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MUDROOROO'S WILDCAT TRILOGY AND THE TRACKS OF A YOUNG URBAN ABORIGINE SYSTEM OF POWER RELATIONS

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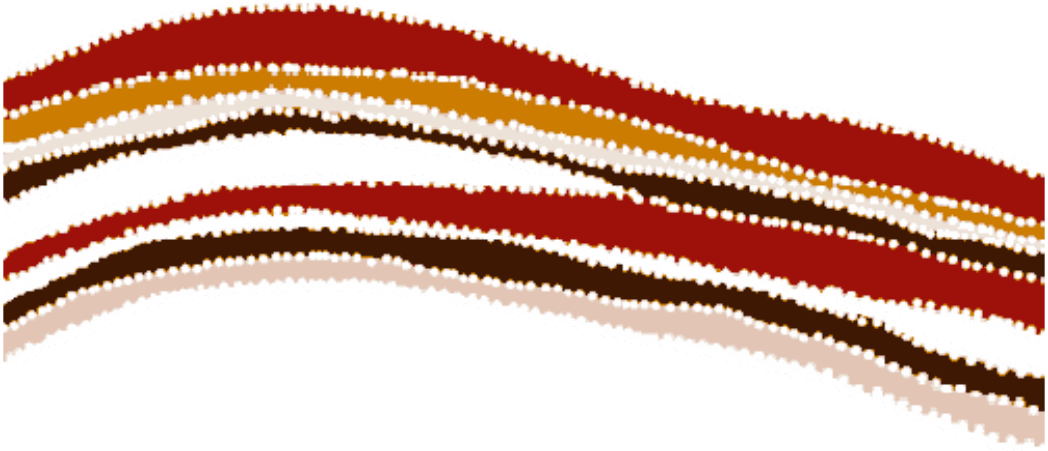

MUDROOROO´S WILDCAT TRILOGY AND THE TRACKS OF A YOUNG URBAN ABORIGINE SYSTEM OF POWER RELATIONS

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This thesis is dedicated to Mudrooroo Nyoongah, whose novels and poems have been my dearest literary objects of study for four years. So inspiring have Mudrooroo's works been to my academic life that this thesis is just the second step along the path that he has opened not only by writing books, but also by kindly replying to my e-mail messages.

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Stories of Dreamtime

But words are things, and a small drop of ink,
Falling like dew, upon a thought, produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think;
LORD BYRON, *Don Juan, canto LXXXVIII*

RESUMO

Esta dissertação consiste em uma leitura da Trilogia Wildcat, de Mudrooroo. O foco da leitura recai sobre as Relações de Poder e seu impacto sobre os jovens aborígines urbanos australianos. O corpus de pesquisa é formado pelos romances *Wild Cat Falling* (1965), *Wildcat Screaming* (1992) e *Doin Wildcat* (1988). O objetivo é analisar os efeitos das estratégias de poder em indivíduos pós-coloniais que são sujeitos a e fazem uso de mecanismos de poder ao estabelecerem relacionamentos tanto com seus pares quanto com pessoas que representam autoridade. A discussão das relações de poder, de seus mecanismos e efeitos se dá no terreno do discurso literário, através da análise das escolhas e estratégias do autor quanto à formatação dos três romances que operam, simultaneamente, como obras de arte, como estratégias políticas de sobrevivência e como estudos reflexivos sobre o processo da escrita literária. Wildcat é o protagonista, bem como autor e narrador nos textos da Trilogia. Ele é também um representante do povo aborígine australiano urbano e jovem na luta pela sobrevivência em uma sociedade na qual eles foram assimilados, mas não realmente aceitos. O texto de Mudrooroo versa sobre história, cultura, luta pela sobrevivência, mas trata principalmente sobre a escrita do texto literário e o papel da literatura aborígine. Para contemplar um construto tão complexo, minha leitura busca a combinação de literatura, cultura e pensamento pós-colonial. O suporte teórico do trabalho está apoiado nas idéias de Michel Foucault sobre poder e discurso, bem como na visão de Mudrooroo sobre a escrita literária aborígine, e também sobre a noção do exótico pós-colonial de Graham Huggan. Minha análise pretende alcançar a compreensão dos mecanismos de poder que povos e indivíduos assujeitados podem colocar em uso quando têm como objetivo serem ouvidos e respeitados pelas pessoas que os vêem como “outros” e que são maioria nas sociedades nas quais vivem. A conclusão indica que relações de poder firmemente estabelecidas são de crucial importância para a sobrevivência dos povos aborígines, e que a literatura é um dos melhores meios para alcançar esta finalidade, não só para garantir sobrevivência, mas também para representá-la.

Palavras-chave: Literatura aborígine australiana; Mudrooroo; Trilogia Wildcat; Relações de poder; Foucault; Jovens aborígines urbanos australianos.

ABSTRACT

This thesis consists of a reading of Mudrooroo's Wildcat Trilogy, focusing on the issue of Power Relations and their impact on Young Urban Australian Aborigines. The corpus of the research comprises the novels *Wild Cat Falling* (1965), *Wildcat Screaming* (1992) and *Doin Wildcat* (1988). The purpose is to examine the effects of power strategies on post-colonial individuals who are subjected to and make use of mechanisms of power when establishing relationships with both their peers and other people representing authority. This discussion is carried out from within the realm of literary discourse, through the analysis of Mudrooroo's choices and strategies in the shaping of these three novels that operate, simultaneously, as pieces of art, as political strategies of survival, and as self-reflexive studies about the process of writing. Wildcat is protagonist, author and narrator in the Trilogy. He is also a representative of the young urban Australian Aboriginal people's struggle to survive within a society into which they have been assimilated, but not actually accepted. Mudrooroo's text is about history, culture, struggle for survival, but it is mainly about writing and the role of Aboriginal Literature. In order to contemplate such a complex construct, my reading aims at combining postcolonial, cultural and literary concerns. The theoretical support of the work rests upon Michel Foucault's ideas about Power and Discourse, as well as upon Mudrooroo's views on Aboriginal Writing, and Graham Huggan's notion of the Post-Colonial Exotic. My analysis intends to reach the understanding of the mechanisms of power that subjected peoples and individuals may put to use in order to be heard and respected by the people who see them as "Others" and are now majority in the societies they live within. Therefore, the conclusion indicates that firmly established Power Relations are central to Aboriginal people's survival, and that Literature is one of the best means to achieve – as well as represent – it.

Keywords: Australian Aboriginal literature; Mudrooroo; Wildcat Trilogy; Power Relations; Foucault; Young Urban Australian Aborigines.

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INTRODUCTION

The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first lines, and the last full stop, beyond its internal configuration and its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences: it is a node within a network.
FOUCAULT, *Archaeology of Knowledge*

When I tell people that I am writing a Master's thesis on Australian Aboriginal Literature, they often ask me why. Then, I ask them if they have time to listen to my story of how I fell in love with Mudrooroo's work. That is a long story, that starts in 2003, when I was to write my undergraduate final paper. I did not want to write about traditional canonic authors because much had already been said about them. As I meant to write about an author and a type of literature that were still unknown to most readers in Brazil, when I heard about Mudrooroo I thought that was exactly what I was looking for. My decision for an Australian Aboriginal writer also raises a second question: what could a Brazilian white woman contribute to the work of an Australian Aboriginal author? The only answer I have to this question is that I have an inclination to study about subjects which, for their novelty in the academic field, might be introduced or developed as my contribution to Brazilian readers and students who, during their undergraduate studies of English language and literature, are usually introduced to writers of the British and the United States canon, which are unquestionably essential, but not exclusive of contemporary literature. Aboriginal Literatures, for instance, bloomed and are in a steady ever-growing development in Canada and Australia. In those countries British colonization brought social and political issues to Aboriginal people who, only after they started to demand their rights, found a way to be heard not only by the largest societies where they live, but also worldwide – through poetry, novels and short-stories – by writing about their version of colonial history; about their suffering for having

been dispossessed of their culture; about the damage that Colonialism[1] inflicted on their identities to the extent that more than two hundred years later, the new generations of Indigenous people are still struggling for cultural and identity survival.

The appeal of Australian Aboriginal Literature lies in the fact that it is both a monument and a document, and will be treated as such in my thesis, which proposes to analyze Indigenous/non-Indigenous Power Relations and the strategies used by the Australian Aborigines to become able to move the scales of power balance through intellectual and aesthetic exchanges in a multicultural, predominantly white society. This will be done by tracking the actions and discourse of the Wildcat Trilogy's main character, who is representative of the Young Urban Aborigine in Australia from mid 1950s through late 1980s.

Although the main reason why Mudrooroo's Trilogy interests me is the fact that it is a work of art in the form of literature, it is not possible to read it ignoring that it also brings embedded the aspect of a historical document. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis, it is chief that I do not oppose the concepts of monument and document, making use of them as complementary to each other, since an Aboriginal writer is always committed to a social cause where history and politics are heavy weights. Mudrooroo makes use of the Australian archive in order to build a monument which, according to the ancient Greek concept, is a cultural representation. The concept of monument was later re-defined by the Romans as an object of remembrance, which would not exclude the archive and is closely related to the German word *Zietgeist*[2], whose free translation would be "the spirit of the times". Later, the word monument used as opposed or complementary to document was inserted in the academic field by Walter Benjamin, in the *Arcades Project*. Susan Sontag and Michel Foucault[3] made use of this dual conceptualization to redefine the approaches to be used in literary criticism in post-structuralist times. In my thesis I will treat the work of Mudrooroo as a literary monument, a piece of writing to be analyzed as an artistic construct, and as a historical document about the struggle of one people towards regaining their place in their country. Mudrooroo uses the oral, age-long techniques of Aboriginal story-telling in the production of his written text, where he refers to traditions that are closely linked to historic places. Recording them in writing grants that such rich experience can be preserved, at least.

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[1] Colonialism here is used as a general word for both, the Colonial and Post-colonial periods.

[2] This German word became best known in relation to Hegel's philosophy of history.

[3] Michel Foucault presents the 'monument-document' set of words in the French edition of *Archaeology of Knowledge* in 1969, and Susan Sontag in essays that she wrote in the 1970s about Walter Benjamin's *Arcades Project* (1927-1939) after the works that comprise the project were translated into English.

In this sense, both concepts – document and monument – are central to my reading of the Wildcat Trilogy, since it is comprised into

the category of Australian Aboriginal Literature, which is comprised into the area of Cultural Studies. Moreover, as Foucault asserts in *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972, p. 7), "In our time, history is that which transforms *documents* into *monuments*".

Aboriginal Literature is political in the sense that it is an instrument of which Indigenous writers make use to negotiate their social, historical and political presence in their country.

The Wildcat Trilogy comprises the books: *Wild Cat Falling* (1965), *Doin Wildcat* (1988) and *Wildcat Screaming* (1992). There is a 23-year span between the publishing of the first and the second books. *Doin Wildcat*, published in the same year the British celebrated 200 years of colonization in Australia (1988), is a milestone in Aboriginal Literature due to several literary and discursive elements used by Mudrooroo, such as a mix of 'englishes' – Standard, Koori as well as Beatnik and British slang – throughout the novel which, incidentally, was categorized by the author as a 'Koori novel and script', meaning that he adds a series of Aboriginal usages into the traditional style of the European Novel. Such subversion of the standard English language was part of Mudrooroo's decision to emphasize Indigenous issues as he did in other works along that year. In fact, the three books mark three distinct phases of Australian Aboriginal Literature, and represent the three phases that Indigenous people underwent in Australia, which are named in this thesis as "Assimilation", "Resistance" and "Reconciliation", represented, respectively, by the books *Wild Cat Falling*, *Doin Wildcat* and *Wildcat Screaming*. My aim is to link the real historic phases to the literary phases of Aboriginal Literature in Australia by following the tracks of a Young Urban Aborigine – Wildcat – from his childhood through his grown-up years, including not only his movements but also his memories springing from an ancient culture that preceded him, and that appears in the trilogy in the form of dreams and reminiscences of what he learned from books as well as from Aboriginal elders. This is why I say that the Wildcat Trilogy will be treated as a monument, a literary work of fiction, and a document referring to a number of historical facts that are brought into the fictional realm.

The reading of the texts will be accomplished by analyzing discourse and the movements of the main character and narrator of the Wildcat Trilogy, as well as of the other characters who influence the protagonist's actions. My reading of the trilogy is grounded on the belief that literature is the best tool that a people has to express their feelings to a distinct people, and communicate aspects of their culture in order to be better understood and

respected. However, how can that be achieved? What is the process by which a Young Urban Aborigine who is led to live at the margins of the Australian society, grows up and contributes to the process of offsetting the scale of Power Relations involving the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous peoples of Australia?

In order to successfully follow Wildcat's tracks while he moves within the Power Relations network of the Australian society, and try to answer those questions through a close reading of the Wildcat Trilogy, I will rely chiefly on three thinkers: Michel Foucault, Mudrooroo Nyoongah and Graham Huggan. From Michel Foucault, the concepts of Power, Knowledge, Discourse and Power Relations will be central to my close reading of the trilogy. Mudrooroo's descriptions of Australian Aboriginal Literature, of the Indigenous culture, family structure and law, will help me to connect Foucault's concepts to the relationship which has been gradually evolving from Colonial times. Huggan's notion of Post-Colonial Exoticism will be added to the other two thinkers' concepts and descriptions in an attempt to link the Wildcat character of the Young Urban Aborigine of the mid 1950s to the more mature Wildcat character of the late 1980s. Nevertheless, based on Foucault's concept of discourse, I will read both the discourse and the counter-discourse that Mudrooroo presents through the main character and narrator of the Wildcat Trilogy, in an attempt to follow the main character's steps through the network of social Power Relations of Australia, until he achieves maturity, turning his counter-discourse into a discourse of reconciliation or the discourse of the Post-Colonial exotic, according to Graham Huggan.

My close reading borrows from the field of Narratology when I deal with the interrelations involving author, character and narrator. However, I will not base the reading on this theory because that would demand that I focus on other aspects than Power Relations and discourse which comprise power/knowledge and history. Moreover, I am aware that, if Narratology were to be applied to this thesis, it would be through one of its Postclassical variants, in the Poststructuralist views of McHole (1987, 1992) and Currie (1998), the Cultural Studies approach of Nünning (2000) or the Political approach of Bal (2004).

Another decision that I made regarding the directions of my reading was to omit any possible analysis of Wildcat's relationships of power with women – in fact, the relationship with his mother will be referred to, but from the family institutional point-of-view – as well as of the mythological elements that appear in the form of nightmares for the main character, will be only superficially analyzed, for the purpose of explaining their role as a link between the main character and the ancient culture of his people.

Complex as Australian Aboriginal Literature is, there will be a need to cite other thinkers as well as to comment or even describe other concepts in addition to the ones mentioned above, as it will be noted in the following paragraphs. However, further definitions will appear within the chapters, along the process of writing, in the form of footnotes.

As our first steps on Wildcat's tracks, Chapter 1 will introduce elements that are instrumental as foundations for the succeeding chapters, such as Australian history, the author's background, aspects of Australian Aboriginal Literature, the role of the author's and narrator's writing techniques, and the Young Urban Australian Aborigine of 1950s-1990s. All these elements are chief for the understanding of my choices regarding the theories applied to the reading, and the events that take place in the main character's life, as well as the literary structure of the trilogy. Moreover, only by understanding the Aboriginal culture, which is so different from ours, my reader will be able to realize what I am proposing in terms of aesthetic construct. Therefore, this thesis aims at contemplating both, Art as document, by providing the reader with the elements necessary to understand the fundamental aspects which build the monument; and the monument as an international relational agent through which the Indigenous people of Australia introduce themselves to the non-Indigenous, via this major cultural channel that Literature is. This is the reason why, in the first part of Chapter 1, the two sides of Australian history will be presented: the official history according to the white people and the more recent Aboriginal version of the facts related to the British colonization in the country. From the beginning of the Colonial period, the issue of the Indigenous loss of identity and genocide was established through dispossession of Indigenous peoples' lands, killing of whole Indigenous nations, including the fact that the colonizer called all of the numerous distinct peoples of Australia, 'aborigines'. The same homogenizing word which was applied by European anthropologists to the Indigenous peoples of Australia was modified and accepted by the Indigenous peoples to refer to themselves as opposed to the white people. As the native people of Australia could not avoid being called aborigines, they capitalized the first letter of the word to make it a name that would comprise all of the Indigenous peoples. Thus, the word 'Aborigine' carries a cultural and political meaning, as well as its variants: Aboriginal (adjective) and Aboriginality (noun that describes de condition of being Aboriginal). Later, still based on anthropologic sciences, the colonizers decided to whiten Australia through a 'cleaning of the blood', and started a process of separating the part-Aboriginal children from their families in order to assimilate them into the white society. The Stolen Generations period is described in Chapter 1 and, because Mudrooroo was one of those children who were separated from their families to be raised in orphanages or mission

schools, this precedes the part where the author's background will be discussed. As Mudrooroo is part of the Aboriginal Literature history, and one of its main thinkers, his background will be followed by a discussion on what Australian Aboriginal Literature is. Nevertheless, as the main character of the Wildcat Trilogy is a young urban half-blood Aborigine, there will be a description of who this young Aborigine is, in the period comprised between the 1950s through the 1990s, in Australia.

Chapter two is dedicated to describing the foundations of the primary focus of analysis which is Power Relations, and which aspects that are specific of the Australian Aboriginal Literature and Post-Colonial exoticism are added in order to be employed in the close reading of the trilogy to show the aspects and consequences of the main character's moves within the Power Relations network in urban Australia from mid 1950s through late 1980s. In addition to Power Relations, Literary Discourse understood under the light of Michel Foucault's concept of discourse is central to the close reading chapter. For the discussion about Power Relations, it is important to understand what Michel Foucault's views on power – and, consequently, on relations of power, which include the concept of resistance and discourse as well as counter-discourse – are. The discussion of the mechanisms that the colonial power has employed to subject the Indigenous peoples of Australia includes the notions of resistance closely connected and as part of Aboriginal counter-discourse which led Australian power relationships from warlike actions in early colonial times to Postcolonial cultural actions. Because I use both terms – Post-Colonial and Postcolonial – I find it important to clarify their difference in usage. Post-Colonial refers to the period of time that comes after the Colonial period whereas the non-hyphenated form, Postcolonial, carries an ideological, political rather than historic orientation. Resistance will also be linked to the hybrid individuals and their strategies to resist total assimilation into a culture that is not theirs. Thus, while discussing hybridity, the concept formulated by Hommi Bhabha will be commented as an early view on hybridity, which today does not necessarily carry the negative connotation that Bhabha first ascribed to it. Resistance will also be discussed in connection with power and politics, discourse, institutions, and discipline with a focus on surveillance. This chapter closes with the concept of Reconciliation, which is the ultimate stage sought for in Australian Power Relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, that today are influenced by Globalization, generating a new Post-Colonial mode: the Exotic, as Graham Huggan calls the 'Other' who not only accepts the terms of the new world order, but also takes advantage of it by selling their culture in the global market. Therefore, Chapter 2 will trace the development of Power Relations in the Australian society, based on theoretical views of resistance (from

violent physical actions to cultural actions), assimilation (biological, social and cultural), self-determination (by influence of the Black Power movement) and reconciliation (by adapting to a new world order).

It is in Chapter three that the concepts previously described are employed in order to go deep into the analysis of discourse as well as a number of actions performed by the main character until he is able to offset the power relations scale. This chapter is divided into three main parts, referring to the books in the trilogy. *Wild Cat Falling* will be analyzed as book number one, *Wildcat Screaming*, which was published as the third book, will be analyzed as book number two for the purposes of this thesis, and *Doin Wildcat* will be analyzed as book number three. At the opening of the chapter I explain why I chose to change the order of the books. In each of the books, Power Relations and Discourse are analyzed through the main character's relations with institutions and other characters. As in Aboriginal Literature some narrative aspects are important, such as language and inclusion of myths, they will be commented upon when I analyze the narrator's choices. Wildcat, the main character, is also the narrator in the books as well as the author of a book that he later turns into a screenplay. The effects that the narrator and main character's discourse might cause on the reader of the trilogy will also be analyzed. In the section *Wild Cat Falling*, there is one subdivision aimed at explaining what type of power the Dreamtime elements which are included in the story have on the main character, and what they mean as literary tools. In the second section, *Wildcat Screaming*, there are two subdivisions. The first is dedicated to the elements of the Dreamtime that appear in the main character's sleep, triggering his inner knowledge/power (understood as Foucault describes them, as one concept, since knowledge leads to power which, in turn, provides more knowledge). The other subdivision analyzes the narrative tools which, in this book, are more complex than those in book one. In the final section, *Doin Wildcat*, there will be four subdivisions, for this book is still more complex than the others from the literary point of view. This is a book about another book, the one that the main character writes in prison. It is also about the making of a movie based on that book. This is a novel and a script at the same time. The full title, as indicated by Mudrooroo, is *Doin Wildcat: a Novel Koori Script as Constructed by Mudrooroo Narogin.* Therefore, in order to better organize the events and actions of this book, there will be subdivisions to discuss Wildcat's relationships of power with the movie crew at the site where they are shooting; Wildcat's memories of both, his past and his stories in the book, his discursive style and effects, as well as the narrative tools employed to build the text of this book.

As a result of the close reading of the Trilogy, by focusing on the Power Relations of the protagonist with authorities, institutions, peers, Aboriginal elders, foreign people, actors and actresses, I expect to find the answers to those questions mentioned above. As a reminder, the questions were: if literature is the best tool that one people has to express their feelings towards a distinct people while communicating aspects of their culture in order to be better understood and respected, how can that be achieved? What is the process by which a Young Urban Aborigine, who is led to live at the margins of the Australian society, grows up and contributes to the process of offsetting the scale of Power Relations between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous people of Australia?

Based on the background information about the Colonial and Post-Colonial history of Australia, I hope that the answer to the first part of the question is that Indigenous people can achieve their goals towards non-Indigenous people who colonized their country, by learning as much as possible about their colonizer's culture, language and power mechanisms in order to write texts in which the content leads their readers to better understand the differences between the two cultures, as well as to reflect on past events when both cultures clashed, resulting in harmful effects for the Indigenous people. Through such readings, non-Indigenous people might be able to understand and respect the Indigenous ones. As for the process by which the young Aboriginal may contribute to the process of offsetting Power Relations, I believe that, in addition to the process of learning about the other's culture, such young Aboriginal has to acquire inner knowledge and try to understand who he is and what his role is in that society, then he might adapt to the environment where he lives, and try to comply with social and legal rules to open opportunities for himself to do something on behalf of his people. Notwithstanding, this is a difficult goal to reach, for past violent actions of resistance have not worked. In order to establish a balanced relationship with so distinct a people, it is necessary to make use of tools and means that cause that people to be interested in other people's matters. The best means to achieve such an interest might be through a work of art. In order to communicate feelings, expectations, frustrations, and hopes to the non-Indigenous society, the best choice for a Young Urban Aborigine is to use the knowledge that he acquired with the aim to produce a monument that will also work as a document. Therefore, through knowing as much as possible about the other people's culture, the young Aborigine, here represented by Wildcat, will acquire the power to make use of the other's discourse to reverse it, if necessary, as a strategy of resistance in a first moment, and a stand for reconciliation, later, and he will be able to do that through literary discourse.

Mudrooroo is the most prolific, polemic and fascinating of all Australian Aboriginal writers. Other works by Mudrooroo, such as poems and his other novels are invaluable monuments that document Australia's history, mythology and social concerns. As for me, I am very proud of having the honor to present my reading of his Wildcat Trilogy to a number of new Brazilian readers. Of course I am aware that the possibilities of interpretation, made from distinct points of view, are infinite; yet I am very glad to contribute with my share in the enhancement of the study of Other Literatures Written in English in my country.

And now, as following tracks is an age-long Aboriginal practice, I invite you to join me in following Wildcat's tracks in the network of Power Relations in Urban Australia.

1 FIRST STEPS ON WILDCAT'S TRACKS

It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.
CHARLES DARWIN, *The Origin of Species.*

Bringing the issue of Power Relations to discussion through the reading of an Aboriginal Literature trilogy is a complex task, because it means approaching the text not only as "monument", but as a "document" as well. With the aim of making sense of the events that shaped the Australian group here referred to as Young Urban Aborigines, some matters such as history – specifically the period known as Stolen Generations – the writer's background, and the literary aesthetics of Aboriginal Literature, will be contextualized in Chapter One, to open the way for the analysis to be carried on in this thesis.

The first problem that the native peoples of Australia[4] faced when the British landed in their country was homogenization. Since the English invaders were not able to tell the 500 distinct groups of Black people they encountered there apart from one another, they named all of them Aborigines, thus erasing their identities, which became a major issue for all of their following generations. However, identity issues do not stem from just one focal-point (as homogenization through naming distinct groups as one), but from several sets of action performed by the colonizer of a given country. Although there were resistance moves on the part of the native peoples of Australia, the colonizers forced their presence and eventually took over the land as if it were *terra nullius*.

Then, following the first stage of colonization, came the assimilation process. It did not start until 1900 when the English government, based on the latest concepts of scientific developments, decided that the native peoples should be civilized. By civilized they meant having Christianity as religion, speaking English, and becoming white in all aspects, including their skin, which meant that the Aborigines as a race should be eventually exterminated.

[4] For the purpose of this work, the terms 'native people(s)' and 'Indigenous peoples' will be used interchangeably meaning 'in their individuality as different tribes,' whereas the word 'Aborigine(s)' is used as to refer to every indigenous individual no matter which his or her tribe is a white European construct.

Nowadays, when people say ‘Aborigine’, they are mainly referring to the hybrid generations that came into existence in colonial times. Nevertheless, those Aborigines have tried both to explain their differences and to keep their ancient culture alive through historical accounts, poetry as well as biographical stories. Regarding their historical accounts, there is valuable information about Aboriginal ways[5] in Mudrooroo´s *Us Mob* (1995) where he describes Aboriginal culture focusing on family ties, arts, spirituality, struggle, and history, among other matters. Indigenous Web sites are also a good source of Australian Indigenous history. Both non-Indigenous and Indigenous accounts of Australian history are noteworthy concerning the underlying events that led to the cultural misunderstandings that caused Indigenous peoples in Australia to have to re-construct their identities.

1.1 Two Sides of the Same History

The nineteenth century was marked by biological theory which played a convenient role in discourses of power. Evolutionism was the basis for political actions such as homogenization, genocide, assimilation techniques, and whitening of black native peoples in colonies. Racism and the consequent practice of genocide relate to such colonial thinking, leading to what Foucault calls ‘the biopower mode’ of colonization. (FOUCAULT: 2003**,** p.257).

The need to work here with both sides of Australian history is crucial to understand that part of the historical truth that was denied to us before the Indigenous peoples started to make use of the colonizer’s language to build their own discourse. In *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault calls this need for the colonized to tell their version of what happened to them as ‘the story of the race struggle’ (2003, p.70). Such a discourse is understood as counter history, and brings into light facts that have been confined to silence for a long time, but that now are available mostly on internet Web sites. Therefore, I have based my research on Australia’s history mostly on internet official Web sites which are reliable sources of information as well as constantly updated to include distinct interpretations of Aboriginal issues.

In *Australia, Places and History*, Marco Moretti (2003) says that, “Until the second half of the eighteenth century this vast and virtually uninhabited continent with no clearly

[5] By ‘ways’ I mean ‘culture’ as it is the word the indigenous intellectuals make use of when speaking about Aboriginal issues.

defined boundaries was known as the *Terra Australis Incognita* by Europeans. [. . .] In actual fact, Australia had already been inhabited for over fifty thousand years by the Aborigines" (p.22). Those native peoples knew nothing about timeline division of historical events, for they viewed the universe as a totality where their world was inserted, and people, animals, plants, and minerals all formed an interrelated environment whose existence was explained by the myths and oral accounts of the Dreamtime.

Dreamtime is the name that Indigenous peoples of Australia give to what is now regarded as their pre-history. The Dreamtime tells about the myths and histories of every distinct native people of Australia, whose culture was totally different from that of the British who colonized their land. That is why it is relevant to contemporary urban Aborigine authors to include elements of the Dreamtime in their current works – this is a major frame of reference to them. Thus, according to Mudrooroo (1995), whereas the non-Indigenous people organize historical events on a timeline, the Aborigines understand the history of Australia as divided into a) pre-history (the Dreamtime), when the native peoples lived in harmony with nature; b) the time of the Invasion(s), when the Aborigines started to adapt to the non-Indigenous people with the purpose of communication; c) the conquering of the Aboriginal peoples, when their identities were most harmed; d) the Colonial period, when the policy of assimilation was put into force; and e) the period of Self-determination, which started in the late 1960s and continues until now. It is noteworthy that they include the first visitors to the country – the Chinese, the Dutch, the Spanish, among others – in the Dreamtime period, because their contacts were made with the only purpose of commerce or adventure trips. On the other hand, because the Time of Invasions is that when "For the first time, the Aboriginal peoples of Australia are confronted with another people who come not to visit, but to conquer (MUDROOROO: 1990, p. 4)", it is the starting point of the power relations discussed in this thesis.

The Barani Web site describes the beginning of the official history of Australia as follows,

> Cook's *Endeavour* sailed away, but the First Fleet landed and thus began two centuries of death, fighting, attempted genocide and a struggle for survival. The second and third fleets followed bringing more colonists, convicts and Governors with good intentions and devastating policies. Within only 20 years of Cook's first sighting of Sydney, the peaceful way of life of the local Aboriginal people was to turn into a nightmare of war, dispossession, displacement, social upheaval and disease.

The British accounts of their actions at the time of invasions in Australian territory do not refer to the Aborigines as the country's native peoples. They landed, explored, and declared Australia *terra nullius*, although, according to the Barani Web site, non-Indigenous people could not have traveled some difficult parts of the land without the help of the Aborigines. Furthermore, the Barani Web site holds that from the first moment of colonization, the Aborigines worked for the British people mainly as trackers or guides for the explorers who wanted to survey that 'unexplored' land. Used to having good relations with other peoples, some of them even played the role of diplomats to other Aboriginal groups. However, when they realized that their land was being taken by the British, the Aborigines started a process of resistance through warlike violent actions at first, which, eventually turned into intellectual, peaceful, firm resistance.

With the purpose of discussing only the events which are significant to this thesis, I have made the decision to break them into three chief historical moments that led to major changes in non-Indigenous/Indigenous relations – the beginning of the Colonial period, the Stolen Generations, and World War II.

1.1.1 The Early Colonial Period

The beginning of the Colonial period in Australia was the starting point in the conflict of power relations between the colonizers and the native indigenous peoples whose presence in "their" land was seen by the settlers as a problem to be solved. Nevertheless, the alleged problem stemmed from the fact that the Aborigines were there first and had a deep relationship with that land.

There are accounts, on some Web sites,[6] telling that Aborigines used to make cattle and sheep disappear into the bush, for instance. The Barani Web site reads that because the British settlers occupied Indigenous lands and started to fish, cut trees, and hunt Kangaroos, the Aborigines found themselves starving, mainly in winter, when they decided that it was time for them to take a stand and do whatever was needed to survive. Therefore, whereas some accepted Governor Philip's offer to go to the city to sleep and eat in the settlers' houses, others felt that they should remain in their lands. It is likely that the latter were the ones who made the cattle and sheep disappear into the bush. In addition to having been dispossessed from their lands, the Indigenous peoples of Australia were dispossessed of health, suffering from new illnesses that were lethal to them, such as smallpox, the flu, and measles; they were

[6] Official Web Sites such as, <http://www.teachers.ash.org.au/aussieed/aboriginalaustralia.htm> ; <http://www.academicinfo.net/histaus.html> ; <http://www.archivenet.gov.au/Resources/indigenous_aust.htm> .

also dispossessed of their distinct identities when they were denominated by the term that homogenized them – Aborigines. Violent actions of resistance only led a further number of them to death.

Years later a policy of assimilation caused the second moment of change for the Indigenous peoples. Although Australia became an independent country in 1901, the principles that guided the non-Indigenous people's behavior towards the Indigenous peoples of the country were still dictated by the British Empire. Moreover, the Indigenous people were not counted in the census of the country when it became independent as they were classified as 'fauna' to the eyes of the non-Indigenous people. One of the most harmful actions the British inflicted upon the native peoples was the assimilation process which had as underlying guidelines the latest scientific ideas based on Darwin's studies on the evolution of species and the preservation of favored races. Although Darwin himself did not apply his theory of evolution to human beings, social scientists and anthropologists appropriated his ideas and developed what is known as "Social Darwinism" which eventually worked as the main tool in the devising of the White Australia policy[7].

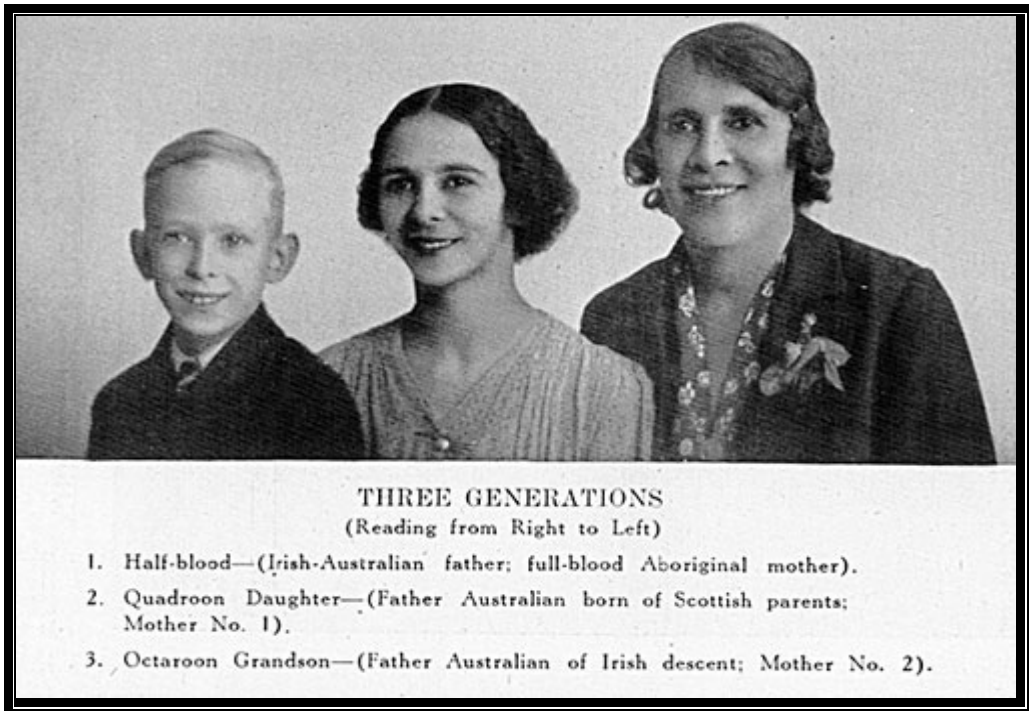
White Australia

1.1.2 "In Spite of Himself, The Native Must Be Helped"

Therefore, the warping of Darwin's theory led the British to the decision to whiten the Indigenous peoples of Australia in order to include and accept them as 'equals'. The negative impacts caused by the efforts made towards whitening the Indigenous people are related to the period known as the Stolen Generations, whose leading ideologist was Mr. A. O. Neville, the

[7] White Australia is a term used to describe a set of racist Australian policies, including the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901.

Western Australian Protector of Aborigines between the 1920s and the 1930s. Bleakley, the Chief Protector of Aborigines in Queensland, presented an alternative method to whiten the Aborigines. According to him, the process of assimilation would be socio-cultural. This means that groups of Aboriginal people would be provided with the elements required to successfully enter the civilized community. However, Neville's biological method had more advocates due to the fact that although interracial sex relationships were prohibited in Australia, it was a reality from which a number of half-castes were born. Neville devised a way to prevent the half-castes from remaining in their Aboriginal communities, since they were 'almost' white, and destined to be part of the 'cleaning' of the race. Neville kept a tight control of marriages between Aboriginal people who could partner only with lighter skinned ones, or with white, non-Indigenous people. The end result would be that the two races would merge to become the White Race of Australia. Dark skinned people, mainly men, were excluded from Neville's project so that they would eventually die and, with them, the Black Aboriginal race of Australia. Neville exercised power on Aboriginal people through strict surveillance and separation of children from their families. He thought that by encouraging half-caste women to marry white men or other 'mixed-bloods' which he termed half-blood, 'quadroons', and 'octoroons', according to the percentage of Aboriginal blood left in them, children with increasingly less Aboriginal blood would be born through several generations, thus avoiding any further 'racial problem'.


THREE GENERATIONS
(Reading from Right to Left)
1. Half-blood—(Irish-Australian father; full-blood Aboriginal mother).
2. Quadroon Daughter—(Father Australian born of Scottish parents; Mother No. 1).
3. Octaroon Grandson—(Father Australian of Irish descent; Mother No. 2).

Mr. Neville's Method to Whiten Aborigines

The picture above, used as an advertisement for the governmental program, is the same that was used in the movie *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (2002), in the scene where Mr. Neville (in a role performed by Kenneth Brannagh) explains his project to other people of the native settlement program. The picture presents a half-blood grandmother, a quadroon daughter and an octoroon grandson. In the latter, no traces of the Aboriginal origin can be seen.

In the movie *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, whose popular name outside Australia is *Stolen Generation*, we find a strong depiction of Neville's policy. The movie tells the real story of three girls who are forcibly removed from their family and taken to the other side of the country. At the opening of the movie, the voice of the real Molly, the main character and narrator, tells the viewers how her family was attracted, as if they were animals, by the non-Indigenous people who had settled in the area of Jigalong, north of the country, giving them daily rations of food, and clothes. Thus attracted, the Jigalong people camped nearby a British depot and stayed there, interrupting their hunting and gathering lifestyle. The story takes place in the time they were building the "big fence", thus the title in English: *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, based on the book written by Molly's daughter, Doris Pilkington Garimara[8]. The three girls depicted in the movie stand for most of the children who were forcibly removed from their families at that time: half-caste girls, who would be prevented from getting married to a full-blood Aborigine. Although the movie shows some boys in the mission, they were not really part of Neville's program, which consisted of sending the children to the Moore River Native Settlement, 1,200 miles from Jigalong, near Perth, where the story of Wildcat takes place. According to the movie, the removal was a legal action, since the constables would show the children's family a document signed by Neville, whose idea was that hundreds of half-caste children should be taken to such settlements to be given the benefits of the white culture. Indeed, the children were treated kindly when they arrived at the settlement, however, they were soon into a rigid disciplinary regime which made Molly decide that she and the other two girls could not stay there.

In the Trilogy, the institutions where Wildcat spends long periods of time in his life, namely the Boy's Home and Fremantle prison, present several characteristics that are similar to those of the power exercised in that native settlement depicted in the movie. Such characteristics are representative of the power mechanisms applied to every British subject in Australia. The Trilogy and the movie share five elements commonly used in order to keep colonial subjects under control. First, the jobs and roles of people in position to exercise

[8] Doris Pilkington's book title is *Follow the Rabbit-Proof Fence* (1996)

power in the sense of intimidating Indigenous people were purposely given to Aborigines, as depicted in the movie, where the tracker in charge of bringing back the runaways is a full-blood whose daughter is kept in the settlement. Second, uniforms are used as means of identification in case the 'inmate' decides to escape. Third, there is the prohibition of Aboriginal language. Only English is allowed, and the 'inmate' must do housework. Fourth, punishment includes some time in the *boob* as they call a kind of solitary in the movie. Fifth, they must learn everything concerned with the European culture.

When interviewed about his role in the movie, Kenneth Brannagh said that before reading the movie script he had not been aware of the many issues that it raises. He got to know, as the viewers get to know at the end of the movie, that more than one generation of the same families underwent such trauma causing Aboriginal people to face serious cultural and mental health problems until today. The director of the movie, Phillip Noyce, describes the scene of the children's removal from their mothers as the strongest and most shocking of the film. Therefore, if now, just directing the movie as Noyce or watching it as a number of viewers, people can feel the weight of such a scene, it becomes clear why the Aborigines are still undergoing a process of healing.

That long period known as Stolen Generations (1910 – 1972), when half-caste children were taken from their families to be raised in orphanages or mission sites to be assimilated into the European culture, is still a big issue in Australia as shown by John William-Mozley´s address to the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory on August 26, 1997 (see Annex A). The best sources on the Stolen Generations are found in two long reports that are available on the Internet – the 700-page *Bringing Them Home: The Stolen Children Report* which was presented by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission of Australia and tabled in the Federal Parliament on May 26, 1997; and *Betraying the Victims: the Stolen Generations Report* by Ron Bruton, published in February, 1998 and which is meant as a criticism on the way the data gathering of the original report was conducted[9]. Both are good sources for further research on the Stolen Generations' issue. *Bringing Them Home* includes items such as History of the Aboriginal Act development in several Australian territories, the Consequences of Removal where some people share their experiences, Reparation, or how the country decided on actions to help those people in their healing

[9] The entire reports are available (on 11th Oct 2006), respectively, at the addresses:
<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/special/rsjproject/rsjlibrary/hreoc/stolen/>
<http://www.ipa.org.au/publications/publisting_detail.asp?PubID=263 >

process, as well as the Services provided for them (access to records, funding, mental health services, churches and Non-Governmental Agencies).

On the other hand, the idea given by the Aborigines Act of 1905 and its other amendments is that the intention of the British government was to protect the Aborigines and make them part of the white culture, which was considered to be the best for everyone, no matter what differences they had regarding race, history, and culture. *Rabbit-Proof Fence* shows a concerned humanitarian Neville who wanted to make the Aborigines white in every sense, skin and mind, in order to transform them from 'Other' into 'Us'. Moreover, not only did the Aborigines Act of 1905 remain in force for a long time, but it has also been amended several times covering a long span that crosses Australia's Aboriginal history up to World War II, after which another period was started by the Indigenous people in order to obtain the right to manage their social, economic and political issues. It was during their active participation in World War II that they became aware of a need for self-determination.

1.1.3 Indigenous Australians Learn about the American Black Power

During World War II, a number of Aborigines joined the Australian army to fight in the war due to the fact that one hundred and fifty years after their country was invaded by imperial England the Indigenous peoples of Australia were faced with another imperial invasion threat – Japan – in 1942. As the Aboriginal soldiers fought as equals to the non-Indigenous ones in the war, they became hostile when peace came and they had to return to the state of prejudice and inequality of the civilian life. Another important influence on non-Indigenous/Indigenous relations after war was the relationship the Aborigines had built with Black American soldiers, which developed in them a new attitude towards the non-Indigenous people of Australia. The American soldiers had told the Indigenous Australians about their struggles to fight racism and inequality in the United States of America, and the positive outcome they got from anti-racism activism. Now the Aborigines wanted to be treated as equals. The post-war period was one of increased Aboriginal urbanization and activism that led them to strive for self-determination. The urban Aborigines became part of the economy of the country as workers, although they had to fight for better salaries in addition to facing another issue: the assimilation program that the government introduced in 1951[10].

Facing issues related to labor and assimilation, the Indigenous Australians concerted affirmative actions – usually with unions or the communist party – such as demonstrations

[10] Now social assimilation.

and strikes. By themselves, they had to face rejection from the non-Indigenous workers who resented sharing jobs as well as neighborhoods with them. Eventually, there was a consensus between them due to the fact that they were all workers striving for better working conditions and good salaries.

One major factor of change in non-Indigenous/Indigenous relations was the Communist Party's support to Aboriginal workers who were hired by companies. Moreover, the growth of the trade union movement also influenced the Indigenous Australians, accepting them as members, giving them support and providing the foundations for Aboriginal movements towards land, health, cultural and political rights. However, exported to Australia in the mid-1960s, the African-American Black Power played a dramatic role in Indigenous Australian political movement.

Black Power leaders such as Malcom X and Robert Williams sought to spread the concept of a new racial consciousness, then several black activists traveled around the world to deliver lectures on Black Power. When one of them gave a talk in Australia, the young Indigenous activists who lived in Redfern, joined the movement and started to recruit other young urban Aboriginals to learn about Black Power and develop an Australian version of it for they needed, as Black people, to fight for self-determination. A group of numerous activists was established in Redfern to struggle over issues such as segregation and land rights. In 1971, a South African rugby union team arrived for a game, and they were welcomed by the Redfern Aboriginal activists demonstrating against Apartheid. Perhaps because they felt that affirmative actions were a must in a world where racism was increasing rather than decreasing, the young Redfern activists joined every and each movement concerned with Black people issues.

In 1972, the demonstrations of those young Redfern activists started to attract other like-minded groups, including non-Indigenous people. That was the year when an Aboriginal Embassy, in fact a tent, was erected in front of Parliament to claim their rights for land, education, health, and a place in the political scene of the country. The police was called to remove the protest group[11] and the Embassy, but soon there were more tents back with the activists asking for donations and distributing educational literature about their cause. Eventually they got support from the people living around Parliament, who opened their homes for showers and meals.

[11] See a Police Confidential Document in Annex B

Perhaps due to the fact that their ancestors were nomads, one of the main traits of the Aboriginal people of Australia is adaptability. Long before the British arrived in their territory, the Aborigines welcomed visitors and maintained cross-cultural relationships with them. They have never been a static culture for they have learned from others as well as shared elements of their culture with others. However, everything changed with the arrival of the British settlers who triggered a series of events such as taking over Aboriginal land, killing their people as animals, removing their children in order to breed out the Black race of Australia, and implementing a program of social assimilation into the non-Indigenous society; actions whose outcome is the ongoing struggle of the Indigenous people of Australia to (re)build their identities.

The starting point for the solution they devised to (re)build their identities was to find out as much as possible about the Indigenous History of Australia, and their tribes. Today, the chief tools they have been making use of to achieve that goal towards identity are politics, art, and literature. The latter has been the most influential means to collect information concerning representation of Aboriginal issues, from historical accounts and documents to economic-social-political matters under discussion with the government, to cross-cultural and identity misunderstandings.

Due to the process that the Aborigines started in order to (re)build their identities, there was a turmoil in the Australian literary field concerning the ethnicity of many writers called Aboriginal who were eventually found out to be Egyptians, Indians, African-Americans, among other nationalities. The similarity in skin color as well as in other physical traits they presented, made it more difficult to distinguish between African and Aboriginal ethnicities causing the colonizers to assume that every person in Australia with a darker complexion was Indigenous. This makes me wonder how many descendants of African people were forcibly removed from their families because they were confused with half-caste Aboriginal children. Such children might even, eventually, lose the memory of their original culture, after undergoing the process of cultural genocide applied by the British institutions. This might have been the case with Mudrooroo. In a sense, I believe all these children belong to the same group: more than being Aborigines, Egyptians or Afro-Americans, they are members of the Stolen Generations.

Until not long ago it was believed that African people had not been taken to Australia in the colonial period, which is not true. Documents were found and studied by historians such as Mollie Gillen, William Bradley, and Ian Duffeld, which prove that a number of both, slaved and freed African people were taken from England and from the coast of Africa to

Australia. Such evidence is widely discussed in the article "From Black Caesar to Mudrooroo – The African Diaspora in Australia" by Cassandra Pybus in *Mongrel Signatures*, where she states that, " [. . .] we now know there were at least a dozen African convicts aboard the first fleet which landed at Sydney Cove in January 1788" (2003**,** p.26), and she adds that "Several hundred African-Americans arrived in Victoria during the gold-rush there [. . .]" (Idem**,** p. 36). Among the African-Americans who arrived in Australia in the 1860s was a man called Thomas Johnson, Mudrooroo´s grandfather.

The information above leads to the discussion about Mudrooroo´s identity and the issues regarding the validation of his works. The main character in the trilogy, and the circumstances presented there, evoke instances of the life of the author in a way that something like an intertext is created, keeping author and character tightly bound to each other. For this reason, identity and authenticity become two words of importance in the development of this work.

1.2 Colin Johnson, Mudrooroo Narogin, Mudrooroo Nyoongah: Mudrooroo´s Background

Mudrooroo

The author of the Wildcat Trilogy was born Colin Johnson and wrote the first volume – *Wild Cat Falling* – under that name. *Wild Cat Falling*, which was published in 1965, was the first Aboriginal novel in Australia, which brought fame and national recognition to its author who, years later, advised by his friend, the poet Oogeroo Noonuccal[12], decided to change his English name to one of Aboriginal origin – Mudrooroo Narogin. The decision

[12] Oodgeroo Noonuccal (formerly known as Kath Walker) was an Australian Aboriginal female poet, writer, and political activist for the rights of the Indigenous people of Australia. She was the first Aboriginal writer to have a book of poems published – *We Are Going: Poems* (1964). She wrote and published thirteen more books, including poetry, Art, Australian legends, and a biography, among other works, until her death on September 26, 1993. Noonuccal was very respected by Mudrooroo who regarded her as a wise person.

came in 1988 when he decided that an Aboriginal writer should not have an English name. As he was born in the region of Narrogin, in Western Australia, he dropped one ‘r’ from the name of the region to add it as his last name. The first name, Mudrooroo, was chosen due to the writer’s need to have a totem[13]. Thus, being a writer, Mudrooroo chose this name because it means ‘paperbark’, the native Australian tree displayed below.


Paperbark trunk (left) and top (right)

Under his name of choice, Mudrooroo Narogin wrote *Doin Wildcat*, the second volume of the trilogy, published in 1988. In 1992, when he published the third novel, *Wildcat Screaming*, Mudrooroo had dropped the Narogin from his name and replaced it with Nyoongah, the name of the Indigenous group to which he thought he might belong, because, as he explains in the preface of *US Mob* (1995, p.vi), “We are Nyungars, Nangas, Yolngus, Kooris, Murris, et al, all different, but all forming the indigenous people of Australia”. Thus, adding the name of his chosen people, Mudrooroo individualizes himself in order to assert a clear identity among the totality that the word Aborigines implies.

Today, releases and reprints of Mudrooroo´s works have brought the plain signature ‘Mudrooroo.’ In 2000 he left Australia, perhaps as a protest against the harsh criticism he had been subjected to after one episode involving one of his sisters who, with the help of a journalist, commissioned the building of their family tree and had it publicly disclosed that they were not Aboriginal, after all. Mudrooroo was found to be the son of a white woman of Irish descent and of a man whose father was African-American. According to Pybus (2003), Thomas Johnson Jr., Mudrooroo´s father, had poor luck with farming in the wheat belt and died in 1937, leaving Elizabeth Barron destitute, with four children, and pregnant of the fifth, Colin. This difficult situation may have caused her to send her children to be raised in public institutions, where they were taken for Aborigines.

[13] Totem – an earthy representation of the dreamtime.

Under the circumstances involving the children from the Stolen Generations facts like these may be common, but in this case the child in question had grown to become the first Australian Aboriginal novelist, the legitimate representative of the Aboriginal cause before the government and the academy, a man who spent his time lecturing, participating in academic discussions, and writing articles and criticism on published works of other Australian writers. Suddenly, ruthless criticism was sparked against him, putting the validity of his works in doubt. To this day, by many Mudrooroo is still accused of passing[14]. His authority to speak on behalf of Aboriginal peoples underwent a whole new process of assessment and criticism, and his contribution to Australian Indigenous Literature was put to trial.

Everything started on July 20th, 1996 when Victoria Laurie, a journalist, created the controversy in her article 'Identity Crisis' in the July 20-21 edition of *The Australian Magazine*. In that article Laurie revealed that according to documents provided by Elizabeth Polglaze, Mudooroo's sister, he was not of Aboriginal descent. The article triggered a domino effect process. Mudrooroo's professional and individual life entered a period of chaos. Indeed, all this may have been a shock to the sense of identity of a man who was a well-known writer, a respected critic, a fifty-seven year old university professor.

But Mudrooroo is not alone in this kind of situation. Gordon Matthews, the first Australian Aboriginal diplomat and who was given the Aboriginal identity by academic people, faced the trauma of not knowing whose ethnicity he belonged to after many years believing he was an Aborigine. According to Mudrooroo´s words in "Tell them you're Indian: An Afterword," in *Race Matters, Indigenous Australian and 'Our' Society* (1997),

> When, in 1996, it was declared that Mudrooroo was of Negro ancestry, thus negating thirty years of being an Aborigine, it necessitated some identity searching; what did this mean to me? I had discovered that identity is a fragile thing and can be taken away, just as it can be given. As I had not confronted with such a crisis before, did it mean that through a genetic oversight I had lost my culture and become unauthentic? (p. 263).

According to a study developed by Maureen Clark – *Mudrooroo: A Likely Story – Identity and Belonging in Postcolonial Australia* (2003) -, Mudrooroo's writing depicts his sense of belonging nowhere. His Wildcat character mirrors the feeling of loss and abandonment that can be inferred from what is known of Mudrooroo's childhood and teenage

[14] Passing as the possibility that he may have consciously and improperly appropriated an Aboriginal identity.

years. Like his character, from 9 years on, Mudrooroo spent most of his time in institutions where he would be kept under strict discipline. At the age of 9 he was taken into institutional care and lived until the age of 16 in the Christian orphanage known as Clontarf Boys' Town, and served time more than once as his main character did.

While in prison, Mudrooroo studied English language and composition. By the time he was to be released, at the age of 19, he told the prison welfare people that he wanted to continue his studies in order to become a writer. With the purpose of helping Mudrooroo's return to society, the prison welfare service found a job for him in Victoria, where he would be able to work and study. For some reason, when he arrived in Victoria the job was not available any longer, then Mudrooroo was sent to Mary Durack's[15] house who, knowing that the boy wanted to become a writer, and being interested in the Aboriginal cause, accepted him as a guest. In a short time, Durack and Mudrooroo developed a strong relationship and kept in touch for years. Durack was the person who helped him with the publishing of *Wild Cat Falling* whose first editions brought a foreword by her. A good summary of Mudrooroo's late childhood, adolescence, and entering into adulthood is found in Mary Durack's account in her foreword to *Wild Cat Falling*,

> We gathered that Colin had been born in the farming town of Narrogin, 120 miles from Perth, in 1938. His mother belonged to that district and he had brothers and sisters scattered about the State. He had never known his father, who had died soon after he was born. He had been baptized a Catholic but had since dismissed all Christian denominations as hypocritical. In the process of a broken education, partly acquired in an orphanage, he had attained his Junior Public certificate, a qualification all too rare among coloured youths. He had at some stage belonged to a Bodgie[16] group, but although he clung to their mode of dress he had finally rejected this cult as beneath his intelligence (p. 140).

However, that collaboration by Durack turned out to be a point of friction between her and Mudrooroo years later, when he realized that there would have been no need for his book to be so heavily edited as it was, just to please a white audience. Moreover, although Mary Durack played a chief role in Mudrooroo's development, having given him a boost and the necessary support at the beginning of his literary career, their relationship is debatable. On the one hand, there is no doubt that Durack had credit for raising him to the position of the first

[15] Mary Durack (1913 – 1994) was an Australian writer and executive member of the Aboriginal Cultural Foundation.

[16] Bodgie: a beatnik term used by Australians male youngsters to describe themselves as *rebels*, especially in the 1950s, distinguished by his conformity to certain fashions of dress and loutish behavior. (source: <http://www.anu.edu.au/ANDC/Ozwords/>)

Aboriginal fiction writer. On the other hand, she was responsible for the construction of his Aboriginal identity that later would spark the polemic which, possibly, was the reason why Mudrooroo resigned from his position as Head of Aboriginal Studies at Murdoch University in 1996.

After leaving Durack's house to take another job in Melbourne, Mudrooroo started a new lifestyle. From the boy who had been raised in an orphanage to the acclaimed writer and intellectual, Mudrooroo's life history includes serving time in prison for robbery and assault when he was seventeen years old, living as a Beatnik, and finding spiritual answers to life as a Buddhist monk. All of those experiences influenced his writings. As a Beatnik he developed himself as a social critic and prolific writer. As a Buddhist monk, influenced by Indian philosophical studies, he became interested in Aboriginal culture and decided to write about it. The reason why he said, in 1996, that he had been an Aborigine for thirty years is that his Aboriginality started when *Wild Cat Falling* was published in 1965. Before that, he did not regard himself as Aborigine. He was just one more 'neither-white-nor-black' youngster.

Through his theoretical work Mudrooroo has always contributed to a politics of cross-cultures without losing sight of working on behalf of the Australian Indigenous people who are still struggling to make their voices heard. Mudrooroo has invariably made the voice of his people heard by writing Aboriginal novels, poetry, theory, plays, and short stories which, in the name of authenticity, were almost erased from the Aboriginal Australian Literature establishment. Although it is true that Mudrooroo was found not to be genetically Aboriginal, in my opinion his works must be acknowledged as such for three main reasons. First, Mudrooroo has been directly involved in the Stolen Generations' process; he was raised as an Aboriginal child, among other Aboriginal children. Second, he has formally been given that identity by Oogeroo Noonuccal, a writer much respected in the academy of her time. And third, there is no way to deny that every piece of work written by Mudrooroo is inherently Aboriginal. These circumstances, to my mind, make of Mudrooroo an Aboriginal person and writer, and this is the point of view to be taken in my thesis. As further support to the point, I quote Ruby Langford Ginibi[17], who regards Mudrooroo as her 'Spiritual Brother'. In "Sharing Stories with Mudrooroo", Ginibi states that "I've always thought Mudrooroo a truly spiritual brother, as he couldn't write the things he does if he was not!" (2003, p. 225). In the same text she defends Mudrooroo's right to Aboriginality, stating that,

[17] Ginibi, born in 1934, is an Aboriginal author, historian and lecturer on Aboriginal history, culture and politics.

> I don't know why all the bad publicity and media reports are hitting back at Muddy. Why, he's one of our most proficient writers, I've lost count of the books he's written since *Wild Cat Falling* in 1965, and he does not deserve all this crap that's been thrown at him sayin he's not Aboriginal. (p.226).

Moreover, there is another concept which should be taken into consideration: Aboriginality in the context of the Arts, which does not require ethnicity as proof of a writer's being Aboriginal. In *Writing From the Fringe* (1990), Mudrooroo states that,

> The term, Aboriginality has arisen because it provides an ideology by which Aboriginal literature may be judged. It is much more than this however, for it provides a lifetime by which dissociated individuals may be pulled back to their matrical essence (p.48).

Therefore, the word 'ideology' is chief for the concept of Aboriginality. Adam Shoemaker, in *Black Words White Page*, (1989), adds to Mudrooroo's explanation of Aboriginality when he claims that "Aboriginality is also counter-cultural in European terms: a reaction against the dictates of white Australian society." Thus, "Aboriginality is both an inheritance from Black Australian history and an immediate, sometimes violent reaction to the Black Australian present" (p. 232).

Sue Hosking (1997) goes beyond Shoemaker's concept when, in an article for the newspaper *Adelaidean*, she discusses briefly the issue of authenticity of Aboriginal art, focusing on writers and argues that the concept of Aboriginality in the Arts has changed and is not concerned with genetic links, for practically everyone is of mixed-blood. Hosking says,

> The danger in rejecting Aboriginal writing (or painting, or dancing) on the grounds that it is not fully 'authentic' is that it fixes Aboriginality in the past, or even worse, outside time. Such attitudes stand in the way of meaningful interactions between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. Insistence on "purity", whatever that is, in writing or art, denies the vitality and creativity of contemporary Aboriginal people who are the survivors of over two centuries of constant, radical and violent change.

Such statements make me conclude that Aboriginality in Arts is related to a pan-Indigenous national identity. In fact, when dealing with terms such as, Aborigine, Aboriginal, Aboriginality, we have embedded the idea of a white construction of a pan-Indigenous identity: all of the peoples who used to live freely, hunting and gathering in groups and whose lands were occupied by colonizers who homogenized them through such words, and made

them assimilate the white European culture in order to be given the right to keep on living in that given country. So, terming a literary text as Australian Aboriginal, and accepting it as authentic, is more than saying that its writer is genetically a descendant from the first native peoples of Australia; it means that it holds within itself an ideology of Aboriginality.

Although a number of critics have been writing about Mudrooroo's texts, John Fielder was the one who dedicated a whole academic text to Mudrooroo's ideology of Aboriginality – 'Postcoloniality and Mudrooroo Narogin's Ideology of Aboriginality'[18]. He explains that Mudrooroo's writings focus on politics, pedagogy, and epistemology in order to prove that Aboriginality is lived and learned. Having said that, Fielder claims that, "In this sense, promoting an ideology of Aboriginality operates as a tactic of resistance aimed at subverting elitist notions of a universal and fixed literary canon, and also to foster, reconstitute, and conserve localized, alternative Aboriginalities".

Mudrooroo has made use of an aesthetic mode that is non-European. He does that by inserting Aboriginal lexicon and intertexts in his works. His ideology of Aboriginality also implies the re-education of the Aborigines by Aborigines, the use of native languages, the ownership and control of the writers' publications, and the fostering of actions of resistance to the ongoing assimilation of foreign cultures.[19]

The language style that appears in a given text is also important to define whether it is Aboriginal, according to Mudrooroo, in *Writing From the Fringe* (1990), where he claims that Aboriginality is identifiable in the text and that *Kriol* (Aboriginal English) is one of the markers of Aboriginality in literary texts.

Thus, if Aboriginality is attitudinal, lived, and learned as well as stated in the form of discourse, I would say that having lived as Aboriginal, having had a deep knowledge of the Aboriginal culture, having written about Aboriginal themes as well as having used their language, Mudrooroo has earned the right to be regarded as an Aboriginal writer.

This discussion about an Aboriginal DNA shows the need that both non-Indigenous and Indigenous people of Australia have to remain into the 'safe' grounds of binary oppositions – in Australia, either you are non-Indigenous or Indigenous, although it is widely known that Australia is a multicultural country, and the very fact that it is a postcolonial society means that there cannot be such a thing as only two ethnicities disputing a place under the sun. As mentioned earlier, African peoples, for instance, are also part of the Australian

[18] available at <http://wwwmcc.murdoch.edu.au/ReadingRoom/litserv/SPAN/32/Fielder.html>
[19] Foreign cultures meaning those of Europe (namely England), and the United States of America.

population. Who knows the exact number of Australian Black people now claiming their Aboriginality who are, in fact, of African ancestry?

I totally agree with Eva Knudsen's words in "Mudrooroo´s Encounters with the Missionaries" (2003) when she asks, "What is identity in a postcolonial society, if not of multiple origins and constantly in process, and something that out of sheer historical, cultural, and social necessity must be embraced as such? (p. 182)". Moreover, the intent to take the Aboriginal identity from Mudrooroo is a practice of exclusion trying to purify and distinguish identities of multiple origins, which is proved to be impossible in hybrid societies, translated into a matter of Power Relations.

Having made it clear that Mudrooroo´s works are to be read under the term 'Aboriginal Literature', the following segment will try to delimit "What Australian Aboriginal Literature is".

1.3 Australian Aboriginal Literature: what is it?

Inscribed in Post-Colonial literatures, the first concept that one must bear in mind is that Aboriginal writing is political in the sense that it translates the need that Aborigines have to register, control and negotiate their social, historical and political presence in a predominantly non-Indigenous Australia. That is the reason why Mudrooroo asserts that Aboriginal writers are 'committed writers'; they speak in the name of the collectivity rather than individuality. As before the invasion the Indigenous peoples expressed themselves in oral language, in order to build what we now know as Aboriginal literature, they had to make use of the colonizer's language. The appropriation and free handling of the language of the colonizer is a political matter *per se*, for "the process of capturing and remolding the language to new usages, marks a separation from the site of colonial privilege (ASCHCROFT, GRIFFTHS, TIFFIN: 1998. p. 38)".

At the beginning, Aboriginal writing followed the standard English grammatical and aesthetical rules. When Indigenous writers started to alter the English language to better express their ideas and stories, they started a process that Homi Bhabha, in *The Location of Culture*, calls mimicry, which he defines as "[. . .] the sign of a double articulation [. . .] which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power (1994, p.86)".

When Indigenous writers started to develop a new aesthetics based on their ancient oral ways of expression, their literature became distinct from that of the colonizer. The first 'revised' English language they used was in poetry because the symbolism of their Aboriginal songs demanded that they did not change the sounds that represented names and symbols of the Indigenous culture. As time went by, they started to write aiming at reaching a non-Indigenous audience as Mudrooroo´s first sentence in his book *Writing from the Fringe* states, "Aboriginal literature begins as a cry from the heart directed at the whiteman (1990, p.1)". Thus, it is agreed among theorists that Aboriginal Literature must be read and understood within a cultural, historical and social context.

In the 1960's, Aboriginal Literature entered a 'period of rebellion', when the writers were mostly political activists revolting against assimilation, and separatist sentiments were strongly shown in poems and novels. Books of that period were written in such a way that non-Indigenous readers did not totally understand them. Language had become a barrier due to the use of native words, or better, Aboriginal sounds represented by English words or even new words making use of the Western alphabet. Following the 'rebel' period came a 'literature of understanding', when the Aboriginal writers tried to explain Aboriginal individuals to a non-Indigenous readership. This started around the 1990's. Those distinct phases appear in the three books of the Wildcat Trilogy.

In addition to the social-political phases into which it is inscribed, Aboriginal literature's aesthetics also makes use of symbolic elements such as *Childhood* as part of a selective reordering of Indigenous memories. This is a means of taking the Stolen Generations back to their Aboriginal place. The *Trickster*[20] is also usually present to bring good to his community. Some critics claim that in Aboriginal Literature the writers themselves are the tricksters, which, considering their role within their communities, is true. Another symbolic element of the Aboriginal culture is the *White People* who often appear conventionalized, representing White evil in opposition to Black good. The *Dreaming*, or *Dreamtime*, is usually explicit or implicit and is representative of Aboriginality for it is a mental or mythical state

[20] According to the definition by the American folklorist Barbara Babcock, "He is positively identified with creative powers, often bringing such defining features of culture as fire or basic food, and yet he constantly behaves in the most antisocial manner we can imagine. Although we laugh at him for his troubles and his foolishness and are embarrassed by his promiscuity, his creative cleverness amazes us and keeps alive the possibility of transcending the social restrictions we regularly encounter. In the majority of his encounters with men, he violates rules or boundaries, thereby necessitating escape and forcing himself to again wander aimlessly". Available at: <http://www.faculty.de.gcsu.edu/~mmagouli/trickbab.htm> accessed on July 15, 2006.

that "[. . .] lies underneath the ordinary day-to-day consciousness of the Aboriginal character, which sometimes erupts to give certain passages a surreal quality" (Idem, p.172). Along with the mythical elements, *The Bush* is always seen as a friend, contrasted to the enemy which is the city. For the purpose of this thesis, only the symbols that are relevant to the discussion on Power Relations will be dealt with in the analysis of the trilogy.

Regarding discourse, when trying to get away from the standard English of the colonists, Aboriginal writers often make attempts to keep the language as near as possible to their oral language. So, the oral habit of telling and retelling the same story is represented in Aboriginal texts such as the Wildcat Trilogy, where the same story is told three times and three times it is not exactly the same story, for in each book there are suppressions, additions and changes in language. The first book, *Wild Cat Falling*, is written in standard English, including the slangs of the Beatniks and of the Black Americans and British, while the second book, *Doin Wildcat: A Novel Koori Script*, is written in non-Standard English with the addition of Kriol vocabulary and spelling, and the third book, *Wildcat Screaming* is written in Standard-English again, but full of intermixed Australian Black slang. For the Aboriginal writers, "Possession of two languages is not merely a matter of having two tools, but means the participation in two psychical and cultural realms. Two worlds are symbolized; two discourses are in conflict [. . .]"(Ib., p. 146). Past and Present tenses, first and third persons are aesthetic elements used by Aboriginal writers in order to emphasize certain kinds of mood in the novel. In *Wild Cat Falling* the main character sometimes narrates in the first person, sometimes in the third person. This play with the narrative persons leads the reader to feel the character as more or less emotionally involved in the events that are being narrated. Ambiguity, traumas, irony, sense of humor, self-deprecating humor, and the pessimistic ending are other frequent elements in Aboriginal writing.

1.4 Wildcat and the Young Urban Aborigine (1950s – 1990s)

The main character of the Wildcat Trilogy was born to the literary world in 1964, depicting the young urban Aborigine of that time. The character expanded along the time as the trilogy was developed by its writer. Time went by, society changed, new historical events took place, and the Aboriginal peoples' point-of-view regarding their role in society as well as their identity also changed.

Urban Aborigines live in towns or capital cities where there are communities such as Redfern in Sydney, which has been a focal point of Aboriginal movements. It is important to point out that in Australia, the Indigenous peoples did not move to cities. Rather, cities were built on their lands, so they just stayed there, which makes of most of them, urban Aborigines who live in conventional houses and mingle with non-Indigenous people in schools, hospitals, and shopping centers. One of their problems is unemployment, making it difficult for them to maintain an average standard of living. Discrimination is still clearly apparent as well as their problematic relationship with the police.

If the Indigenous peoples of Australia felt their identities threatened by the term Aborigine, this happened because they did not have any idea of how to deal with that situation of more than 500 peoples being called by only one name. As they entered a stage of negotiating their position in the power relations chain with the white people, they understood that the use of such term would not change the differences that they carried inside themselves. So, in 1975, at the inaugural meeting of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, George Manuel introduced the concept of The Fourth World to refer to all indigenous peoples of the world. Nowadays, another concept is applied in order to understand and give support to all of the distinct indigenous peoples around the world: the Pan-indigenous identity. Although this term is not well accepted by some, it has been chief for non-indigenous people to understand indigenous issues, in addition to encompassing every similar issue in order to assist and support Indigenous actions to improve their lives.

The 1960s, the decade when *Wild Cat Falling* was first published, was rich in events such as Black and labor activism in the United States and Australia. As mentioned before, since World War II, Australian Aborigines adopted a North-American set of ideas and elements of culture, namely those of the Black Americans. The ordinary young urban Aborigines of the 1960s were always under watch by the Social Welfare, that would tell them where to live, deciding with employers how much of their wages should really go to their pockets (part of it would go to a trust fund under the control of the Social Welfare Director). In 1964 the Aborigines achieved the right to get married without the permission of the Welfare, but the institution still watched and acted on the relationship between parents and children. Although Aborigines were considered Federal citizens, able to vote in Federal elections, their mail could be scrutinized by a ‘protector’ or superintendent of some social institution. In addition, the average young urban Aborigines of the 1960s were poor, drank much, engaged in groups called ‘mobs’, and were usually arrested for petty crimes. When released from prison, although the social assistants found jobs for them, they ended up going

back to their old lifestyle. The ones who engaged in social or political movements became socialists or communists, and started fighting against racism, and for their human rights. Since they saw school as an arm of the system that oppressed them, the young Aborigines dropped out very early. Many of them were schooled in prison.

Between *Wild Cat Falling* and *Doin Wildcat* (1965 – 1988), urban Aboriginal Australia changed through a number of movements, such as the Black Power movement that came from the United States and had its main demonstrations in Redfern between 1968 and 1972; the movement against the War in Vietnam that united Black and White Australians; and the movement against Apartheid; all of them were worldwide movements that put Australians in direct contact with international politics, literature and music. As a non-static culture, open to cross-cultural relationships, the Indigenous people of Australia has also been influenced by the American White Culture, mainly through music and movies. Such influence is strongly emphasized by Wildcat, who identifies much more with the gangsters of American movies, the Beatnik lifestyle and language, and jazz musicians, for instance.

The year of 1972 saw the movement in Redfern become stronger for the Aboriginal Land Rights. The Urban Aborigines built an Aboriginal Embassy outside the Parliament House in Canberra which, in fact, turned out to a total of 12 tents all bearing the 'Aboriginal Embassy' lettering on them. Another important first in Redfern was the designing of the Aboriginal Flag by Harold Thomas.

The Aboriginal Flag

On the site of the Aboriginal Embassy, the Aboriginal activists distributed educational literature and asked for donations with the help and approval of a number of non-Indigenous Australians. That was also the year when the Stolen Generations was officially considered as a sad historical period in Australia.

The Aboriginal Embassy in front of the Australian Parliament

In 1953, the British started a series of atomic tests in Australia, producing a harmful effect called "the Black Mist" which has been affecting Aboriginal people's health and the environment until today. In 1988 The Long March took place, when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders met in Sydney on January 26th for protests. This is the same year they celebrate their survival as native peoples of Australia. Non-Indigenous groups become 'Aboriginalized' and the most famous Australian rock group, Midnight Oil, releases an entire record with songs dedicated to the Aboriginal cause. 1988 is specially important because it is the year when the British side of the country celebrated their arrival in Australia. In a counter-movement, the Aboriginal writers, movie makers, playwrights, and artists prepared texts, movies, and fine art pieces to state that the celebration was theirs for having survived the 200 years of direct and indirect genocide. Annex C shows one of the poems Mudrooroo wrote for that occasion.

When the third book of the Wildcat Trilogy – *Wildcat Screaming* – was published in 1992, another major event took place in Australia: Prime Minister Keating's *Redfern Speech* (see Annex D) at the opening of the International Year of the Indigenous Peoples of Australia, when he acknowledged the past wrongs of all of the British generations in Australia, since colonial times. More relevant actions concerning harmful historical effects on Aboriginals would come into existence five years later – May, 1997 – when the National Sorry Day was established in order to apologize for the removal of Aboriginal children from their families, concomitantly with the public release of the 'Stolen Children' report - *Bringing them Home*.

1.5 The Roles of Wildcat and Mudrooroo's Writing Techniques

As both, document and monument, the Wildcat Trilogy is the story of a young urban Aborigine who serves as a point of contact between Australian history, and Aboriginal social and identity issues, all intertwined in the power relations network depicted in the novels. By lending his main character the roles of narrator and author, Mudrooroo draws on Aboriginal literary aesthetics elements as means to expose Power Relations issues whose causes are found in Australian history events that were not erased from the Indigenous people's minds. The mixing of standard English (the language imposed and assimilated by the Indigenous people) and Aboriginal language used by Wildcat as a narrator and character, are present in the three novels, although in distinct levels, representing Wildcat's ability to move between two worlds to which he belongs as a hybrid product of the Australian society. In fact, the three books contain three distinct writing processes, and mark the period of time when the author wrote them as well as the evolution of the Wildcat character throughout the trilogy. The first book is written in standard English although it blends some Aboriginal words as well as Beatnik and British slang of the 1960s[21] in Australia, including the language of the characters and the narrator himself; the second book is also written in standard English and just some characters show a low level of grammar in their language; the third book, as stated above, contains lots of Aboriginal words and grammar, which makes difficult for an ordinary non-Indigenous reader to understand them. Regarding language, the three books, considered in their publishing order, make clear the phases of Aboriginal writer's resistance through literature: subjection, resistance, and reconciliation.

Wildcat's childhood and his development into a trickster character are representative of the imbalanced Power Relations between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, that lead him to find ways to struggle and survive. The Dreamtime is present in Wildcat's nightmares through the relationship between the Cat's and Crow's archetypes that represent the inner conflicts generated by his hybrid identity, and that he has to resolve by himself. The Bush, Wildcat's Aboriginal element, where he has to enter in order to be introduced to and understand one part of his Self.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Discourse is Mudrooroo's strength when elaborating on the Aboriginal oral habit of telling and retelling stories which is clearly present in the trilogy, with each novel telling a story that is never exactly the same due to changes the

[21] See a Beatnik glossary in Appendix 1

narrator makes to some events and dialogues[22]. The discursive technique of telling and retelling include other discursive tools such as ambiguity, irony and sarcasm, that affect the reader's emotions and feelings concerning both, the fictional and the real Aboriginal characters' struggle to adapt themselves to a society accustomed to the concept of binary oppositions which is a fallacy in today's world where cross-cultural relations have generated interstices, in-between places in which hybrid people should learn to live. Discourse is a powerful tool which, properly employed in literature, may help improve Power Relations. Certainly it is one of the Aboriginal writers' goals.

[22] See, for example, how Wildcat's nightmares develop into dreams when understood through the Dreamtime concept, in Annex E.

2 POWER RELATIONS AND LITERARY DISCOURSE

Power, government, war, law, punishment, and a thousand other things, had no terms wherein that language could express them, which made the difficulty almost insuperable, to give my master any conception of what I meant.
JOHNATAN SWIFT, *Gulliver's Travels*

My analysis of Mudrooroo´s Wildcat Trilogy is concerned with the issue of Power Relations as presented by Michel Foucault. In this section, I describe and exemplify this theoretical background as related to other matters interwoven within the field of Cultural Studies, such as hybridity, racism, discourse[23], cultural practices, strategies of resistance, and the role of institutions. However, let me first define the Cultural Studies practice I am making use of for the purposes of this thesis.

When explaining Cultural Studies in *The Cultural Studies Reader* (1999), Simon During mentions several distinct focuses developed in the area along the years, such as: the links between space and social fields; racism, sexism, and culture identity; ethnic and women's groups committed to autonomous values, identities and ethnicity; historical context; as an academic site for marginal or minority discourses against mass culture; ethnography; cultures of the components of such cultures at a national or ethnic level (also called transnational Cultural Studies); as interdisciplinary studies by historians, literary critics, anthropologists, and geographers; and the listening to marginalized voices, named as Engaged Cultural Studies, which is what I will be doing in the next chapter while analyzing the issue of Power Relations and Literary Discourse within the context of the Wildcat Trilogy, by pinpointing the events, institutions and people's relations with Wildcat as well as how they are presented as Literary Discourse.

[23] According to Foucault in *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972).

I understand that having chosen an Aboriginal text (the voice of the Other) for a close reading leads me to the issue of cultural differences and the Power Relations involved in the Australian society from Colonial to Post-Colonial times, when differences regarding race and knowledge were determinant harmful factors to the culture and identity of the Indigenous people of Australia. White European race and knowledge grew to be deemed superior to others, as civilized, whereas other races, the 'colored' ones, were labeled as inferior, uncivilized. However, the relation: white = knowledge and entitled to exercise power; and colored = no knowledge, no right to exercise power is not accurate, for there is no power which may be exercised on someone who will not react to it when people are engaged in a relationship which includes power. Even while subjected to another's power, a person will devise a way to escape such situation, thus establishing what is known as Power Relations. That was the case with Australian Indigenous people who, although subjected to Colonial Power after having unsuccessfully tried to resist the British settlement, devised ways to invariably counter-act, and in due course obtained results regarding resistance to Colonial Power. Eventually, the most successful approach which Indigenous people have been employing towards a counter-balance in their relationship with the non-Indigenous Australians is literature; therefore, this is the reason why I mention and quote Mudrooroo as a literary theorist in this chapter. His books *Writing From the Fringe* and *Us Mob* corroborate Foucault's views on Power Relations components such as subjection, discourse of exclusion, manipulation of history, resistance and counter-discourse, as well as the central role of the sometimes unintended transference of knowledge which, consequently, places the power to counter-act in the hands of the subjected people.

2.1 A Reading of Foucault's Views on Power Relations

It is important to bear in mind that society is a network of Power Relations. According to Foucault, those relations are established through antagonisms and are represented by action upon action, "on possible or actual future or present actions". (FOUCAULT: 2000, p.340). In other words, Power Relations refer to opposite social forces, each one with its own discourse of truth in an exercise of power. Therefore, when those opposite social forces are at work, every action performed by a colonized people is concerned with Resistance. As power is not exercised in a vacuum, but within a given environment, this is just one element of the Power

Relations dynamics for, leading to movement (action upon action), Power Relations avoid stagnation in a given society, although power is not always fairly exercised, as is the case with war, racism, and genocide, among other types of violence.

As the word 'power' is recurrent in this chapter, I refer to the definitions in the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English language*[24]

> Power (*n*): 1. The ability or capacity to perform or act effectively.
> 2. A specific capacity, faculty, or aptitude. Often used in the plural: *her Powers of concentration.*
> 3. Strength or force exerted or capable of being exerted; might. See synonyms at strength.
> 4. The ability or official capacity to exercise control; authority.
> 5. A person, group, or nation having great influence or control over others: *the western Powers.*
> 6. The might of a nation, political organization, or similar group.
> 7. Forcefulness; effectiveness: *a novel of unusual power.*

Most of the entries relate power to forcefulness, might, influence, authority, control by one over another or others, and fit well when related to power as exercised at Colonial times. Only the first definition of power comes close to Foucault's, when it states that it is the 'ability to act effectively', for such definition gives room to those 'action upon action' that feed Power Relations.

In *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews* (1980, p.98), Foucault describes power,

> It is never localized here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization. And not only individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application.

Although it is true that in certain contexts power may be in somebody's hands, it is nobody's ownership because the ones that are subjected to such forceful action will eventually revolt and act upon it. Even when those subjected to power apparently do not react, they give support to such subjection and are elements for its articulation by

[24] The 2004 edition available on the Internet at <http//www.answers.com>.
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positioning themselves as helpless. However, subjection to another's power might be part of a strategy of taking time to elaborate resistance. Such reasoning leads me to conclude that Foucault's definition of power as understood within the expression 'Power Relations' is the one to be applied to the close reading of the Wildcat Trilogy, for power is part of other kinds of relations, including family, which are not solely prohibition and/or punishment forms of power. Moreover, power is not just a binary structure of domination, but a network of relations in which strategies of power and resistance are dynamic, meaning that those elements of domination are closely related as each other's support, one even reinforcing the other.

In addition, Foucault also points out that power implies the presence of knowledge, or an 'accepted truth', which he describes as "[. . .] that of which one can speak in a discursive practice, and which is specified by that fact [. . .]" (1972, p. 182). Therefore, power implies knowledge that implies discursive practices, three very important elements that were encompassed in the actions of Colonialists, and that later became tools of resistance for the Indigenous people of Australia when those Indigenous children who were compulsorily raised and schooled as non-Indigenous, acquired the same knowledge of their white counterparts. However, the Indigenous knowledge included two major differences: their people's history and race. Due to those differences, many of those assimilated Indigenous people became activists against mechanisms of power exercised upon them when they became aware of the segregation practices and the misleading accounts of Australia's history employed by non-Indigenous people who silenced the Indigenous side of the country's history. Hence, at some point, after years of demonstrations on the streets, and in front of government buildings in the largest cities of the country, the Indigenous activists resolved to make use of another mechanism of power – discourse – whose effects they had already felt along the years they were regarded as wards of state. Thus, the first products of a counter-discourse by Indigenous people in Australia carried Aboriginal accounts of history. Later, in the 1960s, some of those activists who were also writers, decided that instead of collecting and publishing more documents on Indigenous issues, they should build monuments; works that would remain over time, through generations. The outcome of their initiative is what is known today as Aboriginal Literature, which started in the form of poems as counter-discourse.

Poetry is a suitable choice for the exercise of counter-discourse due to its symbolic elements. In Aboriginal poems the reader finds references to myths and other cultural aspects of the Indigenous peoples of Australia, including their native languages blended

with standard English. Nowadays, there are several Aboriginal Arts and cultural activities going on in Australia, such as literature, movies, fine arts, painting, dance performances, theater plays, music, all serving the same purpose of counter-discourse. Everything that was silenced during Colonial times is now expressed in either one cultural activity or another. Yet, the Indigenous people of Australia would not have reached such level of relations with non-Indigenous people if they had not acquired knowledge enough from the ones who, unintentionally, taught them the mechanisms of using discourse as a strategy to exercise power.

Foucault identifies another type of power that played a central role in the development of Power Relations in Australia – Pastoral Power – based on mechanisms of power introduced by Christian pastorship. In the lecture delivered at Stanford University in 1979, and transcribed in *Politics, Philosophy and Culture* (1988), Foucault claims that Christian pastorship introduced a game "whose elements are life, death, truth, obedience, individuals, self-identity" (p. 71). Such game made use of those elements to dominate, discipline and maintain the colonized peoples subjected to the Government. Pastoral Power helped and facilitated the governmental actions to subject the Aborigines as wards[25] of state, taking control of every aspect of their lives on the grounds that they were not capable of taking care of themselves, as if they were children or pet animals.

Because of the complexity involved in analyses of power as well as in the relation between antagonistic forces, Foucault suggests that they should be analyzed from the starting point of techniques and tactics of domination which may be ethnic, social or religious, although in Colonial processes all the three are connected. This is strongly convenient when considering Power Relations as the underlying aspect of Colonialism for it includes several types of power, mainly when they are all linked and worked through discourse.

2.2 Colonial Power

Political and economic power are the main drivers of Colonialism, inflicting a relationship where the Colonial authority[26] exercises power on colonized subjects who, in turn, remain silent for as long as they need to articulate a response to such forceful action.

[25] Being a ward of the state means to be protected by the government, but to have no citizenship rights.
[26] Colonial authority understood as a type of rationality that asserts itself by exclusion, establishing a boundary between self and other.

Missionaries of several Christian denominations collaborated with the British Empire to ‘civilize’ the native peoples and impose the European culture on them through tactics of domination that included power and knowledge. When tactics of domination are reinforced by power plus knowledge, they become the discursive tactic that is the basic tool of any relation of power. However, embedded in any relation of power is struggle which is threefold: struggle against domination, against forms of economic and/or labor exploitation, and against subjection. The Indigenous peoples of Australia underwent ethnic, social and religious domination which must be understood as part of the political power exercised by England as the major colonizer and holder of scientific knowledge in the nineteenth century. Here, it is relevant to point out that the British Empire has warped somehow the theory of evolutionism in order to adapt it to the interests of the State, forming what Foucault calls ‘bio-Power’, or putting scientific, biological knowledge at the service of power. The colonial government made use of ‘bio-Power’ to whiten the Australian Indigenous peoples in a process that intended to make them disappear as a race. Thus, such use of bio-Power was linked to ethnic domination which started even before ‘bio-Power’ being inflicted on those peoples. It started with the arrival of the colonizers and included domination through knowledge and through violence, for racism, as Foucault points out in *Society Must Be Defended*, “is bound up with the workings of a State that is obliged to use race, the elimination of races and the purification of the race, to exercise its sovereign power” (2003, p. 258).

The white people who aimed at living in the newly settled country exercised power on the native peoples in order to have them working as guides, homemakers, or to perform other simple jobs. The ones whose intention was to take the Indigenous peoples’ lands exercised violent power, killing or forcing the natives out of their land. One of the colonizer’s practices led to genocide, through a process that started with dispossessing the colonized people not only of their land, but also of their culture by prohibiting them to communicate in their own language, to perform their rituals, to live in their traditional ways, in kinship groups. Racism was inevitable not only because of the scientific principle of the colonizer’s being the strongest race, but also because the weaker, or the colonized race, represented the Other. The White Race was the model of a perfect race, thus anything different from that model was deemed as degenerated, deformed, demonized, and the Other represented all those bad qualities. In order to ‘correct’ such degenerations, social and religious domination were exercised simultaneously, resulting in impacts that last until now. However, there is a certain ambivalence in the feelings of colonial subjects

concerning the impacts of domination upon them. In *Writing from the Fringe* (1990), Mudrooroo reasons that "Colonization had to be justified by a Christian people which prided itself on a superior morality and culture. One way of doing this was by seeing a people in possession of a wanted land as being uncivilized, savages or even animals" (p.7-8); on the other hand, on the next page Mudrooroo recognizes that the Christian missionaries did not represent merely evil to the Indigenous people because,

> The missionaries laboured to soften the coarse pioneering spirit of the first settlers, who often considered the Aborigines vermin to be destroyed. They accepted the Aborigines as human beings and educated them and eventually Christianised them so that today there is a strong current of Christianity running through much of Aboriginal writing.

The most important example of this kind of domination is the long period of the Stolen Generations whose effects now demand that the Indigenous peoples of Australia negotiate their place in society in order to have their rights to education, health, law, land, and self-determination respected and enforced. On the other hand, they have had no difficulties in dealing with two distinct types of spirituality – Christianity and the Dreaming – as Mudrooroo mentions above. So, they just added Christianity to the Dreaming. Thus, the issues that Aboriginal people face today are not religious, but political. The same governmental system which educated and incorporated them into the non-Indigenous society placed them at the bottom of the social pyramid keeping them at the margins of the society's culture and economy.

2.3 Resistance and Counter-Discourse: From Colonial Power to Postcolonial Power Relations

In Colonial societies power tends to bend more to one side – the colonizer's – whereas in Post-Colonial societies power swings between both sides – colonizer and colonized. In Australia, power relations have been characterized by several elements that represent resistance and self-determination. Elements of resistance range from violent reactions aimed at the take-over of a people's land to milder demonstrations through art and literature, for instance. In fact, resistance is a catalyst to Power Relations in the sense that it is composed of strategies of struggle, which means that at every moment mechanisms of power are put into action and interplay in society.

As for economic and labor exploitation, Australian Indigenous people's struggle has been a work in process since the period after World War II when soldiers who had fought for the British saw themselves suddenly unemployed and without any support to reintegrate in the civil society. Due to labor exploitation and lack of opportunity for good jobs, a number of Aborigines joined Communist parties and movements in the 1960s. It was then that they started also to visibly and socially struggle against subjection to the white society. Foucault states that there are two definitions for the word 'subject' in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault* (2000)[27]

> There are two meanings of the word 'subject': subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power that subjugates and makes subject to (p. 331).

In the case of the Indigenous subjects of Colonial Australia, their struggle at the beginning was against control and dependence on a foreign people who invaded their country bringing an alien culture which they should assimilate in order to become due members of that new society. The British colonial power established strategies of control and dominance in order to guarantee its economic, political, and cultural endurance. Nevertheless, as time went by, the generations that were born within that assimilation period saw, added to their burden of struggling against control and dependence, another type of struggle that did not end when Australia became independent from England – the struggle against their own otherness. They could not see themselves as belonging to the same culture as their elders, and they could not see themselves as belonging to the white society either. Again, the period known as Stolen Generations was mostly responsible for the identity issues that Australian Indigenous peoples are still facing today. As Eva Knudsen states in her article 'Mudrooroo's Encounters With the Missionaires' (2003, p. 169), the main reason why the assimilation period was so harmful for Indigenous populations was that there was a "[. . .] disastrous 'father-knows-best' philosophy, under which their individual and cultural selves were systematically destroyed, as it encouraged them to give up their language, religion, nomadic life-style and cultural traditions". (Idem, p. 169). As consequence, those essentialist practices of the colonizer

[27] As Althusser's student, Foucault makes use of the same concept his professor does of the terms subject and *assujettissement.*

eventually backfired onto hybridization of its subjects who took advantage of their compulsory learning of the English written language to start a process known as mimicry[28].

Due to the fact that those first Aboriginal writers were assimilated into the European culture, learning their language through classes and reading books, the only language they knew was standard English, and the aesthetics of European literature. In addition to that, Indigenous languages did not have a written form thus leaving to those assimilated writers only one option: English language and aesthetics. Nevertheless, they became interested in their own ancient culture and started to include elements of the Dreaming and their views on the colonial history of Australia. Another crucial development for Aboriginal writing was the use of the European alphabet to represent the sounds of their Indigenous languages. The outcome of such developments was that as of the 1960's in Australia, Aboriginal writers started to subvert the narratives of the Colonial dominant culture which became 'contaminated' by the linguistic and racial differences of the native peoples. As Mudrooroo explains in *Us Mob* (1995: p.3),

> And so some of us became educated and read Albert Memmi, Frantz Fanon and Trinh T Ming-Ha. A man from a mob called Jews in a country called Algeria, a black fellow from the French colony of Martinique, both of whom wrote about the psychological and physical effects of colonialism on oppressed people, and, lastly, a Woman of Colour from Asia who wrote about the oppression of women and the 'native' who became seen as the different *Other*.

By reading those writers' works, the Australian Indigenous ones realized that it was time for them to express themselves on behalf of their people. As the oppressed French and the Jewish people about whom Memmi and Fanon wrote, the Indigenous Australians were also under the psychological and physical effects of colonialism, as well as Aboriginal women were Ming-Ha's "different Other". As a result of such similarities shown by those writers from distinct nationalities, Aboriginal writers started to address their own issues through their own discourse.

By subverting the narratives of the dominant culture, Aboriginal writers started a process of counter-discourse[29], which was described for the first time by Foucault in his book *The History of Sexuality* (1998, p.101), concerning homosexuality, where he states that,

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[28] Mimicry: "a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (BHABHA:1994, p. 86). Although Bhabha's concept of mimicry conveys the notion that mimicry is a difficult condition, in the case of Aboriginal Literature, writers made use of mimicry to create an opportunity to be heard as a people who is 'almost the same, but not quite'.

[29] Sometimes Foucault uses the term *reverse discourse* with the same meaning of counter-discourse.

“homosexuality began to speak in its own behalf to demand that its legitimacy or ‘naturality’ be acknowledged, often in the same vocabulary, using the same categories by which it was medically disqualified”. Such description of counter-discourse, when extended to other types of minorities, may be understood as the discourse produced by marginalized groups who appropriate, on their own behalf, the vocabulary used to disqualify them on the grounds that they are inferior beings.

In order to survive, and as wards of the state, the Indigenous people of Australia had to accept education according to the colonizer’s ways. The result was that they learned that it was possible to create a new discourse capable of establishing a new dialectic in which previous terminologies, concepts and truths were challenged and acquired new meanings and understanding. In other words, they had been transformed into the Other, a condition they did not feel as being of dignity, arousing in them a need to struggle for self-determination as well as for their human rights. This leads me to Mudrooroo and the Wildcat Trilogy. The creation of a character such as Wildcat, a hybrid, a mimic-man who brings both worlds together through the non-Indigenous discourse and behavior added to the Indigenous people’s counter-discourse.

There is a story of an artist who was deemed as an example of assimilation as positive to Aboriginal people. In the 1950s, Albert Namatjira learnt from non-Indigenous teachers to paint landscapes using watercolors. Having produced beautiful paintings which were much praised and sold in art galleries, he was acclaimed as an artist. However, at that time the Commonwealth government had instituted the policy of assimilation for Indigenous people, and Namatjira was seen and shown as an example of the assimilation policy’s success. He had his own income and lived comfortably until 1957 when he was granted ‘honorary Australian citizenship’. Nevertheless, one of the conditions for his ‘citizenship’ was that he had to deny his people and identity as an Indigenous person. As he refused to do that, he was not well regarded any longer and started to be seen as a victim of the circumstances. His decision was an act of resistance, for he refused to deny his ethnicity and identity. There are many other stories like this one, as well as there are accounts of part-Aboriginal people who have chosen to live as non-Indigenous, joining the white society. All in all, this is one possibility of which hybrid people can take advantage – choosing their identity. Because most Indigenous people who live in the urban centers of Australia today are hybrids and underwent a process of assimilation from early childhood, they acquired much of their knowledge from books. The first books they read were part of compulsory reading at school; however, when they grew up they acquired their own taste for books. Many of them chose to read texts about or by other

peoples of the world. Such readings were (and are until now) great sources of knowledge for the Indigenous people of Australia. This reminds me of what Mudrooroo says in *Us Mob* (1995), "to educate the Woman, the Native, the Other is to put into our hands and minds a weapon" (p.3) for then they become ready to make use of the Master's[30] tools and methods in their own way in order to express their thoughts through actions of resistance.

2.3.1 The Power of Hybrid Identity: Strategies for Resistance

From the moment the colonizer decided that the Indigenous people of Australia should be assimilated into the non-Indigenous society by being whitened, the Aborigines have been trying to understand who they are, where they belong, and how they will take a productive and respectable role in the Australian society.

The main effect of assimilation was alienation of individual Aborigines from their communities by pushing them into the non-Indigenous society. This was the time when children were forcibly removed from their families and taken to live in institutions such as mission schools or orphanages. As those places were the only homes those people knew, many of them nurtured some fondness for such institutions. However, the denial of cultural and spiritual heritage that was demanded from the Indigenous people during their assimilation period caused loss of identity and health. To understand how resistance stemmed from the policy of assimilation in Australia, it is important to know that the first step the government took was to make all Aborigines wards of the state without any rights of citizenship. However, with assimilation came racism which, even when they were granted citizenship rights later, did not disappear according to a number of accounts of Aborigines suffering discrimination. Thus, even though having been accepted to live as non-Indigenous, they found themselves in a place between Black and White[31]. In *Us Mob*, Mudrooroo explains that "to the Whites they were considered black and to the Blacks they were considered *quislings* or 'Jackies'" (1995, p.14) and such uncomfortable in-between place provoked Aboriginal struggles for dignity in the 1960s, when they fought for justice, land rights and self-determination.

Consequently, the Australian Aborigines became aware that they are not the native Indigenous peoples of Australia any longer. Neither are they part of those white Australians of European origin; they are hybrids living in a hybrid culture, and are still elaborating on the

[30] Mudrooroo´s use of the word 'Master' conveys both, irony and bitterness towards colonizers' actions.
[31] The term "Black", used as a general reference to groups with different histories and ethnic identities, was coined by Stuart Hall in his article *New Ethnicities* (1988), enabling not only black, but also all non-white people to form one homogenous large group comprised of all those peoples who experience marginalization.

fact. As hybrids, Aboriginal subjects are part of a minority identity that express themselves from a place that is between-languages and between-cultures. Although they live in a cross-cultural environment, a number of hybrid subjects have shown a need to identify with one culture, one people, one place whereas some others have resolved their sense of belonging by taking more than one cultural identity as they were born into multinational, multi-ethnic families. Such need for one specific identity is impossible to be fulfilled since no culture, people or place is fixed in time. However, through a process called ethnogenesis – "the beginning of a renewed sense of group identity in which the roots of past histories are explored as a frame for present struggles and future prospect" (HEALY: 1992) – they are able to (re)build their individual and collective identities based on the concept of ethnicity. That is the case with the Indigenous peoples of Australia, who were named Aborigines as if they were only one people. Nevertheless, they took advantage of that homogeneous term – Aborigines – to develop a strategy to speak on behalf of every Indigenous Australian people. Such strategy is found in Aboriginal Literature.

Aboriginality is a construct of the white political culture that coined the term Aborigine to name every black native person they encountered in Australia. This practice corroborates the assertion that identity is a discursive, cultural artifact, directly linked to Power Relations, working like a game where the ones who are able to define the discursive terms win whereas the other ones must keep silent and follow the rules unless they learn to speak back, reversing the dynamics in that relationship, producing what is known as resistance.

There is a close relationship between Aboriginal Literature and Power Relations, due to the fact that literature is discourse which is one of the power/knowledge elements widely used as a means of resistance by minorities. Moreover, according to Foucault in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault,* resistance by colonized peoples is a kind of power that has to do with identity. Resistance, in "opposition to the effects of power linked to knowledge, competence and qualification – struggles against the privileges of knowledge" (FOUCAULT: 2000, p.330). They refuse to accept the ideological violence which ignores their individuality and is impositive to the point of dictating, through scientific knowledge, who a person is; such opposition leads them to strategies of resistance such as physical violence, revolutions, and anarchism. Resistance is a direct attack to a form of power aiming at asserting the right to be different by making use of strategies of resistance. It is employed by people who struggle against anything that constrains them as individuals and members of community life.

2.3.2. Power, Politics and Resistance

The Australian Aborigines made use of resistance strategies ranging from violent actions and reactions against non-Indigenous power to discursive practices that encompass cultural rituals, arts, literature, and language. As soon as the Native Peoples of Australia realized that the newcomers, instead of having come to trade or visit their land, had come to occupy it, they reacted with violence. Some actions of resistance brought positive results for the Indigenous people of Australia; on the other hand, many of those actions resulted in death for a large number of them. When the scale of Power Relations is imbalanced due to Indigenous actions of resistance, there is a reaction on the part of the non-Indigenous people in order to re-balance it to their advantage. The table below contains the noteworthy events in Australia. As a complete table would be too long, I pinpointed and summarized major events by dates, from the beginning of colonization to the year 2000, when resistance was replaced with reconciliation.

1799	The Black Wars take place in the regions of Hawkesbury and Parramata, against white settlement in those areas.
1937	Indigenous people establish the Aborigines Progressive Association, in opposition to the Aboriginal Protection Board.
1938	The first major protest takes place – Day of Mourning – against inequality, injustice, dispossession of land, and protectionist policies.
1946- 1949	The Pindan movement is launched against mining development in Western Australia, with a strike by Aboriginal pastoral workers.
Mid-1960's	Marxist movements and demonstrations take place against unfair treatment and wages; It is also the period when Indigenous intellectuals realize that they can achieve better results through writing; Aboriginal Literature is born.
1969	An Aboriginal delegation goes to New York to report to the UN Secretary-General, the actual situation of Australian Aborigines, bringing worldwide attention to them.
1972	In January, the Aboriginal Embassy is raised in front of the Parliament to demonstrate for Land Rights; in July, Aborigines promote strikes and marches throughout Australia – National Aboriginal Day.
1975	The World Council of Indigenous People for a pacific relationship between indigenous people, governments and the society in general is established (here is the official establishment of the pan-indigenous identity in order to, with all the distinct Indigenous peoples being united, achieve their goals).
1988	Concomitant to the celebration of 200 years of Colonization by the British, the Long March takes place in Sydney to celebrate Native Australian People's survival; their most important way to demonstrate was through Literature and Arts.
2000	The People's Walk for Reconciliation takes place in Sydney.

The relationship between the Indigenous and the non-Indigenous peoples of Australia has been made through Social, Political and Juridical institutions, being chief among them the ATSIC – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission – a federal organization for the Indigenous peoples of Australia which is divided into regional councils where the Aborigines vote to elect their representatives. However, in order to vote, they must accept the legitimacy of the Federal and State governments; consequently, the ones who do not accept it are out of the voters' list. One of the Power Relations' facets shows clearly when a non-Indigenous, governing power decides who can or cannot vote on behalf of a given Indigenous people. Another important institution created to deal with Aboriginal affairs is the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) that at some point complained that it was having difficulties regarding services delivered to Indigenous people which made their work on their Indigenous self-determination unfeasible. The main reason they alleged for such difficulties was the fact that many Indigenous groups had different social structures. In fact, in order to get funding by DAA, Indigenous communities had to organize themselves in the same way the western institutions did, in the pyramidal structure, which did not take into consideration the kinship and family structure of the Indigenous people. Once more, Power Relations are conflicting because the management of the organization forces a structure that is alien to the Indigenous people.

Legal organizations are another issue in Aboriginal Australia, for Aborigines do not understand why they should obey the non-Indigenous people's laws when they have their own, that date from the Dreamtime. Due to the conflicts caused by such distinct mindsets, the Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) was established to help Aboriginal people deal with the non-Indigenous legal structure. According to Mudrooroo, in spite of much criticism directed to ALS, it has managed to help the Indigenous people regarding the Australian legal system. He says that "In fact, without the ALS, many Indigenous persons would be at the complete mercy of the court (which means pleading guilty) [. . .]" (1995: p.98). Although the ALS represents an intention by the non-Indigenous people to give support to the Indigenous people, it is another mechanism to discipline the Aborigines so that they are kept in control while they feel supported.

While it seems impossible to establish a real Aboriginal organization to give social and legal support to the Indigenous people of Australia, the resistance tools they have used are made up of words; Aboriginal discourse within literary texts and other types of Art. They deem the play between words, their use, abuse and misuse, as important weapons against the non-Indigenous discourse.

2.3.3. Power, Discourse, and Resistance

Foucault's concept of discourse is discussed in his book *The Archaeology of Knowledge* where he says that it consists of units called 'statements' (*énoncés*). Such statements make propositions, utterances or speech acts meaningful. Foucault believes that the role of the 'never-said' is as important as the 'already-said'. In other words, discourse "is not merely a phrase that has already been spoken, or a text that has already been written, but a 'never-said', an incorporeal discourse, a voice as silent as a breath" (1972, p. 25). In addition, another supposition that Foucault makes regarding discourse is that everything that is said, was articulated before the event of the utterance, during the 'semi-silence that precedes it'. This concept is significant to understand and read properly postcolonial texts such as Aboriginal Literature, for as an act of resistance it started to exist long before the first Aboriginal book was published.

Regarding silence, it is also chief for a proper reading of a postcolonial text that we understand why a given discourse could not be different from what it was, and such understanding is achieved when we analyze what was not said, but is there in the form of a character's behavior, for instance. Silence is so critical to the concept of discourse that Foucault mentions it several times in his inaugural speech at the *Collège de France* on December 2, 1970. That lecture is entitled *L'ordre du discours* in French, and appears as the appendix in the *Archaeology of Knowledge* under the English title *The Discourse on Language*. There, Foucault discusses some aspects of discourse which are related to social and political matters concerning control, which comprises exclusion and prohibition. Since those aspects of discourse events are represented in the Wildcat Trilogy, they are the ones that interest me while developing the close reading of those books.

Thus, from the point-of-view that a subject may position himself or herself in order to build resistance within discourse, and that discourse formation comprises statements which relate to other statements that came before and that will come after them, Aboriginal Literature has been the conducting thread of Aboriginal past, present and future matters.

Resistance through literature has always been directly connected to political and social matters, to institutions such as government, church, school, orphanage, family, businesses, and prison. One example of the mixed role of Aboriginal writers regarding political and social matters, in addition to literary expression, is a speech published by Mudrooroo in *Writing From the Fringe* (1990, p.23), delivered by Oodgeroo Noonuccal at the opening of the Second

Aboriginal Writer's Conference in 1983[32], where she stated the "Black Commandments" as a parody of the Genesis in the Christian Bible,

1. THOU SHALL GATHER THY SCATTERED PEOPLE TOGETHER.
2. THOU SHALL WORK FOR BLACK LIBERATION.
3. THOU SHALL RESIST ASSIMILATION WITH ALL THY MIGHT.
4. THOU SHALL NOT BECOME A BLACK LIBERAL IN A WHITE SOCIETY.
5. THOU SHALL NOT UPHOLD THE WHITE LIES IN A BLACK SOCIETY.
6. THOU SHALL TAKE BACK THE LAND STOLEN FROM THY FOREFATHERS.
7. THOU SHALL MEET WHITE VIOLENCE WITH BLACK VIOLENCE.
8. THOU SHALL REMOVE THYSELF FROM A SICK, WHITE SOCIETY.
9. THOU SHALL FIND PEACE AND HAPPINESS IN A STABLE, BLACK SOCIETY.
10. THOU SHALL THINK BLACK AND ACT BLACK.
11. THOU SHALL BE BLACK ALL THE REST OF THY DAYS.

It seems that those eleven commandments have never been forgotten by Mudrooroo whose fiction and non-fiction texts follow, if not all, several of them. However, in each one of the Trilogy books, Mudrooroo's texts evolve from the passionate activist strictly following Noonuccal's commandments to a broader sense of hybridity and multiculturalism that although expressed through a strong discourse, show that the writer has striken a balance between political activism and literary discourse to convey Aboriginal ideas. As most Aboriginal writers, when Mudrooroo started publishing his works he also started a process of gathering his people together by writing about their cultural past and identity. Commandment number two is embedded into his writings when he talks about issues that keep the Indigenous people in a sort of repressed life in Australia. As for commandment three, it is impossible to obey now that there is no way back from both major influences the Indigenous people of Australia undergo and accept today – assimilation of the British and the United States cultures. The character Wildcat, for instance, is a follower of the Beatnik behavior, loves American movies and music – rock and jazz –, and mixes British slang in his vocabulary.

What is worth highlighting about Wildcat's cultural assimilation is that he confirms it as both, the main character and narrator in the trilogy, as well as the author of the book/movie script which he writes in prison. Regarding commandment four, although I would not say that Mudrooroo has become a Black liberal in the white society, I think that it is fair to say that, in my reading of his texts, he has realized that radical negative behavior towards the white

[32] For a summary of the speech, see Appendix 2.

society would not be a good choice concerning political and intellectual activism. Mudrooroo's non-fiction books and essays convey a well-balanced way of thinking about Aboriginal issues and the role of the non-Indigenous society in Australia. Moreover, it seems to me that he has not forgotten to follow commandment number five - Thou shall not uphold the White lies in a Black society – for his non-fiction books are about making clear misinformation and misleading accounts on Aborigines issues by the white society[33]. Commandments six through nine are extremely radical, since they suggest that Indigenous people should react with violence, withdraw themselves from the white society, and live away from it. Nowadays such kinds of behavior are not desirable for what has been at stake since late 1980s is reconciliation which acknowledges the efforts of Australian people to live as a multicultural country where it is possible for people from distinct ethnicities to share their cultures, which might help the balance of Power Relations there. As for commandments number ten and eleven – think Black and act Black, and be Black forever –, they are central in Mudrooroo´s non-fiction and fiction texts. Recalling that Black here means non-white minority groups, Wildcat is a good example of its creator's efforts to show that Aboriginality is a chosen identity, and that once Indigenous people make that choice, they understand that thinking and acting Black they are making a stand for their survival and rights. However, I want to point out that I read commandments ten and eleven, without taking into consideration those previous ones that preach that Black people should act with violence or removing themselves from a multiethnic society. There is no need for that since discourse is a powerful tool which enables minorities to reverse it and cause deeper effects on a given target, than would violence for the sake of violence.

Most Aboriginal writers have followed Noonuccal's advice by writing fiction and non-fiction texts in which they state, denounce, revolt against, and resist an unfair society in which they are still segregated and not fully accepted, mainly in urban centers. Those writers have also been developing Aboriginal concepts and theories that enable academic students, as myself, to obtain information from both sides of the truth – non-Indigenous and Indigenous. These new theorists are important to Postcolonial studies for, as Huggan states, "[…] locally produced theories and methods might prove in the end to be more productive than the reliance on Euro-American philosophical trends and habits of thought" (2001, p.3).

Power in the government discourse has been stated through legal documents establishing laws or associations to keep control over the Indigenous peoples. In Appendix 3

[33] See *Us Mob* (1995), which is dedicated to inform about Aboriginal history, culture, and struggle.

there is a long list of all Aboriginal Associations established by governmental acts in Australia, and that Mudrooroo harshly criticizes in *Us Mob* (1995) when he says that,

> How many times have Us Mob said that everything in Australian Indigenous affairs is interrelated? Yet it doesn't seem to have registered with those politicians who keep creating new government organizations to deal with us and think they have solved everything (p. 75).

By organizing Aboriginal affairs into separate departments, the government is able to control, select, distribute and redistribute discourse. That is possible because discourse is managed through power which, in turn, is exercised through discourse. Such complex structure must be examined, taking into consideration all the relationships among its elements. The same can be said of the government's practices that do not see Indigenous affairs as a whole comprised of many distinct elements.

2.3.4 Power, Institutions, and Resistance

Although Foucault claims that it is not a good practice to reduce the analysis of Power Relations to the study of the institutions where power is applied, it is true that in order to understand Australian Indigenous affairs we must read the history of government organizations aimed to protect or control the Aboriginal People's lives. Together with government organizations/associations as discussed in 2.3.2., come schools and orphanages, playing a dramatic role in the lives of Indigenous peoples in Australia as well as other institutions such as the church, prison, and businesses – all of them with the power to make decisions, and dictate rules and regulations.

On the family side of the issue, colonization provoked an unexpected effect on the Indigenous people of Australia due to the structures and strategies of their colonizer's power; because Indigenous children were taken from their families to receive European education, there was a reversal of knowledge in the Aboriginal family tree when the youngsters who were taken to study away from their families came back home, for they became more knowledgeable than their parents or grandparents and other relatives, according to the European concept of knowledge. For their families, however, those youngsters had become people with a different kind of knowledge completely alien from their own. The young ones had no ancestral knowledge for it had been suppressed from their education, opening a great divide between the new and old generations of Indigenous people. They brought in

knowledge about the non-Indigenous world, and they incorporated such knowledge to their lives.

In *Wild Cat Falling*, not only does Wildcat incorporate the European education he acquires in the orphanage, but he adds elements of the North-American culture as well. He knows nothing about Aboriginal culture because even his mother thinks that he must live and behave as a non-Indigenous person. By building a character with that profile, Mudrooroo writes a literary work that is not only a *monument*, but also a *document* in which resistance to subjection and the need to clearly express what has been silenced for many years – his cultural ancestral knowledge– are elaborated in the form of literary discourse.

Such reversal of knowledge creates a conflict between generations. However, this is not to be understood as negative due to the fact that cultures are not static and they are adaptable to new ideas and behavior. Moreover, the Indigenous People of Australia have invariably been in contact with other peoples and cultures, as described in chapter 1, and those contacts surely brought elements that were incorporated into their culture.

Working side by side with the government during Colonial times, Christian churches[34] managed orphanages to where Aboriginal children were taken, usually forcibly, to be 'protected' from their families who, according to the non-Indigenous point of view, were not civilized and could not take proper care of their children. Thus, the power that the government plus the church plus the orphanage held over young Aborigines was enormous, and aimed to subject them to the colonizer's will. Those institutions made use of discipline as a mechanism of power. According to Foucault in *Discipline and Punish* (1995), discipline is not to be identified directly with the institution which exercises it, but as

> [. . .] a type of power, a modality for its exercise, comprising a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets; it is a 'physics' or an 'anatomy' of power, a technology. [. . .] pre-existing authorities that find in it a means of reinforcing or reorganizing their internal mechanisms of power (p. 215).

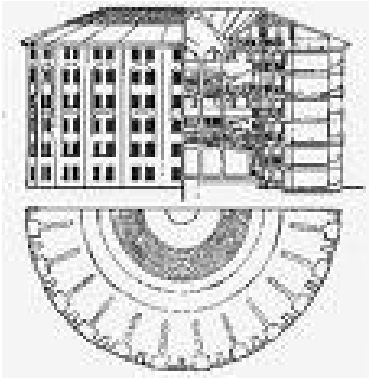
Discipline is described by Foucault as being of two types. One is present in institutions established towards the margins of society, having the negative functions of punishing what is considered as evil to society and breaking communications. Such type of discipline was applied onto Indigenous peoples in Australia where mission camps, schools, and orphanages

[34] Five distinct denominations of Christian churches went to Australia in the colonial times, namely Roman Catholic, Church of England (Anglican), Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist.

established all social rules according to the Empire's commands, dismantling Aboriginal social groups, banning the use of their own languages, arresting and keeping people either in jails or in educational institutions. Although these institutions claimed to have good intentions towards the Aborigines, what moved them was a twofold feeling for their subjects: they should protect them, and they could not let their subjects free because they were uncivilized, which for the British people of that time, meant evil. However, from the point of view of the Indigenous people, the British were the Other, which means that they represented evil to them. In the movie *Rabbit-Proof Fence*, for instance, there is a scene showing how stolen children saw the representative of the government – Mr. Neville – when one of the children asks a question and another one replies: "ask it to Mr. Devil".

The other type of discipline is Panopticism which is a mechanism of power conceived to function as subtle coercion, acting at the psychological level, leading to self-discipline. This is a self-feeding system as described below.

2.3.4.1. Surveillance



Bentham's Panopticon Schema

The *Panopticon*, the other disciplinary mechanism that Foucault describes, was devised by Jeremy Bentham, a philosopher and theorist of the British legal reform around the 1760s. The Panopticon is a surveillance mechanism proposed by Bentham as a model prison where a prisoner is supposedly watched twenty-four hours a day without being able to see the surveillor who is placed in a central position of a circular architecture.

The uncertainty about whether they are being seen or not at any time makes the prisoners, themselves, control their behavior. From that Foucault concludes that,

> So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action; that the perfection of power should tend to render its actual exercise unnecessary; that this architectural apparatus should be a machine for creating and sustaining a power relation independent of the person who exercises it; in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers (1995, p.201).

The full description of a Panoptic prison building is found in Annex E. However, the general idea is that the building must be circular, with the prisoners' cells facing the center. Such cells are individual. No inmate can communicate with his or her neighbors. At the central space of the building is located the room of the 'inspector'. Through a system of lighting in front of the prisoners' cells, and blinds in the inspector's room, it is impossible to follow the inspector's movements. So, they never know who is being observed and when. Among other additional characteristics of the Panopticon, in Letter VII Bentham describes the economic side of it – "what every prison might, and in some degree at least ought to be, designed at once as a place of *safe custody*, and a place of *labour*" with "the joint purposes of *punishment, reformation,* and *pecuniary economy*" (Letter VIII). The prisoners are then divided into classes of workers – the business people (first rank), the people trained to perform in businesses (second rank), the industrial workers (third rank), and the *drones* as he calls the ones who are unskilled or thieves – who will obtain advantages from their good work and behavior.

In the third book of the Wildcat Trilogy, the narrator describes a Panopticon prison system adapted to the Fremantle jail in Perth, where Wildcat serves ten years for having shot a police officer. The Fremantle Panopticon will be analyzed in detail in chapter 3. Nevertheless, I will bring forward one important effect of the Panopticon system: it really induces to the development of Power Relations balanced enough between prisoners and inspectors in the sense that the observers (inspectors), might be observed by the prisoners, making them also prisoners, mainly when they realize that as they look at a given inmate at a given moment, they cannot be sure that the inmate cannot see them. The prisoners' eyes are always curious, in search of the inspector's location.

Although Bentham's disciplinatory system was known in the 1800's, the British Empire did not make use of it in its colonies as well as in Fremantle prison in Australia. However, for some reason, Mudrooroo gives great importance to presenting the Panopticon principle in his books – fiction and non-fiction – as we also see in the title of chapter 10 of *Writing From the Fringe* – 'The Buggared Fringe'. Buggared is a combination word of

‘buggered’ which means ‘damned’ plus the verb ‘to bug’ which may be understood as one type of surveillance, plus ‘beggar’. Understanding the blending of those words as forming just one meaning, we have that ‘The Buggared Fringe’ means ‘damned and surveilled poor people at the margin of society’.

Because Indigenous people are marginalized and do not see any chance of climbing the ladder of society, mainly adult males feel that it is in prison that they are accepted and respected as Indigenous people. This is a negative feeling of belonging, for being Indigenous means being an outlaw, someone who is dangerous to society. However, it is also in prison that a number of Indigenous people develop a political awareness of Indigenality, which gives them fuel to struggle.

Other institutions are representative of the Panopticon principle: the Aboriginal institutions discussed in 2.3.2., for instance, where there are some Aboriginal people in charge of high job positions. About that, Mudrooroo says that such institutions include many of those who have entered the non-Indigenous’s structures of Power “[. . .] Under the gaze of the Master and under our gaze, they too often suffer in their position. They return the gaze and try to please both the Master and Us Mobs” (1995, p.22).

2.4. Reconciliation: From Local Power to Globalized Power Relations

Today, there is another powerful element pervading postcolonial societies: Exoticism, which is described by Huggan as “a particular mode of aesthetic *perception* – one which renders people, objects and places strange even as it domesticates them, and which effectively manufactures otherness even as it claims to surrender to its immanent mystery” (2001, p.13). Thus, it can be said that Exoticism is the translation of the Other, which brings up the issue of Power Relations again. Now I am talking about a balanced relationship of power, in which non-Indigenous and Indigenous people exchange and appropriate each other’s knowledge. In this sense, the Australian Aboriginal scenario is noteworthy. Aboriginality is not a condition of only the black people of Australia any longer, but also of all those people who support Aboriginal affairs, as Ian McLean asserts in his article ‘Postcolonial: Return to Sender’,

> [. . .] in the inter-war years a new generation discovered an indigenous identity for themselves – a white aboriginality. [. . .] Australians suddenly learned to love their

> enemy, that is, their country, and in doing so, exposed a hidden affinity with the indigenous populations.

The rapid changes in postcolonial societies make it important to understand the difference between Postcolonialism and Poscoloniality. From my reading of *The Post-Colonial Exotic* (2001), I understand that Postcolonialism is a type of anti-colonial intellectualism, i.e., it is political and regards social struggle rather than a global processes of commodification[35] whereas Postcoloniality is a regime of cultural value, part of the world market of commodity exchange. This is what makes Exoticism feasible through the marketing of 'Other' cultural production.

In 1988, when Australia was commemorating 200 years of British colonization, representatives of the Aboriginal culture were invited to the center of the celebrations and many artists and writers, supported by non-Indigenous publishers and producers, cooperated in the event. In *Writing From the Fringe*, Mudrooroo acknowledges that,

> Aboriginal culture is becoming a national resource with anyone taking whatever they wish from it. [. . .] Aboriginal culture especially in the bicentennial year of 1988 was used by everyone from tee-shirt to manufacturers to doll makers. It is difficult to see how this can be stopped unless Aboriginal designs are copyrighted (1990, p.46-7).

However, copyrighted or not, Aboriginal works will be exotic. Perhaps that was the reason why there was resistance on the part of some Aborigines who pressed for boycotting of the 1988 event, but the activists who represented the Indigenous people in all instances, decided for non-confrontation and focused their efforts on divulging Aboriginal culture. Due to Aboriginal Arts and Literature's spreading throughout the Australian territory, a need for a specific theory of criticism emerged, because Western critical theories did not cover certain aspects of Indigenous works. In addition, when Western critics read Aboriginal writing, for instance, they try to compare it with non-Indigenous Australian works, when they should be looking for parallels with Aboriginal traditional oral literature, or even with other Indigenous literatures worldwide.

It is a fact that the non-Indigenous government and its institutions exercise power through funding mechanisms. That is one of the reasons why the Postcolonial Exotics decided to enter the global market and commoditize their culture. This is an alternative source of

[35] Commodification – to assign a monetary value to something that would not be considered in monetary terms. Karl Marx criticized it under the term 'commodity fetishism'. The word commodification became popular through critical discourse analisys.

income for them, which means not depending on non-Indigenous institutions. Huggan (2001) describes the Postcolonial Exotic as someone who "occupies a site of discursive conflict between a local assemblage of more or less related oppositional practices and a global apparatus of assimilative institutional, commercial codes" (p.28). This means that the Postcolonial Exotic is between Postcolonialism (anti-colonial vocabulary) and Postcoloniality (economic vocabulary). While the Postcolonial Exotics' discursive practices are anti-colonial and against institutional structures, they do not mind having their culture being capitalized as cultural otherness via their artifacts, literature, and art.

Seen in this way, Mudrooroo is a Postcolonial Exotic, for he defends the entrance of Aboriginal culture into the global market in order to give the Indigenous peoples the income they need to be independent from the paternalistic and, consequently, harmful control of the non-Indigenous people who manage most of the institutions in Australia. Being a Postcolonial Exotic is a way to balance Power Relations due to the fact that it promotes reconciliation, which is the aim of non-Indigenous people in Australia nowadays.

In order to get to this level of relationship, Huggan proposes that reconciliation promoted in the Global World must come through Inter-culturalism rather than Multiculturalism, because according to him, multiculturalism,

> [has] its emphasis on heritage programmes and modes of cultural preservation [that] lock minority groups into ethnic compartments while promoting a nostalgic view of the past that hinders, or simply fails to recognise, sociocultural transformation; that it patronises the socially disadvantaged groups it claims to help and whose marginality it continues to determine (2001, p. 130).

Thus, by making distinctive cultures interact, it is possible to establish balanced Power Relations due to the fact that the cultures will become as hybrid as the people who are part of them.

As for Reconciliation between the Australian government and the Indigenous people of Australia, Mudrooroo focuses on the issue of land rights as crucial. However, one of the most prominent Aborigines of Australia, Kevin Gilbert, does not believe in Reconciliation; in one of his last interviews he poses the question whether the Aboriginal people would have to reconcile to holocaust, massacre, the removal of their land. On the other hand, the *Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation*, a governmental institution, understands that Reconciliation is about improving relations between the Indigenous peoples of Australia and other Australians. A broader aim that, according to the Aborigines, is dependent on land rights.

Therefore, the *Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation*, being a governmental organization, represents a perpetuation of the imbalance of Power Relations in Australia, preventing Reconciliation rather than promoting it. The issue that remains is that Multicultural Australia comprises several nationalities living in the same territory, but each one in its own social and cultural compartment. It is possible that European nationalities may promote Inter-culturalism among themselves; Aboriginal culture, however, is not likely to be incorporated into such a process. Therefore, in order to achieve self-determination and consequent possibility of Reconciliation with the non-Indigenous people of Australia, the Aborigines might accept the fact that being a Postcolonial Exotic is, today, one way to balance Power Relations in their country.

As for all the aspects of the Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationship in Australia mentioned above as well as the complexity they represent for a clear and consistent analysis of Power Relations through a close reading of an Aboriginal text, I chose Institutions and Discourse as main elements of Power Relations to be analyzed in the next chapter. Mudrooroo's views on Power Relations are present throughout the trilogy. However, they are more clearly stated in book 2, where Wildcat describes the prison system and the relationships among inmates, between inmates and the prison authorities, as well as with other institutions such as the Welfare System, a Non-Governmental Agency, and the society outside the prison walls. Some aspects of Mudrooroo's writing style and Aboriginal literary practices include the use of irony, the mixture of Aboriginal and standard English vocabulary, changes in the narrative focus between the first and third persons, elements of the Dreaming, and sentence building which is sometimes interrupted and fragmented to include memories or to focus on another event in the story. The way in which the texts are built changes from one book to another, making of those changes important points for my analysis on both, discourse and events that represent Power Relations. The discourse of the Post-Colonial Exotic is focused in book 3, where Wildcat narrates his involvement with the production and shooting of the film based on his book.

3 THE WILDCAT TRILOGY: OFFSETTING THE POWER RELATIONS SCALE

> **In every story there is a silence, some sight concealed, some word unspoken, I believe. Till we have spoken the unspoken we have not come to the heart of the story.**
> COETZEE, J.M. *Foe*

Wildcat's walk through the network of Power Relations encompasses several of the elements that Foucault points out as crucial for the understanding of such relationships: social, educational, economic, and other systems of differentiations, as well as the objectives of those who act upon others, the instrumental modes for the exercise of power, the forms of institutionalization existent in a given place, and the degrees of rationalization, i.e., how power is elaborated, transformed, organized or even reversed into Power Relations. All of them are present at some degree in the trilogy as triggers of rebellion and struggle on the part of Wildcat, who faces failure, but eventually succeeds in making the Power Relations' scale shift to his profit in a movement towards balance. How does he deal with those elements of imbalance? There may be several answers to that question, all based on Wildcat's actions and reasoning, but there is a powerful element underlying every possible answer, and that is discourse.

The main character of the trilogy is always the same, Wildcat, whose life events are narrated by himself, through his own childhood, adolescence and maturity. Thus the reader follows the development of the character through the traditional structural elements comprised in narrative: narrator's focus, character's thoughts, dialogues, places, and events. On the other hand, Wildcat changes and is not the same when the reader takes into account the elements of the traditional Aboriginal process of storytelling, in which the same person does not tell the same story twice. Wildcat is not the same as narrator in the trilogy and author of both a book and a movie script about his life, for each time he tells the same story, he changes it, omitting

some events, adding or changing other events, causing his character to undergo alterations in both, behavior and mindset.

The volumes of the Wildcat Trilogy were written and published in the following chronological order, *Wild Cat Falling (*1965*), Doin Wildcat (*1988*),* and *Wildcat Screaming (*1992*),* in my discussion I alter the position of the two latter works, with the purpose of allowing the discussion on Power Relations to run more smoothly regarding the evolution of Wildcat while he moves across its network. A second reason for my changing the order of approach to the novels in the close reading is that *Wildcat Screaming*, originally the third volume, tells the story of Wildcat in prison right after he was arrested for having shot a police officer (at the end of the first book). During that time, Wildcat writes a book, which is later turned, by himself, into a screenplay – parts of which appear in *Doin Wildcat*. Therefore, the order in which I read the books is the order in which facts are developed chronologically within the fictional realm, first *Wild Cat Falling*, then *Wildcat Screaming*, and finally *Doin Wildcat*[36]. From the first book I pinpoint the key people and institutions as the most significant means of relations of power experienced by Wildcat; in the analysis of the second book I focus on Wildcat's relationships and structural aspects such as narrative techniques, memories, the power/knowledge aspect of survival strategies, literature, and the inner power developed through the understanding of the Cat/Crow relationship; the third book is read with less emphasis on Power Relations, to focus on the seminal elements that underlie to those relationships: discourse and memories.

3.1 Wild Cat Falling

When discussing Power Relations in a literary text, what type of power may the narrator of a novel exercise? As narrator and main character, and as the author of a screenplay, Wildcat gives the readers his point-of-view, sometimes changing it to a third-person narrative in order to dissociate himself from the scene he is describing. He also works with layers of time in a dynamics that takes the reader from the present moment when he is taking a shower before leaving prison to a near past when he spent two weeks in solitary, where he recalls the time when he lived with his mother, when he was taken from her and sent

[36] From now on, books 1, 2 and 3 or the first, the second and the third.

to an orphanage to receive a ‘civilized’ education, and from there to all the other times and places heading to the open end of this first volume of the trilogy.

An Aboriginal writer has the power to be able to do to the non-Indigenous readers, what has been done to the Indigenous people from the beginning of the colonization process – displace them. In *Wild Cat Falling*, the non-Indigenous reader is displaced near the end of the story, when Wildcat is at the camp with his old uncle, who sings an Aboriginal song. By writing part of the song lyrics in Aboriginal language, Wildcat displaces the reader, who is not able to understand those words because he or she does not belong to that culture. In this case, Power Relations are inverted placing the one who has been previously marginalized in the center, showing his people’s perspective of the world as opposed to that which has been imposed on him. The use of symbolic elements connected with Aboriginal and non-Indigenous cultures also offers a certain complexity to the reader, who has to search for further information to understand such symbols. The color gray, for instance, is ubiquitous in Wildcat’s narratives where clothes, feelings and walls are gray. The meaning of that will be better understood in the analysis of book 2. Irony is present whenever Wildcat has an opportunity to use it, as when he describes the kind of haircut he gets in prison, “It is a crew-cut ordered by the chief warder. He must have read that bodgies wear their hair long and decided to do his bit in the fight against juvenile delinquency. Or maybe he remembered the Samson story” (p.17).

It is through the techniques of narrative discourse that I find many of Wildcat’s feelings, behavior and thoughts whose effects of meaning are strong regarding his relationships of power. In order to convey the difference between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples’ mindsets and cultures, Wildcat talks about a scene he sees on the beach, “Some kids are building a castle in the white wet sand, [. . .] It is the same sort they all build, so maybe it is the kind of place white people dream of living in – pretentious, dominating and secure” (p.31), then he immediately compares to what he used to build when he was a child, “I used to build things out of mud. [. . .] I always built the same place [. . .] a remembered town” (p.32). Wildcat’s criticism against the non-Indigenous culture is severe, for he sees them as people who give more attention to their own pleasure and safety, whereas Indigenous people cherish memories of the places in which they have lived, so he reports that he used to build not a castle, but a whole city, conveying the idea of collectivity and, since in his city there was even a hotel, that city was welcoming to strangers.

The fact that a child of nine is treated by the juridical system as an adult is criticized in, “I am already nine years old. . . .” (p.53), meaning that he was forcibly taken to adulthood, losing his right to grow up through every stage.

Another noteworthy aspect of Wildcat’s discourse is his sarcasm towards the culture of the United States as it is observed by the reader in that moment when he cannot decide whether he goes to the milk-bar or to the movies, and he calls American movies “the glorious fakery of blown-up life from the United States of Utopia” (p.80).

That reminds me that the mid-1950s were the years when the world saw a huge campaign by the United States showing how happy the American people were, how perfect the American families were – The American Way of Life – with every family having at least a television set, a car in the garage, among other amenities. Although the American Way of Life has not reached the Indigenous Australians, who could not afford it, Wildcat’s generation has been influenced by the United States culture. Nevertheless, I said that, as a narrator, Wildcat’s sarcasm towards the United States is noteworthy because, as a character, throughout the novel Wildcat shows his preference for almost everything that is American. The rhythm of jazz and rock, and frequently song lyrics, appear as intertexts, as well as gangster movies, and Beatnik behavior.

However, on page eighty of chapter nine, there is an explanation for that criticism, when Wildcat starts to change and becomes more interested in himself, in his feelings, in his need to dive into his memories of the past. This passage is echoed in what Mudrooroo states about the past, in *Writing From the Fringe* (p. 25), “The past is there only to explain the present and postulate ideals for the future”. Thus, the worth of organizing the events in Wildcat’s relations of power is that it helps us to follow his tracks towards future balanced relationships, as the one he has with his mother, for instance.

Wildcat’s mother represents family relationships. She plays one of the most important roles concerning his identity issues. As an institutionalized Aborigine woman, she was assimilated into the non-Indigenous culture and got married to a white man in order to build a family that would be accepted by the broader Australian society. In her relationship with Wildcat, his mother never tells him anything about her Indigenous family; rather, she insists that he must grow up and live as a white man because only non-Indigenous people are granted personal and professional opportunities in their country.

Wildcat is aware of his color and feels that he will never be regarded as a non-Indigenous person. In addition, there is another aspect that makes it hard for Wildcat to succeed into the non-Indigenous society: he is poor; and as a poor boy, he likes to play with

the Indigenous children who are as poor as he is and who his mother abhors, calling them 'dirty Noongar kids'. Wildcat shows resistance against his mother's orders because he feels more comfortable in the company of those kids than in the company of his non-Indigenous classmates at school. So, Wildcat skips classes to play outdoors where he feels happier and more confident than in school. On the other hand, he wants to please his mother, and sometimes brings stolen gifts to her, although apparently she does not to know that he steals, for he usually tells her that the items have fallen from a truck, such an excuse is an euphemism for stealing, which has become a habit of which he excuses himself, saying that they are poor and his mother deserves beautiful dresses.

Also related to his mother is the nightmare that Wildcat has almost every night. The only place he feels safe after one of those nightmares is his mother's bed. Later he finds out that the nightmare is a signal of his Aboriginality that was repressed by his mother. The more she represses his Indigenous identity, the more he behaves as one, although he does not realize that. Moreover, while she wants him to grow up as a non-Indigenous person, involved with elements of the Christian religion, she does not raise him as she was raised. In their house, hanging on the wall, there are two pictures showing the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Wildcat grows up with those images decorating his home, but he ignores who the "two people pointing at their exposed hearts" (p.8) are. The only explanation his mother gives him about those pictures on the wall is that they are holy. Perhaps she does not really think that religion is important, or she does not regard Christianity as part of her Self[37]. Anyway, Wildcat's mother's disregard for educating him about spirituality is not usual among Aborigines, which leads me to assume that Wildcat narrates that fact in order to show that his mother had been assimilated, but not completely, into the non-Indigenous culture. Moreover, lacking spiritual education, Wildcat is open and in need of some spirituality through which, even if via nightmares, he may eventually be called back to Aboriginality. The reader of the trilogy becomes aware of the seriousness of Wildcat's identity problem when he or she realizes that throughout the novels, Wildcat does everything he can to live as a non-Indigenous person: he behaves and dresses as a Beatnik and listens to jazz which is a product of white Americans. By doing so, Wildcat conforms to his mother's wish to raise him as a

[37] The word Self is used in this thesis according to Carl G. Jung – as the archetype of wholeness and the regulating center of the psyche; a transpersonal power that transcends the ego. Like any archetype, the essential nature of the self is unknowable, but its manifestations are the content of myth and legend. (source of this footnote: < http://www.cgjungpage.org/> . Accessed on March 20th, 2007).

non-Indigenous person, developing a deep identity conflict because he feels ambivalent since he cannot understand why he likes aspects of the non-Indigenous culture so much, and yet feels more comfortable in the presence of Aborigines. Until Wildcat learns that both cultures are part of his Self, the nightmares will not only continue, but also evolve into more complex messages. I call that evolution process, "the concealed power of Dreamtime".

Returning to Wildcat's mother, one of the instrumental modes of power that she employs to try to prevent him from behaving as an Aborigine is to remind him that, because of his color and their poverty, if he misbehaves the welfare system may send someone to take him away from her as they have already done with his siblings. The way power is organized in this mother/son relationship works both through traditional family rules, which state that a child, independently of his or her ethnicity, must respect and obey older people's orders, and through fear that something bad may happen if the child does not behave him or herself. In the case of Wildcat, the fear is always related to separation from his mother. The most recurrent words in his mother's discourse are: "we'll have the Welfare on to us again" (p. 9), "they'll take you away" (p.14). However, this power organization changes when Wildcat goes to prison for the first time and his mother does not visit him. As a matter of fact, he becomes increasingly detached from his mother along the years. The implications of such detachment are serious for a mother/son relationship must never end; in addition, feeling contempt against his mother, and wishing to break their bond is a social taboo, specially in Aboriginal culture, where the concept of family is taken further than in non-Indigenous societies through the concept of the 'extended family', which includes every member of an Aboriginal group. In addition, by separating children from their mothers, the government commits a crime similar to genocide due to the effect that separation will have on the children. As depicted in the movie *Rabbit Proof Fence,* the Stolen Generations have suffered indirect genocide – which means that by erasing the presence of the mother, the presence of identity and ancestral culture are also erased.

The narrative technique that Mudrooroo employs to convey Wildcat's sense of helplessness for having been separated from his mother is the technique of contradiction where at a given moment Wildcat is proud of himself for not caring about anything whereas at the following moment a scene in flashback shows that, in fact, he cares mostly about his mother and about his future. Wildcat has never accepted his mother's denial of her identity by adopting the identity of another culture and race. Wildcat is proud of the fact that he has suffered so much that something valuable broke inside himself leading him to emotional numbness; as a consequence, since he has nothing else to lose, emotional numbness builds in

him a sense of power; and having nothing to lose means that he is less vulnerable than other people.

The way Wildcat refers to his last visit to his mother shows disregard or even resentment – “Jesus, she looks worn out though, and letting herself go, too. Straggly hair and sloppy old clothes. How soon can I get out of here? The stink of the old is worse than jail” (p. 114). After his release, he goes to her house and gives her some coins as if she were any poor woman who makes him feel compassionate. Then, when she thanks him for having remembered her, he says that he has to go and meet a girl – “‘See you again some time, Mum’. That means never’” (p.115). Wildcat’s perception of his mother gets worse when, at the end of book 1, he flees into the bush and meets the old Aborigine man who he finds out to be his relative, and who tells him that his mother is a Noongar and that now that she is to die, she lives with and is looked after by her people, not far from where they are. Wildcat’s reaction to the news is,

> Mum, with her phoney pride, dependent on the kindness of the people she reared me to despise. The Noongar mob, shiftless and hopeless, but with a sort of strength, a blood call to their kind that she knew and feared.
>
> So now she has gone back to die with them and be buried in that back part of the cemetery in a nameless Noongar grave. Serve her right. She had it coming to her, pretending to be better than the rest of them, keeping me away from them, giving me over like a sacrificial offering to the vicious gods of the white man’s world (1965, p. 123).

Now Wildcat thinks of his mother as someone who did everything wrong in her life and, consequently, made his life miserable. Through such discourse, Wildcat is not only ratifying his contempt for his mother’s choices in life, but he is starting to think and react as an Aborigine young boy who ends up projecting on his mother the coldness of the system towards Indigenous people. He never considers that she is as victim of cultural genocide as he is, and that she might have subjected herself to live as a white woman in order not to lose him. In the scale of Power Relations, Wildcat is on the more powerful side, now that it is his turn to make decisions, and his decision is not to see his mother again, dismiss her from his life as if she were responsible for all his suffering. However, other types of institution are the ones which have caused Wildcat to grow up with a sense that society was against him since he did not feel accepted by it. Although he blames his mother for living at the margins of society and for having married a white man, thus making of him a hybrid, Wildcat’s sense of hopelessness stems from the Australian legal system and institutions such as orphanage and prison; places where he has been subjected to arbitrary power exercised by people whose aim was to keep

Indigenous people away from opportunities of feeling really included into the Australian society as citizens.

Fremantle Prison

"Today the end and the gates will swing to eject me, alone and so-called free". This is the opening sentence of *Wild Cat Falling*. Wildcat does not say what 'end' he is referring to, exactly. It could be the end of a time he regards as having been hard; or the end of a period of time spent at the place that now he regards as home, for he is going to be 'ejected', which means to make someone leave a place by force. He knows that he will be all by himself out there, and not really free, for an ex-convict Aborigine is always watched for wrongdoings and expected to return to jail. From the beginning of the novel, the reader knows that Wildcat's feelings are those of boredom and hopelessness because he thinks that the world is against him and society is 'phoney', according to his words on page 4, "Hope is an illusion for squares. I don't fall for it. Don't care any more. I trained myself this way so no phoney emotion can touch me". Such ideas about feelings and the world started to develop inside Wildcat's mind the first time he was institutionalized at the age of nine.

The legal system involving Indigenous children in Australia is exhaustively depicted in the Wildcat Trilogy, represented by the stealing of children to be raised in orphanages and the treatment they receive when taken to court. In the 1960s, when Wildcat is still a child, the reason for the State to take children from their families is not the whitening of the race any longer, but a social politics of assimilation. As wards of the State, the Aborigines must prove that they are able to raise their children according to the non-Indigenous society's rules. The Welfare system is the institution that oversees that the Aborigines comply with State rules. If they do not, they are regarded as unable to raise their children, who are taken from them to be institutionalized until the age of 16, when they must have assimilated the non-Indigenous social rules and behavior. The problem with that kind of system is that it is racist and does not prevent segregation. Thus, when some teenagers are delivered back into society, depending on

the way they have been treated in the institution, instead of behaving as desired by the authorities, they revolt and are unwilling to comply with social rules as they are supposed to. Wildcat represents that kind of teenager who could not find a way to balance Power Relations in the institution in which he lived after the Welfare system took him from his mother.

Wildcat is 9 years old when he breaks into a store and steals a dress to give to his mother. On the following day a police officer comes to their house and finds the dress and some comic books that Wildcat has hidden under his bed. Next, he is taken to court and sentenced to live in an institution called 'Swanview Boy's Home' to be reformed. The process of appearing before the magistrate is a hard one for a child as Wildcat who does not know how the Law works. The only thing he knows is that he may be taken away from his mother as his siblings have been before him. That is the moment when his life as an institutionalized person starts.

The authorities at the Boy's Home are Irish Catholic priests, to whom Wildcat refers by their overall appearance – black-robed brothers – or by their first names preceded by the word 'Old'. Wildcat never refers to Swanview Boy's Home as a place he misses or acknowledges as having done any good to him. When speaking with June[38], in book 1, he tells her that, "I was sent to a home where I was educated in the simple techniques of crime and learnt to survive the harshness of Christian charity" (p.41). Often, charity is used as a mechanism to exercise power upon people in need, and that seems to be the case of educational institutions and welfare systems as well. Wildcat says that in Swanview he was educated in the simple techniques of crime because when he wanted or needed something, he had to obtain that by dissimulating or lying. As for surviving the harshness of Christian charity, he did so by hiding his real feelings towards the brothers, not letting them see him crying whenever he was physically punished. In this way, Wildcat learns that he could neutralize the power of authority if they were not aware of how much pain and suffering they were able to inflict on him.

In this first book, Wildcat describes Swanview's rules and discipline in detail. What becomes clear to the reader is the control and surveillance that the brothers employed over children's activities. They had to do everything in teams, an arrangement that made Wildcat dislike teams for the rest of his life. Even to take a shower they had to go together and a supervisor brother would manipulate the faucets and shout orders telling them which part of their body they should wash. Such amount of control was used to keep the boys in a state of

[38] June is the girl he meets on the beach when he is released from prison.

fear for if they did not comply with the rules, they would be physically punished. All those rules, surveillance and disciplinatory mechanisms led Wildcat to try to escape. However, he was unsuccessful in his flight and punished, provoking in him such frustration and rage that he promised to himself that he would never say another prayer as long as he lived. Through a discourse of "I am doing the best for you and you are ungrateful", the brothers employed physical violence to punish the boys who eventually saw the priests as contradicting themselves as well as the Christian principles of non-violence. Contradiction on one side leads to distrust on the other, thus Wildcat ended up registering in his mind that Christian brothers were not trustworthy.

Now and then, however, the boys had some time for themselves, away from the brothers' gaze, when they could play in a sandpit where they felt free from surveillance. On a given day, Wildcat and a friend masturbated each other, thinking that nobody could see them, but they were mistaken for they did not know that some neighbors whose windows faced Swanview's area, not only did see them, but warned the brothers who punished the boys severely. From that day on, Wildcat felt that he did not mind being controlled or surveilled because he learned that if he had to live for a long time there, the best he could do was to adapt in order to survive. Although such decision was not useful to offset the scale of power between Wildcat and the brothers, it neutralized the authorities' power.

Years later Wildcat would steal money from churches as if they owed him something which is explained by the fact that in institutions as the Boy's Home, children are not taught to be independent, on the contrary, they must be kept dependent on some type of non-Indigenous authority and protection since it is a power-maintenance mechanism. Eventually, Wildcat becomes aware of such mechanism and starts to think of religious institutions as indebted to him, thus he claims his right to charge the debt as when he is talking to Denise[39] when they meet for the first time. When she says that she likes the clothes he is wearing, he replies, "[. . .] I'm a Christian and God provided me with the cash. It was a sort of debt" (p. 19). He means a sort of debt that the church has paid to him as compensation for the suffering, boredom and his dependence on an institution.

That first line of *Wild Cat Falling* refers to the moment when Wildcat is being released from his second imprisonment that lasted eighteen months. In the shower, he reflects upon his feelings towards society, to which he owes nothing as he asserts. In fact, he feels powerless, and even thinks of prison as his refuge from the world outside. However, realizing that such

[39] Later Denise will become his best friend and lover.

refuge has not given him strength enough to face life outside, he decides to train himself to be tough and suppress emotions. Such bitterness is explained when he remembers the first time he served a sentence. He had just left the Boy's Home at the age of 16, and stole some new clothes, food, and money to pay the rent. When Wildcat gives this account, he changes the narrative to the third person. It is just a report on a past event, and that boy about whom he is reporting is not himself anymore. He is able to remove himself from his own past through a narrative technique of turning from the autodiegetic narrator to an extradiegetic one in order to describe those past events.

When describing the shower scene, Wildcat explains that surveillance is present even at moments that should be private, "The stalls are waist high to prevent prisoners breaking the rules" (p. 3). Notwithstanding, he refers to prison as a sort of refuge where he has been accepted as he has not anywhere else. In addition, after spending two weeks in solitary, he realizes that he has become a hero to his peers, so as he is scared to face the world again, he comes to the conclusion that he should stay inside. In order to find privacy, Wildcat dives into his own mind searching for memories and reflecting about himself. One of the techniques he uses as narrator is to go "out of his skin" to describe himself. During those remembrances, he narrates the event that sent him to solitary – an act of rebellion against authority, when the prison guard tells him to get the bucket to fill the mugs of the prisoners, "'Who do you think you're ordering around, you little animal? Do it your bloody self'. Then I jerked up the bucket and flung the tea in his face. Tough screw, now wet little man, whipped out his whistle and blew a chorus of hysterical shrieks" (p.5-6). Once more the effect is that of irony when he says that the tough screw turned out into a 'little man', and that he blew 'hysterical shrieks'. Before having said those words to the guard, Wildcat tells the reader that the way he replied to the order was in his best Hollywood criminal voice, which means that he was mimicking the bad guys in the American movies.

Fremantle cells

Wildcat's cell (?)

In the three novels, here and there many references which are found concerning the influence of the United States' culture in the 1950s Australia; influences such as music and Hollywood movies as well as aspects of the Beatnik generation. Those bits of songs, references to Hollywood movies and actors and use of Beatnik slang are scattered as intertextual elements in the story. The fact that Wildcat and his peers' behavior differs from what is regarded as good behavior by the Australian society means that they are seen as troublemakers who must be constantly surveilled.

Surveillance is also employed inside prison, as in that scene in the shower that Wildcat describes at the beginning of the book. Although surveillance is intended to comprise one seer who represents power, and one or more 'seen' who represent the subjected people, this is a type of discipline which requires that everyone in the system be imprisoned, even the superintendent, as Wildcat holds about the supervisor, "He looks the personification of the prison and radiates the same dreariness. He is one of us even though he considers himself free" (p. 24). The reasoning behind such words is that without convicts the jobs in penitentiary systems would not exist. Moreover, in order to keep close watch and to apply discipline, in addition to managing the system, the authorities are also imprisoned.

The prison system is about the use of power techniques and tools, even when the prisoner is already completely subjected, as Wildcat reports in the episode of his time in solitary. Before going inside the solitary, Wildcat has to undress only to get dressed again when he is inside. Such order to undress conveys a will to humiliate the prisoner, divesting him of the right over his own body. In solitary, the only book available for him to read is the Bible, which he reads from the first to the last page. Although Wildcat does not say anything about his thoughts and conclusions on the reading of the Bible, there is no doubt that he adds something to his knowledge – and might have realized who those two people pointing to their hearts were. However, before the fourteen days in solitary are ended, and having nothing else to read, Wildcat starts to think about his life, recalling past moments, when a shadow, an image on the wall, reminds him of one of the nightmare episodes he had when he was a child – "Flicker of shadow became a shaped dread of dark wings and scared wild cat eyes . . . Falling, falling. Plunging and twisting out of the sky and the hard ground rising up. 'Mum!'. . ." (p. 8). The narrative technique for that scene follows the principle of the narratives in movies, giving the reader a sense of movement, of special effects through which a shadow is progressively transformed into another image and being inserted into another scene, usually in the past.

When the moment to leave prison comes, the prisoners do not receive their clothes back. They have to wear a new suit provided by the prison and made of a fabric which marks them as ex-convicts for the world outside. This is one of the things that made Wildcat say at the beginning of the story that he was 'so-called free' now, for if people outside are to know or to be warned that they are looking at a person who has just served time in prison, they will certainly be apprehensive about that person. This happens with Wildcat when, right after he is released, he goes to a store to buy cigarettes. The old lady who works in the store is clearly afraid of him because she recognizes the kind of clothes he is wearing. Moreover, he cannot just stand somewhere and smoke a cigarette because he could be charged for loitering with intent, therefore he has to move all the time while he is on the streets. When June tells him that the police or the magistrate cannot put him in jail until he breaks the law, Wildcat explains to June to what extent the Indigenous people are treated differently by the law. "'You haven't got a clue'. I tell her. 'They make the law so chaps like me can't help breaking it whatever we do, and the likes of you can hardly break it if you try' [. . .] 'We make the only friends we have in jail, but if we're seen talking outside we're arrested for consorting with crims'" (p. 43). Another example that the law is stricter for Indigenous people is when Wildcat is at the University bar waiting for June and her friends, and he decides to order a beer. He gets nervous because he is under 21, which means that he cannot have alcoholic drinks. So, he thinks to himself (and explains to his readers),

> If the barman takes me for a half-caste, he has a right to challenge me to produce my exemption ticket. As a quadroon I would be eligible for this, but in applying for it I would be found out for under-age drinking and they could put me in for that. Most native boys I know start their jail education by being put in on a drinking charge, but I bet half the Uni boys in here are under twenty-one. I don't see anyone challenging them, and if they did I can't see them being sent to jail. (p. 70)

Because he knows that sooner or later he might break the law and go back to prison, Wildcat feels the need to do it, as when he takes the train to Perth and, although there is a sign warning about a regulation against laying your feet on the opposite seat, he does that and still against regulations he smokes in the train compartment. However, the event that sends him back to prison occurs in the last chapter, when he shoots a police officer. Under other circumstances, Wildcat would never shoot anyone, but on that day when he and his friend broke into a store to get money for their trip, he got a rifle which gave him a sense of power, so his reasoning for that, and trying to avoid going back to prison is, "Must I just wait and take it like before? Why should I, when I have this power in my hands? None of them ever

spared me. Why should I spare one of them?" (p. 118). By comparing the hardships he has undergone all those years with the possibility of shooting a police officer, he means that he feels as they have shot him too, and that they have even taken his life. Nevertheless, as Wildcat knows that his reasoning is not enough to spare him from going to prison again, he flees to the bush where he will learn that there is another kind of power, stronger and more effective than that of the non-Indigenous law system – the power of Aboriginal law, or ways to deal with those who break their laws. Wildcat steals some money from the old Aborigine and is about to leave when the man tells him to wait because he wants to give him money for the trip. That offer makes Wildcat freeze inside, and he describes the moment when he realizes that there is a type of law distinct from what he has known before,

> He looks at me quietly and I feel he is reading my whole life from my face. Everything, as long back as I can remember, even before. So what? I tell myself. What do I care for an old abo crank in beggar's clothes?
> I look him straight in the face with my practiced sneer. His eyes are faded like potch opal, but clear and sad. Not judging me, only seeing how I am. I feel the blood flushing up my neck and over my face and I hang my head. No one ever made me feel this way before. No one. Not the magistrate, or the probation officer, or the brothers with all that thunder about the eye of God. Not even my Mum's suffering face. (p. 126-7).

an effective punishment which makes Wildcat aware of his wrongdoing and, consequently, ashamed of himself. Later, before the police takes him back to prison, although he thinks about committing suicide, he feels different inside and decides to face what is ahead of him – first, prison again; for how long, he does not know.

Until this point in my thesis I have mentioned power exercised through control over others, law and punishment, however, what type of Power Relations does Wildcat face with people who should be at the same level as he is due to their same age? In *Wild Cat Falling*, Wildcat describes his relationships with the Unis, university students who live at a higher social status than him, and the Mob, his companions at the milk-bar and whose social status is the same as his. The Uni students are white and have a higher level of schooling whereas the Mob members are part-aborigines or white, but they see themselves as black cats. There is a point in the story when Wildcat feels that he does not belong to one group (Unis) or another (Mob). Such feeling causes him to withdraw and think over his life in Perth, and once more he feels that he does not fit anywhere.

As Wildcat leaves prison, he goes to the beach and meets June, a university student with whom he starts a conversation. So accustomed is he to be seen as exotic or a species to

be afraid of, that he gets surprised when the girl speaks to him as if they were equal. By accepting a conversation and not showing any bias against him, the girl triggers a negative reaction from Wildcat. When he tries to pose as a social victim, she proposes a way out of the life he has been leaving so far. Wildcat explodes in rage when she suggests that he should relax, put on a bathing suit, get into the sea, run on the sand, and lie in the sun. He replies with sarcasm that perhaps by doing that something good will happen to him as a miracle. Then June pulls the trigger again by saying, "That's up to you" (p. 44). That short sentence is enough to make him resent the non-Indigenous people who see Indigenous people as "lazy, ungrateful rubbish people, who refuse to co-operate or integrate or even play it up for the tourist trade. Fly-blown descendants of the dispossessed erupting their hopelessness in petty crime" (idem). However, she disarms him by keeping calm, good-humored, and inviting him to meet her and her friends at the University coffee-shop the next day, which he accepts.

Wildcat was a good reader when he was in prison, so he acquired good knowledge on several subjects such as philosophy, psychology, and the literary classics. Notwithstanding, he feels like an ignorant when he overhears some students talking about Kafka as a misanthrope. That word was unknown to him, although he read Kafka's works in prison. The mere fact that Wildcat does not know what that word means, makes him think that he will not fit in a group of university students. He thinks twice, though, and decides that with a book in his hands, he will feel more comfortable and self-assured. That is when he buys *Waiting for Godot*[40], goes back to the coffee shop and waits for June and her friends. In fact, what Wildcat needs is to feel that he is able to show other people (and himself) that he is as powerful as they are; for him, power is connected with knowledge, as well as ability to intimidate people through actions and discourse. So, when June's group join him at the coffee-shop table, in addition to talking to them, Wildcat observes and pays close attention to the conversation the students have among themselves. Thus, when they ask his opinion about a painting, he is able to give them what they understand as a detailed analysis of the painting. As a matter of fact, he makes use of some terminology and reasoning that he has just heard in their previous conversation. The students have not noticed it, but Wildcat has mimicked them in language and gestures. This ability makes Wildcat feel that he has the power to make people believe in whatever he says; consequently, he feels more self-confident and is able to think clearly about the differences between him and those students. He gets to the conclusion that they are superficial, phoney as he says, and that even without meaning it, non-Indigenous people

[40] Samuel Beckett's play which Mudrooroo links to the existentialist issues and the consequent lack of hope of Wildcat regarding society and the world.

cannot help seeing Aboriginal people as exotics, as part of the Australian fauna or as defenseless children in adult bodies as in the following comment by a girl, followed by Wildcat's reaction to that,

> 'What I always think' she comes in, 'it's not the natives need educating so much. It's the whites.'
> I guess from the way she looks at me that this is the closest she ever got to an Aboriginal. She offers me this chewed old bit of white corn as though expecting me to seize on it with pleased surprise. How broad-minded, how perceptive to express a big, brave thought like that! I try to think of something withering, but all I can come up with is: 'You're kidding!'.
> She doesn't take it for sarcasm. In fact it stimulates her no end. (p. 74-5)

On the other hand, Wildcat thinks that his old Mob is not good for him any longer. Not now that he is bored with them because they have no ideas, they do not have the good knowledge he has acquired by reading and by being in contact with older, wiser people in prison. However, he still wants to dress like his Mob friends, to be a progressive dresser, all in black, and to listen to the same kind of music, rock'n'roll. Therefore, when he realizes that he cannot stand the kind of people that the University students are, he leaves the party at Dorian's and goes directly to the milk bar, only to realize that there is nobody he knows there. Perhaps the fact that he does not want to be a bodgie any longer and that the Unis are not good enough for him as well as the Mob, makes him feel that he should leave and try a new life on the other side of the country. Wildcat feels uncomfortable wherever he goes and finds it difficult to communicate with people because he does not really look outside himself. He is concerned with and focused on the fact that he feels displaced and not belonging anywhere or to any collectivity. His role is that of a victim of the non-Indigenous society – that has the power to keep him at its margins – although he feels superior to his old friends because now he has the power granted by knowledge and experience. As a matter of fact, he is not able to understand where exactly he stands: is he at the margin or at the center? Seen from this standpoint, *Wild Cat Falling* is a novel about a young urban Aborigine, based on both the traditional European model of novel writing and philosophy. In order to adapt the European model to his reality, the author added an Aboriginal aspect to the novel, which is Australian Indigenous mythology, also known as Dreamtime, as the central element of the protagonist's inner conflicts, and that later will function as the concealed solution he has to unveil to himself in order to understand who he is and where he stands – not at the margins, not at the center, but moving through the large social network that is Australia.

3.1.1 The concealed power of Dreamtime

This is a power that comes in a distinct form from those that run within the network of social relations, mostly in non-Indigenous societies. The Dreamtime concerns the Indigenous people's collective identity, thus being of great importance for the Australian Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations. The fact is that the Aborigines have the basis of their culture in the Dreamtime, and non-Indigenous people ignore how it works, which might explain many misunderstandings between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people of Australia.

Dreaming

The Dreamtime is, before anything else, the spiritual basis of Australian Aborigines, and mechanisms of power such as the ones that his mother was put through in the mission school and that led her to give up her Indigenous culture, giving rise to serious identity issues for the next generations of Aborigines who might never have contact with the culture of their family. Wildcat's mother had her reasons to choose to remain as an assimilated person, whereas Wildcat has always felt a need to be in contact with Aboriginal children, not to mention the curiosity he has often shown regarding the old Aborigine whom he used to see near his house. The result of trying to silence a culture is so harmful that it provokes an internal conflict, a feeling of emptiness along with a kind of inner manifestation of something they cannot understand, as Wildcat's nightmares for instance, until they are introduced to the principles of the Dreamtime and understand that they carry memories of a culture they have not been aware of up to that given moment.

During the narrative, Wildcat includes some clues of his future choice for Aboriginality, despite his mother's efforts to prevent him from that. When he is still a child

and goes for a ride with Mr. Willy, Wildcat feels free and happy at the top of the mountain from where he sees ‘the whole world’ which is, according to him, a good one. The moment when Wildcat loses his belief that the world is good is, clearly, the moment when he is taken to the Boy’s Home.

Wildcat’s interest for Indigenous people and the silence of his mother who, he knows, is of Aboriginal descent, is another hint that sooner or later he will learn more about the Indigenous culture which, after all, is part of his Self. The strongest signal of Wildcat’s Aboriginality appears when he and his friend are arriving in his hometown for one more breaking and entering with the aim of getting money for their trip and, “An eerie sound breaks the stillness and we freeze beside the car. I hear the heavy flop of wings and glance up as the dark shape of a mopoke blurs the sky” (p. 115). Mopoke is the Aboriginal name for a big Owl, which is believed to ‘smell’ death, thus its passage through the sky is a presage of death. Not knowing about that, Wildcat feels that there is something wrong, but he does not know what. Let me elaborate on the word “death” in this context. After having read the whole trilogy, the reader knows that Wildcat does not die as it could have been assumed, in a first reading, from the presence of the Mopoke in the sky. “Death” can be interpreted, here, as the end of a cycle, and the beginning of another, in the trilogy. When Wildcat says in the first sentence of book 1, “Today the end”, the meaning is the same. Each one of the parts in which the book is divided – Release, Freedom, Return – is “the end” or “death” of the previous one, and the beginning of the next. Thus, the Mopoke represents the “death” of Wildcat’s freedom, for he is about to shoot a police officer and return to prison.

It is after he shoots the police officer and flees to the bush that Wildcat runs into the old Aborigine, his uncle, who lets him know about the Dreamtime and the power of spirituality. The old Aborigine talks to him about his nightmares and then he understands that he is divided inside and has to work on that in order to heal himself and feel whole. That will happen in the second book. However, from the moment Wildcat realizes that his Aboriginality has been silenced, he feels different. Indirectly, the power of spirituality is that of making Wildcat know himself and be able to develop new balanced relationships of power. Until the end of book 1, however, he has been co-operative in the maintenance of his position as a subjected person when he describes himself as hopeless, bored and unmoved, which means, a victim of the non-Indigenous society. Still, he seems willing to learn more about himself and free himself from the role of victim.

3.2 Wildcat Screaming

This volume is more complex than the previous one and contains more instances of Power Relations in Wildcat's life. It is in this book that we witness the change of an Aboriginal youngster from a rebel into a strategist when relating to people and institutions. Structurally, this novel is more in accordance with the Aboriginal literary aesthetics described in Chapter 1. Elements of the oral narrative are more emphasized through repetition and the use of non-standard English. On the other hand, there are fewer Aboriginal words, both because the setting is white (Fremantle Prison), and because this book was written by Mudrooroo at the period of Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

Discourse is eminently political in book 2, and based on historical events. The battle of Pinjarra[41] is mentioned several times by Wildcat as the historical event that triggered his hatred for the British colonizers. He questions non-Indigenous actions and reasoning as wrongdoings against the Indigenous people of Australia and, according to him, Pinjarra – the event where his great-grandfather was killed, bringing negative consequences for his whole family up to the present time – was the worst of them. Another political discussion in book 2 concerns corruption in the governmental and prison systems of Australia, as well as the effects of institutionalization. As both narrator of book 2 and author of a book that he decides to write in prison, Wildcat reflects on writers' styles and writing performance. The fact that the author of *Wildcat Screaming* chose both focuses – politics and literature – to be worked together in his book, reinforces my hypothesis that Aboriginal literature is the best strategic tool that Indigenous people of Australia have found to bring into discussion all the issues related to their Power Relations with the non-Indigenous people.

International historical events such as World War I and the Korea War are also mentioned, but only to be compared to the importance that Pinjarra has to the Indigenous people of Australia. The highlights that Wildcat brings to the reader are the Pinjarra battle as an atrocious founding event and the writing of a book about his life as a young urban Aborigine who is institutionalized since his childhood and does not fit in the society where he should be productive as a good citizen. The reasons why Wildcat becomes a misfit rather than

[41] Pinjarra battle, which was the biggest massacre of Australian Aboriginal peoples, took place in 1834. Pinjarra is a small town 86 km from Perth.

a good citizen are told in the form of reminiscences along the trilogy. The very act of writing about his life may have worked as a type of therapy, a self-analysis through literature.

The discursive tactic that mostly called my attention in *Wildcat Screaming* is the fact that the narrator speaks to the reader, as opposed to book 1 where he tells his story as a register of his feelings, attitudes, reflections, along with some past and present events of his life. In *Wildcat Screaming* it is clear that this time Wildcat wants to cause an effect on his reader, and this effect aims at making his reader learn about the Indigenous side of Australian history and politics, as well as about the reasons why the Aborigines had to develop different strategies in order to thrive into the Australian society.

Wildcat Screaming starts with a scene that conveys what Wildcat feels towards the society that, according to himself, has made of him what he is now – an outcast, an animal to be kept in a cage – or even killed – as a non-Indigenous woman tells him. Now he does not have only the nightmares, but also screams inside his mind.

In this sequel, the first information about what happened after the police arrested him in the bush is that one of the police officers broke Wildcat's right arm. I could not help noticing that Wildcat plays on that sarcastically saying, "The right one, because the cops in their infinite wisdom forgot that I was left-handed when they broke it" (p. 4). That is one of the instances when he addresses the reader while he waits with other prisoners to be called before the magistrate. During that waiting time new relationships are established. Now, Wildcat is to move within the network of Power Relations in the prison, where he will undergo one more inner change thanks to some people with whom he will learn that, in order to exercise power as well as consciously subject to it, it is necessary to develop strategies. Therefore it is important to learn how Wildcat changes from a rebel into a strategist, experienced in the tools and tactics of power. In addition, this part of my analysis does not focus only on institutions and people to discuss Power Relations, but also on narrative techniques, memories (that are part of his relationship with the whole non-Indigenous society), the power/knowledge aspect of survival strategies, literature, and the inner power developed through the understanding of the Cat/Crow relationship in his nightmares.

It is by sharing his memories as well as the memories of his people, that Wildcat introduces the character whose role is to help him to include elements of the Australian history into his narrative, Clarrie. The old soldier, now a flasher[42], never stops telling stories

[42] Flasher – a man who shows his sexual organs to women in public places.

about ANZAC Cove[43]. The first time Clarrie mentions his landing at the Cove, Wildcat recalls the battle of Pinjarra and replies, "'Well, my great-grandfather was at the battle of Pinjarra', [. . .] though what battle was it when they came up on us, men, women and children and shot us down making us no tomorrow. . ." (p. 5). Then, after listening to Clarrie's stories for a while, Wildcat concludes that he has also been at a kind of Cove, because he feels that his life has been similar to being at war in a place where he landed by mistake. Then, he recalls the day when he shot the police officer, was arrested and had his arm broken. His mind is so contaminated with hatred for the society which brought so much misery to his people that while narrating the scene of his trip in the car, going towards his hometown at the night of the shooting, Wildcat says that the music playing on the car radio was "young rock'n'roll, the blacker the better, [. . .]. My kinda music. Rebel music. Revenge music [. . .]" (p. 8). The use of the word "black" here is a term to refer to all colored people in the world, regardless of the real color of their skin. The word 'rebel' refers to his main trait in book 1. Now, in book 2, 'revenge' is the keyword to all his reasoning about the kinds of power that have subjected him even before he was born, as I may infer from the recurrent thoughts he has along his narrative, which follows the principles of oral storytelling, with the narrator speaking to his listeners as on page 8, "Well, I'm getting a little ahead of myself, though still in the past. Let's get back to floating along that light beam".

Wildcat also remarks that he has read *The Modern World Encyclopedia, 1935 edition*, when he was in prison for the first time. It added to his rage against non-Indigenous people, for the anthropologists of that time stated, according to Wildcat's description of the words in the book, that "Like the flora and the fauna, they represent an archaic survival" (p. 8). Such description of the Indigenous peoples of Australia, as Wildcat points out, is outdated because he has the same characteristics of the old Aborigines with the exception of his skin which is "just brown because a white bloke got his wick in somewhere along the line. And you notice that they don't tell you anything about why us'uns are declining and surviving" (idem). The Aborigines were regarded as part of the fauna and flora of the country and a race in extinction for a long time in Australian history, consequently silencing the Indigenous peoples' role in the country's history. However, without the Aborigines to guide them through the wilderness of the country, the non-Indigenous people would not be able to explore such a large extension of land.

[43] ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) Cove –a sheltered bay on the Gallipoli peninsula in Turkey. The ANZACS landed there by mistake in April, 1915. They were attacked by the Turks at their arrival. However, they fought back and were able to stay at the Cove for eight months.

Wildcat cannot help comparing everything that non-Indigenous authorities state as being right or wrong, to the fact that he is regarded as a menace to society and enemy of the state, so he thinks about the battle of Pinjarra again, "[. . .] and wonder if any judge said anything about that day when they murdered our men, women and kids in cold blood and my great-grandfather just a kid of nine, the same age as I am when I'm taken from my mum, sees his mum die" (p.11). After some time in front of the magistrate Wildcat is sentenced to ten years at the Governor's Pleasure, which causes the scream inside his mind to start again. In this book the reader does not find a plot based on a character's existential troubles, but a plot focusing on society, from the inside-prison point of view.

The title of chapter 2 of this book is "My New Home", although Wildcat has already served eighteen months in the same prison. The difference now is that he is going to stay in another division, quite distinct from that juvenile one where he served time until a few days before his present arrest. When Wildcat enters the prison again, he feels dismayed because he has never liked that place due to the fact that it recalled him of Queen Victoria, under whose rule Australian Indigenous people faced their worst ordeals and massacres. Wildcat's concept of institution is "an old-fashioned dump. It smells of the suffering men inflict on men. It smells like an Institution. Yeah, an institution, a House of Correction. Home, man!" (p. 19). As Wildcat has been institutionalized from the age of nine, the common element which makes him recall what an institution is the purpose of institutions: houses of correction where people are subjected to strict rules and severe punishment. The reason why institutions become a home for people like him is that they are not prepared to live and think as free people. In order to live and think as a free person, one have to learn how to do that, and the last thing Houses of Correction, as Wildcat calls institutions, wanted was to teach independence and critical thinking to those who they had under their 'protection'. Independence to perform ordinary tasks and critical thinking do not fit in authoritative regimes[44].

Whenever Wildcat recalls that he will stay a long time in prison, the scream in his mind gets worse. It did not start there; it seems to have started when he was arrested and beaten up before going to prison. When he sees that he is going to stay at the New Block, not at the Victorian division, the scream becomes bearable and he's able to observe the place. Then, Wildcat notices that there is something different in that part of Freo, as the convicts call the prison. Wildcat comes to the conclusion that that part of Fremantle is another type of institution, one that he has never known before. According to his account on the cell he is

[44] This sentence summarizes my understanding of several distinct descriptions of the exercise of power and people in position of authority in controlled environments as conveyed by Foucault's writings and lectures.

going to share with the prison librarian and convict, one of ‘his mob’ as the guard informs him, although, in the present case, ‘mob’ does not mean Indigenous, but a murderer. As Wildcat is not a murderer, he is concerned about his cell mate and decides to investigate the place where he finds out that one of the two lockers has a combination padlock, which makes him wonder who his mate is, since it is unusual for convicts to have their belongings locked.

The first time he puts his eyes on Robbi Singh, his cell mate, Wildcat underrates the man because he is fat. As despising someone because he or she is different from you is prejudice, Wildcat’s behavior is similar to that of non-Indigenous people about whom he complains as being prejudiced against him. This is one of the aspects of Power Relations: what may be offensive to me, I do naturally to other people because, from my point of view, I am superior to him or her regarding either race or education or social status or professional position, for example. However, despite his first impression, Wildcat shows ambivalent feelings towards Robbi Singh when, after comparing the man with a dog, he says that “Still, he looks a bit like a Nyoongah, ‘cepting I ain’t seen a Nyoongah that fat before” (p. 24). When Robbi speaks to him, Wildcat notices that his English sounds foreign, “but not too foreign”. Such realization comes from the fact that India was once a British colony.

The relationship of power between Robbi Singh and Wildcat is a complex one at the beginning; nonetheless, although Wildcat has to submit to his cell mate, their relationship becomes more balanced along the time. Their first confrontation shows that, contrary to what Wildcat thought, Robbi is faster and stronger than him. Then, Wildcat subjects himself, since it is the only way to survive at that moment. It is worth pointing out that colonized people end up making use of the same derogatory words which were used by their colonizers when they are on the other side of the power scale. Robbi Singh, for instance, uses the words ‘servant’ and ‘master’ to refer to Wildcat and himself, respectively.

Having realized that that part of prison is really different from the rest, Wildcat starts to think strategically, “Strange, and maybe I can make something of it. [. . .] Just think of the lurks I can learn. Wildcat is gonna have the know-how to be a real big man when he gets out” (p. 27). From that moment on, he starts to observe everything about that division and the relationships between the people who work there and the convicts. Wildcat finds out that not only the prison guards, but also the director, have a close unusual relationship with prisoners. Moreover, that most convicts as well as guards in that division are ex-soldiers. Thus he compares them with himself as institutionalized people.

One of the first things Wildcat learns from Robbi Singh is that freedom is found in the interstices, he then goes to the dictionary and reads that interstices means “‘a narrow or small

space between things or parts; crevasse'. And what I mean by that is the spaces between discipline, between the eye-fucking, between the buttons of the screws" (p. 34). Wildcat is smart and does not miss opportunities to learn. However, sometimes such apparent balance in Wildcat's relationship with Robbi Singh is broken and Wildcat is reminded by his mate that he must keep subjected and not try to place himself at Robbi's position. Wildcat subjects himself to Robbi's will for three main reasons: he knows that he is physically weaker than Robbi, which means the force side of power; he benefits from it by acquiring knowledge he will be able to employ in the future, which is the knowledge side of power; and he needs a mother-like protection, which is the paternalist side of power. On the other hand, Wildcat wants to find a way to escape subjection, and the only way he can think of is through violence and revenge, meaning that he is operating in Foucault's semi-silence mode. Robbi Singh is the character whose function is to describe tactics of power and his approach to that is knowledge. Wildcat knows that and comments, "even asleep he's playing those power games to gain as much as he can" (p. 46). Robbi Singh is a kind of mentor to Wildcat in prison. As an Indian he has the knowledge and practice of transcendental philosophy, in addition to having read a lot (he even keeps books in his locker), and to keeping up to date with the news worldwide by the means of a portable radio. He advises the young Aborigine on what books to read in order to learn narrative techniques, and how to build the characters and the plot of his book; Robbi also teaches Wildcat to meditate in order to soothe his mind; he talks with him as with a friend when Wildcat feels bad or wakes up scared in the middle of the night because of the nightmares. Robbi Singh is also the person who divests Wildcat from his remaining innocence regarding people's ethics (or lack of it).

Fremantle prison has a Welfare department where prisoners meet with the Welfare officer often. Robbi Singh has a project to make the prison a better place and shows that he has the power to lead people do what he wants through the relationship he develops with key individuals in prison, such as the director and the Welfare officer. So, he presents his plan asking for a prison reform whose purpose is to have prisoners really reformed by the system. Such reform is based on Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon system and Adam Smith's principles of economy. Robbi Singh describes the Panopticon project as having a double function: the first is peer-to-peer surveillance in order to promote self-discipline and give the prisoners an opportunity to go up through the Panopticon system to the position of the seer, which means a thoroughly reformed person; the other function of the system is economy promoting profits for the prisoners who, when reformed and released, will have money to start their lives outside. However, there are strict rules to reach that position, and the ones who do not

introduce at least one new convict cannot go up through the system and fail. Failure means to be re-sentenced. On the other hand, a prisoner can be released by paying a fine of the same amount a new convict would have to pay to enter the system – $ 150.00.

In order to obtain support from all levels of society to put the plan of the Panopticon in place, Robbi Singh partners with the prison director, the superintendent and the wards. Wildcat is put to their service in the print shop where he makes copies of letters inviting people from outside prison to attend a lecture by the prison administration staff, whose aim is to present a plan to reform the prison system. In addition to the letters of invitation, Wildcat also prints the schemes of the Panopticon and its byproduct, which is an economic plan through which people who co-operate and give their support to the new prison system, might earn about $1,200. The whole plan is complex for it includes the design of the prison reform according to Bentham's description of the Panopticon as well as it includes a means for every person who is involved with the plan, to make a profit from it. After all of the letters inviting rich people, the Governor and his First Lady, intellectuals, and whoever could be interested in giving support to a new prison structure are delivered, a meeting is held at Fremantle Town Hall[45] in order to present the Panopticon plan.

A version of the Panopticon Project

The scene of the meeting at Fremantle Town Hall is described by Wildcat with focus on his observation of the audience's behavior towards Robbi Singh and the other people who are in charge of explaining the plan. Wildcat conveys such a feeling of revolt and bitterness against the society, that there are moments when he puts words inside those people's mouths and minds. The effect of Wildcat's technique of placing himself as if he were inside the minds of people in the audience is that of exposing several elements which are present in Power

[45] A public building in Fremantle, the port of Perth in Western Australia, built for meetings, exhibitions and other events.

Relations from the non-Indigenous point of view. Among them are prejudice, subjection and money as catalyzer. In order to describe the scene where the organizers - the prison warder, the director, the Welfare officer and Robbi Singh – enter the room, Wildcat puts himself in the shoes of the people in the audience and, as if he were one of them, makes use of derogatory terms to talk about Robbi Singh who is described as having a brown skin which shows that he is a foreigner, a wog[46]. Notwithstanding, an explanation that those people in the audience, through the words of Wildcat, would have for the fact that such a man takes the central seat in front of them, rather than one of the other men whom the audience regards as more like themselves – the British stock – is that perhaps that man is there because he is an object of charity, a victim, a lower level individual. Another individual that the people in the audience seem to take no notice of is a man who intimidates them with his cold eyes and the posture of a private soldier, which means that he might be a police officer or a prison warder, nobody who would be of importance to them, just an ordinary public servant. Such disregard is due to the fact that those eyes make them feel as objects. On the other hand, they see that there is a "grey person" whose eyes do not make them feel discomfort, all in all, gray is a neutral color, therefore they regard him as one of their own kind. In any case, there is something that will make that audience relax and forget those negative feelings: money. After all, they may earn 1,200 pounds!

On the power side of the equation, I may say that those people who organized the meeting are colleagues, – the prison warder, the director, the Welfare officer and the prisoner – or should I say partners? After all, they are probably more interested in the earnings they will obtain from the Panopticon scheme than in the actual prison reform.

When introduced by the director, Robbi Singh is, according to Wildcat's point of view, seen under a different light by the people who had regarded him with prejudice before, and the narrator expresses the shift in the audience's perception through the use of a different cast of adjectives. Robbi Singh becomes the "rather stout, coloured man" instead of "fat" and "wog", because those people in the audience would not be impolite, as the narrator sarcastically remarks. They become even more interested in what Robbi Singh has to say, for he shows a good knowledge of philosophy and economics. During his speech, Robbi ends a sentence by saying that "prison is but the central aspect of society" (p. 84), which is related to the fact that Australia, as a country, was born as a prison – the prison country – whose convicts were in charge of building its infrastructure. In addition, prison is the place where

[46] Wog: a dark-skinned person from the Middle-East or the Far-East.

plans and schemes are conceived as is the case of the Panopticon Prison Reform Society. Moreover, the fact that Robbi Singh mentions Adam Smith as the founder of modern economics and Jeremy Bentham as the founder of the Panopticon as a tool to improve society, means that he is linking Bentham's principle, in the words of Robbi – that "the aim of society is to give the greatest happiness for the greatest number" (p. 84) – with the idea that the Panopticon leads to self-empowerment and, consequently, to prosperity; both, in turn, leading to the happiness of the greatest number, making the scale of Power Relations even.

The scheme of the Panopticon Prison Reform Society is divided into the structure through which the prisoners will go up to the position of seers and the economic plan which helps the convicts to "reform". Considering Robbi Singh's explanations about the way the Panopticon should work, what he means by "reform" is an opportunity to leave prison through investing money in a pyramid-like plan that will advance them into prosperity. By including the majority of society in such a plan, the Panopticon scheme is the tool employed to assure that everyone will profit, and that society's aim is achieved. Therefore, the relationship of society with minorities depends on and is influenced by the benefits and profits that it might obtain from those minorities who, otherwise, are *personae non gratae*.

As Robbi Singh's plan for the Panopticon is discussed at the Welfare office meeting, every prisoner is supposed to present his plan to reform himself. Thus, in the first Welfare meeting that Wildcat attends in Fremantle, he expresses his idea of writing a book, "Well, I've been thinking that maybe I should write a book for them. Warning them what'll happen if they keep on the way they're going"[47]. The word 'they' refers to the young Australian Aborigines like himself, who would benefit from a book written by one of them. In fact, the idea of the book was Robbi Singh's, who told Wildcat that the prison administration keeps a file on every convict's behavior, and that the bigger the number of points you get, the sooner you may be regarded as reformed and, thus, released.

In order to write the book, Wildcat appropriates himself of the tools – language and knowledge – of the ones who subjected his people and adapts those tools to a reality where the Indigenous people are not silenced and have the opportunity to reverse the exercise of power up to a point where balance is the result of Power Relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. By making use of English to write a novel, which is a European literary genre, and by introducing elements of Aboriginal culture, Wildcat conveys two aspects of himself as a writer: he has assimilated the white culture and, although he makes use

[47] The book that Wildcat writes in prison is about his life as a part-Aboriginal teenager who ends up in prison. The reader of this Trilogy might relate it to book 1 - *Wild Cat Falling*.

of the only literary tools that he knows, he is able to adapt them to his objective – the book. Since most Indigenous youngsters in Australia still are not able to read or write in English, according to Wildcat, it is important that they learn the language in order to communicate with the white society. Therefore, after finishing the book, Wildcat, now the prison librarian, starts to plan for the future. He knows that he must keep himself busy. Now he does not think that Beckett's characters are the best example for him any more, because he needs hope, or there will be no future ahead for him. Therefore, Wildcat decides that although he has to remain subjected until the day of his release, he will never be really subjected to those whose only purpose is to maintain their position of authority.

At the end of book 2, by employing the technique of meditation – which he uses whenever he wishes to feel free from subjection – Wildcat "flies" to the bush and thinks about the relationships that he must develop with non-Indigenous people. Mentally free in the bush, Wildcat realizes that he can do something else to add to his points, "[. . .] see if I can get a Nyoongah group together, teach them English, or writing, or something like that" (p. 142). By doing that, Wildcat will be disseminating the use of English by Aboriginal people who will have opportunity to express themselves clearly to both, Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Reflecting on that possibility, Wildcat finishes the narrative saying that "We'll win through, all of us" (p.142).

In *Wildcat Screaming*, the main character of the trilogy is taken to a type of relationship of power that is difficult for him to understand at first because his counterpart in a whole part of book 2 is another Aborigine, who has a skin which is darker than Wildcat's – Jackamara. The role of this character is the same role that full-blood Aborigines had in colonial times, when the politics of whitening the Aboriginal race was in practice and the government used to hire Aborigines to perform jobs such as surveillance and hunting Indigenous children and teenagers who ran away from the assimilationist institutions where they were placed. The same kind of character also appears in the movie *Rabbit Proof Fence*, where a full-blood man, a tracker, is hired by a mission school to hunt runaways. The role of the tracker is so pivotal regarding the Stolen Generations that Mudrooroo devised, for book 2 specifically, a character who plays the same role of those old Aborigines: an Indigenous person who holds a position of authority as a public servant to inform on his own people. In order to focus the reader's attention to Jackamara's role, Mudrooroo dedicated a whole new section in book 2, to the Aboriginal detective – Surveillance. Although Jackamara's role is not exactly that of the tracker, he is a police detective from the state of Queensland, who is called to help the police department of Western Australia to find out what is happening inside

Fremantle prison. The police in Perth had been warned that something ‘strange’ was taking place in that prison and that such thing might be related to prisoners escaping from jail. Thus, Jackamara’s task as a spy for the State in Fremantle, is to allow the police department to arrest him and put him in prison for one week, period of time when he must find out everything he can about unusual activities that might be taking place there.

Although Jackamara is nearer to the full-blood Aborigine and is quite self-assured of his identity and role in society, he cannot help making comparisons between the past and the current Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationship in Australia. According to his thoughts, as narrated by an extradiegetic narrator, things have not changed much. In “Surveillance”, Jackamara’s portion of book 2, the focus is not on Wildcat. The narrative, now in third person, is carried on including the style which represents Aboriginal oral language through repetition of words as in “[. . .] he wonders why he is recalling it while he stands at attention like a, like a copper in uniform” (p. 91); words such as “copper”, “grey”, “chappie” belong to both, the narrator’s descriptions and Jackamara’s thoughts.

The Aboriginal police detective, an army veteran as many of the characters in book 2, notices that the state of Western Australia is different from his home state, Queensland. Jackamara compares Western Australia with the British colony, conveying the idea that the refugees of the British Army who settled there are not different from the convicts who were taken to Australia and managed by colonial administrators.

When Jackamara is taken to prison with the purpose of finding out what is going on in there and to obtain inside information about the Panopticon Prison Reform Society, he has to undergo all the procedures of an ordinary convict, including the examination of the body by a prison doctor. The Aboriginal police detective is the character that represents Indigenous people through color as indicates his reaction to having to undress himself and being observed by the prison guards. That situation leads him to conclude that by the fact that he is dark, it seems to him that he is less naked than the others in that room. The idea behind such thought is that although his color may be something heavy to carry due to racism against Aboriginal people, it makes him part of that country, not a foreigner as non-Indigenous people are. Because Jackamara’s perception of things comes in the form of colors, every event, people and situation include the color gray, as when he thinks about the smell of the prison soap, “If smell could have colours, the colour of this smell would be grey” (p. 102). It seems that everything is gray when described by Jackamara – gray clothes, gray emotion of depression, gray mist, steely-gray eyes, gray head – which conveys the notion of the two colors that blend to compose gray: black and white. Perhaps, in Jackamara’s perception, what calls his attention

more than anything else about that world is that white and black are not distinguished as different colors any more. Once they blend, they become another color which is something in-between – containing both colors, but none of them exactly. Such perception, in my view, is closely related to the notion of hybridity as discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis. Thus, Jackamara represents the oppositions embedded in the notion of hybridism: he is not what he seems (a real prisoner), yet he is an Aborigine. In addition, although he is there as a surveillor, he is investigated by the other convicts who do not trust him due to his way to look at the place and people around him.

After a week in prison, Jackamara finds out all the details about the Panopticon scheme and writes a report stating that it is a plan for prisoners and their supporters earn money, and that prison reform is nothing more than an excuse for a financial scheme similar to that of the pyramid[48]. Therefore, regarding his task accomplished, Jackamara hands in the report to the Commissioner who disregards the report as being "mere supposition". Moreover, the Commissioner informs Jackamara that Robbi Singh was given full pardon, that now the prison chief ward is the new superintendent, and that the former superintendent has suffered a heart attack (all very convenient and rewarding for the Panopticon plan organizers). Once more a representative of the Indigenous people is silenced and ignored as someone whose point of view is not worthy of attention. The convenience of financial earnings transforms the Panopticon scheme into a plan above reproach, so much that the Governor, himself, is a patron. Disappointed at the outcome of one week's imprisonment to help the Western Australia police force, Jackamara decides to visit Wildcat, who was his major source of information in prison and to whom he wants to give support now and when the young Aborigine is released, within some years. This is where Jackamara's part finishes, and another one – Continuance – draws the focus back to Wildcat, who is in charge of the narrative again. Wildcat is annoyed at Jackamara because he was led by the police detective to give information about Robbi Singh without realizing that he was doing that. He feels betrayed by an Aborigine, and that is something he cannot accept. As a matter of fact, more than angry at Jackamara, Wildcat is angry at himself for having been so naïve, in spite of those many years he has spent trying to learn about life and survival. He always thought, for instance, that "coppers came in flat feet and big boots, silver buckles all down the front and a cap and a

[48] The Pyramid scheme is a fraudulent investing plan which is structured like a pyramid. It starts with one person - the initial recruiter - at the apex of the pyramid. This person recruits a second person, who is required to invest a certain amount which is paid to the initial recruiter. In order to get his or her money back, the new recruit must recruit more people who will also have to invest the same amount. The process continues until there are no more recruits.

badge and all that jazz" (p.133). Then he decides to take a knife with him when he is called for a meeting with Jackamara; that decision represents the first reaction of a person who feels hopeless and betrayed. In addition, it is clear that Wildcat has not thought of his book as a likely strategy of power – by giving account of his feelings, his story, the outcomes of his doings and of his relationships with authorities and peers – or he would not think about being violent against Jackamara. Rather, he would try to learn why and how those things happened, and what could be done now to adjust his plans to the future. However, when he is face to face with Jackamara as they talk about their common origin, about the injustices which were committed against their peoples in the past, about feelings, and when Jackamara tells Wildcat that he might help him, the boy says that he does not believe in fairy tales, that Aborigines are "Beckett characters shuffling through life" (p. 138). When Jackamara asks him who Beckett is, Wildcat answers that he is a loser who writes books about losers. Jackamara tells Wildcat that he must think about the future, the time when he is to be released. Eventually, that advice causes Wildcat to remember the book he is writing, and along their conversation, Wildcat starts to trust Jackamara, who invites him to go to Brisbane, Queensland, after his release from Fremantle. At a first moment, Wildcat reacts ironically, but later he decides that he wants Jackamara's friendship and support. Now, Power Relations is balanced between two people who do not usually see each other as opponents or competitors but were placed in that kind of situation exceptionally. The power that Jackamara has exercised over Wildcat was originated from a task that the police detective had to accomplish, therefore, it was a consequence of Jackamara's job, something he could not avoid. Nevertheless, the exercise of power, mostly by people in a position of authority, originates from desire.

Book 2 is rich in instances of situations in which desire for power leads the actions of the characters. Routine discipline in prison, for example, is a tool employed to have many people controlled by a few. One major desired side-effect of routine is that it makes time continuous, broken only by changes in events, not by numbers of hours, minutes and seconds. Such continuity causes the prisoners to feel lost since they do not follow a calendar. They have to adapt to a new reality and are not able to keep track of the time they have already served. Another aspect of losing one's notion of time is the perception of the world outside. It never occurred to Wildcat that the world might undergo changes while he is in prison, so when Denise[49] visits him, he feels surprised not only because the girl's physical appearance betrays consequences of the difficulties she faces in the world outside, but also because he

[49] Denise is Wildcat's friend and lover as she is introduced in book 1. Now she comes to visit him in prison, bringing with her their son, whose existence Wildcat had no idea of.

finds out that he is a father of a boy of four. This means that the world outside does not stop evolving and that he has been in prison for at least four years now. That long period of time has also opened a gap between Wildcat and Denise who, according to his description, seems to feel like him and is not comfortable during their meeting. One sentence that Wildcat uses to describe his current perception of Denise and his son is, “I see the world in them” (p. 72), which conveys much more than just two people who come from the outside to see him. Although this may not have been the intention of that sentence, it suggests the idea that if he sees the world in them, he also sees them as part of the world that put him in jail, that mistreated him when he was a child, that exercised power with the purpose to subject him, and make him feel hopeless, and willing to force himself to stop feeling anything. That may be an explanation for his telling his readers that he does not feel anything for the boy who is his son.

Politics of the body is also a power tool used as part of discipline and punishment in any institution aimed at reforming people. In Swanview, for instance, Wildcat was punished because someone reported that he and a friend were masturbating; in prison convicts undergo medical examination and, thus, are touched by other men at their arrival as well as at their release. In both institutions having a shower means being supervised all the time by an authority whose function is to assure that people will not break the rules.

Knowledge is what makes it possible for subjected people to reverse power. Robbi Singh, for example, brings more knowledge about how life is, about the need that Wildcat has for inner strength and, consequently, be willing to survive. Wildcat’s uncle also knows that knowledge is crucial for survival as when he says about non-Indigenous people at the end of this book, “Lots of things they can’t take away from us” [. . .] Lots of things they don’t know about” (p. 142). This is why Wildcat’s book will be so important for other young Aborigines, although he still thinks that the only reason that led him to write it is to obtain more positive points in his file.

3.2.1 The Dreaming as a Trigger of Inner Knowledge/Power

Wildcat’s nightmares are a focal point in books 1 and 2. They represent his inner troubles through elements of the Aboriginal mythology. Those nightmares started when he was a child, but he could never recall them until the day he met his uncle in the bush. By recalling what was once a nightmare, with the help of his uncle, Wildcat realizes that it is in fact a calling of his Aboriginality through Dreamtime representations of his own Self. In

Wildcat Screaming, the dream changes; in fact, it evolves into a more complex message which is eventually resolved inside Wildcat's mind. Now, instead of just Cat wanting to fly as Crow, and Crow deceiving Cat, more elements are added – naked Greek-like statues on pedestals which are arranged on a ground paved and divided into squares. At each of the intersections of the squares, lies one of those statues – and Wildcat wanders around the pedestals, crosses lines, and feels that he has to keep on moving. This scenario is new to him, therefore he is curious about it as he does not know whether there are rules about where he can go. He just crosses the lines between the statues as he has crossed the lines of society and law when he was outside. He has to keep on moving for it is the only way to find out what he is supposed to do in that place which looks like a large organized white forest. When Crow appears, Wildcat notices that he is thinner, and that his wings became bedraggled. However, Crow still has the power to make Cat believe him and the old story of flying and falling down repeats itself once more, when Crow, although weaker, shows Cat that it is possible to fly, to consciously fall down and go back to flying, "If you can fly you can control your falling" (p. 40). Thus, it is a matter of self-knowledge and self-control. One night, as Wildcat screams in his sleep, Robbi Singh and a prison guard awake him. He tells Robbi about the dream and learns that it is something inside his mind, that the wings he needs are in there, and if he settles his mind, he can go anywhere and, consequently, he can "bow out of the power equation" (p. 46) as Robbi tells him. Nevertheless, bowing out of the power equation also means bowing out of the social equation. By that I understand that only at the moments when he is settling his mind is Wildcat able to bow out of the power equation, for he is a social being and society is a network of Power Relations from which he cannot escape, unless he withdraws from any social contact.

Next time Wildcat's dream includes one more character – a jitta-jitta[50] – a black and white Australian bird with whom Wildcat is able to flutter. Now there are three distinct characters inside Wildcat, and the way I see them in my reading is: the black Crow representing Australian Indigenous people, the Cat representing white society, and the black and white jitta-jitta, representing the possibility of blending both colors and form an interstice, that gray place where there is no dichotomy of colors, but just one color made up of all the traits of the two formerly separated ones. Therefore, I would say that the jitta-jitta represents Wildcat's adaptation to his reality. Now he can cope, and although he has not succeeded yet (he has not flown in his dream yet), the scream fades away. The part of him that was

[50] Jitta-jitta or Wagtail is a messenger bird who is also protector of the Indigenous camp, and must be greeted, fed and treated with respect.

desperately asking for help has been taken care of , has been recognized as existent, and this part is Wildcat's hybrid being who now is able to move all over the power network because he is more than just black or just white. He is both at the same time.

Two events were crucial to send the scream away: Robbi Singh's teaching him to concentrate his mind, and Jackamara having treated him like a human being. The result of such support is in his last dream when Crow loses his power over Cat, who learns to focus and trusts only himself, eventually becoming able to fly. Although flying is not of a Cat's nature, Wildcat chooses to have that skill to feel well about himself, and eventually he is ready to go on – "Now I know that I can make it , and that no one can break me. I have something special in me which can't be touched, which has its own freedom" (p. 142), and that something is his mind which is more powerful than anyone or anything else.

3.2.2 Narrative tools

As *Wildcat Screaming* focuses on political and historical issues as underlying factors of Indigenous issues in Australia, the narrative techniques employed in this book are central for preserving it as monument more than as document. Thus, the oral narrative style with repetitions of key words, colloquial vocabulary mixed with slang and Aboriginal words help to build a fictional text that is intertwined with historical issues, such as discussions on war and anthropology, for instance.

Playing with words to convey deep meanings is represented on page 37 where Wildcat says that in a given room, "There is a mental, naw, a metal door". Although the door was really a metal door, the use of the word mental means that it did not matter whether there was a door or not because he was thinking about escaping, anyway.

Speaking to the reader is Wildcat's way to make his text more personal, closer to his audience, as when he says "don't laugh" (p. 140). The first time he addresses the reader as an old storyteller is when he breaks the flow of the storyline to talk about himself as main character and narrator, and about his family. Then he says, "Well, that's how things are. Now, let's get on with the story" (p. 9), and goes on speaking to himself, "let it flow easy, let it flow slow, huh, Wildcat do your strutting". In addition, the narrator Wildcat disappears from the narrative in the part called "Surveillance" where Jackamara is the main character, and an extradiegetic narrator takes charge. However, the way non-Indigenous people and their behavior is depicted remains always negative as it is in Wildcat's narration. Jackamara is older and more experienced than the young Wildcat is, therefore he does not make use of

derogatory terms when thinking or speaking of non-Indigenous people. However, the narrator continues showing his disregard for the white people as when he describes the moment when the Commissioner tells Jackamara to be seated and he does so, “He nods when he sees that the Aboriginal detective has obeyed his order [. . .] waiting to serve” (p. 92). Wildcat’s point of view as narrator in the Wildcat Trilogy is not fixed. The changes from first to third person and back, is a technique that Mudrooroo uses to place Wildcat as narrator and main character of the story (first person) or as a narrator of his past (third person), in addition to an authorial narrator who is omniscient and narrates the whole Surveillance part of book 2. The way in which Wildcat changes his speech about himself on page 139, causes the reader to note that although it seems that Wildcat (narrator) is speaking about Wildcat as being another character, he is referring to his inner Wildcat, to whom he used to refer as just Cat before, “Wildcat knows how to spit and claw in return, but he can’t. He wants out, and they know this, know that nay brawls I get into are going to be against me [. . .]”. Something similar appears before, on page 133, when he speaks of Wildcat in third person, “This Wildcat, he tries to fly . . . they won’t let him; pull him down, nail him down on a cross like Jesus, and before he knows it, he’s screaming in pain, suffering for al the times he’s opened his mouth when he shouldn’t have”; suddenly, the narrative goes back to first person in the next sentence, “The shit is raining down on me. I feel like I’m about to explode”.

Interesting is the way the narrator makes some elements common to his characters. In common with Wildcat, Jackamara has the gray color; in common with Wildcat, Jackamara has the elements of Aboriginal mythology, such as the crow, which he uses to talk about Singh’s relationship with Wildcat. Those symbolic elements – colors and mythological beings – are powerful narrative tools, representing Power Relations concerning ethnicity, race and culture.

As for gray, I have previously mentioned that, in my view, it is representative of hybridity. In other instances of the story, however, the same color may convey different meanings such as the nickname they give to the Welfare officer – “the grey mouse” – who has grey eyes that do not look directly at the convicts’ eyes. Gray mice are the most ordinary and disgusting type of rodents. They transmit illnesses, enter people’s houses even though they are unwanted, and are useful for nothing. Perhaps this is the idea Robbi Singh has of the Welfare man since the man is manipulated by him, a convict, has no initiative and behaves as though he were scared of the convicts. Gray eyes are usually seen as inexpressive, which is ratified by the Welfare man’s avoidance of facing people in the eyes. The prison clothes are gray, a cold color which, used in a uniform, makes all of the people wearing them look the same.

They are not individuals, but one compact group formed by many gray clothes. Jackamara is the character who brings more expressions that include gray such as, “grey emotion of depression”, or something that a person feels and that does not bring any stimulus, any strength to go on; “grey mist,” which he describes as filling his body and head and world, is that feeling of being confused, not seeing where to head, completely lost; he uses the expression “grey head”, to talk about the Commissioner, meaning that any person could be there at that moment because the specific individual is not important, but what the “grey head” does is. On the other hand, there is one mention to a colorful instance in the whole book, and I should say a negative one, when Wildcat realizes that he has learned one more lesson, that not everything is as simple as he thought, concluding that police officers are not so clearly identifiable and reliable because they may mingle with other people in disguise as Jackamara did, passing for a convict. Wildcat’s words about this are, “They are like flies and come in all the shades of the rainbow of human deceit. . .” (p. 133). The human being has developed so many ways to deceive other people that Wildcat compares those ways to the rainbow – one event (deceit) in many distinct ways (all the colors from which the rainbow is made up).

Intertextual elements are important tools in Wildcat’s narrative in the trilogy. They tell the reader about the narrator’s influences from literature, music, movies, national and international cultural aspects as well as knowledge on Australian history and foreign people who contributed to the development of the country. In book 1, literature and music are highlighted whereas in book 2 all the other types of intertextual elements are used. On page 10, for example, Wildcat tells the reader how much he likes gangster movies, and then compares himself to Little Caesar, a Hollywood gangster of the 1930s. As for literature, Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* has been mentioned since book 1; in book 2, other literary works such as Camus’s *The Outsider* is the book that will inspire him to write his book based on its main character, and *The Plague*, which he calls “contagion”, representing the corruption that he finds out to exist in the prison system. Wildcat also discusses the role of the writer and the art of writing, “Maybe it’s the problem of those sorts of writers. They skip from subject to subject, just not settling down anywhere” (p. 58). It indicates that Wildcat thinks that a writer should write about one theme and develop it as much as possible as his creator, Mudrooroo, has done with the trilogy. Another important intertextual element in book 2 is the economic scandal that would happen in early 1990s in Western Australia, thus many years after the events told in the book. What the narrator does in this case is to tell the reader that, “It may be interpolated here that it is from this meeting that the temporary prosperity and eventual

economic collapse of Western Australia began [. . .]" (p. 86). As a matter of fact, Western Australia enjoyed an economic boom in the 1980s, when the government partnered with large private companies; those partnerships eventually caused big losses to the State, which was investigated, exposing a great deal of corruption. What does that mean? That the last part of chapter 2 in *Wildcat Screaming* is the voice of the author, Mudrooroo. Another evidence of that is chronology. The book was published in 1992, and Fremantle Prison was closed in 1991 to be transformed into a museum. Thus, the story in book 2 takes place long before that. When closing the same paragraph, the author includes some information that seem to be fictional, however, when I noticed that he did not mention the whole name of Robbi Singh, but wrote just the word 'name', which in English usually is understood as a person's last name, I decided to verify the pieces of information which I found in the voice of the author, and have reproduced here,

> [. . .] and I may end this interpolation with the information that he was not only the author of the epithet, 'The State of Excitement', but was instrumental in aiding that euphoric state by bringing to Western Australia a cherished international trophy, as well as ensuring that the famed casino came into being under the most proper ownership. He shall not be forgotten (p. 86).

Interestingly, all those pieces of information are accurate. Not Robbi Singh, the character of this book, but several men whose last name are Singh, contributed to all of those achievements on behalf of the State of Western Australia[51] - the epithet, a cricket international trophy, the Perth casino, were all obtained through the efforts of Indian men called Singh. I read it as a tribute paid to all Indian people who co-operated for the development of Australia.

Wildcat's favorite kinds of music are jazz, the Blues and rock'n'roll. The lyrics which appears in books 1 and 2 with the purpose of telling the reader that Wildcat's real problem is in his mind is "Trouble in Mind", a traditional Blues from the late 1950s. As for rock'n'roll, as mentioned before in this close reading, his preference is for the ones that convey rebellion. From Wildcat's preference for Hollywood movies and American music, it is not difficult to conclude that he does not regard as important to give preference to Aboriginal art. It would not be authentic if he did so, for he was raised as a non-Indigenous person and has been influenced by the most far-reaching culture – the American culture.

[51] To verify the veracity of those pieces of information, just type them between quotation marks, adding the plus signal and the name *Singh* in Google search engine.

3.3 Doin Wildcat

In *Wildcat Screaming*, the main character and narrator walks through the network of Power Relations in Fremantle Prison which is, differently from his first time in prison, a positive school for his future life. He resolves his "trouble in mind" – the Cat/Crow relationship that is eventually balanced – and by doing that he is ready to develop strategies that will help him cope with every situation where he is faced with an imbalanced relationship of power. It means that now Wildcat has reached that level in which the Indigenous people stop fighting back with violence and start fighting back with strategic thinking and words, placing the book he writes in prison as representative of all Aboriginal writers' books. In *Doin Wildcat*, Wildcat's experiences, memories and reflections lead to the new not-so-young-anymore urban Australian Aborigine who has achieved maturity enough to represent the possibility of reconciliation with the non-Indigenous society.

This is the thinnest of the three volumes of the trilogy, and yet the one that presents more challenges for the close reader due to it being structured as a book that a) tells the story in *Wild Cat Falling*, and b) tells about the making of the screenplay based on that book, and the relationship of the author, Wildcat, with the movie director and the actors of the film. Moreover, *Doin Wildcat* was written in the Australian Aboriginal Literary "rebel phase", when the Indigenous writers started to make it difficult for the non-Indigenous reader, to understand the messages contained in the text. Mudrooroo´s reason to having written *Doin Wildcat* in Koori English was that the book was one of his contributions for the commemoration of the 200 years of British settlement in Australia. It is about Wildcat's life after his long time – about twelve years – in Fremantle. In fact, the events in the story take place twenty-three years later. Once more, the book is divided into three parts named: Prison, Goin Ome, Ome, the opposite direction he took in the first one from Release to Freedom to Return (to Prison). Here, Power Relations are conveyed in a more subtle way, whereas discourse and memory are emphasized. The storyline touches on issues such as adaptation, reconciliation and benefiting from the social-economic system in which he lives now. Many of the instances of Wildcat's relationships of power are repetitions of the events and situations that appear in the first and second books. Therefore, my reading of this book does not focus on Power Relations as much as it did in the other two books; its main focus is on discourse,

memories and Wildcat's new mindset, as well as his relationship with the movie director and crew, bringing up questions about the movie and publishing industries.

Doin Wildcat is a founding work by Mudrooroo who from this book on names himself as Mudrooroo Narogin. It is the first time the author includes the name of the region in which he was born as his last name. It is also the first time an Aboriginal writer subverts the criteria established by the European literary field, classifying this book as "A Novel Koori Script" – a novel and a script at the same time; in addition, because it is Koori, such blend does not follow the structure and the principles of the European genres, but presents a whole new concept "as constructed by Mudrooroo Narogin", an Australian Aboriginal writer. It is a new form to present Australian Indigenous discourse from its own aspects of oral storytelling.

3.3.1 Wildcat and the Movie Crew

The relationship that Wildcat develops with the movie crew gives rise to mixed feelings which he has to deal with during the course of the movie shooting. It seems to be bewildering to Wildcat to accept a whole different bunch of people to play his and other people's parts in the movie. Although the boy who is to play him is also part-Aboriginal, he does not look like the young Wildcat. Due to that fact, Wildcat devises a plan to make the boy feel what he used to feel in the situations he describes in the script; the boy must feel both at the same time: fear and anger. Wildcat succeeds in provoking those emotions in Ernie, who gets angry because he is scared. Perhaps that was exactly what Wildcat used to feel when young, for the more afraid he was, the angrier and, consequently, more rebellious he became. Anger stemmed from fear usually has its roots in education or social constraints and prejudice that stigmatize people who are different and thus, not accepted by the general society.

The opposite is also true, for minorities show prejudice against the people who are in a better social and/or economic position in a given society. Such two-way feeling, although seemingly balanced, actually imbalances Power Relations due to the fact that both sides wish to erase one another. Wildcat has always shown hatred, disdain and prejudice against non-Indigenous people and authorities in general, although he usually expresses his thoughts in a way that conveys the notion that all of the Australian Indigenous people are victims of non-Indigenous people and authorities. When two police officers arrive at the set to complain about Wildcat and Ernie's behavior the night before, Wildcat describes the police arrival as, "They turn from us an to Al, who as a white man must be in charge" (p. 55). That statement is a reinforcement that although colonial times have long finished, people's minds are still

colonized and Wildcat criticizes the fact that although the Australian Aborigines have been successful in guaranteeing some important rights as well as in being acknowledged as Australian citizens, in fact they are still seen as "your boys", as the police officer refers to Wildcat and Ernie when talking with the movie director. Not used to be regarded as less than high authority, the police officers are caught by surprise when the movie director overreacts to their words and shouts at them, telling them to complain to some local authority instead of disturbing his work. Overwhelmed, the police officers subject to the movie director's order, yet they feel the need to be the ones who exercise power rather than subjecting to it, thus when they are leaving the set, they threaten Ernie whose position as part-Aborigine, actor, and young, is seen as inferior to theirs – white authorities.

Notwithstanding the fact that the movie director is a non-Indigenous person, an American-Jew, the whitest that Wildcat has ever seen, he is well regarded by Wildcat, who understands that everyone who has suffered as the Aborigines and the Jews have, deserves his sympathy. In effect, minorities are usually supportive among themselves, mainly when one group or another has been undergoing injustice or ordeal. Nevertheless, the invitation to follow the shooting of the movie in Fremantle prompted Wildcat to think of the movie director as part of the majority of people who take advantage, usually economic, of minorities, causing him to explain the following about his disappointment for being there, "Yuh know, they weren't content to buy me book, get me to write the script an all that, but I ave to be invited along to me ol prison ome of many long years" (p.4). Once more Wildcat's feelings are ambivalent for he complains that the movie director and other movie industry's decision makers "were not content", meaning that if they had to do something so harmful to his feelings as to buy his book, and pay him to write the script, they should not have invited him to go to that place where he spent many years and which still brings up sorrowful memories; however, it remains a fact that he also uses the word "home" (very ingeniously, I would say) to refer to that same place. Home is, according to the *Dictionary of English Language and Culture,* "a safe and comfortable place which others only enter by invitation" as well as "a place where one was born or habitually lives and to which one usually has emotional ties". Prison is, indeed, a safe place to live with all the wards watching so that nobody will leave without permission; Wildcat really habitually lived in prisons, mostly in Fremantle, thus he had to make himself comfortable there. In addition, considering the time he spent there and the friends and acquaintances he made, as well as considering all the suffering physical and mental that he underwent there, it is true that he has emotional ties to that prison. Notwithstanding, there is irony in the fact that home is a "place which others only enter by

invitation" which is not wrong, but such guests are "invited" by a law representative who lead them, through law enforcement, to that "home".

Another 'trouble in mind' for Wildcat is the discomfort that he feels when the director starts making changes to his script, but then he recalls that he also made changes to it and that according to the Aboriginal oral storytelling a story is not told the same way twice. However, those changes lead Wildcat to reflect on the editing of books, "Books are all cleaned up with an ero whose worth of sad an withdrawn" (p.23). Such commentary reminds me of another one that Wildcat made in book 2, when he referred to the time when he was writing his book, and had to submit it to the Welfare people's and the teacher's revisions. Those were occasions when Wildcat was given recommendations to make changes to his story, or the people who advised him made editings themselves.

1988 was the year when Aboriginality became a source of economic and social interest with non-Indigenous Australian people becoming aware of how profitable it could be for them to boost Aboriginal cultural movements. Tied to economic advantages of commoditizing the Indigenous culture of the country, were social issues that non-Indigenous people did not want to worsen or the rest of the world would criticize them for being disrespectful to the Aborigines' rights. As consequence both, Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians started a profitable business for their country: Exoticism. As anyone who lived at that time and needed to make money, Wildcat did not think twice when the Americans proposed that he wrote the script and sold the rights of the book to them. However, when Wildcat noticed that the director was doing too many, and important, changes to his script, he regretted the deal he made with the Hollywood people. Although angry due to the changes, Wildcat concludes that, "The director must've fucked it up. Told Ernie to play the sweet beguilin sexy young'un for the American audience [. . .] Anyway, I've signed away me rights an ave to put up with it. . .." (p.43).

3.3.2 Wildcat's Memories or Creative Writing?

As he has not found a way to balance the Power Relations with the legal system and the prison officers in the previous books, Wildcat goes back to Fremantle not only to follow the shooting of the movie on his book, but also to trigger memories which will help him deal with his past. Although it remains true that he complained about having to return to that prison, Wildcat knows that the time to see the big picture of his life has come. Therefore, open to memories as Wildcat is, they come in the form of a side effect to his presence in the

set – Wildcat, the writer, now reflects on his old Self, questioning some of his past memories conveyed in *Wild Cat Falling*, as well as his role as an Aboriginal writer who is pressed upon by the commodification of his work, as opposed to retaining control over it as an author and screenplay writer.

Wildcat either becomes aware or recalls that one of the mechanisms of which he made use when he was writing *Wild Cat Falling* and had to deal with events of his past that could convey him as a youngster unable to react as he should in order to balance the scale of Power Relations, was to write those events as he wanted them to happen because, "Yuh know, yuh never could get the bastards in real life, so I ad to get me revenge in another way. I wrote im into the story an done there what I should've done to im in reality" (p.14).

Several situations in the book did not really happen, or happened in a different way, as the day when the juveniles barricaded themselves and ended up in solitary. Wildcat asks himself why he did not put it in the book or in the script. Then, he answers, "I could ave tidied it up an made it more dramatic, but then Jack and Ralph and Eric don't appear in the book, though Chinky does, an so I changed it to what I wanted personally to do to that screw, an I wanted to play the ero in my own little drama" (p. 26-27). However, what really happened was that instead of the tea bucket, Wildcat and his mates built a barricade in one of the cells to make a stand against mistreatment. In my point of view, Wildcat did not tell the "real" event in the first book because it would not be consistent with his character. In *Wild Cat Falling*, he is an alienated young part-Aborigine boy, living an existential problem. Thus the best way to picture such kind of character is to make him do something as an individual reacting all by himself, against someone who represents the authority who he regards as responsible for his misery. Police officers, prison wards, magistrates as well as probation officers represented, in Wildcat's point of view, the society that rejected him consequently leaving no other choice for him than becoming a misfit eager to disturb that society's establishment.

According to Wildcat, he is all confused about what he wrote in the book and script, and what happened in his real life. "I remember a beach close to the prison, but I'm not sure where it ad been, or even if it existed" (p. 28), is one of his comments, for instance. Similarly, Wildcat tells his readers that the scene at the University and even the group of the Uni students did not really exist in his life. Due to that fact, the scenes where Wildcat interacts with the University students are the biggest creative writing part of *Wild Cat Falling*. Although he has invented those Uni students and the whole context around them, they served as instruments to talk about the fact that non-Indigenous people have always made decisions for the Aboriginal people on the grounds that they were not capable of making their own

decisions and thus managing their lives. In that scene of Wildcat speaking with the Uni students in the coffee shop, a dialogue takes place with the young Aborigine as the center of attention and being asked to give his opinion about a project to integrate Aboriginal people into the general society. However, as soon as he answers, the discussion continues only between the two non-Indigenous students who forget Wildcat's presence there, thus ratifying his perception that the non-Indigenous people never stop deciding for the Indigenous ones.

Another strong memory is when Wildcat recalls his probation officer deceiving him rather than helping him as he was supposed, thus being responsible for Wildcat long imprisonment in Fremantle. While *in loco*, Wildcat recalls and adds to his account of that moment that his family was referred to as "drifters" by Robinson. I can see a purpose in such account: one of the biggest problems for Indigenous people in Australia is related to and due to the power/knowledge aspects of illiteracy and cultural differences, including the law system and more subjective aspects such as discourse mechanisms, ethics, and intentions. Therefore, what Wildcat does is to convey the reality of Aboriginal people who were sent to prison in Australia in the period in which his story takes place; that is: Aborigines, mostly the young ones were semiliterate, thus when asked to sign their statements to a police officer they did not understand many of the words and expressions; as the Indigenous people of Australia usually express exactly what they mean as well as have a relationship of trust, they could not understand the hidden meaning underneath the spoken words, which made it possible and easy for non-Indigenous authorities to insert false information in those statements as Robinson did when he said that everyone in Wildcat's family was a drifter. Whether Wildcat said that it was not true, it was his unworthy word against the non-Indigenous authority's worthy word.

Memories become so blended with the movie scenes that Wildcat's mind starts to replace the old real people from his past with the actors who are playing them in the movie. While recalling Denise, since he cannot remember her face any longer, she becomes Jinda, the actress who plays Denise in the movie as in a previous memory, his mother became Clarissa, the actress who plays her in the movie. Nevertheless, Wildcat reasons that he has already put his past in the book and that "Now nothing is real except the book, an the script an the actors playin in the filim. Some'ow, it seems that that's all I've got of me past" (p.55). He does not actually need to recall his real past because he knows that will be impossible now that time went by and other events took place and people as well as himself have changed along that time. Wildcat's reasoning about his past, memories and real events represent the impossibility for the Indigenous peoples of Australia to return to a moment when the colonizer had not

provoked so many changes to their families and culture. Therefore, now is the time for them to retain what they can still remember and adapt themselves to the changes that occurred along time while passing on to new generations the heritage of their culture as well as the lessons they have learned on how to survive and adapt to a new type of relationship with the non-Indigenous people.

In the script, the scene in which Wildcat is at Dorian's party and speaks with June before leaving is longer and totally different from that in the first book. It means that Wildcat never stops his creative mind and follows the tradition of oral storytelling which, on the one hand is good for the writer and on the other hand, bad for the person who is caught between reality and imagination. Wildcat says to Renee, one of the actresses in the movie, that he wrote books in prison to keep himself from going crazy, however, now he is re-living part of that past that he wanted to purge through his writings, and sometimes he feels like he is losing his grip on reality. Perhaps this is the price he has to pay for having based his creative writing on his real troubled and not resolved life. All in all, some of his relations of power have not been balanced.

3.3.3 Wildcat's Discursive Style and Effects

When talking about the fact that Fremantle prison will be transformed into a museum, Wildcat shows revolt, "An then, yuh know what? They makin it into a museum, a bloody museum dedicated to their colonial arts an crafts. Some arts an crafts alright. All bloody with the blood of both black an white prisoners cryin [. . .]" (p.4). Even though the museum might be intended to exhibit items of the History of Australia, Wildcat and all of the other ex-convicts who served time there will always see it as the prison where they have undergone suffering, both mental and physical. Moreover, prison and convicts are a major part of that country's history. When Wildcat says that it will be a "bloody museum", he is talking about the blood of the convicts who died there either of diseases or condemned to death penalty. As a matter of fact, Wildcat is talking about genocide and this time he is not referring only to black people, but also to those white ones who are part of a minority – prisoners without any rights – that is doomed to be erased, or at least hidden, from the general society. Therefore, the message conveyed within such a discourse is that, although the new museum will be a cultural and historical place meant to inform people as well as to organize Australia's history in one place, the fact is that Fremantle building was built to be a prison; it was a prison built by convicts to inflict punishment to convicts; many of those convicts died there, others

acquired traumas and mental diseases that were never healed. Thus, the message in-between the lines is that prison itself and all of its items that are to be exhibited there along with other documents and pieces of arts and crafts brought from the outside, will represent genocide as the major effect of colonization – the main evidence of a time when Power Relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Australia were far from being balanced.

Since security and surveillance people always wear uniform, even the museum security men might be seen by Wildcat as the prison guards, "[. . .] those uniformed bastards standin over yuh with sticks and guns, an clubs an words" (p.5), who were always ready to exercise physical and mental power. Since the museum security people wear a uniform, carry sticks and guns as discipline weapons, to keep people from breaking the rules while visiting the museum as well as may also have the role of museum guides, they use words to tell visitors the history of Australia according to the official non-Indigenous version of the events. Such words are as harmful as the ones of the prison guards for when they do not erase Indigenous history, they twist the facts according to their best interests.

Those memories of his time in prison make Wildcat's speech increasingly bitter as when he recalls the proceedings at the receival center, "[. . .] where they stripped yuh an eye-fucked yuh, an washed yuh down [. . .] an what were yuh? What were yuh? Nuthin mate! Nuthin, bradda! Nuthin, Kuda!" (p.5). There was always the risk of being raped by older convicts or the guards. However, as Wildcat does not include the description of any event when a guard has had sex with a convict, it is implied the notion that the possibility of that was a mechanism of disciplinatory power applied by the prison guards to keep the convicts afraid of and, thus, obedient to the prison rules.

Another Wildcat's discursive strategy is to point out that he has been observing someone for some time before starting a relationship. Such observation time corresponds to the silent period through which Aboriginal people went before reacting against harmful actions by the non-Indigenous people since the beginning of the colonial times. Then, to explain how hybrid individuals manage to survive he tells his readers that, "A bradda told me once that we ave two lives, that we are unters in this world, an to survive aveta learn ow to mimic, learn the art of camouflagin ourselves as we unt in the different worlds" (p. 8-9). The advice of Wildcat's friend leads to a possibility of mild relationships of power between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. However, the Indigenous people must mimic the non-Indigenous as well as camouflage themselves consciously, or they might be caught and stuck in only one of those survival mechanisms. Mimicking is to show assimilation whereas

camouflaging means non-acceptance to really interact in the general society. Therefore, both are necessary in order to move along the Power Relations network, according to the moment.

Wildcat recalls that there was a kind of hierarchy in prison – among the inmates, the strongest or the most psychopath was respected by the others who submitted to him. In addition, he also points out that some juvenile convicts who go to prison for petty crimes want to do something really bad the next time. This is because they think they did not receive a fair sentence, thus if they do something really bad, they will be fairly sentenced, and therefore they will not suffer so much. Friendship is easily developed among young inmates who, more than the grown-ups gather in groups in order to build strength to act or react against anyone who might mistreat them. This is typical among minorities living under strict discipline and surveillance. Indigenous Australian people for their cultural principles and for their condition of minority in their country, organize themselves in communities in which everyone supports one another. Thus, when necessary to express themselves, rather than just one voice – which would be easily silenced – raising against injustices, they count on many, which are more difficult to be silenced. It reminds me of that tea-bucket scene again. In the discourse level, what Wildcat does is to tell the reader that, in fact, he acknowledges that in order to affirm that this new text is truly Aboriginal, he has also to rescue the presence of the community which he had kept hidden – silenced – in the first book.

The solution he finds to cut the negative effects of his past life in Perth is to leave it for ever. Nevertheless, his feelings for the city are ambivalent, "[. . .] gone and with it whatever links I ave with this town. Maybe I won't come ere again. Still some of me memories ug this place" (p.28). Perth is the city where Wildcat lived most of his life, thus it is natural that he has good memories of it from the times when he was a child, before having to face the punishment of society for not complying with its rules.

While watching Ernie playing him in the scene where he is in front of the magistrate at the age of seventeen, Wildcat becomes disappointed at the young boy who is not able to convey the feelings that he really had at that moment which he regards as one of the most important in his relationships of power. According to Wildcat, Ernie should "give his bottom lip a tremble to show that shit-scared feelin, but then ee as to control it too" (p. 14). He wants that his character's emotions are properly and accurately conveyed in the movie. Thus, in order to make Ernie understand and be able to mimic his feelings when he was a teenager and had to face the angry face of authorities, Wildcat gets a spray can of black ink and writes "WHITES YOU MURDER US" on a shop window to express the bitter feeling that Aboriginal people has towards non-Indigenous people. However, another word was meant to

come after “US” – BLACKS. Wildcat points out that the word “Black” should have been written in order to convey the accurate message to the non-Indigenous people. However, because of the word “Whites”, it is logically not necessary to write Black at the end, for the opposition has always been between black and white people in Australia. Therefore, there is another way to read Wildcat’s will to make clear that the word “Black” should be there: the meaning of that word is broader than just the color of the skin of Aboriginal Australians; that word defines all of the minorities that have undergone direct or indirect genocide by the white society in its efforts to eliminate every race, religion, and culture, distinct from their own. Such reading leads to the notion that by writing “Black” and meaning Aboriginal people plus any other minority, there is also a broader meaning to the word Aboriginality, which may be understood not only referring to an Indigenous identity, but as a choice to live as Aboriginal or to be an advocate of the Aboriginal culture.

At the end of the narrative, Wildcat shows that his reflections on his life and the world where he lives now, made him more confident about himself and his power to establish balanced relationships with other people. Thus, he goes back to the same place with Ernie and writes: “KILL US WHITE AUSTRALIA IF YOU CAN”. Now he feels alive and that he has a future ahead, which gives him strength to defy and fight against discrimination and the consequent erasure of minority cultures.

As a writer, Wildcat knows how to manipulate people’s emotions, so he starts telling a beautiful, romantic story about him and Denise, then turns it into an account of raw impressions about sex, and then softens his language again. By doing that he uses the power of knowledge that the others do not have about Aboriginal culture, Australian customs, and the art of storytelling. Wildcat even mentions Barbara Cartland as the model for his mock romantic story, and says, “I ain’t a writer for nuthin, yuh know” (p.35). This, as well as other instances when Wildcat tells the movie crew stories, show that he is always aware and in control of his creative process. Such control gives the narrator the power to guide his audience’s attention and emotions, while he can follow their reactions and make decisions towards the end of a story. It seems to me that Wildcat works on that very well, for while he is telling that romantic story he looks at the girls’ faces and see that they are totally involved in the story, then he decides to “bring em down a little” (idem) to once more observe their reaction. This way he devises his stories as they were devised by his old ancestors.

Another mechanism of which Wildcat makes use to speak to the readers about the differences in people’s point of view about serious matters is to retell Kevin’s jokes changing them to fit his view on a given matter. It is important to point out that Kevin is also an

Aborigine, which means that not all Aborigines have the same point of view even about issues that matter to all of them. The joke about the old Aborigine and the elevator is a good example. In Kevin's joke the old man stands in front of an elevator door and stays there for some time watching people going in and out. His conclusion is that the people who come out of that "room" are not the same that went in there, so they are changed into different people. Wildcat, was the only person that did not laugh at the joke because it reminded him of the time he spent in solitary from where he came out different: quieter and passive, but also meaner and nastier. Then, after some time he tells Kevin his version of that joke saying that the old Aborigine was put into the elevator and from a different point of view the man sees that when you observe from the outside, different people came out of it, but when you are inside and the doors open on a different floor, you see that you are in a different world.

In books 1 and 2, Wildcat made use of myth discourse to convey the notion of hybridity issues and the positive result of understanding the advantages of being able to move between two distinct worlds by knowledge and adaptation. Interestingly, in book 3 when Wildcat mentions the nightmare he used to have as a kid, he does not give it much importance. He even calls it a "stupid dream", even though this time he says that Crow takes Cat's eyes off. Moreover, the scene of Wildcat (Ernie) speaking with his uncle in the bush, does not mention the nightmare, or the Dreaming. Why is that? If now Wildcat regards the nightmares that were so important before as "stupid", it means that in the other two books he made use of Aboriginal mythology as a narrative tool that now is not useful any longer, for now he has decided to talk more objectively about Aboriginal issues, and nightmares as well as dreams depict individual inner troubles; *Doin Wildcat* is about collectivity as opposed to individuality. Another point to analyze here is the fact that Crow takes Cat's eyes off, which means that he became blind which, in turn, makes him incapable of looking at the moon and flying towards it or any other place. Therefore, Cat returns to his original state of a terrestrial animal, not really part of the Australian native fauna, while the Crow becomes a strong, central symbolic character again. As for the scene where Wildcat/Ernie speaks with his uncle leaving all the nightmare conversation out of the movie, means that although the Dreamtime mythological stories represent "local color" as much as skin color, it was not important for the American audience, and the ultimate goal of the movie is economic profit. It must show the exoticism of the Australian young people, but nothing as exotic as the major symbol of their spirituality – the Dreamtime.

In that scene of the University students discussing about Aboriginal affairs with Wildcat just observing them, another type of non-Indigenous character is introduced with a

purpose which Wildcat explains to the reader, "[. . .] I've also written a scene for another kind of white. It's what yuh could call the nigger lover" (p. 64), a young non-Indigenous girl who defends the right of the Aboriginal people to be left alone to do what they please as they please of their lives, without non-Indigenous people deciding or forcing them integrate into the general society. Although the girl's intention is good, it is seen by Wildcat as interference from a person who has nothing to do with his native people. In order to reinforce such non-Indigenous behavior towards Aborigines, even June answers for him in another dialogue when Dorian invites Wildcat to his party, "He'd like that. It'll give him a chance to meet people" (p.66). The effect of such discourse on the reader of the trilogy is that of realizing how harmful paternalistic treatment has been to the Indigenous people of Australia from the beginning of colonial times, when such type of relationship was established by the non-Indigenous people.

There is one more kind of relationship of power that Wildcat pinpoints in *Doin Wildcat* – economic – in which Indigenous people create a source of revenue and the non-Indigenous people, who hold economic power, take advantage to make a profit from the exoticism of native creations that become goods and services, such as crafts, books, weapons, decorative items, as well as dance and ritual performances, for instance. Wildcat translates it into the following comment, " "What do yuh think white people are for, to look after us poor black people. We ave the ideas, they ave the unger for the money. Yuh know the only guy who ever made any money outa writin about Aborigines was a white bloke" (p.81)[52].

Wildcat's narrative discourse is full of remarks about Power Relations related to several aspects of strategies for survival and the role of knowledge as a linking element for the balancing of relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Recalling the time he spent in the Boy's Home, Wildcat states that the secret to survive in an institution is that, "You got two fists an add to it a thinkin brain an yuh survive" (p.85). Therefore, if physical violence is needed in order to defend yourself, all right, but knowledge is important as well or even more because it is the raw material of strategy. In Fremantle prison, the "thinking brain" is more important than anything else, as Wildcat describes in several situations throughout the trilogy. However, many of those people who have been subjected for a long time, get used to it, accommodate themselves and cannot live on their own. It is an ambivalent feeling – they

[52] In fact, many white male writers wrote about Aborigines, such as Xavier Herbert- who was one of the writers who rescued the Indigenous people of Australia from invisibility - and, Ion L. Idriess –who was not so sympathetic about the Aborigines in his novels, for instance. Therefore, it is difficult to know to whom, exactly, Wildcat refers here.

want freedom, but do not know what to do with it to succeed in life, and that is why they end up back in prison, the place where they feel protected and which they see as their home.

When speaking of his relationship with law authorities, Wildcat changes the bitter discourse to a discourse of victimhood, although his character behaves as if he were self-assured and not affected by the presence of such authority as the magistrate who uses a vocabulary and a kind of discourse too complex for him, to the point of making him afraid of stating something against himself by giving the wrong answer,

> MAGISTRATE: And so you have no time for such things as the bible and oaths made before God, or this court?
> 'No, I don't. . . sir!'
> MAGISTRATE (*with a smile*): And so, we may presume that you'll swear to tell the truth on your honour?
> [. . .]
> 'Yes, sir!'
> MAGISTRATE: Well, we'll have to take that on good faith, won't we?
> Is words scare me, frighten me to ell an back.

Notwithstanding, Wildcat thinks that the job which sent him to serve more than 10 years in Fremantle has eventually paid off, "We fucked it up real good for too many years. Still I wrote this book usin it, an they're makin this movie usin it, so after all I mightn't ave fucked it up altogether. It just took some time to get the proceeds – an Yankees pay real good for scripts an book rights" (p.91). Therefore, Wildcat has eventually given in to the new economic order of exoticism which has been really profitable for both, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, placing them at the same level in the network of Power Relations, although it does not place them at the same social and economic levels in society. In order to remain profitably exotic, Indigenous people must keep their cultural traditions. As a matter of fact, Wildcat shows support to exoticism when commenting about the full-blood Aboriginal who appears in the movies, "Ee as that, ard to describe, weepy manner which some of the oldies ave, an if that comes over in the picture, it'll be good for our image" (p. 93). However, it might be a double-meaning discourse, through which the author, Mudrooroo, criticizes his protagonist for accepting and even wishing that Indigenous Australians and everything connected with their culture be seen as exotic, and thus a source of revenue for their people who are, in turn, a source of profit for the non-Indigenous community. Another aspect of exoticism is that the Indigenous artist or writer usually knows that his or her work is to be commoditized as expressed in the following statement, "Yuh knew that this was goin to be a piece of exotica for the Yanks" (p. 105).

At the end of the book, when Wildcat is talking with Renee, he asks her if she knows about the Aboriginal myth of the Snake, to which she replies that "Yes, there was a series on television called that" (p. 120). Such comment informs the reader that Aboriginal culture has become a product as everything else in the new world social and economic order, nevertheless, it also informs the reader that there will always be a way, it does not matter which one – movies, television programs or literature –, to disseminate Aboriginal culture. All in all, literature, either in the form of novels, poetry or script, is the basis for movies and TV shows.

When discussing the end of the book with Ernie, Wildcat explains that it could not be otherwise because, "That book was me ticket to the outside, bradda. It ad to please em, so the endin was a appy one for em [. . .] nice white social workers helped im" (p. 113). This sentence is curious because Wildcat starts speaking in the first person and ends it in the third person. In terms of discourse, the effect on meaning is that the writer of *Wild Cat Falling* was not exactly the same person who is now speaking to Ernie. And, if he is not the same person, it means that he would not accept the "nice white social workers" interference if he were writing it today.

The last part of the last paragraph on page 10 is the strongest and the richest piece of text since from Wildcat's memories, he summarizes several forms of Power Relations effects on himself as well as on minorities worldwide, as opposed to the power of counter-discourse even when it is built as jokes. The following words might sound just as the expression of Wildcat's despair while he looks at the prison building and releases memories of that place, however, it is a creative way to put much information in a condensed way,

> I sit on earin a soft sobbin arisin from the stones around me, from the earth beneath me, from the bars, from the broken neck of the last anged man as the screw swung is legs to correct a botched angin; earin the silence of the convicts screamin an beatin out on their tin plates a protest at legal murder. Please, let's forget about the illegal ones. Officer, let's forget, sir! I'm back again with nuthin but the memories of you in this place, an I've become a writer of a sorts an ave scripted a picture which'll show little of what I'm feelin – or maybe a lot! It depends on the movie an perhaps on Auschwitz an Treblinka, an a joke told by Kevin at the right time to turn the American guy's mind eyes around an onto the faces of ard-eyed guards murderin without mercy. Let's forget all that, bradda, while I sit still mindin me own business an lookin at that gate.

When right after talking about illegal murders, Wildcat calls "Officer, let's forget, sir!", he is saying that those illegal murders were committed by state authorities, not by criminals. As for his feelings, Wildcat says that they will be shown a little or a lot, depending

on the movie, or better, on the movie director and Ernie, the actor who plays him. Then, he adds the infamous Auschwitz and Treblinka, concentration camps in Germany, where a large number of people, mostly Jews, were decimated. The connection between those places and the movie director, a Jew, in Wildcat's narrative might mean that Al also depends on a type of control that is likely to demand certain cuts in the movie, resulting in a little of Wildcat's feelings being shown. Another reading for Wildcat having mentioned the concentration camps is their connection with genocide. White people – and here it is important to pinpoint the adjective white with reference to those people who exterminate other races because they are regarded as impure – have promoted direct and indirect genocide of black Australians; Wildcat's message concerns to the fact that either the movie director or other people who have the power to make demands by cutting (killing) his feelings in the movie would be practicing indirect genocide.

The amount of Wildcat's feelings that are to be shown in the movie also depends on one of the Kevin's jokes. Not any joke, but one of those that "turn the American guy's mind eyes around an onto the faces of ard-eyed guards murderin without mercy" (idem). This statement reinforces the notion that jokes are not mere funny narratives, but also a discursive tool. As parabolas, they carry a deeper message inside a funny story. Moreover, as they are told by an Aborigine, the message of the jokes must concern social and political matters. By including the suggestion that a joke would cause the movie director's mind to see the guards murdering people, he is saying that he wants that the movie director sees more than just "local color" in his story, and includes Aboriginal issues as the causes of his protagonist's existential problems. As he knows that he can do nothing about the movie's decision making process, ironically he tells his reader to forget all that, and that he will continue concerned with his personal issues.

3.3.4 Narrative tools

Doin Wildcat is consistent with the other two books regarding the oral storytelling technique. The difference in this book is the introduction of Koori, and the fact that it is clearly a counter-discourse to *Wild Cat Falling.* Although in the first book the author was in his first phase as an Aboriginal writer – that when the writer expresses Aboriginal issues through non-Aboriginal language and text structure –, thus appropriating the colonizer's standard English and novel structure in order to talk to the non-Indigenous reader, it can be inferred from the use of Koori in *Doin Wildcat*, that this was the language in which Wildcat

wrote *Wild Cat Falling* in prison, and the reason why the teacher and the welfare people wanted him to write in "proper English".

The jokes are used as a means to talk about cultural or mindset differences either between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people or between Indigenous people themselves. The joke about Turtle and Monkey, for example, tells about differences between people of the same family – or race, nationality, gender, points of view, species –, about unknown abilities, adaptation to new situations and environments, as well as about the fact that Australian animal tales include animals that are not original from that country, as the monkey in this joke. It is a reminder of the relationships that the Indigenous people of Australia have always had with people from other countries. However, there is another reading of the Monkey/Turtle relationship that is more consistent with the trilogy: it is a relationship similar to that of the Crow and Cat in Wildcat's nightmares, although in the joke it is the animal which does not belong to Australia's natural environment (Monkey) who tricks the native animal (Turtle) whereas in the nightmares, the native animal (Crow) is the one who tricks that which is not native (Cat). Anyway, when the non-native animal tricks the native one, the result is that although it meant to do evil, it ends up helping the native animal to find out the strength and ability which it has not realized that it has. Thus, the native animal adapts to its new situation, taking advantage of the opportunity that it has for self-determination, freeing itself from the influence of the other.

Wildcat's memories are not all exposed in flashback (which makes easier for him to show how confused he is about imagination versus reality). Some of those memories come in the form of amendments or additions to events that he has told before. As a narrative technique it works well for both, the reader who has read the two previous books and the reader who reads just the third one. Wildcat usually summarizes briefly the event which he wants to change, thus any reader is able to understand the change and the reason for that. In addition, it works well mostly for the reader who has read the other two books because he or she is familiar with a given event which is changed in the third book, and the writer does not have to devise a distinct, although analogous, event to convey the intended meaning.

When speaking with the movie director, Wildcat builds their dialogue as in a script, placing the names of who is talking before the sentences. He calls himself "script writer", which means that he is un-named again as in the first book, and being un-named means not belonging. In fact, he does not belong to that movie-making world, where people work with Art but are, in fact, interested just in making money. Moreover, when movie-makers decide on a theme or use a book as the basis for a movie, they are not interested in deep or serious

messages, but in what will attract the most people to the movie theaters. Such aim is not familiar to Aboriginal artists and writers, whose works are aimed to convey political and social messages to their audiences. Therefore, Wildcat feels an outsider who is able to identify himself as the "script writer", the only part of his person that the movie director knows and is interested in.

An interesting narrative technique is the way in which Wildcat summarizes many pieces of information about his life history, by making use of symbolic elements that represent the different periods of his life, all mixed with past and present images,

> Ad a stupid dream. Old dream, but mixed up. About a cat that was flyin, flyin high, an a crow came dashin down an pecked out its eyes. Then, it was real funny, I came awake in that dream, an I was a kid again an in that little ouse we used to live in. I got outa me bed an went to mum, but it wasn't her. It was Clarissa, an I begged to get into bed with er. I ad bin frightened by the same dream, then it all changed again. I was grown up, not old, but about sixteen an I was lyin in a bed, an theyu came for me. I was just lyin there, an these two demons, detectives, yuh know, they came in an one said: 'Well, well, here he is just like the last time' (p. 32).

As the nightmares have no function in Wildcat's present life, he regards them as a stupid dream and withdraws the power of Cat to fly. Although the dream is not necessary any longer, he has to use it to lead the scene to his mother's bed, the only place where he felt well after the nightmare episodes. Then he jumps to the present time saying that the bed of his mother is, in fact, Clarissa's, the actress who plays his mother in the movie. Right after repeating the scene of asking his mother/Clarissa to get into her bed, the scene changes to the 16-year-old Wildcat, just before he was arrested and taken for the first time to Fremantle. Thus, by linking events as fast as they would appear in a movie, and using "bed" as the common element between them, Wildcat takes the reader from his childhood troubles to his teenage troubles.

A simple way to define surveillance is found in, "Ow I ate those screws always lookin, always lookin at yuh" (53). By the technique of repeating the verb that conveys the concept of surveillance, Wildcat leads his reader to sympathize with his discomfort of having people watching him all the time. One more example of the use of short statements to lead the reader to understand a major concept in the story is at the very beginning of the book, on page 3, when Wildcat describes the movie director, " [. . .] after all ee is the biggest and whitest director/producer we've ever seen, an come all the way from America to spend big bucks an mix with us Abo's to make a filim based on me book". The notion of the white American (the most powerful people regarding economic and cultural influence) that comes to spend big

bucks (because they have economic power) and mix with Aboriginal people to make a movie based on an Aboriginal book (because it will be profitable since there is a market open for a new concept known as exoticism), is the concept of the commoditization of native Arts and Literature with the objective of spreading them worldwide and integrating the native peoples into the new global economy, which is intended to be profitable for both, non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples worldwide.

The old and always successful technique of using a character to exemplify a concept is also employed by Wildcat on page 64, when Ernie is playing the scene with the Uni students, "Ee begins an I notice that ee's changed is accent so that ee is close to mimicking the students. That's what I mean about livin in two worlds an learnin ow to camouflage yer speech an manners when it suits yuh".

Book 1 was full of intertextual elements. In *Doin Wildcat*, in addition to the intertexts of the trilogy, itself, there is one which is significant as an example of the Beatnik era – the first lines of one of Alen Ginsberg's poems, *Howl* –, and the influence that it had on the young Wildcat, "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked, dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry fix" (p. 73). Then Wildcat says that Ginsberg was both one of the best and worst beatniks. The best at writing his perceptions and criticism on America in the form of poetry; the worst at making apology of drug use which alienate people instead of helping them to act on what they perceive as wrong or harmful. Therefore, the older Wildcat is aware that although he still likes the Beatnik's ideas, the Beatnik behavior did not help him much in what active criticism concerns. Nevertheless, recalling that the young Wildcat probably was not familiar with the American reality, he must have read Ginsberg's first lines of *Howl* adapting them to the Australian Aboriginal reality, which means that "the best minds of my generations destroyed by madness" might be related to the schizophrenia added to the abuse of alcohol, caused by the effects of colonization in Australia; "starving hysterical naked" might be understood literally, for the Indigenous people of Australia were kept in a state of poverty; "dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry fix", might explain the reaction of the first Indigenous people in early colonial times, when they tried to defend and keep their land through violence and revenge against the non-Indigenous people who were taking over their country. If Wildcat read the first lines of that poem as I have assumed, Ginsberg must have been an icon for the boy. Notwithstanding, Wildcat must have read it again a number of times, and must have searched for information about all the other references to the American reality that Ginsberg placed in the poem, thus the older Wildcat

must have understood better the influences of that culture on Australian Urban Young Aborigines.

Independently from which interpretation Wildcat gave to *Howl* and other literary works he has read along the years, what is really important is the power that literature has on the minds of people – readers – who are able to make connections of what they read in fictional works with their reality, since it boosts people's curiosity for the things they find in the texts and of which they have never heard before, as well as it provides food for thought and further action. Such conclusion leads me to another question: who is the target reader of the Wildcat Trilogy?

Australian Aboriginal Literature is aimed mostly at the non-Indigenous readers with the purpose of making them aware of the Indigenous version of truth, while it also provides food for thought so that non-Indigenous readers may be willing to review their relationship of power with the Indigenous people of Australia. *Wild Cat Falling*, as the first Aboriginal novel, started that process of writing fiction in order to convey a discourse on the reality of Aboriginal issues.

In *Wild Cat Falling*, Mudrooroo showed his readers what happened with an Aboriginal boy who was a result of much earlier colonial actions against Australian Indigenous people. Wildcat was constructed as a boy who was institutionalized from the age of nine and that, due to the suffering he underwent for having been separated from his mother, the only family he had, decided to alienate himself from the world outside. Therefore, whenever he had the opportunity to remain free he committed some kind of crime and went back to prison. In *Wildcat Screaming*, Mudrooroo presented to his readers the fact that it does not matter who is inside and who is outside prison because people's conveniences as well as greed for money and power are what really matter. By making non-Indigenous people aware that the so-called marginals may be economically useful to them, they are willing even to make alliances with convicts. In *Wildcat Screaming* the protagonist is pulled from alienation by Robbi Singh, then he devises strategies to deal with other people and institutions in order to survive and develop as a human being who has lost his innocence and is not alienated any longer.

In *Doin Wildcat*, Mudrooroo aimed at showing the non-Indigenous people that they still do not know enough about Aboriginal ways, and that they swap places with Indigenous people when Aboriginal writers make use of their language – thus the Indigenous people move to the center whereas the non-Indigenous are moved to the margins – to communicate with their readers. This third book carries a discourse which, despite the language's barrier imposed by Koori, seeks reconciliation by making the non-Indigenous readers realize that

there is an opportunity for both people to work together and balance their relationship of power.

Therefore, the non-Indigenous reader is the target of the trilogy which, as Aboriginal Literature, distinguishes itself through several aesthetic elements that were already discussed in chapter 1. Nevertheless, all the aesthetic elements used by Mudrooroo in this trilogy are related to identity issues and the Power Relations between both races that were blended in colonial times, although a trend towards reconciliation and Interculturalism has been shown in books 2 and 3.

I see a thread intertwining every aspect and development of events in Wildcat's life and his choices as the narrator in the trilogy: the mixing of languages representing the power of hybrid individuals who belong to and to move between two worlds; the events of his childhood that turned him from a victim into a trickster; the Dreamtime relationship between Cat and Crow in the form of nightmares or dreams representing Wildcat's hybridity as well as the Aboriginal spirituality and culture that were silenced, and the Wildcat of the third book, who went from a defenseless child to a rebellious teenager to a survivor who adapted himself to the world's new order. By accepting and adjusting to a multicultural society, Wildcat benefits from exoticism as a means to spread his word. If he wrote the first book to get positive points and be released from prison, and if later he wrote a script on that book and sold the rights of his story to a foreign producer, it is seen by Wildcat as just one way to reach more people around the world, thus expanding the possibilities of broader, balanced Power Relations.

CONCLUSION

Mudrooroo is a literary pathfinder, not a follower. Therefore, following the tracks he traces in his writing becomes even more important and rewarding.
SHOEMAKER, *Mudrooroo: A Critical Study*

Time, gentlemen, time![53] So, the time has come for the closing remarks about Wildcat's tracks which we have followed up to now, and that represent the system of Power Relations in Urban Australia. In order to keep track of the main character and narrator's 'footprints', our journey started when Wildcat was nine years old and went on to his maturity as events took place in the form of literary text in the Wildcat Trilogy. In a work where the reader is able to find historical events mixed with real Aboriginal issues, which took place from the first years of Colonial Australia until around 1992, Mudrooroo exercises distinct skills and forms of storytelling, character building, narrative discourse, and the employment of Aboriginal cultural elements. His character, Wildcat., is raised as a white person, assimilates the American culture, develops to the point of feeling the need to make ends meet inside himself, and eventually succeeds in understanding who he is, and what role he can play in a society where he had to, first of anything else, learn to deal with Power Relations.

As a character, Wildcat is a metaphor for the Aborigine people of Australia as well as the phases they went through from Colonization to recent times. As a representative of the Young Urban Aborigine in Australia, Wildcat is also a hybrid individual who feels a need to seek for his true identity. However, there is no true established identity for hybrid individuals, and Wildcat finds that out through his own reactions towards his mother's insistence on raising him as a white child. On the other hand, there is Wildcat's repressed Indigenality, presented to him in the form of nightmares. Therefore, the question that the Trilogy's main character feels compelled to answer is: 'which identity should I pick?'; 'Do I want to be and

[53] I have borrowed this sentence from the Irish and British custom of shouting "Time gentlemen, time!" as a last call for customers to tell them that it is closing time, and that they have little time to finish their drinks and go home. In Book 2, this call is the first sentence of chapter 7.

act as the white person that I almost am?' or 'do I want to be the Indigenous person that exists in my genes, and take advantage of this by playing the role of a Post-Colonial Exotic, thus co-operating with the non-Indigenous ruling society that eventually found a way to make a profit from Indigenous cultures?', or 'do I want to be both non-Indigenous and Indigenous, one complementing the other, seeking inner balance in order to be able to offset the scale of Power Relations and move with self-assurance across the two worlds of which I am part by building a bridge between them?'.

My reading of the Wildcat Trilogy assumes that the Young Urban Aborigine that Wildcat is eventually chooses to live as the hybrid person that he is: simultaneously Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The nightmares, when transformed into understandable ancestral dreams, bridge Wildcat's two identities. Literature is the external bridge that he builds to reach those who would not change their behavior towards Indigenous people if they did not acquire a good knowledge of the Aboriginal cultural structure. Nevertheless, there are some specificities about that literary bridge that must be addressed here. In the second book Wildcat mentions that – although he obtained the welfare officer's permission to write a book about his life and the events that led him to misbehave, eventually ending up in prison, by telling the officer that he wanted that other young Aborigines had opportunity to readjust their behavior and thrive in a mostly non-Indigenous society – his pragmatic intention was merely to win some positive remarks in his prison file. I understand that while writing that book, Wildcat goes through a process of self-analysis. In order to recall those events, he reflects about each of them, not as the young boy he was at that time, but as someone who could detach himself from the facts and see them from another angle. Wildcat did so by writing a book, a text that belongs in the European-born literary genre, the novel: *Wild Cat Falling*. While writing the book Wildcat was able to recall past events of his life, reflect on them and project his reflections onto a different future for himself. In my reading, there is the possibility that, after the book was published, Indigenous young Aborigines would have in their hands a text that in addition to telling them what happens to a Young Urban Aborigine who does not conform to society's laws, it conveys the message that it is possible to balance the Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations by learning the language of the majority – the first step to achieve communication between two distinct cultures – and then by writing about Indigenous issues.

The book which Wildcat writes, and the script about that book are part of a fictional universe (the one from where the narrator speaks) and belong to a wider universe from where the author, Mudrooroo, writes the Wildcat Trilogy. Such plurality of authors is complex and

eventually brought to my attention the fact that it was not before *Wildcat Screaming*, the third book in order of publication, that Wildcat names himself as Wildcat, a totemic name, not a Christian name as it would be expected by the reader who, from the first book knows that he was raised as a white Christian boy by his mother. Before that, the only mention to a traditional western name for him was when his uncle called him 'Duggan's boy' in *Wild Cat Falling*. If we take into consideration that Australia has become a multicultural country whose cultural basis is white European, it is possible to read the absence of a name for the main character of the Wildcat Trilogy as representing the fact that he is nobody for the larger Australian society for, according to the stereotype of the Aborigine in that country, he is not likely to succeed. On the other hand, exactly because he does not have one name, he is not just one person, either. In this case, Wildcat is the literary representation of his people, whose culture does not regard traditional western names as important. Although the Indigenous people of Australia add the name of a branch of their tribe or even the name of the place where they live to their totemic name, they usually refer to an individual by a characteristic that the person has, such as 'the boy with pimples', 'the old rabbiter', and 'the skinny one', for example.

Notwithstanding the fact that the main character of the trilogy does not have a name, the author has had plenty of them along his literary career. Over the 27 years that encompass the production of the trilogy, Mudrooroo changed his name three times. The first edition of *Wild Cat Falling* presented the name of its author as Colin Johnson, which was later changed to Mudrooroo Narogin, then to Mudrooroo Nyoongah and finally, to Mudrooroo[54]. In fact, there are many more relationships between the author of the trilogy, Mudrooroo, and the author of the trilogy's fictional universe (Wildcat) – Wildcat is a young hybrid urban boy, culturally Aboriginal. He is Australian, but also behaves and uses Beatnik language as well as is fond of the United States rock'n'roll. Mudrooroo is allegedly white (Irish descendant mother) and black (American descendant father), which makes of him an Australian descendant of European and American families. Mudrooroo's biggest cultural influence comes from the culture of his father's family: the cultural values of the American youth of the 1950s. Moreover, Mudrooroo is a Buddhist monk; therefore he has command of the traditions from the two worlds that we call the West and the East. What he does in the Wildcat Trilogy, is to blend both worlds into Wildcat, who eventually becomes comfortable with himself when he understands the multiplicity of his origin and cultural sources.

[54] Mudrooroo's change of names is better explained in Chapter 1.

It is also worth pointing out that *Wild Cat Falling* is inserted in the category of Australian Literature as the first Aboriginal novel, notwithstanding the already settled dispute about Mudrooroo's biological Aboriginality. Yet, if Mudrooroo is not an Aborigine by blood, he is an Aborigine by acquired cultural rights, since he spent many years of his life in custody of Governmental Institutions, and had to cope with the prejudice held against Aborigines in his own life. If he lives his life "in Aborigines' shoes", he is an Aborigine. With Wildcat, the process goes the opposite way. If we consider *Wild Cat Falling*, both the narrator's discourse and the character's developments present the protagonist as a young man who has assimilated the ideal of the American Way of Life. *Wild Cat Falling* is a late Beatnik book, and its protagonist is an assimilated young person into the United States culture. Perhaps, due to the influence of television, music and movies of the 1950s and 1960s, which brought scenes that related to some historical events which were significant for Australian Indigenous people either as milestones of cultural influences from abroad or as historical events that caused changes in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations in Australia. In order to understand the events embedded into the discourse of the trilogy, I shaped the following timeline[55] based on the dates which were central to both the main character and Australian peoples.

WILDCAT'S AGE	YEAR	WORLD/AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL EVENTS
9	1938	Period between World War I and World War II
17	1955	United-States' influences such as the American Dream, the Blues, jazz, rock'n'roll, and comic books.
19	1957	The Beatniks
31	1969	First man on the moon, Woodstock, demonstrations against the war in Vietnam, the Black Power movement.
50	1988	200 years of British colonization in Australia, Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* attacked by Moslems.

Around 1938 serious political events were taking place in Europe, with countries trying to reach agreements that eventually were broken, leading to the outbreak of World War II. In Australia, that was the year when the book *The Passing of the Aborigines*[56], by Daisy

[55] The years are assumed dates based on evidence found inside the Trilogy's text.
[56] Bates's autobiography which appeared in an urban Australian newspaper as a series and later (1938) published as a book. Daisy Bates (1863 – 1951) was an Irish anthropologist who wrote mostly about the Indigenous culture of Australia.

Bates, was published, when the governmental policy regarding the Indigenous people of Australia was assimilationist.

In 1955, when, in fiction, Wildcat is released from his eighteen months in prison, the book *Sydney Savages 1934 – 1955*[57], by Adrian Ashton, is published. It is the same year when Australia is hit by major cultural aspects of the United States lifestyle and culture. Wildcat is influenced by both, the traditional Bohemian atmosphere of the English club, including the meaning conveyed by its name, and rock'n'roll music, which in 1955 has Elvis Presley as its international star. However, Elvis Presley is not Wildcat's favorite rock'n'roll singer; he prefers to listen to black singers whose lyrics are against racial and sexual taboos, such as Little Richard, for instance, which in my view, send Wildcat's mind back to the suffering of the black slaves and their descendants who made of the Blues the symbol of their struggling for freedom. All of these elements are closely related to the plot of *Wild Cat Falling* and Wildcat's behavior and thoughts. Although the myth of the American Dream is in full force in the United States in 1955, and spreading worldwide, the Australian Indigenous people cannot make it true since they do not have proper education to acquire professional knowledge and thus a good job, do not have opportunity to climb the social ladder in their country.

It is not a coincidence, either, the fact that the events in Wildcat's life two years later (1957) are linked to the Beatnik movement which in its essence was also Bohemian and focused on the Arts, literature, and other cultural aspects. The difference between the 'Sydney Savage Club' and the Beatnik movement is the sense of absurdity that the members and followers of the latter had towards the world where they lived. 1957 is also the year when *Voss*[58] by Patrick White is published. As the main character of *Wild Cat Falling*, Wildcat starts as a bohemian who sees life as absurd. He is a progressive dresser[59] and adds Beatnik slang to his vocabulary. Later, when he serves ten or twelve years in Fremantle, Wildcat enters the world of literature by writing the book about the memories of his life as a Young Urban Aborigine in Western Australia.

The year of 1969, when Wildcat is around 31 years old and leaves Fremantle prison after nearly twelve years, marks the historical events of man's first walk on the moon, as well as worldwide demonstrations against the Vietnam war, and the growth of the Black Power

[57] *The Sydney Savages* is a book about 'The Sydney Savage Club', founded in 1857, in London. The club is still active and has three affiliate branches in Australia. It is composed of people who practice or are interested in the Arts, literature, music, drama, architecture, sciences as well as research. The objective of the club meetings is to encourage and practice such arts and sciences in a Bohemian atmosphere.

[58] *Voss* is a story based on the life of Ludwig Leichhardt, an explorer whose expeditions were concentrated in the interior of Queensland and Northern Australia. Voss, the main character, representing Leichhardt, has a compulsion against Nature. Eventually his expedition fails and he is beheaded by an Aborigine.

[59] Progressive dresser as opposed to a person who wears conservative clothing.

movement which would become a strong influence amongst the Australian urban Aborigines in the early 1970s. That is also the year when *Waiting for Godot* was re-published in the United States after Samuel Beckett received the Nobel Prize. In that same year an anthology of short stories was published in Australia – *View From Kalgoorlie*[60] – with short stories whose common setting was the goldfields of Western Australia. The trilogy's reader does not know what happens with Wildcat between the years of 1969 and 1988, when he comes back into scene to follow the shooting of the movie based on his book. However, I assume that it would be coherent with his ideas if he joined activist movements for Aboriginal rights such as the one held in Redfern in 1972. Maybe he even continued writing books and adapting to the new multicultural reality which was heading towards globalization in his country.

The year of 1988, when Wildcat comes back to close his role as protagonist, narrator and author in the Trilogy, was a turning point in the Indigenous/non-Indigenous relations in Australia. The British population of the country celebrated 200 years of settlement, integrating the Indigenous population in the commemorative events. Although it marked the beginning of better understanding and a possibility of reconciliation between both cultures in Australia, the 200-year celebration divided the Indigenous people concerning their participation in the event. Intellectuals such as Mudrooroo, Noonuccal, Lionel Fogerty and others found it a good opportunity to raise their voices through presenting their literary production, whereas others did not agree that they should participate in a celebration about their suffering under the British ruling of their country. However, the Aboriginal intellectuals took advantage of the invitation they received to participate in the event by writing strong criticism against the British colonial power. In addition to poems written for the occasion, Mudrooroo released *Doin Wildcat* which was greeted as a literary breakthrough in Aboriginal writing – a novel about the shooting of a movie based on the book that Wildcat had written in prison, including parts of the script that he wrote for the movie, all connected by his reflections on his past and present life's relationships with non-Indigenous cultures. The movie director, for instance, is not just one more white person to Wildcat for, despite his being white, he is Jewish, which means that he belongs to a people that has also undergone ordeals to survive as a nation.

[60] *View From Kalgoorlie* , a collection of short stories written by Australian writers and edited by Gavin Casey, Walter Wynne and Ted Mayman.

Speaking of nations and literature, 1988 is also the year when Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*[61] is attacked by Moslems and the writer is called to death penalty on the grounds that there is blasphemy in the book. Censorship, including the punishment of the writer of a given book, has been one of the oldest exercises of power and works as evidence of the intolerance that the establishment has towards those writers who break the rules and include real facts which should be concealed from the large (usually worldwide) society because they show a perverse side of the political, social, religious or educational system of a country.

I would like to say something, now, about the intertextual dialogues contained in the trilogy. Each of the books mentioned in the previous paragraphs have some type of relationship with the Wildcat novels and Aboriginal literature in general for, in order of publication, they form a literary thematic cycle that starts with *The Passing of Aborigines* (1938) whose main theme was the direct and indirect genocide of the Indigenous people of Australia by means of extermination and assimilation – the first stage of Indigenous/non-Indigenous Power Relations in Australia. *Sydney Savages* (1955), about English bohemian intellectuals who used to meet in a club, might be translated into the Wildcat Trilogy as the protagonist being literally a bohemian Savage who, although not an intellectual at the beginning of the story, worked his way towards intellectual knowledge to the point of despising his old Mob friends because they were 'shallow', and did not know anything compared to him, who read all those important books in prison, in addition to the experiences and suffering that he underwent inside prison. So, the 'Savage' Wildcat used to frequent milk-bars that were the equivalent to the Sydney Savages' club. I point out this fact because Wildcat became a 'Savage' by reading those books in prison and living a bohemian life in milk-bars. By mimicking the English and American Bohemians of the 1950s, Wildcat was nothing more than a product of assimilation – the second stage of Indigenous/non-Indigenous Power Relations in Australia; *Voss* (1957), published within the period when Wildcat saw life as absurd and behaved somewhat as a Beatnik, brought the theme of resistance. Note that the transition between the 'Savage' Wildcat and the 'Beatnik' one is not clearly cut, but with it came the transition from assimilation to resistance (in the book represented by the Aborigine who decapitates Leichhardt). The Indigenous people, as Wildcat, wanted to look for their

[61] Using elements of magical realism, several stories, which include Indian expatriates in contemporary England are narrated as dream visions experienced by one of the main characters. Note that the movement of the characters in the *Satanic Verses* is opposite to that of England in colonial times. The Indians are the ones who emigrate to England in a Diaspora movement. Nevertheless, the core issue in postcolonial literature concerns the power relations established between distinct cultures, and those must be balanced in order to build a peaceful relationship.

cultural and linguistic roots, which originated the changes in language in Aboriginal texts, including Indigenous vocabulary and broken English and grammar. *Waiting for Godot* in its 1969 edition might represent a re-reading that Wildcat, now 31 years old and newly released from twelve years in prison, undertakes in order to reflect about his past life, what he has learned about hope and the possibility of a productive and good future ahead, as opposed to his old feeling of hopelessness. The Australian book published in that same year, *View From Kalgoorlie*, composed of stories about the goldfields in Western Australia, has a direct relationship with Wildcat's past. He was born in that region, where Indigenous people have often fought against foreign mining companies, that – when and if – provided jobs for the Aborigines, paid them lower wages, in addition to exhausting their land. Therefore, that book represents the Indigenous struggle for land and labor rights. *Satanic Verses*, as I noted before, has its relationship with Aboriginal literature in the fact that intolerance towards writers who break the established rules of the predominant culture may come in distinct forms, from censorship to marketing guerrilla, all of them aiming at taking the books of such writers out of the readers' hands. The year of 1988 represents the beginning of an intention on the part of the non-Indigenous society of Australia for reconciliation with the Indigenous people. In order to show their openness to reconciliation, the non-Indigenous society invited Aborigines to participate actively in the celebrations of the 200 years of British occupation of Australia, even though they knew that Aboriginal intellectual production would take place in the form of criticism. The censorship and intolerance against *Satanic Verses* and its writer is representative of a worldwide trend: it does not matter if part of the world has been developing and changing to a global set of cultural ideas, some countries will remain tightly closed to such changes.

Nevertheless, Wildcat's major concern in *Doin Wildcat* seems to lie in the possibility for the Indigenous Australians to live in the new Globalized world while retaining their Aboriginality to themselves, in addition to communicating their culture throughout the world. In my point of view there is a good reason to do that: there will never be a balance between Indigenous and non-Indigenous power relations if they do not understand and respect each other's cultural differences. Wildcat reasons that commercial means of communication such as movies, exhibitions, books, plays, are not bad when they serve as a way to disseminate knowledge about Aboriginal matters. Dissemination of knowledge through literature, movies, journals or TV may be done through two distinct views – the non-Indigenous focus on exoticism or the Indigenous focus on <u>their</u> truth. Interestingly, there is a good advantage of the

non-Indigenous focus on exoticism for, as a Marketing tool, it works well for Indigenous people.

Resuming to the chronological table above, I want to point out the presence of important literary events in each of those years when Wildcat was impacted by the events of his own life as well as events from abroad. The Young Urban Aborigine used to read in prison, and was intellectually influenced by European writers, whereas in his daily life he was influenced by the United States' culture. The balance between both influences is achieved when he matures and understands that nobody is free from external influences and that it is useful to take advantage of the good, convenient aspects of them. Regarding influences and life experience from childhood to the teenage years, Wildcat is representative of one kind of Young Urban Aborigine – the rebellious young outlaw who does not fit anywhere in the larger society of Australia. However, I believe that there has been another kind of Young Urban Aborigines – the ones who achieved inner balance while they were still young enough to conform to the larger society's rules, thus being able to accept and be accepted by the non-Indigenous people as part of the productive population of the country. In this sense, in *Wild Cat Falling*, Wildcat is a "Rebel Without a Cause" whereas in *Wildcat Screaming* he starts to achieve his inner balance and is able to improve as a social being. In *Doin Wildcat*, he is more knowledgeable about social relations, more able to make decisions on what kind of Power Relations he wants to develop within the worldwide social network.

With focus on Power Relations, I take that there are positive as well as negative effects of power in society. Robbi Singh, for instance, is a master in the art of producing positive effects. He seems to take to himself the responsibility for boosting Wildcat's self-esteem and knowledge through a disciplined method. Another instance comes in the scene which describes the help Wildcat receives from the social independent assistants regarding the editing of his book. Although the editing of Wildcat's book is not positive due to the differences between non-Indigenous and Indigenous cultural backgrounds, their intention was to help him deliver a literary work which matched non-Indigenous' standards, in order to give him more chance to be granted positive points in his file and, consequently, be soon released from prison. The negative effects have been exhaustively pointed out along my close reading of the trilogy. However, there is a negative form of power that makes use of myths[62] to keep people at the lower levels of society. The office of Aboriginal and Strait Islander Affairs has

[62] Myth here conveys the following meaning, according to the Dictionary "Answers.com": A popular belief or story that has become associated with a person, institution, or occurrence as well as a fiction or half-truth, especially one that forms part of an ideology. source: <http://www.answers.com/topic/myth> , accessed on March 31, 2007).

released a document in 1998, containing statistics that refute notions such as ‘Aboriginal people are drunkards’, ‘Aboriginal people do not want to work’, ‘Aboriginal people grab land beyond their rights’, ‘Aboriginal sacred sites block development of some regions in the country, among others.

If another sequel of the Wildcat Trilogy were to be published today, how differently would Wildcat tell his tale? Perhaps some new facts would be introduced. However, as Power Relations is something difficult to balance, it would remain as part of the narrator’s discourse. The trilogy’s narrator might include the fact that even though the Indigenous people of Australia have received pieces of land back, had some rights recognized by law, and health care and education systems based on their culture were developed, other power mechanisms were devised by non-Indigenous people in order to keep the Indigenous people as away from the larger society as possible. One of these mechanisms is the utilization of a discourse that emphasizes the stereotypes mentioned above. Another mechanism is still more perverse, because it comes disguised in the form of kindness, friendship, interest in disseminating the Indigenous culture of Australia worldwide as the Art of the Exotic. Notwithstanding, Aboriginal writers and artists have been successful in learning to take advantage of Exoticism to spread their culture worldwide.

Another aspect that I believe would not change in Wildcat’s narrative today is the theme of surveillance. Those eyes of which Wildcat complains throughout the trilogy’s narrative, making remarks about the power of eyes to annoy or inflict fear on people subjected to the look of other people. I wonder how he would feel today, when everyone is regarded as a potential criminal or wrongdoer, and anywhere we go there are surveillance security tools – on streets, in companies, private houses, in buildings. Those eyes in the Wildcat Trilogy today would be replaced by cameras. We live in a time when the surveillance systems employed in urban spaces represent many more eyes than those that annoyed Wildcat so much. However, while he complains about other people’s eyes, Wildcat calls attention to eyes as a means of communication among Aboriginal people without the need of words, as happens when Wildcat steals the money from his uncle.

In *Doin Wildcat* the protagonist discusses and explains why an Aboriginal story is never told the same way twice, which makes me wonder up to what point the story that reaches the readers is the same one that the author first wrote. In *Wild Cat Falling,* for example, there is a scene that Mudrooroo changed and had it published one year later as a short-story – *Bohemian Party* – in an Anthology book – *Modern Australian Writing* –. As *Bohemian Party* is slightly different from the scene of the milk bar in the book, it means that

one of Mudrooroo´s creative techniques is to re-write scenes that sometimes double as two different texts. Mudrooroo has experimented with several distinct writing techniques and narrative genres, based on the principle of Aboriginal literature as texts developed into a social, historical and political framework. At the beginning of his career as an Aboriginal writer, Mudrooroo followed Noonuccal's Commandments, which were rather radical and not easy to be followed. Aboriginal artists and writers adapted them to changes that took place along the years in Australia's social network. Nevertheless, the role of artists, writers and intellectual people in general as stated by Noonuccal remains the same: they are people in charge of keeping their culture alive.

Another aspect of Mudrooroo´s writing is the insertion of historical and cultural events that are current at the time he is writing a book. For example, Fremantle prison was closed in 1991. As *Doin Wildcat* was published in 1988, Mudrooroo already knew about the closing, and brought it forward in the book. Such attention to historical details is one of the characteristics of Aboriginal literature as a link between the past and present events of Aboriginal life, in which Indigenous people participate in a context of a non-Indigenous present. Another characteristic of most Aboriginal texts is a strong political and social discourse against the majority that holds the power to make decisions on the country's and its people's future. Therefore, the reader of Aboriginal literature contemporary to Mudrooroo´s Wildcat Trilogy is usually introduced to characters who are schizophrenic and inflexible, unwilling to co-operate to balance the Power Relations scale. From the books by Mudrooroo that I read, as from some articles he wrote and are available on the Internet, in addition to interviews he gave in the past, I realized that his protagonists usually grow from a state of schizophrenia or hopelessness to a state of inner balance and understanding of the world in which they live. Based on that, I would say that Mudrooroo has employed his Buddhist knowledge and practice in the building of those characters. Wildcat, for instance, wants to feel free – from his poor social status, from his mother's and authorities' control, from the nightmares, from the scream in his mind, from prison. However, he only achieves freedom through suffering; this is the principle of Buddhism. A person becomes resilient, thus free, after suffering. This is what happens to Wildcat eventually. Although he wishes so much to stop feeling anything in order to feel free, he is unable to achieve freedom, for according to the Buddhist belief, freedom starts inside ourselves. To be really free, Wildcat has to quit another feeling: desire. According to the scriptures, Buddha says that suffering is caused by desire, and that there is an Eightfold Path to 'cure' desire.

The Dharmachakra
(the eight spokes represent the Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism)

The Dharmachakra symbol called my attention for its resemblance to the structure of the Panopticon. Although the two systems are not related, I like the idea of connecting them for both symbols are connected with suffering, discipline and promise of freedom. Before the possibility of putting the Panopticon into work in Fremantle prison, the prisoners lived in a state of suffering – due to lack of freedom, bad treatment on the part of the prison wards, hopelessness regarding survival in the world outside, among others – which led them either to aggressive behavior or to an inner search for emotional numbness. For Wildcat, for instance, emotional numbness would mean freedom since he would not feel anything and, thus, be free from suffering. The problem is that it is a difficult state of mind to achieve, and it requires much discipline. If in the prison system, discipline is applied by authorities towards convicts, in the Panopticon prison system as well as in the Dharmachakra, it is applied by the person who is seeking his or her freedom. In both systems it is necessary that the one who has freedom as goal, follows paths that lead from a first to a last stage towards freedom and, in order to achieve the last stage, knowledge about the process of walking those paths is crucial. The Dharmachakra leads to spiritual freedom whereas the Panopticon leads to material freedom; material in both its meanings: the 'body and money' (i.e. physical and financial). Following this reasoning, I would say that in the Wildcat Trilogy, the concepts of the Panopticon and the Dharmachakra are complementary for one frees the spirit and the other frees the body, two of Wildcat's aspirations.

The similarities of which Mudrooroo took advantage, in this case, is a way to approach Wildcat's development from a rebellious, hopeless boy into a mature, balanced person, able to live in the world outside prison after having realized that understanding reality by what it is helps him to move and interact within the social network. Wildcat achieves that understanding by learning from Robbi Singh how to develop mastery over his own mind. To do that, he has

to make efforts to improve towards a mental ability to see things as they are, as well as to concentrate properly in order to be aware of the reality within himself, without any positive or negative desire. After learning to pacify his mind and get a better knowledge of himself, Wildcat starts to change his pattern of thinking. Therefore, Wildcat has followed the Buddhist stages in order to improve and achieve inner balance which led him to attain good balance in his system of Power Relations, for it is by looking at the world around him that an author finds raw material for his books. Regarding Aboriginal Literature, it is difficult to separate the author from his work, as it is difficult to separate the distinct roles of Wildcat in the Trilogy. Every time Mudrooroo tries to obtain a closing effect for Wildcat's story, the result is that of something missing; there is something else to tell.

This is what happens with this thesis now. I must place a period at the end of a sentence to tell my readers that it is finished. However, it seems that I am not able to do that due to the fact that having worked with such a rich subject as Aboriginal Literature and one of its most prolific and polemic writers, my text refuses to remain enclosed in itself. Thus, as soon as I place a period after the last letter of this thesis, the only effect I will achieve is that of having reached the end of a cycle to soon start another one

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APPENDIX 1

BEATNIK VOCABULARY IN THE WILDCAT TRILOGY

Cat **-** A male bohemian, a hip.

Chick – A female bohemian.

Crazy – Anything that is approved by a bohemian. Something or someone ‘cool’.

Dig – to understand or enjoy.

Gas – The best of something or someone who is the best and/or a lot of fun.

Hip – Someone who is ‘cool’, in the know.

Nifty – cool.

Slick – great.

Square – The opposite of a bodgie, a conformist who accepts and lives according to the establishment.

Threads – clothes.

APPENDIX 2

OODGEROO NOONUCCAL'S SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THE SECOND ABORIGINAL WRITER'S CONFERENCE IN 1983 (SUMMARY)

Dear Fellow Delegates

Today we have come together to work towards implementing a programme of action in the interest of Aboriginal writers and Aboriginal people. We can be proud of our past efforts. We, as writers, know only too well, how powerful is the pen, how much mightier than the sword. In our short history of progress, since the invasion, (and let's not forget), with little or no thanks to the invaders and their records, our history according to them began on the 27th May, 1967, when we the Aboriginal people, forced a referendum upon the peoples of Australia. [. . .] It is time we put the record straight. Through research, we, the writers must find our own historians and as you know Colin Johnson already leads that field together with Kevin Gilbert and others who have done much. Children's literature is verymuch to the fore, also. Our poets are well-known and much read. Our playwrights are not only seen but are also heard. But in spite of what we have achieved, there is still much to be done.

FIRSTLY. We must at all times be critical of all fields of Aboriginal affairs.

SECONDLY. We must also write about black public servants.

THIRDLY. Our education field is a mess. The reason being, of course that the present education scene in Australia does little or nothing to improve the lot of even the non-Aboriginal students. If we must be educated, then we need our own Aboriginal teachers and our own schools where, if desirable, non-Aboriginal students may attend.

FOURTHLY. The legal services. Let us clean up the culldost that exists in this very important field. Let us ensure that before long we hae our own Aboriginal lawyers, barristers, yes, and even our own judges.

FIFTHLY. Medical services. [. . .] When will we see our octors and nurses emerge in this field?

[. . .]

Little input has occurred in the urban and city fields. What must be understood by ADC[1] is that allocating houses to rent or buy is a non-event if the tenants of such houses are unemployed. [. . .] Private Enterprise is *not* a dirty word. Aborigines have always worked within the Tribal situation of togetherness so private enterprise through co-operatives should not be impossible.

In the DAA[2] and ADC it is very hard to find Aborigines working at the policy-making level.

In the Aboriginal Arts Board only one Aborigine works at staff level. As one of the newly-appointed Directors of the Aboriginal Arts Board, I give my word that that situation will change. These are the things that we must write about. Let the writers lead the field in advising, criticising and scrutinising the ideas and ideals in the interest of all our people. . .

NAROGIN, Mudrooroo. *Writing From the Fringe* (pp. 21-22)

[1] ADC – Aboriginal Development Commision.

[2] DAA – Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

APPENDIX 3

ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATIONS OF AUSTRALIA

- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC)** – From 1990 to 2005, it was a Government entity through with Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders involved themselves in Governmental processes that affected their lives.
- **Aboriginal Arts Committee of the Australia Council** – Gives support for Aboriginal Arts Centers.
- **Aboriginal Arts Management Association (AAMA)** – formed to protect the rights of Indigenous artists as well as to arrange exhibitions and shows.
- **Aboriginal Development Commission (ADC)** – Lasted eight years (1980 – 1988). Its tasks were: assist Indigenous people by buying land, issuing housing grants and loans, and lending or granting money for private enterprises.
- **Aboriginal Land Fund Commission** – established in 1975 as a fund to buy lands for Aboriginal groups throughout Australia. It was closed in 1980.
- **Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS)** – provides legal representation and support for Aboriginal people.
- **Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS)** – one of the first resource organizations formed by members of Indigenous communities. It was established in early 1970s.
- **Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (AIAS)** – its main activity is the research fellowship whose role is to describe and analyze efforts at local curriculum development in remote communities.
- **Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation** – which prepared the Aboriginal people for the year 2001 and the Republic of Australia.
- **Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA)** – Part of the New South Wales Government, it works with Aboriginal people, government agencies, private and community sectors of society to promote the interests of the Aboriginal people.
- **House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs** – which does inquiries and reports on Aboriginal issues to be discussed with the Government.
- **National Aboriginal and Islander Health Organization (NAIHO)** – established to facilitate cooperation between the services and channel expertise and material assistance.
- **National Aboriginal and Islander Legal Services Secretariat (NAILSS)** – Established in 1982, functions intermittently and has the same role of the ALS.
- **National Native Title Tribunal (NNTT)** – deals with uncontested claims for Native Title and compensation for Aboriginal people.
- **Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS)** – provides specialist services.Together with NAIHO has initiated a health worker's education program.

ANNEX A

FRONTIER
EDUCATION

John William-Mozley's Address

The following is provided to give teachers an insight into the thoughts of some Aboriginal people. Mr Williams-Mozley has given permission for his speech to be used in these notes.

Address to the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory in response to the 'Bringing Them Home' Resolution passed by the Assembly on 17 & 19 June 1997

26 August 1997
John Williams-Mozley
Mr Speaker,

May I first of all observe Aboriginal protocol by paying my respects to the traditional owners of this country, the Ngunnawal people.

Having done that, I wish to acknowledge and commend the actions of the Legislative Assembly in offering an apology to those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT who have suffered as a result of the past practices of forced separation from their families.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to the Assembly for providing the opportunity here, today, in this place, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to speak from experience about the policies and practices of forced separation.

Mr Speaker,

I have read the Hansard transcript of 17 June where a motion was tabled in response to the Bringing Them Home report.

As the Chief Minister stated in tabling the motion, it marked an important and historic step in the healing and reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous members of the Act community.

What was of even greater significance to me, however, was the unconditional agreement by all members of the Assembly in commending the motion and their attendant comments which showed not only a great deal of knowledge and understanding of the issues - human, social, cultural and political - emanating from the Inquiry's report, but also their ready acceptance that true reconciliation will never be achieved in this country without acknowledging the past.

Mr Speaker,

The story of forced removal within my family began in 1946 when my mother was removed.

It is in my memory, my brothers' and sisters' memories and that of my niece and nephews who were also removed.

They are not historic, distant or remote memories.

We cannot consign them to the past like some people would prefer us do. They are lived and re-lived every day of our lives.

Nor are they isolated incidents or the aberrations of a few.

My family's story is a familiar and common one within the broader indigenous community.

However, like so many aspects of Aboriginal Australia, our stories have been hidden or excluded from public view for so long.

Mr Speaker,

The National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their families was an important and earnest attempt to provide the Australian community with the facts as they relate to the extent and nature of this country's assimilation policies.

And even though the impact of the Inquiry's findings has led this Assembly to express such practices as abhorrent, determining that they will not happen in the ACT, there is still a prevailing attitude in the broader community that what

was done, was done 'with the best intentions' and 'in the best interests of the child'.

Notwithstanding the argument now being offered, that previous assimilation policies should not be viewed by today's standards or values, I continue to have great difficulty in understanding how such reasoning is used to nullify the facts elicited from the Inquiry which, in essence, substantiated that the policies of forced removal were an act of Genocide, as defined in the 1949 Convention on Genocide; that such policies incorporated gross violations of human rights by persons in authority, that such policies denied Aboriginal peoples' substantive common law legal rights, and that such policies effected the loss of culture and identity.

If government's can enact retrospective legislation to prosecute unlawful or illegal acts committed in the past, then why not in this instance.

What differentiates those unlawful acts from the terrible civil and criminal wrongs that were perpetrated against us?

Why does it take such costly and issue specific Inquiries like the Stolen Generations Inquiry or the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody to bring to the public gaze the continuing circumstance of disadvantage, dislocation and disparity between indigenous and non-indigenous societies?

How much longer do we have to wait before our histories and our knowledges are accepted and given an equal place alongside non-indigenous accounts.

While the commonly held view about the intent of assimilation seems to be that what was done, was done in the child's best interest, I would like you to think about a view that perhaps ran parallel in the minds of earlier politicians, pastoralists and developers.

Since 1788, the concept of terra nullius, or empty land, has been used by Australian courts to exclude the suggestion of Aboriginal prior ownership or occupancy of this land.

As early as the 1890's, governments, churches and pastoralists were thinking about what to do with the growing so called 'half'caste' population.

In their views, traditional Aboriginal people were to be left to die out naturally, hence, the protection era of the early 1900's where governments did what they could "to smooth the dying pillow" of the traditional Aborigine.

If traditional Aborigines died out, then the question of land ownership, land use or just compensation, no longer posed a significant problem.

But the so-called "half caste" population was altogether a different proposition. As long as they continued to live with their Aboriginal family, then they would have legitimate claims to the family's traditional land.

I would offer that the separation of Aboriginal children, first from their family, then from their land, was nothing more, and nothing less than a further strategy to attempt to delimit the number or circumstance of Aboriginal people who would at law, be considered traditional owners.

And even though the High Court judgement in Mabo has now put to rest the legal fiction of terra nullius, Australian common law maintains that Aboriginal claims to land be predicated on their being able to show either a traditional or historical connection to land. The same applies to land claimed under state based land rights legislation or Native Title legislation.

Given that Aboriginal cultures are predicated on affiliation with land, and that land is determined by family kinship arrangements, if family is removed, then affiliation to land becomes almost impossible to substantiate.

This is the case today for the majority of the many thousands of Aboriginal people forcibly removed under assimilation policies.

Mr Speaker,

For the record, I would like to reiterate to this Assembly, those facts which are known to me about the forced removal of my family members.

My mother's name was Mary Williams. She was born in Alice Springs into the Western Arrernte people of Hermannsburg.

She was taken from her family at 13 years of age and transported by rail to the Mulgoa Mission at Warragamba, New South Wales; a distance of approximately 2000 kilometres from her country and family.

Her seven younger sisters and two brothers were also taken from Alice Springs when young children. Although they too were placed in institutions, they were, arguably, more fortunate than her in that they remained in the Northern Territory.

My mother was 17 years old when I was born at the Salvation Army Home for unmarried mothers at Merewether, near Newcastle.

She named me Douglas Raymond Williams.

When I was 7 months old, the Aborigines Protection Board and the NSW Child Welfare Department placed me for adoption.

I was adopted into a non-Aboriginal family whose surname is Mozley.

I was then renamed John William Mozley. This is the name that appears on my birth certificate. The name Mary Williams does not appear. To all intents and purposes, according to my birth certificate, I was born to the two non-Aboriginal people who adopted me.

After searching for twenty odd years, I finally located my mother. She was alive and living in Tennant Creek.

I spoke to her for the first time in 1979 when I was 28 years old.

She told me then that she never stopped believing I was alive, and that we would meet one day.

From the NSW Archives, I learned that it took nine years for my mother to return to Alice Springs. She was taken away as a young girl and returned to her country a 21 year old woman.

In all that time, she was not allowed contact with her family, was prepared for life as a domestic servant and was "encouraged to give up" her first born son.

At the time of meeting my mother, I also learned that I was in fact the eldest of her children and that I had three sisters and three brothers.

My brother Kenny who is three years younger than me, was taken away at birth from Alice Springs and placed on Melville Island. He was permitted to return to our family when 11 years old.

My sister Elna, was taken away aged 3 months. She too was placed on Melville Island and was permitted to return to our family when 10 years old.

Her three children, one girl now aged 21 and two boys aged 18 and 17 respectively, were taken from her as toddlers and placed with adoptive parents.

My brother Paul, was taken away at birth and adopted to a Greek Family in South Australia. He grew up believing he was Greek. Through Link-Up, we were re-united with Paul 4 years ago. He was thirty three years old at the time and continues to find it extremely difficult to come to terms with his true identity and his place in our family.

We believe there is a twin brother to Paul still to be located. The only information we have is that he was adopted to a non-indigenous family in Victoria.

Three years after being re-united with my mother, I had my name changed by legal instrument to John Williams-Mozley, to reflect the family names of both my natural family and my adoptive family.

Three years later, my mother died of diabetes induced kidney failure. She was 51 years old.

I had grown up knowing I was Aboriginal. And even though my adoptive parents had no knowledge of Aboriginal cultures, or Western Arrernte culture in particular, they had told me at the earliest opportunity that my mother was an Aboriginal woman from Alice Springs.

The only other fact they were told by the welfare and the Aborigines Protection Board was that my grandfather was a policemen in the Northern Territory.

As a result, I wanted to be a policemen just like my grandfather and, in 1967, the same year the Australian population voted overwhelmingly in a referendum for Aboriginal people to be counted in the Census as citizens, I was accepted as the first Aboriginal Police cadet in the NSW Police Cadet Corps.

I was one of only two Aboriginal Cadets accepted in the 40 year history of the Cadet Corps.

Because of the fact that I was taken from my natural family at such a young age, and thereafter denied access to my language, my culture, my land, my place in my family, I have no claims to my Aboriginal heritage.

And although I was raised in what could only be termed a 'typical' white Australian family, white society will not accept me as white.

I am neither black nor white.

My identity resides somewhere in the hyphen in the middle of my name.

In every respect, that is nowhere.

Three generations of my family, beginning with my mother and continuing with my sister's children, were removed over the last forty years and either placed in institutions or adopted in the name of Assimilation.

We were not allowed to grow up with each other or within our families.

Consequently, we do not know each other. We can, in all honesty, be described as "dysfunctional".

We have no past, and given the mean-spirited and heartless treatment of the stolen generations issue by the current federal government, we have no future.

Mr Speaker,

If I may be permitted, I would like to conclude by reading a poem that I wrote when I met my mother for the first time. It's titled "Assimilation", and represents my experience of being taken away.

Assimilation

Tonight we met
and through our tears,
we sat and talked
of the many years
we didn't share,
together,
alone
divided lives,
unknown love,
twenty seven years of
tears,
fears,
desires
to perceive
a vaguely recalled
connection
between mother and
son,
nine months as one
we shared life's blood,
before extrusion
to an unfriendly world,
conception of hate,
prejudice,
and alien rules,
for the foetal bond
that was our tie,
like the cord
was severed,
by white design
no cries of protest
from one so young,

brown skinned baby
motherless son,
twenty seven years
groping,
stumbling,
coping,
ambiguity the impetus
of my mind,
conjoined,
dual identity,
dissipated being,
shadow between two
worlds
that never meet on one
plane,
save pain,
the only common
feature,
Mother
tonight we met
and through our tears,
we sat and talked
of the many years,
we didn't share
together.

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Representatives of the Aborigines working from the Australian National University Students Union building have given some indication of the rumours which have been circulated during the week regarding the attitudes of the Police and the Government to their efforts to re-establish the "Embassy". These include:

(1) New South Wales Police were used last Sunday, 23 July to support A.C.T. Police;

(2) The Army was on "stand-by" and was to be used if the Police were outnumbered or overthrown;

(3) The New South Wales Police Riot Squads were held in reserve;

(4) Police had tear gas on hand;

(5) An Inspector from the A.C.T. Police was at Darlinghurst (Sydney) during the week to organise support of the New South Wales Police from that Division.

Regardless of the support received either locally oe interstate, the primary objective of the Aborigines and their supporters is to re-establish the Embassy on the lawns in front of Parliament House, and there is no information available to suggest that they propose to go beyond this. Recent discussions with representatives of the Aborigines leave no doubt as to their determination, and they do not appear to be concerned as to the possibility of arrest or imprisonment. They are convinced that this action is essential to their cause, and that they have the support of their people throughout Australia as well as that of the majority of Australians, and black people from overseas. It is difficult to determine what influence the whites, including Australian National University students, are having on the Aborigines in this situation, and it is significant that Richard Refshauge in his advertisement in the 'Canberra Times' points out that the protest is being organised and lead solely by Aborigines. It has come to our attention however that the students at the University have available to them $2,000 in bail money which is presumably intended to be used in the event of Police action on Sunday, 3 July.

There is no doubt of the Aborigines lack of respect of authority and this is supported apparently by a lack of confidence in the sincerity of Government and Government officials. Some of their spokesmen have openly stated that the Courts are no more than an extension of the Police system. They have warned authorities not to under-estimate their determination. One Aboriginal is claimed to have said on 23 July 1972, that he could easily dynamite the roof of Parliament House. There is continued reference to shooting and blood-shed.

ANNEX C

A RIGHTEOUS DAY

A lifetime of inventions sticky-taping a zipper into
A ball point pen filled with transistorised tunes
Protecting my wrists from the slashes of insecurities.
Today, I shall hold my head higher than
The kites are flying, swooping down on this
Today, I shall keep my violence passive in anger
My voice shall be a steel spring coiled.
Today, I shall cut a smile into the provocation of insults.
Today, I shall walk tall with the leaders who walk on
Stilts, and stumble as they greet me with cries of goodwill.
Today, I hall stand sober and high under the railway bridge
Echoing and resounding with the slap-slap of straight razors
Stropping on the skin of a year mourning bleeding.
Today, I shall let my fist be clenched in songs;
Today, I shall speech-give the essence of my truth;
Today, I shall be free of harassment and let my steps
Lead me away from the red and black along the golden path
Of the honeyed sunshining of my dreams.
Today, I shall find a will to be responsive to our needs.
For today, this day is our day and don't forget it!
'My bloody oath I won't, mate!"

(S*ydney, 26 January, 1988)*

MUDROOROO. *The Garden of Gethsemane – Poems from the Lost Decade.* Victoria: Hyland House Publishing Pry Limited, 1991.

The speech below, on indigenous issues, was given by the then Prime Minister of Australia, Paul Keating, at Redfern Park in Sydney on 10 December 1992 (For non-Australians, Redfern is an inner city suburb of Sydney with an historically large Aboriginal population).

Australian Launch of the International Year for the World's Indigenous People

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be here today at the launch of Australia's celebration of the 1993 International Year of the World's Indigenous People.

It will be a year of great significance for Australia.

It comes at a time when we have committed ourselves to succeeding in the test which so far we have always failed.

Because, in truth, we cannot confidently say that we have succeeded as we would like to have succeeded if we have not managed to extend opportunity and care, dignity and hope to the indigenous pople of Australia - the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people.

This is a fundamental test of our social goals and our national will: our ability to say to ourselves and the rest of the world that Australia is a first rate social democracy, that we are what we should be - truly the land of the fair go and the better chance.

There is no more basic test of how seriously we mean these things.

It is a test of our self-knowledge. Of how well we know the land we live in. How well we know our history. How well we recognise the fact that, complex as our contemporary identity is, it cannot be separated from Aboriginal Australia. How well we know what Aboriginal Australians know about Australia.

Redfern is a good place to contemplate these things.

Just a mile or two from the place where the first European settlers landed, in too many ways it tells us that their failure to bring much more than devastation and demoralisation to Aboriginal Australia continues to be our failure.

More I think than most Australians recognise, the plight of Aboriginal Australians affects us all. In Redfern it might be tempting to think that the reality Aboriginal Australians face is somehow contained here, and that the rest of us are insulated from it. But of course, while all the dilemmas may exist here, they are far from contained. We know the same dilemmas and more are faced all over Australia.

This is perhaps the point of this Year of the World's Indigenous People: to bring the dispossessed out of the shadows, to recognise that they are part of us, and that we cannot give indigenous Australians up without giving up many of our own most deeply held values, much of our own identity - and our own humanity.

Nowhere in the world, I would venture, is the message more stark than in Australia.

We simply cannot sweep injustice aside. Even if our own conscience allowed us to, I am sure, that in due course, the world and the people of our region would not. There should be no mistake about this - our success in resolving these issues will have a significant bearing on our standing in the world.

However intractable the problems may seem, we cannot resign ourselves to failure - any more than we can hide behind the contemporary viersion of Social Darwinism which says that to reach back for the poor and dispossessed is to risk being dragged down.

That seems to me not only morally indefensible, but bad history.

We non-Aboriginal Australians should perhaps remind ourselves that Australia once reached out for us. Didn't Australia provide opportunity and care for the dispossessed Irish? The poor of Britain? The refugees from war and famine and persecution in the countries of Europe and Asia? Isn't it reasonable to say that if we can build a prosperous and remarkably harmonious multicultural society in Australia, surely we can find just solutions to the problems which beset the first Australians - the people to whom the most injustice has been done.

And, as I say, the starting point might be to recognise that the problem starts with us non-Aboriginal Australians.

It begins, I think, with the act of recognition. Recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing. We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life. We brought the disasters. The alcohol. We committed the murders. We took the children from their mothers. We practised discrimination and exclusion.

It was our ignorance and our prejudice. And our failure to imagine these things being done to us. With some noble exceptions, we failed to make the most basic human response and enter into their hearts and minds. We failed to ask - how would I feel if this were done to me?

As a consequence, we failed to see that what we were doing degraded all of us.

If we needed a reminder of this, we received it this year. The Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody showed with devastating clarity that the past lives on in inequality, racism and injustice in the prejudice and ignorance of non-Aboriginal Australians, and in the demoralisation and desperation, the fractured identity, of so many Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

For all this, I do not believe that the Report should fill us with guilt. Down the years, there has been no shortage of guilt, but it has not produced the responses we need. Guilt is not a very constructive emotion.

I think what we need to do is open our hearts a bit.

All of us.

Perhaps when we recognise what we have in common we will see the things which must be done - the practical things.

There is something of this in the creation of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. The council's mission is to forge a new partnership built on justice and equity and an appreciation of the heritage of Australia's indigenous people. In the abstract those terms are meaningles. We have to give meaning to 'justice' and 'equity' - and, as I have said several times this year, we will only give them meaning when we commit ourselves to achieving concrete results.

If we improve the living conditions in one town, they will improve in another. And another. If we raise the standard of health by 20 per cent one year, it will be raised more the next. if we open one door others will follow.

When we see improvement, when we see more dignity, more confidence, more happiness - we will know we are going to win. We need these practical building blocks of change.

The Mabo judgment should be seen as one of these. By doing away with the bizarre conceit that this continent had no owners prior to the settlement of Europeans, Mabo establishes a fundamental truth and lays the basis for justice. It will be much easier to work from that basis than has ever been the case in the past.

For this reason alone we should ignore the isolated outbreaks of hysteria and hostility of the past few months. Mabo is an historic decision - we can make it an historic turning point, the basis of a new relationship between indigenous and non-Aboriginal Australians.

The message should be that there is nothing to fear or to lose in the recognition of historical truth, or the extension of social justice, or the deepening of Australian social democracy to include indigenous Australians.

There is everything to gain.

Even the unhappy past speaks for this. Where Aboriginal Australians have been included in the life of Australia they have made remarkable contributions. Economic contributions, particularly in the pastoral and agricultural industry. They are there in the frontier and exploration history of Australia. They are there in the ways. In sport ot an extraordinary degree. In literature and art and mustic.

In all these things they have shaped our knowledge of this continent and of ourselves. They have shaped our identity. They are there in the Australian legend. We should never forget - they helped build this nation. And if we have a sense of justice, as well as common sense, we will forge a new partnership.

As I said, it might help us if we non-Aboriginal Australians imaigined ourselves dispossessed of land we have lived on for 50 000 years - and then imagined ouselves

told that it had never been ours.

Imagine if ours was the oldest culture in tehworld and we were told that it was worthless. Imagine if we had resisted this settlement, suffered and died in the defence of our land, and then were told in history books that we had given up without a fight. Imagine if non-Aboriginal Australians had served their country in peace and war and were then ignored in history books. Imagine if our feats on sporting fields had inspired admiration and patriotism and yet did nothing to diminish prejudice. Imagine if our spiritual life was denied and ridiculed.

Imagine if we had suffed the injustice and then were blamed for it.

It seems to me that if we can imagine the injustice then we can imagine its opposite. And we can have justice.

I say that for two reasons: I say it because I believe that the great things about Australian social democracy reflect a fundamental belief in justice. And I say it because in so many other areas we have proved our capacity over the years to go on extending the realism of participating, oppotunity and care.

Just as Australian living in the relatively narrow and insular Australia of the 1960s imagined a culturally diverse, worldly and open Australia, and in a generation turned the idea into reality, so we can turn the goals of reconciliation into reality.

There are very good signs that the process has begun. The creation of the Reconciliation Council is evidence itself. The establishment of the ATSIC - the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission - is also evidence. The Council is the product of imagination and goodwill. ATSIC emerges from the vision of indigenous self-determination and self-management. The vision has already become the reality of almost 800 elected Aboriginal Regional Councillors and Commissioners determining priorities and developing their own programs.

All over Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are taking charge of their own lives. And assistance with the problems which chronically beset them is at last being made available in ways developed by the communities themselves. If these things offer hope, so does the fact that this generation of Australians is better informed about Aboriginal culture and ahievement, and about the injustice that has been done, than any generation before.

We are beginning to more generally appreciate the depth and the diversity of Aboriginal and Torrest Strait Islander cultures. From their music and art and dance we are beginning to recognise how much richer our national life and identity will be for the participation of Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders. We are beginning to learn what the indigenous people have known for many thousands of years - how to live with our physical environment.

Ever so gradually we are learning how to see Australia through Aboriginal eyes, beginning to recognise the wisdom contained in their epic story.

I think we are beginning to see how much we owe the indigenous Australians and

how much we have lost by living so apart.

I said we non-indigenous Australians should try to imagine the Aboriginal view.

It can't be too hard. Someone imagined this event today, and it is now a marvellous reality and a great reason for hope.

There is one thing today we cannot imagine. We cannot imagine that the descendants of people whose genius and resilience maintained a culture here through 50 000 years or more, through cataclysmic changes to the climate and environment, and who then survived two centuries of dispossession and abuse, will be denied their place in the modern Australian nation.

We cannot imagine that.

We cannot imagine that we will fail.

And with the spirit that is here today i am confident that we won't.

I am confident that we will succeed in this decade.

Thank you.

ANNEX E

THE EVOLUTION OF THE NIGHTMARES

1- Memories and nightmares haunted me till I hardly knew which was which. Flicker of shadow became a shaped dread of dark wings and scared wild cat eyes. . . . Falling, falling, plunging and twisting out of the sky and the hard ground rising up. (*Wild Cat Falling*, p.8)

2 - Falling, falling. Plunging and twisting out of the sky. Down and down and the dark ground rising up. . . (*Wild Cat Falling*, p. 124).

3- I have remembered the dream. It has been in some secret part of my mind to which he has given me the key. In it I somehow play both parts, and I am also the spectator. I feel the sudden surprised wonder of flight – a trick of some leg muscle, as though rediscovered from a past bird life. I soar into the air with my cat body and my crow's wings, up and up. Almost there. Don't look down. Keep your cat-crow eyes on the swelling, bright face of the moon. Not down. Not down. But the old earth is pulling you. Got to look down. Crow laughs and cat hates. He has been deceived. It is a trick. Have to have wings to reach the moon. . . . Crow laughing, car-carr-carrr. …
Wild cat plunging towards through the night with terror in its glazed cat eyes. I am watching and the terror is my own. I am the crow laughing to see such fun. It is I falling, falling, plunging to my certain doom. I wake with the doom pounding at my heart. (*Wild Cat Falling*, pp. 127-128).

4- Wildcat's eyes sparkle as he listens to Crow. Crow opens his beak and gives gleeful squawks which bode no good for the wild cat. He brings out his claws and lifts a paw. 'Now you don't take on so', Crow caws, giving a little jump backwards. 'No worries, you want to fly? Well, I'm telling you, giving you the proper info. Now, listen here. Dead secret this. Tonight the moon'll be full. Well, you put your eyes on that moon. Fasten them there and keep on looking and looking. Maybe better deep on looking and you'll lift off, fly higher and higher towards that old moon'.
Wildcat nods trying to be wily. Crow gives that squawk agtain. He hops around the wild cat, seeming awful gleeful. 'And what you want in return?' Wildcat asks. 'You know, scratch my back and I scratch yours' – and he extends his claws and Crow's glee leaves him. He gets into a kind of panic, and his wings open and he flutters out of reach just above Wildcat on a low branch. Wildcat bears his fangs. Opens his mouth in a great big yawn, giving Crow a glimpse of his rippers and tearers. 'You're a trick one', he says. 'So just look at what you're up

against'. So Wildcat snarls; but all the time in his mind is the image of the Crow just lifting off the ground as if the sky belongs to him. He wants to do that, wants to fly far and free.
'Man, would I jive you?' Crow says in his hipster talk.
'Man, you would', Wildcat says, very much the bodgie, very much the cool cat in his dark threads.
"Not this time', Crow answers him, slow and easy to put him off the track. 'You eat and leave me a feed, that's ll I ask. We work together after this. You flying will be able to catch anything on legs or wings. Just give me my share, that's all I ask".
And Wildcat relaxes and begins to believe Crow. It won't hurt to try, and if Crow is lying, well, there won't be a crow to crow around much longer.
That night, the moon leaps up into the sky. Wildcat wary at first gazes at it from the ground. It begins to call him, singing a sweet sky song to him.

Arrh arrh, munyha mayeamah yah, arah,
Fly up and touch my skin.

And Wildcat begins climbing this big old gum tree. His claws grip and he pushes himself up higher and higher, right too the very top, where he clings with his black paws and feels himself swaying, swaying, and the moon calling, calling, calling to him. He leaps off and up, one foot, two foot, and begins falling, falling, falling, screaming, screaming, screaming. . . (*Wildcat Screaming*, pp. 11-13).

5 - There's naked white male statues on pedestals. Greek statues as shown in the encyclopedia. The ground is paved and divided into squares and at each of the intersections of the lines is one of theses statues. It is like an ordered forest, a plantation through which I scuttle. No, not scuttle, keep my belly low and sorta writhe around the pedestals and sneak-dash from one to the other. I don't know where I'm going. There's all these statues and I sneak from pedestal to pedestal, cross line after line. Nowhere to go. Gotta keep on moving.
'Hey, Wildcat', someone calls. And I look up and see perched on the head of the statue just in front of me, Crow"
'Watcha doing here?' I ask him.
'What're you doing down there?' he smirks with his black beak and flops down onto the shoulder of the statue, then to his hand. He is thinner and less sleek than in other dreams. His feathers are bedraggled too.
'Well?' he smirks
'Well?' I echo back at him.
'This is no place for a wild cat', he says. 'Not much tucker around here'.
'Naw', I answer back. 'It's the pits. Nothing here but all these old statues'.
'they make nice patterns from above', he hints. 'All orderly and beautiful'.
Crow spreads his tattered wings. He sure has seen better days and zooms up and up. I have to put my head right back until my neck cricks to keep him in view. He's just a dot in the sky. He sure can fly, then he folds his wings and falls, spreads his wings and swoops back onto his perch. I gasp. If you can fly, you can control you falling. It becomes a part of your flight pattern
'Gee, I wish I could do that', I mutter.
'You can'.
'How?'
'You know how. Wait till the moon is full, and let it draw you up'.
He gives a smirk, caws and flutters up and then glides way way away. My envious eyes follow him. I want to, have to learn how to do that.
Now I'm climbing the spiral of a stairway going around and around a tower. It was made for man, so the wild cat has to spring from step to step. His legs begin aching and his breath

begins panting. Still he continues going up and up. He is standing on a platform. Below him the statues surround the tower like an army on parade. The moon shines down on them and their shadows fall away in neat lines touching one another. They're all joined, all together. Perhaps he should become one of them. How does one become a statue; but he wants to fly, not be a stupid statue. He stares at the moon. He squats down on his haunches and stares at the moon. It fills his eyes. It calls to him. He goes to the edge of the platform and steps off. And he is falling, falling, falling, and the scream in his head starts up again and he screams. And Crow is swooping beside him, seemingly urging him to fly, or is he? A monstrous cawing comes from him. He tries to fly, but one of his wings is broken. It drags him down trailing a scream, rising, rising above the cawing of Crow. . . . (*Wildcat Screaming*, pp. 39-40).

6 - My old uncle appears to me along with Mum. We're sitting in that kitchen of long ago, eating some stew. I gobble it down, and then my uncle farts and I'm in that forest of statues, creeping about at the foot of the pedestals. Crow lands on one of the heads and gives a squawk. I flutter up to him. He swoops off and lands on the ground. I follow and then along comes a little black and white bird with a twitching tail, a jitta-jitta, and he whispers to me and I flutter off alongside him, feeling somewhat clumsy. He flutters about the heads and so do I, then the moon appears and I leave him and try to rise. My wings begin to fail. I begin falling. Wagtail flutters around anxiously, and the ground rises up. I come outa my doze to find that I've had a wet dream (*Wildcat Screaming*, p. 74).

7 - [. . .] I lie in my bunk and look at the light shining through the window grille, and strangely, the full moon becomes framed there. I stare at it. I want to fly. . .
Old Crow comes to squawk to me. 'You want to fly?' he says, and I see the gloating to teach me anything. I reply, 'Yeah', and rise towards the moon. I pass through the grille and laugh as I soar high and away from Crow. The night sky is a silver dish. I move under it. I feel the stars beam through my body. I'm as light as feathers, as insubstantial as moonbeams. I exult in my freedom. I leave the barren city behind me and reach the dark thoughtfulness of the bush. I swoop down and alight in Uncle Wally's camp. He sits there muttering a song in the old language. I stand there listening awhile, then he says: 'Sit down, boy'.
I sit at the fire watching the flames flickering, feeling the shadows stir around me, feeling the stars and the moon passing through me. 'How are you, boy?" he says. 'Long time no see'.
'Yeah, I'm in that big house in Freeo', I reply.
'Arrrh, you there? Your granddaddy was on Rottnest. You following his footsteps? Nothing better than the bush though'.
'Yeah, peaceful', I say.
'It leaves in you', he says. 'It calls you, if you let it.' And he begins singing that song he sang to me a long time ago. I know that I know it, and sing back the verses.
'Lots of things they can't take away form us', he says. 'Lots of things they don't know about'.
And then he goes quiet and we sit along that fire and a sense of freedom comes over me. (*Wildcat Screaming*, pp. 141-142).

ANNEX F

LETTER II.

PLAN FOR A PENITENTIARY INSPECTION-HOUSE.

BEFORE you look at the plan, take in words the general idea of it.

The building is circular.

The apartments of the prisoners occupy the circumference. You may call them, if you please, the *cells*.

These *cells* are divided from one another, and the prisoners by that means secluded from all communication with each other, by *partitions* in the form of *radii* issuing from the circumference towards the centre, and extending as many feet as shall be thought necessary to form the largest dimension of the cell.

The apartment of the inspector occupies the centre; you may call it if you please the *inspector's lodge*.

It will be convenient in most, if not in all cases, to have a vacant space or *area* all round, between such centre and such circumference. You may call it if you please the *intermediate* or *annular* area.

About the width of a cell may be sufficient for a *passage* from the outside of the building to the lodge.

Each cell has in the outward circumference, a *window*, large enough, not only to light the cell, but, through the cell, to afford light enough to the correspondent part of the lodge.

The inner circumference of the cell is formed by an iron *grating*, so light as not to screen any part of the cell from the inspector's view.

Of this grating, a part sufficiently large opens, in form of a *door*, to admit the prisoner at his first entrance; and to give admission at any time to the inspector or any of his attendants.

To cut off from each prisoner the view of every other, the partitions are carried on a few feet beyond the grating into the intermediate area: such projecting parts I call the *protracted partitions*.

It is conceived, that the light, coming in in this manner through the cells, and so across the intermediate area, will be sufficient for the inspector's lodge. But, for this purpose, both the windows in the cells, and those corresponding to them in the lodge, should be as large as the strength of the building, and what shall be deemed a necessary attention to economy, will permit.

To the windows of the lodge there are *blinds*, as high up as the eyes of the prisoners in their cells can, by any means they can employ, be made to reach.

To prevent *thorough light*, whereby, notwithstanding the blinds, the prisoners would see from the cells whether or no any person was in the lodge, that apartment is divided into quarters, by *partitions* formed by two diameters to the circle, crossing each other at right angles. For these partitions the thinnest materials might serve; and they might be made removeable at pleasure; their height, sufficient to prevent the prisoners seeing over them from the cells. Doors to these partitions, if left open at any time, might produce the thorough light. To prevent this, divide each partition into two, at any part required, setting down the one-half at such distance from the other as shall be equal to the aperture of a door.

These windows of the inspector's lodge open into the intermediate area, in the form of *doors*, in as many places as shall be deemed necessary to admit of his communicating readily with any of the cells.

Small *lamps*, in the outside of each window of the lodge, backed by a reflector, to throw the light into the corresponding cells, would extend to the night the security of the day.

To save the troublesome exertion of voice that might otherwise be necessary, and to prevent one prisoner from knowing that the inspector was occupied by another prisoner at a distance, a small *tin tube* might reach from each cell to the inspector's lodge, passing across the area, and so in at the side of the correspondent window of the lodge. By means of this implement, the slightest whisper of the one might be heard by the other, especially if he had proper notice to apply his ear to the tube.

With regard to *instructio*n, in cases where it cannot be duly given without the instructor's being close to the work, or without setting his hand to it by way of example before the learner's face, the instructor must indeed here as elsewhere, shift his station as often as there is occasion to visit different workmen; unless he calls the workmen to him, which in some of the instances to which this sort of building is applicable, such as that of imprisoned felons, could not so well be. But in all cases where directions, given verbally and at a distance, are sufficient, these tubes will be found of use. They will save, on the one hand, the exertion of voice it would require, on the part of the instructor, to communicate instruction to the workmen without quitting his central station in the lodge; and, on the other, the confusion which would ensue if different instructors or persons in the lodge were calling to the cells at

the same time. And, in the case of hospitals, the quiet that may be insured by this little contrivance, trifling as it may seem at first sight, affords an additional advantage.

A *bell*, appropriated exclusively to the purposes of *alarm*, hangs in a *belfry* with which the building is crowned, communicating by a rope with the inspector's lodge.

The most economical, and perhaps the most convenient, way of *warming* the cells and area, would be by flues surrounding it, upon the principle of those in hot-houses. A total want of every means of producing artificial heat might, in such weather as we sometimes have in England, be fatal to the lives of the prisoners; at any rate, it would often times be altogether incompatible with their working at any sedentary employment. The flues, however, and the fire-places belonging to them, instead of being on the outside, as in hot-houses, should be in the inside. By this means, there would be less waste of heat, and the current of air that would rush in on all sides through the cells, to supply the draught made by the fires, would answer so far the purpose of ventilation. But of this more under the head of Hospitals.*

* There is one subject, which, though not of the most dignified kind, nor of the most pleasant kind to expatiate upon, is of too great importance to health and safe custody to be passed over unconsidered: I mean the provision to be made for carrying off the result of necessary evacuations. A common necessary might be dangerous to security, and would be altogether incompatible with the plan of solitude. To have the filth carried off by the attendants, would be altogether as incompatible with cleanliness, since without such a degree of regularity as it would be difficult, if not ridiculous, to attempt to enforce in case of health, and altogether impossible in case of sickness, the air of each cell, and by that means the lodge itself would be liable to be kept in a state of constant contamination, in the intervals betwixt one visit and another. This being the case, I can see no other eligible means, than that of having in each cell a fixed provision made for this purpose in the construction of the building.


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