (42). In a dream he is a black cockatoo "uneasily considering if I had the right perch" (80). "Invisible Cities" conveys more powerfully than most other texts this haunting sense of non-belonging that the speaker shares with the Italian immigrant to whom the poem is dedicated as it circles insistently around the question of what "being here" means and feels like. In "The Local" he views Perth, "this exchangeable city" (49), in terms of animal life:

> in these suburbs there're huge seditious roaches
> immigrant and native birds,
> possums and even, like me, foxes
> – expert survivalists cosmopolitan as you like –
> who hide in the parkland and limestone
> caves on the foreshore (126).

While the poems about encounters with Australians of all kinds in the section "Among the Australians" are for the most part anecdotal, the section "The Nature" testifies to the author's ability to respond with alertness and subtlety to the features of Australian landscapes. In particular it is the constant awareness of a pre-history to colonization in those landscapes that gives these poems their special reverberation. At the beach of Mullaloo with its "limestone teeth" he sees "those stone outbreaks as the rough scales / of the thorny devil-lizard on whose back we're lifted" (65). A similarly submerged presence surfaces in the pine forest planted by white colonizers ("dark regimented trunks and a stifling silence") and then burnt down in a bushfire: "After thirty years, / like a nation after decades of martial law, / bodies unclenching, eyes opening, native seeds are sprouting" ("At Gnangara", 66). While this can be read as a reference to South Africa it is equally pertinent as a sign of hidden indigenous past, of which Mateer sees many instances. It is figured memorably in "The Scar-Tree of Wanneroo":

> This oldman-tree might elsewhere have been a hallowed thing,
> garlanded, smoked-in with incense, imminent,
> a series of photos of blue, cloudless sky. But here
> this jarrah, fragmenting heart isn't one of many milestones
> measuring out an historic silence, an empty hurt.
> In mind, this almost forgotten memory, this in-grown wounding,
> is not the last in a country of countless scar-trees (71).

The shorter section "Mokare's Ear" is entirely devoted to indigenous topics and issues. The poems "To Mudrooroo" and "To Jack Davis" are largely anecdotal, whereas "The Brewery Site" offers an extended and sensitive meditation about being on an ancient indigenous site on the Swan river appropriated by European settlers. It ends with the beautifully subdued but evocative lines: "(Around someone on the riverbank / vanquished, translucent paperbarks gather like the grieving)" (90). "Talking with Yagan's Head" refers to the indigenous Nyoongar leader killed by whites in 1833 whose head was for a long time stored in England and finally returned to its people in 1997. The poem "In the Presence", a cycle of fifteen very short "songs" to Yagan himself, intensifies this reappraisal of a

leading Aboriginal figure. The opening line, "Even if I stab a bloody gumtree you will not speak" (97), announces its main concern: The silenced voice is a dominant theme throughout this text, e.g.: "The ghosts of the spoken are this huge tree / on which every leaf is a silenced language" (97). Yet the writer is not trying to "give a voice" to this long-dead hero, on the contrary: "you, to whom these words are sung, are a silence" (103). The powerful conclusion amounts to an undisguised political statement:

> Though the past is as anxious as native vegetation in the suburbs
> and as intoxicating as a carton of petrol held under a child's nose,
> you, your mythical head synonymous with space,
> your abandoned body identical to time,
> are the blackhole of words for which the Prime Minister
> may apologise with these poems (104).

A comrade of exiles, whether the displaced, disempowered indigenous peoples, Vietnamese refugees or brutalized convicts, the author with sympathetic imagination and sharp perception manages to give striking verbal expression to such predicaments and his own sensitive and considered response to them. The texts in this selection are of unequal weightiness and quality but they are also pleasantly free of fashionable rhetoric and sophisticated smartness. The reader who is willing to ponder them attentively will be amply rewarded.

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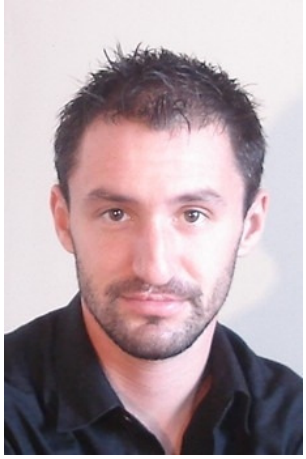

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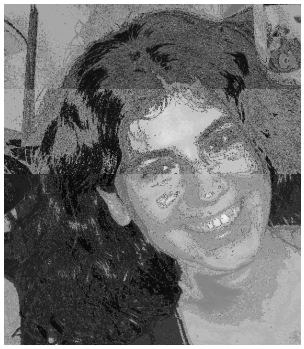

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Mitchell Rolls is senior lecturer and co-director (Academic) in Riawunna, Centre for Aboriginal Studies, University of Tasmania, and Co-Director of the interdisciplinary research centre, the Centre for Colonialism and Its Aftermath. He is currently working on an ARC Discovery Project examining the popular Australian magazine Walkabout. His concurrent research interests include cultural identity, race and representation, cultural appropriation, and place-making in settler societies. He has published recently in the Journal of Australian Studies, Aboriginal History, Australian Studies, and has co-edited Reading Robinson: Companion Essays to Friendly Mission, Quintus, Hobart, 2008; and has co-authored The Historical Dictionary of Australian Aborigines, Scarecrow Press, 2011.

Schmidt-Haberkamp Barbara teaches at „Institut für Anglistik, Amerikanistik und Keltologie" of the University of Bonn. Her publications are varied and numerous; Two monographs that stand out are Die Kunst der Kritik: Zum Zusammenhang von Ethik und Ästhetik bei Shaftesbury (Wilhelm Fink 1990) and Die verordnete Kultur: Stereotypien der australischen Literaturkritik (Peter Lang 2000).

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Werner Senn was professor of English at the University of Berne from 1984 until his retirement in 2007. He taught modern English literature and a wide range of postcolonial literatures. His has published books on Elizabethan drama and Joseph Conrad's fiction and numerous articles on Australian poetry and fiction. He is also editor and co-editor of several collections of essays on Australian literature as well as a founding member and former President of the European Association of Studies on Australia.

Spies Marion

Peter O. Stummer recently retired from teaching at the English Department of the University of Munich. He has published widely on English literature, political discourse, and African, Australian, and Indian literature in English. He edited The Story Must Be Told: Short Narrative Prose in the English Literatures (1986) and co-edited. Die industrielle Revolution in England: Literarische Texte und ihre Kontexte (1991) as well as Fusion of Cultures? (1996)

Adi Wimmer became the editor of this journal in 2007 and in 2008 the president of the German Association of Australian Studies (Gast). His most recent monograph is Australian Film: Cultures, Identities, Texts (WVT 2008)