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2019 Highlights

School of Languages and Cultures

A year in review of research and education excellence



From the Head of School



Please accept my apology for the delayed release of the *2019 Highlights*. Our routine of starting the semester has been disrupted by the pandemic.

We have had a few extremely fast-paced weeks, with everyone adapting to the changed and constantly changing situation. While we continue our weekly classes, we are also moving everything online, switching from lecture theatres and tutorial rooms to Zoom groups. There are no words which could adequately describe the ingenuity and professionalism with which we have been working through the transition – always with our students' best interests at heart.

With the Easter holidays approaching, we would like to present the *2019 Highlights* to you. When you are tired and feel let down by the present uncertainty, please remember the good things we have achieved in 2019.

Those warm words of students who have gained so much through the OLE in-country units, those smiling faces of staff and students at the SLC Awards Ceremony, as well as the conference on World Literatures and the Global South which put our school on the centre stage in literary studies as we hosted prominent writers from around the world – all these beautiful moments should remind us that life will return to normal and our future will be bright.

Do not let the present situation take away our memories. Let's project them into the future.

I hope this publication will bring a smile to your face as you read it during the Easter break.

Professor Yixu Lu FAHA
Head of School
April 2020



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2019 Highlights

School of Languages and Cultures

A year in review of research and education excellence

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World Literatures and the Global South 2019 Conference

The School of Languages and Cultures proudly hosted the first ever multilingual conference on world literatures at the University of Sydney from 23 to 25 August 2019.



The third international congress of the World Literature Association was co-convened with the Peking University Australian Studies Centre and the World Literature Association, along with 14 academic committee members.

With keynote speakers, renowned Australian author Alexis Wright and Columbia University professor and author Gauri Viswanathan, the conference engaged with literary production on and from the Global South in their own languages as well as in translation.

The conference commenced with addresses by University Vice-Chancellor and Principal Dr Michael Spence, Dean of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Professor Annamarie Jagose, lead convenor and Head of School Professor Yixu Lu, and co-convenor Professor Liu Shushen of Peking University.

The opening day featured a special documentary launch and compelling address by Gangalidda man Clarence Walden, which included an audience Q&A.

Over the course of three days, 130 participants from more than 20 countries presented 94 papers across four thematic sections. Along with a plenary event with 12 writers from 10 countries, the conference hosted two public events featuring *Mascara Literary Review*'s salon of diaspora writers and translators, and a discussion forum on China's place in world literature with six Chinese writers.

The conference concluded with a closing address by Professor Zhao Baisheng, conference co-convenor and Director of Peking's Institute of World Literature, and dinner by Sydney's Darling Harbour.

– sydney.edu.au/world-literatures-global-south



Documentary launch

Clarence Walden: Gangalidda man from Queensland's Gulf of Carpentaria

The short documentary details Clarence's stories of survival, cultural resilience in his traditional homelands and sheer political determination which included locking a government minister out of his community.

As part of the 'Other Worlds: Forms of World Literature' project funded by the Australian Research Council, the documentary was produced by Western Sydney University's Writing & Society Research Centre technician Ben Denham and cameraman Andre Sawenko, along with members of the Other Worlds team such as keynote speaker Alexis Wright, and conference participants, Anthony Uhlmann and Ben Etherington.

Following the screening, Clarence shared his gripping story of survival and cultural resilience – from growing up in the Doomadgee Mission in the 1950s to exercising political determination for his community. He was later joined by his friend Alexis Wright as they responded to audience questions.

Listen to Clarence Walden's story and audience Q&A:

– soundcloud.com/usyds1c

Plenary event

Southern Reflections: Writers on Literary Geography

This unique gathering of literary voices from across the globe and in different languages discussed how the concept at hand, the word *Weltliteratur*, or World Literature, has become a term central to different perspectives on the issues of translation as well as the preoccupation with the Western canon.

Relating to the notion of the 'Global South', the panel discussants filled this word with meaning derived from their cultural viewpoints and lives dedicated to writing in a global world of literatures.

Writers on panel:

- Nicholas Jose (Australia)
- Carlos Gamerro (Argentina)
- Cristian Aliaga (Argentina)
- Chen Qiwen (China)
- Nael el-Toukhy (Egypt)
- Lily Yulianti Farid (Indonesia)
- Ju (Myanmar)
- Sabal Phyu Nu (Myanmar)
- Isa Qala (New Caledonia)
- Maraea Rakuraku (New Zealand)
- Shane Carreon (The Philippines)
- Elliott Colla (US)

Section panels and streams

Imagining the Global South/ Writing from the Global South

A total of six panels covered themes on: China and the world; Australia in the network of cultures; epistemological freedom and decolonial aesthetics in Arabic literature; food; and literature from Latin America, the Caribbean and Southeast Asia.

Transnational Literatures

Four panels explored Japanese sinic poetry, new comparativism in minority world literatures, diasporic writings, as well as translation and translatability in transnational literature.

The Global South, World Literatures and Global Market Forces

Three panels addressed ecocentrism, new approaches in transnational literature and transmedia adaptation trends in the digital creative economy.

Writing from the Global South

Three panels and a special guest speaker presented on cinema in literature, popular genres and the South-North intersections.

Language streams

The French stream discussed oral traditions, gender and film. The Chinese stream discussed poetry, Australian cinema in China and cultural translatability.

Alexis Wright

A Self-Governing Literature: Who Owns the Map of the World?

The award-winning author and essayist addresses the tradition of storytelling in Aboriginal Australian society and the 'South-North' division. She delivered her keynote at the third congress of the World Literature Association on the theme of 'World Literatures and the Global South' at the University of Sydney on 23 August 2019.



The imaginative literary mind is as boundless as it is borderless and bountiful in its wayfinding ways of powerfully creating anew the already imagined with the unimagined, or unimaginable. ...

I am a member of the Waanyi Nation of the lower southern highlands of the Gulf of Carpentaria. Our traditional lands, stories and laws situated in Northern Australia lie about 150km south of the Northern coastline on each side of the Northern Territory and Queensland borders. ... The geographical features of our traditional lands are savannah grasslands, arid zone forests, and ever-flowing spring-fed rivers covered with water lilies and lined by pandanus, palms, and figs. ... There are highly important sacred story places on Waanyi country, such as the home of Boodjamulla the Rainbow Serpent, and the Serpent that lives down in Duwadari waterhole in the Lawn Hill Gorge, of which the whole area is collectively known as Mumbaleeya, or Rainbow Serpent country. ...

The ancient story web is a complete and complex matrix of connectivity to the narratives and territories delineated by the ancestors, and this is what links all Aboriginal people together in the oldest living culture on Earth, and what provides the *constancy, balance and consistency* of who we are ... The everyday thinking of Aboriginal people encompasses *the genius and intellect* of knowing country from *all of the generations that have come before*, and this is our traditional cradle to the grave cultural homeland of the mind and spirit.¹ ...

I believe that our people have great inner strength in spite of over two hundred years of acts of invasion to kill the spirit of our sovereignty, the reality of which continues to cause enormous disarray and upheaval in our civilisation in our never-ending battles for justice. ... We are governed by the stories of the ancestral spirits of place in our traditional country. Their strength is in our sovereignty of the mind and spirit, which is like a flash-light swarming with moths, and this became my pathway to understanding the deep cultural depth of who we are in the characters I was creating. ...

Our storytelling of place continues today along with the layers of the colonial legacy. It is an endless battle about who owns the narrative, which is essentially about the ownership of this country, and who has the right to speak for it. The stories that have sprung from

the original and ongoing land theft create fear and resentment, because whoever tells the Aboriginal story, basically tells the story of who they believe owns the land – us, or them...

Our story is whether Aboriginal people have the right to tell or govern their own story and on what terms, or have we relinquished the right to tell the truths about our story?

... I began my writing life by being initially taught by elders in Central and Northern Australia who had always claimed that *we have always governed ourselves*. These senior custodians have great wisdom and deep knowledge of country, and they teach their young people to think afar, to broaden our horizons, to bring back ideas, visions, imagination, to increase our knowledge so that we can better fight the battles of how to control our future. I learnt as a young woman that they expected us to search the world for ideas about how to achieve solutions to questions about our rights as Indigenous peoples.

What has become clearer to me the more I write, is that I have been trying to build a self-governing literary landscape through what I have learnt from our ancient library contained in the land itself, and from understanding how we are being continuously shaped by story, and of our knowledge that we have always governed ourselves through the ancestral stories that form our own Constitution of Sacred Laws for this country. It is a journey of being in communication with our own spirits of place, and of imagining our own unique perspective, one that belongs here, and which is the legacy that has been passed down to us through countless generations so that we can know who we are in this place.

It is extremely clear to me through the teachings of our people that, collectively, we are all the inheritors of a sheltering world that has nurtured the growth of all life on Earth - this planet we collectively call home. Together, we are a combined humanity created from human endeavor to build civilisations that have highlighted our genius for creating the best and worst of human strengths and weaknesses in our combined

1 Davis, Wade, *The Wayfinders – Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World*, UWA Publishing, 2009, pages 152-157.

histories. *Piling up in a shelter* is a line from the great Chinese poet Bei Dao's poem *Landscape*, and his translator David Hinton described the way that Bei Dao created his poetry from the *splinters* of our civilisations *frittering itself away in the ruins of the spirit*.² We are all the inheritors of inspiration derived from our combined cultural legacies now littering the world with our arts, literature and poetry, and all of which I imagine is a shelter through Bai Dao's fine line of, *piling up in a shelter*.

Throughout this country, the legacy of Aboriginal cultural knowledge from Aboriginal law is found in the everyday oral stories of our communities, and throughout our arts and literature, as we collectively re-claim, re-tell and re-write our knowledge of ourselves. The ground-breaking work of Bruce Pascoe, a Bunurang man of the Kulin Nation of South Eastern Australia in his book *Dark Emu* for instance, rewrites pre-colonial history to demonstrate that Aboriginal people have always cultivated this land. A fact that previously, historians had perhaps conveniently overlooked in order to support the lie that the country was *terra nullius* – land that did not belong to anyone, a fact that was only corrected by the High Court of Australia in the *Mabo* decision in 1992.

I acknowledge that the meaning of home can be a matter of perspective, depending on the forces of geopolitics and homeland histories. It is also a matter of sovereignty. It matters how you view being corralled into arbitrary induced divisions of other peoples' imagination and with decisions that may gladden our hearts, or further trouble the spirit of our sensibilities

about who we are, what we are losing, and who we feel we are becoming. It matters how we make sense of our place in our own mind. It matters how people who see themselves as being continuously linked to deep history in their place in the world, know how their present-day realities and legacies of colonial histories trouble and blur our vision. ...

These are some of the most important issues that writers of the world need to grasp – to transform the science into the known, to figure out how to describe these realities, to get into the habit of asking big questions about their homelands, their region, and the world of others on the planet. Think what the Earth needs? What makes a good ancestor? How to think planetary, of which the science warns, that we require global cooperation *as never before*. This is why I believe that political and economic divisions of the planet need to be questioned by the independent writers of the world. How do divisions work? Are they important? Who for, and why? Whose interests?

The Global South is a significant region in the world and its literature grows just as powerful. Yet I am still obliged to ask: Are Aboriginal people, or all Indigenous peoples, for that matter, and our rich and invaluable knowledge systems tied to our legal estates, destined to remain irrelevant and invisible in how others draw and control the map of the world? The question then is - who owns the map of the world if our traditional estates and knowledge systems are doomed in a globally challenged world of climate change, and where many of us will not be able to survive on our traditional lands in the not too distant future? ...

2 Dao, Bei, *Forms of Distance*, translated by David Hinton, pub. Anvil Press Poetry, 1994, page 57.



As an independent writer in every sense of the word, I deeply oppose strait-jackets of any kind: all that limits, confines, and restraints that degrade humanity. There is no world scheme that I fit into, and this means I do not want to be limited to or by other peoples' models, or worldviews in toto. My framework is open-ended, to be able to visit my imagination unimpeded, to live in the sovereignty of my own mind where I own my own thoughts.

I want no restraints in my mind while roaming freely and endlessly to explore endless realities, where the pursuit for knowledge is necessary to be in the world, to try to respond to our times. I have always understood this from the grounding in cosmopolitan thinking of our elders to seek widely in forming a consensus, but also, from how I saw my wonderful storytelling grandmother's embrace of the world when I was a child. She did not know how to read or write, but she helped me to be literate in other ways of thinking and imagining. She saw the world anew and marvelous on a constant basis. I think she helped me to know how to build an internal world of visualisation and exploration, and perhaps the endurance for holding onto a vision, and perhaps this is the great gift of cultural teachers like my grandmother, and which I think helped me to create a novel such as *The Swan Book*.

Writers are a combined force who influence each other through our works to negate frontiers, as the American-Nigerian writer Teju Cole recently described the work of literature.³ We carry others across the limits placed on imagination in our imaginary world building, and carry each other across the frontiers of imagination the more that we find and read each other's works across the world. Yet we will need to be greater visionaries in the creation of our literary universes. We must find ways to extend the emotional human map of the world to include the interconnected cycles of all life that help this planet to breathe. This is the scaffold to build a self-governing world literature.

This keynote excerpt is adapted by Professor Yixu Lu for the University of Sydney School of Languages and Cultures' 2019 Highlights. Published with permission and courtesy of Alexis Wright.

Listen to Alexis Wright's full keynote address:

– soundcloud.com/usydslc



Photo: © Vince Long

About Alexis Wright

..... Alexis Wright is a member of the Waanyi nation of the Gulf of Carpentaria. She has written widely on Indigenous rights and has organised two successful Indigenous Constitutional Conventions in Central Australia, *Today We Talk About Tomorrow* (1993) and the *Kalkaringi Convention* (1998). Her recent publications include the collective memoir *Tracker* (2017) which was awarded the 2018 Stella Prize for Women's Literature, the essay *What Happens When You Tell Somebody Else's Story* (2016) which was awarded the Hilary McPhee Award 2016, *The Swan Book* (2013), which was awarded the Australian Literature Society Gold Medal in 2014, and *Carpentaria* (2006), which was awarded the 2007 Miles Franklin Award. As of 2019, she is the Boisbouvier Chair in Australian Literature in the Australia Centre at the University of Melbourne.

3 Cole, Teju, Carrying a Single Life: On Literature and Translation, *The New York Review of Books*, NYR Daily, 5 July 2019. <https://nybooks.com/daily/2019/07/05/carrying-a-single-life-on-literature-translation>

Making a global impact

In 2019, our academics' expertise changed how we understand history and influenced the trajectory of the world's future.



Rare Renaissance sketch discovery rewrites Venetian art history

An illustration found in a 1497 edition of Dante's *Divine Comedy* in the University of Sydney's Fisher Library has been uncovered as one of the few drawings attributed to the enigmatic artist, Giorgione, following Emeritus Professor Nerida Newbigin's (Department of Italian Studies) translation of the 16th-century Venetian dialect inscribed on the drawing's page.

After being consulted by University of Sydney librarian Kim Wilson, Professor Newbigin confirmed that the inscription recorded a death notice which translated to "Giorgio da Castelfranco ... most excellent painter". It also cited his year of birth – a new and valuable addition to his biography.

The finding has since been reported by news outlets worldwide, including a feature in the March 2019 issue of the prestigious British visual art publication, *Burlington Magazine*.

Read more:

- [SLC Magazine: Nerida Newbigin recounts her role in the discovery \(p. 4\)](#)



Scholars play vital role in Australia's place in Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

Dr Avril Alba and Professor Emerita Suzanne Rutland (Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies) were among a small group of experts of the Australian Delegation who secured Australia as the 33rd member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). This follows a unanimous vote of the plenary in Luxembourg on 4 June 2019.

Led by Australian Ambassador to Germany Lynette Wood, the delegation worked for more than four years to secure Australia's place in the Alliance. Dr Alba and Professor Rutland were also joined by Dr Steven Cooke, Dr Donna-Lee Frieze, UK delegation leader Lord Eric Pickles, Pauline Rockman OAM, DFAT's Ciaran Chestnutt, Sue Hampel OAM and Dr Andre Oboler.

The IHRA is the international and intergovernmental body which promotes Holocaust remembrance to counter antisemitism and racism. As the first Indo-Pacific Nation to join the Alliance, Australia's official membership enables the country's full participation in IHRA's efforts to advance Holocaust education, commemoration and research.



Recommendations made at UN Forum on language education for minorities

Associate Professor Linda Tsung (Department of Chinese Studies) was invited to speak at the United Nations' Twelfth Session of the Forum on Minority Issues held at Geneva from 28–29 November 2019, where she presented on effective practices for the education and teaching of minority languages.

In her recommendations to the Forum on “Education, Language, and the Human Rights of Minorities”, she shared her research evidence from findings in Australia, China and Hong Kong on the five factors of learning, teaching, curricula, assessment and resources.

As Associate Dean of Indigenous Strategy and Services, Associate Professor Tsung is passionate about supporting, protecting and promoting the rich variety of multilingual resources in Australia – including urgent work for the maintenance and revitalisation of Indigenous languages.

Recommendations made at the Forum will be submitted to The UN Human Rights Council for endorsement and implementation.

Learn more about the Forum:

- [United Nations Human Rights Council's Twelfth Session of the Forum on Minority Issues](#)



Advising Indonesian government delegation on capital relocation

In November 2019, the Indonesian government group charged with moving the national capital visited the University of Sydney. Professor Adrian Vickers (Departments of Asian Studies and Indonesian Studies) was among a group of experts sought out by the delegation for advice on the process and its implications. Professor Vickers actively researches around the region and is also a member of the Sydney Southeast Asia Centre. He was joined by civil, environmental and humanitarian engineering academics at the delegation meeting.

The meeting followed the August 2019 announcement of plans by the Indonesian government to relocate the country's capital to the island of Borneo. As of 2020, the present capital city of Jakarta has a population of nearly 10 million and is rapidly sinking due to climate threats.

Professor Vickers pointed out that moving the capital from overcrowded Jakarta to Kalimantan, the Indonesian portion of Borneo, had been attempted and stalled in the 1960s due to major political crisis. The discussions covered issues of planning, the environment, and the larger social and cultural issue of building a new city. The problem of separating the administrative capital from the business centre was also discussed.

The delegation travelled from the University to Australia's capital of Canberra to look at its history as a possible model.

Leading Australia in research

For the third year in a row, our research ranked ‘well above world standard’ by the Australian Research Council for a range of fields in the humanities and social sciences. Our advancement in research on Latin America was also recognised as the country’s leader.



Top ratings in ARC Excellence in Research for Australia report

In March 2019, the Australian Research Council (ARC)’s 2018 *Excellence in Research for Australia* (ERA) cited the numerous fields within the University of Sydney’s research to be of ‘outstanding performance well above world standard’.

Researchers from the School of Languages and Cultures contributed to areas that attained the highest ERA rating score of 5:

- Cultural Studies
- Literary Studies
- Historical Studies
- Sociology
- History and Philosophy of Specific Fields

This marked the third consecutive time that the top ERA rating has been given to Cultural Studies, Literary Studies, Historical Studies, and History and Philosophy of Specific Fields.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Professor Duncan Ivison welcomed the report’s confirmation that the University continues to make a significant contribution to Australia’s quality research output, noting that our outstanding results demonstrate the breadth and depth of research excellence at the University of Sydney.

Learn more:

- [Discover our range of research expertise](#)



SURCLA members at the book launch of the network's edited collection, *Mapping South-South Connections: Australia and Latin America* (2019), with editors Dr Fernanda Peñaloza and Dr Sarah Walsh. Photo: Alana Mann

University of Sydney named Australia's leading institution for Latin American studies

In September 2019, *The Australian* published its fourth annual special *Research* magazine report to recognise individual and combined achievements of the country's research sector as well as the vital roles researchers play in the economy and society.

Recognition as the nation's leader for our research on Latin America came as a significant achievement for the Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies (SLAS); the department was launched in 2007, making it one of the youngest in the country for the area of study.

Hosted within the School of Languages and Cultures, the Sydney University Research Community for Latin America (SURCLA) is an academic research network encouraging ideas, debate and research strategies. Its members come from history, sociology, anthropology, political sciences, gender studies, media and cultural and literary studies across the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. SURCLA has been fostering academic and cultural links with other Australian institutions, bringing students and scholars from different Latin American countries to the University.

To learn more, visit:

- [Sydney University Research Community for Latin America \(SURCLA\)](#)
- [See *The Australian's* 2019 *Research* magazine's Humanities, Arts & Literature section](#)

“We are extremely proud that in such a short period of time, we have achieved such a standing amongst our colleagues across the country. We are determined to continue facilitating dialogue and inspiring work in Latin American studies. There is no doubt that creating opportunities for productive discussions and networking provides a solid platform for excellent research outputs to flourish.

We are very grateful to the well-established and newcoming Latin Americanists based in Sydney who are associated with our department and research community, as we have all played a key role in achieving this recognition. We are honoured to represent Australia's most dynamic and successful research community in our field.”

Dr Vek Lewis and Dr Fernanda Peñaloza
Department Chair of SLAS and SURCLA research lead

Collaborating with international colleagues

The School of Languages and Cultures hosted 15 visiting scholars and research students across nine departments to engage in a range of research projects. Our visitors also actively contributed to our inter-institutional relations with their home universities.

Department visitors

Visitor	Host department	Home institution
Mr LIN Hongxuan	Asian Studies	University of Washington, United States
Professor Robert SHARF	Asian Studies (Buddhist Studies)	University of California, Berkeley, United States
Professor Michael ZIMMERMANN	Asian Studies (Buddhist Studies)	University of Colorado, Boulder, United States
Professor Jorge DIAZ-CINTAS	Chinese Studies	University College London
Associate Professor JIANG Lisong	Chinese Studies	Southwest University, China
Professor Julia WATERS	French and Francophone Studies	Reading University, UK
Professor Zehavit GROSS	Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies	Bar Ilan University, Israel
Mr Yitzhak (Tsuki) SHAI	Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies	Ariel University, Israel
Dr Chiara NERI	Indian Subcontinental Studies	University of Cagliari, Italy
Dr Jesse GRAYMAN	Indonesian Studies	University of Auckland, New Zealand
Dr Anna MORBIATO	International Comparative Literature and Translation Studies	University of Venice, Italy
Dr Gala Maria FOLLACO	Japanese Studies	University of Naples, Italy
Associate Professor LI Jinhua	Korean Studies	University of North Carolina, Asheville, United States

Sydney China Distinguished Fellowship

Distinguished Fellow	Visit duration	Home institution
Professor GU Yueguo	30 July – 25 August 2018	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China
Professor Heike HOLBIG	10 October – 7 November 2018	Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany
Professor Timothy CHEEK	22 April – 18 May 2019	University of British Columbia, Canada
Professor Wendy LARSON	5 August – 31 August 2019	University of Oregon, United States

As part of the prestigious Sydney China Visitors program, the Department of Chinese Studies hosts respected Chinese studies researchers from around the world to share their expertise in Sydney. The fellowship was established through the generous support of Hong Kong-based alumni Mr James Lee.

In collaboration with the China Studies Centre, the program invites senior scholars specialising in modern and contemporary Chinese literature, culture or translation studies, and to share their work through seminars, public events and lectures.

To learn more about the program and our Distinguished Fellows, visit:

– sydney.edu.au/china-studies-visitors



2018–2019 Sydney China Distinguished Visitors

Advancing our academic endeavours

Our research has been widely recognised within Australia and beyond, with a total of 17 grants and funding awards in 2019.

National competitive and public sector grants

Recipient	Department	Project	Funder
Dr Avril Alba	Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies	International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance activities	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia
Dr Avril Alba	Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies	The Memory of the Holocaust in Australia	Australian Research Council (ARC Discovery Project)
Dr Josh Stenberg	Chinese Studies	Chinese Performance in Late Colonial Dutch East Indies	Australian Academy of the Humanities 2019 (Humanities Travelling Fellowship)

University of Sydney partnerships

Recipient(s)	Department	Project	Award partner
Assoc Prof Meng (Christine) Ji	Chinese Studies	Developing Shared Evaluation Frameworks for Digital Innovation in Culturally-Effective, Patient-Oriented Healthcare Translation and Communication: Australia and Switzerland	University of Geneva
Assoc Prof Michelle Royer and Dr Benjamin Nickl	International Comparative Literature and Translation Studies	Audience Regeneration: A Pressing Problem for Australia's International Film Festivals	Commercial Development and Industry Partnerships – Industry Engagement Fund
Assoc Prof Linda Tsung	Chinese Studies	Fostering Intercultural Teaching Competence through Cross-Cultural Telecollaborative Pedagogical Projects	The University of Hong Kong

Research centre and industry grants

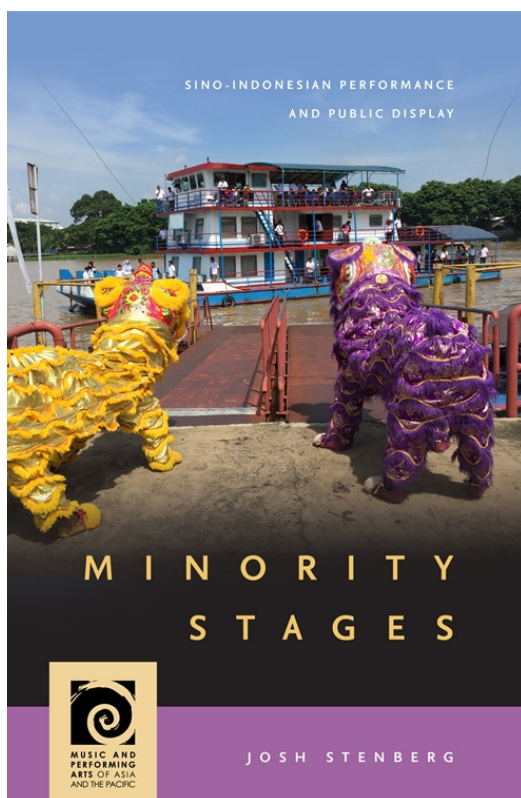
Recipient(s)	Department	Project/Grants	Fund
Dr Mark Allon	Indian Subcontinental Studies	Gandhari Manuscript Project	Khyentse Foundation USA and Dharmachai International Research Institute New Zealand
Dr Su-kyoung Hwang	Korean Studies	Korean Studies Grant: Environmental Effects of the Korean War	Academy of Korean Studies
Dr Josh Stenberg	Chinese Studies	Border-Crossing Puppetry: Taiwanese Potehi in Transnational Perspective	Center for Chinese Studies (Taiwan)
Dr Josh Stenberg and Assoc Prof Xiaohuan Zhao	Chinese Studies	Traditional Chinese Theatre and its Transmission Abroad	China Studies Centre – Centre in China Conference Funding
Dr Josh Stenberg and Assoc Prof Wei Wang	Chinese Studies	Research Grants Scheme Small Projects; Publishing Support	China Studies Centre
Dr Josh Stenberg and Assoc Prof Linda Tsung	Chinese Studies	Virtual Experiential Language Learning Environment for Chinese Language Education; Reading and Writing the Chinese Dream	China Studies Centre – Language, Literature, Culture and Education Cluster 2019

Faculty funding schemes

Recipient	Department	Project	Schemes
Dr Vek Lewis	Spanish and Latin American Studies	CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse groups) Health in Western Sydney	FASS – SREI/SSSHARC Capacity Building Collaborative Scheme
Dr Jim Rheingans	Asian Studies	Developing an Interdisciplinary Framework for Visual Meditation Techniques	Faculty Research Support Scheme
Dr Jim Rheingans	Asian Studies	Ultimate Peer Review, Huddle and Retreats	Sydney Social Sciences and Humanities Advanced Research Centre
Dr Léa Vuong	French and Francophone Studies	Unearthing Paris's Lost River: Resurfacing the Bièvre through Word and Image	Faculty Research Support Scheme

Select publications and highlights

Among the range of exceptional research published by our academics, two were shortlisted in the Australian Academy of Humanities' 2019 Book List for their significant contribution to Australian knowledge, culture and innovation.



Josh Stenberg
Chinese Studies

Minority Stages: Sino-Indonesian Performance and Public Display

Josh Stenberg offers intriguing new perspectives on historical and contemporary Sino-Indonesian performance. For the first time in a major study, this community's diverse performance practices are brought together as a family of genres. Combining fieldwork with evidence from Indonesian, Chinese, and Dutch primary and secondary sources, Josh Stenberg takes a close look at Chinese Indonesian self-representation, covering genres from the Dutch colonial period to the present day.

– University of Hawaii Press



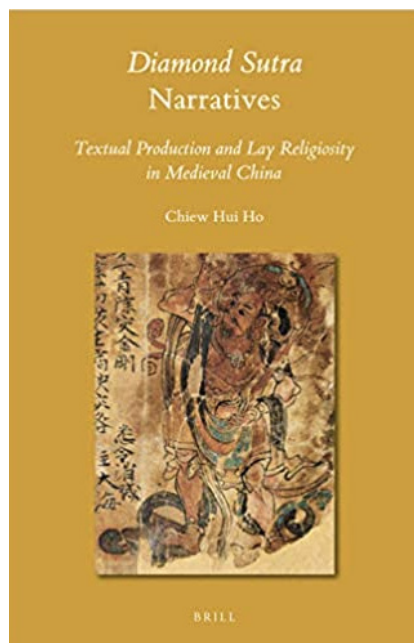
Cat Moir
Germanic Studies

Ernst Bloch's Speculative Materialism: Ontology, Epistemology, Politics

Cat Moir offers a new interpretation of the philosophy of Ernst Bloch. The reception of Bloch's work has seen him variously painted as a naïve realist, a romantic nature philosopher, a totalitarian thinker, and an irrationalist whose obscure literary style stands in for a lack of systematic rigour. Moir challenges these conceptions of Bloch by reconstructing the ontological, epistemological, and political dimensions of his speculative materialism.

– Brill Publishers

Our annual SLC Publications Prize for 2019 was awarded to three early career researchers from various departments for their quality research output.

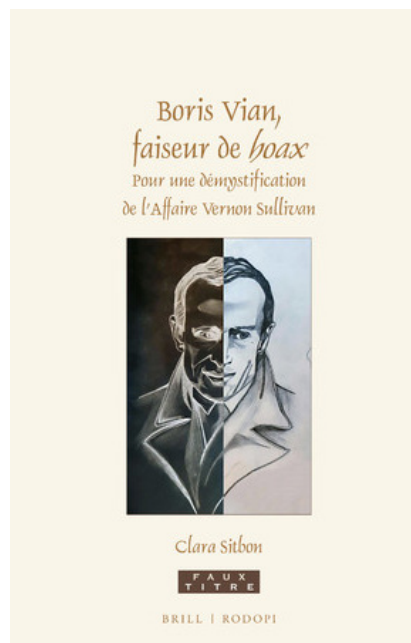


Chiew Hui Ho
Asian Studies

Diamond Sutra Narratives: Textual Production and Lay Religiosity in Medieval China

Contextualising the sutra within a milieu of intense religious and cultural experimentation, this volume unravels the sudden rise of Diamond Sutra devotion in the Tang dynasty against the backdrop of a range of social, political, and literary activities. Through the translation and exploration of a substantial body of narratives extolling the efficacy of the sutra, it explores the complex social history of lay Buddhism by focusing on how the laity might have conceived of the sutra and devoted themselves to it. Corroborated by various sources, it reveals the cult's effect on medieval Chinese religiosity in the activities of an empowered laity.

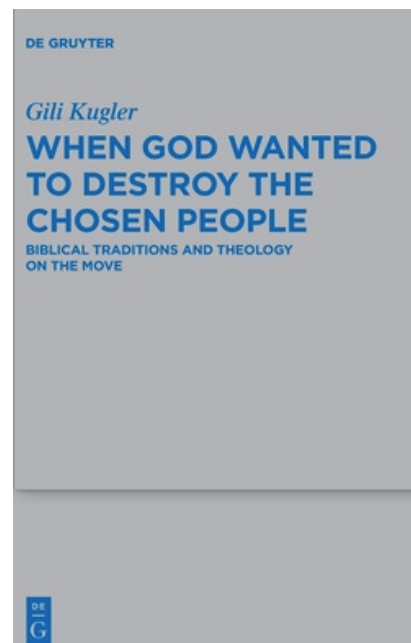
– Brill Publishers



Clara Sitbon
French and Francophone Studies
Boris Vian, faiseur de hoax: Pour une démystification de l'Affaire Vernon Sullivan

This book offers the first comprehensive theory of literary hoaxes: What are they? How can we recognise them? How do they work? Drawing on literary theorists such as Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, Clara Sitbon applies her theory to a range of hoaxes in French, British and Australian literatures, thereby providing a detailed typology of hoaxes. Through detailed analysis of the Boris Vian/Vernon Sullivan Affair (France, 1946–1950) as a case study, Clara Sitbon cleverly demonstrates that the literary hoax can indeed be a useful analytical tool in literary criticism.

– Brill Publishers



Gili Kugler
Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies
When God Wanted to Destroy the Chosen People: Biblical Traditions and Theology on the Move

According to narratives in the Bible, the threats of the people's end come from various sources, but the most significant threat comes, as learned from the Pentateuch, from God Himself. What is the theological meaning of this tradition? In what circumstances did it evolve? How did it stand alongside other theological and socio-political concepts known to the ancient authors and their diverse audience? The book employs a diachronic method exploring the stages of the tradition's formation and development, revealing the authors' exegetical purposes and ploys, and tracing the historical realities of their time.

– De Gruyter Academic Publishing

Two of our honorary associates received prestigious national and international literary awards for their outstanding work in promoting and preserving cultural knowledge.

Prestigious China Special Book Award for distinguished translation work in Chinese literature

Honorary Professor Bonnie S. McDougall FAHA (Department of Chinese Studies) was awarded the Special Book Award of China for outstanding contributions to the translation and publication of Chinese books, as well as the promotion of cultural exchanges and the training of translators in Chinese literature outside of China. Her works include *Mao Zedong's Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature* and *Art and Letters Between Two: Correspondence Between Lu Xun and Xu Guangping*.

The Special Book Award of China is a national award for international authors, translators and publishers who have made significant contributions to Chinese culture as well as the translation and publication of Chinese books overseas. Established in 2005, the 13th Special Book Award of China was presented to 12 individuals from more than 10 countries. Over the last 12 years, 123 winners from 49 countries have received the award.



Professor Bonnie McDougall (centre) with Australian Ambassador to China Graham Fletcher (left) and her husband Anders Hansson (right) at the Special Book Award of China ceremony in Beijing on 20 August 2019

High commendation by national state trust for study on 20th-century Greek 'promised brides'

Honorary Senior Lecturer Dr Panayota Nazou (Department of Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies) was awarded the 2019 Highly Commended Heritage Publication at the 25th National Trust (NSW) Awards ceremony for her book, *Promised Brides*.

First published in Modern Greek in 2013 before its English edition in 2019, *Promised Brides* offers a systematic analysis of the marriage-by-proxy phenomenon during the first generation of Greek migration to Australia between 1950–1975. Nazou presents the experiences and testimonies of 21 women who were arranged to marry someone they had never met before from the perspective of oral history, gender studies and cultural-critical theory.

The National Trust Awards recognise the best works that preserve cultural heritage in New South Wales.



Dr Panayota Nazou (centre) with book designers Marietta (left) and Martin Buikema (right) at the 2019 National Trust Awards

2019 Publications list

Books

Ho, C. (2019). *Diamond Sutra Narratives: Textual Production and Lay Religiosity in Medieval China*. Leiden: Brill.

Ji, M., Pope, C. (2019). *Translation and the Sustainable Development Goals: Cultural Contexts in China and Japan*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Stenberg, J. (2019). *Minority Stages: Sino-Indonesian Performance and Public Display*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Royer, M. (2019). *The Cinema of Marguerite Duras: Feminine Subjectivity and Sensoriality*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Sitbon, C. (2019). *Boris Vian, faiseur de hoax: Pour une demystification de l'Affaire Vernon Sullivan*. Leiden: Brill.

Moir, C. (2019). *Ernst Bloch's Speculative Materialism: Ontology, Epistemology, Politics*. Boston/Leiden: Brill.

Kugler, G. (2019). *When God Wanted to Destroy the Chosen People Biblical Traditions and Theology on the Move*. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter.

Ford, M. (2019). *From Migrant to Worker: Global Unions and Temporary Labor Migration in Asia*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Palmieri, C. (2019). *Identity Trajectories of Adult Second Language Learners: Learning Italian in Australia*. Bristol and Blue Ridge Summit: Multilingual Matters.

Zhang, L., Tsung, L. (2019). *Bilingual Education and Minority Language Maintenance in China*. Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.

Edited books

Ji, M., Oakes, M. (2019). *Advances in Empirical Translation Studies: Developing Translation Resources and Technologies*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ji, M. (2019). *Cross-Cultural Health Translation: Exploring Methodological and Digital Tools*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Ji, M., Taibi, M., Crezee, I. (2019). *Multicultural Health Translation, Interpreting and Communication*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Ji, M. (2019). *Translating and Communicating Environmental Cultures*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.

Xiao, Y., Tsung, L. (2019). *Current Studies in Chinese Language and Discourse: Global context and diverse perspectives*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Royer, M., Upadhyay, L. (2019). *Marguerite Duras a la croisee des arts*. Bruxelles: Peter Lang.

Stone, B. (2019). *Simon Stone Stucke*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag.

Gilbert, S., Alba, A. (2019). *Holocaust Memory and Racism in the Postwar World*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Penaloza, F., Walsh, S. (2019). *Mapping South-South Connections: Australia and Latin America*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Journal highlights

Our academics published in top-ranking journals with high impact factors. These include:

- *Intellectual History Review*
- *Indonesia and the Malay World*
- *Politics & Society*
- *Theoria: A Journal of Social and Political Theory*
- *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*
- *Journal of Indian Philosophy*
- *Asian Theatre Journal*
- *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*
- *Burlington Magazine*
- *TDR – the Drama Review*
- *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
- *Journal of Industrial Relations*.

Spotlight: Research students

Following the judging panel's unanimous choice from a strong shortlist of applicants, **Jarrah Sastrawan (PhD candidate, Asian Studies)** was announced winner of the 2019 *Indonesia and the Malay World's* Young Scholars Prize for his article, 'How to read a chronicle: the Pararaton as a conglomerate text', which is published in the journal's March 2020 issue.

Paul Byun (PhD candidate, Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies) published his article, 'A Paradoxical Situation and God's Righteousness in Ezra 9:15' in the third 2019 volume of *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft (ZAW)*. The ZAW has been the leading international and interconfessional periodical in the field of research in the Old Testament and Early Judaism for over 100 years.

Language learning via in-country immersion

As part of the University's Open Learning Environment (OLE) and supported by the Vice-Chancellor's Global Mobility Scholarship, we offer intensive in-country units to undergraduate students from all faculties to learn a new language overseas as part of their degrees. By the end of 2019, we saw a 70% increase in student enrolments from its pilot year in 2018.

Forging global partnerships to advance language learning and cultural understanding

With 12 partners around the world for a total of nine units of study offered, more than 700 students have embarked on learning adventures to multiple regions around the world to immerse themselves in a new language and culture for two to three weeks.

Between 2018 and 2019, student enrolments rose from 209 to 500 across a total of four intensive sessions during the semester breaks in the months of January, June, July, November and December.

Academic staff from respective language departments play an integral role in establishing relationships with our international partners, including finalising agreement contracts and yearly schedules.

The school's administration staff continue to liaise with student applicants and review sessional surveys to further enhance the offering.

In late 2018 and 2019, communications staff from the School of Languages and Cultures and Sydney Global Mobility partnered with appointed student ambassadors to showcase their experiences from language classes at host universities to field trips.

With the creation of the social media hashtag #usydoleice, students shared their encounters with new linguistic and cultural horizons through Instagram takeovers, video production and photos on the University and school's online channels.

Language	Destination	Partner institution
Arabic	Amman, Jordan	Sijal Institute for Arabic Language and Culture
Chinese	Beijing, China	Peking University
French	Lyon, France	University of Lyon
	Noumea, New Caledonia*	Centre de Rencontres et d'Échanges Internationaux du Pacifique, supported by New Colombo Plan
German	Bamberg, Germany	University of Bamberg
	Berlin, Germany	Humboldt University
Indonesian	Salatiga, Indonesia*	Satya Wacana Christian University, with Australian Consortium for 'In-Country' Indonesian Studies (ACICIS)
Italian	Padua, Italy	University of Padova
	Venice, Italy	Ca' Foscari University of Venice (School for International Education)
Japanese	Saitama, Japan	Rikkyo University
Korean	Seoul, Korea	Korea University
Spanish	Valladolid, Spain	University of Valladolid

The above includes all units of study offered as of December 2019.

*Offered in 2019 only.

Student perspectives: Snapshots from around the globe



Experience the Arab World

“With daily Arabic classes and 24/7 cultural immersion, we picked up far more than what you’d learn in the same amount of time in a classroom in Sydney. We also went on walking tours to *dabkeh* (traditional dance) classes and cooking activities, had lectures from local journalists and activists, and visited refugee camps.”

Anthony Segart

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Advanced Studies
International and Global Studies program, History major

Experience the French-speaking World

“We studied vocabulary and grammar in an active manner and quickly began to use our new language skills in many contexts from buying bread at a *boulangerie* (bakery) to asking for directions on the metro. Staying with a host family helped me to improve my French and see what life in France actually looked like – not the romanticised version I had in mind.”

Kalvin Fernandez

Bachelor of Education (Secondary)/Bachelor of Arts
Dalyell Scholars program, Humanities and Social Sciences

Experience China

“As we learnt the language, we were able to pronounce and understand the meaning of different place names. Communicating with the Chinese locals in Mandarin really enriched our understanding of the culture. We learnt how expressing courtesy in Mandarin is different from English, and truly appreciate the beauty and tonality of Chinese language.”

Deirdre Mair

Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) and Bachelor of Arts
Economics major

Experience Germany (Bamberg)

“Beyond the classroom, we learnt a lot in a short time by applying conjugating verbs and the different types of pronouns in real-life scenarios such as conversing with locals. Staying in the region of Franconia taught me how different the northern and southern parts of Germany is – from dialects and accents down to values and ideas. This made me reconsider my ideas of culture as a singular concept for one country.”

Annie Martin

Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Advanced Studies
International and Global Studies program, History major



Experience Germany (Berlin)

“Learning about German history in Berlin provided a visceral experience. We visited sites like the Berlin Wall, Checkpoint Charlie, and museums teaching about the Holocaust and medieval Germany. Spending four hours every morning to practise speaking and several hours in the afternoon to explore the city with local experts and guides allowed us to learn in a unique way that was not offered by any other unit of study.”

Vallerie Xu

Bachelor of Economics and Bachelor of Laws
Econometrics major

Experience Italy (Padua)

“Daily language and culture lessons boosted my confidence to speak with the locals around the city. We were introduced to the importance of formality and informality in Italian language: for example, for ‘excuse me’, there is ‘scusa’ (informal) and ‘scusi’ (formal). Similarly, for ‘good day’ or ‘morning’, you can say ‘ciao’ (informal) and ‘buongiorno’ (formal). We also had organised trips to attractions as well as day trips to nearby cities.”

Vince Lam

Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Advanced Studies
Marketing and Design major

Experience Indonesia

“Learning Bahasa Indonesia in Java was incredibly enriching. I loved meeting other students from other Australian universities in the ACICIS program. Putting classroom content into practice at local markets and *warungs* (small family-owned businesses) highlighted the invaluable power of language and its role in connecting with people. Doing the unit also ignited in me an interest in Indonesia and its role in global politics.”

Shalomy Sathiyaraj

Bachelor of Science
Health major

Experience Italy (Venice)

“Venice at first seemed very foreign: a different culture, a different language, an older city and no cars in sight. After two weeks of staying and learning there, I realised that Venetians were not so different after all. Their use of Christian motifs in art and architecture can still be understood and appreciated even today – hundreds of years later. The historical Venetian ambition to expand and trade is something not too removed from our modern capitalist spirit.”

Chanum Torres

Bachelor of Economics and Bachelor of Laws
Government and International Relations major



Experience Japan

“Staying in the picturesque suburbs of Japan while learning Japanese as a beginner meant that every step outside was a new opportunity to practise the language. Classes were tailored to individual skill level, and I learnt the basic Japanese writing system and interacted with local students at Rikkyo University. We also had the chance to go on field trips to an AI-run convenience store, historical temple and traditional tea house.”

Yelena Cao

Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Advanced Studies
Marketing and Design major

Experience Korea

“Taking the unit gave me unparalleled opportunities. Pushing myself out of my comfort zone, I got to meet new friends and connect with the Korean culture in a more meaningful way. The routine of going to school and living on campus instead of flashy tourist hotspots allowed me to forge connections and relationships with locals. This truly revealed the differences between studying within a country and travelling there for recreational purposes.”

Anastasia Cao

Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Advanced Studies,
Professional Accounting program, International Business major

Experience the Spanish-speaking World

“On my first day in Valladolid, I couldn’t say much more to my host mother than ‘Hola’ and ‘I don’t speak a lot of Spanish’. By the end of the unit, I was able to hold simple conversations — even conversing with locals about Spanish history and politics. It also helped me to connect with the Spanish people around me and delve deeper into how they live. This experience affirmed how intertwined the language and culture truly is.”

Ashley Masters

Bachelor of Science/Doctor of Medicine
Dalyell Scholars program, Microbiology major

OLE In-Country Experience

Click through below to see more from our students’ experiences:

- Watch student videos on our Facebook playlist
- Browse ‘Experience’ Facebook photo albums
- Read student stories in our school magazine

For more information about our offerings, visit:

- sydney.edu.au/arts/ole-in-country

Glimpse into our classrooms

From face-to-face encounters with history to Q&A's with special guests, our students had opportunities to understand the past, engage with the present and anticipate their futures.

Asian Studies



Students examine ancient artefact from Indian subcontinent

Students in The Material Culture of Asia unit of study had the privilege of conducting hands-on surveys of Gandhāran artefacts dating back to around the first century AD. They examined stone carvings that depict a variety of Buddhist imagery in styles heavily influenced by Greek iconography.

By viewing and handling the artefacts held in the University's Nicholson Museum collection (the Chau Chak Wing Museum from August 2020), students gained a first-hand appreciation for the early interactions of Asian and Mediterranean cultures. Gandhāra was a predominantly Buddhist state in the northwestern part of the ancient Indian subcontinent that thrived from the third century BC to about 300 CE.

French and Francophone Studies



In conversation with renowned journalist and author Annick Cojean

In a special lecture event, several classes joined together to hear from eminent French journalist Annick Cojean and her experiences in the field. The senior reporter for the French daily newspaper *Le Monde* and President of the Albert Londres Prize committee focuses on global women issues, and has published books on violence against women during the Syrian civil war and on Gaddafi's regime.

Speaking on justice issues along gender lines, Annick Cojean used her voice to share the stories of women who were victims of oppressive regimes. She interacted freely with students and answered their many questions, detailing the evolutions of the MeToo movement in France and sharing memories of her decades-long experience as a woman reporting in war zones.



State Library showcase on translation project of WWI German internee papers

100 years on, a collection of papers written by German internees detained in Australian camps were translated into English for the first time by students from the Department of Germanic Studies. Spanning eight months until March 2019, the State Library of New South Wales exhibited their translated works as part of the *UNESCO Memory of the World* collection.

The project was a unique opportunity for students to move beyond textbooks and gain valuable real-world translating experience – and, pivotally, to shed light on a little-known episode of the country's history. Working in collaboration with the State Library to access the archives, each student selected a range of texts that interested them. For student Giulia Ara, translating papers of 'enemy aliens' served as a conduit for history itself.

“My classmates and I became important actors and crucial intermediaries between the late German internees and the papers they intended to hand down to posterity – to historians, history enthusiasts, students and anyone interested in going deeper into this short, but touching, part of Australian and world history.”

Giulia Ara

Germanic Studies student translator

According to Department Chair of Germanic Studies Dr Cat Moir, some detainees were allowed to have visits from family, and correspondence was allowed in and out – but it was heavily censored and had to be written in English. Papers found to be written in a non-English language were confiscated, but many prisoners managed to keep diaries and letters in German.

The students' work brings new records into the public domain that will expand the collective knowledge about Australia's First World War experiences and its forgotten German connection.

Read more:

- [SLC Magazine \(p. 26\): Student reflections on translating the voices of enemy aliens](#)
- [The Conversation: Dr Cat Moir on internees' life in Australia's German detainment camps](#)

The project was made possible with thanks to library curators Anna Corkhill and Margot Riley. Images used in courtesy of the Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

Student translators: Holly Anderson, Giulia Ara, Brigitta Bene, Alexander McDonald, Lauren O'Hara, Benjamin Walker, Ruby Watters



Up close and personal with language revivalist legacy

Written by Yulia Berlin Firer (Sessional teaching staff)

In the last week of August 2019, the Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies proudly hosted special guest Gil Hovav who comes from a proud lineage: he is the great-grandson of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, the reviver of Modern Hebrew; the grandson of Itamar Ben-Avi who began modern Hebrew journalism; and the son of Moshe and Drora Hovav, founding members of Israel's modern-day public radio. Gil is also an author, journalist, restaurant critic, TV and podcast presenter, and a popular speaker.

Gil spoke to our Modern Hebrew students about Ben Yehuda's legacy and contribution to Modern Hebrew. He also shared some stories from his own childhood growing up in his illustrious family.

As per students' request, Gil read a few stories from his published books, including a re-enactment of a few conversations he had with his well-known family members.

The presentation concluded with a Q&A between students and Gil, which included questions about Gil's own view of current and future trends in the Modern Hebrew language.

Before saying *shalom* to their fascinating guest, Dr Yona Gilead (The Malka Einhorn Modern Hebrew Senior Lecturer) presented Gil with a small gift. The department hopes to host him again in our Modern Hebrew classes at the University of Sydney.



Corporate leaders impart real-world workplace wisdom

In the second semester of 2019, students in the Made in Italy unit of study had the opportunity to hear from leaders of multinational companies, international businesses and local Italian organisations about how linguistic and cultural communication skills operate in the workplace.

The advanced-level unit of study aimed to combine Italian language and culture with real-life work skills. Students were tasked with a project that focusses on a company or an Italian institution in Australia.

Class weeks were themed by fields such as food culture, wine industries, tourism, Italian fashion and craftsmanship, the arts, culture and mass media, and technology, with special guests from:

- **Barilla Australia** CEO, Terry Ryan
- **DèLonghi Group** (Braun, Kenwood, Ariete), CEO, Paolo Albertoni
- **Euro Concept** Manager, Roberto Dessanti
- **Ferrero** Corporate Communication Manager, Andrea Malfatti
- **Italian Institute of Culture, Sydney** Director, Lillo Guarnieri
- **MaxMara** Retail Director, Floriana Aranzi
- **Pirelli** Marketing Coordinator, Marco Fusaro
- **SBS Italian Radio** Senior Producer, Marco Lucchi
- **Technogym** Hotel & Residential National Manager, Rogheto Nicola



Food culture with Ferrero's Andrea Malfatti (left) who gifted the class the famous hazelnut chocolates



Culture and media week with SBS Radio's Marco Lucchi



Industry and Technology week with Marco Fusaro of multinational automotive manufacturer Pirelli



Learning the fine details about the wine industry with Euro Concept's Roberto Dessanti

Fostering creative student initiatives

Spearheaded by a group of student representatives, the inaugural multilingual speech contest was held to showcase the linguistic diversity of the campus community.



The first-ever student-run Foreign Languages Speech Contest (FLSC) saw students from various backgrounds showcase their language speaking skills in the form of a two-minute speech.

Together with the School of Languages and Cultures, the event was organised by an executive student team as well as student volunteers and representatives from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Catering to eight languages at varying levels from beginners to native speakers, participants were given the opportunity to speak about their chosen topics. Thematic categories ranged from 'The Power of Language' to custom topics such as 'Love'.

Despite the windy and rainy weather, and with thanks to the help of our volunteers, the contest went off without a hitch. It was a time of get-together among student participants, volunteers, representatives and academics coming together for a friendly night of competition with pizzas and drinks.

Ten teaching staff from the School of Languages and Cultures joined a few students in the judging panel. They crowned 14 winners on the night for the following language categories:

- Arabic Open
- Arabic Native
- French Beginner
- French Open
- German Beginner
- German Open
- Indonesian Open
- Indonesian Native
- Italian Beginners
- Italian Open
- Japanese Open
- Mandarin Open
- Mandarin Native
- Spanish Open



In partnership with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Department of Italian Studies joined a global celebration of the XIX Week of the Italian Language in the World on the theme of *L'italiano sul palcoscenico* (Italian on stage) with two exciting events.

Aria d'Italia: Italian Students on Stage

The concert event kicked off the 19th Week at the University of Sydney on 21 October 2019 with an audience of over 100 attendees in The Great Hall. Students from the Department of Italian Studies and Sydney Conservatorium of Music showcased Italian arias with interludes of Italian baroque music.

Featuring five singers and a pianist, aria performances included *Stride la Vampa* from Verdi's opera *The Troubadour* and Puccini's soprano *O mio babbino caro* by Vanessa Agius, former student of the Bachelor of Music and Diploma of Language Studies majoring in Italian Studies. Joann Balasuriya, Bachelor of Music Studies and Bachelor of Arts student, also took on Mozart's *Vio che saete* and Gluck's *O del mio ardor*.

The highly successful event was the first of its kind for the department. It was organised by students and staff of the Department of Italian Studies in collaboration with the Italian Institute of Culture in Sydney.

Italian Embassy literary competition

Alexandra Salvestro-Martin (B Science and B Advanced Studies) was crowned national winner of the "Premio Italia" competition, coming in first place among other Italian students across Australia. Alexandra's essay, *'L'italianità nelle canzoni'* (Italianness in songs), highly impressed the selection committee for its originality. The prize was a return ticket to Italy sponsored by the Italian Institute of Culture in Melbourne.

In an interview with the Australian-Italian community newspaper *La Fiamma*, Alexandra said: "It was the highlight of my university period."

Third-year intermediate Italian major Riley Treisman (B Arts (Languages)) claimed the nation's third-place award for her short play *Sul palcoscenico* (*On stage*).

The annual competition was organised by the Embassy of Italy in Canberra, and is open to students who are enrolled in a program leading to an undergraduate or a graduate degree, as well as currently enrolled students studying Italian at an Australian university.



As we seek to enhance the student experience through school-based activities, a cross-cultural society was founded for students from across our 15 departments to work collaboratively on their creative interests.

Student Intercultural Society

The School of Languages and Cultures' Student Intercultural Society (SLCSIS) and its subgroups were established in August 2019 by a staff organising committee from the Department of Chinese Studies (Dr Irene Shidong An, Dr Peiru Tong, Ms Samantha Xu and Ms Yijun Zhou) with the help of student leaders.

In the lead up to the end-of-year showcase, 50 student members began projects over the semester through their four interest groups:

- CulturalTube (video production)
- In the Spotlight (stage performance)
- Word of Mouth (public speaking and presentation)
- SoundWave (music)

Students reported having positive experiences in collaborating with culturally diverse peers, and having their intercultural communication and teamwork skills improved in the process.

SLCSIS Showcase party

On 7 November 2019, our talented students presented 10 projects of various genres at the showcase party before fellow students and staff. Presentations ranged from pop dance to a modern retelling of Cinderella in the university setting, and short films on cross-cultural themes to a variety talk show – which included an audience competition game of picking up tiny objects with chopsticks.

The night opened with short speeches by Society founder Dr Irene Shidong An and Dr Carolyn Stott (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Associate Dean for Student Life; Department of French and Francophone Studies). Acting Head of School Professor Adrian Vickers and teaching members across various departments joined the celebration in support of the initiative.

During semesters, our departments' student representatives organised social events and outreach to foster community life among the student body, as well as to create opportunities for cultural engagement with traditions from around the world.



Korean BBQ and film night

Towards the end of the first semester, 50 students from the Department of Korean Studies came together for some delicious Korean BBQ with a spread of bulgogi, japchae, kimchi, salads and rice.

Organised by our 2019 Korean Studies Student Representatives, Cynthia Chang and Edith Chu, along with a team of student volunteers, the evening brought students and staff together for a relaxed time to socialise with fellow students over traditional food. The event was capped with a film screening of the highly acclaimed 2014 Korean wartime family drama, *Ode to My Father*.

Noted by students as a successful evening enjoyed by all its attendees, the event was supported by the Department of Korean Studies with contributions from Korean cultural student clubs and societies of the University of Sydney Union.

Photo by Keira Chen



Cakes for community

Affectionally known as "Cake Boy", 2019 Germanic Studies Student Representative and Mentor Arkady de Jong (Diploma of Language Studies 2020; current Master of Teaching (Secondary) student) became a recognisable figure on campus with his weekly 'Cake Thursdays', as he shared his baked treats with fellow students outside the University's Fisher Library.

It began with bringing cakes to his tutorials as an icebreaker for students to get to know one another. This soon developed into language learning exercises. At the beginning of each class, a discussion would be held in German on how his cake was made; this included naming all the ingredients, which was often new and unexpected vocabulary for Arkady and his classmates.

In collaboration with Student Engagement staff, Arkady also served his now-famous homemade creations to incoming first-year students at welcome events hosted by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.



Day of the Dead @ USyd

Students from the Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies brought to campus *Día de Muertos*, an annual holiday observed in Mexico on the 2nd of November. Through interactive and social activities, the initiative aimed to offer a sensory experience to showcase the vibrancy of Mexican and pan-Latino cultures and their artistic expressions, as well as to educate others about the tradition.

With hands-on help from teaching staff, the day's activities began with a workshop on making colourful altar ornaments which were later displayed near the School of Languages and Cultures' main building. Among their creations were *papel picado*, the multicoloured perforated decorative papercraft widely used in Mexican folk art.

The day concluded with a live telecast of the *Catrina* (elegant skeleton) parades in Mexico, along with a spread of Mexican food and screening of Pixar's *Coco*.

Meet some of our educators

The tireless contributions of our academics, lecturers and sessional tutors equips our students to be truly global citizens. Hear from a few of our staff who make up the school's dedicated teaching culture.



Dr Nesrine Basheer

Arabic Language and Cultures
Lecturer

"I think many of us are excellent teachers. I have enjoyed the freedom and trust to experiment with new ideas and introduce innovative pedagogical approaches. I pride myself on my relationship with my students who shared that they felt a true sense of community in our classes; they feel heard and seen. I am lucky to be able to know them at a deeper level, including their backgrounds, interests and values."

Dr Nesrine Basheer joined the School of Languages and Cultures in 2015 where she teaches and coordinates Arabic language units at all levels including Honours seminars and advanced culture units taught in Arabic. She received the 2019 Vice-Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Early Career Teaching and 2018 Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award.



Ms Christel Rome

French and Francophone Studies
Sessional teaching staff

"I love being a facilitator in creating and gathering all the components in order to generate a kind of magic in the classroom, to transform a learning experience into an unforgettable moment, recaptured at will. My aim is to better equip students with not only a solid knowledge but also essential values and qualities to prepare them to become our colleagues, experts and leaders of tomorrow."

Christel Rome is a native French speaker who started teaching at the University of Sydney in 2004. She has been tutoring and coordinating classes at introductory, intermediate and advanced levels. She has a master's degree on didactics and practices in teaching and learning French as a second language. She received the 2019 Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award.



Dr Michael Abrahams-Sprod

Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies
Roth Foundation Lecturer

"As an educator, I have always been passionate about sharing my subject knowledge, learning from my students and about developing students' abilities to become independent learners. In each class, I hope that we all learn from each other, enjoy and be challenged. My goal is for each student to go away with having felt part of a learning community – that they will be confident to apply skills learnt to real-world situations."

Dr Michael Abrahams-Sprod is an historian and linguist with extensive experience in secondary, tertiary and adult education. He teaches in Holocaust Studies as well as Jewish Civilisation, Thought and Culture (JCTC). He also played a pivotal role in JCTC's curriculum development. He was a recipient of the 2019 Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award.

Investing in our pedagogy

Through biannual teaching workshop days, we regularly reflect on our teaching delivery as we seek to continually enhance our students' learning experience and staff support.



Student panel discussing the classroom experience with academics and tutors at the first 2019 Teaching Day

Collaboration with students

On the theme of 'the classroom experience', the Pedagogy Working Group invited a panel of four departmental student representatives to provide teaching staff with the student perspective at the first of the School of Languages and Cultures' biannual Teaching Day events.

The four student panellists provided personal insights on learning strategies, teaching strategies, feedback and assessment from their own experiences in units of study from the Departments of European Studies, International Comparative Literature and Translation Studies, Arabic Language and Cultures, and Germanic Studies.

A lively Q&A with teaching staff concluded the productive session, affirming the value of a collaborative and integrated approach in enhancing the teaching experience.

Peer support collegiality

Led by the school's Pedagogy Working Group, the Peer Support Program (PSP) provides teaching staff with a structured and collegial process of giving and receiving feedback on teaching strategies and methods. Following a feedback-based and peer-observation model, the PSP began in 2012 for all teaching colleagues to:

- share part of a curriculum with a colleague, such as a learning activity or an assessment task
- observe a colleague teach, and then offer feedback on an aspect of their teaching
- share aspects of teaching delivery technological platform design, or other systems, or tools that support students' learning
- share best practice, experiences and rewards of teaching a language.

Feedback from participating staff highlighted the program as valuable and a positive experience.

Honouring our supporters

In 2019, we received over \$3 million in gifts and bequests from former students for the advancement of our education offerings. The generosity of our donors will impact our students and research, as well as future generations to come.



Mrs Ann Kirby (née Plotke)

**BA 1951, LLB 1958, DipLangStud 2016
(Classical Hebrew; Jewish Thought
and Culture)**

The late Ann Kirby gifted a \$2 million bequest for the advancement of Jewish studies and teaching modern and biblical Hebrew to promote understanding between Jewish and non-Jewish faiths.

She arrived in Australia in 1939, aged 10, after fleeing the Nazis from Germany via Yugoslavia, Hungary and Italy.

“Ann was a quiet, kind and caring person who held strong convictions. She was always so passionate about studying new things herself and encouraging others in their own studies.”

Professor Emerita Suzanne Rutland
Department of Hebrew, Biblical and
Jewish Studies



Mrs Carole Muller

**Former MA student (Indonesian
Studies and Anthropology), 1982**

The late Carole Muller has left a bequest of \$1 million to support students in their research on Balinese art, culture or history. Valued up to \$35,000 per annum, the Carole Muller Awards offer scholarships in postgraduate research and fieldwork in Bali.

A key player in restorations of Balinese cultural sites, Carole is fondly remembered in the Australian academic community for her self-published books on the Bali Aga, the ethnic sub-group known as the ‘Original Balinese’.

“Carole’s determination to promote research on Bali Aga culture led to her bequest in her will. Her legacy will continue at the University of Sydney.”

Professor Adrian Vickers
Department Chair of Asian Studies



Mr Peter Pontikis

BEd 1984, MA 2005

Brisbane-based businessman Peter Pontikis pledged a total of \$175,000 to the Department of Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies for teaching. It will fund the first-ever textbook specifically tailored for the teaching of Modern Greek in the Australian tertiary education system.

Mr Pontikis has a high profile in financial technology, treasury and investment management.

“Peter is one of the most engaged and committed life-long students of Greek culture and language. His donation gives us the opportunity to prepare material for people who haven’t studied Greek and want to explore their linguistic origins and foundational cultural stories.”

Professor Vrasidas Karalis
Department Chair and Sir Nicholas
Laurantus Professor of Modern Greek

Catch up with our alumni

We touched base with two of our former students who are making their mark in Australia and beyond through multilingualism and intercultural competence.



Amelia Lemondhi (née Mitchell)

After graduating in 2007 with first class honours and majors in Indonesian Studies and Asian Studies, Amelia founded her own interpreting business, Indospeak, where she is now an accredited interpreter and translator in Indonesian and English.

She moved to Jakarta in 2018, and frequently travels around Indonesia and to Australia for work. She has served at high-level bilateral meetings, working alongside officials such as Indonesian President Joko Widodo and NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian. Amelia's clients have ranged from international governmental bodies to media companies and banks, including the United Nations and World Bank.

“Studying with the School of Languages and Cultures allowed me to get to a near-native level of proficiency in the Indonesian language, and go into areas such as literature, history and human rights. I went on fantastic exchange programs and in-country study opportunities that allowed me to enhance my language skills.”



Heath Sloane

Heath graduated in 2017 with three language majors: Chinese Studies; French and Francophone Studies; and Hebrew (Modern). In 2019, he moved to Beijing as a Yenching Scholar to pursue his master's degree in International Relations at the prestigious Yenching Academy in Peking University – known to many as “China's Harvard”. Heath was one of only 140 scholars selected from a pool of more than 5,000 international candidates.

Heath was previously Public Affairs Officer at the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies where he routinely spoke Modern Hebrew and utilised his multilingual and cross-cultural skills in his work with diverse ethnic and religious communities.

“When presented with the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of other cultures through language learning, I had no hesitation in pursuing three language majors. I was lucky to have supportive teachers throughout my studies.”

Engagement

Through annual and special events, we connected with valued members of our community to highlight our offerings, honour our benefactors' contributions and observe special occasions together.



Languages at Sydney 2019: Go Global

For the third year running, Languages at Sydney was held on 1 March 2019. 159 students from 18 schools across Sydney and New South Wales attended the day event with their teachers and careers advisors. This annual event provides Year 10 to 12 students with a taster of studying languages at the University of Sydney.

Plenary session

The day opened in The Quadrangle's General Lecture Theatre with alumna guest speaker, Amelia Lemondhi, addressing the students via video on the value of studying languages and career doors it opens. Students Adam Herman and Deirdre Mair also shared about their time learning a new language overseas through the immersive in-country units offered through the Open Learning Environment.

Students later broke out into groups to join in two of 23 language sessions catered to various levels. These were conducted by academics with activities led by language students at the end of each session.

Along with the inclusion of two classical languages offered by the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry for the first time, the event was supported by the Global Student Recruitment and Mobility team, and 43 student volunteers, representatives and ambassadors.

Immersion session languages:

- Ancient Greek
- Arabic
- Chinese
- Classical Hebrew
- French
- German
- Indonesian
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Latin
- Modern Greek
- Sanskrit
- Spanish



Greek Independence Day Reception

The Greek national day reception celebration was held in the University of Sydney's Great Hall on 25 March 2019.

Jointly organised by Professor Vrasidas Karalis (Sir Nicholas Laurantus Professor of Modern Greek; Department Chair of Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies) and the Consulate General of Greece Sydney, the event hosted distinguished guests such as the Consul General of Greece in Sydney and His Grace Bishop Seraphim of Apollonias representing His Eminence.

The evening was graced with performance by the Australian Hellenic Choir, along with renowned Australian news presenter John Mangos as Master of Ceremonies and keynote speaker David Hill.

The event was also joined by students from the Department of Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies, and the student executives from the Sydney University Greek Society.

Photos by Yannis Dramitinos and courtesy of the Consulate General of Greece in Sydney.

For more photos, see our album on Facebook:

– [facebook.com/usydslc](https://www.facebook.com/usydslc)

2019 Awards Ceremony



On 1 May, the School of Languages and Cultures celebrated the achievements of outstanding students as we acknowledged the School's benefactors for their valuable support at our annual Awards Ceremony. Through the awarding of scholarships and prizes, contributions from our donors support students in their academic pursuits and recognise their academic excellence.

With an opening welcome by Faculty Dean Professor Annamarie Jagose, and a special item featuring a series of traditional folk dance performances from the Greek Islands, we had the honour of hosting 21 VIPs and nine of their guests in attendance.

Joined by 27 academic staff from 14 departments, we also invited consulate representatives from various countries and international unions, and media and cultural organisations.

A total of 68 students received 16 scholarships and 37 prizes in 2019, with thanks to our 78 donors and benefactors who include our honorary academics and numerous local and international organisations.

For the photo set and list of student recipients, see:

– *SLC Magazine* (Iss. 43, p. 28–35)

Honorary academic VIPs:

- Adjunct Professor Mabel Lee (Chinese Studies)
- Dr Lily Lee (Chinese Studies)
- Prof Jocelyn Chey (Chinese Studies)
- Emeritus Professor Angus Martin (French and Francophone Studies)
- Professor Margaret Sankey (French and Francophone Studies)
- Dr Yasuko Claremont (Japanese Studies; International Comparative Literature and Translation Studies)
- Emeritus Professor Peter Worsley (Indonesian Studies)
- Associate Professor Sakuko Matsui (Japanese Studies)



Consulate General and representatives in attendance:

- The People's Republic of China: Ms Jing Zhao (Consul and Head of the Education Office)
- European Union: Tracy Dennis (Delegate to Australia)
- France: Mr Nicolas Duhaut (Attaché de Cooperation universitaire)
- The Federal Republic of Germany: Mr Klaus Steitz (Consulate General Representative)
- Greece: Ms Eleni Psychopeda (Consulate General Representative)
- The Republic of Indonesia: Mr Heru Hartanto Subolo (Consul General)
- Italy: Mr Arturo Arcano (Consul General)
- The Republic of Korea: Mr Kie-Min Kim (Director, Korean Education Centre, Consulate General)

Organisations of VIP invitees and their representatives:

- Arts and Social Science Association
- Consulate General of France in Sydney
- Consulate General of France in Canberra
- Lycée Condorcet / International French School
- Susan and Isaac Wakil Foundation
- Alliance Francaise
- Austrian Embassy
- Education Heritage Fund
- Shalom College
- Jewish Communal Appeal
- NSW Jewish Board of Deputies
- Ambassador for Israel in Australia
- Sydney Jewish Museum
- Yarranabbee Foundation
- S and C Roth Charitable Foundation
- Pratt Foundation

- Mandelbaum House
- Fund for Jewish Higher Education
- Jewish Communal Appeal
- Khyentse Foundation
- Asialink
- Gridiger Lawyers
- Italian Institute of Culture
- La Fiamma
- SBS Italian Language Program
- Consulate General of Japan in Sydney
- The Japan Foundation Sydney
- Jae Lee Holdings Pty Ltd
- The Modern Greek Studies Foundation
- AHEPA
- Education Committee
- Consulate General of Greece
- World Council of Hellenes Abroad Oceania and Far East Region (SAE)
- Foreign Language Press Pty Ltd (*The Greek Herald*)

The University of Sydney's School of Languages and Cultures offers a wide range of studies with research expertise in the non-English speaking world and multilingual Australia.

For more information, visit
School of Languages and Cultures

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