Constructing the Metropolitan Homeland: The Literatures of the White Settler Societies of New Zealand and Australia

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The White Settler: Migration, Exile and Diaspora

The sensitive nor'west afternoon
Collapsed, and the rain came;
The dog crept into his barrel
Looking lost and lame.
But you can't attribute to either
Awareness of what great gloom
Stands in a land of settlers
With never a soul at home. (Allen Curnow, "House and Land" (1941))

According to various diaspora typologies[1], settler-invader societies -- notably the white dominions of Canada, Australia and New Zealand (which originated as migrations from the imperial centre of Britain) -- are defined as ethno-national diasporas: that is, dispersed groups sharing a collective history, common ancestors, ethnicity, and national traits, and associated with a specific homeland, maintaining a

symbolical relationship with it through these common constructs and shared affinities (Sheffer 2003: 9; Kokot, Tölölyan and Alfonso 2004: 3).

Yearning for and identification with Great Britain, the metropolitan homeland, are central features of white settler identity, contributing to the doubled and hybrid formations of white settler societies which are uneasily situated between the categories of colonizer and colonized, self and other, centre and periphery. Such "ambivalence of emplacement" (Slemon 2006: 106) between the 'original world of Europe' and the indigene, that other source of authenticity and original belonging (Lawson 1995: 29) recalls the familiar argument that such colonies are not authentically postcolonial.[2] In Australia and New Zealand, as well as in Canada, the practice of 'complicit postcolonialism; an always present "underside" within colonization itself' (Mishra and Hodge 1991: 407), whereby writers subliminally collude in "territorial appropriation of land, voice and agency" (Slemon 2006: 106), was for long masked by the articulation of anxieties about identity compounded by distance from Britain and slavish dependence upon metropolitan culture. An early expression of the "cultural cringe" (Phillips 1997) -- in the sense of deference to British culture -- comes from the Australian writer Nettie Palmer in 1930:

Waves of uncertainty sweep over us. Is this continent really our home or are we just migrants from another civilization […] doomed to be dependent for our intellectual and aesthetic nourishment […] on what is brought to us by mail from overseas? (cited in Rowley 1993: 64)

This schizophrenic state, encompassing both identification with and dislocation from the colonial society and the society of origin, defines the 'unsettled' settler. Dream, memory and history blend in articulations of longing for the metropolitan homeland juxtaposed with images of the unhomely and alienation from the colonial world; all are discernible 'literary effects' of what Homi Bhabha calls "enforced social accommodation or historical migration and cultural relocations" (1997: 445).

This essay examines a variety of symbolic, mythological constructions of the originary homeland of Great Britain in New Zealand and Australian writing, arguing that the fixation on the metropolitan homeland as the object of frustrated colonial dreams belongs to a Europeanized romantic aesthetic. Such ahistoricized longing is based on essentialized ideas of the nation state and of a master race and it presupposes the white settler in exile as a coherent subject who experiences nation, home and homeland as primordial categories. The final sections of this essay also engage with the work of several contemporary Australian and New Zealand diasporic writers who revise and reposition subjective experiences of polarized geographical placement -- a potent source of settler angst -- and complicate notions of nation, location and identity by acquiring new reference points and plural subjectivities, as well as representing 'home' as living "within the hyphen" (Radhakrishnan 1996: 175-6). In engaging with alternative overseas destinations to the original metropolitan homeland, such writing overrides the divisions of colony and empire and traverses the "boundaries defining nation and diaspora" (Braziel and Mannur 2003: 5). In terms outlined by Avtar Brah, these writers are accountable to more than one concept of home and homeland, expressing a "homing desire" by contrast to "the desire for a homeland" , and

showing "the desire to rewrite and to reinvent home as much as a desire to come to terms with an exile from it" (1996: 16, 180, 193).

Contemporary diasporas can be seen both in terms of historical experience and the existential conditions which metaphorize post-modernity. But white settler manifestations of dislocation and nostalgia for the metropolitan homeland have traditionally been identified in terms of nation building rather than in relation to contemporary concepts of globalization and transnationalism. Longing for the homeland and the condition of estrangement belong to an early phase, according to accounts of evolutionary nationalism, preceding the development of a more locally-based nationalist consciousness (Said 1991: 359). Reconceptualizations of space such as Brah's "space of diaspora" where the "genealogies of dispersion" are entangled with those of "staying put" (181) imply a challenge to those theories of the nation-state which focus primarily upon nineteenth-century migrations, for long dominated by white settler perceptions of remoteness, isolation and insignificance. In analysing early settler writing, however, I would argue that the prevalent sense of mourning and loss, for example, points towards a diversity of experience which can be associated with diasporic states of dislocation. Contemporary writers attest to the restlessness and uncertainty, the fragmentation of identity that defined the white settler, so that even present-day 'diasporic' writing differs in its reorientation but not in its essence from that of the earlier tradition.

It is also true that the greater urgency with which the quest for home and homeland is being pursued recently (Hawley 2006: 4-5) is particularly pertinent to white settler diasporas for whom such urges have always been both persistent and deep-seated. To that extent, the contemporary diasporic consciousness was already a

defining one for the white settler. In literary representations of the longing for home in both Australia and New Zealand, nostalgia and the desire for reconnection can be seen as constitutive of a literary tradition in which the apparently familiar, yet unknown world of 'overseas' represents a tantalizing, alluring ideal. But Australian writing empirically tests the myth of a metropolitan homeland because writers return to Britain in order to challenge it in an exclusive redefinition of whiteness, whereas New Zealand writing, more dependent on inherited literary structures, and often romanticizing the indigene as 'other', remains 'disconnected' for longer, with dream divorced from reality.

Representations of White Settler Nostalgia for 'Home'

As I have argued, the formation of white settler identities has often been marked by an ambivalence in which a local sense of belonging was predicated on a unitary myth of the country of origin as 'Home'. This has often precipitated, in white settler writing, a unique sense of loss and melancholy which sets it apart from much recent writing by postcolonial migrants who demonstrate an ability to live diasporically within the old imperial centre. Subscribing to the myth of common ethnic (European) origin which is often invoked as a signifier of superiority, white settler writing is sometimes informed by racist ideologies such as the 'fatal impact' (Stasiulis and Yuval-Davis 1995: 20-21), that is, the inevitable supplanting of the indigene by the European or ignoring first people altogether, so they become the "absent indigene" or "excluded other" (Huggan 2007: 25). While much of the writing is Anglocentric, some writers appeal to Celtic traditions, particularly in recalling their origins. In Australian writer Miles Franklin's account of her childhood, for example, the sadness of her older

cousin A is triggered by homesickness, a longing for the lost world of the Scottish past to which folk music and border ballad give voice:

"On the heights of Killiecrankie yestermorn our army lay"; and "Come hither Euan Cameron, come, stand beside my knee" ; "Lochiel, Lochiel beware of the day." There were others all heady with grief at leaving Scotland for ever. The poor old gentleman would forget he had a listener and nostalgia overcame him. Later I came to understand the poignancy of "Only in dreams will they see again the outer Hebrides." (1963: 89)

Such affective utterances comprise a rhetoric of displacement in which the pioneering subject's identity is trapped in the essentializing binary oppositions of here and now (the host nation) and there and then (the original homeland). This sense of disempowerment was so pervasive that it produced a kind of "spiritual exile" of New Zealand poetry in the 1920s (McCormick 1959: 102-03), a situation satirized by Bill Manhire in "Beach Life":

you're reciting

an early-twentieth-
century poem -- benign
neglectful cadences, still

pining to go home. (2001: 151)

This Anglocentric model of national identity was also, until relatively recently, true of New Zealand, which (as historian Keith Sinclair notes) "grew up on an English dream" (1961: 41). In his memoir *Home*: *A Colonial's Adventure* (1929), author Alan Mulgan testifies to the imperial myth of England as 'home', held even by those who, like him, were not born there: "As far back as I remember, it was 'Home'. In the little New Zealand community in which we lived it was as natural to talk of England and Ireland as 'Home' as it was to call New Zealand a colony" (3).

The schizophrenic habit of thinking of 'home' as a place located half-way round the world contributed to the construction of a neo-British identity for antipodean colonial settlers at a time when there were limited discourses through which to articulate that other pole of settler non-belonging: the relationship with the indigene. At one level the national cultures naturalized the affinity with all things British; the obvious contradictions were tacitly tolerated. For decades the propaganda machine of Empire promoted Britishness as a concept in Britain's overseas colonies, which typecast New Zealand, for example, as a "Better" or "Brighter" Britain to encourage the more 'desirable' classes of British immigrant (Belich 2001). This ideology was reinforced by global networks of family, friends, and professional associates; by the transport and postal systems which disseminated both textual and material forms of culture (such as domestic furniture, textiles, crockery, antiques, books and journals from British publishing houses, and newspapers from British presses); by cultural markers such as cuisine and music, especially folk-songs and ballads, and by the self-familiarizing practices of settler culture, such as calendars and cards from the 'Old World' imaging an inappropriate 'white Christmas' with robins and snow. Other culturally cognate northern European images of flora and fauna, landscape and

setting, were introduced incongruously into the antipodean milieu, because the cultural and religious traditions they represented all reinforced the impression of continued and easy access to the culture they had departed from.

One of the most efficacious vehicles for expressing cultural affinity with the imaginary homeland was literature: the power of fiction to awaken readers' imagination and to enter a more marvellous world was acutely felt. Propagandist colonial discourses were constructed by Wakefield's New Zealand Company to entice migrants to the new world;[3] but once there, settlers often satisfied a yearning for reconnection with the imaginary homeland by reading Victorian stories of adventure, romance or conquest. Alan Mulgan's romanticization of England, for example, arose from reading fable and fantasy: Arthurian legends and stories of romance and conquest made England rather than Ireland (his parents' country of origin) the subject of his imaginings: "It was a huge, mysterious, awful, sacred, yet always lovable place, this England, a land of immemorial things, of shining heroes, of imperfectly understood but fascinating ritual, of marvelous romance, of world embracing authority and prestige". (1929: 7)

Ambivalence of location, both within the nation (where the settler is often alienated from the indigene) and beyond, is often identified with problematic powers of articulation: the Canadian poet Dennis Lee, for example, attests to the difficulties of writing authentically within colonial space (Lee 2006: 347-50), while theorist Stephen Slemon has suggested that the internalization of the conflictual self-other binary is primarily a source of creativity for the white settler, rather than inspiring critical writing (such as an anti-colonial theory of resistance) (Slemon 2006: 106). Such

bifurcated self-identification has a pathological side: the New Zealand cultural historian Eric McCormick notes "the creation of an abstract, idealized often sentimentalized 'literary' world, remote from both poles of reality, the English writer's and the colonial reader's (103)" ; while Australian writer David Malouf sees the effects of isolation: "a particular intensity of the imagination, and a kind of contempt for everyday experience, that makes the *idea* for some of us, quite resistant to the strongest assaults of the actual. Real life happens elsewhere" (cited in Britain 1997: 13).

Provincial novels and poetry (written between the mid-1930s and the mid-1960s) which exploit this ontological dualism -- the simultaneous inhabiting of both old and new worlds -- dramatize the incongruities and misconceptions that occur when images of an established culture dominate an 'underdeveloped', dependent one. In New Zealand writer Robin Hyde's *The Godwits Fly* such a deception leaves the heroine, Eliza Hannay, feeling deprived of the "real thing" :

One day with a little shock of anger you realised that there were no robins and no snow, and you felt cheated; nothing else was quite as pretty. […] None of it happened, had ever happened, to your sight, hearing or taste, and yet everything else was unreal, because you had been weaned on it. The Antipodeans did truly walk on their damfool heads. (1974 [1938]: 24, 102)

In Shirley Hazzard's novel *Transit of Venus* (1980), set in 1939, New World displacement is specifically attributed to literary discourse:

What was natural was hedgerows, hawthorn, skylarks, the chaffinch on the orchard bough. You had never seen these but believed in them with perfect faith […] Literature had not made these things true. It had placed Australia in perpetual, flagrant violation of reality (31).

Hazzard's heroines travel to London, whereas Hyde's Eliza Hannay, who comes to understand the paradox that "you were English and not English" and claims "we belong there, don't we?" , stays at 'home' (1997: 34,101). England is exotic but unattainable; the godwits of Hyde's title, migratory birds which fly from New Zealand north to Siberia, become synonyms for a migration to the north (concomitant with England in the novel) which never takes place. The novel's recurring images of journeying and travel, whether postponed, hoped for or dreamed of, typify the restlessness in settler writing of the early twentieth century.

As is the case in Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career* (1901), where Sybylla Melvyn spurns marriage to the handsome, eligible, bachelor Harry Beecham in order to pursue an artistic career, *The Godwits Fly* illustrates one of the dominant colonial myths: that only through escape from their country of birth could artists gain access to the greater career opportunities offered by overseas metropolitan centres. The expatriate tradition includes distinguished antipodean women writers: Robin Hyde, Miles Franklin, Christina Stead, Henry Handel Richardson, Katherine Mansfield and Fleur Adcock all followed their destinies overseas, seeking liberation from the parochialism of provincial society and the constrictions attendant upon their gender. The colonial theme of escape through travel was never so pivotal in New Zealand fiction as in Australian writing, however, where such motifs subsequently became standard

reference points. Shirley Hazzard's *Transit of Venus* alludes to such literary romanticizing: ' "Going to Europe someone had written was about as final as going to heaven. A mystical passage to another life from which no-one returned the same" (37)

Novels based on departures from the colonies and arrival in the metropolitan homeland often involve some exposure of illusion or satire of human folly. The classic articulation of the experiences of the migrant who travels out to the colonial society and then back to the original homeland, making a home in neither and with a consequent loss of fortune and stability, is Henry Handel Richardson's trilogy, *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony* (1930). In the second, ironically titled volume, *The Way Home* (1925), the theme of the return as a utopian dream is explored against the dystopia of the present. England becomes the imaginary homeland for Richard Mahony, after he has made his fortune in Australia where he had arrived in 1852. Mahony's deluded desire to return incorporates a myth of archaic bonding and self-identification as "the nomad son who, weary of beating up and down the world, turns home at last to rest on the untravelled heart of his mother" (Richardson 1971: 7). He is also the traveler who, having " heard and obeyed the home call" and now the "richer for a goodly store of spiritual experience" , enhances the vision of those who have remained. Mahony develops the myth of England's greatness, invoking the imperial concept of a master race – "the guardian of a vast reserve fund of spiritual force" (8) -- and a grand scheme into which his individual life will fit. He epitomizes the disillusioned colonist who, according to Keith Sinclair, believed he was sailing towards civilization not away from it, yet on returning to England found himself a stranger in the land of his birth (1961: 80). Fundamentally estranged from his original

homeland Mahony becomes increasingly dependent on his Australian-born wife, and caught in a spiral of delusion and despair he returns to Australia in defeat.

By contrast to Mahony, are heroines like Teresa Hawkins in Christina Stead's *For Love Alone* (1944), and Shirley Hazzard's Caroline and Grace Bell, who travel in pursuit of romance. Hawkins "had never wanted to see England" (Stead 1978: 295), but deluded in love, she follows to England the university scholar, Jonathan Crow, only to be disconcerted by his misogynistic behaviour upon arrival. She judges her mistake: "How remote was the foolish romantic girl, who had got on the boat six weeks ago" (343). Teresa views overseas travel as a route to success and following Crow opens her access to the wider horizons of Europe: "It isn't only him. I have a great destiny. If I stay here I will be nobody" (285). Caroline Bell in *Transit of Venus* similarly announces the sisters' arrival from Australia as though it is the fulfilment of a mission: "London is our achievement. Our career. […] Having got here is an attainment, being here is an occupation" (Hazzard 1980: 31).

Radical estrangement features strongly in the psycho-pathological experiences of the doubly displaced woman writer who, early in life, travels to the metropolitan homeland (usually to receive an education) and upon returning to the colony, is overwhelmed by a malaise of 'unbelonging' prompted by intense desire for reconnection to the new spiritual home. Such conditions in younger women confirm that migration, the crisis of rupture and uprooting, is traumatic, creating feelings of helplessness modelled on the birth trauma, for it carries the threat of ego disintegration and the dissolution and blurring of boundaries. According to Vijay

Mishra, "imaginary homelands are constructed from the space of distance to compensate for a loss occasioned by an unspeakable trauma" (1996: 423-4).

This model provides a useful context within which to consider the work of Katherine Mansfield, who felt deeply dislocated upon her return to New Zealand after three years' education in England. She wrote in 1907:

My heart keeps flying off -- Oxford Circus -- Westminster Bridge at the Whistler hour -- […] It all haunts me all so much -- and I feel it must come back soon -- How people ever wish to live here I cannot think -- […] Tonight I feel too utterly hopelessly full of Heimweh. (O'Sullivan 1989: 5)

In a similar vein, Fleur Adcock romanticized England upon returning to New Zealand at the age of thirteen after seven and a half years in Britain with her family during the Second World War. For long she was haunted by a dream of going back "and in this dream I'd walk up this hill and see this village where we lived" (Ricketts 1986: 130). The 'placelessness' of the poems in her first volume, *The Eye of the Hurricane* (1964), masks the ongoing sense of dislocation from the halcyon world of her childhood that she experienced during her sixteen years of repatriation in New Zealand. Lines in her earliest poetry (published between 1952 and 1963) such as "Summer has gone to another country" and "Always he would inhabit an alien landscape" (in "The Lover") are coded statements of the trauma of separation and of longing (Wilson 2007: 20-21).

Inhabiting the Metropolitan Homeland

The 1950s and 60s were marked by increased emigration from the British colonies to England; most potent was the generation of migrants who arrived on SS Empire Windrush from the Caribbean on 22 June 1948. A new wave of antipodean writers and entertainers shared this historic moment of migration: these included the Australians Clive James, Germaine Greer, Barry Humphries, and Peter Porter, and New Zealanders such as James Courage, Fleur Adcock, Kevin Ireland, Janet Frame. In the work of the returning postcolonial writers, new perspectives acquired through extended habitation in the metropolitan centre suggest the emergence of a diasporic consciousness; this includes deconstruction of the original homeland and colony or the 'centre' and 'periphery' binary, a capacity for doubled perceptions, relativized points of view, and multiple reference points. All influence the generic form and orientation of their fictions and verse.

Janet Frame, one of New Zealand's best-known writers, arrived in Britain in 1959. In her third novel *The Edge of the Alphabet* (1962), which was her second novel written in the UK, she adapts to the quest framework the journey made by three travellers between the geographically polarized and culturally distinct locations of New Zealand and England. In keeping with the tradition of antipodean travellers to the northern hemisphere, Toby Withers suffers "an affliction of dream called Overseas" while simultaneously "dreaming of the Lost Tribe" (Frame 1962: 14). This "Lost Tribe" could possibly be identifiable with the ancestral homeland, a place of Anglo-Celtic belonging -- his mother had said "if you ever go overseas […] visit the places where your ancestors lived" (14) -- or alternatively with the centre of New Zealand's South Island, near Toby's birthplace. In parallel to Stead's heroine's quest for love, Toby is

searching for greater "indigenization" (Jennings 2000: 80-93) both in New Zealand and Britain (as the indeterminate location of the tribe suggests), and his journey across the world represents the white settler's quest for an elusive 'authentic' identity and sense of belonging. Toby's ambition to write "The Lost Tribe", associated with his journey, images that quest.

Although Toby writes no more than the title of his novel, these dual points of imagined belonging represented by his literary ambition contribute to his extreme disorientation in England. The arduous endeavour of writing provides new contexts for exploring the settler ambition of travelling, as well as anxieties about home and belonging. The white settler quest for identification may be Janus-faced, but Toby's failure to discover a viable new form of communication means that the world of fiction denies him a home just as his overseas destination does; this exclusion is disempowering. Toby's body becomes possessed or somatically defined by his unexpressed imaginings and ambition; the lost tribe (earlier seen as metaphorically inhabiting his head) becomes associated with a mysterious, poisonous sore on his arm (Frame 1962: 44-5, 149, 193). Unable to adapt to his new surroundings, Toby eventually returns to New Zealand. The interrogative "Home?" followed by the conclusion: "The edge of the alphabet where words crumble and all forms of communication between the living are useless" (224), suggests not only the failure of language , but (as in the case of Mahony) the returning traveller's innate homelessness, his now radically reduced capacity to find a home in any society.

Where Frame's novel typifies a crisis of identification in mid-twentieth-century diasporic writing, work published by 'relocated' antipodean writers from the 1970s

begins to renegotiate the relationship between 'colony' and 'metropole'. A sense of 'diasporic' belonging, demonstrating the ability to inhabit more than one location simultaneously, is represented through a consciousness of parallels and doublings, and of differences as well as similarities as determinants of identity. Fleur Adcock, for example, whose return to England in 1963 was marked by an initial unsettledness and overt rejection of New Zealand (Adcock 2000: 43-44) began in the 1970s to balance her dual allegiances: to friends and family in New Zealand, and to vocation and life in England. Landscape and place become vital markers of a new sense of belonging in her poetry, and in "Letter to Alistair" (1978), for example, she says of the Lake District: "You'd love this place; it's your central Otago, /in English dress -- the bony land's the same" (122). After returning to New Zealand in 1976 after thirteen years away, belonging, exile and estrangement emerge in her reconfiguring of 'home'. In "Instead of an Interview" (from *The Inner Harbour* (1979)) she asserts that "home is London; and England, Ireland, Europe" (2000: 115); both worlds remain inhabited, however, because the shells and souvenirs she has brought back in her suitcase symbolize her continued attachment to New Zealand. She reflects on the way in which her journey complicates and problematizes the categories of 'home' and 'away':

But another loaded word
creeps up now to interrogate me.
By going back to look, after thirteen years
have I made myself for the first time an exile? (2000: 115)

Moving back and forth between nations and classes as a diasporic subject enables Adcock to form multilocational attachments, and to occupy more than one point of view: an outsider's 'insider' knowledge of England appears in her satire of the British in poems such as 'England's Glory' and 'The Genius of Surrey' (163-4), and poems in the 'Thatcherland' section of *The Incident Book* (1986), set in her local district of East Finchley, constitute locally-informed interventions into national politics. Poems in *Time-Zones* (1991) explore a more interstitial habitation of in-between spaces, celebrating her 'to and fro' movements between hemispheres in which, as the hyphenated title implies, temporal distinctions of 'zones' as periods of time are coordinated with time zones as spaces experienced in travelling (Wilson 2007: 86, 93).

Moving a step further from Adcock's poetry of dual locatedness, work by other antipodean writers published in the late 1970s and 1980s offers newly revised perceptions of the colonial home and of Britain's insignificance, rather than the processes of adjustment and the sense of 'in-betweeness' that come from living diasporically. Elizabeth Jolley's novel *Miss Peabody's Inheritance* (1983), for example, playfully subverts earlier narratives of escape to Europe, as well as reversing the polarities of 'English centre' and 'Australian colony': its heroine Dorothy Peabody (living in Weybridge, England) reads instalments of a novel about Australian schoolmistresses seeking culture and sexual adventure in Europe, sent to her by an Australian novelist. Only when she escapes England and arrives in Australia does she come into her inheritance: to complete the novel left unfinished at the novelist's death in what she perceives will be her new home. As Gay Raines points out, "the draw of imaginative vitality and creative power comes, for once, from the

Antipodes, pulling the provincial and marginalized spirit of England towards and into itself" (1995: 189). Similarly, in a reversal of earlier narratives in which Britain is posited as the object of settler self-fulfilment, in Murray Bail's novel *Homesickness* (1980), Australian tourists who come to Europe and visit the mummified versions of Europe's past in museums experience new insights into their Australian identity.

White Settler Postcolonial Diasporas

Over the last thirty years, demographic changes such as an increase in the number of non-white immigrants, and resulting reassessments of antipodean race-relations, have led Australia and New Zealand to redefine themselves as multicultural societies. Increasing globalization and transnational connections between settler societies and other parts of the world continue to displace the imperial centre and colonial periphery model associated with the so-called 'monocultural' settler societies of the early twentieth century. As the British Empire has waned, and as global forces generate multidirectional movements of people and capital, writers have found alternative centres of pilgrimage, and are just as likely to travel to cities like Tokyo, Berlin, Prague, New York or Bombay (with which they have no prior attachment or affiliation) as they are to the former cultural capital of London. In these overseas destinations the society of origin is now represented as the place of belonging. Relocation in these new societies, which cannot be claimed as "imaginary homelands" in the way that Britain originally was for the white settler, continues to overturn and complicate the earlier divisions of home and abroad.

Likewise the pursuit of indigeneity, which (according to the writers of the *Empire Writes Back*) was the white settler's principal undertaking, has been politicized and redefined (Ashcroft et al. 2002: 134; see also Goldie 1989: 13). Debates over ethnicity, sovereignty and nationalism have led to an acknowledgement of cultural hybridity rather than uniformity; in New Zealand in the 1990s, for example, a more complex post-settler Pakeha nationalism emerged as groups of sympathetic Pakeha (descendants of European settlers in New Zealand) developed affiliations with Maori, hoping to overcome the legacy of colonial guilt by embracing biculturalism (Williams 1997: 27), while in Australia, texts such as Peter Read's *Belonging: Australians, Place and Aboriginal Ownership* (2000) point towards a similar reassessment of the relationship between settlers and aborigines. Yet the concept of indigeneity has also been sharply contested, claimed by some Pakeha on the grounds of their having developed distinctive Anglo-Celtic cultural traditions of equal value to those of the Maori, and invoked in arbitration cases over land ownership by white farmers in both New Zealand and Australia on the grounds that their length of land-tenure makes their claims supersede those of the indigene (Read 2000: 1).

Further, white settler identities are becoming increasingly relativized by proximity to and alignment with other races, as the category of whiteness -- for long the dominant cultural reference point for both nations -- becomes subject to a new scrutiny in the multicultural, transnational present. The presence of ethnic groups other than those of settler and indigene, both within the antipodes and beyond, necessitates a rethinking of whiteness as a purely unmarked category, and also as "a normative structure, a discourse of power, and a form of racialised identity" (Ware and Back 2002: 13). In the writing of antipodean postcolonial diasporic subjects, new formulations of identity

cut across the divisions of ethnicity and gender, reconfiguring the relationship between the 'global' and the 'local'. Within these plural contexts, the longing for the metropolitan homeland which mobilized journeys to the imperial centre in search of greater indigeneity or self-discovery is now "a past narrative" (Edmond 1995: 171); when these themes reappear they are usually invoked in order to critique or reposition mythologies of origin and belonging, or to provide new and expanded formulations of the ontological quest.

For example, the earlier motif of longing for the metropolitan homeland of Britain is redeployed within a contemporary frame in Janette Turner Hospital's short story, "The Bloody Past, The Wandering Future" (1987) in which the narrator recollects a walk she took with her grandfather as a child. The narrative constructs a palimpsest-like layering of her memory of this moment in her childhood over that of her grandfather, who is suddenly overcome by a sensation of loss for his own childhood in the company of his father "who used to take me walking on the Eastbourne Pier. Just like this". The narrator comments "Eastbourne is in England and that England is on the other side of the world, a place as easily imagined and as fabulous as Persephone's Underworld" (1995: 162). The reference to myth here draws specific attention to the constructed nature of settler narratives of the metropolitan homeland. Jane Westaway's novel *Good at Geography* (2000), on the other hand, complicates the earlier pattern of migration from Britain to the antipodes with the story of the Midwinter family who migrate to New Zealand in 1964. The parents, believing that their expectations of a better life in a "Man's country" have been betrayed, soon return to the "Old Country", while their daughter Isobel, sixteen on arrival, marries and remains, but is unsure of where her cultural allegiance lies:

‘Listen to your accent. You sound like a New Zealander.’
She spooned instant coffee into cups. ‘I am. You don’t have to be born here, you can … make yourself one.’ She paused, spoon in mid-air -- England and childhood, time and distance were so hopelessly muddled that surely it meant that she was a New Zealander. (94)

As Isobel’s marriage dissolves so does any certainty about the ‘right’ location -- “Man’s country -- she wondered how she had ever come to call it home” (236) -- and the novel concludes ten years later with her visiting her family in England.

The myth of home is most fully reconsidered in Janette Turner Hospital’s meditation, ‘Litany for the Homeland’ (1991). Like Shirley Hazzard, Turner Hospital has lived outside Australia for most of her life and divides her time between Canada, the US and her original home in Brisbane. Her story gives shape and credibility to this diasporic existence: her Australian-born narrator writes back to the ‘margin’ and ‘centre’ model of colonialism by reclaiming marginality as a new centre of consciousness. In her cosmic concept of homeland as existing through extended concepts of time and space the earth ‘spins in the margins of space’; the threat of extinction from a supernova links ‘our homeland’ to human existence more generally, enabling her to demonstrate the concept of homeland as both intimate and universal. Homeland is also described as existing before Captain Cook came with his maps, for the Aborigines made “all of us” visitors, ”those who came in 1788 and those who came later and those who came last year” (1995: 411), thereby acknowledging an indigenous presence marginalized in many former literary representations of

antipodean settler societies. The medieval manuscript tradition is cited as a metaphor for the experience of finding home within the margins, as "In the margins one is ignored, but one is free. That is where homeland is" (415). The narrator's current location near the St Lawrence river which "subtracts from Canada here, depositing American silt there" situates her "at the desiccating edge of things, on the dividing line between two countries, nowhere, everywhere in the margins" (422). These references illustrate the complex interstitial location of the white Australian-born woman narrator, who acknowledges that her literal and intuited homeland -- "Wherever I am, I live in Queensland" -- is just one position on the map she draws; and this very inclusiveness makes the "Litany" enact her ontological habitation of home in several ways simultaneously.

Today the concept of the metropolitan homeland has diminishing importance as the myth of cultural homogeneity dissolves and the Celtic elements of the migrant populations are increasingly acknowledged in novels like Peter Carey's *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000), a reconstruction of Australian Irishness, and Fiona Kidman's fictionalisation of the Protestant mission of the Scottish preacher Norman McLeod, which eventually settled in Waipu in New Zealand's Bay of Islands, *The Book of Secrets* (1987). Diasporic writers, situated both within and outside the antipodes, write less of homelands and nations than of states of being which testify to different degrees of belonging as oppositional locales are reduced and new habitations affirmed: for example, Beverley Farmer's Australian protagonist in her story "Place of Birth" , set in Greece, suddenly yearns for Australia as 'home' because of her desire to give birth there near her ageing parents (1990: 7-8). This engagement with other metropolitan centres demands a rethinking of home and origin: Helen Garner in

Postcards from Surfers (1985) and David Malouf in *Antipodes: Stories* (1985) write stories which are situated in both Europe and Australia; Gail Jones, in *Dreams of Speaking* (2006) writes about Brisbane and Japan. From New Zealand, the Bulgarian-born writer, Kapka Kassabova, writes about Bulgaria and Greece; Sarah Quigley about Germany and the US; Carl Shuker about Tokyo.[4] Writing from antipodean and other postcolonial diasporas, therefore, continues the displacement of the binary, oppositional model of empire and periphery which postcolonial writing in general has inaugurated over the last half century by providing new models of interconnectedness, affiliation and cross cultural dependency. The proliferation of more dynamic types of relatedness between the home of origin and the new societies of relocation arguably show that postcolonial and global diasporas, in shrinking the distances between worlds far apart, have substantially broadened the ways we can think about home.[5]

Notes

1. See, for example, Cohen (1997); Safran (1991); and the critique by Kalra, Kaur and Hutnyk (2005).

2. Huggan (2007: vi) claims this "bitterly contested issue" is one which he addresses, but cannot quite resolve.

3. Founded in 1838 by Edward Gibbon Wakefield (1796-1862), and largely responsible for the establishment of settler communities in South Australia and New Zealand.

4. See, for example, Kassabova's novel *Reconnaissance* (1999) and poetry collections *Love in the Land of Midas* (2001) and *Geography for the Lost* (2007); Quigley's poetry in *AUP New Poets I* (1999) and novels *After Robert* (1999), *Shot* (2003), and *Fifty Days* (2004); Shuker, *The Method Actors* (2005).

5. A longer version of this essay was published in *Comparing Postcolonial Diasporas*, ed. Michelle Keown, David Murphy and James Procter (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009): 125-45. This is reprinted with permission of Palgrave Macmillan. I should like to thank the Rothermere American Institute at the University of Oxford for the award of a Senior Research Fellowship for 2007-8, and Cristina Sandru for reading a draft of this essay.

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