Gender and nation formation in late nineteenth century

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CHAPTER 2

THE BUSHMAN'S JOURNEY

Journey motif in Australian national mythology

The idea of the journey is deeply embedded in Australian narratives of the formation of the nation. In part, this is because 'the Australian story' seems to be one of travellers: of explorers, immigrants, pioneers, drovers, shearers, gold-seekers, bushrangers and swagmen. But, equally, the choice of this cast of characters has been shaped by the metaphorical significance of the journey motif. In myths, the journey can serve as a potent metaphor for a quest, a pilgrimage and the passage of life itself. The centrality of the journey theme in nationalist bush mythology of the late nineteenth century infuses the representation of explorers, pioneers and bushmen with the potency of the mythical journey.

In bush mythology, the journey can be read as a quest to claim territory on which the nation is to be built. The projects of traversing the land—exploring, mapping, fencing, road making, droving—and domesticating it through settlement—mining, farming, grazing, damming and all the other activities that mark the land as in 'productive use'—have attracted a great deal of scholarly and popular attention. It is integral to the mythical formation of Australia as a nation that the territory can be secured only by asserting control over the land and natural 'resources' that lie within the domain of the nation. It may be the case that Australian narratives as frequently address the failure to dominate the land as they celebrate the achievement of this struggle and that "instead of mastering the land, the real heroism lies in surviving it". But in either case, this narrative takes the form of the journey.

In his influential study of nationalism, Benedict Anderson has employed the mythical journey as a device for theorising nations as 'imagined communities'. Anderson employs the notion of a 'pilgrimage' to account for the formation of American 'creole nationalism' in the eighteenth century and colonial nationalism in twentieth century African and Asian states, arguing that the administrative unit of the colonies generated the templates for the emerging imagined national communities. One of the major factors in the formation of national consciousness, he argues, was the 'journey' on which colonial-born functionaries embarked. As their careers advanced, they moved towards the administrative centre of the (peripheral) colony, only to find their spiralling pathway to the (metropolitan) capital of the imperial nation barred by their creole or colonial status.
In a very diverse and broad-ranging empirical study, Anderson uses the notion of the pilgrimage as a structuring device to develop a 'plot' for the story he recounts. Along the "upward-spiralling road", he says, the functionary "encounters as eager fellow-pilgrims his functionary colleagues, from places and families he has scarcely heard of". In spite of the diversity of their backgrounds, their common destination, which is also the ceiling to their careers, creates "a consciousness of connectedness". The creole and colonial functionary comes up against both horizontal and vertical barriers as he finds himself unable to pursue his career beyond the boundaries of the colony:

... his lateral movement was as cramped as his vertical ascent. In this way, the apex of his climbing loop, the highest administrative centre to which he could be assigned, was the capital of the imperial administrative unit in which he found himself. Yet on this cramped pilgrimage he found travelling-companions, who came to sense that their fellowship was based not only on that pilgrimage's particular stretch, but on the shared fatality of trans-Atlantic birth.

In his use of the journey motif, however, Anderson naturalises elements which he might otherwise have questioned. Hayden White's analysis of historical representation identifies the poetic nature of the act by which a "field of facts" is constituted as a "possible object of historical discourse". Both the plot structure of a historical narrative and the formal explanation, White tells us, are prefigured by the original description. Anderson's study of nationalism is prefigured by one of the most deep-rooted poetic devices of the representation of nation formation. Significantly for this thesis, Anderson assumes that women's national consciousness has been formed in the same manner as men's, while the account that he gives for its formation is implicitly shaped around experiences exclusive to men, or with different consequences for women's sense of identity. In choosing the pilgrimage as a structuring device, Anderson implicitly frames his study of national consciousness in terms that are both gender-specific and gender-blind.

Anderson is not alone amongst historians and critics in his prefiguration of his study of national culture through the use of the journey motif. Richard White's influential study, *Inventing Australia*, argues convincingly that Australian national identity should be seen historically as an on-going process of construction. However, though he insists that "we will never arrive at the 'real' Australia", like Anderson, he prefigures his narration of the history of representations of Australia with the notion of a journey. He concludes his Introduction with the words:
From the attempts of others to get there, we can learn much about the travellers and the journey itself, but nothing about the destination. There is none.\(^9\)

The journey motif is repeatedly used in this manner to liken the actions of reading a book, writing a history and forming an image of the nation to undertaking a journey. Since the idea of a journey has been used as both a metaphor and a structural device for the narration of nation formation, for writers about that process to deploy the journey motif without reflection can be problematic. It is possible that the use of the journey motif both naturalises and masks some significant aspects of the subject of enquiry.

This chapter argues that the conventions which shape the way in which the journey motif is employed are gendered. The role of protagonist – the one who undertakes the journey – has been by and large a masculine one. The concomitant role for female characters has been almost invariably that of waiting. Waiting and the auxiliary role assigned to women may structurally complement the role of the male protagonist in the development of plot. But this role for female characters allows only an incomplete and inadequate picture of the processes by which women's attachment to nation might be formed.

**Mapping journeys**

As a structural device in narration, the journey can be reduced to very simple elements. In his study of the "origin of plot", Jurij Lotman identifies these as interior space—the point of departure and return—and exterior space—the location of the adventure. At its most elemental, a journey consists of a departure from interior space, a movement through exterior space and a return to interior space. This circularity in structure implies a spatial differentiation between the point of departure and return, and the terrain of the adventure.\(^{10}\)

The journey theme, as outlined above, generates a rudimentary narrative structure, and implicitly characterisation is closely linked to the function of characters in the plot. The appropriateness of this conceptual framework for interpreting Australian bush mythology is suggested both by the simplicity of plot and the relationship between characterisation and plot in much of the literature and paintings under consideration in this thesis. Graeme Turner has also observed that characterisation in Australian narrative tends to be a function of plot.\(^{11}\)

The notion of the journey implies a conception of interior and exterior space as
dichotomous with a boundary separating them. However, this should not be taken to suggest that the interrogation of the journey motif in this thesis is intended to assert the inevitability of binary oppositions and defined boundaries in the construction of meaning in relation to gender and nation. Rather, the device is employed heuristically. Used in this way, it can help examine whether the problematic notion of binary oppositionality is indeed fundamental to Western thought and representation. Neither the absolute difference of paired terms (interior-exterior, male-female, nature-culture, life-death, mad-sane, public-private) nor the impermeability of boundaries is assumed. Nor, for that matter, is it assumed that all boundaries will be permeable and shifting, and all spaces interpenetrating and multiple. These are models of thought, associated respectively with modernism and postmodernism. Both propose strategies of analysis that can be usefully brought to bear on the late nineteenth century texts under study in this thesis. This is a study of a moment at which loss of conviction in the absolute distinction between oppositional pairs is emerging.

A central argument of this thesis is that in bush mythology the mythical utilisation of interior and exterior space has coincided with a parallel representation of domestic and public domains. It is domestic space that functions as the point of departure and return. The 'bush' represents both the exterior and the public domain in which the nation is forged. For male protagonists, the borders that delineate interior and exterior space must be crossed and re-crossed if the journey is to be completed. For female characters, these borders define the extent of their movement and, generally speaking, the constriction of their confinement.

The bush hut represents the most confined domestic space. It casts its shadow also across the immediate surrounds of hut and homestead. The borders that separate interior and exterior space are represented by fences. These separate the homestead and home paddocks from the bush, as well as the walls, windows and doors of the house itself.

This representation of domestic interior space as the point of departure and return in the bush mythology of the late nineteenth century draws also on other, earlier journey narratives. For example, the insistent presence of convictism in Australian cultural mythology and literature imparts to representations of interior space a prison-like character. Metaphors of imprisonment and images of entrapment, Ross Gibson and Graeme Turner have argued, take on a special significance in Australian narratives because of their relationship to convictism. "The general thematic revolving around exile, divorce and isolation," Turner says, is "often articulated through the fact or metaphor of imprisonment." Imprisonment marks the point of departure for some
1. Tom Roberts *Evening When the Quiet East Flushes Faint at the Sun's Last Look* 1887-8
   oil on canvas 51.0 x 76.6 cm
journeys (escapees, bushrangers) and the point of return for others (transportees). Gibson takes up the argument advanced by Miriam Dixon in The Real Matilda to suggest that an enduring legacy of convictism is to be found in the representation of Australian women. Gibson suggests that the representation of women "derives in part from a complex interplay of English images pertaining to savages, convicts and slaves". "As the Aborigines and convicts began to be excluded from Australian society, the white Australian women were left to endure the various prejudices underlying the representations of outcasts set up by writers during the colony's early decades." Although this connection with convictism is not pursued further here, it seems plausible that not only are representations of women coloured as Gibson suggests, but also that representations of interior domestic space are coded with connotations of confinement derived from imprisonment.

Further, by the late nineteenth century, images of the quest to claim dominion over the land were informed by earlier mythical images of journeys of discovery and exploration. Again, Gibson has described the European myths of discovery of Australia, and of inland exploration in terms of a "diminishing paradise" He argues for the on-going significance of explorers' published journals in forming images of desolation and narratives of defeat. From Sturt's journal, he cites an evocative image of the "interior" as an unreachable centre:

A veil hung over Central Australia that could be neither pierced nor raised. Girt around by deserts, it appeared as if Nature had intentionally closed it upon civilised man, that she might have one domain on earth's wide field over which the savage might roam in freedom.

**Point of view**

In many late nineteenth century representations of the bush, the huts and homesteads, an inscribed point of view for the reader or viewer is directly or tacitly established. Almost invariably, the implied viewer is positioned as though s/he approaches interior space from the bush beyond. This common choice of viewing position may be illustrated by reference to the twilight pastorals and tranquil domesticated farm idylls that many painters included in their oeuvres.

In Tom Roberts' *Evening When the Quiet East Flushes Faint at the Sun's Last Look* (1887-8) (Plate 1), the foreground contains typical motifs of masculine resilience and labour: the gum tree which, though spindly, dominates the picture, and the stacks of timber suggest the labour of clearing the land. The viewer's entry into the imaginary
terrain of the painting is implicitly from the site of masculine labour on the land.\textsuperscript{17} In the distance nestles the hut, its smudge of smoke implying an anticipated homecoming. The viewer seems to approach with the home-coming bushman.

In Roberts' \textit{Dewy Evening} (1887), the viewer follows the cattle home as they pass through the post and rail fence, treading the well-worn path. In McCubbin's \textit{A Ti-Tree Glade} (1897), the viewer catches up to the slight woman walking behind the cattle, following them home. Arthur Streeton, Charles Condor, Walter Withers and David Davies also painted pastorals employing a viewing position which imparts a sense of looking on and catching unawares the activities of those at home. An unusual intimacy in Clara Southern's \textit{The Bee Keeper} (Plate 16) is suggested because the implied viewer comes in close behind the woman who remains unaware of the presence of another.

These evening pastorals suggest the anticipation of earned comfort by a man returning from his labour or travels. The soft twilight and the domestication of the land connote well-being and contentment. Restful contemplation is evoked by the sight of women engaged in gender-appropriate labour. Rather than presenting their labour as productive, these paintings depict women engaged in domestic work as signs that the social order is intact. These works are primarily landscapes; the painters' interest lay in their depiction of light and colour and their representation of the bush. The motifs—fences, twilight—through which the feminine is evoked, even when women themselves are not represented, do not appear contrived since the naturalness of the 'woman's sphere' is assumed.

Women, then, not only wait for men to return home but are represented from the point of view of a returning protagonist, for whom waiting is their most significant 'action'. It is this viewpoint—one that colours the perception of women in the bush—that readers will be likely to form. And where the emphasis of the narration is on the adventure itself, then those who wait for such returns frequently receive only a cursory reference in passing.

\textbf{Women in men's journeys}

The idea of the journey as a deeply entrenched theme in nation formation is suggested by both Anderson's arguments about the origins of nationalism and the recurrence of the journey motif in bush literature and painting. Even the most superficial gesturing towards gender specificity of both the journeys and the spaces implied by journeying (interior, exterior, boundary), will reveal the extent to which this mobility is a masculine trait, even a male prerogative. The conclusion that gender difference is deeply etched into the journey motif appears unavoidable. Eric Leed's recent sweeping
study of human travel argues for the naturalness of gender difference in travel, described as "the mobile male and the territorialised female". By providing food and sexual hospitality, Leed argues, women are integral to the process of "incorporation" of travellers into the societies at which they "arrive". Male mobility and female sessility are rooted in "the superfluity of the sperm and the parsimony of the ovum", says Leed. But given this difference naturalised through the use of biological metaphors, he argues that the manifestation of this "element of human nature" is subject to historical and cultural determination. Whilst Leed argues that the failure to comprehend the agency of women is a product of patriarchal frameworks within which women's passivity is assumed, the textual quality of his own writing reinscribes this passivity into his accounts of male arrival.

Anderson's description of the formation of national consciousness amongst colonial subjects suggests that he remains insensitive to the gender-specificity of his account. He appears not to have considered the virtual impossibility of colonial women gaining the opportunities for employment and education that would enable them to embark on careers as administrators and functionaries. Regardless of the gender orders of indigenous cultures, European colonisers tended to impose their concepts of proper gender relations based on an opposition of public and private realms assumed to be both universal and natural. Arguably, colonial women would have been more likely to perceive restraints on their social mobility to result from their femaleness than their colonial subordination. If this were the case, then colonial women would have been more likely also to identify themselves in terms of gender than to have developed a nationalist consciousness.

Anderson's account of the colonial school-systems of the nineteenth and twentieth century sustains the theme of a 'pilgrimage' by suggesting that boys who graduated from village-based primary schools would migrate to the tertiary institutions located in colonial capitals.

From all over the vast colony, but nowhere outside it, the tender pilgrims made their inward, upward way, meeting fellow-pilgrims from different, perhaps once hostile, villages in primary school; from different ethnonlinguistic groups in middle-school; and from every part of the realm in the tertiary institutions of the capital. And they knew that from wherever they had come they had still read the same books and done the same sums.

Thus, Anderson concludes, the interlocking educational and administrative pilgrimages "provided the territorial base for new 'imagined communities' in which 'natives' could come to see themselves as 'nationals'". Anderson's account of "the amiably
competitive comradeship of the classroom" of these "bright boys" is reminiscent of the British public school education system, in which, to quote from *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (1857), boys must "live and act not only as boys, but as boys who will be men".\(^{21}\)

We should not assume, *prima facie*, that girls also formed parallel national consciousnesses. Girls' colonial educational experiences have been qualitatively different from those of Anderson's "bright boys". It is surely significant for theorising nationalism that we cannot interpolate from Anderson's treatment of nations as imagined communities, the processes by which half the population might have formed national consciousness and identifications. Rather, following the trajectory of his reasoning leads us to conclude that women would be likely to form an awareness of their identities primarily in terms of gender since they would be disbarred from even commencing 'pilgrimages' on the grounds that they were female.

Indeed, there is no reason to think that Anderson expects women to play a role other than the conventional one of waiting, confined and immobilised. The gendering of the journey motif seems to be unquestioned; neither Anderson, nor, almost without exception, bush mythology offers women an alternative role. In both literature and paintings of the late nineteenth century, the recurrent image of women is one of constriction to known and enclosed space.

**Female characters as function of plot**

Jurij Lotman's formulation of the essential components of the journey forms the basis of his analysis of the origins of the literary plot. While he is not concerned to reflect on the gender-specific formulation of the basic plot, he makes observations about the roles available to mobile and immobile characters which are usefully applied to the study of gender representation. Lotman observes a division of characters into "those who are mobile, who enjoy freedom with regard to plot-space, who can change their place in the structure of the artistic world and cross the frontier, the basic topological feature of this space" and "those who are immobile, who represent, in fact, a function of this space".\(^{22}\)

Since women generally are represented as immobile, they may be seen to be "a function" of plot-space, rather than the mobile heroes who cross the frontier. In Lotman's typology, two positions and functions emerge for immobile characters: positioned at the frontier, they function as "personified obstacles"; positioned within interior space, they become the point of return. Thus, since women are not to be mobile heroes, they may belong to the group of "personified obstacles", "immobile enemy-
"characters" or, to use Vladimir Propp's term, "antagonists" at the boundary between the internal and the external sphere which the heroes must cross.23

Oh, Nancy, dearest Nancy,
Please do not hold me back.
Down there the boys are waiting
And I must be on the track.24

Nancy, like all those other bush sweethearts, most of whom are called Mary, represents a "personified obstacle" whose romantic attachment could bind the bushman to her, confining him with her within the space described by the fence. If loved women have threatened to bind men to them, aborting their journeys, then the threat of immobilised women inhabiting exterior space, the shanty barmaids and prostitutes, is that they may prevent men from returning, from the realisation of their quest, and re-crossing the boundary.25

The other function for women characters implicit in Lotman's analysis of plot is that of the point of departure and return to closed space. He observes that closed space can be interpreted as "a cave", "the grave", "a house", "woman", terms which are rendered equivalent in this formulation.26

Whereas younger women are frequently depicted out of doors, though not too far from the house, mature women—especially mothers—are generally, almost invariably, represented within the more confined space of the home. Arguably, maturity in women, or the realisation of their destiny, is imaged in terms of a shift to a more constricted space, and a greater degree of immobilisation. If the sweetheart at the slip-rails functions as a "personified obstacle" in Lotman's analysis, then as a mother, a woman's function shifts to that of "personified interior". Whereas the boundary that must be crossed to initiate the journey is the fence, the completion of the journey brings the bushman through the doorway into the house itself; whereas the confinement of the bush sweetheart is marked by the fence, that of the mother is determined by the walls of the homestead or hut. Not only is the space contracted, but the walls constitute a more substantial barricade than the fence. The yards around the house, though cleared, fenced, and more rarely, cultivated, share the same light and tonal qualities as the bush beyond; dirt and grass, saplings and bush tracks are not bound by the fences that mark out the gendered social space of the bush. The opaque walls of the bush hut describe a space which is not only more constricted, but also is more starkly contrasted with its external surrounds.
If we treat the domestic domain depicted in bush literature and paintings in the light of the masculine journey, three features have great significance for the representation of women: the emphasis on the boundary between the interior and the exterior; the representation of the interior as the place of men's departure and return; and immobilised waiting as the surrogate action of women.

The adventure outside is life itself, and, Lotman comments, entry into the closed interior space is interpreted on various levels as death, conception, return home, and "moreover all these acts are thought to be mutually identical". Thus, Flood Sufferings (Plate 19) depicts a birth, Breaking the News (Plate 18), a death, and Home Again (Plate 17), the return of a man who has been presumed dead. In each of these paintings, the open door ruptures the otherwise enclosed interior. Other writers have commented on the significance of doors and windows in literature. Sebeok and Margolis, for example, note that "channels, portals, or other loopholes" play a critical role in journey literature because they allow access between the outside and the inside. The relationship between interior and exterior space constructed in these paintings focusses attention on the passage which the doorway creates. Robert Cohn has observed that there is "a clear progression in the series door-window-mirror", which he identifies as "a growing arrestation". I will return later to Cohn's inclusion of mirrors in this sequence as signifying "a blockage, a reflexion, a return upon the self".

'Bound asunder': parting and courtship

In the logic of the journey narrative, it is both natural and imperative that the bushman leaves home. His farewell to his bush sweetheart makes a poignant leave-taking. The representation of courtship has been shaped, in part, by the necessity of his departure, and consequently in the imagined formation of nation, courtship has been identified with parting. Henry Lawson returned many times to the theme of the parting of bush lovers, and his poetry has retained much of its popular appeal because it captures a notion of courtship that is thought to be both beautiful and 'Australian'. The following excerpts from Lawson's verse are used to elucidate features of courtship which, it is argued here, are implicit in the journey narrative.

It is not the bushman's capacity to love that is in doubt: rather the strength of his love underscores the naturalness of his departure.

I have journeyed long and my goal is far,
    I love, but I cannot bide,
For as sure as rises the morning star,
With the break of day I'll ride.\textsuperscript{31}

The homestead offers comfort and solace to the bushman, but it is also stultifying and confined. For him, the place occupied by women is the "world cast aside", closed against change and he "breathes with relief" as the homestead recedes from view and the wide world beckons. His sweetheart's place is bounded by the sliprails; the nation is formed beyond the spur:

\begin{verbatim}
Ah! the world is a new and a wide one to you,
But the world to your sweetheart is shut,
For a change never comes to the lonely Bush homes
Of the stockyard, the scrub, and the hut;\textsuperscript{32}
\end{verbatim}

Courtship is a momentary encounter for bushmen and sweethearts are bound to go in different directions. In Lawson's poem, "The Sliprails and the Spur", the bushman's sights are set on the distant horizons, while she treks the dismal path between hut and sliprails:

\begin{verbatim}
She gasped for sudden loss of hope,
As, with a backward wave to her,
He cantered down the grassy slope
And swiftly round the darkening spur.
Black-pencilled panels standing high,
And darkness fading into stars,
And blurring fast against the sky,
A faint white form beside the bars.\textsuperscript{33}
\end{verbatim}

The chilling image of bars and dark-pencilled panels that close in on the woman at the moment of her apprehension of loss, convey a sense of imprisonment. At sunset, sweethearts find solace waiting at the sliprails, dreaming of past evenings, yearning for his return. But though their love may not fade, young women themselves may not withstand the long absence of their lovers:

\begin{verbatim}
Ah! she often watched at sunset -
For her people told me so -
Where I left her at the sliprails
More than fifteen years ago.
And she faded like a flower,
And she died, as such girls do,\end{verbatim}
While, away in Northern Queensland,
    Working hard, I never knew. 34

The woman's grave, like the homestead, may come to serve as a nostalgic anchor for
the bushman, one which serves to enhance his commitment to his nomadic life:

    And he rides hard to dull the pain
        Who rides from one that loves him best;
    And he rides slowly back again,
        Whose restless heart must rove for rest. 35

Illustration 1: Spirit Girl and Bushman
(Source: Henry Lawson, A Fantasy of Man, Lansdowne, Sydney, 1988, p. 162.)
Finally, in death, bush sweetheart's spirit is freed from the confined space delineated by the fences and slip-rails. As a "spirit-girl" she may traverse the bush with her bushman-lover, her memory nurturing and soothing him without impeding his quest:

But to cool the living fever,
   Comes a cold breath to my brow,
And I feel that Mary's spirit
   Is beside me, even now.36

Eternally pristine, in death the sweetheart ascends the final pedestal. The vessel may decay, but the 'spirit girl' never undergoes the bitter transformation that is the lot of the haggard women who survive. "She died that her spirit might strengthen him, where her love would drag him down," says Lawson in "The Leader and the Bad Girl"37

Lawson is not the only one amongst influential writers and artists of the late nineteenth century who represents parting as a natural outcome of romance. With characteristic irony, Furphy's handling of Tom Collins' encounter with Jemima assumes the reader's familiarity with the conventional representation of courtship as completed by the man's departure. Collins and the young woman are "bound asunder" for a single moment. Releasing her to "go thy ways, die when thou wilt."

Similarly, Tom Roberts' painting, Summer Morning Tiff (1886) (Plate 2), imparts a sense of the naturalness of lovers parting as he explores ways of representing the landscape, the play of light and shadow, and the pale gold of the summer morning.40 Once again, however, he employs the familiar motifs of bushman mounting his horse by the sliprails, and the solitary woman walking towards the front along a narrow pathway. In visual images, the recurrent motifs of well-trodden pathways and fences delineate women's terrain as familiar and contained, and their movements as repetitious and ritualised.

**Courtship in the quest for land**
The bushman's departure signals the beginning of his journey, which takes the form of a quest to claim the land on which the nation is to be built. Seen as harsh, inhospitable and unyielding, the land frequently resists exploration, domestication and settlement. At the least, the quest is to render the land known: to explore, traverse and map it, to construct roads and fences across it. But the real success stories in bush mythology are those that bring the land into productive use. Images of benign and plentiful environments signify that the object of the quest has been secured – the territory has
2.  Tom Roberts *Summer Morning Tiff*  1886
    oil on canvas 76.5 x 51.2 cm
been claimed in the name of the nation. The return home in victory, though that may be
too exhuberant a word for these wanderers' homecomings, is frequently symbolically
accentuated by natural plenitude. Thus, in the return home to the faithful sweetheart,
nature's bounty is associated with courtship. For instance, a return from dry outback
country may be marked by rain and plentiful water supplies. The drought will break
when the drover returns ("Andy's Gone with Cattle"41 ) and he will make a home "by
some deep, cool river" ("Andy's Return"42).

The immense natural generosity which marks the return of the drover or shearer is
illustrated by Thomas E. Spencer's "Bonnie Jess":

Now the shearing time is over,
   Bonnie Jess.
And the sheep are in the clover,
   Bonnie Jess.
By the creek the cattle are lowing,
   And the golden crops are growing,
While the setting sun is glowing,
   Bonnie Jess.
And a kiss to thee I'm throwing,
   Bonnie Jess.43

The description of the natural world—the well-fed contentment of the animals, the lush
growth of crops, the glowing sun—reinforces the romantic narrative, reiterating the joy
of the bushman, and predicting that he too will be content and settled now. The internal
warmth and abundance of the 'crimson rushing' as the girl blushes in this ballad
complements the natural image of glowing sunset and rural plenty. The fertility of the
woman is suggested by the descriptions of the natural abundance of her environment.

The fertility—productivity and reproductivity—of both the land and Bonnie Jess
connote a pre-modern conception of the female body itself written at a time when the
representation of the female body was shifting away from the fertile, reproductive body
towards an eroticized body.44 That neither Jess herself nor the land is eroticized is
suggestive of the nostalgic cast of the ballad. By the late nineteenth century, the fertile
relationship proposed in the ballad as the bushman's future was able to be understood
as an image of the past.
Reunions: foreboding of partings
The return home which marks the closure of the circular trajectory of the journey motif is sometimes celebrated in the reunion of lovers. However, a shadow is cast across the threshold they must cross together if the future of contented, intimate and child-bearing marriage is to be realised. "I love, but I cannot bide," says Lawson's Break o' Day. The sense of foreboding is at times expressed in an awkwardness and lack of resolution in the treatment of the reunions of bushmen and their sweethearts. Parting is a recurring moment in bush courting, and impending departures are frequently prefigured in homecomings.

Though Tom Roberts' 1886/7 painting Reconciliation (Plate 3) is one of the few visual images of the coming together of lovers in the bush, the formal and awkward poses of the lovers lacks the sense of naturalness that informs his Summer Morning Tiff (Plate 2), and can be read as suggesting difficulty in depicting sustained intimacy. Roberts' use of academic Victorian pictorial narrative conventions, by then old-fashioned, and accompanying verse suggests a problematic articulation of his theme, in contrast to the more impressionist Summer Morning Tiff painted the previous year.45 We might read this image as a momentary suspension of a ritual movement. The man has caught her from behind, and she is held in his arms slightly off-balance; if he moves, she will topple. Though their eyes meet, their bodies turn outwards. In a moment, the ritual dance will recall them, and they will complete the turn that draws them apart.

This portent of departure can be explained on a number of levels. Firstly, at the level of the deep mythic structure of the journey, it is death not marriage that completes man's passage through life. (In the case of woman, it will be argued in this thesis that maturity through marriage and motherhood is constituted symbolically as a death.) The achievement of maturity in a man is represented by his overcoming of obstacles that bar his way, rather than by withdrawing from the quest to settle down in marriage. Thus, though he may come home again and again, unless his death is constituted through his return, his stay will be of limited duration.46

Secondly, the journey is not complete until the object of the quest is attained. In the case of Benedict Anderson's argument, colonial functionaries who embarked on career-related pilgrimages are barred from reaching the destinations to which they aspire. In the case of Australian bush mythology, the resisting land beckons men to continue the struggle of domination.

Thirdly, the historical context in which these works were formed—that of the last
3. Tom Roberts *Reconciliation* c.1886/7
oil on canvas 127.0 x 75.0 cm
decade of the nineteenth century—plays a significant part in the development of the journey motif in narratives of nation formation. On the one hand, drought, depression, industrial unrest, and the structure of the economy itself placed pressure on men to leave their homes and families in search of employment. On the other hand, the institutions which framed the relations of men and women appear to have been deeply troubled. The culture of the 1890s has been described in terms of contestation, in which masculinist and feminist ideals were in conflict. These topical issues, which this thesis argues underpin the Australian narratives of nation, will be discussed in detail in later chapters.

As a result of these mythic and topical factors, the romantic construction of gender difference in bush mythology is coloured by a deeply pessimistic attitude to romance. Yet, romantic attachment is seen as the cement that binds men and women. When romance 'fades', cultural difference forms an insurmountable gulf between men and women. Thus, courtship is pictured, typically, as a moment of innocent hope and joyful, tremulous anticipation, recalled nostalgically, and counterpointed against loss and disappointment. Joe Wilson counsels "young chaps":

But I think that the happiest time in a man's life is when he's courting a girl, and finds out for sure that she loves him, and hasn't a thought for anyone else. Make the most of your courting days, you young chaps, and keep them clean, for they're about the only days when there's a chance of poetry and beauty coming into this life.

Such a romantic conception of courtship as a transitory moment of poetry and beauty in a man's life is predicated on notions of difference between men and women. As Brian Matthews has argued, in Lawson's writing when women enter the world of men, they become sullied and tarnished. This romantic insistence on difference appears to have obscured possible commonalities and shared experiences between men and women.

The seeds of estrangement are evident even in courtship, and, indeed, they are nurtured by romance. Courtship is a time of few words and many misunderstandings. The language of courtship in Australian bush stories shifts between intimacy and estrangement. Writing of nineteenth century southern American courtships, Steve Stowe observes that courtship language "validated the ideology of separate spheres by making social division between the sexes appear to rest on temperamental differences inherent in sexuality." Consistent with this observation, Australian bushgirls are attractively diffident:
Far too shy, because she loved me,
To be dancing oft with me.\textsuperscript{51}

In bush literature, men may maintain comfortable silence together since they are presumed to be alike, but between men and women no such understanding exists. Words alone could bridge the gap, but words fail them. Face to face, women and men have little to say to each other. Separated, the problem is exacerbated by the need to write and the vagaries of the mail. When Tom Collins receives a love letter, he concludes that it was intended for another man, as he could "make neither head nor tail of it."\textsuperscript{52} The thumb-nail dipped in tar is not the instrument of finely wrought sentiment.

It may appear almost inevitable that estrangement is the outcome of romance based on such failure of communication and lack of empathy. If, as Joe Wilson tells us, "the happiest time in a man's life is when he's courting a girl", then marriage is bound to be an anti-climax. The premature death of a young wife, then, can be a most poignant resolution to the problem of imagining marriage as romance fades and "little dumplings" grow into "gaunt, brick-brown, saw-file voiced, hopeless and spiritless Bushwomen".\textsuperscript{53} Whilst death may appear to be the ultimate expression of loss and estrangement, paradoxically the death of the still-loved, still-young woman leaves romance intact.

**Death—the unbroken promise**

Lawson's poem "Reedy River" reiterates the association of courting with natural plenitude. In an image of boundless promise, Mary Campbell is wooed beside a "bright lagoon" which mirrors the expansive sky and reflects stars and seasonal change. (This mirror serves a very different function to the domestic mirrors that reflect only the cramped space of women's lives that will be discussed in later chapters.)

\begin{quote}
And all the year it mirrors
The changes in the skies,
And in that pool's broad bosom
Is room for all the stars.\textsuperscript{54}
\end{quote}

Bringing Mary home is associated with the domestication and cultivation of the land. The masculine labour involved in settling the land is motivated by the love for Mary and the desire to provide for her a home.
I built a little homestead
On the banks of Rocky Creek;
I cleared the land and fenced it
And ploughed the rich red loam,
And my first crop was golden
When I brought my Mary home.55

Mary Campbell dies and nature, still plentiful, closes over the marks the bushman has made, as though claiming back its own. The loss occasioned by Mary's death is reinforced by the erasure of the control over the land:

But of the hut I builded
There are no traces now.
And many rains have levelled
The furrows of the plough;
And my bright days are olden,
For the twisted branches wave
And the wattle blossoms golden
On the hill by Mary's grave.56

The death of the young wife or sweetheart is represented in romantic terms. Neither the relationships nor the women themselves undergo transformation through maturity. Though men and women will inevitably part, the romantic attachment to the woman who dies young need not fade. The narrator who tells of the death of his sweetheart or young wife may be sad, but the clarity of his grief is not muddied by bitterness, disillusionment and self-recrimination.

The representation of bushgirls and bushwives suggests difficulty in imagining relationships between men and women that are sexual, intimate, compatible and lasting. Romance is almost invariably constructed in the memory of the bushmen; it is most frequently remembered nostalgically as a time long past, its disappointing and disillusioning outcome already known. Because the idea of a journey is both spatial and temporal, the sweetheart who has been left behind waits in the cramped space of a moment in time as well as in the confines of the domestic domain. While the journey which is the passage of life goes on for the bushman, in his journey, the life of the woman is likely to become an incident of the past. In this sense, sweethearts are doubly passive: as girls, they are encountered momentarily at the sliprails, or in vain sunset vigils; later, they are re-formed in the memory of the bushman. Consequently they are doubly confined: bound by the fence and sliprails to their own 'sphere', they are also
'Drifting apart'—estrangement in marriage

The transformation that bush life and maturity bring about in their wives is experienced by bushmen narrators in terms of their loss of the sweetheart they loved. A quick death seems to leave women more intact in the memory than the long, drawn-out process of disintegration for which the husbands feel themselves to be culpable. The estrangement of courtship, which was the other side of romance, is rarely healed by a growing sense of common purpose in marriage. Rather, marriage is likely to be represented in terms of the experience of alienation. Men and women remain apart by the separation of the domestic sphere from the world in which the nation is formed, and the unbridgeable cultural difference that is its consequence.

Recounting the story of their first years at Lahey's Creek, Joe Wilson says,

'It's an awful thing to me, now I look back to it, to think how far apart we had grown, what strangers we were to each other. It seems, now, as though we had been sweethearts long years before, and had parted, and had never really met since.'

Only a few years into their marriage, Joe Wilson had "noticed that Mary and I had got out of the habit of talking to one another". Rather than acting in the bleak present to put their relationship on a sounder, more mature basis, Joe Wilson looks to a "brighter" future, in which romance can be rekindled.

But whenever I thought Mary was getting indifferent towards me, I'd think, "I'll soon win her back. We'll be sweethearts again—when things brighten up a bit."

The barren landscape through which the Wilsons travel in separate vehicles affords no optimism that they will be sweethearts again. This sense of disjuncture between past, present and future pervades the writing and painting of the 1890s. The past evokes yearning and nostalgia, but the hope that the future will grow out of the past is unsettled by a troubled present.

Frederick McCubbin's painting *The Wallaby Track* (1897) (Plate 4) gives visual representation to the sense of estrangement expressed in Joe Wilson's meditations. The young wife watches listlessly while the man goes about the business of living, setting the billy over the new fire. The dark bush at her back yields beyond him to open space and light. Within the parameters of the pioneer myth, the young woman has been conventionally seen as bringing new life and moral values to the bush, but this...
responsibility is not one she appears to embrace with pleasure or vigour. To interpret the painting, as Leigh Astbury does, as an image of domestic warmth, co-operation and well-being is to ignore the absence of intimacy suggested by the isolation and disengagement of the figures of husband and wife. Alienation and resignation appear to be the dark side of co-operation and division of labour between men and women. Whilst the image of the man out in the open bush serves as an emblem of self-sufficiency, independence and resilience, the woman's demeanour emphasises her passivity and desolation.

Whether she is homeless or journeying to the selection which will become her home, this image corresponds with Mary Wilson's conviction that life in the bush spells her death. When McCubbin's paintings of pioneer women are interpreted intertextually with Lawson's stories of Mary Wilson, they take on a more ambivalent and even foreboding quality than the conventional readings suggest.

The conventional interpretation of McCubbin's paintings *The Pioneer* (1904) (Plate 5) and *The Wallaby Track* (1897) in terms of the "pioneer myth" calls for a reading of the works that sees the mood of the young wives as a pensive moment which will soon give way to bustling domesticity. The three panels of *The Pioneer* suggest such a narrative reading. The triptych format also implies a reverential attitude, which is complemented by the image of the kneeling figure in the third panel. In the background, the national theme of transformation and settlement of the land is suggested by the transition from covered wagon, to hut, to crops and city. The diagonal movement of the man from background to middle foreground graphically reiterates the theme of claiming the land through masculine labour. Although the use of panels implies different moments in time, they are not set in exactly the same place, imparting a panoramic quality to the landscape to suggest the breadth and dignity of the land itself.

In the first two panels, the woman is foregrounded. In the left-hand panel, her despondent, passive response contrasts with the activity of the man who once again gets the fire going and brings the billy to the boil. This image reiterates the brooding estrangement between Mary and Joe Wilson as they take up their selection at Lahey's Creek.

*Did she think now—did she begin to feel now that she had made a great mistake and thrown away her life, but must make the best of it?*

The reviewer in the *Age*, in 1905 was confident that the Pioneer's wife "will soon be
setting about her duties with the blithe wifely spirit of the pioneer woman." And indeed, this is what Mary Wilson did. After their quarrel, Joe returns determined to "leave this wretched life" only to find that Mary has been fixing up the hut:

"How does that look, Joe? We'll soon get things ship-shape."

The middle panel suggests that the marriage is intact and the land is yielding to the pioneer's labour, and the baby in the woman's arms describes her part in the formation of the new nation. In the clearing seen through tall trees, a hut with chimney smoking implies a degree of comfort now rewards his labour. Like the Joe Wilson stories, this panel is remarkable in that it is one of very few bush images, literary or visual, of intimacy and communication in the lives of men and women. Yet, even here, the positioning of the figures disturbs the conventional reading of the work. The woodcutter, seated on the log, enjoys a break; the woman stands before and above him, babe in arms. The ambiguity of this image lies in the unsettling connotation of authority that is suggested by the woman's position here. She is not represented in the conventionally supportive role implied by the division of labour evidenced by his timber-felling and her maternity. Significantly, the issue of authority is an area of conflict in the stories of Mary and Joe Wilson's marriage.

Leigh Astbury argues that McCubbin's conception of the subject and composition of this major work may have been influenced by the work of the photographer, George Bell. He finds a suggestive similarity between Bell's photograph The Pioneer's Wife (c.1890-8) (Plate 6) and the central panel of the McCubbin work:

The pose of the mother is almost the same, the settler and the fallen tree are similarly placed, while a glimpse of sky is seen through the dense bush.

The woman in the photograph is not, however, represented as a mother and she is not holding a baby. Rather, she has been posed mid-stride carrying a long slender sapling. As Anne-Marie Willis notes, the languid quality of the pose undermines the connotations of physical labour, once again suggesting the sense of incompatibility of femininity and physical labour on the land. Whilst the painting uses the triangular composition formed by the standing woman, the squatting man and the diagonal log, the representation of their relationship and of the woman's role has been altered. It was in this transformation of the image of woman from co-worker to mother that the role of women was defined within nationalist discourse.

The third panel depicts a man kneeling before a cross, reading its inscription. Far in the
5. Frederick McCubbin *The Pioneer* 1904
oil on canvas (triptych) 223.5 x 86 cm
background, through a clearing that was once virgin bush, the glimpse of a city testifies to the achievement of the pioneer. As Leigh Astbury has noted, the painting celebrates the pioneers who laboured in order that future generations might inherit the land. But the figure of the woman, so significant in the two previous panels, is now absent. There is a man, not necessarily the same man; there was a woman and now there is a grave. She appears to be simultaneously included and excluded in the story. Reading against the grain, we might wonder if it is the woman’s life that is forfeit in the struggle to win the land on which the nation is built.

Geoffrey Dutton’s description of the painting as one of “melancholy and toil that ends in quiet optimism” reiterates the characteristic theme of hope and despair. “It is odd,” he muses, “that the painting is called The Pioneer and not The Pioneers as the wife is central to the composition, and McCubbin had the highest respect for the women who went into the bush with the settlers.” (With deft sleight of hand, Dutton himself omits

Plate 6: George Bell, The Pioneer’s Wife  c.1890-8
(Source: Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney)
women from the term 'settlers'). In fact, the painting is frequently referred to as "The Pioneers", as if willing the inclusion of women in the legends that laid the foundations of the popular idea of what it means to be 'Australian'.

In one sense, the wife in The Pioneer is like Mary Campbell in "Reedy River" in that her maturity is both forestalled by death and represented as death. There is a much greater tension in the Joe Wilson stories. Mary Wilson does grow older: her maturity is constituted by her growing authority and by her physical transformation. The relationship between Mary and Joe does not end with her youthful death, or their marriage, itself romantically constituted as a woman's "death". In marriage, they drift apart, but they also care deeply for this loss of intimacy, and strive to preserve their love for each other. But this preservation of love is imagined in terms of a reinstatement of courtship and a denial of maturity and ageing. It is maturity that appears to bring estrangement.

Joe Wilson has grown withdrawn through worry about his ability to provide for his family. At home "for a day or two", he "was generally too busy, or too tired and worried, or full of schemes for the future to take much notice" of his family. He tells himself that he will take more notice of them "just as soon as I can see things clear ahead a bit". Mary asks him to confide in her:

"Why don't you talk to me, Joe? Why don't you tell me your thoughts, instead of shutting yourself up in yourself and brooding—eating your heart out? It's hard for me: I get to think you're tired of me, and selfish. I might be cross and speak sharp to you when you are in trouble. How am I to know, if you don't tell me?"^68

But Joe Wilson "didn't think she'd understand".

Re-establishing affection and intimacy between Mary and Joe Wilson entails a re-instatement of youthful romance and a denial of the impact of the intervening years. Mary pulls the grey hairs out of Joe's head and collects them in an empty matchbox in "Brighten's Sister-in-Law" and in "Drifting Apart". When Joe gives Mary the new double-buggy in "A Double Buggy at Lahey's Creek", they share again "that strange, shy sort of feeling" of their wedding day. After the excitement of inspecting the buggy, they sit together

.. and talked more than we'd done for years—and there was a good deal of "Do you remember?" in it—and I think we got to understand each other better that night.^69
These moments represent consolidations of the marriage, and though they attempt to re-experience their youthful romance, they also ambivalently acknowledge the intervening years. Nevertheless, at least in "Water Them Geraniums", the time of telling is after Mary's death. The image of Mary lying "white and still" casts its shadow over the stories of Joe and Mary Wilson's marriage.

The representation of marriage is infused with a sense of loss of past romance. Though the romance of courtship is counterpointed by the assumption of parting, there is a circularity to the narrative structure which allows for the possibility of return. Marriage, however, is placed along the passage of time which allows no return. The golden moment remains fixed in the past. The sadness of the image comes not from the impossibility of a return to the romantic past, but from the apparent difficulty of imagining in mature relationships an intimacy and compatibility that could supplant the ephemeral moment of romantic courtship. The narrator seems unaware of the extent to which time may have written over his face and body, and sense of his loss is conveyed through the deterioration of loved women.

Multiple points of view in narration

Considerations of the narrator's point of view are a recurring aspect of this discussion of bush mythology. This temporal doubling of the Joe Wilson narration allows the point of view of both the young, naive Joe Wilson and the older, reflexive Joe Wilson to emerge. The older Joe Wilson reflects on his earlier perceptions and actions with the wisdom of hindsight.

It is in the space created between the older narrator Joe Wilson and the young bushman he once was that Mary Wilson's point of view is also able to be perceived. The narrator wonders what Mary might have thought many years earlier. Mary "speaks" for herself, but the young Joe is insensitive to her perceptions and responses, which only now, the wiser Joe Wilson can comprehend. Nor is the young Joe Wilson an entirely consistent or coherent subject—the stories do not work as fictional autobiographies in which the narrator constructs a coherent past subjectivity in order to account for his present self. For example, the accounts of the move to Lahey's Creek given in "Brighten's Sister-in-Law" and "Water Them Geraniums" replay the decision-making process with different emphases on Mary's and Joe's motives and roles. In "Brighten's Sister-in-Law", Joe Wilson says that he "made up my mind to take on a small selection farm" when he contemplates his success in "carrying", and Mary's opposition to his prospecting: "Mary never let me rest till she had talked me out of that". But, in "Water Them Geraniums", when they quarrel, Joe Wilson reminds her that "You know very well that
it was you that dragged me out here". Here the stultifying atmosphere of Gulong and the belief that Joe would succumb to drinking if they lived in Sydney are the untenable options against which Mary has argued for the selection at Lahey's Creek. Realising now the awful implications of this decision for her own life, she responds by asking Joe, "why weren't you more decided?"

It is these back-trackings and shifts in the accounts of events, which Brian Matthews has discussed in relation to the stories of While the Billy Boils, that make the relationship of Mary and Joe Wilson one of the most interesting studies of marriage in the bush literature. Not only is the Joe Wilson point of view fractured by time, but also Mary Wilson emerges as a character who contests Joe Wilson's perceptions and actions, challenges his authority, acts on her own behalf, and perceives the interests of the family differently to him.

This fracturing of the narration through time has significant implications for the inscribed reading positions. Although, as was noted earlier, the viewer and reader are implicitly masculine and positioned with the protagonist (who is frequently also the narrator), the narration is itself not unified. It is constituted through the double movement of the recounting of a story as the narrator perceived it unfolding and his recollection of it years later, and his reflections on the remembered story. In the case of romance, the narrator is frequently recalling his youthful joy from the vantage point of a saddened wisdom of maturity, when the loved woman has died, or they have become estranged. The cracks in his account, through which other points of view are discernible are not sealed over by a coherent narration. Significantly, although the narrator is almost invariably a bushman who undertakes journeys, the mutiplicity and lack of closure in the narration gives us access to the possibility that women's experiences and perceptions may differ from those which are privileged by the narration. This is not to suggest that an 'authentic' woman's voice can be discerned, whispering through narrative fissures, but rather to recognise that the chances that women would take a different point of view could be acknowledged in these texts even while that point of view was repressed by the process of writing from another position.

Conclusion
Anderson was himself dipping into the mythology of journeys when he theorised the formation of national consciousness through the device of the 'pilgrimage'. He was, perhaps unwittingly, imbedding his historical account in a form that has been associated with the imagining of nation. In literature and in painting the motif of the journey recurs to give metaphoric expression to the struggle to forge the nation and to
prove the mettle of its leaders in this struggle. In the Australian context, this struggle is expressed in the taming of the land, and takes the form of compulsive, almost incessant travelling.

At the level of a mythic passage through life, the journey motif has been a gendered one in which men undertake quests and women wait for and on them. Following Lotman's identification of two locations for immobilised characters, I have suggested that women may take up two functions within the journey of men. The first is that of the lover who waits by the sliprails, her love presenting an obstacle to the departure of the bushman on his quest for nationhood, and manhood. The second is that of wife, but more accurately mother, who is the embodiment of 'home'. In the mythical journey, home can represent death, the point of final return in the passage of life. Lotman identifies a relationship between home-woman-death in a gesture, but this thesis will examine the implications of such an identification for the representation of women.

Unless the home-coming of the bushman is metaphorically his death, the structural device of the journey will impel him to depart once again. Further, since his quest to claim the land will not have been achieved as long as unknown and untamed land still resists incorporation into national territory, the bushman will be called away in the name of the nation.

The death of loved sweethearts and young wives remains a poignant and satisfying resolution to the obstacle that their love poses for the bushman. Dying young, both the woman and her sweetheart's love remain untarnished. In death, she is transformed in function from 'personified obstacle' to 'personified home'. Ironically, as 'spirit-girls', bush sweethearts achieve a mobility that was denied to them in life. Bound in love to just one man, he now represents 'home' for the sprite, and she is with him always as he relentlessly traverses the land, like a snail with its home on its back.

Whilst marriage is constituted imaginatively as a form of death for women, it is represented as a deeply saddening and disillusioning experience for men. The 'dumplings' who were their sweethearts turn haggard and gaunt, and in maturity, men and women drift apart. The relationship of men and women constructed on romantic assumptions of difference grows estranged as romance fades. In marriage, men and women no longer act in accord, and attempting to express and repair this alienation, stories told by men give expression not only to their evolving perceptions but also to those of their wives.

This chapter has introduced a study of bush mythology through an examination of the
mythic device of the journey, and has spelled out some implications of this device for the representation of women. It has argued that the explication of the formation of male national consciousness renders problematic women's identification with the nation. Women's attachment to nation may not be interpolated from the theories of male national identity since the corollary of these theories is women's displacement from the site of nation formation. Nevertheless, the dominance that narratives of nation formation have achieved in the Australian imaginary has meant that their construction of gender and representations of women have wielded considerable cultural influence. The next chapter takes this proposition further by examining some implications of this analysis for the representation of women.

1This still-dominant theme in Australian studies finds recent expression in, for example, David Day, "Aliens in a Hostile Land: A Re-appraisal of Australian History", *Journal of Australian Studies*, no. 23, November 1988, pp. 3-15.


4ibid., p. 57.

5ibid.

6ibid., p. 58-9.


8For a study which indicates how deeply assumptions of gender differentiation are embedded in journey narratives, see Eric Leed's interesting and comprehensive study of travel, a study which nevertheless rests explicitly on the assumption that men travel and women do not. Eric J. Leed, *The Mind of the Traveller: From Gilgamesh to Global Tourism*, Basic, U. S. A., 1991.


11 Graeme Turner, op. cit., p. 91; see also Graeme Turner, "Mateship, Individualism and the Production of Character in Australian Fiction", Australian Literary Studies, vol. 11, no. 4, October 1984, p. 450.

12 Ross Gibson, op. cit.; Graeme Turner, op. cit.

13 Graeme Turner, ibid., p. 60.

14 Ross Gibson, op. cit., p. 183.

15 Ross Gibson, ibid.

16 Ross Gibson, ibid., p. 126-7.


19 ibid., p. 116.

20 Anderson, op. cit., p. 111

21 Thomas Hughes, Tom Brown's Schooldays (1857) cited in Nina Auerbach, Communities of Women—An Idea in Fiction, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1978, p. 16. The full quote from Hughes' schoolboy Rugby Magazine reads: "As on the one hand it should ever be remembered that we are boys, and boys at school, so on the other hand we must bear in mind that we form a complete social body... in which... we must... act and live not only as boys, but as boys who will be men."

22 Lotman, op. cit., p. 167.

23 ibid.


26 Lotman, op. cit., p. 168. (my italics)

27 Paintings referred to are: Aby Alston, Flood Sufferings (1890); John Longstaff, Breaking the News (1887); Frederick McCubbin, Home Again (1884).


30*ibid.*, p. 29.


36*ibid.*

37Henry Lawson, "The Leader and the Bad Girl" (1903), *A Fantasy of Man*, *op. cit.*, p. 187.


39*ibid.*, p. 164.

40For further discussion, see Virginia Spate, *Tom Roberts*, Lansdowne, Sydney, 1985. Helen Topliss tells us that the sitter was McCubbin’s sister, who posed for Roberts at Box Hill. Helen Topliss, *The Artists' Camps: 'Plein Air' Painting in Australia*, Hedley, Melbourne, 1992, p. 65.


45Virginia Spate, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

46For an example of this symbolic equivalence of death and homecoming, see Henry Lawson, "The Ballad of the Drover", *A Camp-Fire Yarn*, *op. cit.*, p. 70-1.


50Steven M. Stowe, "'The Thing Not Its Vision': A Woman's Courtship and her
Sphere in the Southern Planter Class", *Feminist Studies*, vol. 9, no. 1, Spring 1983, p. 128.


54Henry Lawson, "Reedy River", *ibid.*, p. 490.

55*ibid.*, p. 491.

56*ibid.*


58*ibid.*


64Leigh Astbury, "Frederick McCubbin: The Spirit of the Pioneers", *op. cit.*, p. 47.

65Anne-Marie Willis, *Picturing Australia—A History of Photography*, Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1988, p. 84.

66Leigh Astbury, "Frederick McCubbin", *op. cit.*, p. 47.


