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Deerslayers with Degrees:

In Quest of New Kinds of Masculinities in the Landscape in Travelogues by Chatwin and Jose

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ABSTRACT:

Tämä pro gradu-tutkielma pohjautuu John Tallmadgen (2004) käsittelemään korkeasti koulutettujen miespuolisten luontokirjailijoiden maskuliinisuusmalliin. Hän käyttää näistä miehistä nimitystä 'Deerslayers with Degrees'. Nämä miehet vahvistavat identiteettiään maskuliinisina subjekteina luonnossa ja kirjoittavat siitä. Tutkimus pyrkii selvittämään, minkälaisia maskuliinisuuksia Bruce Chatwin ja Nicholas Jose esittävät matkakertomuksissaan *The Songlines* (1987) ja *Black Sheep: Journey to Borroloola* (2002) ja miten ne vaikuttavat heidän luontosuhteeseensa. Lisäksi tutkimuksessa selvitetään kirjailijoiden suhtautumista Australian alkuperäiskansojen tietojärjestelmään luonnosta. Tutkimus keskittyy kahteen maskuliinisuusmuotoon: patriarkaaliseen maskuliinisuuteen ja monimuotoisempiin, muuntuviin 'uudenlaisiin maskuliinisuuksiin'. Keskeisenä olettamuksena on, että uudenlaisissa maskuliinisuuksissa suhtautuminen toiseen on kunnioittava.
Tutkielman teoriaosuus luo katsauksen patriarkaalisiin ja uudenlaisiin sekä matkustavien ja matkakertomuksia kirjoittavien miesten maskuliinisuuksiin. Selvitys länsimaisesta suhtautumisesta luontoon nojautuu voimakkaasti Val Plumwoodin (1993) kritiikkiin siitä ja hänen näkemyksiinsä näiden suhtautumistapojen parantamismahdollisuuksista. Tutkimuksessa hyödynnetään useita Plumwoodin käsitteitä: master model, toiseus, vastavuoroisuus, jatkuvuus, ihmis- ja mieskeskeisyys ja luonnon taka-alalle asettaminen ja instrumentalisointi. Metodina toimii Tallmadgen ekokriittinen tapa lähestyä miespuolista subjektia.
Tutkimustulokset osoittavat, että Chatwin ja Jose esittävät lähes yksinomaan uudenlaisia maskuliinisuuksia. Heidän luontosuhteensa on vastavuoroinen ja he kokevat olevansa osa luontoa. He suhtautuvat alkuperäiskansojen tietojärjestelmiin kunnioittavasti ja ovat halukkaita oppimaan niiden pohjalta ekologisempia ajattelumalleja.

KEY WORDS: gender performance; male travel writers; nature; new kinds of masculinities; otherness; patriarchal masculinity; travel narratives.

1 INTRODUCTION

> There is another pattern of tracks that looks more like the broken map of lines on a hand. It has the living, breathing rhythm of land and water, connecting memory and history with the present world, with a seasonal sense of change and continuity, moving out from the mainland, along the shores of river and Gulf, and out across the islands. It involves working and wandering, 'sitting down', as Aboriginal people say, and letting the mind roam. By seasonal I don't only mean summer and winter, the Wet and the Dry, but also the larger weather of time, of generations, of changing perspectives and attitudes. (Jose 10)

The importance of environmental issues is being increasingly recognised in the west as global warming causes natural disasters such as floods and hurricanes. The fact that the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to two parties fighting climate change is the greatest proof of this. The state of the environment is becoming a daily topic in the media, demonstrating that western attitudes to the environment are at last changing.

In her book *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (1993), Val Plumwood examines western views of nature and of human relations to it in the light of feminism. She maintains that the standard treatment of nature in the west since the Enlightenment, at least, has incorporated the definition of nature "as a *terra nullius*, a resource empty of its own purposes or meanings" which is there to be used for human purposes (4). Nature in this view is seen as alien to humans, as lower than the human sphere, and its domination is considered "simply 'natural', flowing from nature itself and the nature(s) of things" (Plumwood 4). Traditional western thought considers nature as merely a background to human achievements. It is there for humans to use for their own purposes as they will. Clearly, this attitude will not facilitate the preservation of a healthy planet.

Western views of nature and of human relations to it have been strongly shaped by what Plumwood calls the 'master model'. The master model consists of a white, mostly male elite who "stand at the apex of various forms of domination [and] have been able through their command of social resources to exercise control over culture

disproportionate to their numbers" (Plumwood 190). The master model has been influential in shaping the dominant conceptions of the west, which include the idea that male outlooks on the world are human outlooks, and that humans are superior to nature (men more so than women) and not somehow part of it. The master subject conceives of himself as the subject in the centre, and women, members of other cultures and nature are seen as other and placed in a subordinate position.

Because the master model is so powerful, it has shaped thinking in the west since the time of Plato. Plumwood (146) states that "the master perspective [is] the perspective of power." The master identity has structured the dominant ideas of western thought because "the master logic of colonisation is the dominant logic of our time" and because "most of the high ground of western culture, especially that delineated as the territory of reason" has been shaped by the master identity. (Plumwood 190.) Similarly to the way men are seen as the norm for humans, the master identity is seen as human identity and the master model is taken "as simply a *human* model" (Plumwood 23, original emphasis). What is then seen as a peculiarly human characteristic – and by extension a masculine one – is reason, which "provides the unifying and defining contrast for the concept of nature, much as the concept of husband does for that of wife, as master for slave" (Plumwood 3). In other words, humans and men in particular are defined by their ability to reason, whereas nature is identified as a lack of this ability.

It should be noted that the master identity is not "a masculine identity pure and simple, but the multiple, complex cultural identity of the master formed in the context of class, race, species and gender domination" (Plumwood 5). The master model thus consists mostly of white males of the ruling elite, although women – especially white, elite women – can also be classed as masters in the sense that they colonise those belonging to other cultures, races, classes and species at the same time as being themselves the colonised (Plumwood 67).

Plumwood's theory of the master model will be read as an account of patriarchal masculinity in this study, because it has been taken for the human model and because men are traditionally seen as "the very centre, the core, the drive, the universal 'mankind'" (Whitehead 5). For the fundamental aspects of attitudes to nature I will apply Plumwood's concepts of the master model, otherness, mutuality, continuity, human and male centrality and the backgrounding and instrumentalisation of nature. In contrast to patriarchal masculinity, other types of masculinity will also be studied. These will here be referred to as new kinds of masculinities, based on Stephen M. Whitehead's book *Men and Masculinities*: *Key Themes and New Directions* (2002).

In this study I will map patriarchal and new kinds of masculinities in two novels whose authors write about travelling in the Australian outback: Bruce Chatwin's *The Songlines* (1987) and Nicholas Jose's *Black Sheep: Journey to Borroloola*[1] (2002). As travel narratives are concerned with presenting the other to the reader, my aim is to study the way Chatwin and Jose deal with the issue of natural others, which may be anything in the landscape from animals to plants and natural phenomena such as the wind. My hypothesis is that the two authors are on a quest for new kinds of masculinities which, compared with patriarchal masculinity, allow them to have a more respectful and what Plumwood (1993) calls a 'mutual' relationship with nature, one in which they can see themselves as part of nature instead of as masters outside of it. Nature here, of course, refers to the landscape, not human nature.

John Tallmadge's article "Deerslayer with a Degree" (2004) in *Ecoman: New Perspectives on Masculinity and Nature* provides the starting point for my study. He maintains that most of the early North American nature writers were archetypal 'Deerslayers with degrees' (the Deerslayer is the protagonist of the novel by the same title by James Fenimore Cooper), who "lived in nature as single men with advanced degrees [and] who found affirmation in wilderness and celebrated it in books" (Tallmadge 21–2). Their masculinities were strongly connected to nature inasmuch as they saw themselves as rugged but sophisticated outdoorsmen (Tallmadge 21–2). The

[1] In this study I will from now on refer to the material in Nicholas Jose's *Black Sheep: Journey to Borroloola* by placing an abbreviation of the novel's title (BS) and the page number in brackets.

Deerslayer masculinity depends on seeing the wilderness as a site for heroic action while only passing through (Tallmadge 25), without taking any responsibility for its well-being (Tallmadge 23).

This kind of heroic masculinity enacted in nature is not the only kind of masculinity available and acceptable today. Indeed, Tallmadge maintains that modern writers writing about nature are exploring new ways to relate to nature and to have more reciprocal relations with it (25). He claims that the wilderness can still be a place for young men to discover and sustain their masculinities, but he emphasises the need for new models for masculinity so that "durable, sustainable, and honorable relations between human culture and the rest of life" may be built (22). He calls for "a reconfiguration of attitudes toward nature, women, and the wisdom of tribal cultures" as necessary elements in forming more ecological masculinities, and claims that many modern male nature writers exhibit more positive and constructive attitudes to these than earlier writers have done (24).

I will hence follow Tallmadge's idea of studying male writers' attitudes to nature and the wisdom of tribal cultures. Tallmadge claims that modern male nature writers are exploring new masculinities in their relationships to nature through "interaction, inhabitation, and reciprocity" which are connected to agriculture (25). In addition, he sees meaningful relationships with women (and the forming of families) as an important part of an ecological attitude to nature, as opposed to the Deerslayer model which "promise[s] freedom from having to deal with women" (Tallmadge 19) and in which nature substitutes for women (Tallmadge 24). This account, however, takes heterosexuality as a part of masculinity for granted. Because not both of the authors under discussion were heterosexual, and because both authors, although married, did not live with their wives in the spaces they write about, I shall not study their attitudes to women.

My material differs from that of Tallmadge's in other ways, too: mainly in that Chatwin and Jose were not nature writers as such but merely travelled through the

landscape, much as Deerslayer does. I shall, therefore, not explore inhabitation and agricultural activities. Instead, I will investigate the two writers' interaction with and relationship to nature to examine whether they have a mutual relationship with it.

Tallmadge (25) refers to a similar concept to mutuality as a 'reciprocal relationship' with nature. Plumwood and Tallmadge treat these two concepts differently: Plumwood's term *mutuality* describes more an attitude to nature and is possible even for those who are only travelling through, whereas *reciprocity*, as used by Tallmadge, involves a long-term relationship with a particular place in nature, facilitated by inhabitation of that place (25). I have chosen to use the term 'mutual relationship', because it better suits my material, which consists of Chatwin and Jose's portrayal of masculinity in nature while only travelling through.

Although Chatwin and Jose are not nature writers, they have similarities to the 'Deerslayers with degrees', because they are academically educated men who travel, although they do not live, in the wild. They exhibit some of the qualities that early male nature writers possessed: intelligence, eloquence, self-reliance and freedom from female constraints (Tallmadge 21). However, they lack some of the qualities of these writers such as strength and bravery in the traditional, heroic sense of the word. Neither do they resort to violence, as the early writers did on occasion when confronted by dangerous animals or unfriendly natives (Tallmadge 22).

I adopt the ecocritical approach to the male subject developed by Tallmadge. As the writers he discusses are different to Chatwin and Jose, particularly because they write specifically about nature, I will modify his approach somewhat to suit my own material. My material consists of the positions, attitudes and outlooks on the world expressed by Chatwin and Jose that can be considered to be influenced by gender. Patriarchal masculinity is implicit in Plumwood's description of the master model, but as it is not the subject of her book as such, the reading of it for my theory involves reading between the lines or a kind of reading in reverse. The studying of masculinity in written texts such as *The Songlines* and *Black Sheep* also involves reading between

the lines and looking for what Morgan calls "themes which may not be explicitly stated, to read absences as well as presences, to decode the text or to discover hidden or suppressed meanings" (qtd. in Beynon 145).

In connection to attitudes to nature, I will examine the way Chatwin and Jose relate to the wisdom of Aboriginal cultures concerning nature, because I expect this to demonstrate their perceived relationship to it. Tallmadge (24) maintains that to reconstruct more ecological ways of thinking the writers' attitudes to "the wisdom of tribal cultures" must be examined. Many tribal cultures, including those of Australian Aboriginals, are based on philosophies of human connectedness to nature. In the west, where humans and nature have been considered so sharply separate as to alienate humans from nature, these philosophies cannot simply be borrowed, but an understanding of them may help in developing a new, more ecological definition of nature and the human. (Plumwood 102–3.) In particular, western cultures have a great deal to learn from those which have been classified as outside reason, such as Aboriginal cultures, in sympathy and humility towards nature (Plumwood 196). An appreciation for the wisdom of tribal cultures demonstrates a willingness to accept different ways of thinking to the western ones, as well as a willingness to learn from it.

Chatwin's and Jose's attitudes to Aboriginal cultures, therefore, reveal something about their attitude to nature and, in particular, whether or not they consider themselves a part of nature. As Casey Blanton maintains (2), travel writers mediate between foreign and familiar things, the main attraction of their writing being their encounters with the other. Many travel writers, like Chatwin and Jose, hold encounters with other people as central parts of their writing. Nature rarely plays a significant part as the other in such travel writing, but it is always there more or less in the background.

Attitudes to the wisdom of tribal cultures are connected to attitudes to nature, not because tribal people are somehow seen as nature but because the acknowledgement

that those cultures may know more about the landscape than westerners do demonstrates a readiness to learn. Chatwin and Jose learn from the Aboriginals particularly about the continuity of nature and the human. In recognising this continuity, we recognise our dependency on earth.

Gender is instrumental in forming our perceptions of and attitudes to nature. Gender affects everything we do. Yet, until recently, the influence of gender on our treatment of nature has received little attention. Scharff's *Seeing Nature through Gender* (2003) and Allister's *Ecoman: New Perspectives on Masculinity and Nature* (2004), however, make a contribution to this subject. In the former, all the articles concentrate on the way nature has been constructed in the west through both femininity and masculinity. It covers a wide variety of subjects from politics and consumption to bodies. The latter concentrates on masculinities in the landscape. Some of its articles are written from a masculinist point of view, while others take a broader outlook on men's relations with nature.

There have been several investigations into aspects of gender in travel writing, for example, Susan Bassnett's article "Travel writing and gender" (2002), which focuses on femininity. The influence of gender on attitudes to nature in travel writing, however, has received less attention. Paige Raibmon's article "Naturalizing Power: Land and Sexual Violence along William Byrd's Dividing Line," in *Seeing Nature through Gender* tackles this issue and demonstrates that "attitudes toward land and attitudes toward people can be mutually sustaining." (33). This conclusion is also relevant for my study of Chatwin and Jose's masculinities in the Australian outback.

The quest mentioned in the hypothesis denotes a romantic idea of a masculine search for something. Quests usually involve a hero, but they are seldom seen to incorporate a heroine in anything but a passive role, such as the object of the quest. For example, Northrop Frye in his *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) sees it as an exclusively masculine pursuit and includes no examples of female quests in his writing. The word 'quest' is thus seen to be appropriate when applied to travelling male writers. It has a romantic

connotation suggestive of adventure. The very idea of a masculine search for identity, particularly while travelling, is strongly romantic, and for this reason, Chatwin and Jose's quests can also be seen as such.

A quest for masculinity denotes the construction of a masculine identity. It involves "engaging in the cultural practices that suggest manhood" (Whitehead 215). These can be anything from sports and relationships to work, the important factor being the way in which the different practices are engaged in. Through the engagement of these practices the male narrates himself into being as a gendered subject (Whitehead 216). In other words, he gains a sense of identity as a male/man through drawing on the already existing masculine codes that are at his disposal. It should not be assumed, however, that the masculine identity under construction is a simple one and relies on just a few ways of being a man. On the contrary, there are numerous codes of masculinity available.

As the plural form of the term 'new kinds of masculinities' suggests, they are multiple and fluid, unlike patriarchal masculinity, facilitating changes in performance according to context. They refer to masculinities that are less in opposition to the feminine and nature than patriarchal masculinities are. Instead, they often include behaviours that have traditionally been considered feminine. Hence, they have a wider variety of performances at their disposal.

The fact that men have access to many types of masculinity means that they are able to choose which ones they want to perform. Gender performativity is a concept invented by Judith Butler. In performing gender – as we all do all the time – a person acts out socially and culturally expected and acceptable gendered behaviour (Salih and Butler 344–5). It is a way of positioning ourselves as gendered beings in culture. To be conceived of and to conceive of himself as masculine, then, a male has to perform in ways that mark him culturally as such (Whitehead 215–6). However, we do not have complete freedom in our choice of performance, because we have been taught from birth to perform the regulated gender norms of our culture – either those

of a male or a female (Salih and Butler 140). Furthermore, the performing of gender requires a constant effort, as the work of constructing a gendered identity is never finished. This continual process of identity development "must be constantly engaged with, worked at and explored" (Whitehead 216), both in terms of masculinity and femininity.

Gender is performed by drawing on cultural norms. It is not some kind of a 'natural' state each person possesses from birth. There is no masculine essence residing deep within men, common to all men (Whitehead 5). Instead, men's process of positioning themselves as males is "under constant revision, negotiation and movement" (Whitehead 5). This is because gender is fluid, not solid. Masculinity is, in fact, an illusion (Whitehead 34), because it is a purely cultural construction. An examination of different kinds of masculinities in different historical periods proves this:

> In one situation, a man might be expected to join his fellows hunting bison with spears; in another, to wear lace and velvet and excel at court intrigue; in still others, he might weave, or devote his life to prayer, or drink beer and chomp hot dogs at Busch Stadium. (Scharff xiv)

Likewise, essential femininity is an illusion, and the two exist in relation to each other. What makes masculinities real is the actions men choose to act in performing them and the consequences these acts have, both material and political (Whitehead 39, 9).

Men's attitudes and actions towards nature and the consequences of these make a reality of masculinities in ecological terms: masculinities can be either constructive or destructive to the landscape (as can femininities). We encounter the world through gender, and our gendered outlooks on nature and the resulting actions have material consequences for people as well as natural organisms and systems. Masculinities and femininities are, therefore, linked to nature as well as to the rest of the world.

The conceptual connection of masculinities and nature derives from the fact that the human ideal is formed from features considered masculine and that males have been

considered to be the human model and women to be deviating from this and lacking in these intrinsically ‘human’ qualities. The human in western thought is contrasted with nature, and the two are seen as polar opposites with no, or hardly any, continuity. The human ideal, or the masculine one, has traditionally been considered at its best as the dominator of nature. The feminine, on the other hand, is regarded as connected to nature inasmuch as it is seen to possess similar qualities, such as passivity and, of course, capability of reproduction.

More ecological masculinities may strive for a mutual relationship with nature. Mutuality means that both kinship and difference between humans and nature is recognised. Animals, plants, natural phenomena such as the wind and natural organisms such as mountains are recognised in a mutual relationship as similar beings to us inasmuch as they, too, have needs and goals and are “independent centre[s] of resistance and opacity” which set limits on us (Plumwood 157). As in the way we treat our friends and other people, in a mutual relationship with nature we must take into account nature’s needs and goals, such as growth, in our use of nature and natural resources.

Backgrounding nature means denying dependence on and relationship to it (Plumwood 191). Through this denial nature’s essentialness is ignored and, instead, it is made to appear inessential (Plumwood 48). A landscape seen like this causes no moral dilemmas in making use of it for human purposes. Plumwood calls this kind of use of nature where it is constructed as existing exclusively for human ends *instrumentalism*. (Plumwood 53.) In backgrounding, even nature’s reality – its diversity, self-directedness and the fact that it is a living organism – is denied (Plumwood 48). Recognising nature’s diversity leaves room for knowledge that is worth knowing and that may be known by those who have lived in the landscape for generations, using its resources in ways westerners have not. This is another reason why respecting indigenous peoples’ wisdom is important.

Travel writing offers a good opportunity to study the masculinities of male writers and to examine our culture's views of masculinities, as

> travel accounts are not just windows on foreign societies but also mirrors that throw light back on the values of their own authors, who wittingly or not have reflected the interests and concerns of their own societies when recording their observations and experiences in foreign lands. (Bentley a.)

Chatwin and Jose reveal through their writing the values they place on masculinities and the attitudes they have to the landscape. At the same time, their writing reflects western society's interests and concerns in masculinity and nature. The passage quoted at the beginning from *Black Sheep* already suggests a more respectful attitude towards nature than the heavily instrumental attitude described by Plumwood. The landscape is recognised as a living organism. The phrase 'letting the mind roam' points to a new kind of masculinity in the landscape that is not so much about collecting trophies as about appreciating nature.

To better understand Chatwin and Jose's performances of masculinities in nature and otherwise, it is necessary to further examine their backgrounds. In what follows I will first present the two narratives and their authors. In the next chapter I will discuss travelling masculinities and both patriarchal and new kinds of masculinities. Chapter 3 consists of the theoretical background to prevalent western attitudes towards nature and an examination of Plumwood's suggestions for alternative, more respectful views towards it. This is followed by my analysis of the masculinities performed by the authors in the two narratives both in general and in relation to natural others. Finally, I will present my conclusions.

1.1 Chatwin and *The Songlines*

Bruce Chatwin was born in 1940 in Sheffield, England. He attended a public school but had little interest in education. However, he was very talented artistically and had a remarkable career at the famous London art auction house, Sotheby & Company,

beginning as a porter but quickly rising to an art auctioneer and director of modern art. Before becoming a novelist and travel writer, he also worked as a journalist for the London *Sunday Times* Magazine and studied archaeology at the University of Edinburgh.

While studying, he did field work in Afghanistan and Africa and became fascinated by nomadic peoples (Ross Boren). He intended to write a comprehensive, scientific work about nomads in order to prove that evolution had equipped humans with a strong migratory urge and an instinct to travel long distances on foot throughout the seasons. He believed that this instinct still existed in people's unconsciousness and that it manifested itself as "violence, greed, territoriality, status-seeking, or a mania of the new" when suppressed in settlement. (Utz 2001 b.) He gave up his studies in Edinburgh and never finished his work on nomadology, but his thoughts and theories influenced his novels and travel narratives (Utz 2001 a), particularly *The Songlines*. He died in 1989.

Chatwin travelled extensively while working as a journalist and continued to travel when he began to write novels and travel narratives. His first travel narrative, *In Patagonia*, combined travel with anecdotes, legends, anthropology and history. His themes in his books are centred on his anthropological theory of nomadology and "human restlessness." (Utz 2001 a.) He travelled and researched his subjects and the many places he wrote about. In a way, he was a kind of nomad himself.

Chatwin preferred to keep his private affairs to himself and so he remained a great enigma. This can be considered a masculine trait in itself, as for example Jennifer Coates demonstrates in *Men talk: Stories in the Making of Masculinities* (2003). She found that men in talking tend to keep the subject matter "away from the personal" (44). This they often do also in writing even when writing about themselves. For example, Chatwin interlaced most of his writing with different aspects of his own life, yet the narratives he told were not simple biographical descriptions, even though many biographers have read them as such. In doing so, biographers "have overlooked

the possibility that Chatwin's literary texts [. . .] are mythographic embellishments and conscious attempts at fabulizing and at creating a complex and paradoxical writerly persona." (Utz 2001 a.)

The Songlines is Chatwin's most widely debated book. The debates have mostly concerned his presentation of fiction as fact. Some Aboriginals, as well as scholars of ethnography, feminism and postcolonialism, have criticized the book for its distortions of facts and have pronounced it as "masculinist, colonialist, overly simplistic and, thus, unreliable as a source of information about European Australians as well as about aboriginal culture" (Utz 2001 b). Similarly, some of the people Chatwin actually spoke to in Australia have not been happy with the way he has presented them, but felt betrayed by him and have complained that he did not, in fact, spend much time with Aboriginals (Currie 1999).

Although details of his portrayal of people and events have been criticised along with his storytelling techniques and theories, Chatwin's works have been highly praised by critics. In fact, Chatwin has come to be considered one of the most original writers of his time. He is admired, among other things, for his minimalist language and his tone, which varies between detached and very personal. (Utz 2001 b.) He invented new ways of storytelling, giving little significance to the conventions of English literature, and created unique works where he "artfully melded fact, fiction and autobiography into an irresistible blend that produced some of the most remarkable post-war English prose" (Whitehouse).

Critics have also extolled *The Songlines*, which has been acclaimed as having achieved "the most desirable postmodernization of the ailing, traditionalist genre of the travelogue" (Utz 2001 a). In it, Chatwin explores the theories he formulated earlier in life about nomads and interlaces the theory and the narrative in a nomadic way:

> The travelogue becomes itself a kind of nomad in that it is bound to a certain textual terrain but only remains alive if it is made to move and to be seen moving somewhere. By consciously celebrating

> discontinuity and by constantly deferring its own authority, *The Songlines* demands as an ideal reader one who would not easily accept any one, exclusive interpretation of the world and its objects but who would enter into a creative and joyfully nomadic relationship with the text's own *bricolage*, travelling across its surfaces in a way not dissimilar from the one used by the Australian aborigines on their intersecting *walkabouts*. (Utz 2001 b, original emphasis.)

One of the causes for this literary effect is Chatwin's use of a combination of traditional storytelling and travelogue techniques with personal notes, which consist of his own insights and observations, interviews with experts on nomadology, "proverbs, fables, and scientistic as well as scientific wisdom" (Utz 2001 b). By doing this, Chatwin has broken new ground and achieved a high standing as a postmodernist writer. *The Songlines* can even be said to be a cult in many western countries. (Utz 2001 b.)

In *The Songlines* Chatwin describes and argues the theories of nomadology he had formulated earlier. He attempts to explain the restlessness and aggression apparent in the west by contrasting western culture with that of the Aboriginals. The narrative relates the narrator's journey to Australia to learn about the creation myths of the Aboriginals and about "the labyrinth of invisible pathways which meander all over Australia and are known to Europeans as 'Dreaming-tracks' or 'Songlines'; to the Aboriginals as the 'Footprints of the Ancestors' or the 'Way of the Law'" (*The Songlines*[2] 2). He meets a white Australian of Russian origin called Arkady who has abandoned the civilised world and his fixed place of residence, as he prefers the freer lifestyle of living 'in the bush'. Arkady is friends with Aboriginals and very knowledgeable about their culture and myths. He even speaks some of their languages. He helps the Aboriginals in their struggle to maintain their culture. His job is to survey the land and map the Aboriginals' sacred sites so that a railway line may be built across the land without destroying any of these sites. He becomes Chatwin's guide and friend on his travels in Central Australia.

[2] In this study I will from now on refer to the material in Bruce Chatwin's *The Songlines* by placing an abbreviation of the novel's title (S) and the page number in brackets.

The Songlines and Jose's *Black Sheep*, which will be introduced next, are similar in that they both describe men who have, to differing extents, given up the comforts and constraints of civilisation and opted to live a simpler life in a less populated part of Australia, in close contact and cooperation with the Aboriginals. The men living on the margins of society are idealised in both narratives. In *The Songlines* that man is Arkady, a fictional person who is partly based on Salman Rushdie, partly on a person Chatwin and Rushdie met in Alice Springs and partly on Chatwin himself (Rushdie 233), though Chatwin describes other marginalized characters as well. These men have abandoned consumerism and materialism. Arkady has even abandoned his family and home to help the Aboriginals in their struggle for the survival of their culture.

It is of great relevance to this study that the characters described above are all male. 'Women' could not easily replace the instances where the word 'men' is used above without changing the meaning considerably. In the west, women living outside civilisation would not usually be seen positively, as heroines, but negatively, as deviating from the norm. It is not considered acceptable for women to be 'loners' in the same way as it is for men. Instead, women are expected to be cooperative and sociable.

1.2 Jose and *Black Sheep: Journey to Borroloola*

Nicholas Jose was born in London to Australian parents in 1952. His family moved back to Australia the following year. Jose spent most of his childhood in Adelaide in South Australia. He studied at the Australian National University in Canberra and at Oxford, where he obtained his PhD in 17th-century English political literature. Like Chatwin, Jose has travelled extensively, mostly in Asia and Europe. He is particularly interested in Chinese culture and has written widely on it. He worked in the Australian Embassy in Shanghai and Beijing as Cultural Counsellor from 1987 to

1990. He is currently the Professor of Creative Writing at the university of Adelaide. He lives in Sydney.

Jose is a prolific writer whose novels are highly acclaimed in Australia, although he is not very well known outside his own country. He has published nine novels, some of them situated in contemporary Australia and others in contemporary or past China or the Indian Ocean. Jose has also published some translations, three collections of short stories and the memoir or travel narrative under discussion, *Black Sheep: Journey to Borroloola*.[3] This was shortlisted for The Age Book of the Year 2003 Non-Fiction.

Black Sheep is a description not so much of Jose's travels but of Australia's past and present. In fact, it is a somewhat unorthodox travel narrative and can just as easily be described as a memoir. Jose does not describe his actual journey very much but concentrates on describing the people he encounters, as well as people and events from the past. He recounts his observations on contemporary life in the Northern Territory and the small town of Borroloola, where he travels to discover all he can about Roger Jose. He also gives an account of Australia's history, especially in relation to the Aboriginals. He relates how the Macassans, the Dutch and the British, among others, have visited the shores of Northern Australia. The Macassans traded with the Aboriginals, whereas the Europeans, such as Flinders, went there to explore and colonise. These encounters were not always peaceful, especially in the case of Europeans. Jose moves gradually from describing the history of Borroloola and the Aboriginals in the surrounding area to discussing their more recent history and the struggles of the Aboriginals to preserve their culture and protect their land from western industrialism today.

Until recently, Australian history was mostly described through European or white Australian eyes, and the point of view of the Aboriginals was ignored by earlier historians. In *Black Sheep* history becomes a disconcerting story of the way Aboriginals have been treated by white Australians. Jose recognises that Australian

[3] From now on, when discussing the novel, the title will appear in shortened form, *Black Sheep*.

history is much longer than has earlier been recognised by westerners and demonstrates this by going back in time to the first encounters the Aboriginals of Northern Australia had with the Macassans and Europeans. He shows respect for the Aboriginals' past and present reality and comments that "[p]art of acknowledging a shared zone of responsibility is granting the infinite space for all the things that do not and cannot concern me. That's a way of respecting the freedom of other people with whom I find connection" (BS 259). This shared zone of responsibility is what Jose inspects in *Black Sheep* at the same time as he seeks connections.

Much like Chatwin, Jose considers his personal life to be his private concern and likes to keep his distance from the eye of the public. As was mentioned earlier, this is a masculine trait. It demonstrates itself in his work in the way he performs masculinity. His reserve is clear in his masculine style of writing, a style which "tries to be styleless, a clear window on to reality that presents the truth nakedly and objectively as it is, without any subjective feeling or attitude getting in the way" (Easthope 79). Plumwood (141) describes objectivity in its Cartesian form as "disengagement from internal sources of error in nature as the body, the senses and emotions." In other words, objectivity is considered to be disconnected from those parts of human life regarded as nature and, therefore, as inferior and lacking in rationality. Jose's style of writing emphasises the factual, as can be seen from the following passage:

> When the Overland Telegraph was going through from Adelaide to Darwin in 1870–72 – 36,000 poles and 5,000 kilometres of singing copper wire – Borroloola became a depot for bringing materials in by sea that were then hauled by bullock team to the line 400 kilometres away. (BS 9)

Chatwin's style is less constrained by facts, although he too expresses the discoveries he makes as facts. The factual style involves expressing statements as truths "without obvious personal bias" (Easthope 81). Both Chatwin and particularly Jose are careful not to show bias. Easthope claims that the masculine style "goes along with the masculine ego and its desire for mastery" (81). He adds that "[t]ruth in this style is presented as something to be fully known, seen in complete detail" (81). Jose's

masculine style is exemplified, for example, in his practice of citing his sources in the text in academic style. This emphasises the fact that *Black Sheep* is non-fiction.

Although Jose's style of narration differs distinctly from that of Chatwin's, there are also similarities. They both have their own minimalist techniques of writing and use them to maximum effect. Jose presents his narrative in a straightforward manner, creating an unexpectedly poignant image of the past and present. Certainly the reality behind the treatment of the Aboriginals is powerful and shocking enough without further dramatising. Jose's academic style with its emphasis on calmly and simply reported facts leaves no room for readers to imagine that some of the events described may be exaggerated. Jose seeks to influence the way Aboriginals are viewed and treated. To do that, the message has to be strongly presented, and the facts, however unpleasant they may be, have to be verifiable and believed.

Jose seeks an understanding of the Aboriginals as more similar to white Australians and westerners than they have generally been seen by whites. In other words, he attempts to portray them as less alien others than they have heretofore been seen. Otherness in relation to masculinities is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

2 MASCULINITIES

Whitehead (4) defines masculinity as "those practices and ways of being that serve to validate the masculine subject's sense of itself as male/boy/man." The male achieves his existence as a male by "engag[ing] with and work[ing] on the historically and culturally mediated codes of masculinity that prevail around [him]" (Whitehead 216). Through these prevalent cultural codes he gains a sense of identity as a male. This means that men choose the codes of masculinity and women the codes of femininity they perform to construct their identities.

Judith Butler developed her concept of gender performativity to explain this process of choosing a performance of gender from a range of gendered behaviours. Gender performativity is a continuous activity that we all engage in all the time (Salih and Butler 344). We do not, however, choose from an endless variety of behaviours. We only have a limited number of socially and culturally expected and acceptable gendered behaviours at our disposal, and these we have been taught to perform from an early age. We are, therefore, not free to choose any behaviour we like, but have learned to perform those behaviours allocated to our gender in our culture. (Salih and Butler 140.) Performing masculinity is, therefore, a continuous process in which the male positions himself and is seen to be positioned by others as masculine (Whitehead 212).

Masculinities exist in relation to femininities (Whitehead 34) and must, therefore, be considered in relation to them. Masculinities are, first and foremost, that which is not femininity. The concept of other for masculinities includes people of other races and ethnic backgrounds, nature and animals and, most obviously, women. In the dualistic western thought, men and women are seen to exist in opposition to each other, and they are each defined by qualities that differentiate them from the other and by qualities the other is seen to lack. For example, men are seen as active and women as passive, although the qualities are not set as far apart today as they have been in the past. (Plumwood 50.)

There are “multiple ways of being a man” (Whitehead 3), and, therefore, different masculinities are performed in different contexts. This is because masculinities are not fixed. As Beynon (10) claims, “[m]asculinity is never to be set in concrete: rather, it always has the capacity for rapid modification.” In other words, masculinities do not remain unchanged, nor do men perform just one kind of masculinity at all times. Different masculinities exist in different times, contexts and spaces and “are rooted only in the cultural and social moment, and are, thus, inevitably entwined with other powerful and influential variables such as sexuality, class, age and ethnicity” (Whitehead 34). Other variables include education, nationhood, economics and culture, among other things (Whitehead 3).

Masculinity is merely an illusion (Whitehead 34), a cultural construction. A newborn baby boy is not somehow innately masculine from birth but becomes male through a continual process where he is culturally positioned as well as positioning himself in masculinity through his performance (Whitehead 212). What makes masculinity real, then, is the actions men take in performing it and the consequences of these actions (Whitehead 39). The difficulty in distinguishing between the illusion and the reality reveals the extent to which the gender order is hidden, but this order is also visible in how we conduct our everyday lives, “how we speak, think and act as individuals” (Whitehead 5). For example, the way a man relates to other cultures and their members while travelling has real consequences for him and the people he meets.

2.1 Travel and masculinities

Travel has traditionally been seen as a masculine activity. This was particularly so in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when Europeans were travelling to the new worlds they had discovered. They sought fame and fortune as well as riches for their countries. In the process of colonising, various parts of lands were mapped and labelled, thus marking them as the property of the mapmakers and their country. Much in the same way that colonisation has been considered a male activity,

traditional mapmaking demonstrates some masculine traits in its objects, which are "to circumscribe, define, and hence control the world." (Bassnett 215, 230–31.) Of course, western women benefited from colonisation, too, and took part in it mostly indirectly, although some women, such as Lady Hester Stanhope (Benson and Benson 2001), contributed to it directly.

Colonisation is, of course, a matter of power relations. As well as wishing to control the indigenous inhabitants and geographical spaces, colonialists wanted to control the territory's landscape, which was marked as their physical and intellectual property by the naming of its flora and fauna (Bassnett 231). Landscape to the colonialists was property, much as women were considered to be at that time. Women seldom travelled with men, but even when they did, they were seen to remain in the background (Bassnett 225), in much the same way as the landscape itself. Men were the active party, while women and nature were passive, to be taken and used at will.

The colonising male travellers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were performing the masculinity of a "heroic risk-taking traveller" (Bassnett 225), and this heroic masculinity remains the identity some male travel writers perform even today. For example, many important narratives of life in the Australian bush, most of which were written by white males, were descriptions of heroic struggles to survive in a desert or while crossing the country (Ryan, qtd. in Lewis and Mills 19). The Australian outback has, in fact, been the domain of only males as a "space of national self-defining" which has been "conceptualised as feminine" (Lewis and Mills 19). This feminine landscape is seen to exist in order to be conquered and dominated.

Modern travel writers cannot discover new lands but they can assert a heroic masculinity by embarking on "hyper-masculine adventures" in distant lands (Lisle 95). They can travel to places other westerners have travelled before, but in new ways, proving their masculinity by surviving through hazardous, daring or impossible schemes, such as navigating the Amazon single-handedly in a kayak. Such adventures are also a way of avoiding complicated encounters with racial or gendered others.

(Lisle 95). Masculinities can thus roam the landscape unhindered, appearing to be masters of it without any apparent need for gender or racial others.

However, some modern male travel writers, such as Jose and Chatwin, have been searching for alternative ways to perform masculinity. Instead of attempting to be the first, the fastest or the most daring in a landscape without others, they set out to prove "that travel writers are not necessarily chauvinist, racist snobs writing the world through a privileged lens" (Lisle 99). Such travel writers performing new kinds of masculinities advocate feminism and racial equality and are "keen to redress the historical exclusions enacted through colonialism and patriarchy" (Lisle 99). Chatwin and Jose, for example, aim to foreground the Aboriginals.

In colonial times many travel writers (male as well as female) considered themselves superior to the natives they met (Bassnett 227). However, the idea of western culture as superior does not come forward in Chatwin and Jose's two books. On the contrary, they highly esteem the Aboriginal cultures and the treatment of the environment within them, sometimes to the point of idealisation. Jared Diamond (2005: 10) states that historians and archaeologists have proved wrong the assumption that indigenous cultures all over the globe practiced "Eden-like environmentalism." He maintains that these cultures and their peoples faced similar environmental problems to people today, and that some of them were able to solve these problems while others were not. For example, the first colonisers of Australia were unable to resolve the problem of numerous species of large animals becoming extinct after their arrival. (Diamond 9.)

The idealisation of indigenous cultures means that indigenous peoples of the past are viewed as vitally different from modern westerners, just as they are in a racist point of view (Diamond 9). In both cases they are seen as others, whether superior or inferior. Instead of viewing past indigenous peoples only in terms of difference, modern people would benefit from seeing the similarities between past and present peoples, because considering them as radically different, as others, prevents us from learning from the past successes or failures of indigenous peoples to solve their environmental

issues. Diamond (10) maintains that past indigenous peoples were "people like us," with roughly similar problems in roughly similar circumstances and argues that "there are still enough similarities for us to be able to learn from the past."

Part of the appeal of travel is the sense of freedom it offers the traveller. James Buzard (81) maintains that this is the same kind of "imaginative freedom" that culture offers. Significantly, culture in a patriarchal western society has been seen as the domain of males, as travel has been in earlier times. Culture belongs to the sphere of the public, the sphere that is generally considered masculine, and one of its defining factors is that it constitutes freedom from the sphere of necessity (Plumwood 45). The sense of freedom travel affords comes from being detached from the necessities of life and from the whole sphere of the private. After all, travel means moving in the public sphere, because travellers have, at least temporarily, left their private life with its daily routines behind.

The process of moving is an important aspect of travel, because it is a demonstration of freedom. In earlier times, women for the most part did not have this freedom, the ability to leave their families and move from place to place while occupying more visibly the public sphere. They travelled more often with their friends or family, and even today women in the west seldom travel alone. Moving means leaving behind the daily occurrences of places and people met on the way. Travellers do not need to get attached to daily occupations but can view them from outside while passing, if they care to see them at all. It is as if they were above such things, and this, of course, is the source of the sense of freedom. Another important part of travelling is meeting new people in new places. The following sections consist of a discussion on patriarchal and new kinds of masculinities and the way the other has been constructed in relation to them.

2.2 Patriarchal masculinity

Plumwood maintains that western culture and its concepts of humanity and of those conceived as others, such as women, ethnic groups, social classes and nature, are the construction of a master model. The master model mostly consists of white, male westerners of the ruling class, with some female members. She calls the members of this group 'masters' and asserts that "this model is taken for granted as simply a *human* model, while the feminine is seen as a deviation from it." (Plumwood 23, original emphasis.) The master model stands for a particular kind of masculinity shaped in the context of class, race and gender domination. This masculinity is patriarchal masculinity. The master identity, the identity considered ideal in the west, is the identity of the patriarchal male. It is based on traits traditionally considered masculine and on the attitudes of the master model. In this chapter Plumwood's master model and its values and attitudes will be read in reverse and decoded into patriarchal masculinity.

Patriarchal masculinity's defining feature is its relation to the other which the patriarchal self views as inferior and as a mere background to the self. The master model is seen as central. The other is defined only in relation to the master's ends and is not seen as another self whose intrinsic value sets ethical restrictions on its use (Plumwood 145). He/she/it is constructed as inessential, even though the master relies on the services the other provides (Plumwood 48).

Whitehead (6) claims that traditional forms of masculinity such as patriarchy are marginal today. Nevertheless, it continues to affect all westerners, at least, since its ideas of the human are so deeply entrenched in western thought. It has constructed the key concepts of western thought. As Plumwood (190) maintains, the master identity "is a legacy, a form of culture, a form of rationality, a framework for selfhood and relationship which, through this appropriation of culture, has come to shape us all."

Although its limitations have been exposed by feminists, among others, “a tough, heroic, mythic masculinity is [still] deeply ingrained in the national psyche” in the west and is often represented in popular culture (Beynon 6). This tough masculinity is based on patriarchal masculinity. They both assume that the male is the centre and others form merely the background to his achievements. The now apparent limitations of these models have led to many men choosing from a broader array of masculinities, which have more in common with femininities and which in this study are called new kinds of masculinities.

2.3 New kinds of masculinities

New kinds of masculinities are multiple, fragmented and increasingly fluid, in contrast to rigid patriarchal masculinity, which has become marginal, as mentioned before (Whitehead 6). New kinds of masculinities involve a negotiation of and reflection on what it is to be a man (Whitehead 220). These masculinities vary according to context and occupy a less polarised position with femininities than patriarchal masculinity does. In fact, male and female roles and values are more similar today than before, and men and women can “choose from a shared menu of attributes” when performing gender (Beynon 6). In short, the variety of masculinities in the west has increased.

A change in masculinities and masculine values has come about through feminism and its critique of dominant masculinity (Beynon 115). New kinds of masculinities are performed by men who are responding in some way to this critique. These men have taken on the task of changing their values and ideas of masculinity, and by doing so have undertaken identity work which amounts to “far more than striving to become more emotionally literate and sensitive beings: it is about redefining masculine identity and the very idea of masculinity itself” (Beynon 136).

Another influencing factor in the way masculinities and masculine values are perceived today is gay masculinities, which resist the patriarchal or hegemonic models. Gay men have had an important role in creating masculinities, and queer theory has challenged the existing gender roles and questioned the way they have been seen as natural (Whitehead 75). Queer theory has contributed to the possibilities all men, gay or not, have in choosing from a wider range of masculinities than was available before. Men performing new kinds of masculinities take advantage of these opportunities.

Like gay masculinities, the performance of new kinds of masculinities involves an element of resistance to the patriarchal norms of what it is to be a man. This is also evident in the acceptance of some qualities that have previously been seen as feminine. Some of these may be included in the performance of new kinds of masculinities, such as non-aggressiveness and nurturing. Whitehead (220) claims that "emergent discourses of gender increasingly pressure the masculine subject to negotiate, reflect and consider his position as a man, and to be more aware of how one's masculinist practices and assumptions might impact on others and self." Men performing new kinds of masculinities are responding to this pressure and engage in negotiations, reflections and consideration of their own performances. They are more aware of the influence of their masculinities on others and more willing to take others into account than men performing patriarchal masculinities.

In this study new kinds of masculinities are taken to signify context-based, fluid masculinities that allow their performers to view themselves less as the centre or as the foreground to others' background. They are more willing to accept that they are the other to other subjects. Moreover, new kinds of masculinities display an acceptance of the fact that femininity and masculinity are not two opposing poles with no similarities. Nevertheless, it is still important for many men performing new kinds of masculinities to differentiate themselves from women in some way, although it is not necessary for them to view themselves as totally different to them.

3 MASCULINITIES IN THE LANDSCAPE

Plumwood's book *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (1993) was one of the first statements of eco-critical philosophy from a feminist perspective. Its relevance for masculinities comes from her description of the 'master model' which has in this study been decoded into patriarchal masculinity. The master model, as has been explained, consists of a powerful, largely male white elite which has shaped most of western thought, including attitudes to nature and the human. Nature in this view is seen as merely a resource for humans without purposes of its own, as alien and lower than the human sphere and as forming merely a background to human achievements (Plumwood 4), whereas the human is considered central, in control of and above nature.

The characteristics and virtues considered most distinctively human are those considered the furthest from the natural, the animal and the primitive. What is more, these characteristics are connected to masculinities, because what is considered peculiarly human is also seen as peculiarly masculine. (Plumwood 25.) Of course, the attitudes towards nature described in this chapter are not restricted to those held by men but could just as easily be performed by women. It is only in the analysis that these attitudes will be linked to two specific men, Chatwin and Jose.

3.1 Conquering nature

Nature is often a scene for masculine achievement. For example, men may climb a mountain in order to achieve a feeling of power and victory over natural elements as well as over other men who have not sought the same achievement, as O. Alan Weltzien describes doing in "Fathers and Sons, Trails and Mountains" in *Eco-Man: New Perspectives on Masculinity and Nature* (2004, 168–78). He actually talks about "bagg[ing] the peak" (172), which clearly suggests that he sees it mainly as an achievement and a contest. Although he claims that his mountain-climbing

exhibitions are "something more like religious retreat" than "male conquest," his bravado in describing the activity clearly contradicts this (Weltzien 175). He also offers a good example of comparing his (and his friends') achievements to those of other men: "My father followed trails and shunned elevations above timberline; Bill's dad fishes and Galen's golfs. Our generation, at least annually, prefers more demanding settings" (Weltzien 172).

The achievement may also be to gain knowledge. In earlier times colonial travellers often sought knowledge of colonised lands in order to maintain control of them and their peoples. Knowledge of the people and resources of a place were also sought in order to establish business and trade relations, and knowledge of religious and cultural traditions in order to convert people to another religion or influence them to relinquish their traditions. More recently, "personal, familial, and cultural interests" have often been the motivators for travellers in quest for knowledge of the world. (Bentley b.) This kind of knowledge seeking is less a matter of achievement and conquest than in earlier times and concentrates more on finding enriching experiences. It does not involve subjugating or manipulating people or landscapes.

To seek knowledge of something is to seek the truth about it, and quests for knowledge have a longstanding masculine tradition in the west. Easthope states that western culture treats truth "as absolute, a be-all and end-all" (82). The masculine style gives the impression that the writer knows and understands the truth and deals with the reader as someone capable of mastering the truth, and thus as masculine by implication (Easthope 83). The masculine style appears transparent and "treat[s] itself as invisible, not really a style at all," making meaning seem "fixed, free-standing [and] closed round on itself" (Easthope 82). It presents truth "as objective and impersonal, something revealed once and for all and so there to be mastered and known" (Easthope 82). The masculine style of presenting truth objectively can be paralleled to the achievement of climbing a mountain. It may give the writer a feeling of empowerment. It can also have a competitive element in that it gives the writer an

opportunity to demonstrate how much he knows. Instead of ‘bagging the peak’, a writer writing in the masculine style is bagging information.

Nature is central to travel narratives, which often take place in an exotic environment, because the object of nature travel narratives, the wilderness, “always has to be someplace remote and exotic, someplace *different* from where we conduct our normal lives” (Tallmadge 23, original emphasis). After all, adventure needs a background that is distinctive. The wilderness offers men a chance to “withdraw from society into an idealized landscape” (Allister 2) where masculinities can be discovered, reinvented and tested. It is also a place where men can go to escape the expectations laid on them by the ‘civilized’ world and by women, relationships and male competition. The wilderness is where men can live “the Romantic myth that man is most himself when he is spontaneously at one with nature” (Easthope 47).

Often the wilderness is seen as a romanticized ideal, a nostalgic past without technology where men are able to battle with and, ideally, conquer nature. Chatwin certainly sees it as romantic in *The Songlines*. But nature cannot be separated from humans who are a part of it: they are “*made* of nature” (Scott Russell Sanders qtd. in Allister 53). Humans are not simply visitors in nature, just passing by (Tallmadge 23). Their inhabitation of many parts of the earth goes as far back as prehistory. For example, it has now been estimated that the first humans colonised Australia some 46,000 years ago (Diamond 9). Ignoring prehistoric human habitation is a result of Eurocentric thinking, and it also demonstrates how the dualistic thinking of the west has contributed to the way westerners see themselves as the subject and those considered ‘uncivilised’ as the other.

European settlers in Australia and elsewhere also thought of the landscapes they arrived in as wildernesses when in fact they had been carefully and skilfully managed by the Aboriginal population so as to be productive. The western view has often been that true nature is empty of human habitation and out of the reach of human influence (Plumwood 163). Even when the ‘wilderness’ has been inhabited by indigenous

peoples, westerners have been blind to it, seeing only *Terra Nullius*, owned by no one, available to conquering heroes. This is an "egocentric view of landscape, wherein one either sees oneself or one sees nothing at all." (Rose 1996 b.) For example, in Australia "there is no place where the feet of Aboriginal humanity have not preceded those of the settler" (Rose 1996 b), even though settlers probably did not realise this when they arrived. Wilderness as a concept, then, is not a simple one, but loaded with cultural meaning, just as masculinity is.

3.1.1 Nature as background

Since Descartes' time, humans have been considered to hold extensive power over the landscape. In fact, they have been considered its "masters and possessors" (Descartes qtd. in Plumwood 110). Cartesian images of nature include its passivity, its aptitude for human use and shaping, and the image of it as a machine (Plumwood 109). These perceived attributes invite humans to make use of nature. Humans' belief in their ability to control nature has increased in time (Plumwood 109), as is demonstrated by the reactions of shock after disasters in nature undermine this belief, such as the tsunami in the Indian Ocean in 2004. In such cases, the western idea of mechanical nature falls apart, and nature's uncontrollable quality and humans' powerlessness in the face of it are revealed. The shock such disasters cause also demonstrates the way nature is taken for granted as a mere background and only noticed when it fails to perform as expected.

According to Plumwood (69), the traditional positions of western thought on nature and the biosphere reveal that the natural world is often regarded as "the unconsidered, instrumentalised and unimportant *background* to 'civilised' human life; [it is] merely the setting or stage on which what is really important, the drama of human life and culture, is played out" (original emphasis). Nature forms the background because it is "always present, always functioning, always forgiving" (Plumwood 69). Its definition "as passive, as non-agent and non-subject" contributes to its status as background

(Plumwood 4). In contrast, the human, particularly the male, is defined as active, agent and subject.

The quality considered most distinctly human, which most particularly negates human continuity with nature and separates the human from nature, is reason. Plumwood (3) states that in the west reason has been built "as the privileged domain of the master, who has conceived nature as a wife or subordinate other encompassing and representing the sphere of materiality, subsistence and the feminine which the master has split off and constructed as beneath him." Nature is thus involved in providing for the necessities of life, while the patriarchal male inhabits the sphere of freedom, which is defined by the use of reason and freedom from the sphere of subsistence. Reason is considered the domain of the master and a particularly male quality.

Another gendered concept is nature itself, which in the west is constructed as the underside of reason. It is defined negatively, as lack, and in relation to humans (Plumwood 70). In other words, nature is seen as that which humans are not. As reason is considered the defining quality of the human, everything that nature is seen to include is what reason is seen to exclude:

> the emotions, the body, the passions, animality, the primitive or uncivilised, the non-human world, matter, physicality and sense experience, as well as the sphere of irrationality, of faith and of madness. (Plumwood 19–20)

Many of these have also been associated with women through their supposed connection with nature. Both are seen to provide "the background to a dominant, foreground sphere of recognised achievement or causation" (Plumwood 21).

The backgrounding of nature means denying dependency on it and relationship to it. It also involves the denial of nature's independence of the human (Plumwood 191). Nature is seen as a separate realm and humans are considered "apart, outside of nature, which is treated as a limitless provider without needs of its own" (Plumwood 21). It is merely there to provide for human needs. Plumwood (21) claims that "[d]ominant western culture has systematically inferiorised, backgrounded and denied

dependency on the whole sphere of reproduction and subsistence." As well as biospheric nature, this sphere includes the labour of women and non-westerners.

Backgrounded nature is systematically devalued and denied as an essential life force that humans, among others, depend upon. There are many ways of denying dependency, but the most common ones occur "through making the other inessential, denying the importance of the other's contribution or even his or her reality, and through mechanisms of focus and attention" (Plumwood 48). In the case of nature all these are used in the culture of the master. Nature is not considered essential, its contribution is not seen to be important, its reality is hardly considered at all, and all the focus is directed on the human.

In addition, denial can take place through viewing activities as strongly hierarchical, in which case the areas denied "are simply not 'worth' noticing" (Plumwood 48). This is also the case with nature in the culture of the master: the continual recurring activities of nature, particularly those not involved in providing humans with the necessities of life, such as food and materials for shelter, are for the most part ignored. Nature is backgrounded as simple place names where battles over the possession of land have taken place, or in economics when value is given to natural things only after they have been moulded by human labour (Plumwood 70). In conclusion, nature and its activities are systematically devalued and denied.

Nature is also systematically not seen or noticed when it is deemed homogeneous, as it is by the master. The view of nature as homogeneous ignores its diversity and multiplicity, grouping together "things as diverse as seals, waves and rocks, oysters and clouds, forests, viruses and eagles" (Plumwood 70). Things in nature are only acknowledged when they are relevant to the master's desires. The master does not consider differences among those seen as inferior as being important or interesting. In addition, the recognition of differences might destabilise stereotypes and thus weaken the master's position of superiority. (Plumwood 54.) In the homogenisation of both nature and humans the other

> is not seen as a unique individual bound to the self by specific ties. It is related to as a universal rather than a particular, as a member of a class of interchangeable items which can be used as resources to satisfy the master's needs. (Plumwood 54)

Seeing the other as a unique individual makes it morally more difficult to use the other for one's own needs, whereas an other deemed homogeneous, just part of a class of inferior others, presents no such moral problems in its use. Thus, homogenisation clearly sustains both the view of the other as alien and as an instrument for human use (see 3.1.2) (Plumwood 55). It also facilitates backgrounding and denial of dependency (Plumwood 54), because a class of beings considered inferior and alien is easily set as the unimportant background to those seen as superior.

According to Plumwood (4), nature that is seen as homogeneous is taken for granted as "a *terra nullius*, a resource empty of its own purposes or meanings." It is not seen to have any direction or value of its own. It only gains value and direction through human use. (Plumwood 111.) It is defined

> as non-agentic, as passive, non-creative and inert, with action being imposed from without by an external force. It is non-mindful, being mere stuff, mere matter, devoid of any characteristics of mind or thought. It lacks all goals and purposes of its own [. . .]. Any goals or direction present are imposed from *outside* by human consciousness. The human realm is one of freedom, whereas the realm of nature is fixed and deterministic, with no capacity for choice. Nature is neutral, indifferent and meaningless, with no interests or significance of its own, a mere endless hurrying of particles; any significance or value it might have for humans is an arbitrary product of human consciousness. (Plumwood 110, original emphasis)

This definition of nature demonstrates that it is seen as inabilities and absences, in comparison to the human, who has consciousness, rationality, freedom and creativity (Plumwood 110). As a nullity, nature is considered to be available for human ends, ready to be incorporated into the realm of the human (Plumwood 4). It is assumed that its needs do not have to be taken into account or cared for, whether it is a question of wildlife or rainforests (Plumwood 69). Nor are its needs considered to impose limits on humans and their use of it (Plumwood 191). As nature is seen to lack agency and

autonomy, it has become “merely our thing” (Plumwood 110). As such, it is easily rendered an instrument for our use.

3.1.2 Nature as instrument

Plumwood calls the kind of use of nature in which it is regarded as entirely a means to human ends *instrumentalism*. It means that nature is seen as an object that can be used to gain whatever is needed or desired. In instrumentalism nature is considered a mere resource whose value and ends are defined only in relation to humans. In other words, it is valuable only to the extent that it is useful to humans, and its ends are not taken into account but are overridden by human ends. This is because nature is seen as an inferior order that requires no moral consideration. (Plumwood 53.) In the west, all moral consideration is reserved for humans, who are treated as its only proper objects (Plumwood 70), and anything else is considered in terms of usefulness to humans. When nature is not a useful resource it is considered a mere hindrance (Plumwood 145). In short, nature is seen to exist for humans to use as they will and not for itself, because it is not deemed to have any intrinsic value.

Because nature is defined as differing absolutely from humanity, “it can be seen as something utterly neutral on which humans can and even must impose their own goals, purposes and significance” (Plumwood 110). In fact, it positively “*invites* the imposition of human purposes and treatment as an instrument for the achievement of human satisfactions” (Plumwood 110-11, original emphasis). When nature is considered to exist for humans alone, it follows that it is treated as property to be moulded and shaped at will. It certainly is not considered to place any limits on its use. (Plumwood 142.) Instead, it can be put to use for as long as resources exist, without regard for its extinction or the extinction of other creatures through being diminished. A case in point is the cutting down of rainforests, which causes many species to die out. Instrumentalism aims to negate or deny the natural other as “a centre of resistance” that places limits on its use (Plumwood 142). In this mode it is

nature that is the transformed and humans that do the transforming (Plumwood 164), because homogeneous nature is seen to require "the imposition of rational order via development" (Plumwood 194).

In conclusion, in the view of western patriarchal masculinity, nature is inferior to the human and forms merely the background to human achievement. It "is that other which is excluded from the sphere of ends. It is the name for all those whose own ends are denied and have disappeared, those seen as imposing no limits on the rational self." (Plumwood 191.) Human dependency on this inferior, backgrounded nature is denied and the human relationship to it is constructed as minimal and accidental.

Nature is connected to the sphere of subsistence and thus lacks freedom of choice, unlike humans, who occupy the sphere of freedom, particularly if they are white males. Nature is not seen as "another centre of striving and needs for earth resources" (Plumwood 194) whose ends and interests should be taken into account. Instead, it is viewed as something to be used or, if it cannot be made use of, as useless or a hindrance. An example of the latter is the Australian use of the word 'the scrub' for a stretch of land that is seen as useless to humans. This also demonstrates the way nature is considered homogeneous, seen as a universal group of possible resources rather than as a diverse biosphere. (Plumwood 70.) A homogeneous, backgrounded nature seems to exist solely for human use. It has no value in itself, only as far as it is useful to humans.

A person who relates to nature through backgrounding and instrumentalism sees themselves as separate from and outside of an alien other, as having no relationship with that other and as not dependent on it (Plumwood 142). This is the view of the master and the patriarchal male who conceives of others, particularly natural others, as non-central unlike himself. This is by no means the only possible way of relating to nature, as the next chapter will demonstrate. It is possible to have a respectful, ecologically sound relationship with nature, even while making use of it.

3.2 Respectful communing with nature

In western culture, the landscape is often seen as an instrument for our use, but when nature and the human are considered in less dualistic ways, it is possible to have a relationship with nature which includes respect, care, friendship and benevolence (Plumwood 155) as well as empathy and love (Plumwood 160). This relationship can be achieved when nature and the human are seen in less polarised ways than they have traditionally been seen in the west. Plumwood (5) claims that this requires a conception of the landscape as more mindlike, capable of intentionality and agency, and of the human as more embodied.

In patriarchal masculinity the self and the other are seen in dualistic terms that leave no room for overlap or connection, whereas in 'new' masculinities overlap and connection are acknowledged. Males performing patriarchal masculinity are, therefore, less likely to respect others or empathize with them, be they human or natural others. Those performing new masculinities, on the other hand, recognise that masculinities and femininities are not opposing ends of a spectrum with no similarities and, for this reason, they are more likely to accept that humans and nature share characteristics, too, and are more similar than western thought has previously acknowledged. In short, these men are more likely to have respectful relationships with nature, although the type of masculinity performed is no guarantee of ecological attitudes.

'New' men who respect nature can still discover, reinvent and test their masculinities in the wilderness, although not by conquering it. In such expeditions, the masculinities discovered, reinvented and tested are those that have a close connection to nature. When communing with the landscape in this way, men concentrate more on the relationship with the other than on the self. The main object in such cases is not achievements such as 'bagging' a mountain but to gain an experience.

What is considered a significant experience in nature is personal. When it is not a sense of conquering nature, it may be anything from an encounter with a wild animal, large or small, to observing a beautiful landscape. A vast and overwhelmingly beautiful and powerful landscape may arouse feelings of awe, as it did for Romantic poets who admired the sublime in nature. For them the sublime was a subjective experience (Landow 1988 c) and was connected to size, where "nature dwarfs humanity" (Landow 1988 b). Deserts, mountains and seas were considered the foremost sources of the sublime experience. (Landow 2002 a).

Sublimity is connected to power and gender issues. Edmund Burke compared the invigorating sublimity of masculine power to the calmness of feminine beauty, making sublimity an overtly gendered concept (Landow 2001 d). Garrard (64) notes that "[t]he beautiful is loved for its smallness, softness, delicacy; the sublime admired for its vastness and overwhelming power." In short, the beautiful is considered as linked with femininity and the sublime with masculinity. However, the experience of the sublime is not restricted by either gender or place (Garrard 65), as both genders experience it in the same way (Landow 2001 d) and anywhere in nature. To summarize, women as well as men may experience the sublime, although the qualities associated with it are more commonly considered masculine. Sublimity is a similar experience to that which will be examined in relation to Chatwin and Jose in the analysis: humility in the face of superior forces.

To experience the landscape as overwhelmingly beautiful and powerful or sublime indicates a realisation of the smallness of the self. Suddenly the human may appear as peripheral instead of as central, as westerners have grown used to seeing themselves. Culture and even the characteristic considered particularly human, reason, may temporarily be revealed as insignificant. Nature is seen as powerful, and the human as merely a part of its vastness. Humans are momentarily reminded of their connection to and community with nature.

When a man considers gaining knowledge a matter of power and achievement he is performing a heroic, conquering masculinity. Gaining knowledge can, however, also be benign, and then it does not involve heroism. This knowledge is not sought for colonialist purposes, but for reasons concerning "personal, familial, and cultural interests," as has been mentioned before (Bentley b). Knowledge is then not an asset to compete with or a commodity that can be compared to other people's knowledge, but is sought as an enriching, personal experience.

Similarly to mountains, knowledge can be 'bagged', whereas experiences cannot, at least not so easily. For example, experiences of the power of nature and the self's powerlessness in the face of it or of being a part of nature defy 'bagging', because they occur unexpectedly. Unlike mountain climbing, they are not just dependent on humans' action in seeking the experience. For example, a person climbing a mountain can be relatively sure of 'bagging' it, whereas a person seeking an experience cannot know whether it will occur or not. Experiences are not counted and bragged about. They are by nature so elusive and immaterial that they are mostly not even considered or sought and they take place as unexpected surprises. Nor are they usually remembered for long, unless they form the material of a literary or visual work of art. Perhaps the reason why such experiences are not usually bragged about or even discussed widely is that they involve emotions (and very elusive ones at that) which are subjective and belong in the private sphere. Another reason might be that such experiences – perhaps because they are emotion-based – are not considered important in the west.

As has been mentioned, characteristics considered masculine are more highly valued in the west than those seen as feminine. This is also true with western ecological thinking which has been dominated by a 'masculine' type of moral concern for natural others. According to Plumwood (171), this concern is aimed at groups of objects in general and involves "the discarding of the self, emotions and special ties" all of which are connected to femininity and the private sphere. Moral concern based on 'feminine' qualities, such as respect, care, concern, sympathy and friendship, are

directed more locally at particular objects. These qualities have been relegated to the private sphere because they are considered emotional and subjective. Plumwood maintains that these 'feminine' qualities lend themselves less problematically to the treatment of the non-human other than the 'masculine', impersonal characteristics do and that they form a better foundation for an ecological identity and for treating natural others in non-instrumental ways. (Plumwood 173.)

According to Plumwood, friendship, care and love are the most appropriate concepts for a mutually sustaining relationship between people (195), and they are as possible to attain in relationships with non-human others as with human others. This stance requires concern for others "for their own sake and [so] that one's ends make ineliminable reference to the ends of others." (Plumwood 151.) In other words, an acknowledgement of the connectedness of self and other is necessary for a mutual relationship built on respect, friendship, care and love. In such a relationship, the self is recognised as fundamentally related to and interdependent on the other, and the self's development is seen to occur through interaction and involvement with the other (Benjamin qtd. in Plumwood 153). In short, the continuity of the human and the natural is recognised.

Because men performing new masculinities do not construct their identities in firmly dualistic ways in respect to femininities and other others but acknowledge that they share some characteristics with them and are interdependent on them, they are more likely to apply the qualities considered feminine in their treatment of natural others than patriarchal men. They may be better able to recognise particular others in nature and acknowledge the similarities as well as differences between themselves and the other. Thus they may be able to construct a mutual relationship with the landscape and more ecological identities for themselves.

3.3 Mutual relations with nature

Being in a mutual relationship with nature is in strict contrast to the master's attitudes to nature and the human. In mutuality, the qualities considered feminine that were discussed above [see 3.2] are made the most of in building ecological identities. These qualities, as has been said, concentrate on the other as a particular other and assume a more local approach to them (Plumwood 173), whereas the master views others as groups with similar characteristics and discards any emotions, the self or "specific ties" to them in his treatment of them (Plumwood 171).

Plumwood (142) claims that in a mutual relationship, the natural other is not reduced to an instrument for achieving human ends. Of course, nature sometimes has to be used for these ends in order to survive, but even then "it is acknowledged as more than a means to these ends, as an independent centre of striving which places limits on the self and on the kinds of use which may be made of it." (Plumwood 142.) In such circumstances, the natural other is treated with care, respect and empathy. It is regarded in relation to the self and not as part of a universal group that has no connection to the self.

Plumwood (164) defines mutuality as a relationship where humans understand that they cannot always be the ones doing the transforming, with nature being the transformed, but will attempt to find a balance in this. They may be sovereign in some places and in some areas of life, as long as they acknowledge their dependency on the earth. There may also be areas where they interact with nature, for example, through agriculture, "being both transforming and transformed, sustaining and sustained." (Plumwood 164.) In other areas such as the wilderness, nature is sovereign and independent of the human and should be given space to exist. In such regions, humans can interact with it without imposing themselves, because "[h]ere it is the visitor who is the taught and not the teacher, the transformed and not the transformer, visitors who must see themselves through the other's eyes, must bend themselves, as is appropriate for visitors, to the other's ways." (Plumwood 164.) In summary, mutual relations with

nature require that humans recognise that they are not central but part of a larger whole.

According to Plumwood (164), to achieve mutual relations with nature it is essential that both continuity and difference between humans and nature are recognised and valued. This means that the dynamic of dualisms that includes those surrounding the human and nature must be overcome. Instead, kinship and difference between the two need to be recognised (Plumwood 155). The natural other must be acknowledged "as neither alien to and discontinuous from self nor assimilated to or an extension of self" (Plumwood 6). When the human is conceived of as continuous with nature, the latter's ability to flourish can be "treated as not instrumentally but essentially related to our own thriving" (Plumwood 160).

In acknowledging nature's difference as well as continuity, we recognise natural others as others in their own rights and are able to include their ability to flourish among our own fundamental or primary ends and wishes (Plumwood 160). The acknowledgment of difference and continuity indicates that the other is recognised as a particular other. The self is thus retained in the treatment of that other, as is an objective standpoint towards it. Emotions such as admiration or pity may also have a place in such an approach, and special ties are composed of these emotions as well as the similarities and differences observed.

The self in a mutual relationship sees nature as an independent other worthy of respect. Such a self understands that the earth has the ability to change us as well as we it (Plumwood 137). This demonstrates that the relationship is considered a more personal one than the traditional relationship of the master and natural other and that the continuity between the self and other are recognised. Rationality for this kind of self signifies an ability to rejoice over others' well-being and ability to flourish and to "acknowledge kinship but also feast on the other's resistance and grow strong on their difference" (Plumwood 196). Clearly this kind of rationality does not discard

emotions or special ties between the human and the natural other that is acknowledged as a particular other.

The mutual self sees similarities between itself and nature in acknowledging itself "as more animal and embodied, more 'natural'" and in "reconceiv[ing] nature as more mindlike than in the Cartesian conception" (Plumwood 124). This understanding facilitates a move towards seeing ourselves and nature as continuous as well as different. To see nature as "more mindlike" is a challenge, at least to westerners, because since Descartes, western thought has seen nature as unintentional and devoid of mindlike qualities (Plumwood 5). The human and the mind are seen as completely separated from the body, animals and nature and as eliminating any continuity between them (Plumwood 115). As opposed to this view of the mind and reason as belonging exclusively to humans, Plumwood proposes intentionality in nature as a form of mindlike activity.

Plumwood (131) maintains that the mind is marked by many criteria: for example, "consciousness, intentionality, experience/sentience, imagination, reason [and] goal-directedness." Of these markers of mind at least intentionality, experience/sentience and goal-directedness are features also found in nature. Of course, all markers need not be present in an organism to qualify it as having mindlike capacities. Consciousness, for example, is not necessary for growth and an ability to flourish, which can all the same be regarded as mindlike activities, because they include goal-directedness. In fact, directionality, function as well as goal-directedness "are applicable to natural systems and processes generally." (Plumwood 135.) Plumwood offers mountains, trees and forests as examples of goal-directedness:

> "Mountains [. . .] present themselves as the products of a lengthy unfolding natural process, having a certain sort of history and direction as part of this process, and with a certain kind of potential for change. Trees appear as self-directing beings with an overall 'good' or interest and a capacity for individual choice in response to their conditions of life. Forest ecosystems can be seen as wholes whose interrelationship of parts can only be understood in terms of stabilising and organising principles, which must again be

> understood teleologically [that is, as being goal-directed].” (Plumwood 135–6.)

Intentionality includes goal-directedness, because to have an intention implies having a goal. It also includes agency, because the intentional subject is active, although in a different way to humans. Plumwood (131) argues that intentionality allows us to see both continuity and difference in natural others. In addition, it facilitates the recognition of nature’s heterogeneity, because it covers a wide array of mindlike attributes. These include “sentience, choice, consciousness and goal-directedness.” (Plumwood 134.)

The varying levels of intentionality cover the natural world from humans to bacteria. Some complex activities of the mind, such as the wish to be another kind of person, may be restricted to humans. Some animals, humans included, can be credited with “awareness, choice, decision, emotion, imagination and consciousness – for example, missing a companion, learning a new technique, choosing the wrong way, or noticing the gate.” (Plumwood 135.) To yet others may be ascribed “sentience, emotion, volition and sensation, feeling pain and pleasure, as well as certain sensory and intentional capacities humans do not possess” (Plumwood 135). All living beings have an “overall life-goal, for the sake of which its parts are organised” (Plumwood 135). A recognition of these different types of intentionality in natural others signifies that they are regarded as particular others.

The ability to recognise intentionality in natural others is a significant part of the mutual self. This ability enables us to “open ourselves to possibilities and exchanges which are not just of our own devising” (Plumwood 137). Many indigenous, non-western cultures, such as Aboriginal ones, have opened themselves to these possibilities and exchanges. They celebrate human continuity with nature and embrace interactions with it, as the following passage describing Aboriginals’ attitude to the land demonstrates:

> Country in Aboriginal English is not only a common noun but also a proper noun. People talk about country in the same way that they would talk about a person: they speak to country, sing to country,

> visit country, worry about country, feel sorry for country, and long for country. People say that country knows, hears, smells, takes notice, takes care, is sorry or happy. Country is not a generalised or undifferentiated type of place, such as one might indicate with terms like 'spending a day in the country' or 'going up the country'. Rather, country is a living entity with a yesterday, today and tomorrow, with a consciousness, and a will toward life. Because of this richness, country is home, and peace; nourishment for body, mind, and spirit; heart's ease. (Rose 1996 a.)

Intentionality is evident in the above in that country is considered to have consciousness and a will to live. In opening ourselves to exchanges with natural others we become "receptive to the stories of other beings and places in the world" (Plumwood 138). This receptiveness is evident in the above extract in the way country is believed to be sentient and to have sensory capabilities. As Aboriginal cultures recognise intentionality in nature, it will be used to gauge the authors' views of the knowledge systems of these cultures.

Plumwood's analysis concludes that to achieve mutuality with nature requires all these different elements in human points of view. First, the continuity of humans with nature must be recognised, as well as difference. Second, the fact that natural others are other selves, not just objects to act on, must be acknowledged. These points of view pave the way for a less instrumental outlook on nature and an understanding of its ability to direct itself and to be intentional. When we respect nature, care for it and have a friendly attitude towards it we can see it in non-instrumental terms and have a mutual relationship with it. In summary, this means that we can make use of nature while taking care to respect its goals, seeing its difference and seeing the continuity between humans and nature.

4 MASCULINITY AND THE PROTAGONISTS OF *THE SONGLINES* AND *BLACK SHEEP*

The starting point for my study is Tallmadge's article "Deerslayer with a Degree" (2004) in which he discusses the highly educated men who roamed in the wilderness and wrote books about it. These men are the 'Deerslayers with degrees' of his title. They were rough, yet sophisticated outdoorsmen who performed heroic masculinities in the wilderness that they passed through (Tallmadge 21, 23). Tallmadge compares them to modern male nature writers who are performing more ecological masculinities in the landscapes that they inhabit.

My study links Chatwin and Jose to these Deerslayers. They too travel through the landscape, free from female constraints, as intelligent, eloquent and academically educated men who write about their travels. However, they are not strong or heroic in the same way that the early Deerslayers were, and they avoid violence for the most part. Nor do they live in the landscape they write about like the modern nature writers do that Tallmadge discusses. However, they share with these modern writers a more ecological stance towards nature than the earlier ones had.

My aim is to examine Chatwin and Jose's performances of masculinities and their attitudes to nature in their travel narratives. Following Tallmadge's idea (24) that modern male nature writers are better equipped to form more ecological masculinities than earlier writers were, because of their more positive and constructive attitudes to nature and to "the wisdom of tribal cultures," I seek also to study Chatwin and Jose's attitudes to the lore of Aboriginal cultures. My hypothesis is that Chatwin and Jose are perhaps subconsciously on a quest for new kinds of masculinities that reveal a desire for a more respectful and mutual relationship with nature, allowing them to view themselves as part of nature instead of as its masters.

Plumwood's concept of the master model, which has shaped the western view of the human as the master of nature, has in this study been decoded as patriarchal

masculinity. This type of masculinity involves a view of the self as totally separate, different and superior to the other, be it a natural or gender other. New masculinities, on the other hand, incorporate a less dualistic perception of the self and others. I have demonstrated that these involve an acknowledgement of the other as similar to and continuous with the self. For this reason, it seems more likely that men performing new kinds of masculinities would more easily relate to nature in a positive way than those performing patriarchal masculinity, although nature-friendly attitudes are not, of course, necessarily a part of new kinds of masculinities.

While masculinities vary according to context, time and space and are affected by different variables (Whitehead 34), Chatwin and Jose's masculinities are comparable because of some important shared characteristics. They wrote their novels in different, although not too dissimilar times, but at the time of writing they were of similar ages (Chatwin was 47 and Jose 50 years old). They both wrote in and about Australia, and about the less populated parts in particular. Their contexts are, therefore, analogous, as is the space they wrote in. They came from different cultures, as Jose is an Australian and Chatwin an Englishman, but their societies are comparable. Also their social background is similar as both are middle to upper class and well-educated. In addition, they are both white. Their sexuality differs, as Chatwin was bisexual, but this has little relevance for this study, particularly as it was not generally known at the time. These similarities suggest that the authors can be expected to follow corresponding lines in their performances of masculinities. Moreover, their social position implies that they may be flexible in their performances, since the more privileged of either gender are freer to choose the way they want to perform gender than the less privileged (Beynon 6).

In this chapter, the attitudes to nature found in the two novels, *The Songlines* and *Black Sheep*, are analysed. As masculinities are implicit in male subjects' behaviour, and in this case, the travel narratives of Chatwin and Jose, they have to be read between the lines. In the same way, masculine attitudes towards nature are not explicit and need to be unearthed from the authors' descriptions of nature. I first analyse the

features of Chatwin and Jose's masculinities relating to travel. That is followed by an analysis of the authors' attitudes to nature: whether they behave like conquerors or see themselves as being part of nature and whether they respect Aboriginal wisdom.

4.1 Chatwin and Jose on the road

Travellers cannot leave behind the factors that have contributed to the making of who they are. They always carry 'mental baggage' about their past experiences, and this baggage inevitably influences their perceptions of the people, places and events they encounter. Chatwin and Jose are no exceptions: both authors' mental baggage undoubtedly influences the way they perceive Australia and its inhabitants and how they describe them in their travel narratives. Jose recognizes this and makes a reference to it: "You might think this is a wandering book, but I have followed my nose, bringing along the baggage of an overstocked mind with all its stray threads" (BS 252). He also writes about travelling, or about being a nomad, and finally makes a point about mental baggage:

> There's a striking phrase in *The Songlines* where nomads are called 'the crankhandles of history'. Aboriginal people were never really true nomads. They just have a bigger backyard than most other people. Traditionally they moved with ceremony and the season, retaining the strongest possible attachment to particular places. But in the larger, looser sense in which Chatwin thinks of nomads, the concept takes in everyone who is driven to wander, travelling light. Those wanderers include Roger Jose [. . .], or the people of the Gulf of Carpenteria, moving by volition or force across their country, or the Macassans in their annual migrations, or Murrandoo Yanner, here, there and everywhere. The mistake is to assume that the starting place is ever left completely behind. (BS 262)

The starting place, signifying here everything that has been experienced before, forms the mental baggage and has strong implications for what is described in travel narratives. The mental baggage Chatwin and Jose carry could be conceived as the baggage of the master model, which dictates the way all masters see themselves in relation to others, and which Chatwin and Jose, according to my hypothesis, are trying to shed.

Both the authors (even Jose, who is a native Australian) felt frustration at their outsider status and at not always being allowed inside. Chatwin does not describe these kinds of feelings, but Jose writes that Chatwin "was very angry that he couldn't just fly in and fly out with what he wanted" (BS 254). He remarks that Chatwin's exclusion on his travels among the Aboriginals has been seen by some "as a response to him as a predator, a coloniser, 'part of a uniquely English tradition of men in rumpled white shirts at the far-flung corners of the world'" (BS 255, quoting Toyne). Evidently, he was seen by some as 'a master'. Jose's frustration at his position as an outsider is apparent in the following passage:

> At times I have been frustrated that things were hidden from me because of my outsider status and that so much was regarded as flotsam and jetsam to be washed away by time in this land of willing oblivion. I had to be patient with the vast spaces I could never compass and the corners into which I could never go, understanding that it was often my own shadow – the direction I was coming from – that kept me in the dark. Had I been a visitor that might not have bothered me. But unlike Bruce Chatwin I was not completely an interloper. I was a partial insider, seeking to find where the ground might be shared. (BS 258–9)

Again, Jose refers to his mental baggage. He recognises that his shadow and the direction he comes from – his class, race, past, upbringing, South-Australian hometown – all mark him as different and influence his world-view.

In the past, travellers often considered themselves superior to the natives of the country they were visiting. Many male travellers performed conqueror masculinities and, indeed, many times they were literally conquering the land and peoples of the distant places they came to. Even today some male travellers and travel writers perform a heroic masculinity, for example, by 'bagging' mountains or embarking on "hyper-masculine adventures" (Lisle 95). New kinds of masculinities, I argue, do not involve attempts to conquer the landscape or be heroes, but they may entail an aspiration to collect knowledge and new experiences.

Chatwin and Jose also seek to gain knowledge on their travels in the two novels, and they are motivated by personal and cultural interests. The object of their travel is, of

course, to write about it. Chatwin collects information about the Aboriginals and their Songlines, and Jose is mapping a history of relations between the Aboriginals and white Australians. The following quote from Jose demonstrates his personal interest: "I come not as an expert, neither a historian nor an anthropologist nor a linguist, nor as someone hired to do a job. I am driven by curiosity." (BS 33.) In using the word 'curiosity' Jose belittles his own motives, because the word implies subjectivity. Subjectivity, as has been said, is often considered a feminine characteristic, whereas objectivity is seen as a masculine one. Jose's admission of such a 'feminine' characteristic indicates that he does not reject such qualities and, therefore, points towards new kinds of masculinities.

Chatwin refers to his seeking of knowledge and personal interest in Aboriginal cultures thus: "My reason for coming to Australia was to try to learn for myself, and not from other men's books, what a Songline was – and how it worked." (S 12.) His ambition to learn for himself expresses a desire for new experiences. At the same time, his claim that he does not want to learn it "from other men's books" bestows a sense of 'bagging' knowledge on his ambition. It seems thus that he views the knowledge he collects as a trophy and an achievement. This indicates that in this instance he performs patriarchal masculinity.

Jose also relates a deeper, even more personal reason to travel: his desire to learn about Roger Jose. In this passage Jose explains his motivation to a friend:

> He wondered where I fitted in. I told him that Roger Jose, my putative kin, a labourer who lived 'blackfella', in the policeman's disapproving words, might turn out to be the most exemplary of forebears, a neglected visionary. I wanted the connection because I wanted to join myself to someone who had earned his belonging in this country. (BS 38)

Clearly Jose does not view himself as a master who is not required to 'earn his belonging'. Quite the contrary, as a white Australian of European origin, he is acutely aware of being one of the descendants of those who came and robbed the land from its original inhabitants. He feels that a connection to Roger Jose, who lived alongside the Aboriginals and was accepted into their community, would validate his being there.

This quote demonstrates that he does not see himself as centre nor the Aboriginals as background, because he appears to want to be accepted by them as a fellow resident. This further proves that he is also willing to accept the fact that to these Aboriginal others he is an other.

Travel authors performing patriarchal masculinity like to stress the adventurousness of their expeditions and their own heroic actions. In the following, Chatwin relates a trip he and Arkady made by car in difficult circumstances:

> The road streaked ahead in two parallel ruts of reddish water. In places we had to cross a floodpan with low bushes breaking the surface. A cormorant flew up ahead of us, thrashing the water with its wings. We passed through a stand of desert oaks, which are a species of casuarina and look less like an oak than a cactus. They, too, were standing in water. Arkady said it was madness to go on, but we went on. The muddy water splashed inside the cab. I gritted my teeth whenever the wheels began to spin, but then we would again lurch forward. (S 144)

The difficulties of crossing the flooded terrain are emphasised by Arkady's remark that it is "madness to go on." Their carrying on despite this remark and the circumstances demonstrates persistence that is often linked to masculinities. Arkady is here performing a slightly more heroic masculinity than Chatwin, because he is driving and makes the decision to carry on even after admitting it is madness. Chatwin sits next to him and grits his teeth in worry whenever it seems they are stuck. His frankness about his anxiety in the situation confirms that he is not performing a heroic masculinity.

In Jose's description of Borroloola, the area is at first described as extremely remote, giving the impression that he considers himself heroic in undertaking such a journey:

> They say it's as far as you can go in Australia without a passport. On a national remoteness index it's the remotest place in the country after somewhere in the desert where there's no settlement at all. A thousand kilometres from Darwin on the Northern Territory side of the Queensland border, and another 1,000 kilometres from the mining town of Mount Isa, which is already 1,000 kilometres inland from the populated east coast, it is out of reach of the centres of Australian life. (BS 6)

His emphasis of the remoteness of Borroloola makes his expedition there seem special and bold. Although he does not travel there in a specifically difficult or daring manner, his trip to such an isolated destination in itself indicates patriarchal masculinity. However, his further descriptions alleviate this impression:

> Borroloola's isolation ended when the all-weather road was finally put through in 1968, sealing part of the route with tar. It is marketed now as the Savannah Way, recommended for the caravanserai of young backpackers and elderly Australians from Down South, the blond nomads and grey panthers whose recreational vehicles proceed in file down the strip of bitumen during the holiday season. (BS 10)

The image of tourists coming to remote Borroloola in a long line shatters the picture of the town as a place only the very brave dare visit, especially as some of the tourists are elderly and thus unlikely to make hazardous journeys.

In the following quote, Jose further breaks the image of remoteness: "Isolation depends on your orientation. Remote from the population centres of Australia's south, maybe, but close to the busy, populous archipelagos to Australia's north. Closer, in fact, to the great world." (BS 21.) Jose here reveals his first description of Borroloola's remoteness as the point of view of those living in the great cities of Southern Australia. To counteract this view, he slowly develops an argument to the contrary, and here he points out that for the people living in the North, and particularly in the Borroloola area, it is not remote. What is more, to most other parts of the world this area is less remote than Southern Australia.

Although his first portrayal of Borroloola indicated that Jose is performing a heroic masculinity, the latter two quotes prove otherwise. Even with his Southern 'mental baggage' he is able to see the situation from both points of view, from the Southern and the Northern Australians' standpoint. He does not assume, as a Southerner, that his part of the country and thus his point of view is central. Nor does he take the area's residents' views as less important than his. This proves false the above assumption made from the first passage describing the town and confirms that he performs new kinds of masculinities.

Travel writers who perform patriarchal masculinity often describe their journeys as something remarkable. Anything less would not stress their heroic individualism. As Tallmadge proclaims (23), the destination of such a traveller has to be remote and exotic, something that differs from our everyday lives. Jose, conversely, does not convey his arrival in Borroloola as a remarkable event:

> It's unspectacular. This straight road turns a right-angle and becomes Robinson Road, heading past some signs until low structures appear. Even before we're in the town a scratchy placard announces a heritage trail, pedestrians only, that peters out in long grass. There's no arrival, no transition. The pub on one side and the store and a payphone on the other. A few weathered people are hanging around on the green outside the store. A family car full of kids is fuelling up. The buildings are spaced and fenced and set well back from the road. There's a sense of amplitude and emptiness. Past the pub it's as if the town has already stopped again. (BS 41)

Instead of the extraordinary arrival of travel narratives that emphasise the writer's heroism, the one portrayed here is unexciting. There are no magnificent sceneries where heroic acts can be executed, just the commonplace houses, stores and people about their daily business.

Chatwin describes a more satisfying moment on his travels: "At night, lying awake under the stars, the cities of the West seemed sad and alien – and the pretensions of the 'art world' idiotic. Yet here I had a sense of homecoming." (S 18.) This instant is also compiled of very simple ingredients: night-time and stars. These are available to anyone, not just travellers who brave distant lands, just as the above town scene and its events can be found almost anywhere in the west. Only Chatwin's sense of being at home makes the moment somewhat special, especially as he compares it to western life. A heroic travel writer's description would differ from these. It would magnify the splendour of the scenery and particularly the unique points which drew the writer there in the first place. Chatwin and Jose's portrayals are simple and relate experiences that are at everyone's disposal. Neither of the authors is thus performing heroic masculinities. On the contrary, by not performing them they are resisting that form of patriarchal behaviour.

Travel writers performing heroic masculinities seldom discuss their relationships with their loved ones but prefer to omit references to their personal life. Chatwin is similar in this sense in that he makes no allusions to his life outside his identity as a travelling writer. This alone does not, however, mean that he is performing a heroic masculinity. Jose, on the other hand, discusses his emotions to his wife on one occasion: “I wish I was not alone. I wish my wife Claire was here.” (BS 227–8.) He feels lonely and misses his wife. Although the reference is brief and he makes no more reference to her, it implies that he is performing new kinds of masculinities, because he discusses his emotions openly.

When confronted with difficulties, male travel writers performing heroic masculinities react differently to those performing new kinds. The former ones would recount their brave and inventive ways of dealing with the issue and might even exaggerate their heroic actions. This is how Jose handles the situation of having a flat tyre alone on a lonely road:

> I’m snapped from my reverie by the tell-tale rumble of a flat tyre. A poor specimen to begin with, it has been ripped apart by heat and gravel, and I can’t find the wheel spanner. A car comes along – the only one I’ve seen on this road – an Aboriginal family heading for Doomadgee who understand the situation at once. Another crazy tourist … Everything’s hot to the touch but in no time at all we have changed the tyre using their tools. They escort me to where I’m camping and I fill up their tank in gratitude. (BS 226)

Jose treats the predicament with mild concern. In Australia, being stranded on a lonely stretch of road without means of getting help can be a serious problem, and a heroic writer would make the most of it to stress his own role in saving himself. He might exaggerate the time it took for another car to come along, for example. Jose, however, writes that he soon gets help. Instead of writing that he does not have a spanner, he writes that he cannot find one, making it possible for the reader to see him as incompetent. He does, at any rate, change the wheel together with his helper. He writes about and expresses his gratitude openly to the family that helps him and rewards them. A heroic writer might use a less strong word for gratitude, which is

why Jose's emotion indicates that he is choosing his behaviour "from a shared menu of attributes" with femininities (Beynon 6).

In a similar situation far from any dwellings, Chatwin and his Aboriginal friends discover that they have a flat tyre:

> Donkey-donk commanded me to get out the jack and change the wheel. The jack was badly bent and, when I applied a few strokes of pressure, it snapped and the axle hit the dirt.
> 'Now you done it,' he leered.
> 'What do we do?' I asked.
> 'Walk,' said Nero, with a titter.
> 'How far?'
> 'Two days, maybe.'
> [. . .]
> 'Lift him! Lift him up, man!' [Donkey-donk ordered.]
> Walker and I gripped the bumper, braced our backs, and tried to lift while Donkey-donk got ready with a log to shove under the differential.
> It was no use.
> [. . .]
> Donkey-donk handed me a digging-stick and ordered me to scoop out a hole beneath the wheel. Half an hour later, the hole was big enough to change the wheel. All three looked on as I worked. I was done in and drenched with sweat. We then rocked the car back and forth, and finally pushed it clear. (S 210)

Chatwin appears slightly more heroic than Jose does above, because he does all the work. He does it, however, at the command of another man, and heroes do not take orders from others. Moreover, he is reprimanded by this man. The bent jack is an alleviating circumstance that suggests it was not entirely Chatwin's fault. He displays anxiety over their ability to return home by asking what can they do next. This is also an acknowledgement that he does not know how to get back and needs the other men's assistance in the landscape. He admits that he was "done in" at the end of the job, whereas a heroic writer might, again, use a less strong expression.

In another difficult situation, Chatwin finds himself unable to climb a mountain, because he gets dehydrated:

> I was lying spreadeagled against the tree-trunk with one leg dangling over the bank, swigging greedily from the water flask. I now knew

> what Rolf meant by dehydration. It was madness to go on up the mountain. I would have to go back the way I'd come. (S 225)

If Chatwin had chosen to perform a more heroic masculinity, he would probably not have recounted this occurrence at all, because heroes do not give up. He has chosen to describe this event to demonstrate the intense heat of central Australia. He is thus depicting the area as exotic and extreme, which suggests a somewhat heroic masculinity, partly counteracting the non-heroic action of giving up. Climbing the mountain despite the heat and dehydration would be 'heroic' indeed, but going to such an extreme climate and attempting to climb a mountain also displays an attempt to be seen as heroic, although a little less so. All in all, this passage demonstrates a masculinity that is somewhere in between patriarchal and new kinds.

In summary, both authors seek to gain knowledge, but unlike Jose, Chatwin appears to consider it an achievement. This means that he is performing patriarchal masculinity in that instance. Jose does not stress the adventurousness of his travels, perform heroic masculinities nor present his journey as exceptional. Chatwin, on the other hand, portrays his journey on one occasion as adventurous and exceptional and on another not. On the former occasion, he also presents himself as heroic. Jose conveys his emotions in regard of a personal relationship in one instance. In short, Jose performs new kinds of masculinities in all cases analysed above, and Chatwin in some of them.

4.2 Chatwin and Jose in nature

This chapter consists of an analysis of Chatwin and Jose's performances of masculinities in the landscape. The purpose of this analysis is to discover whether the authors consider themselves a part of nature or its masters. First, their general attitudes to nature will be discussed with a view of discovering whether they perform as conquerors and whether they consider themselves as central and nature as background. This will be followed by an examination of the features of mutuality

found in the material. Finally, the authors' attitudes to Aboriginal wisdom will be studied.

4.2.1 Performing conqueror masculinity

Conquerors, of course, consider themselves masters. As has been discussed, masters see themselves as the centre, while the landscape forms only a background. This view of nature allows them to instrumentalise nature. In the past, conquerors were considered in some way heroic. A conquering hero performs patriarchal masculinity because he views himself as centre and others as peripheral. Hunting is a form of conquering nature, and this first quote displays a hunting scene where Chatwin feels anything but heroic:

> We held our course to the west and, before long, a kangaroo and young leaped up in front of us. Donkey-donk put his foot on the accelerator and the car thumped and bounced over the tussocks with the kangaroos bounding on ahead, gaining. Then we were out of the spinifex into burnt and open country, and *we* were gaining, and we caught up and hit the mother in the haunches – the young one had veered off sideways – and she flew, in a backward somersault, over the roof of the car and landed – dead, I prayed! – in a cloud of dust and ash. [. . .] then Nero put a shot through her head, and that was that.
> Walker looked disgusted and miserable.
> 'I don't like it,' he said.
> 'Nor do I,' I agreed.
> [. . .]
> We left the kangaroo to the crows and drove back to Cullen.
> 'You want to come hunting tomorrow?' asked Donkey-donk.
> 'No,' I said. (S 209–10)

Chatwin has asked to be taken hunting, having "fooled [himself] into believing that some of this 'beauty' [depicted in Sir George Grey's *Journal*] must survive, even today" (S 205). Significantly, Chatwin is not seeking glory in hunting, but beauty, which is considered a feminine quality. Instead of beauty, however, he finds the hunt disgusting and gratuitous. A conqueror would describe the glories of hunting and his courage and skill in a successful kill. Instead, Chatwin's description of the kill is

anything but glorifying, and Chatwin's part is depicted as only a disgusted observer. He does not appear to have considered the result of hunting: a dead animal's carcass. Now that he is faced with one he feels pity for it and disgust at the act of killing. A conqueror hunter would view the carcass as a trophy and gain a sense of power and victory in the hunt. In conclusion, Chatwin does not seek achievements but enriching experiences by taking part in this hunting party. Regrettably, he does not gain an experience he would care to repeat.

Jose does not describe hunting scenes, but he does portray a very masculine urge to hunt: "When a steer gambols in the rain, throwing hooves high in the air, you can feel the temptation to chase it and wrestle it down in a real-life merry-go-round" (BS 251). This, however, is depicted in a very generalised manner avoiding using the first person singular, which makes it seem more like an idle, passing comment rather than an actual desire to hunt. These are the only references in the books to conquering nature by hunting.

Other ways of performing heroic masculinities in nature include finding one's way through a difficult terrain. Jose does not describe such circumstances, but Chatwin does. In this scene Chatwin is walking in the countryside and comes across some difficult ground to pass through: "The spinifex was thicker than ever. At times I despaired of finding a way through, but always, like Ariadne's thread, there *was* a way through." (S 224.) Despite his success, the episode is not portrayed as a heroic achievement. Nor does he relate a sense of power on navigating his way successfully through. On the contrary, his feelings of despair are recounted. A heroic character might admit thinking he might not find his way, but Chatwin's feelings are more personal.

Both authors are conquering heroes in the sense that they are ultimately successful in their missions: Chatwin discovers and collects material about the Songlines and Aboriginal cultures, and Jose maps the historical and present day relations of the

Aboriginals and white Australians and learns about Roger Jose. In addition, they both write their books and get them published.

Fear is an emotion that is strictly governed by masculine codes. Even today men are, for the most part, expected to control their fear. Chatwin experiences a physical reaction to fear when he encounters a dangerous natural other:

> There was a trickle of water in the stream, and bushes grew along it. I splashed some water over my face, and walked on. I had raised my right leg to take a step forward and heard myself saying, 'I am about to tread on something that looks like a green pine-cone.' What I had not yet seen was the head of the king-brown, about to strike, rearing up behind a bush. I put my legs into reverse and drew back, very slowly . . . one . . . two . . . one . . . two. The snake also withdrew, and slithered off into a hole. I said to myself, 'You're being very calm' – until I felt the waves of nausea. (S 226)

At first, Chatwin is a little surprised by his own calmness in the face of such danger but then admits to feeling nauseous. If the scene and the character had been made to appear heroic, the effect of the fright on the hero might have been described in a more moderate manner: for example, by recounting his quick pulse or his holding his breath. When Chatwin returns to his camp, his friend, Rolf, remarks: "You look quite shattered, mate" (S 226). This, too, points out that Chatwin is not performing a heroic masculinity, because the strain of the events is discernable in his physical appearance. Nor does he consider himself a conqueror of the snake. Quite the reverse: he recognises that the snake is more powerful than him in such a situation. This near encounter also forces Chatwin to see the snake as a respected other. It is not just background, nor is he himself central.

There are no examples in either of the novels of the authors being in their mind the centre of the world. Instead, there are some that exemplify them viewing natural others as not just background and themselves as non-central. The quote describing Chatwin looking at stars demonstrates is one of these. In it, he has a fleeting impression of the human world and culture as synthetic, which gives him a sense of being non-central and thus not a conqueror. Similarly, Jose describes feelings of not being the centre:

> In this Australian fossil landscape of concertinaed time, of belonging and disruption, I can hardly help wondering where I belong. Am I a cosmopolitan of no belonging? I feel like that here, yet I *am* here, my feet on the hot, hard ground, acknowledging that someone else was here before me, as is the case everywhere on earth. (BS 224-5)

His acknowledgement of someone else having been there before him proves that he does not see himself as central. Nor is he a conqueror who does not take others, who may have been there before him, into account. Jose reveals feelings of uncertainty, of not knowing what he is. This is rather personal and together with the non-conquering attitude indicates new kinds of masculinities.

As both authors are just passing through the landscape, intending to write about it, they do not use it for their own benefit. In other words, they do not take an instrumentalising stance towards nature. However, Jose remarks on the instrumentalism of others in this way:

> The country has proved hostile to aesthetic transformation, although after the Wet, flushed emerald with fragrant, fattening grassheads, the wetlands that extend into salt along the Albert River can look like Constable's Suffolk, if you imagine the air temperature dropped by half. (BS 209)

He is commenting on the attempts of settlers to transform the landscape to make it look more European or British. Settlers viewed the landscape as an instrument at their disposal to be used and changed at will, introducing new species of flora and fauna. In another instance, Jose discusses the instrumentalising stance of the zinc mining company CZL:

> The impact assessment statement prepared by CZL included Aboriginal issues only as a supplement to the main report on which decisions about the mine were made. As accountants Andrew Chew and Susan Greer explain, no philosophical consideration was given to the underlying moral relations in the imbalance of power between proponents and opponent of development. The exploitation of land for economic gain depends on its severability. It's a piece of real estate. But for Aboriginal people the land asks to be looked after rather than exploited. The *yang* values in mainstream development accounting suppress the *yin* values of environmental and community nurturing. 'I will not sell that land – it is my blood,' is how one committed opponent of the project summed up her feelings. (BS 248)

The fact that Jose discusses others' instrumentalism demonstrates that he is aware of the issue. That in itself does not necessarily mean that he would not use nature as an instrument, but it does show that he does not take nature for granted and that he questions the human right often assumed by westerners to exploit it. He does not assume that it is there for him to use as he will.

Chatwin and Jose do not perform heroic masculinities in nature. They do not engage in physical activities that occasion them to do heroic deeds, nor do they express more than a passing interest in hunting. Jose does not relate difficult situations, but Chatwin depicts one in which he is successful. They both achieve their missions of finding information and writing books about it, which makes them conquering heroes of sorts. When faced with a frightening situation, Chatwin does not perform a traditionally stoic, heroic masculinity, although he does control his fear reasonably. Neither of the authors considers himself the centre in a backgrounded nature. On the contrary, Chatwin recognises the artificiality of human culture, and Jose acknowledges that others have been here before him. Because they are only passing through, they do not make use of the landscape in an instrumentalising way. Instead, Jose displays respect for Aboriginals' philosophies towards nature and disapproval of western instrumentalism.

4.2.2 A part of nature

To have mutual relations with nature it is necessary to consider the self as part of nature instead of above it as a master. Mutuality, as has been discussed in chapter 3.2, involves first and foremost a respectful attitude to natural others. Other features that facilitate mutuality include care, friendship, benevolence, empathy and love. (Plumwood 155, 160.) In addition, it requires that the human is conceived of as vitally related to and interdependent on nature (Benjamin qtd. in Plumwood 153). This means that humans' dependency on nature is not denied, nor nature's independence of the human. In a mutual relationship, nature is not used as an instrument for human

needs and desires without any consideration for its own needs (Plumwood 142), but is treated with care, respect and an interest in its goals.

Plumwood (164) states that mutuality requires that nature is recognised as independent and sovereign when it exists without human intervention as the wilderness does. This is important because it warrants the wilderness peace to exist in its own way. Most of the landscapes Chatwin and Jose travel in are wilderness. The recognition of nature's independence is related to the recognition of its agency (Plumwood 142). It does not require humans in order to function, and thus it is independent. We, however, are dependent on it. As natural creatures, we are a part of nature, even though we do not always acknowledge this fact. To obtain mutual relations with nature, an acknowledgment of this is required.

Chatwin and Jose regard natural others respectfully on many occasions and are able to find "a balance of transformation" with them (Plumwood 164). In the following example, Jose catches sight of a turtle coming into the water while he is swimming:

> A large turtle with a spiky knobbed head paws towards the verge. Is it a Gulf snapping turtle, *Elseya lavarackorum*, the identical one to the 50,000-year-old fossil found at Riversleigh and thought to be extinct – until they were found swimming here in the gorge at Indarri Falls? As I watch, drops of rain spear the surface, sending out ripples. The drops get heavier and faster. The heat is breaking. Soon tropical rain is pouring into the gorge. I can smell the rain on the sooty earth, smell the carbon. (BS 228)

Jose observes the natural other respectfully, as another being who is at home here. He recognises that he himself is a mere visitor and, as such, not the transformer but the transformed, at least psychologically. He is perhaps able to see himself through the other's eyes, as a living, natural being among others. Jose recognises the independence and sovereignty of the wilderness and its beings here. All this signifies a mutual relationship with nature and also new kinds of masculinities, because the latter includes a respectful attitude towards the other, a willingness to take the other into account, an understanding that to the other the self is other and that the other is

another centre unto itself. All these attitudes are present in Jose's behaviour and reaction to the turtle.

They are also present in Chatwin's performance which also indicates new kinds of masculinities. Like Jose, he is able to regard himself as the visitor and the other as having more claim than him to the surrounding landscape:

> The butcher birds were silent. Sweat poured over my eyelids so that everything seemed blurred and out of scale. I heard the clatter of loose stones along the bank, and looked up to see a monster approaching.
> It was a giant lace-monitor, the lord of the mountain, Perenty himself. He must have been seven feet long. His skin was pale ochre, with darker brown markings. He licked the air with his lilac tongue. I froze. He clawed his way forward: there was no way of telling if he'd seen me. The claws passed within two inches of my boot. Then he turned full-circle and, with a sudden burst of speed, shot off the way he'd come. (S 225)

Chatwin recognises that the wilderness and the lace-monitor in it are independent and sovereign. He gives the other space and acknowledges his own status as a visitor. This encounter also demonstrates that Chatwin recognises the other's power to transform him. This is evident in his uneasiness at the situation. He is "bend[ing himself . . .] to the other's ways," as Plumwood (164) claims visitors to the wilderness should do. This points to mutuality. In addition to this, Chatwin is performing new kinds of masculinities, because he admits, even if indirectly, to feeling somewhat frightened. He does, however, offer as explanation of his fear the fact that his eyesight was momentarily blurred and out of scale, which made the creature seem more like a monster than it was.

Mutuality also requires that differences as well as similarities between us and natural others are recognised (Plumwood 164). In the snake incident quoted earlier, Chatwin and the king-brown encounter each other as different but at the same time similar creatures that have the power to transform each other. Chatwin acts respectfully, knowing the snake has the advantage, and that he as the human is only a visitor. He appears to understand that the snake views him as an other the same way he does. He

clearly achieves a mutual stance towards the natural other. Since patriarchal masculinity does not involve a recognition of the other as another centre unto itself, Chatwin is here performing new kinds of masculinities.

Jose has a brief encounter with a somewhat larger natural other, although they do not come as close to each other as Chatwin does with the lace-monitor or the snake. He comes across a bull standing in the road while driving a car: "The bull blocks me with his ancient dignity then, nostrils flaring, the great Brahma moves delicately out of the way" (BS 252). Because Jose is sitting in a car, there is no sense of danger in the situation, as there was in Chatwin's case above. Jose recognises the bull as another being who is central to himself. He regards it as an other worthy of respect. He understands that he is the visitor here and respects the other's sovereignty. He also recognises the similarities and differences between himself and the animal and sees the bull as more than just background. In short, his attitude denotes mutuality. This respect implies that he is performing new kinds of masculinities.

Chatwin too performs new masculinities when contemplating the connection between himself and some birds. He does not meet the animals but listens to them.

> A short way off, two male butcher birds, black and white like magpies, were calling antiphonally across a ravine. One bird would lift his beak vertically and let out three long whooping notes, followed by three ascending shorts. The rival would then pick up the refrain, and repeat it.
> 'Simple as that,' I said to myself. 'Exchanging notes across a frontier.' (S 224)

He observes a similarity between humans and the birds in their way of communicating with each other across long distances and in their need to contact others of their kind. He does not consider the birds a mere background with himself in the centre, but recognises that the human and natural others are not opposite ends of a spectrum without overlaps.

Backgrounding involves a denial of dependency on nature, which prohibits a mutual relationship to it. Neither Chatwin nor Jose considers nature a mere background to

their achievements in the narratives (as shown in 4.2.1), but their attitudes to human dependency on nature are as yet unexamined. The next example from Jose again points to the opposite of backgrounding and sheds light on his understanding of his dependency on the landscape:

> I look at the scorched hillsides. Fire, clearing out the grass and exposing fresh rock, is a boon to fossil researchers, who will be here on another expedition as soon as the Wet is over – and to vandals who have removed many fossils from this unguarded place. The only thing standing on the hills now are the termite mounds, grey, slender, two metres high, as if wrapped in fireproof cloaks. I think of Jacob Epstein's sculpture of Lazarus rising, miraculously alive in his winding-sheet after having been dead. I think of television images of refugees trekking across the desert slopes of Afghanistan, their robes blown round them head to toe. I think, viewing these unruined termite towers with a new sombreness, of the Twin Towers of New York, turned to smoke and rubble before our eyes. (BS 223-4)

Nature appears here as an organism in its own right, existing for itself and not for human use. Jose sees nature as powerful in its persistent survival: fire, as well as being destructive, is a renewing force in nature which termites have learned to resist in their building. He compares the power of nature to fragile human cultures. This recognition of nature's survival in the face of disasters while cultures rise and fall is an acknowledgement of human dependency on and relationship to nature, because it includes an acknowledgement of nature's independence of the human. In other words, nature is recognised as an organism that will continue with or without humans. Dependency on others, be they human or natural, is not acknowledged in patriarchal masculinity and, therefore, this performance is one of new kinds of masculinities.

Chatwin also recognises that humans are dependent on nature. In listing some things that natural others can teach us, he demonstrates a respectful attitude to the landscape:

> *Democritus (fr. 154) said it was absurd for men to vaunt their superiority over the animals when, in matters of great importance, it was they who were our teachers: the spider for weaving and mending; the swallow for architecture; the swan and the nightingale for singing.*
> *To which one could go on adding indefinitely: the bat for radar, the dolphin for sonar and, as Ib'n Khaldûn said, horns for the lance.* (S 260, original italics)

Nature is not backgrounded here, but rather brought to the foreground as a great teacher. Our dependency on and relationship to it are thus recognised. Notably, all the things Chatwin adds to the list of things to learn from nature are things of science and warfare, which patriarchal cultures have considered the province of males. The recognition of human dependency on and relationship to nature signifies respect for it, which points to new kinds of masculinities.

An acknowledgement of human dependency on nature is something that can be read between the lines in both Jose and Chatwin, although it is not discussed explicitly. In the passage where Chatwin's stargazing is described, he speaks of nature as home. It is a romantic sentiment but, at the same time displays a recognition of our dependency on it. Since Chatwin's whole narrative can be considered an argument for humans to 'return' to nature and nomadism, it can be seen as a declaration of this dependency.

The master point of view sees nature as homogeneous, thus ignoring its diversity and not really seeing or noticing it at all (Plumwood 70). This, of course, demonstrates a lack of respect but also facilitates seeing nature as a mere resource without any intrinsic value (Plumwood 54). In the examples above where Chatwin and Jose write of meeting natural others, they treat them as individuals, not just as representatives of a larger group. Mutual relations are possible when nature is not considered homogeneous but, instead, is recognised as diverse. Jose recognises the diversity of the Australian outback: "The land and water here are as pristine as anything on earth, virtually unchanged since the *Beagle*'s brief visit over 150 years ago or any time before that. It teems with life and diversity." (BS 212.) Jose does not write of any particular species or part of nature, but refers to the diversity of nature as a whole. In contrast, Chatwin recounts the diversity of fish off the coast of the Timor Sea through the words of a friend, Father Terence:

> The fish here, he said, were so tame you could float through a shoal and touch them. He knew all their colours and all their names: the rays, wrasses, wobbegongs, the baronessa butterfly, surgeon fish, scorpion fish, rabbit fish, angel fish. Each one was a 'character' with its own individual mannerisms: they reminded him of the faces in a Dublin crowd. (S 67)

Father Terence sees individual characteristics in the fish, although only in different species. Although the quote does not portray Chatwin's attitude to the fish, it is obvious that he respects the old man's knowledge. Jose and Chatwin do not regard nature as existing simply for their needs or as valuable only when they are useful to them. Their recognition of nature's intrinsic value suggests new kinds of masculinities.

The awareness of nature's rhythms and the recognition that these have an effect on the self also express a respect for and acknowledgement of nature's powers to transform us. Again, this indicates a performance of new masculinities. In the following, Chatwin recounts his childhood days when he suffered from asthma:

> I loved watching swallows. When they arrived in spring, I knew my lungs would soon be free of green phlegm. In autumn, when they sat chattering on the telegraph wires, I could almost count the days until the eucalyptus inhaler. (S 9)

Chatwin recognises that nature and its cycles have had an effect on his life from early on. Although the arrival and departure of swallows did not transform his life as such, to him they were a sign of a change to come. As Jose does not describe his travels or his personal life while travelling in any length, there are no examples of adjusting to the rhythms of nature in his narrative.

Chatwin does not write about the mind as being more bodily and the body as being more mindlike than they are usually considered in the west. Jose, however, points out the interconnectedness of the two in this way:

> Spiritual pride plays a mean game of exclusion. It can dismiss language, with which the world might be understood, as the agent of a con job. But the life of language lies precisely in its questioning, its rubbing against the world and the flesh where dirt and bodily fluids stick. (BS 188)

Language here is taken to represent the mind and culture, whereas flesh, dirt and bodily fluids are obviously part of the physical world and are hence connected to nature. Jose does not consider nature and culture and mind and body as dualisms, but as interconnected and interdependent parts of a whole. This is a step towards a

conception of the body as mindlike and the mind as embodied. This understanding that culture and mind and body and nature are all needed equally means that Jose's performance again consists of new masculinities.

Plumwood (137) maintains that the ability to see intentionality or other mind-like qualities in nature is a significant part of mutuality. She claims that when humans are able to recognise intentionality in nature they are open "to possibilities and exchanges" that do not all originate with humans (137). Chatwin does not attribute intentionality to nature at all in his narrative, whereas Jose does occasionally. Here Jose describes a bush fire: "The fire is a walking fire, burning slowly enough to walk beside, a fire that cleans up and renews the land" (BS 31). Jose recognises nature's intentionality in its ability to replenish itself through fire. This renewal signifies goal-directedness. He accepts it as an agent that is active as an intentional subject, and this points to new kinds of masculinities.

Acknowledging intentionality in nature demonstrates a profound understanding of it as a living organism with goals and needs. It also indicates a considerable respect for it, and this points to a performance of new kinds of masculinities, as does the following passage in which Jose sees intentionality in termites: "After weeks of rainless Dry the dead grass is burning close to the road. All around the trees are blackened. In some spots new sprouts are already uncurling. The termite mounds, ash-grey here and about a metre in height, withstand fire as well as flood." (BS 29–30.) He recognises that termites are able to build their mounds to endure fire and flood in order to ensure their own survival. This kind of intentionality, again, demonstrates goal-directedness and agency. The new growth further demonstrates nature's ability to renew itself.

Seeing continuity between self and nature is to acknowledge that humans are a part of nature. Many attributes humans share with nature are obvious: for example, both need nourishment, light and rest. Yet it is easy for westerners to forget how similar we are

to nature and for this reason, recognising continuity may be a powerful experience, as it is here for Jose:

> I look to distinguish art from the colours and patterns formed by water leaching through rock, making the same sort of chemical transformations that form fossils. Lowering myself into a shaded lagoon where water churns over a spongy red tufa wall and fish swarm, I bathe up to my neck, gazing at the blue lilies that float on the surface at the other end of the pond. I wish I was not alone. I wish my wife Claire was here. She's a curator. She's away in China, researching a certain brush-and-ink painter at the Fine Arts Academy in Hangzhou. I wish Bob could be here again from New York to enjoy this part. (BS 227–8)

Jose appears to have a sense of being a part of the surrounding nature. He observes the lilies in the pond with him as other beings that are as valuable as he is, which demonstrates that he does not regard himself as centre or the flowers as background. That the beauty of the surrounding landscape causes him to feel humble is made clear by his wish that his wife or friend were with him to share this magnificent moment.

Chatwin also experiences humility at the sheer beauty of the landscape, but unlike Jose, he has Arkady to share the moment with him:

> I went outside. 'Ark,' I called, 'you must come out.'
> A pair of rainbows hung across the valley between the two mountains. The cliffs of the escarpment, which had been a dry red, were now purplish-black and striped, like a zebra, with vertical chutes of white water. The cloud seemed even denser than the earth, and, beneath its lower rim, the last of the sun broke through, flooding the spinifex with shafts of pale green light.
> 'I know,' said Arkady. 'Like nowhere else in the world.' (S 158–9)

The effect of the scenery on Chatwin is emphasised by his action of calling his friend over to see it. Similarly, its beauty is substantiated in Arkady's last line: 'like nowhere else in the world'. Both Chatwin and Jose in the quotes above experience humility at the surrounding beauty, not at the power of nature. A powerful or sublime landscape is vast and overwhelming in its potency. Beauty, in contrast, is small, soft and delicate (Garrard 64), and therefore, considered feminine in traditional patriarchy. Just like the sublime, beauty is accessible to both genders, but more than the sublime, it signifies something about men who share their experience of beauty with others as Chatwin

and Jose do with their readers. Women's experiences and descriptions of beauty would be commonplace but men's are a little more special, because western patriarchal stereotypes of men dictate that they do not notice beauty as easily as women and that it is less important to them. This together with the authors' appreciation of the natural others they observe as valuable, respected others indicates that they are performing new kinds of masculinities.

Experiencing humility in the face of superior forces is similar to experiencing the sublime because both involve a perception of the relations of power between nature and the human. Chatwin does not depict experiences such humility on his travels, but it is represented in *Black Sheep*. After describing the burned scenery, Jose discusses fire's devastating power and the vast areas it can consume:

> The fire came late in the season when there was an excess of flammable material. It burned through neighbouring pastoral country at hotter than usual temperatures – no benign walking fire this one – and entered the national park, destroying trees that were set to become large old specimens. Kangaroos and turkeys could jump the fire line – the turkeys were the first back in – but smaller wildlife suffered, especially the nestlings. There was no vigilance, says the ranger. The fire allegedly started with sparks from a miner's drill. No one was ready for how quickly it spread. Each time the drivers went down into the mine's open-cut for a load and came up again, the fire had leaped to the next ridge. Six weeks later it was still burning, more than 250 million hectares, way over to the Northern Territory border, with no one acknowledging liability. (BS 226–7)

The terrifying potency of fire, the distance it can spread and human helplessness to stop it leave Jose in awe. Such power demands respect and fear, and Jose feels dwarfed by it. The fire's force and the feelings it arouses in Jose do not allow for a view of it as background. On the contrary, it forces humans to accept it as a revered other. Jose thus proves again his mutual relationship with nature. As the word 'humility' implies, experiences of humility in the face of superior forces denotes an acceptance of the powerlessness of the self. This is a significant difference to experiencing the sublime which involves recognition of the power of nature but which does not acknowledge the lack of it in the self as explicitly. Jose's feeling of humility indicates that he is performing new kinds of masculinities.

To return to the subject of continuity, an overpowering sense of it can alter our perspectives on life, at least temporarily. In the following passage, Jose gazes at a landscape and begins to question his identity and belonging:

> In this Australian fossil landscape of concertinaed time, of belonging and disruption, I can hardly help wondering where I belong. Am I a cosmopolitan of no belonging? I feel like that here, yet I *am* here, my feet on the hot, hard ground, acknowledging that someone else was here before me, as is the case everywhere on earth. (BS 224-5, original emphasis)

He feels connected to time and the earth and acknowledges that he does belong simply because he is here, in this landscape. His feet make physical contact with the earth, and he decides that this is all the reason he needs to acknowledge connection. In addition, he recognises the fact that others have been here before him. This connects him also to them. He clearly feels a part of nature. His acknowledgement of others shows that he does not feel he is central and indicates new kinds of masculinities. This sense of continuity causes him to feel small, just as the experience of a sublime landscape did. There is, however, a slight difference in the way these cause a feeling of smallness. In the case of the sublime, being dwarfed is a pleasant experience but at the same time, may leave a feeling of insignificance. This is not necessary a bad thing; it can be a healthy reminder of how we fit into the world. Continuity, on the other hand, is often a more pleasant feeling because we feel a part of something and this causes a sense of security.

Jose also feels secure in being a part of the world. This is evident in the next quote where he describes his view of the whole picture. He talks about a road that is honoured by its name Savannah Way and by being recommended to tourists coming to Borroloola:

> Not all the old pathways are so honoured. There is another pattern of tracks that looks more like the broken map of lines on a hand. It has the living, breathing rhythm of land and water, connecting memory and history with the present world, with a seasonal sense of change and continuity, moving out from the mainland, along the shores of river and Gulf, and out across the islands. It involves working and wandering, ‘sitting down’, as Aboriginal people say, and letting the mind roam. By seasonal I don’t only mean summer and winter, the

> Wet and the Dry, but also the larger weather of time, of generations, of changing perspectives and attitudes. (BS 10)

He refers to the rhythm of nature, which he recognises as living and breathing. This indicates that he does not see it as a mere instrument but as something that must be respected and cared for and whose goals and interests should be taken into account. He also mentions continuity, which he sees as connecting everything to everything else in space and time, including humans. This notion mirrors his experience in the passage above.

In conclusion, Chatwin and Jose understand that, when they travel in the wilderness, they are visitors and the transformed. They realise that the wilderness and its creatures are independent and that nature exists for itself, not for humans. They are able to see the similarities as well as differences between themselves and nature. Jose sees the diversity of nature, and Chatwin demonstrates his willingness to learn about it. They both accept that they are dependent on nature. Chatwin relates the way nature's rhythms have affected his life, but no such references were found in Jose. Jose demonstrates his ability to reconceptualise nature as more mindlike and mind as more embodied, but Chatwin does not discuss this. Chatwin does not discuss nature's intentionality, but Jose recognises it in, for example, fire's ability to renew nature. Both authors describe experiencing beauty in and continuity with nature but only Jose experiences humility in the face of superior forces.

These attitudes to nature demonstrate that the authors have a mutual relationship with it. What is more, they see continuity between themselves and nature and thus recognise themselves as part of it. They both perform new kinds of masculinities in all instances. This is evident in their respectful treatment of natural others which they did not see as background.

4.2.3 Attitudes towards the lore of Aboriginal cultures

Tallmadge (24) claims that attitudes to the wisdom of tribal cultures as well as to nature and women need to be reconstructed in order to develop more ecological masculinities. As has been explained earlier, this study does not deal with Chatwin and Jose's attitudes to women, but focuses on the other two. The previous section examined the authors' relationship with the natural world, and this one will concentrate on whether they appreciate or reject Aboriginal cultures and their beliefs.

Jose's respect for the Aboriginals is, first of all, evident in his habit of referring to them as 'Aboriginal *people*' at all times, instead of just as 'the Aboriginals'. This is a small but noteworthy difference, because it underlines his recognition of the fact that there are many Aboriginal peoples with different languages and cultures. Chatwin also demonstrates his knowledge of this by writing about an Aboriginal man's discussion on the subject:

> 'What the fuckers don't understand,' drawled Titus, 'is there is no such person as an Aboriginal or an Aborigine. There are Tjakamarras and Jaburullas and Duburungas like me, and so on all over the country.' (S 288)

Unlike Jose, Chatwin does not write about 'Aboriginal people', just 'Aboriginals' but he has as much respect for them as Jose, nevertheless.

Chatwin idealises the Aboriginals' way of life in earlier eras as well as the life of some nomadic peoples of today. This is evident in the whole of *The Songlines* which examines his theory about human restlessness and nomadism. Jose focuses on the modern day lives of Aboriginals and sees them as ecological but does not idealise them. The following passage illustrates Chatwin's interest and admiration for Aboriginal lore through presenting them as Arkady's:

> It was during his time as a school-teacher that Arkady learned of the labyrinth of invisible pathways which meander all over Australia and are known to Europeans as 'Dreaming-tracks' or 'Songlines'; to the Aboriginals as the 'Footprints of the Ancestors' or the 'Way of the Law'.

> Aboriginal Creation myths tell of the legendary totemic beings who had wandered over the continent in the Dreamtime, singing out the name of everything that crossed their path – birds, animals, plants, rocks, waterholes – and so singing the world into existence.
> Arkady was so struck by the beauty of this concept that he began to take notes of everything he saw or heard, not for publication, but to satisfy his own curiosity. (S 2)

Arkady's interests mirror those of Chatwin who collected information and wrote about nomads. The romanticising way Chatwin writes about Aboriginal traditions reveals that he idealises them.

Diamond (9–10) states that assumptions of "Eden-like environmentalism" of the peoples of the past are simplistic and incorrect and that their problems were not that dissimilar to ours. Reflecting this, Chatwin also takes a more practical view of Aboriginal reality. Again, he writes about Arkady: "No one knew better that the 'idyllic' days of hunting and gathering were over – if, indeed, they were ever that idyllic" (S 3). This demonstrates his understanding that people everywhere face problems in their everyday lives. Idealisation also means that its objects are seen as essentially different to modern westerners (Diamond 9), as others. The fact that they are seen in a good light makes no difference; they are nevertheless not seen as they are or were and thus their reality is denied. In idealising Aboriginals, Chatwin hides from himself their true lives.

Jose displays his respect for Aboriginals in his reference to their ways when in the previous section he discusses the pattern of tracks that "involves working and wandering, 'sitting down', as Aboriginal people say, and letting the mind roam" (BS 10). Aboriginals who form the majority of the local population probably made these tracks. They illustrate their way of life, their 'working and wandering'. Jose demonstrates a respectful and admiring attitude to these ways which he here depicts as less hurried, frantic and restless as white Australians' and westerners' ways.

When reflecting on white Australian and Aboriginal land politics, Jose does not reject the latter's views but appears inclined to agree with them:

> The exploitation of land for economic gain depends on its severability. It's a piece of real estate. But for Aboriginal people the land asks to be looked after rather than exploited. The *yang* values in mainstream development accounting suppress the *yin* values of environmental and community nurturing. 'I will not sell that land – it is my blood,' is how one commited opponent of the project summed up her feelings. (BS 248)

This demonstrates Jose's respectful attitude towards the Aboriginals. He is recounting their non-instrumentalising attitude to the land in a way that pays tribute to their wisdom. In addition, in contemplating the differences between western and Aboriginal views on the landscape, he applies Chinese philosophy, which also reveals an appreciation of other cultures.

Chatwin's interest in the Aboriginal cultures and beliefs, which form part of his theme, is proof in itself of his respect for them. It demonstrates that he resists western patriarchal culture. He values many of the Aboriginal ways of life over those of his own culture. The following example demonstrates Chatwin learning about Aboriginal wisdom:

> The Aboriginals had an earthbound philosophy. The earth gave life to a man; gave him his food, language and intelligence; and the earth took him back when he died. A man's 'own country', even an empty stretch of spinifex, was itself a sacred ikon that must remain unscarred.
> 'Unscarred, you mean, by roads or mines or railways?'
> 'To wound the earth,' [Arkady] answered earnestly, 'is to wound yourself, and if others wound the earth, they are wounding you. The land should be left untouched: as it was in the Dreamtime when the Ancestors sang the world into existence.'
> [. . .]
> The Aboriginals, he went on, were a people who trod lightly over the earth; and the less they took from the earth, the less they had to give in return. (S 11)

Although this passage does not demonstrate that Chatwin accepts these Aboriginal views, it does show his open-mindedness towards them. His appreciation for Aboriginal wisdom is apparent also from the fact that some of his own beliefs mirror those of the Aboriginals he describes. For example, he appears to believe in owning as

few possessions as possible. His pointing out that the Aboriginals "trod lightly over the earth" is a reference to their non-instrumental and therefore non-patriarchal stance.

Chatwin's willingness to accept Aboriginal philosophy is evident. The next passage, in which he discusses the Aboriginal songs of myth, illustrates his admiration of it:

> Yet even a superficial reader can get a glimpse of a moral universe – as moral as the New Testament – in which the structures of kinship reach out to all living men, to all his fellow creatures, and to the rivers, the rocks and the trees. (S 70)

He is here comparing Aboriginal myths to the New Testament and declaring that they are equally moral. In fact, he points out that Aboriginal myths include more of life on earth than does the New Testament, because they embrace everything in nature. In other words, Aboriginals exist in a mutual relationship with nature, and Chatwin appears to admire them for it, and learns from them. Another instance where he learns from Aboriginal wisdom is when Chatwin and Arkady are discussing the Aboriginal concept of Dreaming or, as Arkady explains, totem:

> Every Wallaby Man believed he was descended from a universal Wallaby Father, who was the ancestor of all other Wallaby Men and of all living wallabies. Wallabies, therefore, were his brothers. To kill one for food was both fratricide and cannibalism. (S 12)

He learns about the Aboriginals' way of conceiving continuity between humans and nature. Although he cannot adopt this philosophy as such, he can learn new ways of seeing the continuity between himself and nature through it.

As Jose recounts his personal experiences while travelling less than Chatwin does, examples of his learning from Aboriginal wisdom are somewhat vague. In the following, however, he comments on the way local white Australians in the Borroloola region have learned from Aboriginals about travelling in the landscape:

> To the west the telegraph line followed the route from south to north that John McDouall Stuart had forged in 1860, straight as a rule on a map. But the land tracks and water routes that link Borroloola with other camps and stations across the region follow Aboriginal contours to this day. (BS 9)

Jose points out the different conceptions of rationality in the cultures of the Aboriginals and white Australians or westerners. The route made by McDouall Stuart was constructed to follow western ideals of efficiency, whereas the Aboriginal routes are built taking into account the practical, everyday needs of people travelling from place to place. The latter take the contours of the landscape better into account as well as the people who use them. Jose points out that Aboriginal rationality in establishing routes actually seems more logical, because by following these tracks, travellers can take care of their physical needs and are, thus, more likely to survive in the desert.

There are no examples in either of the narratives of the authors being critical, disparaging or unsympathetic towards the wisdom of Aboriginal cultures. Both Chatwin and Jose demonstrate nothing but respect for them. They respect them for their non-instrumental stance and for living in a mutual relationship with nature. Chatwin also expresses his admiration for Aboriginal myths. He idealises past Aboriginal ways of life, whereas Jose regards them as simply ecological. This idealisation causes Chatwin to see the Aboriginals not as they really are but as others whose reality he denies. Chatwin also learns about mutuality and continuity from Aboriginal wisdom. Jose defends Aboriginal reason as logical in that its priorities lay with humans and nature, instead of efficiency.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has sought to establish that in their travel narratives set in the Australian outback, Chatwin and Jose perform new kinds of masculinities and have a mutual relationship with the landscape. In addition, it has aimed to examine the authors attitudes towards the lore of Aboriginal cultures which hold more ecological philosophies than western culture does. The purpose of this was to provide further evidence of their ecological attitudes. My hypothesis was that the authors are on a quest for new kinds of masculinities that allow them to form a more respectful and mutual relationship with nature than patriarchal masculinity does and to see themselves as part of it.

The findings clearly demonstrate that Chatwin and Jose do perform new kinds of masculinities which involve a respect for the other and which take the other into account. They respect the environment and have mutual relations with it, as far as they can while only travelling through. They recognise that there is continuity between them and nature, which proves that they view themselves as part of it. Their attitudes to Aboriginal cultures are respectful, particularly for their non-instrumental stance towards and mutual relations with nature. They show a willingness to learn about ecological approaches from these cultures.

Jose does not perform patriarchal masculinity in his narrative at all, and Chatwin provides only one example where he clearly performs it. In another instance, his performance is ambiguous. In most cases, however, Chatwin too performs new kinds of masculinities. In their attitudes to nature, neither of them performs patriarchal masculinities, because they both display only respectful attitudes. They do not consider themselves conquerors of nature or behave like ones. The landscape is more to them than just a background for their actions. Nor do they see themselves as the centre. They do not make use of nature as a mere instrument that exists only for their purposes. This is partially due to their travelling through the landscape, which means that they have no opportunity to engage in activities that could be construed as instrumentalising.

Instead of viewing the wilderness as background, they recognise it as an independent organism that has the power to transform them. They acknowledge their dependency on nature and their relationship to it. This further confirms their mutual relationship with it. In addition, there are moments in the narratives when they have a deep sense of connection with the landscape. In other words, they view themselves as part of nature.

The analysis of the authors' attitudes to the landscape relied strongly on Val Plumwood's criticism of the western stance towards nature and her theory for the construction of a more ecological approach. Her concepts of the master model, otherness, human and male centrality, instrumentalism, backgrounding, mutuality and continuity provided the setting for the analysis of masculinities in relation to the landscape.

John Tallmadge's analysis of male nature writers, whom he called Deerslayers with degrees, supplied the starting point for the thesis. His approach was modified to suit my material which consisted of male travel writers whose subject is not nature although they travel in it. He claims that a reconstruction of attitudes towards the knowledge systems of indigenous cultures is necessary for the forming of more ecological attitudes (24). Chatwin and Jose's attitudes to the lore of Aboriginal cultures were consequently examined to recover further proof of their mutuality with nature.

Plumwood's concept of the master model was read in reverse to provide a model for patriarchal masculinity. It was established that this somewhat rigid type of male behaviour does not support a respectful approach to the other, be they women, members of other races and classes or nature. Instead, men performing patriarchal masculinity consider themselves the centre and others peripheral. It is worth mentioning that the date of Plumwood's study (1993) inevitably means that much of the discussion of masculinity that has come after that date is unrepresented.

Patriarchal masculinity was contrasted with new kinds of masculinities. The basis for these was supplied by Stephen M. Whitehead's theory which describes them as resistant to the patriarchal model. They were demonstrated to include a more respectful attitude to the other which allows for a view of the self and the other as continuous. In addition, they include some characteristics that in patriarchy have been seen as feminine. Men performing these negotiate, reflect on and consider their performances (Whitehead 220) and are sensitive to the influence their masculinities have on others. Because of these differences in attitudes towards the other, men performing new kinds of masculinities are in a better position to build respectful and mutual relationships with nature than patriarchal men.

The two narratives under examination offer contrasting perspectives of travel writing. Jose does not provide much information about the practical side of his travels in *Black Sheep*. He does not, for example, describe situations where he gets hot or lost. Chatwin, on the other hand, offers such descriptions. Jose does, however, describe some very personal emotions on occasion, whereas Chatwin refrains from this apart from one or two descriptions of anger or joy. All in all, the books are so differently arranged and narrated that the results were often very different too.

Masculinities and their connection to attitudes to nature are a significant area of research for the forming of more ecological masculinities. Further research into other literary genres would provide important additional knowledge about these attitudes. This line of study could also be taken in another direction by studying travel narratives by men written at a time when patriarchal masculinity was the norm, for example, the colonial period, and comparing them to modern masculinities in travel narratives.

New kinds of masculinities are exploring new ways of relating to the other, both human and natural. They offer vital examples of respectful attitudes and behaviour towards others. As the world comes closer to our doorsteps through the media, globalisation and easier travel, respectful attitudes to the other become increasingly

important. Not least so in the case of nature which is becoming more and more distant to many modern city dwellers, both in practice and in the way we think of it.

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