

**UNIVERZITA PARDUBICE
FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA
KATEDRA ANGLISTIKY A AMERIKANISTIKY**

**AUSTRALSKÁ NÁRODNÍ IDENTITA A
JEJÍ ODRAZ V KULTUŘE**

DIPLOMOVÁ PRÁCE

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2006

**UNIVERSITY OF PARDUBICE
FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES**

**AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY
AND ITS REFLECTION IN THE
COUNTRY'S CULTURE**

THESIS

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2006

**Univerzita Pardubice
studii**

**Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky
2002/2003**

Fakulta humanitních

Školní rok

ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

pro: Danu Kazdovou

obor: Studium učitelství anglického jazyka

Název tématu: Australian National Identity and Its Reflection in the Country's Culture

Zásady pro vypracování:

Studentka se ve své diplomové práci zaměří na charakteristiku národní identity Austrálie, která je značně komplikovaná zejména otázkou vztahů s původním australským obyvatelstvem.

Studentka nejprve charakterizuje pojem *identita*, a vymezí prostor, který v rámci tohoto konceptu tvoří identita národní. Dále se bude věnovat vlivu historického vývoje na utváření australské národní identity a zaměří se převážně na postavení původního australského obyvatelstva, jeho integraci do společnosti i toho, jak původní australští obyvatelé vnímají sami sebe.

Následně studentka podrobí analýze některá z děl australské literatury, v nichž bude charakterizovat odraz výše definovaných aspektů, vztahů a vývoje.

Ve své diplomové práci bude studentka pracovat se sekundárními kritickými zdroji z oblasti kulturních studií a literatury, zároveň bude formou textové analýzy pracovat i s primárními zdroji, tj. vybranými díly ze současné australské literatury.

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Podpis:

Datum zadání práce: 30. 4. 2003

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Souhlasím s prezenčním zpřístupněním své práce v Univerzitní knihovně Univerzity Pardubice.

V Brně dne 26.2.2006

Dana Kazdová

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Mgr. Zderadičková, M. Litt, for her cooperation and useful pieces of advice and to M. Kaylor, M. A. for his invaluable course of academic writing.

Special thanks are also extended to PhDr. Jitka Vlčková, Ph.D. from the Masaryk University in Brno, for her priceless complaisance and assistance with the collecting of sources for my paper.

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INTRODUCTION

The first part of the diploma thesis provides the definition of the term identity which is considered to be a very complex conception, and which became one of the most discussed subject matters today. This substantial element of every culture provides the means of national identification and strengthens the sense of belonging of individuals in the society, or on the global scale: self-determination is the key of *national identity*. There is also very briefly characterized the issue why the national identity and nationalism became so essential in the modern world. Furthermore, the paper concentrates on describing and locating what one may conceive of Australian national identity, which has been continuously formed in the course of Australian history. The next chapter is shortly polemizing whether it is possible to find the real or typical Australian.

Throughout the centuries, Australia itself provided a number of images and symbols that helped to determine the Australian self-consciousness, which are demonstrated here on some pieces of Australian literature for instance, on the works of Henry Lawson, A. B. Paterson, Thomas Keneally, K. S. Prichard or Alan Marshall.

Moreover, the concentration was posed on what is distinctive about the land and people of Australia. Upon the arrival of the Europeans in Australia, there was created a new image of the country. The discovery of Australia was the starting point for defining its identity. The pioneer legend became the most significant part of self-determination of the newcomers. It has been connected with the conviction as a colonial experience, gold diggers, bushmen or busgrangers; mateship and equality became the essential features of Australian identity at that time.

In the 1880s, new generation of painters and writers, who were attracted to symbols such as bush, landscape, sunlight or freedom, found in them a certain sentiment, heroic gloom or dramatic romanticism which has given to Australia the new image. Another aspect of Australian typicality is seen in the suburban Australia that was many times confronted with the bush ethos. Australia is considered to be presumably the most urbanized nation in the world, and it is often compared with the American style of life. The question of Australian identity was generally perceived as something in between America and Britain. Australia analogous to America, was assumed to be the

multicultural society, nevertheless, both were characterized by the racial prejudice towards the new migrants.

The second part of the diploma thesis concentrates on the primordial inhabitants of the Australian continent. The Aboriginal people led the traditional life undisturbed, close-knit with the nature. They identified themselves with the nature which had the deep spiritual meaning for them. This spiritual bond is represented in their religion, rituals, art and traditions in the form of the Dreamtime, totemism and myths. Nevertheless, the white settlers were completely ignorant to their rich cultural heritage and to the humans themselves. For hundreds of years, indigenous peoples of Australia suffered immense affliction, hardship, racial violence, assimilation and exploitation. However, in the first place there were affected their cultural values, and their sense of identity and belonging. Facing the Australian society today, the Aborigines try to rediscover the cultural traditions which were lost and they also strive to achieve the recognition and equality of Australian society.

1. CONCEPT OF NATIONAL IDENTITY

1.1 Clarification of the Concept of Identity

At present, the concept of identity belongs to not only scholarly speeches, discussions and debates. In the world of huge globalization and of the multicultural societies, it became recently one of the most frequent subject matters. It indicates how an individual perceives himself, how he is perceived by others, and how he perceives the other members of the identical or diverse society. Individuals, trying to find the sense of belonging, have a tendency to define themselves towards the others, and in many cases are striving to retrieve their own roots, that were from several reasons, lost or forgotten ad infinitum. Today national identity is considered to be the main form of collective identification. Regardless of the feelings of individuals, Smith asserts that it “conveys the dominant criterion of culture and identity, the sole principle of government and the chief focus of social and economic activity” (Smith 170). However, the question has to be asked: What does in fact the term national identity represent? Smith attempted to define the concept of national identity as follows:

. . . what we mean by *national identity* involves some sense of political community that implies at least some common institutions and single code of rights, and duties for all the members of the community. It also suggests a definite social space, a fairly well demarcated and bounded territory, with which the members identify and to which they feel they belong [. . .] People and territory must, as it were, belong to each other [. . .] But the earth in question cannot be just anywhere; it is not any stretch of land. It is, and must be, the ‘historic’ land, the ‘homeland’, the ‘cradle’ of our people [...] a ‘historic’ land is one where terrain and people have exerted mutual, and beneficial, influence over several generations. The homeland becomes a repository of historic memories and associations, the place where ‘our’ sages, saints and heroes lived, worked, prayed and fought. All this make the homeland unique. Its rivers, coasts, lakes, mountains and cities become ‘sacred’- places of veneration and exaltation whose inner meanings can be fathomed only by the initiated, that is, the self-aware members of the nation (8-9).

According to this view, Smith suggests that nations are territorially bounded units of population which ought to have their own homelands; that their members share a common culture and common historical myths and memories and, among others, that members have “reciprocal legal rights and duties under a common legal system”(9).

According to Smith nation can therefore be defined as “a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members”. Such a definition imparts the complex nature of *national identity*. Smith points out that a *national identity* is essentially “multi-dimensional”, and thus, it can never be reduced to a single element (14). He claims that *national identity* and the *nation* are:

complex constructs composed of a number of interrelated components – ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic and legal-political. They signify bonds of solidarity among members of communities united by shared memories, myths and traditions that may or may not find expression in states of their own but are entirely different from the purely legal and bureaucratic ties of the state. Conceptually, the nation has come to blend two sets of dimensions, the one civic and territorial, the other ethnic and genealogical, in varying proportions in particular cases. It is very multidimensionality that has made *national identity* such a flexible and persistent force in modern life and politics, and allowed it to combine effectively with other powerful ideologies and movements, without losing its character (15).

Therewithal, the nation appeals to provide a social bond between individuals and classes by “providing repertoires of shared values, symbols and traditions” (16). By the use of symbols – flags, anthems, uniforms, coinage, monuments and ceremonies – members of the community are, by these means of national identification, reminded of their common heritage and cultural kinship, and consequently, as Smith stated, they feel strengthened and exalted by their sense of common identity and belonging. By these presents, the nation becomes a “‘faith-achievement’ group, able to surmount obstacles and hardships” (16-17). So the primary function of *national identity* is to concede a strong “community of history and destiny” to preclude people from personal oblivion and “restore collective faith” (Smith 162).

1.2 Nationalism as a Form of Identity

Furthermore, Smith argues that in the world of nations each nation is unique, each is “chosen”. He views nationalism as:

. . . secular, modern equivalent of the pre-modern, sacred myth of ethnic election. A doctrine of polycentric uniqueness, it preaches the universality of 'irreplaceable culture values'. Where once each ethnic community was a world unto itself, the centre of the universe, the light amid darkness, now the heritage and culture values from the storehouse of that same community, selected, reinterpreted and reconstituted, form one unique, incommensurable national identity among many other, equally unique, cultural identities (84).

To be more specific, it means that, every culture even the least developed and elaborated, possesses some value that is irreplaceable and may contribute to the "total fund of human cultural values"(Smith 84). Nationalism, as Smith asserts, as an ideology and symbolism, legitimates every cultural structure, in order to preserve for descendants its funds of irreplaceable culture values (84). Let's pose a question: Why have *national identity* and nationalism become so fundamental in the modern world? Primarily, that is, as a result of its ubiquitousness and pervasiveness. Smith argues that the nationalist dream of a world of nations, each homogeneous, united and free, even if far afield realization, has been preoccupied by peoples across the globe, and has inspired popular resistance, effort and conflict. Smith stated: "the globalization of nationalism, if not yet of the homogeneous nation is a powerful reality, one that conditions our cultural outlook and political endeavours" (143-144).

Today, *national identity* is the cardinal form of collective identification. Apart from the feelings of individuals, it provides the dominant criterion of culture and identity, as Smith declared, "the sole principle of government and the chief focus and economic activity" (170). The appeal of the nation and nationalism is global, since there is no area released of ethnic protests and nationalist insurrections. "Praised or reviled, the nation shows few signs of being transcended, and nationalism does not appear to be losing any part of its explosive popular power and significance", stated Smith (170).

Finally, a sense of *national identity* provides a powerful means of defining and locating individual selves in the world, by means of the prism of the "collective personality and its distinctive culture", which is conveyed through "a shared, unique culture" that the members of a distinct ethnicity, are enabled to distinguish "who we are" in the contemporary world (16-17). By rediscovering that culture, Smith claims that, we rediscover ourselves, the authentic self, otherwise according to him, it has appeared to many divided and disoriented individuals who have been bound to contend

with the vast changes and uncertainties of the modern world. This process of self-determination and location is in many ways the key to *national identity* (17).

2. AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

2.1 *Defining of the Images*

The concept of *national identity* is relatively recent, a modern way of identifying and constructing communities. Recently, there has been made many attempts to define Australia's national identity, however, in delineating the culture or society of Australia, historians encountered some difficulties to give a definition of what it means to be an Australian (Whitlock, *Introduction* ii):

Our country, our nation, is far from being something we can take for granted. We might think of the vast number of different and often contradictory phrases which emerge from time to time in the media to describe Australia or parts of Australia: a multicultural nation, a British nation, an Aboriginal nation, an "American" nation, an Asian-Pacific nation, a sporting nation, a nation of slobs, a Christian society, an egalitarian society, a racist or sexist society, the land of the outback, the land of suburbia, a workingman's paradise, a banana republic (Whitlock iv).

The predominant images of *national identity* may seem to be natural or inevitable products of the Australian experience as a nation – those images which associate the Australian national character with sports, beach, mateship, landscape for instance. But things look rather more complicated when one starts to consider questions about just, who is, actually meant by the phrase such as "our experience as a nation" (Whitlock 22). Who is included and who excluded by the familiar, or contrariwise, by the notorious images of *national identity*? Where do the images come from, and do we have diverse, even contradictory images present together? Any historical quest for the Australian nation or national character should be exceptionally wary of contemporary definition and prejudice, and should examine contrary, as well as supporting evidence for certain characteristics in the past (22).

Whitlock suggests that this is "the history of a national obsession", forasmuch as the majority of new nations undergo the formality of inventing the *national identity*, nevertheless, Australia itself, has for a long time supported "a whole industry of image-

makers” to state “who we are” (23). It is entirely essential to realize, that the aim is not merely to describe the continent, but to provide the certain culture with a distinctive individuality, charisma or personality. Richard White argues that there is no “real” Australia waiting to be uncovered, and that we can never arrive at the accurate or adequate definitions of *national identity*, but in place of it, that a *national identity* is an invention (Whitlock 23):

There is no point asking whether one version of this essential Australia is truer than another because they are all intellectual constructs, neat, tidy, comprehensible – and necessarily false. They have all been artificially imposed upon a diverse landscape and population, and a variety of untidy social relationship, attitudes and emotions. When we look at ideas about national identity, we need to ask, not whether they are true or false, but what their function is, whose creation they are, and whose interests they serve (23).

Much Australian history has been preoccupied with the quest for *national identity* – a preoccupation which is itself revealing – and has, as a result, often concentrated on that which is seen as being distinctively Australian (Rickard 1).

Historians seeking to explain the origins of the Australian identity have often contributed to its mystification. Many of them have been pushed to find the “real” Australia or the “typical” Australian, and moreover, firmly concentrated on what is distinctive about the land and its people. As a result, as Whitlock writes, they ended their search among the convicts, the bushrangers, the shearers, the gum trees and the wide-open spaces (24). To understand why they came to such conclusions, one needs to look at other forces, not particularly distinctive, contributing to the making of Australian identity. Firstly, *national identities* are invented within a framework of modern Western ideas about science, nature, race, society or nationality. Carter in this sense declares that:

. . . not only is the very idea of national identity a product of European history at a particular time, but each addition to the Australian identity has reflected changing intellectual needs and fashions in the West. The national identity is not “Born of the lean loins of the country itself”, as one ardent nationalist put it, but is part of the “cultural baggage” which Europeans have brought with them, and with which we continue to encumber ourselves (Whitlock 25).

2.2 The Pioneer Legend

In the eighteenth century, the world was becoming one world, but Australia was still a world of its own. The conquest of Australia was born in the oppression of the poor and dispossessed in England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland. Those in power assigned the cause of social problems to those, who suffered most, and sought to alleviate problems by getting rid of the people: transportation to the Antipodes. There, on the other side of the world, was to found a prison colony, where the naval Captain James Cook had first landed in Botany Bay in January, 1788 (Deborah 1). Judge Therry wrote in his *Reminiscences*:

Even in the class of the more depraved convicts transported for a serious crime, the instances of a reformed character were numerous and gratifying. London pickpockets and convicts from Dublin, Liverpool and the large towns of the United Kingdom, who from their childhood upwards, had been brought up in ignorance, and had led lives of habitual crime, if not from principle, from obvious motives of interest in the prospect of becoming independent in a land of abundance, altered their course of conduct and became industrious members of society (*Australian Legend* 33).

2.2.1 The Tradition of Mateship

Pioneering conditions accentuated, not only the dissolute habits, but also the toughness and adaptability of the pioneers; and the loneliness of bush life, no less than the brutalities of the system, enhanced their group solidarity (35). In the new land convicts, itinerant rural workers, and bushrangers [outlaws] developed their own values for survival and resistance. This fact is reflected in the poems by A. B. Paterson, for instance in *Clancy of the Overflow*: “And the bush has friends to meet him, and their kindly voices greet him / And he sees the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended, / And at night the wondrous glory of the everlasting stars” (Weldon 8-9). “Mateship” and a “fair go”, the social and cultural representations of equality, became essential features of Australian identity. Blainey wrote:

The tradition of mateship – collectivist idea that men should be loyal to the men with whom they lived and worked – had its roots in the time when Australia was a man’s land, and that tradition was strongest in the outer rural regions where women were rare and the daily life of men was monotonous and lonely. The idea of mateship flavoured Australian democracy (Blainey 171).

Subsequently, these values came to inform those social movements, particularly trade unionism, aimed at resisting oppression (*Australian Legend* 35). The poet Henry Lawson wrote in 1894: “When the ideal of ‘mateship’ is realised, the monopolists will not be able to hold the land from us” (Deborah 1). The colony was meant to be self-sufficient. Exploration, settlement, and development were officially the “key processes” by which land was to be discovered, occupied, and made to be productive. Deborah stated: “it was a matter of forcibly wresting control of the land from the people [the Aboriginal people] who already lived there. This continent-wide undeclared war of conquest was based on a single intent: winning” (1).

In the book *Images of Australia*, Whitlock wrote: “their history builds a picture of a society characterised by unity, consensus, solidarity and fraternity: ‘the nation is always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship’” (16-17). Consequently, Manning Clark disputed that:

. . . the mateship did serve as a comforter in a foreign environment, but it also served as a blind to conceal the way in which European man in Australia turned to ravaging the land. It is as if, bereft of the ‘civilised’ values of the European heritage, the pioneers went on a rampage of exploitative destruction – and then erected the gaudy monuments of Australian society to hide their guilt and despair (Whitlock 17).

As stated above, Clark attempts to explain the factors which shaped the colonial quest for self-definition, and how these affected the contemporary nation. He declares that a fundamental experience for the white settlers was the “vastness and strangeness of the land itself”, which seemed so much at odds with the purposes of civilised humans, understood purely in terms of European conditions. Furthermore, Clark suggests that the apparent uselessness of the land and the fact that its European inhabitants felt compelled to apologise for it instilled an initial sense of inferiority in them. In his view, Australian colonists reacted either by rejecting European standards to reassure themselves that they were a “unique breed“, or by claiming to be no different from the British mainstream (17).

2.2.2. The Heritage of Convictism

The pioneer legend offered social [and economic] history and declared that the people had made the nation and likewise, it had a significant influence on the writing of formal history. It solved the problem which formal historians could never overcome satisfactorily: the embarrassment of the convict origins of the nation. The pioneer legend, by proclaiming the settlement of the land as the chief theme in Australia's history, found it easy not to mention the convicts at all. The pioneer legend, having first excluded convicts, eventually enabled them to be rehabilitated and given a place in the nation's history: "Convicts could be regarded as pioneers" (219). In this role Mary Gilmore depicts them in *Botany Bay*:

I was the conscript / Sent to hell / To make in the desert / The living well;
I split the rock; / I felled the tree: / The nation was - / Because of me
(Whitlock 219)

Russel Ward, in *The Australian Legend* mentions that after the convict period itself had closed, most writers for long time inclined either to avoid the subject or to assume at least tacitly, that the influence of the first pioneers had been almost deplorable (222-223). The climate of a prevailing opinion, is vividly implied by the half-apologetic, with which a clergyman introduced discussion of the subject in 1867:

It is not easy escaping the conviction, and it has never been, I presume, attempted to be denied, that convictism has tended in no small degree to give a distinct character and complexion to certain phases of Australian life which it would not have otherwise worn, and a knowledge of this constitutes no small part of that much-vaunted 'Colonial experience', extolled as the foundation of success. 'What is the use of a friend,' I have heard one man say, 'but to take the use of him' (as qtd. in Morrison, *Australia as it is* 222-223)?

In the poem by Frank Hudson *Pioneers*: "We are the old world people, we wrought with a will unceasing, we moulded, and planned, and we fought with the black, and we blazed the track, that ye might inherit the land", there is recognizable that, this legend is very different from the one discussed by Russel Ward. It celebrates courage, enterprise, hard work, and perseverance; it usually applies to the people who first settled the land, whether as pastoralists or farmers. In addition to, it is a nationalist legend which deals in

a heroic way with the central experience of European settlement in Australia. Carter asserted that it is “the taming of the new environment to man’s use” (Whitlock 205).

2.2.3. Bush Ethos

But why was the legend seen as important for Australians? Crawford argues that it provided “a self-picture that enables Australians to act with confidence” (Whitlock 16). It was inevitable that his picture would derive from the *bush ethos*. When Australians diverted from Britain in search of some elements unique to life in this country, and in particular, when artists sought inspiration from distinctively Australian sources, “where could they find them”, argues Crawford, “but in the bush” (16-17)? Thus, because it filled an “imaginative need”, it entered the Australian consciousness and became the Australian legend. Besides, the values, as Carter mentions, had their basis in the “experience of bush life – self-reliance, egalitarianism, mateship – were encapsulated in the national character” (17).

Vance Palmer deals with another aspect of this argument, suggesting that the Australian people in the latter half of the nineteenth century were “united in their ideals and aspirations”, and as well as, that they were “consciously isolationist, determinedly working at an imagined community of their own devising and rejecting outside influences” (Whitlock 17):

. . . there is no doubt that the Australian people were acutely aware of their isolation, and were determined to turn to account the freedom it gave them by building up something like an earthly paradise for the common man (17).

Whitlock claims that Palmer’s message was that Australians were fused in a common dream of the future. Moreover, he argues that reference to the legend can help us transcend contemporary divisions, to recognise that “we are ‘a people’”, and so, can anew share a common dream and build a common culture (Whitlock 17).

From the Goldberg’s point of view, much of Australia’s history consists of the “search for and creation of substitutes” thence it follows, that Australia’s dominant myths and legends, be they of (10):

. . . bushman or bushranger, digger or trade unionist, blokes, mates and ockers, are self-induced deceits and evasions, attempts to escape from or

devise easy answers to fundamental questions about the human self, its identity and behaviour. These frauds have been enormously important in determining our self-image and have taken on their own reality (Goldberg 10).

2.2.4 The Golden Era

“With my swag all on my shoulder, black billy in my hand / I travelled the bush of Australia like a true-born native man”.¹ Such were the words of one from the hundreds of incoming immigrants searching for gold (*Australian Legend* 112).

The discovery of gold in Australia in 1851, “hot on the heels of the Californian rush”, only modified that pattern, but its demographic impact was dramatic. Suddenly the whole nature of British emigration to Australia changed. Rickard wrote: “It was no longer a matter of despatching criminals and overnight the colonies had all the immigrants they desired – and more” (Rickard 34-35). Within a decade the population had more than doubled. The Gold Rush was considered one of the “great safety valves” for nineteenth century European society, and apart from it, as Rickard says: “the gold had magic properties. It could not only make the poor man rich, but also create civilisation in the wilderness and moreover, it encouraged the illusion of democracy” (36). The very nature of the Gold Rush, as a social phenomenon ensured, a wide range of immigrants. According to one historian “seriousness of purpose, readiness of emotion, craving for respectability, prudery and sentimentality” marked out this generation (Rickard 37). When Portus writes:

Before the Gold era, Australia was regarded in the main as a kind of outlandish suburb of Britain at best; at worst as a place of exile for those Britons who had to live there. After that time there is apparent in Australia the consciousness of a distinct national identity (*Australian Legend* 114).

From the context, it is quite apparent, he seems to be suggesting, that a substantial effect of the Gold Rush was to, precipitate the growth of a distinctively Australian national feeling. As mentioned above, the pioneer working people developed a distinctive national feeling before the year 1851, nevertheless, the great flood of new immigrants

¹ For the typical gold digger, *Down on his Luck*, see Appendix no. 9

hastened the granting of responsible government and democratic institutions. Ward claims that it actually delayed the growth of national awareness (116).

Furthermore, powerful collectivist morality and mateship were two other fundamental elements of the pastoral workers' ethos, which was seized by the gold-seekers. With the belief in equality came the idea of mateship. Henry Lawson wrote: "The mateship born in barren lands / Of toil and thirst and danger" (Shaw 136). Besides, the sense of comradeship and solidarity may be seen in the K. S. Prichard's novel *The Roaring Nineties*:

The search for gold and the necessity for preserving their existence in that out-of-the-way place, surrounded by hundreds of miles of dry, almost waterless wilderness, reduced all men to the fundamental necessity of human society, combination to safeguard mutual interests. The roll-up served that purpose (Prichard 39).

The diggings were also a forcing-ground for two other traits already noted as being typical of the outback Australian way of life: adaptability to hard conditions and egalitarian independence (*Australian Legend* 120). L. Shaw asserted that there was resistance of different kind, which formed an experience unlike that of the United States of America, here it was "the resistance from the land itself and its climate, from the scanty and unreliable rainfall and from the vast semi-arid plain merging into the trackless desert, which covers more than one third of the continent" (Shaw 17). But these very trials added pride to the thought that the diggings were, as Horne wrote, "the wonderful place to take the conceit out of men who expect much difference" (*Australian People* 81-82). Polehampton both describes and explains digger egalitarianism:

The population of Victoria, as I have said before, presents a marked contrast to that of England and Europe generally. As a rule, every man there is, may be, or expects soon to be, his own master; and the consciousness of this causes a spirit of independence to pervade the mass, collectively and individually; this feeling being more especially prevalent on the diggings. Here are no conventionalities; no touching of hats. Men meet on apparently equal terms; and he who enjoyed the standing of a gentleman in England becomes aware, on the diggings, that his wanted position in society is no longer recognised; and the man, who in former days might have pulled your boots off, or served you respectfully behind a counter, shakes hands with

you, and very likely hails you by a nickname, or by no name at all (*Australian Legend* 120-121).

The levelling tendencies in society were more intense than before the gold discoveries. Moreover, the obliteration of class barriers, inseparable from life on the actual goldmines, and the constant “coming and going” between the fields and the colonial capitals, both tended to spread the egalitarian outlook more rapidly, as Ward stated: “outward from the ‘nomad tribe’ and upward through the middle classes” (121). Besides, Ward also points out that there is the evidence to show that less admirable “outback habit” were also adopted, and even accentuated by the diggers: gambling, profanity and drunkenness flourished in the colonial society (122). This Homeric age of Australian drinking became legendary in the 1840’s, at which time there was a favoured song: “There’s rum and brandy, as I’ve heard’em say / In that blessed island called Bot’ny Bay” (as qtd. in Townsend, *Rambles and Observations* 9). Likewise, Prichard in her novel about the goldfields wrote:

“Come ‘n-’ave- a drink!” Ted shouted breezily. It was the way most arguments ended on the fields. The men scrambled up from the grounds on which they had been sprawling, or sitting squatted back on their haunches. They were all drunk. Frisco and Ted shouting and singing hilariously, as they made their way along the track to their camps after midnight (Prichard 128).

The bushmen’s ethos was not changed by the Gold Rush nevertheless, there arose a new element: that of the racial intolerance. In Britain and in Europe generally, nationalism and its accompanying delusions of “racial grandeur” were much less marked in the eighteenth century than they became in the nineteenth. It is probable that the remoteness and isolation of Australia fostered a relative prolongation of this aspect of the “age of enlightenment” (*Australian Legend* 130). A nationalist radical, E. J. Brady, in his *Australia Unlimited* summed up what it meant to be Australian at that time in terms of romance:

Under clear cold stars their camp fire had been lighted. On the edge of odorous eucalyptus forests, their broad axes had flashed in the sunlight. Mountain fastnesses had echoed the report of their rifles. Over great plains their horses had galloped – north, south, east and west they had been staking out a continent for the White Race (R. White 84).

From this time the mateship of the pastoral workers rigidly excluded Asians from the nomad tribe, though other coloured people were sometimes accepted and tolerated. Ward mentions that the rules of the Australian Workers' Union, in Spence's day, denied membership to "Chinese, Japanese, Kanakas, or Afghans, or coloured aliens other than Maoris, American negroes, and children of mixed parentage born in Australia" (132). An anonymous Kelly Gang folk-ballad shows this racism at its most disgusting:

They mustered up the servants and locked them in a room, / Saying, 'Do as we command you, or death will be your doom,' / The Chinaman cook 'no savvied,' his face was full of fear, / But Ned soon made him savvy with a straight left to the ear (*Australian Legend* 132).

After the Gold Rush there was a sharp decrease in the number of immigrants and visitors from America. The period, from about 1860 till 1900, was one in which Australia, like the United States, was occupying the interior, and was relatively little affected by the outside world:

Apart then from this heightened self-awareness, and the new element of racial exclusiveness, the bush-workers lived and thought in much the same way after the gold discoveries as they had done before them. And this was due not only to the strength of the old-hand-outback tradition, but at least equally to the fact that the conditions of bush life, which had done so much to mould that tradition in the earlier period, were still substantially unchanged after the Gold Rush (*Australian Legend* 138).

Finally, the Gold Rush diversified the economy, and greatly strengthened the middle class in Australia. In politics and economics, the golden decade was a watershed however, in the development of the Australian mystique it was not. As Ward writes, it had an "over-all effect of delaying the emergence into full consciousness of the national legend" (140).

2.2.5. Bushmen versus Bushrangers as the Symbol of Nationalist Sentiment

It has been argued that most of the bushman's essential characteristics took shape before the Gold Rush. This nineteenth century hero of national culture can be seen in the work of two well-known Australian poets, Henry Lawson and A. B. Paterson. Lawson, as a

nationalist, wanted to give his country a past to be proud of. In the early stories and poems Lawson follows the orthodox line of dating Australia's greatness from the gold rushes, and so he accords heroic status to the diggers: "these were the men who gave our country birth" (Whitlock 210). He rates their achievements higher than those of the explorers, sees them as the ranking heroes of the time:

Talk about the heroic struggles of early explorers in a hostile country; but for dogged determination and courage in the face of poverty, illness, and distance, commend me to the old-time digger – the truest soldier Hope ever had! [. . .] Where the scrubs were dark as the blacks that crept, with "nulla" and spear held low; Death was hidden amongst the trees, and bare on the glaring sand. They fought and perished by twos and threes – And that's how they won the land (210-211)!

Just as the later bushmen² felt themselves to be the "true Australian", there are hints that they also felt some indebtedness to the indigenous people of Australia, the Aborigines, to be, in some sense, the heirs to the significant parts of Aboriginal culture. After all, no white man has ever been equal to the Aborigines in essential bush skills, in tracking, finding water or living on bush food. Ward writes: "as has been argued, the bushman's *esprit de corps* sprang largely from his adaptation to, and mastery of, the outback environment, then the Aborigines was his master and mentor" (*Australian Legend* 201). The same was mentioned in *The Roaring Nineties*, the novel which is set in the Western Australian goldfields written from the perspective of the miners, where K. S. Prichard writes: "'It was so easy to lose your way, get bushed in the scrub', she said. 'Even good bushman did'" (Prichard 68).

Moreover, a proper understanding of the distinctive ethos of the "nomad tribesmen" is of cardinal importance for the understanding of many aspects of Australian history. The pastoral industry was, and still is as Ward suggests, "the country's essence" (*Australian Legend* 10). The nature of Australian geography, and decreasing scarcity of white women in the outback brought into being and "itinerant rural proletariat, overwhelmingly masculine in composition and outlook" (10).

The second half of the nineteenth century is the period when Australia established its own traditions, wrote its myths and legends. But highway robbery is not a uniquely Australian phenomenon. There have been the "knights of the road" in

England, such as noted Robin Hood or Dick Turpin and bandits in America like Billy the Kid, but in the nineteenth century bushranging in Australia was so widespread, and so strongly supported by public sympathy (*Australian Legend* 154). Russel Ward mentions: "Every country has its great man – hero, poet or philosopher" (145). Ned Kelly and his gang, was considered to be the most famous of Australia's bushrangers and became a symbol of nationalist sentiment:

So Kelly marched into the bank, / A cheque all in his hand, / For to have it changed for money / Of Scott he did demand. / And when that he refused him, / He, looking at him straight, / Said, "See here, my name's Ned Kelly, / And this here man's my mate" / [. . .] Revenge is sweet, and in the bush / They can defy the law, / Such sticking up and plundering / You never saw before (Stewart, *The Kelly Gang* 42-43).

In the old convict days the bushrangers were escaped felons, who ranged through the bushland robbing the outlying farms and lonely wayfarers and knew the bush better than the newcomers (Blunden 82-83). In the book *The Australian People*, Horne writes that their drunkenness, brutality and incompetence made it credible that some bushrangers had been hounded into crime by police persecution (119). "The escaped convict was a more virulent evil, and his doings smacked of a brutal thirst for vengeance, not only on his former gaolers, but on all, white and black alike, who were less fiendish than himself", such were bushrangers described in *The History of Bushranging* (Ch.White 20). With the booming gold-rush days these outlaws found some new targets. The gold discoveries gave bushrangers a new lease of life. It suited them to waylay and rob those who were going to or retiring from the gold-fields than to "themselves handle pick and shovel and cradle" and they scrupled not to murder as well as rob if the unfortunate victims made even a show of resistance (26).

Furthermore, the "old Australian" elements of population and, in particular, the pastoral proletariat of the interior, tended to look up the bushrangers as "heroic symbols of resistance to constituted authority" (*Australian Legend* 146). Sidney declared on behalf of the escaped convicts: "bushranging by prisoners, has in almost every instance been occasioned by cruel, unjust masters" (147). After his retirement Macquarie wrote:

² For a distinctive bushman, *A Bushman's Song*, see Appendix no. 7

I have no doubt that many convicts who might have been rendered useful and good men, had they been treated with humane and reasonable control, have sunk into despondency by the unfeeling treatment of such masters; and that many of those wretched men, driven to acts of violence by harsh usage, and who, by a contrary treatment, might have been reformed, have taken themselves to the woods, where they can only subsist by plunder, and have terminated their lives at the gallows (as qtd. in Marjoribanks, *Travels in New South Wales* 170).

Most contemporaries agreed that flogging was a particularly efficacious means of producing bushrangers. The desire for freedom undoubtedly excited the convicts in the first instance to break from control and “take to the bush”, and the pangs of hunger led them to plunder; but they soon assumed “a boldness and lawlessness that fairly intimidated the Government”, as White stated (15). Very impressive is the evidence of Judge Therry who wrote:

Bushrangers, it is known, have been the terror of New South Wales. Of some hundreds of them who passed through our criminal courts, I do not remember to have met with one who had not been over and over again flogged before he took to the bush [. . .] the lash was used for the purpose of extorting a confession of guilt from vaguely suspected persons (*Australian Legend* 148).

A few actual cases will show the mingling of complete despair and indomitable defiance, with which some convicts reacted to this treatment. In 1839, a bushranger named Hall, when sentenced to death, said from the dock: “I’ve been all over the country in my time without taking the life of anyone. I’ve been baited like a bulldog and I’m only sorry now I didn’t shoot every tyrant in New South Wales” (as qtd. in Boxall, *The Story of the Australian Bushrangers* 59). Despite the robbing, raping and murdering, the bushmen had rather intriguing attitude to these desperados, as Macarthur conveyed: “The sympathies of the numerical majority of the inhabitants are in favour of the criminals, whom they would rather screen from punishment, than deliver over to justice” (*Australian Legend* 151). Bushrangers were the “culture-heroes of the folk”. In both the earlier and later periods, bushrangers procure to give some verisimilitude to the Robin Hood role which their admirers imposed upon them: “they robbed only from the rich and gave the poor” (152-153).

Fundamentally, bushrangers became folk-heroes, since they were symbols of the emergent Australian national feeling. Distinctive national traits were bred of adaptation

to the new environment; of necessity, adaptation proceeded faster on the frontiers of settlement than in the relatively civilized coastal areas near Sydney. They exemplified the nomad tribe's manner of life. In the 1820's the majority of people believed that men became bushrangers "out of sheer inborn depravity", or because they were compelled to desperation by the inhuman brutality of some masters and foremen (165). Cunningham, the most acute observer of this early period, had a different view and explanation. He wrote:

The vanity of being talked of, I verily believe, leads many foolish fellows to join in this kind of life – songs being often made about their exploits by their sympathising brethren; [. . .] It is the boast of many of them, that their names will live in the remembrance of the colony long after exit from among us to some penal settlement; Riley, the captain of the Hunter's River banditti, vaunting that he should be long spoken of, in fear by his enemies, and in admiration by his friends (*Australian Legend* 165)!

One of the poems, *Ben Hall ballad* by A. B. Paterson, with a deliciously double-edged irony, explicitly states the outback feeling that the bushrangers were the true representatives of the "legitimate Australian spirit":

Come! All ye lads of loyalty, and listen to my tale; / A story of bushranging days, I will to you unveil, / 'Tis of those gallant heroes, God bless them one and all, / And we'll sit and sing 'God Save the King, Dunn, Gilbert and Ben Hall' (as qtd .in Paterson, *Old Bush Songs* 24).

In conclusion, as bushranging began as the gesture of a few "desperate men, goaded beyond despair to defiance". It received the very widespread sympathy enjoyed by the criminals, and this empathy sprang partly from the disjunction between the outlook of the "old Australians" and that of respectable, urban and middle-class people, whose numbers and influence were so greatly increased by the effects of the gold discoveries. Ward points out that these men, desperados, often felt they were striving against the English tyranny when, in fact, they were contending, albeit unconsciously, to grow up nationally, to become a homogeneous Australian people (Whitlock 176).

The bush, the outback, pioneers, stockmen, shearers, drovers and drover's wives, even bushrangers – these images have been plundered again and again for the representations of who Australians really are or where the true Australia can be found. The bush does not have a single meaning but is a cultural symbol which has been used by many different individuals and social groups for a wide variety of diverse, sometimes contradictory, purposes (177).

2.2.6 Australian Landscape

From the 1880's, a conscious attempt was being made in Australia to create a distinctively national culture. At the same time, it should be remembered, that literary, artistic and musical nationalists in Europe and North America were also ransacking history, nature and folklore to construct national cultures. Whitlock wrote that it was an outcome of the rise of European nationalism and, as in Australia, it was often associated with the growth of local manufacturing industry and an urban bourgeoisie (Whitlock 25). Furthermore, In Australia, as Carter mentions, this would result in a new image which was to prove more powerful than any other. It was essentially "the city-dweller's image of the bush, a sunlit landscape of faded blue hills, cloudless skies and noble gum trees, peopled by idealised shearers and drovers". Australians were urged to respond to this image emotionally, as a test of their patriotism. For the first time, a basic distinction was made between the image of Australia created by the Europeans, and that created by the Australians themselves. New European images were condemned as necessarily "alien, biased, blurred; only the new Australian image could be clear, pure, true" (25). It is an enduring cultural myth that the Europeans found the Australian environment hostile, alien, oppressive, and that they had great difficulty in coming to terms with it aesthetically (Rickard 43).

There have been dramatic changes in the Australian life; the long-time boom, which had led to a steady improvement in the overall standard of living from the time of the Gold Rush, came to a sudden end in 1891. In the depression that followed, amidst the great strikes, the bank crashes and unemployment, as Rickard declared, "the old faith in constant progress collapsed" (44-45). On top of that, by the end of the decade the six Australian colonies had voted to become a nation. These changes in political direction were accompanied by a new vitality in the development of art and literature from the middle of the 1880's. A new generation of writers and painters was giving creative expression to a fresh approach to Australia. Whitlock comments:

The Australia they described was supposed to be more "real", more in tune with the democratic Australian temper. Most of the writers and artists coming into prominence in the late 1880s and 1890s, as Australian society settled down after the upheavals of the gold rushes [. . .] It was little wonder then that the younger generation saw themselves as rebelling against an outdated and stale set of cultural standards. They could believe they were

presenting a vision that was new and fresh, and could make much of the virtue of youth (Whitlock 26-27).

The new generation was also attracted to a cluster of symbols and principles which they associated with Australia: sunlight, wattle, the bush, the future, freedom, mateship and egalitarianism (33). To follow, Carter argues that this, like other images of Australia, was essentially artificial:

It did not spring, in full bloom, from the Australian soil, but rather grew out of a set of attitudes to which the new generation had attached themselves and which provided a reference point for their revolt. They generally found this new Australia, which they thought of as the 'real' Australia, in the outback (33).

The merger of history and landscape, whether in the form of archaeological sites, national parks, pastoral idylls, or natural wonders, functions analogously: "The past is simply there [. . .] shared set of dispositions, tastes, gestures, and memories that qualify the nation as distinctive", stated Foster (Scott 244). According to Corrigan, the peculiar coordination of space, time, and people [territory, history, and society] makes the nation an identifiable kind of imagined community (244).

Furthermore, Smith claims that the nation and *national identity* must be seen as a "creation of nationalism and its proponents" and in addition to that, nationalists, intent on commemorating the nation, are drawn to the dramatic and creative possibilities of artistic media and genres in painting, sculpture, architecture, music, opera, ballet and film, as well as in the arts and craft. Through these genres a nationalist artist may, directly or evocatively, "'reconstruct' the sights, sounds and images of the nation in all its concrete specificity and with 'archaeological' verisimilitude" (92). Smith suggests: "Who, more than poets, musicians, painters and sculptors, could bring the national ideal to life and disseminate it among the people" (Smith 92-93)?

For the writers and artists, it was in their professional interest to adopt and popularise a nationalist interpretation of Australian cultural development, to perpetuate the idea that the particular image of Australia which they had created was "somehow purer, and more real, than any other" (Whitlock 41). Smith points out:

. . . This nature and these spaces are quite specific; they constitute the historic home of the people, the sacred repository of their memories. They have their own historical poetry, for those whose spirits are attuned to them. The homeland is not just the setting of the national drama, but a major protagonist, and its natural features take on historical significance for the people. So lakes, mountains, rivers and valleys can all be turned into symbols of popular virtues and 'authentic' national experience [. . .] In this poetic history fact and legend are fused to produce inspiring myths of resistance to tyranny and of purity of soul (Smith 65-66).

In the early 1900's there was a movement to promote the wattle as a national flower – in its “golden innocence“, as Rickard stated, it was said to stand for home, country, kindred, sunshine, and love – and subsequently, a sprig was incorporated in the Australian coat of arms in 1912 (Rickard 130). The image of the Australian landscape: bushfire, flood and drought, pioneering, campfires, bush and station life; can all be found in the literature and art of both generations (Whitlock 39).

The diversion of class politics into the nationalist compact of the new commonwealth has been the subject of considerable “historical scrutiny” (Scates 3-4). Nevertheless, Scates asserts that it does not detract from the great political and cultural imagination of the nineties. Notwithstanding, the “bleakness of the age”, or perhaps because of it, the end of the nineteenth century witnessed the “blossoming” of new schools of Australian art and literature. The work of the Heidelberg painters, which responded in exciting ways to the light and colour of the Australian landscape, and the bush itself, provided a “setting and idiom for *Bulletin*³ writers and bohemian balladists” (4). Scates wrote: “There was an air of anticipation as six disparate colonies cautiously declared themselves a nation, and an elusive search for what contemporaries liked to call an ‘Australian identity’” (Scates 4).

The sometimes sentimental landscapes of Elioth Gruner and the stately gum trees of Hans Haysen, became accepted national images. Heysen saw the gum tree as “a poet's tree, a painter's tree”, proclaiming that “beautiful trees are decided moral factors in everyone's life” (Hansen 72). Some of his paintings were almost portraits of tree, depicting gnarled, massive trunks, with flaking skin of crumpled bark. Rickard comments: “This painterly elevation of the gum tree as the symbol of the bush was complemented by a growing interest in Australian flora and fauna generally” (Rickard 129). By the time of the Heidelberg School, fashion demanded a more intimate

approach to landscape, with gentler scenery and more attention to colour values, space and sunlight than to careful drawing, dramatic romanticism or heroic gloom (Whitlock 36). Besides, the Australian mountains have their own particular romantic quality⁴; Marcus Clarke wrote:

There is no mountain range which can be compared with the Australian Alps [. . .] for gloom, for greatness of solitude, and for that grandeur which is born of the mysterious and silent (as qtd. in Bernard Smith, *Documents on Arts and Taste in Australia* 138)!

Similarly in poetry, Kendall's romanticism had attracted him to the "eastern seaboard and fern-filled gullies"; fashion led Paterson towards "sunlit plains and wide open spaces" (Whitlock 36). By the 1890s, many critics were condemning one of the classic descriptions of the Australian landscape:

What is the dominant note of Australian scenery? That which is the dominant note of Edgar Allan Poe's poetry – Weird Melancholy [. . .] The Australian mountain forests are funereal, secret, stern. Their solitude is desolation. They seem to stifle, in their black gorges, a story of sullen despair[. . .] The lonely horseman riding between the moonlight and the day sees vast shadows creeping across the shelterless and silent plains, hears strange noises in the primeval forest, where flourishes a vegetation long dead in other lands, and feels, despite his fortune, that the trim utilitarian civilisation which bred him shrinks into insignificance beside the contemptuous grandeur of forest and ranges coeval with an age in which European scientists have cradled his own race (Whitlock 37).

Marcus Clarke had written this in his preface to the poems of Adam Lindsay Gordon in 1876 but it had been adapted from descriptions of paintings by Buvelot and Chevalier which he had written earlier. The primary approach was to evaluate literature on the basis of how representative or expressive it is of the society it portrays. Among others, there has been a strong stream of radical nationalism writing in the disciplines of literature and history, and it has shown "a capacity to create powerful myths and memorable narratives" (Carter 39). It has been said that the radical nationalism, with its emphasis on the bush tradition, leaves women, the Aborigines and urban dwellers out of

³ For the explanation of this word, see Appendix no. 1.1

⁴ For *Colonial Art* see Appendix no. 6

the picture, since it has concentrated chiefly on the working class, “where the tradition’s values are allegedly embodied, to the exclusion of understanding how the powerful monied classes affect society and history”: claims Carter (40).

Generated in the early years of white colonisation among assigned convicts, gold miners and pioneer selectors, systematised in the late nineteenth century nationalist fantasies of the Heidelberg School of painters and the Bulletin school of writers, the concept of the archetypal Australian as “a bloke from the bush”, has become ingrained in the national consciousness (as qtd. in Eleanor Hodges, *Bushman Legend* 30-37).

2.3. Suburban Australia

Next, it is commonplace now to remark on the urban nature of Australian society. In 1964 Donald Horne evoked Australia’s typicality:

Australia may have been the first suburban nation: for several generations Australians have been used to the conformities of living in suburban streets longer than most people: mass secular education arrived in Australia before most other countries; Australia was one of the first nations to find part of the meaning of life in the purchase of consumer goods; the whole business of large-scale organised distribution of human beings in a modern suburban society is not new to Australians (Whitlock 240).

There is no doubt that Australia is a profoundly conservative country, a stable place for capital investment where the basic political institutions are respected. Accordingly there is something undeniably authentic in any observation of Australia as suburbia; it probably is the most suburban nation in a strictly demographic sense, as claims Goldberg (241). Richard White argues that the suburban life style was a key element in the notion of “Australian way of life” that developed in the 1950’s. (227) Smith declares: “the city, so pictured, was a trap for the human spirit. But the ‘bush’ - the relentless Australian wilderness – was a forbidding alternative”. He claims that just a few could survive there, thus the city was a practical necessity, whilst the bush an idealized dream (Goldberg 35). Moreover, Donald Horne mentions that a detailed recognition of the essentially suburban character of Australians has been slow, partly because the old myths have remained virulent and, partly because special factors in Australia such as the almost “pantheist love of outdoor activity” have muddled the

pattern of what – according to overseas authorities – suburbanism is supposed to be (*Lucky Country* 10).

Margaret Bowman noted: “Suburbs are so typically Australian that it is almost as if we had invented them” (Davies 189). Although Australian suburbs have never received the sociological attention they merit, there is a scatter of literature, recently augmented by the growing contemporary interest in the cities and their problems. Davies points out that there are the insights of novelists and other artists who have looked with evaluative eyes at Australian suburbs and through them have seen into the Australian society: “suburbia as microcosm” (190). There is George Johnston’s description of the sad and careful respectability of the suburbs – “a spiritless society”:

This world, without boundaries or specific definition or safety, spread forever flat and diffuse, monotonous yet inimical, pieced together in a dull geometry of dull houses behind silver-painted fences of wire or splintery palings or picket fences and hedges of privet and cypress and lanterna; and all these sad, tidy habitations had names like Sans Souci, The Gables [. . .] All the way through to the city proper there was nothing to break the drab flatness of this unadventurous repetition except the club colours flying over the grandstands of some football ground or other (qtd. in G.H. Johnston, *My Brother Jack* 35).

Moreover, D.H. Lawrence in masterly manner describes in his novel *Kangaroo* Sydney’s suburbs, and what he saw to lie behind and beyond them, in these terms: “Great swarming, teeming Sydney, flowing out into these myriads of bungalows like waters spreading undyked. And what then? Nothing. No inner life, no high command, no interest in anything, finally” (Davies 190). If Lawrence used a view of Sydney’s suburbs to show society’s essential nature, the American critics of the 1950s, who presented a picture of suburbia framed in a picture window, were revealing society in the process of change: “they were giving us a glimpse of the future” (191). Davies stated that the suburban development, on the grand scale, was a post-war phenomenon there, as the Americans, drawn into the big cities in search of civilian work, spilled out into the new fringe-housing tracts to find the domestic life they had been waiting for. Neither the familiar country nor the traditional city, the new suburbs claimed to offer the best of both, but to many critics, like Riesman, they seemed to “combine the worst of each, and to reduce both to an awful, endless, homogeneity” (191-192). Davies

mentions that there in the suburbia could be seen the sad, empty face of the consuming society. Suburban life-styles have been characterized by domesticity, family life, low ethnicity and higher socio-economic status in contrast to the multilingual individualistic urban style with its predominantly contractual social relationships (191).

The fact that Australia is probably the most urbanized nation in the world, is highly inconvenient to the national myth-making. Donald Horne writes that Australians have realized that “theirs” was one of the first modern suburban societies. By the third quarter of the nineteenth century Australia already possessed one of the highest proportions of city dwellers in the world. Australians have been getting used to the conformities of living in suburban streets longer than most people; besides Australia was one of the first nations to find a part of the meaning of life in the purchase of consumer goods (*Lucky Country* 10). Horne claims: “The whole business of large-scale organized distribution of human beings in a modern suburban society is not new to Australians” (11). Furthermore, Horne in his book *Lucky Country* mentions that in the earlier periods of an Australian city life there was a considerable difference between gentility and vulgarity:

The vulgarity came from the ‘working class’ of the big cities; it was pictured as happy-go-lucky, hard-drinking, hard-gambling, matey, thumbing its nose at the cissies and snobs in the lower middle class suburbs. It was a non-possessive shiftless society of rented houses and sparse furniture, companionable, reckless, and concerned with the expressions of toughness. This picture reflected some of the primitive virtues: a man did not tolerate injury, he rebelled against authority and sometimes might take harsh revenge. He was seen to reflect the verities of human history – a real man, not a suburban creation (13).

Another feature of the Australian way of life which tied it to the manufacturing sector was its urban character. Carter suggests that the city had lost the pejorative connotations it had in the past, when it was viewed as “a festering sore corrupting and debilitating the national type” (Whitlock 62). Now suburbia was perceived as an ideal. Not only was the Australian way of life specifically urban; it was also increasingly identified with Sydney. Bohemians had left Sydney to find their “real” Australia. Lawson described Sydney as: “She, of Australian cities / The least Australian of all! / Greedy, luxurious, corrupting / Her sisters one by one” (63).

In the 1930's, Thomas Wood had expected to find Sydney as "the centre of Australian thought" however, instead of it he found "worlds apart from the men who plough and shear and mine – and keep Australia going". He writes: "Sydney lives its own life" (*Lucky Country* 48). Nevertheless, by the 1950's, Sydney was seen as "the most Australian of Australian cities", although it was also considered the most American of all (65). Nicolson asserted:

North American suburbia may closely resemble Australian suburbia in the symbols and attitudes associated with suburban ownership, but in other respects neither the lure of the suburb nor the strength and character of anti-suburbanism seem to offer precise parallels (Nicolson 36).

Among others, the new lines of criticism of the Australians appeared. Horne stated: "Sydney is not so much a city as an agglomeration of small municipalities grouped around a semi-Americanized core and the real estate offices of a score of professional boosters" (*Australian People* 192).

Writers would constantly refer to Sydney to describe what was typically Australian. By the 1970's, the Sydney Opera House had become the most popular symbol of Australia, both here and overseas, analogous to the Statue of Liberty in America or the Eiffel Tower in Paris (Whitlock 49). When, in the first decade of the twentieth century, an American author, Frederick C. Howe, sought to illustrate his belief, that in suburbanization lay the best future for democratic societies (50); it was to Australia that he turned:

The great cities of Australia are spread out into the suburbs in a splendid way. For miles about are broad roads, with small houses, gardens, and an opportunity for touch with the freer, sweeter life which the country offers (as qtd. in Howe, *The City, the Hope of Democracy* 35).

However, there were strong anti-urban traditions in the English culture, and the rapid urbanization of the industrial age had served only, as Goldberg says, "to sharpen ancient arcadian visions" (34). To the genteel classes of England, the city had its seasons for duty, business or pleasure; the countryside, however, remained without question "the natural habitat of the species" (Goldberg 34). Hence, the people who migrated to the Australian colonies were prone to see the urbanization as a potentially alienating, de-

humanizing force. In the Australian context, attitudes such as these, were reinforced by the mythology and symbolism of the bush. C.W. Bean, reflecting on the character of the Australians who went to the war in 1914-1918, declared: “even city-bred Australians were at heart bushmen in their values, virtues and vices” (34). Goldberg assented with him, at least in the sense that, for many urban Australians, the city life retained strong negative associations. Henry Lawson’s *Faces in the Street*, pictured townsmen as “care-worn and pallid, weary, listless and sad”:

And cause have I to sorrow, in a land so young and fair, / To see upon those faces stamped the marks of Want and Care; / I look in vain for traces of the fresh and fair and sweet / In sallow, sunken faces that are drifting through the street (35).

Horne stated that the city, so pictured, was a trap for the human spirit. He wrote: “the bush – the relentless Australian wilderness – was a forbidding alternative. Just few could survive there” (*Lucky Country* 44). As well as Henry Lawson conceded in the ballad *Out Back*: “But only God and the swagman know how a poor man fares Out Back” (44). Therefore, the city was a practical necessity, the *bush* an idealized dream. “It is hard to imagine how one can understand Australia, unless one approaches sympathetically the life most Australians lead and the values they follow”, Donald Horne stated in one of the passages in the book, *The Lucky Country* (45). The problems that arise from the suburban living are equal in different places; suburbia, of course, is not peculiar to Australia. It is typical for all industrial and prosperous countries such as England or the United States, two countries that are in a sense very close to Australia.

2.4. British and American Influences

The question of Australian identity has usually been perceived as “a tug-of-war between Australianness and Britishness, amongst the impulse to be distinctively Australian and the remaining sense of the British heritage”, claims White (R.White 47). However, this attitude to the development of an Australian identity became widespread at the end of the nineteenth century, when nationalists began to highlight what was distinctive about Australia. White asserts that Australians saw themselves, and were seen by others, as the part of a group of the new, transplanted, predominantly Anglo-Saxon emigrant society (47). Henry Lawson wrote: “We have little in common with the English people

except our language. We are more liberal and more progressive than England is” (Shaw 160). Australia was the land of the future, burning with the feverish energy of youth. Australian nationalists were beginning to build up the Australian tradition, idealizing the convict past and attacking Great Britain for sustaining it (Shaw 161):

But the Motherland, whose sons ye were / We know her, but light is our love of her, /
Small honour have we for the mother’s name, / Who stained our birth with the brand
of shame. / We were flesh of her flesh, and bone of her bone, / We are lords of
ourselves, and our land is our own (161).

Furthermore, Carter claims that those, who stay with the moment of British settlement, most likely would perceive Australia in terms of links with an older culture. Conversely, those who would prefer to praise nationhood, want to emphasize Australia as something unique with a distinctive and independent cultural life (Whitlock 8). Such attitudes imply diverse Australias. Fundamental is that Australia means different things to different people, asserts Carter (9). In addition to it Horne declared:

Guessing about Australian ‘images’ of the United Kingdom and the United States is perhaps worthless, but it is irresistible. My guess would be that the United Kingdom would come out associated with the Queen, culture, dowdiness, Westminster Abbey, snobbery, the West End theatre, with the Beatles as a puzzling symbol of the present. America would come out associated with electric washing machines, military strength, Kennedy, TV, egalitarianism. Relations with England prickle with familial misunderstanding. It’s like growing away from one’s parents and seeking new patterns of identity with them [. . .] Relations with America are those of a young cousin to an immensely successful and older cousin, with plenty of criticism, practically no hero worship; it is more straightforward relation (*Lucky Country* 84).

By this proposition Horne wants to point out, that Australians seek a fellowship from the outside world offering an open friendship; and therefore, with Americans they feel they might find common ground (84). It seems that almost every aspect of Australian life was, in hope or despair, at some stage compared to its American equivalent (R.White 51). Throughout the nineteenth century, Australia was depicted as:

. . . another America, a New America, the America of the South, the Future America, a humble imitation of United States, that great America on the

other side of the sphere, the United States of Australia, a newer America, and The Yankee-land beneath the Southern Cross (R.White 50).

White stated that one important implication of this, was to deny Australia an independent identity: “the less it was like Britain, the more it was like the United States, and vice versa” (50). Australia has not been a country of great innovation or originality. It has exploited the innovation and originality of others and much of its boasting is that of a parasite. As a transplanted society, it had sufficient working similarities with the societies from which the innovations came to be able to exploit them with only a margin of inefficiency, as Horne pointed out (*Lucky Country* 24-25). These new people, the Australians adopted British history and kept many of the forms of British political and social life. In 1941, John Curtin, Australian Prime Minister made the notable statement: “Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pang as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom. We know the problems that the United Kingdom faces (*Lucky Country* 76).

Australia’s fascination for overseas observer was its newness and its democracy, and yet, their message is, that neither characteristic had a transforming effect on social relations (Goldberg 69). Trollope specifically drew the comparison with the United States where:

. . . all institutions of the country tend to the creation of a level, to that which men call equality, which cannot be obtained, because men’s natural gifts are dissimilar, but to which a nearer approach is made in America than has ever been affected in Europe. In Australia, no doubt and especially in Victoria, there is a leaning in the same direction; but it is still so slightly in advance of that which prevails among ourselves as to justify an observer in saying that the colonies are rather a repetition of England than an imitation of America (Goldberg 70).

McQueen argues that Australia is not a society in its own right and therefore, can never be understood by looking for a “genuine essence”. His thesis is that Australians have enjoyed an economically privileged position, but only because of a relationship with larger powers. He also points out that Australia is derivative, dependent and closed. (Whitlock 18-19). As Whitlock suggested, it means, that Australia was derived from another society and, and thus, this country was seeking innovations from outside, rather than through creative adaptations to it (19).

. . . the image of the Australian way of life was closely related to the image of Australia as a sophisticated, urban, industrialised, consumer society. This suited the needs of an Australian manufacturing sector which was increasingly aligning itself with the United States, and which had been strengthened in the industrial expansion promoted by the war. Whereas the Australian “type” had been seen as an extension of the British “type”, and Britain had set the standard against which the developing Australian character was measured, it was the United States which provided the standard against which Australia, and other Western nations, measured their “way of life”. After all, the American way of life was the original, the most glamorous, the best publicised (Whitlock 47).

In conclusion, Nicolson stated: “An ideology of genuine egalitarianism, of genuine freedom from the culture cringe, and of genuine attempts, often politically inspired, to be free of Britain and America” (Nicolson 120).

2.5 Multicultural Nation

For centuries Australia has attracted migrants from nearly every part of the globe and therefore, it has become one of the world’s most culturally and linguistically diverse societies. Joseph declared: “Among national governments worldwide, Australia has been in the forefront in developing and executing a vigorous policy for constructing a multilingual and multicultural identity” (Joseph 131). The ethnic composition of the Australian society has changed significantly over the last two centuries. In the 1980’s and 1990’s, the national identity was expressed in the term of multiculturalism, just as Zubrzycki formulated it: “every Australian citizen can be ‘a real Australian’ without necessarily being ‘a typical Australian’” (Skořepa 216). Multicultural implies to a term that describes the cultural and ethnic diversity of contemporary Australia. It recognises that Australia is, and will remain, a culturally diverse country, which aims to ensure this diversity as the positive force in the Australian society:

Australia is a multicultural society, encompassing within the breadth of its ethnic diversity, historical moves to incorporate indigeneous peoples, the highly visible Anglo-Celtic ethnic groups, immigrants from Europe, Australians of Asian backgrounds, refugees from world wars and sojourners from many places on the planet Earth (Whitlock 101).

Whitlock claims that the impact of the international capital and migration on the Australian economy has been more substantial than on any other advanced capitalist

country (Whitlock 103). Furthermore, Carter asserts that these factors have fundamentally shaped post-war Australian society (104). In the 1920's, non-British immigration, like communism, was basically an external threat: “‘undesirable’ migrants were kept out by the ‘White Australia’ policy, while British immigrants were exhorted to ‘live up to your British tradition and aspire to emulate the Australian spirit of Anzac’”⁵, declared Carter (49).

The basic tenet of Australian immigration policy for over 100 years was “White Australia”. Before Federation, the Colonies introduced anti-Chinese immigration restriction acts as a response to the influx of Chinese during the Gold Rush. Federation was accompanied by the 1901 Immigration Restriction Act, better known as the White Australia policy. Australia needed immigrants, but only whites were welcome [. . .] The Australian immigration story is inextricably linked with racist laws and practices. Immigration policy had achieved a “White Australia”! Only a small percentage of non-British migrants had managed to enter before and during the days of the White Australia policy, with Chinese, Italians, Greeks and Germans being the most prominent. Australia had selected its migrants to ensure that a racially homogeneous society would confront the challenges of the post-war era (Whitlock 103).

In Australia, this concept was used to discriminate the migrants from other parts of the world. Carter stated that there was articulated a general prejudice against the newcomers and, in addition to that, an aversion for non-conformity, they criticised all migrants for failing to adopt Australian way of life: “It not only denied the possibility that the cultural traditions of migrants might enrich Australian life, but also denied the existence of different ‘ways of life’ among Australians themselves” (45). Barša asserted that the multicultural political society, in the first place has to cope with nationalism, racism and ethnic violence:

Multiculturalism asserts that people with the diverse roots can live together and can learn to understand the symbolic character of the others; they will be able and they ought to, unprejudiced or illusions view over the boundary of the race, language, origin and age, and to learn think against the background of an intermingled society (Barša 5, my translation)⁶.

⁵ For *Anzac Legend* see Appendix no. 1.2

⁶ For Czech translation see Appendix 2.1

Cultural differences were an outrage to the society, which demanded social uniformity, if not equality. The Australian way of life expressed means of intolerance and degradation to its outsiders (Whitlock 46). Moreover, John O'Grady in his very successful novel *They're a Weird Mob* said to migrants:

There are far too many New Australians in this country who are still mentally living in their homelands, who mix with people of their own nationality, and try to retain their own language and customs [. . .] Cut it out. There is no better way of life in the world than that of the Australian (Rickard 52).

Assimilation was required of both migrants and Aborigines; throughout the 1950's they were supposed to adopt a common, homogeneous Australian way of life, which would be jeopardized unless aliens conformed to it. Harold Holt stressed on that account: "We can only achieve our goal through migration if our newcomers quickly become Australian, in outlook and way of life" (Whitlock 44). Simpson mentioned that a more subtle form of elimination, which is also more easily accomplished, is to assimilate the ethnic minority group by encouraging it to adopt the culture of the dominant group; he sees assimilation as (Hutnik 25):

A process in which people of diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds come to interact in the life of the larger community [. . .] when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups; representatives of different racial and cultural groups live together, some individuals become assimilated. Complete assimilation would mean that no separate social structures based on racial or ethnic concepts remained (25).

The statement articulated above, advocates that the majority of Australians should accept minority groups, whereas minority groups should accept a primary loyalty to Australia (Whitlock 116). Nevertheless, Rickard asserts that it is a platitude that migrants bring with them "cultural baggage" and, upon their arrival in Australia they "unpack it and use it to furnish their surroundings" (Rickard 39). It is quite apparent that just as in a new country, there have to be made all kinds of compromises with a strange environment. In this sense the newness of the society lies precisely in the uniqueness of its composition, says Rickard (39).

Gradually through the 1960's, the racial intolerance associated with the Australian way of life, started showing signs of weakening. Even though they were the primeval occupants of the land, Aboriginal Australians were given no part to play in the prominent versions of what it meant to be an Australian (Whitlock 59). As a result of that, Aboriginal people have begun to uphold their own sense of identity or "Aboriginality" against the delimitation which the white society imposed on them. This development is intensely related to the political consciousness, in particular with such matters as land rights⁷ (58). By the early 1970's, Australia was promoted according to Carter as:

. . . a pluralistic, tolerant, multi-cultural society, although it did not reflect any real improvement in the position of Aborigines and migrants, most of whom remained on the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder. This image coincided – somewhat paradoxically – with what Whitlam refers to as the "new nationalism" which was never clearly spelled out, but it related to a general pride in Australian achievement [. . .] The irony was that, although many of the plays, novels and films produced in the 1970s were intensely critical of aspects of Australian life, they were absorbed by the "new nationalism" and applauded for their Australianness (Whitlock 50-53).

Australia is a multicultural society, which has gradually developed certain laws and policies for giving ethnic minorities and indigenous groups a voice in this society. Tajfel stated: "minorities are subordinate segments of complex societies which are bound together by common experience of discrimination and social disadvantage and which have special physical or cultural traits" (Hutnik 169). This implies that members of a minority are excluded from taking a full share in the life of the society because they differ from the dominant group in a certain way (170). On top of that, Geertz claims: "Understanding a people's culture exposes their normalness without reducing their particularity" (14). Therefore, the essential is to provide these people with the acceptable cultural conditions which they need for their full-value lives and, in addition to it, to protect them from the social vulnerability and economic disadvantages. Johns stated on behalf of the Australian society:

Although on the whole Australian multiculturalism appears to be quite successful in regulating the cultural diversity within the limits of nation-

⁷ For explanation of the word *Land Right*, see Appendix no. 1.3

state, it is still far from achieving its goals: to establish a harmonious nation, guaranteeing access and equity to all citizens. Australian native people as well as the people of non-English speaking origins [. . .] are still brutally under-represented in media, arts, and educational and political institutions (Skořepa 221).

Finally, even though sometimes the essence of equality is missing; there are still disparities of power, wealth and opportunity. But Australia is a nation that for a large part accepts the ideology of fraternalism; Australia is one of the world's most prosperous and stable smaller nations, argues Horne (*Lucky Country* 19-20).

3. ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA

3.1 *The Aborigines in Time and Space*

As opposed to the Europeans, the Aboriginal people⁸ were the primordial inhabitants of the Australian continent. They are believed to have come from South-East Asia, at the time when sea-levels were much lower than nowadays. Migration presumably took place over thousands of years. Black Australians' progenitors were the first human beings to cross oceanic depths between continents. The primeval inhabitants setting foot on the unknown land had to learn to understand a new environment (*Australian History 1*). It is thought, that by 1788, there might have been a total Aboriginal population of about 750,000. Over many thousands of years, therefore, the pattern of Aboriginal settlement emerged and, eventually, there possibly occurred between 500 and 600 dialects and languages (Whitlock 62-63). Morris wrote:

When Cro-magnon people were creating their magnificent cave art in southern France and northern Spain about fifteen thousand years ago, the first Australians had been living – and painting – here for at least thirty-five millennia. On present evidence, men and women first entered the Americas about twenty-five thousand years ago and Australia at least 50 000 B.C. (Morris 1).

Aboriginal life was ordinarily secure and relatively easy. Over many centuries the people had developed a knowledge and understanding of their land which enabled them to find a regular supply of food to meet their daily needs. The gathering of food was a material necessity since it also kept the Aborigines close to the spiritual source of their culture (Rickard 7).

There should not be underestimated the depth of knowledge about the environment, which is required by these food-gatherers and hunters living off the land. Elkin claims that the nature is to the Aborigines a system in which the natural species and phenomena are related, or associated, in space and time (Elkin 32). For instance, the appearance of a particular object, for instance a star, a bird or insect, has become, through observations for the centuries, the sign that rain is coming, some animal will be soon plentiful or that wild fruits are already ripe. The Aborigines always live in harmony with nature which is to them an "open book compiled in a language they have learnt from birth" (37). For the Aborigines the earth had always been there:

Where we live is the earth. We walk this ground, and our feet mark our living mother who feels and knows. We are bodies of a particular shape and culture, and our spirits both connect us to other living things and mark us as uniquely human (Deborah 58).

⁸ For *The Old Australians*, see Appendix no 4

Furthermore, the religious beliefs and mythology are the notable features of the Aboriginal identity. They are released through songs, dance, creative expressions and literary works which are primarily represented by way of myths and legends. They reflect, not only the life experience of the people, but also, the ancient past and the initial visions of the Aboriginal life and the nature in general. The events of the myths and songs took place at a time called the Dreamtime (Shaw 364). Myth interpreted the shape and appearance of the world the Aborigines inhabited. Such objects as rocks, trees, waterholes, animals, birds were integrated through myth and ritual into “a spiritual universe of extraordinary richness” (Whitlock 61). Cowan wrote: “Aboriginal secret-sacred legends are concerned with the deliniation of metaphysical elements” (Cowan 18). In the Australian folklore predominates myth that entirely serves as an interpretation and, illustrates a real phenomenon, for instance the origin of a particular natural element. Most typical are stories about the animals, which express the relationship of a human being and the animal world and vice versa, therefore, many of them are of the totemic nature - the Aborigines identify the nature with themselves. The myths, stories and legends were handed on, from generation to generation, by word of mouth. Alan Marshall in the collection of the Aboriginal myths *People of the Dreamtime* recorded a story describing the birth of the Moon:

At the time when the islands have risen up from the depths of the oceans, thick forests had started to grow on them. Nevertheless, on some islands remained sea water in the dips, and thus, it gave a rise to salt lagoons, in which there was a large amount of fish in them [. . .] this fish seemed to be rather different from others – it was round like the moon and there were identical shadows on it, that can be also spotted on the moon [. . .]“Look sis, there is the fish we caught”, exclaimed Makari. Both looked on the sky and became sad, since the grandest fish in the world ran away from them (Marshall 46, my translation)⁹.

The Aborigines say that the moon has the dominant position in the natural world and, represents desire and sexuality. Many stories tell of the moon’s sexual appetite conveying a message: “We see the Moon night by night, month by month, growing big, dying, and returning. When he appears as a crescent shape, some Yarralin people say that he is having sex, the shape being an indication of two people engaged in that act” (Deborah 104). Much of the myths content is supernatural and, may appear to be fantastic, but at the same time, contains much objective knowledge about the environment, which was based on the practical experiences of many generations (Middleton 42).

⁹ For English original, see *Appendix* no. 2.2

3.2. The Land as a Spiritual Bond

It has been said that the landscape such as that existed in places like Australia previous to European contact in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was utterly pristine (Cowan 23). Nevertheless, to the Europeans, the Australian landscape was totally “empty, devoid of beauty, a living hell on earth” (23). The settlers hoped to discover for themselves a paradisaical environment that they could call “home”. As for the most part, the country was regarded to be not fit for white man, except as an extension to his materialistic urge, asserted Cowan. The dreamers were not those who viewed the land as sacred, but those who were able to work it for their own profit (24). Such a landscape could not captivate the white settlers, however, for the Aborigines it represented *kurunba* [life-essence]. Cowan stated that what they saw in their land was not endless repetition of wide open spaces, but an intensely metaphysical landscape capable of expressing their deepest spiritual yearnings (25):

What was pejoratively called ‘Blackfellas country’ by Europeans was to the Aborigines living there the very embodiment of sacred topography [. . .] The bond that linked all these entities together lay in the mythological and symbolic data that these entities represented as part of the Dreaming or Primordial Event. Thus what to the early European settlers of the country was little more than a pristine landscape, was for the Aborigines a complex and luminous spiritual edifice reminiscent of an open-air cathedral (25).

The Aborigine was bound to his tribal territories by a spiritual bond of which the first European settlers were completely ignorant. A dispossession of the traditional hunting preserves was very crucial, both physically and socially, for it meant starvation and above all, the loss of the home of their living spiritual ancestors (Béchervaise 103). The Aboriginal people were bound to their tribal territories by a spiritual bond of which the white settlers were completely ignorant:

The Aborigines’ visions of the world, of the meaning of life and death, of beginning, duration, and end, of property attached to person, were such as to make the ways of the white settlers both comical and inexplicable (103).

3.3 Religious Belief and Practice

Deprivation of their ancient lands was less imaginable than the death, since most of the places were linked to the Dreamtime, in which all men had their beginnings and their reason of being. The Aborigines say that everything comes out of the earth by Dreaming; everything knows itself, its place, its relationships to other portions of the cosmos (Rickard 20). The Dreaming is a relationship between people and land which forms the basis of a traditional society. For Aboriginal people *Dreaming* refers to a wide range of concepts and entities. Rose Deborah wrote: “Dreamings walked like people, bringing language, rituals, songs and dances, special objects, and knowledge of tools, hunting and cooking” (Deborah 45). According to Yarralin people, the earth is female. In her moist and pliable state she gave birth to all the original creative beings; holes or caves are analogous to wombs – the places origin for all life (42).

Mervyn Meggitt has expressed perfectly the relationship between Aboriginal people, their community and their land:

[Their] view of the universe [. . .] regarded man, society and nature as interlocking and interacting elements in a larger, functionally integrated totality. According to Aboriginal belief, each variable in the system had an eternal, moral commitment to maintain itself unchanged for the benefit of the others and to contribute to the proper functioning of the system as a whole (*Concise History* 14).

Furthermore, as Elkin stated, the Australian Aborigines possess an “unsought fame” which has arisen from some elements of their culture, such as the boomerang, didgeridoo, corroboree, circumcision, initiation ceremonies, the classificatory kinship system and totemism. Totemism is a significant element of the Aboriginal cultural identity. It is a view of the nature and life, the universe and man, which influences the Aborigine’s social groupings and mythologies, inspires their rituals and links them to the past (164). It unites them with nature’s activities and species in a bond of mutual life-giving, and imparts “confidence amidst the vicissitudes of life” (165). Nature is the principal component of life of the indigenes of Australia:

The Aborigine, on his part, brings nature into his social and ritual life, adopts an attitude of respect towards it, frequently performs ceremonies designed for its welfare and his own, and looks for its assistance not only as the source of food and water, but also as a protection from danger and a

guide to the future. In other words, nature is thought of in an animistic, and indeed, personal way. [. . .] There is a segmentary aspect to this relationship and bond which exists between man and nature, and it is this very feature which distinguishes totemism from a generalized nature-religion (Elkin 165-166).

This feature is expressed in the usual definition of totemism, as Elkin wrote, it is “a relationship between an individual or group of individuals and a natural object – a relationship which is marked by the bearing of the name of the natural object, the totem by the individual” (165). As a result of this association with their totems, the Aborigines are required to enhance their relationship with their totems by way of certain rituals or taboo acts. Moreover, totemism in Australia is a link between the everyday social life and the secret life of myth and ritual (166). Elkin perceives totemism as essential for understanding Aboriginal religion:

Totemism then is our key to the understanding of the aboriginal philosophy and the universe – a philosophy which regards man and nature as one corporate whole for social, ceremonial and religious purposes, a philosophy which from one aspect is preanimistic, but from another is animistic, a philosophy which is historical, being formed on the heroic acts of the past which provide the sanctions for the present, a philosophy which, indeed, passes into the realm of religion and provides that faith, hope and courage in the face of his daily needs which man must have if he is to persevere and persist, both as an individual and as a social being (*Aboriginal Man*, 236).

3.4 Conflict of Two Civilizations

The earliest contacts between the Europeans and the indigenous people of Australia were in the seventeenth century when various expeditions reached that continent. The arrival of the newcomers resulted in a confrontation between two essentially diverse cultures. The nonmaterial culture of the Aboriginal people, expressed in religion, myth, song, dance, and ritual, was unusually rich, however, absolutely different in its underlying philosophy and orientation from that of the newcomers. This culture was judged by the settlers as “inferior to their own” (Dworkin 121). English mariner, William Dampier, described the first contact with the natives as:

The Inhabitants of this Country are the miserablest People in the World. The *Hodmadods* of *Monomatapa*, though a nasty People, yet for Wealth are Gentlemen to these; who have no Houses, and skin Garments, Sheep, Poultry [. . .] And setting aside their Humane Shape, they differ but little from Brutes. They are tall, strait-bodied, and thin, with small long Limbs. Their Eye-lids are always half closed, to keep the Flies out of their Eyes; and without the Assistance of both Hands to keep them off, they will creep into ones Nostrils, and Mouth too . . . The Colour of their Skins, is Coal-black, like that of the Negroes of *Guinea* (*Great Explorations* 12-13).

The difference between the European man and the savage was civilisation, or as Dampier articulated it, “wealth”. According to him, clothes, weapons, permanent housing were “the signs of civilised man, who was distinguished from barbaric souls by his respect for material possessions and his reading of the Bible” (R.White 4). Proof of the barbarity of the Aborigines lay in the fact that “these poor creatures seem not accustomed to carry burthens”, and that they failed “to admire anything that we had”, and in addition to that, the savages appeared to lack religion, stated Dampier (5). In the interpretation of the Bible, the natural man was “brutish and unregenerate, lacking shame and moral sense” (7). The evangelicals had evidence from Cook and other observers of nakedness, promiscuity, cannibalism and infanticide. White asserted that for the Europeans, “natural man was naturally evil” (7). In consequence of such a view, the British law was allowed to ignore the Aborigines’ right to their own lands and, among others, it justified civilised man’s harsh treatment and dispossession of the Aborigines (R.White 8). Nevertheless, when Captain Cook explored the east coast in 1770, the Aborigines’ reaction was “more one of suspicion than hostility”, as he declared (Rickard 19). James Cook was probably influenced by the lush environment of eastern Australia and therefore, differed from Dampier’s assessment. His portrayal of the Aborigines suggested “a romantic image of the noble savage” (20):

. . . in reality they are far more happier than we Europeans; being wholly unacquainted not only with the superfluous but the necessary Conveniences so much sought after in Europe, they are happy in not knowing the use of them. They live in a Tranquillity which is not disturbed by the inequality of Condition: The Earth and sea of their own accord furnishes them with all things necessary for life [. . .] In short they seem’d to set no value upon anything we gave them [. . .] this in my opinion argues that they think themselves provided with all the necessarys of Life and that they have no superfluties [. . .] (Rickard 20).

However, many Aboriginal people who discussed Captain Cook expressed a mixture of aversion and disbelief: “Europeans preferred to shoot rather than to converse, and they held the lives of human beings to be of less value than those of cattle”. One must admit that this cannot assume to be the matter of proud legend (*Great Explorations* 12-14).

Bernard Smith has argued that these early representations of the Aborigines tend to idolise savage life, showing to people that there is need to feel embarrassed by their nakedness, mostly in family groups, carrying spears, shields and quarry (Foss 193). Throughout Europe, many enlightened people believed in the cult of the *noble savage*. American Indians or South Sea Islanders were seen as being more virtuous because they lived simpler, purer lives, more in accordance with natural laws, than the raffish and sophisticated citizens of Paris, London or Rome (*Concise History* 36).

Even before the European settlement in Australia, there were well-established images of what it meant to be Australian. For scientists, the continent offered great botanical and zoological riches, on the other hand, for some it was a land “untouched by civilisation, a primitive land in a perfect state of nature” (R.White 14). Beauty, richness and diversity of the natural species were highly admired, and some also became symbols of the Australian national identity. White wrote: “The weird animals and plants became popular symbols of Australian identity. They were to appear on coats of arms and coins, and as company trade marks. They were elevated into the conventional, neutral symbols of Australia (R.White 15). The natural beauties were really exceptional; Béchervaise described the nature as follows:

When, late in history, men from the Old World at last defined the shores of terra Australis, their European eyes could discover only strangeness: mild, harmless creatures of astounding agility and incredible shape, incapable of domestication; trees so far outside experience as to seem gaunt, aloof, and even awe-inspiring, their huge columnar trunks the reservoirs of white tributaries in the sky; brilliant flowers that heralded no sustaining fruits for man; undergrowth either prickly, dry, and unkempt, or dank and gloomy. Colours formed new, unimagined combinations, unlike those of any other landscape (Béchervaise 11-12).

On the other hand, the Aboriginal people fared much worse. In Europe, they remained representative of Australia, placed beside the plants and animals as natural objects of curiosity. As the idea of “being Australian”, the Aborigines became decreasingly

representative of Australia until, in the end, they were quite dispossessed, claims White (15). Since the arrival of Europeans, extinctions of many species have occurred at an immensely increasing pace. Over two thousand species of plants and animals are known to be extinct or close to extinction. Ward argues that those who know the country well see more complex and serious process (*Concise History* 102). The Aboriginal people experience losses directly and personally since due to their persuasion people's physical and spiritual being is deeply wedded with many of the species, plants and animals, which are lost or vanishing. Besides, for the Aboriginal people the nature and its components carry an intense social and emotional load, therefore, any loss or damage is indispensable. With the arrival of the European settlers, this country suffered from degradation by using the land, and in consequence of that, many Dreaming sites have been damaged or destroyed (103).

The contacts between the Aborigines and the Europeans were consequently not always amicable; in fact, subjugation, discrimination, brutality, even killing often characterised the treatment of the Aborigines by the newcomers. In addition to various forms of deprivation and mistreatment, the Aborigines likewise became the victims of diseases, for which they had no effective immunity (Rickard 122). Thomas Livingstone depicted one of the conflicts with the Aborigines:

Soon after sunrise this morning, some natives, I think twelve or thirteen in number, were seen approaching our tents at a kind of run, carrying spears and green boughs [. . .] This was a very remarkable personage, his features decidedly Jewish, having a thin aquiline nose, and a very piercing eye, as intent on mischief, as if it had belonged to Satan himself [. . .] the strangers appeared to be a stupid harmless-looking set [. . .] Then I pulled out my gun and fired, and hit one fellow all over the face with the buck shot [. . .] two black-fellows picked him up and carried him away (*Great Explorations* 83).

In the early years of settlement, the white settlers were engaged in an act of conquering the country by decimating its people. In 1908, G. Broughton went to the outback to seek the romance and some years later he wrote a book of reminiscences in which he stated:

Native life was held cheap, and a freemasonry of silence among the white men, including often the bush police, helped keep it that way. In far-off Perth, clerics and various "protection" societies tried to get at the truth of

stories of native killings [. . .] but up in the north men kept their mouth shut (Deborah 9).

Many Europeans were recognised for their brutality, and what is even worse, some were rewarded for their viciousness. Matt Savage, a drover recounted his life story in public. He stated that “a reputation for being hard on blacks was worth a dollar a week extra to a stockman” (qtd. in Willey 52). According to Yarralin people, some isolated incidents occurred, in which Aboriginal individuals were “shot, beaten to death or poisoned” (Deborah 11). In addition to that, there were also many of the “large-scale massacres” (11). In compliance with the sources, it is not possible to calculate the loss, but it is quite evident that thousands of people were exterminated. However, this all contradicts with the instructions from the British government which captain Phillip received before his arrival in New South Wales:

You are to endeavour by every possible means to open an intercourse with the natives and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all our subjects to live in amity and kindness with them and, if any of our subjects should wantonly destroy them or give them any unnecessary interruption in the exercise of their several occupations, it is our will and pleasure that you do cause such offenders to be brought to punishment according to the degree of offence (Bayne 93).

Nevertheless, not all of these people were deliberately killed by the Europeans since introduced diseases certainly “took a large toll” (Deborah 11). There is a statement cited in the South Australian Parliamentary Papers that, in the course of the gold rush in 1886, when the Europeans poured across to the west, Aborigines were “shot like crows”(12). Middleton wrote: “It was not far from such expeditions to the obscenity of the ‘nigger hunts’ organised by settlers as a sport with the ears of the Aboriginal men, women and children killed taken as trophies” (56). Thomas Major, a squatter, and his party shot one Aborigines in the back and they decorated a hut with his skull and bones. To Major, this episode proved the superiority of the “civilised white” to the savage black:

Our treatment of the natives may be deemed unjustifiable by some. Naturally they may say that it was their country, and ask what business we had there? Quite so; but the same argument may be used in all new countries. It will not hold water, however, nor can we change the unalterable

law of Nature. For untold centuries the aborigines have had the use of the country, but in the march of time they, like the extinct fossil, must make way. They now encumber the ground, and will not suit themselves to altered circumstances. The sooner they are taught that a superior race has come among them, and are made to feel its power, the better for them [. . .] The survival of the fittest is Nature's law and must be obeyed (R.White 70).

What the Europeans called "bad nigger country", was the country, in which Aboriginal people were able to resist the invasion. The descendants of Aboriginal warriors note their ascendants's resistance with the respect and compassion. However, they decided to carry on their resistance, although they presumed that they would not survive. While the European settlers, police, and travellers shot or poisoned countless blacks, the Aboriginal people experienced the traumatic loss of fathers, mothers, spouses and children, as well as lands and livelihoods. Deborah writes: "The silence with which whites have surrounded their actions, and their depictions of Aborigines as anonymous victims, has facilitated the outback myth of an empty, lonely, heartless country" (Deborah 13). Moreover, Lindsay Crawford wrote in 1895 that:

During the last ten years, in fact since the first white man settled here, we have held no communication with the natives at all, except with the rifle. They have never been allowed near this station or the outstations, being too treacherous and warlike (qtd. in Crawford 180).

As the number of conflicts between the Aborigines and the Europeans increased, the settlers initiated a policy of "pacification by force", as Elkin mentions, the efforts of the Europeans "to teach the natives a lesson" (Elkin 340-341). Dworkin stated that the impact of these punitive assaults on the Aborigines was to have the effect of serious impairment of their culture and social organization, and to reduce them to a state of pauperism (Dworkin 122). Kolig points out that in the nineteenth century, evolutionism and Darwinism "painted a gloomy picture of the indigenes' future, predicting their inevitable demise in the clash with a superior race". In many cases, that "clash" sadly resulted in outright genocide (Kolig 10).

The expansion of squatting over most of eastern Australia meant the rapid expropriation and extermination of the Aboriginal tribes. Dispossession, disease and despair killed more Aborigines than did white murderers, but "premeditated butchery" of men, women and children and infants accounted on aggregate for thousands of black

lives (Dworkin 127). The conflict was unequal too, because the Aborigines had no weapons or defence with which they could defeat rifles of the white men, poison and diseases (Shaw 364). Thomas Keneally in his novel *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* wrote:

“I can understand your being angry,” he would say in the midst of a night silence. “Oh, I can imagine it, Jimmie. I mean, settlers still talked about *marauding blacks*. Only ten years ago they did. But how many whites really ever got killed by aborigines? No one knows. I bet it wasn’t more than four or five thousand. If that, then, you might ask, how many aborigines did the whites kill? The answer is a quarter of a million. I can understand your being angry” (Keneally 143).

One of the dreadful incidents happened in Myall Creek, where John Fleming and his party spent “most of Monday hunting vainly for the black people” and “on Tuesday morning returned to burn the bodies of their victims”(*Concise History* 128). Even worse might be regarded that the whole colony was “in an uproar”, nevertheless, not with horror at the massacre but with sympathy for the murderers. Most white people found intolerable the idea that the killing of Aborigines could be regarded as a crime; no white man in the colony was ever hanged for killing the blacks (129). In 1838 many newspapers, like *Sydney Herald*, openly declared that the Aborigines were less than human beings and claimed their extermination (130):

We want neither the classic nor the romantic savages here. We have too many of the murderous wretches about us already [. . .] The whole gang of black animals are not worth the money which the Colonists will have to pay for printing the silly documents upon which we have already wasted too much time (130).

By the 1930, a majority of the Aboriginal people lived on the cattle stations and worked for the whites. Many reasons as for why Aboriginal people chose to live on the stations has been, as Deborah wrote, “the desire for relative safety, the desire for what was initially perceived as freedom, and the opportunities for power” (Deborah 17). Throughout the dark decades between 1900 and 1965, life for the Aborigines on the stations was “a set of cruel hardships”. Until 1967, the Aborigines were not counted in

official censuses¹⁰, were not allowed to vote or to travel away from the stations without permission, and unless they obtained official exemptions, they remained for the whole of their lives, the wards of the state. Read wrote in his book *A Hundreds Year War*: “Aboriginal girls had to prepare themselves for the day when they would be allowed to clean the houses of white people. Cleanliness was salvation, purging the worthlessness of a black body” (Read 67). In addition to it, they were not allowed to marry a European without official permission, to raise their own children, if the children were part-Aboriginal, to purchase alcohol, and also were a subject to numerous other restrictions (qtd. in Rowley 34). Hobbles described the conditions under which he grew up and lived for much of his adult life:

And my people been start to work around, old people. And really frighten for the white people coming from big England. They didn't ask. And they been really, really sad, poor buggers [. . .] Captain Cook's orders: 'Don't give him medicine. When they getting crook (sick), old people, you killem him first. When they on the job, that's right, you can have them on the job. But don't pay him. Let him work for free. While we run that station [. . .] If you put them on a job, make them prisoner. Make them work for you [. . .] Whatever they cutting posts right round, make a yard, they cart them on shoulder. If him sick and tired, he don't lift that thing, kill him right there'. And lotta people been work round, my people. That means we're prisoner (Deborah 18).

There is a sufficient European documentation to confirm Hobbles' assertions of lack of the wages, appalling living conditions, minimal health care, violence, hard work for men and women, and insufficient and unhealthy food. Ronald and Catharine Berndt have provided detailed documentation of the living conditions on the stations:

[. . .] lack of uncontaminated water to drink, inadequate shelter and hygiene facilities, and deliberate underfeeding leading to socially-induced starvation are prominent. A variety of diseases – influenza, malaria, tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, leprosy, trachoma, respiratory and gastrointestinal infections – were rife. Infant mortality rates were appallingly high and many women died in childbirth (*First Australians* 76).

Furthermore, the European settlement of Australia has depended on the unpaid convict labour. By the time the convict labour was no longer available, thus Aboriginal

¹⁰ For Australian Citizenship see *Appendix* no. 8

workforce appeared to be a reasonable substitute. The Europeans depended on the Aboriginal labour for the success of their business. On the other hand, the education in basic literacy and numeracy was simply not on the agenda. If warfare was one requirement of conquest, the other was sex. There were very few European women on the frontier, therefore white men satisfied their desires with the Aboriginal women who could not fight back these oppressors. “Dirty, stinking creatures, these aboriginal women, though not bad looking when they’re young, sometimes” (Prichard 118). According to constable Willshire, “men would not remain so many years in a country like this if there were no women, and perhaps the Almighty meant them for use as He has placed them wherever the pioneers go”. Apart from it, black women were also used as a commodity: they were captured and distributed to the Aboriginal men as part of the “reward for working” with the Europeans (Deborah 15). Russel Ward wrote in his book *Concise History of Australia*:

An Aboriginal female could always be cajoled, bought or kidnapped from the males of her tribe and exploited, then discarded or even murdered by whites [. . .] Vicious racism was an integral part of the new national identity that was forming most rapidly on the advancing frontier of pastoral settlement. The levelling mateship, which was at the very heart of the new outlook, necessarily connoted hatred of all non-mates, particularly of those who were seen as inferior; and the more nationalist, the more egalitarian, the more “democratic” a white man was in the last century, the more racist he was likely to be in word and deed (126-127).

Besides, for the white men, it was a shame to abuse the aboriginal women, nevertheless, nobody cared for how dreadful the whole situation had to be for the women themselves. K. S. Prichard in her book *The Roaring Nineties* wrote: “intercourse with native women was fairly common, though most men were ashamed of the impulse which drove them to borrow a woman from the blacks” (Prichard 118).

Between 1916 and 1953, the government had the right to remove part-Aboriginal children from their families and place them in the institutions where they were raised as the wards of the state¹¹ (Deborah 25). Peter Read wrote: “Improve the parent if you can, but you will never improve the child by taking it away from its parents” (Read 62). Eva Johnson from the Northern Territory was taken from her

¹¹ For Dispossession of the children see *Appendix no. 1.4*

mother when she was three. In her *Letter to My Mother* she wrote: “I not see you long time now, I not see you long time now. White fulla bin take me from you, I don’t know why. Give me to Missionary to be God’s child” (Webly 37). In those days, it was considered a privilege for a white man to want a black woman, but if she had children, she was not allowed to keep them. The government took the white children off her since she was not assumed to fit to raise a child with white blood (Rutheford 127). Also Sally Morgan’s book *My Place* deals with the same theme. One of the scenes depicts the incident:

“I wanted to keep her with me, she was all I had, but they didn’t want her there. How can a mother lose a child like that”? When I left, I was cryin’, all the people were cryi’n, my mother was cryin’ and beatin’ her head. I called, Mum, Mum, Mum!” (Rutheford 123).

The European men continued to demand sexual access to the Aboriginal women, thus part-Aboriginal children were a fact of life. Equally a fact of life was that the Aboriginal women were not in a position to refuse the European men, both owing to their greater power and starvation forced the women into prostitution (*Aboriginal Anthropology* 117). Kolig wrote:

The most obvious and most oppressive expression of this nationalistically inspired discourse in relation to indigenous minorities was the endless series of assimilation and dispossession policies in various countries such as Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. assimilation, integration, land alienation, missionisation, pacification, enforced education, miscegenation are just some of the labels used in inflicting official policies on indigenes (Kolig 11).

Kolig points out that today are gone the days of “spiriting Aboriginal children away” to be educated and brought up in institutions [Australia’s lost generation] or punishing Maori children when they spoke Maori in the school yard. Kolig claims that all this was done in the course of what was seen as “the perfectly legitimate creation of a standardised national human product” (11).

Nowadays, in many parts of the north, living on the outstations may imply the choice of getting away from white society, “white problems” such as alcohol, and the stress of having to deal with a tense, and often racist, environment. The move of the

Aborigines satisfied a deep longing to be back in the country for which they were “responsible”, in which their parents and grandparents died, and where they wanted to maintain continuity between past and future (Deborah 24). Deep inside, the Aborigines aspired for the justice and equality in Australia. Smith wrote: “Nations have deep roots. Nationalism is about ‘land’, both in terms of possession and rebuilding, and of belonging where forefathers lived and where history demarcates a ‘homeland’ (Smith 70). The Aborigines contend that the earth is alive and constantly giving life, the mother of them all. They respect their own land that represents their past, present and future. Riley Young says:

The fact of one mother makes us all kin a sort. Blackfellow never change him [. . .] We been borning (in) this country. We been grow up (in) this country. We been walkabout this country. We know this country all over [. . .] Blackfellow been born top of that ground, and blackfellow – blackfellow blood (in the ground) [. . .] This ground is mother. She’s mother for everybody. We born top of this ground. This (is) our mother. That’s why we worry about this ground (Deborah 220).

Moreover, Smith wrote: “Attachments to specific stretches of territory, and to certain places within them, have a mythical and subjective quality. We belong to it as much as it belongs to us” (22-23).

The coming of the Europeans changed the traditional picture drastically, until today no Aboriginal society has been able to maintain its former integrity and independence. In many cases, the main factor causing the powerlessness was the disparity in power of the Aboriginal people and, the ignorant or unsympathetic approach of the Europeans (Elkin 422). Elkin declares that the reasons should be sought, as well, in the “structure and organization of Aboriginal social life and belief with its strong dependence on the mythical beings, through the concept of the Eternal Dreaming”. The impact of the outside world came as a “rude shock”. Things were happening outside the framework of what the Aboriginal people considered to be the “established order of life”; their social equilibrium was corrupted by the impact from the outside world (423). From another point of view, however, Elkin argues:

The European settlers wanted land. Because the Aborigines did not cultivate the ground or make permanent dwellings or settlements, the newcomers did

not realize, or care, that the land *was* owned and occupied and used—although on quite a different basis to their own: and so the question of Aboriginal rights to that land hardly concerned them [. . .] a process of dispossession and de-population of the Aborigines has been going on ever since that time, as Europeans have been pushing forward their frontiers, developing or exploiting the natural resources of the country (Elkin 423).

There are some attempts to justify the white settlers' appropriation of the Aborigines' land that the territories of the Aboriginal people were *terra nullius* [land that was not really settled or occupied or owned]. For the first white colonists it appeared ludicrous to claim that the Australian Aborigines had any kind of real civilization. Thus it was assumed that the Aborigines would necessarily become assimilated into the majority and superior white culture. It was never seriously contemplated that the existence of Aboriginal culture next to the white European culture formed “a multicultural situation” (Kahn 52). Chavchavadze suggests that there are different means of resolving these majority-minority conflicts, but on rare occasions, solutions are found without pain, violence and blood (45). Aborigines could hardly resist to the people who utterly differed from themselves, and thus became exiles in their own land. They could not return to their own familiar environment which was becoming remote from them.

At present when so much emphasis is placed on building up the Australian nation, as a single people with a relatively homogeneous way of life, judging people such as the Aborigines, did not change much what concerns evaluating of their traditional life:

We are more likely to treat individual Aborigines as human beings, to express concern for their health, education, employment and general wellbeing; but one question which confronted the early settlers still remains. How far can we live side by side, in harmony, with a people whose way of living diverges radically from our own? Is there room for such differences in one community, or one small nation? These questions point to the core of the problem which concerns us today (Elkin 433).

3.5 Aboriginal Art

For long time, were Aborigines, to all intents and purposes, seen as a people without culture, philosophy or religion (Foss 198). Foss wrote that the aboriginal bark and cave

paintings, carvings and other craftwork and designs¹² were considered to be “crude and uncivilized, the pallid reflections of a primitive mentality unable, or unwilling to embrace the idea of material progress” (199). At first the arts and crafts were documented purely for the purposes of ethnographic comparison, however, at present it [the art] received, eventually, in public the general recognition. Margaret Preston interposed, on that account, a remark:

The art of the aborigine has for too long been neglected, the attention of the Australian people must be drawn to the fact that it is great art and the foundation of a national culture for this country. It has been for a long time the accepted idea of the world in general that the Australian aboriginal is in the lowest grade of humanity. This unfortunate impression should be completely altered after a study of his pictorial and decorative art (Foss 203).

Apart from it, Preston believed that a national art could arise from the use of Aboriginal motifs, in the area of crafts and then, also in painting (201). She perceived Aboriginal art¹³ as another source of Australian symbolism, and the significant promotion of Australian culture, which became an integral part of the Australian national identity. Preston declared: “Aboriginal people paint and draw with knowledge from the mind more than with mere visual perception” (206). Furthermore, Thomas Watling is surely correct when he states: “We now cannot but see Namatjira’s paintings as a way of reaffirming his tribal territorial knowledge while simultaneously sharing with outsiders his pride in his land’s great beauty” (Foss 207). The Aboriginal art is, however, almost fully connected with their sacred life; the artistic designs are associated with myths and chants (Elkin 49). Brough Smyth declared:

However primitive the Aborigines were, however savage were some of their dances, and however crude were their rock paintings and engravings, they were obviously not devoid of aesthetic sense [. . .] the practice of ornamenting caves, rocks, and trees, and cutting figures on the ground by removing grass, is characteristic of this people. Their pictures are found in every part of the continent [. . .] A large number of references could be given illustrative of their love of art, but a few will suffice to induce the reader, perhaps, to regard with a higher interest the first attempts of a savage

¹² For Body Art *see Appendix no. 5*

¹³ For Aboriginal Art *see Appendix no. 3*

people to imitate the forms of natural objects, and to portray, though usually in no very durable form, incidents in their lives (Foss 262-263).

Foss wrote: “the Aborigines had to wait for almost two centuries before the atrocities committed against them were even recognized, and still longer to have their art valued for its purely aesthetic as well as ethnographic properties” (197). In the words of Gary Foley, black activist and former director of the Aboriginal Arts Board of the Australia Council:

I believe that any expression of Aboriginal art, be it traditional or contemporary, is an act of political defiance. So much time and effort, two hundred years of very concerted effort to destroy Aboriginality and Aboriginal culture, has gone into this country. The fact that Aboriginal culture does remain a living thing is in itself an extraordinary political statement about their resilience, their adaptability and their tremendous willpower (Foss 209).

3.6. *The Loss and the Struggle for the Cultural Identity*

In the past, the spirituality of the Australian Aborigines has often been characterized as “a collection of superstitions and primitive myths” that were assumed to be incapable of supporting “a genuine religious life” (Cowan 1). Christianity in the form of missionaries endeavoured to undermine Aboriginal spirituality, even in the belief that Aborigines “are living in darkness” (1). Berndt wrote: “Missions had as little as possible to do with the existing norms of the Aboriginal social life and to replace their traditional religion completely with the concepts of Christianity” (*Aboriginal Australia* 252). As a result, the Aborigines found themselves the victims of the cultural genocide. James Cowan writes:

Not only were they destroyed physically as a race, but they looked on with impotence as their traditions, their way of life and their beliefs were swept aside. Without treaties to protect them, without even official acknowledgement of their humanity, they were left to live out their lives on the fringe of European settlement – a disenfranchised race of nomads doomed to extinction (1).

Moreover, the christianity was an integral aspect of the colonialism, and was used to suppress the indigenous religious beliefs and to convert the Aborigines to the settlers' spiritual values. It undermined the cultural and religious stability of the Aboriginal society by encouraging Aboriginal assimilation. Their message consisted primarily in the assertion that Aboriginal culture is "the work of devil", and that "non-converts go to hell" (Deborah 38). "White society had built its case for assimilation on the belief that improved living conditions would fill the nothingness in Aboriginal life", stated Peter Read (116). Chavchavadze also made his point when he declared: "If culture is the key to national identities and religion is the key to a culture, then the ability of religions to avoid conflicts and to contribute to democratic life is of special importance to our theme of cultural identities and democratic life" (92). Furthermore, John Locke sees the freedom as "being able to act or not act, according as we shall choose or will", while Bertrand Russell sees the freedom as the "absence of external obstacles to the realization of our desires" (Chavchavadze 82). It was a policy of cultural genocide that has in consequence, all but wiped out traditional Aboriginal life in Australia (Cowan 6). The indigenous of Australia are intensely confronted with the loss of their culture values and personal or cultural identity today. Pynsent asserts:

Problems of identity majorly beset those individuals or groups who are finding their own exclusivity out of the norms of the apparent bearers of the culture, in the particular part of the society or the world (Pynsent 19, my translation).¹⁴

To follow, Jimmy Manngayarri, a Bilinara emu man, said that the younger generation, who did not understand their origins, would be like "a tree without roots" (Foss 106). He says that "dream country is belonging". Every person has a place in the world in which they are needed, and in which they are "heathy". It is not like in former times when old people taught young people; young people learned, and grew old, and taught new young people. He complains: "Once the old people are gone, the songs will be gone; once gone, they are lost forever". "The future is the domain of those who come after us", he says (Foss 180). According to Jimmy, every country is identified with its localised Dreamings. People come and go, but the identity of country remains the same (Foss 209). Maddock wrote:

Most part-aborigines today who have a knowledge of the traditional life and little if any knowledge of it; and questions put to them concerning it bore them. The consensus of opinion seems to be that 'blackfeller ways' are inferior and something to be ashamed of [. . .] There are some old aborigines who have a knowledge of the traditional life, but, faced with the apathetic and condemnatory attitude of their groups and of the young people particularly, they let the knowledge die with them (qtd. in Bell 64).

Here, Bell stressed the continuing character of these communities. The members of a certain ethnic group do not want to see their groups ruined, since they have lived together all their lives as their parents and grandparents did before them and, they hope that their children will continue to do the same (Kolig 34). Beckett stated that: "old men enjoy very little respect from people of younger generations", while Diane Barwick in her contribution to *Aborigines Now* stated, that due to being terrorized in the past, the part-aborigines are reinforced by sentiments of loyalty and duty to their kins. But she admitted the fact that the aboriginal laws and customs had almost been forgotten, and people are reluctant to reveal what they know for fear of mockery (Kolig 35). Sally Morgan in the book *My Place* depicts the grandmother, the Aborigine, who is ashamed for her real origin and is hiding the truth until after some time it came to light though:

"There's been so much sadness in my life", she said, "I don't think I can take any more" [. . .] "I am crying because you children want a white grandmother, and I'm black" [. . .] There's no point in digging up the past, some things are better left buried. You know, Sal [. . .] all my life, I been treated rotten. Nobody's cared if I've looked pretty. I been treated like a beast. Just like a beast of the field. And now, here I am [. . .] old. Just a dirty old blackfella." I think it's better not to know for sure, that way you don't have to face up to it" (Rutheford 115-117).

Besides, Read stated that today, mostly the teenagers, feel ashamed of their Aboriginal identity. One Wiradjuri woman raised on a reserve described her daughter as follows:

A know what my girls would say if you talked to them about Aboriginal culture. They would look at me and laugh. They would say, "Mum, we are trying to live like the white people. Leave us alone. It is enough trying to learn the ways of the white people [. . .] without keeping up with the old ways (Read 131).

¹⁴ For the English original see *Appendix no.2.3*

Furthermore, Smith stated that: “By means of the ceremonies, customs and symbols every member of a community participates in the life, emotions and virtues of that community and, through them, re-dedicate him – or herself to its destiny” (Smith 78).

For all that, there are still some, for whom a sense of belonging is utterly substantial and, as Barwick claimed, there is evident a growing self-consciousness among younger Aborigines, that leads to a search for their own history and for knowledge of the traditional culture (Kolig 35). Robert Tonkinson sees self-identification among the Australian Aborigines as a positive element of their cultural revival (28):

Among Aborigines, as with other peoples in the Fourth World, it is often the case that customs and traditions have fallen into abeyance rather than being lost to historical memory. There is no shortage of words for describing the attempts to breathe fresh life into them, whether this is driven by a search for identity, by political expediency, by nostalgia or by resentment of a heartless world. Candidates include: revival, restoration, return to the past or, more pejoratively, retreat into the past (Kolig 40-41).

The minority group members are led to attribute their low status to their own responsibility, rather than to the discrimination by the majority group, ‘self-hate’, where the individual downgrades his own group and him as a member of that group, is a common phenomenon, stated Hutnik (Hutnik 54). In addition to that, Read wrote:

Aboriginal identity had shrunk merely to a negative quality, a deprivation, a nothingness. Aboriginality at the outset of the one hundred years war appeared to be a state of being without: without possessions, without jobs, without controls, without authority [. . .] It was, therefore, only the dispossessed, unenlightened Aborigine who drank, gambled, smashed windows or, purposeless, remained content in unemployment (Read 113).

As a result, a kind of afflicted group which suffers from “lack of culture” tends to turn to such sociological symptoms as petty criminality, foul language, suicide, alcoholism, welfare dependence, for instance among urban Aborigines (Kolig 20). Dworkin declares that the Aboriginal people living on the fringes of the country towns, are basically those of the disadvantaged poor, who show low aspirations, a sense of helplessness, improvident spending patterns, gambling, and drinking (132). Howitt claims that these

features of asociality and apparent absence of culture are to be regarded as a culture of opposition or resistance (20).

Many part-Aborigines prefer to remain in their own close-knit groups, even in substandard conditions, than to aspire to higher material standards of living that would necessitate their moving away from their own people. This preference is no doubt partly due to a sense of identification and consequential feelings of security; in many cases it is no doubt due also to expectations of hostility and perhaps discrimination from the outside white world (Dworkin 133).

Today the town's Aboriginal population is housed mainly in the shanties on its outskirts; the Aborigines are mainly service and unskilled manual workers, and they have all the characteristics of an underprivileged and deprived group (Dworkin 138). Like many minority groups, Aboriginal workers are economically underprivileged. Most are unskilled, poorly paid, and subject to periods of seasonal unemployment (129). After all, the Aborigines realize that they are an out-group, and as such are regarded as a caste lower in status than the white citizen. They feel the prejudice which puts them into the worst houses in a country town, the overcrowded parts of a city, the worst seats in a theatre, et cetera (Elkin 378). Kenneth Clark concerned with the ethnic identification declared:

Human beings who are forced to live under ghetto conditions and whose daily experience tells them that almost nowhere in society are they respected and granted the ordinary dignity and courtesy accorded to others, will as a matter of course, begin to doubt their own worth. Since every human being depends on his cumulative experiences with others for clues as to how he should view and value himself, children who are consistently rejected understandably begin to question and doubt whether they, their family and their group really deserve no more respect from the larger society than they receive. These doubts become the seeds of a pernicious self- and group-hatred, the Negro's complex and debilitating prejudice against himself (Hutnik 66).

The crucial problem facing the Australian society today may be, relations with Aboriginal people and their culture, and in addition to it, facing up to the long and the brutal history of British invasion and the occupation of this continent. The European colonization with its imported racist ideology, destroyed traditional Aboriginal economic and social structures and many human beings. Racism was used to justify and

perpetuate alienation of the Aboriginal land and, subsequently, the exploitation of cheap black labour. Today many mining companies still disrupt ways of life and destroy sacred sites in order to exploit the natural resources. The surviving minority, approximately one hundred thousand from the original amount of eight hundred thousand, is cut off from participation in the wider society and isolated in poverty and powerlessness. Nicolson stated: "Aborigines share a background of dispossession, oppression, racial prejudice and discrimination, exploitation, deprivation and privation" (Shaw 376). Money thinks that this problem in terms of Australian present culture is insoluble. He stated: "Most white Australians are unable to grant full humanity to Aborigines or to their culture, much less allow their right to live in their own way" (Brady, 538). The neo-Darwinism sustains these offences by claiming that as primitives, the Aborigines were doomed to die in any case, and so their sufferings imply the result of history rather than the human brutality (538). These attitudes remain the basis of Australian racism today. Nicolson asserts that beliefs in the low place of the Aborigines on the evolutionary scale, their inability to assimilate are widespread (Shaw 361). A typical example is the comment by a Queenslander who in 1970 said:

I look on the Aboriginal as being a sort of link between the upper and lower forms of the animal kingdom. I don't think they'll ever be the equal of the white man and therefore I say it's dangerous to put him into society (qtd. in Hartwig, *Aborigines and Racism* 15).

The same points are still brought up in evaluating their traditional life. Some white Australians often ask themselves: "How far can we live side by side in harmony with a people whose way of living diverges radically from our own" (Elkin 433)?

Vice versa, some Australians are concerned with the issue and hold the view that many individuals [Aborigines] can be assimilated into a human society. The Australian government have committed a policy of assimilation in 1961, at a conference in Canberra. They described the policy as follows:

The policy of assimilation means in the view of all Australian governments that all aborigines and part aborigines are expected eventually to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and

influenced by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties as other Australians (*Aboriginal Man* 449).

It was assumed that, in this way the Aborigines can be integrated into the Australian life and rediscover the cultural traditions which were lost, and one day possibly make a distinctive contribution to the society, from which they were outcasts for so long. Aboriginal cultural traditions, not only have an importance for these people themselves, but in a world that is becoming culturally uniform, can one afford to let this indigenous heritage die away (MacKenzie 213)? Bennett Scott wrote:

We've taken his land, decimated his tribes, degraded his women, taken away his dignity and forced him to live in squalor. This is our chance to make some sort of amends. We still have a long way to go. But at least we can make a start at treating him as an equal (Bennett 11).

Moreover, the sensitivity to Aboriginal concerns has increased in Australian literature written since 1960. When Aboriginal poet, Kath Walker [Oodgeroo Noonuccal], wrote her book *We Are Going*¹⁵, during the 1960s, it aroused only little interest, nevertheless today, her work is recognised worldwide. The theme of many of her works is the hope for understanding and peace between black and white Australians. Oodgeroo says:

I wrote *We Are Going*, the aboriginal people don't see it as my book, they see it as theirs, and it's true, it is their book, because it's their voices, their hopes, their inspirations, their frustrations, their aspirations [. . .] Aboriginal have a voice, a written voice (Rutheford 19).

As a campaigner for Aboriginal rights, she travelled across Australia giving talks about dreadful conditions Aborigines were living under, and fought for their equality. The campaign was successful and, in 1940, they finally started being considered as the Australian citizens and in 1967, the Aboriginal Australians could have an equal say in how their country was run (Bennett 8). Walker has drawn out her proud of her Aboriginality by all means. Her father always told to her: "you're black, you're Aboriginal, always be proud of it, but always know this, that if you're going to do anything in this world, you've not only got to be as good as the white person, you've got to be better"(11). Today Oodgeroo is highly praised as someone, who strived for

¹⁵ For the poem *We Are Going* see Appendix no. 1.5

true respect and understanding between both, the white and black communities. Cowan certainly made his point when he stated:

European culture, under the burden of its frenetic desire to transform the country into an economic environment, has caused a great deal of damage to what was once a sacralized landscape. Some Aborigines would say that the damage done to their country is irreversible, that the economic and agricultural vandalism of the past two hundred years has made it impossible to redeem their land from its 'fallen' condition (Cowan 129-130).

Aboriginal people still strive to achieve the recognition of their rights to land, associated with a fair return of portions of land. This is the basis on which relationship between white and black can be established. Geertz made stated: "It is essential to realize that anything one groups of people is inclined toward doing is worthy of respect by another" (Geertz 44). Many people say: "If there is to be a future in which all Australians are assured a fair go, land reform to benefit both Aborigines and Europeans must be the first priority" (Middleton 35). Formerly, Aboriginal ownership of land was collective and inalienable. Middleton wrote that the land, which could be never sold or given away, was held by a group which was a unit continuing over time from the eternal past through generations into an infinite future (39).

However, the coming of the white men changed everything at the expense of the Aborigines. The settlers were interested only in the land and the Aborigines were driven back into remote and valueless areas, or were exterminated by murder, hardship and disease (Middleton 54).

In conclusion, the white Australians should finally accept this unique culture, give them the full recognition, and make them feel as the equal members of the Australian society. On the contrary, the citation bellow expresses what are the indigenous people longing for the most:

We want the right to have and live in harmony, once again, with our mother the land, with nothing closing in on us and threatening us. It's not saying, "All you white people, take your belongings and get off that land and sail home again". We're saying "We want you to share with us, the same as we shared with you when you came here" (Money 71).

CONCLUSION

The *national identity*, as stated above, determines the position of an individual in a particular society which is territorially and politically demarcated. Nations striving for self-determination are essentially a modern phenomenon. It appeals to provide a social bond between individuals by use of symbols distinctive for every culture such as: the flag, anthem, ceremonies, coinage, uniforms, historical monuments or natural beauties. They connect the members of the community together by these means of national identification, and remind them of their common heritage, which strengthens their sense of common identity and belonging. Ethnic and religious identities concern where we come from and where we are going.

Moreover, the question should have been posed? What is a typical Australian, then? The development of the land has brought with it a great diversity of occupation and outlook. The discovery of the Australian continent with its convict tradition, is nothing what the Australians should be proud of. Once convict transportation to the Antipodes became reality, a new image of Australia was created. For several generations the convict inheritance was an embarrassment which really served to discourage the pursuit of history. Nevertheless, the *bush ethos* brought together many distinctive figures of the young Australian history, such as gold diggers, shearers, farmers, patriotic bushmen, and on the top of that, one should not also forget the plundering bushrangers riding horses through the country as a terror of the outback, but yet, praised in a certain way. The pioneer legend offered social history and declared that the people had made the nation.

The fundamental experience for the white settlers was the vastness and strangeness of the land itself, which seemed so much at odds with the purposes of civilised British settlers. The Australian history builds a picture of a society characterised by unity, consensus, solidarity and fraternity. At the time of the gold rushes, mateship served as a comforter in a foreign environment. Those days, the influx of migrants was very high; the people from other countries were lured by a new image of Australia as a land of opportunity for all comers, and above all for the working man. Australia was then depicted as the land of the emigrant. On the other hand, during the gold rushes the Australian policy was to be obsessed that the continent should be kept

racially pure, they voted for “Australia for the white man”. This obsession not only suggested the extinction of the Aborigines, but was also focused against all the migrants who were not possessing the white skin colour. Assimilation required of both migrants and Aborigines through the 1950’s homogeneous *Australian way of life* which would be threatened unless outsiders conformed to it. Thanks to that, Australia was perceived not only, as a multicultural nation, but also as a nation of the racial prejudice. The inability of multiculturalism to significantly reduce structural inequality is a serious short-coming of Australian multiculturalism.

During the 1940’s, the basis of the Australian identity changed. An idea of a racial type, a fundamental part of what it meant to be Australian was replaced by a new concept, the Australian way of life. It was stated that Australia is probably the most urbanized nation in the world; this country possesses one of the highest proportions of city dwellers in the world.

Furthermore, the coming of the white man soon destroyed the tribal life of the Aborigines. Aborigines found their history in the power and beauty of arts, myth and rituals, nevertheless, to the white settlers they appeared as the savages without any culture. As a nomadic people the Australian Aborigines have suffered a great deal of hardship, deprivation and oppression at the hands of the European settlers. They lost control of their country and Dreaming places, of their own labour and have lost their freedom of being in country. Much of their self-confidence has been damaged two hundred years of the white settlement. These days the Aborigines are expected to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community. However, since the indigenous peoples were the primeval inhabitants of the Australian continent and upon arrival of the British settlers were forcibly expelled to the arid parts of the country; it is questionable then who should be actually regarded as the real Australian? It is a conflict of two completely diverse cultures: the black contra the white, so it suggests that we will never arrive at the real Australia.

Today, the popular overseas picture of an Australian, is that of the tall, lean, sun-tanned stockman enjoying an ice-cream and his kid jumping beside him. The endless miles of glittering beaches had become a symbol of Australia’s vulnerability. For many Australians, playing or watching sports gives life one of its principal meanings. The

Australians are often described as possessing the elements of loyalty, fanaticism, pleasure-seeking, competitiveness or ambition. To understand Australian concept of enjoyment - with so many social restraints on other attempts to give life meaning, money, sport or drinking became enriching life objects. Australia is a country of contrasts with vast empty territories and a relatively small population, with a unique natural environment invaded by rural and urban developments, involving Australians with completely different life-styles.

RESUMÉ

V dnešní době se koncepce identity, která je poměrně nedávným moderním způsobem vyjádření vlastní identifikace, stala jednou z hlavních témat každodenních rozhovorů či odborných debat. Neboť koncepce identity je poměrně komplexní, proto ji není jako takovou snadné definovat. Identita by se dala formulovat jako prvek národnostní identifikace nebo výraz určité kontinuity, to znamená, že se jedinec v určité společnosti snaží o vlastní sebeurčení, touží po jisté sounáležitosti, a to nejen v rámci vlastního území, země či státu.

Dnes se za nejdůležitější formu společenské determinace pokládá *identita národní*, která se vyznačuje vymezením konkrétních prvků, typických pro určitou společenskou komunitu, a to například historickým územím, jež se stalo živnou půdou pro vytvoření společného mýtu a vzpomínek, dále politický, právní a ekonomický systém. Národ jako takový, poskytuje určité sociální pouto mezi jednotlivci a společenskými třídami, které určují společné hodnoty, symboly a tradice. Symbolika se stala hlavním prvkem sebeurčení vůči ostatním společenským komunitám. Prostřednictvím symbolů jako jsou státní vlajka, hymna, státní znak, měnová soustava nebo národní či přírodní památky, členové sdílející určitou komunitu, těmito prostředky národní identifikace, vyjadřují své společné tradice či společenské příbuzenství, čímž upevňují smysl národnostního podvědomí či sounáležitosti ve světě.

Australskou identitu utvářel specifický historický vývoj v průběhu poměrně mladých australských dějin. Austrálie je považována za zemi kontrastů, jedná se ve skutečnosti o nejmladší kontinent s nejstarší historií. Významnou roli sehrála taktéž i velká geografická vzdálenost od tradičních západních kultur, určitá izolovanost země, která se zasloužila o vytvoření osobitého životního stylu této země. Mnohokrát se usilovalo o vymezení národní identity Austrálie, avšak vždy se ukázalo, že není vůbec snadné stanovit, kdo je to, nebo co znamená být skutečný Australan. Historikové se především soustředili než na definování typického Australana, tak na to, co je charakteristické nebo význačné pro australskou společnost a zemi samotnou.

Australská národní identita je považována za produkt evropských dějin, to znamená, jakou kulturní přítěž Evropané Austrálii přinesli při osídlování tohoto kontinentu. Začátek konce klidného života, jaký tu vedli původní obyvatelé, zvěstovala

lodí, jejímž kapitánem byl James Cook, který v roce 1770, doplul do Botanické zátoky. Cook byl náramně spokojen pohledem, který se mu naskytl – příznivé podnebí, úrodná půda, překrásná příroda a neškodní domorodci. Později se jméno Botanické zátoky stalo symbolem zoufalství, opuštěnosti a krutosti. Kontrast mezi způsobem života na Britských ostrovech a života původních obyvatel, byl považován za nejpropastnější kontrast světa. Při střetu s domorodým obyvatelstvem došlo k naprostému protikladu, protože Britové i Australci mluvili zcela odlišnými jazyky a měli naprosto rozdílnou historii, zvyky, rituály, náboženství, a zcela odlišný přístup k půdě a přírodě, která je obklopovala. V 18.století posílala Británie mnoho zločinců do amerických měst, avšak poté, co se severoamerické kolonie vzbouřily, musela najít jinou alternativu pro deportaci vězňů a místních vyvrhelů britské společnosti, jímž se později stal právě australský kontinent. Avšak první osídlovatelé museli při příjezdu do země čelit, jak se později ukázalo, ne zrovna příznivým klimatickým a přírodním podmínkám, narozdíl od toho, jak je popsal sám Cook.

Osamělý život v buši, tvrdé podmínky řídicího systému, pozvedly vzájemnou soudržnost mezi farmáři a z počátku vykořisťovanými zločinci. Takzvaný *bush ethos*, jehož součástí byla rovnost, bratrství a vzájemná soudržnost, se stal hlavním symbolem australské národní identity. Legenda prvních průkopníků opěvovala statečnost, vytrvalost a pracovitost prvních osadníků v těchto nevlídných končinách. Australané byli nemálo hrdí na to, že se jim postupně podařilo, navzdory mnoha těžkostem, osídlit mnoho oblastí s tak rozdílným podnebím.

V roce 1851 vypukla v Austrálii zlatá horečka, která zajistila nový přísun přistěhovalců z celého světa. Tím došlo ke změně etnického složení australské společnosti. Posléze se trestanecká kolonie přeměnila v zlatokopecký ráj, ale především se velice rychle zapomnělo na skutečný původ této země a na trestance, kteří stáli u jejího zrodu. Zlatá horečka znamenala významný zlom nejen ve složení australské společnosti, ale především se zasloužila o zvýšení ekonomické situace země. Krom toho se stali zlatokopové novými národními hrdiny, jež se zasloužili o vytvoření nového národního cítění. Takzvaní *bushmen*, jak je nazývali, se cítili být skutečným prototypem pravého Australana.

Překrásná příroda, buš a krajina, se staly koncem 19. století dalším neodmyslitelným typickým rysem australské individuality. Stejně tak jako Evropa a

Severní Amerika, tak i Austrálie patřila mezi ty země, které usilovaly o vytvoření osobité národní kultury. Zde byla Austrálie vnímána jako země farmářů, sluncem zalité krajiny, nekonečné modré oblohy, překrásných hor, vznešených gumovníků. Všechny tyto sentimentální symboly, vyjadřující typičnost a romantiku bohaté australské krajiny, byly ztvárněny v mnohým uměleckých, literárních a jiných dílech té doby.

V polovině 20. století, začala Austrálie zaujímat nový ráz a byla často nazývána “provinční Austrálií”. Maloměstský životní styl byl považován za významný prvek australského života, avšak nadruhou stranu, byl nezřídka srovnáván s houževnatým a mnohdy tvrdým životem v australské buši. Život ve městě se vyznačoval plnohodnotným rodinným životem, chudým etnickým složením a vyšší životní úrovní. Austrálie byla pokládána dokonce za nejvíce urbanizovaný národ na světě, rovněž i svojí podobou byla mnohdy přirovnávána k americkému způsobu života.

Otázka australské národní identity byla obvykle vnímána jako pozůstatek britského dědictví. Národní ideologie, která byla vštěpována dětem ve škole byla anglocentrická. Avšak Australané vždy usilovali o vlastní sebeurčení a snažili se najít něco, co by vyvrátilo tuto podobnost s mateřskou zemí. Austrálie, jako taková, nicméně vždy usilovala o národní svébytnost, avšak nadále zůstává pod zahraničními vlivy. Britský koloniální vliv přetrval až do 40. let 20. století, a ten pak vystřídal silný ekonomický a politický vliv USA. Mnozí Australané se nicméně ještě i dnes přiklání k tradičním britským hodnotám, a na druhou stranu napodobují životní styl Američanů.

Dlouhá léta přitahovala do Austrálie přistěhovalce z celého světa, a tím se stala kulturně i lingvisticky pestrou. Největší nápor přistěhovalců utrpěla avšak právě v období zlaté horečky a následovně po druhé světové válce. Etnické složení australské společnosti je v dnešní době velice variabilní. V roce 1980 byl novým prvkem australské národní identity právě multikulturalismus. Australská společnost začala nicméně vykazovat určité rasové předsudky, a to především ve formě “politiky bílé Austrálie”, která nedovolovala vstup do země určitým etnickým skupinám, ze strachu před možným přívalem přistěhovalců z Číny, Japonska a dalších asijských zemí, kteří by mohli ohrozit politickou situaci země. Tento koncept sloužil k diskriminaci přistěhovalců z jiných částí světa než byla Británie. Nicméně přesto někteří jedinci měli snahu povýšit Austrálii na pluralitní, tolerantní zemi bez rasových předsudků, ačkoli nevykazovala žádné zlepšení ve vztahu k domorodému obyvatelstvu a přistěhovalcům

jiných etnik. Stejně tak jako v Kanadě, tak i v Austrálii, se po dlouhé rasistické a asimilacionistické historii přistoupilo k otevření hranic jednotlivcům barevné pleti a k citlivějším přístupům ke kulturním odlišnostem přistěhovalců.

Důležitou součástí australských dějin, jež je velice často opomíjena, byli původní obyvatelé, anglicky zvaní *Aborigines*. Pokud je známo, přišli australští domorodci z Asie před více než padesáti tisíci lety. Tito nomádi zde žili svým prostým tradičním životem až do příchodu bílých osadníků. Řády a rituály, jimiž se řídil život původních obyvatel a mezi které patří například totemismus či Dreamtime, byly velice komplexní a důkladně propracované. Australci věřili, že svět je dílem mytických stvořitelů, kteří si nad ním udržují moc. Dodržováním starých rituálů si zajišťovali, aby jim božští předkové byli i nadále nakloněni. Významným prvkem kulturní identity domorodých obyvatel je hudba, tanec, výtvarné umění a literární tvorba, která je převážně zastoupena mýty a legendami, jež byly po staletí předávány ústně z generace na generaci.

Australci žili na svých posvátných územích obklopeni přírodou, se kterou je pojil pevný duchovní svazek. Avšak s příchodem britských osadníků byli pokládáni za tvory stojící na nejnižším stupni živočišné říše, a tak osadníci zabavili domorodému obyvatelstvu jejich posvátná území a vyhnali je do vyprahlého a neúrodného vnitrozemí. Australci žili jako jednotná součást přírody, nesnažili se ji nikterak ovládnout či se jí zmocnit, jejich společný život odrážel harmonii a vzájemnou soudržnost mezi muži a ženami. Evropané, jež se považující vůči domorodému obyvatelstvu za nadřazené, narušili jejich pravidelný životní rytmus. Ze strany bílých osadníků nastalo období vykořisťování, znásilňování, brutality, velké rasové nenávisti a útlaku, vyvlastnění, degradace a asimilace, které trvalo několik desítek let.

Dlouhá léta krutého zacházení, zotročení nenávisti, dodnes zanechala na Austrálcích, kteří se potýkají se ztrátou vlastní identity a snaží se o její znovunalezení, trvalé následky. Australská vláda se snaží dnes odčinit to, co na domorodém obyvatelstvu napáchali jejich předchůdci, ale ani malou měrou se to nedá srovnat s tím, co museli Australci, kteří přišli o své rodiny, tradice, posvátná území a hrdost, vytrpět.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1

1.1 Bulletin:

A weekly journal. Archibald and John Haynes founded the *Sydney Bulletin* in 1880. It became very popular, especially during the late nineteenth century, and was often fondly referred to as 'the Bushman's Bible'. Its early policies were nationalistic, radical and republican. The *Bulletin* promoted Australian writers and artists. Its writers included Brennan, Dennis, Gilmore, Lawson, Breaker, Paterson, Lindsay (*Concise History* 44).

1.2 Anzac Legend:

A significant theme in twentieth century Australian history. It rests upon the assumption that Australia 'came of age' as a nation when the Anzacs landed on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. The Anzac have been described thus: "They made a distinctive tradition – brave and tough in battle, excelling at any task to which they set their hands, careless of authority, hostile to most convention, proud of their distinctiveness and their country. For them the real Australian was the Anzac, the bushman on the stage of the world" (qtd. in Carroll, *The Australian Quest for Identity*, 6).

1.3 Land Rights:

A term that, in an Australian context, usually refers to Aboriginal political and property rights. White settlers established missions and reserves for Aborigines, from the early nineteenth century onwards, but did not consider that Aborigines had legal rights to these or other lands. The Aboriginal Land Right Commission, under Mr Justice Eoodward, was held in 1973 and 1974, and was followed by the passing of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act* 1976, which led to the granting of some land rights to Aborigines in the Northern Territory. Other developments occurred in various parts of Australia during the 1980s (*Concise History* 151).

1.4 Dispossession of the children

Between 1905 and even until the early 1970's it was the policy to remove children from black mothers who had been fathered by white men. The assumption was that black women were not fit to bring up children with white blood in them. Also, it was seen as a quick form of assimilation. The removed children were brought up by whites in government settlements and missions. They were discouraged strongly from taking any interest in their mothers' culture and in the majority of cases had little contact with their black families, and no contact with the family of the white father because these children were never owned. This policy, more than any other, led to a rapid breakdown of Aboriginal family groups and culture (Rutheford 185).

1.5 We Are Going: Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Rutheford 23)

They came in to the little town
A semi-naked band subdued and silent
All that remained of their tribe.
They came here to the place of their old bora ground
Where now the many white men hurry about like ants.
Notice of the estate agent reads: 'Rubbish May Be Tipped Here'.
Now it half covers the traces of the old bora ring.
'We are as strangers here now, but the white tribe are the strangers.
We belong here, we are of the old ways.
We are the corroboree and the bora ground,
We are the old ceremonies, the laws of the elders.
We are the wonder tales of Dream Time, the tribal legends told.
We are the past, the hunts and the laughing games, the wandering camp fires.

We are the lightening bolt over Gaphembah Hill
Quick and terrible,
And the Thunderer after him, that loud fellow.
We are the quiet daybreak paling the dark lagoon.
We are the shadow-ghosts creeping back as the camp fires burn low.
We are nature and the past, all the old ways
Gone now and scattered.
The scrubs are gone, the hunting anf the laughter.
The eagle is gone, the emu and the kangaroo are gone from this place.
The bora ring is gone.
The corroboree is gone.
And we are going.

Appendix 2

2.1 Multikulturalismus tvrdí, že lidé s různými kořeny mohou žít pospolu a učit se porozumět obraznosti druhých, mohou a měli by se bez předsudků či iluzí dívat přes hranice rasy, jazyka, rodu a věku a učit se myslet na pozadí promíšené společnosti (Barša, 5).

2.2 Když se z mořských hlubin vynořily ostrovy, začaly na nich růst husté lesy. Na některých ostrovech však v prohlubních zůstala mořská voda, a tak vznikly slané laguny. V těch bylo velké množství ryb [. . .] ryba byla docela jiná než ostatní – byla kulatá jako měsíc a měla i stejné stíny jaké vidáme na měsíci [. . .] “podívej sestřičko, tamhle je ta ryba, co jsme chytly”, zvolala Makari. Obě se zadívaly na nebe na měsíc a zesmutněly, že jim utekla ta největší ryba na světě (Marshall 46).

2.3 Problémy identity doléhají zvláště naléhavě na ty jednotlivce nebo skupiny, kteří vlastní výlučnost shledávají mimo normy zjevných nositelů kultury v příslušné části společnosti nebo světa (Pynsent 19).

Appendix 3



Lady Nungarrayi Robertson, Warlpiri Yuendumu, 1989 (48 x 60)

ABORIGINAL ART

The Dreaming story for this painting tells of the Dreamtime Jungarrayi and Japaljarri men travelling from the north carrying stars and Witi poles and conducting initiation ceremonies for the young men. The travellers made a camp at a hill west of Yuendumu called Yanjilypiri, meaning „star“. It was this Dreaming that created Yiwarra, the Milky Way. The sinuous lines coming out from the central circle represent Ngalyipi or Snake Vine, which the men use to tie the Witi (ceremonial poles) to their legs for dancing during the initiation ceremonies. The black bars across top and bottom of the painting are the wooden spears which are bound together with eucalyptus leaves to make the Witi poles. The smaller circles with U-shapes on either side are the travellers who made the camp (Donald Kahn 77).

Appendix 4

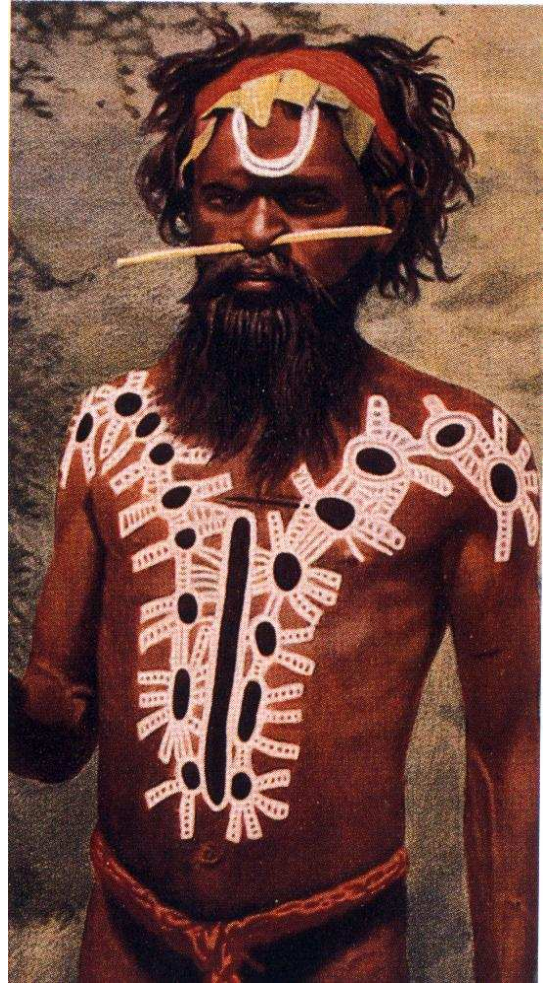


(Aboriginal people of Central Australia, late 19th century).

THE OLD AUSTRALIANS

Now from the fragments, the remnants, the whispers,
Urgent the summons of phantom Churinga:
Tribesmen shall gather from infinite shadow:
Kaitish, Binbinga, and sad Whakelbura,
Kakadu, Mara, and central Arunta-
Many the totems, and endless the dreams.
-from Wide Homeland (Béchervaise 96).

Appendix 5



(Aboriginal dancer depicted c.1910. Body painting is carried out for a wide variety of rituals).

BODY ART

Body art is central to Aboriginal visual arts. In the desert the torso and face is covered with patterns of red and white plant down stuck to the body with blood. The northern people of Arnhem Land and offshore islands paint the chests of young initiates and dancers with detailed clan patterns. Funeral ceremonies are the focus of much body art. The body of the deceased is carefully painted with the ancestral designs of his or her clan. The designs guide the spirit to its resting place by representing the country where the spirit must go. Dancers coat their bodies with white clay to prevent pollution from the dead, which in turn could cause their own sickness and death.

Fine clay designs may be painted on a man's chest on several occasions in his life: at his initiation as a young man, at a major ceremony during his life, and at his death (Bambrick 291).

Appendix 6



(Nicholas Chevalier, 1828-1902. *Mount Arapiles and the Mitre Rock*. 1863, Melbourne, from sketches at Arapiles, near Horsham, Victoria, sunset 5 May 1862. Oil on canvas, 77.5 x 120.6 cm. Australian National Gallery, Canberra. Federal Government funds 1979)

COLONIAL ART

Throughout the Western world high art was more than usually interested in landscape during the century of Romanticism, 1760s-1860s, which roughly coincided with the first century of colonial Australia. Waterfalls and mountain crags were conventional subjects for an age of romantic natural science. Australian nature provided a general sense of comfortable belonging in this non-European land; paintings of gum-trees reminded the European settlers in the great metropolis of Melbourne that these trees were fragrant, were beautiful, were ancient, were everywhere, and were theirs (Thomas 32-41).

Appendix 7



(The Man Who Was Away. Oil on hardboard 35 x 45 cm 1976)

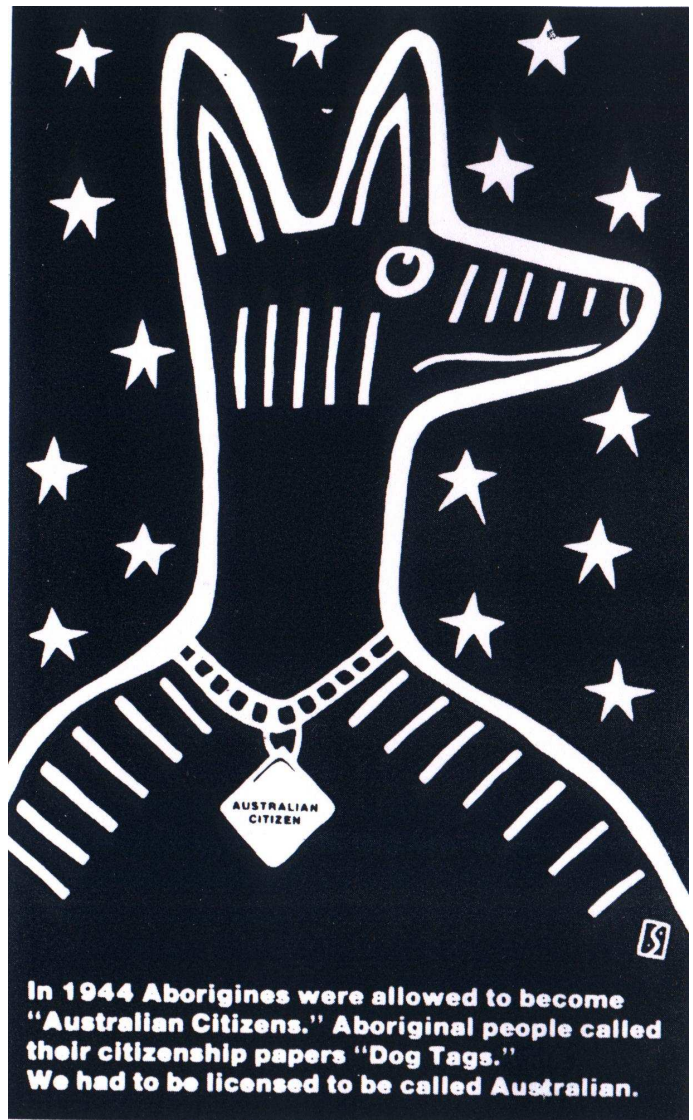
A Bushman's Song (Paterson 114)

I'm travelling down the Castlereagh, and I'm a station-hand,
I'm handy with the ropin' pole, I'm handy with the brand,
And I can ride a rowdy colt, or swing the axe all day,
But there's no demand for a station-hand along the Castlereagh.

I asked a cove for shearin' once along the Marthaguy:
"We shear non-union here," says he. "I call it scab," says I.
I looked along the shearin' floor before I turned to go –
There were eight or ten dashed Chinamen a-shearin' in a row.

For Bob was known on the Overland, a regular old bush wag,
Tramping along in the dust and sand, humping his well-worn swag.
He would camp for days in the river-bed, and loiter and "fish for whales".
"I'm into the swagman's yard," he said. "And I never shall find the rails."

Appendix 8



Sally Morgan (born and living in Perth, Western Australia) *Citizenship* 1987. Screenprint on paper 570 x 565 mm (collection Flinders University Art Museum); *Aboriginal Culture Today*, Ed. Rutheford.

Appendix 9



(Frederick McCubbin, 1855-1917. *Down on his luck*. 1889, Box Hill near Melbourne. Oil on canvas, 114.5 x 152.8 cm. Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth. Colonial Government funds 1896)

THOROUGHLY AUSTRALIAN IN SPIRIT

Frederick McCubbin's *Down on his luck* portrays the melancholy meditation of the unsuccessful gold-pro prospector considering his fate. There was a powerful psychological appeal in the idea that independence could be attained by being in close touch with nature and the land. If one were to experience poverty or failure, then such experiences seemed somehow simpler and nobler in the bush. There were deemed to be psychological compensations in the experience of rural as opposed to urban poverty. This was evident in the contemporary response to *Down on his luck*, which applauded the hard fare but independence of the bushman's life on the wallaby track and found consolation in the lyrical beauty of the secluded landscape.

"The face tells of hardships, keen and blighting in their influence, but there is a nonchalant and slightly cynical expression, which proclaims the absence of all self-pity . . . and the misty atmosphere around which is so dreamily subduing the leaves and branches of the trees into a general neutrality of colour seems to leave the lonely figure of the wanderer untouched as he sits brooding over what might have been. Mr McCubbin's picture is thoroughly Australian spirit, and yet so poetic that it is a veritable bush idyll . . ." (Thomas 118-119).

Abstract

The thesis deals with the definition of the conception of identity, in terms of Australian national identity, which has been constantly formed in the course of Australian history. There have been many attempts to give a definition to what it means to be a real Australian, which always turned up to be very complicated. On the arrival of British settlers on the Australian continent, the image of Australia has been utterly changed at the expense of the indigenous peoples. The Europeans were completely ignorant to their rich cultural heritage and traditions and to the humans themselves. The Aborigines suffered immense affliction, hardship, racial violence, assimilation and exploitation for hundreds of years. However, in the first place there were affected their cultural values, and their sense of identity and belonging. Facing the Australian society today, the Aborigines try to rediscover the cultural traditions which were lost, and they also strive to achieve the recognition and equality of the Australian society.

Abstrakt

Diplomová práce se zabývá definováním koncepce identity v rámci národní identity Austrálie, jež se neustále utvářela v průběhu australských dějin. Mnohokrát se usilovalo o definování toho, co ve skutečnosti znamená být opravdový Australan, avšak ukázalo se, že je velice komplikované dojít ke konkrétnímu závěru. S příchodem britských osadníků na australský kontinent, se podoba Austrálie zcela změnila na úkor původního domorodého obyvatelstva. Evropané naprosto ignorovali bohaté kulturní dědictví a tradice, a rovněž Austrálce samotné. Austrálci podstupovali nesmírné utrpení, strádání, rasovou diskriminaci, asimilaci a vykořisťování po desítky let. Avšak největší vliv to mělo na jejich kulturní hodnoty a uvědomění si své vlastní identity a sounáležitosti. Dnes stojící tvář tvář australské společnosti, se Austrálci snaží znovuobjevit své kulturní tradice, jež byly ztraceny, a také usilují o uznání a rovnost australské společnosti.

ÚDAJE PRO KNIHOVNICKOU DATABÁZI

Název práce	Australská národní identita a její odraz v kultuře
Autor práce	Dana Kazdová
Obor	Učitelství anglického jazyka
Rok obhajoby	2006
Vedoucí práce	Mgr. Olga Zderadičková, M.Litt
Anotace	Práce charakterizuje vliv historického vývoje na utváření národní identity Austrálie až do současnosti. Dále se zaměřuje převážně na postavení domorodého obyvatelstva v australské společnosti na pozadí analýzy australské literatury.
Klíčová slova	národní identita, James Cook, Ned Kelly, multikulturní společnost, Australci, rasismus, asimilace, totemismus, Dreamtime, Zlatá horečka, nacionalismus, bush ethos