

*In the Realm of the Imagined: Representation and Identity in  
Australasian Illustrated Junior Fiction 1890-1920*

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*In the Realm of the Imagined: Representation and Identity in Australasian  
Illustrated Junior Fiction 1890-1920*

*Abstract*

This thesis inquires into how Australasian illustrated junior fiction from 1890 – 1920 employed the realm of the imagined to negotiate the representation of identity. It examines the mediation of colonialism and emergent nationalisms within the field of study, visual culture. It focuses on the collision of cultures, the transformation of the unfamiliar into the familiar and evaluates the roles of stereotype and gender. The inquiry has been prompted by a number of factors, all of which remain ongoing and salient features in shaping cultural endeavour in New Zealand and Australia. These relate to post-colonial issues of otherness as well as the legacy of socio-political events and mythologies contemporary to the period. Along with ‘dying race’ and masculine mythologies these constitute Federation, suffrage, exclusionist policy and war. Critical commentary has cogently debated their thematic articulation in Australasian junior fiction as a foundational vehicle for national identity. With a few exceptions it has failed to address this genre from the juncture of image and text, print and production and cultural endeavour. Junior fiction is not only the product of literary endeavour, it is the creation of illustration and design praxis. By examining this interface, the thesis addresses the unrealised needs of students and scholars of visual communication design, illustration and visual culture for whom socio-cultural issues: indigeneity, gender and ethnicity are paramount.

The research is based on a comparative analysis of New Zealand and Australian illustrated junior fiction. The methodologies of formal and semiotic analyses traditionally employed in the analysis of visual artefacts were applied to unpacking the primary visual material. The illustrations sourced from Australasian children’s literature were analysed alongside selected material from cultural vernacular. Two informal interviews were conducted with descendents of New Zealand image-makers. To supplement visual methodologies, graphical discourse was designed as a synthesizing procedure

and implemented in the discussion of cultural endeavour and image and text.

The results suggest that in addition to the formative events impacting the colonies, postcolonial issues of 'otherness' are key factors in differentiating the colonies from their point of origin and one from the other. Analysis of the findings reveals assimilation, acculturation and socio-cultural identities to be central to the representation of identity. In addition findings reveal socio-cultural practices and relationships to be critical in informing how image and text were composed and integrated. The critical conceptualization of visual culture as a field of study, views it to be a place for the critique of the 'master narratives of imperialism and nationalism' (Bal 2003, 22). The research findings have important implications for the historical account of cultural endeavour and disciplinary praxis. The first of these conclusions is that junior fiction contributes significantly to the ongoing construction of nationalist mythologies. The second is that a practitioner-based perspective extends the critical reading into the representation of discourses associated with nationalism. The third is that graphical discourse provides a model to examining historical and contemporary narratives in the production of image and text.

## *Acknowledgements*

This inquiry instigated a journey into the realm of the imagined. Mapping this world would not have been possible without the valuable support and guidance of a number of people. First of all I would like to thank my supervisors Dr Sydney Shep, Dr Melanie Smalwell and Professor Lydia Wevers for their unfailing encouragement tempered by critical rigour. I am especially grateful to Lynne Jackett, Research Librarian of the Dorothy Neal White Collection for introducing me to previously unknown works and for connecting me with the Friends of the Dorothy Neal White Collection. I would like to thank the FDNW as well as the Bibliographic Society of Australia and New Zealand for their generous financial assistance. Material for the thesis was sourced from several notable Australasian institutions. My thanks go to the Alexander Turnbull Gallery, the Art Gallery of New South Wales, the E. H. McCormick Research Library, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, the Auckland War Museum Library, the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, the National Library of New Zealand, the State Library of South Australia, the State Library of Victoria, the Whanganui Regional Museum Archives and the Wanganui District Library Heritage Collection. A debt of gratitude is extended to Diane Osbourne and George Sherriff's descendents for kindly making available their personal collections and granting permission for their usage. I am also grateful to Bernie White, the great-grandson of A. D. Willis, whose interview confirmed the relevance of this study. Finally my deepest thanks are to my parents who instilled in me a love of reading and an appreciation for illustration from a very early age.



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‘The Death of Captain Cook’

Engraved illustration by R. M. Ballantyne, 8.6 x 11 cm. Frontispiece for *The Cannibal Islands; Tales of Adventure in Forest and Flood* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1910).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 4.2, p. 110

‘Maori Kainga New Zealand’

Chromolithographic postcard by Benoni White, 8 x 13.4 cm, for the New Zealand Government Department of Tourist & Health Resorts, 1904.

Reproduced courtesy of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (PS. 000666).

Figure 4.3, p. 111

‘George Sherriff’

Sepia photograph, 11 x 18 cm, photographer unknown, date unknown.

Reproduced courtesy of Diane Osbourne.

Figure 4.4, p. 113

‘Parahaka’

George Sherriff. Ink and watercolour on paper, 13.1 x 34.4 cm, c. 1881.

Reproduced courtesy of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (2001-0033-1/ 12).

Figure 4.5, p. 115

‘Parihaka, the Principal Maori Stronghold’

Engraved illustration by Mary B. Dobie, 7.7 x 22.8 cm. Illustration for p.497 of *The Graphic*, November 19, 1881. Engraver initials T. C. (?).

Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

Figure 4.6, p. 116

‘The Prophet Te Whiti Addressing a Meeting of Natives’

Engraved illustration by Mary B. Dobie, 7.6 x 17 cm. Illustration for p. 497 of *The Graphic*, November 19, 1881. Engraver unknown.

Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

### **Chapter Five: *Midnight in the Bush***

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Engraved illustration by Robert Atkinson, 7.2 x 11.2 cm. Preface illustration for *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (London: Sampson and Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington Ltd., 1891).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 5.2, p. 143

“‘Take that,” said Santa Claus; “it will give you light in the darkest places””

Engraved illustration by Robert Atkinson, 16 x 20.2 cm. Illustration for p. 6 of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (London: Sampson and Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington Ltd., 1891).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 5.3, p. 148

“‘We’re sorry, we’re so big,” said Hal’

Engraved illustration by Robert Atkinson, 12.7 x 16.4 cm. Illustration for p. 13 of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (London: Sampson and Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington Ltd., 1891).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 5.4, p. 150

‘On top of the geyser were shot out a troop of laughing gnomes’

Engraved illustration by Robert Atkinson, 12.7 x 16.5 cm. Illustration for p. 29 of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (London: Sampson and Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington Ltd., 1891).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 5.5, p. 152

“Run to the hill!” cried Red Cap’

Engraved illustration by Robert Atkinson, 16.5 x 20.3 cm. Illustration for p. 38 of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (London: Sampson and Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington Ltd., 1891).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 5.6, p. 159

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Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14.2 cm. Illustration for p. 166 of *Timothy in Bushland* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1912).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 5.7, p. 161

‘She was nearly done that was plain to the little boy’s eyes’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 24 of *Timothy in Bushland* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1912).



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Figure 5.8, p. 163

‘Overhead the great dead trees seemed to have goblin-like faces among their twisted boughs’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 44 of *Timothy in Bushland* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1912).

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Figure 5.9, p. 166

‘He collected his scattered wits and walked forward to the summons’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 77 of *Timothy in Bushland* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1912).

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Figure 5.10, p. 168

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Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 219 of *Timothy in Bushland* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1912).

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Engraved illustration, 12.7 x 22.8 cm, for p. 525 of *The Graphic*, November 19, 1881. Engraver unknown.

Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

Figure 6.2, p. 180

‘Taking a Siesta’

Engraved illustration, 9.6 x 16.2 cm, for p. 85 of the *Australasian Sketcher*, June 14, 1888. Engraver unknown.

Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

Figure 6.3, p. 181

‘Native Girls, A Chief, Cabbage Trees, the Kawerau Bridge and Road Scene Arrow [?] Bluff Wakatipu’

Engraved illustration, 15.2 x 20.4 cm, for p. 5 of the *New Zealand Graphic*, December 20, 1890. Engraver unknown.

Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

Figure 6.4, p. 192

‘Tiki with his friends’

Chromolithographic illustration by G. Sherriff, 7.8 x 14 cm. Illustration for *Tiki’s Trip to Town* (Wanganui, New Zealand: A. D. Willis, 1893).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 6.5, p. 202

‘The more they fired, the more he worried that poor horse’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 9 x 14 cm. Frontispiece for *The Warrigals’ Well: A North Australian Story* (London, New York, Melbourne: Ward, Lock & Co. Ltd., 1901).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 6.6, p. 206

‘The Black Tracker’

Engraved illustration by G. R. Ashton, 30.6 x 40.5 cm. Supplement to the June 18, 1881 edition of the *Australasian Sketcher*.

Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

Figure 6.7, p. 207

‘He rushed in amongst the troopers’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.8 x 14.3 cm. Illustration for p. 90 of *The Warrigals’ Well: A North Australian Story* (London, New York, Melbourne: Ward, Lock & Co. Ltd., 1901).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 6.8, p. 213

‘Tiki transformed’

Chromolithographic illustration by G. Sherriff, 7 x 12 cm. Illustration for *Tiki’s Trip to Town* (Wanganui: New Zealand, A. D. Willis, 1893).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 6.9, p. 216

‘Raised his arms above his head ... and fell face downward in the sand’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 202 *The Warrigals’ Well: A North Australian Story* (London, New York, Melbourne: Ward, Lock & Co., 1901).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

## Chapter seven: *A fascination with little mate*

Figure 7.1, p. 220

‘The Tuatara’s Visit to the Cave’

Engraved illustration by E. Harris, 15.5 x 18 cm. Illustration opposite p. 33 of *Fairyland in New Zealand: A Story of the Caves* (Auckland: Brett, 1909).

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Figure 7.2, p. 232

‘Avoid all excess in the field games which are suitable only to sporting men’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 16 x 23 cm. Illustration for p. 233 of the *Girls’ Own Annual*, January 11, 1908 Volume XXIX – No. 1463.

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.3, p. 238

‘It seemed to Norah that she pulled up almost in his stride’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Frontispiece for *A Little Bush Maid* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1910).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.4, p. 241

‘They were just out of the gully when the fire roared up it’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 77 of *A Little Bush Maid* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1910).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.5, p. 244

“‘You ain’t havin’ a loan of me, I s’pose?’”

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 59 of *Norah of Billabong* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1913).  
Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.6, p. 249

‘They strolled across the grass to the railings, and looked up and down the tan ribbon of Rotten Row’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.3 x 13 cm. Illustration for p. 16 of *Captain Jim* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1919).  
Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.7, p. 251

‘She leaped straight through the hoop, paper and all, and was carried out by her faithful steed’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.8 x 13.9 cm. Illustration for p. 192 of *A Little Bush Maid* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1910).  
Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.8, p. 254

‘Jottings at the circus’

Engraved illustration by G. R. Ashton, 21.4 x 30.7 cm. Illustration for p. 72 of the *Australasian Sketcher*, February 26, 1881.  
Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.9, p. 256

“‘Well, I must be getting’ back – me office is shut up, an’ the coach is nearly due. So long!’”

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 9 x 13.9 cm. Illustration for p. 185 of *Norah of Billabong* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1913).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.10, p. 261

‘Chinese Overlanding.’

Photograph, 9 x 13 cm, for p. 365 of the *Lone Hand*, March 1, 1911.

Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.11, p. 262

“They slipped it through old Wing’s leather belt and hauled him up too!”

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.8 x 13.9 cm. Illustration for p. 105 of *Mates of Billabong* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1911).

Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.12, p. 265

‘Chinese Sketches in the Slums.’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 22.9 x 33.4 cm. Illustration for p. 17 of *The Illustrated Australian News*, September 1, 1893.

Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

Figure 7.13, p. 270

‘Indian Hawkers.’

Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 21.7 x 30.7 cm. Illustration for p. 9 of *The Illustrated Australian News*, May 1, 1891. Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

## **Chapter Eight: *Conclusion to the thesis***

Figure 8.1, p. 278

Coloured pencil, pencil and oil wash illustration by Caroline Campbell, 26 x 24.4 cm. Unpublished illustration for the *New Zealand School Journal*, 1999.

## Chapter One: *In the realm of the imagined; an introduction*

*'After all, a child is no Robinson Crusoe; children do not constitute a community cut off from everything else. They belong to the nation and the class they came from. This means that their toys cannot bear witness to any autonomous separate existence, but rather are a silent signifying dialogue between them and their nation'.*

Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings volume 2: 1927-1934* (2001).

### *Introduction*

Walter Benjamin's observation that children are neither castaways nor their toys mute in communicating nationhood and class was the inspiration for this thesis inquiring into Australasian illustrated junior fiction. Many of us fondly recollect some childhood book containing cherished characters and stories that speak to us of our identity and place. Some of us may have in our possession such an artefact. Others of us may possess books that are designed for a specific purpose and for a specific audience. These may range from the instructional texts and picture books focussing on the educational needs of infant readers to the illustrated novels presented as rewards for good works. This inquiry focuses on the children's literature created during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and, in particular, the way in which it negotiated themes and issues meaningful to first-generation Australasian-born readers.

Historically my study deals with the transitional decades, 1890-1920, when nationalism was emerging as a master narrative for the British colonies of New Zealand and Australia. It was also a time when visual forms such as illustration and photography, reproduction technologies such as photoengraving, and cultural processes such as cut and paste, and framing were gaining precedence and deployed in the formation of identity. Hence I label these decades the formative period. The phrase created for the study acknowledges Tony Ballantyne's hypothesis, the long nineteenth century theorised as underpinning

the construction of nationalism and race in colonised countries. It also recognises the terminology coined by Peter Gibbons in his historical reading of New Zealand literature. In his essay entitled 'Non-Fiction', Gibbons divides the writing of the country into five distinct phases. One of these phases covers the decades '1890-1930' and is labelled 'The Literature of Occupation' (Gibbons 1998, 33). According to this historian this title, and the loaded term 'occupation', function on two levels. They designate the literature of the period and are symbolic of the cultural practices employed by European authors in assuming a mantle of authority regarding the customs, beliefs and practices of the indigenous people of New Zealand, the Maori. Hence while the period of my study differs by a decade, Gibbons's discussion of one practice particular to the period of occupation, namely the strategy of acquisition, is pertinent to my inquiry. In this inquiry I explore how the figurative treatment of popularly held beliefs and assumptions in works created by both authors and artist/illustrators are evidential of this cultural practice as well as experiential knowledge.

The central question with which the research is concerned is: *how did Australasian illustrated junior fiction employ the realm of the imagined to negotiate the representation of identity?* My study poses a number of related sub-questions that are informed by critical visual culture and postcolonial perspectives of representation. The issue core to the thesis investigation and addressed throughout its exposition is the interrelationship between image and text and their juxtaposition within the designed artefact.

### *Background*

Literary scholars and historians of children's literature have customarily assessed late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Australasian illustrated junior fiction as prescriptive, moral, didactic, and gender oriented. The criticism levelled at the works produced during the 1850s and up until the decade of the 1890s is that they are predominantly formulaic and stylistically derivative. Prior to Federation, before 1901 that is, Australasian works tended to be constructed along the lines of the imported fairytale, fantasy and adventure tale. However



the children's literature created from that time on began to be more fully definitive in articulating the complex changes affecting the nascent nations of New Zealand and Australia. The narrative and illustrative content of post-Federation picture books and illustrated novels subsequently altered to reflect the attitudinal shift in identity and belonging. In addition to incorporating local content, post-Federation Australasian works began to negotiate issues peculiar to national self-interest such as Federation, White policy and regional concerns. Australian children's literature also drew on the mythologies of masculinity and mateship dominating national cultural endeavour and specialised in representing a range of previously unrealised stock figures. Characteristic amongst these were: the indigene in the institutional roles of the black trooper and station hand, 'Warrigal' and 'Myall', the Australian born hero and heroine, and the immigrant to the colonies, the 'new chum'.

This study centres on the mediation of colonialism, emergent nationalisms and seminal national types in the literature created for junior as well as the adolescent and older readers. In the inquiry I focus on the thematic articulation of stock motifs in works intended for both these groups of readers as well as for male and female audiences. My investigation evaluates the role of the landscapes, fauna and flora indigenous to New Zealand and Australia in mediating the collision of cultures and the transformation of the unfamiliar into the familiar. Additional to this I examine the stereotypic representation of gender, indigeneity and ethnicity in the primary material as expressive of the desire for belonging and as testifying to postcolonial issues. My definition of the term 'junior' is informed by my experience in illustrating educational junior fiction and is understood to encompass emergent readers aged 5-7 as well as children aged 8-12. The term 'adolescent' is somewhat loose and covers a group of readers aged from thirteen to twenty.

My study examines several immigrant and first-generation Australasian-born image-makers acknowledged by academics for their contribution to establishing a local literature for local and international readers. Immigrant image-makers

are defined as authors and artist/illustrators who left England in the latter part of the nineteenth century to seek employment in the fledgling cultural communities and print and publishing industries of New Zealand and Australia. This group included a number of migrant practitioners as well as those who settled and based their practice in the urban and provincial centres of the colonies. Contrasting this group of image-makers were men and woman who were first-generation born in New Zealand and Australia and whose creations were directly influenced by their encounters with their place of birth. My inquiry examines the works produced by both sets of image-makers. It concentrates on immigrant authors to New Zealand, Kate McCosh Clark and James Duigan. My examination of early twentieth-century authors of Australian children's literature focuses specifically on Australian-born exemplars Mary Grant Bruce and Donald MacDonald. My study also features three immigrant artist/illustrators: the little known and New Zealand-based Robert Atkinson and George Sherriff, and John MacFarlane, their counterpart in Australia. Within the context of colonization I speculate whether their iconography and stylistic treatment of regional issues was informed by three factors: their knowledge of indigenous customs, their socio-cultural and institutional connections and their interdisciplinary practice. My survey of the titles produced by these men and women includes: Clark's *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (1891), Duigan's *Tiki's Trip to Town* (1893), MacDonald's *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* (1901) and Bruce's Billabong adventure tales.

The impetus for this study arose out of my academic and professional interest in children's literature and its communicative function as a vehicle for identity. Despite *A Nest of Singing Birds* (2007) focusing on the history of cultural endeavour in the New Zealand School Journal, and *E. Mervyn Thompson: artist; craftsman* (2006) featuring a pre-eminent figure in New Zealand print and publishing, research into the role of the children's illustrator and illustration practice is scant. In a recent email communication I discussed the issue of critical neglect and cultural marginalisation with the feminist visual cultural theorist Claire Pajackowska. To my surprise she confirmed that this was also

the case with research into junior fiction in England. My inquiry is designed in response to this situation. It aims at extending the scope of scholarly knowledge regarding the work performed by children's literature and at filling in the gaps relating to the history of commercial practice and cultural endeavour in Australasia. My research is thus intended for a community of scholars comprising students and fellow academics of visual culture studies. It is also aimed at those engaged in the study of visual communication design history and praxis for which critical material is scarce.

Hence my study is practitioner-based and is located within the discipline of illustration, one of visual communication design's major specialisms. I argue that the discipline of illustration constitutes a sub-discipline of visual culture and is therefore a topical arena for critiquing the iconic legacy of master narratives such as nationalism, imperialism and colonialism. I also contend this field of inquiry suitable for examining the historical representation of colonial and national mythologies such as 'dying race', masculinity, egalitarianism and paternalism. My research for this project is based on a comparative analysis of pre-Federation Australasian and post-Federation New Zealand and Australian illustrated junior fiction within this theoretical context. The research aims are achieved through applying a historical reading to the extant archival material and formal and semiotic analysis to its visual images. Formal and semiotic analyses have traditionally comprised two of the research methods underpinning study into design discourse, visual persuasion and visual rhetoric. In visual communication design they are frequently applied in unpacking the explicit and implicit meanings embedded in the symbolic construction and design of created artefacts. However analysis of images based solely on the criteria of aesthetic and stylistic treatment, or what is referred to as 'visual essentialism', does not deal with their interrelationship with the text (Bal 2003, 5). Nor does it deal satisfactorily with explaining the interrelationship between the image-maker and product or the socio-cultural factors influencing their creation.

To complement this approach I have created the synthesizing methodology described as graphical discourse. My justification for using the problematic and binary term 'graphic' as key to the methodology is based on the argument that both visual and textual forms are produced from a series of graphic processes. I therefore hypothesize that both image and text can be designated accordingly. In my investigation I apply the research methodology graphical discourse to critically assessing the juncture of image and text, creation and production in Australasian illustrated junior fiction and cultural vernacular. I also utilize it in analysing recognizable historical factors (Federation, White policy, suffrage and war) as impinging on the making of the selected archive. Graphical discourse thus examines this material within the wider context of colonial and early modern cultural endeavour, as encoded with socio-cultural and political values, and as informed by disciplinary praxis. Consequently (and where possible) images from works selected for discussion are embedded within the text visually rendering the points debated in the thesis exposition.

### *Focus of inquiry*

My study comparatively examines the representation of identity in Australasian illustrated junior fiction within a period of socio-cultural transformation and political upheaval. It explores four theoretical questions developed in relation to the central research question and which crystallised as the inquiry progressed. These are broadly based on inquiring into postcolonial and visual cultural theories regarding cultural perception, representation, image and text and disciplinary practice.

1. How does Australasian illustrated junior fiction use stock motifs (the indigenous landscape, fauna and flora) to divergently reflect cultural issues (assimilation, acculturation, belonging, emancipation and independence) resulting from the master narrative of nationalism?
2. How does the representation of stock figures (the indigene, the immigrant hero, the feminine ideal and the diasporic Asian other) in this literature differ from or conform to the gendered mythologies and cultural stereotyping inherent in colonial and nationalist discourses?

3. Of what relevance is image-maker lifestyle and disciplinary practice in informing the imagined construction of created worlds?
4. What cultural work is being performed by the images in the illustrated novels and picture books?

The first question concentrates on the key factor informing the direction and focus of my research and inquiry. It positions the study as concurrent with the formation of nationalism in the colonies of New Zealand and Australia. I assert that the emergence of this master narrative in the latter half of the nineteenth century had a direct bearing on shaping the thematic content of Australasian illustrated junior fiction as well as the look and feel of its artefacts. Within this framework my inquiry explores the creative and social practices employed by New Zealand and Australian image-makers in creating a product equal in cultural significance to developing national literatures and art. My study consequently investigates the strategic acquisition of local motifs and the cultural process defined as the 'textualization' of indigenous people in framing myths of identity in tales belonging (Gibbons 2002, 10). In addition it examines how foundational level, pre-Federation and post-Federation children's literature evolved from the moral and didactic to register the impacts ensuing from colonization and social and political upheaval. My investigation thus enquires into the representation of assimilation, acculturation, emancipation and independence from this perspective. It argues that their articulation in Australasian illustrated junior fiction's image and text is reflective of the existential reality of colonised peoples as well as the Australasian-born reader.

The second question focuses on the significance of stock figures in cementing late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century cultural perceptions of indigeneity, gender and race. My inquiry centres on indigenous peoples, the New Zealand Maori and Australian Aborigine, the immigrant 'new chum', the emancipated and independent heroine, the 'assimilated' Chinese gardener and the outcast Indian hawker as constituting key figures for discussion. The study compares images of these types in Australasian illustrated junior fiction and contrasts

them with their representation in cultural vernacular as typically affirming formative period cultural attitudes and core national values. In the dissertation culture is theorised according to the research methodology, graphical discourse. The research methodology enquires into how popular beliefs and assumptions are popularly conveyed through graphic representational technologies (drawing, sketching and painting) and reproductive processes (photo-engravings, wood-engravings and chromolithography). The additional term 'vernacular' is defined as language particular to, and in common usage by a group of people in a certain region or country. I have coined the phrase 'cultural vernacular' to encompass the broadly collective as well as the specific. In my inquiry the phrase is used to describe the range of institutional and cultural artefacts (advertising and tourist ephemera, and illustrated papers) through which socio-cultural perceptions are disseminated and made visible.

Questions three and four directly relate to the graphic interpretation of questions one and two. Question three is concerned with key authors and artist/illustrators' professional expertise and personal lifestyle in modifying the traditional treatment of stock motifs and figures in image and text. Question four extends this discussion by analysing their creations within the context of the thesis methodology. Historians of New Zealand cultural endeavour have demonstrated that cultural strategies of acquisition and social connectedness were pivotal in consolidating the creative success of late nineteenth-century image-makers. Scholarly writing contends that the acquisition of local knowledge gained through cultural exchange with paramount indigenous figures and institutional power systems was vital in the construction of national identity. I argue that the creative works of key image-makers was variously informed by interdisciplinary practice as well as by direct experience of local events and customs. I assert that the construction and formal design of their creations was contingent on formal and informal relationships as well as acquired knowledge. Hence my inquiry takes into account the effect of commercial and artistic praxis on image-maker representations of: the collision

of cultures, socio-cultural transformation, and stereotypes correlating with nationalist mythologies.

### *Conclusion*

In my possession I have a generational artefact, a small cloth bound book of eighty pages. The *Chambers's Expressive Infant Reader*, published in 1893, once belonged to my grandmother and was, most likely, purchased by her parents for six-pence from one of the booksellers in Dunedin, New Zealand. This publication was one of the educational books produced for a reading community of immigrant and first-generation New Zealand-born children. Similar in format to many pedagogic vehicles of the formative period, 1890-1920, its content was designed to familiarise the junior reader with letters and numbers and to advance learning in literacy and numeracy. Contained within its covers are the alphabet and numerals in copperplate script, short didactic tales focussing on the syllabic construction of particular words, spelling revision lists and multiplication tables. Its content is instructional and is typical of the emphasis on the literary in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century publications. Its tendency to didactic monotony is perceptibly relieved by simple illustrations in black key-line. These in-text images were designed to make explicit the key elements and meanings in each of the tales. The *Chambers's Expressive Infant Reader* is both physical object and cultural metaphor. On the one hand its illustrative content demonstrates one of the methods by which traditional motifs such as rural, flower-filled landscapes and bucolic settings were imported into New Zealand. On the other it demonstrates how unsophisticated artefacts such as this, and the literature created for emergent and older readers, are not mute things but vehicles of cultural significance.

## Chapter two: *Theorising graphical discourse within visual culture*

*"Sometimes I wonder where television advertisements get their pictures of happy childhood at the turn of the century, with pretty little girls and boys in sailor suits. So many photographs you see now show us as sweet demure children – but life was often desperately uncomfortable."* Jacqueline Kent, *In the Half Light: Life as a child in Australia 1900-1970* (1988).

### *Introduction*

This memory, recalling what it was like to grow up as a child in early twentieth-century Australia, illustrates one of the points salient to the inquiry and informing one of the thesis sub-questions. It demonstrates how imagined ideals draw on historical fact and how they, and the values associated with them, are then re-presented via dominant and contemporary visual mediums. Moreover the statement highlights the importance of the communicative power of images and the cultural work performed by them in transmitting popular assumptions and socio-cultural values. It also identifies one of the technologies important in the capture, reproduction and dissemination of selected views. This was the camera, or what Nicholas Mirzoeff (1999, 3) describes as the complex 'apparatus' that was vital to the 'new literary / visual culture' of the early nineteenth century (Curtis 2002, 1). This chapter is concerned with the theoretical issues involved in the critical examination of image and text in Australasian illustrated junior fiction. It consists of two parts. The first section introduces the key theoretical constructs that underpin the thesis:

- Visual culture
- Lyotard's postmodernist conceptualisation of image and text
- Barthes's theorising of images as imperative and multi-level signifiers
- Visual methodologies of formal and semiotic analysis.

The second provides an explanation of the research methodology graphical discourse based on definitions of the terms 'graphic' and 'discourse'. In this



section I discuss how graphical discourse has been created in acknowledgement of the disciplinary connections occurring between design practice, image and text. I explain how the research methodology has been designed to synthesize the theoretical issues and archival material encountered in the investigation. The section also includes disciplinary terminology specific to the following inquiry into image and text and common to both literary and visual analysis.

### *Theorising illustration as a sub-discipline of visual culture*

#### *Visual*

In this section I argue the relevance of visual culture to the practitioner-based thesis. Etymologically the word ‘visual’ relates to sight and to vision, and extends to the scopic devices by which things are framed, captured and enhanced. The correlation of the term with social production, and the politics of representation, concerns the strategies by which things are visibly communicated to the reader/viewer. As I pointed out in the introduction the observation, documentation and recording of societal categories such as gender, race and class is dependent on various reproduction technologies. In the formative period, 1890-1920, the tools commonly associated with analogue processes such as drawing, painting and print engraving comprised the apparatus of art and design discourse, namely the pen, pencil and paintbrush. The images produced by these and the engraver’s stylus included cartoons, diagrams, doodles, sketches, illustrations and paintings. The arrival of modern and complex technologies occurred with the invention of photography in the 1830s. From then on photomechanical images, such as photoengravings, supplemented photographic ‘snap’ shots of socio-cultural events and formal studio portraits in articulating contemporary values and belief systems. The photomechanical process involved treating the end-grain of a woodblock with photosensitive chemicals and then exposing a photograph or a photograph of an artist/illustrator’s work on to the surface. The resulting image was then engraved by a number of skilled engravers with the more complex aspects of the design being carried out by those with greatest expertise. The outcome of this technological development was both economic and cultural. The “image” of

the Victorian text was manifested in various visual forms: portraits of authors, paintings of contemporary life, graphic illustration, graphic text such as advertising, calligraphy and typography, book binding and the book as a cultural artefact' (Curtis 2002, 1).

### *Culture*

In Western societies the phrase 'culture' is generally associated with the creative endeavour resulting from intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic inquiry and is aligned to high art artefacts. Raymond Williams (1960, xvi) defines 'culture' as having evolved from its original association with 'natural growth' to signifying the 'material, intellectual and spiritual' developments of a society. Generally speaking the objects created and produced under the aegis of the high arts have been valued by Western society as indicating the acme in intellectual inquiry and aesthetic and technical accomplishment. In contradistinction to this set of beliefs, the artefacts created for marginalised socio-economic groups and for popular consumption have been nominally accorded lesser status. Visual cultural theorist, Mieke Bal (2003, 17) reasons that the term 'culture' is usually distinguished by 'two clusters of usages' and is concerned with the influence of social patterns, rituals, belief systems and behaviour on the social production of objects. Her reading of Williams's taxonomy identifies his fourth category as having implications for the way in which social hierarchies 'are communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored' (Bal 2003, 18). O'Sullivan et al (1994, 68) argue that in cultural studies terminology 'culture' relates to the 'social production and reproduction of sense, meaning and consciousness'. Moreover these writers contend that in critical discourse the term is 'multi-discursive' and is informed by discourses of class, gender and race.

Both Gerard Curtis and Malcolm Barnard assert that 'sex, gender, violence, knowledge and power' are of topics of primary importance to 'contemporary culture and cultural studies' (Barnard 1998, 3). Curtis's (2002, 1) historical account of 'the democracy of print' in Victorian England also acknowledges the

‘partnership between the visual and textual’ and ‘the impact of change on traditional beliefs and values’ as critical in its establishment. My inquiry into Australasian illustrated junior fiction critically reflects on the cultural significance of both these concerns. It examines the genre construction of stock figures according to Barnard’s (2001, 1) criteria of ‘institutional practice’ and ‘social and power based relationships’. In addition it explores how the developments occurring in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century print and publishing aided in reinforcing dominant views and social hierarchies.

### *Visual culture*

Visual culture is theorised as an interdisciplinary field of study that permeates the domains of high and low culture in the critique of the creation, popular usage and meaning of fashioned artefacts. It addresses the way in which subjective perspectives and representational modes such as documentation, interpretation and translation work to endorse institutional beliefs and socio-cultural values. Mirzoeff (1999, 4) contends this field as engaged in analysing the treatment of social interactions as well as gender, class and ‘racialized identities’ within popular and elitist domains. This theorist states that visual culture is primarily concerned with how visual experiences are at the centre of every-day life and hence inextricably linked to postmodern issues of visibility and the primacy of the visual. Thus he argues that it strategically reinterprets ‘the history of modern visual media understood collectively, rather than fragmented into disciplinary units such as film, television, art and video’ (Mirzoeff 1999, 12). I contend that Mirzoeff’s grouping is limited and broadly assumes high art and popular media as having more cultural significance than the artefacts produced outside these mainstream disciplines.

In contradistinction to this argument, Barnard proposes that the study of objects that are divergent in their design and usage requires particular approaches of inquiry. Barnard (2001, 1) argues that the strength of visual culture resides in its capacity to reflect on and critically assess the influence of mainstream ‘values and identities’ determining production and consumption.

However he also maintains that not all manner of things can be discussed under the broad headings of either art or design. Instead he reasons that 'any satisfactory account of visual cultures must be historical and sociological' and 'that it must pay close attention to visual production as a set of signifying systems' (Barnard 1998, 32-33). Barnard therefore suggests that there are two ways to appreciating visual culture. Like Bal, Barnard argues that the formal and historical appreciation of the various forms, shapes and artefacts produced by art and design practice is essentially limited. He contends that this critical method merely re-presents existing representations without inquiring into the social or theoretical context underpinning their creation. As a cultural historian of visual culture I argue that an historical appreciation of the provenance and production of created artefacts is a key place to start. Moreover I maintain that practitioner knowledge gained in a specialism of visual communication design, further equips me to critically assess the creative processes implemented in the creation of the selected archive.

Gillian Rose also questions the tendency to embrace visual culture as a language without entirely understanding what it actually entails. She bases her argument on an assertion made by W. Thomas J. Mitchell. According to Mitchell (cited in Rose 2001, 1) 'we still do not know what exactly pictures are, what their relation to language is, how they operate on observers and on the world, how their history is to be understood, and what is to be done with or about them'. Both Barnard and Rose advise applying a methodology that is designed to take into account the impact of socio-cultural practices and power-based relations as significantly impinging on the creation and production of visual artefacts.

Recent debate as to what constitutes visual culture highlights the limitations of this field of inquiry. Guy Julier (2006, 64) contends that visual culture is a well-established scholarly discipline whose foci is 'in images', and which includes 'design alongside fine art, photography, film, TV, and advertising' in its scope of inquiry. Bal contests this view and argues that the field is limited

because of its singular tendency to concentrate on all things visual. Bal acknowledges the difficulties in describing the theoretical boundaries of visual culture and prefers to refer to it as a 'movement' rather than a field or discipline. Furthermore she states that although visual culture is concerned with 'the specificity of its object domain, lack of clarity on what that object domain is remains' problematic (Bal 2003, 6). Hence additional to critiquing the end result of the act of creation she recommends that visual cultural studies focus on examining its sites of production and the cultural practices and processes intrinsic to these areas.

In addition to pointing out the flaws of essentialism, debate proposes that visual culture's scope of study extend beyond historical treatment and formal analysis of objects. It also argues that to concentrate solely on the centrality of the object and to ignore the interface between image and text raises the contentious issue of ocularcentricity. Bal offers a way of countering this theoretical problem. She proposes that its research objectives include inquiry into the cultural performance of created artefacts in order to comprehend 'the bond between visual culture and nationalism ... and the participating discourses of imperialism and racism' (Bal 2003, 22).

This objective is at the heart of my examination of Australasian illustrated junior fiction and the reason for its critical siting within a sub-discipline of visual culture. My inquiry investigates both the provenance of this literature as well as the series of cultural and political processes informing its creation. Formal and semiotic analyses are then applied to the historical reading of its genres and illustrative styles. In visual communication design, formal and semiotic analyses are theoretically relevant in unpacking the construction and communicative power of visual images and in synthesizing visual cultural critique. Hence I argue this critical methodology appropriate for analysing the master narrative of nationalism and associated discourses of gender and indigeneity in children's literature and cultural vernacular.

As a genre, and as a cultural artefact Australasian illustrated junior fiction is both literary and graphic. My examination of formative period children's literature is similar to Curtis's (2002, 1) historical reading of 'the "sister-arts / pen and pencil"' and 'image and word' of the Victorian period. My inquiry examines the works produced by immigrant and Australian-born image-makers as indicative of interdisciplinary practice and socio-cultural collaborations. It inquires into how image-maker associations with fine art and commercial institutions informed their modes of representation in image and text.

The definitions of visual culture put forward by Bal and Julier validate the positioning of this thesis, which could equally be located within the history of design or the study of design culture. This view is supported by Julier (2006, 64) who, in speculating on the theoretical difference between visual, material and design cultures, cites Victor Margolin as expressing a desire for 'doctoral-level studies of design and culture'. My practitioner-based thesis is intended to address that concern. It is also directed at fulfilling critics' anticipation that specialists from specific fields of inquiry are able to add to the ongoing debate into text and image.

### *Image/text*

Mirzoeff (1999, 6) claims that 'Western culture has consistently privileged the spoken word as the highest form of intellectual practice and seen visual representations as second-rate illustrations of ideas'.<sup>1</sup> Behind the concept, 'second-rate', is the notion that images are imitative and derive their existence from the meanings embedded in the text. According to Roland Barthes (1977, 32) the word '*image*' should be linked to the root *imitai* meaning to mimic or imitate. Apart from editorial illustrations, which employ devices common to visual rhetoric and visual persuasion, most of the illustrations produced for

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<sup>1</sup> During my time as a student of visual communication design, I was informed that illustrators were simply technicians. This categorical statement was based on the assumption that the discipline of illustration was no longer viable in an age stylistically governed by international modernism and the dominance of photography.

junior audiences closely adhere to or figuratively mimic the descriptions contained in the author's narrative text. In the creation and design process the author's text usually comes first, and the images produced by the commissioned illustrator follow on after the word. Hence I theorise that this relationship effectively positions illustrations as having a secondary or lesser function and is perhaps one of the reasons why illustrations for junior readers have failed to be fully accounted for in academic writing. Contrary to the 'original' images of high art practice, the primary purpose for which children's literature illustrations are created is to explicate the meanings embedded in the text. This is particularly the case of the educational material created for emergent readers aged 5-7. I maintain that while such pedagogic images are mimetic and inherently literal, they offer interesting insights into the socio-cultural conventions associated with the history of image-making within a particular society. Moreover I argue that a critical reading of this material must take into account the interrelationship existing between image and text. Hence I respond to Mirzoeff's argument for visual appreciation by contending that image and text are equally important coded systems and imperative to the construction of works for children. I therefore assert that their discursive interrelationship cannot be discounted in evaluating the graphic quality or stylistic treatment in any of the picture books and illustrated novels comprising this literature.

Key to the inquiry and to the research methodology graphical discourse, is Lyotard's postmodernist theorising of image and text. My study debates a number of points counter to the image/text divide postulated by the visual cultural theorist Mirzoeff. It explores the ideas:

- That the interrelationship between image and text is discursive.
- That language is limited in dealing with the non-linguistic.
- That the sensible is 'constantly thematized as less than being and whose side has very rarely truly been taken, taken in truth, since it was understood that this was the side of falsity, of skepticism, of the rhetorician, the painter, the condotierre, the libertine, the materialist' (Dews 1984, 40).

- That textual space is planar while actual space is ‘complex, multi-dimensional and deep’ (Bennington 1988, 57).
- That ‘every discourse is cast in the direction of something which it seeks to seize hold of, that it is incomplete and open, somewhat as the visual field is partial, limited and extended by an horizon’ (Dews 1984, 41).

Peter Dews (1984, 40) relates that Lyotard’s seminal text *Discourse, figure* (1971) hinges on defending the ‘perceived’ and sensible world against the legacy of ‘imperialism’ embedded in the written language. Lyotard’s theories regarding image and text paved the way for the re-evaluation of linguistic discourse and structuralist theory as failing to adequately account for the non-linguistic. In this complex philosophical treatise, Lyotard outlines the figural as the inverted other of discourse. He maintains that the presence of the figure within the matter of the text confers meaning on the subject. Lyotard (cited in Dews 1984, 42) states that “everything is sayable”. This statement is qualified by his pointing out the limitations of language and speech in dealing with qualities that are normally apprehended through sensation. Nor does saying or writing the name of a thing (tree, rose, cat, dog and so on) differentiate it or its particular characteristics from another within the same group of things. I shall elucidate this point with a simple instance from art and design discourse.

To characterise a thing as ‘blue’ is generic and symbolic. To state that a thing is either cobalt blue or Prussian blue is to define its visual particularity according to a preferred system of classification. However it is impossible to appreciate the sensible difference in these terms without seeing each hue, one light and the other, the visual equivalent of the hue, black, displayed on a neutral medium such as white paper.<sup>2</sup> Without their translation into visible form, the descriptors cobalt and Prussian have no perceptible meaning. They remain locked within the realm of the symbolic as abstract ideas associated with the conventions of a particular cultural practice. The same argument is made by cultural theorists in

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<sup>2</sup> I am also aware that no medium can truly be described as such and that in making this selection I am conforming to principles common to art and design classification.



connection with the generic terms employed in the idealisation of nationhood. Certain descriptors, such as those collectively grouped under landscape, fauna and flora, are posited as universal tropes. It is the presence of the indigene in each of these collective terms that ascribes national identity with its distinctive specificity. Indigeneity is thus mythologised in cultural historiography as the medium on to which notions of nationhood are painted. My study explores the visual and textual articulation of abstract notions in Australasian illustrated junior fiction. It inquires into the cultural acquisition of local and indigenous vocabularies. It explores the iconic treatment of these vocabularies in framing images of belonging and identity.

The second point relates to the cultural perceptions linking the making of visual representations with mimesis. The argument inherent in Lyotard's statement is that the visual appearance of things reflects their political and social order. Bal makes a similar point regarding the convention of figurative realism and its association with truth. Bal considers the critique of realism one of the important tasks of visual cultural studies. She contends that 'the real political *interests* underlying the preference for realism' in 'the cult of portraiture' (Bal 2003, 22) to be the promotion of mimetic behaviour and social conformity. Barthes (1977, 69) argues that representation is not 'defined directly by imitation' or mimesis. He maintains that socio-cultural and political conventions mobilise the creation and production of visual images as well as the way in which they are to be read or viewed. In this study I speculate on the stylistic practice of naturalism and figurative realism in informing the imagined and created worlds for first-generation Australasian-born readers. I inquire into the figurative treatment of idealised heroes and stereotypic indigenous figures and question whether their representation in children's literature was literally indicative of social conformity or contraindicative of subversive practices such as mimicry.

The third point is concerned with the perceptual paradigms by which image and text are perceived by the reader. Geoffrey Bennington (1988, 56) claims that Lyotard's treatise 'begins with an apparently simple assertion that reading

and seeing are not quite the same thing'. According to Bennington, Lyotard theorises reading a text and looking at a painting to be divergent phenomenological experiences. One of these experiences is plastic and the other, oral. In 'principle' reading a 'book as text and not aesthetic object' requires no attention be paid to the physical and material construction of the 'printed signs' (Bennington 1988, 56-57). Lyotard speculates that textual space is 'barely spatial: it is *flat*, and the signs are linked according to a simple principle of horizontal contiguity' (Bennington 1988, 57). In this space the symbolic elements of the letters, spaces and punctuation marks comprising the text are experienced as sequential and linear and contiguous to the picture plane. In contra-distinction to this spatial conformity, 'the visual space of the world' is postulated as inherently 'complex, multi-dimensional and *deep*'. In the theories of representation correlating with Western art and design practice, space is primarily conceived as three-dimensional and centred on the physical body that is either the subject or the object depicted within it.

Bennington recounts that Lyotard associates the act of reading text with a number of factors. These include the two-dimensional structure and planar surface of the page, the typographic design and print quality of the text, its syntagmatic structure as well as the discursive relationship of the text to the book's title. However, visual images such as illustrations are theorised as rivalling this spatial hierarchy. Andrew Benjamin (1989, 29) states that in images such as illustrations, 'the figure is outside the text, and text and image are, as a rule, presented together (which gives rise to other problems)'. This statement affirms another of the issues pivotal to the thesis, namely the interrelationship between image and text. For Barthes, writing and pictures are classified as visual variants with the latter containing numerous forms and each requiring a specific type of reading. Barthes (1972, 10) proposes that a 'diagram lends itself to signification more than a drawing, a copy more than an original, and a caricature more than a portrait'. Moreover he contends that pictures are 'imperative' and, unlike the written text, possess the potential to 'impose meaning at one stroke, without analysing or diluting it'.

In arguing images to be imperative, Barthes alludes to their interpolative function. In Australasian illustrated junior fiction the most obvious example of interpolation is the frontispiece. A frontispiece is an illustration highlighting a specific moment in the genre narrative. In addition to examining the signifying function of this group of images, I analyse the correlation between the illustrations created for children's literature and cultural vernacular, and narrative and editorial text. My inquiry scrutinizes the order and placement of illustrations within the artefact. It comments on their discursive relationship to the title and their proximity to caption or body text. My discussion focuses on the imperative capacity of illustrations in consolidating popular assumptions and national mythologies. It speculates on how the visual categories of caricature, drawing and portrait facilitated the rhetoric of exclusion and morality embedded in racial and gender discourses.

The fourth point suggests that every discourse has as its subject something that is perceived as 'other' to it. Practice-based discourses of art and design, cultural discourses of gender and indigeneity and political discourses such as colonialism and nationalism are not closed systems but are in a continual state of interpenetration. Their modification is caused by something that is other and latent within them as, for example, the figure in language, the indigenous and ethnic other in colonised societies, or the subject and object in representations. Benjamin (1989, 29) states that for Lyotard an 'imaged text is a discourse which is very close to the figure'. Lyotard theorises that image/text relationships are indicative of the 'figurative power of a word' and hence have a performative rather than visual function. In the archive surveyed for this thesis one narrative is conveyed purely through pictures while the others integrate both image and text to varying degrees. My study examines this inter-relationship in both formats. It inquires into the cultural performance of image and text in the picture books and illustrated novels constituting the key texts for discussion. It explores the assertion that images are 'visual statements' (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001, 1) of discursive structures.

In the following section I contend the relevance of formal and semiotic analyses to this study. I discuss one of the concepts core to semiotic theory, namely that images are multi-level forms possessing differing levels of signification. In addition I outline Gunter Kress & Theo van Leeuwen's critical theory 'visual grammar' additionally implemented in analysing the spatial organization of design elements.

### *Visual methodologies formal and semiotic analyses and visual grammar*

#### ***Formal analysis***

I assert that formal and semiotic analyses, frequently implemented in the critical study and historiography of visual artefacts, are key to this inquiry. Formal analysis, or formalism, resides at the most perceptible level of appreciation. It is a methodology inquiring into meaning and value based on aesthetic and stylistic appreciation. This approach concentrates on the physical appearance of visual images irrespective of their social usage and communicative function, cultural performance or audience reception. It focuses on their form without giving reasons for their critical or theoretical context. Rose (2001, 33) posits 'compositional interpretation' as another way of thinking about this method of analysis. Formal analysis or 'compositional interpretation' consequently examines the aesthetic decisions governing the application of media and treatment of design elements according to art and design principles. In design praxis, design principles constitute a set of cultural ideas relating to perspective and the visual hierarchies employed in the organization of design elements. Design elements comprise a visual toolbox equivalent to the vocabulary, symbols and signs employed in the writing of language. These elements include line, colour, shape, form or volume and tonal value. In visual language the selection, application and spatial organization of design elements is collectively known as 'compositional modality' (Rose 2001, 34).

Visual cultural theorists such as Bal critique this approach visual essentialism for its predominant focus on the centrality of the object independent of any other contributing factors. Rose (2001, 37) acknowledges the limitations of

formal analysis but contends that the method is still useful for 'looking very carefully at the content and form of images'. Moreover she suggests that it provides a platform for the critical study of production, provenance and technology in relation to visual artefacts. Hence I argue formal analysis to be a viable method for initiating inquiry into the stylistic influences and modes of expression employed by immigrant artist/illustrators to New Zealand and Australia. In my study it is applied to scrutinising artist/illustrator representations of indigenous and ethnic peoples, landscapes, fauna and flora in chapters four, five, six and seven.

### *Semiotic analysis*

In my investigation semiotic analysis is contended as extending the formal and interpretative assessment of Australasian illustrated junior fiction. Semiotic analysis is theorised as a system for comprehending the communicative function and meaning of signs according to cultural convention. Three elements namely the sign, symbol and icon are core to this method of analysis. The first of these is holistic and is defined as 'the associative total of a concept and an image' (Barthes 1972, 114). Prior to Mitchell's assertion that we have yet to understand the relationship between image and language and associated acts of reading and viewing, Barthes (1977, 36) reasoned that 'we need to know what an image is'. He subsequently proposed that understanding an image's communicative function was contingent on realizing how divergent modes of visual expression, such as drawings, paintings and photographs, differ in their levels of signification.

Barthes (1977, 43) argues that in contrast to a photograph even the most literal and denotative of drawings is 'coded' and is capable of being perceived on 'three levels'. He theorises that the first level of perception is circumscribed by a 'set of *rule-governed* transpositions' whereby objects and scenes are represented. According to Barthes these conventions are historical in origin and are hence culturally traditional and prescriptive. The example he uses to demonstrate this point is the theory of perspective. Of the organizational principles familiar to

Western discourses of art and design, perspective is historically dominant in denoting order and symbolic hierarchy. The second level of perception is defined by figurative reduction or abstraction where what is represented operates in a metonymic or synecdochic capacity. Thus Barthes reasons that a drawing in which the iconographic elements are reduced from directly mirroring their referent to functioning as signifiers, does not result in weakening of the intended message. The third level of perception relates to the work performed by aesthetics, style, skill and craft or technique. Barthes states that at this level a drawing displays its coding or preferred mode of construction as connotative of politically informed cultural preferences. At the connotative level of signification the figurative and aesthetic treatment of a thing may make it appear literal but it is, in effect, a figure for communicating a condensed set of ideas or values.

In semiotic terminology, denotative signification is defined as the mirroring of the text by the iconography. In this communicative operation image and text are figuratively literal, synonymous and interchangeable. In contrast connotative signification is more complex and inclined to be loaded with the values associated with cultural convention. At this order of communication meaning is implied rather than literal. Rose (2001, 82) states that connotative signs function at the second level of perception as 'metonymic' and 'synecdochal' signifiers. My study applies Barthes's semiotic theory to the graphical analysis of the popular assumptions and mythologies in Australasian illustrated junior fiction's image and text. It inquires into the iconographic treatment of social categories: gender, indigeneity and ethnicity. It investigates the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships of these categories in articulating nationalistic visions of inclusion and exclusion, morality and physicality in chapters five, six and seven.

### *Visual grammar*

Kress & van Leeuwen (2000, 1) maintain that analysis of visual images has primarily focused on two areas. It has centred on 'lexis rather than grammar'

and 'the denotative and connotative, the iconographical and iconological significance' of people, objects, events and scenes in various visual forms. These writers suggest that inquiry into the causal meaning of images ought to take into account the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationship of signs as well as their construction and modality. Hence they advocate a methodology called 'visual grammar'. Visual grammar is formulated on the recommendation that a "historical grammar" of iconographic connotation' ought to investigate the interconnectedness between 'stock metaphors' and cultural conventions in associated disciplines such as the visual and performing arts (Barthes 1977, 22).

Kress & van Leeuwen (2000, 1) theorise 'visual grammar' as the way in which representations of 'people, places and things' are arranged to create 'visual "statements" of greater or lesser complexity and extension'. For these writers image-making is a complex process that is informed by two factors. One of these concerns the socio-cultural background and 'psychological history' of the image-maker (Kress & van Leeuwen 2000, 3). The other is concerned with the positioning of the cultural artefact or what they term 'sign' within the context of production. Hence they argue that their methodology is inclusive in dealing with the design and modes of construction of a range of visual representations encompassing oil paintings, magazine layouts, comic strips as well as scientific diagrams. Consequently their method is contended as investigating how images are not merely the creations of technical and aesthetic competency but are evidence of the personal perspective or voice of the image-maker.

Moreover these writers claim that semiotic modes of communication such as visual communication design perform 'two major functions'; the 'ideational' and the 'interpersonal' (Kress & van Leeuwen 2000, 13). The first term, the 'ideational', relates to the term 'denotative' where one thing, such as an image, symbolically represents or is analogous to the conceptual equivalent of another. In visual grammar the function of the 'ideational' is to represent the experiential reality of the perceived world through an imagined counterpart. By contrast the 'interpersonal' centres on the representation of social events and interactions as

signalling the customs and values relative to a particular society. Hence they suggest that while images are created according to formal principles, they are ideological in intent. Kress & van Leeuwen (2000, 45) subsequently maintain that 'pictorial structures' are never mimetic representations of reality but are inextricably intertwined with the core values and interests of their sites of production, circulation and readership. Their reference to the influence of institutional systems of power on modes of representation affirms the assumption that even simple and imitative images possess levels of meaning other than is first apparent. My inquiry examines the pictorial structures of the illustrations created for Australasian illustrated junior fiction based on Kress & van Leeuwen's hypothesis.

In the next section I define the research methodology graphical discourse created in response to Fiona Carson & Claire Pajaczkowska's (2000, 3) definition of visual culture as an 'integrated field of inquiry'. The research methodology is deliberately synthetic and discursive and integrates academic theory with practitioner-based expertise. It is supported by the overview of the published academic literature relating to Australasian illustrated junior fiction, and cultural and economic systems of production as well as archival research.

### *Graphical discourse*

#### ***Graphic***

Graphical discourse is a composite phrase. It is predicated on analysing each of the two words as fundamental to the thesis and its domain of inquiry. The first of these is the term 'graphic'. My reading of this term links it with the activities and outcomes of cultural endeavour as well as Lyotard's notion of image and text as having synonymous properties. It consequently relates to the multi-dimensional practices and processes associated with visual culture, visual communication design and illustration praxis. Multi-dimensional practices such as drawing, sketching and doodling refer to the spatial, material and tactile operations involved in making two-dimensional visual representations of things and ideas. These practices are also applied in the delineation of symbols such as



letters, numerals and punctuation marks in the creation and production of writing. The development of two-dimensional shapes into three-dimensional forms requires additional concrete drawing practices. Both two-dimensional and three-dimensional visual representations require theoretical knowledge of the spatial laws governing linear perspective.

The graphic processes characterising the print and publication industry of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries were similarly multi-dimensional. In the mechanical production of visual imagery, artist/illustrator's original working drawings, sketches and paintings were reproduced through intaglio (engraved) and planar processes. The intaglio processes of wood engraving and photoengraving involved a community of skilled and apprentice engravers. These specialist practitioners were collectively and individually responsible for translating working images into wood blocks for print through the process of engraving. The plates created through this collaborative process often included both master engraver and artist/illustrator's signatures in recognition of their respective abilities. The planar processes of lithography and photolithography superseded intaglio printing. For artist/illustrators the fluid immediacy of lithography meant that they were able to create autographic images for print.

The phrase graphical discourse also refers to the act of drawing out, or of making visible the meanings embedded in the construction of image and text. Hence the second reading argues the term 'graphic' as literary. This reading equates the word with the way in which expository meanings in a piece of writing, caption or text are made explicit and unambiguous. *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (2002, 619) defines 'graphic' as originating in the seventeenth century and etymologically deriving from the Greek *graphikos* and from *graphe* meaning 'writing' and 'drawing'. Consequently I maintain that the term describes image-maker modes of representation as well as the iconography and genre phraseology employed in the construction of imagined realities.

### *Discourse*

The additional term 'discourse' refers to the theoretical views and socio-cultural values informing cultural endeavour. According to Rose the meaning of this term is specific. 'It refers to groups of statements which structure the way a thing is thought, and the way we act on the basis of that thinking' (Rose 2000, 136). In the research methodology 'discourse' describes the interrelationship between image and text. My usage of this phrase is determined by the unique relationship that illustrations have with texts in negotiating culturally specific codes, belief systems and values for junior readers. It is concerned, *inter alia*, with the image as the figural or lineal component of discourse and text as the letter and word as opposed to the ambiguous term, 'imagetext'.

Furthermore Lynda Nead (cited in Rose 2000, 136) posits discourse to be a 'particular form of language with its own rules and conventions and the institutions within which the discourse is produced and circulated'. Nead reasons that art can be theorised as a discourse and that in the nineteenth century it evolved to encompass the cultural expressions and values of both high art and popular culture. This discourse consisted of the 'concatenation of visual images, the language and structures of criticism, cultural institutions, publics for art and the values and knowledges made possible within and throughout high culture'. Nead's definition of the forms, languages and socio-cultural structures constituting nineteenth-century art discourse complements Curtis's reading of Victorian cultural endeavour. Her argument that discourse is inclusive and embraces both commercial and high-art practice sets a precedent for the thesis research methodology and its concern with the historicizing of visual representation. Moreover Pajackowska theorises history as essentially discursive in addition to being engaged in archival analysis and classificatory practices. Hence I maintain that the arguments forwarded by Curtis, Nead, Pajackowska and Rose affirm graphical discourse as concerned with a cluster of interrelated theoretical and practitioner disciplines.

### *Graphical discourse, a synthesizing methodology*

Graphical discourse is theorised as a synthesizing methodology. The methodology, as the name suggests, takes into account the multi-discursive tasks in performing the thesis research. It is designed to integrate the sensible results of image/text analysis, cultural production, and disciplinary praxis to theoretical analysis. The scope encompassed by the research methodology covers the range of visual images produced for Australasian illustrated junior fiction, cultural vernacular and the high arts; and the values and knowledges made possible via the circulation of their forms. In the study I posit graphical discourse as operative in three associated areas:

- Permeating the boundaries and institutions of high art and visual communication design culture
- Engaged in theoretical issues relating to culture, communication and perception, visibility and representation
- Negotiating the interface between the visual domains of image and text

The following paragraphs explain the relevance of each of these points to the investigation.

The term, graphical discourse, has been created in recognition of the visual communication design specialism, illustration. It takes into account the situatedness of illustrated objects within the context of visual culture, design and academic discourse. Graphical discourse acknowledges the dialogue existing between the creative and theoretical disciplines of art and design. It also recognises the technologies and forms resulting from their specialist modes of practice and inquiry. In my study the research methodology is applied to investigating the influence of institutional power-based systems and socio-cultural relationships on disciplinary praxis. Additional to this it explores the various cultural practices used in the visual representation of popular beliefs and nationalist ideologies. As an adjective 'graphic' is key in describing the representational practices shared by the disciplines of illustration and fine art as well as literary writing and journalism. Included in these practices are

sketching, mapping, delineating, defining, tracing, plotting, framing and note-taking. Graphical discourse explores their application in the treatment of societal identities, political and institutional events, and cultural performances in children's literature, cultural vernacular and high art.

Teal Triggs (2000, 150) maintains that inquiry into graphic design 'can no longer rely on a discourse that merely discusses aesthetics' but should attempt to gain more 'understanding of communication and its social significance'.

Graphical discourse is intended to meet Trigg's challenge and to augment the literary methodologies used in the evaluation of children's literature.

Consequently the method of formal analysis used to assess the pictorial structure and iconographic content of Australasian illustrated junior fiction is supported by other factors. The research methodology inquires into the pedagogical, political and economic motivations for creating this literature.

Graphical discourse discusses the effects of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century economics, developing markets, socio-political events and collaborative enterprises familiar to print and design culture historiographies. It inquires into the performative nature and value of created artefacts outside of and subordinate to elitist cultural domains. It utilises the method of semiotic analysis to investigate the realities inherent in imagined and created worlds.

Central to the thesis and to the research methodology is the interrelationship between image and text. Feminist visual cultural theorists Carson and Pajaczkowska (2000, 1) assert that all 'cultures have a visual aspect'. These writers maintain that for the greater majority of people within any one culture the 'imagery, signs, styles and pictorial symbols' comprising its 'visual aspect' is the most 'powerful component'. Graphical discourse argues the relationship between image and text to be horizontal and interlinked. Thus in my critique of Australasian illustrated junior fiction and cultural vernacular both the written word of the text and the drawn line and modelled form of the illustration constitute the graphic image. The research methodology explores the

communicative power of the graphic image in articulating particular issues, which continue to remain socially and politically relevant.

### *Contextualising illustration and text as graphic images within graphical discourse*

In visual communication design discourse an illustration is generally defined as a communicative device created for an intended purpose. Its creation and form is linked to another graphic form, the text as embodying the argument, message, set of ideas, descriptions and actions contained within the plot, narrative or caption. In the literature created for junior and emergent readers an illustration is often closely aligned to the meanings embedded in the text in order to enhance literacy. In works created for adolescent and older readers an illustration is designed to engender a particular response. One of its intended functions, apart from substantiating images of desire, is to intelligibly communicate a set of cultural and moral codes appropriate to the age and gender of the reader. An illustration is primarily conceived as the resolution of a conceptual or working drawing based on the illustrator's initial interpretation of a supplied text.<sup>3</sup> Its genre form is, most often, governed by editorial direction while the illustrator is responsible for determining the figurative treatment of its characters and construction. Its subsequent shaping and modification integrates deliberately selected design elements to enhance and explicate the fictional content and factual information contained in the text. As previously identified (see p. 22) these elements constitute line, colour, shape, tonal value and volume in addition to negative space. The resulting work is dependent on the illustrator's technical competency and aesthetic sensitivity in manipulating this set of elements.

In most instances an illustration covers a field, a surface area marked out according to graphic design conventions as two-dimensional. In this two-

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<sup>3</sup> Rarely do creative collaborations with writers start with the illustrators. Even today most illustrators are approached by Art Editors or Art Directors and are provided with the specified text for illustration.

dimensional format, depth is implied through the systematic application of the devices of linear perspective and atmospheric perspective as well as scale. An illustration may consequently encompass the entire dimensions of the page, or what is termed 'bleeding off the page'. It may constitute a line drawing inserted into the surrounding text as a freely floating rhetorical device. It may be framed by a border and reproduced as a tipped in plate juxtaposing the body text or it may take the visual form of a vignette. I maintain that whatever its spatial expression and however it is placed in relation to the text, an illustration possesses an independent signifying function.

This assertion is formulated on Barthes's theory of image and text as different in their operation as conveyors of meaning. I contend that while an illustration is dependent on the text for its initial creation, its ultimate solution does not, in all cases, literally mimic the text word for word. Even when it appears to do so, and comes complete with a caption emphasizing its preferred meaning, its multi-level capacity may reference meanings other than indicated by the text. Consequently an illustration designed to represent a particular moment many pages into the narrative may, through editorial direction, be repositioned to appear as a frontispiece. Dislocated from its original sequence it then operates autonomously and in effect serves two cultural purposes. One of these is to illuminate the messages embedded in the title and caption and the other, to act as a visual imperative, a teaser. Through this act of interpolation the reader is drawn in and captured by a work signalling an episode or dramatic incident that will be encountered on further reading. The subsequent implications for the image-maker, the illustrator, who, at the turn of the twentieth century went under the professional name of the graphic artist, constitute part of this investigation.<sup>4</sup>

A piece of writing composed of symbol and sign elements such as: letters and numerals, punctuation marks, diacritics, lines and spaces, also possesses visual,

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<sup>4</sup> The term 'commercial artist' was to become synonymous with mid-twentieth century design practice and is attributed to the American corporate designer, Paul Rand.

tactile and spatial properties synonymous with the illustrated image. To simplify matters the written text, in this thesis, comprises that which is read, whose image is aural and whose meaning is systematically revealed over time in an unfolding linear and sequential fashion. The illustration, on the other hand, is apprehended as something that is complete and autonomous relative to the spatial organization of the text. To use a scopic cliché familiar to art as well as design discourse, an illustration is analogous to a window in disclosing a selectively framed view of figures and objects situated in space. This device enables the reader to pass from the two-dimensional plane, and to enter and occupy the activities, characters and settings imagined in the created world of three-dimensional space.

My study contends that illustrations are neither literal adjuncts of the text nor are they formal indicators of style and aesthetics. Although their discursive relationship appears sometimes slavish it does not, as Barthes suggests, preclude their functioning as independent graphic signifiers. Marita Sturken & Lisa Cartwright (2001, 1) assert that images 'have never been merely illustrations, they carry important content'. Visual language theorists Kress & van Leeuwen, and critical scholars Mallan and Rose maintain that even the simplest of illustrations, such as those created for emergent junior readers, are culturally significant and worthy of examination. I argue that the simple and sophisticated illustrations created for Australasian illustrated junior fiction are more than stylistic decoration. I postulate that even those based on the currency of decoration and verisimilitude, literalness and didacticism are evidence of the changes taking place in social attitudes.

My study examines the case of the illustrations created for this literature. It explores the illustrated images in tales of adventure, fantasy and fairytale as deriving their origin and points of view from discourses of imperialism and racial mythologies. My enquiry questions the normalcy of this perspective. It considers whether alternative narratives, such as those embedded in colonising practices of encounter and assimilation might not also be visible.

## *Terminology*

This section contains terminology specific to art and design discourse and literary critique and complementing the research methodology. Neither the terms listed nor the definitions are definitive. Instead each relates to the disciplinary practices, processes and phraseology encompassed in the inquiry and the historiography of design and print culture.

### *Domain-based terminology*

The title 'artist' defines hobbyist and professional creators working independently and for commission in any multi-dimensional and multi-media field. The 'graphic artist' by contrast designates a professional practitioner employed in the creation and design of two-dimensional artefacts intended for a commercial purpose. In the nineteenth century the term designated creators who, additional to their work in fine arts, produced images for the illustrated press. The term 'illustrator' describes a specialist practitioner engaged in a specific discipline of visual communication design. Unlike an artist, an illustrator works for commission and in collaboration with other specialists in the print and publishing industry. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century this group of practitioners also went under the title, 'working artists'.

In visual communication design terminology 'illustration' constitutes a two-dimensional graphic image designed to complement an accompanying piece of text. The generic phrase 'visual communication design' broadly encompasses a field of activity that specialises in communicating through the visual forms created by its subject disciplines: advertising, graphic design, illustration and typography. The term 'praxis' describes specialist activities applied in a professional skill based practice such as illustration. An 'engraver' is a skilled artisan working in a particular area of the print industry. Apprentice and master engravers, such as Dalziel Bros, were responsible for ensuring the transference of original working drawings on to woodblock plates for print.



### *Praxis-based terminology*

The following praxis based terms are common to the visual language of art and design discourse. The term 'composition' refers to the spatial arrangement of iconographic and symbolic elements within a predetermined format. The 'format' is a two-dimensional shape of specific dimensions in which illustration and text are composed along axial or grid lines. The 'axis' is a horizontal, vertical or diagonal line within the composition and is implicit in the spatial arrangement of iconographic elements. Formal design elements include recognisable terms such as colour, also known as hue, line, shape, mass and volume as well as tonal value. The phrase, 'tonal value', defines the variations in grey between the binaries black and white. The reproduction of illustrations, paintings and photographs became increasingly viable with the invention of photoengraving and half tone screens during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The terms 'atmospheric perspective' and 'linear perspective' relate to two principles used in art and illustration praxis to create the illusion of depth in a two-dimensional field. The former is the application of tonal value to scaled objects within a composition to create the illusion of deep space. The latter derives its origin from Renaissance humanist theories regarding visual perception and mathematics. Linear perspective is based on the assumption that the relationship of the viewer to the picture plane, synonymous with a window, is fixed at a right angle. From this static position various shapes and forms are constructed as having a one-point, two-point or three-point perspective relationship relative to the viewer and specific vanishing points on the horizon line.

'Mimesis' refers to the stylistic practice of copying and imitation and derives its theoretical currency from Greek and Roman classicist painting. 'Lifelike' studies and figuratively realistic imitative representations of life and nature were core to late nineteenth century academic appreciation. The term 'verisimilitude' relates to something that appears to be real or true. In this study

I examine figuratively realistic and mimetic representations in Australasian illustrated junior fiction and cultural vernacular as evidence of both a perceived and imagined reality.

The next set of terms: lithograph, chromolithograph, photoengraving, illustrated press, vignette and frontispiece relate to print and reproduction praxis. A 'lithograph' is a print made through the planographic process of lithography. This process is based on the principle that ink and oil are mutually repellent. The image area to be printed is treated so that it is attractive to oil based ink. The surrounding non-image area, or negative space, is treated to resist the same medium but to attract water. Lithographs were originally produced using heavy limestone blocks until the mechanisation of print in the early twentieth century when they were superseded by flexible metal plates. As the term suggests a 'chromolithograph' is a coloured version of the same process. Sophisticated and complex chromolithographic designs as, for example, posters, required successive printings of individual hand-drawn colour components to achieve the desired effect. 'Photoengraving' as the name implies was a photomechanical etching process. In this process graphic images (photographs, illustrations and text) were fixed on to photosensitised plates or woodblocks and then engraved as half tones. The 'illustrated press' collectively described international and nationally based papers and journals, which traded in the visual mediation of events through various formats. One of these was the 'vignette'. The term 'vignette' derives from photographic practices and is best described as a small (usually round or oval) image with an indistinct or blurred border. A 'frontispiece' is an illustration placed at the front of the book, usually facing the title page, and is motivated by authorial presence and narrative voice.

### *Figures of speech common in the creation and analysis of literary and visual artefacts*

The following terms metaphor, metonym and synecdoche, myth and rhetoric relate to literary discourse and are prevalent in the construction of Australasian illustrated junior fiction and the visual rhetoric of the illustrated press.

A 'metaphor' is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied comparatively to something else with which it is directly unrelated. An example often cited is the phrase my love is like a red, red rose. Linguistically and visually the comparative association of a thing with its signifier is dependent on social usage and familiarity with cultural convention for their meaning to be apparent. Hence a 'signifier becomes a metaphor only in certain syntactic contexts' and '*with reference to*, or in connection with another signifier' (Ruegg 1979, 144).

The phrase 'metonym' is an expression in which a thing, or an attribute or characteristic of that thing, is substituted for something with which it is closely aligned or contiguous to it. Lyotard describes its relationship within linguistic structures as syntagmatic. Examples of this figure usually associate things with institutional power such as the crown with the head of the monarchy or, as in popular images of ethnic Chinese of the formative period, the opium pipe with racial depravity and moral degeneracy. Ruegg posits that structuralist definitions of metaphor and metonymy are entrenched in the traditional hierarchical terminology of classical discourse. She maintains that both figurative terms are synonymous and 'involve a kind of substitution (of one signifier for another)' (Ruegg 1979, 145).

The term 'synecdoche' is similar in meaning. Synecdoche is a figure of speech where either one part of the whole represents the entire body or the whole represents the part. The symbolic example often given is the factory worker's hand as representing collective industrial unity. In this example the figure of the hand becomes a coded communicative device for another figure, namely a power-based system.

The term 'myth' has a number of associated meanings. It refers to a traditional story concerning the history of natural and social origins. It also refers to a particular character, theme or object as embodying the idealised beliefs and socio-cultural conventions of a group of people. In literary terminology it is an

educational story with an embedded moral meaning. Barthes (1972, 109) claims that 'myth is a type of speech' which is 'conveyed by a discourse'. Barthes speculates that because myth is a type of speech it is not limited to 'oral speech' but can encompass all manner of representational modes and even extend to the theatrical performances of political, public and sporting events. Barthes (1972, 124) further contends that as myth stems from a 'historical concept' its character is 'buttonholing' and directly contingent on social usage. Hence, as with previous figures of speech, myth can be selectively determined to represent a particular group or sub-group of any given society.

The term 'rhetoric' is a figure relating to oral and written speech and refers to the means by which an argument is forcefully and persuasively made. Like its oral and written modes of expression, visual rhetoric is dependent on the discursive and coded arrangement of symbols, indexical signs and icons to articulate concepts that are often specious. Barthes's postulation that pictures are inherently coded devices and imperative in their communication effectively describes how visual rhetoric operates on the reader/viewer.

### *Conclusion*

This chapter has argued the case for visual culture as a field of study in which the thesis is located. It has contended the research methodology, graphical discourse, as based on key concepts formulated by theoreticians Barthes and Lyotard. The implication connoted by the term 'graphic' suggests something that is made explicit, visible and transparent. Graphical discourse inquires into the multi-level capacity and communicative function of images in making transparent the terminology listed above. It examines the presence of figures of speech in the illustrative and narrative content of Australasian illustrated junior fiction. It investigates the 'silent' work performed by this literature in articulating the themes and issues of colonialism and nationalism with which the case study chapters are primarily concerned. In the next chapter I overview the published academic literature relating to the thesis topic and the critical discussions of the themes identified as pivotal to the dissertation.

### Chapter three: *An overview of Australasian illustrated junior fiction*

*'For many years, books for children were taken seriously by only a few adults. Today they are considered an essential part of western education and civilization'.  
Henry M. Saxby, A History of Australian Children's Literature 1841-1941  
(1969).*

#### *Introduction*

Saxby's comment on the status of children's literature within western systems of cultural endeavour and pedagogy remains a topical issue for academic debate. Since the publication of his work, this genre has continued to engage the interest of Australasian academics and literary critics. Notable amongst these are writers Clare Bradford, Betty Gilderdale, Diane Hebley, Roderick McGillis, Marcie Muir and Brenda Niall. Despite the assumption of academic marginalisation, and what Hebley (1998, 11) regards as 'critical neglect', inquiry into the significance and cultural power of junior fiction has been rigorous and provocative. In this chapter I overview the published academic literature relating to Australasian illustrated junior fiction from 1890-1920. The overview concentrates on recent and past inquiry into this subject and its mediation of colonial and national discourses. Chapter commentary focuses on its formation and articulation of commonly recognised themes, namely: the representation of the indigenous landscape, indigenous encounter, gender and race. Part of the chapter is also dedicated to reviewing the publishing and print history of this literature in Australia.

#### *Australasian illustrated junior fiction and the desire for belonging*

Muir and associated critics, Gilderdale, Hebley and Niall, relate that the desire for belonging found its clearest expression in 'the indigenous children's book' (Muir 1982, 18). These writers and book historian, Heather Scutter, locate the origins of Australasian illustrated junior fiction within the broader context of imperialism, colonial pedagogy and national cultural endeavour. They each

maintain that its genesis was the consequence of increased settlement, colonization and the impact of missionary and mercantile ambition. Gilderdale (1982, 2) and Saxby (1969, 31) state that pre-Federation works were purposefully moral, 'overwhelmingly didactic and earnest' in meeting the particular 'needs and interests' of Australasian-born readers. These mid to late nineteenth-century creations tended to focus primarily on reform and instruction. In contrast, the literature produced during the transitional decades of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century began to be inflected with issues specific to emergent nationalisms.

Historians Belich, Denoon et al, Gibbons and King identify the 1890s as the decade when national identity became a socio-cultural objective and political phenomenon. Donald Denoon, Philippa Mein-Smith and Marivic Wyndham claim that although both New Zealand and Australia were to suffer the economic effects of drought and depression, the decade for New Zealand was one of relative stability from the residual effects of the colonial land wars. In New Zealand the impetus to form literary and artistic institutions modelled on European concepts of culture and civilization took hold. Art galleries, libraries and academic institutions were consequently established in urban and provincial centres to celebrate the sense of pride and achievement in overcoming the privations of settlement and colonization. Gibbons (2002, 6) states that their formation resulted in 'optimistic assertions of nationhood in the cultural productions of writers and painters, and in enthusiastic applause for their works, from around the 1890s onward'. Moreover cultural theorists posit that one of the purposes for which a national literature and art was established was to endorse the mythologies popularly associated with the formation of nationhood. This purpose extended to the Australasian illustrated junior fiction created in the 1890s. Hence in Australia scholars and book historians consider the decade one of the 'most mythologised' for giving shape to a 'specifically Australian literary nationalism' (Lyons 2001, xvi).

Cultural representations of emerging nationalisms require popular and accessible mediums to operate through other than the traditional institution of the academy. I argue that the graphic artefacts of the period were both modern and influential in mediating masculine mythologies as well as the stereotypes of race, gender and indigeneity implicated in colonial and national discourses. The British illustrated press, and its Australasian counterpart effectively functioned as a communicative medium in two areas. In one of these it served as a vehicle for the public dissemination of information and imagery normally the domain of scientific discourse. Kerry Mallan claims that during the late nineteenth century it was common practice for knowledge of Australian and antipodean marvels to be circulated through the lithographs and wood engravings of the *Illustrated London News*. In New Zealand the 'cultural colonization' by print 'allowed the knowledge-gathering efforts of a handful of Pakeha to be put at the service of the colonial society in general' (Gibbons 2002, 9). In this way 'facts' formally accumulated through scientific practice, and by earlier exploration and settlement, became woven into Australasia's cultural vernacular and pedagogical material. In the following chapter I discuss the publishing strategy of juxtaposing fantasy with fact to cement popular perceptions of race and identity based on the master narrative of imperialism. I examine the purportedly factual representation of an historic event core to Australasian national mythologies. I address the use of the imagined in tales of adventure in bolstering nationalistic views of colonization and civilizing endeavour.

The illustrated press and popular literary journals, such as the *Lone Hand*, also acted as agents in mediating topical socio-cultural and political issues. Amongst those occupying the creative attention of working writers and illustrators were the legend of the Kelly Gang, Federation, White Australia Policy, 'dying race' mythologies and colonial wars. Against the popular treatment of indigenous decline, war, Federation anxiety and suffrage, New Zealand and Australia developed specific cases for belonging. The literature produced for the local market and for international junior readers responded accordingly. On the one hand it embraced the larger concerns confronting identity. On the other it

negotiated issues particular to the impact of settlement and colonization in urban centres and regional districts. Notable amongst these were: the displacement and assimilation of indigenous people, urban wealth resulting from the discovery of gold, and the fear of contamination from encounter and interaction with ethnic and degenerate others.

Women were characteristically absent from this cultural production. Saxby (1969, 33) claims that in colonial adventure fiction it is predominantly 'a man's world where sex as such is never mentioned; and when there are girls or womenfolk present they are seldom allowed to play an important role in the actual plot'. Denoon et al (2000, 135) acknowledge the critique of colonization and 'male archetypes' by 'feminist scholars' and suggests 'pioneer mythology' to be 'friendlier' and more accommodating of women. Raewyn Dalziel argues that in New Zealand the guardian of the colony's well-being, the colonial helpmeet, was ascribed a degree of moral status and freedom which lead to success in emancipation. Dalziel (2001, 187) asserts that 'the colonial environment opened new doors. It gave, within the context, an accepted role, a sense of purpose, a feeling of usefulness and a greater degree of independence than the woman migrant had experienced before'.

In contrast to this reading, the treatment of women in the Australian creation of nationhood is contended as affirming the masculine centrality of its construction. Kay Schaffer (1988, 22) claims that women were associated with the landscape as silent and passive and as the terrible or 'cruel mother'. She argues that they were consequently perceived as actively consuming Australian first-born, and as consolidating masculine fantasies in the symbolic spaces of the bush and the outback.<sup>1</sup> Women were thus a cultural contradiction. In the

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<sup>1</sup> An example of a gendered trope common to masculine adventure can be found in a serial tale created for the Australian publication, the *Lone Hand*. Accompanying the narrative is an illustration of a Maori woman rescuing the narrator/hero from his near death by drowning. The representation of the indigenous woman as an idealised Pacific sex symbol conforms to masculine fantasy and is far removed from more culturally aware representations of Maori in the illustrated press.



illustrated press of the 1890s stereotypes of emancipated women were satirised as constituting a threat to masculinity. In the Australasian illustrated junior fiction of the early twentieth century the treatment of women and girls diverged according to contemporary perceptions of gender. On one hand they functioned as iconic vessels for morality and paternal power. On the other they symbolised gendered liberation and egalitarianism. In the imported annuals of the same period their representation conformed to the effects of socio-political change and suffrage on society. The difference between the two modes is intriguing and raises questions about the ideas and values that were in circulation and disseminated through internally produced and imported creations. It suggests that the focus of the former was on promoting the ideals associated with nationhood while the latter was the result of editorial change and was intended as empowering and educating its audience of readers. To what extent first-generation Australasian-born girl readers were influenced by the message of empowerment and suffrage remains a topic for further investigation.

However Schaffer (1998, 23) argues that it 'is not always women who occupy the imaginary and symbolic space of Other. Objects which stand in a desired or despised relation to man – the land, the Chinese, migrants and Aborigines – can also be so marked'. In post-Federation Australian children's literature representations of Aborigines, Chinese and migrants from the Indian sub-continent were directly informed by two factors, namely assimilation and exclusion. The effect of this was that while indigenous and ethnic types were imagined as assimilated and integrated into the power-based systems of colonial and outback societies, they were also represented as marginalised and excluded. Hence representations of indigenous and diasporic others in landscapes mythologised as 'empty', and as sites of conflict, occupation and possession were important if ambiguous figures.

In literary, fine art, visual, and cultural studies analysis the landscape constitutes a primary topic for discursive treatment. In the subject area of children's literature, discussion of this motif has mainly concentrated on its

metaphoric and metonymic function in fairytale and adventure narratives. Critical investigation of Australasian illustrated junior fiction rarely examines extant texts for evidence of its illustrative treatment. Saxby (1969, 124) asserts that during the first two decades of the twentieth century 'artwork ... became an accepted feature of children's books, and after 1918 the critic must apply artistic as well as literary standards in judging these books'. Bradford, Mallan and Muir are critics who attempt to do just this. Their findings, and the assertion of Saxby, provide a starting point for this thesis and its examination of stock figures and key motifs in image and text.

The writers selected for review have made a significant contribution in bringing national children's literatures to critical attention. In commenting on the colonial and postcolonial articulation of indigeneity, gender and race, they demonstrate the continued relevance of this subject for authors and illustrators alike. Unfortunately little academic study into the print and publishing history of New Zealand illustrated junior fiction exists. To fill in this gap the chronological survey draws on current Australian commentary. The following section begins accordingly with Muir's historical account as precursor to nationally informed critiques. This section includes her assessment of one of the period's key illustrators whose work supports my reading of topical themes.

### *A feeling for the country, the cultural production of Australia's emergent junior fiction*

Muir's *A History of Australian Children's Book Illustration* (1982) charts the publishing history of this literature from the early 1800s to the late 1900s. Muir begins her discussion by locating the scope of her inquiry within nineteenth-century print and publishing practices, and the effects of nationalism on genre and book production style. One of her observations is pivotal to the thesis and to the research study. Muir (1982, 21) states that 'the history of the publication of the first children's books in any country is invariably an uncertain one, casually mentioned in any records kept, if at all'. My research into the archival

history of the New Zealand publisher Alfred Dudingston Willis and the immigrant illustrator to Australia, John MacFarlane, bears out the validity of her statement.

Muir's chronological account identifies a number of factors shared by other researchers and historians of Australasian illustrated junior fiction and print culture. Like Howsam and Saxby, Muir (1982, 10) notes that organizations such as 'The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Religious Tract Society ... became prolific publishers of books for children'. According to Muir the primary motivation of these London-based publishers was instructional as well as moral. Consequently the focus of its publications was on instructing its England-based and colonial audiences on the importance of upholding 'the traditional observance of the Christian religion and high moral standards'.<sup>2</sup> Apart from this imported material, little was produced that was designed specifically for Australasian-born readers.

Economic pressures and lack of population are identified by this writer as contributing factors in preventing the early establishment of local publishing houses. In considering the impact of these factors on production, Muir's position diverges from the literary focus of Gilderdale, Hebley and McGillis, the historical and visual analysis of Saxby and Mallan, and the postcolonial reading of Bradford. Muir equates the appearance of Australian works for children as being influenced by a number of causes. These she lists as the rise in settlement, stable population, urban expansion, economic growth, Federation, and the imported expertise in print technology and reproduction. Muir (1982, 23) states that prior to the 1890s 'the population of even the larger cities of Sydney and Melbourne was not large or stable enough to provide a market for the publication of children's books'. Moreover works for children were 'being

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<sup>2</sup> An evocative example of this civilizing mission is the collection of adventure tales produced by the author/illustrator Robert Michael Ballantyne and entitled *The Cannibal Islands; Tales of Adventures in Forest and Flood* (1910). In this work Christian ideals frame the stereotypic representation of heroic archetypes and pigeonhole Polynesian peoples as savage and in need of Christian redemption.

produced very competitively in industrialized England and exported to the Australian colonies'. However Muir (1982, 25) notes that this cultural deficit was to change in the final decade of the nineteenth century as 'the burgeoning of national feeling' combined with 'ideas of federation ... gave an impetus to literary and artistic achievement'. Two events expedited this achievement in relation to Australian illustrated junior fiction. One was the establishment of Angus & Robertson in Sydney and the other was the arrival of the agent of the London based publisher Ward, Lock & Co. to Melbourne. Their business enterprise ensured that the material created for the local market was more than a subsidiary venture of bookselling and printing.

Synonymous with the colonial term 'native born' which some cultural theorists apply to those first-generation born in New Zealand, the descriptor 'indigenous' is a generic term for creations originating from a particular country or region. This notion is core to Muir's examination of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century book production style. In Australia the establishment of the aforementioned colonial publishers provided opportunities for immigrant as well as first-generation-born image-makers to find means of employment and self-expression. Notable amongst the latter were the Australian-born journalist, Mary Grant Bruce, the author/illustrator May Gibbs, and the author Ethel Turner. Muir relates that Angus & Robertson had success with Australian writers and 'commissioned graphic artists such as F. P. Mahony and George Lambert, who were contributing work of a high quality to the *Bulletin* and other papers'. In addition she states that while 'the publisher William Brooks employed D. H. Souter' (Muir 1982, 26) MacFarlane emerged as the foremost illustrator for writers Joseph Bowes and Bruce. Muir (1982, 47) also mentions that another contemporary, 'R. M. Ballantyne illustrated his own books with well-drawn, realistic illustrations'.

Federal and nationalistic ambitions were subsequently realised through late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Australasian illustrated junior fiction. For the most part boys' adventure tales became the publishers' stock-in-trade

by which New Zealand and Australian-based readers were informed about life in the colony. Muir (1982, 47) contends that the themes of this genre 'whether written for publication in book form, serial publication, or both, were banal and predictable'. She states that they typically included: shipwreck, desert adventure, the discovery of gold, bushfires, bushrangers, hunting as well as the ubiquitous 'conflict with Blacks'. Key to my inquiry is her observation that the majority of these texts 'were capably and prolifically illustrated' by immigrant illustrators to Australia.

In addition to colonial themes Muir identifies the Boer War and World War I (W.W. I) as definitive in driving home the patriotism associated with emergent nationalisms. She accordingly states that the former conflict 'was responsible for a deliberate strengthening of patriotic sentiment, and from then until the end of the First World War there was a strongly patriotic tone in many boys books' (Muir 1982, 50). However her commentary excludes the adventure fiction created for girl readers during the first two decades of the twentieth century. I will argue in chapter seven that not only was W.W. I salient in informing boy's adventure fiction but it noticeably influenced the shaping of the latter category.

Immigrants skilled in print and reproduction technology and illustration praxis had a profound effect in mobilising the nationalistic sentiment of New Zealand and Australia. Within the broader context of Australia's cultural vernacular, popular graphic artefacts the *Bulletin*, the *Lone Hand*, the *Australasian Sketcher* and *The Illustrated Australian News*, provided ample space for the work of immigrant and first-generation born artist/illustrators. These figures included Fred Leist, Norman Lindsay, John MacFarlane, Frank P. Mahony, Phil May and D. H. Souter. Unlike Gilderdale, Hebley, Niall and Saxby, Muir appraises several of these artist/illustrators as creating the quintessential images of Australia that were circulated at home and abroad. She notes that although 'Australian artists were producing good black and white work for the *Bulletin* and other papers, few had any training as illustrators, and it would take some

years before the necessary experience could be acquired' (Muir 1982, 18). Tacit in her appraisal is the assumption that the colony's fledgling creative community was dependent on overseas publishing knowledge and artistic and technical expertise.

Commentators of the period (William Pember Reeves for example) remarked on the lack of artistic ability in colonial New Zealand and Australia. Cultural historians postulate settler and colonial societies to have had little spare time for creative pursuits. Consequently the academic and vocational institutions through which immigrant artists and practitioners would gain training and exhibit their work were not founded until the latter part of the nineteenth century. Amongst the immigrant artist/illustrators employed in children's literature, graphic publishing and in founding creative communities, three were pre-eminent. These were the New Zealand-based Robert Atkinson and George Sherriff and the Australian-based MacFarlane. MacFarlane was associated in a minor capacity with the Heidelberg School, a group of nationalistically inspired painters that also included, for a short period, Atkinson. MacFarlane, however, remains an enigma despite his connections with the Heidelberg community and the commercial world of the illustrated press. In contrast to Atkinson and his well-known contemporaries, the erotically charged Norman Lindsay and the influential Phil May, the latter figure is mostly unknown.

Muir (1982, 57) describes MacFarlane's work as having such 'a feeling for the country' that he 'breathed life into his books as no other illustrator up to that time did'. Although this writer credits him for his treatment of the Australian landscape, Saxby considers his interpretation of Aboriginal themes in Bruce's collection *The Stone Axe of Burkamukk* (1922) to be less successful. According to Saxby (1969, 156) 'aborigines tended to be used merely as incidental characters appearing now and again to stress the Australian nature of a story' as for example Black Billy 'the station hand in the "Billabong" series'. Saxby subsequently critiques MacFarlane's figurative treatment of the Australian Aborigine as an imaginary construct not based on reality. I speculate that a

more positive case can be made for this artist/illustrator's treatment of the indigenous people of Australia. I suggest that the criticisms levelled at this image-maker highlight the issue of aesthetic preference and literary perspectives in informing critical assessment. I maintain that awkwardness in figurative representation is symptomatic of learning to see and that colonial representations varied in their application of that knowledge.

Of the artist/illustrators employed by colonial publishers MacFarlane is acknowledged as 'the most successful of Ward Lock's artists to interpret Australia' (Muir 1982, 63). Muir's reading suggests that the popularity of his work may owe something to 'his love of horses'. As no evidence, self-reflective or otherwise, exists to enlighten us as to his praxis or his interests, this is a moot point. Before the advent of mechanised transport, horses were the primary mode of travel in urban centres and vital to rural and outback communities. Their frequent appearance in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century images is hardly surprising. What her critique possibly references are the stylistic conventions of monumental sculpture, genre painting and animal portraiture typical of the period. In the colonies, as in Britain, this repertoire of stock subjects was recognised by academic institutions and their audiences as legitimate 'art'. In New Zealand the paintings produced by artist/illustrators Atkinson and Sherriff for their colonial clientele exhibited a similarly fashionable and stylistic tendency.

In addition to covering sporting activities, MacFarlane built his reputation on his paintings of the heroes and legendary moments of Australia's early period of European exploration. According to Muir (1982, 63) 'the drawings he made of historical scenes in Australian exploration' were then printed and 'seen in many places'. Six of these art works were subsequently published by the Melbourne-based publisher George Robertson & Co., and sold to schools as pedagogical and patriotic images. In a supplementary booklet entitled *The Teacher's handbook* Long (1912, preface) promotes MacFarlane's figurative treatment of six of the major European explorers as 'real personages'. Compiled by the Inspector of

Schools, and the Education Department of Victoria, this booklet provided specific information as to how the composition of each illustration should be interpreted by teachers of junior readers. In the typography of the period The Teacher advertises 'Robertson's Australian History Pictures' as 'A SPLENDID SERIES of SIX REMBRANDT PHOTOGRAVURES ... Painted by John MacFarlane, from Descriptions supplied by CHARLES R. LONG, M. A., Inspector of Schools'.

However MacFarlane's repertoire was not limited to the sole depiction of legendary heroes or eponymous equine events such as the Melbourne Cup. As one of the creative team of *The Illustrated Australian News* his extensive output ranged from representing cultural events to the nationalistic celebration of industrial growth. Consequently the Afghan camel, a trope synonymous with the desert and, in Australia with advances in communication, constituted part of his repertoire. In addition to this stock motif his subject matter included Australian Aborigines and their mythology, Afghan, Chinese, and Indian ethnic others as well as the modern woman who was lampooned by his contemporary, Souter, in the illustrated press. Hence I maintain that it is possible to ascertain, with a little more certainty, the approach and reach of this elusive man by reviewing his illustrations for junior fiction alongside those created for the illustrated press.

There are two reasons that might explain previous critics' oversight of MacFarlane's professional praxis. The first is that Muir's critique is primarily an historical account of the commercial and nationalistic interests motivating the publishing and production of Australian illustrated junior fiction. The other is that the scope of her inquiry concentrates on book production styles rather than on the graphic artefacts of the illustrated press. I also surmise the absence of the nationalistic posters to be their lack of relevance to her assessment of MacFarlane as the Billabong series illustrator. Furthermore, neither Muir, nor Saxby, mention that this foremost immigrant image-maker to Australia dealt with themes other than those that were definitively Australian. His wood



engraved illustrations of Captain Cook's voyages, for example, also appeared alongside articles written for the *New Zealand School Journal*. These derive from Walter Besant's canonical text *Captain Cook* (1890) and notably deal with the archetypal explorer's encounter with the indigenous people of New Zealand, the Maori. Muir also neglects to mention that his work for Melbourne-based publisher Ward Lock & Co., and George Robertson & Co., would, in effect, serve as visual rhetoric for nationalistic and patriotic sentiment. For these reasons I posit MacFarlane as one of the leading artist/illustrators in the graphic history of Australasia and warranting further examination.

MacFarlane's interpretative abilities combined with his drafting skill and command over media are apparent in his published images for Australasian illustrated junior fiction and the illustrated press. They are, most likely, the reasons for his high profile. However I am interested in discovering what his images communicate apart from their aesthetic appearance and pedagogic purpose. I am intrigued as to what can be discerned in his figurative treatment of gender as well as ethnic and indigenous stereotypes. In the case study investigation I question whether this illustrator's representations are examples of institutionalised paternalism or indicative of a colonial society in transition. The overriding observation in Muir's assessment is that children's literature is a synthesis of style and aesthetic treatment, commercialism and economics. Although Muir refers to the subject matter in the illustrations and their thematic association with genre, she refrains, as does Saxby, from entering into an examination of their explicit or implicit meanings. Instead her study affirms the importance of print and production and creative praxis in the formation of Australasian illustrated junior fiction. In the next section I discuss New Zealand writers Gilderdale and Hebley and their respective critiques of the landscape in New Zealand literature for children.

*Different in accent and vocabulary: landscape and belonging in New Zealand junior fiction*

Gilderdale's *A Sea Change: 145 Years of New Zealand Junior Fiction* (1982) covers the period from 1833 to 1978. Her historical survey traces the lineage of classic literary forms in informing the emergence and changing shape of this literature. It centres on the symbolic story, and how the genre of fantasy in particular, evolved to convey issues specific to the New Zealand-born reader. Gilderdale's analysis commences with New Zealand's Anglo-Celtic newness and the socio-cultural questions confronting settlement and colonization. Her critique concludes with a review of late twentieth-century junior fiction and postmodern genres of fantasy and science fiction in articulating matters relating to conservation, war and prejudice.

Like Hebley and Australian critics Bradford, Muir and Niall, Gilderdale (1982, 1) discusses the tendency for imported models such as the romantic genres of fantasy and adventure to become imbued with the 'vocabulary' of the local. Gilderdale's commentary includes the assertion that as Victorian and Edwardian class-based systems considered illustrations to be vulgar – part of the common lot, the uneducated, earlier works for junior readers were primarily text based. She subsequently applies a literary methodology to unpack the thematic content and stylistic patterns prevalent in New Zealand fantasy novels and picture books as evidence of these conventions. Included in this discussion is the importance of metaphor in delineating place as well as the ability of language to conjure up images.

In her critique, Gilderdale (1982, 2) observes that additional to incorporating antipodean concepts of 'strangeness' and 'difference' colonial works for New Zealand born readers relied on the landscape and 'dying race' theory as core motifs for belonging. In the cultural vernacular of New Zealand, the landscape and 'dying race' mythology were fundamental topoi in cementing perceptions of identity. As a colony the country was advertised nationally and internationally

as a geographic ideal for the dual purposes of pleasure and economic betterment. Its attributes, and its identity, were purposefully accentuated in the artefacts of high art, the illustrated press and tourist ephemera as distinct and unique. The cultural wealth of indigenous people, as observed by historians Denoon et al, Gibbons and King, was influential in this imagined construction. Immigrant and New Zealand-born authors and artist/illustrators engaged in the acquisition of local knowledge to deliberately strengthen their literary and artistic practice.<sup>3</sup> Gibbons (2002, 9) relates that despite ‘individual exceptions, and leaving aside the activities of surveyors, land purchase agents and other government functionaries who worked closely with Maori, most colonists did not obtain substantial knowledge of indigenous matters’. One woman who did so was the immigrant author, Kate McCosh Clark.

From the New Zealand junior fiction created during the period 1890-1920, Gilderdale selects the few extant texts formulated according to the literary conventions of fantasy. These comprise Kate McCosh Clark’s *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (1891), James Duigan’s *Tiki’s Trip to Town* (1893), and Dorothea Moore’s *Fairyland in New Zealand: A Story of the Caves* (1909). In this set Duigan’s prosaic title appears an anomaly. However I suspect that its inclusion is due to the literary form of its text, an ode describing the transformation in status of the hero adventurer. According to Gilderdale (1982, 3-4) such forms are an important indicator of junior fiction’s multi-dimensional nature and point to its commonality ‘with poetry and parable than with other literary forms’.

I argue that Duigan’s picture book is not a fairytale or fantasy but a fable amalgamated with fact. This book was entirely locally written, illustrated and published in one of the regional centres of New Zealand. On one level the literary and figurative treatment of its characters conforms to late nineteenth-century ideas concerning racial theory and morality. On another its

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<sup>3</sup> Avril Bell (1996) and historian Peter Gibbons (1998) have both critiqued the cultural practice of acquisition and ownership of knowledge in the creation of artefacts as socio-politically exploitative.

representation of Maori and pakeha is indicative of colonialist perceptions of indigenous people as assimilated and acculturated. The matter of morality and its association with colonising practices and institutional power-based systems is not limited to this book. It is equally apparent in Australian tales of adventure and will be the focus of debate in chapter six.

Gilderdale identifies themes consistently appearing in New Zealand children's literature. Foremost amongst these are the key vehicle of the family, a nuclear prototype signifying security and belonging. The others are listed by the writer as: inter-cultural relationships, naming, dress and conduct, the physical and social 'confrontation' with the bush, climatic conditions, and the contradictory figure of the 'noble savage' (Gilderdale 1982, 5). Her critique of these tropes, and their function in conveying the existential nature of colonialism resonates with Gibbons's remarks regarding the use of fact and fiction in New Zealand's European cultural production. Gilderdale (1982, 3) claims that 'newly established countries have far more difficulty with fantasy' and that two of the requirements for growing the 'world of the imagination' are a 'sense of security' and place. Hence, in the opinion of this writer, the ideological dichotomy between fact and fiction in colonial New Zealand fantasy tales resulted in a compromised product. Gilderdale contends this pattern is not specific to, or necessarily representative of emergent colonial children's literature. Instead she maintains that it is similarly apparent in many English books, and is evidence of 'the unhappy alliance between J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* and Victorian moralistic traditions' (Gilderdale 1982, 114).

Gilderdale asserts that the translation of a preconceived and historically recognisable structure, such as fantasy, into a new and colonised culture was accompanied by conflict. 'The displaced settler finds his unconscious mind teased by archetypal witches and dragons while his conscious mind is occupied with creating a new and appropriate life in very different landscapes' (Gilderdale 1982, 114). The consequence of this conflict was the subsumption

of the artistic vision of many late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century authors in moralistic pedagogy and didacticism. Fortunately for the Australasian-born reader not all books created for their moral and pedagogic betterment displayed such a preference. A few managed the successful integration of fact and fiction in mediating the conditions of the new world for the colonial child. In chapter five I argue that the success in translating traditional myths into antipodean settings was due in no small measure to the technical skill and acquired local knowledge of immigrant and first-generation born image-makers.

Although line illustrations are editorially inserted in the body of Gilderdale's writing, she refrains from entering into any in-depth analysis of the illustrations as such. Those that are discussed are the creations of the botanical artist Emily Harris for Sarah Rebecca Moore's tale *Fairyland in New Zealand: A Story of the Caves* (1909). Gilderdale (1982, 119) claims that Moore's book is 'well produced and the decorative drawings by Emily Harris are happily married with the text to give a pleasing overall appearance'. The writer's assessment of this work is appropriate given that one of the primary functions of illustrations then, as now, is to explicate the meanings in the text. However as this fantasy tale contains both botanical and imagined scenes Gilderdale's conclusions are somewhat indeterminate. Hence I surmise that her comments directly refer to the illustrator's observational images and not the latter.

Gilderdale's appraisal of Harris is positive, contradicting her critique of early New Zealand illustrated junior fiction as comparatively less significant to the literature produced and imported from abroad. Moore's fantasy tale was Harris's sole adventure into junior fiction. Consequently I find it paradoxical that she rates a mention while Atkinson, the illustrator for *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* and Sherriff, the illustrator for *Tiki's Trip to Town* pass unremarked. When all three books are compared alongside one another the illustrations created by Atkinson far surpass Harris in technical competency and artistic sensitivity. Those of Harris are undeniably quaint in their execution whereas those by

Atkinson are far more complex. I argue that the latter works provide a compelling insight into the way in which immigrant artist/illustrators managed the reframing of the strange and the different into the known and the familiar. I suspect that Gilderdale's evaluation of Harris is due to her cultural significance as a botanical illustrator as her abilities do not extend to dealing with the intricacies inherent in junior fiction.

I will conclude my review of Gilderdale's writing by returning to the reasons for its undertaking. Like Benjamin and Saxby, Gilderdale states that the purpose of her survey is to challenge the assumptions of junior fiction's lesser status as a topic of academic study.

Children are not lesser beings, they are different, and literature appropriate to them is as much as discipline as poetry, drama, or the adult novel; indeed it is often a direct descendent to the myth, the epic and the romance traditions. Nevertheless, until it is accorded academic recognition it is unlikely that general standards will be improved, and if this survey contributes to a heightened awareness of those issues it will have achieved its purpose (Gilderdale 1982, 9).

Gilderdale's argument was confirmed a decade or so later by Hebley in connection with New Zealand junior fiction, by Bradford and Mallan in their critique of Australian children's literature and by McGillis in relation to junior fiction's canonical texts. While she claims that New Zealand works 'were not ready to participate in the first golden age of children's literature' (Gilderdale 1982, 2) I argue that they are definitely worth considering within the wider context of emerging nationalisms and national cultural endeavour.

Instead this writer makes a far more important point similarly propounded by later critics of junior fiction such as Hebley, McGillis and Mallan. For Gilderdale (1982, 140) 'good children's literature' need not be complex or long to be meaningful. Instead she contends that by using 'images which work on

different levels' of signification this literature is able to communicate in a manner that is in direct contradistinction to its sometimes simple construction. My objective in taking up the multi-dimensional character of Australasian illustrated junior fiction is to reinvestigate how local motifs were strategically employed in the mediation of colonial discourse and national identity in image and text. Two of the New Zealand works that form the focus of this discussion are *A Southern Cross Fairytale* and *Tiki's Trip to Town*. Each will be examined for evidence of acquired knowledge in communicating the experiential reality of the New Zealand-born reader.

Hebley's study *The Power of Place: Landscape in New Zealand Children's Fiction 1970-1989* (1998) commences with the decade concluding Gilderdale's inquiry. Key to Hebley's (1998, 9) argument is her assertion that junior fiction is not merely 'pictorial' and therefore mimetic or literally interpretative, but strategic in its representation of characters, themes and issues. The emphasis this writer places on the term 'pictorial' resonates with the argument for multi-dimensional complexity postulated by Gilderdale and Mallan. Hebley bases her criticism of New Zealand junior fiction on a relational reading of the landscape and its geographic motifs. She contends, as do Mallan and McGillis, that these tropes modify character development and inform value systems and power-based structures. Her reading resumes Gilderdale's reference to the use of scientific discourse in legitimising myths of belonging, White's exploration of national identity as type, and Bradford's explication of essentialist philosophy as marking the indigene.

Hebley's argument regarding the marginalised status of junior fiction within academic inquiry conforms to the views expressed by Gilderdale and McGillis. She alleges that critical 'neglect and, therefore, virtual suppression of any area of literature indicate a perceived lack of value in that literature' (Hebley 1998, 11). Moreover she suggests that junior fiction has been trivialised because of its general association with the gendered roles traditionally performed by women within society. In supporting this assumption this writer cites Mary V. Jackson

as stating that 'the minor attention' paid to this genre is due to 'two still potent and academic biases – a tendency to discount and devalue culture when related to the world of the child and a rooted disdain for whatever seems simple and uncomplicated' (Hebley 1998, 11).

Hebley's (1998, 11) response to academic stereotyping is that while some junior fiction is without doubt 'simple and uncomplicated' it is 'nevertheless interesting and often deceptive in dealing with human experiences such as death'. To further strengthen her position she argues that critics such as McGillis consider children's literature as playing an important part in influencing the construction and maintenance of power-based structures and belief systems. In addition to this claim she asserts that in 'New Zealand, there is no comparable earlier golden age in terms of literary excellence and international recognition' (Hebley 1998, 12). While this assertion is less relevant to her investigation, the former substantiates her research as aiming to raise critical awareness of this subject and its suitability for rigorous inquiry.

Hebley makes some profound points regarding children's literature. She suggests that its capacity to deal with perennial and universal themes as well as its work in informing the construction of national identity offers interesting opportunities for analysis. Hebley's evaluation concentrates primarily on the New Zealand junior fiction created in latter part of the twentieth century as distinct from imported European and American writing. It consequently centres on the tropic power of the landscape as culturally intrinsic in characterizing belonging and identity for British colonized societies. However the scope of her survey also encompasses earlier colonial period adventure tales as providing the thematic template for later tales focusing on frontier and masculine mythologies. In addition to critiquing their influence, Hebley comments on themes of isolation, death, remoteness and emptiness as constituting a core European response to the colonised landscape and its sites of encounter.



Hebley maintains that along with the geographic proximity of the sea, topographical features collectively influenced changes in character development. The tropes she identifies as influential in this capacity comprise the bush, the beach, islands, volcanoes and caves, and in Australia, the desert interior and outback. In addition to these sites Hebley argues the eponymous adventures of Robinson Crusoe as providing the initial inspiration for junior fiction's adventure tales. Citing J. R. Townsend she states that island themes, 'especially the desert-island theme from Crusoe ... have served for innumerable children's books and are by no means worn out'" (Hebley 1998, 33). Saxby (1969, 30) relates that 'the *Robinson Crusoe* type of story was repeated so frequently in the children's book of the nineteenth century that the French coined the term *Robinsonnades* to describe them'. This packaged formula consisted of treasure-seeking adventurers, paradise islands and lost boys mediated through Australasian and Polynesian indigenous peoples as local containers for Boy Friday. From this prototypical template emerged the mythology of the 'man alone'. This gendered type derived from John Mulgan's novel of the same name and came to dominate Australasia's cultural vernacular and high art in the mid twentieth century.

Hebley contends that in twentieth-century junior fiction the function of the landscape is not merely physical in the pictorial or literal sense but metaphorical. In employing the pictorial as a metaphor to infer psychological states, Hebley conjures up the most potent schemata associated with identity and belonging. For this writer the landscape is heavily invested with the theme of isolation providing a powerful vehicle for emerging nationalisms. Savage and hostile it is always seeking to claim that which is tamed and ordered. Her literary analysis of this motif posits its distinctive sites as either idyllic or dangerous. The mountains are impassable, the rivers, places of mortality, and the beaches, sites of illicit activity or sites of *tapu* (sacredness). As such they are demarcated by encounter and engagement, revelation and confrontation. According to Hebley (1998, 48) the beach, the bush and the river are places of 'racial confrontation' where engagements are paraded through stereotype.

Hebley's reading alleges that as '-scapes', these sites are invested with psychological import and an imagined reality. Consequently the key themes embedded in her reading of New Zealand illustrated junior fiction constitute danger and survival, order and disorder, whereas for Gilderdale the primary issue was morality.

In the critique of colonial literature and art, the trope of the landscape frequently appears as a backdrop on to which cultural perceptions of indigenous people are projected. Dominating this projection was the conflation of indigenous people and the indigenous landscape with notions of passivity and 'terra nullius', which the Australian historian, Henry Reynolds, critiques as specious. Likewise Australian writers Bradford and Schaffer contest prevailing assumptions associating women, the indigene and the landscape as feminine, hence passive and weak, or as the dark, terrible mother. Although Hebley is not so direct in her comparisons, her commentary similarly explores the implications of indigenous and European belief systems in informing representations of the landscape.

Hebley's (1998, 138) analysis of the Waikato River in the 'adventure / survival stories' of the 1970s and 1980s, and as symbolic of the fear of drowning, is such an example. Hebley maintains that this motif is a container for alternative experiences and memories of place. She claims that in 'settler times, European immigrants came to New Zealand with attitudes to rivers from another hemisphere and were slow to respond to what they found in this unpredictable and powerful landscape'. In contradistinction to this perspective the river, for New Zealand's indigenous people, the Maori, was more than a metaphorical signifier. Rivers were vital to their generational existence as 'suppliers of food and of *mana*, territorial markers and highways for their proud canoes. They had to know them in order to live them'. Thus for this writer the river comprises a powerful motif connoting psychological tension and conflict in late twentieth-century New Zealand junior fiction. I assert that it was no less emblematic in the junior fiction of the colonial period. I argue that its representation in this

literature was based on personal experience with local customs as well as knowledge of imperial power-based institutions.

From their different positions Gilderdale and Hebley provide a comparative synopsis of New Zealand junior fiction and its concern with perennial themes and motifs. The motif discerned as central to this literature and pivotal in the ongoing formation of identity, is the landscape. For late nineteenth-century immigrant and international audiences, the particularities of the indigenous landscape, its fauna and flora and people were unfamiliar. The impenetrable bush metaphorically associated with psychic instability and dislocation, was made familiar through its transformation into a recognisable symbol. This cultural transformation began with the importation of fantasy and adventure genres. The relocation of these formulaic genres into antipodean settings and the absorption of local content into their narratives resulted in a set of identifiable themes.

In Australasian illustrated junior fiction the figurative devices and tropes employed in the representation of colonization appear thematically similar. However in incorporating indigenous culture, fauna and flora in what Gibbons describes as an amalgam of fact and fiction, the literature of New Zealand was noticeably different and exploited as such. Like the works originating in Australia it was entirely reflective of the distinctive geographic and topological characteristics of the country. In the adventure tales of the formative period, indigenous 'Boy Fridays' similarly captured the effect of regional colonising practices. As a result Hebley (1998, 177) concludes that 'New Zealanders now generally believe that a national identity is discernible in this country through distinctive cultural practices as well as geographical location'.

Although neither Gilderdale nor Hebley provide any illustrative material to elaborate their ideas or support their findings, I acknowledge the groundwork opened up by their critique. The scope covered by their inquiry has been valuable in assisting me to establish the theoretical precedence for my own

investigation. Immigrants to New Zealand arrived with various preconceptions, captured by the advertising and marketing strategies of the New Zealand Assisted Immigration Company. Some were probably familiar with popular images of New Zealand Maori and landscape in period papers such as *The Graphic*, *The Illustrated Australian News* and the *Australasian Sketcher* as well as the tourist ephemera specialising in the iconic and sublime. Nevertheless representations of the indigenous landscape and its people were not confined to the picturesque characterising the postcard craze. In the colonial atlases of the period and in the polysemous imagery of the illustrated press these figures framed European notions of belonging and identity. In the following chapter and case studies I argue that this treatment memorialised the indigene and their landscapes as an iconic presence rather than reducing them to visual tokenism and decorative motif.

According to cultural historians Christopher Bell & Steven Matthewman the landscape and its topological features, fauna and flora, are the first indicators of belonging. For Bell (1996, 46) the 'landscape is central to self-image'. For Matthewman it was the principle vehicle on which settler communities constructed the imagined ideal, nation-ness. This section has covered the acquisition and absorption of local knowledge and tropes familiar to New Zealand junior fiction. While this practice defines colonised societies literary and artistic expression, the cultural legacy ensuing from indigenous encounter is even more topical and contentious. To discuss this I shall turn my attention to the discourses of gender and indigeneity as having particular relevance for Australasian illustrated junior fiction.

### *A story of savageism and civilization, the representation of indigeneity*

In the European authors' and readers' seminal quest for belonging and identity, encounter and engagement with the New Zealand Maori and Australian Aborigine emerged as a distinctive and formative theme. From their original encounter with the European in the period of exploration and settlement, and throughout the period 1890-1920, indigenous peoples were used as a marker of

identity. Colonial administrators, as Denoon et al and Gibbons note, exploited their presence to differentiate the colonies as divergent socio-political and cultural entities. Representations of the indigene and indigenous encounter in cultural vernacular further reinforced the mythology of uniqueness privileged by both countries. A literal case in point is Josiah Clifton Firth's book entitled *Nation Making; A Story of Savageism and Civilization* (1890) chapters of which were published in the *New Zealand Graphic*. Firth's work laid claims to the virtues of civilization as the result of missionary and colonising cultural practices. It consequently constituted a piece of nationalistically inspired propaganda setting New Zealand apart from its neighbour Australia. This piece of bombast was followed by William Pember Reeves's nationalistic and influential work, *The Long White Cloud: Ao Tea Roa* (1898).

Gibbons (2002, 10) states that the strategic 'textualization' of the indigenous landscape, fauna and flora provided the contextual foundation for the formation of national identity. Its ensuing fabrication would have been rendered redundant without the integration of 'the original inhabitants' of Australasia. As Gibbons and Tony Hughes-D'Aeth assert indigenous people were indispensable to colonial endeavour and its core practices of acquisition and possession. In Australasian illustrated junior fiction they were essential in framing the representation of heroes and heroines for Australasian-born and international junior readers. Gibbons (2002, 13) speculates that the purpose behind the textualization of 'Maori themselves and their cultures' was so that 'colonists could 'know' the people they were displacing'. Furthermore he suggests that the cultural production or invention of the Maori as 'picturesque, quaint', and as 'largely ahistorical' was a way of managing their presence, as well as their demise, through the medium of print. Hughes-D'Aeth makes a similar point in relation to the way in which the Australian Aborigine was represented graphically in Australian cultural endeavour. This print historian contends that indigenous people 'formed an important marker' in assisting 'the artist stage the narrative of colonial progress' (Hughes-D'Aeth 2001, 42).

During the decade of the 1890s indigenous encounter engaged the creative abilities of migrant and resident artist/illustrators and authors who interwove commercial practice with the high arts. Their creations were subsequently circulated through high art and popular institutions. Of the latter the *Bulletin*, the *New Zealand Graphic*, *The Illustrated Australian News*, the *Lone Hand* and the earlier *Australian Sketcher* were dominant. These illustrated journals and papers traded in conveying topical national and international issues. Their articles and the single and composite illustrations accompanying them often featured New Zealand Maori and Australian Aborigine in various stereotypical guises. Amongst others these included: assimilated 'mimic men' engaged in the subtle strategy for ethnic survival (Bhabha 1994, 87); 'picturesque' indigenes decorating representations of settlement and colonial wealth (Hughes-D'Aeth 2001, 57); and the feared associate of the 'Native Police' (Broome 1982, 44), the 'black trooper' (Reynolds 1972, 109).

In advertising ephemera and the artefacts of the illustrated press evidence exists of commonplace nineteenth-century graphic practices, cut and paste and assemblage. Images created from these mechanisms reduced indigenous people to tokenism. The removal of Maori and Australian Aborigine from their cultural and generational surroundings, and their insertion into editorially prescribed formats buttressed colonial perceptions of the indigene as the 'undifferentiated Other' (Bradford 2001, 11). This is not to say that such beliefs have passed unremarked or uncontested. On the contrary Broome, Hughes-D'Aeth and Reynolds have covered the treatment of indigenous people in relation to Australia's history of colonization, representation and image-making. In New Zealand Gibbons, King and Bell & Matthewman have commented likewise in connection with the country's cultural production. In the thesis I contend that the strategies of assimilation practiced by colonised peoples to hasten the demise of indigenous people would, in some instances, be surprisingly contraindicative.

If there is one critic of Australian junior fiction who vigorously contests the essentialist treatment of the indigene and questions its prevailing legacy, it is Bradford. *Reading Race: Aboriginality in Australian Children's Literature* (2001) is a comparative study of colonial and postcolonial texts and the thematic representation of race. Bradford's enquiry contains two statements that resonate with my own line of thinking. One is her assertion that 'nineteenth-century children's texts throw up some startling contradictions in their treatment of Aboriginality' (Bradford 2001, 5). The other is the claim that 'children's books offer a rich resource for considering how generations of Australians have been positioned to understand Aboriginal culture, relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and relationships between Aboriginality and national identity' (Bradford 2001, 8-9). Previous writers, Gilderdale and Hebley, similarly allude to traditional attitudes informing junior fiction's articulation of Maori and non-Maori relationships without directly establishing indigeneity as the primary focus of their studies. Although the scope of Bradford's survey incorporates works created by contemporary New Zealand indigenous authors and illustrators, her argument is mainly with the creative product originating from Australia.

Bradford's investigation opens with a critique of colonial texts. She focuses on the adventure genre in particular and the stereotypic treatment of the indigene in its tales. Bradford maintains the representation of indigenous people as repositories for essentialist thinking, and recipients for institutional benevolence and paternalism, typically affirms colonial attitudes. 'One of the rules of colonial discourse is that indigenous people are never truly heroes; another is that white heroes achieve feats of exploration and bravery by virtue of their racial superiority' (Bradford 2001, 26). Like Gilderdale and Hebley, Bradford alleges adventure tales to be prescriptive, heavily invested with discovery and naming, and formulated on travellers' anecdotes and accounts as opposed to personal experience. She consequently states that the adventure novels produced by 'prolific authors W. H. G. Kingston and George Manville Fenn' formed part of this repertoire (Bradford 2001, 35). Her critique of the theme of

indigenous encounter central to adventure plots identifies the male protagonist as ideologically symbolic of civilization and industriousness. Opposing this figure are the Australian Aborigines who, as symbols of institutionalised demise, are classified pejoratively as 'wild blacks' or 'myalls' and presumed to be dying out (Bradford 2001, 36).

Unlike the preceding writers Bradford subjects both narrative and illustrative content of the colonial texts aimed at male and female readers to semiotic and postcolonial scrutiny. She asserts that the hierarchical structure evident in these texts reflects the influence of the imperialist, masculine and religious discourses as well as 'discourses of femininity' and sexuality (Bradford 2001, 82). In contrast to the fascination with 'black bodies' evident in the 'popular fiction' written for adults 'adventure novels for boys commonly represent Aboriginal men as cowardly and incompetent fighters' (Bradford 2001, 98).

To support her argument Bradford selects two texts as indicative of these beliefs. One is Bruce's Billabong series and the other Richard Rowe's *The Boy in the Bush* (1869). Rowe's text is the case study through which Bradford critiques the infantilised treatment of 'Aboriginal masculinity' (Bradford 2001, 98).

Bradford bases her analysis on the implicit meanings inherent in the figurative treatment of European and Aboriginal male figures in one of its illustrations. Her formal reading of the iconographic hierarchy of this image establishes the European dominance of the boy heroes. In contradistinction to this representation, Bradford considers that the illustrator's treatment of the adult Aboriginal men performing a ritualistic dance renders them both 'female and savage'. As objects of the boy protagonists' gaze they, their dress and performance are 'feminised' through conflation with the foliage framing the image. According to this writer the foliage constitutes a classical literary and visual device signifying naturalness. In the symbolic currency of the colonial period it signalled indigenous people as savage and 'primitive' and hence lacking in culture.



Bradford also scrutinizes the treatment of the indigene in Bruce's Billabong series. Bradford maintains that in this case study the Australian Aborigine is labelled in economic terms as 'boy'. She subsequently employs class and gender-based systems to examine the status of the 'paradigmatic good servant' 'Black Billy' within the cultural confines of Bruce's iconic outback society (Bradford 2001, 100). Bradford alleges that this character is in a perpetual state of 'latency' and that unlike the author's European characters he is never able to grow up, to marry, or to be part of the 'inner circle of settler family or friends'. Hence her postcolonial reading of this character resonates profoundly with the argument of racial ambivalence and socio-cultural marginalisation put forward by historians Broome and Reynolds.

Bradford focuses her critique on exploring the hierarchical relationships between Bruce's heroine, Norah, the heroine's father and Billy in the narrative but does not examine their representation in the illustrations. One illustration featuring Aboriginal Billy exists in the early novels of the Billabong series. In MacFarlane's illustration he occupies the background of the composition and could, if using Bradford's literary model, be interpreted as a subsidiary and marginalised figure. However to an exponent of visual language, backgrounds, backdrops, margins and frames are all important in establishing the scene for the reader. In the construction of visual rhetoric and visual narrative they are vital tropic devices. For an illustrator they are key to managing the formal arrangement of a composition and in explicating meanings latent in the narrative.

I propose that a practitioner's perspective provides an alternative to evaluating representations of indigenous people according to conventional literary schemata. I concur with Hughes-D'Aeth's assertion that the very existence of the indigene frames the coloniser and their imagined visions in reality. I argue that while representations of indigenous people affirmed popular notions of conflict and ambiguity, not all reflected the state of abject incompetency intrinsic to colonial perspectives. Colonial writers, such as Alexander

MacDonald in *The Lost Explorers* (1907) clearly used the desert, isolation and the construct of the 'noble savage' to maintain racial attitudes and masculine stereotypes. Others, by locating the adventure genre and indigenous encounter in fact, negotiated the colonising effects of acculturation and assimilation as a virtual reality. My reading of the works produced by these authors and illustrators theorises that their representations were motivated by their interdisciplinary praxis as journalist/war correspondents and as artist/war artists.<sup>4</sup>

So far this overview has covered the themes informing the concept of belonging. To complete my reading I shall now evaluate the privileging of type and feminine discourse in the construction of national identity.

### *Gender and the emergence of the feminine ideal in Australian junior fiction*

Niall's survey, *Australia Through the Looking Glass: Children's Fiction 1850-1980* (1984), is predicated on the idea that 'early colonial novels' are 'antecedents' for present day children's literature (Niall 1984, 1). This writer concurs with Gilderdale and Muir, and historians Denoon et al and Gibbons, in identifying the 1890s as the decade when Australian junior fiction became self-determining. Niall alleges that prior to this period most of the literature produced in the colony was created with an eye for overseas markets. 'So long as London was the principal place of publication, as it was for much of the twentieth century and all of the nineteenth, the British child had to be taken into account'. Niall's reading of children's literature and its concern with the interface between cultural production and readership thus follows the viewpoints expressed in the studies of Gilderdale, Hebley and Muir.

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<sup>4</sup> A contemporary exemplar of this combined approach is the journalist/illustrator Joe Sacco. Sacco is renowned for his work with Edward Said in creating the graphic novel *Palestine*. Originally created as a series of comics, this work is a political critique of the events witnessed by the journalist during his 'visit to the Occupied Territories' in the early 1990s (Thompson 2002, 52).

Core to Niall's critique is the assumption that 'the way others see us is part of our perception of ourselves' (Niall 1984, 2). Her argument subsequently centres on the fabrication of the stereotype and the discourses of gender and physicality in consolidating ideas of what it means to be Australian. In addition to observing physical superiority as indicative of national identity, Niall acknowledges the importance of gendered types in children's literature. Consequently the masculine stereotype characterising Australian colonial romance and typically described as 'lean sun-bronzed' and 'adaptable bushmen' is pre-eminent in her discussion. According to this writer the concept of the 'outback hero' and the European notion of Australian-ness originated in the indigenous landscape. In imperial discourse the mythic site of the Australian landscape was theorised as vast and 'empty', a fallacious image subsequently popularised by the Heidelberg School of painters. This group also specialised in creating romantic and sentimental images of isolated and independent bushmen, women and children forging out a tenuous existence in arid outback or forested regions. Niall's reading of these types asserts that these 'ideal settlers' would later transform into the iconic 'Anzacs of life and legend'. Bell & Matthewman and Denoon et al affirm this popular assertion in their respective critiques of masculine and national mythologies in Australasian historiography.

Niall claims that in the Australian junior fiction of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the lean and bronzed masculine stereotype was cemented by two antithetical topoi. One was the 'new chum' recently arrived from England whose initiation experiences in the bush would either render him resilient or 'defeated' (Niall 1984, 2). The other, frequently associated in this literature with the major urban centres Melbourne and Sydney, was the degenerate urban cousin. Historians Denoon et al note the preoccupation of colonial societies with issues of morality and degeneracy. Niall's account highlights the importance of this preoccupation in establishing a national identity in which physical strength is synonymous with moral strength. So what of the feminine type who emerged from the pastoral ethos as the action figure, as 'little mate'?

Martin Lyons & John Arnold maintain that the primary sign with which the pastoral ethos was emblazoned was the bushman. These book historians contend that this heroic figure evolved to signify 'the fierce independence' associated with the ideal of democracy, a political system of some importance to the colonies (Lyons & Arnold 1998, xvii). However they also dispute the assumed precedence of the masculine stereotype as exclusively determining identity. Hence they argue that the privileging of the male hero 'has been thoroughly contested, and the decade no longer speaks with ... a single voice'. Schaffer is another critic who also expresses her doubt as to the legacy of masculine mythologies as having any ongoing symbolic currency.

Bell, Bradford, Lyons & Arnold and White claim that the feminine ideal originated in Arcadian and pastoral mythology and was associated with the mythic sites of the bush and the outback. Muir (1982, 59) states that conservative and Victorian socio-cultural values such as the notion of 'propriety', the 'angel of the house' stereotype, and the institution of marriage over education were influential in her creation. Moreover Scutter (2001, 300) observes that in colonial discourse these views were engaged to consolidate the symbolic position of women and girls as signifying the moral health correlating with 'the home of the nation'.

In the adventure tales created for the Australasian girl reader the linkage of heroine to the feminine ideal of the bush and the outback, and the moral values intrinsic to colonial discourse, forged her into a gendered icon. Although she would be cast with the mantle of masculinity and mateship, she would also be emblematic of the modern woman emerging with suffrage and emancipation. In my study I argue the case for the female protagonist. I maintain that her invention added to the 'single voice' emanating from popular artefacts, the *Bulletin* and the *Lone Hand*. I posit that her creation added the next thematic layer in the consolidation of identity in Australasian illustrated junior fiction.

In my investigation of formative period children's literature I discovered that such an ideal is rarely evident in the works originating from New Zealand. In contrast to this situation, feminine types dominated imported publications such as the *Girls' Own Annual* and the writings of Bruce and Ethel Turner. In New Zealand texts, however, their appearance was minimal and confirmed contemporary stereotypes such as 'the angel in the house'. Muir and Scutter note that the establishment of the London based publisher Ward Lock & Co.'s agency in Melbourne was significant in the creation of the female protagonist. Muir (1982, 61) relates that this publisher led the way by publishing local writers 'Ethel and Lilian Turner' as well as Bruce's Billabong series. As I have mentioned previously this agency fostered Australian born writers, complementing the creative talent of the Melbourne-based publisher George Robertson & Co. Pre-eminent amongst Ward Lock & Co.'s creators was the author, Mary Grant Bruce. It was she who instigated the cultivation of the feminine ideal and who successfully filtered the adventure genre through the pastoral ethos and bush mythology. Her writing confirmed the outback heroine as the idealised container for Australasian-born and international readers.

Avril Bell (2004, 121) speculates that present day societies are judged to contain the residue of indigenous encounter meted by 'cultural practices and representations and the relation to power'. I suggest that a similar case can be made for the portrayal of women and girls. Briefly limned, if included at all in tales of exploration, female characters would become fully dimensional in the illustrated adventure novels of the first decade of the twentieth century. I therefore concur with Lyons & Arnold and Schaffer in debating women and girls to be another centre in the formation of a nascent Australian national identity. In the final case study chapter I will trace the representation of the feminine ideal in the first six books of the Billabong series from this perspective. I will examine these works for evidence of the virtues of independence, egalitarianism and self-reliance, which are claimed by Australasian historians to originate in pioneer discourse and be valued by settler mythology.

Niall and Bradford both assert that a historical survey of junior fiction has the capacity to reveal the way in which a society is fabricated. Unlike Bradford, Niall's enquiry includes no discussion or analysis of the illustrative content of the novels. Consequently the visual component, which may substantiate her findings or offer a substitute reading, is lacking. Like Gilderdale, Hebley and Muir, Niall concentrates specifically on addressing the overriding themes of independence, industriousness and resourcefulness common to colonial and masculine discourses. Hence her survey precludes the status of the marginalised other and the independent women in the prevailing masculine mythology of Australian illustrated junior fiction. Bradford, by contrast, rigorously explores the articulation of the indigene in colonial texts and in relation to the discourse of masculinity and the pastoral ethos. Bradford's study argues the case for the representation of race and gender as congruent in colonial texts, and imperialism and evangelical interests as informing the writing by women for girls. Where her inquiry differs from those surveyed, is in her analysis of selected images. However as the scope of her critique is limited to the field of junior fiction it does not include material from additional fields of cultural vernacular with which graphical discourse is concerned.

My study aims at extending the existing findings regarding gender and indigeneity by comparatively examining the figurative treatment of the indigene and the independent woman in Australasian illustrated junior fiction, girls' own annuals and the illustrated press. The following section provides an overview of the cultural artefacts and works examined in the thesis and their archival provenance.

### *Overview of selected works*

The range of artefacts comprising my survey is predicated by two factors. One is that its scope is reflective of the archive sources. The other is that it deals with an area of children's literature that was in its early stages of genesis and development. Nor has it been limited to one type of artefact such as a lengthy, hardbound illustrated novel given as a reward, or to the books created for a

specific group of readers. Instead my survey includes both picture books and illustrated novels for younger and older, national and international readers alike as well as the printed material in circulation during the period. The period marked out by the survey commences with publications originating from Australasia in 1890 and concludes with the publications produced during the climatic event of W. W. 1. In some instances the thesis refers to additional material created earlier in the nineteenth century.

Another factor impacting on the findings is that due to the early creation of some of these artefacts, unearthing any sources listing reader response has proven to be elusive. This finding supports Muir's account of the problems encountered in the historiography of Australian junior fiction. Unfortunately this is also the situation for the illustrated junior fiction created in late nineteenth-century New Zealand. This is a product of the period where full records of reading were rare, library catalogues patchy and reviews of children's literature virtually non-existent. In addition most of the illustrated works originating from Australasia are the creation of practitioners whose praxis was informed by fine arts schooling rather than design, a pedagogic system as yet in its infancy. Consequently the extant artefacts are reflective but not necessarily representative of that academic discipline, as they are indicative of an emerging print industry.

As I have stated, one of the reasons for pursuing this investigation is to reflect on the discursive relationship between image and text in communicating themes and issues vital to Australian born readers. Consequently I am not solely interested in discussing the stylistic merit of verisimilitude, which Muir alleges as the reason for MacFarlane's success as an illustrator. Nor am I concerned with providing an alternative case to Gilderdale's and Hebley's similar assertions that early New Zealand works were too embryonic to fully participate in what is regarded as the golden age of children's literature. The assessment postulating late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century junior

fiction as lacking in aesthetic technique is understandable when the criterion is skill based.

Like Bradford I am intrigued by the illustrations in the picture books and illustrated novels produced for junior and older readers and how they reflect changes in cultural attitudes and beliefs. One of the premises basic to children's literature is that both words and images construct a world for their readers that can be identified with and entered into. Another is that visual language 'is not transparent and universally understood, but culturally specific' (Kress & van Leeuwen 2000, 3). Both premises are considered in my examination of Australasian illustrated junior fiction. At one level the illustrations created for this subject can be argued as simply augmenting the explicit meanings inherent in the narrative. At another, the perspective conveyed by the figurative treatment of characters and settings is sometimes contraindicative and subversive. I propose that it is this level that offers an interesting insight into the way in which immigrant and Australasian born-illustrators negotiated colonial themes and assumptions regarding identity.

Of the twenty-five Australasian titles surveyed for this investigation the following four are specifically constructed around the particularities of the indigenous landscape. Kate McCosh Clark's *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (1891), Alexander MacDonald's *The Quest of the Black Opals: A Story of Adventure in the Heart of Australia* (1908), Sarah Rebecca Moore's *Fairyland in New Zealand; A Story of the Caves* (1909) and Mary Grant Bruce's *Timothy in Bushland* (1912) all employ the bush and fauna and flora indigenous to New Zealand and Australia as the unifying frame of reference. These texts are formulated according to the imported genres of fantasy and adventure. Inter alia, they integrate the terminology of scientific discourse to definitively locate their characters and settings as specific to these countries.

The remaining texts incorporate masculine and pastoral mythologies. These adventure tales negotiate the issues of acculturation and assimilation resulting



from encounter and engagement with indigenous and ethnic others. They comprise: G. A. Henty's *A Final Reckoning: A Tale of Bush Life in Australia* (first published 1886), James Duigan's *Tiki's Trip to Town* (1893), Edward George Dyson's *The Gold Stealers* (1901), Donald MacDonald & John F. Edgar's *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* (1901), Louis Becke's *The Settlers of Karossa Creek* (first published 1906), W. H. G. Kingston's *Twice Lost* (1906), Alexander MacDonald's *The Lost Explorers: A Story of the Trackless Desert* (1907) and *The Hidden Nugget: A Story of the Australian Goldfields* (1910), R. M. Ballantyne's *The Cannibal Islands; Tales of Adventures in Forest and Flood* (1909), Joseph Bowes' *Comrades; A Story of the Australian Bush* (1912) and Mrs. H. Clark's *The Bushranger's Secret* (1915).

Of the twelve texts authored by Bruce those of the Billabong series: *A Little Bush Maid* (1910), *Mates at Billabong* (1911), *Norah of Billabong* (1913), *From Billabong to London* (1915), *Jim and Wally* (1916) and *Captain Jim* (1919) focus on the emergence of the female ideal within the pastoral ethos. The intervening texts: *Glen Eyre* (1912), *Gray's Hollow* (1914), *Possum* (1917) *Dick* (1918) and *Rossiter's Farm* (c. 1920) are indicative of the author's concern with the moral issues confronting settlement and urbanisation.

Of the colonial authors and artist/illustrators surveyed for this thesis, Bruce is acknowledged in the critique of Australian junior fiction for her idealisation of outback society and female and masculine types. MacFarlane, as mentioned previously, was renowned as the illustrator responsible for interpreting the Billabong series. In addition to his prolific work for this series and its author, he illustrated other texts in the adventure genre and was connected with the illustrated press and pedagogic publishing. Considerably less well known and rarely featured in the critical reading of New Zealand junior fiction are immigrants to New Zealand: Robert Atkinson, Kate McCosh Clark, James Duigan and George Sherriff. In their singular work of fantasy for New Zealand born and international readers, Atkinson and McCosh Clark integrate indigenous motifs with traditional themes to articulate an inverted reality. In

their equally unique picture book for children Duigan and Sherriff use the backdrop of a regional setting to convey the effects of colonization on indigenous people.

### *Conclusion*

This concludes the review of the academic writing dealing with the emergence of Australasian illustrated junior fiction and the themes of landscape and belonging, gender and indigeneity commensurate with its genesis. Common to both colonies was the shared interest of migrant and Australasian-born image-makers in employing dominant tropes the landscape, the bush and indigenous fauna and flora. Although engaged in similar aspects of colonization, their divergent treatment of these motifs reflected the cultural and national self-interest of each of the countries. In addition to indigenous motifs and colonial themes, masculine mythology and mateship constituted a powerful value system against which New Zealand Maori, Australian Aborigine, women and ethnic others were measured. Nevertheless the masculine stereotype that stepped ashore with imperial endeavour and which figured predominantly in the quest for identity was transformed through his encounter with these figures. These ideas are discerned as marking the formation of identity during the transitional years 1890-1920. The following chapter positions the thesis argument within the master narrative of nationalism. This chapter links the academic discussion of the themes discovered in the overview to their comparative analysis in case study chapters five, six and seven.

## Chapter Four: *Emergent nationalisms, myth, stereotype and image-making*

*‘Who are these Australasians? or, rather, who will they be? Are they merely the four million pioneers now occupying the fifth and possibly the richest, continent of the world? They will be, as the London Spectator says “the fifty millions who in another century will dwell there”’* Josiah Clifton Firth, *Nation Making: A Story of New Zealand Savageism & Civilization* (1890).

### *Introduction*

Firth’s book entitled *Nation Making: A Story of New Zealand Savageism & Civilization* (1890) began its serial run in the *New Zealand Graphic* with the January 1890 edition and continued through to January 1891. In the reproduced chapters Firth argued that national success rested upon the physique and intellect of its people, its enterprise and virtue. In addition he promoted the assimilation of indigenous people as being an important factor in the construction of an emergent nationalism. Firth thus favoured colonial practices of assimilation and excluded an independent indigenous culture from his vision of nationhood.

This chapter provides a historical context for the thesis and gateway to the investigation that follows. It links the critical discussion of theoretical concepts in chapters two and three to the examination of the figurative treatment of assimilation and acculturation, exclusion and inclusion in case study chapters five, six and seven. Chapter four consists of two parts. In the first, I concentrate on the emergence of nationalism as a master narrative. Within this framework I outline Federation, suffrage, exclusionist policy and war as key socio-cultural and political events of the formative period 1890-1920. The chapter posits these events as having a major influence in informing seminal identities and in shaping post-Federation Australasian illustrated junior fiction. It argues these events to be salient in the ongoing inquiry into national mythologies. This chapter includes a commentary on myth and stereotype as pivotal to the master

narrative of nationalism, associated discourses of imperialism and colonialism and 'dying race' theory. It introduces terminology frequently used in the articulation of these power-based systems in children's literature and cultural vernacular. These terms are used throughout the remainder of the study and include: indigenous people, Australian Aborigine, Maori, Pakeha, *tangata whenua*, Myall and Warrigal.

The second section of this chapter addresses cultural endeavour as the means whereby the beliefs, values and mythologies associated with emergent nationalisms were given form in image and text. This section introduces New Zealand and Australian image-makers responsible for translating the contemporary beliefs of the period into works for junior readers. By way of introduction to the case study investigation, chapter four includes a discussion of Ballantyne's representation of Captain Cook. My graphical analysis of the explorer and South Pacific stereotypes establishes precedent for the examination of the work performed by gender and race in chapters five, six and seven.

### *Emergent Australasian nationalisms and identity*

#### *The desire to create a sense of place*

Historically, the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century encompass two very different eras, the late Victorian and the early modernist era. For New Zealand and Australia the decades defined in the thesis as the formative period were ones of transition in which the desire to create a sense of belonging and identity was an imperative.

Historians claim that it was during the late nineteenth century that the imperial ties, or what is termed the 'crimson thread of kinship' linking the colonies with Britain were becoming marginally loosened (Denoan et al 2000, 197). Denoon et al, Gibbons and King assert that for the first time since their colonization and settlement, the colonies were no longer transient sites of exile, transport or migration but places of occupation. The effect of this shift in identification was as if a light had been turned on in a darkened room. Instead of being the

antipodean objects of imperial discourse, New Zealand and Australia became the focus of their own scopic lens.

In New Zealand and Australia the process by which colonists initially strengthened their identity was by looking inwards to their new home rather than abroad for their cultural origin. David Novitz suggests that in New Zealand the course undertaken in creating an emerging national persona, or what Richard White (1981, 64) defines as 'national type', amounts to a 'colligatory' construction (Novitz 1989, 280). Novitz (1989, 282) defines colligation as the collection of a particular set of isolated facts according to a group's 'concerns and interests', which are then selectively arranged according to a predetermined set of principles. He subsequently proposes that in 'the quest for identity' three principles are fundamental, "the remarkable, the extraordinary' and 'the outstanding" (Novitz 1989, 286).

### *Processes in the imagined representation of belonging*

The impulse for both countries to create an identity distinct from their colonial origins also had further, and intentional consequences. Historians Belich, Denoon et al and King assert that prominent political figures such as William Pember Reeves, deliberately deployed New Zealand's distinctive qualities to consolidate the colony's cultural and political status as a fledgling nation. For early nation-maker, Reeves, New Zealand was ideologically separate. Its identity was considered too distinctive for it to be part of the federal ideal that was anticipated and argued for in Australia. The effect of this belief system filtered through to the processes employed in the creation of a national literature and art and also influenced the formation of a locally based children's literature. One process considered vital to both adult and children's literatures, and critical to art and design, is the 'inventory of phenomena' (Gibbons 1998, 55).

The term 'inventory' relates to accounting and business practice. In the discourses of science and museology it designates classificatory practices

associated with naming and collecting. In describing children's play, the term signifies activities of acquisition, collection and exchange whereby children assume an imagined role or identity. As a literary figure, 'inventory' is a metonym for the institutions of governance and merchandise that are associated with occupation and settlement. Ideologically it links the practices of classification and cataloguing normally associated with scientific discourse with cultural endeavour. The cataloguing of the particular customs and lifestyles of indigenous people as well as the peculiar characteristics of indigenous fauna and flora by immigrant and Australasian-born authors and artist/illustrators, was part of the core business of colonization. This knowledge was compiled to form an 'aggregate' of 'distinctive phenomena' which became the basis for textualizing indigenous peoples according to notions of difference and otherness (Gibbons 1998, 56). The assumptions postulated by Firth and the descriptions of Reeves in *The Long White Cloud – Ao Tea Roa* (1898), testify to the implementation of this process.

Given the formative period's embrace of the distinctive and remarkable, it is not surprising that 'colligatory' processes such as inventory and classification were systematically applied in establishing nationalist rhetorics of belonging. Nor is it surprising that the created worlds imagined for Australasian-born readers showed evidence of the process of acquisition. The collection of stock motifs from which Australasian national mythologies subsequently developed, depended on imagined and journalistic accounts of local phenomena. Such accounts circulated primary motifs, the indigenous landscape and the bush, through a range of common and particular descriptors. In Australasian illustrated junior fiction and in cultural vernacular the landscape is described as: vast, empty, distant, mountainous, volcanic, unstable, inhospitable, uninhabitable, insular, and continental. The bush is inventoried as: gloomy, impenetrable, exotic and dangerous. In addition to these tropes elemental motifs, such as fire and water, are popularly characterised in children's and adult literature as signifying an ever-present threat to identity and belonging.

Cultural theorists David Novitz & Bill Willmot (1989, 30) and Claudia Bell (1996, 46) maintain that the landscape 'lies at the heart' of what constitutes identity for colonized countries and 'indirectly, shapes' the mythologies 'central to self-image'. In formative period national mythologies, the indigenous landscape became the primary vehicle on to which were projected contemporary perceptions regarding the indigene, national identity and typologies of morality. In high art, the theories informing its imagined construction grew out of imperialist notions correlating nature with savagery and culture with civilization and progress. Mitchell (2002, 10) contends that pictorial representations of the colonised landscape are 'the "dreamwork" of imperialism'. He speculates that while images of its sites may appear utopian and fantastical they are nonetheless 'fractured' and embedded with 'unresolved ambivalence and unsuppressed resistance'. Hence for Mitchell the stylistic manner by which this primary cultural trope is pictured is underpinned by institutional and power-based relationships that effectively render the indigene mute and passive.

To further consolidate mythologies of belonging, both New Zealand and Australia drew inspiration from existing indigenous myths and legends.<sup>1</sup> According to Gibbons the incorporation of indigenous myths by immigrant image-makers was one of the strategies whereby indigenous peoples were discursively assimilated and domesticated. In the junior fiction surveyed two figures feature from Maori and Australian Aboriginal pantheons of deities and mythical creatures. One of these is the Maori god of the forest, Tanemahuta. The other is the Australian Aboriginal creature of fable, the Bunyip. In addition to appearing as a character in children's literature, the Bunyip features in page twelve of the October 1, 1890 edition of *The Illustrated Australian News*. In this full-page illustration the creature is imagined as resembling something between

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<sup>1</sup> Both the New Zealand author, Kate McCosh Clark and the Australian author, Mary Grant Bruce, produced compilations of indigenous myths and legends for junior readers. Robert Atkinson and John MacFarlane, responsible for illustrating the works surveyed in this thesis, also illustrated these collections, which are excluded from this inquiry.

a panther and a mustelid, and is shown in the process of devouring an aboriginal man. Thus in this popular vehicle the Bunyip conforms to mediating particularly held beliefs and is also a visual metaphor for a people in decline.

*Typologies of belonging and identity: 'Enlightened' explorers and 'savage natives', 'new chums' and mates*

In New Zealand and Australia both colonized and colonizer were described in essentialist terms as civilized and as savage. In visual culture writing 'essentialist thinking' is defined as 'determinist' and as deriving from an Enlightenment doctrine in which things were reasoned as having an inherently ideal nature (Bell 2004, 123). In the nineteenth century this form of thinking was coupled to imperialist discourses and was applied to 'objectively' characterise indigenous people according to race and physiology. Bell and historians Broome, Denoon et al and Reynolds relate that the indigenous people of New Zealand and Australia, the Maori and the Aborigine, were stereotypically mythologised through this approach and categorised as peoples in decline, and as passive and assimilated. These assumptions were based on the seed ideas, 'terra nullius', the 'noble savage' and 'dying race' theory that were central to the rationalist ideology of imperialism. In the main the figurative treatment of colonizer and colonized in formative period children's literature is evidence of these perceptions and the influence of the Religious Tract Society in promoting the core values that would become nationalist hallmarks, namely: endeavour, civilizing prospectus, benevolence and mateship.<sup>2</sup>

Later encounters involving European settler with Maori, the *tangata whenua* (the people of the land) and the Australian Aborigine reaffirmed initial stereotypes of 'enlightened' explorer and 'savage native'. Michael King (2003,

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<sup>2</sup> The Religious Tract Society originally founded in London in 1799 by the Clapham sect, was an evangelical and philanthropic group. Leslie Howsam (1991, 3) states that it 'existed to produce attractive and improving reading materials for the newly literate working-class reader'. In addition to promoting abolitionism and moral reform, the Society sought to disseminate Christian values based on the teachings of the New Testament both within England and the greater Empire.



168) states that the term 'Maori' relates to the expression 'tangata maori' meaning 'ordinary people'. As this historian has explained, the term was 'widespread' by the 1830s and appears in the 'Maori text of the Treaty of Waitangi' that was signed by Maori and Pakeha on February 6 1840. In contrast to this term, the designation 'Pakeha' denotes 'people and influences from Europe' that have undergone transformation through affiliation and juxtaposition with the indigenous people and culture of New Zealand (King 1991, 8). Except for a few instances Australian Aborigines were described in the literature for junior readers by the generalised terms, 'Myall' and 'Warrigal'.<sup>3</sup> These two labels were synonymous in designating the Australian Aborigine as wild, uncivilized and as antagonistic to civilization and institutional power-based systems. Thus the terms, indigenous encounter, 'civilised', and 'savage' are employed throughout the thesis according to their historical context and as evidence of colonization's discourses of categorization.

As mentioned the representation of indigenous people was mediated through the imposition of scientific and moral discourse, and the perspective of racial theory. Within the antipodean *wunderkammer* New Zealand Maori and Australian Aborigine were collectively categorized as types and pejoratively classified as 'savage' or 'noble savage'.<sup>4</sup> White (1981, 64) claims that by the nineteenth century the word 'type' began to be employed in the general sense of denoting 'form or character'. In the mythologies of colonization and settlement, the expression conveniently buttonholed indigenous people as one-dimensional. New Zealand Maori and Australian Aborigine were consequently theorised as

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<sup>3</sup> The terms 'Myall' and 'Warrigal' are used along with Aborigine in the Australian adventure genre to collectively classify Australian Aboriginal peoples (see Donald MacDonald (1901) and Joseph Bowes (1912)). In a few rare instances aboriginal people were identified in formative period Australian children's literature by the name of their tribe. According to the *OED* (2002), Myall refers to Australian Aborigines living according to traditional customs while Warrigal is translated as 'wild dingo'. I maintain that the conflation of Australian Aborigines with these generalised terms encodes them with dying race theory (see Henry Reynolds c. 1972, reprint 1975).

<sup>4</sup> A *wunderkammer* is a German word meaning wonder chamber. It derives from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and correlates with the practice of collecting and exhibiting the exotic, the rare and the curious. In upper class society the *wunderkammer* was a symbol of the owner's status and wealth, his learning and knowledge.

either dying out, marginalised or as successfully assimilated into colonialism's power based institutions. Bell (2004, 123) maintains that assimilation 'involved seeing colonisation as a "civilizing mission" that was to bring enlightenment and development to the "savages" who existed on a lower plane of racial hierarchy'. Hence in addition to modes of classification, assimilation was one of the strategies fundamental to the discursive construction of emergent nationalisms.

In the main formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction conformed to this perception and categorised indigenous people according to patriarchal, patronising and purely racial perspectives. However I argue that despite a diet of rational men, 'savage natives' and exotic motifs, the literature created for junior readers witnessed a modest move beyond these norms. In the process of evolving into a creation that was discernibly local, clothes were changed, labels were acquired and lost, and new identities were founded. At a foundational level Australasian illustrated junior fiction constituted a powerful vehicle in facilitating the transformation in identity for immigrant children to the colonies. In contradistinction to this group of readers were those labelled as 'native born' (White 1981, 25). This term describes the first generation born in the colonies during the period of occupation and acquisition. For the emergent nations New Zealand and Australia, the 'native born' generation were, in effect, societal containers in which were invested the concepts of morality, hope and opportunity associated with nationhood and identity. From here on this group of readers is referred to in the thesis by the phrase, 'Australasian-born' and in specific cases as either 'New Zealand' or 'Australian-born'. This designation is in keeping with the central theme of the investigation and distinguishes this group of readers as no longer having their origins in England.

Opposing those first-generation born was the 'new chum'. In the adventure tales of Australian illustrated junior fiction the epithet 'new chum' was generally applied to the newly arrived emigrant from England. Invariably male and aged somewhere between his mid-teens and early twenties, he sought one of two things: to better himself or to clear his wrongfully tainted name through

adventure, mining and exploration. The ultimate reward for his endeavours and hardships was settlement and acculturation into masculine and pastoral mythologies. More frequently appearing in Australian children's literature than in the works produced in New Zealand, he was subsequently transformed through his outback adventures into the ubiquitous 'mate'. The metamorphosis of the 'new chum' into 'mate', constituted a topical subject within the wider context of formative period cultural endeavour. For the Australian-based group of artists the Heidelberg School, whose membership included several notable illustrators, this type was especially favoured. Rarely, if ever, would the 'new chum' be associated with the Australian girl, the independent 'little mate'. She would find her own place in Australian illustrated junior fiction as the feminine ideal.

This section has looked at the processes by which emerging nationalisms were initially mediated in late nineteenth-century Australasian illustrated junior fiction and cultural vernacular. The content has covered the institutional reliance on acquisition and assimilation as well as inventory, naming and collecting.<sup>5</sup> I reasoned that although these processes and framing devices were used to embellish notions of belonging, alternative views were also evident. In the case study chapters five, six and seven I analyse the representation of stock figures and motifs as indicative of acquisitive processes. I argue the integration of the indigenous landscape, fauna and flora, people and mythologies as imparting emergent Australasian nationalisms with their distinctive currency. Additional to this discussion chapter six debates the stereotypic treatment of Maori and Australian Aborigine as evidence of institutional assimilation. In the next section I outline the key events impinging on the ongoing development of Australasian illustrated junior fiction.

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<sup>5</sup> For an Australian exemplar in this area see the work of the Australian author/illustrator, May Gibbs.

*Federation, suffrage and war; events characterising the period of formation*

White (1981, 63) asserts that it was 'difficult during the nineteenth century to pin down what was distinctive about Australia apart from its unique flora and fauna'. Novitz (1989, 286) claims that 'New Zealand and Australian cultures are markedly different but this does not entail that there is anything distinctive about New Zealand culture let alone that there is a New Zealand cultural identity'. Both the assertions of White and Novitz allude to the role of the indigene in giving form to identity. However I propose that in addition to the objects identified as belonging to a country it is the events impinging on a particular society, and the issues ensuing from those events that imparts a country with its national specificity.

In New Zealand two events directly impacted on the way in which a seminal nationalism took shape. The first of these events was the colony's partial severance from the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth century. The second was its complete rupture with the proposed Federation of Australia in the early twentieth century. The enactment of Federation took place on January 1, 1901 and is argued as giving the nation of Australia its 'formal existence' (White 1998, 631). Federation was one of the controversial issues facing the countries of New Zealand and Australia and was hotly contested in the illustrated press. The Sydney-based *Bulletin* took up its proposal and lampooned the individual characteristics of Australian federal identities in the satirical illustrations accompanying its polemical articles. As Denoon et al have shown the road towards the formation of nationalism in Australia was an uncertain one. These historians relate that the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South and Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania were adverse to Federation and reluctant to give up what they perceived as the advantage of autonomy. Consequently they persisted in promoting their status as independent economic, political and socio-cultural identities. So while Firth, in New Zealand, promulgated nation-making under the collective term 'Australasian', by the end of the decade of the 1890s Reeves was arguing for separation and differentiation.

In addition to Federation, three overlapping socio-cultural and political factors were influential in informing emergent Australasian nationalisms at the turn of the twentieth century. Historians Denoon et al and Gibbons, and cultural historians, Schaffer and Scutter, posit these as exclusionist policy, suffrage and war. Suffrage for women was enacted in New Zealand in 1893. In Australia the situation was different and suffrage was not agreed to by all the country's colonies, nor did it extend to Australian Aboriginal women. But beginning with the year 1894 and up until 1908 each colony gradually put this concept into practice. The exclusionist policy, or what was known as White Australia Policy, took effect in 1901. This extremist policy targeted ethnic and diasporic peoples, such as Chinese and sub-continent Indians, who were considered a threat to the vigour, constitution and morality of the colony. Targeting was conducted through two extremely powerful and influential power-based systems, institutional policy in the form of poll taxes and the editorial images and articles of the print media. As White (1981, 71) has demonstrated institutional policies based on the maintenance of racial purity and fear of degeneracy subsequently ensured the 'active discrimination' against this group of immigrants. In Australia the message of ostracism was vigorously pursued in the visual and editorial rhetoric of illustrated papers such the *Bulletin*. In New Zealand similarly held anxieties about ethnic migrant Chinese as having 'good qualities, the chief of which are thrift and industry', and as 'Mongolian hordes' were played out in the illustrated press (Firth 1891, 2).

Representations of immigrant Chinese in the decades preceding the 1890s and 1900s, however, are suggestive of more moderate approach. My inquiry does not elaborate on the reasons for this differentiation.<sup>6</sup> Instead I examine the treatment of ethnic Chinese and Indians as indicative of policies of inclusion and exclusion. I argue that while representations of essentialist others and

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<sup>6</sup> For a succinct explication of the treatment meted towards ethnic Chinese in New Zealand's illustrated press, I recommend Ip & Murphy's study of racial intolerance *Aliens at My Table: Asians as New Zealanders see them*. (2005).

national typologies are hollow and flawed, they were instrumental to the processes of nation-making during the formative period.

Additional to discourses of ethnicity and gender, inclusion and exclusion, war was a causative factor in informing Australasian national identities. For New Zealand the earlier colonial land wars of the 1860s had a direct bearing on influencing colonial relations with the indigenous people of the country. They also directly impacted on the way in which Maori were mediated in Australasian illustrated junior fiction and in cultural vernacular. Historians claim that subsequent to local and regional conflicts, the South African War, which 'broke out in October 1899' and W.W.I. significantly contributed to a growing sense of identity as type (King 2003, 285). They also maintain that in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Australia, national types were shaped according to ideologies of race and degeneracy. White (1981, 72) posits that fear of 'racial degeneracy promoted the desire to "measure up" in terms of manliness'. He subsequently contends that 'at a time when military superiority was accepted as the ultimate measure of national fitness, by far the greatest most glorious test was war'. Hence my investigation considers and concludes with the conflict core to the independent nation states of New Zealand and Australia.

### *Thesis scope and organization*

Gibbons (2002, 7) asks what 'picture might emerge if national identity was not the organizing principle of discussion, but, instead, the production of cultural artefacts' within the perspective of colonization. His suggestion resonates with Bal's (2003, 22) proposal for visual cultural study as the critique of production, practices and processes, and 'master narratives'. In New Zealand and Australia, W. W. I and the Anzac myth, are historically coupled with national identity. Denoon et al question this tradition as well as the masculine mythology on which it is based as solely responsible for nationalist narratives. Schaffer likewise challenges traditions of representation historically associated with the

discourse of nationalism. She queries the prevailing legacy of masculine mythology as singularly defining Australian identity.

My inquiry also engages in these propositions and assumptions. It centres on the mediation of identity in a subject area rarely considered within the wider context of theory, production and praxis. It comparatively analyses the representation of formative period myths, issues and stereotypes in the drawings, paintings, illustrations, caricatures, cartoons, and photographs of children's literature and cultural vernacular. In examining the varied images produced for Australasian illustrated junior fiction I am not attempting to repackage the representational legacy of colonisation. Rather I aim to locate postcolonial discussions regarding identity, place and otherness within the scope of this literature.

Post-colonial theorist Homi Bhabha (1994, 2) defines this type of inquiry as a form of revision, which, he suggests is not to be confused with an exercise in 'nostalgia'. Instead he proposes this mode of investigation a methodology for comprehending the present and the ongoing articulation of stereotype and otherness. My inquiry is organised along comparable lines. It employs this mode of analysis to revisit the representation of myth and stereotype, gender, race and physical superiority as core to the images and texts of pre-Federation and post-Federation Australasian illustrated junior fiction. To explicate this intention, the following section discusses the representation of one of Australasia's iconic figures.

### ***Stereotype and otherness in the representation of myth***

*The Cannibal Islands; Tales of Adventure in Forest and Flood* (1910) is the work of the author/illustrator Robert Michael Ballantyne and was published in England as a hardbound book by James Nisbet & Co. Ballantyne's collection of adventure stories hinges on promoting the message of morality and redemption associated with the civilizing mission of Christianity. It consists of three tales: 'The Cannibal Islands: Captain Cook's adventures in the South Seas', 'Chasing the



Sun' and 'Lost in the forest: or Wandering Will's adventures in South America'. *The Cannibal Islands; Tales of Adventure in Forest and Flood* is supported by three engraved illustrations all of which are attributed to Ballantyne, and which are inserted in the book as tipped in plates. Within the context of this survey their importance resides in the messages of race and power encapsulated in their iconography and compositional modality. To support this argument I have selected for discussion the frontispiece to this collection of tales. Ballantyne's frontispiece operates on a number of levels. On one level it portrays an historical event to the reader/viewer. At another it references concepts of savagery and morality associated with the civilizing discourses of British imperialism and Enlightenment essentialism. Its metonymic function is to reinforce formative period myths of masculinity and civilization contained in the text.



Figure 4.1 'The Death of Captain Cook'. Engraved illustration by R. M. Ballantyne, 8.6 x 11 cm. Frontispiece for *The Cannibal Islands; Tales of Adventure in Forest and Flood* (London: James Nisbet & Co., 1910). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

'The Death of Captain Cook' (see Fig. 4.1) is a lightly drawn, monochromatic engraved illustration featuring Cook's ultimate demise in Kealakekua Bay, Hawa'ii. Its composition and attendant iconographic apparatus sum up the pictorial

conventions traditionally employed in representing the South Pacific and its inhabitants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Ballantyne's frontispiece the location of Cook's death is imagined according to imperial



prescription. Its inventory of stock motifs includes traditional and familiar European and South Pacific tropes: towering volcanoes, limpid lagoons, sleek war canoes, fierce warriors and exotic palm trees. Ballantyne's hagiographic representation of this event depicts the heroic archetype gesturing woodenly out to sea while behind him the 'Hawaiians' wield the club and the knife, the weapons of his demise and symbols of savagery.

Apart from the man directly behind Cook, who appears to sport leg dressings, the figurative treatment of the ethnicity of these warriors is problematic and ambiguous. It is here that Muir's (1982, 47) assessment of 'well-drawn' realism breaks down. Synonymous with visual mimesis, realism is an artistic and literary convention that is dependent for its success on accurate observation, technical skill and research. Long valued in western societies as a form of aesthetic expression, it was supplanted by the invention of photographic technology and reproduction processes in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Even if Ballantyne based his image on known and accessible facts, and it remains conjecture as to whether he did, its construction contains a number of contradictory statements. In this instance the representation of the warriors as loosely Tahitian, Hawa'ian and Maori, demonstrates the collective stereotyping of indigenous people according to 'racial biologies' (Bell 2004, 123). Sporting Huia feathers in their hair, and wearing woven garments and carved pendants resembling *peka peka*, these warrior 'types' function as ambiguous referents for the 'savage native'. Hence Ballantyne's representation of Polynesian people and place is an example of the way in which colonized people were viewed as the 'undifferentiated' (Bradford 2001, 11) and 'exoticised' (Gibbons 2002, 13) 'Other'.

In the text, the warriors are alleged to be wandering 'about in a state of nudity and idleness' practising 'every species of abomination', and killing, roasting, and eating each other, 'just as they did a hundred years ago' (Ballantyne 1910, 71). By juxtaposing the historical event of Cook's voyages and Polynesian encounters with the contemporary reader, Ballantyne establishes a hierarchy of

perception based on stereotype. This hierarchy is predicated on the set of determinist descriptors, 'civilised' and 'savage' considered fundamental to imperial discourse. At one end of this classificatory system is positioned the intended reader and container of societal values, the Australasian-born child. Opposing the reader is the indigene cast in the role as 'Other' and on to whom various notions, idealistic and otherwise, were projected.

The moral discourse embedded in this binary relationship is indicated, moreover, by the compositional modality of the image as well as the position of the frontispiece within the book. In Ballantyne's illustration the warriors hover on the verge of fantasy as the degenerate and immoral other. Cook, in contradistinction to these mythologised figures, signals as a metonym for the institutional power and civilizing and moral force of the British Empire. This privileging of type is implied in the use of two pictorial conventions common to formative period representations. The first of these is figurative realism, and is indicated by the attention to detail with which Cook's naval attire is painted. The second is less apparent to those unfamiliar with the pictorial conventions of representation but is no less significant. It is gestured by Cook's *contrapposto* stance. This term, and the stance which it describes, derives from classicism and was a favoured principle of neoclassicism. As used in this image it is a metaphor for the traditional values and civilizing aspirations associated with imperialist voyages of discovery.

The articulation of culture and civilization is further reinforced by the parallel symmetry of two objects that have long been synonymous with institutional systems of power. These comprise the lowered musket and the raised spear. These coded signifiers are placed on the left axis of the inverted triangle whose points of convergence are defined by the spear-bearing warrior's clasped hand, the volcano and Cook's right foot. Although Ballantyne's frontispiece is figuratively simple and awkwardly drawn it is a strategic piece of design. It effectively invites the Australasian-born reader/viewer to identify with its key figure and to collude in the inherently masculine enterprise of redemption

commonly appearing in South Pacific tales of adventure. Ballantyne writes that New Zealand's role in this enterprise was to serve as a benchmark for the transformative effects of colonization.

Setting sail from Tahiti, the *Endeavour* visited several other isles, and at length arrived at the celebrated island of New Zealand. This is one of the largest of the South Seas, and is now the site of several thriving British settlements. Flourishing cities have been built on its rich soil; large portions of it have been brought under civilization; gold mines have been discovered; churches and schools have been erected and many of the natives have become partially civilised (Ballantyne 1910, 90).

### *Myth and stereotype*

Ballantyne's treatment of colonial figures resumes postcolonial debates regarding stereotype, otherness and mimesis. Bhabha claims that one of the marked features about colonial discourse is its dependency on fixed notions of stereotype and otherness. Bhabha (1994, 37) contends that in colonial representations it 'is always in relation to the place of the Other that colonial desire is articulated'. Hence he suggests that images of otherness based on mimetic representation are inherently metaphorical and metonymic substitutes for cultural and political values. He consequently argues that the 'image is only ever an *appurtenance* to authority and identity; it must never be read mimetically as the appearance of a reality' (Bhabha 1994, 51). Thus for this theorist a stereotype is not necessarily false, but is a 'much more ambivalent text of projection and introjection' that is embedded with 'metaphoric and metonymic strategies' (Bhabha 1994, 82). Like Bal, Bhabha (1994, 163) maintains that it is not enough to become aware of the 'semiotic systems' used in the production and dissemination of cultural values and beliefs. He proposes that in order to understand the work performed by cultural objects requires assessing how 'diverse disciplinary' discourses and 'institutions of knowledge' have left their traces on the making of those objects.

Barthes (1972, 109) likens myth to a construction or 'form'. Barthes speculates that myth is a cultural container for condensed systems of belief and conventions, which are imparted in a way as to be instantly recognisable. He contends that 'since myth is a type of speech, everything can be myth provided it is conveyed by discourse'. Furthermore he asserts that its genesis does not take place 'in a vacuum' but in response to particular historical and social events and the ideologies and discourses embedded within them. Barthes (1972, 124) reasons that because of this discursive contingency, myth 'has an imperative, buttonholing character' and he therefore questions its ability to be inclusive.

James Belich (2001, 356) reasons that although myth 'is a convenient label' it offers an opportunity to examine 'important historical refractors and determinants'. Barthes's premise, and Belich's hypothesis neatly dovetail with Gibbons's theory of ongoing colonization, which argues the reaffirmation of dominant mythologies through cultural production. Gibbons's view, in turn, resonates with the argument put forward by Bhabha regarding mimesis and stereotype and their impact on the cultural constitution of identity. Gibbons's postulations also conform to postmodern theories regarding representation and national identity posited by Madan Sarup.

Sarup claims that identity is a unique configuration of selected elements that are ideologically determined. Like Gibbons this theorist maintains that the 'representation of identity is an ongoing process, undertaken on many levels, in different practices and sites of experience' (Sarup 1996, 40). Sarup speculates that identity is 'articulated in multiple modalities' and is inclusive of the theories underpinning representational modes such as writing, drawing and painting. Hence he argues that in the cultural production of identity, the traditions of the past mark the present and directly influence the criteria by which 'memories and discourses' are selectively mythologized. Thus, in addition to these views, he suggests that analysis of identity consider the impact of 'external determinants' such as class, status on its composition (Sarup 1996, 48). Sarup

acknowledges the critical debate focussing on the many and varied ways in which identity has been constructed but maintains that the 'symbolic', by which he means 'language', is critical to its examination. Sarup's postmodern critique of identity and culture finds commonality with previous theorists' views. It affirms the relevance of race, gender, stereotype and myth as underpinning nation-making. It confirms the cultural importance of differing symbolic modes, such as written language, visual language and graphical discourse in the mediation and representation of identity.

Ballantyne's frontispiece for *Tales of Adventure in Forest and Flood* is evidence of past systems of belief as well as the process of selection in its stereotypic treatment of historical and social realities. A graphical analysis of its iconography and compositional modality shows it to be inflected with Sarup's category of 'external determinants', namely: class, religion and status. The legacy of the mythological adventurer/explorer and their encounter with the exotic indigene and landscape established the identities of the colonies within Australasian illustrated junior fiction, and in general. As the concept of national identity started to fuse, indigenous motifs became ever more specific in framing both New Zealand and Australia.

This section has provided the backdrop for the creation of Australasian illustrated junior fiction. The following outlines the topic of cultural endeavour and introduces the image-makers key to the mediation of emergent nationalisms in works for children.

### *Emergent nationalisms, Australasian illustrated junior fiction and cultural endeavour*

#### *National identity and image-making*

Cultural theorists, historians and critics of junior fiction maintain that from its ideological inception, the creation of identity in New Zealand and in Australia was sanctioned through the institution of the print media and cultural

vernacular. Gibbons (2002, 14) refers to this process as the ongoing 'cultural colonisation' by print, and as beginning with the artefacts produced during the decade of the 1890s. Curtis (2002, 7) states that in keeping with the 'dynamic expansion in illustrated literature' the scope of printed objects in circulation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century ranged from the literary to the popular. Included amongst the creations were illustrated books, picture books and picturesque atlases, girls' and boys' own annuals, illustrated journals and papers. Additional items associated with consumer culture namely: invitations, posters, postcards, stamps, banknotes and so on, also served as vehicles for the national and international mediation and dissemination of perspectives alternative to the British model.

Mirzoeff (1999, 257) proposes that in analysing popular cultural artefacts, the analytical model 'visual popular' be invoked to counter the dominance of 'national-popular'. Popular culture is defined as the study of artefacts whose 'popularity', usage and cultural value within a society may be accepted or denigrated as positive or negative (O' Sullivan 1994, 231-232). Popular culture is concerned with the influence of aesthetics and taste, and consumption and desire on the manufacture, production and status of designed artefacts.

Mirzoeff's term 'visual popular' is founded on the visual imperative informing postmodern pan-globalism where nationalist ideologies and nation-states are assumed obsolete. I contend that while his expression might be pertinent to postmodernism, the new model is effectively an extension of the proliferation of the visual, which signalled modernity and the emergence of nationalism.

Consequently the 'national-popular' model applied in analysing the representation of national identity as 'ambiguous, contradictory and multi-form' (Mirzoeff 1999, 257) is still relevant. It confirms the role of Australasian illustrated junior fiction as crucial to the colonizing project and the formation of national identity.

The illustrated novels and picture books comprising the selected texts for case study analysis did not exist in isolation as a body of literature; nor did they

originate independent of other cultural endeavours. They were consolidated from serial and other forms of print culture in circulation in New Zealand and Australia during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The image-makers of these artefacts, and the professional activities they specialised in were no less interlinked. This section profiles those authors and artist/illustrators. It includes individuals who were first-generation Australasian-born as well those who had recently stepped ashore. Some of these image-makers are considered iconic in the critique of children's literature (Gilderdale, Hebley, Muir, Niall and Saxby). Some are briefly mentioned in historical accounts of fine art practice and print culture (Astbury, McCulloch, Platts) while others are included in postcolonial critique (Bradford).

I have approached these men and women from an interdisciplinary perspective by placing them and their practice against the socio-cultural and historical backdrop of cultural endeavour and nationalism. This undertaking has been both rewarding and problematic. I have discovered that rich repositories of information exist in connection with some of these individuals, while others are riddled with gaps. This dilemma, also encountered by McCulloch and Muir, has subsequently resulted in an account in which detail and omission are juxtaposed. If my treatment is less than comprehensive it is partly due to the destruction as well as the absence of archival material. It is analogous to piecing together a family history where recording is omitted, and information sold on or disposed as no longer important or relevant. Or, as is the case with some family histories, certain relatives are considered too marginal or of little note to merit inclusion in the family album. The scarcity of business records and information regarding sites of practice contributes likewise to a sketchy view.

My study acknowledges these constraints. It contends that it is not possible to explore the mediation of emergent nationalisms in Australasian illustrated junior fiction without considering this literature within the wider context of cultural production. Cultural critics Nicola Brown, and Martin Jay put forward similar holistic claims. Brown (2001, 16) maintains that in order to

comprehend the ‘individuality and development’ of anything that is produced within a particular discipline or field of activity requires an evaluation of society and time. Her argument is equally applicable to this inquiry in which I argue formative period children’s literature as being dependent on a number of factors. These comprise: the inherent relationship between image and text, the aesthetic and stylistic approach employed by the image-maker as well as associated sites of print and production. My investigation does not concentrate on the cultural or aesthetic merit of Australasian illustrated junior fiction’s created artefacts, or the technical skill those who generated them. Instead it discusses how cultures of recognition and tradition inform the critical appreciation of those involved in image-making processes.

Often, the authors and artist/illustrators responsible for this literature are critiqued independently of one another. Or, as in the studies of Gilderdale, Hebley, Muir and Niall, are compared unfavourably against the breadth and depth of illustration/design expertise originating in England. In contrast to these readings, art historian Leigh Astbury and Muir claim that trained artists were attracted to Australia by the employment opportunities arising from developing commercial enterprise. Their ranks included leading graphic artists Phil May, William Hatherell and brothers George and Julian Ashton as well as John MacFarlane. The latter would play a pivotal role as one of Australian illustrated junior fiction’s key illustrators although the critical recognition of children’s literature and ranking in the literary canon has meant he has all but been forgotten. All aforementioned artist/illustrators are notable for their representation of the stock motifs and mythologies associated with colonialist and nationalist discourses. In the front covers, the inner pages and the special inserts of the illustrated papers as well as the walls of the newly established fine art institutions, they demonstrated their interdisciplinary skill as artist/illustrators. Some are also responsible for the extraordinary images that inspired this inquiry.



Gilderdale, Hebley and Muir claim that the illustrative content of early Australasian illustrated junior fiction is tentative and lacking in technical competency and refinement. Given the developmental nature of the decades 1890-1920, and the scarcity of regional and urban cultural and technical institutions this is without question. But should the apparent incompetency evident in illustrative technique be used as the criterion to exclude some of this literature and its image-makers from literary and cultural critique? Should the characteristic treatment of colonised and coloniser rule these texts as being burdened with colonial legacy and irrelevant to contemporary debates concerning nationalism and globalism? I argue that to do so lessens our appreciation of what all representations have to offer whether competent or otherwise.

In the following investigation I speculate on the extent to which the illustrated press, graphic and fine art practice influenced the stylistic approach of formative period image-makers. I query whether their aesthetic response and creative interpretation owed anything to their interdisciplinary praxis as journalists/authors, journalist/war correspondents, or artist/war artist/illustrators. The extent to which institutional and professional formalities (employment contracts, commissions, peer-relationships) impacted on each individual lies outside the scope of this investigation. But by reflecting on the praxis of these men and women within the context of national cultural endeavour, and print and production I aim to begin to explore these issues. Of the four authors and three artist/illustrators profiled in this chapter the Australian-born Bruce is first and foremost the most widely recognised in her homeland as well as in New Zealand. Weighed against the critical commentary (Bradford, Muir, Niall, Saxby, Scutter) concerning this author, Robert Atkinson, Kate McCosh Clark, Donald Duigan, Donald MacDonald and George Sherriff hardly rate a mention. An overview of these image-makers and their individual contribution to the formation of children's literature in New Zealand and Australia will demonstrate their critical importance.

### *Image-makers of Australasian illustrated junior fiction*

The following profiles are not structured alphabetically, or chronologically, or according to their literary or artistic status. Instead each author and artist/illustrator is considered in relation to the selected texts forming the case studies in the subsequent chapters. MacFarlane is discussed in connection with Bruce rather than MacDonald, as his graphic treatment of the characters and themes contained in this author's texts is widely recognised. Where relevant, contemporaneous artists and publishers are included as influential in shaping Australasian national identities and associated mythologies and discourses.

I have elected to outline the author's biographical details first followed by that of the artist/illustrators. This order in no way implies a logo-centrism positioning the latter, as interpreter of the written text, as secondary or subordinate. In formative period children's literature image and text were closely intertwined in what Brown, and Jay consider a form of communicative mimesis. Astbury, Hughes-D'Aeth and Jay note the importance of similitude or textual adherence in complementing the practice of verisimilitude and photographic technology in metering an early modern reality. The design layouts of the works surveyed consequently reflect the custom of relegating the illustrator's name to the title page while the cover was reserved solely for the name of the author. The format that I have subsequently employed adheres to this customary practice. The first two profiles covered in this section introduce the image-makers of the New Zealand picture book *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (1891).

### *Immigrants, artists and socialites; the image-makers of A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*

#### *Kate McCosh Clark (1847-1926)*

This author profile draws on Janet McCallum's account of Kate McCosh Clark (1847-1926) in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography Vol Two 1870-1900* (1996) and Graham Bush's *Decently and In Order: the Centennial History of the Auckland City Council* (1971). Some of the facts provided in these records form the basis

for my personal opinions. These are inserted in the biography of the book introducing case study chapter five. This approach is similarly applied in the remaining profiles, which reference national and discipline specific biographies. McCallum (1996, 87) claims that while Clark's (nee 'Kate Emma Woolnough') early life and education in England are obscure, it is known that she pursued art studies and that she later worked as a researcher 'often in the British Museum' for other writers.

McCallum relates that in April 1875 Kate married James McCosh Clark in Melbourne, Australia. The details provided in the *DNZB* do not clarify when exactly she departed New Zealand or the reasons for her doing so. What they do state is that after this event she and her husband subsequently returned to New Zealand to rise to social and civic heights in the Auckland community. According to McCallum, Clark was regarded as an accomplished musician and painter by the city's cultural circles. She promoted music and the arts opening her home, the Towers in the Auckland suburb of Remuera, as a venue for women to engage in artistic, literary, and dramatic pursuits. Bush and McCallum record that Clark and her politically and commercially influential husband, who was to serve a three-year tenure as Mayor of Auckland from 1880-1883, assisted in re-forming 'the Auckland Society of Artists as the Auckland Society of Arts in 1880'. Here Clark exhibited in addition to functioning as a committee member. Not only did this institution help establish the reputations of local artists, it also served as a 'valuable adjunct' to New Zealand's 'general system of education' by promoting a factor 'essential' to the period, the 'cultivation of taste' (Bush 1971, 177).

The Auckland City Art Gallery's archival collection contains the exhibition catalogues of the Auckland Society of Arts from 1886 to 1986. The catalogues from the period 1886 to 1920 are revealing as to who and what was cultivated under the classification of 'taste'. Its membership included several prominent topographical and picturesque painters who specialised in the scenic representation of the New Zealand landscape. Featured are John Gully (1819-

1888), Charles Barraud (1822-1897) and Charles Blomfield (1848-1926), who served on the committee and whose subject matter included numerous renditions of the fabled Pink and White Terraces. Given these affiliations I surmise that it is highly likely that such artists as Blomfield would have been influential in informing Clark's subject matter and iconography.

Both Bush (1971, 177) and McCallum note that the Clarks were also founding members of the contested Auckland Art Gallery, which 'was treated as a poor relation of the library'. Bush states that when the Auckland Art Gallery finally opened in 1890 'one writer was so carried away ... as to describe' the collection as "'surpassing in value intrinsically and aesthetically the whole of the other public collections in the whole of Australasia'". As with any other socialite Clark's philanthropic and cultural services to the community did not go unnoticed, inspiring the following accolade in 'The Leaders' section of the Auckland based paper, the *Observer*.

At the late Exhibition of paintings and works of art, in the Choral Hall, the Mayoress took a prominent part, both in active work and in exhibiting. She may be considered as the patroness of the aesthetic art in Auckland; and as there is but little love, and little taste for these things in this Colony – devoted almost to mammon – we may well make much of so warm a friend, especially when she sits in high places.<sup>7</sup>

McCallum records that Clark was not solely a promoter of the arts but was active in the establishment of charitable organizations and participated in climbing expeditions and outdoor pursuits. Her entry in the *DNZB* identifies the economic depression of the 1880s and her husband's failed speculation as causative factors in their decision to return to England at the end of the decade. Thereafter Clark became involved with the International Council of Women. This international consortium focused on the needs of women including but not

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<sup>7</sup> 'Leaders of society, No 2 – The Mayoress (Mrs McCosh Clark)'. *Observer* (Auckland). 25 Dec. 1880.

exclusively so, the rights of suffrage. The biography mentions that Clark had completed *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* prior to her departure, and that the London-based publishers Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington Ltd subsequently published this children's book in 1891. The provenance of publication and printing may account for the high quality of its production as well as the technical proficiency of the engraver, W. E. Chambers.

Astbury claims that engraving companies such as the London-based Dalziel Bros. were instrumental in translating working drawings and paintings into line for reproduction. Unfortunately I have been unable to ascertain whether Chambers was employed by any of the publishing companies whose craft and skill enabled the phenomenon of the Victorian illustrated book. Discussion with Professor David Skilton and a search of the Database of Victorian Illustration and the Dalziel Archives has been unable to shed any light on the workplace or existence of this engraver. I suspect that Chambers, like others in his field of expertise was but one of the many skilled artisans employed in the 'large establishments of the Dalziel Brothers and Swain "factories"' (Beegan 1995, 259).

McCallum (1996, 88) states that Clark's last work, *Maori Tales and Legends* (1896) was 'intended to interest and instruct young people about New Zealand and the Maori'. As with *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*, this work bears the mark of the author's prominent social position and affiliations. Clark's social standing within the community meant that she was able to gain access to notable 'sources such as Sir George Grey and King Tawhiao' as well as 'Edward Tregear, John White' and 'F. D. Fenton'. From these sources she gained 'valuable' information relating to the indigenous people, and fauna and flora of New Zealand. In keeping with the pedagogic imperative instituted during the formative period this compilation was to later appear in serial form in the *New Zealand School Journal* for junior readers commencing in Part 1, 1909. Disseminated in this way Clark's text had the potential of reaching a wider

audience than could be realistically achieved otherwise and is suggested as the reason as to why her work is so well known.

The details provided by McCallum for the *DNZB* are prescribed by dictionary convention. Nevertheless the reference to this author's range of writing styles and her socio-political connections are useful in describing a woman who individually reflected the social, cultural and pedagogic ideals of the period. My search of the Auckland Art Galley and the Auckland Museum Library archives has provided little else to expand on what this historian has already stated. What I am able to offer is a critique of Clark's illustrative praxis.

Clark was not solely an author. Like the renowned Australian author/illustrator May Gibbs, she also produced vignettes in what appears to be watercolour of local fauna and flora to accompany the scientific facts detailed in her narrative. Although her treatment of the local is imbued with patriotic and pedagogic inflexion and nationalistic sentiment, it differs in its metonymic function. Clark's illustrative approach is more symptomatic of the 'gentle art' of botanical illustration (Bermingham, 2000). Moreover her engagement in this area resonates with one of her contemporaries, the botanical artist Emily C. Harris 1836/37-1925 who, at the opposing end of the social spectrum struggled to make a viable living from her art. Clark's level of draftsmanship and technique conforms to the conventions of late nineteenth-century botanic illustration and is entirely appropriate for the supporting pedagogic illustrations. However her abilities do not stretch to being able to accommodate the more aesthetically and technically challenging illustrations designed to explicate the narrative. For these images Clark turned to her friend, the artist/illustrator Robert Atkinson. The following section outlines his relationship with Clark, the illustrated press and the Heidelberg School of *plein-air* artists in Australia.

### ***Robert Atkinson (1863-1896)***

If the immigrant artist/illustrator MacFarlane is closely linked with the Australian author Bruce, the same can be said of the association between

Robert Atkinson (1863-1896) and Clark. Although MacFarlane has been described by Muir as the primary interpreter of Bruce's writings I have found no evidence to support the idea that they had more than a working relationship. By contrast Una Platts in *Nineteenth Century New Zealand Artists: A Guide & Handbook* (1980) suggests that the relationship between Atkinson and Clark was amicable as well as professional. Her brief account states that this artist/illustrator was born in England in the Northern city of Leeds and studied art 'under Verlat' in Antwerp, Belgium (Platts 1980, 27). Health is given as the primary reason for his immigration to New Zealand where he set up residence and practice as a professional artist in Auckland. According to this biographer his acquaintances included the 'painter Albin Martin whose friend he became and whose portrait he painted'. Platts states that by 1890 Atkinson had moved to Sydney and subsequently died there at the early age of thirty-three.

However Hendrik Kolenberg, Anne Ryan and Patricia James (2005, 92) claim that Atkinson arrived in Sydney in 1885 and spent approximately five years as a 'resident of the artists' camp at Edwards Beach near Balmoral' before returning to England. This camp, and others around Mosman were associated with the Heidelberg School of artists who practiced the philosophy of *plein-air* or impressionistic painting. Astbury covers the Heidelberg School in relation to Victoria, Australia. Astbury's commentary focuses on the pastoral themes and gendered mythology that the school specialised in and includes the observation that a number of its adherents were both professional artists and working illustrators for the illustrated press.

Kolenberg et al assert that Atkinson was an exhibiting member of the Art Society of New South Wales and was employed as an illustrator for the illustrated press. This institution included the *Bulletin*, the illustrated paper that savagely exploited the satiric devices of lampoon and caricature to supplement the editorial slant and nationalistic rhetoric of its articles. These devices had developed earlier in Europe and England and were popularly used in subversive social and political critique. Stylistically the visual rhetoric of the

*Bulletin* was dominated by the artist/illustrator Phil May with whom the paper was to become visually synonymous.

My search for evidence of Atkinson's contribution to this paper resulted in the discovery of two illustrations that were created for the 'Political Points' section of the *Bulletin*. This section dealt in snippets of political gossip rather than in depth analysis of topical events. One of Atkinson's illustrations is the central focus of page thirteen of the September 22 1888 edition and is captioned 'Execution by Electricity'. It features a statesman responding lazily to a juryman's written appeal and using telegraphic technology to expedite the hanging of 'Hewart' in New South Wales. The other, 'Prayers for Rain – Another Aspect' appears in page nine of the September 29 1888 edition. This illustration critiques the shortage of coal on the (New South Wales?) gas company, and the subsequent effect on lighting and travel. It depicts a clergyman on his knees and with his back to the viewer urgently praying that a full moon might be sent 'every evening beginning at 7.30 sharp – carriages may be ordered at 11 o'clock'. When compared with the work of May neither of these illustrations exhibit the same degree of flair or intensity although both appear reminiscent of May's vigorous linearity. What they do confirm is Atkinson's creative flexibility in producing works for both mature and junior audiences.

The details provided by Kolenberg et al derive from a catalogue produced by the Art Gallery of New South Wales for an exhibition of nineteenth-century Australian watercolour and pastel artists. While these curators note Atkinson's association with the illustrated press they omit that his creative output also encompassed the design of illustrations for junior fiction. Nor do they mention his time spent in New Zealand or his involvement with the establishment of the Auckland Society of Artists. Also overlooked is his connection with two of Maoridom's principle *ariki* or chiefs, Te Heu Heu Tukino IV, known as Horonuku and his son Te Heu Heu Tukino V. Kolenberg et al state that Atkinson returned to England in 1889 on the completion and sale of his



painting entitled 'The Bluff, Middle Harbour, Sydney'. What direction his activities then took is subject to conjecture. It may have been that the burgeoning trade in illustration, illustrated books, the illustrated press along with a vital artistic community and ready patronage was the impetus for his return.

During his time in New Zealand, Atkinson is known to have produced a number of works. The Auckland Society of Artists catalogue of 1886 lists two oil paintings and three watercolours. Four of these feature Middle Eastern peoples and exotic themes made popular by nineteenth-century orientalist painters. Five oil paintings executed during the years 1885 to 1887 are housed in the collection of the Auckland Art Gallery: 'Life Study', 'A Spanish Soldier of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century', 'Age', 'Portrait of Albin Martin', and 'A Settler's [sic] Kitchen, Opua Whanga, New Zealand'. 'Bringing in the Dinner' and the aforementioned painting of the bluff were produced in 1889 and are held by the Art Gallery of New South Wales. More importantly for this study are the portraits of paramount chief, Te Heu Heu Tukino IV and his granddaughter, Te Uira, in The Fletcher Trust Collection. The caption relating to the painting of Te Uira claims this work to be of 'national historic importance' and a 'very fine example of the work of an artist highly skilled in watercolour'. In December 2007 Waatea News reported the first official showing of this painting in Rotorua, New Zealand in recognition of its cultural and political significance for Maoridom.

Of the illustrations Atkinson created for *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* and *Maori Tales and Legends*, eight finished drawings are to be found in the New Zealand reserve collections of the Auckland Museum. His collective works are evidence of his undoubted facility with the mediums of oil paint and watercolour as well as the nineteenth-century concern with anatomical draftsmanship, lighting and technique. Unlike Sherriff whose descendents have a number of that artist/illustrator's artefacts in their keeping, I have been unable to determine whether any sketchbooks belonging to Atkinson exist. In spite of this, I argue

Atkinson one of Australasian illustrated junior fiction's pivotal image-makers and culturally significant in creating representations of indigenous people that are neither romantic nor sentimental.

This concludes the profiles of the two figures responsible for *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*, one of the earliest hardbound books for junior readers. The following section features the creators of one of the earliest extant picture books printed in New Zealand for junior readers. As the publisher of this text is notable in New Zealand's print history this section also includes selected material on Archibald Dudingston Willis, otherwise known as A. D. Willis.

*Dreamers, war correspondents and men of ambition; the creators of Tiki's Trip to Town*

*Archibald Dudingston Willis (1842-1908)*

Unlike *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*, which was created in New Zealand but printed and published in London, *Tiki's Trip to Town* (1893) was entirely the creative product of regional New Zealand. Those responsible for this uniquely conceived children's picture book were the author James Duigan (1843-1903), the artist/illustrator George Sherriff (1846-1930) and the Wanganui-based printer/publisher Archibald Dudingston Willis (1842-1908). Randal Springer's biographical synopsis of Willis in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography Vol Two 1870-1900* (1996) portrays a man who was competent, ambitious and politically connected. Springer (1996, 584) relates that from the age of twelve Willis was engaged in the printing trade with the 'prominent firm of printers, Eyre and Spottiswoode'. According to his tribute in the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand Vol.1 Part 2 Wellington* (1897) Willis followed a path similar to others seeking their fortunes in the British colonies. He emigrated to New Zealand in 1857, landed in Auckland penniless and embarked on carving out a printing/publishing career. The *DNZB* files mention that subsequent to his arrival he continued to pursue a range of activities common to colonial migrants. These included a short stint as a gold miner in the Otago goldfields and, like the Sherriff brothers, service as a militiaman for colonial forces during the land wars of the

1860s. His various sojourns and activities also brought him into contact with Premiers Julius Vogel and John Ballance, with whom he developed affiliations.

Willis's expertise in printing and publishing culminated in professional associations with: the *Otago Daily Times*, the Christchurch *Press*, the Wellington-based *Advertiser*, and the *Hawke's Bay Herald* in Napier. Springer (1996, 584) states that in 1864 he took up the offer 'to become foreman printer of the *Wanganui Chronicle*'. In 1860's New Zealand, North Island cities such as Wanganui were caught up in the conflict of the New Zealand land wars and were sites of tribal insurgency. Consequently it was not until the following decade that Willis was able to purchase 'an established business and set up his own printing and stationery works'. Springer records that the 'business thrived, becoming one of the most prominent printing houses in the country'.

The peripatetic Willis is recognised in New Zealand's print history as a leading pioneer of the chromolithographic printing process and as being the first cardholder of the Typographic Society in New Zealand in 1863. He is also acknowledged in the *Cyclopaedia of New Zealand Vol.1 Part 2 Wellington* for maintaining commercial relationships with the British trade in print and publishing. In addition to producing the first playing cards in use in the country, Willis's firm of wholesale stationers, printers, paper merchants and booksellers printed and published fine quality productions. These publications include *Geysers and gazers* (1888), *Collotype views of the Wanganui River* (c.1895) and the technically superb *New Zealand Illustrated* (1889). The latter features a pictorial assemblage of archetypal and sublime vistas, and tamed and bucolic landscapes stylistically favoured in formative period representation. The work includes fourteen chromolithographic plates, each involving anywhere up to sixteen colours and requiring an assorted specialist team of artists, engravers, lithographers and pressmen.

Willis also specialised in producing high quality technicolour postcards such as the one included here (see Fig. 4.2). These prototypes of early Kiwiana were

produced for the New Zealand Government of Tourist Resorts as tourist mementoes and enticements to travel for the market 'back home'. Their design and iconography featured edited versions of Maori composed into fashionably scenic landscapes. These compositions were sometimes framed by organic motifs stylistically reminiscent of the Art Nouveau predilection for the organic and natural.<sup>8</sup> This particular example is evidence of this practice and the technical skill with which Willis and his team of artisans managed the chromolithographic process. Its inclusion is also to provide an example of the way in which regional publishers negotiated the treatment of indigenous subject matter for local and international audiences.



Figure 4.2 'Maori Kainga New Zealand'. Chromolithographic postcard by Benoni White, 8.0 x 13.4 cm, for the New Zealand Government Department of Tourism & Health Resorts, 1904. Reproduced courtesy of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (PS. 000666).

<sup>8</sup> Nicola Brown (2001) comments on the symbolic importance of organic motifs peculiar to the movement of Art Nouveau. She contends that these motifs reconcile the opposing discourses of nature, culture and science in the Victorian fairytale.

***James Duigan (1843-1903)***

James Duigan (1843-1903) is said to have arrived in New Zealand by way of Australia in 1870. His various occupations are listed in the *Cyclopaedia of New Zealand Vol.1 Part 2 Wellington* as a flour miller, a founder of Wellington's freezing works, a partner in the Wellington Brewery and journalist. Formerly employed by *The Argus* in Melbourne, Duigan went on to become the editor of the *Wanganui Herald* and Wanganui based *Chronicle*. Although I have found no archival records to support this assumption, I suspect that his professional activities might have brought him into contact with Willis as well as Sherriff. Duigan is mentioned briefly in the memoirs of Flora Spurdle (n.d.), and in connection with the American newspaper owner, Colonel Ballingall, in 1889 in

*Wanganui from 1856-1929* by J. P. Belcher (1930).



Figure 4.3 'George Sherriff'. Sepia photograph 11 x 18 cm, photographer unknown, date unknown. Reproduced courtesy of Diane Osbourne.

***George Sherriff (1846-1930)***

Rather more information exists on the life and practice of the artist/illustrator, George Sherriff (1846-1930) (see Fig. 4.3). The details in his profile are drawn from his older brother Arthur Albert Sherriff's account entitled *Reminiscences in New Zealand* (1901) and Springer's reference in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography Vol Two 1870-1900* (1996). Aged sixteen, Sherriff emigrated from England in 1862

accompanied by his two brothers, sister and father under the assisted



immigration programme of the New Zealand Company. Disembarking in Wellington, New Zealand, the family took possession of land at Fordell, near Wanganui, and began the collective task of building the family home, Rusthall. At this time the town of Wanganui was garrisoned with colonial troops, for which Sherriff and his brothers provided sentry duty. According to his older brother, Sherriff did not take to farming life but was a competent rider who enjoyed pig hunting, almost killing himself in the process. This excerpt taken from Arthur Albert's memoirs held in the archives of the Whanganui Regional Museum provides a frank and slightly exasperated evaluation of Sherriff's personality.

"He was never without his pocket sketch book and every spare minute would be making studies of cattle etc. You could never tell when a job he had undertaken to do would be done or finished by good old dreamy George. As he so disliked outside work, he became cook and dairymaid. As his heart was set on art he longed to study, I [Arthur Albert Sherriff] agreed for him to go to Melbourne which he did and joined one of the principal art classes and remained there two years. Altho' [*sic*] he spent as little as possible for anyone to manage on, the payment of 100pds and his passage money made it a difficult problem for me."<sup>9</sup>

It is unknown which of Melbourne's artistic institutions Sherriff sought tuition from or whether he had any contact with the exponents of the Heidelberg School in Victoria as did Atkinson in New South Wales. Unfortunately these biographical details remain teasingly obscure and I can only speculate that he may have attended the School of Design or the Painting School attached to the National Gallery of Victoria. Further enabled by his brother's financial support of 300 pds per annum, Sherriff travelled to England to continue his artistic studies at the West London School of Art, and the Slade School of Animal

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<sup>9</sup>Arthur Albert Sherriff. *Reminiscences in New Zealand*. A. A. Sherriff papers courtesy of the Founders' Index of the Whanganui Regional Museum Collection (archival material has never been accessioned).

Painting after which he took up a studio in St Ives, in Cornwall. On his return to New Zealand he set up a studio in Ridgeway Street, Wanganui. An existing clothbound sketchbook from his time in England contains a number of observational drawings in graphite and colour pencil of Salisbury Cathedral, Godstone, the Frome, as well as a delightful study of a young girl named Doris Hayward. This item is part of the collection belonging to his descendent, Diane Osbourne. Another sketchbook, held in the picture library of the Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa, features scenes of Sydney, Australia.

Sherriff was commissioned by *The Graphic* to document Parihaka, the Taranaki-based site of Maori passive resistance to colonial occupation, as a war correspondent and artist. At Parihaka he ignored the orders issued by John Bryce, the Minister of Maori Affairs, for civilians to refrain from taking part in the attack on the village and ensured that he was part of the action. His visual account of this time includes a number of detailed ink and watercolour sketches



Figure 4.4 'Parahaka'. George Sherriff. Ink and watercolour on paper 13.1 x 34.4 cm, c. 1881. Reproduced courtesy of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa (2001-0033-1/ 12).

of various stockades and camps, depictions of Maori fortifications as well as Parihaka itself (see Fig. 4.4). These carefully executed drawings comprise a valuable documentation of the mechanics of military engagement and tactical manoeuvre within a specific arena of colonial engagement.

In addition to this military subject matter Sherriff produced a few portrait sketches of key figures involved in the Maori pacifist movement. These sketches include portraits of Hiroki, the murderer and his guard 1881 (on permanent display at the Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa), and Te Whiti-o-Rongomai and Tohu Kakahi the spiritual leaders of Parihaka. Both sets of drawings focus on the capture of these men prior to their sentencing to the Chatham Islands. Originally the drawings in the sketchbooks were surrounded by Sherriff's handwritten observations in copperplate script. Unfortunately these have been cut out so that there is no way of being able to access the thoughts behind their construction. But from what survives, Sherriff comes across as a man of wry humour and independent mind.

Technically Sherriff's portrait sketches are similar to his contemporary in the field of war, Horatio Gordon Robley 1840-1930. Robley was a military artist and Major General who documented the conflicts at Tauranga and Gate Pa in the 1860s and then went on to make a detailed study of Maori *moko* (tattoo).<sup>10</sup> Leonard Bell describes the execution of Robley's drawings as earthy and direct. In drawing practice this type of expressiveness equates with the technique of 'gesture drawing' so termed for its unstudied spontaneity and its concentration on essence rather than substance. While Sherriff's depictions of Parihaka evince the detached spectatorship commensurate with surveillance, his portraits of Maori leaders exhibit an immediacy and earthiness equal to Robley. Consequently they provide an alternative model to the standard representation of social figures and events, which Bell (1980, 52) considers 'straight up-and-down piece of reportage'.

Another contemporary of Sherriff's is Mary Beatrix Dobie. This artist/illustrator is reported to have been the only European woman known to have been present at Parihaka and to have recorded that experience through her

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<sup>10</sup> As Bell (1980) specifically focuses on war artists arising out of the military no mention is made of Sherriff who was also more than likely too minor a figure in relation to Robley and Major von Tempsky (1828-68).



minutely observed drawings. These were published in the November 1881 edition of *The Graphic* - almost a year after her murder at Opunake in the Waikato. An appraisal of her images shows her documentation of the village of Parihaka to be comparable to the one produced by Sherriff. As serial prototypes, both sets of images are evidence of the cultural perspectives employed in representing inflammatory topics in cultural vernacular and in the illustrated press.



Figure 4.5 'Parihaka, the Principal Maori Stronghold'. Engraved illustration by Mary B. Dobie, 7.7 x 22.8 cm. Illustration for p. 497 of *The Graphic*, November 19, 1881. Engraver initials TC (?). Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

On the surface Dobie's depiction of the village of Parihaka (see Fig. 4.5) bears a distinct resemblance to Sherriff's portrayal albeit from a different vantage point. Both artist/illustrators have utilised the distancing effect of aerial or bird's eye perspective to evoke the palpable presence of otherness exacted by the colonial gaze. Consequently their sweeping, wide-angled compositions encompass the scenic panorama of the village, the surrounding forest and the imposing volcano of Mount Taranaki as if viewed from above. Sherriff's military sketches, of which 'Parahaka' is one, conform to traditional colonial practices of surveillance and information gathering. Dobie, however, is not merely concerned, as was Sherriff, in representing the *pa* as a military stronghold devoid of social or cultural activity. King (2003, 72) describes the Maori term *pa* as originally signifying 'fortified hilltops'. According to this historian these sites were constructed by Maori for a number of social purposes

which included communal gardening, the ‘pursuit of mana or authority’ and protection.

By integrating the social and communal activity of the *pa* within the scope of its surrounding environment, Dobie references the spiritual and cultural significance of this location for Maori. In her representation, Parihaka is living site, peopled with its inhabitants and surrounded by its symbolic *whakapapa*. King states that for Maori *whakapapa* denotes the interrelationship between people of a particular area to the surrounding forests, the rivers and the land. Moreover Maori consider these elemental, botanic and geographic forms to be their ancestral progenitors and critical to their generational lineage. By further including a portrayal of Te Whiti, the charismatic leader of the syncretic movement, in the act of oratory to a gathering of Maori followers (see Fig. 4.6) Dobie further reinforces the particularity of this site of resistance as one of non-violence.



Figure 4.6 ‘The Prophet Te Whiti Addressing a Meeting of Natives’. Engraved illustration by Mary B. Dobie, 7.6 x 17 cm. Illustration for p. 497 of *The Graphic*, November 19, 1881. Engraver unknown. Reproduced courtesy of the National Library of New Zealand.

Although the representational styles of each artist/illustrator are divergent both reflect the dependence on commonly applied pictorial conventions and cultural perspectives. Hence their documentation of Parihaka conforms to formative

period perceptions of indigenous resistance. Despite this tendency their reportage is more credible than the representation of colonised peoples, which are ostensibly based on verisimilitude and photographic technology.

Like his contemporaries Clark and Atkinson, Sherriff was involved in the establishment of a regional cultural institution, the Wanganui Arts and Crafts Society 1901. As with the creation of the Auckland Society of Arts in 1880 (where Sherriff was an exhibiting member) its purpose was to provide critical and creative support for the region's artistic community. Not surprisingly his obituary states that he was 'one of the pioneers of art in the North Island and particularly in Wanganui. He was known better to the older generation, among whom he was recognised as one of Nature's gentlemen.'<sup>11</sup> His unpublished reminiscences written for his nephews in 1928 offer a glimpse of his childhood in England, and arrival to New Zealand, but contain nothing informative about his decision to become an artist.<sup>12</sup> In fact they say very little about his practice or how he managed his commissions and more is gained through examining the memoirs of his brother, Arthur Albert on whom Sherriff was initially dependent. The photographic portrait of Sherriff in the *Cyclopaedia of New Zealand* (1897) shows him in his studio in Ridgeway Street, Wanganui, posed in the manner of a gentleman, and surrounded by a number of variously sized paintings. Their subject matter constitutes the staple diet of a working artist engaged in producing the popular imagery desired by the settled immigrant to pictorially reinforce their establishment - animals, still life and portraiture.

What Sherriff is most remembered for is his design and execution of the recumbent lion surmounting the memorial to the veterans of the Nukumaru campaign, South Taranaki 1869. Chris Maclean and Jock Phillips (1990, 26) state that this statue was unveiled in 1892 and is the 'first example in New Zealand of the sculptured lion, which would become such an important symbol in Boer War memorials some ten years later'. Curiously the illustrations that he

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<sup>11</sup> Obituary, 29 December 1930, the *Chronicle*.

<sup>12</sup> These memoirs are in the possession of Sherriff's descendents and include no details of his working life. They concentrate specifically on his origins in England and immigration to New Zealand with his family.

produced for *Tiki's Trip to Town* do not rate a mention anywhere. Nor is there any extant archival material relating to either Sherriff, or Willis, to suggest why he undertook this commission.<sup>13</sup> When viewed along-side his paintings and his sculpture, his illustrations for junior fiction could be regarded as anomalous. However, an illustrated alphabet created for one of his nephews is still in existence in Australia.

This concludes the profiles of the three men involved in the creation of one small book. The profile outlining Sherriff, and in particular his portrayal of indigenous insurgency and engagement in colonial warfare, is a fitting way to introduce Donald MacDonald the author of *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story*.

***Man of adventurer, journalist and lover of nature; the author of The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Adventure Story***  
***Donald Alaster MacDonald (1859-1932)***

Mary Grant Bruce, whom I will discuss next, Ethel Turner and May Gibbs are said to dominate the creation of Australian junior fiction. These authors are credited in the critical commentary of this literature as locating their works within Australia's geographic and botanic specificity. But however motivated none of their works contains such a singular and evocative image of masculine mythology and outback discourse as is found in the adventure tale created by Donald Alaster MacDonald (1859-1932). This profile features the author/journalist who was born in Victoria, Australia and who, along with John Frances Edgar, co-authored *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Adventure Story*. Edgar is briefly included in the entry to MacDonald in E. Morris Miller's *Australian Literature Vol. II* (1940) as having died before that author's return to Melbourne. Consequently the literary significance of his contribution to this work is unknown whereas MacDonald is acknowledged as

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<sup>13</sup> A discussion held with Bernie Willis, A. D. Willis's great grandson, confirmed that nothing prior to the 1950s exists of his great grandfather's printing and publishing practice.

having a solid reputation as a journalist. The details in MacDonald's profile draw on Miller's account as well as Anderson's biographical reference in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 10 (1986).

Anderson (1986, 249) records that MacDonald was born in Melbourne and pursued an early career as a 'pupil-teacher' for the Victorian education department. This was followed by employment with the *Corowa Free Press* and subsequently the Melbourne-based *Argus*, where he established a writing career as a sports reporter with an eye for detail. Coincidentally the *Argus* was the very same paper for which Duigan worked before his arrival in New Zealand. The *ADB* file relates that in addition to his career as a journalist, MacDonald wrote books for children including the tale of exploration entitled *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Adventure Story* (1901). Like Sherriff, MacDonald was a war correspondent and committed naturalist. Anderson relates that he was the 'first Australian war correspondent' to be sent to the South African War and that on his arrival he endured four months of confinement under siege. MacDonald's eyewitness account, 'The Siege of Ladysmith', was given full coverage in the December edition of *The Argus* 1899 spanning eight of its twelve columns.<sup>14</sup>

Being under siege did not prevent the adventurous MacDonald from travelling into the countryside in order to record the local landscape, fauna and flora, and peoples of the veldt. These recordings were published as a subsection of his main article 'What the Naturalist Saw'. I have included two excerpts from this account as evidence of the descriptive style used in his journalistic reporting and in his writing for teenage boy readers. The first is an endorsement of nationalistic pride and moral sentiment combined with the ethos of Christianity. The second, more profoundly, uses the terms 'picturesque' and 'natural' to frame the indigene as cultural and ideological constructs.

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<sup>14</sup> Donald MacDonald 'The Siege of Ladysmith' *The Argus* Monday December 4 1899.



It is good country for an Australian to see. It destroys within him forever the deadly sin of covetousness, brings home to him with convincing force the thing he may have lightly valued, or never realised at all, viz., that genial fruitfulness and comfort of his own *country*.

The only other picturesque natural feature in the landscape is the ever-imposing but distant Drackenberg, with such towering rock masses as Champagne Castle, 12, 000 ft high, and which the Kaffirs, with something of the Maori sense of poetry, call Nmededele, or “the mountain which must be left alone”.

Anderson states that after the war MacDonald spent a year touring Australia, New Zealand and Great Britain giving lectures recounting his experiences in the colonial conflict. In addition to his journalism and war correspondence MacDonald also produced numerous studies of nature. According to Anderson and Miller these were incorporated into a series of articles and reproduced in the *Australasian* and the *Argus*. Those featured in the latter were then compiled into the *Bush Boy's Book* (1911) thus conforming to the publishing practice of printing serial pieces before printing the collection as a singular edition. Anderson also attributes MacDonald as inventing Australia's first tourism guide, the *Tourists' Handbook of Australia* (1905). Prior to these activities MacDonald co-wrote *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* (1901) with Edgar. The author's preface mentions how an international event impinges on his finishing the work and also alludes to his professional practice as a journalist of war.

Anderson (1986, 249) concludes his entry by stating that MacDonald ‘was one of the best-known journalists in Australia’ and that his observations of nature were influential in informing many junior readers about their country of origin. Miller (1940 648) states that ‘MacDonald has little claim as a novelist’ and is ‘better known for his story of the siege of Ladysmith during the South African War’. He claims that *How We Kept The Flag Flying* (1900) ‘was generally

accepted as one of the best books on the war and enhanced' MacDonald's 'reputation as a war correspondent'. As an author of adventure tales and creator of masculine mythologies MacDonald deserves to be recognised. Compared with Bruce his body of work for junior readers is scant. However the literature he produced served to consolidate notions of Australian-ness through sustained characterisation and narratives confined within localised settings. The selected text exemplifies this cultural practice. Miller asserts that MacDonald's *Gum Boughs and Wattle Blossom gathered on Australian Hills and Plains* (1887) 'deserves to be rescued from oblivion'. I contend that a similar argument can be made for his tale of adventure in Northern Australia.

This brings me to the final set of creator profiles, which focus on the author and illustrator most acknowledged for their representation of identity. For these I am indebted to the information contained in Miller's bibliography, Saxby's *A History of Australian Children's Literature 1841-1941* (1969) and William H. Wilde, Joy Hooton and Barry Andrews entry in *The Oxford Companion to Australian Literature* (1994).

***Of the establishment and a graphic enigma; the creators of the Billabong Series  
Mary Grant Bruce (1878-1958)***

Miller, Saxby and Wilde et al relate that Mary Grant Bruce (1878-1958) was born at Sale, Victoria, and spent a large part of her childhood in Gippsland on a cattle station managed by her uncle. A graduate of Melbourne University, Bruce furthered her tertiary education by enrolling in a three-year science course at the Technical Schools. Miller and Wilde et al record that she moved to Melbourne, aged twenty, to take up the position of editor of the children's section in *The Leader*, a weekly appended to the Melbourne based newspaper *The Age*. In 1913 Bruce departed for England with the intention of becoming a journalist in London. She subsequently married and returned to Australia. The ensuing outbreak of W. W. 1 in 1914 would see her migrate continually between Australia, England and Ireland (the birth place of her father).

Bruce's biographers claim that she emerged from her early career in journalism to become, along with May Gibbs and Ethel Turner, one of the most influential and prolific authors of Australian junior fiction. She is said to have published thirty-seven titles between 1910 and 1942. May Gibbs, the author of the 'Gumnut Babies', communicates her concept of national identity through the iconic specificity of indigenous fauna and flora. Bruce, in contradistinction, pursues the issues contingent in the pastoral myth from a regional perspective and within the iconic site of the outback or the bush. In addition to her primary focus on conveying settler and outback identities her writing engages in conveying the gritty reality of the rural squatter existence.<sup>15</sup> Of the female Australian authors (May Gibbs, Ethel Turner, Vera Dwyer) examined for this research, it is Bruce who conforms to the assumption that the 'heroes of the emerging Australian legend were pastoral workers, stockmen or shearers' (Denoon et al 2000, 204).

Given her background it is not surprising that her early novels are reviewed favourably in one of Australia's primary literary institutions of the colonial period, the *Lone Hand*. Denoon et al state that this monthly journal invested in promulgating the 'Man Alone' mythology as well as Henry Lawson's ideology of 'mateship'. However, with the transition from the nineteenth to the twentieth century the *Lone Hand* began to incorporate articles directed at women. These included the biographies and personal opinions of pre-eminent female figures in the arts and literature such as Bruce, Turner and Mary Gaunt. Unlike the reviews in the *Bulletin*, *The Leader*, the *Australian Town & Country Journal*, the section dedicated to new literature and readership, 'THE BOOKANEER' in the December 2 1912 edition featured a comprehensive appraisal of the novels Bruce had published to date as well as work in progress. I have quoted it almost

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<sup>15</sup> Her small book *Rossiter's Farm* (1920) published by Whitcombe's Story Books is a social, if morally sentimental, commentary on the abuse and neglect experienced by young children on settler farms. It is an example of the assertion that 'lack of capital made' the settler farmer 'depend on the unpaid work of wives and children' and that instead of "smiling homesteads" many became "sordid farms" (Denoon et al 2000, 204). Its subject matter bears a particular resonance with the works of the late colonial Australian author, Barbara Baynton.



in its entirety for its literary relevance in introducing Bruce as an emerging writer of note and for its comparison with one of her key contemporaries in junior fiction. The review focuses on the thematic content of her novels and includes a recommendation of their individual suitability for junior readers.

Since Ethel Turner's success with stories about Australian children, which proved interesting to children and grown-ups in other countries besides Australia, there have been a good many books written here. Miss Mary Grant Bruce has made a distinguished place for herself with stories of children set in the heart of the Gippsland bush. That part of Australia is somewhat different to any other, and, of course, bush kiddies are unlike their cousins in the towns. Youngsters who grow up outback do not see any of the "weird melancholy" that has been written into our gum-trees. When they are not callous, as so many young Australians are, they love the freedom and spaciousness of the bush in a way that no city child can understand. It is not dark and forbidding as European forests are, and the young imagination does not people it with demons. Bush children may sometimes be rough in manner, but they are almost always brave, sturdy and independent, and jolly good mates (The Bookaneer 1912, xxiv-xxvi).

Two points are of interest to the thesis namely, the age range of her readers, and the dissemination of national typologies through the national and international distribution of her works. The review states that the 'little people of Miss Bruce's stories are true to type' and that her characters are the 'genuine thing'. These claims are supported by biographical details, which inform the reader of Bruce's origins. By suggesting that Bruce's novels would 'appeal' to older children, the reviewer reinforces Scutter's claim that readers of junior fiction, although described as 'girls' were in actuality adolescents and young adults. Consequently, and as Scutter suggests, Bruce is promoted as possessing an authentic voice and a true perspective. 'The Billabong books represented not only Australian content, but as with Turner, what could be recognised as a

distinctly Australian childhood experience' (Scutter 2001, 300). The review of Bruce's works begins with the first novel in the Billabong series.

Her first book to see the light of publication was *A Little Bush Maid*, which appeared in London in 1910; but *Timothy in Bushland*, issued this year, was written 6 years earlier. *Mates at Billabong* came out in 1911, and *Glen Eyre*, her most ambitious story, a couple of months ago. Miss Bruce is engaged upon another book, which she will take to England next year. *A Little Bush Maid* and *Mates at Billabong* are pleasant stories for youngsters of the kind publishers describe as "wholesome". The humors [*sic*] and escapades of bush children are described naturally, and the atmosphere in which they live is conveyed so well that the reader can see the places as clearly as his or her back yard. The author does not care for *Timothy in Bushland* now, as she recognises certain crudities in it; but it is just that mixture of fairy tale and extravagance, simply done, which little children can appreciate. I tried it on some youngsters of mine and they heartily enjoyed it. *Glen Eyre* will appeal to the children of larger growth. The strain of pathos running through it would not be understood by the young. The little mother dying slowly with a brave smile on her face; the silent undemonstrative father with his neglected children, and the good hearted Irishwoman, are well drawn characters, and the kiddies themselves are capital. There is no mawkish sentiment about them – they are the genuine thing. And behind the characters one sees the sheep farm on the Gippsland hills, and the struggles of the sturdy farmer (The Bookaneer 1912, xxiv-xxvi).

The emphasis on naturalness and genuineness suggests that Bruce's imagined and created worlds contained an element of fact. In this sense I suggest that they can be considered under what I consider to be 'faction'. Faction describes the amalgam of fact and fiction, or what is termed 'non-fiction' (Gibbons 1998, 31). Formative period authors of the adventure genre such as Louis Becke, Alexander MacDonald and Donald MacDonald employed the technique of

faction to flesh out, or make more real the imagined experiences engaged in by their characters.<sup>16</sup> In MacDonald's instance the technique involved piling detail on top of detail to authenticate the regional particularity of his tales.

As an author of children's literature Bruce did likewise. She similarly combined personal account, journalistic practice and verisimilitude to create an adventure genre that was both regional and nationalistic. It is ironic then that the last profile in this chapter should outline an illustrator who is considered iconic in junior fiction but remains an enigma.

### ***John MacFarlane (1857/8-?)***

Given his reputation it is surprising how little exists of the life, interests and career of John MacFarlane (1857/8-?). Alan McCulloch's account of MacFarlane in *The Encyclopedia of Australian Art Vol Two L-Z* (1984) and Muir's commentary in *A History of Australian Children's Book Illustration* (1982) supports what is covered here. McCulloch claims that MacFarlane arrived in Melbourne in 1883, aged 25/26, and took up residence in the Melbourne suburbs of Prahan and Caulfield until c.1899. The legendary sporting venue, the Caulfield racetrack, was and is one of the major entertainment sites of urban Melbourne. Consequently it is quite possible to infer the latter residence as having provided MacFarlane with ready access to the world of horse racing. Muir (1982, 63) states that his 'book of engravings' entitled '*At the Races: the Melbourne Cup* (1892) is certainly the work of an eye-witness, but biographical material on him is scanty'. I speculate that this venue may also have provided him with the raw material for his figurative treatment of horses and riders for Bruce's Billabong series.

Evidence of MacFarlane's considerable output can be found in the artefacts of children's publishing and cultural vernacular as well as pedagogic publications, including the *School Journal of New Zealand*. An examination of the numerous

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<sup>16</sup> In her case study of Louis Becke, Carol Mills (2005) states that Becke, a one time Pacific trader, modelled for Norman Lindsay and assisted him with the illustrative content for the novel based on Becke's adventures.

illustrations created for the covers and inner pages of *The Bulletin* as well as *The Illustrated Australian News* proves MacFarlane to be one of the key graphic artists of the period. By the late nineteenth century dominant British publishers Ward, Lock & Co., had established a local office and agent in Melbourne. MacFarlane subsequently became one of this company's foremost illustrators and was also a major contributor to the success of publishing houses George Robertson & Co., who's outlets encompassed Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide and Brisbane, as well as MacMillan and Co.

Of the works surveyed, six large (44.3cm x 63.4 cm) photoengravings are held in the Heritage Collection of the Victoria State Library. Each of these photoengravings is a reproduction of one of MacFarlane's original watercolour (?) paintings (whereabouts unknown) and features a key figure of nineteenth-century Australian exploration. These images were printed as teaching aids by the publisher George Robertson and Co. Additional to this set of photoengravings, MacFarlane's work for junior fiction includes what appear to be watercolour illustrations for MacDonald's *The Warrigal's Well: A North Australian Story* and Lillian Pyke's *Jack of St Virgil's* (1917) as well as wood engravings for Walter Besant's *Captain Cook* (1890). Moreover MacFarlane designed two full-page illustrations for the December 21 1907 edition and the January 11 1908 edition of *The Girls' Own Annual*. The latter, published in London in the first decade of the twentieth century, suggests that he might have ended his professional transience in his country of origin, the United Kingdom.

It is extraordinary given this body of extant work that no sketchbooks or correspondence offering an insight into the thinking or practice of this prolific illustrator exist. Muir credits MacFarlane for realising the essence of Australia in a way no other illustrator did. McCulloch acknowledges him as faithful in his portrayal. Although MacFarlane is best known for his interpretation of Norah and the characters in the Billabong series it is impossible to determine whether he had a close working association with either Bruce or with William Steele, Ward, Lock and Co.'s agent in Melbourne. As well as his visual distillation of

the Bruce novels, MacFarlane's work for the colonial book, publishers and illustrated press offers some clues as to the way in which he interpreted the pastoral ethos and masculine mythologies. Stylistically his illustrative treatment and technique is loose and impressionistic in contrast to the muscular, heroic style employed by Arthur Buckland. As he is mentioned briefly in Astbury's account, he may have been familiar with, if not an exponent of, the Heidelberg aesthetic.

MacFarlane's representation of Australian Aboriginal people was, most likely, informed by the photographic, illustrative and textual material in circulation and mediated through such illustrated papers as the *Bulletin* and *The Illustrated Australian News*. The reproduction of his Aboriginals encountering a camel train in page twenty-one of the February 1 1893 edition of *The Illustrated Australian News* is one such example. The following citation from an article on Northern Australian Aboriginal culture in the July 1 1896 edition of *The Illustrated Australian News* is an example of 'dying race' mythology and colonist cause. While extolling the physical stature of the 'North Australian native' and lamenting their passing as a 'type', lengthy emphasis is given to these people's intractability and unwillingness to conform or to submit to the governance of the European. I have quoted the article at some length, as it constitutes a compelling piece of evidence of the pejorative mediation of Australia's indigenous people. It also provides a frame of reference for the prevailing views out of which *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* was created.

It seems a pity that such type as exist in the North should be destined to disappear from the face of the earth as has been the case with the native population throughout Australia, but the fact is that the blackfellow is almost everywhere a refractory ore in the crucible of civilisation, and does not readily submit to its processes. From the first, he opposes the inevitable and invincible march of progress, and as progress is but another expression of the implacable natural law of survival of the fittest, it brooks the interference of no such superable obstacle as a tribe

of hostile blackfellows. The North Australian native is almost, without exception, hostile and treacherous, and a long and convincing list of his acts of hostility to white settlers could be made out. Hardly a station has been settled or a goldfield opened without the sacrifice of one or more valuable lives, and it has been the well nigh invariable experience of northern pioneers that until a tribe has been thoroughly chastised for its wanton acts it is a much safer and reliable enemy than it is a trustworthy friend.<sup>17</sup>

MacFarlane is regarded in literary criticism but little known otherwise. He is without doubt one of Australasian illustrated junior fiction's pivotal image-makers. Although Saxby (1969, 157) considers his figurative treatment of Australia's indigenous people 'as far removed from anything at all like real aborigines' his contribution to formative period children's literature is critically important. British artist illustrators Sir John Tenniel (1820-1914), Arthur Rackham (1867-1939), and the American Howard Pyle (1853-1911) are renowned for creating idealised pirate and fairy fantasies. But, as Saxby has pointed out, Australasian junior illustrated fiction was less concerned with the imaginary as it was in capturing the reality of an imagined vision. In his capacity to articulate adventure and masculine mythologies, and the position of the Australian Aborigine within that context, MacFarlane embodies a new perspective.

### *Conclusion*

The selected authors and artist/illustrators created texts and images especially designed to meet the growing needs and concerns of the Australasian-born reader. Beginning with the acquisition and integration of indigenous subject matter, formative period image-makers added the dual strands of fiction and fact to build a uniquely conceived literature. Their iconic and little known creations were embedded with issues and events that were commensurate with

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<sup>17</sup> Explorer, (author unknown), 'Natives and native carvings in North Australia' *The Illustrated Australian News* July 1, 1896.

colonial practice and personal experience. How these were articulated and represented in the image and text of specific works is the subject for discussion in the following case study chapters

## Chapter Five: *Midnight in the Bush*

*'It is midnight, but no Christmas waits disturbed the stillness round the quiet house.'*

Kate McCosh Clark, *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (1891).

### *Introduction*

In chapter five I begin my investigation into the mediation of emergent nationalisms in the literature created for Australasian-born junior readers. My investigation focuses on the way in which immigrant and Australasian-born image-makers articulated a sense of belonging and identity. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the drive to create a national persona or type was pivotal to formative period cultural endeavour. It was embedded in the production and re-productions of fact and fantasy, memory and desire. This, and the following case study chapters examine the works inspired by that imperative. Chapter five opens up that examination. In this chapter I discuss the theme of the celebration of difference and the cultural implementation of one of the processes fundamental to the construction of national identity. My discussion centres on the acquisition and integration of primary stock motifs, the indigenous landscape, fauna and flora as well as figurative types deriving from Australian Aboriginal mythology. As indicated by the quotes introducing the chapter, graphical analysis examines these motifs as signalling the transformation in traditional attitudes.

During the formative period 1890-1920, the message of difference was celebrated and circulated through institutional forms. These forms included one-off modes of representation such as paintings. They also included various forms common to cultural vernacular, namely: multiple editions of books, picturesque atlases, illustrated journals and weeklies, posters, stamps and banknotes. The intention to create a visual identity based on difference also privileged assumptions of divergence, insularity and isolation. William Pember



Reeves, the then Agent General to New Zealand, was one for whom the characteristics associated with insularity were a national requirement. Denoon et al assert that Reeves's address in the *Empire Review* of February 1901 was, in essence, an expedient piece of nationalist rhetoric. In this address Reeves persuasively argued that New Zealand was distinct from Australia. Reeves noted that as the country was 'insular', its landscape, fauna and flora, and indigenous people were distinct and unique.

None of the Australian beasts or reptiles, only one bird, none of the eucalypts and acacias ever found their way across the Tasman Sea. The fertile easy-rolling downs, the park-like woods and dreary endless "scrubs" of the sandstone continent are replaced in New Zealand by snowy mountains or steep green hills, rich valleys divided by cold mountain torrents, and one of the densest, most luxuriant jungles to be found in the temperate zones (cited in Denoon et al 2000, 32).

Three years earlier in his seminal work entitled *The Long White Cloud – Ao Tea Roa* (1898) Reeves bewailed the fact that there was no colonial literature to speak of and that the cultural artefacts in existence derived their origins from 'back home'. However the Agent General to New Zealand was not one to pass this off as a cultural deficit. Instead he considered the situation an opportunity for the national validation of cultural progress. 'There is such a thing as collective ability. The men who will carve statues, paint pictures, and write books will come, no doubt, in good time' (Reeves 1898, 409). In fact they were already there having migrated in the earlier decades of the 1800s, and in contact with one another through their various enterprises and escapades.

Reeves's comments were without doubt directed to the prominent cultural institutions and practices traditionally associated with Eurocentric civilized society. In the colonies of New Zealand and Australia the establishment of the arts and its core disciplines of painting, sculpture, architecture and literature mirrored imported traditional values. In New Zealand representations of

belonging and identity also reflected immersion in a new world resulting in a certain degree of tension. New Zealand historians note that the colony's fledgling cultural community consisted of two groups of image-makers. One of these comprised those for whom traditional and imported values were all important. The other consisted of creators who expressed a preference for local content.

The patriarchal and highbrow sentiment evident in Reeves's writing is symptomatic of the civilizing ethos informing institutional thinking. Not only does his opinion marginalise image-makers who valued the iconic significance of local content, it appears to overlook the creations of authors and artist/illustrators engaged in commercial practice. This oversight thus excludes the very people who were influential in formulating a locally based iconography for an expanding population of readers on both sides of the Tasman. In particular Reeves's cultural opinions rule out works created for junior readers. I argue that in contrast to this perception, literature for children offered an opening for the representation of societal identities bordering upon mainstream cultural values.

The situation for New Zealand's larger neighbour was similar. As noted by critics of children's literature and print historians, growth in population subsequently resulted in an increase in the local creation and production of works for junior readers. Consequently, while Australasian illustrated junior fiction pertained to an imported aesthetic and didactic ideal, its genres provided a platform for the negotiation of issues particular to the colonies. In New Zealand and in Australia image-makers: Robert Atkinson, Mary Grant Bruce, Kate McCosh Clark and John MacFarlane engaged in the deliberate construction of imagined and created worlds. Not only did their writings and illustrations carve out a particular niche in Australasian cultural endeavour, their message of difference was also targeted at readers 'back home' in England and in other parts of the British Empire. Hence the work produced by these image-makers ensured that Australasian illustrated junior fiction

became a not insignificant marketing tool. In returning the colonising ethos to its place of origin, it promoted a nascent national identity synthesized through image and text.

*The formation of national identity in Australasian illustrated junior fiction*

As the colonists started to consolidate their sense of belonging by looking inwards to their new home, cultural attitudes and values perceptibly altered. The literature created in the colonies, and in response to the needs of the Australasian-born reader, subsequently shifted to reflect this inverted perspective. As a consequence locally inspired creations began to replace the glamour of material imported from England and produced by the likes of Arthur Rackham and Walter Crane during the golden age of children's book illustration from 1860-1890. By employing local content to frame traditional tales, along with an amalgam of fact and fiction, Australasian illustrated junior fiction provided a contrasting and relevant vehicle. The image-makers responsible for articulating the shift in cultural attitudes and perceptions of identity were thus part of the collective enterprise envisaged by Reeves. Moreover their image-making is evidence of colonial processes that Gilderdale and Gibbons consider essential in the formation of identity.

For many of the next generation of writers New Zealand would be a place of habitation rather than islands of exile. A considerable amount of non-fiction writing from the 1890s is concerned with fabricating New Zealand by creating an inventory of its phenomena. The 'native born' colonists were trying to depict themselves as the indigenous people. To 'belong' in New Zealand they must regard the place and its phenomena not as alien but as normal (Gibbons 1998, 55).

Historians (Denoon et al and Gibbons), cultural theorists (Bell & Matthewman, Novitz & Willmott) as well as critics of children's literature (Gilderdale and Muir) similarly maintain that the absorption and integration of the local was pre-eminent in the representation of belonging. In New

Zealand and Australia formative period image-makers became reliant on the acquisition of local knowledge for their uniquely conceived visions of the familiar and unfamiliar. I suggest that their representations in Australasian illustrated junior fiction's image and text inheres to processes of acquisition and inventory associated with 'habitation'. In this chapter I apply the research methodology, graphical discourse, to examining the conventional inventory of local phenomena in two works for junior and older readers. Although one constitutes a picture book and the other an illustrated novel, both engage in articulating the celebration of difference and the transformation in identity. These works comprise *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (1891) and *Timothy* (1912).

*Imagined and created worlds of difference and transformation; case study selection*

The two works from the archive surveyed for case study discussion, are each respective of the critical dependence on the theme of indigeneity. Both publications were the creative product of women possessing significant status in the arenas of publishing, the arts and local body politics during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The first of these, Kate McCosh Clark's *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*, is the collective endeavour of immigrant image-makers to New Zealand and a London-based publishing house. This picture book is entirely inspired by the particularity of New Zealand's indigenous landscape, fauna and flora. It is specifically intended to familiarise the Australasian-born and international junior reader of both genders with local knowledge.

The second, *Timothy in Bushland* by the author/journalist Mary Grant Bruce, is the production of one of the dominant players in colonial publishing; Ward, Lock and Co. This adventure tale adheres to the classic formula of the heroic odyssey. In addition to this classical device it incorporates Australian Aboriginal mythology as well as the fiscal and social issues facing outback farmers. The novel is illustrated by MacFarlane, the artist/illustrator known

for his interpretation of Bruce's works but less well known for his treatment of Australian Aboriginal myths in the illustrated press.

Although a twenty-one year gap exists between these two publications, both negotiate stock themes common to pre- and post-Federation Australasian illustrated junior fiction. These constitute the quest for belonging, adventure and discovery. In addition to these dominant themes *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* and *Timothy in Bushland* deal with sub-themes prevalent to colonial discourse and national mythologies. These encompass hardship, isolation and loss. Moreover both tales focus on the encounter with the unfamiliar in rites of passage to self-reliance, independence and security. To further signal occurrences in transformation, Bruce and Clark employ temporal as well as geographic and botanic motifs.

*Processes of acquisition and inventory in establishing a national case for difference*

My reading of difference and transformation is predicated by the importance of stock motifs, the indigenous landscape, fauna and flora in consolidating notions of belonging. Consequently my discussion centres on answering the following questions:

1. Is the representation of the key characters and settings, indicative of the influence of societal issues associated with discourses of belonging and nationhood?
2. How is the representation of the landscape, fauna and flora evidence of processes of acquisition and acculturation?
3. How does the imagined and created world inhabited by the key characters suggest image-maker knowledge of the customs and beliefs of indigenous people, the Maori and the Australian Aborigine?

By applying these questions to the works of Bruce and Clark my investigation examines the implementation of acquisition and inventory in tales of belonging. It explores the idea that these processes were symptomatic of

acculturation and that they validated the presence of the indigene in image-making. By comparing the celebration of difference and transformation in the narrative and illustrative content of these two works, I will comment on the metamorphosis from the unfamiliar into the familiar. Clark's work constitutes the first case study for discussion followed by Bruce's *Timothy in Bushland*. The chronological order in which each work is presented is determined by the period of publication, and by the continued relevance of local phenomena and indigenous mythologies in framing New Zealand and Australian identities.

### *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*

#### ***Biography of A Southern Cross Fairy Tale***

Kate McCosh Clark's *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (1891) is possibly aimed at a reading audience of junior readers aged 10 to 12 years of age. The entire work is a handsome reproduction and consists of seventy-four pages in portrait format (284 x 220 mm). The picture book is hardbound in deep green buckram with black and white typography and gilding on the cover and spine, and is an example of the quality of product originating from England and exported to the colonies. Two sets of illustrations were created for this work. Those produced by the author, and embedded in the text, are watercolour vignettes of fauna and flora indigenous to New Zealand. In contrast to these pedagogic images, the artist/illustrator, Robert Atkinson, created the illustrations designed to explicate the narrative.

By way of introduction to the graphical analysis of Clark's work, I shall begin by quoting in full the preface written by the author in Auckland in July 1889. In this piece of writing Clark outlines her intention to create a differently imagined world for her readers; one based on a celebratory blend of tradition and newness.

The scenes of Christmas tales read by English-speaking children have for the most part naturally laid [sic] amid winter, snow, and leafless landscape.

The Yule-log and the holly berry have been time-honoured “properties.” But there are, growing up under the Southern Cross, generations of children, with English speech and English hearts, to whom the Yule-log at Christmas is unmeaning and the snow unknown.

The little story which follows is written for such children as these, and for those in the older land who have any desire to know what Christmas is like amongst their kin on the other side of the world.

While seeking to amuse, it is intended to convey pleasant information. New Zealand is a land full of natural wonders and natural beauty; its vegetation and its fauna are every way remarkable. In the following pages the allusions to these wonders and beauties, however playfully introduced, are intended to be truthful. The colours and habits of plants and animals are in sober reality just what they are made to appear in fairyland.

The illustrations are from nature, and will, it is hoped, bear out the text. For the loan of certain birds and clear descriptive notes upon them, I am deeply indebted to Mr. A. Reischek, F.L.S., the well-known naturalist, The kind interest of Professor Thomas, M.A., F.L.S., F.G.S., and the valuable notes given by him upon the Terraces, Geysers, &c., also lay me under much obligation.

The statements contained in the author’s preface testify to *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* as fundamentally a collaborative creation. In addition to this the preface highlights two considerations with which this chapter and the study is concerned. One is the reference to first-generation New Zealand-born children for whom traditions normally associated with climatic conditions peculiar to the Northern Hemisphere had little or no meaning. The other is

indicated by the relationship between the phrases ‘sober reality’ and ‘fairyland’. Their juxtaposition in the tale’s image and text affirms the scientific and creative conventions of fact and fiction in establishing the discursive representation of imagined and created worlds. The amusement and pleasantries intended as the outcome of reading this picture book owes much to the nuanced relationship between these two forms in the narrative and illustrative content.

### *A quest for belonging and identity*

*A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* is primarily a journey towards belonging constructed around the encounter with the unfamiliar. At its heart lies the representation of difference. It is through this lens that the author announces the severance with traditional cultural norms and endeavours to convey the particular characteristics of a new world through a synthesis of fantasy and reality. In Clark’s work ‘time honoured’ values are inverted and the needs of the Australasian-born reader are paramount. To consolidate the message of transformation and shift in belonging, the author resorts to encoding her tale with collected facts and scientific detail. The narrative unfolds from the preface to subsequently capture the reader in a celebratory quest for identity.

This quest involves a guided adventure through the iconic sites of New Zealand made popular through their dissemination in cultural vernacular and in such illustrated papers as *The Graphic* and the *Australasian Sketcher*. In a rite of passage encompassing both North and South Islands, Clark’s primary characters visit iconic sites associated with the scenic picturesque. Led by a key figure in the form of Santa Claus as well as elemental guides (fairies and gnomes) the child protagonists engage in activities and encounters mainstream to colonial societies. The adventure commences at midnight in the bush adjoining the ‘English’ garden of a colonist’s home. It concludes the following morning with a bedroom scene.



Along with the key theme of difference, others considered by Gilderdale to be fundamental to late nineteenth-century children's literature are woven into the tale's narrative structure. These sub-themes comprise sickness, dangerous and long journeys, physical isolation and death by drowning in addition to Christian themes of resurrection or restoration. Clark's tale also manages a certain resonance with the Robinson Crusoe mythology suggested by parental tales of shipwreck and island survival. This genre form was pivotal in influencing 1890's adventure genre and will be discussed in greater detail in chapter six. Although themes of difference and transformation inform the tenor of the narrative, the fine black and white engraved illustrations flesh out the nuances in the text in a way that words cannot. Atkinson's originals are in the medium of watercolour and are designed to evoke the atmospheric qualities of light and shadow using the tonal extremes of chiaroscuro. Skilfully interpreted through the hand of the engraver, these images are a faithful attempt to communicate the iconic presence and physicality of the New Zealand landscape. Moreover I suggest that their tonal aesthetic and figurative treatment successfully contributes to creating a picturesque world for a dance with Tane's children.<sup>1</sup>

### *The dance of encounter*

The dance of encounter with difference begins with a deceptively simple illustration (see Fig. 5.1) featuring two emblems of authority, a crown and a wand resembling a Maori talking stick or *tokotoko*. Perhaps no other image in formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction is as compelling in denoting the institutional relationship existing between the coloniser and the indigenous people of New Zealand. For those familiar with the effects of colonization in New Zealand and the relationships ensuing from governing authorities and indigenous systems of power its visual code is imperative. In this image both the crown and the wand/talking stick constitute symbols of

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<sup>1</sup> Tane or Tanemahuta, the god of the forests, was considered by the Maori to be the foremost deity in the quartet of brothers that included Tawhirimatea, Tangaroa and Tumatauenga, and who separated their parents Rangi, the sky father, and Papatuenuku, the earth mother, from their eternal embrace.

governance and oratory. Hence I contend that they function as powerful metonyms for institutional and hierarchical systems with which Clark and Atkinson were familiar.



Figure 5.1 Engraved illustration by R. Atkinson, 7.2 x 11.2 cm. Preface illustration for *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (London: Sampson and Lowe, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1891). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

In Atkinson's illustration the crown, the icon of monarchy commonly used to signal dominion and rulership, assumes a protective and all embracing function. By encircling the equally powerful symbol of the wand/talking stick, it refers to the paternalism embedded in imperial and colonial institutions. The implementation of imperial power-based systems in the colonies was founded on the principle that imported policies of governance were in the best interests for a dependent people. In contradistinction to this belief the reality for the colonised population was often the impingement upon their

freedom, self-determination and power. The impact of institutional power-based systems on indigenous people, and the strategies they engaged in to counter them is the focus for discussion in the following chapter.

Imperial paternalism inhered to the notion that indigenous peoples, labelled by Reeves (1898, 2) the 'native race' would benefit and be preserved by hard work and good governance. A determinist reading of Atkinson's image appears

to conform to this perception. It also conforms to the idea that the Crown and its governing agency, the Department of Native Affairs was the sole protector of the indigenous people of New Zealand. However I suggest that there is an alternative to this interpretation. This reading comes from analysing the symbolic relationship inherent in the spatial arrangement of the two iconic elements. I argue that in this composition the penetrating or phallic wand functions on two levels of signification. On one level it is literally representative of the tool of magic traditionally appearing in children's literature. At another level the wand is culturally metonymic of the *tangata whenua*, the people of the land. Shown carved with Maori motifs (the most dominant of which is a tiki) it closely resembles a *tokotoko*, the talking stick or genealogical staff used by male orators in Maori society and is hence emblematic of tribal and kinship society.

I assert that the illustration of the wand/talking stick encircled by an emblem of colonial authority and governance is more than just a decorative token. Like the crown this iconic emblem is equally synonymous in connoting concepts associated with authority and rulership. For Maori it was and remains a symbol of value, generational currency, status and power in the transmission of indigenous oral histories and values. Hence I maintain that through its traditional association with the cultural customs of Maori, the wand/talking stick is a potent signifier for signalling acculturation rather than assimilation. Consequently my reading of this introductory image complies with King's and Ann Salmond's account of the historical origins of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi and its consequent implications for Maori and Pakeha relationships. For King the signing of the Treaty would result in a bi-cultural society. The 'face of New Zealand would be a Janus one, representing at least two cultures and two heritages, very often looking in two different directions' (King 2003, 167).

The four subsequent illustrations extend the reading of belonging and identity through the representation of four different sites of engagement. In addition to the stock motif, the bush, these are signalled in *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* by

the clearing, the thermal region as well as the volcano and fabled Pink and White terraces. I contend that each image contests the norms of colonial discourse, and proposes a new way of mediating imagined and created worlds by book illustration.

*Sights before sunrise and a barefoot Santa Claus*

Clark's tale is set during Christmas Eve, a time denoting longing and the anticipated fulfilment of desire. The plot centres on a brother and sister, nine-to-ten year old Hal and seven-year old Cis. In the narrative the author describes their father as absent, presumed drowned on the return voyage to visit a 'sick relative in a distant land' (Clark 1891, 4). The insecurity signalled by this paternal absence is filled with the arrival of a surprisingly different Santa Claus. When questioned by the child protagonists as to why his appearance is so unusual he replies that in the old world he is an old man but when in the "New World" he assumes an appropriately youthful aspect (Clark 1891, 1). Consequently his supporting trademarks, the reindeer, sleigh, 'snow and frost', have been left behind as symbolic of past traditions. In contradistinction to the popular representation in cultural vernacular of Thomas Nast's rotund and ruddy ideal (created in the 1860s) Clark's Santa Claus is atypically a 'lad' endowed with knowledge and light (Clark 1891, 7). In the new world of Christmas summer and 'long soft shadows' he is a barefoot guide, crowned with stars and bearing a wand. Represented in this fashion he is both a signifier for Imperial perceptions of the colony as antipodean and youthful as well as the institution of paternalism entrenched in colonial society. The author's word-painting of this idealised figure is evident in the following excerpt as well as the first of Atkinson's evocative full-page illustrations.

And there, where the moonbeams fell upon the floor, stood a lad with a smiling face, and on his head was a crown of twinkling stars, and beneath the stars these words shone, "I bring good gifts to all." A robe of deepest blue hung down in soft shimmering folds near to his feet; and in his hand was a wand, on the tip of which shone the evening star.



Figure 5.2 “Take that,” said Santa Claus; “it will give you light in the darkest places”. Engraved illustration by R. Atkinson, 16 x 20.2 cm. Illustration for p. 6 of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (London: Sampson and Lowe, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1891). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection of the National Library of New Zealand.

The unique gift that he has come to bestow is one that will enable the children to comprehend the signifying systems peculiar to New Zealand. Within the context of emergent nationalisms, knowledge and understanding are correlated with processes of inventory and acquisition. In the critique of children’s literature as well as national cultural endeavour they are indicative of

acculturation and generational status. By suggesting that Santa Claus endows Cis and Hal with the gift of appreciation, Clark highlights a pivotal stage in transition for first-generation New Zealand-born children. For the author, status and security equate with becoming cognisant of and familiar with the peculiarity of local phenomena. Hence Clark’s tale subsequently focuses on the acquisition of local knowledge resulting from encounters with the landscape and fauna indigenous to New Zealand.

The first full illustration dealing with difference and transformation (see Fig. 5.2) is set during the bewitching hour of midnight. Illuminated by a full moon

Cis and her brother, Hal, are led from the safety of civilisation into a wonderland whose gateway is hinted at by the untamed and impenetrable bush. In Clark's text European civilization co-exists with the exotic and is evoked by stock motifs correlating with colonization and culture: the house festooned with passion-flowers, its garden of roses and accompanying meadows. In contradistinction to this recognisable and imported norm, Atkinson's illustration represents the unfamiliar particularity of the New Zealand bush. In his image the ubiquitous and iconic *ponga* (tree fern) and the otherworldliness of the supple jack vines and forest trees combine to symbolise the demarcation between the known and the unknown.

Atkinson's selection of indigenous flora visually extends the literary metaphor implicit in the phrase describing the garden as a semi-cultivated wilderness. Moreover his figurative treatment of the author's iconography operates to reinforce commonly held perceptions of the colony as civilized and uncivilized, cultivated and uncultivated. For the New Zealand-born reader of the formative period the cultural divergence in imported European flora and plants peculiar to New Zealand symbolised the reality of being immersed in two worlds. Thus, in addition to the illustrator's treatment of stock motifs, the landscape and the bush, Clark's floral motifs signalled the transformation in identity from the conventions of one world (England) to another (the Antipodes).

Along with the literal adherence to the figurative description supplied in the text, the stylistic convention that best conveys this altered state is the frame or border surrounding the illustration. As a frame it localises a specific view. As a border it symbolically encloses a field that can be penetrated and transgressed as where the new world leaks out of the upper and lower edges of the composition. Far from providing a decorative function the border further performs an optical illusion by flipping from a flat, two-dimensional shape to become a space in which a rabbit (shown in aerial perspective) bounces in vertiginous abandon. Whether the inclusion of this creature owed anything to



popular tales involving magic and animals is unknown. I speculate that by showing the rabbit inhabiting the space outside the main illustration, Atkinson is attempting to portray the influence of one world on another. Santa Claus emerges from this graphic conundrum to pass the wand to Hal who dominates the central axis of this flux of representational activity. "Take that," said Santa Claus; "it will give you light in the darkest places" (Clark 1891, 5). Like an X that marks the spot, the light at the tip of the wand/talking stick alludes to the navigational constellation known as the Southern Cross. As a metaphorical as well as astronomical pointer it is denotative of place and is hence a geographic motif of some importance.

A symbol of acculturation similar to the wand and the Southern Cross is the name Aotearoa, or the Long White Cloud, given by Reeves to New Zealand in 1898. King (2003, 41) states that the 'dissemination in the *School Journal* and other literature' of myths of discovery 'popularised and entrenched the notion that the Maori name for New Zealand had been and still was Aotearoa'. In Clark's tale the mode of travel by which Santa Claus, Cis and Hal move from the North to the South island of New Zealand is a cloud. I thereby contend that the figurative devices, the wand and cloud, are evidence of the way in which the indigenous people of New Zealand were imaged, textualized and culturally colonized.

The identification with the colony as home, rather than a place of immigration, is further reinforced by the placement of the children in the design of the composition. In illustration for junior fiction characters are deliberately positioned within the composition and drawn in such a way that they speak to the reader. In the compositional modality of Atkinson's design, Cis and Hal are placed in the centre, facing outward and organically framed by the encompassing and dense bush. Thus positioned I argue that they mirror back to the New Zealand-born reader as well as the audience 'back home', a people in the process of developing their own sense of identity and place. This message of belonging is given further weight through the artist/illustrator's

compositional treatment of Santa Claus. In the spatial arrangement of this image he appears to enter into the scene as from a door. By using the device of the border in this manner, Atkinson signifies Santa Claus as having passed from the traditional past into the new and unfamiliar present.

The severance with the past is made even more complete by a botanic sign that could be disregarded as just a decorative feature. This is the supplejack vine appearing on the right hand side of the composition. Without its contrasting diagonal emphasis, scale, linear movement and graphic weight, the unfolding scene would contain little in the way of psychological tension.<sup>2</sup> As a compositional framing device it is stylistically reminiscent of the organic art nouveau motifs in the illustrations of Edith Howes' *Maoriland Fairy Tales* (1913). I maintain that in Atkinson's illustration the supple jack vine is not a redundant feature but a metaphoric symbol for indigeneity. Recognisably less friendlier than the *ponga*, with which New Zealandness became identified, it nonetheless signals the particularity of indigenous motifs in framing representations of belonging.

This reading resonates with the argument forwarded by cultural theorist Hughes-D'Aeth that indigenous tropes were essential in contextualising colonial identity. Hughes-D'Aeth asserts that in colonial representations of civilization and progress, Australian Aborigines are symbolically synonymous with indigenous and regional fauna and flora. The same argument can be made for the treatment of the indigenous people of New Zealand in formative period illustrations. In these Maori were typically 'cut out' from their surroundings and inserted as pictorial markers of the colony's key sites and industries. A literal reading of Atkinson's illustration might conclude that as no Maori are figuratively represented they are, in effect, absent. Such a reading would conform to the popularly held belief that New Zealand was a splendid but

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<sup>2</sup> The Australian-based New Zealand born director, Jane Campion, used the snaky and unyielding vines of the supplejack to great effect in her film *The Piano* to evoke a sense of claustrophobia and entrapment.



desolate wilderness inhabited by a dying race. My argument made in relation to the analysis of the title page illustration and this image contends that this is not the case. According to Maori belief systems the bush and its creatures, the mountains and the lakes belong to the domain of Tanemahuta, the god of the forest. Hence I maintain that in addition to recognisable and mainstream stock motifs, less well-regarded forms assume an equally active role in the articulation of identity in image and text.

The linear perspective in this and the following illustrations is virtually non-existent compared with the representation of space in Australian children's literature. In this image there is little horizon to speak of and the logic by which this form of perspective is constructed is confounded by a landscape filled up with organic things. Instead the artist/illustrator has applied the convention of atmospheric perspective to create the illusion of spatial depth and distance. Consequently the delineation of foreground, mid-ground and background are defined through the subtle application of scale and tone. The resulting effect is a created space outside of which the border/frame folds and unfolds in a constant state of negotiation between the real and the imagined.

This otherworldliness is the subject for representation in the next illustration (see Fig. 5.3). In contrast to the former site, this image depicts a forest clearing in which a dance is being held. In keeping with the pulsing momentum of the event the composition expands to fill the entire dimension of the image area. In this illustration Atkinson has again employed the principle of atmospheric perspective to represent the inward-looking nature of the bush where long views and distant horizons, such as the sea, are hinted at but concealed from view. Overseen by Santa Claus who holds court at the base of a tree fern, surrounded by a ferment of curiously shaped fairies, the children join in a heterogeneous dance that appears to have no perceptible order. While everybody, including the introduced rabbit, dances with everybody else a large and slightly intoxicated looking Kiwi is embraced by Cis and a Tui or Parson bird, formally partners Hal. Huhu beetles chase after caterpillars, Kakapo

(alleged by Clark to be the best dancers) dance with Weka, and Tuatara survey the goings on with a solemnity that, according to the author, correlates with their historical longevity as a species. Not only are the latter ‘too proud of their old family’ they so dislike the ‘fast ways of the inhabitants of this part of

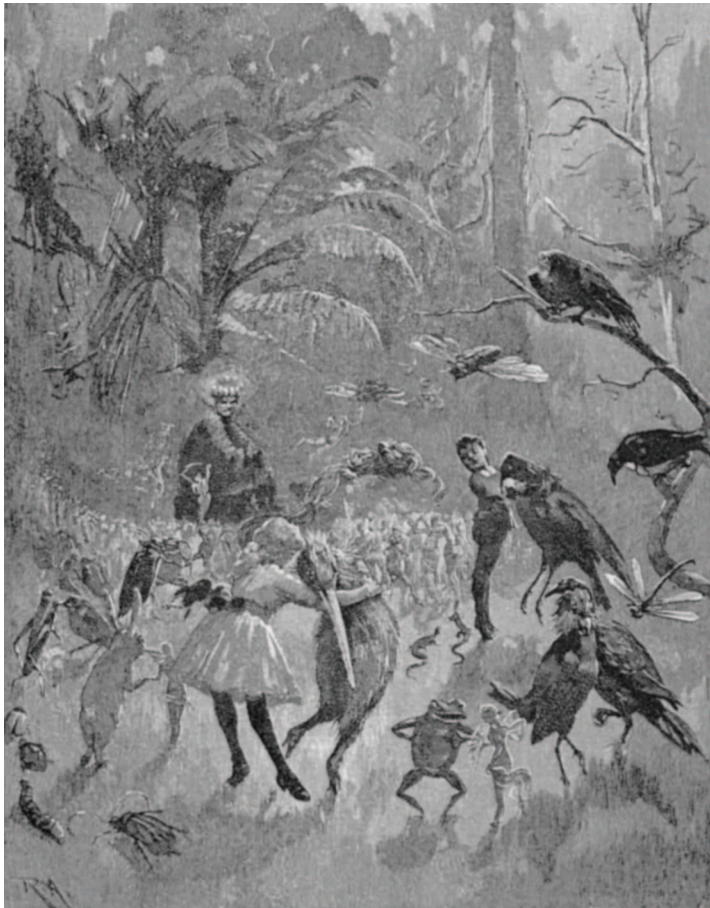


Figure 5.3 “‘We’re sorry we’re so big,” said Hal’. Engraved illustration by R. Atkinson, 12.7 x 16.4 cm. Illustration for p. 13 of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (London: Sampson and Lowe, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1891). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection of the National Library of New Zealand.

the country’ that they have all ‘retired to an island off the coast, where their only companions are the mutton-birds who live in holes in the ground’ (Clark 1891, 15).

Becoming notionally familiar with the ‘alien’ and exotic through witnessing or taking part in a dance is woven in to colonial discourse and tales of discovery. Historians and cultural theorists claim that ritualised performances such as dances were integral to Polynesian and Australian Aboriginal

society. Paul Carter and Salmond relate that since the days of early exploration ritualistic cultural experiences such as the Aboriginal *corroboree* and the Maori *haka* were prominent in acts of encounter and negotiation. Consequently I suggest that in the author’s text and in Atkinson’s illustration the dance features as a symbol of induction and corresponds to cultural rites of

passage. As in the narrative description the circular motion of this event hinges around the figure of Santa Claus. By being partnered with the Tui and the Kiwi and by mimicking an adult performance, the child protagonists, and by association the child reader, enter into a discourse of association. Thus although the image is imbued with a delightful sense of whimsy synonymous with the conventional treatment of fairytale worlds in English publications, it carries other implications for the New Zealand-born reader. The message implicit in the representation of the dancing human and avian protagonists is a societal relationship echoing the order in the preface illustration.

After the dance ends Santa Claus tells the children that he has 'more wonderful things to show' them 'before the sun rises' (Clark 1891, 26). He leads them out of the forest and up a hill from which they look out over a plain broken by deep gullies and bordered by dark mountain ranges. The children walk on silently in the uncertain light wishing they were home but curious to know what else their guide has to show them.

In contrast to the previous bush scenes, the third and fourth illustrations, which will be dealt with separately, pinpoint New Zealand as a site of the spectacle of tourism. In each of these Atkinson has used a framing device rather than a border, which consequently results in a different reading from the previously discussed images. In the first of these prior images (see Fig. 5.2) the border is treated as a fluid and malleable space and is hence symbolically suggestive of flux, movement, change and instability. In contrast to this and the image of the dance (see Fig. 5.3) the following illustration (see Fig. 5.4) is compressed into a dark, thin frame.



Figure 5.4 'On the top of the geysers were shot out a troop of laughing gnomes'. Engraved illustration by R. Atkinson, 12.7 x 16.5 cm. Illustration for p. 29 of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* (London: Sampson and Lowe, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1891). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

Once again Santa Claus is seated on the ground. However in this image his figurative role is less an icon than an indexical sign. With his back turned to the reader he faces into the scene directing the reader's gaze to an exultant looking Hal. In contrast to her brother, Cis is in the protective embrace of Santa Claus and being kept from harm.

Atkinson's gendered representation of the child protagonists is possibly informed by the colonial perception of women and girls as moral containers for

nationhood and requiring paternal protection. I suggest that while the artist/illustrator's figurative treatment of his key characters certainly conforms to the discourse of paternalism evident in pre- and post-Federation Australasian illustrated junior fiction, it is not as explicitly paternalistic as Dorothea Moore's *Fairyland in New Zealand: A Story of the Caves* (1909).

In Atkinson's landscape depth has been replaced by shallowness. This affect is visually heightened by the extreme reduction in the dimension and scale of the figurative elements comprising this image. In this condensed field

of activity forms float in space with no fixed reference point for their existence and origin except for their clothes. The eerie forest looming in the background of the composition further reinforces the juxtaposition between indigenous and imported worlds. Not only does this iconic element augment the primeval tenor of the narrative, it renders European existence, signalled by gnomes discharged from the geyser, superfluous. In this restricted representation of otherworldliness, stock motifs pertinent to New Zealand, the bush and the geyser dominate the scene. The spectacular nature of the latter phenomenon was popularised through the promotion of one of New Zealand's renowned iconic tourism sites, the volcanic plateau, in advertising ephemera and the illustrated press. The Agent General to New Zealand considered the geothermal region of New Zealand a national institution. He described the 'health-resort' as a 'wonderland' with geysers equivalent to 'those of Iceland and the Yellowstone' and which 'in the clear, sunny air' had the capacity to 'silence even the chattering tourist for a while' (Reeves 1898, 21-22).

Situated in the central North Island and incorporating Wairakei Valley the volcanic plateau was, until 1894, the tribal land of the Ngati Tuwharetoa. The inclusion of this region as a specific site for representation was most likely informed by the author's and artist/illustrator's relationship with King Tawhiao and paramount Chiefs Te Heu Heu Tukino IV and V. Although the reference to geothermal uniqueness is implicit in Atkinson's illustration, his image neither conveys Reeves's poetic vision nor the concept of health embedded in tourist rhetoric. Nor does it conform to the stock in trade representations of the picturesque disseminated through cultural vernacular. Instead I contend that the darkness pervading this illustration is an early version of the aesthetic known as 'New Zealand Gothic'. This stylistic form has since become endemic to the genre mediation of identity in art, literature, film as well as design sub-cultures.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See Kavka, Misha and Jennifer Lawn, Mary Paul, eds. *Gothic New Zealand: The Darker Side of Kiwi Culture*. Dunedin, Otago: Otago University Press, 2006.



From the dark uneasiness of the preceding illustration, the fourth and final for discussion (see Fig. 5.5) emerges to again combine fantasy and fact in a graphic memorial. This image is an imagined simulation of an actual event that occurred just five years prior to publication of *A Southern Cross Fairytale*.<sup>4</sup> It represents for the New Zealand-born and international reader the cataclysmic effects following the eruption of one of New Zealand's most iconic volcanoes, Mount Tarawera.

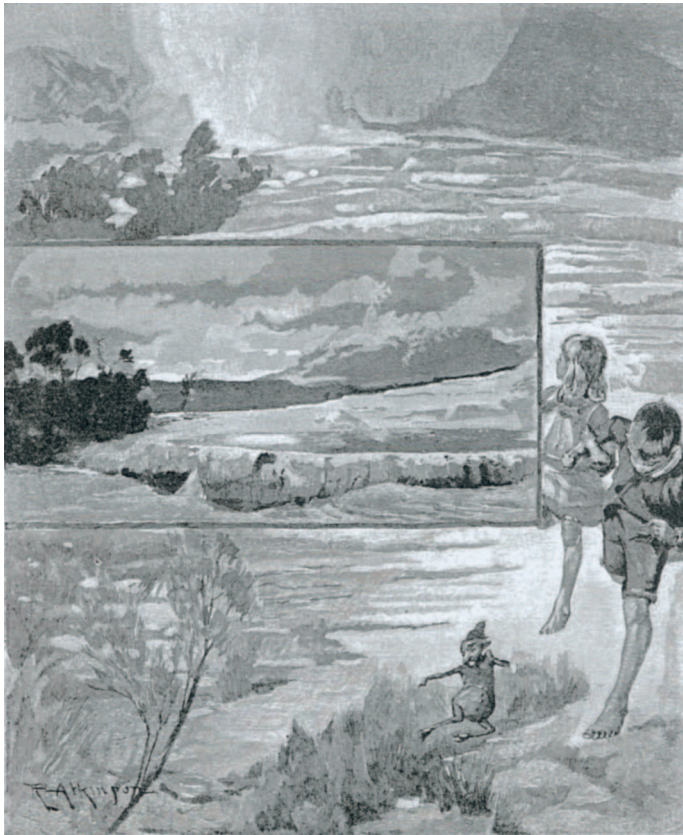


Figure 5.5 "Run to the hill!" cried Red Cap'. Engraved illustration by R. Atkinson, 16.5 x 20.3 cm. Illustration for p. 38 of *A Southern Cross Fairytale* (London: Sampson and Lowe, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1891). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

In Atkinson's illustration the entire image area is taken up with the pyroclastic destruction of the Pink and White Terraces. In the artist/illustrator's juxtaposition of reality, memory and fantasy, the children perform a secondary role to the iconic primacy of the landscape. In this image they are represented fleeing the scene, barefoot in the company of their guide, the head gnome 'Red Cap'.

Of all the images created by the illustrator for *A Southern Cross Fairytale*, this is the most

<sup>4</sup> Michael King (2003, 250) states that 'Mount Tarawera erupted on the night of 10 June 1886. At least 147 Maori and six Pakeha died; the villages of Te Wairoa, Moura and Te Ariki were buried, and the fabled Pink and White Terraces destroyed'.

intriguing and compositionally complex. While composite images featuring socio-cultural and political events, ethnic minorities and geographic destinations were common to the illustrated press (as will be discussed in chapters six and seven) they were unusual in Australasian illustrated junior fiction. Most often the children's literature of the formative period included vignettes embedded in the text along with tipped in illustrations. In the compositional modality of this image the key characters are squashed into a vertical space, which almost squeezes them out of the scene. This squeeze is due to the insertion of a framed illustration that horizontally thrusts its way into the primary image. In contrast to the dramatic representation of the narrative, this image presents a stereotypically picturesque view reminiscent of the scenic postcards produced by such printer/publishers as A. D. Willis. The visual tension resulting from its iconographic content and compositional placement ensures the smaller image to be graphically imperative. Its communicative function in the picture book is to immortalise the Pink and White Terraces as a picturesquely packaged and freeze-framed memento. Sealed within the representation of their destruction, the terraces live on commemorated through Australasian illustrated junior fiction as a unique loss. Hence I maintain that the design of this composite illustration affirms the practice of re-presentation as consequential in the formation of national identity and myths of belonging.

I suggest that the five illustrations created by Atkinson are consecutively representative of the negotiation of identity through the quest motif. As the title, *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*, implies its genre specific characters, the fairies and gnomes, are agents in this process. However, as catalysts of change and transformation their influence is subsidiary to the iconic metaphor signalled by the Southern Cross. This constellation illuminates the iconographic importance of indigenous motifs and by extension the culture of the indigenous people of New Zealand in framing identity. For the New Zealand-born reader concepts relating to belonging and identity were constructed on the mythology of sublime isolation. The gift of light and knowledge that Santa

Claus brings to the child protagonists is intended to break through this isolation and to ease the process of acculturation and transformation. However becoming acculturated was not without a struggle as evident in the deeper meaning of Atkinson's illustrations. The bush always threatens to consume, confuse and contaminate. The dance of encounter becomes formalised through the Treaty and then breaks apart through broken promises and retaliation. Regions once in the possession of *iwi* and *hapu* are areas of territorial debate and contingent on colonial influence. The occupation of the land is shaky and unsettled.

Cultural theorist Nigel Clark (2004, 3) claims that it is through our situatedness, our experience and interaction with 'events, things, places and people around us' that a sense of belonging is created. Although the narrative of *A Southern Cross Fairytale* covers both islands, only the North Island is represented in the illustrations. At the time of publication the North Island had been richly populated with Maori Tribes. Certain tribes such as those connected with the region of Waikato were still in contention with the Crown while others as, for example, Te Arawa, expressed allegiance. Te Arawa's tribal region included the internationally renowned tourist destination, scenically geothermic Rotorua. In addition the European/Pakeha of the 1890s was neither settler nor nationalist but a hybrid mix of immigrant and New Zealand born. I argue that *A Southern Cross Fairytale* is consequently representative of an identity in transition. I maintain that the characters and activities represented in the images accompanying the author's text articulate the effects of transformation associated with occupation, settlement and possession.

In reading the preface to this tale, the complexity involved in negotiating the processes associated with national myth-making becomes apparent. In the concluding statement the author asserts that as the 'illustrations are from nature' they 'will, it is hoped, bear out the text' (Clark 1891, preface). Her



assertion tacitly acknowledges the importance of verisimilitude, the aesthetic privileged in formative period high art academic study. It implies, moreover, that the function of an illustration is to faithfully reproduce the meanings contained in the text thereby validating the author as truthful in her account. Thankfully, Atkinson's skilled and imaginative illustrations are not tainted with the sterile technical accomplishment of the academy. Even the pedagogic drawings by the author of New Zealand's indigenous fauna and flora do not fit entirely into this description. Instead they are subjectively informed according to her appreciation of cultural convention. As with other works created for children, this picture book is the product of cultural, societal and historical influences. However, within the context of Australasian illustrated junior fiction and the visual cultural mediation of emergent nationalisms, it possesses a certain specificity. I maintain that the author's intention to 'playfully' introduce her New Zealand-born and international readers to the 'reality' of New Zealand's 'wonders and beauties' confirms the power of fact and fantasy in affirming identity and belonging. Having analysed difference, transformation and the quest for belonging within the New Zealand context I shall now examine their representation in an Australian work.

### *Timothy in Bushland*

#### ***A biography of Timothy in Bushland***

*Timothy in Bushland* was written by Bruce and published in 1912 by Ward, Lock and Co. Like most of her creations it was intended for a mature audience of adolescent readers. *Timothy in Bushland* is an illustrated novel hardbound in red buckram with black typography and gilding on the cover and spine. The entire text comprises 239 pages in portrait format (192 x 130 mm). Eight illustrations were designed and created by John MacFarlane and inserted into the illustrated novel as leaves of plates. Thus the length of the work, the format and the number of illustrations conform to the publishing patterns evident in literature produced in Australia for older children.

According to literary critics (Miller and Saxby) this work was not one that the author particularly rated as amongst her best creations. However, I argue that *Timothy in Bushland* is singular in integrating a figure believed to have originated from Aboriginal mythology into a quest for identity based on the pastoral ethos and masculine mythology. The core themes of independence, impoverishment and insecurity evident in this tale share commonalities with Bruce's complex novel *Glen Eyre* (1912) and her pastoral critique *Rossiter's Farm* (1920). Like her later work, *Dick* (1918) the emphasis of the plot of *Timothy in Bushland* is on morality, sexuality and manhood. In contrast to the gendered relationship in *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*, Bruce's tale focuses on a lone eight-year old boy who seeks to restore his parents' threatened existence. Here, the narrative and illustrative content of the two titles diverge in essence and in construction. The tone of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* is playful and light while *Timothy in Bushland* is comparatively inward looking and darker. Clark's New Zealand work articulates the theme of belonging and identity through the celebratory dance with difference. Bruce, in contradistinction, negotiates the transformation in identity through immersion in the alien and unfamiliar.

### *His mother's mate*

By describing her key character as young and small for his age, I suggest that the author reconfigures the mythic type of the man alone. Timothy is consequently junior fiction's equivalent of a societal identity often depicted in cultural vernacular as physically isolated and in conflict with the land. In the text the hero's fragile status is signalled by the description that he is neither chubby, nor well-fed like the city boys, but lean and hard. Thus, despite his size, height and age the hero conforms to Bruce's preference for the tall, lean and hard stereotype mythologised as the true Australian. Most importantly for the reader Timothy is his mother's mate. In this role he is forced into early maturity due to the impact of drought and economic hardship. In the Australasian historiography of farming practice, isolation and fear of generational loss are observed to be significant factors. Historians state that thousands of 'farmers had to abandon small farms of the second half of the

nineteenth century after sinking their savings to keep them afloat' (Denoon et al 2000, 127). Moreover they claim that the ever-present fear of drought, which hit the region of Victoria in the 1890s and the "'tyranny of distance'" were consequential in influencing the viability of settler and squatter societies.

*Timothy in Bushland* opens on the spectre of drought and the ensuing fiscal and moral toll on a family reduced by infant mortality and living under the threat of being forced off the land. As a signal to this drama Bruce (1912, 9) entitles her first chapter 'King Drought'. The remainder of the novel engages in representing the virtues of masculine stoicism and vigour counter to their stereotypic articulation in standard male-authored tales of adventure and exploration. In Bruce's tale impoverishment and insecurity prevail as consonant themes. Timothy's father is characterised as a broken man. Reduced by circumstance he is described as crying the 'hard, dry sobs of a man which are so infinitely terrible because they so rarely come' (Bruce 1912, 28). Apart from kindred female characters in *Glen Eyre* and *Rossiter's Farm*, this fragile type is not to be found in other works of formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction.

The narrative construction of the tale is essentially one of fantasy to which is added elements from the genres of adventure and fable. As with *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* it involves a quest, which is similarly initiated at night and under a full moon. In this instance the quest is not for knowledge but for economic salvation. Guided by an irascible and squealing bandicoot, Timothy is driven into the bush, now foreign and alien, to meet the 'King of Bushland', a 'Bunyip' (Bruce 1912, 57). He is summonsed to meet and pass three trials. These are to determine whether he, a human, has the capacity for loyalty, compassion, courage and strength. In addition they are to assess whether he is worthy of the title 'mate'. The trials comprise a race against a kangaroo, a joey and an emu, an ascent up a red gum to collect an abandoned nest, and finally immersion in a waterhole. In meeting his aim Timothy is acknowledged and rewarded. He is informed that his 'work' among the creatures of bushland is

complete. 'You have seen what no one of your race has ever beheld; you have fought such a fight as never boy waged before, and you have won. Now yours is the reward – and then farewell!' (Bruce 1912, 222).

Like Cis and Hal, Timothy awakes expecting to be absorbed in the existence of the bushland but is, instead, brought back from this fantasy by the reality of the 'pine walls of his own little room' (Bruce 1912, 228). However, his memory of his otherworldly experience enables him to lead his father through the scrub to locate and un-earth a large nugget of gold. This mineral wealth subsequently ensures the economic profitability of the farm and transforms Timothy's fortune. From the eight illustrations accompanying this tale, I have selected the frontispiece and four consecutive images of key sites and motifs for graphical analysis.

### *In the land of the Bunyip King*

The first image (see Fig. 5.6) in which the theme of mateship is represented as consonant with self-sacrifice and compassion is MacFarlane's illustration for the frontispiece. It features Timothy rescuing a koala, the creature quaintly described as the 'little Monkey – Bear' from drowning (Bruce 1912, 166). Other creatures forming the Bunyip King's court wait at the base of a large (gum?) tree, silent and aloof witnesses to this spectacle of a human not as wanton destroyer but protector. In this image the combined iconography of the child and the koala resonate with the interlinked crown and wand in the frontispiece of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*. Both the boy and the indigenous animal are in effect coded forms of national character and metonyms for the indigene. Hence I argue that MacFarlane's image is similarly unambiguous in communicating colonial relationships and paternalistic systems of power.

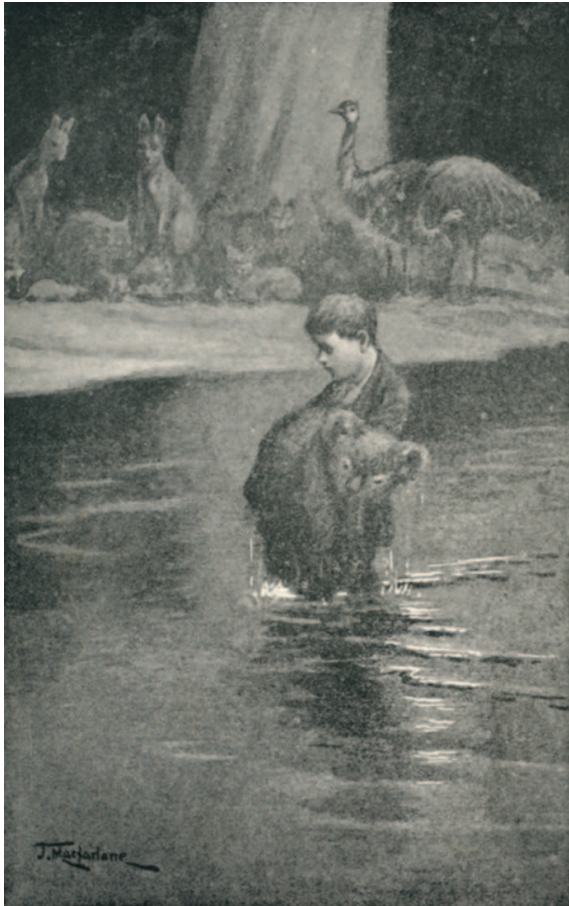


Figure 5.6 'He was slowly wading to the land with the limp form of the little Monkey-Bear in his arms'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14.2 cm. Illustration for p. 166 of *Timothy in Bushland* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1912). Reproduced courtesy of the National Library of New Zealand.

Most importantly for the Australian-born and international reader, the frontispiece illustration performs two significant functions. One of these is to introduce one of the author's favourite types, the compassionate saviour. In Bruce's works this character type is not limited to a specific gender but encompasses both feminine and masculine aspects. The other purpose of the frontispiece is to affirm the role of the hero as native protector. Although I have no evidence to support this speculation I surmise that the ideology of conservation promoted by authors such as May Gibbs and Donald MacDonald may be implicated in MacFarlane's image. However I also maintain

that while this message may be evident, it is less relevant than the reinforcement of paternalism and reward for good works embedded in the text. In *Timothy in Bushland* the reward for endeavour is the discovery of gold, the much sought after mineral that brought the gold-boom and economic prosperity to the region of Victoria. The location of this mineral is revealed to the hero once he has demonstrated his trustworthiness to the real and mythical creatures of Australia, and Australian Aboriginal mythology. Consequently I argue this discovery, additional to paternalism and redemption, to be

consequential in informing the selection of this image as the frontispiece, over the others.

Where the illustrator's figurative treatment of institutional and indigenous motifs differs from the title page image of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* is the representation of passivity. Not only is the koala passive, as are the mutely observant animals in the background, but so is the pool of water from which Timothy emerges. Represented as still, dark and brooding it symbolically resonates with the stock motif, the indigenous landscape, conceptualised in colonial discourse as the dark, 'terrible' mother. In formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction, the elemental motif of water has a super-charged meaning. Immersion in water was symbolic in signifying processes of acculturation and transformation as well as signalling belonging. Moreover as critics of New Zealand children's literature have demonstrated death by drowning was a significant reality for immigrant as well as first-generation-born readers. By triumphing over his ordeal with this element, Timothy is transformed from fragile type signified by his father into a container for the constitutional vigour characterising Australasian typologies.

I assert that MacFarlane's interpretation of the author's imagined and created world differs from popularly informed perceptions of the land as vast, empty, arid; a non-nurturing mother. Visual representations based on this set of cultural descriptors stereotypically conveyed a tough and rugged individualism. MacFarlane's frontispiece suggests an alternative to this conventional representational system. I maintain that his figurative treatment of the hero and the koala is as important in signalling indigeneity, belonging and identity as are the following set of illustrations. In the next image I discuss the juxtaposition of stock motifs specific to the pastoral ethos.

In this illustration (see Fig. 5.7) the graphic treatment of iconic figures, the landscape, the boy and the cow visually convey the deadening effects of drought in a manner more poignant than the pile of desiccated bones often



appearing in adventure tales. In this image (the first adhering to the narrative sequence) MacFarlane has pared back all animate and inanimate elements to their skeletal essence. Consequently each motif in the design of this composition is, in effect, a synonym for another. The emaciated flanks of the milking cow, the lined face of Timothy, the linearity of the wooden fence, the skeletons of the dead trees (not ring barked as in *Glen Eyre*) and the hollow vessel symbolised by the bucket are all interchangeable symbols. At one level their arrangement and representation in this illustration conforms to the text. At another these combined motifs signify the extreme realities and conditions

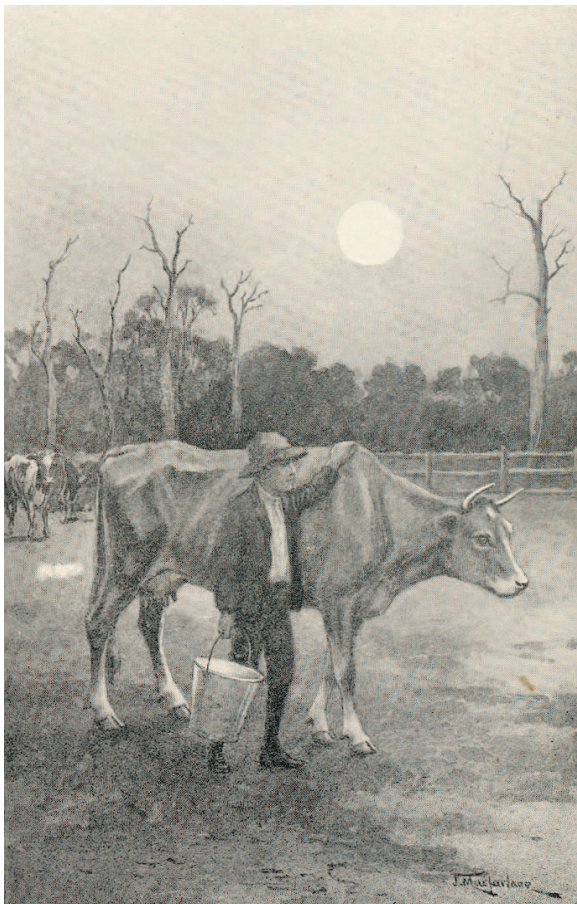


Figure 5.7 'She was nearly done, that was plain to the little boy's eyes.' Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 24 of *Timothy in Bushland* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1912). Reproduced courtesy of the National Library of New Zealand.

with which Australian-born readers living in regions affected by drought would have been familiar.

I contend that what makes MacFarlane's representation of life and death so compelling is the iconographic treatment of Timothy, his pet cow and the surrounding landscape. Everything in the foreground has a hard linear and planar quality. Even the trees, just beyond the boundary fence, classically evoke the cultural response typical in recording the effects of drought. The regenerative bush in the background, however, is symbolic of another type of boundary. I suggest that this

botanic motif is not merely an aesthetic feature but that it is a referent for the silent and waiting presence of the bush into which Timothy must enter. Consequently the juxtaposition between the drought-stricken and the verdant obliquely references the very real issues of economic survival and physical wellbeing.

These issues are reinforced by what I suspect is MacFarlane's intentional figurative treatment of the hero. In this illustration eight-year old Timothy has the facial features of a mature man. I allege that his youthful appearance in the frontispiece is not paradoxical or unintentional but is symptomatic of the rejuvenating power of the bush. Moreover I contend that the apparent flaws in anatomical draftsmanship in the representation of Timothy add to the pathos of the scene. In addition to connoting the psychological burden of responsibility, they signal the father/son relationship as inherently synonymous and indistinguishable. Further to this, Timothy's symbolic presence is, at once, intensified and diminished by a large, flat sun pressing down on the landscape. In MacFarlane's illustration of incipient loss, it dominates all supporting motifs and even minimises the vastness implicit in the illustrator's treatment of space. Hence I maintain that this image is discursively representative in communicating the characteristics of stoicism and self-reliance associated with bush mythology.

Two other compositional devices mark this scene as unmistakably Australian. The first is the application of linear perspective. This principle underpinned popular academic representations of the Australian landscape as wide and open and with diminishing horizons. The second aspect, one that is possibly less obvious, is the use of tone in the treatment of the sky. It is even. With no clouds either on the horizon, or above, this uninterrupted space can only confer one meaning, namely drought as opposed to a beautiful, fine, sunny day. Australasian historians acknowledge Reeves as stating that the 'sandstone continent' of Australia comprised 'fertile easy-rolling downs', 'park-like woods' and 'dreary endless scrubs' (Denoon et al 2000, 3). I argue that MacFarlane's



illustrative talent in capturing the particular essence of the Australian landscape is evident in this image and that his representation successfully communicates the views of Reeves as well as the gritty reality of 'King Drought'. In the following illustration the illustrator transforms the horizontal space conventionally privileged in landscape painting into a vertical nightmare.



Figure 5.8 'Overhead the great dead trees seemed to have goblin-like faces among their twisted boughs'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 44 of *Timothy in Bushland* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1912). Reproduced courtesy of the National Library of New Zealand.

In *Timothy in Bushland* the hero is described as being guided in a fashion similar to Clark's child protagonists, Cis and Hal. However in Bruce's quest for belonging and identity Timothy is not invited into wonderland nor is he given knowledge and light at the outset. Instead his quest is one of challenge and initiation in which knowledge is hidden. Timothy's adventures take him up a creek bed and into a landscape that is unfamiliar and unrecognisable. The language of this world is indiscernible. Here nature, represented previously as tamed, cultivated, fenced and grazed, now assumes a form typical of the otherworldliness of nightmares.

If the previous illustration is representative of a certain conventionality all that has now changed. In this image (see Fig. 5.8) the flattened, horizontal space conventionally associated with the Australian landscape has become squeezed

and compressed. The design elements of scale and form have become distorted and exaggerated and the vertical takes on visual precedence. Moreover MacFarlane's representation of the symbolic bush is completely antithetical to its depiction in *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*. In Atkinson's interpretation of other-worldliness this stock motif is a gateway to acculturation and the key botanic and topographic features framing the protagonists indicative of processes associated with occupation. Hence even when the bush and the landscape threaten to devour and destroy (see Figure 5.6), encounter with these key motifs constitutes part of the thrill of becoming familiar with the local.

In contrast to Atkinson's celebratory and lively images, MacFarlane's representation of cultural unfamiliarity and difference depicts the bush as primeval and claustrophobic. I surmise that his illustration implicitly conveys to the Australian-born reader the threat to generational status and masculinity. Moreover I maintain that the hero's encounter with the bush is a metaphor for an identity that has become compromised through ignorance of the effects of colonising practice. In the narrative the author reflects on the merit of human actions. She speculates on the impact of settlement and occupation and the apparent disregard for the fauna and flora indigenous to Australia.

By this time Timothy had completely lost his bearings. He knew the bush fairly well, or so he thought, but he had no idea at all about his whereabouts. The landscape round him loomed dim and ghostly, the tall dead trees standing out like gaunt skeletons watching over a sleeping land. It was very hot, down in the sheltered creek bed, and strangely silent; all the sounds of the bush were absent, and scarcely a rustle of a lizard stirred the undergrowth on either side. It seemed like a dead scrubland (Bruce 1912, 42).

A little further on Bruce writes that 'Timothy felt as though he were alone in a dead world'. Conforming to the traditional conventions of the quest genre, the

hero finds himself to be isolated with neither name nor identity, neither place nor knowledge, neither friends nor family. The loss of identity, which the hero must gain back, is contended as synonymous with becoming acculturated in a tale of survival.

In MacFarlane's image the terror conveyed by the loss of identity and incipient death is visually conveyed through the symbolism of the serpentine. In contradistinction to the preceding illustration where all stock motifs are horizontally fixed in inertia, here everything writhes organically. Roots metamorphose into large snakes and the boughs of the trees threaten to become reptilian. Elemental forms representing the darker side of the psyche emerge wraith-like from tree trunks and vegetation and the full moon, symbol of transmogrification, is dimly reflected in a puddle of water. I do not wish to imply that MacFarlane's illustrative treatment of the bush is literally indicative of this terminology, or that his image is children's literature's equivalent of the dark, terrible mother in adult tales of discovery and survival. I speculate that it owes some of its influence to Rackham and Gadd, renowned Victorian artists/illustrators of the golden age of children's book illustration. Moreover I surmise that additional to this influence, his treatment of indigenous stock motifs was mediated through the lens of his own acculturation as evidenced in the following illustration.

In this image of difference and belonging Timothy is depicted in a clearing surrounded by a 'strange gathering' of animals and birds, the most peculiar of which is the 'Bunyip' (Bruce 1912, 52). In contradistinction to the symbolic space of the forest clearing in *A Southern Cross Fairytale*, the venue over which this ruling figure presides is a court rather than a site of intimate encounter. In the narrative text, and in MacFarlane's illustration, the solitary hero is represented in ways that suggest that he is not necessarily a welcome guest. His acceptance is assumed rather than proven. Hence I speculate that the hero's representation as a lone outsider in this image of acculturation and



Figure 5.9 'He collected his scattered wits and walked forward in answer to the summons'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p.77 of *Timothy in Bushland* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1912). Reproduced courtesy of the National Library of New Zealand.

indigeneity is precedent for the iconic figure popularly characterised in twentieth-century Australian cultural vernacular as the 'little battler'.

According to Australian historians the Bunyip, a 'mythic, man-eating amphibious animal which inhabits water-holes, swamps and lakes, is enshrined in the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal mythology of eastern Australia' (Davison et al 2001, 94). Graeme Davison, John Hirst and Stuart MacIntyre claim that its creation and construction drew on 'Aborigines accounts' as well as the 'reputed sightings' of 'white settlers and explorers'. In Bruce's tale the Bunyip King's hybrid form conforms to the mythological conventions of the

period. Her mythic creature is accordingly imagined as being fashioned out of many different animals. Hence in the narrative text this composite character is described as having a 'great head with a long scaly neck', a 'great horn', a 'big body covered with scales that flashed and glittered' in the 'moonlight', and as walking 'upright on two great hind legs' (Bruce 1912, 76).

MacFarlane's figurative treatment (see Fig. 5.9) is a faithful interpretation of the author's whimsical description and is in complete contrast to another darker image that he produced for the October 1890 edition of the *Illustrated*

*Australian News*. This illustration, captioned ‘Aboriginal Myths – The Bunyip’, was created for an adult audience and similarly adheres to popular beliefs in circulation. In this full-page, graphic representation the Bunyip is muscular and carnivorous. In contradistinction the character created for *Timothy in Bushland* has been suitably adapted for the child reader. At one level the artist/illustrator’s literal treatment of real and mythical creatures explicates the ideas contained in the text and evokes a world similar to *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale*. At another MacFarlane’s imagined court is a visual pun on court institutions and paternalistic systems. I argue that it thus functions as a subversive critique of institutional power, much like the Bakhtian carnivalesque. Institutional systems of power frequently came in for parodic and satirical treatment by the illustrated press for which MacFarlane worked as a graphic artist. Consequently I assert there is a delightful irony in his representation of this fabled character.<sup>5</sup>

The final image for discussion is the fight for survival between the boy protagonist and the wombat (see Fig. 5.10). Why Bruce selected Timothy to be the nemesis of the wombat is unknown. Consonant with the title of the first chapter, which identifies drought as an all-consuming event for the pastoralist, this chapter is suitably entitled ‘The Evil Water’ (Bruce 1912, 207). I maintain that the association of the term ‘evil’ with the elemental motif of water conforms to the colonial practice of associating particular sites within the indigenous landscape as having psychological import. I argue that although the pool is lacking from this representation, its presence is hinted at in the earlier image of Timothy in the bush. Consequently I suggest that the reflected moon in the puddle of water in the foreground of this prior composition constitutes a visual clue as to the existence of the other.

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<sup>5</sup> The Bunyip’s quizzical face and question mark horn also bears stylistic resemblance to Dr. Seuss’ much-loved children’s character, the ‘Cat in the Hat’ of 1957.





Figure 5.10 'The bush he had grasped gave way with him, and came out by the roots'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 219 of *Timothy in Bushland* (London, Melbourne, Toronto: Ward, Lock & Co., 1912). Reproduced courtesy of the National Library of New Zealand.

This compositional selectiveness reaffirms the point made by Barthes that myth is not solely defined by the elements contained in its construction but is dependent on their utterance. In this case the consolidation of particular beliefs is through their continued representation in image and text. Although the pool is figuratively absent, the signifying void into which Timothy falls, and from which it seems he might not escape, is not. The fear of drowning implicit in this image of ordeal and in Bruce's works *Glen Eyre* and *Possum* (1917) was a theme common to New Zealand if not Australian illustrated junior fiction. It is as though the pool's physicality, its dark feminine and possibly native presence, cannot

be adequately represented through illustration. For the Australian-born reader familiar with the specific nature and form of the country's terrain, the existence of this key site is communicated through the sheer cliffs and the scrubby bush to which Timothy clings. I therefore assert that the artist/illustrator's representation of the boy hero and the indigenous landscape, flora and fauna ensures his illustration as specifically meeting the needs of this audience of readers.

I maintain that this image complements the frontispiece for *Timothy in Bushland* and its representation of the hero as the triumphant saviour. In addition I allege that the visual weight evident in the compositional arrangement of the stock motifs reinforces the hero's role as carrying the burden of responsibility. Having swum several times around the perimeter of the pool's cold, dark depths, Timothy is finally permitted ashore and is informed that he will be rewarded. Despite the focus of this tale on water, the hero's ultimate reward is not its discovery but gold. This mineral resource is hidden in a wombat's den 'just at the edge of the bank' and next to the 'withered bush of uprooted dogwood' (Bruce 1912, 235). In Bruce's tale it is gold not the irrigating power of water that transforms the economic status of the hero and ensures his and his family's security and independence. Hence I suggest that the message of reward for good works is tacitly concealed in this illustration as it is in the frontispiece.

At the conclusion of *Timothy in Bushland* the hero becomes an engineer. For the author this is an interesting departure from her concern with the pastoral ethos and the stereotypes of masculinity inherent in outback discourse. Embedded in the reward of gold and engineering practice is a new kind of masculine identity and mateship. Coming at the end of the tale this departure in identity acts as a historical pointer. For Bruce's Australian-born and international readers it signals the next historical step in the nation's development and independence. Moreover I argue that the discovery of gold by the hero is appropriately metonymic of the gold rush and the formation of the towns, such as Ballarat and Bendigo. This mineral resource not only transformed the region of Victoria, it significantly assisted in establishing the city of Melbourne as the primary urban centre.

Historians claim that the 'main traits of the legendary bushman were already fixed in the Australian imaginary by 1851' and that the 'discovery of gold' assisted in extending the values of mateship and solitariness embedded in pioneer and bush mythologies (Denoon et al 2000, 140). I assert that the

masculine ideals of the 'lone hand' and mateship are central to Bruce's bush-based narratives. Her adventure tales are usually constructed around the 'realities' associated with the pastoral ethos and bush mythology. Where *Timothy in Bushland* differs is in its setting and its juxtaposition of fantasy and fact. For the main part the indigene is represented in this tale as seemingly mute, passive, uncivilised and uncultured. In addition to this stereotypic treatment the hero appears to conform to the male stereotype of bush mythology. He is represented as possessing the virtues of stoicism, vigour, silence and self-reliance as positive traits. However, Timothy also exhibits the quality of compassion. For Bruce compassion is as much a preservative as conservatory tool. I maintain that by becoming an engineer, Bruce's hero contrasts the idealised forms of the male authors who articulated identity through convict, bushman, and digger typologies. I suggest that in contradistinction to these types the author's hero is a symbolic figure for the civilizing practice associated with industrialization.

### *Conclusion*

In this chapter I set out to examine the first of the themes with which the thesis is concerned, namely the mediation of the landscape, belonging and identity. The chapter investigated the communicative function and symbolic power of stock motifs and mythologies indigenous to New Zealand and Australia. My graphical analysis of the selected case studies reveals these forms, and fact and fantasy to be integral to the construction of pre- and post-Federation New Zealand and Australian publications. My reading of *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* and *Timothy in Bushland* confirms the particularity of two very different landscapes as significant in framing the encounter with difference in the imagined and created worlds of Australasian illustrated junior fiction. Although both works employ traditional models to support their modes of representation, each is contingent on indigeneity and difference. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the iconography employed in the illustrations. One work is a celebration of forests, volcanos, and geysers. In the other the parched land is privileged. Moreover while *A Southern Cross Fairy Tale* and



*Timothy in Bushland* convey the civilizing message inherent in colonialist discourse they also highlight its moral concern with the exchange in commodities such as tourism and mining. Thus the themes addressed in this initial case study chapter provide a starting point for the following inquiry into the representation of indigenous encounter, assimilation and acculturation.

## Chapter Six: *Changing Clothes*

*'After all, that was the purpose for which the black police were founded. They reigned supreme by terror, and terror only.'* Donald MacDonald, *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* (1912).

### *Introduction*

MacDonald's statement sets the tone for this chapter discussion and its focus on the theme of indigeneity acknowledged by Belich, Bhabha, Bradford, Gibbons, Gilderdale, Hughes-D'Aeth, Muir and Niall as pivotal in the formation of national identity. In the preceding chapter I took as my theme the immersion of the colonial child in the unfamiliar landscape and mythology of the indigene. This chapter builds on that foundation. It explores how masculine mythologies and indigenous stereotypes, such as identified in the opening quotation, were core to formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction. In the chapter I examine how the representation of assimilated and acculturated types demonstrate the influence of essentialist thinking, journalistic praxis, war reportage and knowledge of institutional power-based systems. In addition I discuss how the figurative treatment of the indigene is a precedent for the cultural issues pertinent to post-colonialism and evokes Bhabha's notion of mimicry as a survival strategy.

In New Zealand and Australia, national identity evolved against the context of indigenous decline, popularly disseminated through cultural vernacular as 'dying race' mythology. The belief systems and mythologies embedded in this nascent construction were encapsulated in the creations of graphic and commercial practitioners as well those associated with the high arts. These were then circulated through vehicles such as the *Bulletin*, the *New Zealand Graphic*, *The Graphic*, *The Illustrated Australian News*, the *Lone Hand* and the *Australasian*

*Sketcher*.<sup>1</sup> Prominent in this vision was the representation of a new world promising social betterment. Testimony to this formation was Firth's *Nation Making: A Story of New Zealand Savageism and Civilization*. In this work Firth extolled the virtues of civilization as the result of European missionary and colonising practices, and authoritatively proclaimed New Zealand and Australia to share similar economic and cultural values. In doing so he deliberately used New Zealand's and Australia's indigenous fauna and flora, landscape and people to bolster his views on race, and the collective identity he labelled 'Australasian'.

In the quest for identity, indigenous encounter emerged as a formative theme along with issues of assimilation and acculturation. Within colonialist discourse indigenous peoples the New Zealand Maori and Australian Aborigine were represented as tacitly compliant in their adoption of the attributes, conventions and dress of the coloniser. Although appearing assimilated through this adaptive process, such acts of compliance were in effect an '*ironic compromise*' and akin to mimicry (Bhabha 1994, 86). For indigenous peoples assimilation, compliance and mimicry constituted survival strategies in confronting the vicissitudes of colonization and in negotiating a place in societies and worlds turned upside down. For the European immigrant wishing to become a mate, assimilation and acculturation were no less important in the attainment of identity and belonging. Ironically the process by which his transformation was consolidated was through the framework of indigenous encounter.

Bhabha's conceptualisation of mimicry and irony as tacit in acts of compliance, assimilation and acculturation constitute core issues in my examination of

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<sup>1</sup> The article 'The Prophet Te Whiti and the Parihaka Stronghold' in the November 12, 1881 edition of *The Graphic* mentions the colonial wars of the 1860s in New Zealand and their deleterious effect on the population of the 'Aboriginal races'. It states that while the European population is increasing the 'Maories are dwindling away' to the extent that there 'are now in the colony nearly half a million Pakehas, and only 40,000 Maories'. This figure corresponds to the '42, 113' Maori shown to be surviving in 1896 (King 2003, 224).

indigenous encounter in Australasian illustrated junior fiction. Hence my discussion focuses on examining the following two questions:

1. How does Australasian illustrated junior fiction use stock motifs to divergently reflect cultural issues resulting from the master narrative nationalism?
2. How does the representation of stock figures, the indigene and the immigrant hero in this literature differ from or conform to the gendered mythologies and cultural stereotyping inherent in colonial and nationalist discourses?

The chapter speculates whether it is possible to infer from their representation in Australasian illustrated junior fiction that the indigenous other is neither a people in decline, nor a sideline curiosity, or token. It examines the possibility that this literature presented an alternative image to stereotypical and essentialist representations of civilization and savagery.

In addition to their collective objectification as ‘noble savage’, New Zealand historians have shown that Maori were reconfigured as ‘dying savage’ as well as white or Aryan Maori (Belich 2001, 357). These stereotypes were then re-presented accordingly in cultural artefacts. Belich (2001, 358) contends that ‘European conceptions of Maori from 1820 to 1920 can be seen as a contest between White and Dying Savage myths, with the Black Savage making sporadic forays from the background.’ Although his critique of colonial mythology is directly related to New Zealand it also has an indirect bearing on contemporary perceptions regarding the status of the Aborigine in Australia. This chapter examines the legacy of those belief systems and the outcome of civilization in two very different works originating in New Zealand and Australia for junior readers. Although structured to meet divergent audiences, the issues culminating from colonization’s fatal impact are evident in each. These works comprise *Tiki’s Trip to Town* (1893) and *The Warrigal’s Well: A North Australian Story* (1901).

### *Two stories of assimilation and acculturation; case study selection*

As I have just mentioned I have selected two very different works from the archive surveyed as case studies for this discussion. The number of extant creations that feature indigenous people and indigenous encounter as primary themes delimits the selection. In New Zealand the number is very few which is not the case with publications originating from Australia. The first of these, James Duigan's *Tiki's Trip to Town*, is the creation of an independent regional publishing house. More than likely aimed at junior readers of both genders, it constitutes a picture book inspired by regional New Zealand. The second, *The Warrigal's Well: A North Australian Story* by the author/war correspondent Donald MacDonald, is the production of one of the major houses in colonial publishing. Written in conjunction with J. F. Edgar for a more mature and probably male audience this adventure tale commences in Britain and culminates in a rite of passage in Australia's Northern Territory.<sup>2</sup> Although the former work amounts to a basic reader and the latter, a novel of some complexity, both are characterized by the binary concepts of civilization and savagery inherent in colonialist discourse. Consequently both works represent images of acculturation and assimilation specific to the colonial regions of New Zealand and Australia. To support the case for modes of representation supplementary material from cultural vernacular and the illustrated press has been incorporated.

### *Collectibles within an imperial frame*

According to historians of Victorian print culture the

popularity of illustrated and engraved travel texts and artistic engravings, and the dynamic expansion in illustrated literature and

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<sup>2</sup> During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Australia's Northern Territories were regarded and promoted as a frontier zone. Its arid, and verdant topography complete with 'savage' tribes, gold and mineral seeking adventurers, and lost explorers was a literary El Dorado for writers of Australian boys' own adventure stories (Joseph Bowes, Alexander MacDonald, Donald MacDonald, George Manville Fenn).

journals was significant for this very fact. The images presented were the traces not just of events but of visual imagination, and of the social and political inclinations of the event's recorder and reproducer. Artist and writer provided through these works a delineated and metred "virtual reality" (Curtis 2002, 7).

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, representations of indigenous people were common currency and mediated through the illustrated press and mechanisms of high culture. The artefacts in which they featured ranged from painting and literature designated as high culture, to the concert programmes, postcards, posters and journals comprising print ephemera. Within this material New Zealand Maori and more particularly the Australian Aborigine, were often depicted as metonyms for marginalisation and racial decline.

Hughes-D'Aeth argues that representations of Australian Aborigines in vehicles such as the *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia* constituted a framing device for identity. This critic maintains that although Australia's indigenous people were typically stereotyped as the uncivilised and uncultivated 'Other', it was through their singular particularity that federal characteristics assumed national status. In his analysis of the compositional modality of the illustrations created for the *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia* Hughes-D'Aeth comments on the placement of Aboriginal figures. He reasons that although such figures were relegated to the periphery of these compositions, they effectively provided a framework for colonization's imagined visions of economic and cultural progress. He thus infers from this the affirmation of Australian Aboriginal status and culture.

Hughes-D'Aeth's assertion validates an argument put forward by Bhabha. Bhabha (1994, 70) proposes that the 'stereotype is a complex, ambivalent, contradictory mode of representation' that 'demands not only that we extend our critical and political objectives but that we change the object of analysis

itself'. Hughes-D'Aeth (2001, 42) argues that Aboriginal people were 'crucial to colonial space precisely because they formed its margins'. If erased, neither the place, the region, the country, nor the colony's mythologies of settlement, exploration and civilization, would be recognisable. Without the indigenous stereotype as an iconic referent in the marginal spaces of high art and literature, and commercial design, national identity would remain absent. Although Hughes-D'Aeth's argument addresses Australian modes of representation in a specific area it is similarly, and sometimes acerbically, made by cultural theorists and historians in relation to the historical shaping of European identity in New Zealand.

As I discussed in the previous chapter newly acquired local signifiers functioned as organizational referents for a new set of memories, displacing those originating from 'back home'. I argue that what is objectionable is not so much the usage of indigenous peoples as local signifiers but their reduction to decorative forms. Even more controversial than 'type', in which an attempt is made at faithfully reproducing the particular characteristics and attributes of a people, decorative forms ultimately become redundant tokens and motifs. Earlier examples of this representational practice comprise the graphic mainstay of the illustrated press. Two such examples were created for the 1879 edition of the *Australasian Sketcher*. In one of these images token Maori are shown performing an unlikely *haka* (war dance). In the other they are depicted paddling a war canoe against a fantastical backdrop of volcanos belching fire and ash.<sup>5</sup> Imagined motifs based on superficial appreciation and awareness of indigenous cultural forms frequently embellished the tourism souvenirs of the period. In the two-dimensional artefacts created for the tourism industry Maori were editorially assembled and arranged similar to Walter Benjamin's creative process of cut and paste. The re-presentation of indigenous people as collectibles within the imperial frame, and in picturesque Atlases, illustrated

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<sup>5</sup> Maori rarely featured in the Australian monthly journal, the *Lone Hand* and when they did they were represented in stereotypical ways. The figurative treatment of Maori women in particular resonated with Norman Parkinson's female fantasies and conformed to stereotypic views of the Polynesian woman as exotic and erotic types.



journals, tourist ephemera and *ur* coffee-table books specialising in indigenous culture and landscape is argued ‘cultural colonization’ by print (Gibbons 2002, 15). As evidence of this process I have included for discussion two illustrations from the illustrated press. These images constitute the benchmark for my evaluation of indigeneity in the remainder of the chapter.

### *Images of New Zealand Maori in the illustrated press*

The first of these is a photoengraving (see Fig. 6.1). Deriving from the 1881 edition of *The Graphic* this image purports to represent a Maori family in their *whare* (hut) in one of the tribal settlements near Lake Taupo. I say purports, for

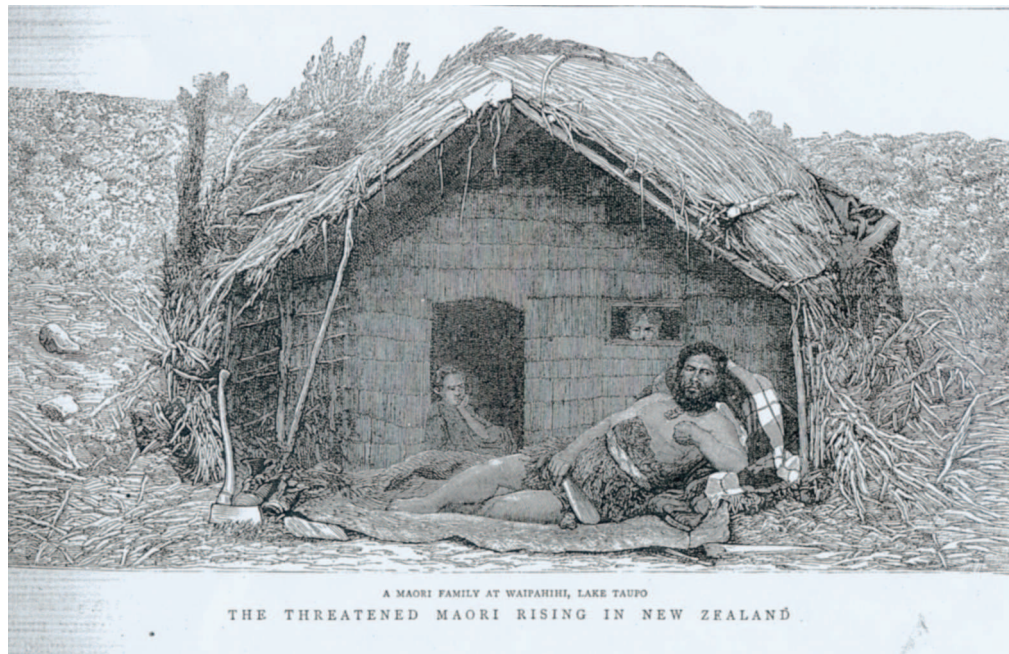


Figure 6.1 A Maori Family at Waipahihi, Lake Taupo: The Threatened Maori Rising in New Zealand. Engraved illustration, 12.7 x 22.8 cm, for p. 525 of *The Graphic*, November 19, 1881. Engraver unknown. Reproduced courtesy of the National Library of New Zealand.

this authentic snapshot of family life is deceiving. Allegedly based on similitude, or mimesis, it is instead a representation of the indigene floating in a landscape in which all identifying topographic and botanic markers have been erased.

The lack of any recognisable indigenous flora seems to suggest that the construction of this illustration may have been influenced by the dioramas showcasing the empire and the indigenous other in The Crystal Palace and The



Great Exhibition of London of 1851. On closer scrutiny, the technique employed to delineate the features of the landscape shows it to be a type of graphic infill and perhaps the markings of an apprentice engraver. Hence not only do the graphic treatment and compositional modality combine to reduce the iconic significance of the key figures, they reinforce the symbolic weight of the descriptors 'family' and 'threatened rising'. In this image based on European perspectives all topographical features such forests, lakes and mountains denoting generational ascendancy, as well as intimate (*whanau*) and extended (*iwi* and *hapu*) family relations for Maori are absent. Thus while the wording in the caption is ironic in suggesting that the resting family is rallying, the iconography implies that the uprising is impotent. Consequently the reader is not only confronted with an ahistorical representation of Maori. They are confronted by an image in which authenticity and decoration collide in ambiguous semblance of reality.

Seven years later the same scene was reproduced in the June 14, 1888 edition of the *Australasian Sketcher*, a Melbourne-based illustrated paper whose circulation included New Zealand as well as England. In this representation (see Fig. 6.2) the Maori family are further reduced to synonyms for degeneracy. The central male figure is awkwardly drawn with little expertise in anatomy and foreshortening while the remaining detail and background is glossed over. No longer identified as people from a particular region, the new caption, 'Taking a Siesta', subjects the indigene to the popularly held belief that not only were the Maori a race in decline, they were also lazy. Directly underneath this illustration another wood engraving augments these ideas. Captioned 'the old order changeth' this image comprises poorly observed and crudely drawn Maori cultural artefacts. The caption expression was also favoured by Firth in describing the events and changes taking place in the countries of New Zealand and Australia. In his essay on cannibalism, race and work he states that New Zealand and Australia were once 'names of fear and terror' but 'in this, as in other things, "the old order changeth"' (Firth 1891, 2). Thus both this image

and the illustration just mentioned epitomise 'dying race' theory through decorative treatment and representational corruption.



Figure 6.2 Taking a siesta. Engraved illustration, 9.6 x 16.2 cm, for p. 85 of the *Australasian Sketcher*, June 14, 1888. Engraver unknown. Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

In contradistinction to the 'realistic' photoengraving for *The Graphic*, the wood engraving from the *New Zealand Graphic Christmas Number* (see Fig. 6.3) is decorative. This image features key motifs by which the colony of New Zealand was made known to national and international audiences. It is typical of the illustrations reproduced in formative period periodicals. The design consists of a large format within which a series of smaller images are composed in geometric frames. The compositional modality comprises two intersecting triangles, one containing indigenous portraiture and the other indigenous landscape and flora. In this arrangement there is no singular focal point as in



Figure 6.3 Native Girls, A Chief, Cabbage Trees, the Kawerau Bridge and Road Scene Arrow [?] Bluff Wakatipu. Engraved illustration, 15.2 x 20.4 cm, for p. 5 of the *New Zealand Graphic*, December 20, 1890. Engraver unknown. Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

images constructed according to the principles of western perspective. As neither triangular set has visual precedence the reader's eye is free to alternate between the subject matter composed within each frame. Nor are the two Maori girls and the chief specifically identified as belonging to a particular region or tribe. Although there are no descriptors of status or tribal affiliation, these unprepossessing and unromantic figures unequivocally frame the land as synonymous with its people. For this reason I maintain this illustration is an attempt at representing a popular view of national identity despite its lack of technical refinement and its usage of cut and paste. I maintain that while it appears decorative, it is more representative of New Zealand than the popular and scenic depictions of the landscape often privileged as a double page spread. Illustrations such as 'On and About Lake Wakatipu' in the March, 1881 edition



of *The Graphic* could just as easily be mistaken for a romantic destination in the Swiss Alps, if not for their captions.

This composite image constitutes evidence of the way in which picturesque representations of Maori were lifted from their landscape, identity and context to fulfil the colonialist's desire for belonging and identity. In addition to demonstrating the stylistic treatment and technical processes employed in realising imperial and colonial visions, this and the previous illustration are indicative of publishing power and influence. In the edition dated February 26, 1881 the *Australasian Sketcher* carried an advertisement endorsing the purchasing power of the publication. It declared that the 'proprietors have Obtained the Services of the Best Artists and Engravers in the Colonies for this Journal'. Besides these practitioners, the best in the field included journalist/writers who, along with artist/illustrators and colonial publishers interpreted the culture and society of the indigenous people of New Zealand and Australia in works for junior readers. In New Zealand and Australia the five men associated with this endeavour were: James Duigan, John MacFarlane, Donald MacDonald, George Sherriff and Alfred Dudingston Willis. Pivotal in their field of expertise, they were also critical in how Maori and Australian Aborigine were represented in a way other than as decorative memorabilia. I argue that as a result of their creations the indigene moved from the margins to the centre and thus became an essential figure in validating national identity for the Australasian-born reader.

*Mates, Maories, new chums and Warrigals; a cast of masculine stereotypes*  
Core to both *Tiki's Trip to Town* and *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* are masculine and indigenous stereotypes characteristic of colonial discourse and nationalist mythologies. Each work is informed by contemporary perceptions in circulation and profiles a cast of stock figures such as the civilized explorer/adventurer and the 'savage indigene'. For the formative period 1890-1920 the binary typicality of these stock figures is not surprising. These tropes owe much to the residue of classificatory thinking ensuing from

imperial institutional systems of power. But to suggest that all representations of masculinity and indigeneity in Australasian illustrated junior fiction conform to this cultural set of conventions precludes a different reading. In this chapter I contend that such expectations are not always the case. I maintain that in some instances this literature flirted with a subtle inversion of the classifications, 'civilised' and 'savagery', through the cast of their stock figures.

In *Tiki's Trip to Town* the narrative is dominated by one central character classified by historians as the Aryan Maori or 'civilised native' (Belich 2001, 357). In *A Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story*, MacDonald's cast of masculine stereotypes comprises, the English immigrant, similarly signified by the metonymic label 'new chum', the Native Police and tracker, and the 'Warrigal'. As a descriptor the last term is especially meaningful for collapsing the Australian Aborigine and their culture into a synecdoche for colonial perceptions of degeneracy and savagery. Through this cast of characters, and in their image and text, the authors and artist/illustrators addressed events, identities and issues specific to colonization's fatal impact. Moreover I argue that the representation of types correlating with acculturation and assimilation reveal attitudes equivocal to, or challenging the binary hierarchy of the colonial ideal.

My discussion subsequently centres on inversion and mimicry. By inversion I mean the displacement of hierarchical systems conventionally privileged as ordered structures with layers ranging from top to bottom. Inversion displaces these preferential orders enabling relationships to be based on a horizontal axis. In this relationship permutation, interaction and interchange are permissible. In analysing indigenous encounter, inversion and mimicry in these two case studies, I will concentrate on unpacking a set of illustrations as key texts for discussion. In addition to the first and last illustrations of *Tiki's Trip to Town*, this set comprises the frontispiece, the first and last images of *A Warrigals' Well: A*

*North Australian Story*.<sup>4</sup> These, collectively, are indicative of encounter and transformation, acculturation and assimilation. They are also representative of stereotypes particular to New Zealand and Australian colonial discourses.

### *Wandering about in a state of nudity and idleness*

Literary critics acknowledge primary stereotypes, 'enlightened' explorer and 'savage native', as integral to the representation of societal hierarchies in adventure tales. Initially these types were contained in tales of exploration and contact. As initial contact progressed from encounter to settlement to colonization, stereotypes inherited from Enlightenment discourse were fleshed out and mediated through cultural vernacular. Hebley, Muir and Saxby have shown that lost explorers and friendly 'natives' constitute key motifs in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883). Formative period tales of adventure integrating the Robinson Crusoe legacy and its formula of desert islands, lost men, isolation, indigenous encounter and redemption featured prominently in the children's literature produced by colonial publishing houses based in London.

Richard Nile and David Walker (2001, 6) tellingly describe this institution as the 'Paternoster Row Machine' for its mercantile capacity to pump out printed material equivalent to an industrial machine. Dominant players within this 'machine' were prominent publishers such as: Ward, Lock & Co., Blackie & Son(s), Henry Frowde, Hodder & Stoughton and Longman's Green. This mix also included the Religious Tract Society, recognised in the field for promulgating Christian idealism, philanthropy and moral values to a colonial audience.<sup>5</sup> Their non-fictional array of adventurous heroes included colonial

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<sup>4</sup> The illustrations for *Tiki's Trip to Town* that have been omitted for analysis depict the progressive acculturation of Tiki through engaging with the world of the coloniser. Excluded from the visual content of *The Warrigal's Well: A North Australian Story*, is the portrayal of the 'new chum', Alan Ogilvie, and his Australian mate searching for water in the desert.

<sup>5</sup> The Religious Tract Society, originally founded in London in 1799 by the Clapham sect, was an evangelical and philanthropic group whose name derived from the suburb in which many of the members resided. Its publishing and pedagogic function was to

society's legendary man of science and exploration, Captain Cook. A status symbol for national and international readers and icon for the civilizing cause, Cook's famous life with its humble origins was a vehicle for commonly prescribed views. Such was his influence that his expedition, as was discussed in chapter four, was accorded hagiographic status setting precedent for myths of civilization and assimilation. The following excerpt from Robert Michael Ballantyne's *The Cannibal Islands: Tales of Adventure in Forest and Flood* testifies to the moral authority and civilizing prospectus commonly invested in tales of exploration.

At this moment, reader, while you ponder these lines there are men of the South Seas who wander about in a state of nudity and idleness; who practise every species of abomination, and kill, roast, and eat each other, just as they did a hundred years ago (Ballantyne 1910, 71).

Given these sentiments it is commonplace that 'civilised' and 'savage' stereotypes were absorbed as topoi and used to pepper the tales of adventure and colonization extending from exploration and contact. However, the state of nudity and the reversion to savagery with which Ballantyne seduced his readers were not only confined to the moral prescriptive inherent in his tale. They also appeared in a singular image as a metaphor for feared outcomes consonant with adventure and acculturation.

### *Consensus and conflict in tales of adventure*

In addition to the evolving representations of masculine stereotypes and indigenous encounter in formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction,

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'produce attractive and improving materials for the newly literate working class reader' (Howsam 1991, 3). In addition to promoting the abolition of slavery as well as moral reform, the Society sought to disseminate the Christian values of redemption within England and its colonies. Its evangelical message was conveyed through the Bible and illustrated novels such as Robert Michael Ballantyne's *The Cannibal Islands: Tales of Adventure in Forest and Flood* (1910) and Louis Becke's *The Settlers of Karossa Creek* (1906). For the reader they highlighted the primacy of moral status, the obverse of which resulted in transportation.

the locus in which the interaction took place witnessed a transposition of site. The repositioning of indigenous encounter from the littoral zones to regional sites and, in Australia, the legendary depths of the interior, was culturally symptomatic of the acquisitive practices of colonization. It was also indicative of the activities of war, mining and exploration. Consequently the genres of fantasy and adventure started to be inflected with consensus and conflict. Desert-island tales formulated on the promise of riches, the loss of identity and possible death, metamorphosed accordingly from imaginary isles to culturally specific sites.

One of these was the desert. In Alexander MacDonald's text *The Lost Explorers: A Story of the Trackless Desert* (1907) the desert resembles a spatial paradox, a 'tropical paradise' and a South Seas Eldorado (MacDonald 1907, 337).

Consonant with the transposition occurring in the representation of site and stereotype, the desert vastness in this work acts as a contact zone for a host of lost boys such as 'Never Never Dave' 'Emu Bill' and the 'Shadow'. In this metaphoric site mining discovery supplants buried treasure, and lost tribes of Aborigines occupy an implausibly parallel universe.<sup>6</sup> In the desert Darwinian theories of evolution are enacted alongside consensus and conflict, and dying race and masculine mythologies inherent in the discourse of colonialism and exploration. Already elevated to mythic heights by the survival accounts of nineteenth-century exploration, the desert interior, deserted beaches and infested jungles were promoted by the Melbourne-based publisher George Robertson. With agents in Sydney, Brisbane and Adelaide this publisher effectively endorsed the cachet of Australian exploration. Through their educational product the mythology of masculinity and mateship consisting of

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<sup>6</sup> According to *The Oxford Companion to Australian Literature* (1994) the 'Never Never' is said to symbolise the 'vast, remote, inland area of northern Australia, part of north-west Queensland and the Northern Territory'. Its derivation is from an Aboriginal term "'nievah vahs" meaning unoccupied land'. Australian authors Jeannie Gunn (1908) and Henry Lawson signalled this mythological site in their writings as the 'land where mateship flourishes'. Interestingly although Gunn is credited for bringing this word into the vernacular through her title *We of the Never Never*, MacDonald's work pre-empts that by a year.



European adventurers, Aboriginal 'Boy Fridays' and 'savage' Aborigines was evoked in all its related drama.

Post-colonial theorists have shown that

borderline engagements of cultural difference may be often as consensual as conflictual; they may confound our definitions of tradition and modernity; realign the customary boundaries between the private and public, high and low; and challenge the normative expectations of development and progress (Bhabha 1994, 2).

Bhabha's theory is supported by the idea that cultural constructions, such as mythologies of civilisation and savagery are located in difference. In borderline engagements such as practiced by the colonial institution, the 'Native Police', traditionally privileged hierarchies and social orders are not stable.

Engagements involving such power-based systems and stereotyped peoples often result in the subversion of agreed upon social conventions as well as institutional hierarchies. I suggest that inversion is evident if not common in the thematic representation of mateship in the adventure tales of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Bhabha also proposes that what passes for social solidarity and cultural cohesiveness is symptomatic of the 'signs of the emergence of a community envisaged as a project – at once a vision and a construction'. According to Bhabha this imagined community does not exist in splendid isolation as does Benedict Anderson's, but is acted upon and affected by the presence of the other, in this instance the indigenous other. As a consequence of this interaction what is broadcast as an imagined ideal through cultural vernacular is in turn manipulated and modelled by otherness. What transpires as a result of this cultural process is a perpetual re-presentation of traditional themes in different guises – different clothes.

While conducting the survey of archival material I found that very few works explored the representation of consensus between the indigene and the coloniser or gave it a voice and shape. Most, as do Ballantyne's *The Cannibal*

*Islands: Tales of Adventure in Forest and Flood* and Joseph Bowes' *Comrades: A Story of the Australian Bush* (1912) adhere to the traditional diet of picturing conflict. In Ballantyne's and Bowes's texts the coloniser, adventurer and explorer are invariably stereotyped as civilised. In contradistinction to this representation, indigenous people are metonymic of degeneracy, corruption, immorality and racial decline. In post-Federation Australian illustrated junior fiction social and cultural distinctions extend from colonial and colonised types to the hierarchical treatment of transported types. Culturally perceived as outlaws, convicts are frequently characterised in adventure fiction as unrepentant and unregenerate characters. In tales of this genre their borderline relationship with the Australian Aborigine was based on retaliation to institutional systems of power.<sup>7</sup> Given these stereotypic assumptions it is not surprising that both Bhabha and Gibbons argue cultural endeavour and print culture as effectively colonising indigenous peoples all over again.

Despite the robustness of their argument, I allege that while Australasian illustrated junior fiction retained the ideological stamp of endeavour, benevolence, mateship and civilising prospectus, it also attempted to articulate new realisations. *Tiki's Trip to Town* and *The Warrigal's Well: A North Australian Story* are as singular in this regard as they are in articulating consensus and conflict. In both cases the issues posited by Bhabha, as well as those of acculturation and assimilation, are strongly presented to the junior reader. The adventure genre of the formative period traded in phobic fantasies and imagined sites of encounter. However I argue that within this formulaic paradigm identities are sometimes inverted resulting in representations infrequently found in junior fiction. Both these works originating from New Zealand and Australia are vehicles informed by cultural and colonising practice. Hence both share commonalities in grounding the figurative treatment of the

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<sup>7</sup> To fully appreciate the mythology of bushranging see the 1880 editions of the *Australasian Sketcher* for a full graphic reporting on Ned Kelly, his group and their activities. One full-page portrait features him dressed in his Sunday best, leaning on a tree stump with a rifle nearby in complete contradistinction to his often represented legendary attire.

indigene within colonial discourse as friendly and hostile, transformed and assimilated. Nevertheless I maintain that the expected demise of the indigenous other ostensibly contained in 'dying race' mythology is not quite what is to be expected.

### *Tiki's Trip to Town*

#### ***Biography of Tiki's Trip to Town***

*Tiki's Trip to Town* (1893) is no doubt intended for junior and emergent readers aged 5 to 7 years of age rather than a pre-adolescent audience. The book is produced in landscape format and constitutes 12 pages bound with a soft cover. The text employs the literary form of an ode to introduce the hero. This central character is then portrayed through a series of uncaptioned, monochromatic, lithographic illustrations in a way that is synonymous, although not entirely equivalent to a graphic novel. The illustrations are composed into vignettes, a technique commonly used in junior fiction, and printed on adjoining pages.<sup>8</sup> The legend, placed at the end of the book, reaffirms the pictorial sequence of the narrative in textual form. The entire book is single section, pamphlet stitched. The fact that the publication is neither hard-backed, nor reproduced in colour suggests this work to be ephemeral and inexpensive. However the fine-grained stock on which the images are printed contradicts this assumption.

As testimony to the printed product for which the publisher A. D. Willis was esteemed, the book is finely reproduced with images on front and back covers, in a style synonymous with the design of his scenic postcards (see Fig. 4.2, p 110). The front cover illustration for *Tiki's Trip to Town* comprises a vignette of Tiki being carried in a shawl on his mother's back. The iconography of this image appears to show the influence of the artist Gottfried Lindauer (1839-1926). In particular the compositional arrangement and figurative treatment of the two characters closely resembles Lindauer's 1878 portrait of Henne Rupene

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<sup>8</sup> *Tiki's Trip to Town* has been designed without folio numbers. In the further discussion of this case study reference will be made to particular pages. The number assigned these pages in the thesis corresponds with their pagination.

and her child. This romantic portrayal of Maori paradoxically linked with 'dying race' mythology was widely made accessible through popular and high art artefacts thus cementing its familiarity as a cultural norm.

Willis employed the skilled illustrator and lithographer, Benoni White, for the imprints and the postcards produced for the New Zealand Government Department of Tourist Resorts. However it is not known if he was also responsible for the reproduction of the illustrations created by the artist/illustrator, George Sherriff, for this work. Neither have I been able to uncover any correspondence or archival material relating to any affiliation Willis may have had with James Duigan, the author of *Tiki's Trip to Town* or its artist/illustrator.

Although *Tiki's Trip to Town* could be loosely classified as an adventure tale, the illustrative content as well as the text with its integrated Maori terms, suggest otherwise. The horizontal format, small size, and indigenous terminology employed in this book combine to suggest that it is one that an adult familiar with, if not fluent in Maori, would read with a child. As a cultural artefact originating in New Zealand during the period of the 1890s, it is imbued with the ethos of Christian morality privileged as a civilizing construct. This directive was pedagogically aimed at Pakeha and at Maori through the establishment of the 'native' schools in the 1880s. Consequently *Tiki's Trip to Town* is an example of colonization's pedagogical ideology as well as a literary device extolling the virtues of European civilization. However I suggest that in its representation of the acts of compliance, assimilation and mimicry strategically engaged in by the indigene, it is also subversive.

### *A journey down the river to assimilation*

The plot, if it can be called that, centres on Tiki, a young Maori boy whose curiosity for things European impels him to embark on an adventure from his

*pa* (fortified village) in Pipiriki to the settlement of Wanganui.<sup>9</sup> Accompanied by his mother, a *kuri* (dog) and potatoes for trade, naked Tiki travels by canoe down the Wanganui River to the township. Along the way he has various encounters. On reaching Wanganui his mother dresses him in a Crimean shirt and leaves him to explore what the European settlement has to offer. Here the hero's adventures include consuming an orange, smoking quality tobacco, and coming across two European children on their way to church. Tiki's adventure is complete when dressed in a suit of European clothes he returns to Pipiriki transformed to the astonishment of his friends.

Superficially this tale presents the reader with a quest for knowledge and a reconfiguration of identity resulting from experiencing the wonders of colonial civilization and modernity. These wonders comprise urban settings and shopping arcades, the spectacle of steam driven technology, imported commodities such as 'strong tobacco', exotic fruits consisting of oranges, grapes, bananas, pineapples, and institutional power in the form of Christianity.<sup>10</sup> For the child reader these items are significant referents in connoting status, economic prosperity and, not least, regional stability. During a period when identity was evolving beyond the memory of colonial conflict such images were important in conveying values consonant with the desire to belong.

In this tale Tiki is conventionally stereotyped by the author in accordance with the mythology of the 'savage native' as the son of a *Tohunga* (priest) and 'lineal

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<sup>9</sup> In this work the term *pa* conforms to the description of a settlement where a family or an extended family pursued the cultivation of tribal land and traded 'with their neighbours' (King 2003, 84).

<sup>10</sup> The commodity of tobacco commonly makes an appearance in Australian adventure tales and is used by the European to 'communicate' with the Aborigines, particularly those designated as the Myall and Warrigal. The immigrant European protagonist is usually informed by his guides and mentors that 'Bacca' is the one word that the Aborigines know. The product is always generic, never specified. In *Tiki's Trip to Town* tobacco is marked by its brand name, 'Old Judge'. This American product was originally manufactured in New York, then in Richmond, Virginia. Its claim to its superior quality lay in the exclusive and patented use of a special rice paper, which was promoted as counteracting the effects of creosote oil.

descendent of the original' man (Duigan 1893, 13). Represented at the outset as an icon of Pacific naturalism and naivety, his appearance undergoes a metamorphosis, culminating in what I regard as junior fiction's picture book version of post-colonialism's 'mimic man' (Bhabha 1994, 87). Bhabha posits the 'mimic man' or the colonised reformed, to be a construct resulting from the imposition of European ideals via missionary products. He suggests, moreover, that the term describes the survival strategy of adaptation and mimicry engaged in by the indigene to counter assimilation. The representation of Tiki in this picture book encompasses this idea as well as the colonial processes of acculturation and assimilation affecting indigenous people. To demonstrate the significance of this argument I will examine the first and last illustrations produced by Sherriff for *Tiki's Trip to Town*.



Figure 6.4 'Tiki with his friends'. Chromolithographic illustration by G. Sherriff, 7.8 x 14 cm. Illustration for *Tiki's Trip to Town* (A. D. Willis, 1893). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection, the National Library of New Zealand.

The first illustration (see Fig. 6.4) finds Tiki, naked, and seated on the banks of the Wanganui River sharing his *kai* (food) a *taewha* (potato) with his attentive friends, a *kuri* (dog) and a *poaka* (pig), the

latter a descendent of the pigs that Captain Cook brought with him on his voyages of discovery. In the background the iconography of the *wharenui* (meeting house) of the *pa* and the scenic mountains complete this visual idyll. While functioning as a graphic diorama, visually testifying to the Edwardian preference for the romanticised, or sentimental image as a set piece (the genre of many paintings) I suggest that it also presents an attempt by Sherriff to

portray the hero other than the idealised projection of the 'noble savage'. Moreover his figurative characterisation of Tiki does not quite fit the stereotype mythologised as the 'dying savage'. High art images of 'noble' and 'dying savages' conformed to the classical canon and were typical of essentialist thinking and racial classifications. In contradistinction to this academic mode of representation Sherriff has portrayed Tiki in a more naturalistic fashion. In so doing his illustration performs two cultural functions. Not only does it depict the relationship between Tiki and his friends in a manner suitable for junior fiction, it also communicates to the child reader the societal relationships and customs of local Maori. Hence I surmise that Sherriff's figurative treatment of the central and supporting characters is an attempt by an immigrant artist/illustrator to articulate an indigenous reality contradicting the views and aims of colonial agencies of power.

This illustrative strategy also reaffirms the observation made by Hughes D'Aeth in connection with the selective use of the Australian Aborigine in the *Picturesque Atlas of Australasia*. Hughes-D'Aeth convincingly claims that the indigenous people of Australia were vital to colonial depictions celebrating settlement and industry. 'Aboriginality, as it was conceived by European settlers, had a way of framing the Australian colonial world by delimiting the fields of racial identity and narrative' (Hughes-D'Aeth 2001, 42). He subsequently argues that by functioning in this symbolic capacity indigenous people acted as a focal point and provided colonial representations of civilization, commerce and endeavour with an authentic sense of place. I argue that in this image of Tiki, Maori are not removed to the margins; they constitute the focal point for a regional narrative.

A number of factors provide a historical and regional context for this representation. One is Sherriff's extensive knowledge of the Wanganui river system. According to the *Historical Record Vol. No. 2. Journal of the Wanganui Historical Society Inc.* Sherriff placed 'on record all aspects of local history from his many Maori friends. It was said that he knew the full length of the



Whanganui [*sic*] River better than any other European'. Another is the existence of the sketches of local Maori made by the Wanganui-based artist, John Gilfillan. Gilfillan's images of local *iwi* feature in T. W. Downes's *Old Whangau* (1915) and document the trade in cloth, tobacco, potatoes and pumpkins between European and Maori from the upper reaches of the Wanganui River. In this work Gilfillan is lauded as a

born artist, whose work is among the finest we have seen, who not only visited New Zealand in the early years, but lived with us long enough to have everyday scenes thoroughly wrought into his memory so that they were depicted by him faithfully and accurately in fact and detail, and markedly skilful in execution (Downes 1915, 242).

Gordon Brown and Hamish Keith (1969, 17) claim that Gilfillan 'is a rare exception to the general disregard of the Maori people by the settler painter'. These critics state that from reproductions 'he appears to have been an able draftsman sympathetic towards the Maori people and interested in conveying something of the changes in their life brought about by European colonisation'.

In looking at Gilfillan's sketches of Maori as an illustrator, I do not find the evaluation of 'able draughtsman' entirely credible. By definition a draftsman is one who is competent in drawing techniques, which includes figurative representation and its complexities of anatomy and foreshortening. Technically Gilfillan's observation and depiction of the human form is naïve irrespective of his subject matter. For the period this failing was not exceptional. In fact it caused Downes (1915, 242) to express his regret that the honest articulations of the early writers were often marred by 'the crude representation on the opposite page'. It seems that during the topographic period versatility with words did not translate into an equivalent skill with the elements of visual language, the pen, paintbrush and pencil. Downes put this situation down to two factors. One was the lack of training and technical expertise. The other was that settlers to the colony had little time to engage in aesthetic pursuits even if

they wished to. I do, however, agree with Brown and Keith's assessment of Gilfillan. Although his figures are awkward, his sketches have an honesty and integrity about them that prevents them from dissolving into sentimental expression or being tinged with noble gravitas.

Although Gilfillan left the colony for Australia in the late 1840s after a number of his immediate family had been killed by local Maori, I speculate that his artistic legacy may well have proved to be influential. In the 1890s Sherriff was commissioned by the Misses Gilfillan to make copies of their brother's sketches documenting Wanganui between 1843 and 1847. These four images include: a sketch of 'Taupo Quay Whanganui', 'Wanganui = About 1844', 'Whanganui from above Puteki' and 'York Stockade, from the Rutland Stockade'. It is for this reason, as well as for Sherriff's association with Wanganui *iwi* that I surmise his representation of Tiki to be based on fact.

I argue that Sherriff's images offer the reader a more realistic portrayal than the picturesque and exotic construction of the 'indigene' conceived by Benoni White or the graphic examples from *The Graphic* and *The Illustrated Australian News* (see Figs. 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3). The picturesque image created by White and printed by A. D. Willis was marketed at consumers of tourism. Quite possibly it was also created to meet the growing popularity in the trade and collection of the illustrated postcard, identified as the 'Picture Post-card Craze' in the October 14, 1889 edition of *The Girls Own Annual*. By contrast the illustrations produced by Sherriff seem not to be burdened with this selective focus but are representative of a societal identity in the process of adapting to meet the forces of assimilation. Although there is no evidence to bear this out, I speculate that this little book was created and produced for the local market in which two cultures were united through shared colonial practices and encounters. Furthermore Sherriff has crossed over into genuinely creating illustrations suitable for his junior readers – not an easy task for a professional artist. Through the integration of particular symbolic elements this image of Tiki and his friends visually references culture, civilisation (both Maori and European)

cultivation and colonization. Sherriff's design, moreover, confirms the argument for complexity in visual images no matter how simple. Visual theorists propose that the process of making images is 'complex' and that it is informed by two factors (Kress & van Leeuwen 2000, 6). One of these relates to the 'cultural, social and psychological' background of the image-maker. The other concerns the 'specific context in which the sign is produced'. Hence I consider socio-cultural and historical factors to be powerful determinants in analysing the construction of images and the figurative treatment of characters.

The inclusion of the pig (commonly known as a 'Captain Cooker') alludes to the provenance of this book as well as the historical and cultural practice of the trade and exchange in primary goods. It is also connotative of the cultural associations resulting from the connections between the legendary explorer and man of science, Captain Cook, and Maori. Sherriff's composition reinforces those traditional values. In addition it signals New Zealand's geographic status in serving as a site of commerce for an ever-expanding horticultural and agricultural industry. The introduced pig, the dog (historically possessed by Polynesian peoples as a source of food) and the humble but not insignificant potato are all denotative of one thing – food. At another and deeper level they carry the implications of economic success and physical wellbeing. For Maori these items connoted cultural conditions and customs existing prior to colonization. In contradistinction to that perspective, they symbolise the desired outcome of that process for the European settler and colonist.

King identifies the settlement of Wanganui as integral to colonisation. This region provided additional land for the expanding settler population of Wellington (of which it was regarded as an extension) in addition to supplying the 'mother country with pigs, pork and potatoes' (King 2003, 172). I maintain that while Tiki appears as not owning anything materially significant, he in fact possesses the core resources vital to survival: food, water, land and kinship ties. Illustratively the jarring note in this composition is the dog whose distinct coat and fluffy tail mark it as a Border Collie. This imported icon of Anglo-Celtic

culture was to become associated with the high country of New Zealand and the legendary sheep rustler, MacKenzie. Fortunately in the two illustrations that follow Sherriff provides Tiki and the reader with a more suitable *kuri* even if that is at the expense of visual continuity.<sup>11</sup> In these images the dog is appropriately small, shorthaired and has a patched coat similar to exploration accounts of what this animal looked like. Continuity of character development in visual narrative is core to illustration for junior fiction. Sherriff in either his enthusiasm, or artistic license, or lack of attention to detail, has overlooked the importance of continuity as a consideration in his overall design. Where was the sense of editorial ownership I wonder? Not only does the plaid Crimean shirt worn by Tiki suddenly become plain, the more accurately drawn and culturally appropriate *kuri* improbably reverts to Border Collie physiology in the last illustration. This visual incongruity is not surprising and can be found, much to a child reader's consternation, in present-day children's literature. What it also indicates is the need for representational fidelity in dealing with cultural issues associated with master narratives.

### *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story*

#### ***Biography of The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story***

Assimilation, acculturation and the indigene as the reformed other, are also pivotal to Donald MacDonald's illustrated novel *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* (1901). This work focuses on relationships of consensus and conflict correlating with indigeneity and gender in tales of adventure. It consequently deals with acts of compliance between the indigene and coloniser. MacDonald's work also sets a precedent for the representation of ambiguity in Alexander MacDonald's *The Lost Explorers: A Tale of the Trackless Desert* (1907). In this tale of exploration and mining the lost explorer, Bentley, is found and

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<sup>11</sup> Anne Salmond (2003) states that the Polynesian *kuri* was neither the physical nor the temperamental equivalent of a European dog. *Kuri* came to be metonymically associated by the Europeans with their Polynesian owners while the latter considered them part of their diet. Despite European taboos regarding the consumption of dogs, Cook's crew had become accustomed to eating dog meat by the time of his third expedition.

cared for by a lost tribe of Aborigines. Despite establishing a relationship with this people, the fear of reversion and degeneracy resulting from becoming native or 'taking to the blanket', requires that Bentley be rescued by another set of lost explorer/adventures. The way out is a trek through the desert to civilization. This metaphor combines the themes of redemption and restoration embedded in colonial discourse with mateship. Mateship is subsequently singled out as the moral imperative for warding off the destabilising and atavistic presence of the interior.

Donald MacDonald's lengthy tale *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* was written for an adolescent and older audience. It comprises 106 pages within a format of 20 x 14 cm. Similar to other illustrated novels (which were often given out at prize-giving) it is case bound in red buckram, and features a close-up motif of the spear-wielding Warrigal chief, stamped in black and vermillion on the front. It is not my intention to comment on the merits of the cover design. However I will digress by stating that the bold usage of formal design elements (colour, typography, composition) in the cover design was typical of the period and livened the look and feel of this book.

On opening the novel the reader immediately comes upon a dramatic frontispiece protected by tissue paper, followed by three further illustrations. These and the frontispiece are reproduced monochromatically on coated stock, and printed separately from the body text. None of the images bleeds beyond the trimmed dimensions of the printed page. Each is, in effect, framed by a border and captioned with the appropriate key sentence or phrase. With the exception of the frontispiece, the images are episodically situated adjacent to the text that they respectively illustrate (pp 90, 164 and 202).

The plot of *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* focuses on the adventures of a hero, a wrongfully accused young Englishman, who flees to Australia to clear his name. By introducing the narrator-protagonist as a thirty-five year old, the author lends an authorial and pedagogic air to a text

composed for older readers. This creative practice was not uncommon in formative period adventure tales and resonates with eyewitness survival accounts of exploration. In works of junior fiction it added an air of authenticity to the telling of the tale. It begs the reader to believe in the fantasy embedded in the narrative as a factual account of realistically lived events.

In MacDonald's work the central character is colloquially identified as the 'new chum'. Subsequent to disembarkation in the Northern Territories of Australia the 'new chum' engages with Aborigines as well as iconic and ethnic stereotypes of colonial discourse. One of these is the bushman singing popular ballads, the 'Wild Colonial Boy' and the 'Song of the Ringer'. The other, briefly encountered by the hero, is the Irishman who has served in the 'New Zealand war' (MacDonald 1901, 33). The hero's character is ultimately tested in the desert where death is not an implausible outcome. Rescued from this peril, he and his companions finally discover a goldmine, which they register at 'Flynn's Creek, on the Kimberley Goldfield' (MacDonald 1901, 244). Having proved himself, his identity is transformed from the lesser 'new chum' into a legendary 'mate'. Consequently I maintain that the representation of identity in this work is based on two colonial practices, namely commerce and exploitation of the land.

MacDonald's tale closes on a note of romance with the hero meeting a woman 'who could have claimed the instant attention of any man. Tall, strongly built, voluptuous, with a suggestion of the masculine in her swinging walk, but otherwise the perfect woman' (MacDonald 1901, 265). However, this intimate encounter with the feminine other is even more tenuous than the relationship forged with the Australian Aborigine. In his exposition of national type, White claims that Australian indigenous people and women were seen as potentially undermining the 'manliness' of the masculine ethos. Thus the woman departs for New Zealand while the hero is left behind secure in the embrace of a solitary and independent male mythology – a mate.

### *Assimilation and acculturation in the outback*

As with Duigan's tale, *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* presents assimilation and acculturation as the desired outcome of cultural engagement. For the European this meant absorption into the masculine culture of mateship. For the Australian Aboriginal male, assimilation resulted from association with colonial institutional systems of power and its moral agencies. In post-Federation Australian illustrated junior fiction two forms combine to represent this power-based system. One of these is the rule of law as expressed through the agency of the Native Police, the state trooper and the black tracker. The other is contained in key figures of outback society, the squatter and the cattle station. MacDonald's *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* is concerned with the institutional apparatus of power and governance conveyed by the Native Police, the state trooper and the black tracker.

In keeping with the adventure genre of the period, MacDonald's illustrated novel constitutes a tale of conquest constructed around a repertoire of stock figures. Its narrative contains a detailed commentary on exploration (Leichhardt's disappearance), and the perils of isolation (degeneracy) and critique of the acquisitive practices of exploitation and collection (rapacious orchid hunters).<sup>12</sup> Employed at the beginning of the narrative are the generic terms 'Myall' and 'Warrigal'. Both descriptors are used by the author, and by Joseph Bowes (1912), to describe Australian Aborigines living according to traditional custom. In MacDonald's tale 'Myall' and 'Warrigal', meaning 'wild', and by extension 'savage', are used interchangeably. As metonyms for 'dying race' mythology these types conform to the idea that the function of the stereotype within colonial discourse is to strategically create a space of

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<sup>12</sup> In 1912 MacFarlane was commissioned by George Robertson & Co. to illustrate Leichhardt's ill-fated 1845 expedition. The supporting notes to this work inform the reader that it is sunset. Camped beside a lagoon Leichhardt and his party are oblivious to a number of Aboriginal men who are painted for war and waiting for the right time to attack. In MacFarlane's composition the Aborigines are placed at the extremities of the print image, while the focal point is centred on Leichhardt and his companions. By looking out at the viewer and by being shown emerging from the border, the Aboriginal figures add tension to an otherwise ordinary scene.



belonging and identity. In addition, the continent's key sites, the desert and the jungle, frame gendered rites of passage to acculturation, assimilation and identity. In MacDonald's text the Australian Aborigine, stereotyped as belonging to a 'dying race' or 'whitened' flits between being assimilated and acculturated, accepted and marginalised. I suggest that this state of existential conflict could not be more strongly demonstrated than in the illustrations MacFarlane created for MacDonald's text.

### *Representations of ambivalence, fear and terror*

In contrast to the idyllic scene introducing Tiki and the scenic regions of the Wanganui River to the child reader, the frontispiece (see Fig. 6.5) for MacDonald's *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* confronts the reader with all the drama evoked by Australia's frontier, the Northern Territories. MacFarlane's image is a construction based on colonial discourse. It employs stereotypes as figures and scenes as allusive referents to present the uniquely different world imagined by the author: a world of danger and exoticism in which roam 'strange, silent men' (MacDonald 1901, 10). "'There is a Darkest Australia as well as a Darkest Africa'" intones the narrator-protagonist from an explorer's club in London where mining maps hang on the wall and where ventures in speculation 'read like a chapter from the *Arabian Nights*' (MacDonald 1901, 15 and 20). The narrative reference to printed materials suggests print to be another of the processes whereby stereotypic views are reproduced. Where Tiki is shown in the company of his friends, this image presents an altogether different view. Coming at the beginning of the book the frontispiece is a visual declaration. While illustrating a key moment ninety pages on into the narrative it also acts as an enticement, a teaser, of the drama to follow.



Figure 6.5 "The more they fired, the more he worried that poor horse". Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 9 x 14 cm. Frontispiece for *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* (Ward, Lock & Co., 1901). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

MacFarlane's dramatic frontispiece visually regales the reader with one of the visceral terrors, amongst others, that the Northern Territories could offer up. In addition his representation of a man and a horse being taken by 'an alligator' (most likely a salt-water crocodile) equates with the fascination for horror stories in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century cultural vernacular. The image depicts an incident in the narrative, when in swimming their horses across a lagoon one of the black troopers of the Native Police is attacked. At one level the

artist/illustrators figurative treatment of animals and men is a faithful interpretation of the caption as well as the passage in the narrative from which it derives. "He must ha' nipped the black fellow too, for we see nothin' of 'im again, but that poor horse just gave a scream like a man, and went plungin' and kickin' mad, first under water then on top, till everything round him was red and white" (MacDonald 1901, 50). At another the stock motif of the endemic 'alligator' is symbolic of an atavistic force that, through one form or another, threatens to destabilise the rational and moral order signified by the inspector

of police, his 'boys' and their horses. No words are given to voice the terror of the trooper; no human struggle is shown. In this frontispiece image he disappears without a trace, expendable in the race to colonization. Instead full attention is given to the portrayal of the horse, said by Muir to be one of MacFarlane's favourite topics.

The illustration of this consuming encounter attests to the establishment of an Anglo/Aboriginal relationship fashioned on the borders of society and bonded by an agonising and duplicitous dependence and cooperation. Visually it references the 'systems of administration and instruction' whereby colonised people, considered racially degenerate, became absorbed into institutions of governance (Bhabha 1994, 74). One such system of power was the Native Police. Black armband historians have shown that the 'Aboriginal fighting force', euphemistically called the Native Police, was created to counter the resistance of the indigenous people of Australia to colonization (Broome 1982, 45). Richard Broome cogently argues that the creation of this feared force attracted young Aboriginal men with the lure of 'uniforms, horses, guns, money and the promise of excitement that went with the life of a trooper'. I suggest that that consensual cooperation is symbolised in the frontispiece by three of Broome's criteria: namely uniform, guns and horses. Principally recruited from other tribes and districts, the Aboriginal members of the Native Police were faced with the ghastly prospect of hunting down their own people thereby expediting Australian 'dying race' mythology. Consequently the life of a trooper in the Native Police was one that was short and torn with conflict and ambiguity.

Aboriginal troopers expressed confused loyalties. A significant number were to have re-enlisted after time – perhaps they had nowhere else to go. Of course many troopers never accepted European values or perceptions. Some deserted, despite the unofficial penalty of execution, and some actively fought with their own people against the settlers (Broome 1982, 45).

With his journalistic eye for detail, MacDonald specifically itemises the guns as: Winchesters, Sniders and Remingtons. Superficially the mention of these brands might appear to signify little. However, they collectively refer to the invention of the 'breach-loading' rifle, the 'deadly' weapon used by the Native Police to the fatal detriment of the Australian Aboriginal peoples (Broome 1982, 45). In MacDonald's narrative these are characterised by the un-assimilated and uncivilised Myall and Warrigal who were considered 'outsiders' by assimilated tribes (Broome 1982, 59). In contradistinction to these outsider others, the Aboriginal troopers are represented as assimilated into Anglo-Australian masculine society. Moreover these figures are in possession of the institutional commodities associated with colonial systems power. Hence they are signalled in the novel as having marginal mateship and moral value as the following statement from the narrative shows.

As he will kill, if he gets the chance, so he is in fear of being killed; and much as he may have dreaded white men in his original savagery; still more keen in these days of semi-civilization is his fear of the blackfellow, especially if he is without the stiffening of a white man's company (MacDonald 1901, 60).

The moral 'stiffening' resulting from association with the European is the dominant theme of the frontispiece. The case for assimilation, however, is ambiguous for the Aborigine in his role of trooper in the Native Police, is neither a mate, nor a Boy Friday. The emotive connotations implied by these stereotypes appear to typify the qualities of loyalty, courage, and fearlessness, which are identified as characterizing the 'Robinsonnade' aesthetic (Saxby 1969, 30). However in this work the depiction of the black trooper as a mediating functionary is more muscular and un-compromising. He was a feared mate – by both the coloniser as well as the Aboriginal peoples. This fear was not due to his possession of horse, gun or uniform but because of his ability as a tracker and his literacy in the language of signs. 'After all that was the purpose for which the black police were founded. They reigned supreme by terror, and

terror only. The lesson they had to impress was that all Australia was not large enough to hide the black man who had speared a white' (MacDonald 1901, 81). Thus the Native Police became crucial in bringing about the 'final defeat of the Aboriginal resistance. Unlike the European they were able to pursue the Aborigine deep into the bush' (Broome 1982, 45).

Escaping the terror in the water, three men, a police inspector and two troopers, appear in the background of the composition all wearing the same uniform and mounted on similar looking, hardy horses.<sup>13</sup> There is little to distinguish them apart excepting their skin colour. Although the men have been united through this incident, and through institutional and colonial discourse, their egalitarian masculinity exudes a superficial reality. For this reason I argue that MacFarlane's stereotypic figures are representative of ambivalence. I maintain that they are evidence of the 'discursive strategy' in depending on the stereotype in reinforcing societal hierarchies in Australian children's literature (Bhabha 1994, 66).

Two decades earlier the Australian illustrated press circulated another memorable illustration (see Fig. 6.6) of a native policeman in action. George Rossi Ashton created this astonishing image, captioned 'The Black Tracker', for the June 18, 1881 edition of the *Australasian Sketcher*. Reproduced solely as a double page spread and independent of any text, this lithograph with ground washes is not merely black and white but is printed using the four colour printing process. In this image the placement and pose of the tracker is contrary to the graphic and photographic representations of static and passive Australian Aborigines in formative period illustrated papers and journals. In contradistinction to these popular images of 'dying race' mythology, Ashton's handsome black tracker dominates the pictorial space as an active masculine type. Moreover the subject matter of this image is atypical of the imported and

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<sup>13</sup> Muir (1982) has commented that MacFarlane was known for his ability to draw horses, which is certainly evident in this portrayal of the terrified animal. His reptilian representation, though, is less successful.



traditional European stock motifs normally appearing in the supplementary pages. I surmise that from its large size (30.6 x 40.5 cm), aesthetic treatment and colour it was no doubt a valued image, one that I presume would have been lifted out of the paper and given space on a wall. Like MacFarlane's representation I maintain that it constitutes an example of the way in which the two-dimensional space of cultural artefacts was used as a 'predominant strategic function' to contextualise the colonization of indigenous people (Bhabha 1994, 70). As precursor to the next image it highlights the dependence of Australian colonial society on an institution that 'marked the absolute rock bottom of



Figure 6.6 The Black Tracker. Engraved illustration by G. R. Ashton, 30.6 x 40.5 cm. Supplement to the June 18, 1881 edition of the *Australasian Sketcher*. Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

government Aboriginal policy' (Broome 1982, 45). I will now examine the tenuousness and fragility of that relationship in the second of MacFarlane's representations of assimilation, consensus and conflict.

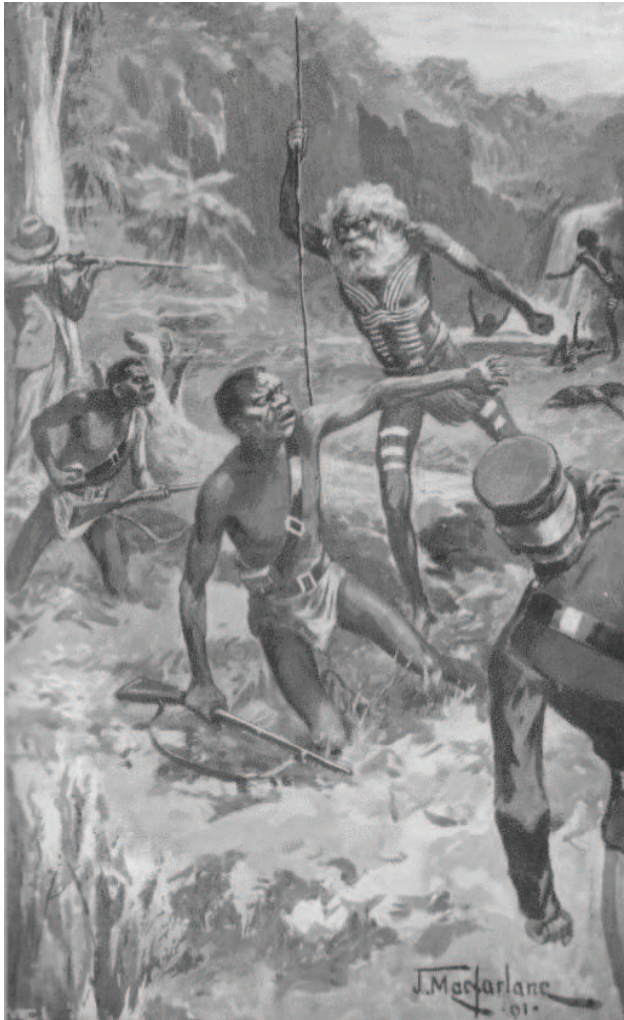


Figure 6.7 'He rushed in amongst the troopers'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.8 x 14.3 cm. Illustration for p. 90 of *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* (Ward, Lock & Co., 1901). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

The theatrical site for this illustration (see Fig. 6.7) is the jungle of the Northern Territories, described in the narrative text as an Eden 'in the heart of the wilderness – an Eden, too, with its serpent coiled and ready to strike' (MacDonald 1901, 79). In this setting an all out conflict is ensuing between the Myall tribe, the troopers, the 'new chum' and the police inspector. As with the 'alligator' employed in the frontispiece, the serpent is a symbolic trope for the threat of 'savagery' around which this novel is constructed and a literary referent for all that was considered to be untrustworthy and venal about the indigenous people of Australia. On the surface

MacFarlane's illustration is a literal representation of the passage from which the caption derives.



There was one old man with flowing grey hair and beard, but still athletic whose valour was a spending thing to see. He threw his spears whenever he saw a foe. He was his once with a bullet and fell. Struggling to his feet again, and gripping a heavy spear like a lance, he rushed in amongst the troopers' (MacDonald 1901, 90).

At another level it provides a commentary on the societal relationships ensuing from the interface between the colonised and colonial agencies of power.

In this composition it is not the iconic metonyms of institutional power symbolised by the uniformed officer of the Native Police in the foreground and the 'new chum' beside the 'cedar tree' that are visually privileged. Instead it is the trio of figures formed by the trooper/trackers and the fearsome 'savage', the Myall warrior who dominates the vertical axis around which the composition is arranged. Hence I propose that MacFarlane's image of assimilation and savagery does two things. On one hand his representation provides a degree of nominal respect for a people often stereotyped in Australian illustrated junior fiction as work-averse and degenerate. On the other it mirrors the ambivalent and mixed perceptions of the Australian Aboriginal male as respected, feared and degenerate types. I argue that his representation of the two troopers minus the uniform of a black trooper, and having been transformed into 'demoniacal warriors', conforms to cultural perceptions of reversion and also evokes the invidious role of the black trooper within the Native Police (MacDonald 1901, 88).

Having discarded the collective institutional symbol of their uniforms to fight in loincloths, the 'stoical' trooper/trackers have not done away with one of colonialism's most persuasive tools of 'civilising' authority and power – the gun. Although possessing this instrument of authority, it is their fluency in the 'natural' language of animate and inanimate signs that validates their place for the newly arrived European immigrant, the 'new chum'. Hence while the narrator-protagonist considers the exaggerated expressions of the

trooper/trackers to be 'theatrical', he admires their ability to read signs as well as the 'minuteness' involved in their tracking (MacDonald 1901, 86).

The acknowledgement of the Australian Aborigine's capacity for reading signs reflects the recorded values of the period as evidenced in Ashton's iconic representation (see Fig. 6.6). However, it also collides with the stereotypical evaluation of the Australian indigenous people as devoid of the civilised markers of cultural expression and language. MacDonald thus contrasts the Aboriginal male who has exchanged his value and become subject to the dependence on European commodities with the Myall tribe which, despite all odds, was prepared to fight for their land. In the adventure genre of Australian junior fiction this appreciation is rare and more often than not Australia's indigenous people are fixed in pejorative stereotype (see for example *The Dingo Boys* by George Manville Fenn (1921) and the obvious allusions to degeneracy in *The Graphic*). In MacFarlane's illustration the simulation of assimilation has been visibly minimised by the removal of loincloth-clad trooper/trackers of their state uniform. Subsequently their physical state is represented below that of the warrior who is now the 'noble savage' whereas the feared enforcers of colonist policy have now become degenerate.

Metaphorically this illustration is suggestive of the perception that, as with Maori, the Australian indigenous people were a 'dying race', condemned by modern technology in conjunction with the imposition of institutional power. This is articulated in the image and text of *A Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story*. MacDonald's work consequently mediates commonly held views: the indigene as having converted from black to white; the 'dying savage', and the 'black savage' as a metonym of inferiority and degeneracy. Even when adjusting to the impacts of colonisation and far from dying out, indigenous people were regarded as capable of reverting from civilisation to 'savagery'. It is a theme that is found in other works in the adventure genre, such as Joseph Bowes' *Comrades: A Story of the Australian Bush* (1912) and is even more poignantly embedded in Mary Grant Bruce's *Possum* (1917). Consequently in

MacDonald's tale success in exploration and acculturation rests on the back of local knowledge despite the 'discord' signalled by 'the stoical tracker in his misfit uniform' (MacDonald 1901, 85).

As mentioned earlier assimilation, adoption and adaptation were implicated as strategies that the indigenous people of New Zealand and Australia engaged in, along with mimesis, as a means of survival. In Australia one of these was to become a trooper in the Native Police. Another was to become a tracker for exploration. In New Zealand survival strategies for Maori, whether friendly or hostile to colonial endeavour, meant acculturation through adopting the ways of the European, while not necessarily becoming assimilated in the process. Parihaka is one such example. At Parihaka Maori developed their own form of Christianity and engaged in passive resistance within a social structure that was distinctly their own. For the newly arrived European, the 'new chum', the possibility of becoming familiarised, and becoming a mate, involved acculturation while assimilation ('taking to the blanket' or becoming 'Maori-pakeha') was to be avoided. These issues will be considered now through another set of illustrations, one of which will examine the representation of mimesis.

### *Representations of adaptation and mimicry*

Paul Carter (1992, 121) maintains that the cultural practice of mimicry is integral to 'migrant situations' and 'the means of imitating relations however temporarily' between settlers and indigenous people. Carter considers mimicry to be a performative act of interaction and a signal to communication and negotiation within a given situation. Hence he suggests that no matter how theatrically charged or superficial the act, the effect generated by performance permits the occasion for dialogue between two peoples who, often, possess no means of communication except that of mirroring each other.

Carter proposes mirroring to constitute a form of communication mediated through visual exchange. Mirroring was enacted through the exchange of

symbolic currency where items, such as clothes, colours, emblems, gestures and signs were regarded as having equivalent value. This argument contains some problems. Not only does it shear performative value of its relativity and symbolic significance, but also as any form of communication is culturally determined it does not necessarily follow that the exchange was equal to both parties. In fact it might well be reductive. In MacFarlane's frontispiece (see Fig. 6.5) the troopers of the Native Police denote assimilation through the embrace or mimesis of European institutional authority. However their reversion to fighting in loincloths in the following illustration suggests that the adoption of institutional values was tenuous, thus highlighting the ambiguity of such relationships. As Broome has intimated the strategies of imitation and mimesis were adopted by young Aboriginal men in negotiating a place in a world turned upside down by the imposition of colonial power. While assumedly engaging in acts of assimilation, mimesis often served as a real form of reduction in terms of physical circumstances and life expectancy.

Bhabha, by contrast, suggests mimicry to be consonant with camouflage and adaptation in borderline engagements. I consider Bhabha's arguments to be more sympathetic to Broome's views regarding the compromised position the young male, black trooper found himself in. Moreover Bhabha maintains that shared gestures and playing the game are forms of deliberate imitation and ways in which mimicry may be defined. Furthermore he proposes that the place or zone in which the act of mimicry occurs is transitional, as opposed to historical. While acknowledging that cultural structures take form within a certain space and time, the difference of his argument lies in the performative function and significance of place. Rather than a place of mediation Bhabha (1994, 34) suggests that the site of encounter is always equivocal, 'ambivalent' and dependent on otherness. Therefore not only is the cultural construct of colonial existence contingent on desire, it is always articulated 'in relation to the place of the Other' (Bhabha 1994, 44).

I argue that the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in New Zealand and Australia was a period of transition in which the desire for belonging was pre-eminent as was the adoption of new identities. Consequently the illustrated junior fiction arising out of it provided another vehicle for this ambivalence to be portrayed. Bhabha's (1994, 44) argument for the 'inversion of roles' is consonant with Hughes-D'Aeth's assertion regarding the role of the Australian Aborigine in picturesque works. For Hughes-D'Aeth indigenous people were central in the definition of belonging and identity despite their compositional relegation to the border zone. For Bhabha the act of mimicry was a means of subversion by simulation, mimesis that is, where playing the game took on another set of associations. The trooper/trackers in the preceding illustrations engaged in mimesis as a survival strategy during a time when the value of things, namely horses, guns, if not uniforms, began to take precedence. By mimicking (and perhaps parodying through imitation) European conventions, they employed the mimesis of camouflage as a means to manage and to survive the exigencies of the cultural imposition of colonisation and missionary projects. Moreover mimicry constituted a survival strategy through which Maori and Australian Aborigine could escape being captured by a vision where they were subject to the pejorative, other. By adopting the role of 'mimic men' they engaged in subversion and appeared as assimilated.

The image that has been selected to examine these ideas is the final illustration (see Fig. 6.8) from James Duigan's *Tiki's Trip to Town*. Although it represents the effects of assimilation as a consequence of consumption and acquisition, Tiki is neither of the Pakeha world, which he mimics through adopting the 'camouflage' of European clothing and posture (a dandy), nor of the Maori. His adventures have modified him to the extent that when he returns to his village of Pipiriki, located up the river from Wanganui, his sceptical 'playmates ... think that Tiki, like other travellers, does not confine himself to the truth' (Duigan 1893, 14). He has become a curiosity to his companions – an altered spectacle wearing a 'costume'.



Figure 6.8 'Tiki transformed'. Chromolithographic illustration by G. Sherriff, 7 x 12 cm. Illustration for p. 13 of *Tiki's Trip to Town* (A. D. Willis, 1893). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

By reinforcing the view of the Maori as duplicitous, this representation would seem to validate the contention of the indigene stereotype as a marginalised figure. In Bhabha's (1994, 70) words a 'complex, ambivalent,

contradictory mode of representation, as anxious as it is assertive'. Has Tiki morphed into a whitened Maori? The mode in which Sherriff has figuratively depicted him could owe something to the political circumstances of the region. The reason that the town of Wanganui did not fall to Maori incursion from the North was due to the support given by local tribes, the 'friendlies', to the colonists. Nevertheless the representation of Tiki as transformed and as succumbing to the effects of colonisation is ambiguous. In assuming the iconic role of the reformed indigene, Tiki, visually mimics colonization as an authorial presence. At the same time, he subverts the weight of that presence by appearing to engage in imitative mockery as one of colonization's discursive stereotypes. Hence I maintain that the romantic and mimetic portrayal of the 'dying race' immortalised by Lindauer and continued as a genre by Charles Goldie (1870-1947) is subverted in Sherriff's representation.

In the conclusion of this book Tiki a metonym for a subject people, has been made-over as the 'whitened indigene'. But even while rakishly clothed in a tight fitting (sailor's?) suit, buckled shoes and sporting the Phrygian cap, his identity remains, contrarily, his own. Why he should be clothed in this outfit and wearing this cap is curious. In Australasian illustrated junior fiction, dress was

used as one of the most obvious signifiers in denoting identity and status as the previous discussion of the Native Police has shown. Sherriff's image of Tiki is evidence of this cultural practice. It is also indicative of an endeavour on behalf of the image-maker to engage in the representation of divergent cultures and differing social identities.

This chapter has examined the importance of clothing and dress as markers of acculturation and assimilation. Beginning with the depiction of a naked boy, it has commented on the adoption of institutional clothing by the indigene as strategies of survival and adaptation. In concluding this examination I will now reflect on what the removal of clothing means in terms of identity, acculturation and assimilation for the 'new chum'.

### *Naked in the desert*

The image for discussion is the final illustration produced by MacFarlane for MacDonald's *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story*. The previous image of the hero (see Fig. 6.7) testifies to his cultural immersion in the jungle and minor place as a 'new chum'. In contradistinction this illustration (see Fig. 6.9) resurrects him to centre stage after his presumed death in the Sturt desert. MacFarlane's figurative representation depicts a reversal in status for the now naked 'new chum', the young Englishman, Alan Ogilvie. Executed at the expense of Edwardian European sensitivities, when it was more common and acceptable for the female nude to be paraded for consumption, this composition focuses on a naked man, albeit viewed from the back. MacFarlane's image resonates with the hero's loss of identity in Patrick White's *Voss* (1957) and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902). It visually plays with that phobia and the descent into 'savagery' in the Dantesque 'Never-Never'. In highlighting the role of the hero in this state the artist/illustrator has represented him emerging wraith-like from the edge of darkness. This key motif subsequently assumes a supernatural presence. It seeks to devour not only the naked man but also the light flaring from the torch held by the tracker. The following excerpt from the



narrative text describes the Aboriginal/ European exploration party's combined shock in encountering the hero.

From the heart of the darkness ahead came a shout so wild and sudden that we were startled. Out of the pall of night, as from an open door, and into the bright ring of light, rushed a black and naked figure ... He [Alan Ogilvie] sought to rush forward, faltered, and fell face downward on the sand ... He has stripped off every stitch of clothing. That the madness of the loss should be systematic I can attribute only to the fact that clothes are, after all, but an artificial habit, and that with the dethronement of reason and self-discipline we revert to savagery (MacDonald 1901, 201-202).

For a contemporary audience the representation of a young Englishman completely naked is distinctly unusual in colonial junior fiction. It may be that Ward, Lock and Co., sought to bring the reality of the Australian experience into their publication, as shall be seen in the next chapter when I discuss the work of Mary Grant Bruce. I suggest that the contemplation of the hero's 'natural' state by mounted Aboriginal trackers casts the narrator-protagonist as a man without reason. In contrast to these figures whose clothes denote civilisation and whiteness, the hero's nakedness signals that he possesses nothing and is hence a cipher – black. As a primal scene of fear and desire, this illustration also embodies Bhabha's stereotype of terror and reversion. It consequently presents the reader with two ambivalent views. On the one hand it represents the fear of losing one's identity and regressing to 'savagery', or in MacDonald's interesting choice of words, becoming dethroned. On the other it represents another type of mimesis, that of the desire to become similar through assimilation. In formative period Australian illustrated junior fiction it is in the mythic zones of the jungle and the desert that the wrongfully accused hero loses his identity, and through acculturation gains a new one.



Figure 6.9 'Raised his arms above his head ... and fell face downward on the sand'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 202 of *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* (Ward, Lock & Co., 1901). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

MacFarlane's illustration is atypical in junior fiction for the representation of adult male nudity and powerlessness. It is a representation of the apotheosis (or nadir) in cultural immersion, in which the traditional newness metaphorically connoted by white skin, is lost.<sup>14</sup> To the discovery party, Aborigine and European alike, the 'new chum' is apprehended as a 'savage black', a Warrigal. Emphasised by the effects of chiaroscuro (the contrasting use of lights and darks), everyone, horses included, is startled by this vision of a 'civilised' man become 'savage'. No longer a 'new chum' Alan Ogilvie is now

transformed through his metaphoric baptism in the imagined site of the desert into a fully bonded member of Anglo-Australian masculine culture. In the inversion, the down-under of the 'Never-Never', assimilation equates with

<sup>14</sup> Of all the images analysed in the course of this investigation this illustration of a nude man is the most unusual. Even in present day practice, the inclusion of nudity as a subject matter is subject to cultural convention and conservatism. As a practicing illustrator I have encountered this problem when producing work for the American market as well as dealing with its Maori representation in New Zealand.

survival. This state is dependent on becoming notionally bush literate through acculturation of Aboriginal lore. While flirting with the fear of becoming primitive, of losing all sensibility and reason there is also a recognition and acknowledgement of Australian Aboriginal culture as central in developing the mythology of mateship.

### *Conclusion*

Historians assert that in the

history of exploration as elsewhere, Aboriginal Australians played ambivalent roles. Their apparent collaboration – as scouts and trackers for explorers, and later as shepherds and stockmen, and the feared Native Police – might be explained by their innocence of European's designs, or as survival strategies. By making themselves useful – and in exploration, indispensable – they ensured a measure of care and protection from their masters (Denoon et al 2000, 85).

The last statement is particularly relevant when reflecting on the impact of institutional systems of power as influencing formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction. Even when based on the imported, traditional genre of the desert island aesthetic, the local product was engaged in articulating the complex issues confronting colonized societies. In this articulation the objectification of indigenous peoples was undeniable. Most likely this was a direct consequence of the cultural perception that the indigenous people of New Zealand and Australia were in the process of extinction, as MacDonald's novel, amongst others, implies. However as historians Broome, Denoon et al, King and Reynolds have noted, processes of absorption, assimilation, adoption and mimesis were engaged in as a means of countering this situation. *Tiki's Trip to Town*, and *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story* are both indicative of junior fiction's attempt to convey these processes, as they are indicative of traditional and masculine mythologies.

In this chapter I have concentrated primarily on the representation of masculine and indigenous stereotypes, engagement and encounter. In the next, and to bring some balance to the argument, I shall focus on the feminine ideal to counter the notion of mateship as exclusive to masculine mythology.

## Chapter Seven: *A fascination with 'Little Mate'*

*"They used to say that his sister would make the perfect wife for a bushman because she could shear sheep, milk a cow, ride a horse and kill a snake."*

Jacqueline Kent, *In the Half Light as a Child in Australia 1900-1970* (1984).

### *Introduction*

The quotation introducing this chapter derives from a collection of childhood memories describing what it was like to grow up as a child in urban and rural Australia in the twentieth-century. It highlights the discourse of gender permeating settler and bush mythology and its conflation with independence, self-reliance and mateship. Tacit within the gendered description is the concept of egalitarianism associated with the discourse of nationalism.

In the previous two chapters I examined themes of landscape and belonging, indigeneity and masculinity. These themes are argued as inextricably linked to processes of colonization and the master narrative of nationalism. They are commonly regarded as constituting the iconic framework out of which Australasian illustrated junior fiction emerged as an identifiable and separate literature. The integration of regional landscapes, fauna and flora and indigenous encounter were discussed in connection with the issues of assimilation and acculturation. In addition chapter six commented on identity as type, stereotype and decorative effect. In this chapter I turn my attention to evaluating a subject that has also received considerable treatment by literary critics and cultural theorists, Muir, Saxby, Schaffer, Scutter and White. I have taken as my central topic the feminine ideal in post-Federation Australian illustrated junior fiction. My examination investigates her cultural value as an icon for first-generation Australian-born readers. Chapter discussion acknowledges a number of factors to be imperative in informing this type. In addition to socio-cultural issues these comprise the gender-based issues



informing early twentieth-century representational discourse and the political phenomenon described as 'the new woman' (White 1981, 77).

Critics of socio-cultural change have shown that present day representations of race and identity are reputed to contain the traces of 'colonial ways of thinking and relating' and are hence indicative of power-based relationships (Bell 2004, 122). No less significant is the influence of the latter in informing the representation of societal identities as connotative of seminal national values. Of these identities, the depiction of women in early twentieth-century Australian illustrated junior fiction provides a fascinating insight into the mediation of the



Figure 7.1 'The Tuatara's Visit to the Cave'. Engraved illustration by E. Harris, 15.5 x 18 cm. Illustration opposite p. 33 of *Fairyland in New Zealand: A Story of the Caves* (Auckland: Brett, 1909). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

exclusive virtues associated with mateship, namely: independence, egalitarianism, self-reliance. Historians (Denoon et al), cultural and book historians (Scutter and White) and critics of junior fiction (Bradford, Muir and Saxby) relate that these virtues originated in pioneer discourse and were moralistically valued by paternalistic settler mythology and that subsequent to this, they became popularly

instilled in the vernacular and nationalist rhetoric of the period.

In formative period New Zealand illustrated junior fiction such evidence is not so readily found. The cultural promotion of this feminine type is not a prevailing theme and emphasis is more customarily sited within the symbolic frame of indigeneity. Even Sarah Rebecca Moore's tale entitled *Fairyland in New Zealand: A Story of the Caves* (1909) focusing on a virtuous heroine and deriving its inspiration from the European fairy tale, is imbued with an indigenous presence.<sup>1</sup> The reputable New Zealand botanical artist, Emily Harris (1836/7? – 1925) created the illustrations for this work. Harris's expertise is in the sub-discipline of botanical illustration not in creating characters and illustrations for children's literature. Hence while her figurative treatment of Moore's central and supporting characters shows the influence of imported stylistic conventions, her charming, if naïvely resolved female figures (see Fig. 7.1) are no match for the subject matter that her reputation was built upon. It is for this reason, and for the absence of any other New Zealand literature dealing specifically with female characters that this chapter deals solely with material pertaining to Australia.

Australasian cultural and book historians acknowledge the decade of the 1890s as instigating the genesis of an identifiable local product. In New Zealand and Australia the iconic figure most associated with this product was the imagined ideal, the self-reliant bushman. In Australia the bushman emerged as the primary vehicle for symbolising the political ideal of democracy and 'the fierce independence' associated with the decade's nascent nationalism (Lyons & Arnold 2001, xvii). However Martin Lyons and John Arnold assert that recently the cultural values embedded in this iconic figure have been challenged. They suggest that 'the heroic version of the 1890s, once closely identified with' the racist views of 'the *Bulletin*' is less influential than commonly

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<sup>1</sup> Although this cannot be proven, I suspect that the topographic features designed by Harris to be the environment inhabited by the fairy and tuatara is based on knowledge of one of New Zealand's iconic tourist destinations, the Waitomo caves.



thought. This might be so but it cannot be denied that in the late nineteenth century this imagined ideal was consequential for the distinctly masculine mythology colouring the literature created for children.

Adding to the singularity of that gendered voice is the feminine ideal originating in the first two decades of the twentieth century for an altogether different reader. In keeping with the ethos characteristic of the period this ideal is not of the urban centres but is of the outback and its metaphoric counterpart, the bush. Her emergence as a national type had the refreshing effect of countering the predominance of taciturn explorers and hostile indigenes in formative period adventure tales.<sup>2</sup> Moreover her representation in image and text offset the marginalised status of feminine types in junior as well as adult fiction with the result that women and girls became another centre in the formation of identity.

Book historians have shown that 'federation anxiety about national identity, along with a fascination with the Australian girl and her place in the home of the nation, created a ready market for girls' books written and published in Australia' (Scutter 2001, 300). Heather Scutter assigns the establishment of the London based publisher Ward, Lock & Co.'s agency in Melbourne as the causative factor inspiring this development. Under the direction of William Steele, this agency fostered local Australian writers complementing the talent promoted by the Melbourne-based publisher George Robertson & Co. One of Ward, Lock & Co.'s talents was the Australian-born Mary Grant Bruce. It was she who cultivated the feminine ideal and who successfully filtered the adventure genre through the pastoral ethos and bush mythology. By creating Norah of Billabong Station as the central figure around which an adventure and pastoral ethos revolved, Bruce inverted the masculine mythology apparent in pre- and post-Federation Australian illustrated junior fiction. In so doing her

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<sup>2</sup> An anomaly to the research pattern is Mrs H. Clark's adventure tale entitled *The Bushranger's Secret* (1915). This work was illustrated by W. S. Stacey and published by Blackie and Son Ltd. The plot is constructed from a Christian perspective and deals the issues of class and morality, desire and redemption.

creation provided her female audience with an alternative to 'the masculine exclusiveness of the bush ethos' and 'the shearing shed' where 'women were out of place' (White 1981, 101).

This chapter focuses on the feminine ideal exemplified by Norah in the Billabong series published from 1910 to 1920. My analysis examines her representation as the resourceful and independent heroine within the predominantly masculine world of the cattle station. In addition I comment on how her encounter with indigenous, female, ethnic and degenerate others operates to reinforce the symbolic value of the heroine as a national type. In Bruce's texts degenerate others are synonymous with the urban relative and the swaggie. Supplementing the typicality of these stock figures, ethnic and feminine others function as metonymic substitutes for cultural, racial and national destabilisation. Positioned at various points on the social spectrum these types establish the heroine in her dominant role as the spiritedly egalitarian 'little mate'.

In this chapter I apply the methodology, graphical discourse, to examine the illustrative treatment of the feminine ideal additional to her representation in the text. Earlier illustrated texts are critiqued for their fanciful representations of the Australian landscape and its inhabitants as having little in common with reality. However the arrival of immigrant illustrators such as MacFarlane began to turn that cultural deficit around. Moreover MacFarlane was one of a group of commercial 'artists, writers and painters' who 'began, in the 1880s, to create a new expression of Australia based on realism' (White 1981, 85). White (1981, 88) considers the work of these image-makers to be 'artificial and painfully self-conscious'. I regard their work significant for propelling first-generation Australian-born into the centre of the cultural arena. As the principal illustrator of the Billabong series, MacFarlane had not only to interpret one novel but was charged with the challenging task of evolving

Bruce's characters through serial form, and over time.<sup>3</sup> As each novel in the series contains one frontispiece and seven illustrations, MacFarlane's task of continuity was not without its problems.

*Lean, sun-bronzed and adaptable*

Brenda Niall (1984, 1) states that Australian children's literature 'does not properly begin until the 1890s, when local writers displaced hastily scribbled travellers and stay-at-home romances'. In expounding on this earlier generation of jottings this critic reasons that 'the way others perceive us' is, in part, directly related to the way in which we see ourselves represented in the print media.

Thus the stereotypes of colonial romances, for adults as well as for children, helped to shape an Australian sense of self. Young Anzacs of life and legend may be found in early colonial novels as the lean sun-bronzed, adaptable bushmen who made ideal settlers. The nature of the new land demanded self-reliance, physical strength and energy from its pioneers; and even long after Australia became a nation of city dwellers, the image of the outback hero remained confirmed in fiction and celebrated in nostalgic films to the present day. The hero's antithesis, the over-civilized "new chum" who is either toughened or defeated by his Australian experience, appears in many novels: British authors created him, and Australian authors drew him again and again before turning him into that degenerate native product, "the cousin from Sydney" (Niall 1984, 2).

Niall's evaluation proposes the perception of belonging as inherently dependent on the symbolic values contained in the indigenous landscape and the stock figures associated with its key sites. Stock motifs do not possess any intrinsic value as such but come to be regarded as having merit and worth according to social usage and cultural conventions. In formative period adventure tales,

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<sup>3</sup> Muir states that MacFarlane illustrated all the novels in the Billabong series with the exception of two titles that were illustrated by Fred Leist.

classificatory labels were embedded with culturally accorded values. These were applied to the identities of the adventure genre to symbolically position these figures within the created and imagined worlds of the narrative. Terms, such as the 'new chum', 'mate', and 'little mate' came to be imbricated with the attributes of emergent nationalisms. These terms were subsequently deployed as paradigmatic designators in children's literature to differentiate the Australian-born reader from their place of origin. In Australian illustrated junior fiction gendered and indigenous tropes common to masculine and colonial discourse dominated the construction of identity and belonging. Most telling of this cultural practice is early colonial junior fiction and the resumption of the 'Robinsonnade' labels and aesthetic in its artefacts. Not even Moore's aforementioned New Zealand-based fairytale was immune from this pervasive influence. But to posit identity as being predicated solely on the theme of masculinity slides into representational conventions predisposing a predominant ethos. The emphasis on the noun 'hero', as well as the descriptor 'bushmen' is presumptive of that gendered exclusivity and typology.

Like Lyons and Arnold, and Schaffer I deplore the perpetuation of the outback hero as the quintessential icon. For Kay Schaffer Australian national identity and 'character' is conceived and maintained as inherently masculine within cultural vernacular. She maintains that within this gendered construction women and things feminine are at once excluded and 'defined' in relation to men (Schaffer 1988, 4). This cultural privileging comes at a cost. It not only frames European women and girls within an assumed perspective, it overlooks the representation of Aboriginal women, however slight and equivocal. Schaffer was right to question cultural assumptions and to ask where women belonged in the creation of national identity. As with the predication of identity on the imaginary concept of *terra nullius*, such a perception presupposes nothing else to have existed.

As I have argued the representation of identity in Australasian illustrated junior fiction was contingent on encounter with indigenous people and engagement

with the indigenous landscape. It was also dependent on the interaction with gender. Even Joseph Bowes's stereotypic and perceptibly misogynist tale, *Comrades: A Story of the Australian Bush* (1912) features an illustration of an Aboriginal woman by Cyrus Cuneo. This image of gender and indigeneity is one of a handful encountered in this enquiry. The narrative describes this nameless woman as a grief stricken *gin* consumed with the belief that one of the European boy adventurers is the ghost of her dead son. In Cuneo's illustration she occupies the focal point of the composition, flanked by her tribesmen and one of the lost boys. Yet even Cuneo's representation and its unmistakeable resemblance to the feminine types appearing in masculine and colonial discourse, is not unsympathetic. Excluding their rare occurrence in the illustrated press, the only other depictions of Aboriginal women that I have come across are to be found in junior fiction. Two such figures appear in Bruce's *Norah of Billabong* (1913) and *Possum* (1917).<sup>4</sup>

*Speaking with a singular voice; a case study selection and biography of the book*

The first six books of the Billabong series constitute the primary texts for my assessment of gender and the virtues of independence, self-reliance and egalitarianism. Published by Ward, Lock & Co., between 1910 and 1919, these works are singular to post-Federation Australasian illustrated junior fiction for articulating the position of women within outback society. I speculate that the appearance of strongly built female characters in the creations of Bruce and her contemporary, Vera Dwyer, was the consequence of three factors: socio-cultural change, suffrage and an emerging nationalism. Iconic amongst these was Bruce's heroine, Norah. In building a case for her representation as a national type, I will contrast this central character with other stock figures selected from the series and other titles by Bruce.

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<sup>4</sup> The most sympathetic treatment that I came across in conducting this survey was a watercolour portrait of an Aboriginal woman captioned 'An Australian Gin' in the February 1, 1908 edition of the *Lone Hand*. This sensitive portrait is atypical for the period. It conveys the personality and humanity of the sitter in contradistinction to the stereotypic representations of Australian Aborigines in popular culture and the illustrated press.

As a background to this evaluation additional material has been included from the journals created for girl readers, *The Girls' Own Annual*, the *Girls' Own Paper* as well as *The Illustrated Australian News* and the *Australasian Sketcher*. Chapter discussion also incorporates representations of women from the *Lone Hand*. My reason for including supplementary material from this illustrated journal is consistent with the research methodology, graphical discourse. As discussed in chapter two, graphical discourse is theorised as a synthesizing methodology for examining the dissemination of values and knowledges in image and text. The *Lone Hand* was one of the primary print vehicles in circulation in Australasia during the period 1890-1920. As with *The Girls' Own Annual* and *Girls' Own Paper*, it was influential in disseminating views and attitudes that would inform the shaping of identity. Primarily dedicated to serving the literary interests of men, the *Lone Hand* broadened its range of topics to encompass prominent female writers and artists. Consequently I argue that it is impossible to overlook the journal's commentary on the creation and production of Australian illustrated junior fiction. I have already referenced 'THE BOOKANEER' as providing a forum for the critical reception of Bruce's creations including Billabong Station and Norah.

Bruce's works offer up no European or Aboriginal feminine ciphers or heavily invested types of transportation such as found in Edward Dyson's *The Gold Stealers* (1901), Louis Becke's *The Settlers of Karossa Creek* (1906) and Bowes's *Comrades: A Story of the Australian Bush* (1912). For the adventurer hero roughing it in the far north of Australia the absence of European women is pejoratively described as the absence of "'frill'" (Bowes 1912, 85). Diametrically opposing this metaphorical stereotype are the Aboriginal *gin* and Malay pirate women. In Bowes's tale these feminine ciphers operate as metonymic repositories for the destabilising presence of ethnic others as well as the fear of racial degeneracy. Bruce does not avoid these stereotypes. Nor is she immune to the social attitudes and cultural conventions of the period in which she wrote. On the contrary the subject matter embraced in the Billabong series is dependent on the existence of the stereotype. Where Bruce differs is rather than represent

these characters as a collection of two-dimensional cut outs pasted in for local colour, she attempts to give them a three-dimensional persona. Consequently while her articulation of the feminine ideal and indigeneity is considered by Saxby (1969, 84) to be 'idealized', and by Scutter (2001, 300) 'stereotyped' and patronising in tone it is rare for the period in which she wrote.

Equally important is her treatment of Billabong station and its iconic value as an imagined space. Scutter asserts that the particularity of Billabong's appeal resided not so much in its geographic specificity but in its inherent value as a transportable sign.<sup>5</sup> Saxby (1969, 96) maintains that life at "Billabong" represents the world in microcosm'. While appearing secure, 'threat comes occasionally in the form of the feckless swagmen, cattle-thieves, gold-stealers, fire drought and flood'. By reinvigorating the representation of societal identities, cultural practices and power structures in the landscape of the outback, Bruce created a significant vehicle through which Australian-born readers could reinvent themselves and their identities. By providing her readers with an antidote to the pervading perspective of gender she offset the male discourse inherent in tales of adventure where women were briefly limned, if they were to appear at all. Salient in this creation was its correlation with what constituted the feminine ideal in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century colonial society.

### *The feminine ideal*

#### *The colonial helpmeet*

Raewyn Dalziel relates that in 1839 Mrs Sarah Strickney Ellis outlined the fundamental principles of social conduct for women. These principles included making personal sacrifices, preserving 'the moral fibre of the nation' within the sanctity of the domestic institution and remembering their place as inferior to

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<sup>5</sup> Although Scutter's comment is directly related to Australia, Bruce's readership extended to New Zealand as well. In 2005 I presented a guest talk to the Friends of the Dorothy Neal White Collection at the National Library of New Zealand and was delighted by the response of the audience and their intimate knowledge and love of the Billabong series.



men (Dalziel 2001, 184). Dalziel argues that it was thus the responsibility of a daughter 'to serve her father, sister her brothers, a mother her sons, and a wife her husband'. Moreover she alleges that colonial nations regarded women as a stabilising and moral force, and that this perception paradoxically affirmed their position and lead to success in emancipation. Hence additional to their social role as moral containers, colonial women were able to attain a greater degree of independence and purposefulness than they had previously been able to achieve.

The role of wife and mother in New Zealand, while incorporating Mrs Ellis's model, involved a wider range of functions and duties than it did in England. Much as a middle-class wife was necessary in England as ornament, status symbol and angel in the house, she was infinitely more necessary in the colony because she was useful. The colonial woman's role was most frequently described as that of a true "helpmeet" (Dalziel 2001, 188).

Although Dalziel presents an ideal specific to New Zealand a corresponding counterpart was similarly developing in Australia. Here the 'helpmeet' also participated in arenas beyond the social distinctions of conventional society. Thus in both New Zealand and Australia women were, to a certain degree, freed from the social confines and mores of traditional roles.

During the late nineteenth century prototype feminists promoted the ideological values of social and moral reform, equality, justice and emancipation. Historians have shown that organizations such as the National Council of Women were constructive in creating and protecting the moral order of society. Moreover they argue that these organizations also enabled 'women to work alongside men in reforming states and constructing myths' (Denoon et al 2000, 205). Written into pioneer mythology and extended through colonial discourse, women and girls symbolised the consolidation of Strickney Ellis's values as moral currency. Moral honour, social responsibility, conduct and

socio-economic status became topical issues editorially sanctioned and played out in the period's popular culture vehicles. The London-based publication *The Girls' Own Annual* for example, expressed opinions that were both conservative and progressive. Its volumes included articles in which were embedded gendered instructions endorsing appropriate social conduct. One such piece entitled 'The Child – How Will She Develop' appears in pages 12 and 13 of the October 6, 1894 Volume XVI – No. 771. The article paints a bleak picture for the girl who dared to exhibit an independent turn of mind and unequivocally suggests that such a behavioural preference would ultimately result in a miserable and lonely ending.

Accompanying this article is an illustration that would equally be at home in one of the polemics debating the merits of suffrage in the *Bulletin*. Captioned 'Discontent' it features a woman at a social consciousness event backgrounded by a poster bearing the exclamatory statement, 'WOMAN! Arise!!! To suppress THE ENEMY – MAN!!!' Its more liberal and forwarding looking articles, however, dealt with the reality of suffrage and the rise of the modern woman as a socio-economic and political phenomenon. By October 7, 1899 Volume XXI – No. 1032 of *The Girls' Own Annual* was stressing the importance of cultivating a philanthropic spirit, a 'level head and a well-ordered mind' in addition to a 'sound body'. The onset of W.W.I ensured that gendered independence, patriotism and national pride were at the forefront of its material, as was moral fibre and self-sacrifice. Evolving concurrently with these socio-cultural changes and belief systems, Bruce's outback heroine assumed these core values as national assets.

### *The Australian girl*

Dalziel, Denoon et al and Schaffer assert that in addition to their conflation with moral currency, women and girls were invested with virtues that were popularly disseminated as consonant with national identity. A case in point is the sketch entitled 'The Australian Girl' by David Henry Souter appearing in

pages 271 and 272 of the February 1, 1912 edition of the *Lone Hand*.<sup>6</sup> Souter (1836-1935) was a contributor to the *Lone Hand* whose observations of gender-based issues were punctuated with a graphic flair for caricature. Under his pen women were stereotypes sheathed in tightly fitting clothes permitting little mobility but fully revealing their bodies to masculine viewing. Souter's views, cited below, affirm the reading of gender and national identity by Dalziel, Denoon et al and Schaffer. His appraisal of women is also representative of the ambiguity inherent in the representation of the modern women in cultural vernacular. On the one hand dominant cultural institutions such as the illustrated press endorsed the emergence of this feminine type. On the other, they continued to uphold the traditional notions embedded in late-nineteenth century gender-based discourse. 'The Australian Girl' is consequently a commendation of her capacity to signify nationalist virtues, and a sly lampoon of her new found freedom.

Compared with her sisters of other parts of the globe, the Australian Girl has a particular claim on our affections because of her immediate and unfailing proximity ... She walks with a freer step, talks with a wider intelligence, and meets you on a more level plain of equality than the girl born and bred under conditions less kindly than those obtaining in Australia ... She plays tennis; before she was a girl she played hockey. When she plays golf she ceases to be a girl, and therefore does not come within the scope of present enquiry (Souter 1912, 272).

Souter's statement contains some observations regarding sport and women that are intriguing. His consideration of the game of hockey bears a certain resonance with its endorsement as a 'splendid game for girls' in the October 7, 1899 Volume XXI – No. 1032 of *The Girls' Own Annual*. Not only does this

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<sup>6</sup> Like many of his counterparts Souter was an interdisciplinary practitioner who, in addition to being an illustrator, cartoonist and art editor, produced drawings for junior fiction as for example Ethel Turner's *An Ogre Up-to-Date* (1911).

annual depict hockey as wholesome, it informs its readers of the game's various techniques using the contemporary technology of representation, photography.



Figure 7.2 'Avoid all excess in the field games which are suitable only to sporting men'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 16 x 23 cm. Illustration for p. 233 of *The Girls' Own Annual*, January 11, 1908 Volume XXIX – No. 1463. Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

MacFarlane's full-page illustration (see Fig. 7.2) of the hockey wielding girl for the January 11, 1908 Volume XXIX – No. 1463 of *The Girls' Own Annual*, showcases the active and sporting woman as a figure for the reader to aspire to. MacFarlane's representation, though, is appended by an advisory caption. Attributed to "Medicus", it warns against indulging in too much activity and to avoid engaging in activities judged socially and culturally to be the domain of men. For Souter, and possibly the editors of the *Lone Hand*, hockey is

marginally acceptable. In contradistinction to this ball game, Souter implies that golf possesses the ability to turn girls into something less than feminine. Is gender at stake here? *The Girls' Own Paper* (formerly *The Girls' Own Annual*) considers not and features this sport and other liberating activities alongside articles such as 'Dreams of a Feminist Millennium'.

Four years prior to Souter, Florence MacDonald's travelogue entitled 'Some themes I saw in Australia' was published in Volume XXX, 1908-1909. In the article the author claims that an

Australian girl is generally able to turn her hand to anything, and is as courageous as she is resourceful. She knows how to saddle and groom a horse as well as how to cook a dinner; she is deft with hammer and nails as with needle and thread; and in many cases she can handle a gun, which is a useful accomplishment to one who has to often rely on her own resources (MacDonald 1908, 282).

MacDonald's contribution to this publication affirms the critique of the colonial woman and girl as actively participating in a more extensive range of duties than those traditionally performed by her counterpart back home. Her assessment of the Australian girl's abilities is in direct contradiction to the ambivalence encountered in Souter's article for the illustrated press. The national type subsequently conveyed by *The Girls' Own Annual* to its national and international readers is independent, resourceful, courageous and active. Competent within the domestic sphere she is equally competent with more muscular activities. The annexation of domesticity, resourcefulness and independence as a social reformative to urban malaise and rural hardship are themes that are also exploited by Bruce in *Gray's Hollow* (1914) and *Possum* (1917).

Norah's genesis as an independent action figure was intact from the very first novel in the Billabong series. Her subsequent representation throughout the series reflected the changing perception of gender where women were no longer passively defined but visibly active in that definition. By examining the semiotic power of the feminine ideal in the Billabong heroine, I aim to extend the existing assessment of the colonial girl posited by Dalziel, Denoon et al, MacDonald and Schaffer. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to this purpose and is divided into two parts. The first section examines the

representation of Norah as an evolving feminine ideal and national type. The second focuses on the consolidation of her status through a comparative examination of feminine, degenerate and ethnic others in the Billabong series. My reading of these societal identities is predicated by the hierarchical relation of these types to the heroine rather than the chronological order in which they appear in the series. My approach is prompted by the following questions:

1. Is the representation of Norah, and the social hierarchy of Billabong station, reflective of the issues of emancipation and independence associated with discourses of gender and nationhood?
2. How does the representation of stock figures: the indigene, the feminine ideal and the diasporic Asian other in this literature differ from or conform to the gendered mythologies and cultural stereotyping inherent in colonial and nationalist discourses?
3. How does the imagined and created world inhabited by Norah suggest the influence of image-maker lifestyle and disciplinary practice?

By applying these questions to Bruce's works, the chapter examines whether Norah possesses a genuine voice of her own or whether, as her father's 'little mate', her role precludes her from that. It speculates on whether she was a subsidiary metonym, which, while appearing to ratify an egalitarian identity, in effect upheld the authorized view of paternalism embedded in masculine discourse.

### *'Little Mate'*

#### *Norah of Billabong Station*

In the formation of national identity economic power, that is the power to own, and to possess and trade, is uppermost in its construction. However underpinning this construction, and prevalent in its dissemination through cultural vernacular is semiotic power. In visual culture, and visual communication design discourse semiotic power is understood as the power of symbols to invest objects with meaning and to have those meanings socially accepted and agreed upon. In children's literature one of ways of mediating

abstract concepts such as nationhood to a junior audience is through the semiotic power of the protagonist, in this case an iconic and evangelical heroine.

Norah, and to a minor degree Nancy of *Glen Eyre* (1912), serves as the imagined protagonist for this feminine ideal and the virtues of independence and self-reliance pervading suffragist discourse. The first illustrated novel of the Billabong series, *A Little Bush Maid* (1910) introduces the central character to her readers. Over the next nine years Norah evolves from a twelve year old, motherless, free-spirited girl to a figure of independent womanhood who is supported by men but not inferior to them. From the isolated community of a cattle station in a depopulated region of the state of Victoria the series shifts to accommodate socio-cultural and political issues contemporaneous to the period. Included are those that testify to Bruce's interest in addressing the specificity of local issues as well as a nascent nationalism. These comprise: moral status and institutional decline, the urban site as a modern spectacle, the treatment allotted indigenous and ethnic others, class structures and systems, and the impact of W.W.I in Europe. Thus in addition to the pastoral ethos the Billabong series incorporates masculine and Anzac mythologies as its grand themes.

Labelled a tomboy, Norah exists outside polite and correct society. She is even outside the realm of her brother, whose room (a colonial *wunderkammer*) features as a metaphor for the acquisitional practices associated with colonialism. As first-generation Australian-born she is an icon of a new identity and new world order, which sought to separate itself from tradition. In the Billabong series she is the focal point around which the hierarchy of the cattle station is arranged. This hierarchy is denoted by Europeans and Australian Aborigines, ethnic others and displaced others, such as the swaggie who are positioned in varying degrees of relationship to the heroine. In this social order Cecil, her urban and materially oriented cousin, is even further removed from the heroine than the ethnic others who are symbolised by the characters of Lee Wing and the Indian hawker. Norah's youth and generational status thus allows her to engage with minorities who are popularly perceived as synonyms



for depravity and corruption. In each of the heroine's encounters, Norah demonstrates two or more of the attributes of proto-feminist thinking associated with the pastoral ethos. The remainder of the chapter is a chronological examination of the representation of Norah in the first books of the Billabong series. It begins with inquiring into her treatment as an adventurous and resourceful tomboy in image and text. It concludes with her representation as an iconic ideal signifying emancipation and philanthropic virtue.

*A daughter whose right hip was not higher than the left*

Aside from the covers of the Billabong series, the reader first meets the twelve-year old Norah in the frontispiece created by MacFarlane for *A Little Bush Maid* (1910) (see Fig. 7.3, p. 237). As the only daughter of a cattle station widower Norah eschews sophisticated society whose social conventions are more than once critiqued by Bruce as being morally suspect. Through her key character Bruce provides her readers with a powerful cultural icon that is symbolic of the robust and self-reliant community that is Billabong station. In this initial work in the series the heroine exhibits a behavioural preference for racing, fishing, rescuing animals and exploring over girlish activities, such as playing with dolls. In the second work, *Mates at Billabong* (1911), Bruce paints a detailed description of Norah's physical features and mode of dress. As a type, Norah is characterised as slim and as having 'unruly hair' which she ties up with anything at hand, including red office tape, New Zealand flax and green hide (Bruce 1911, 10). Her habitual mode of dress is a 'neat divided riding skirt of dark blue drill, with a white linen coat' and 'tie' (Bruce 1911, 32).

For the Australian-born reader the red tape, the New Zealand flax, the green hide and the 'divided' riding habit may have had a certain resonance. As national and cultural symbols they signal the heroine as belonging to the colonies. Moreover the meanings embedded in the last two devices link Norah with a society whose attitudes and practices are the cultural opposite of those performed by sophisticate and urban societies. Bruce's heroine is consequently an eccentric who excels as a rider, traps rats in her own devices, climbs trees

and who is not bothered with 'the sight of muddy garments' (Bruce 1910, 85). She is an accomplished knitter who also knows how to wield a stock whip. With her position firmly established within the discourse of mateship embedded in Billabong society, the heroine is at liberty to engage in a number of life-threatening adventures presented by the locale of the outback.

Amongst those are encounters with groups of people collectively ostracised on account of their ethnicity, social status, or conduct. In *A Little Bush Maid*, these marginalised figures comprise disaffected swagmen, hermits and Australian Aborigines. The main event, around which the narrative is constructed, is the rescue of a hermit. This social outcast is found by Norah to be dressed in wallaby skins and sharing his tent with a pet carpet snake. Despite his discovery the hermit eventually dies, but not before his partial resurrection as a recognised and cultured European. Intersecting the issues of social responsibility, redemption and compassion are those congruent with geographic vulnerability and institutional isolation.<sup>7</sup> In Bruce's narrative these are signalled by a phrase alluding to Victoria's bushranger history made legendary by the sub-cultural icon, Ned Kelly. 'The police were still in the district ... stern-looking men in dusty uniforms were unusual figures in those quiet parts' (Bruce 1910, 185).

Whether appearing in an adventure tale or a domestic story, the communicative purpose of the frontispiece is twofold and synchronous. The relative merit of this type of illustration in establishing the scene has been covered in connection with *The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story*. It alerts the reader to the particular issues with which the plot is concerned and at the same time introduces the protagonist/s through representing an isolated incident in the narrative. In contrast to the formal arrangement of design elements constituting the cover design, the frontispiece is composed around a more complex set of

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<sup>7</sup> The activities of Ned Kelly and his gang, and subsequent their capture and trial were fully covered in the *Australasian Sketcher* of 1880. The illustrators employed to capture the drama of this regional event, and to pictorially represent its major incidents and players were T. Carrington and George Rossi Ashton.

signs. Frequently in the cover design of the period, the figurative treatment of the key character or characters is delimited by reproduction technology, typographic treatment and the application of one or two colours on coloured buckram. In contradistinction to this graphic stasis, the frontispiece functions as the illustrated novel's moving image despite its chromatic limitations.



Figure 7.3 'It seemed to Norah that she pulled up almost in his stride'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Frontispiece for *A Little Bush Maid* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1910). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

MacFarlane's frontispiece (see Fig. 7.3) for *A Little Bush Maid* is visually explosive. In this image the description of Norah in the narrative is condensed in a manner that advances the theory of visual immediacy forwarded by Barthes, Kress & van Leeuwen, and Rose in relation to images. On one level it is crowded with conventions characterising the adventure genre and pastoral ethos. At another it introduces the heroine whilst simultaneously conferring her iconic status as an action figure; a role that she would subsequently sustain in the works leading up to the Great War. Consequently this representation sets a precedent for the core theme

of gender and the sub-themes of independence and egalitarianism, which the author and the illustrator continued to address in articulating Norah's beginnings and development.

The content covered in the frontispiece derives from a point in the narrative where Norah is out riding with her brother and their friend, Wally. The compositional modality employed by MacFarlane to highlight the momentum and incident resulting from this activity is deliberately awkward and intense. Tilted at an oblique angle against the horizon is a trapezoid shape formed from the three main characters and their mounts. Occupying the upper right of this compositional device, the protagonist, Norah, performs two communicative functions for Australasian-born and international readers. In addition to embodying the attributes of the action figure mediated in the girls' own annuals, she is representative of 'the constitutional vigour' marking pastoral mythology (Denoon et al 2000, 210). Representations of dramatic and life threatening incidents such as falling off a horse were not uncommon in augmenting the adventure genre of the period. I maintain that MacFarlane's frontispiece is distinctive in its articulation of female sovereignty even though the heroine's style of riding is one that is ratified by her father.

There was nothing in the saddles to distinguish Norah's mount, for she, too, rode astride. Mr Linton had a rooted dislike to side saddles, and was wont to say that he preferred horses with sound withers and a daughter whose right hip was not higher than the left (Bruce 1910, 46).

Norah is literally her father's 'little mate' a term employed by Bruce to distinguish the heroine in the otherwise male society of the cattle station. Empowered by this generational legitimacy she functions as a referent for the values and ideal of mateship embedded in a nascent national identity.

I will now turn my attention to another to Norah's primary roles, the compassionate saviour, to further examine how a set of specific attributes is

employed by the author and the artist/illustrator in enhancing the semiotic power of the feminine ideal as a national type.

*It was most deliberately done*

Norah is further characterised in *A Little Bush Maid* as typifying attributes congruent with mateship through her engagement in pastoral and socio-cultural activities. These extend her role from the feminine ideal as action figure to compassionate saviour of animals, the rural impoverished and urban sick. The enlargement of the heroine's scope of activity provides Bruce with an opportunity to address the social status of marginal types as well as the economic and moral issues affecting outback society. Paramount in setting up the heroine as a saviour figure is the arrival of the swaggie to Billabong station and the bushfire ensuing from his unwelcome presence. In the Billabong series this figurative type is a social pariah, a degenerate other. His appearance in this work underscores the importance of identity politics and social structures in bush mythology. In Bruce's narrative this other of others is furthest removed from the central hub and its conflation with the heroine as signalling morality and civilization.

Synonymous with anti-social activities, the swaggie juxtaposes the relative value of the cultural codes invested in the heroine and Billabong station as an ideal space. In retaliation for his ostracism from the cattle station he deliberately sets fire to the station's economic wealth, its fields of grass, jeopardising its inhabitants and its viability. According to Niall and Saxby the ordeal by fire features as a prevalent motif in the Australian illustrated junior fiction created for readers of both genders. Not only did it constitute a potent signifier in junior fiction, it frequently featured in the illustrated press as a metonym for an environmental force that was capable of swallowing up the first-generation Australian-born. Historians and cultural theorists have shown that fire, along with natural events such as floods and droughts, correlates with the psychoanalytic phrase the 'terrible mother'. In the cultural history of colonization this phrase is used in conjunction with the colonized indigenous



landscape and myths of consumption and savagery. Hence first-generation squatter and settler identities are said to have feared these natural events for their capacity in reducing their fragile security and fiscal status to nothing. It comes as no surprise, then, that Bruce's Billabong heroine, first-generation offspring of immigrant stock, should be represented as surviving this ordeal.



Figure 7.4 'They were just out of the gully when the fire roared up it'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 77 of *A Little Bush Maid* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1910). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

MacFarlane's illustration (see Fig. 7.4) resumes the symbolic imperative of these ideas. In this representation the heroine is graphically dominant in the role of saviour, shoving at a flock of distressed sheep to herd them away from the consuming flames. MacFarlane's image hinges around the placement of three iconic signifiers, the heroine, her sheep and fire. Kress & van Leeuwen (2000, 13) claim that in visual communication design discourse icons are culturally specific and 'ideational' indicators. In the triangular modality of this composition these key Australian icons are deliberately used by the artist/illustrator to frame the imagined reality for the reader. Moreover to

compound the sense of claustrophobia evoked in the narrative, MacFarlane has

reduced the perspective of this image to a flattened wall of elemental force. Hence the upper axial line of the composition is marked by fire, the graphic signifier for the swaggie's disaffection. Sweeping in from the upper right of the image fire threatens to engulf the entire scene and has almost done so for only a faint silhouette of trees remains in the background. In contrast Norah and the flock of sheep indicate the lower axial line of the composition. Positioned thus they signal heroine's flight to safety.

MacFarlane's image of Norah and the sheep is representative of a cultural activity with which Bruce's readers may have been cognisant. For national and international readers familiar with the pursuit of pastoral practices in New Zealand and Australia, the flames and smoke denote the all-consuming effects resulting from an uncontained burn-off.<sup>8</sup> For a national reader, however, they may also be connotative of the threat of arson, a practice that squatters sometimes employed to rid their properties of settlers.<sup>9</sup> Moreover I argue that MacFarlane's graphic commentary on specific cultural and social practices is indicative of a particular psychological state. I maintain that in addition to evoking the 'physical and racial characteristics' signalling national type, it is evidence of 'a moral, social and psychological identity' (White 1981, 64).

At a psychological level MacFarlane's illustration is a powerful reminder of the ever-present fear for the settler or squatter of losing everything: their occupancy, their economic livelihood and their generational ascendancy. Operating as a graphic antidote to this, the fire, the sheep and the young female protagonist combine to create an effective advertisement for self-sacrifice and compassion. Culturally sanctioned as battling the environment and rescuing the stricken flock, Norah typifies a national type imbued with the attributes of moral and physical robustness characterising the pastoral ethos. Her encounter

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<sup>8</sup> The issues arising from this pastoral practice and its ruinous effects on a family, feature in the comparatively darker outback novel, *Glen Eyre* (1912).

<sup>9</sup> For junior fiction that critiques 'the new land Bill' and the institutional power of the New South Wales government, and its policies supporting settlement see Louis Becke's *The Settlers of Karooa Creek* (1906).



and repulsion of the degenerate other, and her survival of the ordeal comprising his revenge, endorses her semiotic currency as a moral container. She thus denotes the preservative force and redemptive power concentrated in women and girls in colonial and national, and gender-based discourses.

The motifs of compassion and sacrifice evident in Bruce's text and MacFarlane's illustration, also feature in *The Settlers of Kaross Creek* published by The Religious Tract Society. Unlike Becke who promotes the Christian ethos in a congratulatory and evangelising tone, Bruce subsumes its redemptive message in the values of egalitarianism, social responsibility and philanthropy. Schaffer would argue that this reading of Bruce's 'little mate' adheres to the image of women and girls as governed by the gender conventions inherent in masculine discourse and bush mythology. I argue that as Norah is the primary focus in this and the former frontispiece illustration, her representation conforms to the assertion of the feminine ideal in cultural vernacular. In the remaining chapter discussion I examine her maturing role as a national type and as encapsulating moral reform, philanthropy, gendered liberation and respectability.

### *The feminine ideal and a preference for physical type*

#### ***A sound body is a sure foundation***

Eleven years prior to Bruce's articulation of gender and national identity, *The Girls' Own Annual* published material providing an antecedent for the issues dealt with by the author in the Billabong series. Appearing in pages 6 and 7 of the October 7, 1899 Volume XXI – No. 1032 is the article entitled 'Advice to Girls who are entering life's Battle'. In addition to stressing the relative importance of a 'sound body', the article recommended developing logical thinking as a requisite quality for pursuing 'good work'. In order to discuss the symbolic significance of these values, I will examine the representation of Norah as the philanthropic and physical ideal.



Figure 7.5 "'You ain't havin' a loan of me, I s'pose?'" Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 9 x 14 cm. Illustration for p. 59 of *Norah of Billabong* (1913). Reproduced courtesy of the National Library of New Zealand.

This illustration (see Fig. 7.5) derives from the third novel in the series, *Norah of Billabong* (1913) and depicts the heroine Christmas shopping accompanied by her father. In this work Norah, adolescent and attending boarding school in town, struggles with deportment and what passes for good conduct. Hence the issues central to the plot are those relating to behavioural conduct, social status, modernity and rural identity. I will return to the last two later in this chapter when I take up the representation of the bush postmistress as a counter ideal to Norah. At present I wish to focus on the iconographic content of MacFarlane's illustration and its import as a

communicative device. On one level the image denotes a literal response to a particular moment in the narrative. On the other, the triangular arrangement of the Lintons, the crippled boy and the urbane shopper in the foreground, constitute a graphic endorsement of physical type. Tacit within MacFarlane's figurative treatment is the acknowledgement of this type as an 'excellent specimen of long-limbed Australia' (Bruce 1913, 13).

The physical preference presented to the reader via this representation of Norah and her father, suggests the influence of socio-cultural conventions. Pre-

Federation conventions equated moral fibre with the rural environment while urban centres were associated with discourses of moral decline. Norah and her father consequently typify the assumption prevalent in the 1890s of the outback as constituting moral and physical robustness. Historians state that the social factors contributing to this mythology focused on the perception that urban centres were sites of 'decadent site mortgages, failed marriages and racial decay' (Denoon et al 2000, 218).

When seen against the background of this belief system, MacFarlane's illustration of physical wellbeing and moral robustness is representative of the legacy of this mythology. In this image, the outback heroine is no longer an unsophisticated tomboy but a youthful metonym for the constitutional vigour associated with the pastoral ethos, and the moral and redemptive power embedded in the imagined ideal of Billabong station. Norah is thus the focal point of this composition. In the narrative Norah is described as purchasing all the balloons that 'a little crippled hunch-back' of indeterminate age has for sale (Bruce 1913, 58-59). In MacFarlane's image she is shown in this philanthropic act and in juxtaposition to the urbane shopper to the right of her. This woman is represented by the artist/illustrator as ignoring the cripple and striding quickly and resolutely to a commercial destination. Hence I maintain that in this image Norah, her father, the cripple and the shopper function as symbolic referents for rural and urban institutional systems. Moreover MacFarlane's compositional arrangement of these key characters communicates a socio-economic reality regardless of social and economic reform. I suggest that for the reader it signals the fact that despite comparatively improved living conditions, the prevalence of socially contractible infectious disease and developmental incapacitation was a reality for many in the first decades of the twentieth century.

In addition to social and moral critique, MacFarlane's figurative treatment highlights the author's preference for the physical aesthetic of slimness and leanness as characteristic of national type. This preference is not only apparent

in *Norah of Billabong*, it also extends to Bruce's representation of male and female protagonists in her creations outside the Billabong series. The concern with physique as well as mental and physical wellbeing was not singular to Bruce but was a topic common to the girls' own annuals of the period. Moreover I speculate that the values inherent in Bruce's text and in MacFarlane's images were precursors to another ideal. This was the cult of the bronzed, hard body that was elevated to primary visual status with the shift in focus from Australia's interior spaces to its littoral sites. Matthewman argues this cultural shift in representation as evident in the visual essays featuring beach activities in Sydney in the *Lone Hand*. Denoon et al note the social phenomenon of the beach belle in the *Bulletin* as signifying a particular type of new woman in federal Australia. Bruce's Billabong series was published during the same period in which the bronzed ideal first makes an appearance in cultural vernacular. Her physical ideal does not reflect this shift in national cultural values and outdoor pursuits but adheres to the conventions of the outback and the pastoral ethos. Instead Bruce's idealised type would be woven into the physical ideal prominent in the nationalist mythologies and the visual propaganda of W.W.1.

### *War and the poster girl*

Having met with hardships in the crucible of the outback, and having been shown capable of dealing with infirmity and pathos, Norah's capacity for independence and resourcefulness is concentrated in a work dealing with the dual themes of war and national identity. Norah's maturation from tomboy to feminine ideal to poster girl for a national type culminates in Bruce's work centring on the socio-political upheaval of W.W.1, *Captain Jim* (1919).

In cultural, historical and literary critiques of nationalist mythologies, the Great War of 1914-1918 is singled out as crucial in consolidating federal Australia and colonial New Zealand as nation states. Denoon et al (2000, 267) express a popularly held belief in asserting that Anzac 'legends are pivotal episodes in Australia and New Zealand national narratives' and 'fundamental to their self-image as unique'. As with the celebration in cultural vernacular of the

mythological bushman as a national type, the Anzac is acknowledged as characterising another step in the formation of identity. The Great War concentrated the work of formative period image-makers in creating a national ideal whose characteristics were promoted and distilled as distinctly Australasian.

Cultural theorists have shown that 'the digger emerged as the national hero' and 'came to stand for all that was decent, wholesome and Australian. Not only did he embody Australianness, but he was its greatest protector' (White 1981, 125). In this cultural endeavour Bruce was no different. In *Captain Jim* the author cements the role of this event as essential in informing the iconic power of the Australian Anzac and the heroine for her readers. Unsurprisingly the key theme articulated in the plot is military. Bruce, however, does not limit herself to this perspective. She also addresses socio-political issues specific to the effect of war on the colonies as well as her country of origin, Ireland, and its ambivalence towards entering the conflict. Writing from this subjective position the author claims that "'the Irish boys enlisted, very often, dead against the wishes of their own people, and against their priest – and you've got to live in Ireland to know what *that* means'" (1919, 51).

As in the earlier books in the series Bruce incorporates the Billabong heroine as a literary and pedagogic device. In this instance she functions as an iconic referent for nationalist pride, philanthropy and self-sacrifice as well as proto-feminist thinking. Norah inherits 'Homewood' the country estate based in England from Sir John O'Neil, an elderly Irishman. In contrast upper-middle class English society perceive Norah as an immature flapper. This perception enables the antipodean heroine to subvert cultural and class convention through her independent behaviour and conduct. In her inimitable fashion Norah turns her inheritance, complete with its class-oriented servants, into a rest home for disabled soldiers and their families. Thus in addition to symbolising the feminine ideal and the values of independence, redemption and preservation, Bruce's heroine denotes the power contained in the Anzac spirit.

Unlike the Anzac ideal encapsulated in Norah's brother, Jim, and their friend, Wally, the role of the heroine in *Captain Jim* does not allow for engagement in the machinery of war, such as nursing at the front or service in the armament industry. Although the author's representation diverges from the patriotic images of women serving the war effort in the girls' own annuals and lithographic posters, her war vehicle provides another opportunity for action. Through this counterpart of sacrifice and restoration Bruce's heroine negotiates the human cost resulting from W.W.I while also continuing her class-based encounters. Thus the author's description of Norah's brother and friend joining the war effort reinforces the patriotic sentiments consonant with the promotion of the Anzac in the image and text of the illustrated press. This excerpt also acknowledges the effects of war technology on the physical ideal.

They had joined a famous British regiment, obtaining commissions without difficulty, thanks to cadet training in Australia. But their first experience of war in Flanders had been a short one; they were amongst the first to suffer from the German poison-gas, and a long furlough had resulted (Bruce 1919, 14).

MacFarlane's illustration (see Fig. 7.6) of national solidarity conforms to the value systems represented through nationalist propaganda and war rhetoric. I argue this illustration for *Captain Jim* as Australasian illustrated junior fiction's graphic equivalent of contemporary war propaganda. The consequences of war, physical incapacitation and the destruction to manhood, are not represented in the artist/illustrator's image. Instead the heroine and her male counterparts are representative of the constitutional vigour and patriotic sentiment embedded in national mythologies.





Figure 7.6 'They strolled across the grass to the railings, and looked up and down the tan ribbon of Rotten Row'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.3 x 13 cm. Illustration for p. 16 of *Captain Jim* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1919). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

In this image demure Norah appears a passive antithesis to her familiar role as independent action figure. Nevertheless I maintain that the figurative treatment and compositional arrangement of this illustration demonstrates two equally important issues relevant to the status of women and girls and their representation in junior fiction. One is the implication of mateship and egalitarianism tacit within the oval arrangement of the three key characters. The other is the reaffirmation of women as vital to colonial and masculine discourse and to the construction of national mythologies. MacFarlane's representation of Norah in this illustration subsequently

resumes these ideas as well as signifying the status of women in nation-building. In re-presenting the heroine as a respectable poster girl for the national assets of egalitarianism and independence, MacFarlane's patriotic image functions as a piece of war rhetoric. Moreover I suggest that it is evidence of the transference in cultural conventions from pastoral mythology to national type; a type that was popularly conflated with 'strength' and 'purity' despite the drain on nationalist vigour that occurred as a result of military engagement (White 1981, 127).



### *Feminine and feminised typologies*

#### *The consolidation of 'little mate' as moral, independent and egalitarian*

Encoded in a recognisable vehicle such as the heroine, semiotic power serves to create and maintain a sense of identity that is reinforced through repetition and visual accessibility. Reader recognition and identification may be attained through repeated exposure to one form as, for example, the individual posters featuring the mythic heroes of Australian European exploration. In the case of the Billabong series, however, semiotic power is consolidated through the sequential representation of the heroine over time. This repetitive process ensures reader association with her character transcending the dominant legacy of the male hero. In this reading the theme of masculinity is not supplanted but an argument is made for the representation of egalitarianism by concentration on the feminine ideal.

Throughout the Billabong series Norah is the focus and principal icon for modern social values and emancipation from inherited class structures. Her currency as a poster girl, equipped to deal with any emergency, would not have been possible without the many and varied stock figures in the Billabong series. To consolidate her heroine's status Bruce uses, amongst others, contrasting stereotypes marginalised within masculine mythology and the pastoral ethos. Within the paradigm signified by the feminine ideal, these feminine and feminized ethnic others constitute juxtaposing signs against which the heroine is measured. With the exception of the maternal housekeeper, they skirt the narratives of the Billabong series and weigh in as a countermeasure to Norah's deceased mother. The presence of this figure, often absent in bush and masculine mythologies, is immortalised in the text as the 'little mother'. Figuratively represented by: the bareback rider, the bush postmistress, the Aboriginal woman, the servant, and Norah's New Zealand friend, Jean, these types affirm the heroine's place, value and identity for the reader. The two selected for comparison are atypical to junior fiction. Synonymous with divergent institutions of pleasure and power, they signify to Bruce's response in

addressing the issue of morality inherent in the pastoral ethos and bush mythology.

### *The bareback rider*



Figure 7.7 'She leaped straight through the hoop, paper and all, and was carried out by her faithful steed'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.8 x 13.9 cm for p. 192 of *A Little Bush Maid* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1910). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

The first of these, the bareback rider, is encountered in *A Little Bush Maid* (see Fig. 7.7). This feminine other constitutes one of the acts in a travelling circus, which arrives in Bruce's isolated outback community complete with its retinue of exotic animals and performers. In this work local girls are vehicles for cultural values and attitudes contrary to norms of what was considered 'good' behaviour. Hence they are described as riding to this attraction 'in their dresses' or with their 'habit skirts over their gayer attire, with great indifference as to whether it happened to be crushed' (Bruce 1910, 187). For children in outback communities the fantasy of the circus provided the ultimate escapist spectacle that

was at once a metaphor for exoticism, independence and pleasure. The cultural indifference displayed by the author towards conduct and dress code suggests a partial liberation from the restrictions of what constituted appropriate behaviour for girl readers in the annuals of the period.

In the alternative society of the circus where discourses of inversion, fantasy and otherness are privileged, it is the bareback rider who advertises the sophisticate model. For the heroine, and by association the reader of the period, the theatrical image of a skilful equestrienne leaping through a paper-covered hoop illuminated by 'acetylene lamps' is a figure of desire (Bruce 1910, 190). The author's word-painting of this figure describes her as performing 'in a glistening suit of black' and juggling 'plates and saucers and knives' while balancing on the back of her horse (Bruce 1910, 191). Hence I maintain that as a referent for feminine independence, liberation and modernity, the bareback rider is similar to the golf player, the action figure previously discussed in relation to *The Girls' Own Annual* of 1908.

Bruce's representation conforms to the stereotype of exoticism and desire conflated with circus mythology and the transient spectacle of otherness. However, by describing the bareback riders as 'models of beauty and grace' and 'courage', Bruce subverts social convention and provides an alternative to the feminine ideal disseminated in cultural artefacts (Bruce 1910, 193). In reality the estimation of circus types was based on appreciation of their bohemian existence and ran counter to the idealised projection connoted by this feminine other. Nevertheless the author's inclusion of this equestrienne type countered, in a minor way, the questionable morality nominally associated with this group of performers.<sup>10</sup>

MacFarlane's graphic interpretation of this feminine other is less sensuous than the imagined figure conjured up by Bruce's description. His figurative treatment is inflected by a spatial modality that minimises the moral assumptions associated with performative types. This is evidenced by the illustrator's use of the pictorial principle known as bird's eye perspective.

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<sup>10</sup> Jacqueline Kent's (1988, 5) account of a girl growing up privileged in Melbourne during the 1900s mentions that even opera singers, such as Dame Nellie Melba, 'ranked a small step above actresses ... and that was very low indeed'. Consequently her pastimes would include furtively sneaking 'shawls, sheets and blankets' with which to imagine herself as an opera singer.

Commonly applied in the design of illustrations for junior fiction this principle subjects character/s and scenes to representation from above. Composed according to this graphic code, the exotic feminine other rises up from the horizontal back of her mount to command the vertical axis of the composition. From that authoritative position she addresses the reader as a feminine ideal. At one level the bareback rider denotes the values of sophistication, exoticism, independence and freedom. At another, but most likely not for the reading audience whose key iconic signifier is pre-pubescent Norah, she is a metonym for moral and sexual liberation. Near, but unattainable, the equestrienne remains an isolated type within the spectacle of the circus. For the reader she is a figure of desire socially restricted by the sanction of moral discourse and thus visually safe.

Although the appearance of this feminine type in Australasian illustrated junior fiction is unusual, cultural representations of circus equestriennes were not uncommon for the period. Barton's touring circus, for example, was marketed through the promotional merchandise of cultural vernacular. The Dunedin-based printer/publisher Caxton Co., publicized this show as 'A HOST OF NOVELTIES INCLUDING A BEVY OF FEARLESS LADY RIDERS'. The modestly illustrated, monochromatic programme designed for this event depicts a fearless rider, side-saddle, and in control of a fully rearing horse.<sup>11</sup> Opposing this representation is the treatment accorded the renowned bareback rider, Linda Jeal, in the February 26, 1881 edition of the *Australasian Sketcher* (see Fig. 7.8).<sup>12</sup> Created by George Rossi Ashton (1857-1893), 'Jottings at the

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<sup>11</sup> I have a vivid memory of my aunt a champion horsewoman showing me, then aged twelve, two photographs of such riders in a book dedicated to horsemanship. She informed me how dangerous this feat was given that both were riding side-saddle.

<sup>12</sup> Alan McCulloch mentions George Rossi Ashton in passing, and in connection with his more famous brother Julian, who was associated with establishing the Fine Arts in Australia. Like MacFarlane, Ashton was born in England and one of a group of immigrant illustrators. Following a path similar to the writer Donald MacDonald, he became employed by the *Illustrated London News* as 'a pictorial correspondent' (McCulloch 1994, 53) to depict the events in South Africa in the late 1870s. In Melbourne he and his brother became part of the creative team working for *The Illustrated Australian News* and the *Australasian Sketcher*.



Circus' is a handsome, full-page composite image comprising five separate illustrations. Each of these is discreetly framed and deals specifically with the performative nature of the circus as identified by the following captions: 'Performing Elephant', 'Stallions Drilling', 'Aerial Bicycle', 'Miss Linda Jeal', and (all important to modernist spectacles) 'The Electric Light'.



Figure 7.8 'Jottings at the circus'. Engraved illustration by G. R. Ashton, 21.4 x 30.7 cm. Illustration for p. 72 of the *Australasian Sketcher*, February 26, 1881. Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

Ashton's 'jottings' conform to the late nineteenth-century fashion for novelty, spectacle and visual display. His composite representation of the circus world resonates with images of the indigenous landscape and indigenous people (see Fig. 6.3, p. 181) focusing on the sublime and unique. The word 'jottings' implies visual recording. Synonymous with the documentary practice of note taking it suggests that this artist/illustrator may have relied on a sketchbook for the final set of images. Whether these fashionably stylistic images were created after the event, or from sketches executed on the spot is unknown. Apart from the

equestrienne, who performed under the title, 'The Queen of the Flaming Zone' there are no direct attempts at identifying the performers other than as types.<sup>13</sup> Even Ashton's graphic treatment of the star is condensed and abbreviated. When compared with the dancing horses and elephant all six performers, including the Ring Master, the anchor for this composition, are anatomically reduced to mannequins. Although MacFarlane's representation is similarly static in appearance, his equestrienne is not reduced to the same level of figurative decoration. Instead he has represented the bareback rider as a feminine ideal, albeit one connotative of a lifestyle and values beyond the reach of the reader. Contrasting this image is the representation of another feminine type seemingly related to the heroine, but in reality even less an ideal than the bareback rider.

### *The bush postmistress*

The character of the bush postmistress makes her appearance in the third novel of the series, *Norah of Billabong* (1913). As mentioned earlier, social distinctions are the focus of this novel where the merits of urban modernity and sophistication are compared against their rural absence. Although this thematic emphasis suggests a symbolic departure from the pastoral ethos and bush mythology, these core issues were never far removed in the Billabong series. Consequently the plot shifts from the outback to the urban centre to return again to its point of origin. In this text the city of Melbourne is imbued with mythological status as a federal embodiment of technological and cultural modernity. The author spends some time painting an appealing image of the contemporary vision evoked by advertising and brand signage where 'huge electric letters flickered into sight and disappeared again – one moment dazzling, the next velvet black' (Bruce 1913, 29). The palpable richness afforded by this technological spectacle is sharply contrasted with the social backwardness and economic insecurity of the outback. For Bruce outback

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<sup>13</sup> Born in England, Linda Jeal grew up in Australia, moved to California and went on to have a career as an equestrienne in several of the established European circuses of the period. She is said to have cut a controversial figure with her jockey's costume, tights and short-cropped hair.

townships are marginal sites inhabited by ‘typical bush children’ who are socially inept ‘wild and shy as horses, and quite incapable of giving an answer when addressed’ (Bruce 1913, 181). The contradistinction between urban and cultural development and institutional decline is nowhere more apparent than in Bruce’s description of the outback post-office. This ‘Government building’ is described as ‘a little ramshackle lean-to, against the side of a shop that was equally falling to decay. There was no door – only a slot barely two feet wide ...



Figure 7.9 “Well, I must be getting’ back – me office is shut up, an’ the coach is nearly due. So long!” Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 9 x 13.9 cm. Illustration for p. 185 of *Norah of Billabong* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1913). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand.

The sole furnishing of the office was a small shelf against the wall; above it, a trap-door’. The image supporting this evocative description is not, as one would expect, the empty and neglected edifice but the ‘free and independent’ postmistress in charge of the premises (Bruce 1913, 184).

In this image (see Fig. 7.9) the allusion to institutional inertia is signalled by the juxtaposition of the key figures, the postmistress, Norah and her father. In the picturesque atlases and illustrated papers of the period, architectural edifices and institutional events were grandly employed as rhetorical devices. These

were used to broadcast the colony’s socio-economic and cultural achievements



as well as its federal status to national and international readers. In a work primarily aimed at junior female readers, such gestures to masculine gender and industry are not only unsuitable, they are also inappropriate for conveying the social and moral messages embedded in the text.

Like the bareback rider, the bush postmistress is an ambiguous symbolic referent. On one level she functions as a metonym for a centrally driven power-based institution. At another she contrasts the core values contained in the figures of Norah and her father, namely respectability and responsibility. Symbolically the postmistress is conflated with the bush. She thus symbolises a region, which while connected to government systems adheres to its own form of governance. MacFarlane's representation of this feminine type conforms to the values of independence and egalitarianism embedded in the bush ethos. His image is consequently in contradistinction to the images of civilized respectability and sophistication paraded in the illustrated press. Moreover it contrasts the romantic and sentimentalised images of outback female types made popular by the Heidelberg School.

In the text the postmistress is described as assertive and unrestrained, and with curling pins still in her hair. To emphasise the issues of morality and institutional decline inherent in the narrative, MacFarlane has mobilised the postmistress and her horse along a diagonal axis. The improbably contorted torso of the postmistress further augments the visual tension conveyed by this arrangement and contrasts the classical restraint informing the artist/illustrator's figurative treatment of the heroine protagonist and her father, Mr Linton. Placed at a distance to this graphic flux, the characters of the Linton father and daughter function as icons of social stability. Secured to a vertical axis, and positioned to make an exit into the surrounding margins, they signal the patriarchal authority associated with the pastoral ethos. Against this conventional typicality the independent postmistress is an easy and alternative type.

Schaffer contends that although appearing different, cultural representations of women during the early twentieth century were consistently mediated through masculine discourse. Bradford maintains that Norah and the supporting Billabong characters show no evidence of departing from the patronising ethos informing colonial representations. I maintain that although these feminist and postcolonial readings respectively validate this conformity Bruce, nonetheless, articulates the changing face of colonial society and the issues dominant within it. To examine this idea I will now focus on the heroine's encounter with ethnic others perceived as degenerate in discourses of exclusion. The second novel in the series constitutes the key text for this discussion.

### *The feminine ideal and ethnic others*

#### *Celestial gardeners and peripatetic salesmen*

Bruce weaves the plot of *Mates at Billabong* (1911) around the critique of moral decadence associated with urban centres such as Melbourne and Sydney, and the issue of degeneracy equating with racial type.<sup>14</sup> As in the other books in the series, Billabong station is both an imagined space and metaphor denoting the virtues of wholesomeness and independence. Into this iconic community comes Cecil, Norah's upwardly aspiring cousin and figure of urban decadence. In *Mates at Billabong* he is the moral antithesis to Norah and her male relatives who, along with the station hands, are mythologised in the narrative and according to masculine discourse as decent men – mates.<sup>15</sup> Galled by her egalitarian treatment of the servants, and the Indian hawker, Cecil sets out on a path of revenge only to become undone in the process.

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<sup>14</sup> Now regarded as a pejorative, this term has been included as indicative of the terminology in use during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In Victorian and Edwardian systems of classification, 'types' were regarded as containing the characteristics and qualities perceived as belonging to a race. In the case of *Mates at Billabong*, the imagined qualities of independence, egalitarianism and mateship are consolidated as virtues and conflated with the spirit of Australian identity.

<sup>15</sup> Bruce reinforces the pastoral mythology with quotes selected from the writings of Henry Lawson and 'Banjo' Paterson to highlight the narrative content in the chapters of her novels.

The festive season of Christmas is the narrative device by which Bruce pulls in ethnic others, otherwise excluded through political policy. Stereotypically represented in cultural vernacular, ethnic others bolstered the national type as inherently possessing the virtues of purity, robustness, egalitarianism, masculinity and independence. In addition to the hawker, Lee Wing, Billabong station's gardener is representative of ethnic groups from China and the Indian sub-continent that were singled out for this particular treatment. The remainder of this chapter examines the representation of the diasporic Asian other in this work. It inquires into whether the representations of ethnic Chinese and Indians by the author and artist/illustrator reinforced contemporary images aligning the fear of moral degeneracy with race. As in previous discussions I have turned to *The Girls' Own*, the *Lone Hand* and *The Illustrated Australian News* for supporting material. As an opener to this section I have included an excerpt from *The Girls' Own* and an image deriving from the *Lone Hand* as stereotypical of the phobia and racism attending the representation of ethnic others. My assessment is positioned against this background.

*Industrious, silent, insinuating and impenetrable*

In his article entitled 'What is "The Yellow Peril"?' for the 1910 publication of *The Girls' Own*, Sir Charles J. Tanning, author of 'The Unrest in India' speculated on the characteristics of the Chinese. According to this author the

Chinese people are characterised by an industry, an ability, and a self-reliant persistent energy, which render them a most useful element in any community they settle amongst. But – and here is one of the difficulties of the situation – their powers of insinuation are coupled with an ingenious reserve and an immiscibility with other races, as well as a remarkable power of silent combination in the most impenetrable of secret societies, which, it is said, tend to keep them outside the control of the laws of the land in which they are sojourning ... Now the question of the Yellow Peril really resolves itself down to two considerations; should the Chinese be excluded from Western countries? Or is it

possible for them to become desirable residents in civilised lands?  
(Tanning 1910, 359-360).

Industrious, silent, insinuating and impenetrable, such were the collective epithets pasted on to ethnic Chinese as other. Nominally acceptable provided they were submissive, hardworking and silent they were treated with graphic savagery in the cartoons and images of the illustrated press. In relation to this practice Manying Ip & Nigel Murphy (2005, 7) claim that 'for more than a century' images of Chinese people have consistently traded in showing 'themes of anxiety, wariness, and a long-standing aversion towards Asians as "essential outsiders" – the ultimate Other'. Testimonial to this inveterate practice is a seemingly innocuous image appearing in page 365 of the March 1, 1911 edition of the *Lone Hand* (see Fig. 7.10).

Using the reproductive technology of photography this 'snap shot' purports to document the method by which opium entered Australia. Captioned 'Chinese Overlanding' it depicts two ethnic Chinese men bearing their possessions in the traditional manner and making their way through a shrubby landscape that is bare of any distinguishing features. However when combined with the mode of representation, the supporting phrase 'Chinese Tourists!' conspires to constitute a compelling example of the alteration of subject matter to fit cultural and nationalist perspectives. I suggest that the loaded term 'tourists' is a pejorative and satirical designation for a migrant people engaged in seeking work and opportunity. The further association of this term with the product 'opium' thus twists this representation of industry, independence and resourcefulness. The insidious connotation resulting from the juxtaposition of image and text is that no matter how innocent their activities might appear, the Chinese were framed as synonymous with illicit trade and as presenting a moral threat to the well-being of European society.



Figure 7.10 'Chinese Overlanding'. Photograph, 9 x 13 cm, for p. 365 of the *Lone Hand*, March 1, 1911. Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.

Photographic images were not the primary method by which Chinese and ethnic others were represented in popular cultural vehicles. Uppermost in this racial manipulation were the cartoons of the English-born illustrator Phil May (1864-1903) and the American cartoonist Livingston Hopkins (1846-1927) augmenting the political rhetoric embodied in the illustrated press. In their critique of this material, Ip and Murphy (2005, 7) suggest that the communicative power of cartoons resides in their visual immediacy and is 'greater than that of words'. They maintain that this graphic mode of representation has the ability to 'encapsulate the current editorial viewpoint, and give an accurate indication of the focus of public opinion – the dominant "street level view" – of the time'. In formative period vernacular the cartoon was a powerful device for trafficking essentialist themes and consolidating cultural images of exclusion. I will now discuss the representation of the Billabong station's Chinese gardener against this stereotypic norm.



*Lee Wing – gardener and celestial*



Figure 7.11 "They slipped it through old Wing's leather belt and hauled him up too!" Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 8.8 x 13.9 cm. Illustration for p. 105 of *Mates of Billabong* (London: Ward, Lock & Co., 1911). Reproduced courtesy of the Dorothy Neal White Collection the National Library of New Zealand).

The illustration of Lee Wing by MacFarlane (see Fig. 7.11) is the sole representation of ethnic Chinese in the junior fiction surveyed.<sup>16</sup> It depicts the gardener responsible for maintaining the vegetable garden of the cattle station hanging unceremoniously from a hook. This device has been used to hoist up the piano into the loft of the barn, where the men's dance is to be held on the one night of the year when the station is not a working place. Everyone is invited to this event including Lee Wing and Billy, the Aboriginal station-hand. In the narrative morally degenerate Cecil is incredulous that an invitation has been extended to the 'Chow' as well as to Billy

(Bruce 1911, 103). The solitary Lee Wing is too shy to attend, however, thus causing the dance to lose 'a lot of' its 'international enjoyment'.

Prior to that, plenty of enjoyment is had the expense of the hapless Lee Wing, as this image suggests. Lee Wing's continued presence at Billabong station and

<sup>16</sup> Other titles extend to the representation of ethnic others including Polynesian peoples and Jews.

his acceptance of the treatment meted out to him by the station hands puzzles Norah's father. The reasons for this behaviour are stereotypic and implicit in the narrative. Labelled as a 'Celestial', Lee Wing is a metonymic substitute for Australian discourses of racism, fear of difference, corruption, degeneracy and duplicity (Bruce 1911, 123). In the masculine culture of the outback station the Chinese gardener is also an institutional symbol for the characteristics of inscrutability and industriousness projected on to the diasporic people of China. Susan Ratcliffe (2002) states that the term 'Celestial' derives from the 'Celestial Empire' of 'Imperial China' and is a 'translation of a Chinese honorific title'. The phrases 'Celestial Kingdom' and the 'Empire Celestial', also appear in pages 572 and 573 of the December 21, 1907 Volume XXIX – No. 1460 of the *Girls' Own Annual*. In this instance they feature in an article promoting the work undertaken by an institution that Bruce might have been cognisant of, namely the medical missions to China.

MacFarlane's interpretation of this passage in the text has its origins in his representation of ethnic Chinese in the September 1, 1893 edition of *The Illustrated Australian News* (see Fig. 7.12).<sup>17</sup> Similar to May's cartoons accompanying feature articles focusing on the Chinese 'problem' in the *Bulletin*, this composite image concentrates on stereotyping the Chinese as duplicitous and venal. Reproduced for popular consumption, the full-page composition comprises eight wood-engravings including: a hawker, 'making cheap furniture', an eating house, 'the Chinese quarter Little Bourke Street', a laundry man, an opium den and gambling hall, and young, Caucasian female 'victims'.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately the pages featuring the article relating to this image are sealed.

<sup>18</sup> MacFarlane's illustration is also a chilling postscript to the 'alleged lynchings' of Chinese in the 1861 Lambing Flat riots in New South Wales. William H. Wilde et al (1994) state that racial prejudice was a common feature of late nineteenth century literature. However others, such as Henry Lawson (1911) and Mrs A. Gunn (1908) entertained marginally broader perceptions. A reading of the *Lone Hand*, the literary vehicle for a number of writers, including Lawson, offers little material that runs counter to entrenched populist perceptions. My argument is that in their professional capacity as newspaper journalist and illustrator, Bruce and MacFarlane would most likely have been aware of the contention surrounding the place of the Chinese within



The last three fill a good two-thirds of the 23 x 33.4 cm format with the dimly lit opium den and its addicts, one of whom is a woman, taking centre stage.<sup>19</sup>

MacFarlane's group of 'sketches' are reminiscent of Gustave Dore's (1832-1883) personal travelogue of London. Created in 1868 by the famous French illustrator, the social compendium also includes an opium den as a stereotypic site of depravity and exoticism. MacFarlane's image juxtaposing industry with illicit pastimes is but one of the many representations conveying a prescribed view of the Chinese ethnic other to colonial readers. Images such as his constituted part of the graphic repertoire employed by the illustrated press as it negotiated the projected arrival of ethnic others and the promulgation of White Australia policy. Consequently it adheres to the popular treatment of the 'problem' projected on to ethnic groups as other. Consonant with this perception the Chinese ethnic other is thus represented as a fetish, a paper cut out where diligence is subsumed by depravity and exoticism. The cultural practice of visual festishing ensured that this group, and other diasporic people, were fully objectified in the representation of inclusion and exclusion.

MacFarlane's representation of Lee Wing suspended in space and at the mercy of the station hands for *Mates of Billabong* is discomfiting and raises present day concerns with racial stereotyping. Without doubt his treatment of the gardener is influenced by the discursive views of the period. However it differs in one aspect. Compared with the figurative treatment of ethnic Chinese in the illustrated press and in the popular journals of the period there is an element of essential humanity in this illustration. I speculate that MacFarlane has attempted to do what the previously discussed images and the photograph do not. He has endeavoured to give the character of Lee Wing a distinct face -

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Australia, while the satirical cartoons of popular culture provided another means to raise conscious awareness of these issues.

<sup>19</sup> The focus of this thesis precludes discussion on sequential art and its deliberate use of format and dimension to signify time and space. Here, the iconic image of opium taking is reinforced by both portrayal and position. These further combine to suggest the expanded sense of time caused by the drug and its influence on other activities.



Figure 7.12 'Chinese Sketches in the Slums'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane 22.9 x 33.4 cm. Illustration for p. 17 of *The Illustrated Australian News*, September 1, 1893. Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.



a portrait as opposed to the stereotyped features characteristic of caricature or the simulation of reality enabled by photography. Whether this was due to the author's influence or editorial input can only be surmised. Nor do I have any way of knowing whether the impositions of print and publishing directly impacted his figurative treatment of Chinese types in his sketches for the illustrated press. A survey of earlier representations of ethnic Chinese in the *Australasian Sketcher* shows evidence of comparatively less bias and more sensitivity than their exploitation in the *Bulletin*. What this reduction is indicative of is the shift from marginal acceptance towards outright exclusion as this group of diasporic people sought to become permanent residents.

The contrast between MacFarlane's superficially inclusive illustration of Lee Wing and his composite image for the illustrated press highlights two points central to Barthes's theory of myth. Barthes (1972, 110) claims that modes of representation such as image and text are key to supporting 'mythical speech'. Moreover he suggests that differing forms of representation such as diagrams, drawings, copies, caricatures and portraits are dependent on different levels of perception. For instance Barthes argues that 'a caricature' lends itself to signification 'more than a portrait' as the representational mode of portraiture assumes a level of mimesis in image-making. In contradistinction the representational mode of caricature implies that mimesis is no longer paramount. Hence in this mode, characteristics and features become condensed signs of discursive treatment.

Building on Barthes' proposition, Ip and Murphy assert that caricatures and stereotypes are informed by governing systems of power.<sup>20</sup> Caricature and stereotype are common to both the illustrated press and Australian illustrated junior fiction. However the various modes by which ethnic stereotypes are mediated is subject to editorial influence and the age and gender of the reading audience. Generally speaking a portrait sets out to engage in mimesis whereas,

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<sup>20</sup> See Paul Jobling and David Crowley (1996) for a discussion on the political and social use of caricature and cartoon in the cultural artefacts of the mass media.

as has been touched on in relation to Souter, a caricature seeks to intentionally subvert through the strategy of exaggeration. Consequently I argue MacFarlane's representation of Lee Wing to be unique despite the racism implicit in the remainder of the composition. The representation of the Indian ethnic other in *Mates of Billabong* supports this reading.<sup>21</sup>

### *Something of an institution*

Using a range of descriptions the author of the Billabong series paints an evocative figure of the Hindu hawker as 'something of an institution'.

He carries a queer mixture of goods – a kind of condensed bazaar-stall from his native land, with silks and cottons, soaps, scents, bootlaces and cheap jewellery, all packed into a marvellously small space; and so he tramps his way through Australia. No life can be lonelier. His stock of English is generally barely enough to enable him to complete his deals; the free and independent Australian regards him as "a nigger," and despises him accordingly; while the Hindu, in his turn, has in his inmost soul a scorn far deeper for his scorners – the pride of tradition and caste (Bruce 1911, 133).

His visit to Billabong station causes the house servant to give vent to a remark confirming the policy of exclusion that federal Australia adopted in 1901. "Gimme white Orstralia" she mutters, indicating her preference for a national type consisting solely of Europeans (Bruce 1911, 143). Ever egalitarian, Norah is unmoved by this exclamation of racial prejudice as she is by Cecil's disdain in making him wait for his second cup of tea, while she attends to the hawker. Bruce writes that in her cousin's eyes Norah knows 'no class limits' or

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<sup>21</sup> Historians have demonstrated that Australia's geographic distance from Britain resulted in the settlement's economic dependency on India in the late eighteenth century. The state of Bengal supplied much in the way of 'food, livestock, spirits and other necessities. The return cargoes to Calcutta included Australian coal, timber, and horses' (Dawson et al 2001, 343). In 1837 indentured labourers began migrating from Calcutta to Australia and, similarly to ethnic Chinese, suffered the effects of White Australia policy.

‘restrictions’. In this work both the morally degenerate, urban cousin and the servant are metonyms for hierarchical systems of power and cultural attitudes that the author considers conservative. Hence the biased perceptions of Cecil and the servant are used by Bruce to reflect on the lack of socio-cultural awareness and sensibility. These figures consequently reinforce the status of heroine as the ‘new woman’ professing a more inclusive vision, even if Australian policy ran contrary to that.<sup>22</sup>

The cultural relevance of Bruce’s representation can be seen when compared alongside MacFarlane’s sketches of ‘Indian Hawkers’ for the May 1, 1891 edition of *The Illustrated Australian News* (see Fig. 7.13). The format of this full-page illustration is equivalent to his 1893 polysemic representation of ethnic Chinese. It is similarly composed of multiple images purporting to represent particular ethnic socio-cultural activities. Instead these ‘snap shots’ perform as an institutional warning to public health. In this composite image the warning takes another form to the dual vices of addiction and gambling emphasized in the graphic representation of the Chinese. Here the allusion is to unsanitary practices signalled by communal eating, smoking and crowded sleeping and living conditions. Where depravity is collectively painted on to the Chinese in the previous image from the illustrated press, the labels of cheapness, uncleanliness and contamination are unmistakably pasted on to the Indian hawker. Thus both representations conform to the assertion that Asian ethnic peoples were typically depicted ‘as unclean, crafty and offering substandard services’ and constituting an ‘untold danger’ to their ‘naïve’ customers (Ip & Murphy 2005, 19). Moreover both composite images are evidence of the representational strategy of stacking up purported evidence to normalise the myth that diasporic Chinese, Bengali, Gujarati and Punjabi were ultimately unassimilable.

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<sup>22</sup> Ip and Murphy suggest that the debate ensuing from the endorsement of a White Australia policy confronted federal Australia with the implications of exclusionism and racism. New Zealand, on the other hand, with no such policy buried its head in its superior delusion of equality and fairness.

Accompanying MacFarlane's composite image is an article suggesting a journalistic/illustrative presence in the creation of three of the six scenes, while the remaining three are possibly anecdotal. Contained within the article are two journalistic statements, which collude with the sketches to generate a climate of distrust. The first suggests that a 'great deal of attention has recently been bestowed upon the natives of India at present in Victoria, most of whom roam about the country hawking cheap trinkets, inferior silks and such goods' (author unknown 1891, 11). The second statement, allegedly made by the police, claims that isolated rural areas are the hunting ground of the Indian salesman. It alleges that in 'outlying farming districts these Hindoos, emboldened by the absence of the natural protector from the homestead, terrify females into buying, and in many instances use threatening language if their wares are not bought'.

Compounding these accusations is the assertion that Hindus symbolised uncontrolled sexuality and thereby constituted a moral danger to European girls and young women. When seen in the light of these mainstream views, the sympathetic representation of the Indian hawker, and the wonder evoked by the description of his wares, is unusual in Australian illustrated junior fiction. Bruce's treatment of the Indian Hawker may be idealised and patronising as has been shown by her critics. Nevertheless I speculate that like her Chinese character, the peripatetic salesman provided an alternative perspective for readers of her works. Even more extraordinary is the action taken by the heroine in stepping outside the boundaries of moral convention to engage in social intercourse with such a marginalised type.





INDIAN HAWKERS.

Figure 7.13 'Indian Hawkers'. Engraved illustration by J. MacFarlane, 21.7 x 30.7 cm. Illustration for p. 9 of *The Illustrated Australian News*, May 1, 1891. Reproduced courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library of New Zealand.



## *Conclusion*

In this chapter I set out to examine whether Bruce's heroine, Norah, possessed a genuine voice of her own or whether her role as her father's 'little mate' precluded her from that. I questioned whether Norah upheld the authorized patriarchy associated with colonial and masculine discourses rather than ratify an egalitarian identity. Viewed from a present day perspective, Bruce's attitudes are patriarchal and patronising and redolent of the pastoral ethos. I maintain that despite this tendency, the encounters of the heroine in the outback, urban centres and the international theatre of war, provides Bruce with a vehicle to openly discuss issues and events relevant to her audience. Consequently I assert Bruce's creation a substitute to the masculine prototype and a refreshing alternative to the powerful legacies inherited from colonial discourse in which women were perceived as inferior and decorative figures.

Schaffer maintains that in Australia the cultural exclusion of women culminated in social and political marginalisation. To be consigned to domesticity was her only acceptable place. Ideologically conveyed through Bruce's narrative and augmented by MacFarlane's illustrations is a person divested of this inheritance. But has she become one of God's police? Is she now a container for the colonial masculine ideal, subsumed by its mythology of mateship? I suggest that the answer lies in the words of another of Bruce's contemporaries, Mary Gaunt, serial author for *The Girls' Own Paper and Women's Magazine*. In her article entitled 'Woman in Australia' for *The Empire Review* (1901) Gaunt maintains that colonial women may assert pride in their British association. However she qualifies her statement with two claims to place, gender and national identity. The first is that 'differences of climate and surroundings will tell – will put their marks upon us' (Gaunt 1901, 211). The second evokes the virtue of resourcefulness characterizing New Zealand and Australian women. 'Someone once said of the American woman: "If she ain't got a claw-hammer handy, she just takes up a tack with the kitchen-spoon and knocks it in with the flat-iron."' The remark will apply equally well to her Southern cousin' (Gaunt 1901, 215).

Although this chapter concludes the thematic analysis of gender and identity through the various stages of image accretion, it in no way suggests this to be the end of the story. Bruce would continue the Billabong series into the later twentieth century. Similarly the place of women in war and society, and their representation in the illustrations supporting the nationalist rhetoric of the early twentieth century, is beyond the scope of this investigation. It is a study waiting to be pursued.

## Chapter eight: *Conclusion to thesis*

These case study chapters conclude my thesis investigation into the mediation of emergent nationalisms and the representation of identity in a subject area rarely considered within the wider context of theory, production and praxis. Two theoretical issues, one deriving from current visual cultural debate and the other from the historiography of New Zealand print culture, informed the direction of the research study. The first is Bal's proposal that research in the domain of visual culture extend beyond its traditional concern with visual essentialism. Her contention that visual culture inquiry should examine the performance of created artefacts in mediating power-based discourses such as imperialism, colonialism and nationalism, is pivotal to my study.

The second issue relates to the positioning of the thesis within the historical context of national cultural endeavour. Gibbons queries what images of society might emerge if critical discussion into the formation of national identity and nationhood centre on the cultural production of artefacts within the perspective of colonization. My research study examined the works created for the Australasian-born reader from these theoretically viewpoints. In my investigation of formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction I argued that the representation of key themes and socio-cultural issues in image and text is evidence of what is regarded as colonialism's 'textualizing strategies' (Gibbons 2002, 10). I asserted that the discursive treatment of stock motifs, and gender and racial stereotypes correlating with masculine and pastoral mythologies was core to nascent nationalisms. My thesis research into the cultural production of Australasian illustrated junior fiction and its images and texts resulted in the following findings.

### *Thesis research findings*

- That literature for junior, adolescent as well as older readers constitutes a salient topic for academic inquiry.
- That the cultural practice and work of illustrators of children's literature remains under-researched.
- That the socio-cultural issues of indigeneity, gender and ethnicity remain topical themes for negotiation in postcolonial societies.
- That the research methodology, graphical discourse, has further applicability to analysing the range of created artefacts produced by the specialisms of visual communication design as well as fine arts.
- That the recovery of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century practicing artist/illustrators recuperates national histories of cultural endeavour.

The research findings support my argument that works for children comprise a salient repository for the scholarly inquiry into the cultural treatment and construction of myths of belonging and identity. The recovery of archival material, previously unexamined in national critiques of cultural endeavour, affirms the critical importance of Australasian illustrated junior fiction and its image-makers. In addition my study supports Benjamin's observations regarding the socio-cultural power of children's toys. My findings also suggest that the works created for emergent, adolescent and older readers cannot be examined in isolation. Instead they must be considered within the wider context of print and production as well as social-cultural and political change. The findings indicate that although some of this literature appears to be simple, even the picture books created for emergent readers provide rich material for examining indigenous encounter, racial policy and war. For this reason I justify my investigation as adding to the critical debate focusing on the juncture between nationalism and cultural production.

In the thesis I maintained that both image and text are equally meaningful forms in conveying popularly held assumptions and perceptions to national

and international junior readers. I argued that awareness of artist/illustrator life-style and praxis is essential in informing the critical examination of Australasian illustrated junior fiction. I suggested that a comprehensive reading of its genres encompass inquiry into image-making. The research findings confirm the critical status of Australian-born authors, Mary Grant Bruce and Donald MacDonald, as indicative in shaping the quintessential characters and settings of post-Federation Australian adventure tales. However they also indicate that the role of immigrant artist/illustrators in the formation of local children's literatures is frequently over-looked and under-researched. My research shows that appreciation of this group of image-makers is as important as the scholarly acknowledgement of pre-eminent authors and thereby augments existing literary perspectives.

My thesis concurs with Australasian historiography as well as cultural and literary critique that the construction of national identity in New Zealand and Australia is imbued with the ongoing legacy of colonization. The research findings highlight indigeneity, gender and ethnicity as constituting discernable themes. In addition to these themes the findings point to assimilation and acculturation as frequently occurring in both fairytale and adventure genres of Australasian illustrated junior fiction. In my inquiry I speculated that these socio-cultural issues were crucial to the establishment of nascent Australasian identities. I argued that representations of the indigene as 'mimic' man is evidence of counter strategies of adaptation. I theorised that although assimilation, acculturation and mimicry are theoretically associated with postcolonialism, they have their origins in colonial practices and encounters. The research findings indicate that while these issues share commonality in New Zealand and Australian literatures for children, their articulation is specific and indicative of the implementation of colonial practices in each country. Hence my study of gender and racial stereotyping as contingent on colonial themes provides a platform for contemporary visual cultural inquiry into the ongoing relevance of colonial issues in postcolonial societies.

In my discussion I considered a number of concepts relating to image and text. I theorised that image and text possess a discursive interrelationship, that language is limited in dealing with the non-linguistic, and that pictorial space is multi-dimensional as opposed to linear. The research methodology, graphical discourse, was designed in consideration of these ideas. It was also envisaged as inquiring into the concept that illustrative representations provide textual meaning with a concrete and recognisable semblance of reality. Graphical discourse was applied along with formal and semiotic analyses, to selected case study works to discover how the illustrative treatment of themes and issues differed from their representation in narrative text. The research findings indicate that the images created for Australasian illustrated junior fiction follow the formula of formative period representations and adhere to the descriptions in the text. However the findings also suggest that the iconographic and compositional treatment of key characters and stock motifs performed an additional function to textual mimesis. My graphical analysis of the image/text juncture in works for children supports Barthes's assertion that pictorial images are vital to myth-making. Hence my study extends the academic critique and perception of this literature as pre-dominantly picture or text-based.

In addition to arguing the image/text juncture, I asserted that the formation of a local children's literature was part of the late nineteenth-century desire for a separate cultural identity. I identified that the establishment of local printer/publishers, publishing agents and image-makers was core to this endeavour. In addition to investigating notable New Zealand- and Australian-based authors and artist/illustrators, my inquiry focused on bringing to notice little known practitioners in the fields of art and design. I speculated on whether the interdisciplinary practice of these men and women was informed by their relationships with New Zealand Maori and Australian Aborigine as well as their institutional and academic connections. The research findings suggest that their praxis-based representation of stock motifs and figurative stereotypes is evidence of their acquired knowledge of colonial and indigenous

power-based systems. By drawing attention to the significance of these previously unacknowledged image-makers, my inquiry recuperates national histories of cultural endeavour and augments the specialist histories relating to children's literature, print culture and visual communication design.

### *Revision*

Additional to examining the mediation of emergent nationalisms, my inquiry focused on postcolonial discussions regarding identity and stereotype. My investigation comparatively analysed the figurative treatment and semiotic power of national types as correlating with nationalist myths of identity and belonging. I argued that inquiry into myths of 'dying race', degeneracy and mateship was a form of revision. I theorised that the thesis revisitation and investigation of past material is a way of comprehending present day representations of gender and ethnic stereotypes. The research findings indicate that the genres of formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction are deeply entrenched with Christian morality and paternal attitudes. Nevertheless the findings also indicate that certain works attempted to negotiate the socio-cultural and political changes affecting urban, regional and outback societies.

In my thesis investigation I argued that formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction is more than just a fanciful narrative decorated with traditionally motivated illustrations. I claimed that as its construction is evidence of the creative processes associated with national cultural endeavour this literature provides a historical precedent for the contemporary articulation of nationalistic issues as well as gender and racial types. For twenty-first century authors and illustrators, negotiating the representation of real-life events, peoples and socio-cultural activities for educational journals and the international market can be a sensitive subject. The racial perceptions and socio-cultural ideologies associated with nationalistic thinking continue to mark more inclusive social and global attitudes. The following image (see Fig. 8.1) illustrating the experience of the New Zealand climber, Guy Cotter, in



Tibet is an example of the difficulties that authors, illustrators and publishers sometimes face in dealing with current issues in a global market.



Figure 8.1 Coloured pencil, pencil and oil wash illustration by Caroline Campbell, 26 x 24.4 cm. Unpublished illustration for the *New Zealand School Journal*, 1999.

This illustration was one of four that I produced for the New Zealand educational publisher, Learning Media Ltd. However neither it, nor the remaining images and story were published possibly because the publication of the journal coincided with a visit from dignitaries from Mainland China at the time. In the thesis conclusion it serves as a visual metaphor in signifying the topical relevance of the dissertation and its future application in related areas of inquiry.

### *Future projections and applications*

In addition to responding to the perspectives of Bal and Gibbons, my thesis is posited as answering two critical views. My thesis inquiry was intentionally designed in response to Margolin's plea for more practitioner-based postgraduate study within the subject domain of visual culture. It was also aimed at responding to Pajaczkowska's claim that even in England, literature for children remains under-researched and under-valued. Given these views I suggest the following applications for the material and findings covered in the study.

- I propose that further investigation of John MacFarlane would be of benefit in fleshing out a national history of key Australasian illustrative practitioners. Of the artist/illustrators examined for the thesis study, MacFarlane is the most prolific and, curiously, the most unknown. Even my research into his work for children has only considered a small part of his extensive output. In contrast to the information concerning Robert Atkinson, archival material relating to MacFarlane's life and praxis is scant. Nevertheless I consider this image-maker pre-eminent as a visual navigator of colonial and national mythologies. I therefore suggest that a thematic or content analysis of the images he created for the *New Zealand School Journal*, the *Australasian Sketcher* and girls' and boys' annuals would greatly add to the critical study into the role of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century artist/illustrators.
- My thesis inquiry into the mediation of nationalism and the discourses associated with colonialism has further applicability to current investigation into the changing face of societal identities in postcolonial societies. Moreover I contend that postcolonial societies such as New Zealand and Australia are fortunately placed to assess the historical legacy of stereotypic assumptions and cultural perceptions in printed artefacts. Hence my thesis research into the representation of identity and myths of belonging is postulated as providing a theoretical model

for students of visual culture and visual communication design, and for whom identity, gender and race remain topical subjects for investigation.

- I maintain that the concepts contained in semiotic theory and Barthes's reading of myth is still relevant. For students engaged in the study of visual language, the semiotic analysis of the signifying power of graphic forms and their discursive relationship with text, and traditional and contemporary reproduction technologies is pertinent. Hence I propose his approach applicable to unpacking the modes of representation used in the figurative treatment of indigenous people and national typologies in historical and contemporary designed artefacts.
- I contend that the research methodology, graphical discourse, is not limited to the study of image and text in formative period children's literature. I propose that graphical discourse may also be implemented in the study of contemporary works for emergent and older readers and related junior fiction such as school journals, comic books, graphic novels, 'zines' and digital productions. In addition I assert that this synthesizing methodology has further applicability. I postulate that the research methodology has application for any subject designed with an emphasis on interrelationship between image and text, and through which messages are communicated. I therefore argue that subjects appropriate for this method of critique may include advertising design, digital animation design, graphic design, typographic design as well as fine art. I also suggest that it may encompass forms more commonly associated with anthropological and socio-cultural study such as the cultural significance and communicative function of tattoos.

This section concludes the thesis investigation into the realm of the imagined and the representation of identity. The journey has been a fascinating one. It

commenced with the inquiry into the celebration of difference and transformation in identity in a picture book and an illustrated novel. It concluded with an event core to the nations of New Zealand and Australia, the Great War of 1914-1918. Formative period Australasian illustrated junior fiction is without doubt formulaic and patronising and embedded with traditional values and attitudes. Its representations of indigenous and ethnic peoples are often questionable. Nevertheless I argue that this literature constitutes a viable subject for the overdue assessment of marginalised image-makers and their works. As a researcher and practitioner I contend that my study adds another dimension to the scholarly assessment of children's literature and thus affirms its place within the context of visual culture and national cultural endeavour.

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