THE HUMANITIES AND THE AUSTRALIAN ENVIRONMENT*

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In 1988 the annual symposium of this Academy had for its theme the evolution from *Terra Australis to Australia*, a theme which was particularly appropriate for the Bicentennial year. Accompanied by a great exhibition, it traced development of knowledge about the Great South Land from ancient speculation through to white settlement in 1788. In so doing, it discussed the nature of intellectual discovery within the context of geographical exploration. Last year attention shifted to more contentious issues – the relevance of the Humanities to today's society, especially Australian society in the light of changing national attitudes to education. This year's theme builds on both those earlier probings. The nature of the Humanities themselves will always be the basic pre-occupation of this Academy; but it is no less concerned to relate their innovative, regenerative and interpretative powers to the material world in which we live and for which we bear responsibility.

How to conserve the resources of nature and at the same time to meet the needs of an industrialized society; to recognize, respect and work for the freedom and prosperity of the earliest inhabitants of this country together with that of the people who have come here over the last two hundred years and who continue to come from a wide range of cultures – these are matters of profound national and political concern; but such concerns would not exist without the Humanities, and it is the Humanities that must set the basic agenda for debate on the Australian Environment.

Why is this so? Because the business of the Humanities, no matter how developmental and changing in emphasis this concept may be, is to address the human person as such, and humans are uniquely 'selving' beings. Basically the disciplines of literature, history, art history, philosophy, etc. are to do with interpreting the phenomenon of the self as it is expressed both in the individual and in human clusters or groups. Such study may result at times in the construction or deconstruction of elaborate and sophisticated theories about the difficulties or even the impossibility (according to some) of communicating meaning across or beyond particular layers or expressions of the self; but ultimately, I want to argue, these disciplines are grounded in the interpretation of meaning. Professor Chris Wallace-Crabbe puts it eloquently when, as both creative writer and literary critic, he talks in his most recent book of exploring 'the many ways in which self falls into language'.[1] He further comments, '. . . no matter how theoretical we may want to be with the tops of our heads – the area given to tertiary elaboration – we all know that autobiographies are of interest because they are about people's lives. It is when we try to locate those lives that the plot begins to thicken'.[2]

Wallace-Crabbe is talking specifically of the locating of the various levels of self-life as they are mediated in autobiography; but his statement is also applicable to the issue we address this evening. We cannot talk about interpreting or commenting on the meaning and the value of human endeavour without locating the object of our study. The many facets of the self are related to what we variously call nature, the world or the environment. Because human life has to do with both mind and matter, we are inextricably bound up with the physical world. Our very language takes this for granted. For example we speak not only of events but of human development 'taking place', and I am reminded of a fellow novice many years ago who was pulled up sharply during a visit of her parents in the early days of our religious training. Using the language of religious metaphor which talks of the abandoning of certain temporal and material values as 'quitting the world', she confidently prefaced a reference to some earlier experience with the words 'when I was in the world'. 'And just where do you think you are now?' interposed a mildly indignant parent.

Human beings are not passively or inevitably related to an objective setting, foregrounded so-to-speak against an appropriate or inappropriate backdrop. A basic characteristic of self-growth is that we alone of all creatures stamp the environment with our identity; we fashion, shape and change it; we are in constant interaction with it. More than this. The environment owes its meaning to the human person. 'The environment is inside me' says Vincent Buckley in 'Golden Builders'.[3] Ceaselessly and relentlessly involved in the transaction between the spiritual and the material, we are bonded to the physical world as much by mind and imagination as by our material needs. Locating ourselves is part of the human developmental process. Whether we relate to wilderness or cultivated garden, use land to grow wheat or graze cattle, honour its spirits as sacred to our journeying, or build cities and great sprawling suburbs, we are always seeking to extract meaning, to make the surrounds part of our lives. The Humanities traffic in this consciousness of place, in the sense of nearness and distance, of territories past and present, and of visions or nightmares yet to be given 'a local habitation and a name'. Furthermore, it is out of the environment that we speak; it is the milieu of our saying. With each fresh comment, each interpretation, comes the statement 'I am here. I see from this perspective'. Like Van Eyck's signature on the portrait of the Arnolfini Wedding 'Jan Van Eyck fuit hic'; I leave the trace of my identity on the place where I find out who I am. By contrast, if I am 'disoriented', 'displaced', 'rambling in my mind' or 'lost', my self command is seriously at risk.

These are the reasons why any serious discussion of the Environment must involve the Humanities. If we ask purely economic questions or purely conservationist ones we shall receive answers in kind. Specific issues must be addressed and the resolution of many of them requires a precise expertise, but the frame of reference is always the human person. 'Environment' is an effectively allusive term to use in this respect, because it connotes not only a physical locality but also the culture developed by the interaction of people with one another as well as

with their surroundings. Current studies have alerted us to fresh awareness of certain elemental clusters in this reciprocal dynamic. Men and women, for example, provide complementary and distinctive environments for each other. The term 'Environment' is powerful, too, because while it is interchangeable in many respects with words such as 'Nature' which have been richly laden with meaning over the centuries, it also has in today's society the sharpness and edge of urgent challenge. I looked up *The Penguin International Thesaurus of Quotations* (Penguin Reference Books, 1976) recently. There was no heading under 'Environment' while several pages were dedicated to 'Nature'. *The Bloomsbury Thematic Dictionary of Quotations*, on the other hand, which was first published in 1988 contains both 'Nature' and 'Environment'. The word Nature is not likely ever to lose its currency; too many people through the ages have used it in powerful and memorable ways. A witness to its continuing relevance for science, for instance, is the fact that one of the most respected scientific research journals still goes by its name. On the other hand, this symposium would not have aroused quite the same specialist and public interest if it had been entitled 'The Humanities and Nature in Australia', still less, I might add, if it had been called 'The Liberal Arts and Nature in Australia'.

'The Humanities' too, is currently an evocative and provocative term. Like 'the Environment' its elastic character reflects the present situation. Ian Donaldson reminded us last year that 'the Humanities will be better served by curiosity, by a readiness to venture into other people's houses and even into the streets, than by cautiously remaining within familiar walls'.[4] This indeed is now taking place and articles and conferences multiply in which the relationship of the Humanities to other categorizations of knowledge and training – to the social sciences and science, to professional and business expertise – are being vigorously discussed. I concentrate tonight on their relationship to the creative arts, because this is particularly relevant to their impact on the Environment.

In their work of interpreting the self the Humanities are intimately linked with artistic creativity, a fact which has been recognized by this Academy in the awarding of Honorary Fellowships to distinguished Australian practitioners of the arts. 'In painting and sculpture, as in literature', says George Steiner, 'the focused light of both interpretation (the hermeneutic) and valuation (the critical-normative) lies in the work itself. The best readings of art are art. This is, most literally the ease', Steiner goes on to claim, 'where painters and sculptors copy previous masters . . . Such incorporation and reference, conscious or unconscious, mimetic or polemic, is constant in art. Art develops via reflection of and on preceding art, where "reflection" signifies both a "mirroring", however drastic the perceptual dislocating, and a re-thinking. It is through this internalized "reproduction" of and amendment to previous representations that an artist will articulate what might appear to have been even the most spontaneous, the most realistic of his sightings'.[5] But artists are also pre-occupied with the Environment, in drawing meaning from and imposing their own order on it. They are both nature-lovers and artificers. Thus, the web of interpretation weaves

endlessly but productively between the artificial world of artistic contriving and the challenge of the natural environment, which can be at one moment inspiring, at another brutish and intractable. Interpretation of the human condition through literary criticism, art history, philosophy, history, the classics etc. must always keep in touch with this primary artistic interpretation in order to remain authentic, and to retain its hold both on the external environment and the self.

A powerful illustration of the artist's mediation between environment and imagination and of the extended interpretation of this through critique and commentary, was provided in a work by Film Australia on the late Australian painter Fred Williams shown recently on S.B.S. television, and which many of you will have seen. You will recall how it documented in moving fashion Fred's dedication to painting daily for long hours in the Australian outdoors, at Mittagong, in the Upwey Ranges, in the You-Yangs, in the Pilbara, along the Victorian Coast, or in the Victorian suburb of Kew.(Plate 3). We saw him with extraordinary persistence establish himself day in and day out, armed with brush, paints and easel, before a particular part of the Australian terrain, and we heard him explain 'Hail, rain, or shine – I find a quiet spot and let it come to me . . . I've no preconceived idea. I've never looked on myself as a landscape painter, just as an artist. The landscape is something I can hang my coat on'. He tells us that what he is about is painting: 'My way home is to keep on painting'. The large-scale, ordered, finished work of art was always done in his studio after a lapse of time for reflection, for the extracting and decanting of the insights and expressions captured in the gouaches and oils sketched outside. 'I see things in terms of paint', he said. But he also commented, 'The impetus for painting always comes from some notation I've made outside'. He talked too of his substantial art library, and fellow artists attested to his profound and intimate knowledge of the painters of past eras, noting his special love of French 19th century works. 'When I paint a picture' said this man whom the camera had shown spending so much of his regular working day in the heart of the Australian landscape, 'I remember all the other pictures I have ever seen'. Why did Fred Williams give his life to this exacting activity which, as he acknowledged, demanded constant discipline? 'Because I love painting . . . and because I want to communicate with people. I want people to listen, to love painting'.

Helped by the critical medium of the documentary film, we now reap the results of this all too brief life, a life which was committed to the mystery of painting and which thereby has made more meaningful the land which we inhabit.

This critical and comparative dimension of what may be called the Humanities at work, expanding artistic interpretation and linking it with ways of living and thinking in both the past and present, is communicated in many types of discourse and language - in musical, visual or literary modes in the written or the spoken word, in graphic images and signs, through academic or popular channels, by the solitary scholar or the mass media. Here communication becomes indeed the message. For the Humanities together with the creative arts call for a renewed alertness and

capacity to listen and to reflect as well as to speak. A person educated in the Humanities should become habituated to recognizing and assessing meaning, and thereby help to shape an environment in which the difficult choices made between competing meanings and values will be such as to engender trust and collaboration rather than fear and an angered sense of injustice.

Let me for a few minutes further exemplify through the interpretative channels with which I am most familiar, namely painting and poetry, how the almost infinite strata of past perceptions of the environment go to fashioning the dynamic context of our present, out of which we should make informed and constructive decisions.

It comes as something of a shock, given the later achievements of Australian landscape painting, to realize that the artists associated with early white settlement failed to penetrate beyond the most superficial meaning of this land or of its Aboriginal inhabitants. Works produced at that time tend to stay either within the confines of topographical delineation or to be conventionally arranged pieces designed to arouse nostalgic associations with the homeland. Aboriginal depiction was generally limited to the recording of basic methods of fishing and hunting, types of shelter, weaponry, or utensils with some application of the 18th century European notion of the idealized primitive living in touch with unspoilt nature. Alternatively, artists and writers alluded to what they considered to be the depredations of the Australian Aboriginal.[6]

When we remind ourselves of the lowly status of the arts in this community and the other concerns which faced the settlers, the slow progress in coming to know this country is understandable. The voyages of scientific exploration, on the other hand, provide certain striking contrasts. Here we find artists assisting in specific scientific investigation and being caught up with the enthusiasm and dedication of their professional colleagues. Thus the studies of plants made by the youthful Sidney Parkinson on his voyage on the *Endeavour* where he worked under the direction of Joseph Banks, and later those of Ferdinand Bauer, who accompanied Matthew Flinders' expedition, outstrip in their interpretation of details of the Australian environment the achievements of contemporary landscape painting.[7] Banks has recorded the regular working schedule of his team. 'From 4 or 5, when the cabin has lost the odour of food (dinner was at midday), we sat till dark by the great table with our draughtsman opposite and showed him what way to make his drawings, and ourselves made rapid descriptions of all the details of natural history while our specimens were still fresh'.[8] Over the long journey up to his untimely death in Batavia when homeward bound, Parkinson executed almost one thousand drawings of botanical subjects. Like Fred Williams he began his work outdoors before his subject, and the studies were developed later on the boat with the aid of picked specimens. He learnt from his scientific companions not only to focus on precise characteristics but also to adapt their note-taking methods to his own needs. With no time to complete most of the sketches he wrote colour notes on the verso of the sheets. There are affinities here with the working methods of Fred Williams, but whereas the latter painted within

an environment in which he was at home, Parkinson's point of contact was limited to the individual botanical object. This he commented on with skill and insight of enduring value both to science and to our understanding and love of the distinctiveness of the flora of this country, which as a nation we are now committed to preserve.

Much of the art of the early days strikes us now as a drama of absence, as documenting a failure to connect or to communicate. Those early settlers knew neither the people nor the cultural language of the country which confronted them. For many of them Australia was indeed 'terra nullius'. Today, we are increasingly aware of the suffering and destruction that stemmed, at least partially, from this lack of understanding. As Anglo-European and Asian cultures wrestle to come to terms with Aboriginal relationships to the land, we have found that we are also growing more responsive to Aboriginal art. One interprets the other. Isolated images stand out from those days of settlement that presage this later reconciliation. One such is preserved in a letter of the convict painter Thomas Watling written to his aunt in Scotland in 1794 'The natives are extremely fond of painting, and often sit hours by me when at work. Several rocks round us have outre figures engraved in them; and some of their utensils and weapons are curiously carved, considering the materials they have to work with.'[9]

Interest in Aboriginal art has been intensified and our understanding facilitated by certain contemporary developments within the art forms themselves. The emergence of such schools as the Papunya-Tula painting of the western desert and the many parallel movements as well as the growth of urban Aboriginal art has resulted in Aboriginal culture becoming far more accessible to the urban white Australian. Art that is executed on rock or in the sand, or body, weapon and utensil decoration has constituted for a number of reasons a preserve largely closed to non-members of the Aboriginal race. These reasons include the often sacred and exclusively tribal nature of such art, the detailed de-coding needed for the uninitiated and its very distinctive visual aesthetic as well as its often remote location.

Papunya style acrylic painting on canvas supports has allowed some of the techniques, media and stylistic elements of western art to be combined with facets of the rich inheritance of Aboriginal art. Thus a meeting place, a bridge has been constructed, one of the many which we strive to build today between the very distinctive cultures of the peoples who have made their home here and who must seek to learn how to share both its resources and its responsibilities. An awareness of our common dependence on both the land's economic viability and its ecological health should strengthen this readiness for collaboration.

The story of what has become valuable and meaningful to us all requires continuous narration and interpretation to energise both our imaginations and our constructive decision-making processes. Development of a varied but national cultural consciousness is of even greater importance because of the strangely broken and fragmented chains of meaning that characterise Australian art and culture to date, and the comment of a reviewer in the *Times Literary Supplement*, cited already

by Geoffrey Serle, is no journalistic hyperbole '. . . although it is true that culture in the ideal is unified and without boundaries, only the countries with seeds of cultural background can afford to say so. In the underdeveloped countries (sic!) . . . a national culture is a political necessity, and like all political necessities looks less like politics and more like an absolute condition of existence as you get closer to where the existence is led. It is quite possible that in Australia in the near future liberty will simply lose the ability to describe itself, unless its permanent definition, which is embodied in the creative values of culture, can be maintained in the national consciousness'.[10]

There is not just one period or one facet of art that should be fashioned into a national icon. Understandably later generations will react against what they see as an over-emphasis on past articulations. Nevertheless certain cultural values that have their roots in the Australian environment must be preserved and constantly re-interpreted. The paintings of the Heidelberg School of the late 1880s-90s are a case in point. I believe that it is necessary for all Australians, Aboriginal and white, those whose families have been long-established here, and those who have come more recently, to know and understand the work of such artists.

The large travelling Exhibition 'Golden Summers', (1986) devoted to this period, clearly presented to the people of Australia a statement of their continuing heritage, and through the accompanying scholarly catalogue and such insightful publications as Leigh Astbury's *City Bushmen*, it has been possible to re-assess the meaning attached to these works.[11] Clearly, too, the people responded, and record crowds visited the exhibition. Many elements can be recognized in the paintings of Streeton, Roberts, McCubbin, Conder etc. that Australians now take for granted as part of their environment but which were strange and alien to an earlier generation: the nature of sunlight and shadow – so much a part of all our days – the types and patterns of bush and foliage, the characteristic configurations of land and water, the gold-brown hues and the silvery greens - all these are readily identifiable. But so too is the city or suburban view of the bush or country-side presented by these works. Many of us are most at home in the cities which have born and bred us. They are dear to us for in them we have become ourselves. City culture is invisibly present in the Heidelberg School paintings and we respond readily when scholarly interpretation by experts in the Humanities gives us the cues.[12] The seaside and many of the views rendered by these painters are the stuff of weekend excursions; the perils of bush life such as lost children, drought, bushfire are those that have been communicated to city-dwellers by the medium of the press (Plates 2, 4-6).

Since our perceptions of both the Australian environment and of Australian art and culture are still in a relatively early phase of integration, we find relating them to an international context both stimulating and disturbing. On the one hand our writers and artists rightly persist in reacting against a thoughtless and often meaningless application of inherited language and imagery. The poet, Charles Harpur, long ago commented on the ridiculous names given to Australian birds 'Old

Soldiers, Bald-headed Friars, Leather Bellies, Native Companions, Laughing Jackasses, . . . etc.'[13] He remarks approvingly that ' . . . in some of the remote districts, first penetrated by intelligent Squatters, the birds (and most other things) are allowed to retain their aboriginal names, which are generally very beautiful'.[14]

On the other hand, we are the rich heirs of all the generations and peoples that have preceded us. It is the work of the Humanities to make accessible the art and culture of past civilizations and distant lands. Where an authentic connection can be made between meanings enshrined in apparently discrete cultures, the artist can instil fresh significance and elegant beauty. Thus Gwen Harwood in the poem 'Mt. Mangana in the Distance' uses the classically acclaimed beauty of the triangle both to frame and communicate her vision of the Australian mountain:

> . . . one prospect in three planes of vision/ . . .
>
> the casuarinas endless outlines
> rough-sketched on foreground sky and water;
> two distant arms of land dividing
> distant water and sky, and last
> the mountain, at the peak of distance,
> a triangle of softest blue[15]

But how does this discussion help us to address the current threat to the natural environment, a threat that we feel more keenly the more we are bonded by knowledge and understanding to this land where we become ourselves?

The problems that confront us, as Sir Ninian Stephen authoritatively reminded us in the opening of this symposium, are global in dimension – problems of climate-change, land devastation, pollution of the world's seas and rivers. The scholarly and interpretative role of the Humanities and the arts is essential to ensure that we implement policies with both hindsight and wisdom and that we direct concerted energies to this task. There is cause to hope that Australia will play a special role in the world response to the environmental offensive or defensive, not in an isolationist or protective way, but rather through its people's awareness of and alertness to the variegated web of values to be protected or rescued. Where decisive change is inevitable for human living, knowledge of our history and identity with it should make us more adaptable. It is to be hoped, too, that we may proceed in the midst of these giant issues with minds and hearts attuned to the preciousness of the self and of the individual.

One principle, I think, which stems from what I have had to say about the interaction between the Humanities and the Environment, and the importance of continuously evaluating selved meaning, is that where individuals or groups are affected by decisions about their environment, those to whom it means most should be consulted first. This is not to say that they will necessarily have the last word, and I do not intend to convey the worth of the environment necessarily in monetary or material

terms, but those whose lives are entwined with the environment will be most affected by its change. They cannot be thoughtlessly uprooted and re-located without harm. Sometimes satisfactory solutions for all can be found, sometimes the national good must prevail at the expense of the individual, sometimes the world's good at the expense of the nation; but it is important that the concept of the general good encompasses advantaged and disadvantaged alike, and is not cynically or despairingly interpreted as applicable only to the rich and powerful.

Certain distinctive features of the Australian environment, both natural and cultural, colour our current perceptions. Although some accuse them of exaggeration and distortion, artists like Drysdale, Pugh and Nolan have captured something of the enduring, stark and intractable nature of much of this land (Plate 1). Our cultural milieu is conditioned, too, by absences as well as presences. We lack, for example, any strong tradition of religious mysticism, be it Christian or Eastern. Aboriginal religion does indeed permeate a way of life, but it too is distinguished from the great traditions of contemplation and meditation. White settlement here had more secular beginnings by contrast say to the spirit of America's Pilgrim Fathers. This is reflected to some extent in the pragmatic emphasis in the current debates on education and its relevance. We are used, as Geoffrey Blainey recently pointed out, to relative prosperity, space, sunshine, time for sport and reasonable working hours.[16] We also have our own rather special brand of doom and gloom, and a celebrated 'knocking' tendency which inclines to gloat whenever the powerful topple. We may also argue that we have dogged perseverance and have got out of many a tough corner. All these, of course, are subjective assessments but they help to colour our environment. The Humanities themselves are affected by them – their supporters may react indignantly to officious and bureaucratic critics and yet they too are capable of passing arrogant or ignorant judgement on their colleagues. Commitment to the Humanities, some argue, and I number myself among them, demands an opting for a spiritual and prophetic element, a sense of the transcendant, for all our daily trafficking in the material. Artists like Fred Williams can show us the way.

I wish to give an artist, this time a poet, the last word on our theme tonight. From our Australian location let us listen to what Richard Wilbur, an American Poet, has to tell all those who wish to live as prophets, keeping their eyes on a shared future in the world as they know it, and beyond.

ADVICE TO A PROPHET

When you come, as you soon must, to the streets of our city,
Mad-eyed from stating the obvious,
Not proclaiming our fall but begging us
In God's name to have self-pity,

Spare us all word of the weapons, their force and range,
The long numbers that rocket the mind;

Our slow, unreckoning hearts will be left behind,
Unable to fear what is too strange.

Nor shall you scare us with talk of the death of the race.
How should we dream of this place without us?
The sun mere fire, the leaves untroubled about us,
A stone look on the stone's face?

Speak of the world's own change. Though we cannot conceive
Of an undreamt thing, we know to our cost
How the dreamt cloud crumbles, the vines are blackened by frost,
How the view alters. We could believe,

If you told us so, that the white-tailed deer will slip
Into perfect shade, grown perfectly shy,
The lark avoid the reaches of our eye,
The jack-pine lose its knuckled grip,

On the cold ledge, and every torrent burn
As Xanthus once, its gliding trout
Stunned in a twinkling. What should we be without
The dolphin's arc, the dove's return,

These things in which we have seen ourselves and spoken?
Ask us, prophet, how we shall call
Our natures forth when that live tongue is all
Dispelled, that glass obscured or broken

In which we have said the rose of our love and the clean
Horse of our courage, in which beheld
The singing locust of the soul unshelled,
And all we mean or wish to mean.

Ask us, ask us whether with the worldless rose
Our hearts shall fail us; come demanding
Whether there shall be lofty or long standing
When the bronze annals of the oak-tree close.[17]

NOTES

1. C. Wallace-Crabbe, *Falling into Language* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press) 1990, p xvi.
2. ibid., p ix
3. V. Buckley, *Golden Builders and Other Poems* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1976) p 53.

4. I. Donaldson, in A.M. Gibbs (ed), *The Relevance of the Humanities* (Canberra: Australian Academy of the Humanities, 1990) pp 33-4.
5. G. Steiner, *Real Presences* (London: Faber & Faber, 1989) p 17.
6. See, B. Smith, *Australian Painting* 1788-1970 (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1971) pp 1-23; *European Vision and the South Pacific*, Second edition (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1989) especially pp 169-177; and R.J. Lampert, 'Aboriginal Life Around Port Jackson, 1788-92', in B. Smith and A.Wheeler (eds), *The Art of The First Fleet and Other Early Australian Drawings* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press in association with the Australian Academy of the Humanities and the British Museum [Natural History], 1988) pp 1-69.
7. Smith, *Australian Painting*, pp 1-3, 8-10; *European Vision* . . . pp 16-18; 189-191. For Sydney Parkinson see also D.J. Carr (ed), *Sydney Parkinson Artist of Cook's Endeavour Voyage* (Canberra: British Museum, [Natural History], 1983) pp 1-69.
8. Quoted in W. Blunt, 'Sydney Parkinson and his fellow Artists', in Carr (ed), *Sydney Parkinson*, p 25.
9. Excerpt from T. Watling, *Letters from an Exile at Botany Bay, to his Aunt in Dumfries, Penrith (Scotland)*, 1794, in B. Smith, *Documents on Art and Taste in Australia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1975) p 13.
10. G. Serle, *The Creative Spirit in Australia: A Cultural History* (Richmond: William Heinemann Australia, 1987) p 227.
11. J. Clark and B. Whitelaw, *Golden Summers. Heidelberg and Beyond (*Melbourne: International Cultural Corporation of Australia Limited, 1985); L. Astbury, *City Bushmen* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1985).
12. See especially Astbury, ibid.
13. C. Harpur, *Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed McAckland, (Ringwood: Penguin, 1986) pp 120.
14. Harpur, ibid., p 121.
15. G. Harwood, *Bone Scan* (Sydney, 1988) p 50.
16. G. Blainey, *The Quality of Life in Australia*, Lecture, The Regent of Melbourne, October 24, 1990, Melbourne, Jennings Group, 1990.
17. R. Wilbur, *New and Collected Poems* (London: Faber & Faber, 1989) pp 182-183. I have been greatly helped by my discussions with Richard Wilbur and Chris Wallace-Crabbe on this topic.