Australian literature travels: through being pushed into other markets and institutional settings via commercial, academic, or diplomatic mechanisms, or through being pulled into these other settings by its own powers of attraction, connections created by migration, or the strategic interests of another country. There is a largely positive story to be told of Australian literature and literary studies in Asia, especially in China, India, and Japan, despite many obstacles, even a relative lack of dialogue between scholars in these countries and their Australian counterparts. It would be tempting to interpret this growth of interest in Australian literature regionally as a strong instance of transnationalism, and so it might be in some very broad sense of the term. But just as often the paradigm has been a form of ‘comparative nationalisms,’ even where postcolonialism or another transnational framing is used. Australian literature has been a significant force in creating interest in Australia among scholars, students, and general readers abroad, but there is always the risk of literature ‘representing’ the nation in ways both naïve and overdetermined.

The present chapter focusses on China and India (for background on the Japanese context, see Arimitsu). In both we see what is in many ways a remarkable story of the expansion and deepening of Australian literature’s presence, although unevenly spread across commercial and educational domains. Australian institutional support, through government agencies and universities, has been crucial, despite limited resources or policy investment. Being a predominantly Anglophone literature brings both advantages and disadvantages. In China, certainly, being in English makes Australian literature attractive to many university students and staff as part of their country’s push into international affairs. At the same time, within English studies, Australian literature must make its way as a minor player in a world dominated by British, American, and Canadian Anglophone literatures. Just as this context (or competition), in turn, makes Australia’s ‘regional’ identity critical, so too its multiculturalism and the powerful presence of Indigenous cultures do in breaking down any assumption of a singular or unified national identity.

China

There is now a small but rich archive of articles in English on the presence of Australian literature in China and the history of Chinese critical approaches to Australian literature. Most are written by insiders, scholars and teachers of Australian literature working in Chinese universities. What follows is an outsider’s view, though from one who has been closely involved with Australian Studies in China since the early 1990s. The study of Australian literature has, from its outset in the 1980s, been the largest disciplinary concentration within Australian Studies in China, but, for...
complex reasons, not always at its leading edge. However, as discussed below, a significant renewal of the field has taken place over the last decade and a half, changing the nature of both Australian literary studies in China and the relations between Chinese and Australian literary scholarship.

The 2017 Association for the Study of Australian Literature (ASAL) conference acknowledged these developments, having as its theme ‘Looking In, Looking Out: China and Australia’ and featuring over 20 papers by Chinese participants. In China itself, the 2018 conference of the Chinese Association for Australian Studies saw more than 30 papers by Chinese scholars on Australian literature, including three on Alexis Wright’s *Carpentaria* (2006), two on Kim Scott’s *Benang* (1999), four on children’s literature, and others on a range of authors from Elizabeth Jolley and Peter Carey to Gail Jones, Bruce Pascoe, and Marion Campbell. Australian literature is now taught in at least a dozen Chinese universities.

In the field of translation, in 2010 ten contemporary novels appeared in a single series (listed in Ouyang 68), and subsequently new translations have ranged from the challenging *Carpentaria* (2012) to popular fiction such as Kate Morton’s *The Shifting Fog* (2016) and Jane Harper’s *The Dry* (2017). In 2015, a new *Anthology of Contemporary Australian Fiction*, edited by Zhu Jiongqiang, was published, presenting 47 authors from Patrick White to Alice Pung; and in 2016, translations of five new Aboriginal narratives appeared. In criticism over the last decade, as well as monographs on White, Carey, Jolley, Garner, and Thomas Keneally (Wang, ‘A Hard-Won Success’ 54; Zhu, *Helen Garner*), ambitious studies have appeared on cultural diversity and colonialism (Ye), identity in contemporary Aboriginal literature (Yang, *A Study of Identity*), Australian eco-literature (Xiang), and Indigenous representation in Australian children’s literature (Xu, *Indigenous Cultural Capital*). Finally, a major history of Australian literary criticism from A.G. Stephens to ‘post-theory’ was published in 2016 (Wang, *A History of Australian Literary Criticism*) – to our knowledge nothing equivalent exists in other languages.

Zhou Xiaojin’s in-depth analysis of Chinese journal articles on Australian literature to 2016, however, is somewhat sobering. While such articles have grown from a handful each year before 2000 to more than 80 on average, the total still lags behind comparable articles on American, British, and Canadian literatures. Further, Zhou Xiaojin diagnoses an institutional anxiety behind the fact that only a small number of scholars, when publishing their articles, identify their primary research field as Australian literature; many of the articles on Australian texts are written by scholars without wider expertise in the field. Despite the vibrant conferences, it remains relatively rare for Chinese academics to be able to pursue a career defined primarily in terms of Australian literature, and the possibilities of undertaking a PhD in Australian literature are limited, though expanding significantly for study in both China and Australia. And while the internet has greatly increased access for scholars to Australian materials – noticeable in the contemporaneity of recent critical work – for many access to books and print journals remains difficult.

Among the developing archive of work on Australian literature in China are some unexpected early signs of its presence. Short stories by thriller and crime writers Guy Boothby and Fergus Hume appeared in Chinese magazines in 1906–1907, no doubt due to their British and American reputations (Ouyang 65). Poems by Mary Gilmore, Hugh McCrack, and Roderic Quinn appeared in a magazine in 1921, selected by the Chinese writer Mao Dun, a key figure in the ‘modernising’ movements of the 1920s and 1930s. ‘These poems are somewhat similar to modern American poetry,’ Mao Dun wrote, ‘there is neither arrogance nor humility, neither tiredness nor nervousness, neither indulgence in nihilism nor exaggerated beauty, nor any alarm or bewilderment at the ugliness and difficulties of the material environment’ (qtd in Yang, ‘Australian Poetry’ 9). As Nicholas Jose remarks, the comments implied a contrast with China.

A magazine article on the contemporary Australian literary scene, by novelist and academic Zhao Jingshen, appeared in 1929. The news was not encouraging. Australian literature remained undeveloped and unsupported. There were no worthy literary periodicals – the *Bulletin* was no longer significant and the *Triad* was read for entertainment rather than literary content. There
was no solidarity among those engaged in literature, while readers denigrated the local product, preferring third-rate British and American imports. Australians were more interested in timber and mines than literature. The author, nonetheless, highlights Gordon, McCrae, and, above all, Katharine Susannah Prichard. We do not know the source of Zhao Jingshen’s information, but the article is up-to-date and well-informed; the negative diagnosis was certainly shared by many in the Australian literary world at the time.

This sequence of contacts raises interesting questions regarding parallels between China and Australia and modernising literary movements in the interwar years. Yu Ouyang (65) has also noted Australian literature appearing in 1934, alongside literatures from Peru, Poland, Hungary, Korea, and Estonia among others, in a journal special issue devoted to ‘Literatures from the Weak and Small Nations.’ China, too, could be grouped among such nations at this time. Today we might understand the concept in terms of Pascale Casanova’s model of the world republic of letters, which provides a way of understanding Australian literature’s situation in China alongside other Anglophone literatures. Australia can miss out on two sides, being neither a major ‘first-world’ literature nor a definable ‘third-world’ literature (Wang, ‘A Hard-Won Success’ 55); postcolonial theory offers an alternative language to argue Australian literature into an academically recognised paradigm.

The next phase was the translation of Australian works following the 1949 communist revolution. Between 1953 and 1964, 23 books were translated by high-quality translators and published by major houses, mainly works by communist and left-leaning authors, including James Aldridge, Frank Hardy, Judah Waten, Dymphna Cusack, Mona Brand – and Henry Lawson (Pugsley 90; Ouyang 66). This resembled the contemporaneous pattern of publication in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and East Germany, and the books possibly arrived through Russian rather than Australian literary connections. The impact of these translations is unclear, but we might guess they were read in an internationalist spirit, for their populist, anti-capitalist, or anti-imperialist sympathies, rather than for their distinctive national qualities. This first phase of translating foreign literature ended with the Cultural Revolution (and was probably not helped by the Communist Party of Australia’s break with Beijing in 1963). Translations only pick up again in the 1980s, apart from a collection of Lawson’s stories in 1978.

While translations are vital, the bulk of criticism in the academic sphere occurs in the context of English or Foreign Language schools and hence through work on the original English-language texts. Further, translations are often subsidised rather than commercial productions and have limited distribution. Approaches to criticism and literary history, then, are as significant to the story of research and reception as the history of translations, although the influence clearly works in both directions.

As others have recounted, the study of Australian literature in China began in a systematic, institutionalised way with the return to China of a group of scholars who had undertaken Masters-level study at the University of Sydney from 1979 to 1981. The now legendary ‘Gang of Nine,’ nine young male university teachers, were selected by the Chinese government to study in Australia. At the University of Sydney they studied with linguist Michael Halliday, who would become the best-known Australian intellectual in China, and, for Australia literature, with Leonie Kramer. An important decision was made that the visiting scholars would undertake a full MA programme. For those focussing on literary studies this meant a comprehensive introduction to canonical Australian literature and literary history, with long-term effects on Australian literary studies in China.

In Australia itself, this was a critical moment in the history of Australian literary studies. The canon of Australian literature instituted in the academy in the 1950s and 1960s around notions of universal literary significance – and culminating in A.D. Hope’s poetry and White’s novels – remained the foundation for most courses in Australian literature. But it was beginning to be challenged by a new generation influenced by the ‘new nationalism’ of the period and by neo-Marxist and feminist approaches. The moment of ‘theory’ was about to disrupt the predominance of ethico-formalist approaches in English departments (Carter, ‘Critics, Writers,
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Intellectuals’ 272–283). Kramer’s *Oxford History of Australian Literature* appeared in 1981, just as the Chinese scholars were finishing their studies. The largely hostile response it provoked in Australia for the narrowness of its canon and the limitations of its critical approach was symptomatic of these shifting tides, but they had yet to make their major impacts.11

Nonetheless, the Sydney experiment was a success by any measure, although in fact the first university base for Australian literary studies was in the Oceanic Literature Research unit founded by Ma Zuoyi, not one of the Sydney group, at Anhui University in 1979 (Hu, ‘The Oceanic Literature Research Institute’). The ‘Oceanic’ framing was an enabling one and has continued into the present, mostly recently with the (re)launch of *Oceanic Literary Studies* in 2014 (Ouyang 66).

Those who had studied literature at Sydney, however, played an essential role in translating their experience into Australian Studies Centres and teaching programs, despite Australia’s marginal status both in the Chinese university system and among Anglophone literatures: Hu Wenzhong at Beijing Foreign Languages Institute (later Beijing Foreign Studies University, 1983), Huang Yuanshen at East China Normal University (1985), and Wang Guofu at Soochow University (1991).

The Chinese Australian Studies Association held its first conference in 1988.

Although the field was still very much in its formative stages, important books began to appear (Zhou 256): anthologies in English, selected for teaching purposes, including Hu Wenzhong’s *A Selection of Australian Short Stories* in 1983 and Huang Yuanshen’s *Selected Readings in Australian Literature* – from Harpur to Carey – in 1986; translations of canonical works, especially *His Natural Life* (1870–1872) and *Robbery Under Arms* (1882) in 1985, and White’s *The Eye of the Storm* (1973, trans. 1986), *The Tree of Man* (1955, trans. 1990), and *Voss* (1957, trans. 1991); critical articles, such as those included in *A Collection of Chinese Critical Essays on Australian Literature* in 1993 (Tang; Wang, ‘Australian Literature in China’ 122–126); and in 1997, Huang Yuanshen’s *A History of Australian Literature*, the single most influential work on Australian literature published in China.12 Support from the Australia-China Council helped Australian Studies Centres develop, and this assistance was formalised into an Australian Studies in China programme in 1997 with grant schemes for research projects, curriculum development, publishing subsidies, and cultural ‘outreach’ activities (Carter, ‘Living with Instrumentalism’). Australian Writers Week has been significant, too, since 2007, with four authors selected annually to tour major centres in China.13

As these books suggest, the Sydney experience enabled the study of Australian literature in China from the outset to be more than ‘random attacks’ on individual texts and authors. It offered a powerful historical narrative of national emergence, which was also a growth into cultural maturity, from colonial to national to ‘modern’ (but not modernist) literature; and the standing of literature could also be taken as a gauge of national standing. Again, this was the history that culminated in White (with newer literature being understood as furthering this modern ‘internationalist’ phase); White’s status as a Nobel Prize winner also lent academic credibility to the study of Australian literature. Further, this history could chime with ‘the long Chinese tradition of historicising writers and works’ (Zhou 263). Lawson remains the key figure for the nationalist period, and while his literary shortcomings might be noticed his status remains relatively untouched by the critiques of nationalism that defined the *Oxford History*’s approach. In short, the canon inscribed in Kramer’s *Oxford History was not* translated directly into Chinese readings; other authors central to this canon – Christopher Brennan, Henry Handel Richardson, Martin Boyd – have not been prominent in Chinese criticism.

Contemporary authors have been added to the lists of criticism and works translated, especially those who could be seen to be advancing the ‘modernisation’ of Australian literature, and then, more recently, its diversity. Keneally, Carey, Thea Astley, and Christina Stead appeared before 2000, Scott, Malouf, Wright, and Jones, among others, since that time. There is a particular interest in writers with a Chinese connection: Brian Castro’s *Birds of Passage* (1983) was translated early, in 1991, the same year as Jose’s *Avenue of Eternal Peace* (1989); Alex Miller’s *The Ancestor Game* (1992) appeared in 1995.14
Alongside academic interest, there has also been a growing commercial trade for both literary and popular fiction titles, not least in children’s and young adult literature. The translation with the greatest impact remains undoubtedly that of Colleen McCullough’s *The Thorn Birds* (1977). There have been nine editions of the novel since 1983, including an annotated edition for English-language students (Ouyang 67; Zhou 257). The book has also been influential in academic circles, so much so that McCullough’s exclusion from critical consideration in Australia needs revisiting. Ouyang counts 18 MA theses and 24 academic articles to 2011, while more than 15% of the articles Zhou Xiaojin examines are on McCullough (though often not by academics working in Australian literature).

From this outsider’s perspective, a new stage was initiated in Chinese Australian literary studies around 2010, a ‘third wave’ perhaps, following the foundational work of the 1980s and 1990s and then a second generation of critically updated work in the 2000s (see works listed in Wang, ‘A Hard-Won Success’ 54; the ‘third wave’ is present in journal articles rather than books at this stage). A new critical self-reflexivity emerged, in part as new PhDs from Australian and Chinese universities began to make an impact. Theoretical approaches were taken up far more actively, especially feminism, multiculturalism, postcolonialism, and postmodernism, joined more recently by ecocriticism, diaspora theories, and ethics/affect studies. Aboriginal narratives have become a major focus – Zhan Chunjuan notes 11 journal articles on *Carpentaria* in recent years (although she also notes some limitations in critical method) – together with a new interest in Australian Chinese-language literature. As suggested, the internet enabled a new contemporaneity with Australian and international trends, catalysed by new pressures for internationalisation, higher graduate qualifications, and publication metrics within the Chinese university system. Articles on Australian literature by Chinese scholars have begun to appear in Australian or international journals, participating in current Australian – and international – debates (see, for example, Wang, *Translation in Diasporic Literatures*; Xu, ‘Liminality and Communitas’; Zong).

At the same time, the historical legacy produces certain biases and gaps in the field, some of which might be seen positively, as expressing a distinctive Chinese take on Australian literature, others of which identify areas ripe for further critical attention. Despite shared theoretical references, there also remain key differences in critical approach, with Chinese scholars typically more respectful towards canonical works and traditions, and, for better or worse, less automatically drawn to the ‘hermeneutics of suspicion’ than their Australian counterparts. The critical focus, unsurprisingly, remains concentrated on canonical authors and texts (Zhou 255–256), although these are diversifying through feminist, Indigenous, diasporic, and ecocritical interests. More telling are some major historical and theoretical revisions that have not been taken up in significant ways.

Apart from the publication of Ye Shengnian’s projects on colonial literature (Ye, Hua, and Yang), there has been little interest in the major revisionary work on nineteenth-century literature that has radically reshaped ideas of colonial literary history through the reassessment of romance fiction (especially women’s) and the ‘cosmopolitanism’ of colonial print cultures. The emphasis on turn-of-the-century nationalism continues to marginalise colonial literary cultures in the ‘Australian story.’ Something similar can be said about the interwar years – the years between Lawson and White – first revisited by Australian scholars in the 1980s–1990s, largely through feminist interrogations, and again more recently through new studies of modernity, middlebrow cultures, and print culture studies. These new approaches have not greatly influenced Chinese scholarship, and the ‘pre-White’ twentieth century remains something of a blank. Major figures such as Eleanor Dark and even Prichard outside *Coonardoo* (1929) remain largely invisible.

Chinese critics have also remarked that the potential for comparative or transnational approaches remains undeveloped (Wang, ‘A Hard-Won Success’ 55; Zhou 262 – but see Wang, *Translation in Diasporic Literatures*). So too does the potential offered for comparative work across
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our two ‘provincial modernisms.’ The point here is less about comprehensiveness than the major revisions to understandings of Australia’s literary and cultural history that such work has produced. While the contemporary canon is updated and diversified, its historical underpinnings remain largely unchanged; beyond the literary history, historical and social contexts are not widely or intensively studied (beyond themes such as the Chinese in Australian history and again, more recently, some elements of Indigenous history). Still, looking over the story of Australian literary studies in China since the early 1980s, what is notable is its relative diversity and continued expansion in the face of cultural and institutional challenges and often limited access to resources.

India

Australian literature in India can be compared with its reception in China – the long attachment to formalist close readings of canonical nationalist works, for example – but historical connections have been quite different, especially because of the greater familiarity of many Indian students with English language and culture. Although colonialism affects relations across all three countries, modern literary studies show different patterns: India, for instance, pays little attention at all to The Thorn Birds (a difference worth study in itself) though Lawson and the Bush tradition has also been a consistent interest. If the China connection has filled pages on prejudicial representations of Chinese in Australian literature, Indian scholarship has tended in its earlier years to look at positive links favouring Indian heritage: White’s use of Indian motifs; Les Murray’s view of a common cattle-herding culture; supposed origins of Aboriginal peoples in the South of India. The Traditional Markets Agreement that held sway in Anglophone publishing for many years had the effect of limiting the flow of Australian books to other countries while promulgating an ideal of Commonwealth exchange. Internally, India operated outside of international copyright conventions for a long time, so that Australians were reluctant to give material direct to Indian publishers. Hence, unlike China, India had a sense of commonality with and access to Australia but not the drive or the legal structure to promote local editions of primary works or readers’ guides. Most scholarly exchange therefore occurred within university-sponsored (mostly English Department) publications produced by a few individual enthusiasts.17

Australian literary ties with India date from colonial times, when John Lang, the first Australian-born novelist, moved to practise law, then journalism in Calcutta, and published fiction about Company life there from the 1840s. Australia continued to send people to India, first as colonial functionaries (like nurse, Molly Skinner, who depicts a comic picaro abroad in Tucker Sees India [1937], and military wife, Ethel Anderson, who lived in India for 20 years from 1904 and published Indian Tales in 1948), then as travellers (Christopher Koch’s Across the Sea Wall [1965] depicts young people encountering ‘the East’ en route to Britain), and sojourners (married to an anthropologist, Janette Turner Hospital spent time in Kerala, depicted in The Ivory Swing [1982]).

Other than Lang, the literary traffic between India and Australia was for a long time largely one way, with colonial officers moving south after service under the Raj. Two exceptions were WH (Wilton Hack) and Mary Bright, who published through the Madras Theosophical Society in 1905 and 1926 respectively. Later migrations of Anglo-Indians and Indians could publish work back in India or return to settle and publish (as, for example, Malaya Gangopadhyay, who produced stories, essays, and an autobiography in Calcutta between 1985 and 2005). However, there have been some Australian works translated or reissued in India. Boothby’s My Strangest Case (1901) appeared in Urdu in Delhi some years after its English publication, and Australian journalist Godfrey Blunden had a Tamil version of his novel A Room on the Route published in 1947. Through the 1980s and since, a number of children’s picture books have been translated, mainly into Hindi and Tamil, with Philip Cummings’s Wilbur (2010) in both languages. Young adult novel, Fake ID (2002) by Hazel Edwards has been issued in Tamil translation (2018). Michael
Wilding has had intermittent connections to India and some of his stories were published in Hindi in 2001. A Murray collection, _The Bridges/Setu_ came out in Hindi in 2003. Set in Mumbai, the ever-popular crime thriller _Shantaram_ (2003) has come out in Marathi (2010), but also in Malayalam (2013). (_Shantaram_ may be the Indian equivalent of _The Thorn Birds_, though it has not inspired the same amount of scholarly attention.) Mridula Chakraborty brought together Dalit and Aboriginal writers and produced a special issue of _Cordite_ in both Hindi and English (2016) that circulated across both countries. Aboriginal writing is a favourite with Indian readers of Australian literature, and R. Azhagarasan has translated some into Tamil, Angshuman Kar going a step further and publishing a small book of Aboriginal poems translated into Bengali.


Indian publishers have over time taken on Frank Clune’s _To the Isles of Spice_ (1946), Mary Holliday’s _Open Season for Fury_ (1991), Libby Hathorn’s time-travel young adult (YA) novel _With the Tiger_ (2008), and David McMahon’s _Vegemite Vindaloo_ (2006). Most of this list involves Penguin India, and often visits by the writers to India. One major exception is _My Place_: its publication under a ‘home-grown’ publisher indicates how central that book has been to the classroom study that guarantees a solid market.

Such writing did not circulate very widely in India until Professors C.D. Narasimhaiah and K.R. Srinivasa Iyengar introduced Commonwealth literary studies into university curricula in the late 1960s with subsequent support from others such as Meenakshi Mukherjee, Jasbir Jain, Shyamala Narayan, H.H. Anniah Gowda, C. Vijayashree, Sanjukta Dasgupta, K. Chellappan, Syed Amanuddin, and Harish Trivedi. Under the broad banner of Commonwealth literary studies, Narasimhaiah produced a special Australian issue of his journal, _The Literary Criterion_, in 1964 and a collection of essays by Australians, _The Flowering of Australian Literature_ (1981). Australian and Indian teachers and writers began visiting each other. P. Lal (Calcutta), Alur Janaki Ram (Jaipur), Ayappa Paniker (Trivandrum), R.K. Narayan (Mysore), and Jayanta Mahapatra (Orissa), for example, all toured Australian universities and literary festivals during the 1970s and 1980s. Perhaps the peak of this foundational two-way traffic and its concomitant formation in India of subjects on Australian literature was the triennial conference of the Association for Commonwealth Language and Literature Studies, held in Delhi in 1977, when Hope, Wallace-Crabbe, Ken Goodwin, Syd Harrex, and Chris and Helen Tiffin were among the Australian participants.

The next phase consolidated interest by way of support through the Australian High Commission and then the Australia-India Council. They supplied packages of reading materials and
eventually ran a programme of ‘familiarisation tours’ for postgraduates and lecturers working on Australian subjects, with some support for Australian writers and lecturers to attend conferences and build research collaborations in India. Gillian Whitlock was one of the drivers from the Australian end during this period, along with Philip Mead, Dennis Haskell, Richard Nile, David Dunstan, Andrew Hassam, Peter Gale and many more. During this time, there was an effort in India to achieve a ‘critical mass’ that would make Australian literary studies sustainable. An Indian Association for the Study of Australia (IASA) was founded in 2000 preceded by the wider ranging but India-based Association for Australasian Studies in Asia (founded 1995). These promoted the main form of scholarship: books of selected papers from biennial conferences. One example is the massive collection from the latter organisation, *Patrick White Centenary: The Legacy of a Prodigal Son*, edited by Cynthia Van Den Driesen and Bill Ashcroft (2014). A lot has depended on the enthusiasm of individuals, and that frequently dissipated once they retired or moved to another university. The location of most Australian studies within university departments of English Literature meant that interest was always hedged about with competing subjects on African, Caribbean and (for many years the better resourced) Canadian literatures. Stalwarts in keeping things moving were Asha Das at the Australian High Commission in New Delhi, Santosh Sadan at Jawaharlal Nehru University, with regular input from Bruce Bennett, Malati Mathur at Indira Gandhi Open University, and R.K. Dhawan from Delhi University, often backed by David Kerr and Van Den Driesen. Eugenie Pinto kept things moving in Chennai, with regular visits by Judith Rodriguez and Baranay and teaching stints by C.A. Cranston and others. K. Radha headed New Literatures teaching in Trivandrum for many years. An Australian and New Zealand Studies centre was set up at Himachal Pradesh University under Pankaj Singh, one of several over time, most of which have since faded from view. An exception is the Australian Studies Resource Centre established in the English Department at Burdwan University, West Bengal. Since 1999 this has taught MPhil- and PhD-level Australian literature and run workshops with visiting Australians. It published two volumes of a journal, *Australian Studies*, and when funds ran out worked with Calcutta editors and publishers to produce books of Australian poetry translated into Bengali. Debnarayan Bandyopadhyay went on from there to establish another centre for Australian Studies and teaching programme at Bankura University in 2014, working with people from the University of New South Wales, Monash University, the University of Wollongong, and the Australian National University. Other people teaching and often editing books of papers on Australian writing have been Makarand Paranjape (Jawaharlal Nehru University), Pradeep Trikha (Ajmer and Udaipur), Jaydeep Sarangi (Calcutta), and Pramod K. Nayar (Hyderabad). A key moment of this consolidation phase was a meeting in 1998 of interested scholars from across the country at the Australian High Commission, chaired by Australia India Council officer Sheel Nuna, to establish a model curriculum for Australian literary studies. This was followed up with a planning meeting in Simla in 2000. In fact, the movement had gained sufficient momentum for a regional branch of IASA to be formed, centred on West Bengal but servicing the surrounding eastern states. The book best representing this period of consolidation is the hefty compendium of essays assembled by Amit and Reema Sarwal, *Reading Down Under: Australian Literary Studies Reader* (2009), published in New Delhi.

Study of Australian literature has remained framed by ‘new literatures’ and ‘postcolonial’ ideas, so that books are usually studied in comparison with or alongside other ‘Commonwealth’ samplings. This kept the focus for a long time on questions of national identity, land, and settler history, and the most studied authors were Hope, White, and Judith Wright (stylistically harmonious with the kind of British writing at the centre of English Literature departments). All three continue to appear in current BA and Master’s subjects, usually framed by comparisons with Canadian and New Zealand texts. Getting enough material for comparisons and reliance on national literary anthologies as sources for texts means that poems and short stories tend to dominate
curricula, though *Voss* is widely taught still, and Kerala University unusually includes a play by David Williamson. The interest in poetry among staff at Dayanand College, Ajmer, produced an unusual concentration of doctoral theses on Robert Gray, John Tranter, Alan Gould, Kevin Hart, Kinsella, and Adamson during the early 2000s. There and elsewhere, however, MPhil and PhD work tends to concentrate on fiction: White, Malouf, Carey, Mudrooroo, Turner Hospital, Grenville, Jolley, Flanagan, Scott, and Wright, being among the more common writers studied. Of late, there has been some interest in young adult and graphic fiction as well. In taught courses, especially at undergraduate and MA level, texts are often limited to short pieces from available anthologies. Selections can sometimes seem fairly random and it is hard to see what sort of picture of Australian literature/society/culture might be formed from the scant offerings in many comparative subjects, where texts exist mainly to illustrate the abstract concepts of postcolonial theory.

As India established its own sense of nationhood and became aware of internal differences, so interest shifted, first towards feminist readings and then Indian diaspora studies, in which Australia, for its historical exclusion of non-white immigrants, has been a tiny corner of American- and British-focused work. ‘Dalit’ (subaltern/underclass) issues and pan-Indigenous studies have encouraged comparisons with Aboriginal literature (not without considerable strain at times). Jack Davis, Oodgeroo Noonuccal, Morgan, and Scott have become canonical on Indian courses influenced by this change. More recently, as in China, attention has moved to the environmental humanities and eco-criticism and (in keeping with shifts in Australia) to transnational themes and literary networks, with extensions into cultural studies. Goa is something of an ‘outsider’ in that it teaches Australian material (mainly film) as a case study in an optional MA subject, Multimedia in Cultural Literacies, but includes in the socio-historical background reading many works used by literary scholars.

Indian interest in Australia, outside of personal contacts, sport, and later call-centre contracts, was initially developed by departments of English, but in the last few decades there has been a push to expand into other disciplines to build a fully fledged Australian Studies profile. Literature remains a key focus, but arguably no longer enjoys the prominence it once had. Within its ambit, and as reception becomes as important as production in analyses, questions around the benefits and limits of cross-cultural reading continue to crop up at conferences, where textual interpretation among postgrads frequently suffers from lack of access to a wide range of materials and lack of familiarity with sociocultural context, leading to recycling of thematic close readings and/or to distortions of the work because viewed too narrowly through a particular critical lens. At the same time, views from outside of Australia can produce new, sometimes unsettlingly vivid perceptions of Australian culture. There have been some interesting applications of Indian aesthetics (Sanskrit *rasa-dhvani* suggestion; traditional Tamil codes of place, time and mood) to reading Australian texts. These tend to overlook the more flexible workings of modern writers that reduce the viability of using traditional theories, but they usefully interrogate the fact that Western models of some vintage are often unquestioningly deployed when reading any kinds of literary work.

Books that circulate without being part of educational programmes are usually those garnering international fame, so that Booker prize-winning titles continue to appear in bookshops (Carey, Coetzee and Keneally representing Australia, with Flanagan as a recent addition). Books that are set in India also receive attention, so travel narratives like Sarah Macdonald’s *Holy Cow* (2002) can often be found, and the lasting and most pervasive book is Gregory David Roberts’s blockbuster, *Shantaram*, visible on many railway and streetside bookstalls. With the entrance of global combines into the Indian market, the breaking down of old trade barriers, and increasing movement of people to and from Australia, more Australian books are making it into Indian markets, Garth Nix’s young adult work being one example. Now resident in India, sometime Australian Aravind Adiga can see *The White Tiger* (2008) everywhere, even touted to motorists stopped at intersections. Deliberate ‘cross-over’ books also find publication, such as the series edited by Meenakshi Bharat
and Sharon Rundle. They choose a theme with relevance to both countries (as with Fear Factor: Terror Incognito [2009]) and showcase writing from each place.

Today, the international circuit of literary festivals ensures that two-way visits by writers continue. The Jaipur Literature Festival held a spin-off event in Melbourne in 2017 and delegations of Australians have gone to Jaipur over the last five years or so, as well as to the Kolkata Book Fair and the Hyderabad Literary Festival. Interest is building in young Australian writers of Indian heritage (Roanna Gonsalves’s story collection The Permanent Resident [2016] being issued by Speaking Tiger as Sunita De Souza Goes to Sydney [2019]). That said, interest in the field remains constrained by the limited availability of both primary texts and secondary material. Governments and their agencies have turned more towards big business and have discontinued the face-to-face cultural work of providing teaching materials and fieldwork experience for scholars. The work of individual enthusiasts continues to be the driver of the university-level studies by which most readers in India encounter Australian literature.

Notes


2 David Carter was manager of the Australia-China Council’s (ACC) Australian Studies in China programme from 2002 to 2016 and remains a board member of the Foundation for Australian Studies in China (FASIC). He had the privilege of being on the jury for the oral defence of the first Chinese PhD on Australian literature (Ni). The discussion that follows is indebted to the articles cited throughout and to ongoing conversations with Chinese colleagues involved in teaching, translating, and researching Australian literature.

3 Plus 13 titles from J.M. Coetzee. At the time of writing, AustLit is upgrading its indexing of such translations as part of a project to build a dedicated interface for Chinese scholars and students.

4 The Australian Literary Translation Project was under the direction of Huang Yuanshen. The Australian Indigenous Culture Chinese Translation project was under the direction of Li Yao. Both projects were supported by Australian funds through the ACC and FASIC respectively. The five Indigenous titles published in 2016 are: Convincing Ground, Bruce Pascoe (2007); Fight for Liberty and Freedom, John Maynard (2007); Mutton Fish, Betty Cruse, Liddy Stewart, Sue Norman (2005); My Ngurrindjeri Calling, Doreen Kartinyeri, Sue Anderson (2008); Paint Me Black, Claire Henty-Gebert (2005).

5 Through its Australian Studies in China program the ACC until 2015 supported the development of major collections of Australian Studies materials for the library of Beijing Foreign Studies University and the Shanghai Municipal Library, in addition to helping individual Australian Studies Centres build collections. More recently, FASIC has supported access for Chinese centres to the AustLit database and Australian Literary Studies.

6 All three poets appeared in Walter Murdoch’s 1918 Oxford Book of Australasian Verse, a possible source; but the magazine also printed from T.G. Tucker’s Sonnets of Shakespeare’s Ghosts (1920), published under the pseudonym Gregory Thornton.

7 Ouyang (65) also reports evidence of Adam Lindsay Gordon’s Poems (1893) being available in China in 1927, through the diaries of Mao Dun’s contemporary Yu Dafu.

8 Liu Shusen from Peking University presented a paper on this article in Beijing in 2015. I thank him for bringing it to my attention and providing further information and a draft translation. Zhao Jingshen did not travel to Australia, but was editor-in-chief at a popular literary publisher in Shanghai, which could have supplied foreign books to him. He was also actively engaged in the literary movement promoting world literature in China in the 1920s and 1930s, through which he may have accessed works of or on Australian literature.

10 The nine scholars were Du Ruiqing, Hou Weirui, Long Rijin, Qian Jiaoru, Yang Chaoguang, Hu Wenzhong, Hu Zhuanglin, Huang Yuanshen, and Wang Goufu. The last four named were foundational in establishing Australian Studies in China (see Hu, ‘Interpreting the “Gang of Nine”’).

11 AusLit provides a full list of critical responses at https://www.austlit.edu.au/austlit/page/C230851?mainTabTemplate=workWorksAbout&from=0&count=10000. See in particular reviews by Barnes, Blight, Carter, Docker, Dutton, Green, and Pierce.

12 A concise edition, coauthored with Peng Qinglong, appeared in 2006, and a revised edition in 2014. Zhou Xiaojin (259) notes that the book is the most cited of all works in the Chinese journal articles he examines. Huang Yuanshen (A Unique Literature) and Hu Wenzhong (A Chinese Perspective) also published collections of their own critical articles. See also Huang, ‘Publish or Perish?’

13 In 2018 the authors were Richard Flanagan, Charlotte Wood, Alexis Wright, and Fiona Wright. In 2019, Morris Gleitzman, Richard Fidler, Graeme Simsion, and Julie Koh.


15 Pugsley gives 1984 as the date of publication with a first print run of 185,000.

16 Then again, a similar list of articles produced by Australian scholars might not be too different.

17 Much of the detail that follows is gleaned from the AusLit database. Thanks also to Pradeep Trikha, Eugenie Pinto, and Debnarayan Bandyopadhyay for helpful advice. Any inaccuracies are the writer’s own.

18 The author of this section, Paul Sharrad, has attended conferences of IASA and the Indian Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (IACLALS) over 20 years and lectured on Australian topics at many of the key colleges and universities, hosting many of the Australia-India Council visiting fellows at the University of Wollongong. Different slants on this overview can be found in the introduction to Sharrad and Chatterjee; Sharrad, ‘Convicts, Call Centres and Cochin Kangaroos’; Sharrad, ‘Reconfiguring “Asian Australian” Writing’; Sharrad, ‘Les Murray in a Dhoti.’

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