Deakin University

Tess Brady

An exegesis concerning the novel *Fragments of a Map*

Provenance: This exegesis and its accompanying novel were submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts, Deakin University, in April 1998.

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Abstract

Fragments of a Map explores the journey towards completion for two women.

Their journey is mirrored in the narrative by the women's attempt to unravel the provenance of the Vinland Map. Central to the narrative is the question: "Is the Vinland Map a valuable 15th century map or a clever forgery?"

The novel, through its concerns and structure, plays with the notion of research in the creative arts.

This exegesis comments upon the concerns of the novel, and the writing and research processes.

Summary

Tess Brady, known officially as Mariwyn Nelson Brady submits her novel, *Fragments of a Map*, and the exegesis, An exegesis concerning the novel, *Fragments of a Map*, as fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. She has been assisted in this process by her supervisors Ms Judith Rodriguez of Deakin University and Dr Nigel Krauth of Griffith University.

The novel, *Fragments of a Map* explores the journey towards completeness of the main character Meridian, and her friend Crete. As a metaphor of, and a commentary on this journey, the narrative concerns itself with Meridian's efforts to discover the provenance of a 15th century map whose authenticity is held in considerable doubt.

The exegesis traces the development of the thematic concerns of this novel. It also focuses on the writing process employed and on one of the relationships between creativity and research.

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Introduction

> 'What kind of stones are those?' I said, astonished at how natural my voice sounded. Then there was a silence into which my voice fitted; now it had found exactly the space intended for it … 'You mean the stones stand for something else'… They stand for the things in us that we do not dare recognize. (Wolf, 1984:123-124)

The question of what an exegesis accompanying a creative work should contain will probably always be one of the form's most pressing problems.

To address this question and consequentially give some indication as to what this exegesis contains, I will first deal with two commonly held confusions as to the nature of an exegesis. To do this I will address what an exegesis, in this situation, should not be.

An exegesis which accompanies a creative work and is written by the creator of that work, should not, for example, pre-empt the critic and offer a review of the creative work. The critic's role in evaluating a creative work must be seen as separate from that of the creator who is preoccupied with the process of making the work.

In order to explore this difference it is useful to isolate a few of the tasks of the critic and since the field of this creative work is literature I will isolate my comments to the role of the literary critic.

In literature, critics function somewhat like a bridge between the writer and the reader. Their task is to inform the reader but at the same time to question decisions the writer has made. Questions are rightly asked regarding structure or thematic development, or believability of plot or characters. A critic might wish to reflect on a writer's style, the mastering or lack of wit or humour. Further a critic might well reflect upon a writer's contribution to the genre and in some cases to the development of a particular literary form. Questions could be asked regarding the importance of including or deleting the writer's work from the literary canon.

Equally the critic often reflects upon the publishing and literary funding process and policies. They (note 1) might, for example, comment on the editing of a text, the cover design, or question the nervousness of a publisher who inserts explanatory *forewords* or *end notes*. They might question the role of a funding body in supporting a certain text, or conversely, suggest to such bodies and to publishers, that more could be done in a certain genre.

The critic needs to do all this, as Daniel points out, without overriding personal agendas (Daniel, 1997:1). While Daniel does not make a claim for objectivity - no critic could work in an ideological vacuum - she does suggest that for critics

to contribute significantly to the literary debate and the publishing and funding culture and climate, they need to put aside personal prejudices and review the work within the context of its publishing. It is a little like buying a birthday present for a dear friend. While we search for a 'good book', we are not necessarily looking for a book which we would choose for ourselves, but rather one which our friend might choose.

The need to contain personal agenda makes the role of the critic significantly different from the role of the creator. For example, it would be extremely difficult for the creator of a work to offer a review of their own work which did not carry any overriding personal agenda. Such a review would be partial and worth more as a curiosity rather than any kind of bridge between the reader and the writer.

The exegesis then, since it is written by the creator of the work, should not be a criticism of the work after the normal fashion of the critical review.

To take this further, I would like to suggest that while an exegesis can be a reflection on the work, it cannot be a critique of the work.

To understand this we need to question the difference between the *reflecting* and *critiquing* process. In a critiquing process we expect an interrogation of a process, or work, or idea, by a particular theoretical position. We expect the interrogation to be rigorous, skilful, elegant and possibly inventive. All of this the writer can do, and often does *in* their work, but can the writer carry out this process *to* their own work in anything but a partial manner which might best be described as 'reflection'?

Reflection is a gentler process. It does not insist upon rigour. It excuses incompleteness and at times can label contradictions as 'interesting'. In reflection we do not need to come from a particular or unified theoretical position but rather can embrace the complexities of our entire makeup, adopting, for example, an ecological position here, a feminist stance there.

There is little question that a writer, like anyone else, can reflect upon their own work, their process, the way a work might relate to an historical, contemporary or ideological position. Such reflections however, carry with them more wishful thinking, more personal goals and hopes than we would normally like to attribute to the critiquing processes. It colours the process, it makes it partial. The exegesis that follows this path then, is more likely to be a *reflection* rather than a *critique*.

Neither can the exegesis hope to explore all the aspects, thoughts, concerns and problems posed by the work. To attempt to do so would be inelegant and an unnecessary duplication of the work itself, in this case the novel. It would produce little more than an awkward and tedious clone of the fiction. The exegesis then needs to focus on certain concerns while leaving others alone. In this way it needs to be particular rather than general, selective rather than all embracing.

In this isolation of certain concerns each exegesis then needs to vary according to the creative work it supports. Some works will require a literature review of the theoretical concerns underpinning the work; others will seek to place the work within a cultural or historical framework. Still others will eke out a genre or concentrate upon the details of techniques explored and developed. When handled in this way, as a document addressing selective *concerns*, the exegesis becomes a valuable vehicle, for both the writer and the reader, for further exploration and reflection.

Because of the nature of my creative work *Fragments of a Map*, and the way it plays with the notion of research, I have decided to focus this exegesis on issues relating to both the development of this novel and its thematic concerns.

I have divided the exegesis into three main sections. The first deals with the thematic concerns that were my early companions when I began researching and writing the novel.

The second section looks at the process I took my writing through. It looks at structural issues relating to this novel and also issues relating to the novelist *qua* novelist. In this section I am suggesting a human rather than clinical approach to the business of writing a novel.

The third section addresses the issues of research, and illustrates the nature and range of traditional scholarly research required for the writing of this novel. It also explores the relationship that developed between the creative and the academic processes.

I found the process of writing the exegesis an interesting one. In particular it was personally satisfying to trace the development of my ideas, to see how readings, directions and thoughts that I busied myself with at the beginning of my journey (some five years ago) clung to the narrative or thematic considerations of the final product. While ideas changed and developed, little was wasted and those early concerns which gnawed so deeply at me in the beginning, manifested themselves in quite remarkable, although often not obvious, ways.

Since this exegesis relies and draws upon a reader's knowledge of the novel, it is suggested that the novel be read before the exegesis.

It is also worth pointing out that, unlike the novel, which from its inception was seen as a public document whose resting-place is the market place, this exegesis is intended to remain in the smaller landscape of the academic domain.

Lastly it is fitting here to publicly acknowledge the debt I owe to my supervisors. My principal supervisor, Judith Rodriguez has been with me throughout this journey patiently working through the many drafts I have asked her to comment upon. She has accompanied me on my experiments and has been a constant source of encouragement. Nigel Krauth generously agreed to act as a local supervisor when the novel neared its final stages. His support and encouragement in those last months of writing was invaluable and I am indebted to him for his belief in me and in my project.

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Section 1 - Thematic Concerns - A Feminist Position

Overview

In the beginning of my research two issues, relating to feminism, interested me. They were issues relating to the silencing of women and, directly from Irigaray, the notion of women being 'not one' (Irigaray, 1981).

Irigaray's notion of women being 'not one' had ramifications within the structure of the text and will be dealt with in Section 2 where I discuss my experiments with duality structure. Here in Section 1 I will concentrate on the way in which my understanding about the silencing of women manifested itself in the final text of the novel.

The silencing of women is an enormous issue and my exploration of it took me in two directions, the private-personal and the public-systemic.

When addressing the private-personal domain I explored domestic and work-front bullying and abuse. Basically I was looking for answers as to why men wanted to silence women's voices. On the political-systemic domain I was interested in the way women's ideas, thoughts and knowledge had been written out of the canon, and in many cases lost or fragmented. I was searching for some event or process that I could label, even metaphorically, as the beginning of the gendercide.

I approached this task with a great sadness for I was not angry with men as such, but rather deeply saddened by the patriarchal desire to silence our voices.

In exploring these issues I adopted feminist research techniques which implored me to position myself as a player in the research, a part of the research and not as a removed observer (Ball, 1991; Fraser, 1989; Spelman, 1988). I did not want to remove myself from my research, nor I argue, could I have with any conviction. Notions of absolute truth and objectivity are foreign to me, and indeed, as I will mention later, they form part of the systemic process by which women's knowledge has been silenced and neglected. In all of the research - textually, interview or observationally based, I accepted that I was part of the subject. After all, I was a woman researching aspects of how my gender has been silenced. I listened to Cixous and from the very beginning placed myself firmly and comfortably within the text (Cixous, 1991).

The lens - sadness

Sadness is a delicious yet, in psychological parlance, an under-explored emotion. It is often, in such parlance, coupled with depression or linked to a list of other negative emotions, and is rarely treated as a positive and separate emotion.

Carol Stearns traces much of the psychological, biological, linguistic and anthropological literature on sadness. In trying to isolate the emotion she refers back to the original meaning of 'sad' which I found to be useful in teasing out the layers of the emotion (Stearns, 1993). Her article however only mentions aspects of the 1667 definition, notably, 'dignified and steadfast'. It is also useful to refer to the earlier 1450 use of the word as 'having had one's fill, sated, weary' (Onions, 1964). This etymological search is useful, for, I argue, these early meanings still infect the word. Sadness accompanies dignity as it does some kind of weary, sated state.

For us to divorce sadness from depression we need to charge the emotion with aspects of ennui and its companion, fulfilment. Ennui and fulfilment are bedfellows because for one to experience ennui one needs to be tired of the world, full of it, overburdened by it. It is not possible to experience this world-weariness if one is new to the world. It is not the plight of a novitiate to suffer ennui.

And if ennui and fulfilment are part of sadness so too is dignity, for, unlike depression, anger, hysteria, unhappiness or weepiness, we expect sadness to be accompanied by dignified and steadfast behaviour. For example, missing the train might make one unhappy or annoyed or angry or even frustrated. It might result in a person tearing up their ticket, abusing the platform attendant, biting their bottom lip, cursing themselves for being late or other such behaviours. But these are the behaviours of anger, annoyance, frustration, and the like. They are not the typical behaviour of sadness. Missing the train would not by itself make one sad.

In order to experience sadness from something like missing a train other factors need to be involved. There has to be some higher order of events and consequences for such an occurrence to cause sadness. The resultant behaviour of one suffering sadness in such a situation is more likely to be an effort to hold back tears, to sit exhausted on the platform and stare silently into the empty track wondering what life now holds. Sadness generates silence and reflection. It is a powerful and yet intensely private emotion, and unlike anger, with its too frequent public outburst, sadness generates private emotional states.

Sadness in this light is a positive emotion that balances and gives depth to our lives. It is the emotion that gives joy depth and dimension, and without it our lives would be superficial, sanitised or tranquillised.

A paragraph that has been cut from the final draft of the novel sums this up. Meridian is speaking:

> I have often found a great sadness in Purcell. It's not a romantic sadness, a weepiness or even a good cry. It is almost a world-weariness, a knowledge that behind each joy is its shadow of loss. Delicately traced, the music moves from image to shadow, from fulfilment and laughter to loss and bewilderment. It is as if there is always a cello playing slowly, precisely, sadly in the crevasses of our lives, and, no matter how much we fill the air with laughter, we know there is awaiting us the loss and confusion of darkness. And strangely, to know this is not to dwell on morbidity, but rather to accept an easy peace with the whole balance of life. Purcell reminds

> me that it is because I know loss and sadness that I also know joy and fulfilment and can call them friends.

This notion of sadness penetrates the novel.

Stearns concludes her article on defining the nature of sadness:

> To answer these questions well, we will need the co-operation not only of psychologists, anthropologists, and historians, but also of biologists, linguists, sociologists, psychiatrists, and psychoanalysts. (Stearns, 1993:559)

She might well have included a novelist in such a list.

Sadness seemed, then, an appropriate emotion to explore in the novel and to use as a filter to look, once again, at the relationship between men and women in the last part of the 20th century.

Different emotions require different craft techniques in their writing and I was interested in how this private and powerful emotion needed to be written with a great deal of gentleness and subtlety. It was as if I needed to lift my hand from the keyboard, applying just the gentlest of touch.

Major influences: Gilman and Greyer-Ryan

Two articles in my general reading on the subject of silence clung to me like awkward memory. One was Greyer-Ryan's, "The Castration of Cassandra" (Greyer-Ryan, 1991) and the other, Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" (Gilman, 1981) (note 2). I will concentrate on each.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" is a disturbing yet simple short story written at the end of the 19th century, which deals with the rest cure, a fashionable treatment for women whose emotional state placed them outside their husband's or family's perceived notion of normal. Gilman, like many women of her time and ours, was not privileged with permission to explore a range of psychological states, but rather was expected to maintain those behaviours that had been defined as acceptable. Like the tranquillised women who are fed Valium or Prozac, Gilman and her generation were expected to operate within a narrow band of emotional states where evenness and predictability were highly valued. In Gilman's case she was tranquillised not with drugs but with inactivity. The rest cure allowed her/her character only two hours of intellectual work a day (note 3). Starved in this way her character became fixated upon the wallpaper which dominated the room she spent her 'quiet time' in and, as we rapidly see in this excerpt from the story, it also dominated her unoccupied mind.

> But there is something else about the paper - the smell! I noticed it the moment we came into the room, but with so much air and sun it was not bad. Now we have had a week of fog and rain, and whether the windows are open or not, the smell is here.
>
> It creeps all over the house.
>
> I find it hovering in the dining-room, skulking in the parlor, hiding in the hall, lying in wait for me on the stairs.
>
> It gets into my hair.

> Even when I go to ride, if I turn my head suddenly and surprise it - there is that smell!
>
> Such a peculiar odor, too! I have spent hours in trying to analyze it, to find what it smelled like.
>
> It is not bad - at first - and very gentle, but quite the subtlest, most enduring odor I ever met.
>
> In this damp weather it is awful. I wake up in the night and find it hanging over me.
>
> It used to disturb me at first, I thought seriously of burning the house - to reach the smell.
> But now I am used to it. The only thing I can think of that it is like is the color of the paper! A yellow smell.
>
> There is a very funny mark on this wall, low down, near the mopboard. A streak that runs round the room. It goes behind every piece of furniture, except the bed, a long, straight, even smooch, as if it had been rubbed over and over.
>
> I wonder how it was done and who did it, and what they did it for. Round and round and round - round and round and round - it makes me dizzy! (Gilman, 1981:14-15)

Although much has been written on this piece, both by Gilman and others, notably Hill, it is the story itself, which lasts as provocative, awakening and demanding action (Gilman, 1981; Hill, 1980). I was interested in how Gilman had achieved this.

The story is not didactic or prescriptive and yet the outrage and sadness it generates over the way women are limited, girdled, controlled and silenced is overwhelming. I have given this story to many female students who are struggling with issues relating to their own silencing and they have reported back, time and time again, that the story has infected their dreaming. It holds a contemporary potency. The way Gilman has constructed her story allows the reader to leap from the 'rest cure' to contemporary medical practices, which still demand women adhere to limited patterns of behaviour, handing out treatments and drugs to achieve this desired equilibrium.

This use of fiction excited me. I wanted to say something about this silencing but I didn't want to do it with a didactic mallet. Gilman's approach held clues for me.

Her approach also gave me a way of dealing with, and looking at, lunacy. I did not want to view lunacy as a negative or frightening state, but rather as just another manifestation of our psychological being. For me, then, lunacy was part of the whole, part of the person, and I would argue, part of the balance. After some searching, the lunacy I eventually worked with was menopausal lunacy - the changed behaviours of women who were no longer shackled by fertility - and its powerful postmenopausal manifestation, the Crone.

So frightening and 'lunatic' is the Crone that those who seek to control the more deviant behaviours of women denigrate the Crone to ugliness, uselessness, sorcery and witchcraft. The Crone is not only useless in society but she is to be feared and mocked for her strange powers and kept out of sight for her ugliness. Let loose the Crone not only disobeys the rules but flaunts her disobedience. (Martz, 1987) Such a powerful female version of lunacy attracted my attention.

The Crone, as she manifested herself in the novel, her shape and appearance owes much to Crista Wolf, who in Cassandra writes:

> Lunacy: an end to the torture of pretence. Oh, I enjoyed it dreadfully, I wrapped it around me like a heavy cloak, I let it penetrate me layer by layer. It was meat and drink to me. Dark milk, bitter water, sour bread. I had gone back to being myself. But my self did not exist. (Wolf, 1984:60).

Like Shakespearean manifestations of lunacy, the Crone haunts, rather than walks through the text. This haunting is reflected in her colour, purple. There is something very interesting about purple, it is a colour with mysterious electro-magnetic properties. As light it does not exist, it is a trick of the eye, a transcendental colour which defies the physics of the colour spectrum. In physics the colour can only be described as blue/red-red/blue, and yet in the world we see it - here, there (note 4). So too with the Crone. She is and is not there. We see her and yet we don't, we know her and yet we don't.

In Chapter 5 Meridian encounters the Crone, but we are left uneasy as to the nature of this encounter. Was it real or a dream?

> Quite late in the night I woke disturbed by a sound. I listened intently, terrified of an intruder. But it was the sound of the old woman's chant. It appeared to be coming from the front veranda, so in the dark I made my way to the front room and looked out of the window. She was sitting on the veranda; her purple hat caught the moonlight. She rocked with her chant.
>
> I turned on the front light and went outside to her. The light startled her a little and then she simply grunted, as if she was annoyed that I had kept her for so long.
>
> "You sleep too well," she said, and waved the situation away as if it was an annoying insect. She stared at me, and for the second time I felt something uneasy, strange. I was not afraid of her; there was something else. I found it too difficult to put my finger on. Something which made me cautious, wary.
>
> Her voice became very clear and she continued to stare at me as she spoke. "Make haste girlie! Make haste! We have no more time for your rationality. Make haste!"
>
> I didn't understand her. I took a step towards her but she put up her hand to stop me coming closer. "We have so little time. Listen! In the distance, coming closer. Can't you hear it? Can't you hear the male calling? Can't you hear the didgeridoo?"
>
> And with that she stood up and made her way out onto the street and the darkness of the night. I didn't try to stop her but held tight her words, like a cloak of smoke they wrapped themselves around me. I took them inside with me. I took them inside of me and let them become part of my night's dreaming. (Chapter 5)

Within the novel the Crone remains a shadow, and yet I deliberately gave this shadowy character the final great act of hope. Unlike the other expressions of hope in the novel, which I discuss later, this final manifestation is the least hesitant, the least tarnished. It is the hope held within lunacy, within the shadows of our dreams, within the inkling of tomorrow. It is the gift of the Crone.

Perhaps because she holds some of the answers, the Crone takes us away from the silencing of women. We need to return to my exploration and in particular to the work of Greyer-Ryan who has other advice for me. (Greyer-Ryan, 1991)

Greyer-Ryan coupled the sound of women's voices with the negative ways in which they are described. She placed this against a backdrop of silencing.

Specifically, Greyer-Ryan focused on the way in which women's voices, traditionally occupying a higher pitch to their male counterparts, were described using words such as 'piercing', 'shrill', 'high' and 'grating'. She pointed out that this negative description focused attention on the way women talked rather than *what* they were saying. Such descriptions take our attention away from their argument and places it instead on the physical properties of their voice.

In the Australian culture, women's broadcasting voices have, increasingly, become low in pitch. While a certain degree of lowering of pitch may have more to do with advanced microphone technology than any perceived social change in an acceptable female pitch, it is interesting to hear broadcasts of women from other cultures maintaining a higher pitch. Perhaps efforts by women, consciously or unconsciously, to lower the pitch of their voice is akin to adjusting one's dress to hide the woman inside the executive. It could be seen as an effort to rid one's voice of the female - of the negative descriptions of 'shrill' or 'piercing' - and demanding that the content of the speech be engaged with and taken seriously.

So acute was the habit of dismissing the content of a woman's speech by concentrating on the sound of her voice, that Mary Ellman (1968) in her early work reviewing criticisms of women's writing, points out that not even the word 'hysterical' occurs as often as the word 'shrill' in those reviews (Ellman, 1968:90).

Greyer-Ryan develops her position illustrating how negative descriptions of women's voices flowered like a noxious weed into negative descriptions of the women themselves. Descriptions such as 'nagging' and 'argumentative' equally remove attention from the content or concerns expressed in the woman's speech. She cites the perceived argumentative relationship between Xanthippe and Socrates, where Xanthippe is often referred to as the opinionated and quarrelsome hysteric opposing Socrates the 'great sophist and maieutic philosopher.' (Greyer-Ryan, 1991:200) The description deprives Xanthippe of content, negating her contribution as 'quarrelsome', and thus dismissing, and, significantly, not engaging with, her speech. It denies her and other women subjected to this device, the right of rational argument.

Greyer-Ryan concludes:

> Full female voices, such as those of the Sphinx, the Sirens, and Sappho, or a sight which repels male sexuality, such as that of Medusa, are banished by the dominant cultural discourse into the shadowy realm of the abnormal and inhuman. (Greyer-Ryan, 1991:203)

I began to work with descriptions of women's voices and found it illuminating that, all too often, a pleasant description of a woman's voice is offered in bird-like terms: 'the sweetness of a nightingale'; cat terms: 'she purred sweetly'; or food terms: 'smooth and luscious as chocolate'. The alternative, and sometimes collaborative of this is the description which implies a readiness for sex: 'a deep husky voice' and in its collaborative form: 'a voice the colour of purple, deep, husky and smooth as chocolate'. While my examples are of course designed to be over-the-top they resonate through a disturbing amount of fiction. It is only in contemporary fiction that we would expect to find a description of a woman's

voice along the lines of: 'It was a clear strong voice that penetrated the confusion'.

I translated this interest into the fears surrounding Crete's silencing which, we discover, is one of her deepest fears. This fear is played out in her public life as a medieval historian. Her alternative historical methods are derided and labelled 'witchcraft', 'unscientific', 'non-historical', 'undisciplined'. These forms of abuse marginalise her work and, as Greyer-Ryan pointed out, by describing Crete's work in these terms, those who wish to deride it do not have to engage with it. Such is the dismissive nature of ridicule. This crippling ridicule is at the core of Crete's fear.

I was also interested in the abundance of classical references in Greyer- Ryan's article and how others such as Cixous made use of these stories. Here the Greek myths were re-told in a way that helped to explain and support women, rather than negate them (Cixous, 1991). These feminists were attempting to reinterpret the classical stories and other myths, seeing numbers of them as stories *for* women. There were lessons for me here and I re-read classical mythology. Section 2 deals with this development.

Domestic silencing

I gathered stories, my own included, of women who had been silenced on the domestic and/or work front, by male aggressive, violent and/or bullying behaviour. I was not interested in the pathological male bully or the sadist. Rather, I was interested in the male who under other circumstances was seen to be a reasonable and socially sensitive human being, but for whatever reasons, threatened the women in his life into silence. In order to unpack this I interviewed a number of women (note 5).

These interviews, sometimes deeply moving, made me realise that I was not interested in the men who were acting aggressively but rather in the women, and how they had *given the men permission* to silence them. In other words, I stopped seeing the women as victims of male aggression and began to see them as co-conspirators in their own silencing.

I hasten to add here that I am not maintaining that women *cause* the abuse or that they are to *blame* for it. And further, it should be noted that I was dealing with what would be described as 'mild cases'. Not one of the women I talked to had reported any abuse to the authorities, although some had welcomed police protection when it was offered. None of the women had sought protection or resolution in the courts, or tribunals, or officially-sanctioned mediation systems, although some had sought domestic and relationship counselling. None of the women had needed hospitalisation although some had needed medical treatment.

I was interested in how, often inadvertently, the women, including myself (for I was part of this research) had allowed the silencing to occur. We justified our compliance as an effective way of maintaining peace, sanity, equilibrium, and in some cases, safety. We had all learnt the cost of such peace.

A personal example will suffice here. After coming out of a long and difficult relationship, my daughter, who was twenty years old at the time and in her second year at university, casually asked me what I lectured in. She wasn't asking what topic, or what subject, but rather she was asking what discipline I taught in. I was shocked by her lack of knowledge about my job, and then I realised that to keep the peace I had not spoken at home of my university work. It had been a silenced issue and I had silenced it. My academic work had not

been allowed to penetrate the domestic image of me as wife, cook, brewer of the beer, keeper of the flower garden, mother and sometimes writer. I was shocked by how totally and successfully I had silenced myself. Such self-silencing became a focus of my research.

I knew that in a novel dealing with the silencing of women and their struggle to regain voice, I could not escape dealing with the issues of violence or bullying. But because I was interested in what we did to ourselves, I did not want to dwell on these issues which I feared would take the focus back to the aggressive men. Further, I saw these forms of abuse as too simple, too obvious, and I was, in the end, more interested in the insidious forms of silencing where the very nature of the argument, the essence of the logic, excluded the woman's voice.

I made several attempts at writing the violence trying to depict it from a variety of perspectives, but in the end decided to restrict it to one small passage. By restricting the violence to one small incident I hope to increase its potency in the text.

I allowed the violence to nestle into Crete as, at least in part, an explanation as to why she felt afraid and timid of forming a relationship with Gabbett. In Chapter 12 Meridian talks to Gabbett:

> "She told me a story once, I've never forgotten it. It frightened me." I took a gulp of the wine. "It was when she was with her last husband, the violent one. They'd had a fight and he'd bashed her, ripped her clothes off her, and in a rage stormed out of the house. She came to and found herself sitting in the dark, in the far side of her bedroom. Probably she'd passed out or been knocked unconscious..." The story was hard to tell, and it was hard to listen to. We both needed to take our time over it.
>
> I continued. "She came to, and as I said, she was sitting on her bedroom floor, all bunched up like a child, her clothes torn and hanging loose. It was dark now and she saw a light coming down the hall towards her. It shone into the bedroom. It looked like an eye, a single bright eye at the door of her bedroom. It was a torch of course, held by a policeman. By his side was a woman police officer. They heard Crete and turned on the light. They were kind enough to her, got her clothes, to a doctor, made her a cup of tea, that sort of thing. But she told me, and this is what really frightened me - she told me that the worst was not the beating he'd given her, the bruises or the ringing in her ears, the torn clothes or the soreness in her shoulder. The worst was the fact that two strangers had just been able to walk into her house and find her like that."
>
> I looked at Gabbett. "She said, *That's what being a victim really is, forgiving him for bashing you but not forgiving him for letting strangers into your world*." As I spoke those words I could picture her, hear her voice, see her resolve. I could hear her laugh about it, make light of it, as if the past was another place and she could escape it, live in the here-and-now. (Chapter 12)

A version of this story was given to me by one of the women I interviewed. What impressed me the most was how this woman found the hardest thing to cope with was the police's intrusion into her private space. She was not against the police, they had in fact treated her well. It was the thought of strangers entering uninvited into her private space which was the most painful for her. Her home, her house was her inner space. It had been violated. I asked myself: was it

because her body had so often been violated that she projected such concern onto a physical space? Sadly, her story was not unique.

I decided that there was something about this story which summed up the violence I wanted to speak of. And I decided to write the scene in the third person, as a remembered incident from someone else's life because I didn't want the reader to focus on the particulars of the violence. I did this because the story's truly shocking quality comes from the reader's realisation that, for this woman, the personal violation of space was worse than the physical beating and violation of her body. In other words, I didn't want the reader to immediately experience, via identification, the fear of the attack. Instead, I wanted the reader to reflect on the incident *in situ*, as just another part of this ordinary woman's life. I wanted the reader to reflect on their understanding of what constitutes a victim.

Further, I wanted to imply in the incident, by generalisation about the nature of becoming a victim, an explanation as to why I had silenced myself, why my twenty-year-old daughter did not know what discipline her mother lectured in. (In my reading and interviews perhaps I was trying to unfold the gradual history of my own self-silencing. Perhaps I am still trying to unfold that secret.)

The final paragraph in the quotation above refers to how Crete had *told* the story, how she had laughed in its retelling. In many of the women I interviewed this was a common enough trait. These were the ones who had coped with the situation. They had, by changing aspects of their lives, empowered themselves, and could now reflect back on the silencing. The woman who originally told me this story laughed at herself, at how she had been silly enough not to focus on the beating. I thought it important to give Crete this dimension; she was after all portrayed as a survivor.

But in saying this I am not attempting to make light of such silencing. There were, of course, women who were still trapped within the cycle and who could not laugh. They were nervous, reluctant to talk, and blamed themselves. Their bruises were fresh. Their brains were clouded with tears. They were still focussed on the intrusion and had not learnt to focus on the beating.

But these pained women were not my focus. My lens was sadness not numbness, pain or anger. Perhaps one of the great attributes of sadness is that it does not exclude hope. I wanted to use this, I wanted the novel to speak of survival and hope. But hope is just as difficult to write about as sadness.

I had a particular kind of hope in mind. I was not interested in that trivial hope full of bright sunshine and found at the end of rainbows and feel-good movies. I wasn't interested in anything so romantic. I also wasn't interested in the religious use of hope which is offered as an excuse for dreadful behaviour or as a soporific for terrible suffering. I wanted to evoke a gentler form of hope: a kind of tarnished hope, all dull and half-rubbed-out; a hope that's found in bus stop graffiti, casual conversations or distant laughter. It's the kind of hope which doesn't offer excuses or explanations but, more out of curiosity than conviction, it keeps one going, keeps one taking that extra step.

Like sadness, this tarnished hope invades the narrative.

To focus on Crete we can see an example of this form of hope. The passage above illustrates that Crete's empowerment is tarnished. She stumbles at surviving. But there is a sense in which we know that somehow she will survive. It may not be often, but there are times when she can talk about her past situation, when she can laugh at the mistakes she's made.

Removal of women's knowledge

A much more insidious form of silencing occurs systemically and has resulted in women's ideas and knowledge being defined out of the acceptable. Somewhere in time the canon of acceptable knowledge, our very notion of *logos*, was constructed in a way that relegated much of women's knowledge into the realm of superstition, as esoteric or as a hobby.

In searching for a metaphor for the beginning of this form of silencing I rejected Crista Wolf's fall of Troy and other references to the Greek and Roman classical period, and instead centred my attention on the period between the Medieval and the Enlightenment eras. How I came to focus on this period of time is perhaps less important that what I made of it.

The Enlightenment interested me greatly. It was a time when thought itself was being ordered and categorised and much of the categorisation we use today in ordering knowledge stems from this period. I am thinking in particular of Diderot's *Encyclopaedia* of 1751, which worked from, and developed, Bacon's categories of knowledge. The thinking behind the construction of these categories is set out in d'Alembert's preface to the *Encyclopaedia*, a lengthy and informative discourse. In order then to address Diderot's categories, I will refer to d'Alembert's preface.

We need to address here the notion that to generate and construct categories is not simply to organise a collection, whether it be thought or seashells, but also to limit and exclude. Imagine a sea shell collection organised in colour or shape or even chemical composition. Each time a new object is brought to the collector, that person must determine if it *is* a seashell, and then if it *fits* into the collection. They make these decisions by referring to the categories by which they organise their collection. Is it pink enough? is it of the right size? and so forth. The categories then function as gatekeepers whose task is to limit entry in order to keep the collection pure. Thus once categories have been set up, and often they are set up as a device to help organise and sort the collection, they in turn become strong limiting devices. The categories set up in the Enlightenment were no exception and functioned as limiting devices.

The Enlightenment, in defining the categories and thus the limits of knowledge, had two great premises at its core. Firstly, it was anthropocentric, that is, it was human, not God centred; and secondly it placed its faith in the laws of physics rather than the laws of God. Schawb in his translation of d'Alembert's *Preliminary Discourse*, commented:

> Throughout the *Discourse*, d'Alembert is reflecting a major concern of Bacon, Descartes and Locke, who had all been occupied with the question of establishing the limits of our knowledge so that philosophers might most profitably expend their efforts on what can be known through reason, rather than wasting them, in flights of speculation, imagination, and superstition, on what cannot. (Schwab, 1963:25f)

Reason, not faith, became the foundation of human endeavour. The mysteries of the universe were no longer the mysteries of God but rather puzzles to be solved by physics or other pursuits of reasons.

To illustrate this shift it is useful to refer to the concept of P. The ancients determined it to be a transcendental number and worked out a functional rather than precise way of using the number in their calculations and constructions

relating to a circle. They might trouble over the notion of the transcendental but did not spend lifetimes trying to resolve the number. The medievalist took it on faith as one of the mysteries of God. The Enlightenment mathematicians dismissed its transcendental status and determined to resolve the number. Several spent a lifetime working on it and at the last count it has been calculated to over fifty-one billion decimal places (Blatner, 1997).

The changes in the approach to knowledge, as well as the way in which it was organised, guaranteed that the Enlightenment was seen as a radical movement. It is not surprising to discover that the *Encyclopaedia*, whose preface is often referred to as a manifesto of the Enlightenment, was banned in several European Catholic countries and that Diderot and d'Alembert were hunted men.

What fascinated me was the way in which man (the male), in an effort to rid himself of the collar of the Church, invested faith in physics in particular, and science in general. Science became the new religion worshipping at the altar of *logos*. Faith, and all its component zealous behaviour, was simply transferred to the new worship of reason. The world could now potentially be explained and understood. It could be measured and mapped and evaluated. It could be categorised and labelled and assessed. And all of this could happen without the intervention of the Church. Further, it followed that if the physical world could be spoken of in this way then so too could the worlds of politics; of education; of social organisation; of economics; of art; of morality and of philosophy. The Enlightenment removed the necessity for miracles, indulgences, relics, the Divine Right of Kings, creationism, divination, prophets, and the overwhelming authority of the Church in matters scientific, secular and political.

Of course those accepting the tenets of science could, and did, believe in God. But it was a different form of belief in that it was a different understanding of the power of God, and consequentially a different expectation for the role of the Church, from that of their medieval brothers. The authority of the Church no longer needed to manifest itself in the public lives of people or in the matters of State. When to sow or harvest was not a Church matter, how to govern or administer laws was not necessarily a Church matter and God was no longer needed to explain the workings of the material world. Cosmology rather than teleology became an important component of belief.

Accordingly it is interesting to note here that just as the Church was losing power and being relegated to a small section of knowledge, so too were women's skills and lore becoming isolated. It is ironic that the same system reduced the power and influence of both the Church and women, since the Church, to this day in its conservative forms, maintains women as the marginalised *other*.

Women's knowledge was marginalised in several ways. Firstly, women's skills of weaving, dying, brewing, cultivation of herbs, sewing, healing, nurturing, caring and the like, were not listed under any of the categories of knowledge.

In contrast, one of the truly democratic aspects of the categories and the Enlightenment movement was the elevation of the role of the artisan. For example, under the category section *Uses of Nature*, several artisan skills were listed. These included skills employed in the use of gold and silver; use of precious stones; use of iron; use of glass; use of skin; use of stone, plaster and slate; use of silk and use of wood. No doubt this list of artisan skills reflected the influence of the powerful trade guilds and master system. Nevertheless, so committed to the elevation of the role of the artisan was d'Alembert that he states poignantly in his preface:

> The discovery of the compass is no less advantageous to the human race than the explication of its properties would be to physical science. The contempt in which the mechanical arts are held seems to have affected to some degree even their inventors. The names of these benefactors of humankind, are almost all unknown, whereas the history of its destroyers, that is to say, of the conquerors, is known to everyone. (d'Alembert, 1963:42)

Secondly, women's lore, and by this I am referring to intuitive knowledge, healing and divinatory knowledge, nurturing and the preservation of oral history, was marginalised. In a set of categories, *Science of God* (quite a small sub group in the overall scheme) superstition, divination and black magic were grouped together under the title of *Evil Spirits*, and placed in opposition to *Natural and Revealed Theology*. Naming the category with the emotive word 'evil' and placing it in opposition to theology provided justification *within the bounds of reason* to eradicate this form of women's knowledge. In short, it provided a justification for the burning of women who had been classified as witches and the burning of manuscripts of those whose writing challenged the Church.

So firmly did these categories exclude women's knowledge that I decided to take them as the metaphorical beginning of the gendercide. Such a beginning suited me, as it was not event based, as in Crista Wolf's the fall of Troy in *Cassandra* (1984), but rather relied on a more gradually changing situation. The intellectual shifts celebrated in d'Alembert's discourse, did not happen overnight. Such intellectual shifts slowly built up and gradually applied pressure to the existing political powers and structures.

The Church, quite naturally, felt particularly threatened. Much of its power base was being eroded and, as in any social organisation, the erosion of power was accompanied with a certain fear. There are many expressions of this growing fear of change. The two I became interested in were the Conciliarism movement, and the eradication of heresy and witchcraft resulting in the burning of the women.

McBrien gives an account of Conciliarism which was a movement by bishops and cardinals of the Church to democratise its governance. It was a kind of Magna Carta where at the Council of Basel (1431-1449) several members of the church attempted to vote for, and implement, a restriction of powers of the Pope. They wished to set up instead a governing council (McBrien, 1981).

Nicolas of Cusa came to the Council of Basel as an advocate of Conciliarism and had, in 1433, written a tract, *De Concordantia Catholica* setting out a council governance system which might be employed. Even at this early stage of his career he was a powerful and influential figure. However, by 1437 he publicly reversed his position and supported Pope Eugenius. This switching sides caused an enormous upheaval, those wishing for reform no longer had the numbers and the Council was disbanded. Conciliarism was outlawed in the Church under the pain of excommunication, which at the time meant at least the loss of one's income, if not death or torture.

Many doubted Cusa's motives, especially when he went on to be appointed the cardinal of Brixen in Italy and later promoted to the papal enclave as the papal legate to Germany.

It is at this point that the narrative enters. My central character Meridian is engaged in a quest to discover the provenance of a 15th century map thought to have been drawn by a scribe at the Council of Basel. The narrative makes much of the rapid closing of the Council and the disbanding of those who supported

Conciliarism, reworking much of the story. It also weaves into the narrative Nicolas of Cusa's interest in cartography and libraries.

Another way in which the Church reacted to its growing loss of power was to attempt to eradicate heresy and witchcraft. In order to maintain itself it tried, on one hand, to rid itself of powerful threats and, on the other, to adopt a form of internal purification in an attempt to reduce excesses of superstition and mysticism.

Disturbing numbers of women, called witches, were put to the flames. And if that was not enough, women's work and writings were also burnt. It was during this time that the 'deviant' poet Sappho's works were burnt and we now have only fragments of her poetry, like charred scraps of manuscript that blew away from the flames.

But unlike the struggle over Conciliarism, or even the eradication of the Knight's Templar, the eradication of women, their books, their skills, their crafts, their knowledge and their lore, was seldom documented. What records exist today make very sad reading, and attempting to estimate the number of women killed is difficult. Estimates of the number of women burnt or drowned as witches puts the figure as high as a third of the female population of Europe (Bethancourt, 1997). Contemporary interest in this time has opened up some information and the Internet is being used to collect and record this, however, it is unlikely that we will ever have any accurate figures on the burnings.

Fortunately Christine de Pizan's books were simply too popular and numerous for any fire at the steps of a church to silence her. She needed to be *forgotten*, allowed to quietly slip away from the canon, not in any spectacular bonfire but rather much more insidiously, she needed to disappear without notice. Her works needed to fall away from conversation. But this was difficult to achieve.

The works of Christine de Pizan (1365-1432) were popular and in spite of the high cost of copying a book (estimated to be on average the equivalent cost of two townhouses in an English town) many copies were made of her work. She was the first European woman to make a living as a writer and one of her texts, a history, was the second book Caxton printed on his press, immediately after he finished printing the Bible. Her tracts, *The Book of the City of Ladies* (1405/1982) and *The Treasury of the City of Ladies* (1497/1989) are models for modern feminism. She not only points out, but also goes on to illustrate, how a woman can live without a husband, how she can run her estate, how she can achieve an education and how she can avoid suitors. *The Treasury* completes the picture and offers a large number of role models from history of women who have achieved success in various human endeavours. These were very dangerous ideas. Christine de Pizan must have posed an enormous threat to male supremacy.

It is perhaps an indication of the determination of conservative men, who perceived her works to be dangerous, that successively throughout history she has been forgotten, excluded from collections of medieval manuscripts, relegated to the dark stacks of libraries, fallen out of print, been eradicated from encyclopaedias and not mentioned in general, literary or intellectual histories. It is conversely, an indication of the determination of women that she has been rediscovered and reprinted as many times as she has. I could not let such efforts go unnoticed.

In the narrative, when Crete is faced with the fears that her work will be silenced I turn to Christine de Pizan's work and its constant rediscovery to evoke a notion of women's historical memory. In Chapter 13 Meridian says:

> I wanted to explain this very carefully to Crete. "This watch maps my past, the women who I've come from. We don't have a surname to map our mothers but we do have things like this watch. We all have something to connect us. For some of us, it's our customs - how we bury our dead, how we celebrate birthdays, or Christmas, or how we make scones, or the silly ditties we sing. For others, there are objects, pieces of jewellery, old books, maybe a handkerchief. But we all have something that connects us to our mother's mother's mother. This is our memory, Crete, our historical memory."
> Neither of us spoke for a moment and then I added. "Don't fear about being silenced. It doesn't matter how many times Christine de Pizan's work has to be re-discovered; the point is we do keep re-discovering it. We keep on. We do map and record our lives and those of our mothers. It's quite wonderful and we do, do it!"
> I put the watch back into her hand to let her feel the age of women, the memory of the women. (Chapter 13)

Fragments of a Map engages with these issues and addresses the silencing of women. But the novel contains hope at its core. As I mentioned earlier, it is scruffy, tarnished kind of hope, but it is hope. It is not surprising then that I allow my characters the opportunity of voice. I'd like to think that perhaps, in unmeasured ways, women are beginning to remove their gags. Someone is singing in a clear high voice. Is it Hildegard of Bingen?

> I fell asleep listening to a single woman's voice singing Hildegard's chants. Her voice reverberated through the cloisters of history, through the pages of a manuscript. (Chapter 7)

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An exegesis concerning the novel *Fragments of a Map*

Section 2 - The Process

History - fiction and myth

I had written a crime novel and thought I knew something about the prose process. This perhaps was my first mistake.

I knew, for whatever reason, that I wanted to write a 'non-genre' novel, a 'woman's' novel, a 'straight' novel. I didn't have the words to describe it. And worse, I knew I didn't know what such a thing was. Wanting to write what I had never written before I felt lost and confused. I mistakenly searched for boundaries and formats, so that before I began the first draft, I would know exactly what it was I was going to write. This was another mistake.

I was not so much interested in the interface between the writer and the reader, but naively, more in the essence, the very nature of what a novel was. My questions were not framed in what a novel could be but rather in terms of what constituted a novel, what it already was. I believed such a description existed, and as if it was a rare and beautiful butterfly, it became my task to find it.

In my search to discover exactly what a novel was I joined the debate at the point of collision between myth, history and fiction. Berthoff worked this territory noting the relationship between modern fiction and historical narrative (Berthoff, 1970). He claimed that while much of history obscures its author under a veil of fact or truth, fiction promotes its author flaunting the veil of contrivance. Berthoff elevated the author of fiction and the role of contrivance over the historian, and for that matter the storyteller. For Berthoff the storyteller was the keeper of myths.

He also claimed that myth differs from fiction and history because it is not composed but told and re-told until its origins are obscure. Berthoff saw the act of re-telling as a passive one where the storyteller is slave to the myth. I could not agree with him. Surely the act of retelling, the stressing of one point, the reorganisation of material, the cadences and tension of the storyteller are no less a contrivance than those displayed by the novelist.

Berthoff concludes:

> In consequence, history is trapped into competition with fiction (and myth) in order to arrive at its own models of completeness (Berthoff, 1970: 274).

While I had problems with his notion of myth, Berthoff's metaphor, 'history trapped into competition with fiction', excited me. Much of *Fragments of a Map*

can be viewed as an exploration of this tension between fiction and history. This aspect of the novel is explored in Section 3.

But there was still the issue of myth. How, if at all, does it relate to this struggle?

Berthoff held a Levi-Straussean view of myth which saw them as functioning as social classificatory schemes, not so much for explanation but rather for 'recovery, preservation, organization, continuance' (Berthoff, 1970: 281). But I had just read Estes' *Women Who Run With The Wolves*, a text where story after story was retold in order to offer explanation (Estes 1991). So dominant was this intent that Estes spent considerably longer on the explanation than she did on re-telling the stories. Clearly if we are to view the stories as myths, and she certainly did, then for her explanation and commentary became the role of myth (note 6).

Further, I could not bundle myth into the same home team as fiction. I knew, for example, that while on my better days I could claim to write fiction, I could not claim to write myth. Myth was somehow sacred, older, and almost religious. It, like the Ten Commandments, had the air of being handed-down, a precious heirloom. It came in the form of catechisms or chants or shared and known stories. I did not write this stuff, I couldn't, I wasn't initiated.

And I could not couple myth with history either. History's contrivances and obligations had other perimeters.

I moved my reading towards Joseph Campbell and since I was interested in the classical references employed by Greyer-Ryan, Cixous and others, I turned to Bolen's work on the classical Greek gods, the myths and their relationships to us as archetypes (Campbell, 1949; 1973; 1988; Greyer-Ryan, 1991; Cixous, 1991; Bolen, 1989).

I found this reading of myth more comfortable. It allowed me to see myth as the story of the game played out between history and fiction. To explain: imagine a game of cricket where the opposing sides are history and fiction. Myth provides the ashes, myth is the Long Room in the M.C.G., myth is the preservation of the old score board. Myth then became the explanation, the backdrop, the basis on which my entire novel could be built. It was for me the essence of explanation, of what was behind the novel and what underpinned it.

Here I am being careful to speak of the novel and not of the narrative or of the themes, of the style or the genre, the plot or the characters. I want to address the whole work, the novel itself, for wholeness seems important here. Myth sat underpinning it all, not the individual parts, but the thing as a complete unit. And it did so shyly, almost without being noticed. The novelist does not need to say, "Here I am including a myth", for the process to function, for the myth to be there deep in the tangle of words, deep in the shadows of the text.

Viewing myth in this way allowed me to see the novel as more than the sum of its parts. Some caution is needed here for the simplicity of this sentence in no way indicates the magnitude of the recognition. It was a little like finally having words to put to the mystery of the Trinity.

There was something further here. I knew I wanted to write a novel that dealt with the silencing of women. I knew I wanted to tell two women's stories, and I knew that I wanted their stories to be both unique and general. I wanted the stories to be open enough for other women to relate to, and identify with. I wanted women to be able to find part of their own story in the novel.

Myth gave me a way of addressing this problem. For me, myth became the vehicle that took a particular story and drove it to the universal, letting it slide effortlessly in and out of the particular. It was the relationship between myth and fiction that allowed the novel to move from the individual to the general. It was the underpinning of myth that carried one story about one woman into one story about many women.

What I had found in this reading was not so much a framework or a structure for the novel but rather a playing field where the game could be contested. Exactly what kind of game I still needed to discover.

A chronicle or a quest?

The next part of my journey was the internal debate on the novel's role as a chronicle or a quest. Should I document these women's journeys, recording the steps and places and events that transpired, or should I set them off on a quest, giving them a task to perform, a riddle to solve?

> It had been a particularly boozy publisher's dinner with more bottles of red wine than anyone wanted to count. Somewhere over the meal she had asked the senior editor of one of the largest publishers of fiction in the country what he thought a novel was. The question was a conversation stopper. Silence descended on the table, the restaurant, the outside traffic. She regretted asking. She took another glass of red.
>
> He did likewise. "Sometimes I think it's what I read, what's presented to me. What someone else calls a novel."
>
> He looked into his glass. It wasn't much of an answer but it was more than he usually gave. The restaurant patrons began to talk again; they at least knew that any time for revelations had passed.
>
> Later, not much was remembered of that night, but as someone was driving her to where she was staying, there was another conversation she remembered. "Cover designers," he said, "get more money than first novelists." The cover designers, she thought, were paid very little.
>
> A novelist then, she now knew, is someone whose first book sleeps between well-designed covers and does not sell. She decided to tell no one of the money she had made on her first novel.
>
> The next morning as she nursed her hangover and prepared to have lunch with the city's nightwatchman, she rehearsed talk of remainders and minuscule royalty cheques.
>
> "It's a labyrinth," he explained, and she walked into the nightwatchman's house, thinking, in a blurred sort of way, about the idea of a chronicle.
>
> The walls of his house were lined with suggestions. She had quite forgotten Shipps' scholarly thesis, *The Quote Sleuth* and was pleased to be reminded of it.
>
> Whether it was the movement of her walking down the hallway, or the co-incidence of time, she would often wonder, but a single rose

petal fell precisely into a neat pile of other petals. She stopped and watched. Silently the rose formed an image of itself on the surface of the hall table - one petal coupled within the other. It was like the image of the globe peeled off and projected onto a map. As a projection, she thought, the cartographer could now understand the meridian of the rose.

She followed him, continuing her journey into the house. The city night watchman led the way directly to his table. He had been waiting, not too patiently to begin. What he served was not food but mythology.

"Keeps the mind active," he said, as he carefully placed a large fishlike slice of text onto her plate.

***

The Nightwatchman's Wallpaper

A long passage is usually easier to trace than a short one. A book made up of undocumented quotations has no authority. If at all possible you should see the quoted passage in its context.

An account of the journey to oneself	*An archive of the journey to oneself*	*A bibliography of the journey to oneself*	*A catalogue of the journey to oneself*

The attribution of authorship is usually correct and can be trusted. Time spent looking for quotations is never wasted. One-line quotations may be the first line of a long poem.

A chronicle of the journey to oneself	*A casebook of the journey to oneself*	*A clock of the journey to oneself*

You should get ready for quotation problems long before they happen. Intense concentration will sometimes call to mind an idea that would not have come otherwise. It is worth remembering that in identifying the source of a quotation, the sleuth is no match for the person who knows the answer.

A fiction of the journey to oneself	*A log of the journey to oneself*	*A detail of the journey to oneself*	*A description of the journey to oneself*

Your capabilities will increase over time as you add to your knowledge. Inevitably, a competent tracer of quotations will often be given credit for knowing more than they really do.

A footnote of the journey	*An intrigue of the journey*	*A memory of the journey*

to oneself *to oneself* *to oneself*

It is good to keep and to review from time to time a file of untraced quotations. As a sleuth it should be remembered that the Oxford English Dictionary is also a book of quotations.

A monument of the journey to oneself *A map of the journey to oneself* *A report of the journey to oneself* *A narrative of the journey to oneself*

If you have not found the solution after doing all that you know to do on your own, you should appeal for help. Solutions that you cannot find yourself sometimes find you.

A sketch of the journey to oneself *A tale of the journey to oneself* *A romance of the journey to oneself*

Just as murderers are said to return to the scenes of their crimes, quoters often return to the authors they have quoted before. The author may recall just where the passage occurs.

(Fragment: *In which A thinks of the novel as a chronicle* and *The wallpaper*)

At this point I had developed three female characters, The Cartographer (later Meridian) The Archaeologist (later Crete) and The Narrator (my voice). To these I eventually added the Crone (later the old woman). The Crone appeared one day on my computer screen. I had been reading Christine Downing's *Women's Mysteries* (1992) and was writing about menstruation, birth and fecundity. Suddenly my fingers began to type and with a flurry the Crone was there. She was wrapped in a dark heavy shawl and in a shrill voice, yes it was "shrill", she told me: "Make haste. There is no more time for your rationality. Can't you hear them calling? Can't you hear the male calling?"

Like a muse she had imposed herself on the text. I simply wasn't brave enough to ask her to leave.

At this time I had begun to write fragments, odd snippets that didn't connect to each other. My drawer filled with them. There were times when I felt like an archaeologist trying to piece together shards of a smashed pot. Similarly my reading was becoming erratic. Tuesday was the day new books were displayed in the library. I didn't miss a Tuesday. I'd sort through the piles of books from a range of disciplines and taking them out, I'd read snippets, chapters, paragraphs, anything that caught my eye. The lack of order was worrying me and the fragments concerned me greatly.

Foolishly, I applied for a writing grant from the South Australian Department of Arts and Cultural Heritage, offering as support material a few of the fragments. The grant was successful, which ironically made matters worse. It was now official, I was writing a novel. Occasionally when I had to give a public reading I'd read one or two of the fragments and avoided any conversations about the progress of the book.

Grace Nicholls, the English novelist, came to town and gave master classes. I showed her my fragments. I told her about the Crone who'd invaded my computer screen. She wasn't fussed by either the fragments or the Crone and talked of tarot cards. She reminded me that the cards are complete and tell their own story, but when they are put in this or that way they tell another, or a different story - they can be read. She moved my fragments around like cards.

I liked her metaphor and went out and found a very beautiful women's tarot deck, the *Shining Woman's Tarot Guide and Cards* (Pollack, 1992). I spent some time looking at the cards, moving my eyes from my writing fragments to the cards and back again. I'm not sure how I think about the tarot but I like the symbols of this pack. There were cards called 'Knower of Stones', 'Speaker of Rivers', 'Place of Birds'. I began to move the fragments around juxtaposing them in different ways.

I noticed two things about the fragments. Firstly I was exploring a voice I had developed and used in the radio dramas I had written, particularly *Anthony, a play for three women* and *A Woman in the Key of A Minor* (Brady, 1979, 1983). This surprised me because I had abandoned that voice when I began writing crime novels. It was a delicate fragile voice that at the same time was not frail. There was the trace of the survivor hidden in it somewhere. An example is the fragment *On seeing an almond tree blossoming, after a class on metaphor*. I had recently been to the 1994 Third International Women Playwrights Conference and had been impressed by how women working in other cultures seem to play much more easily with metaphor. I like their play and their bright colours.

> The young almond tree in my garden is white with blossom, fragile with life like a small girl in her communion dress.
>
> There I go again, avoiding the metaphor, standing back, comparing and not becoming.
>
> I am the tree white with blossom. I am the communicant, my white dress a mass of fragile tulle. I am the confirmer, my white dress a little too long in the hem to be stylish. I am the bride, wearing by choice now, a dress too full, too opulent to be fashionable.
>
> The third time I became a tree I wept. My father whispered to me while my mother fussed over last minute details of the social event in her year. Safe in a house too large for family she knew nothing of my confusion, of the last night I was my father's daughter, of the safety I found in his reassurance.
>
> So why, tree, do I notice you again? Your white flowers have spelt fragility over a plethora of lovers and husbands but I have not noticed you, have had no need to become you. Why is it now not enough to distance myself behind the memory of a communicant, fragile in her first mysteries?
> (Fragment: *On seeing an almond tree blossoming after a class on metaphor*.)

Such pieces were embarrassing and yet there was something I wanted to keep working with, the metaphor perhaps, the delicateness? But I had a lot of work to do; I was still too shy. I needed to engage with the fragile blossom and at the same time show the tiny worm making a nest in the nectar.

The second thing I noticed about the fragments was an exploration and experimentation with balance: the foregrounding or backgounding of perception. This became a major concern in the novel. I was constantly asking myself what

in the women's lives will I focus on, what should I leave behind, what needs to slip almost out of sight? I discovered in this following fragment, as elsewhere, the oddity of foregrounding the wrong event. I liked its quirkiness.

> The Cartographer walked into a bookshop. The name of the shop doesn't matter. More importantly, you should know that it was *the* bookshop frequented by those who called themselves writers and intellectuals.
>
> As the Cartographer entered, a bell attached to the door gave a gentle ring. The antique device suited the muted classical music of the shop.
>
> "Can I help you?"
>
> "I've come for the ladder."
>
> "The large or the small one?"
>
> "She hasn't said. How big is the large one?"
>
> Without answering, the assistant led the way down to the basement of the shop. "So, which one?" She asked with a touch of impatience.
>
> Quite instantaneously, the Cartographer became aware of the oddness of this sequence of events. She became aware of the intrusion of a ladder into an environment dedicated to books. Before walking into the shop she had been concentrating on the problem of defining the land from the sea. She had recently been experimenting with coastlines, applying her cartography of reefs to the firmly drawn lines of the coast. The results were startling. They reflected the real world where there are no clearly marked lines between the land and the ocean.
>
> What then took her mind away from these issues? What made her suddenly aware of the oddness of her conversation with the shop assistant?
>
> Not unlike the rest of us, any given day in the Cartographer's life is crowded with conversations, sights, desires, dreams, chance meetings, petty annoyances. She swallows them without reflection. When the Cartographer retells her day she orders it, makes clear lines between that which is memorable and that which is not. She might talk of her growing theory of cartography, or she might say, for example, "I finished the cove and met the Narrator for coffee." This is, after all, a common enough description of the day.
>
> But like the firm lines of the coast which tell us nothing of the battle between the land and the sea, such common descriptions of her day reveal nothing of the individual aspects of her world. They do not mention her standing in the shop, that odd phone call, and the one she missed. We are told nothing of the security officer who almost knocked her over in his hurry, and the book on the library's New Book Shelf that she looked at but decided she didn't have time to read. They do not tell us how, when leaving the library she changed her mind, and turning back, borrowed the book.
>
> And the ladder?

Would she have normally included the ladder sequence in any recount of her day? Perhaps not. But having now thought of it, having now recognised the oddness of walking into a bookshop for a ladder, she might construct her entire recount of the day around this sequence.

And the ladder?

The Cartographer had no idea which ladder to choose. She chose the taller and sturdier-looking one and carried it up onto the floor of the shop. The shop assistant called up to her, "And the painting that's come off its mount? Do you want that as well?"

"I don't know. Was it to be collected?"

They looked at each other. There wasn't an immediate answer to her question; it involved another story, a range of alternatives worked out earlier between other people.

By now she was standing in the middle of the shop, the new titles were to the left of her arm. "I'll wait. She'll know about the painting."

The shop assistant had followed her up the stairs. She nodded approval and went back to her place behind the counter, back to her place in the book she was reading.

It wasn't long before the Archaeologist had found a park for her car and came hurrying into the shop. Her red hair, as always, caught attention like a breath.

"You've chosen the big one!" She laughed.

"Safety," the Cartographer said, and added, "something about a painting off its mount?"

"I'll look." The Archaeologist disappeared around the corner to the basement stairs, coming back within a few seconds with a badly framed image.

They left.
(Fragment: *The Cartographer orders her day*.)

As I have mentioned, the problem of foregrounding and backgrounding material remained a dominant issue. I have spoken in Section 1 about the importance of these decisions when writing the domestic violence sequence. Other sections of the novel equally owe much to these early experiments. In hindsight, what is fascinating for me is to see just how much of these early fragments did make its way into the final draft of the novel. There isn't a scene about a ladder or a bookshop, but the two women relate as Crete and Meridian relate. Further, in Chapter 15 there is an important sequence on cartography which was developed from the above fragment and formed the essence of the tenth mandala, The Centre.

And the resolution as to whether my novel is a chronicle or a quest? Like the tarot cards, it is both. We lay the cards out in patterns, they speak of our journey, of the choices we can make, the obstacles and delays we will encounter. They also speak of the challenges we face, of the problems we need to solve, of our

goal, our private quest. I shuffled the pack and laid the cards down. I wrote a novel that was a chronicle of a quest and a quest for a chronicle.

The first draft

Probably because it was New Year and because I couldn't think of any further reasons for delay, on the fourth of January 1994 I went to my desk and began to write. I didn't at that stage have a plot. I had a theme, a handful of character-archetypes, a notion of myth, the idea of the collision between history and fiction, a playfulness with perception and a crone who wouldn't go away.

I expected to throw away at least the first week's work as I struggled to find both my characters and their story, but to my enormous surprise by the second day I had discovered the character's names, and within the week, their story.

I will deal with the discovery of the Vinland Map story in Section 3. It will be enough here to recall my first introduction to the map. Knowing that Meridian was an historical cartographer I went to the library to see if I could find out something about her work. I expected such details to remain peripheral to the narrative. The original Yale University publication on the Vinland Map literally fell out of the shelves onto my foot. It was a large and weighty tome so I couldn't ignore it! I sat on the library floor, nursed my aching foot, and opened a book that contained the essence of my plot.

My characters, Crete and Meridian began to fill my life. I spoke to them over breakfast, in the shower, as I drove to my office, while I was doing my shopping. I spoke to others about them. They were becoming real to me.

I worked every day pushing out the first draft. I met characters along the way and I still am surprised at finding Francisco. When I initially wrote him into the narrative I had no idea that Meridian would have an affair with the man. I'm not at all sure where that came from. Like the Crone, it just happened one day. I became very fond of Francisco although he was often difficult and tiring to be with for any length of time. I can still recall the day I wrote his death.

Coming to my university office that morning I knew I had to write his death and I felt sadness, like rain, all over my body. I wrote the scene and then roamed about the summer-break-campus looking for someone I could sit and talk to. I wanted to cry. I wanted to mourn his death, but how could I say *I'm upset my character's just died*, to someone who hardly knew me?

During this period of the first draft I wasn't safe to be near. I was living in my own private world populated with people nobody else had met. My friend, the novelist Caroline Macdonald, took it on herself to look after me. I still recall the evening I absent-mindedly stepped out in front of oncoming traffic in one of Adelaide's busiest streets. There was a screech of brakes and I stood on the road frozen, surprised at the presence of the car. "Come on." She grabbed my arm and pulled me off the road. "I need a brandy after that one!"

It was a period when I suspended disbelief. Perhaps it is like being in a theatre as the lights go down and you settle back in your chair and wait to begin a time of 'let's pretend'. For me, writing the first draft is like a very long game of 'let's pretend'. The removal of disbelief lasts for as long as the draft takes to write. In my case, well over a month. Odd things can happen when you suspend disbelief for that long.

Annie Dillard writes of the need to suspend disbelief.

> Every morning you climb several flights of stairs, enter your study, open the French doors, and slide your desk and chair out into the middle of the air. The desk and chair float thirty feet from the ground, between the crowns of maple trees. The furniture is in place; you go back for your thermos of coffee. Then, wincing, you step out again through the French doors and sit down on the chair and look over the desktop. You can see clear to the river from here in winter. You pour yourself a cup of coffee. Birds fly under your chair. In spring, when the leaves open in the maples' crowns, your view stops in the treetops just beyond the desk; yellow warblers hiss and whisper on the high twigs, and catch flies. Get to work. Your work is to keep cranking the flywheel that turns the gears that spins the belt in the engine of belief that keeps you and your desk in midair. (Dillard, 1990: 10-11)

Friends, children, lovers and pets can become very agitated during this time. But as a writer I don't think I can claim special privilege. This time of distraction is akin, I suggest, to a student completing a thesis, to a businesswoman thinking through a restructuring of her business or to a teacher planning how she will teach reading this year. We all have times in our employment where we need to retreat from the daily responsibilities and immerse ourselves in the finer details of the task ahead of us. Writing a first draft, for me, is one of those times. Thus, while I admit that at such a time I am distracted and do not function safely in the real world, I do not think this constitutes a plea that the creative act accompanies temperamental or indulgent behaviour.

The problem of duality

Possibly because of my process, the first draft was very rough. There were passages where the characters were well worked and other times when I rushed at the narrative or the setting, leaving the characters as sketches. I knew there was a lot of re-writing ahead of me.

While there was a plot of sorts, a quest to discover the truth about the Vinland map, the novel's structure was fundamentally not driven by it. Other concerns over and above the plot needed to operate on any solutions I might find to structural questions.

Generating from my reading of Irigaray (1981) I was interested in writing a feminist novel where the notion of 'not oneness' was maintained. I wanted to avoid the phallocentric single. Specifically, I wanted to avoid using a single protagonist and instead set up a duality where the two characters Crete and Meridian had equal weight and gained equal attention from the narrator, and thus the reader.

I was aware that I could have told the same story through two different sets of eyes in some kind of sequence. But I wanted the duality to be more than this. I wanted it to be embedded in the structure.

I spent a lot of time and energy on this but eventually had to accept defeat and revert to a single protagonist, Meridian. The problem occurred at each test reading. The convention that the narration, in a third person novel, views the world through a single character was too strong to overcome. Unconsciously my readers searched for the protagonist and struggled discontentedly with what was becoming a conflict between the two women. The two women jostled for dominance, not only in the text but also in my dreams. I was having nightmares over this issue.

My characters became demanding. Crete got stroppy when I tried to write about her via Meridian's eyes and thoughts. She claimed that she was a senior scholar to Meridian and did not want her work interpreted by someone significantly junior to her. I thought her a bit of a prat at this stage. Meridian on the other hand couldn't really cope with Crete's scattiness, the continual saga of love affairs, and her belief in the esoteric. Meridian was a much more serious sort of woman and didn't want to be viewed through Crete's lens.

The women were arguing with me and with each other. This was complicated by another associated problem - there were several minor characters that I was becoming tired of.

I took control of the situation by re-claiming authorship. I wrote my characters a long letter, telling some why they could immediately leave my book and others, such as the two women, to settle down and trust me. The letter heralded the end of the 'let's pretend' space and I reclaimed the novel as my work. It also helped me to foreground the thematic concerns of the novel and to avoid being lost in any one character's problems.

In the culling of the characters I removed the Crone and greatly reduced Gabbett's role. Both of these two characters were, in later drafts, retrieved. The Crone as she provided the depth of the myth and haunted the background of the novel, and Gabbett because his presence saturated Crete with doubt, something I thought she sorely needed. He also became useful in other ways, chiefly to lead us to Francisco, but also to illustrate Meridian's concern for Crete.

I re-drafted the text letting Meridian carry the narrative and, in all but the small section in Chapter 6, Crete whose fears, dreams and hopes, are always seen through Meridian's gaze. Giving Crete that one scene of her own, where she accepts that she will live with Gabbett, highlighted her vulnerability. She took him to her cloisters, which was, as we discover later, the very thing that had been violated by domestic violence. Juxtaposing this scene against Meridian's intimacy with the manuscripts and libraries allowed the reader to reflect on the different notions the two women carried of intimacy. It also set up Meridian's encounters with Francisco in his library.

To this day I am saddened that the duality did not work and perhaps I will at another time try other experiments. Was it all a case, I wonder, of letting my ideology dictate to my creativity? Perhaps in further novels I might find scope to explore the relationship between ideology and creativity. This novel, however, had other mountains to climb.

The mandalas

In the course of collecting women's personal stories, and in my own reflection, I noticed how important personal stories are often told and retold almost word for word. It is as if some event has formed itself in words in our heads and when we recall that event what we are recalling are the words, the telling of it. Let me call them word-stories.

These word-stories had other attributes. Any one of us carries around a handful of such word-stories and, unlike jokes or yarns, they are intimate and private stories. We probably only retell the set of them to our most intimate companions and that might take a lifetime.

If I focus on a negative for a short time I can illustrate their power. We have all had to endure, with a great deal of discomfort or embarrassment, someone who

is not an intimate but who has undergone some personal crisis, retelling their word-stories to us. We feel uncomfortable, not so much because we are bored, but because we feel the intimacy is misplaced or unwanted. We are embarrassed because it is inappropriate for that acquaintance to be telling us their word-stories.

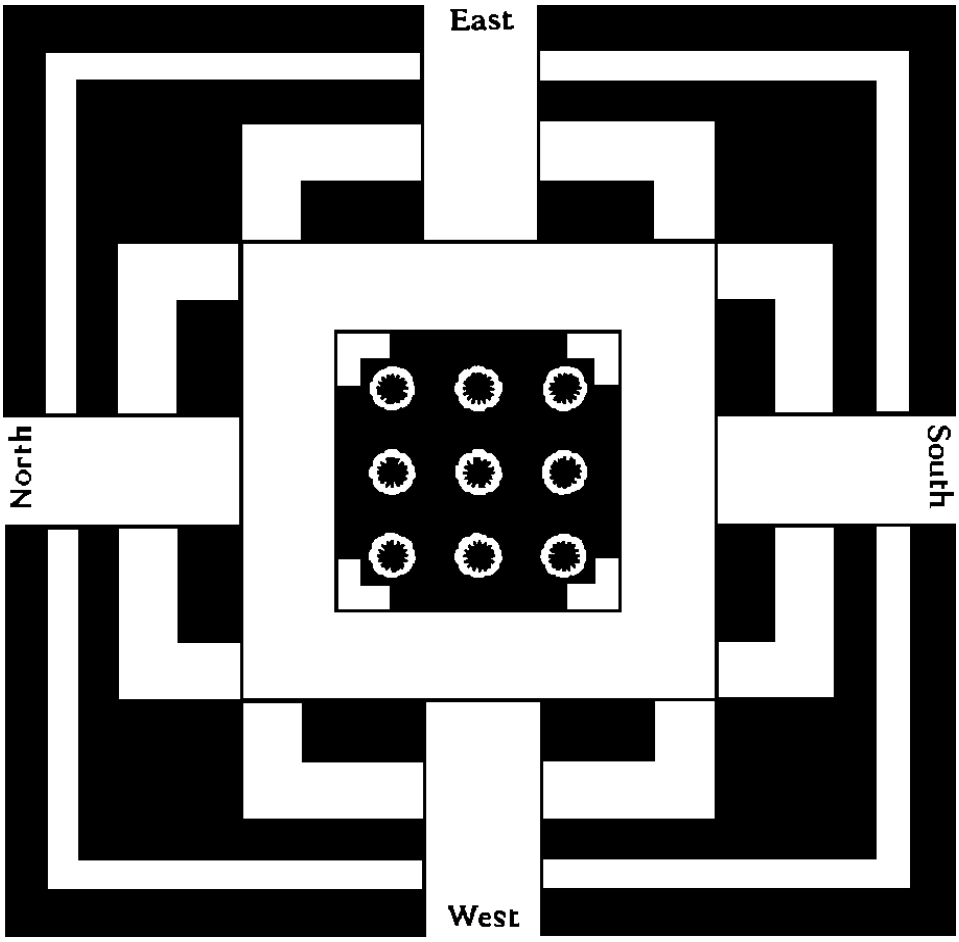
In addition, the word-stories seem to be event focussed and although they may not recount the central or major events in our lives they somehow grab at the essence of those times. For example, Crete's domestic violence story is, in this sense, a word-story. It may not have been the biggest, or most excessive, or conclusive event in that part of her life, but it was a story that summed it up for her, that focussed it all for her. The word-stories become like hooks to hang whole sections of our lives on.

I began to see them like the small round objects I collect and store. Sometimes I misplace or forget them and can be quite surprised when I stumble over them again. I have a collection of small stones that sit by my computer. From time to time I take one out and touch it, play with it. At other times I forget the stones, they fall behind papers or books and when I see them again months later, they are dusty, somehow in disarray. The word-stories for me are like these stones. They are almost physical and yet of course they are entirely conceptual. I navigate myself around them, finding them, remembering them, forgetting them.

Perhaps I could have called the word-stories stones, but I felt that word carried too many difficult connotations. They were not like the ancient stones or runes, nor did I want to evoke the notion of "casting the first stone". But I did want to indicate that there was something very precious, very important, very central and core about these word-stories.

I decided to call the word-stories mandalas, a term coming from the Sanskrit word for 'circle'. I use the word 'mandala' in a general rather than specific sense referring to the patterns which explore the collision between the circle and the square. Implicit in this notion of the mandala is the same paradox Western philosophy explores in P, the uncalculable relationship between the circle and the square. Since the novel makes use of P the relationship between it and the mandala was useful to me.

To further understand why I used the term 'mandala' it might be helpful to pause for a moment and reflect upon a more specific meaning. Within the bounds of Buddhism and Hinduism the mandala explores the relationship between the circle and the square as a tool to meditation. Much like the labyrinth it is used as a guide for the novice seeking initiation and the sacred. For example, in the Tantra tradition the *Navapadma Mandala*, (the mandala of the nine lotus flowers), pictured below, is used in meditation as a projection of the cosmos.



Navapadma Mandala (Elaide, 1987: 154)

This mandala 'contains the whole world and is the exalted home of all gods, which encompasses all other loci and is the paramount abode.' (Elaide, 1987: 154). By meditation the initiate journeys towards the centre of the mandala and towards a unity with the central deity. While the novel does not express its concerns in this way, I felt that the quest for unity with the central deity could be seen in another way, as a quest for completeness or wholeness. This latter expression of the quest is core to the over riding thematic concerns of the novel. Once again then, calling the word-stories mandalas supports much of the novel's concerns.

My use of the term 'mandala' also owes a debt to Patrick White's *The Solid Mandala* (1969). In his novel White depicts the mandala as a solid object and gives Arthur, one of the twin brothers, a collection of glass taws:

> However many marbles Arthur had - there were always those which got lost, and some he traded for other things - he considered four his permanencies. There were the speckled gold and the cloudy blue. There was the whorl of green and crimson circlets. There was the taw with a knot at the centre, which made him consider palming it off, until, on looking long and close, he discovered the knot was the whole point.
>
> Of all these jewels or touchstones, talismans or sweethearts, Arthur Brown got to love the knotted one best, and for staring at it, and rubbing at it, should have seen his face inside. After he had given two, in appreciation, or recognition, the flawed or knotted marble became more than ever his preoccupation. But he was ready to give it, too, if he were asked. Because this rather confusing oddity was

> really not his own. His seemed more the coil of green and crimson circlets. (White, 1969: 228)

This use of mandalas to act as windows into, and also symbols of the person, is further developed by White in the earlier passage when Arthur is encouraging his twin brother Waldo to write.

> 'There is nothing in Leonard Saporta,' said Waldo, 'that anyone could possibly *write about*.'
> Arthur walked looking at his stones.
> 'Well,' he said carefully, 'if you ask my opinion,' and sometimes Mrs Poulter did, 'simple people are somehow more' - he formed his lips into a trumpet - 'more transparent,' he didn't shout.
> But Waldo was deafened by it.
> 'More transparent?'
> He hated it. He could have thrown away the fat parcel of his imbecile brother's hand.
> 'Yes,' said Arthur. 'I mean, you can see right into them, right into the part that matters. Then you can write about them, if you can write, Waldo - can't you? I mean, it doesn't matter what you write about, provided you tell the truth about it.' (White, 1969: 29)

I found echoes in this passage and I felt comfortable with acknowledging, through my use of mandalas, Patrick White's heritage. The acknowledgement is exaggerated in the opening section where I refer to the mandalas as if they were solid objects:

The Map

She took from her pocket the mandalas she had been storing for all of her life and, one by one, she showed them to him.
(p. iv)

This is the only place in the text where the mandalas are referred to as objects and it is easy to imagine them as Arthur's glass taws.

In *Fragments of a Map*, the mandalas, ten in all, are spread through the novel and are named. They represent key events in the character's life. They are: Projection; Discovery; Wile; Moil; Marvel; Knowledge; Desire; Orientation; Persistence and the last one is The Centre. Like a mandala there is a core or a centre, and within this case, nine segments which form the circle. I like the way nine is a number that seems in balance, and yet it is an odd number. Its balance is its symmetry: three sides of a triangle or three triangles. Nine in numerology signifies completeness (Schimmel 1987). This is an apt signifier as the novel reflects upon the women's journey towards completeness.

I also like the hidden notion that as Meridian progressed she acquired more and more mandala - as if they were the gifts of life.

Fear of completion

I had written several drafts and was fairly advanced. I still had quite a lot of structural problems to work out but I had developed the characters and fully researched the information I needed for the narrative. The university awarded me six months off on full pay in an equity scheme to complete the novel and other works associated with my PhD. This was an extremely generous offer and, like the winning of a writing grant earlier, it terrified me.

I was frightened because there were no more excuses, no more delays, no more smoke screens. I could no longer offer promise; I now had to deliver.

I went to Melbourne for Christmas and recall sitting in a restaurant in China Town, Little Bourke Street. It was crowded and my daughter and I were eventually given a table to the side. We ordered a vegetarian meal, which isn't hard in such a place, and then suddenly I began to weep. Great uncontrollable tears fell down my face. I wept because I was afraid of what lay ahead of me. I wept because I didn't know how to structure the novel and I wept because I knew I had to journey into places in my own head that terrified me. I wept with fear that I was not up to the task ahead of me. Who would have thought that a small restaurant in Little Bourke Street could have been my Garden of Gethsemane?

After Christmas I came back to the Gold Coast and, for the fun of it, joined a group of my mature age students who were getting together once a week to play with clay. We called it a pottery class but there wasn't anything structured about the time. It was all hand building and I began to work with coils. We gave ourselves permission to make truly awful pots which we praised excessively. Complements such as 'it's so organic' were often used for our wobbly drooping shapes. We were writers and it didn't matter if we made bad pots.

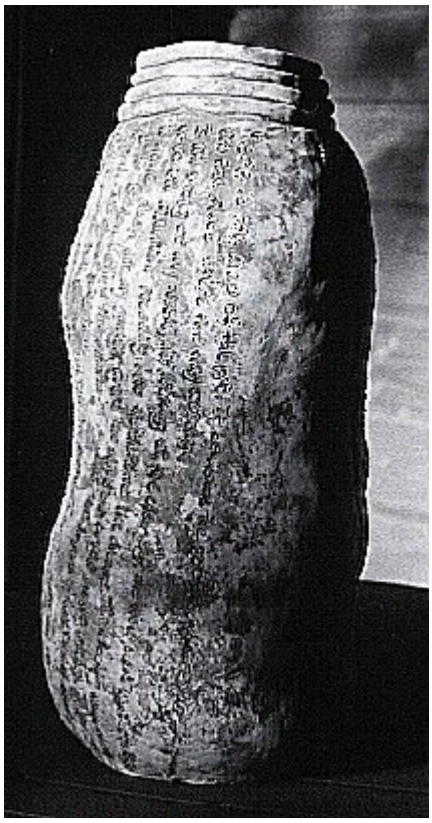
At first I tried to control the shape of the pot but then, admitting to my lack of skill, I stopped telling the clay what to do, and began to learn to listen to it. I began to realise when the clay needed to rest and when it was ready for working. I noticed I couldn't rush at it. The clay had a mind of its own, a life of its own.

I began to notice the colour purple. It was there in the tropical flowers of my garden and in the bright colours so many tourists wear. I wrote the last of the fragments. I wrote freely about the colour purple, about the clay, about my fear and about structure. I had been to the Assyrian exhibition while in Melbourne and I wanted to imitate that ancient culture, I wanted to write this fragment onto the clay pot. I became excited by this and busied myself with the various tasks more seriously than I had approached the clay before. I even experimented with oxide glazes, as I wanted this awkward pot to look as if it had been dug up from centuries in the earth.

This is the pot and the words I wrote on it:

This is the map of the pot. It contains the pot's co-ordinates and it remembers the place where the clay was dug.

> I am sitting at my desk, not looking at the clear sky, the view over water to bush covered mountains receding into the distance like dreams. Iam looking much closer to home, down into my garden where the slightest bright purple catches my eye. It's almost hidden behind the shades of greens, the layers of leaves and shadow and branch. It's almost forgotten, overpowered by the showy pinks and yellows, great abundances of flowers and colours. Those are no shy girls those flowers. The surprise of purple caught my eye. How much more arresting is the hidden? How much more desirable is the suggestion?
>
> And I cannot tell you much more about the purple. I cannot name the colour with the precision of a painter who gives colours and shades of colours names and meaning. I cannot give the formula of red against blue against…what other colours? I do not mix paint or dyes or name the world in this way. Instead I ask you to imagine the purple, glimpsing it, like I do, almost hidden by the greens and shadows of the layers of bushes and trees. Somewhere is the colour



purple. Somewhere is the shadow ofthis purple. Somewhere is the memory of the purple.

I make this pot, coil the clay around and around until, growing, it takes on some vaguely human shape. I have watched others, they are more precise. They coil one step at a time - one ring of coil; smooth out the clay; reshape. Definite shapes emerge as they work. They tell you it will be a bowl or a vase or...and it is possible their pots will be useful. I admire their skill. This is not how I work. Great long snake-like coils I wrap around my neck, a heavy necklace. I remember my grandmother with skeins of wool. The coils for me are heavy skeins. I take the end, and all in a hurry I wrap it around and around the top of my growing pot. It grows in great steps, great leaps. The coil runs out. I stop, smooth out the inside and then the outer. I use my hands or this or that implement. I am covered in clay dust. I smile to myself. At times I encourage the shape, help the pot to bulge a little here or there. I go for a coffee, let it dry a little, settle after so much caressing. I push another wad of clay through the compressor, out comes yet another long coil and I begin again. Higher and higher we go. I pretend to know what I'm doing. Only the pot knows. I listen very carefully. The pot is becoming very tall. I stand on the chair to make it easier to listen to the song. I always coil in the same direction.

I am working with fear. I cannot give the exact colour of the fear, the exact co-ordinates or name it as some analyst might do. I glimpse it, but it is mostly hidden in the layers of confidence and shadow. It is the fear of making a bad pot. It is the fear of writing a bad novel. It is the fear that my art will have nothing to say. It is the fear that I will betray the clay, that I will not listen carefully enough to the pot. It is the fear of distraction, the fear of ineptitude, the fear of mediocrity, the fear of self-deception, the fear of not being able to fulfil the promise.

The coils rise higher and higher. My fear becomes my companion and I remember the purple, the place of the clay. My fear takes on a form, the pot takes on a shape. Both become themselves. I begin to write, and like my foremothers, I begin in clay.

By turning to an art form unrelated to writing, a form where I had quite audibly given myself permission to be inept, I discovered the secret of letting go. The pot made itself: I worked with the clay, listening to its song. So too with the novel, the worry and problems of structure were contained like secret songs within the pages of my drafts. I needed to let go, trust, listen to the words, and let the structure open out to me.

Using another art form as a way to solve creative problems is a device I am now committed to.

Weaving the fabric

Once I had allowed the structure to tell me its needs rather than impose upon it what I thought might have been ideal or clever, or in the case of the dualism, ideologically required, the novel began to take shape. With the colour purple in my eye, I allowed the Crone back into the text, eventually placing her at the very beginning. I tossed out events and passages and spent longer on others. I rearranged passages and sections, disturbing their order and resettling them in other places of the text.

It was not a text that demanded a sequential working through the chapters. It felt more like a very large mural rather than a sequence of paintings or a triptych. Attending to a section in Chapter 10 for example meant I needed to return to Chapter 2 and modify or balance something there. But it was an open structure and I allowed the seams and working to show.

An indication of how I opened out the structure allowing the seams to show was in the way I imparted knowledge about the Vinland Map. There was a lot of detail that the reader needed to know and it was slowing down the narrative. I decided to be overt and honest about this and to hand the information to the reader as directly as possible. This direct telling method can be seen in Chapter 5 when the reader is given the details relating to the rediscovery of the map. At other times however, I use the novelist's devices to pass on information. Eric's mandala in Chapter 2, for example, equally reveals to the reader aspects of Eric's personality as well as detail about the archaeological dig in Newfoundland.

On completion

Once I had closed the novel, once I had said to myself that with the exception of the odd corrections and editorial changes it was finished, and I handed it over for a full reading, I felt lost and confused. It wasn't simply that I suddenly had time on my hands, it was more than this. I no longer knew who I was. I did not know how to describe myself.

Up until that point I was someone who was writing a novel. Then suddenly I was someone who had written a novel. Quite suddenly I had to describe myself in the past tense. I felt completely emotionally and, surprisingly, physically disorientated. During this time I fell up a set of steps badly bruising myself and twisting my glasses out of shape. It was as if I didn't know where my feet were, I didn't know how my body occupied its space. I needed to get my land/reality legs back because I had been at sea in my imagination for so long.

I felt empty and silent. I found it difficult even ringing friends, it was as if I had nothing at all to say, I had said it all.

At the same time as I was facing this disorientation my old computer which had been reliable throughout the writing process chose that moment to crash. It did so in a spectacular way by inserting 350 pages of large pink swirls into a document.

It was also at this time that my friend Caroline Macdonald, someone who had been so helpful to me at the early draft stage, was losing her battle with cancer.

She could no longer read but she enjoyed listening to audio books, so I read the novel onto cassette tapes for her. I flew to Adelaide to see her.

She lay in a hospital bed which had been moved into her study. A bunch of poppies I'd brought sat in a vase on the windowsill, and as we talked they gradually opened, dropping their green hairy husk. Bright colours unwrinkled into the afternoon, and for the first time she spoke of her coming death. Two weeks later she died.

Deakin University
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An exegesis concerning the novel
Fragments of a Map

Section 3 - Research and the Vinland Map

Types of research for the novelist

For the purpose of this discussion let us assume that there are at least three types of research the novelist is likely to have to undertake.

The first I will call reflective research. Here the novelist needs to explore their own opinions and emotions, thoughts and feelings, and in that exploration struggle with developing appropriate descriptions and metaphors. It is important to note here that such exploration needs to avoid the superficial, for this level of reflection is in danger of generating clichés.

For example, when looking at the idea of sadness it was important that I not only read the literature available on this emotion, as well as how other writers had utilised it, but I also needed to reflect on my own understanding of it. I needed to ask myself what exactly sadness was, what exactly did it feel like and what caused it. I also needed to know what kind of behaviour it might generate. But to know sadness in this way is not to know it objectively, on the contrary I needed to swim in the experience of sadness, and to know that experience.

I do not find it easy coming to my desk in the morning knowing that I have to allow myself, nay, encourage myself, to slip into the depths of sadness, or for that matter joy or fulfilment or hunger or loss. This particular type of research is the hardest for me and the most time consuming. It requires a distressing level of self-honesty and it also produces high levels of doubt. The doubt can be crippling and the self-honesty is difficult to live with on a daily basis. After all, there are good reasons why we protect ourselves with clichés, or numb the doubt with chemicals.

And working in this area also requires a certain arrogance. The novelist needs to adopt a belief that what they say on an emotion or a concept is of interest to their reader. There were days when I just couldn't take myself that seriously, when I just couldn't believe that what I had to say would be of interest to anyone else. Writing the section in Chapter 3 where Meridian talks about her feminism was an instance of this. I see- sawed backwards and forwards between an arrogance that what I had to say was intensely interesting, and total disbelief in the value of anything I had to say on the matter. I worked and re-worked the chapter, expanding and contracting the text depending upon the day and the balance of self- deception and self-honesty.

The second type of research is that which is informed by ethnography. As I pointed out in Section 1, I employ a method which requires that I place myself into the situation as a reflective participant, and not simply as an observer (Ball:1992; Fraser:1989; Spelman:1988).

As I mentioned above I interviewed a large number of women. I listened to their stories and told them mine.

Many of these interviews were casual. For the novelist a casual conversation with a stranger can sometimes offer more than any formally constructed interview. But why is this the case? Why can I often discover more about the human condition

from a casual conversation than from a researched and well-conducted interview? Perhaps it is an instance of the human trait to want to confess to a trusted stranger, to want to tell that stranger the story you carry with your shopping bag, or in your brief case. The novelist becomes the trusted stranger. And yet the concept of a trusted stranger is close to an oxymoron. What kind of trust can we place in a stranger? Is it simply that the stranger is trusted to remain aloof? Talkback radio virtually survives on this phenomenon, on this human desire to tell the stranger, to confess to the stranger. There is possibly something else here - is the desire to tell the story partly motivated by the hope that it will be re-told, the re-telling somehow giving the person an importance, a form of immortality? Does this make the novelists a particularly useful trusted stranger because they are also trusted to re-tell the story? The novelist then, in order to carry out successfully this form of research, needs to become the stranger.

Visiting locations, gaining new experiences, such as the handling of medieval manuscripts, and the tasting of foods all come into this type of research. An example of this was the careful research I needed to conduct on sherry.

Sherry was not a drink I knew much about and yet it was of great concern to my character Francisco. I had never looked on it with any sophistication, it was something I occasionally used in cooking. I didn't know enough about sherry to write Francisco's passion for the drink. One afternoon I brought two small and elegant bottles of very fine sherry to the office of my colleague and local supervisor, Nigel Krauth. With, at least initially, great seriousness, we sipped and smelt and talked, searching for the words and metaphors to describe the drink. We searched for the drink's language, for the words of sherry. After that, whenever I worked on a part of the novel that mentioned, or played with, the drink, I'd pour myself a small glass of this very fine sherry and let it sit next to my computer, filling my senses and my words with its aroma.

The third type of research is that scholarly type traditionally carried out in the library - the searching through books and journals for information and argument. I have written elsewhere that the novelist needs to embroider the reflective and ethnographically informed research with this form of knowledge gathering (Brady & Bourke, 1998).

For this particular novel I needed to spend a great deal of time in the library. Interested as I was in the tension between history and fiction, I needed to acquire enough history to make that tension viable.

The novelist and the bowerbird

Writing a novel for a degree required that I kept a bibliography of my reading. The bibliography included in this exegesis makes quite interesting reading in itself because it illustrates the unusualness of the novelist's library research. Unlike my colleagues in other disciplines I needed to acquire a working rather than specialist knowledge, not in one area but in a range of areas and disciplines. I needed to function a little like a bowerbird that picks out the blue things and leaves all the other colours. Similarly I needed to pick out the dark blue pieces of ecclesiastical history, the azure lines of cartography, the sapphire decorations of medieval manuscripts and the Nile blue theories of archaeology. I needed to be able to write on a range of issues and yet I knew I was not an authority in any of them.

This bowerbird researching requires its own skill. The skill to locate quickly, sort through and accurately select all the blue pieces. It is also the skill of knowing where to look, where to find the blue pieces in the first place. It may sound easy, but to be able to accurately and quickly isolate the turquoise from the aquamarine at one

end of the spectrum, and the indigo from the purple at the other, requires nerve, a great eye and a lot of knowhow. With so much information to gather, the novelist needs to be able to work quickly, to know the questions to ask and to be able to isolate the essence.

For example, I did not need to become an archaeologist in order to make use of the Ingstad (1970) research. I had to know where to find the article, and then I had to take time to read it, navigating my way through the discipline's jargon. But the real time was spent thinking *about* archaeology. Once I had comprehended the article and its issues I needed to isolate a particular aspect that in an isolated way could represent the whole. Further, this single item needed to be one which could be retold, or worked into a novel. I chose the hunt and discovery of the anvil stone because it was a single incident which could be retold in a dramatic manner. I also chose the importance of the design of the Norse houses, because this reinforced a thematic concern pertaining to the cultural and historical nature of perception. These were my blue bits. And in selecting them I rejected several other excavation sites and a list of artefacts that were discovered at the dig.

The Map

As I mentioned in Section 2, serendipity led me to the Vinland Map and since the Vinland Map was central to the narrative it became a veritable minefield of 'blue pieces'. I needed to investigate not only the literature associated with the map's rediscovery and the various papers on its authenticity or lack thereof, but also the Vinland sagas, the myth and history associated with this time, and the relevant archaeology. The story of the map also directed me to Spain and in particular to Saragossa. It further required that I became familiar with aspects of medieval church history.

The reproduction of the map, below, has been reduced, as the original was drawn on two leaves of vellum joined at the centre which reproduces snugly to an A3 size page.

The Vinland Map

Reading the map can be difficult for our 20th century eyes which are so used to a particular projection and version of the world. To read the map, locate the Mediterranean Sea in its centre. Notice how Africa has been shortened to exaggerate the curved symmetry of the map. The island group at the top right is the earliest depiction of Japan. To the far left the large island, thought to be part of the Canadian coastline, is the Norse lands of Helluland, Markland and, the furthest south, Vinland. The three different lands are dived by deep gulfs which almost sever the island. Greenland, in its appropriate place on the map, north and between American and Europe, is for the first time drawn as an island, and next to it is a very enlarged Iceland. Ireland is also enlarged. The famous wormholes can be seen as the shaded circles, two in the Atlantic and one in Asia Minor.

The map is a simple drawing without decoration and it does not contain a compass rose.

By carefully looking at the map it becomes obvious that it is more than a map of the known world, a *mappa mundi*, it is also a picture of medieval thought. It is the latter which most interested me. In this way I used the map to talk about the way representations and evaluations of knowledge have changed over time, and in particular, the changes associated with the Enlightenment period.

The actualities of the map are less interesting to me, although they have their place in the narrative. The map does exist, it has been written about and it can be viewed in the Yale University Library Map Room. But all of this is unimportant to me. I am comfortable with a reading of my text where the map is seen as another fiction.

It might be of interest to also note that just as the map actually exists in the world so too do other aspects of the narrative. Enrico Ferrajoli did sell the map to an American called Laurence Witten. Ferrajoli had previously shown the map to the London dealer Davis, and had sold to Davis a section of the *Speculum* that Davis put in his international catalogue. Ferrajoli was arrested by the Spanish police for the theft of manuscripts from a cathedral at Saragossa. He served a prison sentence and died in jail revealing to no one the true identity of the original owner of the Vinland Map. Witten did show his purchase to his friend Thomas Marston, curator of maps at Yale University Library. Thomas Marston did purchase from Davis' international catalogue a segment of the Speculum. Witten did recognise the wormholes and Marston assisted him in putting the three manuscripts, the Vinland Map, the *Tartar Relations* and the *Speculum* together. All of this can be found in the documented story associated with the map's rediscovery.

That I used so much of a so-called 'real' story in a fiction, twisting it upon itself and playing out the improbabilities until the division between fact and fiction blurred, is a reflection of my concerns about the way the historical and fictional narratives collide.

The characters' knowledge

The characters themselves, since in the novel they existed in the world and had full and interesting lives, had to know certain things. But these characters need to be significantly different from each other and so I had to make sure that I did not rely solely upon my own bank of knowledge to feed their concerns and lives. Consequentially, I had to research what it was that they knew.

It is interesting to list the specific knowledges each character required. Crete

- medieval women's life and lore
- herbal cures and the process of mixing potions the story of the rose
- medieval church architecture the mass

- the sun god/earth mother creation story
- the Crone in contemporary feminism relating to menopause familiarity with medieval manuscripts

Francisco

- Spanish town of Saragossa and its history
- poetry of Lord Byron, St John of the Cross and Dylan Thomas anarchy during the Spanish Civil War
- philosophy of Suarez cathedral libraries ancient manuscripts
- the influence of the Arabs in Spanish culture ecclesiastical history
- details on Nicolas of Cusa
- the trade routes of medieval Europe medieval tapestry
- the Tartar Relations sherry
- the Council of Basel Martha

- the preservation and discovery of manuscripts the stories of manuscript recovery
- red wines

Gabbett at least had to have the language and concerns of the documentary filmmaker. Some understanding of ABC/SBS studio practice was needed.

Eric

- Australian pre-historic animals, notably the paleochestes life on a dig in Newfoundland
- the details of the Ingstad dig
- the basic tenets of archaeology to be able to explain to Meridian why carbon dating was unimportant
- the typical Norse house construction and the placement in any such settlement of the smithy shop
- the uniped
- the modern recovery of the Vinland Map
- Greenland, the indigenous people and their ancestors the Norse sagas associated with Vinland
- aspects of American modern history in order to be able to construct a conspiracy theory
- the American Columbus Society Meridian
- the basic tenets of historical geography and ancient maps something of modern cartographic craft
- the Vinland Map and its entire literature and debate
- details associated with the original production and scribing of medieval manuscripts the chemistry of ink pigments
- methods of historical map verification
- wormholes, binding, and an intimate knowledge of old manuscripts stories of forgery in cartographic history
- nomenclature Prester John
- the ancient Sumerian myth of Inanna
- the invention and mechanism of the stump jump plough Greenland, its geography and its contemporary art
- 17th century watches
- the persecution of witches in Europe
- The works of Christine de Pizan
- the transcendental number P
- the poetry of Hafiz

To expand, I will take the character of Fancisco. I knew that he and Meridian spoke in his library but I did not know what he would say or, importantly, how he would

say it. So, in order to write this old man and his classical concerns, I needed to read the poetry of St John of the Cross, because it is the *kind of thing* he would use in his conversation. As it happened in the final draft I took out those references, but it is easy to imagine that such a poet might have been discussed on one of those late afternoons.

Martha on the other hand would not bother herself with St John of the Cross's poetry; she would be far more interested in various translations, in various folios. To give her character dimension I needed another solution. I gave her a knowledge of red wine - there is nothing light and fluffy, nothing of champagne or trendy Chardonnay in Martha.

The academic and the creative become each other

What I worked with in the text was a deliberate blurring of reality and fiction. Unlike my contemporaries who investigate faction - the conscious and deliberate intrusion into fiction of historical events that are accurately re-told - I wanted to upset the surety of an historical narrative, invading it with fiction rather than supporting it through fiction.

In addition, I was combining in my *process* both the creative and the academic. I was writing a novel and I was writing a PhD. The academic became the creative; the creative became the academic. My desk was covered with the trappings of the academy, with filing cards, photocopies, Manila folders marked: 'bibliography', 'Vinland references', 'maps, other' and so on. My desk was also covered with the trappings of the novelist - with photographs and pictures, yellow stick-ons, a feather, the smooth black pebble which was never far from the keyboard, a list of characters, a bent and twisted paperclip, red, blue, black pens, marked-up manuscripts. But I could not maintain the division as one slid into the other and the academic and the creative processes blurred. Before long my card index file also contained details on my characters, details of the fiction, and notes on chapters. The Manila folders began to be labelled, 'chapter 4, extra'; the paperclip was bent back into shape and held together notes on the Inanna myth.

And in my working I did not separate the two, I did not for example carrying out academic work on one day and creative work on another. In one breath the novelist moved from one kind of 'work' to the other and back. The two parts became each other, mixing together in swirls of colour. I would read an article on 17th century watches and think of Meridian holding a small watch in her hand, feeling the warmth and weight of four hundred years of women's touch. In Chapter 9 when the women are in the rose garden I knew I wanted a line from an Arabic poem. I didn't know what poem or what line. I left my desk and went to the library borrowing all the books on Arabic verse the library held. Back at my desk I hunted for a line that used roses. There were quite a few. I sat around with some of my colleagues discussing the poems until Hafiz's 'The red rose is open and the nightingale is drunk' stood out from the rest (Kritzeck, 1964). The line became a corridor catch phrase and was written up on the staff noticeboard rubbing shoulders with sober notices of conferences and research opportunities.

Like marbling on paper. Into a bed of water oil paints are applied, raw colours, one after another. By running a comb through the water the oil paints are swirled together to form a marble pattern. There are blues and reds and purples where the colours have combined. There are dark shades and lighter hues folding into each other. Paper is applied and takes up the colour so that the whole, the marbling on the page is the thing we remember, not the tubes of paint containing the separate raw colours.

So too with the novel. The academic and the creative slid into one another, nestled

side by side so that one fed on the other, one became the other.

I became playful with the combination and decided to take risks. I invented the Literary Executor.

The Literary Executor

Faced with this interweaving of the academic and the creative I began to play with the connection, seeing it as mirroring the game already being played out in the text between history and fiction. I developed the last of my characters, the Literary Executor, known by my formal initials M.N.B.

The Literary Executor played with the idea that the novel is a piecing together of fragments from a range of knowledges.

Completing the novel I knew I was not the same person who began it, I had been on my own journey of discovery. My job, my housing, my personal domestic arrangements, even the city in which I lived had changed. I had moved across the continent from the plains to the mountains, from the Mediterranean climate to the sub tropical. My fingers that tapped at the keyboard were older, much more wrinkled now. And there was something inside of me which had changed as well. The woman who began this process was not the woman who ended it. The Literary Executor then came from a playfulness with the idea of the death of the author and a realisation that indeed the author, as she appeared at the beginning of the process, was part of my history rather than my present. The Literary Executor offered a place at the table I did not mind taking.

I gave the Literary Executor a Foreword and from time to time let her make a comment in the footnotes of the text. But like my other characters she demanded more. I then realised that I could invent references for the text just as easily as I could insert genuine sources. I began to do this, taking care that one was not distinguishable from the other.

Going even further, I inserted fiction onto the factual, not as an elaboration or writerly device, but simply to playfully corrupt the factual. An example of this kind of intrusion can be seen in a footnote in Chapter 5 which discussed a possible confusion in the text over the first name of the historical cartographer Thomas Marston. The largest intrusion was however in the invention of Saint Beneface the Bold, the monk, who according to Meridian, might well have been the originator of the Vinland Map.

The Literary Executor works quietly in the background of the text. She is named in the shadows, having only initials for her name. She lives in the footnotes chipping away at the cracks, disturbing the historical narrative. She is mischievous with the canon. She is finding spaces. She is letting our shrill voices into the academy. She is letting our lore into the libraries. She is opening up language.

In summary, through these and other devices, *Fragments of a Map* engages with, and playfully disturbs, the ways in which we transpose knowledge. It plays with historical account, citation, interpretation, invention and translation. It skips between the academic and creative in such a way that both inform the other, both become the other.

The novelist protects herself

In writing and editing this exegesis I have struggled with selection, with what to include and what to leave unsaid. And, as I claimed at the very beginning, it is not

possible to unpack all the concerns and processes of my novel into this space. To do that would be to make an ugly and awkward clone of the novel.

Two factors directed my selection process. Firstly, I was concerned with the difficult issue of autobiography. To what extent is the creative work autobiographical?

In producing a public creative work I need to call on a very large number of my skills and resources; some of which will be private, and others will live more comfortably in the public domain. And unlike my colleagues in other disciplines I do not have the safety glass of objectivity to hide behind. When the work is reviewed, criticised, lauded or torn apart I need to try and remove myself as a human being from that activity. I need to try and step back from the work so that I am no longer attached to it, sever the umbilical cord and let it make its own way in the world. This is a large ask and it may not be possible to separate myself from the work in this way, but in order to survive as a human being in the daily action of living I need to make some effort at it.

For these reasons I do not wish to reveal, perhaps even to myself, the level of autobiography contained within the text.

Secondly, my selection of topics to discuss in this exegesis was also governed by the emotional connection I still feel for ideas expressed in the novel. Some are still too immediate for me to want to address in any kind of analytical manner. Besides, I enjoy the incompleteness, the thought that a completely different companion document might have been written at another time or by another writer. I enjoy the thought that the process or business of the novel cannot be documented in this space. All that I can offer here is a hastily drawn *mappa mundi*, one without decoration and without provenance; but one with a well worked interest in the oceans of fiction, the islands of history, and the old navigation myths. Perhaps in its own right a fascinating piece of vellum.

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An exegesis concerning the novel *Fragments of a Map*

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Notes

1. Throughout this exegesis I use the term 'they' as a singular pronoun of no fixed gender. I prefer it to the other forms of he/she or s/he. Return to text
2. "The Yellow Wallpaper" was originally written and published in 1891. References here related to the 1981 edition. Return to text
3. In 1913 Gilman wrote an article relating her own experiences to those of her character in "The Yellow Wallpaper". This article is included in the 1981 edition. Return to text
4. For an interesting discussion on light and its unexpected scientific properties see Biller 1973. Return to text
5. While the interviews were conducted in a reasonably formal way, that is

appointments were made and they were conducted in the privacy of their, or my office, I did not tape record the interviews. Nor did I sit opposite them taking notes. Both methods would have hindered my research aim which was to explore, in a manner which illustrated respect, a variety of women's deeply personal stories relating to their silencing and their battle against such silencing. In all cases the women knew I was researching a novel and I assured them that I would not use their stories directly or in a way which would identify them. As a result these interviews are undocumented. Return to text

6. In her introduction Estes subtitled her book 'Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype' (Estes, 1991: 4). This subtitle is not given on the title page. Return to text

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