Language and Culture

Language and Culture is the quarterly electronic magazine of the School of Languages and Cultures in the Faculty of Arts at Sydney University. It explores current issues in the field of languages and cultures and provides updates on the activities of the School.

This issue

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Issue 19 December 2011
On behalf of all of us in the School of Languages and Cultures, please let me begin by wishing everyone a pleasant holiday season and a happy new year.

As 2011 draws to a close, I want to take this opportunity to share with our readers news of the accomplishments and international recognition of some of our academics during the last twelve months. Overall our School has been performing extremely well in our research and teaching endeavors and as a result we rank very highly in terms of the quality of our work and also our financial stability not only within our Faculty and University but across the Australian tertiary sector. Here are the names of some of those whose activities have made an especially great impact on our School’s excellent performance.

Associate Professor Michele Ford of Indonesian Studies won a Discovery grant from the Australia Research Council for her project, “The Re-emergence of Political Labour in Indonesia.” In addition to that award, Michelle was one of two academics in the School to win an International Program Development Fund grant for her project entitled, “Beyond Oligarchy: Accountability and Representation in Contemporary Indonesia.”

Professor Peter Morgan, our Director of European Studies, was awarded a prestigious Alexander von Humboldt research fellowship that enabled him to spend part of the months of November and December at the University of Konstanz in Germany.

Dr Rebecca Suter of Japanese Studies received a Japan Foundation Long-Term Japanese Studies Fellowship as well as an affiliation as a Visiting Scholar at Keio University in Tokyo. Rebecca continues to work on the project for which she won an ARC Discovery grant two years ago.
Dr Yasuko Claremont of Japanese Studies won the Kore Press Poetry in Translation Award and also received grants from the Japanese Foundations to organize two conferences in 2012. Associate Professor Bronwyn Winter of French Studies won a grant as part of the Ville de Paris “Research in Paris” scheme for foreign researchers for her project on gay and lesbian exile and asylum in Paris. Bronwyn’s promotion to Associate Professor was also effective in 2011.

Dr Leonid Petrov of Korean Studies was a member of a team that won an ARC Discovery grant that will be administered by another university.

Dr Yixu Lu of Germanic Studies won a research development from the University’s China Studies Center for her project “Culture and the scientific discourse of China in Petermanns Geographische Zeitschrift 1855-1900.”

We all congratulate Professor Suzanne Rutland for her promotion, effective in 2011, to Professor Level E. Among Suzanne’s accomplishments in the last year was winning an International Program Development Fund grant (as did Michele Ford). Suzanne’s IPDF project is entitled, “The Holocaust and Legacies of Race in the Postcolonial World, 1945 to the Present.” Suzanne was also an invited speaker at Shandong University in Jinan, China, and was instrumental in securing a Pratt Foundation grant for the establishment of a professorship in the department of Hebrew, Biblical, and Jewish Studies.

One of the innovations in research in the Faculty and our School is the creation of research networks established through a competitive grant scheme administered by the Faculty. In the 2011 round our School was awarded a grant for the creation of the “Language and Identity Research Network” thanks to the efforts of Dr Antonia Rubino, Dr Caroline Lipovsky, Dr Nerida Jarkey, Dr Novi Djenar, Dr Wei Wang, and Dr Linda Tsung. For more information, please see: sydney.edu.au/arts/research/language_and_identity/language_and_identity.shtml

The following were successful in the 2011 round of the Faculty’s competitive research support scheme: Dr Ali Aldahesh, Dr Mark Allon, Dr Francesco Borghesi, Dr Ki-Sung Kwak, Dr Lucia Sorbera, and Dr Linda Tsung.

And last, but far from least, the following were promoted to Senior Lecturer in 2011: Dr Francesco Borghesi, Dr Novi Djenar, Dr Mats Karlsson, Dr Vek Lewis, Dr Fernanda Penalozu, Dr Rebecca Suter. For me, personally, nothing is more gratifying than having these young scholars receive this recognition for their hard work.

**Good wishes to all for 2012!**
I am both happy and honored to have this chance to congratulate those who have been awarded degrees today. You should all be pleased with yourselves and I know that your parents and friends are proud of your accomplishments. This university and our Faculty make great demands of our students—you have met those demands and are now ready to move on to the next stage in your life.

Whether that next stage involves a job, further formal education, or simply time to reflect on what you want to do, let me quote a line from an early Chinese philosopher named Xunzi (荀子) that has meant a lot to me and I hope will prove helpful to you: 學不可以已 “learning can never end.” Over the years I have come to appreciate the subtlety and depth of this brief bit of wisdom. Not only does it remind one to be humble about what one has already learned, it also alerts one to the fact that there always remains the necessity to improve oneself by learning more.

For me the truth of that message has not been difficult to grasp. My field of interest is Chinese after all. Even though I can read Chinese literary and historical sources from different periods and I can speak the language well enough to attend scholarly conferences and to converse with friends in China, I would never describe myself as fluent in Chinese. That is something that I continue to work at but know, at the same time, that I will never truly attain. Perhaps those of you who have studied to play a musical instrument will best understand what I mean. As skilful as you might come to be at playing the piano or violin, you can never stop practicing and refining your skills. There is always room for improvement.

But when Chinese philosophy teaches us that “learning can never end,” it means more than deepening your understanding of a specialty or particular body of knowledge. It also means stretching and extending yourself by always being open to learning new things and new
areas of knowledge. The same ancient Chinese philosopher, Xunzi, counsels us that we can do this because we possess minds that have the capacity always to learn more, to appreciate new knowledge without a bias based on previous learning, and to integrate new facts and ideas into the body of what we already know so that we think and act coherently. While we can do this by reading books and attending classes, these are certainly not the only way to keep expanding what you know. It involves as well being curious, wanting to experience new places and new people, being willing to put yourself in unfamiliar territory and to take risks, and being willing to do the unconventional and unexpected for the sake of gaining new knowledge—even if that knowledge is only learning what you are fully capable of doing. You may find, as I have, that a willingness to try new things, to experiment has a transformative effect on your life.

In a sense it was my desire to learn more that led me to leave behind a familiar existence and career in California and migrate to Australia to join the University of Sydney. I admit that this was not a great stretch. In many ways my life and academic experiences here at Sydney have proved to be an extension of what I did at the University of California. Yet I have been transformed enough that I have taken Australian citizenship and have no intention of permanently returning to the U.S. I see my future divided between Australia and China.

A more relevant illustration of stretching oneself comes from my studies of China. When I was a beginning student of Chinese, I studied the language for what I could learn of early Chinese thought and philosophy. But later I came to realize that knowing even some Chinese language opened for me a valuable pathway for understanding life and society in contemporary China. And over the years I have come to see how much traditional Chinese thought has an impact on how people in China behave and view the world. Thus I continue to learn about Chinese values not only from ancient books but also from the many people with whom I am acquainted and with whom I have happily fashioned friendships.

I have found that such understanding of another culture—gained through the contact and communication that language provides—enhances one’s capacity more generally for empathy with regard to the challenges that other people face in their lives. I lived for a year in Beijing and during that time I met numerous migrant workers whose lives were filled with hardship because while Chinese they were not born in Beijing. The more I spoke with them the more troubled I was by their plight.

There is a debate going on at the moment among social commentators in the United States about what is more important in creating an ethical society: empathy for others or a code of moral values. I believe that both are essential: a code of values makes human society possible but empathy makes it humane. I admit to a bit of a bias in this regard that favours empathy and a sense of personal responsibility over ethical rules, codes and other social contracts. When I read or hear of how both sides of government discuss immigration by people attempting to come to Australia by boat, my most immediate response is not to question whether our politicians adhere to ethical codes but rather to wish that they had more empathy for the migrants and others whom their policies affect, that is a more sympathetic understanding of their lives, their experiences, and their culture—the sort of understanding that comes from knowing another language, from studying the history, politics, philosophy, and art of a culture other than one’s own.

An education in our Faculty has provided you, our students, with a solid foundation of this kind of understanding. My sincere hope for all of you is that based on these beginnings you will thrive and prosper, that you will go out of your way to experience and learn of the lives of people different from your own, that you will travel, take risks, leave the familiar behind, learn a second or third language. “Learning can never end.” Thank you.
Although not the oldest profession, as an ancient profession teaching certainly ranks amongst the most distinguished. Most cultures esteem teachers: in the Theravada Buddhist cultures of mainland Southeast Asia there is an annual day for students to pay homage to their teachers. There is a special kind of learning that goes on in universities, in which teachers, despite the changing fashions of the education industry, must still play a role.

Can the ancient be improved? Is it an act of hubris to set up institutes and faculties dedicated to the generation of ways to improve tertiary education? Certainly there is an argument for better ways to support teaching and share insights and experiences, as well as assist us to find the best uses of technology. But beyond these things, is there a formula for teaching? Teaching is an art, and a craft, best learned through apprenticeship and experience.

Initiation into university teaching has been, at least until the last decade or so, a hit-and-miss affair. I can still remember the first tutorials I took: as a post-graduate I was sent off to what were in the 1980s very small groups of students, with vague instructions from the lecturer about what they should get out of the somewhat obtuse combination of readings he had devised. I was not really clear about how to mark the assignments, and tended to play it safe by giving everyone a middling mark. I had previously had some experience working for a language school, where I had to work out how to use the somewhat formally structured texts available to give basic language instruction. I had been invited to give a few guest lectures by David Reeve, who was very generous in his commentary on my somewhat unstructured and dense presentations. David later also gave a number of us experience in part-time teaching to TAFE students, which was very helpful when, unemployed at the end of my PhD, I taught in the Higher School Certificate native speaker Indonesian-Malay course.

All this is a good argument for formal ways to introduce people to university teaching. I don’t really think that this kind of hit-and-miss, figure-it-out-for-yourself approach really serves our students well, or us for that matter. It was not until my first lectureship at UNSW that anybody really told me what was going on. Then I was what we might call apprenticed to an experienced lecturer, Ian Black, who focussed on the purpose of the subject, and acted as a channel for student feedback, telling me that my lectures were too dense: basically I needed to slow down, and not to pack so much information into the lectures. He also discussed students in a way that let me work out how to deal with the diversity that even then was part of the student cohort at UNSW.
The term ‘apprenticeship’ is a serious one. Like the carpenter who has to learn the techniques of dealing with knotted planks, there are some aspects of teaching that can be learned in the abstract, from formal courses, and others that require listening to the voice of experience. We might structure a lecture to cover seven key points, to have a natural breather at the twenty-minute mark (insert joke here), and to follow the text-book method, but you need someone to really tell you whether it is working or not, and if not, why not. This is all a matter of listening.

Training in anthropological fieldwork has been indispensable for teaching. Listening to our experienced colleagues is one part of the process of learning the craft of teaching, listening to students is another. In the last decade or so teachers in universities have become more removed from students, we rarely drink at the same pubs, or socialise in other ways. Too great a distance between teachers and students is a barrier to learning, so we can’t really identify what is going on in the classroom.

There are three trends to be resisted in the corporatisation of Australian universities, the first, connected to my last point, is that we need to avoid the trend of treating students as “customers” or “clients”, ie emphasising the formal distance of commodified relations (while at the same time remembering that they are paying substantial amounts of money for attending university). Secondly, we need to avoid the “infantilisation” of students; “pedagogy” is the wrong word to apply to our teaching of adults. Thirdly, the advent of mass education has meant that tutorials have got larger and larger (I can remember conversations in the 1990s about how difficult it was getting when staff-student ratios passed the 1:15 mark!). The size of our institution makes it difficult for us to engage with our students, and this often leads to an alienated student population. We need to lobby for better SSRs wherever possible.

Student surveys are useful, and sometimes the feedback is better from those who take the time to write comments. These are often a blunt instrument, and I’m sure that most of you get the entirely contradictory remarks on the forms that I do. Sometimes you need a thick skin, which most academics should have acquired from refereeing processes anyway. However the numerical scores need to be treated with suspicion, since students often do not have any points of comparison, except their school experiences, for evaluating what we do.

Probably the most useful way to find out about general principles of teaching is to have a daughter (or son) go to university, as I did a few years ago. She confirmed for me the uselessness of group-marking for class work, which doesn’t really teach team-work in the rather rosy model some educationalists have, but rather means poor students get to sponge off their more diligent peers. She also confirmed how seriously students take their marks, but then I was never a fan of the ‘84’ grading.

The most important lesson, confirming what I had learned from consorting with school teachers, was the problem of how to go from a high degree of structure in schools to the more open style of problem-based learning that is the Socratic legacy of the university system. What some might think would be a problem for students coming from structured systems of Asia to the western system, is now the reality of domestic teaching.
This is particularly true of the rigidities imposed by the HSC in New South Wales, which is structured very closely to sets of criteria. This kind of paint-by-numbers system is the creation of focus around final marks. No wonder students look a little lost when they get to us, and we give them vague expectations about the nature of academic questions.

An important part of the process of movement between the HSC and university is the nature of first year. Here first year is relegated to structural unimportance, it does not even count towards a major, only providing pre-requisites. What sort of message does that send to students? The Faculty of Arts and Social Science is making important steps to an integrated approach to first year, and Liam Semmler’s ARC Linkage project on teaching Shakespeare is exemplary in this respect. But we need to do more, including looking at who teaches first year. Rather than assigning our graduate “apprentices” to first year, I believe that everyone, especially the professors, should take first year units of study, especially tutorials. Consider it fieldwork.

One lesson from schools is the work done in the Department of Education’s Quality Teaching Program. This is aimed at getting more depth and creativity into learning, setting up quality criteria, and ways of getting genuine engagement from students. One important element in the Program is the idea of risk taking. I don’t think we do enough of this, either in terms of taking risks in curricula, and so we are not encouraging students to take intellectual risks in their learning.

Structuring curricula is important, and we need to think more about the notion of progression between years. When we moved to semester systems there was a fracturing of the curriculum, and our students experience a very disjointed collection of units, rather than a curriculum. Peter Morgan is doing some excellent work in this field.

Teaching and learning may not be as directly connected as some might assume. What are students getting out of lectures? Sets of information? Entertainment? A set of concepts? Or examples of how important questions might be posed? All of these could and perhaps should be there to get some response, but how can we tell? Assessment is probably as good a means of any of gauging what students are getting out of lectures and tutorials, if used properly. An examination is not really going to tell us much beyond the first element, whether sets of information have been conveyed and can be regurgitated. Essays, on their own, may be better, but they need to be carefully designed. A set of exercises about the nature of dealing with concepts, a structured process of learning to pose and answer useful questions are what might best provide insights for students that they can then build on through their further reading, meaning the reading they will, hopefully, be interested enough to do after the short period of a semester is over, which is often the most significant learning period.

How to do these things? Again, like new brick-layer on a building site, an apprentice teacher can learn as much from her or his peers as from the experienced brickie. Informal discussions with colleagues, and hearing from students about which tutorials they enjoyed, has been useful for me. When I taught at Wollongong I learned from Catriona Elder the idea of getting students to write abstracts of key ideas as tutorial presentations, instead of the dreaded attempts at a mini-lecture that fill up most of our tutorials.
From Josie Castle I took the idea of trying to run seminars like dinner party chats, the tricks of trying to get students to chat are as vital as any. Here we are severely hindered by the lay-out of our teaching rooms, with their school-like rows of desks designed to kill any interactions between students. The technique of group discussions, which Melanie Beresford first showed me, has been important in getting students to explain ideas to each other. John McQuilton showed me the importance of performance in lectures, the appeal to emotions as a way to reach into students’ hearts and minds.

I also benefitted there from an intensive course in acting and performance. We have a lot to learn from outside fields. While I didn’t really learn to act, I learned about projection of self, and techniques of communication, from that course in performance. Likewise from a course in media training I learned about staying on-message and tricks for getting a set of ideas across.

All of these things are very old-fashioned: the ideas of learning through discourse, through posing questions, go to the heart of the learning exchange. Discourse does mean listening as much as speaking, since it requires real interlocutors, and the constant challenge is understanding where our students are coming from, literally and figuratively, when they speak. How much harder it is when we need to know as much about Chinese pop culture as about the vicissitudes of the Australian cricket team to communicate with a single class.

So can teaching be improved? Certainly by more systematic ways of integrating people into the craft, but technology does play its part as well. Much of the adaptation of technology has been promoted by older managers who began with the foolish expectation that on-line teaching would save them the expenses of salaries for tenured staff. How many times have we heard that the lecture is dead? Students still demand them, as I found out once when I experimented with having no lectures in one unit.

I confess to being an ‘early adopter’. I have tried video-conferencing lectures to multiple sites, full on-line assessments, and discussion groups. The results have been mixed. On-line lectures are nowhere near as engaging as a well-produced reality TV programme, and the audience turns off even more quickly on TV than in an auditorium when the lecture is not well-presented. On-line discussions can never replace a tutorial discussion. I have found it hard to get that same level of chattiness, students tend to respond more formally. This lack of informal chat on sites like Blackboard is the result of its clunkiness, magnified by the advent of Facebook, where the sharing of trivia and the social interactions go hand-in-hand with information about serious causes and links to important news items, or even reporting of events as they are happening. What we need is a Facebook teaching tool, where we can provide on-line interactions that are not just easy, but addictive. Learning should be fun, and interesting. Perhaps Google+ might do that.

But the important point is that on-line learning will not replace face-to-face interaction anytime soon. We have to adjust our demands to the needs to students, and we have to compete with re-packed learning processes outside universities—what is a “festival of ideas” or a “writers’ festival” but exactly what we do every day of our teaching lives? Let us show our students what an interesting conversation might be.
Dr Yona Gilead (above)
Professor Yael Ziv (top right)

During the University of Sydney’s Stuvac Week, Professor Yael Ziv, visited the University of Sydney and participated in an intensive week of activities, including being one of the Humanities representatives at the University of Sydney – Israel Forum, ‘Shared Challenges, Future Solutions’, which aimed to foster research between our university and leading Israeli researchers in all academic disciplines. Her visit was sponsored by the Sir Zelman Cowen Universities Fund, which supports academic exchange between the University of Sydney and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Yael Ziv received her PhD in Linguistics from the University of Illinois and has been teaching courses in pragmatic theory, discourse analysis, information structure and the syntax-discourse interface with respect to specific syntactic structures at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem since 1976 in the departments of Linguistics and English. Her primary research area is discourse and pragmatics, with specific interests in Relevance Theory, information structure, discourse markers, centering theory and attentional state, generics, conditionals, existentials and the discourse characterization of Spoken Hebrew.

In the morning overview session during the University of Sydney - Israel Forum, Yona Gilead from the Department of Hebrew, Biblical & Jewish Studies introduced Professor Ziv to the audience and spoke about the synergies between the department and Hebrew language pedagogy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Professor Ziv then spoke on ‘Studying a Spoken Tongue and Teaching a Modern Language in an Immigrant Society: the Case of Modern Hebrew’.

Professor Ziv presented two workshops during the afternoon sessions. The first, entitled ‘Teaching Language for academic purposes through activation of familiar genres’, was held in conjunction with the SLC Teaching Day, coordinated by Dr Linda Tsung. This seminar was very well attended with approximately 30 academics. Yael’s presentation was extremely well received. Her presentation was followed by a many questions and a lively discussion. Moreover, many academics commented on how applicable Yael’s research findings were to their research interests and, after the workshop, a number of SLC lecturers requested copies of her Power Point presentation.

The second, entitled ‘Discourse markers - Discourse phenomena at the sentence level’, was also very interesting. Whilst it attracted fewer attendees, all found the topic informative and interesting. Professor Suzanne Rutland, Yona Gilead from HBJS, and Neta Steigrad, Associate Lecturer in Teaching Classical Hebrew in the Faculty of Education, oversaw these seminars.

As a follow up to the Symposium Yael presented a further two seminars: The first, entitled: Assessing / Dispelling claims about language – implications for teaching Hebrew, was specifically geared for MH school teachers. Having Yael present a work shop to this group of educators is part of the University of Sydney’s ongoing pursuit of working closely with teachers in the Jewish day schools; facilitating teachers’ upgrading of their knowledge; and in doing so contributing back to the community. Yona Gilead oversaw this seminar.

The second, entitled: Discourse markers - Discourse phenomena at the sentence level, covered the same overall content as the Symposium’s first afternoon workshop. It was presented to postgraduate students at the Faculty of Education. Approximately 25 people attended this seminar and the feedback was again very positive with several attendees asking for Yael’s power-point slides to be made available to them. Neta Steigrad oversaw this seminar.
On Wednesday 16 November, an enthusiastic audience participated in a seminar given by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier, authors of the second (and first complete) English translation of Simone de Beauvoir’s groundbreaking work *The Second Sex*.

The event, which formed part of Borde and Malovany-Chevallier’s highly successful Australian tour, was sponsored by SSPS and the Department of French Studies/SLC and opened by SLC Head of School, Professor Jeffrey Riegel. Professor Riegel, a scholar in Chinese Studies, spoke eloquently of the importance of Beauvoir’s ideas, and of feminism more generally, in a transnational context.

Borde and Malovany-Chevallier also reminded us that when *Le deuxième sexe* was first published in 1949 in France, it was read avidly by women from all socio-economic backgrounds, from factory workers and shop assistants to intellectuals, and the book went into several print runs in its first year. They traced the complicated and fascinating history of its first translation into English and spoke of the challenges, and the four years of work (including significant research and wide consultation with scholars), involved in producing a new translation that would finally restore the entirety of Beauvoir’s original for English-speaking readers. H.M. Parshley’s 1953 translation had been lacking both in length and in interpretation of Beauvoir’s philosophical and political concepts, which was not entirely Parshley’s fault, but also due to the marketing choices of the publisher (Knopf), which expressly required a ‘dumbing down’ of Beauvoir’s ideas for a mainstream US readership at that time.

The new translation has sold like the proverbial hotcakes: a week before the end of the tour, Random House Australia was already out of stock. Fortunately, individuals who attended the talk were able to procure a copy directly from the well-stocked Co-op Bookshop stand: Sheila and Connie were kept very busy signing them! Their translation of *The Second Sex* has responded to a long-expressed need in the English-speaking world and ensured a renewed interest in one of those few works of which one can say, without hyperbole, that it changed the world.
On October 12, 2011, the French Department hosted its annual poetry recital competition. Coordinated by Carolyn Stott, the evening was a great success and a showcase of creativity and dramatic performance. Students recited their own poems created along the 2011 Verge Festival theme of “Come Explore” (“Invitation au voyage”). The competition was in fact an amalgamation of two previously separate competitions in the past: one for writing a poem, the second for reciting one.

Prizes were thus awarded in two categories, with a further special Beginners’ poetry writing category. Participants included two published poets, and a spread of students from the Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced streams of French Studies. Students were ably supported by two tutors from the Department of French Studies, Christel Rome and Corinne Mesana, who ran weekly poetry writing and recital workshops for interested participants. The evening ended in fine French fashion with discussion progressing from poetry to the wine and cheese shared by participants and staff! Thanks must go to the French Society and to the Alliance Française, both of whom contributed prizes for the competition. The Department of French Studies congratulates all participants on their inspiring words and moving recitals.

**Concours de poésie**

Prize-winners

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<th>Poetry composition:</th>
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L'invitation au Voyage
Caitlin Westropp-Evans (1st place, composition)

La France présente une magnifique invitation au voyage:
On rêve de grandioses rues qui se trouvent à Paris,
Charmantes, séduisantes,
Qui révèlent les secrets des générations d’autrefois.

On entend parler de la Grande Vie qui s’y trouve:
La mode, l’élegance et les délicatesses,
Tentantes, inspirantes,
Qui révèlent une culture riche et précieuse.

On voit la splendeur des grands monuments qui s’y trouvent:
La Tour Eiffel, le Louvre et le Palais de Versailles,
Puissants, confidents,
Qui révèlent la gloire et la vigueur de ce pays ancien.

Mais toutes ces images masquent la réalité
Qui se trouve dans les véritables rues françaises.

On ne voit pas les gitans qui se rassemblent sur les places de Montpellier,
Ni les grèves nationales qui créent des tas d’ordures dans les rues de Marseille,
Ni les étudiants de toute la France qui peuvent à peine joindre les deux bouts.

On ne parle pas de l’augmentation du chômage chez les jeunes,
Ni la vaste lutte contre l’accroissement de l’Islam dans les villes,
Ni le profond problème qui se pose pour les immigrants illégaux.

Quand on accepte l’invitation de voyager en France,
Il vaut mieux traverser le boulevard des Champs-Elysée,
Descendre la Seine en bateau-mouche,
Et rentrer dans les grandes Halles de Paris,
Sans ouvrir les yeux sur la réalité qui s’y trouve.

An Invitation to Travel

France presents a magnificent invitation to travel:
We dream of the grandiose streets of Paris,
Charming, Seductive,
That reveal the secrets of past generations.

We hear about the Grand Life that is found there:
The fashion, the elegance, the delicacies,
Tempting, Inspiring,
That reveal a rich and precious culture.

We see the splendor of the great monuments that are found there:
The Eiffel Tower, the Louvre and the Palace of Versailles,
Powerful, Confident,
That reveal the glory and the vigor of this ancient country.

But all of these images mask the reality
That is found in the true streets of France.

We don’t see the hordes of gypsies that gather in the centre of Montpellier,
Nor the national strikes that create piles of rubbish in the streets of Marseille,
Nor the students throughout France who struggle to make ends meet.

We don’t talk about the rise in unemployment of the youth,
Nor the widespread resistance against the increase of Islam in the cities,
Nor the profound problem that faces the illegal immigrants.

When we accept the invitation to travel to France,
It’s better to traverse the Champs-Elysée Boulevard,
Float down the Seine on a passenger boat,
And stroll through the grand markets of Paris,

Without opening our eyes to the reality that is found there.
Concours de poésie

L’univers lumineux
Caitlin Still
(Second place, composition)

I. Je suis dévastée par la mer calme.
Demain, il n’y aura plus
rien à faire,
Rien à penser,
rien à savoir,
Que la nuit, sans bruit,
sauf les insectes bourdonnants
Dans le sombre,
les papillons de nuit
me dévorent,
Et les voix
des heures mortes,
Elles grattent,
me ramènent
Je suis seule
dans la chambre, il est
Quatre heures du matin,
je suis
Inerte, dans
Le noir, asphyxiant

II. Derrière mes yeux,
Il y a le ciel
Il y a le jour,
Il y a le noir
Au-delà d’ici,
Ils s’étendent à l’infini
(Je me vois disparaître,
Et je suis sereine)

III. Pensant à demain, je suis
Déchirée entre les temps
On me dit,
Qu’il y a toujours plus à faire,
plus à savoir,
plus à craindre
et plus rien à aimer,
et plus rien à vouloir
plus rien à dire,
quand le monde m’épuisera,
Et le sommeil de sa merci,
Il me prendra

IV. Lorsque je dors,
je retourne à la mer
Et debout sur la sable,
je me projette au fond,
La Profondeur
qui m’attendait,
elle m’enveloppe en elle
Je suis calme
dans la silence,
Oublie dans son corps
Et m’emmène à l’homme
qui attend à l’horizon ;
Veillant sans fin,
Le Phare qui attend
(et je me demande
ce qu’il lui manque)
Là, je retrouve
l’ombre de mes pieds,
Ils brûlent, frissonnent
dans l’eau qui ondule
L’ombre de mes pieds,
de la peau blanche d’hiver,
Claire et froide,
Éthéré, brillant

V. Derrière mes yeux,
Il y a le ciel,
Il y a la mer
Et là,
Le monde, il s’étend à jamais,
Et je vois
L’Univers, lumineux,
et lointain
Je casse la surface et
je respire.
Je ne sais plus mon nom.

The Luminous Universe

I. I am devastated by calm sea.
Tomorrow, there will be
nothing more to do
Nothing to think,
nothing to know
but the night, soundless,
save the insects
that hum
The moths
In the darkness
devour me
And the voices
Of the dead hours
They scratch,
they return me
I am alone
in the bedroom, it is
Four in the morning, I am
Inert, in the
Suffocating dark

II. Behind my eyes,
There is the sky
There is the day,
There is the dark
Beyond me,
They stretch to infinity
(I see myself disappear,
And I am serene)

III. I think only of tomorrow,
Torn between time
They tell me
There is always more to do,
more to know, more to fear
And nothing more to love,
And nothing more to want,
Nothing more to say,
When the earth will exhaust me,
And sleep, in his mercy
He will take me

IV. When I am asleep
I go back to the sea
I stand on the sand
Feel myself at the bottom
The Deep, having waited
Wraps me within
I am calm
In the silence,
lost in her body
She takes me to the man,
Who waits on the horizon,

Endless in vigil,
The Lighthouse who waits
(and I wonder
What it is he misses)
There,
I see the shadow of my feet,
They burn, and they shiver
in the water that waves
The shadow of my feet,
In the bright skin of winter
They are
Clear and cold
Ethereal, shining

V. Behind my eyes,
There is the sky,
There is the sea
And there,
the world extends forever,
and I see
the Universe,
Luminous and far
I break the surface,
and I breathe
I do not know my own name.
**Voyage quotidien**
Emme Devonish
(Third Place, composition)

On entre dans l'immeuble sans regarder la glace
l'image de la femme grise
Son cœur gelé
comme la mémoire du bébé
Francis, mort-né

On descend les escaliers sans penser à un mari
qui a fiché le camp
Ses cris alarmés
comme un garçon effrayé
des ombres de la nuit

On s'installe au bureau sans manger pendant des heures
car les heures nous mangent
Voyage quotidien
comme un squelette désintégré
Despair consomme

On se lève de la chaise sans parler à personne
dans la salle de fantômes
Leur insouciance étouffante
comme des larmes effondrées
d'âpres hystérectomies

On sort du bâtiment sans regretter les jours
en regarde les étoiles brillent
et leur splendeur invite
comme Niel Armstrong incite
à se rendre sur la Lune.

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**Daily Travel**

We enter into the building without looking at the mirror
the image of the grey woman
her frozen heart
like the memory of the baby
Francis, still-born

We come down the stairs without thinking of a husband
who has run away
his alarmed screams
like a boy frightened
by the night shadows

We sit at the desk without eating for hours
as the hours eat us
Daily travel
like a desintegrated skeleton
Despair consumes

We get up from the chair without talking to anyone
in the room of ghosts
their stifling indifference
like the tears distraught
from bitter hysterectomies

We get in the lift without bringing the bag
of atrocious stories
pages of the past
such as Francis's tomb
buried at Charonne

We come out of the building without regretting the days
because the stars are shining
and their splendour invites
as Niel Armstrong invites
to land on the Moon.

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**Hier soir, j'étais étendu**
Toby Finch (Beginner’s prize, composition)

Hier soir, j'étais étendu
sur le lit, écoutant......
La maison et les planètes
chuchotaient.
J’ai gigoté et elles se sont tuées...
Elles m’avaient entendu! L’univers s’était
lui-même balayé sous le tapis,
le bain débordait d’obscurité.
J’avais bouleversé le rythme des choses
alors, j’ai retenu mon souffle.
Sous peu, le soupir nocturne
était de retour: l’esprit de la maison se mit
t à fredonner dans la mansarde,
balançant ses hanches au pouls
des aurores boréales; un opossum
a secoué les comètes de la canopée des arbres.
Un cerceau de vents a livré la lune
à travers la porte de ma chambre, alors
que des créatures spectrales des chimères voisines
glissaient comme du sucre liquide dans les allées,
embrassant les lampadaires avec
des lèvres immenses,
et j’ai promis de ne pas refaire une scène.
Je vais rester éveillé, immobile et en sourdine,
tandis que les gouttières grincent,
les carreaux craquent, et les
fenêtres se cristallisent,
attendant que les astres expirent
et l’espace se déroule.

---

**Last Night I Lay Awake**

Last night I lay awake
in bed, listening to the house
and planets whispering.
I fidgeted and they fell silent...
They’d heard me! The universe
swept itself under the carpet,
darkness overflowed the bath.
I’d upset the rhythm of things
so I held my breath.
Before long, the nocturnal
sighing returned: a poltergeist
began to hum in the attic,
swinging his hips to the pulse
of the southern lights; a possum
shook comets from a canopy.
Hooping winds bundled the moon
through my bedroom door as eerie creatures
from the neighbours' pipe dreams slid
like liquid sugar down the alleys,
kissing the streetlights out with enormous lips,
and I promised not to make a scene again.
I will lie awake, motionless and soundproof,
as the gutters creak, the tiles crack,
and the windows crystallise,
waiting for the stars to breathe out
and space to unfold.


The newly established Language and Identity Research Network at the University of Sydney convened a Symposium on “Language and Identity across Modes of Communication” on 21 and 22 November 2011. This event was a great success, attracting around 100 academics and postgraduate research students nationwide and internationally from the US, New Zealand, China and other countries. The two day event resulted in a highly positive exchange of researchers’ current work in aspects of linguistics and identity, explored by a diversity of paradigms and across a range of languages and modes of communication, and a variety of sociocultural contexts.

The first day featured a very fruitful and thought-provoking roundtable discussion on the latest key issues and developments of language and identity research. Chaired by Professor Brian Paltridge (Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Sydney), the speakers on the roundtable discussion included Professors Mary Bucholtz (University of California, Santa Barbara), Tim McNamara (University of Sydney), Miriam Meyerhoff (University of Auckland), and Alastair Pennycook (University of Technology, Sydney), who are all leading scholars in the field of language and identity research in the world. Eight individual papers presented on the first day covered topics and disciplines in relation to language and identity ranging from corpus linguistics, language acquisition, literary studies, literacy education, media studies, anthropology, and applied linguistics. The speakers were Monika Bednarek, Ken Cruickshank, Novi Djenar, Nerida Jarkey, John Mansfield, Antonia Rubino, all from the University of Sydney, Richard Liu from Charles Sturt University and Sue Starfield from the University of New South Wales.

The public symposium on the second day was formally opened by Professor Duncan Ivison, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Sydney. Mary Bucholtz, in her plenary talk ‘The elements of style’, argued style as ‘an agentive semiotic practice through which social identities are constituted’. Drawing on her research on language and youth identities in the United States, she provided an outline of the key elements of the new concept of style. In Miriam Meyerhoff’s plenary talk titled ‘All these years and still counting: why quantitative methods still appeal’, she presented her work looking at language on Bequia (St Vincent and the Grenadines) and demonstrated...
to the audience that ‘quantitative methods are useful if we’re interested in group identification’. The second day speakers also included Michael Walsh (Identity and the Future of Australian Languages), Linda Tsung (Constructing Identities: South Asian Students in HK), Ahmar Mahboob (Identity and World Englishes), Wei Wang (Narrative Identities of Laobaixing in the Most Read Magazine in China), Zuocheng Zhang (Indexicality, Professional Identities, and Business English Education in China), and Cynthia Nelson (‘Studies’ of Identity from the Performing Arts), who are all from the University of Sydney. The two day symposium was formally closed by Professor Rob Tierney, Dean of the Faculty of Education and Social Work, the University of Sydney. These events were organised by the Language and Identity Research Network, formed by twelve linguists from the Faculty of Arts and Social Science and the Faculty of Education and Social Work and funded by the Collaborative Research Scheme offered by the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

The Asia-Pacific War: Return, Representation and Reconciliation

Symposium report
On 30 September a very successful Symposium was held at the University of Sydney, with guest speakers that included Yuki Tanaka (Hiroshima Peace Institute), Neville Meaney (University of Sydney) and Matthew Graves (University of Provence), and papers by members of the SLC and SOPHI. The symposium was funded by the Japan Foundation, with additional support from SLC and SOPHI, and organised by Yasuko Claremont, Judith Keene and Liz Rechniewski. The Symposium addressed three main themes: The Soldier’s Return, Representations and Reconciliation.

The Soldiers’ Return explored the reception given to former soldiers and prisoners of war when they returned to their home country. Although societies often accord a quasi mythical status to the soldiers and their sacrifice, they do not always compensate this ‘sacrifice’ in the post-war world. The re-insertion of former combatants into society is often difficult; a ‘home for heroes’ often fails to materialise. Yuki Tanaka’s paper was a powerful illustration of the fate that befell some of the soldiers who returned from war only to suffer the horror of Hiroshima. Yasuko Claremont and Roman Rosenbaum gave examples of the representation in literature and film of the soldiers’ return.

In the second session, Neville Meaney spoke of Japan’s attempt to become a ‘normal nation’ after the war; Judith Keene reflected on the problems posed in studying aspects of the POW experience, in this case, of Japanese POWs in Russia.

In the afternoon session, Reconciliation, Matthew Graves shed light on a little explored area, that of memorial diplomacy. Commemorations provide an arena for the conduct of international diplomacy in which former belligerents can take the first steps towards reconciliation. But memorial diplomacy can take place at levels below that of national and intergovernmental initiatives, as Liz Rechniewski showed in her paper on Cowra.

The Symposium concluded with a Round Table chaired by George Parsons (Macquarie University) which sparked lively discussion from speakers and audience.

A publication based on the Symposium is in preparation.
NORTH KOREA: IMAGINING THE FUTURE
A Collaborative Workshop
On 22 July 2011, a collaborative workshop “North Korea: Imagining the Future” was held by an international team of scholars from the University of Sydney, the University of Technology Sydney and the Australian National University. The scholars presented expert views and discussed possible future scenarios for North Korea over the period to 2020, and considered the implications of each scenario for its neighbours.

North Korea (the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, DPRK) has been described as the troublemaker of Northeast Asia that can instantly lead regional tensions to flashpoint. Because of the North Korean government’s notorious fickleness, scholars and officials in neighbouring countries are often reluctant to make predictions about the DPRK’s future. This leaves a dangerous vacuum and leads to misperceptions. Profound changes are likely in North Korea over the coming years, and whatever direction they take, these changes will have far-reaching implications for all the other countries of the region.

The workshop had two components – an open roundtable discussion, where all participants exchanged opinions and explored ideas together, and a closed session where participants, including a recent defector from North Korea, presented their views on specific scenarios.

The focus of discussion was directed to economic and social change, including the future of the market economy, consumption patterns, the movement of people (both within and across North Korea’s frontiers) education, media and gender relations. The participants agreed that the promotion of research on current and future developments in North Korea has the potential to make a significant theoretical contribution to general debates relating to the relationship between economic liberalisation, civil society activation and democratisation.

Participating experts included senior scholars with a deep knowledge of North Korea: Prof Tessa Morris-Suzuki (ANU), Dr Leonid Petrov (USYD), Dr Andrei Lankov (Kookmin University), Dr Bronwen Dalton (UTS), Dr Kyungja Jung (UTS), as well as a number of postgraduate and early career researchers: Mary Nasr (USYD), Emma Campbell (ANU); and a broadcaster, Mr. Kim Un-ho (Radio Free North Korea).

They explored the uncertainties that North Korea faces and discussed the effective strategies for engagement with this reclusive country. Workshop attendees, among them many well-known scholars of Korean Studies and post-graduate students, posed numerous questions to the panel. This workshop has formed part of an ongoing discussion network, where the face-to-face meeting and online communications is strengthening inter-institutional collaboration.

(from left) Mary Nasr, PhD student, and Dr Duk-So Park, both of University of Sydney; CNC - Towards the World billboard.
Dead Sea Scrolls Conference Report

The Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies, in association with Mandelbaum House, organized a conference on the Dead Sea Scrolls in memory of Emeritus Professor Alan Crown, on the 31st of October and the 1st of November at Mandelbaum House at the University of Sydney. Alan was a former Head of the Department of Semitic Studies, the ancestor of HBJS (and also Arabic and Islamic Studies) in SLC. The conference was convened by Ian Young and Shani Tzoref (a former departmental colleague who now works for the Israel Antiquities Authority), and ably facilitated by Naomi Winton of Mandelbaum House. In conjunction with this event, the library displayed the facsimile copies of the Scrolls it acquired on the advice of Alan Crown.

Our keynote speaker was Professor Emanuel Tov, former editor-in-chief of the Dead Sea Scrolls publication project. Emanuel and Ian also contributed to the Israel Research Forum on the first morning. Ian opened the Dead Sea Scrolls conference with reminiscences of Alan Crown as teacher and mentor, and his influence over scholarship in Sydney. This was followed by Emanuel Tov’s keynote address. This session had over 70 attendees.

The rest of the conference saw a further 15 papers, covering the full range of Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship. All sessions were well attended. “Thanks” to Qantas, however, two of our biggest name scholars were unable to attend, Professor William Loader stuck in Western Australia, and Professor Albert Baumgarten from Bar Ilan University, Israel, and his wife really getting to know Uluru! Nevertheless, discussion in both the sessions and at meal times was full of energy and enthusiasm, with Emanuel Tov being an absolute star, going out of his way to talk to everyone her could (even though many of the attendees were somewhat overawed by meeting this rock star of scholarship).

As a follow up to the conference Shani hosted Prof Tov and the recently arrived Prof Baumgarten in a session aimed at a more general audience interested in the Scrolls, at which 40 very appreciative people attended.

Welcome to new staff
Dr Avril Alba, appointed as Roth Lecturer in Holocaust Studies for 2012 following the retirement of Professor Konrad Kwiet from undergraduate teaching.

Upcoming conference
Professor Suzanne Rutland has received an IPDF 2012 Round Grant, which has been matched by the Faculty of Arts, for a conference being held together with the University of Cape Town and the University of Southampton, called “The Holocaust and Legacies of Race in the Postcolonial World, 1945 to the Present” to be held at the University of Sydney in April 2012.
Associate Professor Michele Ford represented the Australian Academy of Social Sciences at the 19th Biennial General Conference of AASSREC in Manado, Indonesia, in October. Associate Professor Ford was also called upon to brief AusAID and Australia’s Shadow Foreign Minister on various Indonesia-related issues. Associate Professor Ford also presented at conferences in Germany and the United States, as well as at the Indonesian Council Open Conference in Perth.

Dr Novi Djenar was invited to speak at the International Workshop on Deixis and Spatial Expressions in Indonesian Languages, held at the Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, Japan. Earlier this year Dr Djenar was invited as a plenary speaker at the Trends in Contemporary Asia Symposium, Flinders University. Her paper was titled “Indonesian teen literature, youth morality, and language ideology”.

Dr Djenar gave a paper at the International Conference on Dialect and Literature, University of Sheffield, UK, entitled “Dialect as style and authorial identity in Indonesian teen literature”. Dr Djenar was invited to contribute a chapter to a festschrift for Professor Bambang Kaswanti Purwo, one of Indonesia’s most eminent linguists. Her chapter, entitled “Deixis, point of view, and empathy”, appraises and extends Prof Purwo’s 1984 seminal study on Indonesian deixis.

As a member of the Language & Identity Research Network, Dr Djenar presented a paper at the network’s Language & Identity Symposium entitled ‘Style and authorial identity in Indonesian teen fiction’.

Professor Adrian Vickers delivered keynote/plenary paper “Problems of Modernity and Modernism in Southeast Asian Art” in “Making a ‘Great’ Art Museum: Contending with Southeast Asian Modernities and Art” Conference, NHB Academy IPS Symposium, Lasalle College of the Arts, Singapore (a special symposium organised as part of planning the new National Gallery of Singapore).

Prof Vickers also gave keynote address titled “The Contribution of Bali’s Visual Arts to Global Culture” at the Bali World Culture Forum, held by the Dinas Kebudayaan Pemerintah Bali (Government Cultural Board of Bali). Keynote for this was given on a panel with the Governor of Bali.

Prof Vickers was also invited by the Academy of Korean Studies to give a paper in the Lecture Series of World Distinguished Scholars. This was a special invited lecture, the other speaker being Amartya Sen.

Prof Vickers was an invited speaker at the University of Melbourne’s Understanding Contemporary Asia Seminar Series. He delivered a paper entitled “The politics of Indonesia’s current ‘history wars’”.

Honorary Fellow Dr Keith Foulcher was an invited speaker at a Monash University’s event: celebrating the University library’s special collection of publications by Balai Pustaka, the government publishing house in late colonial Indonesia. The collection is the largest accessible collection outside the Netherlands. The invitation was recognition of Dr Foulcher’s standing as a literary scholar specialising on Indonesian literature.

Honorary Fellow Dr Tiffany Tsao convened two panels at the Indonesia Council Open Conference in Perth, on the natural environment in Indonesia.

Congratulations Associate Professor Michele Ford was awarded a University of Sydney International Project Development Fund (IPDF) grant for her project entitled ‘Beyond Oligarchy? Critical Exchanges on Accountability and Representation in Indonesia’. The grant will be used to host a joint workshop with Assistant Professor Tom Pepinsky from Cornell University. She also received an ARC Discovery Project (in partnership with Associate Professor Teri Caraway, University of Minnesota) for a project commencing 2012. This project will examine trade unions’ attempts to encourage Indonesian political parties to think more about policy and less about charismatic leadership and money politics.
Italian Studies
Dr Antonia Rubino was one of the organisers of the Symposium on “Language and Identity across Modes of Communication” that took place on 22 November at the University of Sydney. She also presented a paper on “Conflict talk in intergenerational family conversations” during the workshop preceding the Symposium.

Dr Giorgia Alù and Dr Francesco Borghesi were the organizers of an International Symposium on Word & Image, East & West which took place on 28-29 October at the University of Sydney and the Art Gallery of New South Wales. Around 24 speakers were invited from universities in the United States, Egypt, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, New Zealand and Australia. The Symposium was generously supported by the China Studies Centre (University of Sydney), the Power Institute, SLC; SLAM as well as by the China Research Centre (University of Technology, Sydney).

Research Seminars
The Italian Studies Research Seminar Series for Semester 2 was concluded with a Seminar on “Rethinking Families, Kinship and Nations in Post-war Europe: an Italian perspective”, presented by Dr Stefania Bernini (Lecturer at the University of New South Wales) on 13 October.

Spanish & Latin American Studies
International Symposium
Indigenous Knowledges in Latin America and Australia
Locating Epistemologies: Difference and Dissent
8-9 December 2011
Indigenous Film Festival - 10 December 2011
The University of Sydney
sydney.edu.au/arts/conferences/indigenous_knowledges_2011
Organised by the Sydney University Research Community for South America (SURCLA), and supported by University of Sydney International Program Development Fund (IPDF), the Faculty of Arts, the School of Languages and Cultures and the School of Social and Political Sciences, this symposium brings together Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics and intellectuals from Mexico, Chile and Argentina for an important dialogue with their counterparts in Australia to discuss different models and approaches around Indigenous Knowledges in higher education. The first time for such a dialogue to cross so many cultures, languages and contexts, this event will be accompanied by a Film Festival showcasing work by Indigenous artists from Australia and Latin America.

Keynote Speaker: Les Malezer, Inaugural Co-Chair National Congress of Australia’s First People

French Studies
Congratulations to
Associate Professor Bronwyn Winter, whose co-edited book, to which she also contributed: September 11, 2001: Feminist Perspectives (Melbourne: Spinifex, 2002; North American edition Vancouver: Raincoast Books 2003), was selected for featuring as a ‘feminist classic’ in the regular ‘classics revisited’ section of the journal Women’s Studies Quarterly, in the most recent issue on the theme of ‘Ruin’. The editors and a couple of others were asked to contribute short pieces.

European Studies
Professor Peter Morgan’s book Ismail Kadare: The Writer and the Dictatorship 1957-1990, has been translated and published in Albania
The following departments and programs are located in the School of Languages and Cultures:

- Arabic & Islamic Studies
- Asian Studies Program
- Buddhist Studies Program
- Chinese Studies
- European Studies Program
- French Studies
- Germanic Studies
- Hebrew, Biblical & Jewish Studies
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