PREFACE

Australian aboriginal novel has been dominated by Mudrooroo since 1965, with his first publication *Wild Cat Falling*. Mudrooroo invented new ways of writing to Australia and the world. Writing seven novels, three books of poetry, three plays and one critical study, he proved to be the most prolific and the widest ranging Aboriginal author. Beginning his career as ‘Colin Johnson’, he has reinvented himself as ‘Mudrooroo Narogin’, Mudrooroo Nyoongah’ and eventually as ‘Mudrooroo’. Constantly shifting himself between poetry, prose and criticism, as a literary chameleon, he adopted himself to different locations, genres and themes. All his works have carried out a core of interest to investigate and explicate Aboriginality. He concentrates on the issues of Black Australian beliefs both inside and outside the text and Nyoongahs use of literature to connect them with their past. Over the past thirty years, he comes close to answering these issues than many contemporary Aboriginal writers. He draws a clear distinction between Aboriginal and Non Aboriginal concepts and do not contain post modern critical insights. He is of the view that European theorists often entomb Aboriginality instead of liberating it. Creating a literary path, he comes out with more rewarding and significant ways to elucidate Aboriginal culture. The world of dichotomy is not new to Mudrooroo. He explicitly states that Aboriginal writer must act as a
mediator between Aboriginal past and future effectively continuing his existence in non Aboriginal present. Mudrooroo manages this tightrope walk uniquely in a creative way. As a consummate observer, he flexibly incorporates his experiences and stays ahead of others as a literary shape shifter. He changes his literary identity, strategic literary interpretations and moves swiftly. Deriving energy from this process, he specializes in reflecting back and leaves open the possibility of reappearing tomorrow. As a literary trickster, Mudrooroo explores at length Maban, Shaman or trickster in his novels. This is only to design the trickster creative interpretation as his major preoccupations.

All his works are fascinating and challenging. Each of work is independent and a representation of collective life. He leaves message at the end of every novel like the great song circles of his ancestors. He expresses his firm views and is categorical in his denunciations. The thesis examines the popular and significant works of Mudrooroo in the light of contemporary understanding of Aboriginal literature within the circumscription of Fourth World literatures. The first chapter ‘Fourth World Literatures’ introduces the literary and cultural emergence of the classification of Fourth World Literatures at the backdrop of the enormous significance drawn towards understanding Indigenous literatures across the globe. The chapter traces the evolution of Australian Aboriginal literature
and offers a literary cartography of the significant poets, novelists and playwrights. The chapter also provides a brief synoptic view of the thematic designs of Mudrooroo’s novels. The second chapter ‘Aboriginal Authenticity’ analytically probes the controversial issue of the Aboriginal identity of Mudrooroo. The chapter examines accusations of non aboriginality of Mudrooroo from Aboriginal writers and offers valid reasons extracting authentic evidences from Mudrooroo’s life. Apart from providing the thematic explorations in support of ‘Aboriginal Authenticity’ of Mudrooroo, the chapter brings in the resolution that Mudrooroo’s Aboriginality is undisputed. The third chapter ‘Quest for Aboriginal Self Knowledge’ examines *Wild Cat Trilogy*. The thematic understanding of these novels is provided with textual illustrations. *Wild Cat Falling, Doin Wildcat* and *Wild Cat Screaming* present the rise and befall of the protagonist. Presenting three different themes, Mudrooroo explores the contemporary issues of Aboriginality. He predicts the existential predicaments of Aboriginals confronting the grave realities in African society. The chapter provides critical insight into the narrative strategies employed by Mudrooroo. The fourth chapter ‘Reimagining the Aboriginal Past’ elucidates *Dr. Wooreddy’s Prescription for Enduring the End of the World*. The novel is a representative of Aboriginal culture and identity. The theme of the novel is best illustrated with textual illustrations. Subscribing to the post colonial proposition of reclaiming the past, the
novel becomes an ontological encounter with the borders of the past. The resistance of Aboriginals and the ambivalence of the colonizers are perfectly equipoised through the character of Dr. Wooreddy, presented as representative of self realization and Aboriginal spirituality. The fifth chapter ‘Constructing Counter Realism’ elucidates the novel *The Master of Ghost Dreaming*. The concern of the novel to voice out the evolution and formation of Aboriginal society is established with inter textual element in this chapter. The chapter exposes the ironies of the Church involved in ameliorating the lives of the Aboriginals. The complete conversion of the Europeans to the Aboriginal ways of living is analytically presented in the chapter drawing conclusions from the textual inferences. This is followed by the conclusion which offers a summation of all the possible traits of the author producing a paramount aboriginal literature that has distorted the traditional perspectives of literature.

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