



**Wrestling Knowledge of Another Kind: Memory,
Myth and Mapping the Exegetical Process.**

Malcolm Walker

**Submitted as part of the requirement for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**Discipline of English
School of Humanities
The University of Adelaide
South Australia**

March 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Statement of originality	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
Foreword	1
Introduction	4
Chapter One: Landscapes and Beginnings	14
Chapter Two: The 'Green Man' Emerges	31
Chapter Three: Timescapes and Collisions	44
Occlusion	62
Sources	69
Works Cited	70
Bibliography	75

Statement of originality

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

Malcolm Walker

Date:18/7/2007.....

Acknowledgements

On the family side of things, my thanks to Niki for encouraging me down this path and for her love, support and a constant belief; to Alexis, Cei and Taliesin for their belief and for grounding me; to Elishia and Adaya for bringing a new dimension to our family; to Graham, Tess, Greg, Aileen and Bert, Maria and John, and Sophia for their kindness and generosity whenever I go back to Europe; to Maida and Dick for my first introduction to Scotland; and to Maria.

In getting the novel on its feet I wish to thank Tom Shapcott for his insights and astonishing reading ability; Phillip Edmonds and Nicholas Jose for their appraisal of the exegesis; the University of Adelaide Creative Writing program, the teaching and administrative staff in the Discipline of English, in particular the office staff—Shirley Ball, Bev Thomson, Michelle Lai, and Sue Mleczeko; Mark Caldicott for his back-to-back support, friendship and readiness to reads drafts hot off the press; Kerrie Le Lievre for her insight into fantasy literature and for reading a later draft; and the crew up at Flinders University, who started the ball rolling. Thanks are due to the people of the Borders, particularly Marjorie Blake for her help and hospitality during my researching there.

Special thanks go to the 'Exeter Brigade'—Patrick Allington, Anne Bartlett, Tony Bujega, Jan Harrow, Sabina Hopfer, Heather Johnson, and Christopher Lappas—in their metamorphosis from reading group to luncheon party to bar-flies. Thanks also to: Angela Baker, Tully Barnett, Russell Bartlett, Phil Butterss, Guy Carney, Kaye Cleave, Jon Dale, Dallas Colley, Ruth Fazakerley, Zoë Gill, Kate Greenwood, Rob Hall, Julie Hanson, Rosanne Hawke, Rachel Hennessy, Stephanie Hester, Sue and Rick Hosking, Alan Jenkins, Nicholas Jose, Maxine Joy, Heather Kerr, Mark Kimber, Mike Ladd, Elizabeth Lau, Marianne and Brian Lewis, Sandra Lyne, Alison Main, Denise and James Martin, Amy Matthews, Joy McEntee, Tony and Carol Moore, Vanna Morosini, Amanda Nettelbeck, Alison Newton, Simon O'Mallon, Sarah Minney, Paul Mitchell, Deborah Paauwe, Helen Payne, Michelle Phillipov, Lucy Potter, Jim Roberts, Anne Robertson, Steve and Nola Routoulas, Ken Ruthven, Maggie Tonkin, Mandy Treagus, Ray Tyndale, Lee Salomone, Stephen Shortt, Greg Smith, Anna Solding, Rudi Soman, Catherine Wait, Rikki Wilde, Lesley Williams, Farley Wright, Wendy Wright, and John and Jenny Zammit.

Abstract

Two teenage newcomers to the Scottish Borders unleash an unearthly power when they unwittingly remove one of a group of wooden horsemen from an ancient site known as Sleepers Spinney. Containing the trapped spirits of King Arthur and his men, the carvings have been magically held in check since the Dark Ages by an ancient line of Keepers. With the Keepers prepared to stop at nothing to recover what has been stolen, a fragile and at times troubled friendship grows between the two youngsters as they are drawn into a parallel world of myth, magic and the supernatural. Arthur is awake—and he is no venerable, grey-bearded King come back to save The Isles.

The Stone Crown is, in part, a contemporary reworking of the Arthurian legend. While the novel includes the stock figures of Merlin, Arthur, Modred and Nimuë, they are presented more as flawed characters caught up in the power struggles of the time rather than heroic figures, thus anchoring the historical and fantasy elements within the story of two young people trying to deal with their respective pasts. The novel explores a variety of young-adult themes, including guilt, madness, teenage ostracism and loneliness, absentee parents, migrants and child-soldiery.

Accompanying *The Stone Crown* is an exegesis entitled 'Wrestling Knowledge of Another Kind: Memory, Myth and the Exegetical Process', in which I reflect on how creativity can be affected by the exegetical process. In particular I look at the difference between a post-publication exegesis and one penned mid-novel, and how the unconscious drivers that inform artistic themes, often to the bewilderment of their creator, cannot necessarily be analysed, reduced or slavishly deconstructed to fit a set of theoretical maps or models. While acknowledging the mid-novel exegesis may suit some writers, I investigate how the need to work creatively often involves a delicate balance between rational thought and the unconscious, a process that can be thrown into a state of disequilibrium by the exegetical act itself.

Foreword

‘There is no inbuilt reason why it should be possible to talk about an art because you can practice it.’

William Golding *A Moving Target*, 125

My first rather shaky understanding of the power of myth and its magical interweaving with fantasy came at about the age of six. Before that I had, like most children, simply been immersed in those worlds. I remember the incident rather ashamedly: the disclosure to a child younger than myself that Father Christmas was an adult invention. Tears ensued: first the boy's and then, once my mother realised what I was up to, mine. It was, I believe, my first inkling of the power of the adult rational world when it collides with the symbolic, the mythic and the legendary.

In my innocent attempt at deconstructing a popular myth, I was modelling my father, behaving as he often did within our family and pooh-poohing anything that did not fall within the borders of the knowable world. My father was a black and white man; a convinced sceptic, unlike my mother, who, with her Welsh-Greek blood, was highly superstitious. Parallel worlds did not feature as part of mealtime conversation. In my father's words myth, magic and the supernatural were, after they were laughed backwards out of the room, best not meddled with. He saw such things as logic, rationality and scepticism as his parental responsibility; he was doing his children a service, getting them up to speed with the real world.

At the time of my six-year-old foray into myth-wrecking I was negotiating that uncomfortable structure which most of us cross sooner-or-later: the reality bridge. I journeyed, as most children do, back and forth as it suited. Fantasy is still a refuge (even

the most realist novel is fantasy), one which allows me to indulge in the 'willing suspension of *belief*' (169). I am intentionally misquoting Coleridge because in order to have disbelief one must first have beliefs, those often tacit assumptions that help determine the architecture and landscape of a fictional world and which are not always anchored quite as solidly in 'reality' and the conscious mind as we would like to think.

Most artistic endeavour is fraught with difficulty, along with a strong, some would say egotistical, belief both in the value of the story one is telling and in the desire to tell it. The construction and perturbation of such belief is the subject of this exegesis, because inner time, fantasy and the unconscious work to their own mysterious schedules, refusing to submit to mere analysis and cataloguing. It is this intersection of the rational and the unconscious, and how their collision affected both the novel's progress and the writing of this essay, that intrigues me. For, as John Fowles suggests in his essay *The Tree*, when we enter in any story, either as writer or reader, we enter into a wood of words (58-59). It is a journey I should like to *undertake* with my father. The meaning of my italics will become clear later.

Introduction: A Wood of Words

‘She said, “You hear different things in all them way back storys but it dont make no diffrents. Mostly they aint strait storys any how. What they are is different ways of telling what happent.”’

Russell Hoban *Riddley Walker*, 19

Creativity rarely runs a straight line. It is not without its lacunae, its stops and starts. Breaks in the writing process are often required simply to allow time for other avenues to surface from the conscious and unconscious realms. Given that this novel was written in an academic setting, with all its strictures, and while on a scholarship, by necessity such breaks could hardly be ignored and so were used at various points to move the exegesis forward. Roughly around the time draft four of the novel was being completed, the two manuscripts,¹ particularly the thinking and analytical processes needed to kick-start the exegesis, began to develop in parallel. I would like to have kept them separate in the neat mathematical sense of the word. However, as the title suggests this was not an easy or entirely predictable process, for once the novel's thematic concerns began to infiltrate the exegesis the two could no longer be held at a distance. Aspects of my relationship with my father, no longer an unconscious thematic, had begun to flex their muscles, and for a writer such as myself, who operates more out of an intuitive, feeling space, one in which emotion rather than intellect is the driving force, this posed difficulties.

There is a distinct difference between a post-publication exegesis and one penned mid-novel, not the least of which being how such a commentary might interfere with

¹ At this point the exegesis could hardly be called a manuscript; it was more a loose collection of thoughts and ideas in note form that was yet to be organised into a coherent shape or form.

the creative processes and fictive landscape of the novel. During the writing of *The Stone Crown*, I found that the methodologies I needed to access while engaging with the exegesis—analytical thinking, critical evaluation of material, more traditional research practices and avenues, and scholarly prose—were to a certain extent counterproductive and even antagonistic to the progress of the novel, which was still very much in draft form.

With the above in mind, this essay seeks to investigate the following. Firstly, how the unconscious drivers that impregnate and inform artistic themes, often to the bewilderment of their creator, can, when over-analysed in a reductive sense, wedge themselves between the writer and his or her work. In tandem with this, I explore how my family history and mythos, once consciously called into question by the exegesis, collided with the mythic figure of Arthur and repositioned my father as the central figure in the novel, something which I had been circling on an unconscious level. Threaded through all this, and to a great extent tying it together, are John Fowles's eloquent essay *The Tree*, in which he links the traditional European symbol of the 'green man' to the unconscious processes involved in creativity, and Alan Garner's collection of essays and talks on the writing process entitled *The Voice That Thunders*.

In talking about exegetical interference in the artistic process it seems wise to outline my approach to the term 'unconscious'. It is not the aim of this essay to offer a comprehensive investigation of the creative process using the psychoanalytical frameworks developed by Freud, Jung, Lacan, Kristeva, and other theorists of the unconscious. Such an undertaking is beyond the scope of this essay. More importantly, if this exegesis is to be a useful record of the processes I underwent during my candidature, my personal framework of beliefs provides a more appropriate departure point than the almost limitless theoretical backdrop that is 20th century psychoanalytical thinking. My

use of the term ‘unconscious’, therefore, is largely empirical, referring to elements in my work or underlying my process of which I was not, at first, fully aware.

Nor does this essay intend to give a comprehensive overview of Arthurian sources. There are a number of reasons for this. In terms of the sheer volume of material found under the rubric of Arthuriana, as authors Nastali and Boardman indicate in *The Arthurian Annals*, where they have garnered a bibliography of ‘more than 11,000 Arthurian works’ (xi), such a project would be outside the parameters of this essay. Also, with the bulk of the novel’s action taking place in the present, *The Stone Crown* is a contemporary novel that uses a reworking of the Arthurian legend as a platform from which to discuss its young-adult themes of guilt, madness, ostracism, loneliness, and abuse. The final and perhaps most important reason for my selective coverage of both the Matter of Britain and more contemporary re-tellings involving King Arthur is a strong belief that it is unnecessary for a writer to be an expert in any of these fields in order to produce a young-adult novel or, for that matter, to comment on the process of production; as such, I did not immerse myself in any of the more predictable source material, relying rather on childhood recollections of Arthur, a few half-remembered plot lines from previously read novels (both adult and children’s) and my imagination. Instead, I have narrowed my focus to Arthurian re-tellings situated within my chosen sub-genre of ‘indigenous fantasy’² (Attebery 129-41). Dealing with the broader textual material of the Matter of Britain rather than being directly about Arthur, Alan Garner’s award-winning young-adult novel *The Owl Service* is one of several examples of the sub-genre to which I shall refer.

I found, even quite early during *The Stone Crown*’s production, that Garner’s uncompromising prose style, his propensity towards the numinous and the mythic, and the quality of his writing as displayed in *The Owl Service*, were a constant inspirational and qualitative set of reference points. Later, as the exegesis unfolded and then collided with

² Attebery’s term ‘indigenous fantasy’ is explained in Chapter One.

my novel, I discovered *The Voice That Thunders*, which, like *The Tree*, had a profound resonance for me. Like Alan Garner, I believe that it is not enough to take the teenage reader on a meaningful journey, rather an author's primary duty is to produce work that not only lays 'claim to excellence' but which is 'dangerous' (*Voice* 84; 135). And if adolescence is a dangerous, unsettled time, as it is for many teenagers, then surely literature's job is not to shut that danger away. Garner suggests this can be done only by the author putting her or himself at 'risk' and by speaking the 'truth':

if you see in my work things that are dangerous, they may well be there. Books are the most powerful means I know for the expression of truth and of lie, the most constructive, and the most destructive, product of the human mind. (135)

To my mind it seems appropriate that as a writer for the young-adult market I should approach some of the blank areas on the map of self and engage with whatever 'truths' I uncover. However, in doing so, what is brought back and appears as black marks on paper cannot always be understood or known in the way that the academy seeks knowledge. John Fowles suggests that '[k]nowing everything about a highly subjective art' might be 'a fearsome handicap', while 'the instinctive and the only half conscious', a sort 'of knowing of one's own junkroom' might be of 'great benefit to a maker of fiction' (Fowles *Wormholes*, 44).

There are, as Fowles suggests, other ways of knowing, and as the novel took shape I found myself, albeit unconsciously at first, moving away from the legendary Arthur, the traditional hero-king who Alan Garner points to in this description of his childhood:

They said of him, half (yet only half) in jest, that, since he was waiting to ride out when England should be "in direst peril", and, "in a battle thrice lost, thrice won, drive the enemy into the sea", it was about time for him to be doing. It showed me at an early age the enduring power of myth. In 1940 it was something the village turned to seriously. (*Voice* 18)

There was something inherently conservative, perhaps within children themselves—certainly around the idea of Britain being saved by a Sleeping King—that I did not wish to regurgitate: the notion of the parent plucking the child from the jaws of disaster. Arthur the boy interested me. What had turned him into a ‘warlord’, the Dux Bellorum, a man who the proto-historian Nennius says slew ‘nine hundred and sixty men in one onset’ at the Battle of Badon Hill (Wade-Evans 75)?

While I was aware of the flexibility of this particular legend, it was sheeted home by children’s author William Mayne, when he says that one of his pleasures regarding the Arthur story ‘is the formless speculation one is allowed to have when considering the Matter of Britain’ (Mayne in Thompson 1-2).³ On reading this, I came to see that it was precisely my desire to re-write Arthur, to place him in the more historically accurate Dark Ages, which fuelled the genesis of *The Stone Crown* at an intellectual level. On an emotional level something entirely different was going on. I had embarked upon a rewriting of my father, because, as William Mayne also suggests, during the Dark Ages, ‘Britain was like Lebanon’ and ‘ruled by various militias’ (2), two descriptions that could have been applied in equal measure to my home-life as a child. Given that *The Stone Crown* deals with father-son, and to a lesser extent mother-daughter relationships, it seems appropriate to furnish a potted time-line of my relationship with my father.

He was forty when I was born in 1948. From the age of about nine onwards his drink-fuelled mood swings added to an already fragile desire for a family miracle. Things went downhill during the tumultuous teenage years. At nineteen, I left home. Sporadic contact followed until, at age twenty-four, I went overseas. Letter writing improved our relationship almost as much as my entry into adulthood. Three years before my father’s death, I took my family to Britain and Greece. We disembarked from a thirty-hour flight, endured Customs and Immigration, collected our hire car, and drove across

³ Mayne’s *Earthfasts* is an ‘indigenous fantasy’ reworking of the Arthurian legend.

London in the rain-swept darkness to Woking, a town I had never visited—a journey that entailed multiple backtrackings and stops to ask directions—for a prearranged visit to my father, who retained his keen intellect and formidable memory until he died. On our arrival at the home, a staff member went to collect him from the television room. His response when confronted by us went something along these lines: ‘I thought you were coming Monday, son? *Dad’s Army’s* on now. Come back Monday. We’ll have a nice chat then.’ Our proposed two-hour visit, to which my father had agreed by phone, lasted less than ten minutes. My partner and son were dumbstruck. It was to be a fortnight before our itinerary allowed us time to visit. I had fallen into a common enough trap, that of believing a rose-tinted version of our family mythos over and above hard facts: at eighty-seven my father was unlikely to change.

Writing, particularly this more realist brand of fantasy, provided an intersection between personal and public mythologies. But, once I began to engage seriously with the exegesis, there came a point where the unconscious drivers that I had so cleverly avoided surfaced. It became clear that the characters of Arthur and Merlin, together with the other male characters, stood in nicely for my absent father, and were inextricably bound, in a large part unconsciously, with my childhood. Unlike legendary heroes, dead parents do not return to apologise or make amends. While this was something I was consciously aware of, characters in novels are not always drawn literally by their creators. Rather they can work on an intuitive and unconsciously metaphorical level that imparts a necessary energy to the writing process, as Dianna Wynne Jones suggests when she says she is:

awed and amazed that people are finding things that I didn’t know were in there ... [or] ... only at such a subconscious level that I didn’t realize until these articles pointed them out. (Butler 172)

David Malouf describes such unconscious processes as an emptying of 'conscious knowledge':

the trick of falling into dreaming ... in which the mind ... is free to explore knowledge of another kind altogether ... where memory seems particularly open and fluid, where one is especially sensitive to the emotional charge that is carried by events, words and images; and it is precisely this emotional charge ... that makes these memories, useful... ('What We Know', n.p.n.)

This essay is, in part, an examination of Malouf's 'state' and the ineffable and unapproachable space from which it emanates. It is based on the difference between words that conjure vivid mental pictures and those that engage us via more abstract, non-visual thinking. As Kevin Brophy suggests:

Much of the debate over the presence of creative writing in universities has been connected with conflicts over notions of the author. In response to these conflicts I have aimed to show... that the author is always a complex social, commercial, linguistic and literary construct *often not under the control of the person writing* [my italics] ... For this reason it is important that creative writing students remained informed and engaged with social-theoretical analyses of literature. (203)

The academic self-exegesis sits uneasily within this divide. It explores creativity through rational and analytical argument. Children's literature and fantasy do not always slot easily into its templates, nor do their metaphorical, allegorical and poetic language and imagery and, more importantly their manipulation of time and space, always support such notions. Brophy's paragraph is not meant to conjure a series of vivid mental pictures: its purpose is altogether different and therefore does not become a mind's-eye dreaming in the way that the following passage from Garner's *The Owl Service* does.

From the grass to the screes and the bracken, and grass again, over the streams they drove him. If he threw stones at them they snarled and were more savage in

their biting. He ran, fell, ran a thousand feet down to the river, but they would not leave him. No men appeared, but the shouts and whistles were close in the hedgebanks. The dogs walked up the road, their steps high and slow, lips arched red, back, back, to the front drive—and left him. (122)

Kevin Brophy's text is an example of the difference between two types of writing. He is dealing with abstract, intellectual models. Such notions are at a remove from the personal and at times arduous process of writing fiction, particularly when the exegetical act precipitates unconscious artistic drivers into everyday consciousness, foregrounding family patterning and personal psychology in such a way that the author cannot return to a position of unknowing. In this sense, the construct of author that Brophy outlines, while working perfectly for some writers, may prove a hindrance to a mid-process creative writer like myself. Paradoxically, familial patterns are often the drivers of creativity. Frederick Reiken suggests that:

all art is derived, at least at first, from therapeutic need. We all have our wounds, and fiction writers need to be people whose temperaments lead them to create stories that in some mysterious . . . and unconscious way are tied to their private histories... (42)

The 'dogs' passage, taken from *The Owl Service*, was not chosen idly. Like many people I am chivvied and nipped by the unseen and unknown, those half-remembered, barely visible ghosts that hint at my own and my family's past. What follows is difficult as it not only involves my relationship with my father and his subsequent death, but also a loss of a different kind: the delicate balance that is required in fiction writing and how the unconscious often synchronistically directs and guides the writer in ways that are not necessarily apparent. However, by far the most disturbing element is the disequilibrium and turbidity caused by the parallel dissection of the main text. I shall call it what it is, a vivisection, for a novel has a life of its own during its creation and the writer often falls

a 'thousand feet' like Garner's character Gwyn in *The Owl Service* into that space Malouf describes as 'knowledge of another kind altogether.'

Chapter One:
Landscapes and Beginnings

'I do not plan my fiction anymore than I normally plan woodland walks...'

John Fowles *The Tree*, 59

It is to landscape and nature, particularly European woodland, I should like to turn first, for while nature and its near cousin landscape have always been part of my imaginative world, during my formative adolescent years they were as important as breathing: a lifeline, an escape, albeit a semi-conscious one. However, as landscape features strongly in my novel as well as being a preoccupation in this exegesis, I should like to resituate the term away from its usually rather narrow definition and give it a broader personal meaning to do with the preoccupations, desires and beliefs that constitute my writing practice. For me, in terms of writing fiction, landscape is any space, either external or internal, past or present, real or imagined in which I place myself; one that includes the unconscious and unknowable as much as any conscious appraisal of geography, people, ideas, situations and beliefs. Before delving into the more unconscious aspects of my writing process, it seems appropriate to first situate *The Stone Crown* in relation to other Arthurian re-tellings, and secondly to investigate its conscious shaping: questions of why an Arthurian re-telling and why, at fifty-four, I chose a genre-based young-adult fantasy novel?

Brought up after the Second World War, like many of my generation I was well aware of Britain's mythical Once and Future King: so to suggest that I have not been influenced by the Arthurian re-tellings would be disingenuous. It is more a question of

how such influences have insinuated themselves in my consciousness and in what particular fashion they have emerged in my writing.

However, there are a number of points here: firstly, as *The Arthurian Annals* point out, there is the sheer volume of fictional texts that reference Arthur⁴ in his many guises; secondly, that re-tellings of the Matter of Britain such as Rosemary Sutcliff's *The Shining Company* and Lloyd Alexander's *The Book of Three (The Chronicles of Prydain)* refer to much older texts,⁵ which in turn points up the palimpsestic nature of all Arthuriana; lastly, given my choice of sub-genre, Attebery's 'indigenous fantasy', together with my limited reading in the area of Arthuriana and my reference in my Introduction to an author's non-expert status, the relevance of such a plethora of contemporary re-tellings is called into question, especially when they can vary enormously, from relatively traditional historical works (Bernard Cornwall's *The Winter King: A Novel of Arthur: Book I of The Warlord Chronicles*) through to sci-fi variants involving Atlantis (Stephen Lawhead's *Taliesin: The Pendragon Cycle: Book I*). Still more traditional sources include Mallory's *Morte D'Arthur*, where I sourced the 'Rex Quondam, Rex Futurus' reference, and Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*.

Readers of young-adult fiction in particular may recognise *The Stone Crown* as sitting alongside such contemporary Arthurian re-tellings as Diana Wynne Jones's *The Merlin Conspiracy*, *The Squire's Tale* by Gerald Morris, *King of Middle March* by Kevin Crossley-Holland, Jane Yolen's *The Sword of the Rightful King: A Novel of King Arthur*, Lisa Anne Sandell's *Song of the Sparrow*, to name but a few, as well as classics such as T. H. White's *The Sword in the Stone* and Sutcliff's *The Sword at Sunset*.⁶ Indeed, any reader of *The Stone Crown* or of this exegesis will be able situate both the novel and the exegetical discussion

⁴ *The Arthurian Annals* do not cover academic Arthurian scholarship, which has its own extensive bibliography and which the *Annals* are intended to complement.

⁵ Their provenance is respectively the old-Welsh epic poem *Y Goddodin*, the first text to mention Arthur, and *The Mabinogion*, perhaps the oldest source of Arthurian material.

⁶ This handful of contemporary titles is a mere fraction of books published on Arthur.

within any number of Arthurian re-tellings, and in this broader sense my novel can be placed in a constantly changing Arthurian landscape. Therefore, with this impossibly large number of titles, I will focus in this exegesis on those books that deal directly with the Matter of Britain, in whatever shape their authors have chosen, as being more closely related to my novel.

I must return now to landscape once again. While some authors have chosen alternative locations, most tend to situate their re-tellings within the wild landscapes of Britain: Wales, England (particularly Cornwall or the North), and sometimes Scotland. Landscapes, however, change over time. But this is also a two-way process, as perceptions of past landscapes, those sufficiently distant to be pre-realist painting and pre-photography, can become contaminated by a writer's imagination, and so, as I sought a location for the novel, shying away from Cornwall and various other English localities, I found myself retreating from a more traditional rendering of the Arthurian landscape, both geographical and historical. My subsequent encounter with Kevin Crossley-Holland's *Arthur: The Seeing Stone* and Robert Leeson's *The Song of Arthur*—both read during the third draft of *The Stone Crown*—only strengthened my intention of producing a much darker, more personal vision of an Arthur linked to contemporary Britain, one, which unlike these titles, placed him squarely within the 'indigenous fantasy' mould.

Among those contemporary Arthurian re-tellings that have influenced me are Susan Cooper's *The Dark is Rising Sequence*, Alan Garner's *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen* and *The Moon of Gomrath*, and William Mayne's *Earthfasts*. While all four are wonderful books, their combined influence has been to point me in the opposite direction: Cooper, because I wished to avoid a series of linked titles (the trilogy so common to the genre) and her almost Blyton-esque 'gang of four' protagonists; Garner, because these two pre-*Owl Service* titles do not compare with the mythic complexity and subtlety of his later

publications; and Mayne, because of his rather out-of-date syntax and his somewhat impressionistic dialogue. However, as a kind of unconscious mix, they were certainly highly influential in providing points of departure, particularly as, like *The Stone Crown*, all four titles use ritual objects (in the Hitchcockian sense of a ‘McGuffin’) on which to centre the plot.

Before I move on, *The Owl Service* deserves more coverage; not only because of its already mentioned artistic influence on me, but because while it does not fit neatly into the mould of Arthurian reworkings it talks back to perhaps one of the oldest known Arthurian sources. In writing *The Owl Service* Garner drew upon the *Mabinogion*—a collection of Welsh myths that deal in part with Arthur and the Matter of Britain—from which he took the hero Llew Llaw Gyffes. Brian Attebery succinctly describes the novel’s mythic heritage:

Llew, whose mother has cursed him so that he can marry neither mortal woman nor goddess, is given a bride made of flowers by the wizard Gwydion. The beautiful Blodeuwedd, though, betrays her husband with a neighbour, Gronw Pebyr, and with him she plots Llew’s death. Rescued by Gwydion, Llew kills Gronw, and Blodeuwedd is transformed into an owl. Their story of love, betrayal, murder, and metamorphosis impinges on the present-day narrative when Alison finds a set of plates, the owl service of the title, with a floral design that can be rearranged to form owl faces. (82)

The similarities between Garner’s novel and my own are obvious: transformation by magic, the green world, and ritual objects that hold devastating power. *The Owl Service* has been influential in shaping my understanding of young-adult fiction, both thematically and, with its uncompromising approach to children’s literature, in going beyond the merely formulaic, for Garner, like his contemporary, William Mayne, ‘has a reputation, not wholly unearned, for difficulty, for [addressing] the full range of human concerns, and any simplicity in their strategies for doing so is deceptive’ (Clute 387).

The actual unconscious centrality of Arthur as I chose to write him, not as the Once and Future King but as a warlord, is the key here, as both novel and exegesis exist in their respective forms due largely to my rendition of Arthur's plight, which in turn was influenced by my choice of historical and geographical landscapes. In this sense I am more interested in the fact that I adapted Arthur's story in a way that allowed me access to a partial fantasy world in which the problems of generational abuse, male power and hierarchical family relations could be thematically investigated.

As to the question of 'why children's literature?' I had been writing adult literary fiction without success and, given that young-adult fiction is a lucrative market, the latter seemed a logical move. More importantly, however, I have a long-time interest in this area, particularly that blend of realism and fantasy I have referred to as 'indigenous fantasy'. As the exegesis progressed I began to see how, for this novel at least, I was drawn to this rather narrow sub-genre: somehow—and I am not really sure why—it allowed me to both escape into a revisionist adolescence, while at the same time accessing old wounds that could be reflected in my contemporary teenage protagonists, elements that perhaps bring a more literary quality to the work.⁷ However, before moving to *Attebery*, there is the issue of my motivational landscape, my goals, the most important of which is an attempt for artistic and stylistic excellence, something towards which I am always striving. For, while the bulk of fantasy works are generic, I had no wish to produce a formulaic novel.

John Grant suggests that such formulaic structures are less the case within children's literature and young-adult fiction, where 'current representatives of those [subversive rather than commercial] traditions ... continue to flourish' (22). Grant is talking about those works that rise above the stock plot and character scenarios that fill 'the toilet bowl

⁷ An ex-Penguin reader, employed by my literary agent to appraise the novel, described it as a young-adult text, but one 'for the more serious, literary-minded reader'.

of the book trade' (23) and which produce 'a narrow commercial definition of the genre' (22). To do this fantasy must 'meddle with our thinking', must:

delight in being controversial, it must *hope* to be condemned by authority (whatever authority one chooses to identify), it must be at the *cutting edge* [my italics] of the imagination, it must flirt with madness, it must be doing things that other forms of fiction *cannot*. (22)

While such values are part of my belief system—my internal landscape—the necessary skills to achieve this have been a long time coming, as my first attempt at children's fiction, at eighteen, was a derivative Blytonesque novel. Whether I have met my own 'cutting edge' criteria is for others to judge. I have attempted to write the best young-adult novel that I can. While *The Stone Crown* is a more mature attempt at what I aimed for at eighteen, my Blytonesque period was the beginning of a lifelong interest; the point where I passed from simply being a reader into a serious, if non-scholarly, attempt at writing.

But it is precisely with non-scholarly prose that the exegesis can interfere. Such interference raises fundamental questions, questions that children's author Alan Garner suggests go to the heart of a writer's job, which is to use words 'to express that which is most necessary, to speak the ineffable' (*Voice* 137). On his writing process he has this to say:

In each of my books the child protagonists have aged. The distance between them and me has stayed the same. Is that a coincidence, or have I been engaged in something much more subtle and unconscious, to do with my own psyche, not theirs? (60)

If this is a truism that applies to my work, and I believe it is, what exactly are these 'subtle and unconscious' processes? Due to the subject matter and themes of my novel

and because of my father's death quite early in its writing, Garner's question about the subtleties of the psyche is one that resonates profoundly, one which leads into another secondary landscape, that of personal history: the emotional, spiritual and intellectual milieu out of which I write.

Brian Attebery describes 'indigenous fantasy' as a mode where the action takes place in the 'ordinary world', one where 'contrary to all sensory evidence and experience—magical beings' and 'supernatural forces' are to be found. He also suggests that it is an 'inherently problematic form':

for one wonders what strategies the author will adopt to conceal or bridge the built-in conceptual gap. The gap itself reflects our different ways of knowing or responding to the world, the magical and scientific dimensions of thought and language that are reflected in ... fantasy (129)

Attebery's comments offer a different way of looking at the world than the strictly mimetic world of realism, and as such, highlight 'the less evident gulf between story and history, [and] our two ways of organizing time and placing ourselves within it' (129). But it is precisely how, as a writer, I accessed and organised memory (time) and history (family) that concerns me. And, in this sense, this question of strategies goes deeper than those outlined by Attebery on a purely narrative or mechanical level. In choosing an Arthurian re-telling (albeit one where the Arthurian action comprises less than ten per cent of the novel) I believe I was unconsciously breaking down the stone dyke between my palimpsestic re-reading of a mythic Arthur and a hidden, secondary re-reading, that of my unconscious incorporation of my father into our family mythos and subsequently my novel. But why this choice to move away from the traditional tellings? What was at work here? In not having Arthur come back to save Britain I was taking a chance. The reading public, particularly the younger demographic, sometimes do not brook interference

with their mythic traditions. Yes, I was endeavouring to produce a story that ‘meddle[d] with our thinking’ but that was only part of it, for in order to do so, as Garner suggests, it is sometimes necessary for the writer to put herself or himself at ‘risk’ and that the story revealed by the writer should be ‘no less than the truth’, and by ‘“truth”’ he means that ‘fabrication through which reality may be the more clearly defined’ (*Voice* 27). Here, again, I believe my family history shaped these various outcomes.

While firmly lodged in reality and the everyday, my recollections of my father have always embodied a mythical, ‘world-as-we-want-it-not-as-it-is’ dimension. This grey area of memory, myth and emotional longing explains my optimism that night when my family drove out to Woking. On my part, memory had given way to wishful thinking—a favourite phrase of his—and I had succumbed over the years to the more intimate, epistolary version of him. The gaps between his lines left space for me to breath life into a different man, one I could remake in an image that suited the safety of distance. However, the reshaping of real experiences is part of the fiction-writer’s job description, and, as I said in my Introduction, this more realist brand of fantasy allows personal and public mythologies to intersect. Unconsciously I needed to delve into my past from the perspective of fantasy. I needed this liminal arena in which to deal with issues surrounding my father, which was fine until I started to wrestle with the exegesis.

In terms of the exegesis, I had taken off in several different directions at various points only to come to a dead end. However, as I did not want to write a typically straightforward exegesis that goes neatly through from genesis, research, drafts, to final product as if it were a self-reflexive journal of some kind, an alternative position needed to found, and it was while mentally searching for such a stance—during an intense period of re-writing covering drafts three to five of the novel—that things began to unravel.

To a degree the exegesis was already interfering with the novel: considerable time, energy and emotional resources were already engaged in solving the exegetical problem, all of which I felt would be much better spent on the creative side, as that too had its problems, not the least of which was that I had got to draft three without having a sufficiently strong understanding of the metaphysical rules that governed the time-bridge aspects of the novel and underpinned the appearance of the horseman in the 21st century. Like many things that we avoid or shun, the exegesis began to take on monstrous proportions and it was not until a week after I had completed draft three of the novel, when I was once again contemplating my resistance to the whole exegetical endeavour, that the first inklings, the first of those hidden elements in what I was undertaking, rose to the surface:

I can now see what I've been circling it for so long. My resistance to the exegesis is directly related to the hierarchical structure of the institution that I am in. It's patriarchy ... my father I'm arguing, rebelling against. (Walker: journal entry n.p.n)

That was not to be the end of it. As things progressed, it slowly dawned that both in mythical and metaphorical terms I was writing a novel about my relationship with my father; that Arthur and various male characters stood in for him. I already knew this in that unspecific kind of way creative people deal with personal and family issues. But the mythic Arthur? Had I, in choosing this particular version of him, a legendary hero who was not coming back to save the Isles, unconsciously elected to come to terms with the fact that my father was no longer coming back to make amends for all those years?

At first the whole thing seemed interesting. I was between drafts and, while I was still unclear as to my direction, I attacked the exegesis with renewed vigour. However, on my return to the novel things began to unravel. Something was

missing, or more to the point, something was now 'in there' that should have been hidden; the fact of which left an awkward emptiness—a feeling of hollowness to the creative process. I could not put my finger on it at first and only much later would it come out: my father now sat, in a monolithic sense, at the centre of the novel. He was no longer avoidable, tangential. He was now—to use Fowles's analogy of the written wood, a 'metaphorical forest' of 'constant suspense' (*Tree* 64)—the ogre in the castle at its centre, or, in Tolkienian terms, my forested landscape had become the Old Forest and all paths led down to the Witherwindle and Old man Willow (125-7).

With my father now foregrounded as conscious focus and the novel progressing through draft four, it was not long before the exegetical process warranted another entry in my electronic journal. The following is unedited:

unconscious produces thematic structures → thematic structures produce art → art equals excellence → not arguing that my novel is excellent → arguing that process is striving for excellence → ∴ in analysing process the conscious realization of an unconscious portion might equal disaster → and if not disaster, then it certainly stands between an unconscious patterning and a more deliberate textual manipulation → is this the case? → has revelation of 'Arthur as father' interfered with novel? → certainly feels so → however, feeling lacks academic credibility → so am I obliged to prove it exegetically? → am I obliged to think even harder about the process in order to justify my stance? → does this expose me to other revelations that will in turn interfere with the writing? → certainly the child-like space which I seem to connect with during writing is now policed by my father → it feels much like when as a teenager I struggled with my homework and he stood watching over my shoulder, telling me to concentrate and not to daydream—daydreaming won't get you anywhere he'd say—and then tell me how stupid I was whenever I made a mistake (Walker: journal entry n.p.n)

Like many Englishmen before me, my connection to the literary forest as a place of danger, where a wrongly taken path may lead to disaster, goes back to my early childhood and The Brothers Grimm. As a child, the fictional woods, those landscapes

composed within the texts I devoured, and the actual woods, the natural surroundings in which I felt at home, were freighted equally in my imagination. I was constantly escaping the realities of home in favour of a 'habitual flight into [the] mental greenwood' (Fowles *Tree* 42). But in terms of the literary wood as a site of danger and 'other' it was *The Wind in the Willows*, with its Wild Wood—'dense, menacing, compact, grimly set in vast white surroundings' (99-100)—and its more psychologically rounded characters than those found in fairytales, that resonated. But writing is rarely constructed around such early literary experiences. Many strands feed into a writer's make-up, into his or her journey through the wood of words, not the least of which is other fiction, and both children's and adult literature have affected my writing: each exists within the other; each informs the other in a constant dialogue between the child and the man, as these powerfully evocative passages from M. John Harrison's *The Course of the Heart* show.

In that part of Northamptonshire ... the winter copses seem to hang for ever in the moment of darkening against a pale blue sky — as if it will take for ever for night to fall — in a gesture so perfect there will never need to be another day. (136)

Harrison's redolent language transports me bodily. I can smell the ploughed earth and hear the rattle of dried leaves in the hedgerows. Below, the author's landscape is linked to the poignancy of adolescent experience:

Even now, a chance configuration of cottages and bare elm trees will remind me how I trudged home across the cold ploughed fields at the close of an afternoon in late December: a boy thirteen or fourteen, composed only of the things he wanted at that moment... (136)

Importantly, it is somewhere between Grahame's 'Wild Wood' and Harrison's 'ploughed fields' that I wished to take my young-adult readers. In doing so I was re-

animating my own adolescence, returning not only to my family mythos, but also re-entering the landscape in which I had, for so long, placed King Arthur. To do this required my re-entering those landscapes of adolescence. I needed to touch, imaginatively, the Greenbelt of outer London where I grew up; to re-enter those green spaces, a journey that is somewhat akin to walking through a beechwood in early spring, when the leaves burst forth into a canopy of green so translucent that one seems to be underwater rather than on the forest floor. As John Fowles intimates, my entering of such a space required a certain kind of concentration, 'a sublimated form of discovery' and 'isolated exploration', a crossing over into the 'endless combe in leaves of paper' (*Tree* 61), in order that I could rediscover that fourteen-year-old who was so in love with the green world of nature.

While I was familiar with a number of Fowles's novels, it was only after my father's death that I was handed his essay *The Tree* in which he triangulates the relationship between his father, nature and the unconscious elements of the writing process. But it is his meditations on nature and the idea of the 'green man' as an allegory for the unconscious elements of writing that struck me; in particular the analogy of the wood and our passage through it as a metaphor for writing.

The Stone Crown is written, in part at least, out of my love of landscape and nature. Like Fowles I am a suburban boy, something he claims shaped his view of nature: 'because [he] had not been brought up in a rural atmosphere, [he] could not take the countryside for granted, indeed it came to [him] with some of the unreality, the not-quite-thereness of a fiction' (*Tree* 60). Unlike Fowles, who was evacuated to Devon during the Second World War, I experienced the wonders of true countryside much later, having to content myself with the odd picnic excursion and the fact that we lived on the periphery of London, a place where I could lose myself within the aptly named Greenbelt. Fowles describes the acute childhood sensation of '[s]linking into the trees'

as being akin to 'leaving land to go into water, another medium, another dimension' (11). Overwhelmingly, this too was how I experienced the tangled, overgrown greenery and bird-life of adjacent bombsites that abutted our rather tame back garden; this too was how I slipped into the emotionally cooling spaces that comprised the extensive (and to my adolescent mind seemingly endless) corridor of parks, commons, woodland and expropriated farmland which I explored, and where I watched badgers and made casts of fox spoor.

As a writer, the connection between the idea of physical exploration, mental exploration, and memory, those elements involved in following a story through its many twists and turns to the final page, seems obvious. Exploration, whether on paper or in the field, suggests there is something to discover, and, while in literary terms the old saw that there is 'no new thing under the sun' (Ecclesiastes 1:9) may be close to the mark, there is always that sense of discovery we have with certain books, that sense of the 'mysterious and paradoxical within us'. If such experiences are so indelibly linked to that bridge between my childhood love of reading, with its escape between the leaves of a book, and my corresponding escape into nature, how much more important is it that I re-connect in a similarly intense way with such experiences when endeavouring to write for children?

Let me return now to childhood experience and the experience of the wood—both Fowles's and mine. In particular, I am interested in his notion of the wood or nature as a simile for the creative process, a largely private experience for many artists, and one which stands in direct contrast to the Linnaean 'scientific mill' (Fowles *Tree*, 52), which reduces and catalogues all experience into ever narrower bifurcations.

Yet we cannot say that the 'green' or creating process ... has no importance just because it is largely private and beyond lucid description and rational analysis. We might as well argue that the young wheat-plant is irrelevant because it can yield

nothing to the miller and his stones. We know that in any sane reality the green blade is as much the ripe grain as the child is father to the man. Nor ... does the simile apply to art alone, since we are all in a way creating our future out of our present, our 'published' outward behaviour out of our inner green being (52)

This “*published*” outward behaviour’ links directly to my father’s insobriety, for it was the latter that drove me in among the trees in the first place. I have already mentioned the Greenbelt that served as a kind of spiritual reservoir against my home-life. And it was to the poignancy of adolescent experience, a kind of Greenbelt of the imagination, to which I turned in those initial drafts, mostly because the physical landscape was insufficient. I needed an emotional entry point into the novel.

Instinctively I chose two sites from my adolescence: one was a disused and wooded quarry close to where I lived as an adolescent; the other was my father’s local watering hole, a public house named The Swan and Sugarloaf. In hindsight and with regard to this exegesis, it was an interesting, although at the time unconscious, juxtaposition of sites. For me, these two sites symbolize the landscape of my childhood and subsequent adulthood: the quarry, with its alignment to nature, imaginative freedom, and my burgeoning adolescent sexuality represents fantasy; while the pub represents contraction, responsibility, family and reality, although for my father such sites were the opposite and an escape. In one sense I was writing back to myself and exploring not only the landscape of memory but also the memory of landscape. There is I believe a subtle difference; both are superimposed one upon the other like a photographic double exposure. However, I can see that the natural world as elegised in those first drafts was precisely that, an idealised, nostalgic reverie, while the pub was an emotional springboard and entry point into the various characters that represented my father. The result was the emergence of my two teenage protagonists interacting around a deserted quarry. Although the quarry was abandoned, along with other elements, after draft three in favour of a walled spinney, it, and the action contained around it, was my starting

point. The quarry's main purpose had been served—it had pulled me into schema from which I could draw on childhood experience.

Such cross-pollinated landscapes live in my imagination and have been fed from sources in both adult and children's literature. In the context of Arthurian myth these landscapes come alive in another sense as well. I am talking here of the spirit world. Britain's landscape is populated with folk legends: fairies, monsters and heroes can be found associated with every nook and cranny of the countryside, and as David Malouf intimates:

[I]f you live in a little village in England or Ireland or Scotland... you can comfortingly tell yourself that you absolutely belong in that landscape and there is no problem, there is no metaphysical problem. Take the same people out and put them somewhere where all of those things are gone, and then, yes, they are in a kind of void. This opens up the question of what it is we need as humans to place ourselves in the world and how difficult it is to achieve that. (Papastergiadis 87)

Malouf is speaking about his experience of being at the edge, of living in a new country with the baggage of the old world, Europe and Lebanon, which is also my adopted position. However, this is precisely what teenagers are doing, moving from the old world to the new. They are being asked to move away from the site of fantasy and enter the real world—to place themselves in the fashion Malouf indicates. On many levels they are more or less willing, appearing to be only too eager to throw off the shackles of childhood and parental authority. The fantasy landscape of popular fiction is at once an escape hatch from the pressures of school and family, while at the same time a parallel world of problems and solutions.

To my mind the most successful young-adult fiction is a deft melding of hope and the kind of brutal honesty that teenagers expect. And, in writing *The Stone Crown*, I had entered the creative landscape quite consciously for similarly polarised reasons: on the one hand there was nostalgia for those adolescent landscapes; on the other a need to

write characters like the McCrossans. In doing so I had descended into Malouf's 'fluid' space, a melding of memory and imagination, where I became sensitive to the 'emotional charge' of adolescence. By this time I was finishing the third draft of the novel and things seemed to be going well.

But all this was to change very quickly. Having set the novel in North Wales in drafts one and two, I stumbled upon an alternative in Alistair Moffat's *Arthur and the Lost Kingdoms*, which places Arthur as an historical entity in the Border Counties of Scotland.⁸ Although I did not know the area well, I had lived on the Welsh Marches, which is similar country, leaving me not entirely out of my depth with regard to colour writing. Before I had a chance to really enter into the spirit of the book, which as an Englishman I viewed rather sceptically at first, my father passed away and I found myself once again in the UK, where I took the briefest of opportunities to visit the Borders, the site of Moffat's Arthur. There I would make a chance discovery, one that would affect both the novel and the exegesis.

Like the Welsh Marches, The Scottish Borders are Marcher country and have a long and bloody history, which in hindsight seems appropriate given my pugilistic bout with the exegesis, the dark and bloody themes contained in the novel, and the antagonistic relationship with my father. The routed and pursued often head for the cover of the trees because open country is dangerous. During my childhood our various houses resembled emotionally the skirmishing and raiding of the Borders. Both my father and I would run for our respective and entirely different metaphorical trees, woods that are simultaneously the unconscious and conscious focus for my novel.

⁸ The final Borders location only solidified between drafts three and four.

Chapter Two:
The 'Green Man' Emerges

'I had a dream of some endless combe, I suppose almost an animal dream, an otter-dream, of endless hanging beechwoods and hazel coppices and leated meadows, houseless and manless'

John Fowles *The Tree* 60

In writing this novel for and about teenagers, with its mythic and historical connections and dysfunctional male characters, I am not only writing back to the historical and mythic within British culture but also to my father. I would like to think we have, in our separate ways—his through drink; mine through artistic pretensions—endeavoured to engage with Fowles’s ‘green man’ as he slips away through the trees, leading us on, tantalising us with his sheer inapproachability. Merlin, who I occasionally call ‘The Green One’ in my novel, with his lore and wisdom, and his druidic power, is—certainly for the young Arthur and possibly in part for the younger reader—also somewhat unapproachable, as the following passage shows:

Turning his back on the trees, the uncle makes a sign against the evil eye and heads back down towards the settlement. But there are things unsaid, untold: secrets that a child cannot fathom, paths that the uncle only guesses at ... Only now, with his uncle a speck at the valley bottom, do we walk in among the trees. There is a power here in the deepest groves that the priests and the monks cannot know. (Walker Stone 52; 53)

However, at the novel’s inception things were different. I played with the notion of a time-slip scenario, involving an old man who appeared to his younger self in order to change his life and subsequent death (whose life, I wonder, was I really wishing to change?). This scenario became cumbersome and was abandoned in favour of the disembodied narrator who was hovering ill-formed and inarticulate in the background.

As the novel progressed I saw that, unconsciously at least, the old man was still lurking among the trees, and although this character had been sacrificed, he resurfaced in the voice of Merlin. But those early draft chapters were not wasted; instead they provided a launch pad, an emotional jumping off place. As my confidence grew, I turned to Merlin, who speaks from an unspecified space and time, to articulate some of the conscious themes I intended exploring, but like all projections of the unconscious he was to be far from content with my limited choices.

In that first draft the opening line of my novel read, '[t]he *old man* was *gone*' (my italics), which, if taken with the Cockney meaning of husband or father and the colloquial euphemism for death, was untrue, as at the time of writing it my father was living in a nursing home in Surrey. Nor can I claim like Emlyn the power of the sight as at eighty-seven⁹ my father's subsequent demise was on the cards. I cannot say definitely that his death shifted the novel into its current form and structure, but I like to think of it, in particular *Sleepers Spinney*, as a parting gift from him.

When sober my father was the epitome of the mannered English male and expected his family to behave in a similar fashion. However, it seems he could only emerge from his cultural and generational straight-jacket by entering the green world of his repressed consciousness, something he accomplished through alcohol. What he lacked, like most modern, post-industrial individuals, was guidance, a culturally appropriate map of the territory. He was a child lost in the forest: a nightmare world. What emerged was stripped of inhibition and ran among us in much the same fashion that the boy Arthur does when Merlin enchants him.

Then, in a wild-eyed moment, he is on his feet and into the forest. He weaves between the trees, leaping fallen trunks, ducking under branches as the moonlight picks out the gleam of sweat

⁹ My father was ninety-three when he died.

across his muscles. He runs on. He is the hunter and the hunted. The forest god governs his body now. (Walker Stone 65)

The above quote appeared in draft four after my father's death. Prior to that, instead of Merlin putting Arthur in a trance in which the forest god takes hold, I had the young Arthur prove himself by facing down a she-bear: *'the animal grunts and raises itself up on its hind-quarters. It stands as tall as Merlin. Time slows as the animal sways on its hind legs, its muzzle probing the air'* (Walker: early draft Stone). My point being, that somewhere between drafts three and four Merlin began to take hold of the Arthurian section of the novel and would not let go.

As Merlin's disembodied voice speaks from an unspecified space and time and from beyond the grave, the question arises as to whether I am, in popular psychological parlance, seeking to hear from him what I would dearly have wanted to hear from my father? Had I conjured these alternative versions of Arthur and Merlin, a kind of surrogate father son relationship, as an unconscious entry point into my issues with him? However, what if the writer needs to explore, to move through the trees as John Fowles would have it and discover what lies ahead, and in doing so to write the kind of fiction that tempts 'the visitor [reader] to turn the page' and 'explore further' (*Tree* 58-59). Because it was not simply the novel I was exploring; there was the exegesis.

At every stage where there was a break in the novel writing process the conflicting issue of tackling the exegesis and my resistance to it raised its head, its usual manifestation being a mixture of confusion and avoidance tactics. During one such stage between drafts three and four, I returned to *Arthur and the Lost Kingdoms*. With web-based images showing the landscape to be very similar to the Welsh Marches, where I had lived during my early twenties, I moved the novel's location from Wales to Scotland, a decision based primarily on the ideas I had encountered in Moffat's book. Due to this alternative history, with its emphasis on a 'brilliant

Welsh-speaking cavalry general from a southern Scottish tribe' (Moffat dust jacket), *The Stone Crown* incrementally distanced itself yet again from the traditional myths and legends surrounding the Matter of Britain.

But life, like the plot of a novel, is subject to change. The first of these was the 'chance discovery' I mentioned at the end of the last chapter, when, during the period following my father's funeral, I borrowed a car and took off to the Borders to see if Moffat's landscape was as I imagined. It was there, just outside the hamlet of Drumelzier, that I found the walled spinney which features so centrally in *The Stone Crown*. However, as draft three became four, and 'Sleepers Spinney' insinuated itself into the novel, I began once again to ponder my resistance to the exegesis. The wood of words was no longer a place to roam freely and imaginatively, no longer a space for unfettered fantasy, it had shifted across from the metaphorical into a much more mimetic world.

As a writer in mid-process, writing out of my own fraught adolescence and back to the fraught adolescence of the characters, the initial comfort of writing a young-adult fantasy novel was being dissolved by the collision between the exegesis and the creative work. In particular, those analytical elements that comprise any intellectual puzzle, one which I had no doubt unconsciously set myself, were no longer at a significant intellectual distance from the more emotionally dangerous unconscious drivers.

Such notions are perhaps best highlighted by looking at the audience for which young-adult literature is produced. Children's author, Tim Bowler, likens teenagers as 'being two people in one ... a child falling asleep and an adult waking up' (Jubilee Books n.p.n.). With their mood swings and their casual invocation of rational argument, teenagers can often be said to occupy a kind of militarised zone into which their parents stumble. In his essay, '“Not in the Middle Ages”?: Alan Garner's *The Owl Service* and the Literature of Adolescence', Paul Hardwick argues that this liminality or 'blurring of boundaries' within

young-adult fiction is an ‘invitation’ for the adolescent reader to ‘participate in the working out of these issues’. Citing Aidan Chambers, he suggests this is done by the writer leaving ‘“ tell-tale gaps” ’ in the narrative (26). There is, however, a subtle difference between such gaps applied consciously by the writer—which both Hardwick and Chambers are driving at, along with Attebery’s ‘built-in conceptual gap’, which I mentioned earlier—and those gaps in knowledge, all those unconscious, hidden, forgotten or suppressed aspects that the writer circles thematically.

My stance on writing process, which I find uncannily aligned to that of Fowles and Garner, can best be summed up when I asked a friend, a practicing psychiatrist, if she would read some of the passages dealing with Emlyn’s father’s unnamed mental disorder. She replied that I needed no guidance and that I should rely on my imagination, as ‘the vagaries of the human mind and of mental illness were as many and varied as there were individuals’. The mental ‘greenwood’ is, after all, full of diverging and converging pathways, dead ends and dark entangled thickets. The separation between shaman and madman (a shifting line that might be equally applicable to my character, Merlin) has always been a vague demarcation, and the ‘man in the trees’, as Fowles suggests, (or, as he intimates, W. H. Hudson’s ‘green woman’) has always been elusive and at the same time attractive, and no less so because this ‘profound and universal’ myth ‘is constantly “played” inside every individual consciousness’ (*Tree* 42).

Each mental ‘greenwood’ develops its own landscape and topography. To me, as a youngster, the Plantagenet Romances of the 12th and 13th centuries, with their courtly love and polished armour, failed to ring true: mine was a darker, muddier vision of Arthurian Britain, inspired no doubt by my equally muddy home-life. In [un]consciously choosing the legend and setting it in what I saw to be its correct time, the Dark Ages, other vortices were at work. Merlin’s voice places the contemporary action within a much larger timeframe, a much broader mythic landscape, and it is he who conjures the

spirit of the forest, of the oak, the 'green man' if you like, and places him in the boy Arthur. Instead of the ubiquitous dunce-capped wizard, I made him a more shaman-like figure. This idea is not new; in fact the notion of an historical Merlin is almost as old as the legend. Nikolai Tolstoy suggests that not only was he real but that he was a shaman, a seer, 'a genuine prophet whose oracle lay at a sacred spring on that Mountain-Centre, from whose skirts flowed the great rivers of the North' (217). The mountain in question is Hart Fell, one of the highest peaks in the Borders; the rivers are the Tweed and the Teviot, thinly disguised as the Yeave and the Yarrow in my fiction.

Garner's valley in *The Owl Service* also exists, as does the fabled Stone of Gronw through which Lleu Law Gyffes hurls his spear and kills Blodeuwedd's lover, Gronw Pebyr. According to Paul Hardwick, the Middle Ages (Dark Ages in my case) double as a metaphor for adolescent experience (26).¹⁰ Hardwick suggests that '[t]he most effective adolescent fiction confronts the reader with his or her own "Middle Ages" in the sense ... [that it is] ... a period of blurred boundaries and barely-suppressed violence (of one kind or another)' (28), and then links this to Clive, one of the parental figures in *The Owl Service*, and to a scene where his son Roger has shot some film, which upon development shows signs of paranormal activity.

'I haven't the faintest: unless Halfbacon was putting a jinx on you.'
'Are you serious, Dad? Could he?'
'Could he what?'
'Put a jinx on me?'
'Now steady,' said Clive. 'We're not in the Middle Ages: you'll be roasting the chap at the stake next.' (Garner *Owl* 82)

¹⁰ I believe that Hardwick has got his time frames wrong. Although the written form of *The Mabinogion* stems from mid- to late 14th century Welsh sources, there are suggestions that it comes from a much older oral tradition and that 'no one doubts that much of the subject matter of these stories is very old indeed, coeval maybe with the dawn of the Celtic world.' (Jones & Jones 7)

Garner is strong on the debate between rational scientific thought, played out through Gwyn's textbook explanation of the physics of reflected images (94), and the unresolvable paradoxes contained in myth, particularly those unexplained areas of human experience that fit roughly into what we call the paranormal. This debate is reflected partly in Clive's response to his son's idea of a curse being placed on him. Hardwick is quick to point out that Umberto Eco has written on this in *Travels in Hyper-Reality*, with the latter referring to that popular fantasy scenario of the medieval secondary world, a fictional construct he describes as the 'new Middle Ages' (72). Hardwick elaborates by quoting Eco: 'before rejoicing or grieving over a return of the Middle Ages, we have the moral and cultural duty of spelling out what kind of Middle Ages we are talking about' (Eco in Hardwick 25).

As novel and exegesis moved closer together, I was approaching that forgotten space to do with my father that had originally motivated the story: the Dark or Middle Ages of my adolescence and my suppressed angst at my father's behaviour. Interestingly, the crucial motivator for the contemporary action in *The Stone Crown* springs from events set in the Dark Ages, the time when the Romans had pulled out of Britain and the first waves of warrior-settlers were issuing from mainland Europe. Thus the stage is set for the legendary characters of Arthur and Merlin. Even in the more traditional renderings Merlin can be seen as manipulative; a consummate politician balancing the affairs of state against the lives of others. But in *The Stone Crown* Merlin has cause to regret his manipulation of the boy, Arthur. He has been forced to rethink his actions. He wishes to release himself and Arthur from their mutual entrapment in much the same way that Lawrence McCrossan finally sees an end to his family's indentured service to the wooden figures.

A clearer example of exegetical interference at this point in the novel is Merlin's voice. Once I had consciously taken him on as representative of my father, I began

to resent his presence. Merlin now seemed like my puppeteer as well as Arthur's, and, as draft four moved forward, a more guilt-ridden version of Merlin began to emerge, as these two snippets, which were not in draft three, show:

For many years Arthur has no need of me and I am left to my forest wanderings. But I cannot forget that his childhood has been snatched from him; that it is me who has stolen it. The same thing happened to me as a child. (Walker Stone 103)

Merlin, speaking as my father, was separating himself out, separating himself from the power he had held over Arthur since a child. In this sense Merlin is an archetypal parental figure. But, as the draft advanced, there was a growing confusion in me about which position I was speaking his character from: was it me as a writer, me as a son, me as angry son, me as guilty son—or was it simply my father speaking? Again:

No resemblance does he bear to any child: neither the child we carry with us to the grave and who berates us for our callous forgetfulness of youth, nor any living child that plays in the dust or cries for his mother. He is apart. He is a man possessed and he will have his sword (158).

I could easily substitute the word 'drink' for 'sword' in the sense that the above passage metaphorically describes the effect of drinking upon my father; he would, for a while, act in a maudlin, childish way before entering a disinhibited stage where he became progressively nastier. The previously unconscious liminal space from which characters had spoken was now a half-world, a contaminated zone where I could only guess at what was pulling my strings. While the above passages remained in the final submission, the constant decision-making around any new material, where it had emerged from and why, was at this stage of the novel writing process rather enervating. Questions eventually arise as to whether, without the exegesis,

what decisions, what forking paths in the wood of words I might have chosen and whether *The Stone Crown* would have been a better or a worse novel?

During the initial stages of writing any given draft this was in no way a conscious spelling out of my own family patterns or issues: in the heat of creativity words appeared on the page and characters orbited one another. It was often later, during re-drafting, or close re-reading, that a character's actions and dialogue would come to be interpreted as my father talking through Merlin (or whichever character I was currently working on) or equally as myself addressing my father. But is this not precisely the point of art: to bring about a fusion (or apparent confusion) of irreconcilable elements within the artist, and transmute them, almost alchemically, into a creative whole? However, such discoveries, this facing-off between characters and author, is perhaps best left until later, after the dust has settled and a manuscript has been bottom-drawerred or published, a point Hardwick appears to be alluding to in his essay.

Certainly, in his positioning of Garner's works, attitudes to creativity and several mental breakdowns, Hardwick seems to be implying precisely this connection. The implication is that Garner's characters, Alison, Roger and Gwyn *are in* the Middle Ages, not only in terms of being caught in the Welsh mythic landscape of *Math vab Mathonny* but also in terms of being adolescents, with all of the attendant difficulties and perils, and that by default Garner is, in his creative 'confusion', equally caught up.

Although my creative confusion was much less severe than Garner's, it was still there, and while close analysis can be an interesting and productive way of approaching a narrative, it is not the only way; for some it can also suck the life from a text. In hunting the 'green man' from the trees, I have, in some sense, undone what I had made of my father as he passed from memory into the creative foliage of *The Stone Crown*. I had let him go back into hiding and emerge, like Arthur, in a different time and place. The exegesis is akin to the hire-car that carried me to that excruciating ten-minute visit

on our arrival in the UK; it started out innocently enough, the distance was there, but I was eventually delivered into a space where two completely different realities collided. What is understood on an intuitive and emotional level sometimes does not bear unravelling by the intellect, as the following incident will show.

One morning soon after my return, as I entered my office during the process of problematizing the exegesis, and the word 'bosky' simply arrived in my consciousness. There seemed to be no apparent connection to anything that had happened prior or to anything I had been thinking about. Bosky? Bosky? I rolled the word around in my head. I had not heard it for years. *The Oxford English Dictionary* showed two entries. The second entry—meaning 'somewhat the worse for drinking'—being derived from the first, which meant 'covered with bushes or underwood' (*OED Vol II 421*). But the French for wood is *bois* and a French/English dictionary turned up '*bosquet*', meaning copse or grove. A light bulb exploded in my head: not only does the major part of *The Stone Crown* centre on 'Sleepers Spinney', but the wall holds back the forest god. My father was no longer just Arthur and Merlin; he was now consciously, conspicuously, a representative of the Oak God. He was Fowles's 'green man' breaking through the spinney wall. The creative component was now an interlocutory drama; I had become my own inquisitor, an uncomfortable position, both emotionally and mentally. In hunting the 'green man' from 'out of his trees' (Fowles *Tree* 51), I had confronted the fullness and the emptiness of both phrases.

Was my resistance to writing this exegesis causing my unconscious to act in that dream-like, associative state where forgotten elements of my life emerged? After all, the exegesis had been a pugilistic bout, not only between myself and the demands of the university, but between quite disparate elements of my personality: the desire to complete my doctorate against the less fettered wish to be freely creative; hence the title,

‘Wrestling ... the Exegetical Process’. Or in both novel and exegesis had I simply been wrestling my father, or myself for that matter?

My father wrestled other demons. For him the fight was a constant war between his Englishness, his reserve, and his emotions: drink was his means of contacting and releasing all that had been stifled by an Edwardian childhood (in one sense the ‘conforming face imposed by fashion’ (42) that Fowles speaks of). Where my father’s mental and emotional flight was to the pub, mine had been towards nature and creativity. And yet here I was meeting both myself and my creation, the metaphor of my father as ‘green man’, as we stepped clear of the walled spinney. Like John Fowles, I am interested in Zen Buddhism, and I cannot help pondering that my *satori*-like revelation was brought about by the intellectual knots I had experienced in dealing with the exegesis and, that in trying to write a ‘dangerous’ young-adult novel, it was hardly surprising that I would encounter some creative dangers on the way.

In *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods* Umberto Eco implies that the forest is a metaphor, ‘not only for the text of fairy tales but for any narrative text’ (6). The symbol of the woods as perilous, as a metaphor for the unconscious and irrational elements within the psyche is not new. Although seen as a comedy, Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, with its movement from city to forest and back again, and its manipulative fairies, has a darker element running through it, one that marks our fear of the ‘greenwood’ and the monsters and supernatural beings that dwell in its interior.

I have come to terms with my father—part monster, part God, part run-of-the-mill bloke—and in turn, as John Fowles would have it, with the numberless ‘crossroads in our two lives’ where I had ‘murdered him, or at least what he believed in’ (*Tree* 18). His faults were of a certain time and place. His disappearance between those trees that constitute Dante’s ‘dark wood’ (27)—the pub, work, his absence, his ever present anger—and his subsequent re-emergence in my novel, in all its unpredictability for the

child contained within the adult writer, were both his and my way of reconciling the irreconcilable.

Chapter Three:

Timescapes and Collisions

‘In the middle of the journey of our life, I came to myself
in a dark wood, for the straight way was lost.’

Dante Alighieri *Inferno*, 27

Time in faerie is different, as any child will tell you. However, time is one of the thematic preoccupations of my novel and of this exegesis in so much as it deals with memory and imagination and the re-ordering of narrative both cultural and personal. Entry into the faerie wood can be seen to be analogous to the creative process. The writer disappears into the wood of his or her imagination, enters another time, and emerges clutching the half-remembered dream that she or he wishes to communicate. As Alan Garner states: '[t]he word in the air is not the same as the word on the page' and it is the writer's job to 'make the invisible ... such that other people can see it' (*Voice* 43; 62). However, he also suggests that in order for this to happen the writer 'must employ and combine two', what he describes as paradoxical qualities: 'a sense of the numinous, and a rational mind' (41).

The phrase 'off with the fairies' is a derogatory one and I was often described thus: the child as dreamer. But it is precisely as 'dreamer' that I access Garner's 'paradoxical qualities'. As a suburban Australian wishing to write for a younger audience, I needed to connect with my childhood and those landscapes, both emotional and actual, that served the project best. As David Malouf suggests, it is possible that any writer, any one person 'might have only a single place he can speak of, the place of his earliest experience' (*Southerly* 3). Malouf is not simply talking of a geographical location. Rather, he is intimating the entire emotional geography that is the child and which we carry with us

into adulthood. The British children's author, David Almond, also puts it eloquently in the introduction to his autobiographical collection, *Counting Stars*:

These stories are about my childhood ... Like all stories, they merge memory and dream, the real and the imagined, truth and lies. And, perhaps like all stories, they are an attempt to reassemble what is fragmented, to discover what has been lost.
(ix)

Two elements stand out for me in Almond's introduction: the merging of 'memory and dream, the real and the imagined, truth and lies' and his notion of storytelling as an attempt to 'reassemble what is fragmented, to discover what has been lost.' This last phrase is crucial. To discover what has been lost requires looking: a quest. My young protagonists, like many fictional characters, engage in just such a quest in the hope (via myself as writer) that my readers will also wish to journey through the text. Such a journey tacitly implies the writer's quest. I was attempting, in Almond's words, to 'reassemble', to discover what I had 'lost', and to do so I had to make certain narrative decisions at each point in the story.

This constant forking, both in life and in story—this 'multiplicity of choice of paths in a wood' (Fowles *Tree*, 59)—is something that fascinates me: how we get there, and how those choices, some rational, some not, are made. Why some and not others? I believe this is in part governed by a semi-conscious turning away on my part from certain elements of the writing process, what Fowles describes as a kind of 'benign psychosis' (*Wormholes* 137), which in turn produces a state of receptivity, a synchronous positioning of self, by whatever means I care to explain such phenomena, be it quantum physics or spirituality, that opens me to various situations and experiences, both mental and actual. Such was the situation when I stumbled on the walled copse. On the other hand, turning my face toward these processes, looking hard at the hidden spaces from which I created *The Stone Crown*, seemed to have the opposite effect: new characters

were created; old characters started acting 'out of character'; dialogue began to seem stilted—the 'green man' was running amok.

The following is one of a number of examples of how these exegetical processes began to infiltrate the text of the novel. I had been working on an unchanged passage from an earlier draft in which I was endeavouring to manoeuvre the character of Lawrence McCrossan into a more complex relationship in which the father, Ol'man McCrossan, could blame the son for the disappearance of the wooden figure. This entailed having Lawrence McCrossan leave the spinney and then return: '[Emlyn] heard the muffled outbreak of cursing ... and McCrossan came crashing back through the wood' (Walker *Stone* 50). As I wrote this the idea of my father as 'green man' came crashing in alongside the figure of McCrossan yet again.

Landscape and location was also affected. On a conscious level I had already vividly conjured from childhood memories several key pub scenes where the weight of the McCrossans came to bear on Emlyn and Maxine. Some of the more critical action stems from just such locations and interactions, which is hardly surprising given my father's focus. So great was the impact of my 'green man' revelation that I thought seriously, if somewhat fleetingly, about changing the name of the pub to 'The Green Man'. Subsequent research showed, however, that it was mostly English public houses that carried that name and, as I could find none in Scotland, the issue slipped away.

As stated in Chapter Two, I had already recognised my creation of a Dark Ages Merlin and Arthur as 'a kind of surrogate father son relationship', one that allowed me 'an unconscious entry point into my own issues'. Added to this was the knowledge that my father's 'boskiness', his release of his 'green man' through drink, corresponded to my disappearance into the wood of creativity. Here he was, first as

Arthur, then as Merlin, and finally as the Oak God, stepping from the unconscious workings of the novel into the rational and analytical arena of the exegesis. A journal entry notes this unholy trinity as:

Merlin, Arthur and Dad = M-A-D. Which is what I feel like, battling this bloody exegesis. Angry! Angry about how at each turn it interferes (on some profound level) with the novel, throws into stark relief issues that I'm working through artistically. Angry about how this information seems to bleed into everything, contaminating the whole with my father's more literal appearance. (Walker: journal entry n.p.n)

Exegetical stress continued to insinuate itself into decision making that involved the novel. In draft five I had situated the chess club upstairs at The Crown in order to solve the problem of how Emlyn and Max could hoodwink the McCrossans. The question now arose as to whether the chess figures were not only a clever plot device but also a double metaphor? Did my chess-like shifting of characters and plot (a common enough writing practice) correspond directly to the exegetical exposure of what had previously been unconscious processes? Did it matter? Or was I thinking too hard about everything. The infiltration of the exegesis had so perturbed my writing environment that even writing dialogue, which previously I had always found relatively easy, became a chore.

When writing fiction I let myself sink down with my mind's eye into the imaginary landscape (a very different scenario from writing academic prose as outlined in the stylistic comparison in my Introduction), populating this world with figures that then speak to one another. I hear their dialogue—the characters literally hold a conversation in my head—and often I let them talk through the action as this frequently pulls up an emotional direction that I find useful. Below, in the scene where Emlyn is confronted by the McCrossans on the banks of the frozen

Yeave, is another example of how such mimetic intrusion interfered with my creative writing process. An earlier draft read thus:

‘Oh my, we’ve all the answers, have we not? What happened between your father and me,’ said the old man. ‘That what this is all about, eh?’

‘You cursed him,’ shouted Emlyn. ‘You killed Digger.’

Ol’man McCrossan jerked his thumb at the rider. ‘Cursed – sung – you think the like of this’n give a monkey’s?’ He replaced the carving in the tin and closed it; the rider remained. (Walker: early draft *Stone*)

While the final draft of my novel submitted for my doctorate reads:

‘The lad still doesn’t ken what happened that day up at the spinney with his father and Willie Musgrave,’ said Ol’man McCrossan. ‘That what this is all about, eh?’

‘You cursed him. You put something on him and —and he wasn’t the same anymore.’

‘He sung him,’ said the son. ‘Sung away his memory. Cold it was, like this. But he wasn’t like all the other kids, he was different, a dreamer, and my singing —well, it sung him into the dream that is the horsemen and he never really came out.’ (Walker *Stone* 231)

The changes here are subtle and probably have no particular resonance for the majority of readers. But for me there is a world of difference. Apart from the delicate shift in language from ‘your father and me’ to ‘his father and Willie Musgrave’, there is the larger issue of the emergence of a new character.

Willie Musgrave was not in earlier drafts. He came to the fore as draft four moved into five. He was my way of softening the McCrossans, who I had begun to see, primarily as a result of too much ‘exergising’,¹¹ as a kind of exaggerated composite of my father. And while the insertion of the Musgrave character

¹¹ The temptation to use this made up word was irresistible.

probably eased my guilt around writing my father, his inclusion complicated an already tortuous plotline.¹²

The delicate balance between author and characters was also upset. The chief example here is that of Merlin as narrator. His ventriloquising affect was so powerful that, while editing for my literary agent, I changed Merlin's disembodied voice to that of Cei, Arthur's seneschal in the romance version of the Matter of Britain (a change that will stand in the published version). Merlin now became a shadowy figure, talked about rather than addressing the reader directly. I felt this was necessary, because as the voice is in the first person and present tense, I was (as I will show a little later in this chapter in relation to Alan Garner's brief psychosis during the filming of *The Owl Service*) somewhat unnerved to be speaking my father speaking back to me.

Examples of how the exegesis interfered with the novel, while not numerous, are there in sufficient number that they had a cumulative and contaminative effect. Not the least of these was a kind of writer's block.¹³ Like Fowles, I have a similarly intuitive response to my work and to the term writer's block, an Americanism that he abhorred (Singh in Vipond 91-92), believing, like him, that time and space within the making of a work, what he called his 'doldrums', is as important as those times when 'the wind is there' (North in Vipond 52). But with the exegesis circling, blockages from its over-analytical approach fed into the novel. Whereas previously, any parental issues I was dealing with were coming through unconsciously in the contemporary action, mostly via Max and Emlyn's problems and the McCrossan family's response to them, and while such

¹² Interestingly, Musgrave is my father's middle name and also that of a Border Reiver family. Later, my literary agent suggested that Willie Musgrave be decommissioned and he does not appear in the published version.

¹³ One of the reasons I find I am not usually subject to writer's block is that I have several projects running concurrently. The doctoral thesis doesn't allow for that; once the exegesis is in train, one feels obliged to move on it at every spare opportunity.

fictional problems were not my own and had been imaginatively fabricated to suit the story, they still resonated with my personal history. But, as the shift of character from Merlin to Cei suggests, this might not have been the case with the disembodied voice. Outside psychic and paranormal circles, the dead do not speak. But here I was, having a creative discussion with my now dead father around his lack of parenting, the immediate effect of which was to plunge my critical faculties into the unconscious heart of the novel. I knew that unlike the mythic Arthur, he was not coming back as unresolved issues remain unresolved and it is no longer possible to converse with him. The parallels are obvious. In *The Stone Crown* Emlyn's father is absent in all but body, while Maxine's is practically invisible to her until the conclusion. But here is the difference. Sometimes in writing it is useful to disregard the thematic elements, to ignore them, pretend that they are not there. I did not need to know that 'Arthur's my father' in the same way that I know the grammatical structure of subject-verb-object phrase 'Bob's your uncle'.¹⁴

There are inherent dangers involved in the dismantling, in the 'breaching' of—as Maxine does in the novel—such mental walls, not the least of which is our relationship to time. Alan Garner describes this leaking or breaching process in his essay 'Inner Time', where he talks about how he became mentally unravelled during the filming of *The Owl Service* and subsequently had to seek professional help (*Voice* 106-125). Garner's issue was one of time, of tense in actual fact, as I will show shortly (112), for time in the greenwood—whether it is the greenwood of the writer's or reader's imagination—operates differently. On this subject Fowles is eloquent:

With one or two exceptions—the Essex marshlands, Arctic tundra—I have always loathed flat and treeless country. Time there seems to dominate, it ticks remorselessly like a clock. But trees warp time, or rather create a variety of times: here dense and abrupt, there calm and sinuous—never plodding, mechanical,

¹⁴ The original or working title of this exegesis was 'Bob May Be Your Uncle, but Arthur's Not My Father ... Or is He? Memory, Myth and the Exegetical Process.'

inescapably monotonous. I still feel this as soon as I enter one of the countless secret little woods in the Devon-Dorset border country where I now live; it is almost like leaving land to go into water, another medium, another dimension. When I was younger, this sensation was acute. Slinking into trees was always slinking into heaven. (*Tree* 11)

Slinking into a book is a luxury I relish. Writing, on the other hand, is more akin to Malouf's process of submersion, although at times it seems almost like drowning: one has to go down into memory and internal spaces as vivid sometimes as the real. As an analogy of reading, particularly for the avid teenage reader Garner spoke of earlier (although our electronically savvy youngsters are in danger of losing this), Fowles's description of the wood cannot be bettered. And if the physical landscape can have such an effect, what of the imaginative landscape? In talking about his experience of psychosis, Garner relates his therapist's approach and his subsequent realisation:

Bill Wadsworth's ... question was simple, but its implications are so great that I have had to make this two-fold approach ... in order to link the personal to the universal relevancy. Bill had asked: 'Was *The Owl Service* written in the past tense and the third person or in the present and the first?' It had been written in the past tense and the third person. Although there was a lot of dialogue, it was all observed, 'he said' and 'she said', safely at a distance.

The crucial point is that an author's characters are all to some degree autobiographical: and the time of a film or a play is Now; dangerous as it ever was. The distance has gone. (*Voice* 112)

Such are the dangers within the metaphorical wood for a creative mind that wishes to go beyond the merely formulaic, for Garner, like his contemporary, William Mayne, 'has a reputation, not wholly unearned, for difficulty, for [addressing] the full range of human concerns, and any simplicity in their strategies for doing so is deceptive.' (Clute 387) Like Garner, I believe that to fail to provide anything less is to let down not only one's readership, but also oneself.

In writing *The Stone Crown* I was intent on avoiding the clichéd or formula-based approach that can be found in the fantasy genre.¹⁵ To do so it seemed to me that I must play with time and space, not only literally by using these motifs within the work, but also by engaging with that delicate contract between author and public that is fulfilled when as a reader one is drawn miraculously into the narrative. This effect is not exclusive to the fantasy genre; rather it is something all good literature does. However, fantasy quite often touches on those areas that realism,¹⁶ by its very nature, is unable to deal with, such as temporal and spatial anomalies.

Space and time, along with the latter's darker cousin death, have preoccupied the human imagination from the moment we began to communicate. In scientific terms they are a mystery cosmologists and quantum theorists have been pursuing since Einstein rewrote Newtonian physics. In literature, magic, the supernatural and the fantastic can be seen as fictional gateways, releasing us from our earthly bonds and plunging us into worlds not dissimilar from that of Stephen Hawking when he says, '[t]he laws of science do not distinguish between the past and the future' or between the 'forward and backward directions of time' (Hawking 144; 152). One only has to think of Kafka's gigantic beetle or the infinite labyrinths and libraries of Borges.

However, magic and the supernatural are generally seen in antithesis to science. But if Heisenberg's uncertainty principle (1927) and Schrödinger's cat (1935) have taught us anything it is that the Linnean system for boxing everything up does not always work as well as we might expect in an infinitely complex universe. In quantum indeterminacy, or the observer's paradox, the observation or measurement itself affects an outcome, so that it can never be known what that outcome would have been if it were not observed,

¹⁵ Which is not to say such elements are totally absent from the novel.

¹⁶ Because Magic Realism is often confused with fantasy and the fantastic, a quick differentiation between it and 'realism' seems appropriate. While using the real world as its backdrop, the supernatural or paranormal elements of Magic Realism are not explained by either the narrator or the characters. (Chanady 16; 23)

a point I brought up earlier when I asked the question ‘whether *The Stone Crown* would have been a better or a worse novel?’ without the exegesis. However, in literature, in our imaginations, this paradox, like the paradox of Schrödinger’s cat, ceases to be problematic; we are like Russell Hoban’s eponymous hero, capable of being both wave and particle simultaneously.

Pilgermann here. I call myself Pilgermann, it’s a convenience. What my name was when I was walking around in the shape of a man I don’t know, I simply can’t remember. What I am now is waves and particles, I don’t need to walk around, I just go. (*Pilgermann* 11)

Any number of literary devices—compression, ellipses, flashbacks, flash-forwards, pauses, repetition—are open to the realist novelist in terms of ordering time, but, as Attebery suggests, rather than simply ordering time through standard literary devices, the fantasy author, along with Magic Realism and the literature of the fantastic, can disrupt ‘time at the level of the story’:

Time itself may be described as jumping, pausing, repeating, or looping back on itself as a result of magical operations. There is even a precedent for distortion of time in folk narratives, which often portray time in Elfland as running at a different rate... (*Strategies* 55-56)

Attebery goes on to suggest that ‘[t]he impossible in fantasy is generally codified’ but that ‘[o]nce admitted to the fictional world ... works to redefine everything else’ (55).

In particular, the magical code allows the author to send messages about narrative sequence, about character, and about the ontological status of narrative statements, or, in other words, about the boundary between the fictional and the real. (55)

Generally speaking, literary magic is seen as either altering time or space or both, with the former being flagged as temporal disruption, while the latter inevitably involves

spatial dislocation in the form of matter being rearranged or relocated. There is a link between Blodeuwedd, being made from flowers, (Garner *Owl* 82) and the character of Arthur in *The Stone Crown*: he too is given his power by a magician but does not ask for it; he too is imprisoned and punished for his innocent involvement. In Garner's novel, as in mine, the present is punctured or penetrated by time past, something that we know in the real world to be impossible, although current thinking in quantum physics does not deny the possibility of travelling back to the past. At the present moment, however, we must rely on fictional narratives to achieve this. Time in Huw Halfbacon's world is very different from that of the three teenage protagonists, as the following passage shows [my italics]:

'All right,' said Roger. 'I'll buy it. Why are you called Halfbacon?'

'We *are* very short of meat in the valley, *old time*,' said Huw. 'And there *is* a man in the next valley. He has some pigs. But *he is not letting* anyone have them.'

'So what did you do?'

'I *go* to him and I *ask* him to let me *take* the pigs in exchange for what I will give him.'

'Fair enough,' said Roger. 'Did he agree?'

'Yes.'

'And you took the pigs, and that's how you got your nickname.'

'Yes.' Huw laughed. 'I *am tricking* him lovely.'

'What did you give him for the pigs?'

'Twelve fine horses,' said Huw. 'With gold saddles and gold bridles! And twelve champion greyhounds, with gold collars and gold leashes!'

Huw staggered with his laughter.

'You did that swap for a few greasy pigs?' said Roger.

Huw cackled, showing his teeth, and grabbed Roger's arm for support.

'You're mad,' said Roger. 'You're mad. You're really mad.'

'No, no,' said Huw. He wiped his eyes. 'I *am tricking* him!'

'Then I'm mad,' said Roger. 'Mad for listening to you.'

'No, no,' said Huw. 'You see—they greyhounds, and the horses, and the trappings and all—I *was making* them out of toadstools.' (*Owl* 53-54)

Just as there was danger for those involved in the myth of Blodeuwedd, so too there is for the writer. Halfbacon does not use the past tense, 'gave'; rather he uses variants of the present; in particular the continuous present tense.

The toadstools passage, with its direct reference to the stallions, the greyhounds and the swine in the *Mabinogion* (68), would be easier to dismiss, along with much of the book, as simply a fantasy writer's imaginary journey created for the edification of children, if it was not for Garner's already mentioned bout of mental illness brought on by his involvement with the filming of *The Owl Service* for television two years after publication. Paul Hardwick argues that it is precisely these 'autobiographical resonances that caused such problems for Garner when *The Owl Service* was brought from the safe past tense into the dangerous Now by filming' (Hardwick 27). He also suggests that it has precisely that energy, the dangerous paradox of tense and time Garner experienced, which enable the reader's 'creative participation' and that in fashioning 'the experience of the reader—they have to be true to the danger of adolescence itself' (27). Fowles appears to back this up, saying:

for the ... simple truth is that creating another world, however imperfectly, is a haunting, isolating, and guilt-ridden experience very similar indeed to the creating of a 'real' perspective on the actual world that every child must undertake. (*Wormholes* 137)

As I said in my Foreword, this was a journey I wanted to *undertake* with my father. If the exegesis has done anything, it has, as Attebery suggested earlier, broken down 'the boundary between the fictional and the real'. Perhaps for some writers and authors like myself the truth of the novel is in some way a self-truth; one, as Malouf says, that stems perhaps from a forgotten or repressed childhood—that 'single space'. It is tempting here to equate that 'single place' with the singularity of quantum physics, for while such blank spaces on the map can be approached and circled there is always the danger that one will cross an unseen boundary, approach too closely, and plunge the psyche into crisis, à la Garner. Or, as is in my case, profoundly shake those intuitive roots, the 'supportive multiplicity' beneath the 'confusion of daily experience' from where, as

William Golding would have it, the writer emerges from the 'magical area of his own intuitions' and, with the appropriate scaffolding in place, clambers onto the 'supportive machinery of ... story' (*Moving Target* 198).

Perhaps Fowles, Garner and Golding are a little too old fashioned in their thinking about art and the value of art in a postmodern world. However, as a writer in mid-stream, wrestling the exegetical process, I find myself siding with Golding's 'bumbling truth' (197) and with Alan Richardson's notions of the 'dynamic child' in his essay 'Romanticism and the End of Childhood':

If the ingenuous, questing, unique, emotive, dynamic child of the Romantics has lost its power to move us, we may well have lost more in terms of cultural power than we think to have gained in terms of critical sophistication. (Richardson in McGavran 37)

After all, if I am writing for young-adults, who are crossing their own reality bridge from childhood to adulthood, it seems only fair to plumb the depths of my psyche and dredge up something honest; to write 'dynamic' characters that 'move' the reader. But to do so required a certain emotional and intellectual sleight-of-hand as I approached long buried issues and hidden agendas, for if children's writing requires anything it is the aura of magic, something elusive, unattainable and paradoxical that must stem from the author. And if, as Fowles would have it, the literary wood is analogous to the human psyche and the writing process, then mental time, as Garner puts it, operates outside the stricture of either analogue or digital modalities (*Voice* 106-125). Time in literature, in much the same way as time in memory or the elf wood, is a fluid construction and the traditional fairy tale opening of 'Once Upon a Time' flags this. As Attebery suggests, such time-honoured openings also indicate:

the importance of time itself in fantasy. Narrative is language's way of exploring time; it enables us to give shape and meaning to time in somewhat the same way architecture orders space. The literary convention we call story is our way of establishing imaginative control over time, and so is the fundamental vehicle for artistry within narrative discourse. (53)

Few of us have power over our childhood experiences and, when we do, it is generally limited. Any power we do have comes later and in various forms: the retrieval of memory; the rose-tinted view; the deliberate artifice of reconstruction; or the unconscious reorganisation of personal history. Certain forms of art fall into the latter two categories. The act of writing carries us deep within those personal woods, and yet to ascribe to the notion that everything encountered there is charted and safe is to suggest that Bedlam was merely a day-care facility.

During a particularly emotionally tough period, well before I embarked upon either doctorate or novel, I was talking to my psychiatrist friend—she of the 'vagaries of the human mind' in Chapter Two—who said people with an abusive background needed to find the positive aspects in that landscape and, after listening to my story, handed me 'The Country of the Mind' from Barry Lopez's *Arctic Dreams: Imagination and Desire in a Northern Landscape*. Lopez walks slowly over what at first he describes as the flat and featureless terrain of Pingok Island (70°35' N and 149°35' W). No trees: no landmarks: nothing for the European or Western eye to discern as different in this seemingly 'impoverished' (228) landscape. Slowly, over many months, Lopez's perception changes and he sees the diversity and beauty in numerous small, and to our over-stimulated eyes, insignificant details: 'the chitinous shell of an insect'; 'hoofprints of caribou'; 'the skull of a ringed seal carried hundreds of yards inland by ice' (227-8). The parable was not lost on me and changed how I thought about my childhood and my father; my psychiatrist friend had, without spelling it out, allowed me to see that even within such a barren landscape there are highlights, points of colour and depth that the unaware eye may not see. More

importantly, however, Lopez's prose emphasises the importance of mental landscapes and how the western rational mind, with its strong scientific leanings, catalogues both familiar and unfamiliar terrain. Here he describes how a group of British ship's officers from a mapping expedition draw on the local knowledge of the Inuit people.

[T]hree or four Eskimo men drew a map for them in the sand. The young officers found the drawing exotic and engaging, but almost too developed, too theatrical. I can imagine the Eskimos drawing a map they meant not to be taken strictly as a navigational aid, but as a recapitulation of their place in the known universe. Therefore, as they placed a line of stones to represent a mountain range and drew in the trend of the coast, they included also small, seemingly insignificant bays where it was especially good to hunt geese, or tapped a section of a river where the special requirements for sheefish spawning were present. This was the map as mnemonic device, organizing the names of the places and the stories attached to them, three or four men unfolding their meaning and purpose before the young officers. They did not know what to *leave out for these impatient men*. [My italics] There was no way for them to separate the stories, the indigenous philosophy, from the land. (266-67)

My father was an extraordinarily impatient man. Watching him surface from the unconscious levels of the novel into the more rational areas of writing, such as editing, plotting and restructuring, caused some confusion. Like the Inuit men, I no longer trusted my intuition, no longer knew 'what to leave out'.

Each of us has an indigenous landscape: that of childhood. While it may appear fixed, static, as stories are told and retold, shaping its contours and etching deep trails across its terrain, it is not static or fixed, but, like the natural world, fluid and changeable under the geological and meteorological effects of time and memory. Such shaping is rather akin to exploration. As a writer digs deeper into memory, seeking the blank areas on the map, things open up, sometimes painfully. But, like Lopez's description of the Western-Inuit encounter, some inexplicable territory will remain undiscovered, lying between or beyond the emotions and the intellect. Both intellect and emotion shaped my novel; both circle the 'gap' or 'gaps' in the self that I can never reach or know.

Things struggle free of the unconscious, as our night journeys attest: there are patterns that may not be recognisable to the writer at first or possibly ever. These issues surface as we work around those themes, both fictional and autobiographical, that our unconscious urges us to deal with. The line between fiction and truth is often a blurry one; it shifts according to individual perspective, as sibling challenges to autobiographical memory attests. Nowadays, I am more than happy to be off with the fairies: what was the daydreaming boy, staring out of the classroom window, is now legitimised in the writer seeking a path through the mental greenwood. What happened in our family cannot be changed, but what has changed is my perception and, on a more fundamental and unconscious level, a shift has taken place that I suspect is directly linked to the novel's existence.

And now the exegesis exists too.

I cannot say that it has been an easy row to hoe. It has interfered with the process that was the novel, while at the same time allowing insight that would have been unforthcoming without the steady pressure it exerted. It is as Alan Garner suggests: the 'prime material of art is paradox' and 'that paradox links two valid yet mutually exclusive systems that we need if we are to comprehend any reality ... intuition and analytical thought' (*Voice* 40-41). For all his acerbic spleen on the subject of institutionalised textual analysis, in speaking of the divide and the dialogue between the teaching professions and certain authors, Garner is finally magnanimous:

There are differences between us. It may be that the purely academic mind will always be wary of the eclectic, deeply ordered chaos of the maker, and that artists will always and instinctively resist the scholar's quest for the finite answer; so our attitudes to literature will not be the same. Yet through literature we share the same purpose.

Whether alone in the classroom, or alone in the study, we work, through books and language, towards the one end: to bring about the future. (104-5)

The future Garner describes is very much his personal vision. He states his duty 'is first to the text', because a 'writer is, by writing, above all making a claim for excellence.'

In working the language, as a farmer works the land, we seek to strengthen it against abuse, to protect it against decay, to encourage it towards growth. We hope to leave the language better for our writing... Yet, at the end, there is always somebody, an unknowable "you", whom [we] wish to reach. And, for that contact, [we] are responsible. (84)

I have used the personal pronoun 'we', instead of Garner's original 'I', because his proposed literary future seems inseparable from a future that allows and encourages all children and teenagers to exercise their imaginations and, hopefully, their own creativity. I have a naïve belief in the power of language and narrative and although I could be accused of being elitist (like Alan Garner), I believe there is a 'spiritual obligation' on the part of writers to 'root out the reductive', 'seek excellence', and 'pursue the numinous' (34). And if such pursuit requires the illogical approach of entering the green depth of the wood and taking the uncharted path, then so be it.

Occlusion

‘Everywhere you go you always take the weather with you.’

Woodface Crowded House

At this juncture, a conclusion seems inappropriate inasmuch as it is suggestive of endings or resolution, of a summing up; it has quasi-philosophical and academic connotations. For me writing is a very open-ended affair: books run one into the other; texts speak one to the other; endings can be beginnings or vice versa. On the other hand, to occlude is to stop up or block, and therefore hints at the possibility of leakage. However, it is with the meteorological meaning, where a cold front catches up with a warm front, that I am more concerned. Weather can, when it turns its hand against us as hurricane Katrina proved, be seen as the ultimate natural phenomenon.

My interest in nature and the focus on natural landscapes in my writing seem to point up the appeal of the 'occlusion' metaphor. I have been at pains to find writers for whom the emotional, intuitive and irrational aspects of their art, particularly those processes we call creative, cannot simply be subsumed within the rational and the intellectual. But, in terms of the exegesis, my meteorological analogy perhaps needs spelling out. The cold front catches up with the warm front. During this process the intellect ambushes the emotions, which have been more than happy to ignore what some readers may see as all too obvious. You're writing about your father. And all hell breaks loose.

Throughout his essay *The Tree*, John Fowles¹⁷ is at pains to point up the unapproachable mystery of nature and woods as a metaphor for the creative experience. Is he perhaps hinting at the indecipherable nature of nature, of which weather, in all its unpredictability, is the foremost example? The weather of the soul is no different. We seek happy endings, in life as much as in books, that is the child within us, but rarely do they remain static, rarely can they be held on to. And there are pleasures that go beyond the happy ending, as John Fowles suggests:

[T]here is something in the happy ending that resolves not only the story, but the need to embark on other stories. If the writer's secret and deepest joy is to search for the irrecoverable experience, the ending that announces that the attempt has once again failed may well seem the more satisfying. (*Wormholes* 144)

Both the ending of this exegesis and of *The Stone Crown* are, in some way, the same: they point to the irreconcilability of certain aspects of the human psyche; to an unknown destination.

A book is made up of many beginnings and endings: phrases, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, sections, even sequels. But endings are marks in the sand: they will wash away in another tide. As readers we draw them as much as the author did. Yet we wish to be told a story, and a story we will have, even in the most marginalised and experimental text—why? Because we are creatures of narrative and we will make sense of those patterns that are presented to us. But for the writer the subtler underlying patterns do not necessarily expose themselves. These unconscious elements are held together by plot, characterisation, narrative technique—all the usual suspects in a writer's arsenal—while the unconscious elements are precisely that area into which I do not wish to journey.

¹⁷ It was with some sadness that I learnt of John Fowles's death during the later stages of re-drafting the exegesis. Through *The Tree* I had developed a relationship, a commonality of understanding that his fiction had not brought forth. It was a little like hearing of the demise of a long-lost friend.

Like many writers I often start with an image or a voice. Whether that voice or image gets legs and ups and runs or whether it is stillborn is a mystery. Some things go the distance, some do not. I am loathe to interfere with that process on too conscious a level. As Russell Hoban says in his acknowledgments page for *Pilgermann*:

Riddley Walker left me in a place where there was further action pending and this further action was waiting for the element that would precipitate it into the time and place of its own story. (n.p.n.)

Riddley Walker is a 'connexion man', a riddle-master walking a post-apocalyptic landscape, carrying his 'fit up', a portable glove-puppet show not unlike Punch and Judy, from community to community. In a world where books have ceased to exist, he is a teller of tales, a showman, trying to make sense of the world for his audience. Hoban creates his own mythology for 'Inland' the landscape, for it cannot be called a country, which Riddley walks, although much of its power for me resides in the fact that Hoban's map of Inland is based on Kent. It is a powerful myth, one in which the degraded inhabitants of Inland try and make sense of the garbled history, science and technology that has been handed down over millennia since the 'Bad Time' (*Riddley Walker* 44). Riddley trusts the landscape he walks through with an almost fatalistic doggedness, and at one point when he is over-intellectualising his chances for survival and outguessing his opponents, he is quickly shown the futility of this by a new found companion:

He said, 'Im lissening enn I.'

I said, 'Youwl lissen us right in to Grabs your Aunty in a minim if we keap on walking dont you have nothing in mynd?'

He said, 'I dont know til I get there do I. Youre all ways worrying your self with little myndy askings. Dont you know if you keap getting a head of your self youwl jus only fall over your self when you get to where youre going?' (94)

Hoban's apocalyptic dialogue brings me in 'mynd' of the dangers of the exegetical process, the chance of tripping over one's feet, of getting ahead of the story. As a character, Riddley is almost as close as one can come to Fowles's notion of '*kerannos*' or hazard (*Wormholes* 347), ricocheting, as he does, from one disaster to another, and yet under Hoban's masterful hand he also embodies those elements of Jungian synchronicity, of being in the right place at the right time, that makes this novel for me so powerfully paradoxical.

It was only during the writing of this exegesis that I made a connection within Hoban's novel that I had not seen before. Both 'Drop John' and 'Punch', two of the puppet characters Riddley manipulates, have something in common with my father. His childhood nickname was Punch and, although his Christian name was Howard, he was often called John or Johnny because of our surname and its link to the Scottish distillery. These connections, which would seem almost intangible to an outsider, are an important part of how I conceive of the world, how I place myself within it, how I read the map of self. My father was crucial in the laying out of that map. I believe that what I am saying to my father, to his memory and to myself, is that my childhood was as it was and it cannot be undone. It is up to me to make sense of it as best I can and for some time that has involved being creative, engaging memory and the imagination. What I can do is recreate and repopulate those memories and turn them into fiction through the artistic impulse, and in so doing try and create fiction that is halfway decent. The truth, however clouded, remains, while the narrative—one of the many possible narratives I hold within me—evolves and shifts, and my story becomes part of a much larger mythic process.

Hoban's novel haunts my imagination. Fictionally it is, to date, the singly most influential book I have read. So I will end with a beginning; with Riddley Walker, a teenager when teenagers no longer exist, a boy on the cusp of manhood, a voice so

marked, it is—and not only because of the language—one of the most distinctive narrative voices I have come across.

On my naming day when I come 12 I gone front spear and kilt a wyld boar he parbly ben the las wyld pig on the Bundel Downs any how there hadnt ben none for a long time befor him nor I aint looking to see none agen. He dint make the groun shake nor nothing like that when he come on to my spear he wernt all that big plus he lookit poorly. He done the reqwyrnt he ternt and stood and clattert his teef and made his rush and there we wer then. Him on 1 end of the spear kicking his life out and me on the other end watching him dy. I said, 'Your tern now my tern later.' The other spears gone in then and he wer dead and the steam coming up off him in the rain and we all yelt, 'Offert!' (1)

I have not entirely worked out what I was doing, or even tried to do, in *The Stone Crown*, nor am I likely to. I am fairly sure that I do not want that sort of insight. I think that when you have complete control over something it dies or is killed off. The creative act that is a book is rather like Hoban's last wild boar at the beginning of *Riddley Walker*—an offering. You hope there may be others, but you can never be sure. It could always be the last one.

All I can hope for is that for a few readers the characters from my book will walk with them a short way. That my stories do not dry up; that I can keep on putting them down on paper and, to return to my earlier meteorological analogy, that I continue to circle the dead eye of the storm, the unreachable centre, and continue to record the weather and landscape that constitute my sense of self as best I can. Some weeks are fine and glorious, and the hope-filled child steps forth, much like Mole on that spring day in Grahame's mind's-eye to follow his new found friend the river, trotting 'as one trots, when very small, by the side of a man who holds one spellbound by exciting stories' (*Wind* 4); others can seem as bleak as Riddley's rain-filled world:

Theres rains and rains. This 1 wer coming down in a way as took the hart and hoap out of you there wer a kind of brilyants in the grey it wer too hard it wer too else it

made you feel like all the tracks in the world were out paths nor not a 1 to bring you back. (67)

The dark wood is always there and we are always in its midst no matter the season, stopping at this tree, turning at that, moving on amid the chaos and change that is nature, both human and universal, choosing our path as best we can. My path through the wood is that of the writer, and hopefully the artist, although the latter is not for me to judge. In this I feel a particular affinity with John Fowles and his notion of the artist, the writer, 'the individual experiencer, the "green man" hidden in the leaves of his or her unique and once-only being' (*Tree*, 47), who, in endeavouring to communicate that which is hidden in the depths of the forest, may well fail.

And yet, as my pal Riddley says, 'Still I wunt have no other track' (214).

Sources

The childhood verse that haunts Lawrence McCrossan as he climbs into the Land Rover after they've burnt the figures is a re-working of the traditional 17th Century 'Two Rivers' taken from Arthur Quiller-Couch's *The Oxford Book of English Verse: 1250–1900*:

SAYS Tweed to Till—
'What gars ye rin sae still?'
Says Till to Tweed—
'Though ye rin with speed
And I rin slaw,
For ae man that ye droon
I droon twa.'

(Anonymous)

Works Cited

- Alexander, Lloyd. *The Book of Three*. 1964. New York: Dell-Yearling, 1990.
- Almond, David. *Counting Stars*. London: Hodder, 2000.
- Attebery, Brian. *Strategies of Fantasy*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992.
- The Bible: Authorised King James Version*. Introduction and notes by Robert Carroll and Stephen Prickett. London/New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Bowler, Tim. Author interview: Jubilee Books Co. UK.
<http://www.jubileebooks.co.uk/jubilee/magazine/authors/tim_bowler/interview.asp
> [2006, October 23]
- Brophy, Kevin. *Creativity: Psychoanalysis, Surrealism and Creative Writing*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1998.
- Butler, Charles. 'Interview with Diana Wynne Jones.' *Diana Wynne Jones: An Exciting and Exacting Wisdom*. Eds. Teya Rosenberg, et al. New York: Peter Lang, 2002. 163-172.
- Chanady, Amaryll. *Magical Realism and the Fantastic: Resolved Versus Unresolved Antinomy*. New York: Garland, 1985.
- Clute, John and Grant, John. Eds. *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. 1997. London: Orbit, 1999.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Biographia Literaria: Or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*. 1906. London/New York: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd./E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1975.
- Cooper, Susan. *The Dark is Rising Sequence*. London: Puffin, 1984.
- Cornwall, Bernard. *The Winter King: A Novel of Arthur: Book I of The Warlord Chronicles*. 1995. London/Ringwood, Vic: Penguin, 1996.
- Crossley-Holland, Kevin. *Arthur: The Seeing Stone*. 2000. London: Orion Paperbacks, 2001.

- , *King of Middle March*. London: Orion Paperbacks, 2003
- Crowded House. 'Weather With You'. *Woodface*. Capitol, 1991.
- Dante Alighieri. *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Volume 1: Inferno*. c1307-21. Ed. and Trans. Robert M. Durling. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Eco, Umberto. *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Fowles, John. *The Tree*. 1979. St. Albans: Sumach Press, 1992.
- , *Wormholes: Essays and Occasional Writings*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1998.
- Garner, Alan. *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen: A Tale of Alderley*. 1960. London: Collins, 1999.
- , *The Moon of Gormrath*. 1963. London: Collins, 1999.
- , *The Voice That Thunders: Essays and Lectures*. London: Harvill Press, 1997.
- , *The Owl Service*. 1967. London: Collins, 1999.
- Golding, William. *A Moving Target*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1982.
- Grahame, Kenneth. *The Wind in the Willows*. 1908. London: The Reprint Society, 1954.
- Grant, John. 'Gulliver Unravels: Generic Fantasy and the Loss of Subversion.' *Extrapolation* 41 (2000): 21-27.
- Hardwick, Paul. '“Not in the Middle Ages”?: Alan Garner's *The Owl Service* and the Literature of Adolescence.' *Children's Literature in Education*. Vol. 31: No 1. (2000): 23-30.
- Harrison, M. John. *The Course of the Heart*. 1992. London: Flamingo, 1993.
- Hawking, Stephen W. *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*. Toronto/New York: Bantam, 1988.
- Hoban, Russell. *Riddley Walker*. 1980. London: Picador, 1982.
- , *Pilgermann*. London: Jonathon Cape, 1983.
- Jones, Diana Wynne. *The Merlin Conspiracy*. London: Collins, 2003.
- Lawhead, Stephen. *Taliesin: Pendragon Cycle: Book I*. 1987. Oxford, UK: Lion Books, 1989.

- Leeson, Robert. *The Song of Arthur*. London: Walker, 2001.
- The Mabinogion*. Trans. Jones, Gwyn and Jones, Thomas. Illus. Alan Lee. Amsterdam: A Dragon's Dream Book, 1982.
- Malory, Sir Thomas. *Caxton's Malory: A New Edition of Sir Thomas Malory's Le Morte D'Arthur Based on the Pierpont Morgan Copy of William Caxton's Edition of 1485*. Ed. James W. Spisak. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983.
- Malouf, David. 'A First Place: The Mapping of the World.' *Southerly*. Vol 45: No 1. (1985): 3-10.
- . 'What We Know: A Meditation on Experience, Knowledge and Memory.' Edited transcript of address delivered at the Supreme Court of New South Wales Annual Conference, 13 June 1997 and first published in *Judicial Officers' Bulletin* 81, 1997. http://www.acjnet.org/capcj/maloufeng.html#N_4 [2000, September 1]
- Mayne, William. *Earthfasts*. London: Puffin, 1969.
- Moffat, Alistair. *Arthur and the Lost Kingdoms*. London: Phoenix, 2000.
- Morris, Gerald. *The Squire's Tale*. 1998. New York: Dell Laurel-Leaf, 2000.
- Nastali, Daniel P. and Boardman, Phillip C. *The Arthurian Annals: The Tradition in English from 1250 to 2000: Volumes I & II*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- North, David. 'An Interview with John Fowles.' *Conversations With John Fowles*. Ed. Dianne L. Vipond. Jackson, Miss: University Press of Mississippi, 1999. 50-58.
- Papastergiadis, Nikos. 'David Malouf and Languages for Landscape: An Interview.' *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*. Vol. 25: No 3. (1994): 83-94.
- Reiken, Frederick. 'The Continuum.' *The Writer's Chronicle*. Vol 36: No 4. (2004): 42-44.
- Richardson, Alan. 'Romanticism and the End of Childhood.' *Literature and the Child: Romantic Continuations, Postmodern Contestations*. Ed. James Holt McGavran. Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 1999.
- Sandell, Lisa Anne. *Song of the Sparrow*. London: Scholastic, 2007.
- Shakespeare, William. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. c1600. Ed. Stanley Wells. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, UK: Penguin, 1967.
- Simpson, J. A. and Weiner, E. S. C. Eds. *The Oxford English Dictionary: Vol 2: B.B.C.—Chalypsography*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.

- Singh, Raman K. 'An Encounter with John Fowles.' *Conversations With John Fowles*. Ed. Dianne L. Vipond. Jackson, Miss: University Press of Mississippi, 1999. 82-101.
- Sutcliff, Rosemary. *The Sword at Sunset*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1963.
- . *The Shining Company*. London: Red Fox, 1991.
- Tennyson, Alfred (Baron). *Idylls of the King and Other Arthurian Poems*. 1859. London: Nonesuch, 1968.
- Thompson, Raymond H. 'Interview with William Mayne.'
<<http://www.lib.Rochester.edu/Camelot/intrvws/mayne.htm>> [2003, September 1]
- Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lord of the Rings*. 1937. Rev. 1951. 2nd Edtn. London: Allen & Unwin, 1966.
- Tolstoy, Nikolai. *The Quest for Merlin*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1985.
- Wade-Evans, A. W. *Nennius's "History of the Britons" together with "The Annals of the Britons" and "Court Pedigrees of Hywel the Good" also "The Story of the Loss of Britain"*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1938.
- Walker, Malcolm. Personal Electronic Journal: intermittent entries. Adelaide: 2001-2006.
- . *The Stone Crown*. MS. Adelaide: 2007.
- White, T. H. *The Sword in the Stone*. 1938. New York: Dell, 1963.
- Yolen, Jane. *The Sword of the Rightful King: A Novel of King Arthur*. San Diego: Harcourt, 2003.

Selected Bibliography

Fiction

- Alexander, Lloyd. *The Book of Three*. 1964. New York: Dell-Yearling, 1990.
- Almond, David. *Skellig*. London: Hodder, 1998.
- . *Kit's Wilderness*. London: Hodder, 1999.
- . *Counting Stars*. London: Hodder, 2000.
- . *Heaven's Eyes*. London: Hodder, 2000.
- Anderson, Margaret J. *In the Keep of Time*. New York: Scholastic, 1977.
- Bone, Ian. *Sleep Rough Tonight*. Camberwell, Victoria: Penguin, 2004.
- Bowler, Tim. *River Boy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- . *Storm Catchers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Bradley, Marion. *The Mists of Avalon*. 1983. London: Sphere, 1984.
- Carmody, Isobelle. *The Gathering*. Ringwood: Puffin, 1993.
- Caswell, Brian. *Merryll of the Stones*. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1989.
- Chopra, Deepak. *The Return of Merlin*. London: Century, 1995.
- Cooper, Susan. *The Dark is Rising Sequence*. London: Puffin, 1984.
- Cornwall, Bernard. *The Winter King: A Novel of Arthur: Book I of The Warlord Chronicles*. 1995. London/Ringwood, Vic: Penguin, 1996.
- Crew, Gary. *Strange Objects*. 1990. Melbourne: Mammoth, 1991.
- Cross, Gillian. *Wolf*. 1990. London: Puffin, 1992.

- Crossley-Holland, Kevin. *Arthur: The Seeing Stone*. 2000. London: Orion Paperbacks, 2001.
- . *King of Middle March*. London: Orion Paperbacks, 2003
- Crowded House. 'Weather With You' *Woodface*. Capitol, 1991.
- Dante Alighieri. *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Volume 1: Inferno*. c1307-21. Ed. and Trans. Robert M. Durling. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Funke, Cornelia. *The Thief Lord*. 2000. Frome, Somerset: Chicken House, 2003.
- Garfield, Leon. *Smith*. 1967. Harmondsworth: Puffin, 1968.
- . *John Diamond*. 1980. Harmondsworth: Puffin, 1981.
- Garner, Alan. *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen: A Tale of Alderley*. 1960. London: Collins, 1999.
- . *The Moon of Gomerath*. 1963. London: Collins, 1999.
- . *Elidor*. 1965. London: Collins, 1999.
- . *The Owl Service*. 1967. London: Collins, 1999.
- . *Red Shift*. 1973. London: Collins, 1999.
- . *The Stone Book Quartet*. 1983. London: Flamingo, 1999.
- Garnet, David. *Lady Into Fox*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1922
- Grahame, Kenneth. *The Wind in the Willows*. 1908. London: The Reprint Society, 1954.
- Gwynne, Phillip. *Deadly Unna?* Ringwood: 1998.
- Haddon, Mark. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*. 2003. London: Red Fox Definitions, 2004.
- Harrison, M. John. *The Course of the Heart*. 1992. London: Flamingo, 1993.
- Hoban, Russell. *The Mouse and His Child*. 1967. London: Puffin, 1976.
- . *Riddley Walker*. 1980. London: Picador, 1982.
- . *Pilgermann*. London: Jonathon Cape, 1983.

- Jefferies, Richard. *Bevis: The Story of a Boy*. 1910. Intro. Henry Williamson. London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1966.
- Jinks, Catherine. *Pagan's Crusade*. 1992. Rydalmere, NSW: Hodder, 1998.
- Jones, Diana Wynne. *The Merlin Conspiracy*. London: Collins, 2003.
- Kelleher, Victor. *The Master of the Grove*. 1982. Ringwood: Puffin, 1983.
- . *The Green Piper*. 1984. Ringwood: Puffin, 1991.
- Lawhead, Stephen. *Taliesin: Pendragon Cycle: Book I*. 1987. Oxford, UK: Lion Books, 1989.
- Leeson, Robert. *The Song of Arthur*. London: Walker, 2001.
- Lessing, Doris. *Briefing For a Descent Into Hell*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1971.
- Lewis, C. S. *The Complete Chronicles of Narnia*. n.p: n.p., n.d.
- London, Jack. *White Fang*. 1905. New York: Macmillan, 1906.
- . *The Call of the Wild*. 1903. London: Heinemann, 1918.
- Mahy, Margaret. *The Haunting*. 1982. London: Puffin, 1999.
- . *The Tricksters*. 1986. London: Collins-Flamingo, 2001.
- . *Twenty-four Hours*. 2000. London: Collins-Flamingo, 2001.
- Malory, Sir Thomas. *Caxton's Malory: A New Edition of Sir Thomas Malory's Le Morte D'Arthur Based on the Pierpont Morgan Copy of William Caxton's Edition of 1485*. Ed. James W. Spisak. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983.
- Malouf, David. *An Imaginary Life*. 1978. Woollahra: Picador, 1980.
- . *Dream Stuff*. London: Chatto & Windus, 2000.
- Marsden, John. *Tomorrow, When the War Began*. 1993. Chippendale, NSW: Pan Macmillan, 1995.
- Masefield, John. *The Box of Delights: Or When the Wolves Were Running*. London: William Heinemann, 1935.
- Mayne, William. *Earthfasts*. London: Puffin, 1969.
- . *Ravensgill*. London: 1970. Hodder, 2000.
- McCaughrean, Geraldine. *A Pack of Lies*. 1988. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

- Morris, Gerald. *The Squire's Tale*. 1998. New York: Dell Laurel-Leaf, 2000.
- Park, Ruth. *Playing Beatie Bow*. 1980. Ringwood: Puffin, 1982.
- Pullman, Philip. *Northern Lights*. 1995. London: Scholastic, 1998.
- . *The Subtle Knife*. 1997. London: Scholastic, 1998.
- . *The Amber Spyglass*. London: Scholastic, 2000.
- Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. London: Bloomsbury, 1997.
- . *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*. London: Bloomsbury, 1998.
- . *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. London: Bloomsbury, 1999.
- . *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. London: Bloomsbury, 2000.
- Rubinstein, Gillian. *Foxspell*. Melbourne: Hyland House, 1994.
- Sampson, Fay. *Herself: Book Five in the Sequence Daughter of Tintagel*. London: Headline, 1992.
- Sandell, Lisa Anne. *Song of the Sparrow*. London: Scholastic, 2007.
- Shakespeare, William. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. 1600. Ed. Stanley Wells. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, UK: Penguin, 1967.
- Stewart, Mary. *The Crystal Cave*. 1970. London: Coronet, 1971.
- . *The Hollow Hills*. 1973. London: Coronet, 1974.
- . *The Last Enchantment*. London: Book Club Associates, 1979.
- . *The Wicked Day*. 1983. London: Coronet, 1984.
- Stowe, Randolph. *The Girl Green As Elderflower*. New York: Viking Press, 1980.
- Sutcliff, Rosemary. *The Lantern Bearers*. 1959. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- . *The Shining Company*. London: Red Fox, 1991.
- . *The Sword at Sunset*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1963.
- Tennyson, Alfred (Baron). *Idylls of the King and Other Arthurian Poems*. 1859. London: Nonesuch, 1968.

- Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lord of the Rings*. 1937. Rev. 1951. 2nd Edtn. London: Allen & Unwin, 1966.
- Walker, Malcolm. *The Stone Crown*. MS. Adelaide: 2007.
- Welsh, Irvine. *The Acid House*. 1994. London: Vintage, 1995.
- Westall, Robert. *The Watch House*. 1977. Harmondsworth: Puffin, 1980.
- . *Gulf*. 1992. London: Mammoth, 1993.
- . *The Machine Gunners*. 1975. London: Macmillan, 2001.
- White, T. H. *The Sword in the Stone*. 1938. New York: Dell, 1963.
- Winton, Tim. *The Riders*. 1994. Sydney: Picador, 1996.
- Yolen, Jane. *The Sword of the Rightful King: A Novel of King Arthur*. San Diego: Harcourt, 2003.

Non-fiction

- Aldred, David. *Castles and Cathedrals: The Architecture of Power 1066—1550*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Attebery, Brian. *Strategies of Fantasy*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992.
- Baker, James R. 'John Fowles: Interview.' *The Paris Review*. Issue 111 Summer 1989. <<http://www.theparisreview.org/viewinterview.php/prmMID/2415>> [2005, November 16]
- Baldick, Chris. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. 1990. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- The Bible: Authorised King James Version*. Introduction and notes by Robert Carroll and Stephen Prickett. London/New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Blundell, Nigel. *Ancient Scotland*. London: Promotional Reprint Co., 1996.
- Bord, Janet & Colin. *Mysterious Britain*. Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1973.
- Bowler, Tim. Author interview: Jubilee Books Co. UK. <http://www.jubileebooks.co.uk/jubilee/magazine/authors/tim_bowler/interview.asp> [2006, October 23]

- Briggs, Elizabeth L. Pandolfo. 'On the Inside Looking In: Contemporary Anglo-Welsh Fantasy.' *The Lion and The Unicorn* 23.1 (1999): 67-78.
 <http://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/lion_and_the_unicorn/> [2001, September 19]
- Bromwich, Rachel; Jarman, A. O. H; & Roberts, Brynley F. (Eds.) *The Artbur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh literature*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991.
- Brophy, Kevin. *Creativity: Psychoanalysis, Surrealism and Creative Writing*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1998.
- _____. *Explorations in Creative Writing*. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2003.
- Brown, R. Allen. *Castles from the Air*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Butler, Charles. 'Interview with Diana Wynne Jones' *Diana Wynne Jones: An Exciting and Exacting Wisdom*. Eds. Teya Rosenberg, et al. New York: Peter Lang, 2002. 163-172.
- Carr, Vaughan. *Understanding Schizophrenia*. Adelaide: Schizophrenia Fellowship of South Australia, n. d.
- Chanady, Amaryll. *Magical Realism and the Fantastic: Resolved Versus Unresolved Antinomy*. New York: Garland, 1985.
- Clute, John & Grant, John. Eds. *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. 1997. London: Orbit, 1999.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Biographia Literaria: Or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*. 1906. London/New York: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd./E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1975.
- Costley, Sarah and Kightly, Charles. *A Celtic Book of Days*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1998.
- Cremin, Aedeon. *The Celts in Europe*. Sydney: Centre for Celtic Studies: University of Sydney, 1992.
- Davies, John. *The Celts*. London: Cassell, 2000.
- Davies, Norman. *Europe: A History*. 1996. London: Pimlico, 1997.
- Delaney, Frank. *The Celts*. 1986. London: Harper Collins, 1993.
- Dixon, Karen. *Roman Cavalry: From the First to the Third Century AD*. London: Batsford, 1992.
- Douglass, Sara. *The Betrayal of Arthur*. Sydney: Macmillan, 1999.

- Drout, Michael D. C. 'Reading the Signs of Light: Anglo Saxonism, Education, and Obedience in Susan Cooper's *The Dark is Rising*.' *The Lion and the Unicorn*. 21.2 (1997): 230-250. <http://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/lion_and_the_unicorn/> [2001, October 24]
- Early Settlers in the Borders*. Melrose: Scottish Borders Council, 1997.
- Eco, Umberto. *Travels in Hyper-Reality*. Trans. William Weaver. London: Picador, 1987.
- . *Six Walks in the Fictional Woods*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Edmond, Murray. 'Margaret Mahy: Interviewed by Edmond Murray.' *In the Same Room: Conversations with New Zealand Writers*. E. Alley and M. Williams (Eds.). Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1992.
- Evan, H. M. and Thomas, W. O. *Y Geiriadur Mawr: The Complete Welsh-English, English-Welsh Dictionary*. 10th Edtn. Abertawe/Llandysul: Christopher Davies/Gwasg Gomer, 1981.
- Filmer-Davies, Kath. *Fantasy Fiction and Welsh Myth: Tales of Belonging*. London: Macmillan, 1996.
- Folkard, Lynne. *The Rock Pillow*. South Fremantle, W. A: Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1992.
- Fowles, John. *The Tree*. 1979. St. Albans: Sumach Press, 1992.
- . *Wormholes: Essays and Occasional Writings*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1998.
- Frere, Sheppard. *Britannia: A History of Roman Britain*. 3rd Edtn. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1987.
- Garner, Alan. *The Voice That Thunders: Essays and Lectures*. London: Harvill Press, 1997.
- Geoffrey of Monmouth. *The History of the Kings of Britain*. Trans. Sebastian Evans. Revised Charles W. Dunn. London: Dent, 1963.
- Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 4th Edtn. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1995.
- Gildas. *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*. Ed. and Trans. Michael Winterbottom. Chichester: Phillimore, 1978.
- Golding, William. *A Moving Target*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1982.
- Grant, Annie. 'Animals in Roman Britain.' *Research on Roman Britain: 1960—1989*. Ed. Malcolm Todd. London: Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 1989. 135-146.

- Grant, John. 'Gulliver Unravels: Generic Fantasy and the Loss of Subversion.' *Extrapolation* 41 (2000): 21-27.
- Gray, John. *At Home in the Hills: Sense of Place in the Scottish Borders*. New York: Berghahn, 2000.
- Green, Miranda. *Animals in Celtic Life and Myth*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Halpern, Daniel. 'A Sort of Exile in Lyme Regis.' *Conversations With John Fowles*. Ed. Dianne L. Vipond. Jackson, Miss: University Press of Mississippi, 1999. 14-25.
- Hardwick, Paul. "'Not in the Middle Ages"?: Alan Garner's *The Owl Service* and the Literature of Adolescence.' *Children's Literature in Education*. Vol. 31: No 1. (2000): 23-30.
- Harrowven, Jean. *Origins of Rhymes, Songs and Sayings*. 2nd Edtn. London: Kaye & Ward, 1977.
- Hart, Linda. *Phone at Nine: Just to Say You're Alive*. 1995. London: Pan, 1997.
- Hawking, Stephen W. *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*. Toronto/New York: Bantam, 1988.
- Hopkins, Andrea. *Chronicles of King Arthur*. London: Collins & Brown, 1993.
- Hunt, Peter and Lenz, Millicent. *Alternative Worlds in Fantasy Fiction*. London: Continuum, 2001.
- Jackson, Rosemary. *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. 1981. London: Routledge, 1988.
- Johnson, Paul. *The National Trust Book of British Castles*. London: The National Trust/Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1978.
- Jones, Gwyn. *Welsh Legends and Folk-tales*. London: Oxford University Press, 1957.
- . *Kings, Beasts and Heroes*. London: Oxford University Press, 1972.
- Jones, Prudence and Pennick, Nigel. *A History of Pagan Europe*. 1995. London: Routledge, 1997.
- Kemp, Peter. (Ed.) *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Quotations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Kroll, Jeri. 'Uneasy Bedfellows: Assessing the Creative Thesis and its Exegesis.' *TEXT*. Vol 3: No 2. (1999) <<http://www.gu.edu.au/school/art/text/oct99/kroll.htm>> [2006, October 20]
- Lacey, Robert and Danziger, Danny. *The Year 1000: What Life Was Like at the Turn of the First Millennium*. London: Abacus, 2000.

- Lacy, Norris J. and Ashe, Geoffrey. *The Arthurian Handbook*. New York: Garland, 1986.
- The Mabinogi and Other Medieval Welsh Tales*. Trans. Patrick K. Ford. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.
- The Mabinogion*. Trans. Gwyn Jones and Thomas Jones. Illus. Alan Lee. Amsterdam: A Dragon's Dream Book, 1982.
- Maier, B. *Dictionary of Celtic Religion and Culture*. Trans. Cyril Edwards. Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 1997.
- Malouf, David. 'A First Place: The Mapping of the World.' *Southerly*. Vol 45: No 1. March 1985: 3-10.
- _____. 'What We Know: A Meditation on Experience, Knowledge and Memory.' Edited transcript of address delivered at the Supreme Court of New South Wales Annual Conference, 13 June 1997 and first published in *Judicial Officers' Bulletin* 81, 1997. <http://www.acjnet.org/capcj/maloufeng.html#N_4> [2001, September 1]
- Marsden, John. *Everything I Know About Writing*. 1993. Sydney: Pan Macmillan, 1998.
- Masson, Sophie. 'Rolling Column... Sophie Masson: Fantasy.' *Australian Book Review*. (May 1997): 33-4.
- Matthews, Caitlin. *Arthur and the Sovereignty of Britain: King and Goddess in the Mabinogion*. London/New York: Arkana, 1989.
- McGavran, James Holt. Ed. *Literature and the Child: Romantic Continuations, Postmodern Contestations*. Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 1999.
- Moffat, Alistair. *Arthur and the Lost Kingdoms*. London: Phoenix, 2000.
- Nastali, Daniel P. and Boardman, Phillip C. *The Arthurian Annals: The Tradition in English from 1250 to 2000: Volumes I & II*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- North, David. 'An Interview with John Fowles.' *Conversations With John Fowles*. Ed. Dianne L. Vipond. Jackson, Miss: University Press of Mississippi, 1999. 50-58.
- Olshen, Barry N. 'The Archetype of the Green Man in the Writings of John Fowles.' *John Fowles and Nature: Fourteen Perspectives on Landscape*. Ed. James R. Aubrey. London: Associated University Presses, 1999. 96-113.
- Papastergiadis, Nikos. 'David Malouf and Languages for Landscape: An Interview.' *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*. Vol. 25: No 3. (1994): 83-94.
- Philip, Neil. *A Fine Anger: A Critical Introduction to the Work of Alan Garner*. London: Collins, 1981.

- Phillips, Graham and Keatman, Martin. *King Arthur: The True Story*. London: Century, 1992.
- Platt, Colin. *The Architecture of Medieval Britain: A Social History*. New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Pringle, George C. *Peebles and Selkirk*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914.
- Reid, Howard. *Arthur the Dragon King: The Barbaric Roots of Britain's Greatest Legend*. London: Headline, 2001.
- Reiken, Frederick. 'The Continuum.' *The Writer's Chronicle*. Vol 36: No 4. (2004): 42-44.
- Richardson, Alan. 'Romanticism and the End of Childhood.' *Literature and the Child: Romantic Continuities, Postmodern Contestations*. Ed. James Holt McGavran. Iowa City: Iowa University Press, 1999.
- Ross, Dr. Anne. *A Traveller's Guide to Celtic Britain*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985.
- . *The Pagan Celts*. 1970. Ruthin, Wales: John Jones, 1998.
- Ross, Anne and Robins, Don. *The Life and Death of a Druid Prince: The Story of an Archaeological Sensation*. London: Rider, 1989.
- Savage, Anne. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles: The Authentic Voices of England, from the Time of Julius Caesar to the Coronation of Henry II*. Godalming: Coombe, 1995.
- Simpson, J. A. and Weiner, E. S. C. Eds. *The Oxford English Dictionary: Vol 2: B.B.C.—Chalysography*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.
- Singh, Raman K. 'An Encounter with John Fowles.' *Conversations With John Fowles*. Ed. Dianne L. Vipond. Jackson, Miss: University Press of Mississippi, 1999. 82-101.
- Smout, Chris. 'Woodland history before 1850.' *Scotland Since Prehistory: Natural Change and Human Impact*. Ed. T. C. Smout. Aberdeen: Scottish Cultural Press, 1993.
- The Story of a Community: Dingleton Hospital, Melrose*. Melrose: Chiefswood Publications, 2000.
- Survivors Guide to Mental health in the Borders*. Scotland: NHS/Scottish Borders Council, 2004.
- Swinfen, Anne. *In Defence of Fantasy: A Study of the Genre in English and American Literature since 1945*. London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984.
- Thomas, W. Jenkyn. *The Welsh Fairy Book*. Cardiff: John Jones Publishing, 1979.

- Thompson, Raymond H. 'Interview with Susan Cooper.'
 <<http://www.lib.Rochester.edu/Camelot/intrvws/cooper.htm>> [2003, September 1]
-
- _____. 'Interview with Alan Garner.'
 <<http://www.lib.Rochester.edu/Camelot/intrvws/garner.htm>> [2003, September 1]
-
- _____. 'Interview with William Mayne.'
 <<http://www.lib.Rochester.edu/Camelot/intrvws/mayne.htm>> [2003, September 1]
- Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lord of the Rings*. 1937. Rev. 1951. 2nd Edtn. London: Allen & Unwin, 1966.
- Tolstoy, Nikolai. *The Quest for Merlin*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1985.
- The Trimontium Story*. Melrose: Trimontium Trust, 2002.
- Turner, Hilary L. *Town defences in England and Wales: An Architectural and Documentary Study AD 900—1500*. Hamden, Connecticut/London: Archon/John Baker, 1971.
- Vipond, Dianne L. Ed. *Conversations With John Fowles*. Jackson, Miss: University Press of Mississippi, 1999.
- Wade-Evans, A. W. *Nennius's "History of the Britons" together with "The Annals of the Britons" and "Court Pedigrees of Hywel the Good" also "The Story of the Loss of Britain"*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1938.
- Waggoner, Diana. *The Hills of Faraway: A Guide to Fantasy*. New York: Atheneum, 1978.
- Walker, Malcolm. Personal Electronic Journal: intermittent entries. Adelaide: 2001-2006.
- Watson, W. J. *The History of the Celtic Place-names of Scotland: Being the Rhind Lectures on Archaeology (Expanded) Delivered in 1916*. Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1926.
- White, D. R. *Dancing With Dragons: Ursula K. Le Guin and the Critics*. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 1999.
- Wilson, Colin. *Mysteries: An Investigation into the Occult, the Paranormal and the Supernatural*. 1978. London: Granada, 1979.
- Wintle, Justin and Fisher, Emma. *The Pied Pipers: Interviews with the Influential Creators of Children's Literature*. New York: Paddington Press, 1974.
- Wood, Michael. *In Search of the Dark Ages*. London: Penguin, 1994.