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# 外国文学研究



# 美国后垮掉派诗

张子清

**摘要:** 1997 年金斯堡的去世,标志着曾经轰轰烈烈的垮掉派文学时代的结束和后垮掉派时代的到来。正是现在后垮掉派的崭露头角使垮掉派成为“经典”。本文介绍后垮掉派的由来、特点和走向。

**关键词:** 后垮掉 新垮掉 波希米亚 反文学 诗歌竞赛

众所周知,20 世纪 50 年代,在旧金山著名诗人雷克斯罗思的促进下,金斯堡、斯奈德、凯鲁亚克、麦克卢尔、惠伦、巴勒斯、科尔索、奥洛夫斯基等一批垮掉派诗人脱颖而出,逐渐从边缘的先锋派诗人地位跨进美国主流诗坛。其中金斯堡成了拥有全世界读者最多的美国诗人,尽管他无缘戴上美国桂冠诗人的桂冠或获诺贝尔文学奖。30 年之后的 80 年代早期,一批成熟的诗人开始用“后垮掉”(Post-Beat)和“新垮掉”(Neo-Beat)一词来描述他们的艺术风格,因为他们认识到,他们的作品对新生活方式的追求和在精神、抗议社会的不平、个人经历的表述及语言和混合媒体艺术的探索等方面均源出于垮掉派诗人。“后垮掉”一词直接表达在诗里的最早见于史蒂夫·达拉钦斯基(Steve Dalachinsky, 1940—)创作于 1980 年、发表于 1985 年的《后垮掉派诗人》一诗里。诗的开头是:

我们是后垮掉派诗人,我们是电视的一代  
我们是吸毒、性爱和衰渎的真正的感受者  
我们是战后试验的事后思考者  
我们是骚动和变化中的国家的后果  
我们是被糟蹋了的适应性强的和被歧视的  
最后超过三十岁的一伙<sup>①</sup>  
我们是原子弹受诅咒的对象和登陆艇母舰的堕落者  
我们使大麻成了家喻户晓的一个词,遭到我们的父母反对  
我们试图澄清摆在我们前面的一切知识

如果说诗的开头用反讽的手法强调后垮掉派诗人的玩世不恭和反战情绪,那么诗的结尾则点明了他们的生活态度:

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<sup>①</sup> 20 世纪 60 年代的美国有一个口号:“别信任超过 30 岁的人。”弗雷泽认为,影响美国文化变化的的确是年轻人,所以那时年轻人处处显得“天下舍我其谁”的英雄气概,但具有讽刺意味的是,时间不饶人,提出这个口号的人如今已经 50 岁了,当时接受这个口号、欢呼青年运动的后垮掉派诗人(包括弗雷泽本人在内)大都也已经过半百了。当年年轻的一代而今却是年老的一代。



我们是后垮掉派诗人

在对我们最近的传统更加置信不疑和自豪时

发现懒洋洋躺在彩色电视机旁地毯上蜜色猫冷漠的绿眼睛

我们,嬉皮士,不分阶级

非常原始的 20 世纪

非常的信息灵通

我们都有我们的特性

我们的意识

我们个人的风格

我们的信仰

经常改变而又总是一样

我们都有我们的时代,我们的时代来临了

达拉钦斯基这种不断罗列事物的艺术手法并不新鲜(早在 19 世纪惠特曼就大量使用过,垮掉派金斯堡使用得也很娴熟而突出),不能典型地代表后垮掉派的艺术特色,但是,他的贡献在于他首次在诗中鲜明地宣告后垮掉派的存在和他们的生活哲学。同时,他也透露了后垮掉派诗人有一个安定的生活环境,否则他们不可能有养猫的闲情逸致,让猫懒洋洋地躺在电视机旁的地毯上。垮掉派诗人以前过的是波希米亚式的生活,那时生活费用低,房租和食物便宜,他们到处可以流动而放荡不羁,可是到了 20 世纪 70 年代,美国经济下滑,使波希米亚式的生活失去了经济基础,因此多数后垮掉派诗人不得不找稳定的工作,例如找大学教授、编辑、社会福利工作者、牧师等使生活有保障的职业。

弗农·弗雷泽说,他在通信和谈话时使用“后垮掉”这个词来描述他的诗歌和小说的根。其他的一些作家则喜欢在杂志和电子出版物上使用“新垮掉”这个词来彰显他们的写作风格。他认为,“新垮掉”这个词不太准确,这意味着这些作家是在有意识地和垮掉派竞赛,并想超过前一个时代的垮掉派文学风格。实际上不然,后垮掉派作家其实是在新时代沿用和扩展了原来垮掉派作家的风格。垮掉派使用诗行铺满稿面的手法,后垮掉派的一些诗人也在使用。五六十年代垮掉派诗人,例如肯尼思·雷克斯罗思、劳伦斯·费尔林盖蒂、杰克·凯鲁亚克、肯尼思·帕钦等爱用爵士乐伴奏他们的诗歌朗诵,几乎大多数后垮掉派诗人也都喜爱用乐队或音乐伴奏朗诵,例如,弗农·弗雷泽在乐队的伴奏下,既朗诵又拉低音大提琴;珍妮娜·维加(Janine Pommy Vega, 1942— )与管弦乐队一起演出;米克海尔·霍罗威茨(Mikhail Horowitz, 1950— )用爵士乐、滑稽说笑与他的朗诵结合在一起,艺术效果极佳;巴里·沃伦斯坦(Barry Wallenstein, 1940— )、劳伦斯·卡拉迪尼(Lawrence Carradini, 1953— )、史蒂夫·达拉钦斯基等诗人在前卫爵士乐伴奏的朗诵都生动活泼,吸引观众。他们扩展了音乐伴奏朗诵的传统。弗雷泽认为这样的朗诵,能使伴奏者帮助传达诗的情绪和意义。这和垮掉派诗人用博普爵士乐伴奏朗诵有所不同。金斯堡和巴勒斯后来才用先锋派作曲家和爵士乐演奏者为他们的朗诵伴奏。弗雷泽坚信,是后垮掉派时代的录音制片公司为了商业目的而发起了诗人与演奏者合作的艺术。

另一方面,后垮掉派诗人试图挖掘语言表现的潜力。埃德温·托里斯(Edwin Torres, 1958— )在纽约东村另类文化的熏陶下,在探索英语表达方式的可能性上狠下工夫,其风

格接近语言诗,他的朗诵很难使听众很快得到感应。弗雷泽在语言运用中吸收凯鲁亚克即兴创作技巧。霍罗威茨从金斯堡运用俏皮话的技巧中受到启发,通过双关语扩展语言表现力。英语读者尚能欣赏他们挖掘语言表现力的种种尝试,但无法翻译成汉语。无独有偶,中国的中间代诗歌提倡者安琪(1969— )最近似乎也有类似的尝试,例如她的诗集《任性》(2002)。这类诗在书面阅读时已经使读者感到费劲,当然更难通过朗诵接近广大的读者群。弗雷泽已经认识到此种艺术手法的局限性,在他编选《后垮掉派诗选》时剔除了这部分诗人及其作品。不过,他今年出版的诗集《即兴:1—24》(*Improvisations I-XXIV*,2000)和《即兴:25—50》(*Improvisations XXV-L*,2002)却是只能供视觉欣赏而无法朗诵的语言诗和具体派诗。看来中国的安琪、康城们从弗雷泽偏重扩大语言诗性空间的这一面也许能找到知音,她(他)们任性(或韧性)地坚持自己所钟爱的艺术形式迟早会有所成就。

后垮掉派诗人对垮掉派诗人有继承的一面,也有区别的一面,其区别至少有五个方面:

1. 弗雷泽认为,20世纪60年代之后,垮掉派诗人为美国开创了包括服饰和发式在内的异于传统而又各式各样的生活方式,而他们的作品和生活方式为后垮掉派诗人更大胆地表现自己铺平了道路。相对而言,垮掉派诗人所处的时代比起后垮掉派诗人所处的时代社会约束力大、限制严,而后垮掉派诗人比垮掉派诗人的生活环境宽松得多,因而言行更加自由<sup>①</sup>。

2. 后垮掉派诗人更多地受到查尔斯·布科夫斯基(Charles Bukowski,1920—1994)的影响,出版社和批评家基于市场的需要而把他放在垮掉派作家之列<sup>②</sup>。实际上,布科夫斯基是一个比较寂寞的蓝领诗人,他关注的是社会下层的生活:无家可归者、与酗酒的女人鬼混者、赛马赌徒、做下贱工作的人。他虽然不被美国学院派看好,但他对上流社会大不敬的态度和前卫的或“反文学”的写作风格却对后垮掉派诗人具有很大的吸引力,而且使他的名声远播欧洲。

3. 后垮掉派诗人参与到几乎每个中等城市都存在的另类文化活动之中。他们除了在各种小杂志<sup>③</sup>上发表作品外,更积极投身于混合媒体的诗歌创作(例如,网络版诗歌),在《杰克》、《文学反冲》、《牛奶杂志》等在线诗歌杂志上,以及越来越多的其他电子出版物上发表诗作,而且他们通过互联网、E-mail互赠出版物,几乎在全美国各个中等城市的志同道合的诗人中建立起非正式的联络网,他们为此都乐意称自己为后垮掉派诗人。他们这种发表和出版方式在垮掉派诗人时期是不可想象的。在年龄和出道的年代上,他们有些像中国的朦胧派诗人,但在发表的方式和松散的相互联系上则有些像中国的中间代和70年代。

4. 后垮掉派诗人对垮掉派诗人而言,是年轻的一代,接受新时代的艺术影响,因而影响了他们对语言的使用。例如,斯凯勒·霍夫曼(Schuyler Hoffman,1947— )酷爱抽象表现派画家杰克逊·波洛克(Jackson Pollock,1912—1956)<sup>④</sup>的艺术表现手法,深受其画风的影响,以致他的诗中的词句也常常洒满稿面。霍夫曼除了用乐队伴奏他的朗诵外,还拓展了垮

① 见弗农·弗雷泽发给笔者的E-mail(2002年9月25日)。

② 同上。

③ 例如,*Bouillabaisse*, *Caf \_ Review*, *Hunger Magazine*, *Nerve Cowboy*, *Plain Brown Wrapper* and *Home Planet News* 等小杂志。

④ 美国画家,抽象表现派主要代表,以用“滴画法”在画布上滴溅颜料作画著称于世。波洛克是纽约派诗人和垮掉派诗人的朋友,他们常在纽约的雪松酒店喝酒作乐。

掉派诗人书面艺术形式上的表现空间。

5. 由于女权主义的影响,后垮掉派女诗人,例如谢里尔·汤森(Cheryl Townsend, 1957—),莱尼·拉塞尔(Layne Russell, 1946—),比垮掉派女诗人在暴露色情方面更大胆,进一步扩大了垮掉派已经开拓的这个为大众可接受的题材范围。

和垮掉派诗人被主流文坛接受之前的处境一样,后垮掉派诗人现在处于文学的边缘。正因为如此,他们关注社会问题,例如,柯佩尔·戈登(Kirpal Gordon, 1952—)用垮掉派的艺术手法,对无家可归现象和其他的社会问题发表犀利的抨击,因此他的朗诵能产生很强的艺术感染力。他们容易接近社会底层的广大读者群,这就决定了他们作品的平民性,而用前卫爵士乐、搞笑和朗诵结合在一起的方式是诗人接近广大听众的有效途径,如同时下的流行音乐,让大批年轻听众听得如痴如醉。当然,他们还搞诗歌竞赛这一招,以此提高诗人的知名度。例如,20世纪70至80年代,鲍勃·霍尔曼(Bob Holman, 1948—)参与马克·史密斯(Marc Smith)、伊莱恩·伊奎(Elaine Equi)和帕特里夏·史密斯(Patricia Smith)在纽约曼哈顿创建的“新波多黎各诗人咖啡馆”(Nuyorican Poets Cafe)。这里由于实行房租控制政策而吸引了一大批收入少的少数民族、波希米亚式的艺术家和作家来此居住。这家咖啡馆是美国主要的诗歌竞赛场地之一。参赛的诗人每次四到八人,每个诗人的朗诵时间不得超过三分钟,由听众打分,十分制,去掉最高分和最低分,得平均高分的获胜者参加州一级和全国一级的竞赛。为了引起听众的兴趣,诗人朗诵时特意加上自己的表演。其获奖方式类似于中国中央电视台每周举行的电视主持人的竞赛,打分权掌握在听众或观众手里。因为朗诵时间限制严,诗人朗诵的内容都是自传性的,大多数人采取了查尔斯·布科夫斯基那种直白的表达方式。诗歌竞赛在某种程度上不但普及了诗歌,而且也提携了一批诗人。在主流诗坛之外,非主流诗人也高高兴兴地找到他们自己的活动空间。

最后值得一提的是,后垮掉派诗人与垮掉派诗人之间没有截然分开的鸿沟,仍然有着这样那样的联系。例如,诗运亨通的安妮·沃尔德曼(Anne Waldman, 1945—)作为垮掉派诗歌运动后期金斯堡的朋友和搭档,取得了举世瞩目的成就,而今她又成了后垮掉派诗人群中的主干,一个重要的过渡性的杰出诗人<sup>①</sup>。当笔者问到她金斯堡的去世是否标志垮掉派诗歌完成了它的历史使命,但它的影响依然对当代美国诗歌特别是后垮掉派诗歌起影响时,她回答说:“是的。我要说垮掉派诗歌影响继续存在着,仍然活跃在诗坛上的黛安·迪普里玛、珍妮娜·维加、乔安妮·凯格(Joanne Kyger)、加里·斯奈德、阿米里·巴拉卡等诗人都在不同的时间里与垮掉派诗歌运动有联系。垮掉派作品同时对其他许多国家作家的创作有影响。但也存在着垮掉派‘时期’的历史感。”<sup>②</sup>她所谓的垮掉派时期的历史感说明垮掉派诗歌已经与历史联系起来了,尽管她没有直接承认垮掉派诗歌已经完成了它的历史使命,但她同意把自己的诗稿送交弗农·弗雷泽收进《后垮掉派诗选》也足以表明她的态度了。又如,和垮掉派诗人保持密切联系的西海岸诗人杰克·弗利(Jack Foley, 1940—)不但有机会与在世的垮掉派主要诗人交往,例如,参加过威廉·埃弗森别具一格的诗歌朗诵会,和加里·

① 安妮·沃尔德曼在美国诗歌界的影响是多方面的,她还被列入纽约派诗人的行列,可能是她在主持纽约圣马可教堂诗歌项目期间与纽约派诗人联系紧密的缘故。见 Ginsberg: *A Biography* by Barry Miles (New York: Simon and Schuster Inc., 1989), p. 531.

② 安妮·沃尔德曼 2003 年 7 月 8 日寄给笔者的 E-mail 答复。

斯奈德一同出席过迈克尔·麦克卢尔的婚礼,同菲利普·惠伦进行过有趣的交谈,采访过劳伦斯·费尔林盖蒂、金斯堡、菲利普·拉曼西亚,而且是迈克尔·麦克卢尔过从甚密的朋友。他也与部分黑山派诗人和语言诗人有来往。在伯克利,他主持定期的诗歌朗诵会,著名黑山派诗人罗伯特·邓肯也应邀光临,更不必说黑山派诗人拉里·艾格纳常常参加他主持的朗诵会了。他就是在这样的文学氛围里成长的,养成了一种开放式的心态和性格。自从1988年以来,他就在伯克利民办的“太平洋广播电台”(KPFA)做诗歌节目。该电台成立于1949年,为他采访诗人、组织诗人朗诵、宣传他的诗歌主张提供了极大的方便。该台的文学节目享誉旧金山海湾地区文学界,有“垮掉派之父”之称的雷克斯罗思曾在这里作过诗歌朗诵和接受采访,英国著名诗人迪伦·托马斯也曾经在这里朗诵过他的诗。诗人托马斯·帕金森(Thomas Parkinson)曾经对他说:“‘太平洋广播电台’对旧金山海湾地区所有的作家产生了深刻的影响,提供了他们接近独特讲话的可能性。”<sup>①</sup>所以,杰克·弗利当今在西海岸湾区的诗坛上扮演了一个极其活跃的角色,是一个不可小视的后垮掉派诗人。

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# From Nationalism to Internationalism

黄源深

**Abstract:** This article, tracking the Australian literary history, unveils a paradox, intriguing and thought-provoking: in the formative days of Australia, Henry Lawson and his followers spared no pains to eliminate exotic features in Australian literature and succeeded in founding a national literature with full indigenous qualities, which, about 80 years later, was harshly criticized by Patrick White who together with others rendered it internationalized and subsequently put Australian literature on the world literary map. This paradox perhaps mirrors the major changes in Australian literary history.

**Key Words:** nationalism, Lawson, internationalism, White

In the literary history of Australia there are two dominant concerns: quest for nationalism and endeavour towards internationalism. The literary nationalists with Henry Lawson as their initiator stick to Australian realism which, however, is severely criticized as being "dun-coloured" by Patrick White, the very representative of internationalists who try to give indigenous literature an international hue. Nationalism with its traditional drive reigns for a long period from 1880s to 1960s when it ultimately gives way to literary internationalism which holds sway today.

In the formative days of Australia, the native literary plant growing out of the British seed is impressed with every exotic feature of English Romanticism. The major fictional works in spite of their local settings read like most of the English novels of the corresponding period. The characters in them are more or less English men/women in Australian costume, taking their local abode as a temporary shelter. England, in their heart of hearts, is the perpetual physical and spiritual home. Australian literature of this early stage bears more foreign than indigenous qualities.

1880s witnessed a nationalist upsurge which aimed to propel the country towards independence. Australia in its transitional period was eager to express its national characteristics fully and to have its voice, a voice uniquely Australian, to be heard by the rest of the world. To answer for the purpose a national literature was expected to come into being. In quickening its birth the Bulletin with her "Australian national policy" played a significant role by promoting bush realism against the transplanted and also prevalent romance. More importantly perhaps the journal provided an outlet for the works of local writers and artists who contributed to the growing authentic Australian literature. However, "its best effect on writing of all kinds was to curb diffuseness and value crisp, clear language, a 'modernizing' impulse which drew Australian writing further from the

formal language and periodic sentence found in much Victorian literature.” (Bennett & Strauss, 1998) Writers like Henry Lawson, A. B. Paterson, Miles Franklin, Joseph Furphy and Mary Gilmore never ceased their effort, either in open claims or in creative works, to mould Australian literary nationalism known as new realism. Lawson, a key figure in the literary quest of nationalism, stressed: “I wrote of nothing that I had not myself seen or experienced; I wrote and rewrote painfully, and believed that every line was true and for the right.” (Lawson, 1972) And unabashedly he appealed in agony for assistance to the burgeoning literature: “The position of purely Australian literature is altogether hopeless in Australia — there is no market.” (Lawson, 1972) Furphy, announcing his “Such is Life” as “offensively Australian”, expressed his full support to Australian literary nationalism. Eventually a new writing was brought into being with Salient national identity.

The landscape is the inhospitable bush, “bush all round —bush with no horizon.” (Henry Lawson, “The Drover’s Wife”) The sparse population and the vast bush give rise to isolation which courts danger of all kinds. The “everlasting, maddening sameness” of the eucalyptus “makes a man long to break away and travel as far as trains can go, and sail as far as trains can go, and sail as far as ship can sail — and further.” (Henry Lawson, “The Drover’s Wife”) Often, human efforts are made futile by drought, flood, fire and the unending illness of stocks, which collectively or alternatively haunt the bush. So pressure is never far away and the bush acts as “the nurse and tutor of eccentric minds, the home of the weird.” (Henry Lawson, “The Bush Undertaker”)

The characters are the bushmen, often robust and sunburnt with a temperamental optimism. Constantly away from home they form a special friendship among themselves, sometimes even forgetting about their wives they have left behind. They work hard to make money but many a time squander it, when having “a good cheque”, in drinking and gambling, a fine sense of humour they are endowed with often helps to sustain them through hardships and crises. So we see Old Dad, never losing heart in a lean year, “the man from Snowy River”, a fearless tough guy and Mitchell, a good mate with his marriage being tough on the rock. Bush women in those works are mostly of a passive type with excessive patience, “past caring” for the human privation.

Mateship, close in meaning to comradeship or fellowship, is lauded as a bush moral code. “An ideal of personal devotion, trust and generosity, irrespective of class or creed” (Gay Brereton, “Henry Lawson by His Mates,” 1931), it grows out of harsh reality as Lawson puts it: “Tis hardness, drought, and homelessness/ That teach those bushmen kindness.” (Henry Lawson, “The Shearers”) Mateship becomes a recurrent theme of nationalist works of literature and turns out to be in a way “a national inspiration” of the time. Also voiced as a widely shared aspiration is egalitarianism expressed most likely in the form of confrontation between the individual and the government (as in “Ned Kelly”), or the poor and the rich who are often supported by the “troopers” (as in “Waltzing Matilda”).

The nationalist writers have captured Australian accent, vista and social values, and recorded faithfully the ethos of that age. They give Australia “a country without history”, a myth and a legend, something Australians always cherish and take pride in. Their works distinguish for the

first time Australian literary products from those of the rest of the world. The old dispute over whether these works represent Australian cities can perhaps be ignored in the critical appraisal, for what seems important is that they have depicted with accuracy a country in the making, which is a unique contribution to the world literature (Kramer, 1981). "... asserting: until the Australian writer can attune his ear to catch the various undertones of our national life, our art must be false and unenduring ... the bush for the present must be the mainspring of our national literature." ①

Henry Lawson, A. B. Paterson, Joseph Furphy, Miles Franklin, Vance Palmer, Katharine Susannah Prichard, Alan Marshall, Kylie Tennant, Frank Hardy are the representative figures of literary nationalism at different stages of history which dominates Australian literary scene for nearly eighty years until it met the challenge of Patrick White and his followers in 1960s. The fact that during those eighty years in Europe modernism after its replacement of realism waxed and waned, whereas in Australia realism ruled all through, can be accounted for by many factors, social, cultural, geographical and even technological, functioning interactively.

Federation in 1901 marked the rebirth of Australia as an independent nation. To make the rest of the world feel its presence, Australia, now a free country in growth, needed to enhance its national identity. Literary nationalism with its constant nationalist bias well served this purpose. Besides, in a hostile land thinly populated with a nomadic pattern of life in early days social values like mateship, egalitarianism, fortitude and optimism were much sought after and abided by in general as national moral creeds. Also this newly unshackled young nation called for loyalty, which explains, among other things, why when European modernists were spreading shortly after the First World War disillusion and scepticism towards the establishment, Australian realists were singing in praise of faithfulness and heroism displayed in the same war launched for an unjust cause.

In culture Australia had just established its own tradition with strong native characteristics whether in writing, painting or music. It is understandable that people adored this cultural tradition so much that they reject anything else set in opposition to it. So modernist attempts and practice by, for example, Christopher Brennan, Chester Cobb and Max Harris were either treated with indifference or debunked relentlessly through conspiracy. Nationalism, with its deep cultural root, stood unshakable for a long time.

Australia suffered in history from insularity because of its geographical remoteness from the rest of the world, which Geoffrey Blainey calls "The Tyranny of Distance", Literary trend or movement that had started in Europe gradually lost its force through the wearing of distance when it arrived in Australian continent. It was unlikely to elicit any sensational response seen in its birthplace. When modernism, for example, reached its peak in Britain and the United States in 1920s here realism still maintained its dominance in literary field.

In a technologically backward era isolation for Australians was an unsurmountable hindrance. This in a sense favoured a conservative atmosphere in which convention had a firm hold while new

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① Palmer, Vance. "An Australian National Art", *The Writer in Australia: A Collection of Literary Documents*.



concepts found it hard to take root. Nationalism as a tradition remained in that cultural climate a vital force, often to the exclusion of any imported isms.

Drastic changes did not occur in Australia until 1950s and 1960s when the whole world, with cumulative technological advances and political divergence, was reoriented in many phases. With the globe made smaller owing to highly developed means of communication and significantly improved transport, the adverse effect of distance on Australia dwindled, and social and cultural events going on in any place could be simultaneously shared by other parts of the world. Australian hearts throbbed in sympathy with those of others far away. Australia with her old deference to great powers in foreign affairs was involved, in spite of herself, in Korean and Vietnam wars, which brought her increasingly closer to the United States. American influence was overwhelming in politics, culture, business, almost every aspect of life. Kentucky Chicken, Macdonald and Coca Cola nurtured a generation not only physically but also culturally as born out by Phillip Adams, a film maker who asserted: "I grew up on a diet of American pop art"<sup>①</sup> which came together with American food and drink. Such traditional values as mateship and Anzac spirit which most suited an undeveloped pattern of life began to dissolve in a modern society as they were severely ridiculed in the plays of *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* (1955) by Ray Lawler and *The One Day of the Year* (1960) by Alan Seymour. The preoccupied themes and its realistic approach of literary nationalism seemed outmoded and insufficient to reflect the growingly sophisticated life. Changes were inevitable.

Interestingly in the transition from a literature with exotic qualities to a national literature, Henry Lawson played the role of a pioneer and now when nationalism is on the move to internationalism, it is Patrick White who makes his pioneering contribution. Is it the hero that makes the era, or the era that makes the hero? Of course we should not ignore the political and cultural impact of 1960s with scepticism quickly spreading entailed mainly from the traumatic Vietnam War and the mounting student movements. Anyway White attempts to subvert Lawson tradition and "discover the extraordinary behind the ordinary, the mystery and the poetry"<sup>②</sup> of Australian life. What he vitates as "dun-coloured" points to the indigenous qualities, that is, the theme of nationalist writings and his criticism of Australian traditional writings as "journalistic realism" is directed to the realistic approach of nationalist literature. That is to say, White wants to remould Australian literature in both the approach and the theme.

In approach he turns to modernism for inspiration. Mysticism is resorted to, with his unique creation of a cryptic world peopled by eccentric characters sharing some common aspiration, a world vastly different from the one in real life. Symbolism finds its full use to give the otherwise ordinary and dull life of Australia "mystery and poetry". His language, often in twisted and dislocated forms, is heavily loaded — sometimes overloaded — with deeper meanings which renders most of his writings difficult for comprehension and boring to the reader. The use of stream of con-

① Phillip, Adams. *Cinema Papers*, March — April 1984.

② White, Patrick. "The Prodigal Son", *The Oxford Anthology of Australian Literature*, Leonie Kramer (ed.) 1985.