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VICTORIA BURROWS

THE GHOSTLY HAUNTING OF WHITE SHAME IN DAVID MALOUF'S *REMEMBERING BABYLON*

The publication of David Malouf's *Remembering Babylon* met with an ambivalent reception.[1] The novel is a complex and often deeply moving narrative that vividly evokes the displacement, dispossession, uncertainties and anxieties of living in the border or contact zones in mid-nineteenth century Australia. Yet it radically divided literary critics, their divergent responses exacerbated by the socio-cultural context of its publication. This was in 1993, the International Year of Indigenous Peoples, and one year after the momentous *Mabo v. Queensland* High Court ruling on native title. My own position in the ongoing debate is along the lines of Peter Otto's assertion that Malouf's text inscribes an "erasure of the political" through his literary translation of the "political into the psychological, and matters of history and politics into questions of creativity and aesthetics"[2] and in compliance with Suvendrini Perera's postcolonial critique of Malouf's protagonist as being centred within a "discourse of happy hyridisation".[3] However, rather than simply re-engaging with this debate, I want to offer a reading of the underlying theme of shame in *Remembering Babylon*, a subject that has so far been neglected in critical discussions of this novel.

This omission is particularly astonishing not only because of the omnipresence of shame in the text but also because ever since the Australian Reconciliation Convention in 1997, shame has had a particular contextual importance in contemporary Australia. As is well-known, the timing of the Convention coincided both with the completion of the *Bringing Them Home* report and John Howard's astounding denial of the shame of Australia's violent colonial history and the long-term impact this had and continues to have on the first inhabitants of this continent. Howard's crude dismissal of what he terms the "black arm band version of history",[4] together with his studied refusal to apologise to the remaining Aboriginal population – which was tantamount to refusing to believe the authenticity of the stories of profound trauma and grief that were recorded in the *Bringing Them Home* report – resulted in many of the delegates at the Reconciliation Convention turning their backs on Howard as a physical marker of shame.[5] Indeed, Raymond Gaita argues that "Australia is a nation 'seriously stricken by shame', which is why so-called 'black armband brigades' are set up to be mocked" by political conservatives as diverse as John Howard and Keith Windshuttle.[6]

To be stricken by shame in either a personal or socio-political context while simultaneously refusing to acknowledge this shame results in paralysis and stasis. What is more, because shame – whether it is consciously acknowledged or not – is powerful, contagious, self-propagating *and* profoundly hierarchically structured, contemporary white Australia protects itself from shame by projecting the contagion of this affect onto the objectified other. Perhaps the most recent example of this here in Western Australia is the way in which the white-centric media constantly and forcibly exposes the shame of Aboriginal dereliction in photograph after photograph of the dinner camp in Halls Creek, with pictures of drunken mothers lying in the dirt beside begrimed toddlers and others of scores of adults leaving the pub with cartons of beer which will be consumed amid the squalor and hunger of the camp. What this exposure of projected shame covers over, of course, is the long history of white acts of dispossession and the subsequent shameful and continuing treatment of the indigenous population of Australia.

In other words, a refusal to engage with historical shame is a highly unethical form of political evasion. However, as Jacqueline Rose reminds us, shame is both a verb and a noun and the act of shaming is central to the operations of repressive societies or groups who rule.[7] From Steve Connor's perspective, "[t]he wielders of shame want to silence, objectify and discipline – to make subjectivity impossible".[8] As a counter-tactic, then, the first move beyond the toxicity of social shaming as a method of control is to expose these acts of shaming and the power politics that dominate this affect. Eve Kosofsky-Sedgwick, who has written some fine work on shame, maintains that this affect can be used to initiate "a fight ... against the killing pretence that a culture does not know what it does".[9]

When I began to think about this topic many months ago, I had intended to focus solely on David Malouf's rather ghostly representations of whiteness in *Remembering Babylon*.[10] However, as I re-read the text in order to write the article it became clear to me that what Malouf is questioning in a very profound way is the whole notion of the historicity of white shame in Australia. What the novel exposes, I believe, is how and why shame and whiteness interacted in a small settler community in nineteenth-century Queensland and the long-term consequences of such a toxic union. In the first place, Malouf astutely and evocatively reveals some of the ways in which the settlers' shame of being *white-but-not-quite* in terms of a relationship with the imperial centre transmogrified into a kind of anxiety about their status within the safe zone of whiteness.[11] This racialised anxiety only too easily turned into acts of violent racism against Aboriginal others and the central outsider character Gemmy Fairley who is considered to be contaminated by his association with an Aboriginal "tribe". Secondly, Malouf recreates intense instances of white-on-white social shaming which are used as a means of demarcating and policing the boundaries between whiteness and Aboriginality – and in particular as this relates to mateship and the unacknowledged whiteness attached to this iconic Australian grouping. And, finally, he demonstrates how shame can only too easily become a tool of silencing that can obscure or even erase the history of those shamefully othered by the dominant power.

In terms of whiteness theory alone, *Remembering Babylon* is an interesting text. As Penelope Ingram argues in her excellent essay on the representation of settler whiteness in this novel, "whiteness is produced in contemporary settler texts in ways different from those identified in representations of whiteness by other critics".[12] Indeed, in the main body of whiteness studies it is argued that whiteness is an ideology that retains its dominance and power in Western societies because it is the *unacknowledged, invisible norm*.[13] This position of normativity carries a range of unrecognised privileges that arise solely from having a white skin. Whiteness's ubiquitous power structure and white skin privilege are imperceptibly upheld by and through all the institutions of power, both ideological and material. Such a theory becomes complicated in relation to Malouf's representation of whiteness in mid-nineteenth century settler Australia, because his white characters are both strongly marked as white and as racialised subjects. However, one by one, each central character reveals that his or her form of settler whiteness is overlaid by a sense of deep personal shame, a shame that is more often than not connected to class insecurity that adds a defect to dominant perceptions of whiteness. This in turn encourages feelings of aggression, envy or forms of white victimhood or abjection that can only be displaced through projection onto others.

The affect of shame thus turns into or magnifies "personal powerlessness, degradation, deficiency and misery".[14] Shame is generally thought of as toxic, as destructively disorientating, as a moment of heightened and tormenting self-consciousness in which the self is confronted by the self at its most despicable. It is often linked to the sense of being seen in an inappropriate or wrong context – to losing face. It is an acute, painful, inarticulate experience, which leaves its subjects feeling exposed, silenced, impotent.[15] Silvan Tomkins, one of the leading shame theorists, sees it as an affect of "indignity, of defeat, of transgression and of alienation ... an inner torment [that can only too easily become, in his words,] a sickness of the soul".[16] From Gershen Kaufman's perspective, "[s]hame is multidimensional and multilayered: it is an individual, a familial and a cultural phenomenon. It is reproduced within families, and each culture has its own distinct sources and targets of shame".[17] However, shame's most intimate connection is with the self. Indeed, Jennifer Biddle believes that "[t]here is no emotion that individuates, that isolates, that differentiates the self, more".[18] Levinas speaks of effects of shame this way:

> We see in shame its social aspect; we forget that its deepest manifestations are an eminently personal matter ... The necessity of fleeing, in order to hide oneself, is put in check by the impossibility of fleeing oneself.[19]

At the same time, the exposure of shame sets up a division within the self, a sense of splitting, of duality, in which "[t]he self is experienced as part subject and part object, or as two different selves at different times".[20] There is, Giorgio Agamben contends, a "double movement" within the affect of shame with subjective (but often unconscious) shifts between "subjectification and desubjectification".[21] It is this *movement* from being in active control of the subjective white "I" to the passivity and loss of the objectified shamed self which, I think, is central to a reading of Malouf's *Remembering Babylon*.

The clearest manifestation of the shifting subjectivity of shame is presented by the "in-between" (28) character of Gemmy Fairley. Gemmy is the symbolic figure of shame in the novel, the out of place character who is always in the wrong place at the wrong time and is, therefore, both a subject and source of shame.[22] Chronic shame reduces the person shamed to a state of inarticulateness or speechlessness, and Gemmy's famous first words enact his partial speechlessness: "Do not shoot ... I am a B-b-british object" (3) he stammers; and we later learn that his stuttering is not only because he has not spoken English for sixteen years.[23] His stammer "belonged to someone he had thought was gone, lost" years before (14). Shame is a learned response and Gemmy has learned the hardest lesson of all. At the deepest level of shame is the "conviction of one's *unlovability*" writes psychiatrist Léon Wurmser: "the most radical shame is to offer oneself and be rejected as unlovable".[24] Gemmy has lived a childhood of shame in a Dickensian London with the humiliation of being unloved at its centre. Only when he becomes "Willet's boy" (149) does the shame of unlovability pass, at least for a while, until he finally enacts a form of revenge against Willet's abuse that ironically brings about his own enforced exile to Australia. His ability to make "himself small" (25) and his "street child's gift for mimicry" (26) ensure him a place in the Aboriginal tribe of women and children with whom he lives for sixteen years, tormented by traumatic memories of the white world that has rejected him.

When the invasion of Aboriginal Australia begins, and the white-faced spirits drift up from the south (29), Gemmy seeks them out. He needs his shame witnessed. "He did not want to be taken back", the text tells us. "What he wanted was to be recognised" (32).[25] However, the one surety of this novel is that Gemmy's shame can never be recognised, both because he represents in excessive form the white shame that each of the settlers feels in their separate ways, and because his unbidden presence forces them to confront their own hidden shames. What they all feared more than anything was losing the power of whiteness, the one thing that separated them from the feared and despised racial other. But here in front of them is a shameful "parody of a white man ... He had started out white. No question ... But had he remained white? ... [this posed] the harder question. Could you lose it? Not just language, but *it. It*" (40).

The unspoken "it" that drives this text is the ideology of the superiority of whiteness, and it is, Malouf suggests, an ideology that is never benign. It is always about white domination – it's just a matter of degree. Malouf's symbols that amply portray the strength of this ideology are the make-believe gun and the imaginary stone that is said by Andy McKillop to have been passed to Gemmy by two visiting Aboriginals. These tropes also represent the two weapons that match the two sets of behaviour that manifest within the white settler grouping. Lachlan's stick-gun represents a child's version of the masculine weapon of genocidal power that decimated the Aboriginal population in the nineteenth century and would have been the weapon of choice of the vehement racists in the settler community who believed in exterminating the blacks as a perquisite to building a new nation (62). However, Malouf implies that the power of ideology can be almost as dangerous as physical weapons when the spectre of fear is raised. Even "the milder members of the settlement, who argued that it was surely worth trying a softer policy" (62), were swayed into violence when paranoia about the loss of whiteness becomes seemingly visible with the passing of an imaginary stone. It is this literalised embodiment of fear of the other, a stone reputed to be wrapped in bark thus conferring the notion of secrecy, which triggers the outbreak of brutal physical racism in the community.[26] Even Jock McIvor, in voicing what he thinks is a defence of Gemmy, feels the need to back his statement with a qualifier: "'We're no' scared o' stones. Ah thought that was the difference between us and them'" (105). Thus, even the "good" white settler is blind to his own inbuilt prejudices.

Malouf implies that each of the settler's individual fears has an origin in class shame or some form of shame that is related to the outsider status of exile. Jock's "shame ... [is the shame of failed exile, because he had promised his wife Ellen] so much and provided so little" (75); Ellen's shame arises from their poverty that has resulted in the deaths of two of her children and her sense of loss and failure as a mother; her daughter, Janet, also "felt humiliated, as if the poverty was in them" (55); George Abbot's shame is of not having lived up to his rich benefactor's expectations and this shame is then displaced as rage at his pupils and himself (44–6); Lachlan is shamed by his Scottish accent and orphaned status; Hec Gosper by the shame of his harelip that separates his strong body out from the others (15); even Sir George in the Palladian splendour of Government House is plagued by feelings of inadequacy and shame at his lowly beginnings: "What he fears is that if he is too successful here he will be taken for granted and overlooked; but there are occasions when he fears even more that he may be *exposed*, since the secret that gnaws his soul, child as he is of a Donegal rectory, is that he is an imposter" (170, emphasis in original). It is a "slow poison in him" (171), a version of Tompkins's "sickness of the soul".

In some sense then it could be argued that it is the compensatory factor of mateship that is offered in this novel as a defence mechanism against the separating out and alienation effect of class shame. However, the class solidarity offered by the iconic status of Australian mateship (which of course excludes Ellen as a woman and Sir George because of his class mobility, despite the pall of his shame) is unspokenly but emphatically white. As Ingram succinctly states in her commentary on the novel: the "idiom of mateship that is thought to embody a truly Australian ethos ... [is] one based on race".[27] Malouf makes it clear that Jock's attempted protection of Gemmy – an act of rapprochement that was in many ways forced upon him rather than chosen – results in his exclusion from the brotherhood of white mateship:

> Something had been destroyed in him that could not be put right. He ... drift[ed] back after a time to his friends, to Barney Mason, Jim Sweetman, but the days of unselfconscious trust in his standing among them, and the belief that to be thought well of by such fellows was the first thing in the world, were gone. (161)

However, this sense of settler mateship is a closed network to which Gemmy himself could never belong because he is forever contaminated by the smell of shame.

Remembering Babylon is an olfactory novel, suffused with rancid smells that are always associated with some form of violation and it is through this much-repeated trope that the visceral physicality of shame makes its presence.[28] It is a smell that is connected only to Gemmy, and it was reputed to have seeped onto him from his time of living with Aboriginals, "learning [as the text stresses] *their* lingo and all *their* secrets, all the *abominations* they went in for (39, last emphasis in original). Gemmy has thus truly now become a colonial object, a "thing you could *smell!*" (41, emphasis in original). Despite all the scrubbing and the new clothes given to him by Ellen McIvor, "he had kept the smell he came with, which was the smell of the mayall, half-meat, half-mud, a reminder, a depressing one, of what there might be in him that could not be reclaimed" (41). What could not be reclaimed, of course, was his whiteness, a whiteness read off the body that in the settlers' eyes had taken on "the native look" (40).

The Western grand narrative of shame and indeed the basis of all shame readings in Western cultures is the Biblical story of Adam and Eve and the expulsion from Eden after eating the forbidden apple. It is, of course, also a story of shameful exposure and the punishment of exile, a shadowy allusion to which is implied by the title and more formally enacted in the famous opening scene of this novel. Gemmy, the innocent child-man surrounded by the seemingly hostile group of settlers, tears off the salt-stained blue rag that hides his genitals (an ironic symbol both of his rotted Britishness and a parodic substitution for the biblical fig-leaf) and holds it out to the crowd. When the rag is given back to him, Gemmy merely grins and hugs it to his chest until it became "too much" for one of the settlers, the burly ex-blacksmith and ironically named Jim Sweetman who bursts out: "For God's sake man … cover yourself" (13).[29] "Flushed with shame, he [Sweetman] snatched the rag from the man's hands, pushed it at him, and pointed, then looked away" (14). The irony here is that in terms of shame, the uncivilised and contaminated Gemmy appears to exist in a state of prelapsarian innocence, while Sweetman is personally shamed by confronting the nakedness of this white man who has "gone native". Gemmy himself merely grins at the rag's return to his body, and "[v]ery complaisantly … knotted the thing … in a very ineffectual manner, at his waist" (14). He is not ashamed of his nakedness, and this intensifies Sweetman's own reaction of shame.

Yet Malouf's choice of a man seemingly devoid of artifice and an attachment to the ideological codes of the white society to which he belongs, however peripherally, also provides a particular kind of character who can be excused for being unable to voice or even see the political and social erasures of the dominant white society. *Remembering Babylon* in one sense begins the important task of making visible and exposing the long history of white shame in Australian society as Malouf acknowledges white culpability and the constitutive power of white shame. Nevertheless, as Germaine Greer, Suvendrini Perera, Garry Kinnane, Peter Otto and many others have argued, Malouf also steps away from the depictions of white violence and barbarity against Australia's first inhabitants that were very much present in the historical narrative which Malouf tells us in the afterword gave rise to the memorable opening segment of the novel.[30]

Once Gemmy decides to reject white settler society in order to return to his outsider status with the Aboriginal tribe, within the ideological parameters of the novel, he *has* to be wiped from the text. His rejection of the settler white way of being and the history of his ill-fitting life can be safely erased by the rain, though of course we as contemporary (and thus, distanced) readers are aware that it is the *wrong* history (181), the irony here acting as a mechanism of ideological displacement. Indeed, as soon as Gemmy's racial allegiance is confirmed, he, along with the Aborigines to whom he returns, are euphemistically "dispersed" or killed off (196). Following this, the final chapter moves into a purified white point of view and a return to the biblical shame narrative. The disorderly scene of Gemmy's performance of shame for the benefit of horrified white settlers is now safely separated out from the white enclosure of the new Eden. A white nun and a white politician – both synecdochic symbols of institutions that in different ways have promulgated the ideologies of white Australia – can relax in a "walled retreat (the walls were ten feet high, spiked at the top with shards of glass ...), an impressive but dangerous reminder of a world they had set themselves apart from, though not entirely" (182). Inside this safe white space, a ritualised and repeated eating of the fruit of temptation is now conducted in a "civilised" way with a knife, but one that divides "knowledge and curiosity" into regimented segments.

Significantly, the last conscious thought in the novel belongs to Janet who acts as the moral centre of the text. It is a childhood memory of her first sight of Gemmy atop the fence that divides black from white, the "impenetrable dark" (8) from the newly "civilised" white settler colony: "a stilled moment that has lasted for years [of] Gemmy as she saw him, once and for all, up there on the stripped ands shiny rail, [seemingly] never to fall" (199). But fall he did, and Gemmy's fall into conscious shame was to prove deathly for the "black white man" (10) who crossed the racial divide of the "Colonial fairytale" (19). In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon states that "in the colonial situation, dynamism is replaced fairly quickly by a substantification of the attitudes of the colonising power. The area of culture is then marked off by fences and signposts. These are in fact so many defence mechanisms of the most elementary type, comparable for more than one good reason to the simple instinct for preservation."[31] As I see it, while *Remembering Babylon* is suffused with ghostly hauntings of white shame that drift through mapped demarcations and pervade social imaginings, these eerie manifestations of whiteness are first questioned then evaded in this novel. Whiteness both acts as a defence mechanism and as an acknowledged form of power.

It could be said then that in *Remembering Babylon* while David Malouf evokes the ghostly hauntings of white shame he avoids the ideological repercussions. Moreover, the inexorable return of the ideology of Australian whiteness is almost impossible to discern because it is "ghostly at first in its feathery lightness" (181). In considering this ideological retreat from acknowledging shame that occurs in the last chapter of the novel, it is noteworthy that Malouf himself places a great deal of importance on forms of narrative closure. As he says in an interview with Helen Daniel, "I've always been very interested in endings ... I think I'm always working towards the ending, and I often, in shaping the novel, have no idea what's going to happen in the middle. But I do know what the ending will be".[32] Yet in the final paragraphs of this novel the shameful cultural prescriptions and damage of white colonialism dissipate into an ethereal representation of an unlocated and unnamed stretch of ocean and an unbounded declaration of "love" (199) that can, it is suggested, conquer all.

However, if both the metaphorical and very real fences that divide white from black in Australia are ever going to fall there has to be a breaking open of the illusory shelter of a (white) nostalgic Eden and a politicised, self-conscious engagement with the literality of white shame. This needs to be addressed in terms of both historical re-readings and as a positive, political *re-engagement* with what has unfortunately become the spectral politics of Reconciliation.

Notes

Many thanks to Susan Midalia for her astute editorial advice.

1 For one of the more recent articles that begins and ends by outlining the parameters of the critical controversy, see Don Randall "Cross-Cultural Imagination in David Malouf's *Remembering Babylon*", *Westerly* 49 (2004): 143–4 & 152–3.

[2] Peter Otto, "Forgetting Colonialism", *Meanjin* 52:3 (1993): 546 & 545.

[3] Suvendrini Perera, "Unspeakable Bodies: Representing the Aboriginal in Australian Critical Discourse", *Meridian* 13:1 (1994): 17.

[4] See Elspeth Probyn, "Shaming theory, thinking dis-connections", *Transformations: Thinking Through Feminism*, eds. Sara Ahmed, Jane Kilby, Celia Lury, Maureen McNeil and Beverley Skaggs (London & New York: Routledge, 2000): 50–1.

[5] As Probyn states, the *Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families* was tabled in April 1997 and the Australian Reconciliation Convention was held the following month – May 1997. The *Report* had rightly claimed much media attention and Howard's very public refusal to say sorry at the Reconciliation Convention has been the cause of much continuing shame for very many Australians.

[6] Quoted in Rosamund Dalziell, *Shameful Autobiographies: Shame in Contemporary Australian Autobiographies and Culture* (Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1999): 3.

[7] Jacqueline Rose, *On Not Being Able to Sleep: Psychoanalysis and the Modern World* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2003): 1.

[8] Steve Connor, "The shame of being a man", *Textual Practice* 15:2 (2002): 227.

[9] Eve Kosofsky-Sedgwick, *Tendencies* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1993): 51, quoted in Probyn, 57. See also, Eve Kosofsky-Sedgwick, "Queer Performativity: Henry James's *The Art of the Novel*", *GLQ* 1 (1993): 1–16; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank eds., *Shame and Its Sisters: A Silvan Tomkins Reader* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 1995).

[10] David Malouf, *Remembering Babylon* (London: Vintage, 1994). References to the novel will henceforth appear in parentheses in the body of the essay.

[11] The phrase *white-but-not-quite* is a play on Homi Bhabha's theorising of the "*ambivalence* of mimicry", which he represents as "almost the same, *but not quite*". See "Of Mimicry and Man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse", Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London & New York: Routledge, 1994): 86 (emphases in original), also pages 89 & 91 for variants of this phrase.

[12] Penelope Ingram, "Racializing Babylon; Settler Whiteness and the "New Racism", *New Literary History* 32:1 (2001): 157.

[13] For an extended discussion of the implications of the ideology of whiteness and the damage that inheres in its structures of power, see Victoria Burrows, *Whiteness and Trauma: The Mother-Daughter Knot in the Fiction of Jean Rhys, Jamaica Kincaid and Toni Morrison* (Basingstoke, UK & New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

[14] Halina Ablamowicz, "Shame as Abject Communication: A Semiotic View", *The American Journal of Semiotics* 11:3–4 (1994 [1998]): 157.

15 Stephen Pattison, *Shame: Theory, Therapy, Theology* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 43.

16 Silvan S. Tomkins, *Affect, Imagery, Consciousness: Volume II, The Negative Affects* (New York: Springer, 1963): 118.

17 Gershen Kaufman, *Shame: The Power of Caring* (Rochester, Vermont: Schenkman Books, 1992): 191.

18 Jennifer Biddle, "Shame", *Australian Feminist Studies* 12:26 (1997): 229.

19 Emmanuel Levinas, *On Escape (De l'évasion)* [1935], trans. Bettina Bergo (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003): 64.

20 Tomkins, 135.

21 Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone Books, 1999): 106. Agamben argues that "[s]hame is what is produced in the absolute concomitance of subjectification and desubjectification, self-loss and self-possession, servitude and sovereignty" (107).

22 Carl Schneider maintains that "we experience shame when we feel we are placed out of the context within which we wish to be interpreted". Carl D. Schneider, *Shame, Exposure and Privacy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1977): 35. When the concept of being interpreted out of context is attached to race and the defining machinations of whiteness, the proliferation of shame becomes only too obvious.

23 See Pattison, 41–3, for a description of the way in which shame reduces the shamed person to speechlessness. As he states, "[l]inguistic difficulties have also played a major part in ensuring that shame remains hidden" (41).

24 Léon Wurmser, *The Mask of Shame* (Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981): 92 (emphasis in original).

25 Jennifer Biddle describes the ambivalent duality of the psychic structure of shame this way: "As much as shame seeks to avert itself – there is no feeling more painful – shame seeks to confess. To be heard, to be borne by another, to find a witness – shame seeks to be allowed the very condition denied it in its rupture – recognition by another" (227).

26 For an interesting reading of Malouf's use of the imaginary stone, see Alice Brittan, "B-b-british Objects: Possession, Naming, and Translation in David Malouf's *Remembering Babylon*", *PMLA* 117:5 (2002): 1167–8.

27 Ingram, 163. Peter Pierce offers some insightful comments on representations of mateship in Malouf's text in "Problematic History, Problems of Form: David Malouf's *Remembering Babylon*", *Provisional Maps: Critical Essays on David Malouf*, ed. Amanda Nettelbeck (Nedlands, Western Australia: Centre for Studies in Australian Literature, 1994): 185, 186 & 194.

[28] For references to the connection between shame and smell, see Wurmser, 27 & 169.

[29] David Randall also writes about Malouf's focus on "the rag" which he sees as adding a "comic element to the text". Randall also reads the trope as a "sign [which] intends to show much more than it hides", which adds an interesting dimension in terms of a shame reading. See Randall (2004): 146.

[30] Germaine Greer, "Malouf's Objectionable Whitewash", *Age* 3 November 1993; Garry Kinnane, "Black, White and Red", *The Australian's Review of Books* April 2000: 7–8; Otto, (1993): 545-58; Perera, (1994): 15–26.

[31] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* [1961], translated by Constance (Farrington, London: Penguin, 1990): 190.

32 Helen Daniel, "Interview with David Malouf", *Australian Humanities Review* (September 1996): 2.