



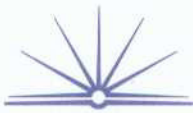
Images are created by various composers visually, aurally and in literary art to define, analyse and explore any given world view. The images created for us in poetry like Kevin Gilbert's are designed to be confronting and challenging to a comfortable western middle class world view. Inside Black Australia's poem 'Tree' and 'Kiakato' are a juxtaposition of what is good and what is bad from Aboriginal point of view. An article by journalist John Pilger reflecting on the image of Kathy Freeman at the Olympic Games debunks the positive image she presents to the world. A comic from the Bulletin (1927) contrasts the prejudicial views of its readership and perhaps much of white Australian values of the day. And a documentary from ABC's 'Australia Story' (2000) provides images that give us hope.

Gilbert's 'Tree + Kiakato' ~~contrast~~ <sup>fit</sup>



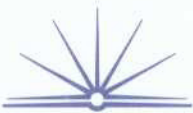
into Aboriginal and non indigenous culture and they are affectively read and heard in actual settings. The poem tree is a one sentence stanza that ~~just~~ presents images of Aboriginal totems and Aboriginal life and world view as a single stream of consciousness. The visual view of the poem of the page and as it is read gives the image of the fluid wholeness that defines Aboriginal religion + life. The images (totems) are strong "tree": life + strength, "eagle": majestic predator, "sun moon earth": cosmic sweep of what life encompasses. The 'sacred clay' from which it all grows, is part another part of the 'something' the 'consciousness' which makes up their mysterious life for Gilbert, etc.

Kiacatoe on the other hand a Ballad with an ABCB structure, contrasts the sacredness of 'tree' with the sacrilegious of murder + barbarism suffered by Gilbert's

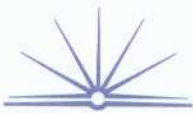


great grandma 'Kalara'. The mention of  
Pylate is the image of betrayal and cowardice.  
The 'Shroud of the Crown' covers up the 'lies  
& murder & theft.' The beauty & splendour  
of the images in the Tree, the sea, the  
Creator' are vandalised in Kiakatoe  
by inhuman hunters who 'bag the lot.'  
and cut the Aborigines down 'like wild  
dogs'. Such is the 'haunting' that the place  
is still pained 'quickly' as though the  
evil by the Lachlan river is an ever  
present contaminant. And this feature is  
a lasting image in Gilbert's poems. — the  
poet is still with us — the fluid  
mystery of the dreaming in the tree &  
the unexplored evil of Kiakatoe still  
live in the people : in us.

Another disturbing image from the 1927  
Bulletin is a cartoon of Professor of Biology  
Melbourne university & leading ethnologist of



The day, protector of NT. The cartoon feeds  
the ~~old~~ prejudiced values of white colonialists  
showing Spencer Baldwin in a tuxedo,  
cool, rational, civilized, slightly hooded  
eyes as though the subject matter under  
review was beneath him and at the  
very least boring. He is self powered +  
appealing to the clans and academics  
of his day. In the picture he is using  
a pointer to draw attention to an aboriginal  
in a silly uncontrolled posture, a Hoovering  
in one hand and a beer in the other.  
He appears naked, uncivilized uncontrolled  
irrational, primitive + savage. The message is  
clear, as were Baldwin's reports that  
the inevitable extinction of aboriginals whilst  
not overtly stated, was none the less a  
possible and positive outcome. The image  
is disgusting in light of history, and  
a shameful reminder of our roots and  
our responsibilities.



When her sponsor QANTAS portrayed Cathy Freeman and the Olympic flame as the 'spirit of Australia' she was heralded as vigor youth and glory of the market machines new tourist destination.

But as John Pilger points out in his article on his website (2001) it's simply a facade of reality. The image gives us great memories of achievement + glory, but QANTAS failed to tell us that World Health Organization have us on a shame list for having children still going blind in aboriginal communities, or that black deaths in custody + in carcerations were as high as those in apartheid South Africa at its zenith. QANTAS does not mention we are condemned by the UN as racist. Her image is a mask and like many images - to lie well it contains truth - she's good, a champion - beautiful, - but the spirit of Australia? Not yet.



ABC's Documentary of Myall Creek Massacre where 28 Aboriginals lost their lives however is an image of hope. Relatives of the victims and the perpetrators are shown to be walking together to the sight, a ceremony and memorials, containing traditional features (smoking gum leaves/Rock carvings) and non indigenous features (speeches + prayers) result in forgiveness tears + reconciliation. The leader of the ceremony describes it as "the nucleus of reconciliation for the whole country," a opportunity of hope. In a final scene of embracing, white hands holding black hands, the elder Sue Blacklock relative of the victims invites Beulah Adams, relative of the murderers, to come and join the membership of her tribe. Images created by word or picture can take us from the heights, to the depths and back through hope to the heights again.