Flying down the Darling River: Fae Morris

We took off into the clear blue autumn sky. The sky in the Western Region, is like a dome appearing larger than the earth itself. We flew like a bird circling left and right, looping over particular sights, then down the twisting Darling River which almost turned on itself. Like a great, giant mythological snake, the water flowed down the river and at times seemed to just stop short of creating an island within itself. In times of flood it covers the land for hundreds of kilometres.

The pilot, Ted, tipped the plane from one angle to another pointing out features like the boundary fence of a station. Mobs of sheep appeared on the landscape.

The soil was at times deep ochre red and then the black soil washed down by thousands of floods covering the red, blue saltbush appeared dotted over the land. There were small patches of grass, green from the nitrogen from sheep manure and from stock kept in hutches overnight by shepherds a hundred years ago.

My imagination was captured by the history of that outback region of this hauntingly stark ancient land and my heart remembered the original inhabitants of this country.