

AUSTRALIAN LITERATURE

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Australia = the Brown Continent

= Down Under (=in the Antipodes)

geographical schizophrenic because of the remoteness

2 territories:

- A.C.T. = Australian Capital Territory (Canberra)
- Northern Territory (Darwin) - Aboriginal reservations

Federal States:

- New South Wales (Sydney)
 - Victoria (Melbourne)
 - Queensland (Brisbane)
 - Western Australia (Perth)
 - South Australia (Adelaide)
 - Tasmania (Hobart)
-
- Irish presence
 - Anglo-Celtic population
 - Aboriginal population
 - Asian population (migrants)

Australasia

bush = everything but the city eucalyptus → desert

Problems:

- Aborigines (only recently, they were recognised as human beings - they can vote)
- land rights (sacred sites); Australia was settled in 1788 - penal colony (from England). In 1988, Aborigines started a revival. They took tribal names in order to show that Australia had existed before the year 1788.

- migrant presence: Until the 1970s, Australia insisted on creating one nation (a British nation). They adopted the idea of multiculturalism. Asian influx - threatens the existence of multiculturalism.
- Republican issue: Australia is an independent country (since 1901). The British queen is still the leader of the country.

Government General - the Queen's representative

"cultural cringe" (kulturno klečepazenje) - certain pro-British authors still rely on a British literal tradition

Explorers/Discovering Australia

terra australis incognita

- Sir Francis Drake: 16th century; he was from Britain; he never got there (he went North instead of South)
- Some of the Dutch tradesmen reached the North shores of Australia.
- Captain Abel Tasman: He wanted to chart the land. He discovered Tasmania instead of Australia.
- various pirates: West Australia (17th century)
- Official discoverer is Captain James Cook (Pacific Isles - The Cook Island, New Zealand, East shores of Australia). In 1780, he took possession of the land and then made some more journeys there.
- In 1788, the prisoners arrived at the Sydney goal (Botany Bay). They were not guilty of any major offences (thieves) and many were political prisoners (from Ireland). The objective of Britain was to establish an industrial colony. Convicts had to work for a particular office in a Government and were soon released (but they weren't allowed to leave Australia).
- In the 19th century, first economic settlers came. The convicts soon represented cheap labour to work for the Government and the officers (the officers called themselves "pure merinos"). The officers soon became

land-owners and the convicts had to work for them. The dispute between the officers and the convicts became so strong that in the early 19th century, a number of rebellions took place (because of the hard living conditions, they were paid very badly - slaves).

- From 1788 to 1850s, a number of convicts tried to escape and were hunted down by the soldiers (in a cruel way). This behaviour to the convicts was the source for Australian literature (pre-colonial period (1850s - 1900) = the Victorian Period in Britain).
- From the very beginning, the British tried to establish a balance between men and women (to create a colony - a source of income for Britain). In the 1850s, when gold was discovered in Victoria, economic settlers (men and women) started to come and established colonies (they built cities).
- Political refugees found their refuge in Australia (they were well educated, explorers).

Australian expressions:

"The Drover's Wife" by Henry Lawson

- drover drives cattle
- station = selection = farm
- bush = outside the city
- to squat - čepeti
- squatters = people move on the land without a permission and claim it to be their own land
- a claim = a piece of land which is claimed by a particular person as their own, where he/she can search for precious stones - opals
- gem-fossicking = the activity of looking for gems (semi-precious stones)
- a hotel = a pub (in a bush) - a centre of social activities
- mate = chap, man (a man in the bush who helped his other mates)
- mateship = male-friendship
- American Australian

/eI/ → /aI/

/I/ here

Fauna and flora:

- kangaroo
- emu
- koala
- eucalypt

Aborigines:

Aboriginal literature dates back to the oral phase. It consisted of chants (spevi). These chants are a multimedia events. They are poetic in expression (figurative language), rhythmical in structure and are complemented by ritual dancing, visual arts (painted bodies) and musical performances. These chants were performed in aboriginal languages (every tribe had its own language). Many languages died out (because it was only oral). The chants described dream time to which only old men had access. Dreaming contained all the myths and sacred symbols.

bora ring - within this ring they performed chants.

corroboree - an instrument

Aborigines have lived in Australian continent for 20.000 years. They probably came to the continent from Asia during the last ice age by canoes and crafts. There are about 500 tribes and 250 languages. There were approximately 400.000 Aborigines. During the settling and colonisation (fights), their numbers dropped to 30-50.000. They are a native race. Each of the tribes has its own tribal territory, the centre of which is **a watering place**. The Australian name for this natural pool is billabong.

The Aborigines are **totemites**. As a totem, they usually used an animal or a plant, which they did not kill or eat because they pronounced it a taboo. They believed that the spirit of their ancestors lived in the land and that they were born again - **reincarnation**. The totem gives them support, strength, help and unity. They believe that all the information about life can be obtained through the totem.

They considered dreaming (eternal) more real than the reality (only temporal).

Each tribe has its own **sacred site**. They are important nowadays because they want their sites back.

reservations (Northern Territory - Darwin): White men cannot go there.

Tasmania: There are no more Aborigines there.

Lost Generation (50s and 60s): They took Aboriginal children and gave them to the civilised people to raise them.

In 1970s, the first signs of more pluralistic treatment began to show. The first Aboriginal writers emerged.

Kath Walker: Aboriginal writer → Oodgeroo (He is known by this name.)

Oodgeroo = paperbark (lubje) paperbark tree = eucalypt tree

In 1988, there was the 200th anniversary of the white settlement.

Kath Walker: We Are Going (p. 9):

we are going = we are all on the verge of extinction

The narrator identifies himself with nature and past.

Life studies are nowadays a sub-genre which represent autobiographical facts (a native person is trying to come to terms with life).

Sally Morgu: My Life

The colonial period:

Explorers of the land: They are used in literature.

- Simon Fraser (North)

- Ludwig Leichhardt: He was made into a fictional character by Patrick White: *Voss*. In 1848 he came from Germany to Australia and tried to conquer Australia from East to West. He got sponsors and got relatively far. The whole expedition perished one by one.

In 19th century, there were struggles between the British officers and the convicts. The officers took a lot of land (today - large farms). There were many rebels. Soldiers called themselves "pure merinos". The convicts were cheap labour. The last ship of convicts sent from England came to Australia in 1849. This ship first came to Melbourne. The city life and people were so cultured that the convicts were not accepted. The ship had to move on to Queensland. There, they were accepted.

The 1850s present the turning point (gold rush). Many economic settlers had to become farmers. Towards the end of the 19th century, a Bill was passed by a Government which stipulated that each person is entitled to get a certain piece of land on lease. The big cities were relatively well developed and industry started to emerge - they had their own unions.

The 1890s is considered as nationalistic decade.

Imagology (the study of images):

- heterostereotypes (how others see us)
- autostereotypes (how we perceive ourselves)

Slovene locale (Slovene setting)

Andrew Taylor: *Morning in Ljubljana* (a poem)

He was in Ljubljana in late 1980s.

Susan Hampton: *Yugoslav Story* (a poem)

Both authors are of Anglo-Celtic origin.

Richard Flanagan: *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* (a novel, 1998)

The Death of the River Guide (1995)

The colonial period (continuation):

The farmers (prospectors) had sheep and were relatively poor.

The Labour Party came into existence.

1950s, 60s - the beginning of novel and short story

1890s - the nationalist decade (content)

The Declaration of Independence:

1st January 1901: Queen Victoria died (the end of the Victorian period).

the Commonwealth of Australia

There has always been a rivalry between the two richest cities in Australia - Sydney (radical, anti-British) and Melbourne (conservative). They decided to make a new capital city - Canberra.

WW1:

It was important for the strengthening cultural and liberal identity. Australians participated alongside the British. There was a famous battle at Gallipoli (it is situated in Turkey). Australians and New Zealanders were in majority. They were used as cannon fodder - more than 16 000 soldiers died.

25th April 1915 - the day of defeat (a national holiday in Australia) = the ANZAC Day (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) - it has almost become a myth (about the anti-British attitude)

Australian identity was strengthened and they turned towards the British.

WW2:

There was a Japanese threat. They wanted to expand. They occupied Singapore (a prison camp - no crematoriums). The Japanese controlled the bays of Australia. They bombed Darwin but never set foot on the Australian ground.

Papua New Guinea - the Australian colony

American influence became important and replaced the British influence.

1970 - the Vietnam war: Australians participated in Vietnam. Many of them were killed. The public opinion grew against the participation. Writers were very active (they organised speeches).

1971: Australians departed from American influence.

There is a stress on international literature. They no longer rely on Australian issues. They want to appeal to readers world-wide.

2000 - referendum against the Australian republic

Governor General can be considered a "President" without much say.

The Republican issue is still open.

Literature proper:

p. 51 (book): Douglas Stewart: a 'voyage' poem (it celebrates the great explorers of the 18th and 19th centuries).

mythopoesis. early period of the post-colonial period (early 20th century)

In the early post-colonial literatures, myths were deliberately created by means of literature.

vacuum - places without myths and ghosts

Features:

- nostalgia
- bitter humour and irony (they cracked ironic jokes at their own expense)
- the mood of a mock repentance (it is linked with the hatred for the social System)
- an admiration of those who successfully opposed this System (convicts who managed to escape from the prison camps); The feeling of rebellion against the authorities and the System is a great part of Australian mentality.

Unlike in the U.S., where the founding myth was made on the utopian ideas about the new world as seen by the so-called pilgrim fathers, in Australia, the myth was built on guilt and convict traumas. In this early convict writings, there is a prevailing sense of loss (freedom, homeland) and alienation (from Europe - Ireland, England).

The convicts who started writing ballads, short stories and novels were anonymous (folk ballads - the main heroes are those convicts who escaped).

- Jack Donahue
- Ned Kelly
- Ben Hall

They became highwaymen (robbers).

At the beginning, it was difficult to get things published (middle of the 19th century). This is connected to the affluence which resulted from the gold rush. In the middle of the 19th century, the first theatres were established (in the 18th century - country tents → shanties - public houses - a place where meetings could take place, performances were given).

Economic power brought many professional writers from Europe (migrants). The first universities Melbourne and Sydney were established in 1850s. In Australia too, the novels were first published in instalments. They were successful and were then published as books.

convict ballads = colonial ballads

They still look at Australia from the exotic point of view. They can be described as romances (fictional elements), which appealed to the readers also in Europe. They can be read as adventurous stories.

The first colonial novel written in Australia was first published in instalments:
Marcus Clarke: He was born in England. He tends to see Australia from the English point of view. His uncle was a judge (he was high on a social ladder), so he (Marcus) was able to work as a journalist.

For the Term of His Natural Life: It is about a convict who is sentenced for life. It is full of violent descriptions of hardships of the convicts and it contributed to reforms. In 1884, it was published as a book.

Alexander Harvis: *Settlers and Convicts* (a collection of short stories)

Henry Kingsley

Rolf Boldrewood: He was very prolific. He concentrates more on the settlers than the convicts.

- *Ups and Downs* (about the ups and downs in the lives of settlers)

- *The Squatter's Dream*
- *Robbery Under Arms*: He describes the British soldiers who committed 'robbery'. They managed to get the best - huge pieces of land, where they used the early settlers as cheap labour.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the new mood started to appear - nationalism. Authors felt Australians (1890s) - nationalistic decade.

The major representative of this period was Henry Lawson. He wrote poems, short stories and novels. His parents were of Scandinavian and Norwegian origin.

Other authors of this decade:

- Miles Franklin
- 'Banjo' Paterson
- Steele Rudd
- Joseph Furphy (he wrote only one novel: *Such is Life*)

They all published in a famous magazine The Sydney Bulletin. They published bush stories and bush ballads. They concentrated on the concept of 'mateship' - it includes loyalty, friendship, solidarity. These writers expressed the need for independence of Australia (Lawson's poem: *The Song of the Republic*). The Bulletin School of writers helped to raise the national self-consciousness of Australians to a great degree. Since they wrote about the bush, the protagonists were usually women.

The Drover's Wife (by Lawson)

They provided the founding myth of Australian culture.

Another element was social equality. It criticised the typical British stratification of society.

- egalitarianism: It can still be perceived in Australia. It leaves little space for personal growth and for being different from the group.
- 'to cut down the tall poppy'

They no longer wanted to imitate British literary tradition and the British Romance, because they wanted to assert the new emerging national identity.

The founding myth was based on heroic ethic of mateship. The new hero is an independent character who defies the authorities and is, usually, a representative of the lower classes. There is a socialist bias (= attitude). Nowadays, these founding myths are redefined. Despite the deconstruction of these myths, they emerge anew. They're not destroyed, but re-evaluated.

Important writers:

- Miles Franklin
- Barbara Baynton

In their works, there appear squatters, drovers, jackaroos, swagmen, bush rangers ('noble outlaws').

Bush ballad was a very popular genre, developed by 'Banjo' Paterson. They were written by known people (not folk ballads!). Many of these ballads have been put to music.

Items: a tough, physically strong, laconic, inarticulate, self-reliant, independent, imaginative person

Sydney Bulletin is still published today in Australia. In the 20th century (before WW1), many leftists published in this magazine

Early in the 20th century, quite a few authors felt uneasy in Australia to such an extent that they decided to leave the country to Europe to become ex-patriots. They felt that all the important literary movements took place in Europe.

- Jack Lindsay
- Martin Boyd

The literature of ex-patriots is still present in Australia (Peter Porter, Peter Carey).

Very soon, some of these writers felt that it is in their interest to go back home where their real source of inspirations is.

- Vance Palmer

After WW1, social realism in literature becomes more prominent. The life of cities is described more frequently than the life in the bush (new themes). In this period, a major woman author emerged - pseudonym Henry Handel Richardson (she wanted to be published). She is famous for her trilogy *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* (he is based on her father; he is a split personality - split between Britain and Australia).

In the period between the two wars, there were **two nativist movements**:

- The Angry Penguins Movement: They insisted on writing exclusively Australian poetry, drawing on the heritage and myths of the Aborigines.
 - Mary Gilmore
 - Henry Kendall
 - Judith Wright
- The Jindyworobak Movement (to join, unite, link): They wanted to link the natives' and the white settlers' traditions.

The writers were referred to as yarn spinners. They were good narrators (Henry Lawson). The narrator would be seated by the fire and other people would be sitting around him and he would narrate a story.

1st half of the 20th century: Australian national myth is pushed to the background.

After WW2, we can speak about international literature.

Short stories:

They were very well suited to the Australian character, because the main features are:

- a sudden turning point
- They are concentrated on the singular event.
- They include irony, humour.

- They are characterised by a single mood.
- Some of them are emotional, pathetic, only gradually, they became more poetic.
- They are short (500 words; in reality they range from 500 to 3000 words).

Length determines the genre (short story, sketch, novel).

Edgar Allan Poe observed unity of impression and unity of mood. His belief was that a short story would have a strong effect on the reader in very short span of time.

Pavel Chechov: His stories were romantic and poetic (they concentrate on the mood of the character).

The short story always depicts eccentric, isolated individuals, thus, they do not reflect the true reality. The reader cannot identify with them. This limits the value of this genre.

Every short story is based on epiphany (the moment of recognition, of becoming aware of the certain truth). The epiphany lends the short story genre emotional power, content.

Australian short story:

They include dark humour and extremely laconic way of expression. There is an elliptical way of expression used. Each part (sentence, word) of the short story contributes to the final, single effect. Practically, there are no digressions. They are narrated in a very straightforward manner. They represent a very clear vision of life. They are usually socially committed. They express humanistic ideas.

There was a singular character in many parts. These parts were put together and published as novels.

The early authors were:

- Marcus Clarke
- Price Warung

They represent a convict short story.

Marcus Clarke:

He became popular with a collection of short stories *Old Tales of a Young Country*. He deals with the pioneers. It was published in 1870. The period described goes back to the early 19th century. Clarke collected oral testimonies and based his stories on the early convict fears. He described as it was described to him the cruelty of the convict system injustices of the law and celebrates those convicts who managed to run away and to rebel against the system. These convicts are really heroes who fight for their own individual freedom in the service of democracy. They are courageous people who persevere in their views. He does not comment upon the situation! He just objectively presents the situation. This representation is more powerful than his comments.

Price Warung:

He contributed to the Sydney Bulletin. In his stories, he is at times melodramatic (in describing the cruelties of the convicts), ironic and grotesque. He puts all the blame for the injustices and hardships of the convicts on the system - society. Frequently, he uses allegorical names and these names appear rather as types because they embody a certain characteristic.

The Drover's Wife

- Henry Lawson
- Murray Bail
- Barbara Jefferis

Henry Lawson: *The Drover's Wife*

Lawson is identified by critics as nationalistic, patriotic Bulletin writer, who stood for the democratic egalitarian principles of bush epic. In this story, he is rather sentimental and uses mythopoesis.

The drover's wife is left in the bush, her husband has gone away. We get an insight into her physical existence and wishes, desires. The woman is described as very powerful, strong, independent. Only as such, she is able to survive in the bush. She is not given to self-pity, fear, retrospection, because she must survive.

It is a typical short story. The description is almost elliptical (words, verbs are omitted).

The dialogues are vivid, some words are left out because of the censorship (mainly swear words).

- flashbacks: He was a drover.
- background: her life with the drover, what she used to be
- irony: - She reads magazines about fashion, but this can't help her much while she lives in the bush.

- her children

- nationalistic sentences: "Her husband is an Australian, and so is she."

He stresses the fact that she is used to be alone.

- symbol: She put on her husband's trousers to beat the flames - she had to do man's work.
- flashbacks of her brave acts - fire
- She fought preuro-pneumonia - thunderstorms.
- She fought a mad bullock - snakes.
- She fights crows and eagles - floods.
- It is very economical.

Murray Bail: *The Drover's Wife*

This myth of a strong, independent bush-woman is ridiculed and is reversed.

He (Murray) assumes the role of the drover's wife.

A painting is an extra-literary device.

The narrator is the drover's wife's husband (= the drover). She went droving and left him. Everything he says is a speculation. The narrator is a dentist. He doesn't want her to be happy.

Barbara Jefferis: *The Drover's Wife*

It deconstructs, makes fun of the myth of the drover's wife. She claims that Lawson as a male author was not able to capture the sensitivity of a woman, living in the bush. She makes the drover's wife speak.

Some of the most important facts of the bush women were omitted in the two previous versions, because they were written by men.

Steele Rudd

He depicted lower social classes in Australia in a bush as well as in the city. He invented an imaginary family the Rudds. This family live on a selection (piece of land). The most famous collection of his short stories is *On Our Selection*. It was the very first Australian best-seller.

His real name was Arthur Davies. He also published his own literary magazine - *The Steele Rudd Magazine*.

Henry Lawson took over.

He wrote about the bush ethic.

- *On the Track*
- *Joe Wilson and His Mates*
- *Children of the Bush*
- *Mateship*

He stood for a social egalitarian approach and a democratic system.

Katherine Susanna Prichard

She was the first major woman author after Miles Franklin and Barbara Baynton.

She brought into literature social realism. Her style is very journalistic since she worked and was trained as a journalist. She brought the Aborigines into Australian literature. She looks at them very sympathetically. One of her famous novels is about an Aboriginal woman - *Coonardoo*. The woman is described as a double outsider - a woman and an Aborigine. She is abused by the white owner of the farm where she lives.

She wrote about people who desire to possess people and material goods. Such desire can only end tragically. In her novels and short stories, the protagonists are usually in conflict between their own aspirations and the environment. The society usually crushes the individual.

- *Happiness*: She relativizes the concept of happiness. Is happiness presented by the fulfilment of individuals or the society?

Her novels:

- *Working Bullocks*: Bullocks are strong animals and are symbolically compared to the early pioneers.

Short story writers (50s, 60s):

- **Gavin Casey**: He emerged as a writer out of a period of social commitment. He concentrates on the industrial workers, miners and dock labourers. He also wrote novels.
- **John Morrison**: He presents social themes. In his works, he makes a type of an Australian worker who is a simple, uneducated, common man, sometimes a bit rude, but still honest, sincere and one that does not give in easily.
- **Hal Porter**: He emerged as a writer after WW2. He was an experimental and symbolist writer. His protagonists are often misfits, outsiders who cannot adjust to the norms of society because they are so different. They are eccentrics. He wanted to create a different kind of Australian fiction that would move away from the traditional nationalist concerns and from social realism into a more international fiction that would not be so

specifically linked to the locale. He admired greatly the European tradition and imitated some European writers (French, German).

- **Vance Palmer:** He is a symbolist and a critic. He is a very influential author who uses poetic language (metaphors). However, his novels and short stories are still readable because there is always enough tension and plot. The main theme is a man's dualism, people who are split between their spiritual life and the physical reality surrounding them.
 - *Cyclone*
 - *Swayne Family*
 - *Daybreak*
- **Desmond O'Grady:** His themes:
 - religion. He voices the clash between Anglican and Roman Catholic tradition.
 - migrants
 - ex-patriots
 - *A Long Way From Home*
 - *Valid For All Countries*

Michael Wilding:

Along with Peter Carey, Murray Bail (*Eucalyptus*) and Frank Moorhouse, he started writing in the 70s.

Peter Carey:

He got a Booker Prize in 1988 for his novel *Oscar and Lucinda*.

He also wrote a novel *Jack Maggs*: It is set in Victorian England as seen through the eyes of a certain Jack Maggs. It is a post-colonial version of Dickens' *Oliver Twist*.

Wilding, Carey, Bail and Moorhouse all published their short stories in a collection called *The Most Beautiful Lies*. The collection was written down by Mark Twain. Their stories have many things in common and are deliberately fictitious. They disregard the mimetic representation of reality - non-mimetic.

Their writing was labelled by the critics (especially Brian Kierman) as new fiction, new writing because:

- it was different from realistic and socially committed writings of the previous periods.
- their stories focused much more on the form, style itself than the content.
- they relied so much on the form and the process of writing which became an end in itself.

They experimented with the style and language to such an extent that some of the stories are difficult to understand. Some critics maintain that such non-mimetic writing showed the dead end in which the post-modernism found itself.

1968 - hippies, drugs - 'drug power' (flower-power)

1971 - the withdrawal from Vietnam

The themes:

It was no longer about the bush, but the city - the urban experience. It was no longer the landscape but cityscape. They referred to the people who lived in Australian cities and to the 'inner urban tribe'.

At that time, little magazines appeared, in which many young writers wanted to be published. Some critics refer to these authors as the underground authors. There were many public readings with short-story writers and poets.

The authors created a new sensibility, they were less concerned with the issues of national identity and tried to write the so-called 'international literature'. It should appeal to readers everywhere, not exclusively to Australian readers. There is an attempt to go beyond the Australian borders and to become known internationally. For the first time, they regarded Australia as no better nor worse place to write than elsewhere. There was no need for an exile.

Poetry

The development of poetry - 'new poetry' emerged with the foremost representative Michael Dransfield. This poetry was breaking patterns from the traditional versification in terms of form and content. The form became very experimental, free, relaxed and typographic. For the content, Dransfield took drugs - drug poetry.

Theatre, drama

There is a new wave in drama - new-wave theatre.

The representatives: David Williamson, Alex Buzo, Jack Hibberd, Louis Nowra.

The centre of this activity was in Sydney (especially the inner city suburbs - Balmain). Sometimes, they are called 'the Sydney Push from the Bush'.

This period established new possibilities for young writers. They no longer felt separated from Britain and America.

Novel

Marcus Clark: *For the Term of His Natural Life*

He describes the inhumanity of the convict system. This is a convict novel.

Alexander Harris: *Settlers and Convicts*

It is a very realistic account of the life in the colonies, based on his own experience. He is rather didactic and likes to create a **romance** (in order to sell his books in Europe) out of the lives of the individual settlers.

Henry Kingsley: He describes a life on a station (= farm).

Patrick White:

He was born into a well-to-do Australian family who owned a big station. He was privileged. His parents were pro-British oriented. They didn't feel very Australian. White rebelled to this kind of attitude and in his works emphasised his Australian identity. His early novels were published in England.

- *Happy Valley* (1939)

- *The Tree of Man*

- *Voss*:

It is based on an actual German explorer called Ludwig Leichhardt who in reality tried to cross the Australian continent through the desert. He established an expedition and got sponsors. His expedition was a failure. They all died in the desert. White took this model to show this physical journey as a journey into the unknown and Voss' own psyche.

Voss is highly egotistical. He comes from Germany. He only admires will-power. In Australia, he is in a double isolation (an explorer and a migrant). He fascinates people with ideas. He falls in love with Laura. They enter a strong relationship on the spiritual level. They do not have any physical contacts (when he departs, they exchange letters). They are both rebels. She is not so much oriented towards money. The people in the expedition are representatives of various strata of the society (social status, professions). White wants to make the expedition representative of the whole society. There is a strong parallel between Voss and captain Ahab in *Moby Dick* (Ahab is also obsessed). They both want to discover the unknown, the final truth about nature and landscape. In this quest, they are both defeated.

Voss gradually learns things about his own self and society and changes. He realises that he is not a super man. He can be defeated by nature. In the end, through the process of physical and spiritual suffering, he becomes a more humble man (he learns to live with the limitations). Laura also changes. She becomes less rebellious and undergoes the same sort of self-acceptance.

Some critics say that Voss is defeated. One member of the expedition, Judd, is more practical and decides to go back. He finds himself in Sydney. He is also the narrator, since he is a sole survivor. Voss dies - he is decapitated by Aborigines. He became one with the landscape. His self-inflated ego was defeated. He accepted the new land and the land accepted him. Voss and

Laura accept what is here and now and also the cosmic order (mortality and fragility of human beings).

Aborigines represent the landscape (they are one with the land). They are superior to the whites because they acknowledge and accept the land as such and they don't regard it as a possibility of economic exploitation. You have to try to understand the landscape otherwise you are defeated.

- *Riders in a Chariot*
- *The Solid Mandala*
- *The Eye of the Storm*
- *A Fringe of Leaves*
- *The Vivisection*

Much of his works has certain features in common.

The technique is complex and difficult (stream of consciousness). His style of writing is very poetic and metaphoric (symbols). The physical landscape and events that are described always symbolically represent some higher universal truths or reality. They are always to be taken as a point of comparison.

Themes:

Usually, the novel is about an individual, alienated from the rest of the society. These individuals are very egotistical people who rely essentially on the power of their will. They are preoccupied with themselves. Such egotistical figures all go on a physical journey (travel, exploration of the new land). This journey symbolically represents a spiritual journey which can be called a spiritual quest.

Characters:

They proceed from the initial innocence and inexperience to the final acquisition of wisdom and experience (a Blakean concept). They learn about themselves and society and they become 'wiser' and 'experienced'. They

accept their role and position in society and come to terms with themselves and society. They reach some sort of humility. Their ego is no more in the centre of attention. This knowledge comes about in an epiphany. These individuals are explorers, artists, people who are different from the average society.

The objective reality becomes symbolic of the psychological reality. The physical landscape becomes the landscape of the mind.

The plots are usually not very important, since his novels are more psychological. The plots are used mainly to illustrate the growing up of the characters. The main protagonists sometimes seem exaggerated, larger than life.

ambivalence - White is quite severely critical of the Australian culture. This does not mean that he doesn't like Australia.

White also wrote short stories and dramas.

Joan Lindsay: *Picnic at Hanging Rock*

The landscape is only present in the Australian psyche. It is about four teenage girls who attend the girl school. The story takes place in 1901. There is a parallel established between the growing up of the country and the growing up of these girls. The Victorian ties are being loosened. The Victorian repressed sexuality of the girls is disappearing. One day, the girls disappear while they are on a picnic in the bush. They suspected that they became adult and merged with the landscape. Two girls are later found. There are also two boys. One is an upper class boy. He feels more British than Australian. The other boy is Australian farmer's son who is employed by a rich family. He speaks in an Australian idiom.

Fiction writers (novelists)

- Christina Stead: *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*
- Peter Carey: *Jack Maggs*
- Thomas Kenneally: *Schindler's List*
- Christopher Koch: *The Year of Living Danger*

Poets

A. D. Hope:

- *Australia* (p. 1):

There is a definition of new land. Australia is a nation of trees. He sees Australia as a desert, but also prophets may raise. He defines the tribes as having immense stupidity. He is critical of Australia and its people.

It is about Hope's attitude to Australia. Australia has no past, no monuments. To him, it is a desert from the intellectual point of view. Australians are 'second-hand' Europeans - migrants. He's negative about the current state of the cultural level of Australia. In the end of the poem, we learn that he had been living as an ex-patriot in Europe and then decided to go back to Australia (the speaker of the poem). It is his land which he likes despite its hostility towards the culture. The poem concludes with a biblical allusion about a prophet who emerges not in some lush, green country. The prophets appear in deserts and from there they lead their people towards a better life. The speaker sees himself as such a prophet.

Hope is a classicist and pro-European. Wright is a nativist and ecologist. She is more in favour of creating new Australian poetry. They both have a literary love for Australia.

Hope influenced the whole literary scene after WW2. He was pro-European. He claimed that Australians are descendants of the Europeans and that their culture and literature have its origin in the ancient Greece and Rome.

- *A Letter From Rome* (1960s):

It is a long epic poem. It describes Hope's visit to Europe because he went on some kind of a cultural pilgrimage. He wants to go to ancient Greece and Rome. When he comes to Rome, he sees the monuments. He is somewhat disappointed with Europe.

- *Latter-day Rome*:

Rome is polluted, full of traffic, nothing idealised as he has imagined. He uses a lot of humour. He describes a story between an American woman student who comes to Rome to do Europe. In this story, we learn that she is very keen to get to know the ancient Rome and Italian culture. In doing it, she is met by a younger Italian whose main objective is to get to bed with her. He contrasted the story of the young American student and his own.

There are certain parallels with Byron. He would like to see himself as antipotean Byron.

- *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*

Judith Wright:

She, in contrast with Hope, has a great sympathy for the Australian race. She is considered a nativist.

- *The Cycado*:

It is an endemic plant - a tree that grows only in Australia. It is considered by biologists a living fossil.

She produced some very unique poems that have nothing to do with Australia but with relationships.

- *Woman to Man*

- *Woman to Child*

- *South of My Days*:

She says that she is south of Europe. She is aware that her ancestors came from England.

- *Bullocky*:

It is an Australian animal. She describes a bullock-driver who works very hard. He works so much that he becomes mad. She draws a parallel between the old Mosses from the Bible and this Australian bullock-driver who is a pioneer (he settled the land and made it what it is today).

Douglas Stewart:

He was a poet and a playwright. He was fond of voyager poems (mythopoeic).

Colonial writers:

Henry Lawson (ballads)

Banjo Paterson (ballads)

- *Australasia*:

It is a colonial poem (pre-Romantic).

Henry Kendall

James McAuley

- *Terra Australis*:

It is a mythopoeic poem. He says that terra Australis is south of everything (Europe), that the land (flora and fauna) are much more different. There is a poetic vision of terra Australis. He describes Australia as a metaphor, standing for all the possible 'projections' (fears and aspirations) of the western civilisation.

Michael Dransfield:

He has been compared to Coleridge because he was very experimental with the form and content. He is very international.