

A Travelling Colonial Architecture

**Home and Nation
in
Selected Works by Patrick White,
Peter Carey, Xavier Herbert and James Bardon**

Stephen Brock
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) (Flinders)

The Flinders University of South Australia
FACULTY OF EDUCATION, HUMANITIES, LAW AND THEOLOGY

Date of submission: June 2003

A thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Contents

Contents	2
Abstract.....	7
Introduction	8
1 Writing Home in <i>Voss</i> , <i>Riders in the Chariot</i> and <i>A Fringe of Leaves</i>	18
The Spatial Politics of Mr Bonner's Garden: A Scene of Writing.....	21
When Voss Writes Home: Cultural Hybridity and the 'Primitive Imagination'	29
A Classical Grammar of Representation	37
Representations of Aboriginality in <i>Riders in the Chariot</i> and <i>A Fringe of Leaves</i>	42
Conclusion.....	54
2 <i>Oscar and Lucinda</i> : The Explorer Hero Revisited	58
Peter Carey and Paul Carter	60
Inventing Country	67
Cultural Hybridity in <i>Oscar and Lucinda</i>	82
Conclusion.....	88
3 Pet Shop Pantheon: <i>Illywhacker</i> and the Architectural Construction of Australian Types	90
A Foucauldian Reading of <i>Illywhacker's</i> Pet Emporium	91
Exhibiting Australian Types.....	96
'American Dreams'	109
Conclusion.....	111
4 Nation and Miscegenation in <i>Poor Fellow My Country</i>	113
Jeremy Delacy's Menagerie.....	129
Narrative Strategies in <i>Poor Fellow My Country</i> and <i>Illywhacker</i> : Alfie Candlemas vs Leah Goldstein.....	139
Magic Realism in <i>Poor Fellow My Country</i>	141
The Painted Caves.....	147
Prindy As 'Bad Primitive'	154
Travellers, Tourists and Postcards.....	158
Conclusion.....	163
5 Mapping the Homely National Imaginary in <i>Revolution by Night</i>	165
Papunya Tula Art and the Fourth Dimension	167
The Imaginary Primitive	171
Chronotopes and Heteroglossia.....	176
Cultural Horizons	184
<i>Revolution by Night</i> : A Victory Over the Sun.....	186
Aboriginal TV and the Visual Prerogatives of the Twentieth Century	188
Mapping and Naming: A Travelling Colonial Architecture	194
Conclusion.....	205
Coda.....	206
Works Cited.....	215
Works Consulted	223

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Stephen James Thomas Brock *June 2003*

Declaration

I believe that this thesis is properly presented, conforms to the specifications for the thesis and is of sufficient standard to be, *prima facie*, worthy of examination.

Dr Lyn Jacobs Supervisor *June 2003*

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful for the supportive supervision and critical insights provided by Associate Professor Lyn Jacobs and Rick Hosking.

I acknowledge the Commonwealth Government for financial assistance through the provision of an Australian Postgraduate Award scholarship.

I am grateful to staff and colleagues in Australian Studies at the Flinders University of South Australia and all those who participated in the Cultural Studies seminar series.

Thank you to Professor Gus Worby and Rick Hosking for having me onboard *Travelling Australia*, a challenging and inspiring course to work on.

In particular, I thank Steve Hemming for his de-colonising perspectives and Dr Peter Doley for his friendship and scholarly example.

Special thanks to Nathan Hollier and Chris Ingleton for reading the manuscript and providing constructive feedback, and Dr Michael Deves for editorial assistance.

I am ever grateful to my family for ongoing support, especially my wife, Angie, a source of strength and inspiration, and daughter, Simone, for her timely interruptions and patience.

Dedication

Angie

Compañera de vida y sueño

Abstract

This thesis is a study of constructions of home and nation in selected works by Patrick White, Peter Carey, Xavier Herbert and James Bardon. Drawing on the work of postcolonial theorists, it examines ways in which the selected texts engage with national mythologies in the imagining of the Australian nation. It notes the deployment of racial discourses informing constructions of national identity that work to marginalise Indigenous Australians and other cultural minority groups.

The texts are arranged in thematic rather than chronological order. White's treatment of the overland journey, and his representations of Aboriginality, discussed in Chapter One, are contrasted with Carey's revisiting of the overland journey motif in *Oscar and Lucinda* in Chapter Two. Whereas White's representations of Indigenous culture in *Voss* are static and essentialised, as is the case in *Riders in the Chariot* and *A Fringe of Leaves*, Carey's representation of Australia's contact history is characterised by a cultural hybridity. In White's texts, Indigenous culture is depicted as an anachronism in the contemporary Australian nation, while in Carey's, the words of the coloniser are appropriated and employed to subvert the ideological colonial paradigm.

Carey's use of heteroglossia is examined further in the analysis of *Illywhacker* in Chapter Three. Whereas Carey treats Australian types ironically in *Illywhacker's* pet emporium, the protagonist of Xavier Herbert's *Poor Fellow My Country*, Jeremy Delacy, is depicted as an expert on Australian types. The intertextuality between Herbert's novel and the work of social Darwinist anthropologists in the 1930s and 1940s is discussed in Chapter Four, providing a historical context to appreciate a shift from modernist to postmodernist narrative strategies in Carey's fiction.

James Bardon's fictional treatment of the Papunya Tula painting movement in *Revolution by Night* is seen to continue to frame Indigenous culture in a modernist grammar of representation through its portrayal of the work of Papunya Tula artists in the terms of 'the fourth dimension'. Bardon's novel is nevertheless a fascinating postcolonial engagement with Sturt's architectural construction of landscape in his maps and journals, a discussion of which leads to Tony Birch's analysis of the politics of name reclamation in contemporary tourism discourses.

Introduction

This thesis takes its title from Tony Birch's essay 'Come See the Giant Koala' which identifies non-Indigenous Australians' anxieties about their imaginative hold on the country as whole towns vanished after the gold rushes of the nineteenth century.¹ National mythologies are constructed in their place through contemporary heritage and tourism practices, deploying discourses that continue to marginalise and dispossess Indigenous Australians in the denial of their histories and native title. Such architectural anxieties have always been the travelling companion of colonial nationalism, as articulated in Frederick Sinnett's lament over a lack of 'archaeological accessories' for the literary imagination: 'no storied windows, richly dight, cast a dim, religious light over any Australian premises.'²

In *White Nation* Ghassan Hage adds another dimension to Sinnett's architectural metaphor when he argues that the nation is imagined as a 'homely space' by the white nationalist, who assumes a position of managerial power in relation to the Other. This is the case for both the overt racist, who would evict the Other from the imagined national space and send them 'home', and the liberal willing to accommodate humanitarian arrivals into the national imaginary as long as they arrive in manageable numbers:

A national practice of exclusion is a practice emanating from agents imagining themselves to occupy a privileged position within national space such as they perceive themselves to be the enactors of the national will within the nation. It is a practice orientated by the nationalists' attempt at building what they imagine to be a homely nation. In this process, the nationalists perceive themselves as spatial managers and that which is standing between them and their imaginary nation is constructed as an undesirable national object to be removed from national space.³

Building on Benedict Anderson's notion of 'imagined communities', Hage highlights the fact that certain groups have more power than others to represent and stage the nation:

Given that they are 'imagined communities' that cannot be experienced empirically in their totality, and whose identity is often contested, nations cannot be understood

¹ Tony Birch, 'Come See the Giant Koala', *Meanjin*, Vol 58, No. 3, 1999, pp. 61–72.

² Frederick Sinnett, 'From *The Fiction Fields of Australia*', in Ken Goodwin and Alan Lawson (eds) *The Macmillan Anthology of Australian Literature*, The Macmillan Company of Australia, South Melbourne, 1990, pp. 415–418, p. 415.

³ Ghassan Hage, *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*, Pluto Press, Annandale, 1998, p.47.

outside the relationship of power that give certain groups the possibility of simultaneously representing, constructing and, most importantly ... staging the nation.⁴

White's *Voss*, Herbert's *Poor Fellow My Country* and Carey's *Oscar and Lucinda* are texts selected for their status as iconographic narratives of nation in Australian literary culture. Home and architecture are integral to the staging of the nation in each of these texts: Mr Bonner's house and garden in *Voss*; the glass church in *Oscar and Lucinda*; the pet emporium in *Illywhacker*; and Jeremy Delacy's Lily Lagoons homestead in *Poor Fellow My Country*. While Bardon is a new voice in Australian letters, his novel opens the way for discussion of the events at Papunya that profoundly reconstructed the staging of the Australian nation in the international visual arts arena. In *Revolution by Night*, the house is a central trope; the hieroglyphs of Papunya Tula artists speak back to the absences in Sturt's architectural construction of landscape through the windows of latitude and longitude bars of his maps and journals. I move from close readings of specific chronotopes of home and nation in the respective texts to engage with broader theoretical concerns of representations of race and culture in imagined national space.

Home and nation are key subjects of postcolonial literatures, which write back to the centre through 'nationalist assertion'.⁵ Ashcroft et al. observe in *The Empire Writes Back* that 'the construction or demolition of houses or buildings in post-colonial locations is a recurring and evocative figure for the problematic of post-colonial identity ...'⁶ Ashcroft and Salter identify a paradox at the heart of Australian nationalism that is symptomatic of the postcolonial condition of settler societies:

Colonial nationalism, which is born of the desire to assert difference from the imperial centre, inevitably calcifies into an authoritative discourse which replaces the one it appears to be rejecting. In Australia, nationalism has always served imperial, or in contemporary terms, 'international' interests.⁷

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 154.

⁵ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*, Routledge, London, 1989, p. 33.

⁶ *ibid.*, p. 28.

⁷ Bill Ashcroft & John Salter, 'Australian Voices: A Bakhtinian Reading of the Australian Nationalist Debate' in Patrick Fuery (ed.) *Representation, Discourse & Desire: Contemporary Australian Culture & Critical Theory*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, pp. 70–86, p. 71.

Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of heteroglossia and dialogism, which posit that nationalism is monologic and oppositional to the natural play of language and culture, Ashcroft and Salter write that:⁸

A centralising discourse like imperialism, by definition, occludes the cultural heteroglossia over which it maintains control. But nationalism in Australia, although it begins as a discourse of resistance, very quickly comes to exhibit a 'centripetal' force by imposing a unity upon the heteroglot. At the level of the ideological sign, the 'authoritative word' resists the perpetual disruption of the little languages of the heteroglossia and restabilises, dialectically, what it perceives to be a challenge to its authority.⁹

I will argue that Carey's fiction accommodates the heteroglossia of voices otherwise marginalised by the monologic conceptualisation of nation identified by Ashcroft and Salter. In contrast, Herbert and White occlude the cultural heteroglossia of nation by framing the Indigenous Other in a modernist discourse of 'the primitive'. Bardon's *Revolution by Night*, while writing back to the imperial construction of the landscape and its Indigenous owners through its representations of Papunya Tula artists, continues to frame Indigenous people in a modernist grammar of representation.

Edward Said's theory of Orientalism, informed by Foucault's theory of discourse, which recognises that power and knowledge are inextricably linked, articulates the process by which Others are known and produced textually by Western institutions. Introducing his theory of Orientalism, Said writes:

I have found it useful here to employ Michel Foucault's notion of a discourse, as described by him in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and in *Discipline and Punish*, to identify Orientalism. My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period ... It also tries to show that European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self.¹⁰

In his introduction to *Power, Knowledge and Aborigines*, Bain Attwood applies Said's Orientalism to the construction of Aboriginality (Aboriginalism) in

⁸ 'The problem with centralising discourses such as nationalism is that they run counter to the natural condition of language which is dialogic rather than monologic' (Ashcroft & Salter, p. 73).

⁹ Ashcroft & Salter, p. 73.

¹⁰ Edward Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, Penguin Books, London, 1991, p. 2.

academic discourse and the formation of Australian cultural identity. Attwood states:

... Europeans have forged a collective identity through a discourse which sets them apart from non-Europeans, especially 'the Aborigines'. In particular, many European Australians have constructed Aborigines as the primordial or primitive other, a paradigm of originality and antiquity. In this representational discourse, Aborigines figure as 'savages' or as 'an ancient people in an ancient land' or as 'a stone age people' ... Aborigines, or Aboriginality, thus represents a place which Europeans have left behind in order to assume 'civilisation' or enter into modernity, whereby Aborigines stand for the past, for our origins or beginnings, the childhood of mankind. As this movement can be regarded in either positive or negative terms, as progressive or regressive, Aborigines are constructed in Aboriginalist discourse in two forms, as noble or ignoble savages, as 'soft' or 'hard' primitives.¹¹

The Other is central to questions of home and nation, so this thesis examines how Australia's national mythologies are informed by racial discourses that marginalise Indigenous people and other minority groups. Formulations of home and nation in the novels of White, Carey, Herbert and Bardon all engage with these images of 'soft' and 'hard' primitives. Considerations of the respective representations of Indigenous people are a central concern of this thesis.

If White, Herbert and Carey are authors who might make the 'cricket team' of an Australian literary canon, then Bardon might struggle to fill the twelfth man.¹² The discussion of *Revolution by Night* raises wider theoretical concerns that privilege questions of political exchange and economy over aesthetics in readings of culture. Postcolonial theory, and critical theory in general, emphasises the political and ideological significance of texts over the aesthetic, edifying values of the Leavisite tradition:

The critical and theoretical lenses have changed. A shift can be observed from a *belles-lettres* tradition in which written works were valued chiefly for their beauty of language, and their emotional effects or uplifting moral sentiments, through New Critical engagement with autonomous linguistic structures, to more recent conventions which value literature mainly for the ideas, images or stories it contributes to a wider set of political conversations or discourses.¹³

¹¹ Bain Attwood 'Introduction' in Bain Attwood & John Arnold's (eds), *Power, Knowledge and Aborigines*, *Journal of Australian Studies* (Special Edition), No 35, 1992, pp. i–xv, pp. iii–iv.

¹² Bruce Bennett writes in 'Literary Culture Since Vietnam: A New Dynamic' that 'an early approach was to select a cricket team of authors to represent the nation. Vincent Buckley's canon of the 'best' Australian writers numbered twelve: Furphy, Richardson, Herbert, Dark, Palmer, White, Brennan, Slessor, Hope, Wright, Neilson and McAuley' (in Bruce Bennett & Jennifer Strauss (eds) *The Oxford Literary History of Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998, pp. 239–265, p. 252).

¹³ Bruce Bennett and Jennifer Strauss, 'Making Literary History: An Introduction', in *The Oxford Literary History of Australia*, pp. 1–5, p. 2.

Exploiting the creative tensions that exist between literature and critical theory, I open a space for dialogue and conversation regarding the cultural and identity politics at stake in the imagining of the Australian nation. The theorists I engage with are not only secondary sources employed to illuminate aesthetic or philosophical insights within the novels, but feature as companion texts, and at times theoretical questions are given priority. This thesis arrives at a broader understanding of Carey's revisiting of Australia's national mythologies and postmodern narrative strategies in *Oscar and Lucinda* and *Illywhacker* through a consideration of selected works by White and Herbert in the light of contemporary theoretical discussions on race, nation and culture.

Chapter One identifies a modernist discourse shaping the representations of Indigenous culture in *Voss*, *Riders in the Chariot* and *A Fringe of Leaves*, which posits the 'primitive imagination' as an evolutionary precursor to a postlapsarian European intellect. Voss takes his leave from the colonial space of Mr Bonner's garden, which houses the science of horticulture and the logos of the word, and travels into the 'prehistory' of the cave, in a return to the 'primitive imagination.' This Nature/culture binary culminates in the destruction of Voss's letters by the Aboriginal elder Dugald. Whereas the words of the coloniser in *Oscar and Lucinda* are appropriated and employed to subvert the ideological colonial paradigm, Voss's letters die a natural death in the outback. White's mysticism renders the desert a Gothic space that mirror's Voss's inner psychology and glosses over the unresolved political and economical issues of contested national space raised in Carey's fiction, issues that continue to dominate public debate in contemporary Australia. In addition, White shares with Herbert a confidence in speaking for the Other in his universal mysticism that posits all religions are One.

Chapter two centres on Carey's treatment of the overland journey, which Ashcroft et al. define in *The Empire Writes Back* as a characteristic genre of postcolonial texts. The title of this thesis evokes most vividly the glass church in *Oscar and Lucinda* travelling down the Bellinger, and Carey shares with Birch a concern for the filtered perspectives of local histories, symbolised by the yellow-tinged glass of old Bellinger Valley farmhouses. Carey revisits the explorer genre in the transportation of the glass church, examining the architectural construction of colonial space through the panoptic technologies of observation and categorisation, disciplines applied also to the construction of Indigenous

Australians under the gaze of the Imperial eye. Drawing on the theorising of Homi Bhabha, I argue that Carey's representation of Australia's contact history is culturally hybrid. While Indigenous stories are invisible to the Imperial eye of both missionary and explorer, the words of the coloniser are appropriated by the colonised, and their authority destabilised. I reveal an intertextual connection between Carey's explorer-hero genre and Paul Carter's *The Road to Botany Bay*, and place this discussion in the context of the former's use of the unreliable narrator and the planting in the text of 'historical errors'.¹⁴ The heteroglossia of Carey's text is contrasted with White's treatment of the explorer genre in *Voss*, as well as his static and essentialist representations of Aboriginality in *A Fringe of Leaves* and *Riders in the Chariot*, discussed in Chapter One. Carey's self-reflexive, postmodern narrative strategy in *Oscar and Lucinda* and *Illywhacker* problematises the telling of history, and the heteroglossia of his texts undermines any grand narrative claims on 'the truth'.

In Chapter Three the Panoptic disciplines of observation and categorisation considered in relation to *Oscar and Lucinda*'s treatment of the explorer hero genre are developed further in a Foucauldian reading of *Illywhacker*'s pet emporium. *Illywhacker* plays with architectural metaphors in the construction of national mythologies, and I argue that the display of Australian types in the pet emporium parodies the exhibition of colonial subjects in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Simon Ryan argues in the *Cartographic Eye* that 'the construction of the explorer as invisible observer is a superb example of the project of Panopticism explicated by Michel Foucault.'¹⁵ Foucault holds that the origins of Bentham's Panopticon are to be found in Le Vaux's menagerie of Versailles, built in the sixteenth century.¹⁶ Hage, in *White Nation*, finds the origins of the display of ethnicities in multicultural festivals in the spatial configuration of the menagerie: 'such a tradition goes beyond the exhibition of human otherness and has its historical roots in zoos and royal menageries'.¹⁷ The caging of Australian types in the pet emporium mimics the calcification of identity in racialised national discourses, including that of multiculturalism.

¹⁴ Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay*, Faber & Faber, London, 1987.

¹⁵ Simon Ryan, *The Cartographic Eye*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1996, p. 133.

¹⁶ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Alan Sheridan (trans.), Vintage Books, New York, 1979, p. 203.

¹⁷ Hage, p. 151.

In Chapter Four I argue that whereas Carey treats his Australian types in the pet emporium ironically, the protagonist of Xavier Herbert's *Poor Fellow My Country*, Jeremy Delacy, is depicted as being an expert on Australian types. Herbert's *Poor Fellow My Country* and Carey's *Illywhacker* are novels in which the central characters both find homes in a menagerie of sorts: Herbert Badgery among the Australian types on display in *Illywhacker's* pet emporium, and Jeremy Delacy among his collection of crippled animals and 'blacks' on his country retreat, Lily Lagoons. Through the trope of the menagerie Carey and Herbert both explore the dehumanisation of the disempowered subject, imprisoned and classified by the disciplines of Foucault's Panopticism. Whereas Carey's narrative is characteristically postmodern and treats its Australian stereotypes ironically, Herbert demonstrates an obsession with the fixities of racial types, his social Darwinist grand narrative perpetuating the very racism it sets out to decry. He constructs Delacy's 'hospital-cum-menagerie' on the foundations of social Darwinist anthropology. Carey questions the relevance of and need for Australia's stock of national icons in the menagerie described as the 'Best Pet Shop in the World'. Herbert represents home and belonging as distinctively racialised concepts, particularly evident in his theory of miscegenation and the Euraustralian. Both novels end in postwar Australia in the shadow of impending Japanese economic imperialism and exploitation, epitomised by the multinational company Mitsubishi. Carey's pet emporium echoes Herbert's final and apocalyptic image of the Territory and its sacred sites as a polluted theme park for tourists, as Australian culture is commodified and its citizens reduced to the simulacra of Carey's 'American Dreams'.¹⁸

I argue further that Carey's *Oscar and Lucinda* and *Illywhacker* and Herbert's *Poor Fellow My Country* can be usefully considered as magic realist novels. Far from being a flight from the real, magic realism is a narrative strategy used to comment on the extent to which perceived reality, particularly historical reality, is itself a construction, an elaborate fiction. In *Imaginary Homelands* Salman Rushdie emphasises the political nature of the magical real:

The damage to reality in South America is at least as much political as cultural. In Márquez's experience, truth has been controlled to the point at which it has ceased to

¹⁸ Peter Carey, 'American Dreams' in *Collected Stories*, Faber & Faber, London, 1995, pp. 171–182.

be impossible to find out what it is. The only truth is that you are being lied to all the time.¹⁹

Remembering and forgetting are profoundly political. Rushdie addresses this political element to the construction of opposing views of reality, particularly when the state is playing off its own interests, arguing that:

Re-describing a world is the necessary first step towards changing it. And particularly at times when the State takes reality into its own hands, and sets about distorting it, altering the past to fit its present needs, then the making of the alternative realities of art, including the novel of memory, becomes politicized.²⁰

Illywhacker and *Oscar and Lucinda* are novels that engage politically with the construction of Australian history, re-describing the world in polyphonic narratives that celebrate the diversity of languages that constitute the nation. Magic realism in *Poor Fellow My Country* allows for a degree of heteroglossia in the imagining of the Australian nation, which, despite Herbert's social Darwinism, makes at times for a dialogic text in which Indigenous voices challenge the authoritative discourse of government bureaucrats and well-meaning social reformists.

In Chapter Five I argue that Bardon's fictional treatment of the Papunya Tula painting movement in *Revolution by Night* idealises Indigenous culture, which is seen to fulfil a lack in the national imagery not unlike that identified by Sinnett, and echoed in the works of White and Herbert. Whereas the latter authors deal in images of the 'hard primitive', with scenes of cannibalism, brute superstition and ape-like characteristics that signify the social Darwinist theory of 'The Great Chain of Being', Bardon posits that the direction of Indigenous artists 'superintends and subsumes the visual tradition of western civilisation as defined by its priorities in the twentieth century'.²¹ The hieroglyphs of the Indigenous artists are described at times in the novel as 'trophies of the Gods' and in the modernist and romantic terms of 'the fourth dimension'.²² With recourse to the theorising of Muecke, Michaels, Bakhtin and Bhabha, I explore alternative ways of reading culture by arguing that all representation in texts travels through 'the

¹⁹ Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981–1991*, Granta, London, 1991, p. 301.

²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 14.

²¹ Bardon, James, *Revolution by Night or Katjala Wananu (The Son After the Father)*, Local Consumption Publications, Sydney, 1991, p. 234.

²² *ibid.*, p. 229.

gates of the chronotope'.²³ Bardon's text is a springboard to analyse both the events at Papunya, and the location of postcolonial questions of mapping and naming in the cultural future. While acknowledging the text's unique qualities and the power of its poetic prose, my critique of Bardon demonstrates that modernist discourses of 'the primitive' continue to shape contemporary cultural debates.

Deleuze and Guattari argue that we speak and write from a middle.²⁴ My thesis is a product of the historical and theoretical discourses at work in my particular institution, Flinders University, and the society at large. The goal of this journey is to shake the colonial edifice of my own language and culture, in order to reconceptualise and deepen my understanding of home and place, and contribute to the decolonisation of knowledge and nation. And while these theoretical issues have been grounded in the texts at hand, they travel well to other texts and other sites of cultural production. Rather than attempt to speak

²³ Mikhail M. Bakhtin, 'Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes toward a Historical Poetics' in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*, Michael Holquist (ed.), Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (trans), University of Texas Press, Austin, 1981, pp. 84–258, p. 258.

²⁴ 'A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo ... Where are you going? Where are you coming from? What are you heading for? These are totally useless questions. Making a clean slate, starting or beginning again from ground zero, seeking a beginning or a foundation—all imply a false conception of voyage and movement ... But Kleist, Lenz and Büchner have another way of traveling and moving: proceeding from the middle, through the middle, coming and going rather than starting and finishing ... the middle is by no means an average; on the contrary, it is where things pick up speed. Between things does not designate a localizable relation going from one thing to another and back again, but a perpendicular direction, a transversal movement that sweeps one and the other way, a stream without beginning or end that undermines its banks and picks up speed in the middle' (Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Brian Massumi (trans.), University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1987, p. 25.)

for the Other, as a non-Indigenous Australian writing from a position of privilege, I have sought to examine constructions of Aboriginality in texts by non-Indigenous authors. Each of the texts under study engages with founding mythologies of place, and in turn, contributes to the travelling colonial architecture of home and nation.