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Chapter 1 : - Literature and the Aborigine in Australia, by J.J Healy

An historical overview of the literary representations of Australian Aborigines by white writers from first contact till the mids. The author looks at poetry and prose in historical sequence.

Economic development by Europeans had as its necessary complement the ravaging of Aboriginal life. Especially if it is accepted that the pre Aboriginal population exceeded one million and that living standards were high, the subsequent history must all the less appear as one of Prehistory. It is generally held that Australian Aboriginal peoples originally came from Asia via insular Southeast Asia now Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, East Timor, Indonesia, and the Philippines and have been in Australia for at least 45,000 years. On the basis of research at the Nauwalabila I and Madjedbebe archaeological sites in the Northern Territory, however, some scientists have claimed that early humans arrived considerably sooner, perhaps as early as 65,000 to 80,000 years ago. That conclusion is consistent with the argument made by some scholars that the migration of anatomically modern humans out of Africa and adjacent areas of Southwest Asia to South and Southeast Asia along the so-called Southern Route predated migration to Europe. Other scholars question the earlier dating of human arrival in Australia, which is based on the use of optically stimulated luminescence measurement of the last time the sand in question was exposed to sunlight, because the Northern Territory sites are in areas of termite activity, which can displace artifacts downward to older levels. In either case, the first settlement would have occurred during an era of lowered sea levels, when there were more-coextensive land bridges between Asia and Australia. Watercraft must have been used for some passages, however, such as those between Bali and Lombok and between Timor and Greater Australia, because they entail distances greater than miles km. This is the earliest confirmed seafaring in the world. By about 35,000 years ago all of the continent had been occupied, including the southwest and southeast corners. Tasmania became an island when sea levels rose sometime between 13,000 and 8,000 years ago, thus isolating Aboriginal people who lived there from the mainland as well as the highlands of the island of New Guinea. Archaeological evidence suggests that occupation of the interior of Australia by Aboriginal peoples during the harsh climatic regime of the last glacial maximum between 30,000 and 18,000 years ago was highly dynamic, and all arid landscapes were permanently occupied only roughly 10,000 years ago. The dingo, a type of wild dog, appeared in Australia only 5,000 to 3,000 years ago, which postdates the time that Aboriginal people began hafting small stone implements into composite tools some 8,000 years ago. Whereas the dingo was introduced from Southeast Asia, the small implements appear to be independent inventions from within Australia. Within the past 1,000 years, other important changes occurred at the general continental level: There is evidence for complex social behaviours much earlier, however, including cremation before 40,000 years ago, personal ornamentation shell beads by 30,000 years ago, and long-distance trade in objects before 10,000 years ago. It has not yet been ascertained whether there were single or multiple waves of migration into Australia, although recent genetic evidence indicates multiple donor groups, whether from a single heterogeneous migration or multiple waves. While there is no doubt that only anatomically modern humans *Homo sapiens sapiens* have ever occupied Australia, skulls found in the southeast suggest to some the existence of two distinct physical types. However, most now accept that there was a wide range of variation in pre-European populations. It has also been argued that one group on the Murray River practiced a form of cosmetic cranial deformation that led to their different appearance. Some have posited that Aboriginal cultures have one of the longest deep-time chronologies of any groups on Earth. Traditional sociocultural patterns By the time of European settlement in 1788, Aboriginal peoples had occupied and utilized the entire continent and adapted successfully to a large range of ecological and climatic conditions, from wet temperate and tropical rainforests to extremely arid deserts. Population densities ranged from roughly 1 to 8 square miles. Estimates of Aboriginal population vary from 100,000 to more than 1,000,000. More than 250 different Aboriginal languages were spoken and hundreds of dialects; see also Australian Aboriginal languages, and most Aboriginal people were bilingual or multilingual. Both languages or dialects and groups

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of people were associated with stretches of territory. Their members shared cultural features and interacted more with one another than with members of different groups. These groups were not, however, political or economic entities, and, while language names may have been commonly used by groups as labels for one another, individual and group identity was grounded in much more locally oriented affiliations and memberships. There was no consciousness of a shared national identity. However, the worldview of Aboriginal peoples tended to be expansive, with a perception of society as a community of common understandings and behaviours shared well beyond the confines of the local group. The blurring of such boundaries accords with strong cultural emphases on diffusion and the expansion of networks of relationships through kinship, marriage alliance, exchange, and religious activities. Greater emphasis on maintaining boundaries, together with higher levels of ethnocentrism and intergroup conflict, were more likely but not invariably to be found in resource-rich areas with higher population densities. According to traditional scholarship, Aboriginal people were hunter-gatherers who grew no crops and did not domesticate animals apart from the dingo, so they were directly dependent on their natural environment. On the other hand, some historians and archaeologists in the 21st century argued that Aboriginal people employed agricultural practices that were far too sophisticated to be characterized as hunting and gathering. Nevertheless, the conventional interpretation holds that the Aboriginal people, though nomadic, had a very strong sense of attachment to sites and areas in their home territory, where most of their hunting and gathering was done. The need to balance population with resources meant that most of the time people were dispersed into small food-gathering groups. But several times a year, when food resources permitted, large gatherings would be organized, and much of the social and religious business of the society would be transacted over a two- to three-week period of intense social activity. This rhythm of aggregation and dispersal was fundamental, but over much of this dry continent ecological factors made dispersal the predominant fact of life. Australian Aborigines at an event commonly called a corroboree. This ceremony consists of much singing and dancing, activities by which they convey their history in stories and reenactments of the Dreaming, a mythological period of time that had a beginning but no foreseeable end, during which the natural environment was shaped and humanized by the actions of mythic beings. It includes the creative era at the dawn of time, when mythic beings shaped the land and populated it with flora, fauna, and human beings and left behind the rules for social life. After their physical death and transformation into heavenly or earthly bodies, the indestructible creative beings withdrew from the earth into the spiritual realm. As Aboriginal people understand it, the Dreaming beings retained control of all power and fertility, which they would release automatically into the human realm as long as humans followed their blueprint; this included the regular performance of rituals to ensure a continued flow of life-giving power. Spirit beings were used as messengers to communicate with the living and to introduce new knowledge into human society. Through dreams and other states of altered consciousness, the living could come into contact with the spiritual realm and gain strength from it. Diverse features of the landscape provided tangible proofs of the reality and world-creating powers of the Dreaming beings, and a rich complex of myths, dances, rituals, and objects bound the human, spiritual, and physical realms together into a single cosmic order. Despite the uncertainties involved in getting a living, Aboriginal people had a strong sense of self and a religious confidence in their ability to cope with and control their physical and social world. Social groups and categories Aboriginal society was the outcome of interplay between economic, ecological, social, and religious forces. An appreciation of all these forces is essential to an adequate understanding of Aboriginal social life. The adult males of the estate group were the principal guardians of its sacred sites and objects and organized appropriate rituals to renew and sustain the land. Ownership of land was nontransferable; estate group members held land in trust collectively by means of an unwritten charter deriving from the Dreaming. In the interior deserts particularly, boundaries tended to be permeable, and a variety of cultural mechanisms allowed bands to exploit the resources of their neighbours in hard times. The band, consisting of two or more families, was the basic economic and face-to-face group. Flexible in size and composition, it was the land-utilizing group, highly mobile and able to respond quickly to altered ecological and social circumstances.

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The individual family, or hearth group, was the fundamental social unit; each family generally cooked and camped separately from other families in the band. The family could function self-sufficiently as an economic unit, but Aboriginal people preferred the enhanced sociality made possible by traveling and living together in bands. In most of Australia people were also members of various kinds of social categories, based on a division of the society into two moieties, four sections or semi-moieties, or eight subsections. People were born into them and could not change membership. These categories, in addition to being useful as labels of address and reference, indicated intermarrying divisions, were basic to the organization of many rituals, and served as a useful guide in classifying distant kin and strangers. Also widespread, and interposed between the level of the band and the wider society, were clans – that is, groups whose members claimed descent from a common founding ancestor through either the male line patriline or female line matriline. Patrilineal were the more common form, and they played a very important social role in certain areas, such as northeast Arnhem Land. Kinship, marriage, and the family The smooth operation of social life depended on obedience to religious precepts and on the operation of kinship, which was the major force regulating interpersonal behaviour. Kinship is a system of social relationships expressed in a biological idiom through terms such as mother, son, and so on. All Aboriginal kinship systems were classificatory, that is, a limited number of terms was extended to cover all known persons. Aboriginal people inhabited a universe of kin: A person thus showed respect and deference to almost all kin of the first ascending generation. These terms did not indicate the emotional content of such relationships, however, and between close relatives the intensity of feeling was bound to be greater see also kinship terminology. Kinship terms provided everyone with a ready-made guide to expected behaviour, indicating, for example, the expectation of sexual familiarity, a joking relationship, restraint, or complete avoidance. Friendships and temperament led many to bend the rules, and at times of heightened emotion, as during conflicts, some broke them; however, repeated flouting of kinship conventions brought censure, since it threatened the social structure. Children were not bound by such rules and did not normally begin to observe them until early adolescence. Affines relatives by marriage were often classified with consanguineal blood relatives, and certain terms indicated potential spouses or affines. Relationships between actual brothers and sisters were often restricted and involved some form of avoidance. Marriage was not simply a relationship between two persons. It linked two families or groups of kin, which, even before the union was confirmed and most certainly afterward, had mutual obligations and responsibilities. Generally, throughout Aboriginal Australia those who received a wife had to make repayment either at the time of marriage or at some future time. In the simplest form of reciprocity, men exchanged sisters, and women brothers. Such exchanges took place between different moieties, clans, or families. Most kinship-and-marriage systems provided for the possible replacement of spouses and for parent surrogates. Infant betrothal was common. In some Aboriginal societies parents of marriageable girls played one man against another, although this was always a potentially dangerous game. Also, there might be a considerable age discrepancy between the members of an affianced pair. Generally, a long-standing betrothal, cemented by gift giving and the rendering of services, had a good chance of surviving and fostering a genuine attachment between a couple. For a marriage to be recognized, it was usually enough that a couple should live together publicly and assume certain responsibilities in relation to each other and toward their respective families, but it might be considered binding only after a child was born. All persons were expected to marry. Elopement was often supported by love magic, which emphasized romantic love, as well as by the oblique or direct approval of extramarital relations. Although most men had only one wife at a time, polygyny was considered both legitimate and good. The average number of wives in polygynous unions was 2 or 3. The maximum in the Great Sandy Desert was 5 or 6; among the Tiwi, 29; among the Yolngu, 20 to 25, with many men having 10 to 15. In such circumstances, women had a scarcity value. Having more than one wife was usually a matter of personal inclination, but economic considerations were important; so were prestige and political advantage. Some women pressed their husbands to take an additional wife or wives, since this meant more food coming into the family circle and more help with child care. To terminate a marriage, a woman might try elopement. A man could bestow an

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unsatisfactory wife on someone else or divorce her. A formal declaration or some symbolic gesture on his part might be all that was necessary. In broad terms, a husband had more rights over his wife than she had over him. But, taking into account the overall relations between men and women and their separate and complementary arenas of activity in marriage and in other aspects of social living, women in Aboriginal societies were not markedly oppressed. In some cases this was believed to occur through an action of a mythic being who might or might not be reincarnated in the child. Even when Aboriginal people acknowledged a physical bond between parents and child, the most important issue for them was the spiritual heritage. Weaning occurred at about two or three years of age but occasionally not until five or six for a youngest child. Through observation of camp life and informal instruction, children built up knowledge of their social world, learning through participation while becoming familiar with the natural environment. Children were also constantly having kin identified to them by their elders and receiving detailed instructions about correct kinship behaviours.

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An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is a person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and is accepted as such by the community in which he she lives. Until the s, the sole legal and administrative criterion for inclusion in this category was race, classified according to visible physical characteristics or known ancestors. If you were a "full blooded Aboriginal native Section 51 xxvi gave the Commonwealth parliament a power to legislate with respect to "the people of any race" throughout the Commonwealth, except for people of "the aboriginal race". The purpose of this provision was to give the Commonwealth power to regulate non-white immigrant workers, who would follow work opportunities interstate. The purpose of Section was to prevent the inclusion of Aboriginal people in Section 24 determinations of the distribution of House of Representatives seats amongst the states and territories. Since that time, there have been a number of proposals to amend the constitution to specifically mention Indigenous Australians. In the Tasmanian Dam Case of , the High Court of Australia was asked to determine whether Commonwealth legislation, whose application could relate to Aboriginal peopleâ€™parts of the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act Cth as well as related legislationâ€™was supported by Section 51 xxvi in its new form. The case concerned an application of legislation that would preserve cultural heritage of Aboriginal Tasmanians. It was held that Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders, together or separately, and any part of either, could be regarded as a "race" for this purpose. As to the criteria for identifying a person as a member of such a "race", the definition by Justice Deane has become accepted as current law. It is unnecessary, for the purposes of the present case, to consider the meaning to be given to the phrase "people of any race" in s. Plainly, the words have a wide and non-technical meaning The phrase is, in my view, apposite to refer to all Australian Aboriginals collectively. Any doubt, which might otherwise exist in that regard, is removed by reference to the wording of par. The phrase is also apposite to refer to any identifiable racial sub-group among Australian Aboriginals. By "Australian Aboriginal" I mean, in accordance with what I understand to be the conventional meaning of that term, a person of Aboriginal descent, albeit mixed, who identifies himself as such and who is recognised by the Aboriginal community as an Aboriginal. This has just really crept up on us We are very happy with our involvement with indigenous people around the world, on the international forum But we do object to it being used here in Australia. Her lecture offered a new perspective on the terms urban, traditional and of Indigenous descent as used to define and categorise Aboriginal Australians: Not only are these categories inappropriate, they serve to divide us. The latter would imply a migration pattern in which their ancestors passed through South Asia to Australia without intermingling genetically with other populations along the way. They found that the ancestors of the Aboriginal population split off from the Eurasian population between 62, and 75, BP , whereas the European and Asian populations split only 25, to 38, years BP, indicating an extended period of Aboriginal genetic isolation. These Aboriginal ancestors migrated into South Asia and then into Australia, where they stayed, with the result that, outside of Africa, the Aboriginal peoples have occupied the same territory continuously longer than any other human populations. These findings suggest that modern Aboriginal peoples are the direct descendants of migrants who left Africa up to 75, years ago. The same genetic study of found evidence that Aboriginal peoples carry some of the genes associated with the Denisovan a species of human related to but distinct from Neanderthals peoples of Asia; the study suggests that there is an increase in allele sharing between the Denisovans and the Aboriginal Australians genome compared to other Eurasians and Africans. Examining DNA from a finger bone excavated in Siberia , researchers concluded that the Denisovans migrated from Siberia to tropical parts of Asia and that they interbred with modern humans in South-East Asia 44, years ago, before Australia separated from Papua New Guinea approximately 11, years BP. The researchers had two theories for this: Their research also shows that these new arrivals came at a time when

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dingoes first appeared in the fossil record, and when Aboriginal peoples first used microliths in hunting. In addition, they arrived just as one of the Aboriginal language groups was undergoing a rapid expansion. The study concluded that the Warlpiri are descended from ancient Asians whose DNA is still somewhat present in Southeastern Asian groups, although greatly diminished. The Warlpiri DNA also lacks certain information found in modern Asian genomes, and carries information not found in other genomes, reinforcing the idea of ancient Aboriginal isolation. They are quite distinct from the indigenous populations of Borneo and Malaysia, sharing relatively little genomic information as compared to the groups from Papua New Guinea and India. This indicates that Australia was isolated for a long time from the rest of Southeast Asia, and remained untouched by migrations and population expansions into that area. They were observed to have been able to sleep naked on the ground at night in below freezing conditions in desert conditions where the temperatures easily rose to above 40 degrees Celsius during the day. By the same token, Tasmanian Aborigines would sleep in snow drifts with nothing on apart from an animal skin. According to the April edition of the National Geographic magazine, it is believed that this ability of Australian Aborigines is due to a beneficial mutation in the genes which regulate hormones that control body temperature. Indigenous health in Australia Aboriginal Australians have disproportionately high rates [31] of severe physical disability, as much as three times that of non-Aboriginal Australians, possibly due to higher rates of chronic diseases such as diabetes and kidney disease. In a study comparing Aboriginal Australians to non-Aboriginal Australians, obesity and smoking rates were higher among Aborigines, which are contributing factors or causes of serious health issues. An article on 20 January in The Lancet describes the suicide rate among Aboriginal Australians as a "catastrophic crisis": In , more than [Aborigines] died by suicide, the highest figure ever recorded nationally and double the rate of [non-Aborigines], according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Additionally, [Aboriginal] children make up one in three child suicides despite making up a minuscule percentage of the population. Moreover, in parts of the country such as Kimberley, WA, suicide rates among [Aborigines] are among the highest in the world. The report advocates Aboriginal-led national response to the crisis, asserting that suicide prevention programmes have failed this segment of the population. Because poverty is also prevalent in Aboriginal populations, the need for medical assistance is even greater in many Aboriginal Australian communities. The researchers suggested the use of mass drug administration MDA as a method of combating the diseases found commonly among Aboriginal peoples, while also highlighting the importance of "sanitation, access to clean water, good food, integrated vector control and management, childhood immunizations, and personal and family hygiene". However, in low-risk youths, perceptions of racism caused poor psychosocial functioning. The researchers suggested that factors such as racism, discrimination and alienation contributed to physiological health risks in ethnic minority families. The study also mentioned the effect of poverty on Aboriginal populations: Cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death worldwide and among Aboriginal Australians. Aboriginal people develop atrial fibrillation, a condition that sharply increases the risk of stroke, much earlier than non-Aboriginal Australians on average. The life expectancy for Aboriginal Australians is 10 years lower than non-Aboriginal Australians. Technologies such as the Wireless ambulatory ECG are being developed to screen at-risk individuals, particularly rural Australians, for atrial fibrillation. The overall mortality rate of Aboriginal Australians due to cancer was 1. This may be because they are less likely to receive the necessary treatments in time, or because the cancers that they tend to develop are often more lethal than other cancers. The smoking rate is roughly equal for men and women across all age groups, but the smoking rate is much higher in rural than in urban areas. The prevalence of smoking exacerbates existing health problems such as cardiovascular diseases and cancer. The Australian government has encouraged its citizens, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, to stop smoking or to not start. Alcohol usage[edit] In the Northern Territory which has the greatest proportion of Aboriginal Australians, per capita alcohol consumption for adults is 1. Nearly half of Aboriginal adults in the Northern Territory reported alcohol usage. In addition to the inherent risks associated with alcohol use, its consumption also tends to increase domestic violence. Due to the complex nature of the alcohol and domestic violence issue in the Northern Territory,

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proposed solutions are contentious. However, there has recently been increased media attention to this problem. The average diet is high in refined carbohydrates and salt, and low in fruit and vegetables. In traditionally living Central Australian tribes like those of the Walbiri Warlpiri and Pintupi Pintubi a variety of protein-rich insect species found acceptance as a regular food item. Some suggest the use of taxes on unhealthy foods and beverages to discourage their consumption, but this approach is questionable. Providing subsidies for healthy foods has proven effective in other countries, but has yet to be proven useful for Aboriginal Australians specifically. List of Indigenous Australian group names Dispersing across the Australian continent over time, the ancient people expanded and differentiated into distinct groups, each with its own language and culture. The Northern and Southern areas, having richer natural marine and woodland resources, were more densely populated than the Central area.

Literature and the Aborigine in Australia, 1st Edition by John Joseph Healy (Author).

Beliefs and aesthetic values Religion Aboriginal people saw their way of life as already ordained by the creative acts of the Dreaming beings and the blueprint that was their legacy , so their mission was simply to live in agreement with the terms of that legacy. There was thus no notion of progress and no room for competing dogmas or rebellion against the status quo. Everything that now existed was fixed for all time in the mythic past, and all that the living were asked to do, in order to guarantee the continuance of their world, was obey the law of the Dreaming and perform correctly the rituals upon which physical and social reproduction were said to depend. Human creativity was not excluded but was explained away. The Dreaming legacy was not a static deadweight of tradition but was forever being added to and enlivened, despite an ideology that proclaimed non-change and the need only to reproduce existing forms. This view of the world gave precedence to spiritual powers and explanations over mundane knowledge or human intellect, and it placed everyone squarely under the authority of the law rather than that of other people. Outside the ritual arena, and notwithstanding the superior rights of men over women and of older men over younger men, people valued their personal autonomy highly and were likely to react with anger and violence to any attempts by others to deny or diminish it. Totemic beliefs are more highly elaborated among Aboriginal people than among any other people. Totemism has been defined as a representation of the universe seen as a moral and social order, a worldview that regards humanity and nature as one corporate whole, or a set of symbols forming a conventional expression of the value system of a society. Such symbols provided intermediate links, both personal and social, between humans and the mythic beings. Many of the mythic beings in Australia are totemic in the sense of exemplifying in their own persons, or outward forms, the common life force pervading particular species. Others, originating in human or near-human form, at the end of their wanderings entered some physiographic feature, were metamorphosed as hills or rocks, or turned into various creatures or plants. Conception totemism connects individuals to particular places and events and provides them with a unique account of their coming into being. It thus underpins individual identity while at the same time linking a person to many others who share similar associations. The plants, animals, or minerals that are selected as totems are not in themselves of religious significance, though in the case of foods a person may choose not to eat his or her totem, considering it to be of the same flesh. What is important is the connections symbolized by totems—the ties that bind people simultaneously to one another, to sites in the physical world, and to the omnipotent spiritual powers on which all worldly life depends. Throughout the year, religious activity was often taking place or being planned or discussed, particularly by initiated men. However, the high points were large gatherings, made possible periodically by the local superabundance of a major food resource. These occasions enabled Aboriginal people to conduct their religious life in an atmosphere of heightened excitement and tension. The main ritual roles in most major religious sequences were reserved for initiated men, and much secret-sacred activity excluded all others, but women had important roles in many religious activities. Children also took part in many rituals. In some areas, such as the Great Sandy Desert , women had their own secret-sacred rites and objects. New rituals were always being composed or exchanged with other groups, and this diffusion added a vital dynamic element to religious life. Aesthetics Sacred ritual provided immense scope for aesthetic expression, especially in dramatic performances with stylized posturing and complicated dance movements. Less intense but sometimes almost as elaborate were the nonsacred ceremonies corroborees with dance, mime, and singing designed for entertainment and relaxation. Songs ranged in style from the succinct verses or couplets of central Australia and the Great Sandy Desert, which were made up of three, four, or more words repeated in linked sequences, to the more elaborate songs of northeastern Arnhem Land, which were long verses building up complex word pictures through symbolic allusion and imagery. There was no poetry in terms of spoken verse, but there were chants, some of them outstandingly beautiful. The majority of

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secret-sacred songs comprised mythic cycles, each containing several hundred verses. Instrumental music in the north was provided by the didjeridu and clapping sticks. In southern and central regions boomerangs or clubs were rhythmically beaten together or pounded on the ground; in southeastern Australia women used skin beating pads. Tunes and rhythms varied greatly from area to area. In addition to sacred mythology there were ordinary stories and tales, either historically true or presumed to be true. Some existed in several versions, depending on the situation in which they were told and the individual background of the storyteller. Tjurunga sacred object art, consisting of incised patterns on flat stones or wooden boards, was representative of a large area of Australia, although centralized in Aranda territory. In central Australia body decoration and elaborate headdresses on ritual occasions, using down, blood, and ochres, were especially striking. Everywhere, sacred ritual provided the incentive for making a large variety of objects—mostly impermanent, because the act of making them was itself one of the appropriate rites. In western Arnhem Land maraiin objects—realistic and stylized carved representations of various natural species—were made. The rangga, or ceremonial poles, of eastern Arnhem Land, many of durable hardwood, bore ochre designs and long pendants of feathered twine. For mortuary rituals the Tiwi made large wooden grave posts, and shaped and decorated receptacles for bones were common in eastern Arnhem Land. Also common were carved wooden figures of mythic beings and contemporary persons; some were used in sacred ritual, others as memorial posts for the dead. They were used mostly on the initiation ground for the instruction of novices. Also widespread were cave and rock paintings or engravings and sand paintings associated with desert rituals. See also art and architecture, Oceanic. Rock painting of a lizardlike creature, Hawker, South Australia. They had a powerful impact on local art, music, ritual, and material culture. In the northeast, on Cape York Peninsula, Papuan visitors from New Guinea also had an influence; bows and arrows, dugout canoes, masked ritual dancing, and the use of the drum can all be traced to them. Yet these influences did not penetrate into the rest of the continent, the inhabitants of which had no knowledge of non-Aboriginal people and no need to develop cultural mechanisms aimed at withstanding the impact of alien and culturally different peoples. The European British settlement, dating from 1788, was altogether different. The arrival of carriers of a powerful imperialist culture cost the Aboriginal people their autonomy and the undisputed possession of the continent, and it forced them into constant compromise and change as they struggled to accommodate the newcomers. Initial contacts were often tentative but friendly. Communication was minimal and the cultural gulf was huge. Once European settlement began to expand inland, it conflicted directly with Aboriginal land tenure and economic activities and entailed the desecration of Aboriginal sacred sites and property. Clashes marked virtually all situations where conflicting interests were pursued, and the Europeans viewed Aboriginal peoples as parasites upon nature, defining their cultures in wholly negative terms. The frontier was a wild and uncontrolled one for a long period. Aboriginal peoples in some areas used their superior bushcraft to wage prolonged and effective guerrilla campaigns until they were finally overwhelmed by force of arms. Pemulwuy, an Australian Aborigine warrior who fought European settlers and was killed in 1816; etching by Samuel John Neele, Courtesy of the Rare Books Collection of the State Library of Victoria, Australia. Introduced diseases exacted a terrible toll and probably killed many more Aboriginal people than did direct conflict. The disappearance of Aboriginal people in southeast Australia was so rapid that the belief arose that all would soon die out. Growing humanitarian concerns and reactions to frontier excesses led the Australian colonies to pass laws, beginning in 1838 in Victoria, concerning the care and protection of Aboriginal peoples. These laws offered Aboriginal people no place in the economy or society of the colonists, and in practice they resulted in much greater restriction and control exerted by whites over the lives of Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people were kept off their land and were therefore unable to survive by hunting and gathering. Those who survived were drawn—often forcibly, always uncomprehendingly—into wretched poverty on the margins of life in the developing colonies. Armed conflict was superseded by a more passive but nonetheless determined opposition to cultural absorption by the invaders. Forced adaptation entailed impoverishment, both material and cultural, but no alternatives were left. Gradually, missionaries and government welfare agents began to have some

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effect, and questions of humane treatment came to have a more practical meaning. But in outlying areas, maltreatment, violence, and the forced removal of children of mixed descent lingered on beyond the s. Further, wherever European settlement was intensive, miscegenation took place, and Aboriginal people of mixed descent eventually outnumbered those with full Aboriginal ancestry in southern and eastern Australia. Bleakley collection item no. But many were attracted to, or forced into, the fringe settlements, where they formed tribally and linguistically mixed communities. This meant the emergence of a new form of living, structurally linked to the wider Australian society. It was not until the s that the frontier period finally ended, with the move into settlements of the last few nomadic groups from the Great Sandy Desert. Their traditional life ceased to exist as a living reality over much of the southwestern, southeastern, and middle-eastern areas of the continent, though continuities with the past remained important in the values and modes of behaviour surrounding kinship and social relations, and at the turn of the 21st century there was a strong emphasis on cultural revival. In the central and northern regions traditional life remained, even on some pastoral, mission, and government stations, although in a modified form. In more remote areas it was still possible for Aboriginal peoples to live approximately in the way they had before European colonization but with notable modifications, particularly in the arena of law and order. Berndt Robert Tonkinson In the late 20th century there were growing calls for the Australian government to apologize to Aboriginal people for abuses they had suffered under earlier administrations. For decades the government resisted releasing such a statement, but in February Prime Minister Kevin Rudd issued a formal apology for the past mistreatment of Aboriginal people.

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Notable contemporary expatriate authors include the feminist Germaine Greer , art historian Robert Hughes and humorists Barry Humphries and Clive James. Dennis and Dorothea Mackellar. Dennis wrote in the Australian vernacular, while Mackellar wrote the iconic patriotic poem My Country. Lawson and Paterson clashed in the famous " Bulletin Debate " over the nature of life in Australia with Lawson considered to have the harder edged view of the Bush and Paterson the romantic. Hope and Judith Wright. Among the best known contemporary poets are Les Murray and Bruce Dawe , whose poems are often studied in Australian high schools. Oodgeroo Noonuccal was the first Aboriginal Australian to publish a book of verse. Aboriginal writers and themes[edit] David Unaipon , the first Aboriginal author. Indigenous Australian literature At the point of the first colonization, Indigenous Australians had not developed a system of writing, so the first literary accounts of Aborigines come from the journals of early European explorers, which contain descriptions of first contact, both violent and friendly. Legendary Tales of the Aborigines. For this he is known as the first Aboriginal author. Oodgeroo Noonuccal " was a famous Aboriginal poet, writer and rights activist credited with publishing the first Aboriginal book of verse: We Are Going The voices of Indigenous Australians are being increasingly noticed and include the playwright Jack Davis and Kevin Gilbert. Alexis Wright won the award in for her novel Carpentaria. Noel Pearson is an Aboriginal lawyer, rights activist and essayist. Many notable works have been written by non-indigenous Australians on Aboriginal themes. Differing interpretations of Aboriginal history are also the subject of contemporary debate in Australia, notably between the essayists Robert Manne and Keith Windschuttle. Letters written by notable Aboriginals leaders like Bennelong and Sir Douglas Nicholls are also retained as treasures of Australian literature, as is the historic Yirrkala bark petitions of which is the first traditional Aboriginal document recognised by the Australian Parliament. Early and classic works[edit] Watkin Tench , an officer of the marines on the First Fleet and author. Henry Lawson right with J. A number of notable women authors used male pseudonyms. For centuries before the British settlement of Australia, European writers wrote fictional accounts of an imaginings of a Great Southern Land. In Abel Janszoon Tasman landed in Tasmania and after examining notches cut at considerable distances on tree trunks, speculated that the newly discovered country must be peopled by giants. Among the first true works of literature produced in Australia were the accounts of the settlement of Sydney by Watkin Tench , a captain of the marines on the First Fleet to arrive in In , poet, explorer, journalist and politician William Wentworth published the first book written by an Australian: These novelists also gave valuable insights into the penal colonies which helped form the country and also the early rural settlements. In The Guardian: It was the first Australian novel printed and published in mainland Australia and the first Australian novel written by a woman. It is a Gothic romance. Ruth Park wrote of the sectarian divisions of life in impoverished s inner city Sydney The Harp in the South. Alan Moorehead was an Australian war correspondent and novelist who gained international acclaim. A number of notable classic works by international writers deal with Australian subjects, among them D. The Magic Pudding by Norman Lindsay. Wells and Germaine Greer. These classic works employ anthropomorphism to bring alive the creatures of the Australian bush , thus Bunyip Bluegum of The Magic Pudding is a koala who leaves his tree in search of adventure, while in Dot and the Kangaroo a little girl lost in the bush is befriended by a group of marsupials. May Gibbs crafted a story of protagonists modelled on the appearance of young eucalyptus gum tree nuts and pitted these gumnut babies, Snugglepot and Cuddlepie, against the antagonist Banksia men. Paul Jennings is a prolific writer of contemporary Australian fiction for young people whose career began with collections of short stories such as Unreal! A generation of leading contemporary international writers who left Australia for Britain and the United States in the s have remained regular and passionate contributors of

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Australian themed literary works throughout their careers including: Several of these writers had links to the Sydney Push intellectual sub-culture in Sydney from the late s to the early s; and to Oz , a satirical magazine originating in Sydney, and later produced in London from to After a long media career, Clive James remains a leading humourist and author based in Britain whose memoir series is rich in reflections on Australian society including his recent book Cultural Amnesia. Barry Humphries took his dadaist absurdist theatrical talents and pen to London in the s, becoming an institution on British television and later attaining popularity in the USA. Geoffrey Robertson QC is a leading international human rights lawyer, academic, author and broadcaster whose books include The Justice Game and Crimes Against Humanity Leading feminist Germaine Greer, author of The Female Eunuch , has spent much of her career in England but continues to study, critique, condemn and adore her homeland recent work includes Whitefella Jump Up: The Shortest Way To Nationhood, Other contemporary works and authors[edit] Martin Boyd â€” was a distinguished memoirist, novelist and poet, whose works included social comedies and the serious reflections of a pacifist faced with a time of war. Never destined for life on the land, he enrolled at Cambridge where he became a published poet. White developed as a novelist, but also had major theatrical successâ€”including The Season at Sarsaparilla. A subsequent novel, Riders in the Chariot also received a Miles Franklin awardâ€”but White later refused to permit his novels to be entered for literary prizes. He turned down a knighthood, and various literary awardsâ€”but in accepted the Nobel prize. David Marr wrote of biography of White in Clavell was also a successful screenwriter and along with such writers as Thomas Keneally see above , has expanded the topics of Australian literature far beyond that one country. The Secret River is an historical fiction by Kate Grenville imagining encounters between Aboriginal and colonial Australia which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. The Slap was an internationally successful novel by Christos Tsiolkas which was adapted for television by ABC1 in , and was described in a review by Gerard Windsor as "something of an anatomy of the rising Australian middle class". Grunge lit[edit] Australian fiction writer Helen Garner was retrospectively considered to be a grunge lit author, due to the characters and subject matter of her novel Monkey Grip: Grunge lit Grunge lit an abbreviation for "grunge literature" is an Australian literary genre usually applied to fictional or semi-autobiographical writing concerned with dissatisfied and disenfranchised [38] young people living in suburban or inner-city surroundings. It was typically written by "new, young authors" [39] who examined "gritty, dirty, real existences", [39] of lower-income young people, whose lives revolve around a nihilistic pursuit of casual sex , recreational drug use and alcohol , which are used to escape boredom. It has been described as both a sub-set of dirty realism and an offshoot of Generation X literature. The term "grunge lit" and its use to categorize and market this diverse group of writers and authorial styles has been the subject of debate and criticism. Linda Jaivin disagreed with putting all these authors in one category, Christos Tsiolkas called the term a "media creation", and Murray Waldren denied grunge lit even was a new genre; he said the works actually are a type of the pre-existing dirty realism genre. Post-grunge lit[edit] Post-grunge lit is a genre of Australian fiction from the late s, s and s. It is called "post-grunge lit" to denote that this genre appeared after the s Australian literary genre known as grunge lit. Australian Grunge Fiction, the Bildungsroman and the Long Labor Decade" states that there is a genre called "post Grunge [lit]" which follows the grunge lit period. Christie names three examples of Australian "post-grunge lit": Kalinda Ashton born has been called a post-grunge writer, in part due to influences from grunge lit author Christos Tsiolkas. Ashton is the author of the novel The Danger Game. Australian writing in languages other than English[edit] Australia has migrant groups from many countries, and members of those communities not always of the first generation have produced Australian writing in a variety of languages. It has been argued that, in relation to the national literary landscape, such literary communities have a quite separate existence, with their own poetry festivals, literary competitions, magazine and newspaper reviews and features, and even local publishers. There are now signs that such writing is attracting more academic interest.

Chapter 5 : Australian Aboriginal astronomy - Wikipedia

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Interpreting the sky[edit] Emu in the sky[edit] The Aboriginal " Emu in the sky". In Western astronomy terms, the Southern Cross is on the right, and Scorpius on the left; the head of the emu is the Coalsack. An engraving near the Elvina Track [4] shows an emu in the same pose and orientation as the Emu in the Sky constellation. To the Wardaman , however, the Coalsack is the head of a lawman. They tell the story of three brothers who went fishing, and one of them ate a sawfish that was forbidden under their law. Seeing this, the Sun-woman, Walu, made a waterspout that carried him and his two brothers and their canoe up into the sky. This is an example of astronomical legends underpinning the ethical and social codes that people use on Earth. For example, in the central desert region, they are said to be seven sisters fleeing from the unwelcome attentions of a man represented by some of the stars in Orion. Another story involves seven sisters, the Maya-Mayi who were so beautiful that a warrior, Warrumma, kidnaps two of them. They eventually escape by climbing a pine tree that continually grows up into the sky where they join their other sisters. The myths of the Australian Aboriginal people are, as around the world, to do with moral lessons and various reminders such as when to eat certain types of food, which is itself a cultural connection in the general form of the stories. Therefore, the study of the stars is probably the oldest knowledge on earth, such that it remains an intriguing possibility that aboriginal star knowledge does contain some fragments of a much older original culture. While there is no hard evidence of a cultural connection, the possibility should not be written off, and the door is open to research to construct models of older human cultures, through the tracing of these narratives and other means such as linguistics. The canoe is sent back to earth as a shooting star, letting their family on Earth know that they have arrived safely in the spirit-land. Aboriginals also thought that god was the canoe. The Yolngu say that Walu , the Sun-woman, lights a small fire each morning, which we see as the dawn. She then lights a torch and carries it across the sky from east to west, creating daylight. At the end of her journey, as she descends from the sky, some of her ochre paints again rubs off onto the clouds, creating the sunset. She then puts out her torch, and throughout the night travels underground back to her starting camp in the east. The Yolngu tell that Ngalindi , the Moon-man, was once young and slim the waxing Moon , but grew fat and lazy the full Moon. His wives chopped bits off him with their axes the waning Moon ; to escape them he climbed a tall tree towards the Sun, but died from the wounds the new Moon. After remaining dead for three days, he rose again to repeat the cycle, and continues doing so till this day. In the Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park there are a number of engravings showing a crescent shape, with sharp horns pointing down, and below it a drawing of a man in front of a woman. While the crescent shape has been assumed by most researchers to represent a boomerang, some argue that it is more easily interpreted as a solar eclipse, with the mythical man-and-woman explanation depicted below it. As she approaches, in the early hours before dawn, the Yolngu say that she draws behind her a rope of light attached to the island of Baralku on Earth, and along this rope, with the aid of a richly decorated "Morning Star Pole", the people are able to communicate with their dead loved ones, showing that they still love and remember them. Astronomical calendars[edit] Aboriginal calendars tend to be different to European calendars. Many groups in northern Australia use a calendar with six seasons, and some groups mark the seasons by the stars which are visible during them. Other groups know that when Orion first appears in the sky, the dingo puppies are about to be born. The arrangement is aligned with the setting sun at the solstices and equinox, but the age is currently unknown. Unfortunately, most of the Nganguraku culture including their language has been lost because of the banning of such things by Christian missionaries over a hundred years ago. They inherited this Dreaming through their maternal line.

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The study of many such works, however, is still a relatively recent phenomenon, as contemporary scholars increasingly look to expand modern perceptions of history and literature to include those of native cultures, and to define the ways in which marginal voices have been suppressed or eliminated by mainstream intellectual discourse. Regarding the history of the Aborigines in Australia, contemporary anthropologists believe that aboriginal peoples began to inhabit the continent some 40,000 years ago, or perhaps longer. Europeans first visited the region during the early modern period of world exploration and called their discovery Terra Australia, a continent thought necessary to balance the Eurasian landmass in the north. With little regard for the native population, Cook claimed the new land for England, opening the way for the construction of an English penal settlement at Port Jackson, in the region of what is now metropolitan Sydney. Concurrently, early European literature of the era regards the dark-skinned Aborigines through a relatively simplified lens of perception, which critic Ross Gibson has categorized as generally dichotomous: With the coming of the nineteenth century and the development of an Australian literature written by European visitors and settlers, the Aborigine became a common feature of the mostly romantic or semi-autobiographical fiction of the period, and frequently appeared in personal reminiscences and verse as well. It features the tropes of the Aborigine as a flawless tracker or a treacherous murderer, as well as the already well-worn motif of the lost white child who falls into the hands of bushrangers and blacks. Cawthorne presented a decidedly more tranquil and impartial portrayal of relations between whites and Aborigines in his *The Kangaroo Islanders: A Story of Australia before Colonization* written in 1845; published in 1846. Written with a view toward psychological detail, the work also presents a balanced portrayal of its central Aboriginal figure, tribal leader Macomo, and of the other natives who assist Maxwell in bringing the outlaws to justice. Aborigines appear in numerous other works of fiction by European-born or white Australian writers of the period, with most authors opting to portray them in a sensationalistic or reductive manner. Still, critics have observed that a movement toward increasing verisimilitude became steadily apparent as the nineteenth century passed into the twentieth. In verse, colonial representations of the native Australian have tended, even more than many of those in fiction, to mythologize or romanticize the Aborigine. Charles Harpur and Henry Kendall, the two outstanding Australian lyric poets of the mid-century period, sketched a more confrontational view of the Aborigine and the white, especially in their pastoral, landscape poetry. As critic Ivor Indyk has observed, these poets generally employ images of Aborigines as symbolic of the threat of nature or of the possibility of violent death in a savage world. Aboriginal literature itself in the nineteenth century existed primarily in the form of oral tradition and contains tales, myths, and legends passed along verbally from generation to generation. Additionally, there exists evidence of works by Aborigines written as far back as in a range of genres, including essays, letters, poems, journalism, as well as traditional stories rendered on paper. The vast majority of these compositions, however, have not yet been extensively studied by linguists or literary scholars. In contrast, recent anthropological studies have begun to uncover some of the richness of traditional Aboriginal oral literature and have initiated the process of recording, classifying, and analyzing the native Australian oral tradition. Among varied topics, the Aboriginal view of myth and history has drawn the attention of several recent scholars, notably Chris Healy, who has commented on the ways in which historical accounts of contact between Aboriginal populations and European settlers have generally been recorded and mediated via the perspective of the latter. Healy argues that expanding western historical sensibilities to include an Aboriginal point of view of the engagement between whites and blacks in Australia could well benefit a future understanding of Aboriginal history, culture, and literature.

Chapter 7 : Aboriginal literature – Australian Literary Studies Journal

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