

Myth And Alchemy In Creative Writing

An Exegesis Accompanying The Novel

Children Of The Earth

by

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Declaration

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopy.

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Date.....

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Synopsis

The novel *Children Of The Earth* is about transformation. It uses Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as a metaphor for the processes which occur in the psyche of each character, and is based on Jungian insights into myth and alchemy. Archetypes that underlie the unconscious processes of all humanity are seen in the symbolism of three very different religious traditions, namely Greek mythology, the Hebrew Old Testament and Australian Aboriginal beliefs. I explore the ways in which these three great mythologies might have converged in colonial South Australia.

The story deals with the troubled marriage of isolated settler couple, Hestia and Adam George, and the effects on it of three people who come into their lives.

Itinerant German mineralogist Johannes Menge (based on a real life pioneer) is a self-taught, eccentric polymath, and a devout but unorthodox exponent of the Bible. In Jungian terms he fulfils the role of an archetypal, but flawed, 'Wise Old Man.' Menge represents nineteenth century Protestantism, albeit still trailing some arcane superstitions. His protégé, a disgraced young teacher of classics, calls himself Hermes, and represents the role of Greek mythology in European civilization. Reliving the life of the mercurial god in the antipodes, he becomes messenger, trickster and seducer. Unatildi, an Indigenous girl whom Adam finds in a burnt-out tree trunk, is an archetypal maiden. She introduces the Europeans to the mythology of their new land, as sacred for her people as the Bible is for Johannes Menge. Each of these three characters plays a part in transforming the marriage of Adam and Hestia, and each, in turn, undergoes a personal metamorphosis.

Aboriginal women act as midwives at the birth of the love-child of Hestia and Hermes. Named Sophia, after the goddess of wisdom, the new child is thought to have inherited the miwi spirit of Unatildi's lost infant. On his deathbed, as Menge bequeaths his wisdom to his Australian friends, he predicts that Sophia will understand the sacredness of all spiritual life.

Eventually Hestia and Adam find themselves changed by their encounters with the archetypes of myth. News of Menge's death on the goldfields gives them the courage they need to begin rebuilding an honest relationship.

The novel is 107,400 words in length and is accompanied by an exegesis of 20,170 word, entitled *Myth And Alchemy In Creative Writing*. The exegesis describes the interactive process of researching and writing, as well as exploring the value of Jungian concepts for creative writing, and current issues of creating Indigenous characters. There is an emphasis on the Jungian approach to mythology and alchemy.

Myth And Alchemy In Creative Writing

Introduction

The words myth and alchemy are Janus-faced. Both carry magical overtones of past beliefs, of ideas and stories as old as human language. But the word 'myth' is now often used to mean anything which is patently untrue. As for alchemy, once revered as holding the secrets of the universe, it came to be seen by rationalist scientific thinkers as at best naïve, and at worst as the field of charlatans.

Yet myths have been treasured and preserved by countless story-tellers down the ages. There is something about story – any story – which fulfils a human need, both for listener and teller, reader and writer; but when myth is involved a story can awaken some energy deep in the psyche.

Now some scholars are telling us that even alchemy, often seen as a relic of pre-Enlightenment ignorance, has something to say to us in the 21st century. We have C.G.Jung to thank for showing us that such archaic and widely-held beliefs can be seen as an expression of humanity's collective unconscious, and that the study of both myth and alchemy can have relevance for contemporary life and literature. After reading *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* and *Man And His Symbols* I concluded that one of the most convincing ways to explain the arbitrary and irrational nature of human behaviour is the body of work produced by Jung and his followers.

It was Jung also who seemed to offer help with understanding the fragmented images of the novel I wanted to write. According to him, we dream visually; dream images arise from the unconscious pre-verbal mind. Perhaps Jungian theory would enable me to see the complete picture, some fictional world that was trying to manifest itself. The process of conceiving and writing a novel is not linear. Initially there are only a few fragments of a tantalising picture and some hazy characters who may or may not obey their creator and crystallize into something sharper and more vivid.

While a number of twentieth century novelists have deliberately written from the Jungian point of view, Bettina Knapp maintains that many authors who predated Jung by centuries managed to connect with the deep unconscious of their readers in a purely intuitive way. Knapp illustrates this very well in her study of writers from the fifth to the nineteenth century, including Euripides, Goethe, Montaigne and Yeats. In her introduction she says that 'Archetypal or primordial images, which emerge from the deepest layers of the unconscious, are found in myths, legends, literary works the world over and from time immemorial. (*A Jungian Approach*, xi).

In *The Spirit in Man, Art, And Literature*, first published in 1967, Jung describes two kinds of creative artists – the psychological and the visionary. In his opinion only a very few examples of great literature fall into the 'visionary' category. Of the work of such writers such as Dante, Goethe and William Blake, Jung says:

It is something strange that derives its existence from the hinterland of man's mind, as if it had emerged from the abyss of prehuman ages, or from a superhuman world of contrasting light and darkness. It is a primordial experience ... sublime, pregnant with meaning, yet chilling the blood with its strangeness, it arises from timeless depths (90).

The psychological novel, according to Jung, is a very different matter, and arises from our ordinary everyday consciousness:

The psychological mode works with materials drawn from man's conscious life – with crucial experiences, powerful emotions, suffering, passion, the stuff of human fate in general The raw material of this kind of creation is derived from the contents of man's consciousness, from his eternally repeated joys and sorrows, but clarified and transfigured by the poet. (89)

Jung finds the deliberately 'psychological' novel of little interest to his profession. (88) I thought it possible, however, that archetypal theory might give me insights into connecting with the unconscious levels of my own mind as well as with the reader's mind. It might also help me to

understand and develop my characters. Jungian theories of myth seemed rich with possibilities.

Steven Walker contends that :

it is clear that Jungians value the study of mythology primarily as a means of furthering *individuation*. In individuation the individual integrates, at least to some degree, the inner world of split-off personalities ... and realises to some extent the archetype of the Self, the foundation for a secure sense of identity. (33)

Nevertheless my preliminary reading convinced me that as a creative writer I would benefit by gaining a Jungian understanding of the psychology of my characters, and the psychology of the process of writing fiction. If ideas for fiction can first arise as images in the writer's unconscious, it ought to be possible to begin with these images and make a conscious analysis of their archetypal dimensions. Jung's theory of the archetypes was developed during a time when he allowed his conscious mind to be overwhelmed by unconscious fantasies. I did not think I could achieve this remarkable feat, but it might be possible to quieten my conscious, critical mind and allow the unconscious a little more freedom.

There is nothing new about applying Jungian ideas to creative writing or literary criticism. Although it can be argued that Jung's archetypal theory has been overtaken by postmodernism, this is contested by Christopher Hauke in *Jung And The Postmodern: The Interpretation Of Realities*. Hauke argues that Jung's psychology, and that of many post-Jungians, is actually a response to modernity. (1) Susan Rowland argues that, 'as a relatively new development Jungian literary theory makes connections between the core principles and writings of the psychoanalyst, C.G. Jung, and the domain of contemporary cultural theory including deconstruction, postmodernism, feminism and postcolonialism.' (*Jungian Literary Theory*,1) Hence one of the questions I wanted to explore became: '*How useful are Jungian ideas to creative writing in the context of contemporary cultural theory?*'

The Genesis Of the Novel

I set myself the task of reading copiously, especially on the Jungian aspects of psychology, religion, mythology, alchemy and literary theory. Reading Jung led me to think of a small group of people, unfulfilled in their personal lives, placed in situations which would trigger the process of individuation for each. My preoccupation with the idea of inner changes also arose out of a recent reading of David Slavitt's modern translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Ovid's continuous narrative of mythical 'bodies changed' seemed to resonate with the successive psychic transformations which Jung posits as the process of individuation. My characters would undergo metamorphoses of the spirit.

Initially I thought of writing a novel about a troubled marriage. As a result of researching an earlier historical novel I had an interest in South Australian history and Aboriginal /settler relations. There were possibilities in those early days when Indigenous and European cultures first clashed. I found myself combining disparate notions in new ways. Serendipitous ideas began to evolve.

Then there was Johannes Menge, crying out for a place on South Australia's literary map. During my research for *The Protector* I had chanced on W.A. Cawthorne's small character sketch, *Menge The Mineralogist* (1859), and had been fascinated. I considered writing a biographical novel about this eccentric German, South Australia's first geologist and mineralogist, but abandoned the idea because of the complexity of conflicting information available. To research Menge's long and varied life fully was a task for a serious biographer; it might take years to unravel the truth. Eventually I was drawn back to the idea of the troubled marriage. According to Walker:

For Jung, a woman's animus ... is a source of stubbornly held and unquestioned opinions and results in an exasperating know-it-all attitude, carping criticism and a tendency to argue at the drop of a hat. ... what happens when a woman nags and a man

gets moody is more a battle between animus and anima than a dialogue between human beings. (52-54)

Such marriages must have existed long before Jung defined them thus. Why not a nineteenth century couple in colonial South Australia? If I were to create such a pair would they necessarily bicker and sulk for the rest of their lives? They could not read psychology, or a modern marriage manual. They could not even know the Freudian and Jungian terms which have invaded our language. What could happen to facilitate the process of individuation that would heal the rift?

Jung's theories of mythology and religion seemed to offer a solution. My unhappy couple could not consciously understand or express their complexes, but like many before them they could absorb by osmosis the healing myths and beliefs of the past. Living in a new landscape, they might be influenced not only by the Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman beliefs, but perhaps more subtly by stories from the Aboriginal Dreaming.

Although in the 1930s Jung proposed the possibility of deep psychic differences between races, in later life he embraced the idea of archetypes common to all humanity. In Walker's words 'the collective unconscious belongs to a category of ideas that posit a universal human nature.'(9)

An archetype is irreprehensible, and cannot be known directly, but the archetypal images it can produce are culture-dependent symbols which can appear in the myths, dreams and visions of any people, whatever their race. Jung saw this concept as his most significant contribution to the study of myth. (Walker 12.)

If this was true could the archetypes of Europe's ancient lore find correspondences with those of a newly discovered Australian mythology? For my pioneer couple, could becoming 'Australian' rather than 'British' involve absorbing a little of the Indigenous mythology, even while retaining the mix of Judeo-Christian and Greco-Roman ethos which informs European culture? I saw the possibilities of not just an anima/animus conflict, but a nature spirit, a nymph, emerging from the virgin bush, and perhaps even someone who would fulfil the role of 'trickster'. Then I

realised I had the perfect opportunity to include Johannes Menge in the story, as the archetypal Wise Old Man, wandering in and out of the lives of my central characters while he prospected in the Mount Lofty and Flinders Ranges.

I pictured a small, isolated farm on flat land, with a backdrop of mountains. After visiting the northern Mount Lofty Ranges I chose this landscape as the setting for my novel. It was country that Johannes Menge might well have traversed, and where he could, quite feasibly, have struck up a friendship with a farmer and his wife, and where he might also have encountered the area's original inhabitants, who would have been the Peramangk people. It occurred to me then that the wandering Menge might tie the whole story together. He could also be the means of introducing a trickster who would play the role of a messenger from the gods.

My disparate ideas, first seen as alternatives, had woven themselves into one story. It would not only deal with some of the issues which arose when European culture met that of Indigenous Australians, but would also apply twentieth century psychology to a nineteenth century marriage.

A flesh and blood settler's wife would represent an archetypal Olympian deity, Hestia, goddess of hearth and home, but she would be a flawed, undeveloped goddess. Although relatively young and attractive, she would be emotionally scarred, with an animus complex. Frigid, moralising and somewhat opinionated, my nineteenth century Hestia would be unaware of her potential divinity. Her unfortunate husband, Adam George, would be a simple man, a stolid farmer, moodily resentful of his unsatisfactory marriage.

This tale of marriage, betrayal and reconciliation became a dream in which the old gods of Europe might encounter the even older deities of Australia. The challenge would be to translate the vision into something which *could* have happened in the mundane world of colonists and colonised.

The Research

Researching Jung and the Jungians

I had a general awareness of the work of C.G. Jung, derived from such books as the popular *Man And His Symbols* (1964), but while I wanted an understanding of Jungian thinking in general, I particularly wanted to study Jungian approaches to mythology and alchemy. As well as this I knew would need a knowledge of Jungian archetypal criticism and how it might relate to more recent literary theory.

I found an embarrassment of riches. Asking for Jung in a nutshell was plainly unrealistic, but I soon discovered that some of his many disciples and colleagues were better at encapsulating his ideas than the master himself. For instance, Kerényi articulates very well Jung's sense of the grandeur and universality of the great myths:

A particular kind of material determines the art of mythology, an immemorial and traditional body of material contained in tales about gods and god-like beings, heroic battles and journeys to the Underworld – “mythologem” is the best Greek word for them – tales already well-known but not amenable to further reshaping. (Jung & Kerényi ‘Prolegomena’, 3)

Kerényi writes of ‘a torrent of mythological pictures’ and this was what I had found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and hoped to find in Aboriginal Dreaming stories. Kerényi also claims that ‘Mythology, like the severed head of Orpheus, goes on singing even in death and from afar,’ and that ‘Myths never, in any sense, explain; they always set up some precedent as an ideal and as a guarantee of the continuance of that ideal. (‘Hermes’,8) This seemed particularly applicable to Aboriginal myths which defy Western rational explanation, and yet seem rich with hidden meanings.

Kerényi writes of the Greek god Hermes as a Divine Child, closely related to Eros, who demands love, and is symbolised by the phallic symbol, the ‘Herm’; Hermes’ theme is ‘the eternal

relationship of love, thievery, and “affairs” (73). I wondered how, in my ignorance, I had chanced on Hermes as the name of the passionate and selfish young man who would seduce the frigid Hestia. But first I needed to know what Jung had to say about creativity and the creative arts.

In *The Spirit In Man, Art, And Literature* Jung’s lecture on Paracelsus revealed resemblances between Paracelsus’ writings and Johannes Menge’s beliefs, as described by Cawthorne. It seemed quite possible that Menge had read and absorbed the philosophies of Paracelsus. Considering how the young apprentice Menge had devoured the library of his educated benefactor Herr De Leonhardt, (Triebel 31) it appeared even more likely. My vaguely formed story kept meeting ideas, concepts and themes that confirmed and clarified it. I refused to put pen to paper at this early stage but my discoveries were making connections with the story that was already writing itself in my head.

The idea of an anima/animus battle in which my fictional couple could be locked needed further investigation. Writing from a personal and necessarily male point of view, Jung deals in much greater depth with the anima than he does with the animus. It is his wife who develops more fully the idea of the animus in the female psyche, with its dangers, and also its potential for the personal growth of women. Emma Jung’s *Animus And Anima* also proposes some practical solutions to the problems of the animus possession for a woman, such as developing her intellectual aspects and seeking solidarity with other women, something my character Hestia would do.

Eventually I discovered that it was the Post-Jungians who would best serve my needs. Steven Walker led me into the stream of ideas generated and elaborated by Jung’s many disciples. Walker not only summarises the fundamental theories of Jungian psychology, but clarifies the concepts of archetypes and their relation to mythology and alchemy. He differentiates between the universal archetype and the culturally derived archetypal image, distinguishing between the personal and the collective unconscious. He explains the concepts of the Anima, the Animus, the Shadow, the Hero, the Wise Old Man, the Great Mother, the Divine Child and the

Self. On the subject of the anima/animus dichotomy Walker writes that 'Biologically the anima, the inner woman, expresses the presence of a minority of female genes in a man, just as the animus, the inner man, expresses the presence of a minority of male genes in a woman' (45).

While it is the projection of the anima and the animus onto a person of the opposite sex which leads to falling in love, these archetypes can also cause major difficulties in a relationship. Of the anima Walker says 'Jung finds in a male's irrational *moods* the most common sign of the presence of the anima, of whose power over his emotional life he usually remains unconscious. Resentment, testiness, touchiness and sentimentality are typical manifestations of the anima.(4) The animus can be equally troublesome for a woman. 'For Jung, a woman's animus – which like the anima is partly personal and partly archetypal in origin – is a source of stubbornly held and unquestioned *opinions* and results in an exasperating know-it-all attitude, carping criticism and a tendency to argue at the drop of a hat. (52.)

On the psychological significance of alchemy, Walker explains that 'The particular archetypal image that Jung struggled to come to terms with in his alchemical studies was the *coniunctio* or the joining of opposites. The myth that expresses this archetypal image is the *hieros gamos*, the sacred marriage of male and female principles (116). I understand this to mean the union of animus and anima within each individual. Individuation for the female will mean integrating her masculine aspect, instead of projecting it onto her male partner. For the male it will mean accepting his feminine aspect instead of expecting his female partner to perform this function for him. According to Walker, 'Both alchemy and analytical psychology seek to produce a unity out of opposites. For the alchemists, this unity was symbolized by the production of gold (*philosophical gold*, not the "vulgar gold" of the miser's delight). For Jung, it is the completion of the individuation process (117).

Robert A. Segal discusses the differences between the theories of mythology held by Frazer, Tyler, Freud and those of Jung; he builds a strong case for the Jungian approach to

understanding the origins, functions and universality of myths. For Frazer, myths were invented as colourful *descriptions* of natural phenomena; for Tyler they were created to *explain* natural phenomena: for Freud they were invented as a *result* of individual childhood experience. For Jung and the Jungians myths are not 'invented' at all. They arise out of the archetypes inherent in every human psyche, in the collective unconscious shared by all humanity, regardless of time, race or culture.

On the subject of alchemy Segal quotes Jung as saying that 'the alchemists... in their own way knew more about the nature of the individuation process than we moderns do .' (34) Both comments were significant for my novel because I wanted to imply that the symbols of mythology and alchemy could influence the unconscious individuation process in my characters, in spite of the fact that none of them could have had any knowledge of Jungian theories.

In *A Jungian Approach to Literature* Knapp quotes Jung as saying 'The human psyche is the womb of all the arts and sciences'. The literary creation, she says, is a manifestation of the subliminal realm working in harmony with the conscious sphere, is a unique expression of an individual's personality as well as the revelation of a cultural phenomenon. (365) While in this work Knapp deals only with classics of the past, the principles she expounds can be applied to writing of any period. Susan Rowland, in *C.G. Jung And Literary Theory*, relates both Jungian and contemporary theory to a number of twentieth century novels. Her *Jung: A Feminist Revision* (2002) further develops her theories.

It was David Tacey, however, who was to have particular significance for me. Tacey has creatively applied Jungian thinking to both Euro-Australian and Indigenous culture. Discovering his *Edge Of The Sacred* was exciting. Tacey is an Australian, and a self-confessed Jungian who has studied under James Hillman. He has a literary background but insists that 'the theory of archetypes and of unconscious process knows no disciplinary boundaries.'(vii) He is deeply concerned with restoring the sacred in the psyche of secular contemporary Australian society. Although I was exploring the sacred and the spiritual in the lives of nineteenth century pioneers,

Tacey's observations of Australian culture seemed relevant. I also liked his use of the word Euro-Australian, although I realise it is not as inclusive as 'nonIndigenous.' Tacey discusses what happens in the psyche of immigrants:

As a society transplants itself from the old to the new world, the delicate and carefully maintained balance between the two psychic systems, between consciousness and the unconscious, is disturbed. Ego-consciousness, which in the old parent culture had become sophisticated and had achieved a fairly high degree of autonomy, is reined in suddenly by the unconscious, which becomes stronger and more demanding in the new psychocultural situation. (35)

This is exactly what I thought would happen to my pioneer settlers on their remote farm. Old restraints and traditions would break down, and unruly unconscious forces might be released. The landscape could effect subtle but real changes in the immigrant psyche. Tacey sees the Australian landscape as 'a mysteriously charged and magnificently alive archetypal presence.' (6). How could my characters fail to be influenced by it?

Reason told me that writing a colonial novel without the problems of representing an Indigenous character would have been much easier, but I knew instinctively that Unatildi was essential to my story. Tacey suggests that 'In archetypal terms, Aboriginals have ceased being carriers of the white person's shadow and have become messengers of the sacred; they are now psychopomps, or personifications of what Jung calls the Self.' Aboriginals are now 'experienced [by EuroAustralians] as spiritual guides' (*Edge Of the Sacred*, 129). This, Tacey contends, results in 'the danger that by projecting sacredness onto Indigenous people, white Australians disempower themselves spiritually and refuse to accept responsibility for their own souls' (131). One of the reasons Unatildi is essential to my novel is because, in Tacey's words, she enables my European characters 'to befriend the deeper, more primal or 'aboriginal' layer in their own psychic structure',

Writing about twentieth century Euro-Australian society, Tacey saw it as a spiritual desert. True spirituality can be found, he maintains, in what remains of traditional Aboriginal beliefs, but these cannot be appropriated by non-Indigenous people. We must find our own souls, he says, before we can connect with the deeply spiritual Indigenous Australians. In Tacey's terms, my nineteenth century European characters were sufficiently religious not to have lost their souls entirely. Given the right circumstances some connection might have been possible between their spiritual heritage and that of the original Australians they encountered. An exchange of important myths might not have been impossible.

Researching Classical Mythology

It was David Slavitt who led me to enlarge on what had been an embryonic, perhaps dormant, interest in Greco-Roman mythology. Some months before beginning to plan my novel I had picked up *The Metamorphoses of Ovid, Translated by David R Slavitt*, and found myself enthralled. Later I would find other versions, but it was Slavitt's very free translation which initially intrigued me.

Ted Hughes, in *Tales From Ovid* encapsulates my first impressions of Publius Ovidius Naso, when he writes:

Above all, Ovid was interested in passion. Or rather, in what passion feels like to one possessed by it. Not just ordinary passion either, but human passion *in extremis* – passion where it combusts, or levitates, or mutates into an experience of the supernatural. (ix)

In my novel Hermes, the teacher, would have to translate passages from Hestia's old Latin text of *Metamorphoses*. Having forgotten most of my secondary school Latin, I chose an English edition which a nineteenth century classics teacher might have known. I found it in a 2001 electronic version of *Ovid's Metamorphoses: translated into English Verse under the Direction of Sir*

Samuel Garth by John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Joseph Addison, William Congreve and other Eminent Hands (1672-1744). I felt sure that classics teacher Hermes would have known this translation in its original form and (being conveniently lazy) would have quoted from memory when obliged to translate. The theme of metamorphosis would emerge in the seductive tales which he would 'translate' for Hestia.

Although I had decided to rely mainly on Ovid, I wanted a broader perspective on classical mythology. I chose Robert Graves' *Greek Myths*. But in his introduction I found that he disagreed strongly with Jung's theories on mythology.

Despite a sameness of pattern in Greek myths, all detailed interpretations of particular legends are open to question until archaeologists can provide a more exact tabulation of tribal movements in Greece, and their dates. Yet the historical and anthropological approach is the only reasonable one: *the theory that Chimaera, Sphinx, Gorgon, Centaurs, Satyrs and the like are blind uprushes of the Jungian collective unconscious, to which no precise meaning had ever, or ever could have, been attached, is demonstrably unsound.* (30, my italics).

I think Graves missed the point. Certainly the great world mythologies arise out of history, and are studied by anthropologists, but they are shaped by the minds of the people who have told them down the ages – that is, by humanity's collective unconscious. I am prejudiced, of course. I admit that I was already strongly influenced by Jung's ideas before I read Graves' commentary, but for me Jung illuminates the myths, while Graves merely attempts to explain them. Graves did, however, provide me with the story of Hermes' origins and early capricious exploits (68-70), which I would later use in my novel. His description of Hestia (78) is quite brief, so for the true essence of Hestia I went to Hugh G. Evelyn-White's translation of the Homeric Hymn dedicated to her:

Hestia, in the high dwellings of all, both deathless gods and men who walk on earth,
you have gained an everlasting abode and highest honour: glorious is your portion

and your right. For without you mortals hold no banquet – where one does not duly pour sweet wine in offering to Hestia both first and last. (*Hymn 29 To Hestia*,1)

But I needed more. In *Pagan Meditations*, Ginette Paris explores the nature of the goddess

Hestia:

Although few stories and myths surround Hestia, one must not believe that she is of less importance than the other Olympians. She is less brilliant and is not much talked about, but by the place she held in daily life she was the one most often honoured. That there are few stories relating to her underlines the fact that she likes neither change nor adventure. (167)

Hestia is, according to Paris, 'the center of the Earth, the center of the home, and our own personal center.' (167) Domestic space was organised around a hearth, and the word Hestia was the Greek word for hearth. Jean Pierre Vernant suggests that Hestia is the navel which ties the hearth to the earth. She is the symbol of fixity and permanence (128). It was with delight that I discovered that the Olympian Hestia had a close relationship with the god Hermes. This is apparent from the second verse of *Homeric Hymn 29 to Hestia*, as translated by Hugh G.

Evelyn-White:

And you, (Hermes) slayer of Argus, Son of Zeus and Maia, messenger of the blessed gods, bearer of the golden rod, giver of good, be favourable and help us, you and Hestia, the worshipful and dear. Come and dwell in this glorious house of friendship together (1)

Vernant explores the relationship at length, contrasting Hestia who 'remains at home and never leaves her abode' with Hermes,

a traveller from afar and one who is already preparing to depart. Nothing about him is settled, stable, permanent, restricted, or definite. He represents ... movement and flow, mutation and transition ... In the house, his place is at the door, protecting the threshold, repelling thieves because he is himself the thief. (129)

These clues to the nature of the Olympian Hestia and Hermes would become important aspects of my fictional characters. Then a newspaper advertisement alerted me to a forthcoming Australian production of *Metamorphoses: A Play*, written and produced by Mary Zimmerman, of particular interest to me because the playscript revealed that it was based on Slavitt's translation of *The Metamorphoses Of Ovid*. Set in and around a square pool of water, against a backdrop hinting at the Greece of antiquity, *Metamorphoses: A Play* brought to life nine of Ovid's stories in a seamless blend of ancient and modern, metamorphosing between the traditional and contemporary so easily that the relevance of the myths for the 21st century was immediately obvious. Zimmerman captures both the comedy and high drama of Ovid, in language ranging from streetwise to classical. Having to dodge the splashing of the gods in the pool only added to the dreamlike realism of the experience. If Ovid could be applied to the twenty first century, he could surely have something to say through my nineteenth century characters.

Researching Aboriginal Mythology

When I began researching the first inhabitants of the Mount Lofty Ranges I hoped to discover something of their culture, and in particular, their Dreaming stories. I was appalled to find that by 1850, the date my novel begins, the Peramangk people had almost ceased to exist as a community. There seemed to be only scant records, and even fewer which could be accessed by a nonIndigenous person. The last of the Peramangk were removed to missions or integrated into neighbouring tribes during the 1850s. Their descendants are few, but I was able to talk to Richard Hunter of Nildottie on the River Murray. Richard Hunter is now the custodian of the Peramangk culture. He could provide me with no stories which are known to have belonged specifically to the Peramangk, but said that the people of the Mount Lofty Ranges would have been familiar with the major Dreaming stories of their neighbours. He suggested using the stories of the Ngarrindjeri and the Kurna people.

I pursued every mention of the Peramangk that I could find in indexes or catalogues for other clues to their culture. I searched the Internet and discovered that the people of the Mount Lofty Ranges had many names, including Peramarma, Mereldi, Marimejuna and Tarrowatta. I discovered that a few Peramangk stories and other cultural materials had been compiled under the supervision of South Australian Aboriginal Education Officer Adele Pring, but these had been judged too sensitive to be published, so were not available to me. At this point I was tempted to change the location of my novel, but discussing it with Heather Kerr of my University's English Department provided me with a fresh point of view. She suggested that I incorporate the early loss of Peramangk culture as part of my story.

Anthropologists writing about South Australian Indigenous people have little to say about the Peramangk; there are only passing references. The 'Hills Men' are, however, described by Cawthorne (1844) Tindale (1974) and Berndt and Berndt (1993). It seemed that these three would be my most reliable sources: Cawthorne because he was in Adelaide in 1844, Tindale because of his exhaustive coverage of all known Australian tribes, and Berndt and Berndt because of their meticulous recording of information given to them by Albert Karloan and Pinkie Mack about the culture of the Ngarrindjeri and their neighbours.

Impressed as I was by Cawthorne's lively and credible descriptions of Menge, I was disappointed by his understanding of Indigenous beliefs. He does, however, give a graphic description of a corroboree performed by 'the Mount Barker tribe', by which he must have meant the Peramangk. This he depicts as being quite different from the performance of the 'Adelaide natives', presumably the Kurna. The 'Mount Barker Natives', Cawthorne says, danced 'with widely glaring eyes' making 'undesirable motions with their legs,' while the corroboree of the 'Adelaide natives' was beautiful, the whole effect 'very great.' (Cawthorne, *Rough Notes 13*). From this I deduced that the Peramangk were regarded as a wilder, more primitive people, perhaps less amenable to 'civilising' influences than the Kurna.

Tindale refers to the Peramangk as neighbours of other better-known tribes, such as the confederation known as the Ngarrindjeri. Berndt and Berndt write of the latter by the alternative name 'Yaraldi.' Tindale also mentions the Peramangk as being feared by the Kurna for their powers of 'evil magic'. The Peramangk may have in turn feared the Kurna because they practised circumcision, though Tindale and the Berndts disagree over whether or not the Peramangk practised circumcision. The Ngarrindjeri (Yaraldi), who did not circumcise, certainly considered it a barbaric practice.

It is difficult to establish the exact boundaries of Peramangk territory. Berndt and Berndt (304) on their map showing the tribal boundaries of the Ngarrindjeri (Yaraldi) and their neighbours, indicate the 'Piramangk' as occupying a roughly rectangular area which includes much of the Mount Lofty Range as well as a narrow corridor to the river Murray. Tindale's (1974) tribal map of the same area shows a longer, thinner wedge-shaped area, extending further north and south, but without access to the river. All that can be assumed is that the Peramangk occupied the Mount Lofty Ranges from Mount Barker to Angaston, but there is some uncertainty about the exact borders.

Drawings by George French Angas (1844) held by the State Library of SA depict '*A Peramangk Man*' and '*A Peramangk Corroboree*.' These were particularly valuable because such items are rare. The Peramangk man appears short, slightly built and heavily scarred with a distinctive pattern of horizontal bands across the chest, forming chevrons on the upper arms. He carries a spear, a waddy and an intricately carved shield: he wears a nose-bone, a decorated headband and a rather fierce expression. One gets the impression that he is no mean warrior, but that his power is mental as well as physical. He became the model for the stern father of my Indigenous character, Unatildi.

The Aboriginal people who dug potatoes on John Wrathall Bull's Mount Barker farm in the early 1840s were probably not Peramangk, but their eastern neighbours. In 1883 Bull described the effect of a meteorite on his workers in the following words:

They no sooner saw the meteor than they cast themselves with their faces on the ground, uttering one combined and long-continued hideous yell. When the meteor had vanished all I could say did not pacify or relieve them of their fright; they persisted in saying it was a devil-devil, come to kill blackfellows. (154)

Bull's Indigenous workers disappeared overnight and when he next saw them months later their numbers were depleted and many still bore the signs of the illness they believed to have been caused by the meteorite. It is highly likely that the Peramangk were similarly affected by the frightening phenomenon. (I would later use this mysterious epidemic as the reason for the early death of many Peramangk, including the mother of my character, Unatildi.)

Philip A. Clarke describes the cosmology of the Kurna people, based mainly on information recorded by missionaries Teichelmann and Schurmann during the years 1839-1846. ('Adelaide Aboriginal Cosmology', 1-10'). How much the Peramangk cosmology resembled that of the Kurna can only be imagined, but the sky beings of the Milky Way occur widely in Indigenous mythology, so it seemed reasonable to use this in my novel.

Writing in the *Journal Of The Torrens Valley Historical Association*, Coles and Draper affirm that the 'Mount Barker Tribe', the Peramangk, sometimes visited the settlement in Adelaide in a large group 'to conduct ceremonial business'. Of relations with settlers, they say:

Interracial conflict was mostly peaceful, although the European police troopers did harass them on occasion. Not until the 1840's, when flocks of sheep were crowding the watering places and grazing lands of the Hills tribe and the animals they hunted for food, did open conflicts arise....There was apparently little physical violence. (2)

Robin Coles provided me with copies of his own articles on cave art found in the Mount Lofty Ranges, illustrated with drawings. While this cave art is evidence of the existence of the Peramangk culture, I was not able to interpret its meaning, except that it included animals and reptiles.

I wondered what might be revealed in the writings of early missionaries (Schurmann, Teichelmann, Taplin, Newland), Protectors of Aborigines (Wyatt, Moorhouse), settlers (John Wrathall Bull), and colonial journalists (Cawthorne, Nathaniel Hailes). Although all contained some fascinating accounts of early contact with Indigenous people, none of these seemed to differentiate between the Kurna and their neighbours. They seem to merely refer to 'the Adelaide blacks,' although there are passing mentions of the 'Merimeyunna', or 'East Men' who must have been the Peramangk.

My hopes of finding any trace of Peramangk mythology finally faded. I could not concoct a mythology specific to the Peramangk. I could only imply it. Such are the losses and tragedies of Aboriginal history. But because mythology was to be a major theme in my novel, this meant finding stories where I could. Part of the solution lay in Richard Hunter's suggestion that the Peramangk people would have known stories such as the Kurna people's Tjilbruke story, and the myth of the Ngarindjeri's great creation hero, Ngurrunderi.

It became necessary, then, to discover as much as I could about the major myths of the Peramangk people's neighbours. I found that there were several versions of the Ngurrunderi myth, some simplified, and some containing vast amounts of detail. Eventually I decided to rely on the versions told by Ronald and Catherine Berndt, and a recent edition of Unaipon's *Legendary Tales Of The Australian Aborigines* edited by Stephen Muecke and Adam Shoemaker.

Anthropologists Catherine and Ronald Berndt spent many years with Indigenous people and developed a strong rapport with them. Their 1993 work, *A World That Was: the Yarlaldi Of The Murray River And The Lakes, South Australia* was the result of their meticulous recording of Ngarrindjeri culture over an extended period. Berndt and Berndt's version of the Ngurrunderi myth mentions 'Tjirbuki, a place associated with the Dreaming man Blue Crane'. This almost certainly refers to the Kurna myth of 'Tjilbruki' mentioned by Peramangk custodian Richard Hunter, and also published by the South Australian Museum. It is evidence that although particular myths were the property of specific groups, they were also known across tribal borders.

By now I knew that on his journeys to the Flinders Ranges, mineralogist and prospector Johannes Menge would have passed through the territory of the Ngadjuri, the Peramangk's northern neighbours. It seemed likely that the Ngadjuri stories might also have been known to the Peramangk. Tindale (1937) records the Ngadjuri Dreaming story of 'The Old Woman And Her Two Dingoes' and the hero Kudnu. In my story, Menge's knowledge of this story and a smattering of Ngadjuri language would become important.

For a broader perspective on Australian mythology I decided to read relevant sections from the work of nineteenth and early twentieth century anthropologists. Some of these writers are now considered out-dated, condescending and even racist, but I thought it should be possible to read between the lines, to make allowance for the biases of the past, and still gain an impression of those early meetings between European and Aboriginal.

The problem was my lack of experience in evaluating the various early scholars of Aboriginal culture. Lang, Malinowski, Ashley-Montagu, Spencer and Gillen, Radcliffe-Brown, Stanner, Eliade – whose voluminous writings would be reliable? As with Jung and the Jungians, the sheer volume of literature daunted me. I searched for chapters that might be germane for my story, and immersed myself in these. Although I was not able to reach many conclusions about reliability, I developed a feel for the period. Elkin, in *Aboriginal Men of High Degree*, records in sympathetic detail his study of Aboriginal 'medicine men', otherwise known as 'Warrawarras' or 'clever men.' There seemed to be possibilities in comparing a Warrawarra with Jung's archetypal 'Wise Old Man', who for me was already embodied in Johannes Menge.

It was Katie Langloh Parker (1905), the wife of an outback station owner, who provided me with some vital information relating to Aboriginal women. Langloh Parker is sometimes dismissed as merely a kind, but condescending mistress of black servants, and at first I thought her situation in northwest New South Wales too remote from the Peramangk to have any relevance for my research. However, the dearth of detail about the lives of Aboriginal women in colonial times led me to read *The Euhalay'i Tribe* (1905) and its introduction by Andrew Lang. Like

Lang I was impressed by Langloh Parker's acute observation and detailed recording of the Euahlayi culture. As Evans, Grimshaw & Standish attest:

Parker's writings offer evidence about the lives of the Yuwalaraay (Euahlayi), particularly Yuwalaraay women, which is not present in other literary sources and which exists for few Aboriginal women for this stage of the frontier(16-17).

Parker employed Yuwalaraay girls in her home, but she also taught them many accomplishments that few white servants of that era would have acquired: to read, write, and play the piano. She listened to them and took a strong interest in their culture. They in turn, appear to have trusted her with their stories. She also appears to have achieved a mutually respectful relationship with the adult women living on the property. 'Old Bootha' who became a 'Wirreewun', presumably a Wise Woman, used her healing and rain-making powers for the benefit of the white household. It is hardly surprising that Parker's writing reflects some nineteenth century attitudes, but her independence of mind and her strong empathy with the Euahlayi people cannot be denied.

Evans, Grimshaw and Standish claim that:

Parker was no ordinary colonist; she was one who could publicly express positive opinions of a despised group and also take a critical look at what colonization had done to them. Parker noted, for example, Yuralaraay distress at recalling the initial impact of the invasion and the panic that overtook the community when many of their ancestors succumbed to European diseases (22).

Although there is evidence of wide variation between tribal cultures, there also appear to be similarities between the legends of widely separated areas. A comparison of the Yuwalaraay creation story and one told by the Ngarrindjeri people of the Murray Lakes reveals this. One story belongs in northern New South Wales, the other in southernmost South Australia. In both cases important waterways are created by a Supreme Being searching for his missing wives.

Parker discusses the Yuwalaraay belief in Baiame, the creator or 'All Father' of mankind, emphasising that these Indigenous people had no contact with Christian missions. Although the name used for this deity may vary, and the concept is not recorded for all tribes, it seems likely that most Indigenous people had such a belief. Clarke (1990) writes of the (Adelaide) Kurna people's reverence for Munaintyerlo, the creator of all things. I have not been able to discover a corresponding name used by the Peramangk of the Adelaide Hills.

Langloh Parker says that the name Baiame could not be used by women and the uninitiated. Nevertheless, she says, women had a high place in sacred lore. She writes of a girl brought up as a 'witch' and describes the apparent lunacy of 'Old Bootha' whilst in the process of becoming a 'Witch Woman.' Presumably becoming a 'Warrawarra' meant that a man must go through a similar psychic process. I was reminded of Jung's mental crisis in which he experienced the sequence of visions which convinced him of the reality of the collective unconscious. Elkin (1977) writes at length about the selection and training of 'men of high degree', and while it is likely that the roles of men and women differed, Langloh Parker supplies evidence that women also achieved high rank and displayed unusual powers of perception and healing.

Some contemporary historians, with their emphasis on conflict, would no doubt question the fictional situation I was creating; a white settler's wife and a young Aboriginal woman becoming friends? But close relationships, even marriages, between Aboriginals and Europeans have been recorded. While clashes often occurred between organised groups, there are numerous instances of friendship between individuals. (Langloh Parker and Old Bootha; Sturt and Wylie; John Wrathall Bull's pleasure at being embraced publicly by an Aboriginal man; the trust placed in T.G.H. Strehlow by the Aranda elders; Inga Glendinnen's accounts of N.S.W. Governor Phillip's friendship with Baneelon [Benelong]. No doubt there are other examples, recorded and unrecorded, of friendship between indigenous and European individuals. Nevertheless, in the

light of recent discussion over the appropriation of Indigenous culture by non-Indigenous writers I sought a range of opinions on this subject.

Anita Heiss questions the right of non-Indigenous writers to write in the area of Aboriginal Studies, but says:

In discussing the role of non-Indigenous writers it is important to distinguish between fictional and non-fictional and the historical and literary areas of writing. There are fiction writers like Thomas Keneally, Xavier Herbert, Peter Bulkeley and Phillip Gwynne, who have obviously seized upon the Aboriginal character and at times lifestyle, and written about them in their works of fiction. (10).

Heiss canvasses a range of opinion from contemporary Aboriginal writers, including Jackie Huggins, Cathy Craigie and Christine Morris, much of which discourages non-Indigenous writers from writing about Aboriginal life and culture. Further discussion of these issues belongs in a later stage of this exegesis.

Late in my research, when most of my novel was written, came the publication of *Aboriginal Religions In Australia: An Anthology Of Recent Writings* (2005). It was immediately apparent that what was once called 'mythology' was now referred to as 'religion'. Since, for Jungians, the terms are interchangeable in relation to any system of sacred beliefs, this merely confirmed my own views. The book's revaluations of the theories of Lang, Spencer and Gillen, Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown questioned their understanding of Aboriginal religious life. It is Stanner who emerges as uniquely able to comprehend the sacredness of Aboriginal beliefs. According to Max Charlesworth:

Stanner was one of the first to take the religious dimension of Aboriginal life seriously and to see it as a sophisticated and complex (and admirable) body of belief, moral and social practice, ritual, and even philosophical thought. (*Aboriginal Religions*,8)

In the period from the nineteen thirties to the nineteen sixties it was Stanner and T.G.H. Strehlow who established the centrality and sacredness of the Dreaming and the Ancestor Spirits in

Aboriginal life. (*Aboriginal Religions*, 9). It seems unlikely that prior to this time nonIndigenous people would have used the now familiar words 'Dreaming' or 'Dreamtime'.

The effect of landscape on new settlers has been a preoccupation for many Australian writers. The land as character, or as agent of change, is inherent in much in the work of Australian novelists, but it was Patrick White who most cogently revealed to us the spiritual aspects of both bush and desert. Ever since *The Tree Of Man* (1955) and *Voss* (1957) we have been aware of the phantoms that lie in wait for us as soon as we leave the safety of paved streets: not just the shades of settlers and explorers, but a stronger, much older presence. David Tacey suggests that:

In Aboriginal cosmology, landscape is a living field of spirits and metaphysical forces.

The earth is animated by ancestral creator-beings who engaged in primal rituals at the dawn of time and whose spirits fused with the earth to shape, form and sacralise it.

Landscape is a mytho-spiritual field which acts upon human beings from without, causing them to conform to ancient patterns and to re-enact the lives and movements of ancestral animals and other beings. Landscape is at the centre of everything: at once the source of life, the origin of the tribe, the metamorphosed body of blood-line ancestors, and the intelligent force that drives the individual and creates society. (*Edge Of The Sacred*, 148)

The first euro-Australians may not have been conscious of the unseen forces around them, but at some deep level they might have felt them.

Researching The Old Testament

Many nineteenth century Christians were brought up to accept the Bible literally and uncritically; they took their religion seriously. I knew that my characters Menge and Hestia would fall into this category, but I was not sure about Adam. As it happened Adam declared his lack of faith soon after I began writing, relieving me of a conscious decision. Hermes' education would have

ensured that he was biblically literate, but for him, ancient Greece and Rome were much more real. It was clear that the language of the Bible would be indelibly written in the consciousness of Menge and Hestia, and to some extent in that of Hermes and Adam.

The church-going years of my youth were enough to leave fragments of scripture embedded in my mind like shrapnel. But memory is deceptive and it is easy to misquote, so I chose to use an inherited family Bible published in 1874, relying on an online index (Bible Gateway.com) to find the elusive phrases or stories which Menge and Hestia might want to quote. I concluded that the New Testament is for theologians, and beyond the scope of a mythological novel.

It intrigued me to find that in my heirloom Bible the Old Testament has a column on each page showing the supposed dates of the events recorded; for example the year in which God created the earth is shown as 4004 B.C. while the birth of Moses occurs in 1571 B.C. I am not certain when these dates were calculated, but it seemed reasonable for Hestia to own such a family Bible a mere twenty-five years earlier. Those arbitrary dates would provide her with ammunition for the heated discussions she would have with Hermes over the validity of the Greek creation stories. Even better, they might amuse the modern reader who knows that Australia's Aboriginal history has been shown to extend backward in time at least 50,000 years.

Researching Johannes Menge

It was obvious from W. A. Cawthorne's lively sketch, *Menge The Mineralogist*, that Menge was a multi-faceted character with a keen mind and wide interests. I trusted Cawthorne because he had known Menge personally and was one of South Australia's often-quoted early journalists. He describes Menge as :

Insignificant in person, eccentric in manners, he nevertheless possessed

powers of mind, and exercised a certain influence in the early days of our colony, that demand a record, as a tribute to a genius that under other circumstances would have commanded, not the petty fame of a local spot, but a fame wide as the boundaries of literature. (4).

Although Cawthorne is effusive about Menge's intelligence and the contribution he made to the early discoveries of minerals in South Australia, his tongue-in-cheek accounts of some of the old man's wilder schemes give the impression that he is inviting his readers to have a chuckle at Menge's expense. He refers to:

one of his favorite schemes for the enlightenment of mankind, no other than an actual college, and above all a Chinese college! where missionaries might prepare themselves for their work, where correspondences with all the learned societies of Europe could be opened, and where untold intellectual wealth could be accumulated and disseminated.(6)

It is Cawthorne who describes Menge's unique method of locomotion when prospecting in mountains, from which I borrowed shamelessly for *Children Of The Earth*. Cawthorne also gives a vivid account of the old man's many idiosyncrasies: his nomadic life in the bush, his intense dislike of doctors and his faith in natural cures, his belief in demons as the cause of all misfortune and sickness, his faith in astrology and his scorn for the science of astronomy, his unorthodox but effective approach to identifying minerals and precious stones, his passion for languages, especially ancient Hebrew, his astonishing knowledge of the Bible, and much more. Such an eclectic mix of peculiarities might have made people shun him, but Cawthorne assures us that Menge was of such a generous and genial nature that he was very popular with the settlers, and was welcomed into bush homes where he was a frequent visitor, particularly at meal-times.

(Menge the Mineralogist, 23)

Originally I had thought Cawthorne would be my main source of information, but a search of library catalogues, databases and bibliographies soon proved me wrong. I found several

articles about Menge in old issues of small history journals. Saunders' typewritten list of references to articles in nineteenth century newspapers, held by the State Library of South Australia, proved invaluable. There were more than thirty of these, most of them written by Menge himself. Admittedly many were outdated and obscure geological essays. All were difficult to read on poor-quality microfilm and even worse offprints, but they included the first few instalments of the autobiography Menge had planned, but unfortunately never completed. Showing through the verbosity of Menge's flawed nineteenth-century scientific language there were glimpses of the man whose character I wanted to understand.

Whereas I had originally accepted Cawthorne's account of Menge at face value, I found that H.A. Lindsay (1958) criticised it for its factual inaccuracies, and at least one other writer referred to it as a caricature. Lindsay directed me to two articles, by W. Praesent, which gave a good deal of detail about Menge's early life in Germany, including his apprenticeship to mineralogist de Leonhardt, his extensive travels, his lifelong thirst for knowledge and his European career as a geologist and linguist. These articles reinforced the view that Menge had enjoyed much greater respect and honour in Europe than he had in Australia. Another by Myrene Teusner (1978) attested to the high regard still accorded to him as a pioneer of South Australia's early German settlement, the Barossa Valley.

In the South Australian State Archives I found microfilm of hand-written letters from Menge to Governor Grey and to Captain Charles Sturt, offering his services as a salaried Colonial Mineralogist. Replies from the Governor's secretary regretted that he could not agree to the financial terms requested by Menge. This revealed that although he professed to despise money, Menge would have much preferred a paid government position to the meagre living he made by selling sets of mineral samples to European museums.

The South Australian State Library's archival records yielded a series of letters written during the years 1836 to 1846 by Menge to his friend Dr Pauli in Germany, and to his sons in England and India. Two had been translated but most were still in their original nineteenth century

German. I arranged for these to be translated and, together with the material I already had, they gave me added insights into the life and character of Johannes Menge. His keen observations, his fondness for family and old friends, his devout Protestant beliefs and his sometimes acerbic wit can be found in these personal letters. A number were written on the tedious sea journey to Australia, and others from various Adelaide addresses which reflect his unsettled life.

When I finally obtained a copy of a paper given by L.A. Treibel in 1962 (to the Tasmanian Historical Society) I found this to be the most comprehensive and probably the most factually correct account of Menge's life in Europe and in Australia. It also summarised very succinctly those microfilmed newspaper articles that had almost blinded me.

In the end, however, it was Cawthorne's vivid account of Menge's life in colonial South Australia that attracted me most. Facts are all very well for historians, but I was writing a novel. I wanted the spirit, the essence of this complex character, and Cawthorne's Menge leapt off the page, a living, breathing, contradictory eccentric, both humorous and tragic.

Researching The Background and Setting

In order to find a setting for my novel I read some of the history and natural history of the Mount Lofty Ranges. *The Quiet Waters By: The Mount Pleasant District 1843-1993* by Reg Butler provided a wealth of information on the geology and original vegetation of this area: folded and faulted pre-Cambrian rocks, crystalline formations of minerals, outcrops of red granite, valleys carved by ice or racing streams, permanent forests of red and blue gums, as well as sheoaks, and 'a riot of native undergrowth' that included honeysuckle, wattle, native cherry, scarlet runners, orchids, and along the creeks, ferns and mosses. In places there was kangaroo grass as tall as wheat. Butler also describes the micro-climate of the area, mentioning winter deluges leading to sudden floods, violent electrical storms and giant redgums burnt hollow by either lightning strike or firestick.

Of the Peramangk, Butler writes that conflicting evidence makes reliable commentary upon Mount Pleasant's original inhabitants difficult, but he cites Cawthorne, Tindale and Hossfield. He mentions the ten-centimetre moth larvae savoured by the Peramangk people, and describes some of the indigenous wildlife that would have formed their staple diet. He includes a photograph of a local canoe tree and drawings of Aboriginal cave paintings.

After visiting the area I decided to set Adam George's farm immediately to the east of the range, a little north of Mount Pleasant, where the land suddenly becomes flat enough for farming. Part of the imagined property could have run back into the forested hills, where streams and caves would have been likely. The George's farm is no particular place, just a site that could well have existed. It is a little south of one of Menge's favourite haunts, the Barossa Valley, and the River Marne, which Menge originally named after the Rhine.

On my visit to the area I saw a creek-fed rock-pool large enough for a swimming lesson, though the surrounds are now denuded of their original vegetation. The vegetation I imagined was found along another creek. A decrepit wattle and daub cottage of two rooms was an unexpected discovery, though it was on the plain, not near the hills. I did, however, find another small cottage tucked in the lee of the range, as I had envisaged the home of my settlers. Thus my fictional farm setting arose out of a composite of separate realities, rearranged to suit the purpose of my story.

The Process Of Writing

Writing /Researching/ Writing – A Cyclical Process.

Although I had planned to spend the first six months researching my novel, and then to settle down to uninterrupted writing, I soon learned that the writing and the researching cannot be separated. Certainly my main activity in those first months was research, but my mind was busy spinning stories and directing me to new avenues of research. When I did begin to write seriously I found myself constantly finding new questions that needed answers. I concluded that for me, the researching/writing process had to be cyclical. The more I learned the more my story grew; the more my story grew the more I needed to research. Perhaps this cyclical process could be likened to the alchemists' symbol, the snake eternally swallowing its own tail, the uroborus which is both devouring and self-fecundating, as described by David Tacey (*Patrick White*, 6). In Jungian terms, the uroborus symbolises going deeper and deeper into the unconscious. Like my characters I would have to find my way out of this self-perpetuating circle and bring my story to a satisfactory conclusion. There would come a time when the conscious mind would need to apply some logic.

One aspect of the writing process that I found essential was reading: reading other people's creative work for the sheer joy of it, and in the hope that a little of their magic might rub off on me. Plagiarism? If so, every writer is a thief, for nothing anyone writes is ever completely original. The past, even when seemingly forgotten, is a deep well from which we draw on everything we have ever read or experienced.

I believe that every creative writer needs the daily nourishment of other writers. Our choice of reading has to relate to our own work, but it should also be as wide as possible. My psyche was fed by so many past authors that it is difficult to say who profited me most. The general bibliography which accompanies my novel lists those I read or reread during the course

of my candidacy, but I know I have been influenced by dozens of other books read in the past, their titles no longer in my conscious memory.

Reading Susan Rowland's *C.G. Jung And Literary Theory*, I was reminded that I had already read *The Chymical Wedding* when it was first published in 1990. It was almost certainly Lindsay Clarke's novel that had suggested alchemy to me as a theme for fiction. Rowland's analysis pointed out the novel's shortcomings in terms of feminist theory, but a second reading of it reminded me that I had found it strangely satisfying. Then Bettina Knapp's review of Goethe's *Elective Affinities* must also have influenced me. As Knapp writes:

Elective Affinities (1808), a pastoral novel, takes its title from an alchemical process: the blending of certain compounds to cause an alteration in their consistency – from *fixatio* to *dissolutio*. In the human sphere this implies the introduction of new factors or different people into a relationship and, in the process, creation of a climate conducive to a shifting of old affections and allegiances. (*A Jungian Approach*, 139)

It was only on reading *Elective Affinities* some months into writing *Children Of The Earth* that I saw connections between my plot and Goethe's: that of an older married couple who become four through their involvement with younger lovers, then become two again, though they are not paired in the same way. While I do not wish to equate myself with Goethe, I have to admit to another similarity, as far as I know replicated unconsciously. Like *Elective Affinities* my novel also ends with the birth of a child in whom 'symbolically the four have been joined in one.' (*A Jungian Approach*, 158) Whether these similarities were entirely unconscious I cannot say. Plainly something remained in my memory, but I did not set out to deliberately copy. My head was still full of alchemy when I read *The Adventures Of Christian Rosycross* by David Foster; it was a revealing journey back into the lives of the alchemists.

For allusions to classical mythology in the novel I was inspired by *The Glade Within The Grove*, also by David Foster, *Elizabeth Costello: Eight Lessons* by J.M. Coetzee, *An Imaginary Life* by David Malouf, and by both reading and seeing *Metamorphoses: A Play* (2002) by Mary

Zimmerman. In the hope that style might be contagious, I read A.S. Byatt , Elizabeth Jolley, Patrick White, David Malouf and many other novelists whose created worlds I found immensely satisfying.

I have to admit to reading *The Da Vinci Code* out of curiosity to see what makes a book so popular. Dan Brown's best-seller seems to me to be the epitome of what Jung called the non-psychological novel. Referring to the work of Rider Haggard and Conan Doyle, Jung wrote, 'Such a tale is constructed against a background of unspoken psychological assumptions, and the more unconscious the author is of them, the more this background reveals itself in its unalloyed purity to the discerning eye.' (*The Spirit In Man, 88*) Possibly it is this very unconsciousness on the part of the popular author which allows him to connect so strongly with the unconsciousness of the reader. I had already lost my innocence by reading Jung, so I was unlikely to write either a visionary work or a best-selling novel. All I could do was to write what I had to write.

I found that words flowed best when I just sat down at the computer, read what I had written on the previous day and entered my fictional world. I had a vague, general idea of where the story should go on that day, a point towards which I should travel. My research was there as a framework through which I could weave my fantasy. I can honestly say that during that first draft I never suffered writer's block, and writing was always a pleasure, largely I think because my principal supervisor, Thomas Shapcott encouraged me to follow my own intuitions.

As I shall explain, later I would discover the pitfalls in this approach.

The Dangers Of Creativity

At a recent Creative Writing seminar at Adelaide University, Kate Grenville spoke of the advantages of allowing the right brain to dominate in order to foster creativity. I have long believed this to be true, but my experience of writing *Children Of The Earth* taught me that there

are dangers in giving free rein to the creative impulse, whether it is attributed to the right brain or the unconscious mind.

In my first draft I thought I had been respectful of Indigenous sensibilities but my unconscious mind had led me into controversial territory when it came to writing about my Aboriginal character, Unatildi. Just as I had tried to enter into the consciousness of each of my other characters, I had quite naturally fallen into the trap of trying to see the world from Unatildi's point of view. As with each of my other characters I had wanted to get inside her head to understand her feelings.

I was advised, however, that for a white writer to assume knowledge of an Aboriginal point of view can be regarded as appropriating Indigenous culture. Since my Aboriginal character, Unatildi, was integral to the story I wanted to tell, I looked for solutions to this dilemma. I have to admit my first attempts to depict Unatildi had made her, and her thoughts, too European. I had no wish to give offence, so it became clear that my original manuscript would need revision.

Fortunately I was alerted to the problem in time and directed to some relevant reading on the subject. According to Anita Heiss, there are strong and original arguments coming from people who believe that white writers should not write about Aboriginal issues, especially sacred matters. But she also says it is important to distinguish the fictional and non-fictional and the historical and literary areas of writing. (10) Christine Morris believes that the issue of non-Indigenous people writing in the Aboriginal area comes down to subject matter and context, and that white writers should stay away from anything that comes under customary law. (in Heiss. 12) Heiss also quotes Nadia Wheatley, who points out the no-win situation for white writers.

She [Wheatley] suggests that writers who don't include Aboriginal characters and themes in their work run the risk of painting a white Australian monoculture and inadvertently foster racism. On the other hand, those who do include Aboriginal characters and themes may depict Aboriginal people tokenistically, including them to

make white writers and readers feel better. At worst, and however unintentionally, they create a new form of exploitation and appropriation. (in Heiss,13-14)

I agree that to write a frontier novel that ignores Aboriginal Australians would be to write them out of history, to pretend they did not exist. As Cathy Craigie said in an interview with Heiss:

I believe that any writing that's done on any theme that comes out of Australia, must or should have Aboriginal undercurrents, acknowledgement or whatever. There is no such thing as the great Australian novel unless it has included that side. If you want to show the psyche of Australia, you've got to do that. ...but there are certain things you can't talk about. (in Heiss, 12)

So we are 'damned if we do, and damned if we don't'. Even when we write from a respectful point of view, we can be in danger of offending. But we cannot ignore the Aboriginal presence in Australian history and literature.

When I had weighed up all this I was still encouraged by the words of highly respected Aboriginal writer David Unaipon, who in 1929 wrote :

Perhaps some day Australian writers will use Aboriginal myths and weave literature from them, the same as other writers have done with the Roman, Greek, Norse, and Arthurian legends. (4)

The whole tone of Unaipon's *Legendary Tales Of The Australian Aborigines* celebrates Aboriginal culture and mythology, and seems to invite readers of all cultures to share in that celebration. The original text was written in 1929, but if Muecke and Shoemaker's editing is faithful to the author's intentions, there is a strong message coming down the years, suggesting that Australian writers should not ignore the potential of Aboriginal mythology to enrich Australian literature.

Defending the rights of authors, Ross Fitzgerald (1994) says that 'Without the freedom to offend, freedom of expression ceases to exist.' (22) It seems to me that when Indigenous writers demand a blanket ban on certain topics or words, they are denying the opportunity for what could

be a healthy dialogue. Simon Haines, Head of the School of Humanities at the Australian National University asks:

Can't we ever make contact with a character or another human being, in literature or life, without seeing their gender, race, class or party affiliation as the most important thing about them? (18)

This is one of the questions I have been asking myself. How will racism ever be conquered in Australia unless we can see an Indigenous person as an individual, not as a representative of a particular political group or race? If we could go beyond old prejudices it is just possible that our lost mythologies and spiritual longings could unite us, not divide us. I resolved that because mythology was central to the whole concept of the novel, I would use known (already published) Aboriginal stories, with the same respect as I would use Bible stories or Greek myths.

To try to understand what contemporary Indigenous writers are saying I read *My Place*, (1987) by Sally Morgan, *My People* 2nd ed (1990) by Oodgeroo Noonuccal, and *Story About Feeling*(1989) by Bill Neidjie. The deep sadness and sense of loss in these and many other Indigenous titles is all too apparent. As a non-Indigenous writer I have no wish to appropriate Indigenous identities, or compete with Aboriginal writers for publication. The paths of our forebears crossed, but we write from different places. They are expressing their own unique perspective, and I am exploring, from a European point of view, some of the cultural aspects of South Australia's colonial past. There are many gaps in history where a writer's imagination can play.

Rewriting sections of my novel was done over a period of months with support from both my supervisors and my mentor. All three kept me grounded in contemporary realities, while at the same time giving me encouragement and reassurance. I hope my story offends no one. It was never intended to be political. It is about what might have happened between individuals, not representatives of groups or factions.

The Dangers Of Words

In the past many of the words used colloquially to describe Indigenous people have been deeply offensive. It is difficult to write them without cringing. Even when we excise these cruel epithets from our language, it seems there are many other ways of offending with words, even words used seriously and respectfully in the writing of early anthropologists. Today there is a great readiness to read questionable meanings into words that might once have been used innocently. As Nadia Wheatley asks

Should we say aborigine or Aboriginal or Koori(e) or Murri or what? Is it Dreaming or Dreamtime? Is it always offensive to use terms such as abos or boongs or gins, or is it excusable if we put these words into the mouths of unsympathetic white characters, or characters from the past? (22)

As for Dreaming or Dreamtime, I cannot remember seeing the term used by nineteenth century European writers. I assume that it was not until the 1930s, when Stanner and Strehlow wrote about Aboriginal religion, that Euro-Australians began to have a rudimentary understanding of the concept. I decided that I simply could not use either word.

What concerned me more was the question of dialogue in an historical novel with Aboriginal characters. Wheatley asks:

If we have an Aboriginal character speaking, should we attempt to use Aboriginal English in order to make the dialogue realistic; or when it comes from a white writer – does this look like pidgin on the page? (22)

Is it possible to create an authentic voice for an Aboriginal person in the nineteenth century without acknowledging that learning English is extremely difficult for someone who has had no contact with European languages? When Wheatley refers to 'Aboriginal English' I presume she means the kind of language learned ad hoc by Indigenous people, perhaps on missions and cattle stations, where the words are learned but the rhythms and structures of speech still follow the Indigenous grammar.

Because I knew I would have a problem with Unatildi's speech, I chose to have my character taught English in a very intensive way. Hestia has only one pupil and she is obsessed with teaching her to speak 'like a lady.' From the beginning she says she will correct every mistake Unatildi makes, and even Adam feels obliged to 'defer to Hestia's methods' because Hestia has said it is unkind to allow Unatildi to demean herself' with bad grammar. (*Children of the Earth*, 134, 175)

Problems arose when I set out to rewrite my novel to conform with the necessary Aboriginal protocols. Unatildi had to begin with no English at all. Gestures do not necessarily mean the same in different cultures. I was advised that Unatildi would most likely have kept her eyes downcast in the early stages of her relationship with Hestia, so I could not assume much eye contact. Communication between the two women became fraught with difficulties and I never felt that I had quite solved the problem. There were simply no models for the situation I was creating. Somehow I had to take Unatildi from having no English at all to speaking it fluently. I had no doubt that this was possible for one sees and hears articulate Aboriginal people speaking in English on television. But the process had to be gradual, so there were times when Unatildi, to be authentic, had to speak a kind of creole. Was I offending?

In an article entitled 'Respect V Political Correctness' Huggins comes down on the side of respect. She gives some guidelines for nonIndigenous writers; she warns against perpetuating stereotypes and racism, and says this can be done subconsciously. To the best of my knowledge I have approached my subject with respect, if not with 'political correctness', and I sincerely hope that my use of Indigenous mythology will not offend. I believe that nonIndigenous Australians can only begin to comprehend what Indigenous people have lost when they are better able to understand their culture and the religion which underlies it. One way of understanding anything is to write (and read) about it.

Regarding Dreamtime stories, Heiss quotes Jackie Huggins, with reference to myths as children's literature:

We've had so much destructive material written about us that we must hold together the very fabric of the stories that created us. Out of all the material written about, for and by Aboriginal people this is perhaps the most sensitive genre. We never refer to these stories as 'myths,' how can the bible be a myth? (in Heiss 10)

That dangerous word 'myth'! I fully agree with Huggins when I hear people using it to denote something which is untrue, or regarded as 'a mere fairytale for children.' But when the word myth is used in its Jungian sense, (whether it refers to Biblical, Indigenous or any other genuine mythology) it means something that contains deep archetypal currents. In this postmodern age I hesitate to suggest that myths contain anything as fixed and certain as 'truths', but my character Hermes tells Hestia that 'Ovid is truer than true. He is *truth*.'

One of the points I set out to make in *Children Of the Earth* is that Aboriginal beliefs contain meanings as important to their followers as the sacred scriptures of any other people. In order to show this, however, I needed to be able to use examples. The custodian of the Peramangk cultural material, Richard Hunter, had agreed that to use material already in the public domain would not be inappropriate.

For Adam to be touched (and changed) by contact with Indigenous mythology it became necessary for him to hear some stories from Unatildi. Drawing on both Unaipon (2001) and Berndt and Berndt (1993) I had an abundance of material. The challenge was to select an appropriate amount of this and put it into words that Unatildi might have used. Sometimes I resorted to telling what Adam had heard, or understood, rather than what Unatildi might have actually said.

Through it all the danger of words was ever-present.

Representing Aboriginal Characters

The representation of Aboriginal characters in fiction presents particular problems for nonIndigenous writers. Because many past depictions of Aboriginal people have been found

offensive, both in terms of the stereotypes portrayed and the language used, it is understandable that writers like Huggins should warn nonIndigenous writers not to trespass in areas she sees as exclusive to her own people (in Heiss,10).

To see how Indigenous people have been represented in Australian fiction over the past century I sampled a selection of novels dating from Simpson Newland's 1893 *Paving The Way* to Roger MacDonald's 2006 *Ballad Of Desmond Kale*. Aboriginal characters in Australian fiction have ranged from the bloodthirsty-when-provoked 'savages' in Simpson Newland's *Paving The Way (1893)*, to recent more complex and truthful portrayals by authors such as Alex Miller and Roger MacDonald. Between these two extremes lie many other novels which present Indigenous Australians in a variety of ways. Katherine Susannah Prichard's *Coonardoo* (1929) may have been one of the most sympathetic representations of Aboriginal characters ever written up to the time of its publication, but it uses the words 'gin', and 'abo', albeit in the mouths of less than sympathetic characters, and it portrays Aboriginal people as subservient to their white employers.

Prichard also enters into the mind of Coonardoo, and writes about the evil spirits that frighten her. Any nonIndigenous attempt to portray the thoughts and feelings of an Indigenous character is now questioned. While there are good reasons for this, I cannot help wondering whether is it necessarily wrong for a white person to try to understand the way an Aboriginal person might have felt at the time of white settlement. Exploring a subject by writing about it in an imaginative way can result in a better understanding of another's point of view.

Thomas Keneally in *The Chant Of Jimmy Blacksmith* (1972) takes us into the mind of 'half-caste' Jimmy and shows us all the depravity of his alcoholic relatives. He 'punishes' characters who use words like 'abo' and 'nigger' by making them profoundly unlikable. I have heard Keneally on ABC radio regretting that he wrote this novel the way he did, but at the time he probably meant to draw attention to the tragic plight of Aboriginal people. I have no doubt that his intentions were good, yet he now feels obliged to apologise for having transgressed.

David Malouf's *Remembering Babylon* (1994) sidesteps the issue of portraying an Aboriginal character by creating Jemmy, a shipwrecked white youth who spends years with a group of Indigenous people. Jemmy becomes essentially like the people who sheltered him, and when he returns to settler society he becomes a target for suspicion and violence. Without actually creating an Indigenous character, Malouf makes very clear the attitudes of the settlers to their Indigenous neighbours. Only Jock, Ellen and their children stand by Jemmy, and their efforts are not enough. *Remembering Babylon* is a fable about the destructive force of fear and ignorance, and how it can overcome reason.

Achieving authenticity for an Aboriginal character without giving offence is not easy. Those depicted in literature are sometimes demonised, caricatured or are mere shadows in the bush. Yet there are examples of interaction between Europeans and Indigenous Australians which are written not just sympathetically, but hopefully. Alex Miller, in *Journey To The Stone Country* (2003) deals with a relationship between twenty-first century Australians involved in the conflicting land-rights of Indigenous people and mining companies, but there are undercurrents of older relationships in the cattle industry, and even older Indigenous religious traditions. The romantic liaison between urbanised Annabelle and Aboriginal cattleman Bo seems to hint at reconciliations to come.

In *The Secret River* (2005) Kate Grenville adopts a deliberately balanced view of colonial New South Wales, paying tribute to both the courage of convict pioneers and the devastation wrought on Indigenous Australians. In this superbly written novel Grenville reveals a great deal about the point of view of the white settlers, and leaves us in no doubt about the dark side of New South Wales history. I cannot help wondering how Grenville might have written if she had felt free to imagine the inner thoughts and emotions of the Indigenous characters, just as she imagined those of the English immigrants. To make any character seem real, writers usually at some stage enter their stream of consciousness. When this is proscribed, it becomes extremely difficult to bring a fictional character to life, or to make them fully human.

Roger MacDonald has created a vivid and convincing Aboriginal character in *The Ballad Of Desmond Kale* (2006). MacDonald never presumes to tell us what Titus thinks or feels, but we are left in no doubt that the parson's protégé is capable of being both a cunning survivor and a loyal friend. We must deduce Titus's pain and confusion, his courage and his instinct for survival from the story.

This very brief overview suggests to me that over the past 100 years non-Indigenous writers have made progress in the way they represent Indigenous characters. Given another hundred years they may do better yet.

Exploring Australian Identity

In my novel I wanted to examine the effects of nineteenth century history and its merging of European and Indigenous cultures on the evolving psyche of Australia. The identity of the first (mostly British) colonists had its roots in Classical and Judeo/Christian beliefs, in the Enlightenment, and in nineteenth-century idealism and humanism. Even before the influx of post war immigrants that changed our ethos again, there was a difference between Australians and their cousins who remained in their country of origin. I suspect that part of what made Euro-Australians different from their European forebears was not just the pioneer experience or the effect of the landscape. It seems possible to me that not only were Indigenous people Europeanised to varying degrees, but Euro-Australians somehow absorbed a little of the spirit, or the myth of the original Australians. How this has happened is not easily explained. In *Children Of The Earth* I have dared to attribute to the dying Menge the fanciful idea of miwi spirits blown on the wind into the bedrooms of white settlers. I do not ask my readers to take this allegory too seriously, only to acknowledge the possibility of the Indigenous culture influencing the new settlers, however it happened. The English language is rich with allusions to the European myths that have shaped us, and I am sure that Indigenous languages are equally rich with cultural meaning. Perhaps even the few Aboriginal words that have crept into the English language have

subtly changed those of us who speak Australian English. Perhaps early settlers were influenced more than they thought by encountering a new culture and a new mythology. Could this have contributed to the ideas of mateship and egalitarianism now so embedded in the Australian culture?

Jane Lydon refers to current debates about our national identity and the effects of various representations of our colonial history. She comments that 'particular versions of the past serve as ammunition for present political struggles,' and proceeds to review three recent Australian films, *The Tracker*, *Black And White*, and *Rabbit-Proof Fence*:

Each of these films addresses different aspects of Aboriginal-settler relations as fundamentally shaped by racism. Each engages with the historical processes which have come to public attention during the last two decades: frontier violence, child removal, Aboriginal treatment at the hands of the law. (138)

Lydon gives instances of some film-makers as 'setting the supposed attitudes of the past too sharply against those of the present – aiming to shock with the blatant racism, sexism and elitism no longer openly tolerated'. (141) Of the film *The Tracker* she says, 'Just as the Tracker is too smart and powerful, the Fanatic is too bloody awful: his insane violence is made to represent white rule with all the nightmarish savagery settlers once attributed to 'wild' blacks. (140) Such portrayals of violence, and the emphasis on violence as the main cause of Aboriginal suffering are debatable. Although deeply regrettable instances of violence can certainly be found in South Australian history, it seems likely that in this state a great deal of the loss of Aboriginal life and culture was simply caused by the impact of European settlement. Disease, malnutrition and loss of land and family were sufficient to destroy traditional lifestyles and claim many lives.

It is all too easy to depict colonial violence against Indigenous people, and comfort ourselves by saying, 'That was in the past. We no longer tolerate such horrendous behaviour.' To overplay past violence is to blame everything on another generation and downplay our own responsibility here and now. My portrayal of friendship between Unatildi and the Georges is not

intended to belittle the tragedy of Aboriginal losses, but to show that such losses sometimes occurred even more insidiously without open confrontation. Discussion on this question is not new. As Henry Reynolds quotes, in 1845 the explorer Edward Eyre wrote:

Suppose the case of the settler, who, actuated by no selfish motives, and blinded by no fears, does not discourage or repel the natives upon their first approach; suppose that he treats them with kindness and consideration (and there are happily many such settlers in Australia), what recompense can he make to them for the injury he has done, by dispossessing them of their lands, by occupying their waters, and by depriving them of their supply of food? (29)

This is consistent with the comments made by Coles and Draper on the settlement of the Adelaide Hills:

There was apparently little physical violence However, by the 1850's, the scattered documentary sources cease to mention the Hills tribe; there is only the chronicle of a growing agricultural district ...the original inhabitants of the district had passed from sight, and almost from memory (2).

Could anything be more tragic than that?

A Jungian Analysis Of *Children Of the Earth*

The Characters.

In an interview Elizabeth Jolley said 'Writing is a mixture of exploring and inventing. You're inventing a character, and once you get the character a little bit on paper, you're exploring them and discovering more about them'. (in Woolf & Grenville, 157) It is not unusual to hear writers say that their characters took on a life of their own, or 'took over' their creators. Others say that each character represents a part of the author's own personality. Some writers vow that they solve their writing problems in their sleep. Such ideas are now so commonplace that we hardly think of them as Jungian, but what many writers are saying is that their unconscious mind, with all its archetypal possibilities, is actually doing the creative work with a little help from the conscious ego which knows how to spell, convert images into sentences and stay within the bounds of what is culturally acceptable. All five of my main characters began like indistinct figures emerging from a mist. Only during the process of writing did they begin to become clearer and more defined. By the end of the first draft I knew so much more about them that I was obliged to make changes to the early chapters. Each successive draft taught me more, and necessitated further revisions.

Hestia, named for the Greek goddess of home and hearth, began as a personification of all those pioneer women who kept the home fire burning in isolated places. In spite of her humble station in life, my Hestia has a natural dignity and reserve. In keeping with her Olympian associations her face resembles that of a statue of a Greek goddess: calm-browed, wide-eyed, with a patrician nose and skin dense enough to hide a blush.

On the page Hestia, the settler's wife, became a damaged personality who had brought past hurts and fears to her new life in Australia. Fear of childbirth and a troubled relationship with her father have paralysed her, not only sexually, but emotionally. Then, from beneath her perverse, prickly exterior, there emerges a woman with a thirst for learning, friendship, romance and finally, mature love. Hearing the stories of Ovid, becoming concerned for an Aboriginal girl,

and her brief but passionate affair with Hermes all contribute to Hestia's metamorphosis. From a frigid, self-righteous wife, she becomes a warm and much wiser woman who finally chooses her husband over her feckless lover.

In psychological terms Hestia integrates her own animus in two ways recommended by Emma Jung. (*Animus and Anima*, 41-42) First she begins to use her mind. Discussing theology with Menge whets Hestia's appetite for intellectual stimulation, but it is learning Latin, listening to Ovid and verbally sparring with Hermes that push her to the next stage. Learning a little of Unatildi's belief in miwi spirits imbues a pool with magical qualities, and while bathing there with the sexually charged Hermes, a momentary vision of the numinous uroborus is the final trigger. There is an alchemical combustion, an explosion of desire that transcends all previous inhibitions. Hestia's need for female companionship is first seen in her attraction to Unatildi, and again in the final stages of her transformation when she begins to consider visiting her female neighbours, Mrs Bigg and Mrs Mackenzie.

Adam, Hestia's husband, was initially even less clear. I knew only that he was a farmer of limited education and little sensitivity, despondent about his failed marriage but powerless to change it. I saw him as fair-skinned, thickset, with a square head and sandy whiskers, at ease out of doors but awkward in the house. As the story progresses Adam reveals more of himself. He talks to his animals, has a deep attachment to his land, and distrusts religion. His love for Hestia is faithful and long-suffering, in spite of her sharp tongue and the fact that she denies him sex. Adam is transformed too, by indulging in a sexual relationship with Unatildi, who teaches him a religion that touches his spirit, and brings out the latent tenderness in his nature. I did not expect him to become the hero of my story, but in the end he did.

My fictional Johannes Menge came almost ready-made, but as I wrote, he developed aspects that Cawthorne either did not know or chose to ignore in the historical Menge. There is no evidence that the real Menge practised hypnotism, or, as it was then known, mesmerism, but this did not seem out of character for a well-travelled enquiring mind of the mid-nineteenth

century. I could find no mention of Paracelsus in Menge's writings, but once again Menge's professed beliefs were not inconsistent with those of Paracelsus. As for alchemy, it was a secret art, and not likely to be openly discussed. But Menge had educated himself, at least in part, in the library of his mentor, De Leonhardt, a scholar and mineralogist whose early books on mining and metals would almost certainly have included some of the German folklore of metallurgy, with its links to alchemy. It might even have included Gnosticism, another subject which interested Jung.

Eliade confirms the possibility Of Menge's interest in alchemy, through the link between alchemy and early metallurgy. He writes of 'the connections between the agricultural mystique, metallurgy and alchemy,' and also says that 'the alchemist, like the smith, and the potter before him, is a "master of fire" '. (26 & 79) Like his namesake, the fictional Menge is vastly knowledgeable about mineralogy and languages; he is kindly, devout and generous. But he is decidedly eccentric. He clings to arcane beliefs and refuses to submit to the logic of science. He is reminiscent of both Jung's 'Wise Old Man' archetype and the Aboriginal concept of 'Warrawarra.'

Hermes was fleshed out for me by several writers. First by Graves, who tells the story of the god Hermes' birth and miraculous growth into a wily, precocious infant who alternately tricks and charms his relatives. The divine Hermes ensures his place as one of the Olympians by undertaking to be their messenger. (Graves, 69) For all his divinity he is the archetypal crafty, inventive trickster.

The *Homeric Hymn To Hestia* has a second verse which confirms her close bond with Hermes. The two are spoken of in the same breath, with affection and reverence.

And you, (Hermes) slayer of Argus, Son of Zeus and Maia, messenger of the blessed gods, bearer of the golden rod, giver of good, be favourable and help us, you and Hestia, the worshipful and dear. Come and dwell in this glorious house of friendship together.

Edward Edinger adds further dimensions to Hermes:

He is the divine messenger and hence implies something similar to what is symbolized by angels ... He is the god of revelation, the bringer of dreams, the guide of the dark way, and the psychopomp Hermes does not always need to be truthful. He can be ambiguous and false and cunning, and that gets him into places that absolute light and truth could never enter.... He is a magician with a magic wand, and his ability to cross boundaries makes him a mediator between the human and the divine realm, or in psychological terms, between the personal psyche and the unconscious. (29-30)

I wanted my character Hermes to be all these things – essentially mercurial. I knew the mythical Hermes would be difficult to reproduce in human form. His legendary qualities would have to be shown in hints and brief glimpses. He had to be a believable young man possessed by the god he adored. I saw him as dark-haired and dark-eyed, with a mobile, expressive face. He would be quick-witted, smooth-tongued, charming and unlikely to stay very long in one place.

The earthly Hermes began with many negative attributes, so he too had to undertake a journey of redemption. His story is one that begins in disadvantage and disgrace, a journey of escape from the past into an adventure fraught with pitfalls. Underneath his outward *savoir faire* Hermes is plagued by his own fears and uncertainties. He is illegitimate, penniless, and has been dismissed from his teaching post for suspected improprieties with his students. His journey towards individuation begins with Menge, onto whom he initially projects his own untrustworthiness. As his grudging respect for Menge grows, so does his self-respect.

But a flirt and a predator in romance, Hermes must form a passionate attachment to Hestia and lose her to Adam before he knows the true meaning of love. As Menge sees in his deathbed reverie, this is the lesson that will transform Hermes into a responsible and dedicated teacher. Hermes cannot remain at the scene, because, as Jean Pierre Vernant writes, he is:

a traveller from afar and one who is already preparing to depart. Nothing about him is settled, stable, permanent, restricted, or definite. He represents ... movement and flow, mutation and transition ... In the house, his place is at the door, protecting the threshold,

repelling thieves because he is himself the thief. (129)

Unatildi was initially the least defined of my characters. I knew only that she would be a young Peramangk girl, alienated from her own people. She would be distressed, perhaps injured. She would need a history to explain her condition and her willingness to become part of the Georges' household. My creation of Unatildi and her situation was designed to portray the damaging effects of white settlement on just one Aboriginal person, for suffering can only be truly understood in terms of the individual. Unatildi had been hurt in numerous ways by the impact of white settlement. The death of her mother and the loss of many of her relatives had been caused by the European disease that decimated her people. The subsequent breakdown of traditional authority had led to the drift of young Indigenous men to the farms and towns. This in turn placed greater pressures on Unatildi to marry the elderly Warrawarra. Her alienation from her father, the suspicious death of her lover, and the loss of his child are further consequences which heap insult on injury.

Developing Unatildi's character was difficult because I could not even allow her to *think* her own background story. It had to be pieced together first through Menge's translations and later by broken English conversations with Hestia and Adam. I discovered some of her characteristics, however, during the writing of those first person accounts that had to be destroyed, so they were not wasted.

For instance, Unatildi's name means 'little grebe', a small, quiet water bird common to waterways in her local area. At first I saw her as a gentle, unassertive girl, but when she defied her father and refused to marry the Warrawarra, I knew she had a stronger aspect. Gradually it became apparent to me that Unatildi would have inherited the special characteristics necessary for the making of a 'Wise Woman' in her culture; her deep sense of responsibility and her growing awareness of her own psychic powers would eventually compel her to leave the relative ease and comfort of farm life to return to her try to save her suffering people. Her affection for Hestia would

divide her loyalties, but ultimately she would answer the call of duty. Her transformation would be complete when she submitted to being 'made' a Wise Woman and healer.

The Plot

A plot, by definition, involves a series of events, each in some way contingent on an earlier one. It is said that there are no new ones, only variations on earlier ones. Possibly this means that all plots can be traced back to the myths of the past. While the plot of a novel is not a myth in the true sense, because it is the work of an individual, (according to Jung true myths have grown out of the collective unconscious of generations) perhaps the product of one's imagination could be called a personal myth.

Quite early in the incubation stage of my novel I concluded that the main plot would be the story of the Georges' troubled marriage, beset by what Jung refers to as an anima/animus complex. At that stage I was not sure what the resolution would be, but I knew the tension between Hestia and Adam would become unbearable, and something dynamic would happen. As the plot unfolded, the arrival of Hermes, then Unatildi, on the remote farm would trigger at first marital infidelity, and later, reconciliation.

Secondary plots arose as the characters began to interact. As soon as I introduced Menge, Hermes and Unatildi each began to vie for a larger role. I once participated in discussion at a writers' conference over recalcitrant minor characters who threaten to take over the plot. There are, apparently, ways of dealing with them. Nevertheless, I felt that my own unruly creations were products of my unconscious mind and deserved a little respect. In the end their stories became almost, but not quite, as important as the story of Hestia and Adam.

The romance of Hestia and Hermes is one thread which is woven throughout most of the novel. Adam's relationship with Unatildi is briefer, but forms another significant sub-plot. Both

affairs result in changes which affect the outcome of the main story of Hestia and Adam. It was Menge, however, who was the most intrusive. My research had revealed so much of interest about the real Johannes Menge, and suggested even more. I soon saw that 'the Professor' would be an archetypal but flawed 'Wise Old Man', with a finger in every pie and an opinion on every subject. Menge's personal story is the lifelong journey he makes in his quest for the alchemists' 'true gold', or spiritual fulfilment. His wanderlust indicates that he has failed to find this in his youthful travels in Europe or his life in England. His early years in South Australia are one long quest for fulfilment, which he mistakenly equates with recognition for his value as a mineralogist. His failure to find more than a few grains of gold in the Flinders Ranges leaves him still searching. What he eventually finds on the Victorian goldfields is not common gold, but the alchemists' 'true gold' of self-knowledge. On his deathbed, he recognises his own intellectual arrogance, is humbled and dies a peaceful death after bequeathing aspects of his considerable sagacity to his friends.

The sequences of happenings which form plots are not necessarily physical, and events in the material world are often driven by inner mental or psychological changes. In Jungian terms, each character in *Children Of the Earth* has an inner journey to undertake, a significant step along the way to individuation. Although these are personal, each character is in turn affected by interactions with the others. Hence the plots are necessarily intertwined, but they are also held together by Menge's presence at every stage. He acts as marriage counsellor to the Georges, mentor and career guide to Hermes, and urges Unatildi to help her distressed Peramangk people. Finally, even his death notice in the newspaper prompts an overdue exchange of honesty between Hestia and Adam. Perhaps Menge took over more than his fair share of the plot. Like those of the Peramangk, his ghost still haunts those ranges.

Themes

Mythology, alchemy, transformation, marriage and illicit love are recurrent themes in *Children Of The Earth*. Mythology pervades the entire novel. While I made a conscious decision to explore Jung's interest in this subject, I did not foresee just how many mythological motifs would emerge.

Alchemy was another of Jung's preoccupations. He saw it as an earlier, unconscious expression of man's journey towards individuation. Menge's avid reading of ancient texts and the connections between alchemy and early mineralogy made him a likely repository of the secret art. Transformation is a recurring motif in many mythologies. It is inherent in *Metamorphoses*, and is also intrinsic to Aboriginal mythology. It is found in alchemy, and in Jungian psychology. Such changes are not always gradual: Ovid's miraculous changes are achieved in a few lines; in Aboriginal myth both humans and animals can change shape instantly. In alchemy, after long labour by the adept, a transformation would occur; there was sudden combustion and the new substance was made. In Jungian terms, the change is the 'ah-ha' moment of comprehension or insight into oneself. Some of my characters make their transformations through a series of small shifts, but Hestia's metamorphosis into a sexual being occurs dramatically while bathing in the pool with Hermes.

Marriage is a constant preoccupation for Hestia and Adam, as they wrestle with their estrangement and are finally reconciled. Menge's marriage is also a continuing thread throughout the novel, although his beloved Charlotte has been dead for many years. Her spirit seems to go with him on his wanderings, and once, in a moment of exhaustion, he mistakes Hestia for his wife. (*Children of the Earth*, 97) Charlotte is Menge's anima, the feminine tenderness he long ago integrated into his own soul. It is the source of his gentleness and the nurturing role he adopts towards the younger characters.

Unatildi, whose love object, Piwingi, disappears, must find masculine strength within herself. Once integrated into her own psyche, Piwingi becomes her animus and gives her the power to fulfil her inherited role. As I wrote I discovered that 'There was no doubt that Unatildi

was changing. Where once she had been shy and diffident, now her confidence seemed to grow daily...there was a growing sureness about her, a sense of knowledge and purpose.' (*Children Of The Earth*, 233) Unfortunately Unatildi's heroic inner changes could not be told, merely suggested.

Illicit love was of particular interest to the ancient Greeks, who evidently understood the problems of infidelity and marital discord; their gods appeared to take their marriage vows lightly. In *Children Of The Earth* Hermes makes full use of Ovid's tales to focus Hestia's mind on the subject of physical love. Try as she might to resist, desire permeates her unconscious. When she pores over the suggestive drawings of the *Rosarium Philosophorum* these erotic ideas are reinforced, but nothing happens until her sudden metamorphosis as she lies in the pool visualizing that ancient alchemical symbol that heralds transformation, the uroborus.

Symbols In *Children Of the Earth*

a word or an image is symbolic where it implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning. (Jung, *Man and His Symbols*, 4)

The symbols that appear in creative writing may be consciously chosen, or they may creep into the work almost unnoticed. Looking back I can see that reading Jungian concepts of myth and symbol, as well as the actual myths, Greek, Aboriginal and Hebrew, had left me with a residue of symbolic language that lay not far below the surface. Consequently it did not surprise me that symbols appeared in my writing, often without a conscious decision. A cave, a pool, a hearthfire, trees, mountains, gold, stones, demons, death and birth all hint at the unknowable archetypes of the unconscious.

Aniela Jaffe writes of three enduring symbols, which recur in the art of many periods: '...the stone, the animal and the circle – each of which has had enduring psychological significance from the earliest expressions of human consciousness to the most sophisticated

forms of 20th-century art.' (in Jung 1964, 257). Jaffe cites the Old Testament story of Jacob to illustrate man's sense of a living god or divine spirit in a stone. "For Jacob ... [the stone] was a mediator between himself and God.' (259). Of stones Eliade says: 'The stone parentage of the first men is a theme which occurs in a large number of myths.' (43). Eliade mentions Ovid's story of Deucalion and Pyrrha, who repopulated the earth after a great flood by throwing 'the bones of their Mother' (stones) over their shoulders. I had already thought of using this myth, and it was yet another connection with Menge, the lover of stones. In my novel Menge would help Hestia to translate, '*Hence we are strong, we children of the earth,*' thus providing me with a title that refers ambiguously to both embattled Aboriginal people and hardy pioneer settlers.

Stones are a recurring motif in *Children Of The Earth*. Menge was born on a stony farm near the village of Steinau. He digs in the stony mountains for precious stones; he gives Hermes the crystal which he in turn gives to Hestia; the rocks which surround the miwi pool have been rubbed smooth by countless generations of hands; Adam wants to build a solid stone house.

Writing of 'animal pictures that go back to the Ice Age', Jaffe says that the symbolic power of animals is 'the strange magic that seems to haunt caves, especially those that contain rock engravings and paintings.'

The circle, Jaffe says is a symbol of the Self. 'It expresses the totality of the psyche in all its aspects, including the relationship between man and the whole of nature' (266). But the circle is also represented by the uroborus, the alchemical symbol which Hestia sees in *Rosarium Philosophorum* and envisions while floating in the pool. The uroborus, the snake swallowing its own tail, is both an animal and a circle and must be doubly powerful.

A cave, symbolically the womb of Mother Earth, is the birthplace of Hermes. It also has numinous significance for the Aboriginal people. Even today, Jaffe says, a strange magic seems to haunt the caves that contain rock engravings and paintings. In my novel a cave with animal drawings is appropriated by Menge, until he discovers that it has sacred meaning for its original owners.

Natural pools, which are often circular, are one manifestation of the circle. Pools appear in many myths, from the Old testament to the Greek tale of Narcissus, and in Aboriginal stories of the Rainbow Serpent. In my novel Hermes' redemption begins with being ducked in a pool, and a pool is the site of Hestia's metamorphosis.

The hearth and the maintenance of the home fire is the core of the Hestia myth. Pioneer wives 'kept the home fires burning' while their husbands planted crops and fought the elements. Fire also plays an important part in Aboriginal Dreaming stories. Trees appear in all mythologies. I did not recognise Unatildi's emergence from the trunk of a burning tree as symbolic until it was pointed out to me. Mountains play their part in myth too. They are found in the Bible, in Greek myth and in the landscapes of the Aboriginal Dreaming.

Gold, a recurrent theme in *Children Of the Earth*, is the alchemists' symbol for spiritual attainment. It was to recur again and again, in Menge's persistent prospecting and his lifelong interest in spiritual fulfilment. Menge's story culminates in the powerful event of the gold rush which draws him to his redemptive death. Menge's demons are symbols of evil. The Old Testament has the Devil and his minions, and Aboriginal people know demons by countless different names. As Menge says, every language has a word for 'demon.'

The alchemists' *hieros gamos*, or sacred marriage, is represented in the illustrations in Hestia's copy of *Rosarium Philosophorum*, where the originally separate couple draw gradually closer together and eventually become one divine being. For Jung, as for the alchemists, the *hieros gamos* symbolises not the physical marriage of man and woman, but the union of male and female aspects of the human psyche, which lead towards individuation, or perfection of the soul. But perfection is unattainable except, perhaps, in death, as Menge illustrates.

It was the uroborus, however, that was the most potent symbol in *Children Of The Earth*. It is so difficult to define that no two Jungian writers seem to agree absolutely on its significance. David Tacey describes it as:

the most basic and primordial of all archetypal symbols... The uroborus symbolizes the all-containing (self-fecundating self-devouring) nature of the unconscious prior to the advent of human consciousness. Although the uroborus is a symbol of unity, it is to be sharply differentiated from the mandala, with which it is often confused. The mandala represents, as it were, 'unity regained' after the development of consciousness and the emergence of the ego from the matrix. The mandala symbolises the unity of human and divine, time and eternity, whereas the uroborus points to an otherworldly, pre-human unity outside time. (*Patrick White, 6*)

Referring to the novel *The Living And The Dead*, Tacey suggests that White's circular forms are not mandalas, but symbols of an original unity where the personality is as yet undifferentiated from the matrix. 'The blissful oneness of the uroborus lasts only while the personality is in a dissolved, unconscious state' (7). Only after reading this did I realise that my personal fascination with the uroborus had led me to leave Hestia in a symbolically undifferentiated state. She sees the uroborus while bathing with Hermes, and the conscious prohibitions of her ego are swept away. As Tacey says of White's character Elyot 'when he merges into the unconscious, the archetype assumes a cosmic, oceanic quality and he feels nurtured by it' (*Patrick White, 7*). In the pool Hestia experiences this 'cosmic, oceanic quality' but it loses its power when she returns to the normal, everyday life of the farm.

In the scene in which Hestia and Adam eat what is to be their last meal together, Hestia finds herself unable to desert her husband in his time of need and decides to 'stay for the harvest'. Tacey's comments on the uroborus led me to see that at this point she would experience a mandala. What better example than the patterned dinner plate she holds as she begins to clear the table? Admittedly I had to be prompted by Tacey, but when I originally wrote that scene I had envisaged Hestia holding two plates in her hands as she cleared away the uneaten supper. I had just failed to recognise that the plates were significant and needed to be mentioned. So when I thought the novel was finished I went back and allowed Hestia to examine

the circular pattern on one of her plates, and to feel drawn to it, to see it anew as something that is hers, from which she does not wish to part.

Jung And Literary Theory

I began *Children Of The Earth* believing that a literary analysis using archetypal theory would be, in effect, the same thing as Jungian literary theory. As I wrote, I dipped into Susan Rowland (*C.G. Jung and Literary Theory* 1999, *Jung: A Feminist Revision* 2002) and Christopher Hauke's *Jung and the Postmodern*, 2000. In article written in 2004 Rowland defines these ideas succinctly:

Jungian literary theory differs from the established practice of Jungian literary criticism sometimes referred to as archetypal criticism. As a relatively new development, Jungian literary theory makes connections between the core principles and writings of the psychoanalyst C.G.Jung and the domain of contemporary cultural theory, including deconstruction, poststructuralism, postmodernism, feminism and postcolonialism. ('Jungian Literary Theory, 1922 -,' 1).

To be quite honest as a writer I had been afraid of postmodernism and its associated theories. Having constructed a fragile edifice of words, why would I want to *deconstruct* it? While deconstruction is not the same as *destruction* it has negative undertones.

Paul Dawson writes of the challenge to Creative Writing 'to negotiate a theoretical and political stance in relation to current intellectual work in the humanities...Creative Writing needs to answer the critique of authorship and of the category of literature offered by Theory, rather than simply rejecting this critique as unhelpful or deleterious to literary culture'(161). But it is Rowland who seems to offer a way forward:

Theoretical approaches such as feminism and postcolonialism can make very necessary criticisms of the cultural biases deeply embedded in Jungian ideas. At the

same time I would argue that Jungian theory has been an unjustly neglected resource in the development of literary studies (*C.G.Jung And Literary Theory*, 188).

I have to admit to liking Jung so much that I tend to overlook his 'cultural biases.' I excuse him on the grounds that he lived in another time and another place. No one is entirely free of cultural and historical bias. I take what I want from Jung – his archetypes and his collective unconscious, the way he illuminates such phenomena as myth and alchemy, the way he explains war and flying saucers, and irrational human behaviour. Feminist and postcolonial deconstructions are beyond my competence, but I agree entirely with Rowland that Jung has been unjustly neglected.

In *Jung: a Feminist Revision* Rowland writes that 'Jung's work can be said to show affinity with the postmodern when it ceases to claim itself as a secure foundation for a fixed knowledge of the human subject. Jung speaks to postmodernity when he renounces "grand theory" and enters the territory of metaphor, speculation and the literary.' (128) So Jung and Postmodernism are not completely oppositional after all. My original understanding of Jungian theory in literature needed rethinking. I had seen it as an undercurrent of archetypal themes surfacing intermittently as symbols, as a mythological structuring of story, a way of exploring the motivations of my characters and understanding the creative process. But while symbolism and archetypal theory are still valid concepts, there are other aspects of Jungian thought which can be applied to creative art and literature.

When Rowland claims that, for Jung, 'the *unknown* [my italics] quality of the unconscious underpinned all human culture and claims of disciplines to know the world.' ('Jungian Literary Theory, 1922 -,' 1) she makes it clear that the very concept of the *unknowable* unconscious makes all Jungian thought provisional, and at least partly compatible with the slippery uncertainties of postmodernism.

From Christopher Hauke comes further confirmation of Jung's relevance to contemporary culture:

I regard Jung's psychology, and that of many post-Jungians as *a response to modernity*. To put this more strongly, Jung's psychology constitutes a critique of modernity and of Enlightenment rationality and values that, to my mind, brings it in line with many aspects of the postmodern critique of contemporary culture. (1)

Postmodernism seems to belittle many past values, without replacing them. I find it difficult to endorse a world view that is devoid of values. Hauke proposes that Jung can provide new values that are both post-Enlightenment and also post-Postmodernism.

Common to Jung's thought and postmodern critique is a sincere wish to restore to humanity that which five hundred years of Enlightenment 'progress', despite many gains, has robbed. Of course this will involve criticising contemporary values, but ... this is not simply nihilistic and destructive but *deconstructive*, not leading to death but to *rebirth*, not to the loss of values but the *revaluation of all values* (42).

If the Jungian archetype of death/rebirth does take its place in contemporary literary theory it may no longer be necessary for a creative writer to fear postmodernism and deconstruction as destructive and nihilistic. If Hauke and Rowland are right, and Jung has something valuable to add to contemporary cultural theory, creative writers of the future may want to develop this idea further. Can we dare to hope for a fertile marriage (perhaps a *hieros gamos*) between Jung and Postmodernism?

Conclusion

Writing *Children Of The Earth* has been a journey. My research has led me from areas I knew only vaguely into byways where I was often tempted to go beyond the requirements of my novel. I explored the cultural significance of gold, from alchemy to the Victorian goldfields; I met Paracelsus and other Gnostics; in a small way I refreshed my knowledge of Greek and Old Testament myth; I learned a new respect for Wise Old Men, from Jung and Johannes Menge, to Aboriginal Warrawarras. I found resonances between Indigenous myths and those of ancient Greece and Israel. I began to see the connections between Jungian archetypal theory and postmodernism.

Myth and alchemy are potent catalysts for improbable ideas. The difficulty for me was to select what I needed from my fantasies and keep them grounded in historical reality (whatever that is). Perhaps my Jungian vision of old European gods travelling across oceans to encounter even older Australian deities was too far-fetched to be translated into the reality of colonial South Australia. I was daily confronted with the sheer impossibility of finding the right words, and yet exhilarated by the adventure of it. Only my readers can judge whether I attempted to fly too high and, like Icarus, melted the wax on my wings.

As for my initial question *'How useful are Jungian ideas to creative writing in the context of contemporary cultural theory?'* I can only say that for me the experience of writing within a framework of Jungian concepts set my imagination racing. It gave me far more ideas than I could utilise, all of them sufficiently slippery and provisional to please the most ardent postmodernist. I have observed myself researching and writing a novel. I have been convinced that my unconscious mind solved problems while I slept. I thought I glimpsed what Jung called serendipity when in my research I found unexpected connections between myth, psychology and reality. Even the Jungian concept of synchronicity began to seem possible. Segal defines synchronicity as 'the experience of the world as meaningful ... an acausal nexus between the inner, human

world and the outer, natural one' (20). Small matters, such as finding the right book on the right day, or stumbling on some obscure but relevant fact on the Internet at a vital moment, seemed significant. I began to have trouble convincing myself it was just my imagination.

Hence, although I cannot prove that Jungian theory would make a difference to the creativity of other writers, I can say that Jung and the Jungians seemed to enrich my work and made writing a deeply rewarding experience.

All fiction is in some way speculative. *Children Of The Earth* simply explores what might have happened between five lonely people in an isolated situation. It is about our shared humanity, our propensity to worship someone or some thing, our weaknesses and follies and our capacity for renewal and growth: in other words, what Jung called 'individuation'. It has no axe to grind, other than to say that we are all children of the earth and we are all on a journey of self-discovery.

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