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.

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A couple of weeks ago, I was asked: what is the most important value of our University? My answer was "courage". Sapere aude! (Dare to know!) is the famous motto of the European Enlightenment. The courage to seek truth, to explore the unknown and to embrace differences is, in my view, the most important value of our University.

When you read this last issue of our magazine for the year 2015, you will find exciting news about the many achievements of our students and our staff who dare to embrace new challenges, learn new things and to broaden our cultural and intellectual horizons. This is what the School of Languages and Cultures is about. We care about diversity and intercultural understanding. We dare to explore complex cultural and societal issues in many different regions of the world and we help our younger generation to acquire the skills to understand different peoples by equipping them with linguistic competency.

The ancient Greek phrase “Know yourself” tells us that we need to know and understand ourselves, but we can only know and understand ourselves if we understand others, just as the famous German writer Goethe once said: “Those who know nothing of foreign languages know nothing of their own”.

I wish all our students, colleagues and readers a wonderful festive season and a good start to 2016!
Year in Review

2015 has been a big year for the School of Languages and Cultures, with events, international guests and conferences. Here are just a few highlights...

CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIUMS

In July this year the Italian conference, *Fertile Spaces, Dynamic Places: Mapping the Cultures of Italy*, featured keynote speakers Katherine Bentz, Saint Anselm College and Luca Somigli, University of Toronto. This international conference covered everything from language teaching strategies and engaging University students with members of the Italian community to cultural identity, crime fiction and Dante.

The Department of French Studies partnered with the Embassy of France in Australia and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Network in the Office of the DVC (Indigenous Strategy and Services) on a symposium in May. The panel comprising Emelda Davis, Professor Jakelin Troy, Professor Bernard Rigo, Ernie Dingo, Professor Nick Enfield discussed *Competing Voices: The status of Indigenous languages in the French Pacific and Australia*.

At the end of September this year, academics from our School including Adrian Vickers, Vrasidas Karalis and Peter Morgan were involved in an international symposium *Judging the Past in a Post-Cold War World*.

The Department of Japanese Studies and Yasuko Claremont organised a reconciliation conference with the Japan Foundation, which you can read about in this magazine.

OTHER EVENTS AND MEDIA

Dr Sahar Amer and Dr Vanessa Hearman spoke at events as part of the immensely popular ‘Raising the Bar’ initiative. Sahar also spoke earlier this year at the Sydney Writers’ Festival on a panel alongside Dennis Altman and Kooshyar Karimi, discussing global sexual freedoms and rights.

As the Greek financial situation unfolded, Professor Vrasidas Karalis was invited to be a guest on Q&A. He charmed the audience with his take on the ‘drama’. Dr Avril Alba appeared on ABC Compass to discuss religion in schools and Radio National speaking about Nostre Aetate.

There were film festivals such as the Arab Women Film Festival and Queer Arab Film Festival, exhibitions such as the Tactical Imaginary Roundtable, a day run by the Indonesian Department to engage high-school students and a plethora of other events.

SOME OF OUR SPECIAL GUESTS

The School was graced with many special guests, including Professor Herman Lebovics Professor in the History department at Stony Brook University, Professor Gerald J. Prince (who made the Sonia Marks lecture), Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO (Former Governor of New South Wales 2001-2014), author Thomas Keneally, poet Nicolas Kurtovich.

We had events with national and international academics such as Tessa Morris Suzuki (Australian National University), Christina Twomey, (Monash University), Aiko Utsumi (Director of Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership) Pankaj Mohan (Nalanda University, India), Keiji Sawada, (Waseda University), Professor Dr Markus Winkler (University of Geneva), Andreas Harsono (Human Rights Watch).

These are just a few among the many exciting happenings this year, please visit our website to stay up-to-date with news and events.
Veiling

Sahar Amer, Department of Arabic Language and Cultures

Islam did not invent veiling. Yet, the veiling of hair (and body) is today most often associated with the Islamic tradition and the subordination of women. The first reference to veiling dates to the thirteenth-century BCE and is linked with Assyrian laws. In this early urban civilization, veiling marked married women and concubines. It was prohibited for slaves and prostitutes who were punished if they veiled and infringed the veiling law. All Mediterranean civilizations that followed the Assyrians of Mesopotamia, namely the Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, like the Jews and Christians, inherited the same practice of women’s covering. Veiling at the time was a mark of privilege, of social status, of rank. It was not associated with any particular religious faith or practice.

When Islam came on the scene in the early seventh century, women veiled, regardless of religious and cultural traditions. The newly converted Muslim women did not change the way they dressed but continued to wear what their mothers and grandmothers had worn for centuries before them: They continued covering their hair and body. Veiling alone did not distinguish Muslim from non-Muslim women though it did distinguish upper-class from peasant women for whom veiling was a burden and was never commonly adopted till the twentieth century. Jewish and Christian women, like Muslim women, covered and wore modest dress.

Veiling did not become a “problem” or associated with Islam until Europe declared it to be so during the period of colonialism, beginning in the middle of the eighteenth century. In order to justify their military incursions in Muslim-majority societies, European powers (the British and the French especially) pointed to Muslim women’s veiling and segregation as proof of the backwardness of Muslim societies, the subordination of women, and the primitiveness of Islam. They called for the shedding of the veil and the “liberation” of Muslim women from their alleged oppressive religion, culture, and family, forgetting the fact that non-Muslim women around the Mediterranean and throughout the world also covered, and that even European women of that time wore modest dress and lived in isolation, as dictated by the period’s strict Victorian mores.

The European call to shed the veil soon became voiced by some of the Western-educated, upper-class Muslim men and women. In the 1900s, Westernized Muslim intellectuals, like political leaders in some Muslim-majority societies, began to call for the modernization of their countries through the liberation of women and their systematic unveiling. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the first president of the Republic of Turkey, like the Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi of Iran, and the great feminist leader Huda al-Sha’rawi of Egypt are perhaps the best-known figures who set in motion the wave of unveiling that quickly spread across Muslim-majority societies from the 1920s to the 1970s.

For the better part of the twentieth century, and until the 1980s, women living in Muslim-majority societies did not cover their hair. Any woman who continued to cover her hair was understood to be un-educated and (in

“When Islam came on the scene in the early seventh century, women veiled, regardless of religious and cultural traditions.”
contrast to earlier centuries) coming from a lower socio-economic class.

By the late 1970s, the failure of Arab nationalism gave way to new Islamist voices that called for the return to a “purer” form of Islam. In their view, the Islam of the seventh century, the Islam that was associated with scientific, astronomic, and medical advances (10-13th century), the Islam that spread and converted peoples from China to Spain (7-14th century), like the great Islamic civilization that terrorized Europe until the 17th century had to be recalled for their unifying force. They alone could help late twentieth century Muslims counter the many political and social challenges they now faced. Only that earlier practice of Islam could help Arab and Muslim nations combat the creation of Israel and their failure to resist the rising power of Western nations. A growing number of Muslims turned to religion; men began growing their beards, and women started covering their hair, bodies, and faces, in reversal to what their mothers and grandmothers had done for generations.

Today, only four Muslim-majority societies in the world require women to cover their hair: Saudi Arabia, Iran, the Sudan, and the Aceh Province of Indonesia. These countries invoke a traditional interpretation of Islamic texts to justify their laws and practice. In the remainder of Muslim-majority societies and for the majority of Muslim women, veiling is a choice freely adopted, a visual sign of belonging to a larger community.

Even though some governments and many Muslims maintain that the Quran requires the veiling of women in clear terms, there is in fact a wide range of divergent opinions on the matter. Most discussions of veiling in the Quran focus on two key passages none of which uses the term “hijab” which is today the most commonly used word to refer to Islamic veiling. When addressing the question of women’s dress, the Quran uses instead the term jilbab (Q 33:59), stating simply that it could serve to distinguish and protect free women. Q 24:31 uses the term khimar pointing that such attire marks women’s modesty by covering their private parts, a recommendation also made explicitly and firstly to men. It is still highly debated what jilbab and khimar could have meant in seventh century Arabia.

Besides the clear mandate to be modest, the Quran remains open ended. It does not specify any kind of clothing, head, or face scarf; it does not stipulate any colour, and it does not offer any firm or unambiguous requirement to wear what we have come today to recognize as “Muslim dress” or veiling. This will be done by later male theologians from the 10th to the 13th century who will interpret these open ended Quranic passages according to the social and sartorial customs of their times. Their increasingly restrictive interpretations of the Quran quickly became orthodox prescriptions for women and defined with greater and greater specificity those female body parts henceforth considered immodest and that required covering.

Once one is familiar with the conservative, restrictive voices of early Quranic commentaries, one readily recognizes them in popularized form behind the sermons of many imams in contemporary Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority societies. Once these sermons are propagated on satellite channels and their message printed in self-help Islamic books and leaflets, we witness stricter and stricter views of Islamic veiling and increasingly conservative veiling practices around the world.

Ten years after the return to veiling in the late 1970s, we observe the development of a whole new fashion and lifestyle industry that caters to the growing number of Muslim women from
all levels of society around the world who have adopted veiling. Its goal is to demonstrate that Islam and fashion are not contradictory practices, that pious Muslim women can be both devout and trendy. Despite the internal and external criticism that the Islamic fashion industry faces from the Euro-American fashion industry and from Muslim secularists, it continues to have great appeal especially to the younger generations as it allows them to assert at once their piety and their modernity and cosmopolitanism.

Muslim women around the world have become savvy about the perfect colour coordination between clothes, scarves, accessories, and makeup. They have developed a keen sense of savoir-faire in the creative layering of clothes and the wrapping of headscarves, in the selection of multicolored pins and shiny stones, and in the detailed decoration of the fabric of their abayas that often escape the untrained eye.

Muslim designers are not stopping at the adaptation of Western style of dress to Muslim tastes (and size) or the creation of new lines of clothing for their Muslim clientele. They are now also actively participating in the global fashion industry by organizing fashion shows tailored to veiled Muslim women. The first Islamic fashion show took place in Turkey in 1992 and was organized by a prominent company, Tekbir Giyim, whose motto was “to make covering beautiful.” Since then, a growing number of Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority countries have hosted regular Islamic fashion festivals: Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Dubai, Iran, as well as France and the United Kingdom. New lines of clothing and new colours are released for each season, ensuring that veiled women are kept at the forefront of global fashion, all the while being anchored in their local cultures.

Many non-Muslims perceive the particular form of veiling that covers the face and the eyes, the niqab and burqa, as a sign of religious extremism and possible political militancy. What may be less known is the fact that many Muslims too tend to be wary of women who cover their face. While most Muslims acknowledge that covering one’s hair as a religious duty, many believe that the face veil is not an Islamic prescription, but rather a cultural tradition from certain geographical areas (notably, from Pashtun areas in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and from the Gulf region) that has been superimposed on Islam and fused with its teachings. To substantiate their condemnation, they point to the fact that wearing a face veil is forbidden during the pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj).

In fact, there are many jokes that circulate in Arab and Muslim-majority societies about women who wear the burqa. Many of these are published in daily newspapers with or without cartoons and relished by younger and older people alike.

In an illustrated book now translated into several European languages and titled Burqa, Simona Bassano di Tuffilo, an Italian artist, drew twenty-four illustrations to accompany a short piece written by Jamila Mujahed, an Afghani journalist who described her experience as a woman before and after the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban. The illustrations in the book depict some of the ironic social consequences of all women wearing the burqa. In one of the illustrations, for instance, a small terrorized boy searches for his mother in a room full of women all dressed alike covered from head to toe in burqas, screaming, “mommy!” In another, one woman in a burqa says to another, “Sorry to be late, I did not know what to wear.”

Other illustrations focus on men’s hypocrisy when they force women to wear the burqa, on the one hand, and then, on the other, take advantage of women’s anonymity to flirt with them with impunity.
Jennifer Leah
While not overly concerned with my appearance on the average day, the veil had given me a complete disregard for how my body was presented. It didn’t matter that my bust fit awkwardly in the long black dress that my petite Palestinian friend had lent me, nor that my hair was overdue for a wash. These unattractive qualities were all covered up and I was liberated from many of the common expectations surrounding female aesthetics in our ‘liberal’ society today. For the first time in a long time my body, that is the one underneath the veil, had truly been mine all day long. What was not mine, however, were the profiles that had been cast around me as a result of my attire, be they ‘lady’, ‘sister’, ‘alien’ or ‘thug’.

Larissa Grinsell
What about the prospect of being veiled incites hesitation and, ultimately, anxiety in me. It is not something I feel immediately comfortable with, nor does my comfort grow as I encounter the writings, speeches and company of great Muslim women who choose to veil.

[Through this project] I realised the powerful symbolism of the veil how all at once it says “here I am”, “I am Muslim”, “and that means I am predisposed to be an accessory in this debate”.

Louise Williams
Over the course of the day I wore two styles of hijab – a ‘typical’ hijab and a turban style – deliberately choosing a bright, blue and purple paisley scarf. This was both to assist people to view me as an individual and for me to express my own personality through fashion.

Sally Middleton
In the store, the assistant helped me to choose an abaya, a Turkish hijab and a niqaab… she kept calling me ‘sister’, which shocked me by how nice that made me feel – a sense of shared humanity and inclusive terms like that just aren’t very common in the public world that I am situated in. This small platitude is strangely one of the things that has moved me the most during the experiment.

Emma Carney
Unfortunately for me every time I wear a hijab I feel like I am being turned into someone else’s success story. For me it never feels like a simple matter of personal choice that is divorced from all other people and considerations. I always feel like other people are eager to claim me and use me as an example of Happy White Muslimah. I do not want other people projecting their own meaning onto my choices but it seems as if it is impossible to be a visibly Muslim woman in Australia and not be expected to represent Islam (faithfully). My identity as an Australian woman was cancelled out by my identity as a Muslim when I wore hijab. People weren’t hostile but they wanted to figure me out. I couldn’t just be, I had to be explained.
Celebrating Reconciliation

Wounds, Scars and Healing: Commemorating the 70th anniversary since the end of the Asia-Pacific War in 2015

Yasuko Claremont, Department of Japanese Studies and Emily Wiech

This year commemorates the seventieth anniversary since the end of the Asia-Pacific War, and a conference held at the University of Sydney marked the occasion with lectures, workshops, films, photographic exhibition and an Opera.

In May 1945 during a massive bombing raid on Tokyo, American pilot Hap Holloran was forced to parachute from his burning aircraft. As Hap drifted towards the ground, he and a Japanese pilot Hideichi Kaiho shared a moment of recognition. Instead of shooting the suspended man, Hideichi raised his hand in a salute.

Later, Hideichi painted the scene and some fifty-five years after the attack, the two men met. A photo of Hideichi and Hap, with the inscription “Hideichi and Hap, 55 years later, friends” - as well as a photo of the painting - was featured in a recent exhibition. This was shown in the Fisher Library as part of the reconciliation conference Wounds, Scars, and Healing: Civil Society and Postwar Pacific Basin Reconciliation.

This year commemorates the seventieth anniversary since the end of the Asia-Pacific War, which was viciously fought on both sides. In Japan there is not the same celebration of the military, nor the emphasis on remembrance that we see in Australia. There are no ANZAC Day- style parades or celebrations. Quite the opposite in fact, the government deliberately does not want the public to be aware of their part in the war.

Yet, despite the Japanese Governments’ reluctance to teach young people about their involvement in the wars, people in Japan have become aware of the history. Information is now so readily available on the internet, people have come to realise the atrocities committed by the Imperial Army during the war and seek reconciliation. Such movements towards reconciliation have allowed the relationships between countries to normalise no matter how each attempt might be small.

Wounds, Scars, and Healing was not about the disaster of war, but rather reconciliation – how people reached out in friendship after the conflict. It is the fifth conference on the topic that Yasuko Claremont has organised, and certainly the most ambitious. The varied activities examined the legacy of the war and all efforts made since then to build peace and reconciliation. As well as the exhibition of photos on reconciliation, there was a Pre-conference Grassroots Workshop, the World Premiere of a Noh Performance, Oppenheimer, and a Film Screening of Hiroshima (1953).

The Pre-conference Grassroots Workshop at the Women’s College on 29 September was opened by Dr Chiaki Ajioka, a Board Member of the Australia Japan Foundation. The Workshop began with Martin Flanagan’s moving documentary film about how his father, Archie, former POW of
Japanese on the Thai-Burma Railway, arrived at a stage of forgiveness and reconciliation. Martin's brother Richard Flanagan wrote *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, winner of the Man Booker Prize in 2014. At the Workshop there were three representatives from the POW Research Network, Japan, one of them, a journalist, Fuyuko Nishisato, actually visited Archie in Tasmania, Mina Watanabe (Women’s Active Museum on War and Peace), former RSL President Major General Peter Phillips, Father Paul Glynn, Rosemary Gower (Loveday) were among many participants that included some from the general public. A very lively discussion took place because the war impacted in some way on all people socially and culturally, regardless of which generation they were in. Student attendees raised some questions to the panellists – a good sign of participation.

On 30 September the conference was opened by Professor Dame Marie Bashir, former Governor of New South Wales and former Chancellor of the University of Sydney. This three-day conference was led by two world-class keynote speakers, Emeritus Professor Donald Keene from Columbia University and distinguished Australian author, Thomas Keneally, together with six leading guest speakers, Tessa Morris Suzuki (ANU), Christina Twomey (Monash), Yuki Tanaka (Hiroshima Peace Museum), Aiko Utsumi (Osaka Uni. of Economics and Law), Keiji Sawada (Waseda) and Pankaj Mohan (Nalanda). There were 39 speakers in all, and 20 volunteer students. There were also 10 PhD students from Korea, China, USA, Taiwan, New Zealand, and Japan. They presented research findings, activities and future plans in a panel with senior academics. The three-day conference was well attended with roughly 50-70 people at each session and people participated so enthusiastically that sessions went on through lunchtime.

It's easy to see how people are passionate about and committed to building a peaceful society. Participants – international and local PhD students, journalists, civil society activists, researchers – brought a wide range of perspectives in discussing postwar issues socially, culturally, legally, educationally. Their contribution is what led to the success of this conference.

The war ended seventy years ago, but as Yasuko notes, in some ways we are still at war:

“A thing that really struck me was that when Tessa spoke at the conference, she said that now is still a time of warfare, but it is civil society warfare. There is still a clash of views, created by the freedom to express these views.”

The Australia-Japan Foundation funded the Workshop and the Photographic Exhibition and the Japan Foundation funded the premier performance of Oppenheimer, a creative Noh Play in English by Allan Marett. It was an outstanding performance. A few spectators were in tears because the grief and remorse expressed by the show, Oppenheimer, was deeply felt as a sign of ingrained human folly. The play was very well received. The mask of Oppenheimer was made especially for this performance and 10 professional musicians and performers came from the USA and Japan. Chanting the *Heart Sutra* in Sanskrit, in high and low, still lingers in my ears.

On 2 October there was a screening of the legendary 1953 film, Hiroshima, by Director Hideo Sekigawa (104 minutes) with English subtitles, made by Ritsumeikan University students. The film was privately funded by 500,000 teachers of Japan and 88,500 Hiroshima citizens participated in the film as
Celebrating reconciliation

It was awarded the best feature-length movie prize at the Berlin International Film Festival in 1955, but it was rarely shown in Japan, partly due to the Allied occupation censorship on the works related to the atom bomb disasters in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and on non-commercial trade. The USA promoted the campaign of “Atoms for Peace” in the 1950s and 60s, so even in Hiroshima there is a nuclear power plant. This film shows exactly what happened when the atom bomb dropped. Peter Phillips said ‘the old film footage of Hiroshima was very powerful’ and Yoshiko Tamura ‘unbearable to see’.

People who attended the conference emphatically praised it. Yasuko was particularly happy with the department’s former Honours student, Rosa Lee, who is now working on her PhD thesis at the University of Tokyo. She was the final presenter at the conference and it was a very moving speech. Rosa began with ‘for me, it was particularly special since I got to present at my alma mater in front of the Japanese Studies faculty!’ Her talk was about the journey that took place in September this year from the remotest place in Hokkaido all the way by bus, ferry and train to the final destination the Seoul Memorial Park. The journey was carried out by a group of young people, Korean, Japanese and American who carried by hand the boxes that contained the remains of the forced Korean labourers during the wartime that were left abandoned in the communal burial site in Hokkaido. It took them days to return the remains to the homeland.

Here are some of the other messages that Yasuko received:

“You must be exhausted! But you should know that all your hard work has resulted in an extraordinarily successful meeting. Actually, it went beyond the usual conference to become a kind of cultural event that also folded in social activism as well as academics.” (Michael Lewis)

“Congratulations to you for planning, organising and staging such a wonderful conference. It was a great success, worthy of all the effort and dedication you put into it. From the workshop to the film screening, I gained a lot from every session… I am glad I attended all the sessions… The University of Sydney should be very proud of you!” (Hugh Clarke)

“I found this event very successful and inspiring, opening up many interesting discussions. In addition, this conference also made participants really consider the issues of our research and praxis by learning from each other… In fact, this was one of the best conferences that I’ve ever attended so far.” (Wakako Suzuki, a PhD student from the University of California)

“It was by far the most exciting conference that I attended in recent years. The biggest highlight was of course the Noh – so deeply moving that I sincerely hope it’ll be performed in Hiroshima, Nagasaki and many other places in the world.” (Tomoko Aoyama from the University of Queensland)

“Everyday from 8:30 am to 6 pm we were in a seminar room and participated in various presentations from school textbooks to the world heritage application for the Unit 731 site in China, which were stimulating and thought provoking…. Everyday I kept eyes-wide open.” (Fuyuko Nishisato, POW Research Network)

Dame Professor Marie Bashir AD CVO also said that it was “both a privilege and a pleasure to join you on two occasions – the opening session and then the wonderfully dramatic and sensitive presentation of Noh Oppenheimer, in English.”

The conference could not have happened without the very generous support...
Celebrating reconciliation

of Professor Duncan Ivison, former Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, now Deputy-Vice Chancellor (Research) and the Department of Japanese Studies. Roman Rosenbaum, Matthew Stavros, and Mats Karlsson put a huge amount of work into organising the conference along with Yasuko. Of course, all members of the SLC admin office played their role in supporting the detailed running of this conference.

A special note of thanks must go to 20 volunteer students, mostly from the Japanese Department across the first, second and third year and one from ICLS. I noticed that even young ones got worn out by the fourth day of the conference! Their quick and efficient organisation was remarkable.

Perhaps the best thing about the events was the evidence, in every presentation and the work of every attendee, that people are passionately committed to networking and building a peaceful society. One could see this happening through the evident satisfaction felt by the participants and their sadness at parting at the end of the conference film screening. They shared the same universal values of peace, and appreciated a moment of farewell.

Two publication opportunities came from this conference:

(1) Palgrave will be publishing the previous Seoul Conference papers in April 2016. We will approach Palgrave to continue with the publication of the papers from this conference. The volume which will commemorate the postwar 70th anniversary on the themes of peace and reconciliation has its special significance.

(2) In addition to the AJF grant Yasuko received another fund from the prestigious Chancellor’s Committee Grant to assist with the publication of the booklet of the photographic exhibition on Celebrating Reconciliation. This will be a wonderful contribution not only to the conference outcomes but also to the AJF, which will commemorate their 40th anniversary from the establishment in 2016.

We are all looking forward to seeing these publications 2016!
Bans or self-censorship? Jakarta conspiracy or local police action? What were the possible reasons for the recent ‘bans’ at the Ubud Writers and Readers Festival.

Adrian Vickers and Ariel Heryanto

The wash-up from the cancellation of four panels and two book launches at the recent Ubud Writers and Readers Festival (UWRF) continues. Accusations and counter-accusations fly about the correctness of actions and attitudes on both sides of the debate. Friendships between the festival organisers and reconciliation activist groups are under threat.

Was the closing-down of events related to the post-1965 killings and anti-development protests a well-organised conspiracy coming from Jakarta—outdated remnants from the Suharto years? Or was it a case of hasty self-censorship on the part of the organisers in the face of threats from local police? The answers are anything but clear.

From a participant’s point of view, the issues of the cancelled panels were discussed everywhere: panellists were at pains to refer to the mass killings of communists, and to environmental issues.

Panel chairs were warned of the presence of Intel (police ‘intelligence’)—although if any of these secret agents understood enough English to know what was going on, they certainly did not show it. There were no interventions, not even in the mini-protest at the quickly convened ‘Censorship’ panel.

The only overt show was at the off-site launch of Saskia Wieringa’s new book on the Crocodile Hole—the site where the bodies of murdered generals were dropped on the night of the 30 September 1965, triggering the subsequent mass killings. The launch was rechristened as a ‘lunch’, and when Intel started taking photographs, everyone photographed them, sending them into confusion.

From an observer’s point of view, the main question is, what exactly has all the noise in the international media contributed to broader Indonesian efforts to come to term with the violent past? Dozens of famous writers from many countries quickly condemned what they were told were bans. The more panellists published stories about the ease of discussing the sensitive past during the festival, the more evidence that there was that these bans were not real.

According to festival director Janet DeNeefe, the police caught the organisers out with their timing. Coming one week before this huge multilayered event, the threat to cancel the whole UWRF was a successful intimidation tactic. The local head of Gianyar police intimated that he was acting on behalf of the feared state intelligence body, BIN. Given their murky record, including possible involvement in the murder of human rights activist Munir, this was not a threat to be taken lightly.

The festival’s Indonesian negotiators claimed to be inexperienced in dealing with this heavy level of intervention, and lacked a good legal advisor who could have told them that they needed to get something in writing. In the absence of written evidence, it was easy for the district police chief to deny that he had banned anything.

Such incidents are not anything new in Indonesia, even since the Suharto regime ended in 1998. In many other cases, organisers have called the bluff of the authorities and completed their events on 1965 without disruptions. Just
a few days earlier, a special issue of a student magazine in Salatiga was threatened with closure for publishing stories of the 1965 killings. Not only did the soft version of magazine go viral online, but the incident attracted overwhelming support nationwide, putting the local authorities on the defensive.

The international outcry that resulted from the cancellation was certainly a huge own goal for the Indonesian government.

Understandably, with such history in mind, a number of local activists questioned what the UWRF had done to negotiate against, if not confront, the threat before they decided to cancel the selected panels. Indonesian activists expected more.

The international outcry that resulted from the cancellation was certainly a huge own goal for the Indonesian government.

If it wants to gain influence—the Holy Grail of soft power—then petitions signed by famous international writers are not going to achieve that aim. But if the ban was never there, what this petition achieved is also unclear.

Bans not appropriate

It is hard to tell what domestic audience the local authorities, and perhaps the national authorities, were playing to. The relevant minister—perhaps with an eye to the international crowd—later announced that he thought bans were not appropriate. But the cancellations might be expected to serve a domestic purpose: they came after a series of events around the 50th anniversary of the killings, which had seen both sides of the national polemic come to the fore.

On the side of truth and reconciliation is a long series of publications, art events and organisation by victims’ groups and concerned parties to work towards justice. The famous film, Act of Killing, is one part of these events but by no means the first, nor the last. This film has succeeded in raising international awareness of the killings, a theme of Indonesia’s showcasing in the Frankfurt Book Fair this year. The holding of an International People’s Tribunal continues this theme.

The reaction against global attention has been just as marked. There are many groups with vested interests in not discussing the killings. These include the military, which has major collective responsibility for creating and organising the slaughter, and major civil bodies, including organisations belonging to major Muslim groups.

The rise of Islamic discourse in Indonesian politics has been marked by strategic use of anti-communism to legitimise existing positions, and to some degree to take over the authority of the military in public life. This transfer of authority has become part of the triumph of premanisme, the amplification of gangsterism in national and local politics, manifested in violent demonstrations against enemies real and imagined.

Consistent backlash

There has been a consistent backlash against attempts at truth and reconciliation. The first post-Suharto efforts to document and even exhume mass graves were met with threats and violence, as were attempts to reform the school history curriculum.

Most recently a Swedish citizen of Indonesian origin who came to visit the grave of his father, a victim of the killings, was attacked by a mob near the grave in Sumatra, and thrown out of the country. Muslim and other groups have resumed showing the Suharto regime’s propaganda film, The Treason of the Communist Party’s 30th September Movement (Pengkhianatan G30S/PKI).

The return of this film is symptomatic of the larger problem. Suharto’s New Order government was incredibly successful in defining the terms of discussion of the killings, presenting them as justified because ‘the communists’ killed six generals and three other officers. By means of this device, the killings of between 500 thousand and 1 million people are obliterated.

So, on the anniversary of the events of 30 September 1965—the so-called coup—the families of the murdered generals are wheeled out as ‘victims of communism’, as is the writer Taufiq Ismail, who has made great mileage from a story of being persecuted by communist activists. These meagre ‘facts’ of history somehow outweigh the larger event of a massive crime against humanity in Indonesian political discourse.

The current administration is struggling for control. President Joko Widodo lacks his own power base, but even if he had one, his powers are much more...
Indonesians should be able to talk about 1965 massacres without fear of censorship

By DR VANNESSA HEARMAN Lecturer Department of Indonesian Studies
Full article first published at theconversation.com

The Ubud Writers and Readers Festival (UWRF) has cancelled events discussing the 1965 Indonesian massacres, after police threatened to revoke the festival permit. I was to moderate one of the five events that were dropped from this week’s festival. The Indonesian government does not acknowledge responsibility in the murder of more than half-a-million communists and their sympathisers between 1965 and 1966. The Suharto regime harshly censored writings and discussions about this period. But since the regime collapsed in 1998, accounts of what happened have slowly emerged in Indonesia from survivors, activists, researchers and artists.

I had not imagined after 17 years of democratic rule in Indonesia, and a year after the euphoric celebration of President Joko Widodo’s election, that the government would resort to crude tactics of silencing those speaking about the massacres in front of an international audience. Clearly I was wrong. Or maybe this year is a little different. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the massacre. An International People’s Tribunal on the 1965 violence is underway, to be held in The Hague from November 10. Perhaps some government officials feel under pressure, despite this tribunal lacking any official judicial standing.

My panel, Bali 1965, would have featured musicians and activists Roro Sawita, Made Mawut, Ngurah Termana and Man Angga from community organisation Taman 65 (65 Park) in Bali. Angga and Termana lost their grandfathers in the massacre. Sawita has spent several years researching and documenting Bali’s dark past. After years of work on the translation series and hoping to bring to the Ubud Festival more Indonesian voices about this violence, I and many others involved feel devastated by the outcome.

The festival director, Melbourne-born Janet DeNeefe, who has long settled in Bali, strongly condemned censorship of the festival, but also hopes that the events “find better platforms in safer homes”, a statement that helps our speakers little.

Half a century has passed. It is high time for Indonesians to be able to discuss these issues in the place they call home without fear of censorship.
PUBLICATIONS

ARABIC:

Amer, S, Doyle, L 2015, Introduction: Reframing Postcolonial and Global Studies in the Longer Dure, PMLA, 130(2), 331-335

Amer, S 2015, Reading Medieval French Literature from a Global Perspective, PMLA, 130(2), 367-374


CHINESE:


Maras, S M, Nip, J Y M 2015, The Travelling Objectivity Norm: Examining the case of the first Chinese journalism handbook, Journalism Studies, 16(3), 326-342


Wang, W 2015, Contrastive Genre Analysis in Translation Studies: Tourism Websites in China and Australia, China Language Strategies, Nanjing University Press, Nanjing, 2, 198-217

Wang, W 2015, Uncovering how identities of laobaixing are constructed in China's most read magazine, Language and Identity Across Modes of Communication, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin, 1, 203-223

FRENCH:

Antle, M N 2015, Review - David Caron. The Nearness of Others: Searching for Tact and Contact in the Age of HIV, Contemporary French Civilization: a journal devoted to all aspects of civilization and cultural studies in france and the francophone world, 40(2), 304-305

Antle, M N 2015, Review - Jennifer L. Shaw. Reading Claude Cahun's Disavowals, Contemporary French Civilization: a journal devoted to all aspects of civilization and cultural studies in france and the francophone world, 40(1), 100-102


Wilson, S 2015, Show and Tell: Negotiating Self and Seeing in "Les Photos d'Alix" by Jean Eustache, Life Writing, 12(4), 447-463

Winter, B 2015, The "L" in the LGBTI "alphabet soup": issues faced by lesbian asylum seekers and other non-Western lesbian exiles in France, Contemporary French Civilization: a journal devoted to all aspects of civilization and cultural studies in france and the francophone world, 40(2), 179-198

HEBREW, BIBLICAL AND JEWISH STUDIES:

Alba, A A 2015, The Holocaust Memorial Museum: Sacred Secular Space, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, UK

Alba, A A 2015, “Here there is no why” - so why do we come here? Is a pedagogy of atrocity possible?, Holocaust Studies: a journal of culture and history, 21(3), 121-138

Ebied, R Y 2015, An Arabic Version of the Treatise on the Origin and History of the Thirty Pieces of Silver which Judas Received from the Jews, The Character of Christian-Muslim Encounter: Essays in Honour of David Thomas, Brill, Leiden and Boston, 25, 167-185


### PUBLICATIONS

#### INDIAN SUB-CONTINENTAL STUDIES & BUDDHIST STUDIES:


#### JAPANESE:


#### SPANISH:

Angosto Ferrandez, L F 2015, Epistemología, poder y cultura en las antropólogas del sur: la mirada de Esteban Krotz, AIBR, Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana (Journal of Iberoamerican Anthropology), 10(1), 9-26

De Pablos-Ortega, C 2015, Thank you for a lovely day! Contrastive Thanking in Textbooks for Teaching English and Spanish as Foreign Languages, Sociocultural Pragmatics: An International Journal of Spanish Linguistics, 3(2), 150-173

#### INDONESIAN:

Caraway, T, Ford, M T, Nugroho, H 2015, Translating Membership into Power at the BallotBox? Trade Union Candidates and Worker VotingPatterns in Indonesia’s National Elections, Democratization, 22(7), 1296-1316


On 3 November 2015 over 160 people filled the Sydney Jewish Museum’s Education Centre for the launch of Dr Avril Alba’s first monograph: The Holocaust Memorial Museum: Sacred Secular Space. Professor Emeritus Konrad Kwiet hosted the evening’s proceedings and the book was launched by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, University Professor Emerita and Professor Emerita of Performance Studies at New York University and Chief Curator of the Core Exhibition at POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. Professor Kirshenblatt-Gimblett was in Australia as the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation (Monash University) Kronhill Visiting Scholar.

In her monograph, Alba sought to uncover and explore the sacred underpinnings of three internationally influential Holocaust museums: The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Washington DC), Yad Vashem (Jerusalem), and the Sydney Jewish Museum. The work reveals and traces the transformation of ancient Jewish symbols, rituals, archetypes and narratives in these sites, arguing that the effect of these ‘built theodicies’ is to turn ‘what the Holocaust was’, and ‘what it has come to mean’, into largely redemptive narratives. Alba argues that in each institution the mythic scope of these sacred visions radically transforms the meaning of the history on display, producing diverse and sometimes conflicting conclusions as to the significance and utility of Holocaust memory in the present.

At the launch, Professor Kirshenblatt-Gimblett spoke to the fact that in the plethora of literature on Holocaust representation and Holocaust museums in particular, this was the first work that sought to understand these spaces as theological as well as historical in nature. In her speech, Dr Alba then provided insight into the origins of the study, emerging as it did through observation of the sacred significance that the Sydney Jewish Museum in particular held for its survivor volunteers; individuals for whom there were no gravesites at which to mourn nor rituals and prayers deemed adequate to contain the magnitude of the losses they had suffered.

Reflecting on the contribution of the study Dr Alba spoke to how history museums had long considered their central mission to be the conservation, interpretation and display of material history. She argued that in adding a commemorative dimension to this portfolio, memorial museums must also now take up the task of explicating the various sacred meanings increasingly ascribed to these histories.

She also spoke to the importance of such endeavours beyond Jewish history, noting that if we recognize that there is a sacred dimension to these spaces—a dimension where those who seek to display and commemorate the Holocaust conceive of that task from within the cultural and
religious codes of Jewish civilization but seek to convey them to individuals and communities without—memorial museums become sites of an exceedingly complex and dynamic cultural interchange. In this exchange, memorial museums move beyond their current utility as containers of history, or ‘sites of memory’, and can also be understood as forming a nexus between the sacred and the secular in contemporary settings. In so doing, these spaces can also help us commemorate and educate about other difficult and painful histories.

An explicitly interdisciplinary work, The Holocaust Memorial Museum is historical in its method, theological in its breadth and museological in that it attempts to trace exactly how the sacred narratives, texts, symbols and rituals of Jewish civilisation come to be embodied in museum space. It is also political as it seeks to question the ways in which the memory of the Holocaust has and continues to be mobilized for social and political ends. Dr Alba ended her speech by also recounting that while of course the book was first and foremost a scholarly work, it also held a deeply personal significance as it spoke to her own and many other communities’ histories of genocide and its ongoing effects.

The SLC Research Committee honoured Dr Alba by awarding the book the SLC Publication Prize for a Junior Researcher.
Buddhist Studies

Mark Allon delivered the following paper: “Four sūtras of the Senior Kharoṣṭhī manuscripts with parallels in the Pali Majjhima-nikāya and/or Chinese Madhyamāgama.” The 3rd Āgama Seminar of the Āgama Research Group Research on the Madhyama-āgama, Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts, Taiwan, 23–24 October 2015.

Department of Chinese Studies

Investigator: Dr Yee Man Joyce Nip (2015-7)

Joyce Nip won a Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation Research Grant for a collaborative project about online public opinion in Greater China: Similarities, differences, and mutual influences.

Investigator: Dr Xiaohuan Zhao (2016-9)

Xiaohuan Zhao appointed Distinguished Overseas Professor in the One Hundred Talents Program funded by the Shanxi Provincial Government, China, for a collaborative research project on Chinese ritual and folk drama.

Professor Mabel Lee was appointed to the advisory panel of the 2016 Australian Academy of the Humanities Medal for Excellence in Translation.

Congratulations to Professor Bonnie McDougall for being elected as Fellow into the Australian Academy of Humanities.

Department of French Studies

Our end of year news features our guest lecturers, a selection of events and some of our outstanding Honours and Doctorate students. Bonne année 2016!

Diploma of Language Studies

Dr. Michelle Royer, Director of the newly-created Diploma of Language Studies (DLS) introduced this SLC program to a large auditorium of parents and students on Open Day.

Throughout October Dr Royer, the Chairs of Department, unit designers and DLS students have been very busy promoting the Diploma. They spoke at sessions for High School students at “Life at Sydney” and at information sessions for University students, which very well attended by interested students.

This year has seen the first cohort of students do levels 1,2,3 of the accelerated DLS in Japanese, Korean and Spanish. Level 4 of these languages will be taught in December 2015, levels 5 and 6 in January and February 2016. We will also teach French and Chinese in accelerated mode for the first time in January and February 2016.

The promotional video has been updated and can be watched here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSRnXL6LgOo

A French Major Event

Our department hosted its first annual event to inform students about the major and the Honours program. A group of 40 students were welcomed with macaroons, and listened to Dr. Francoise Gaubry speak about how students can undertake a major in French. The event concluded with a raffle – four lucky students walked away with prizes.

Government Funding for French Program

Dr Francoise Gaubry and Dr Carolyn Stott successfully applied for a government Endeavour Mobility Short-term program for 2016-2017. They put together an application in Semester 1 this year, which went through a selection process at Sydney Abroad before being submitted to the Federal Government.

The application related to a specific program: a new short-term intensive program by the Maison des Langues in conjunction with Université de Genève run in January-
February. They have been awarded $21,500, which amounts to 10 scholarships worth $2,000 per student plus a supplementary $1,500 to be used to facilitate the program. Find out more here: http://bit.ly/1WqhIlk

Events and Conferences
Dr Michelle Royer has secured funding from FASS to support her international conference on “Marguerite Duras and the Arts” which will be held at the University of Sydney from 29 June until 1 July 2016. 35 Duras scholars (from Australia, France, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Sweden, Thailand, UK and the US) will participate in the conference. Thu Van Tran, artistic director of the exhibition “Duras Song” held for centenary of Marguerite Duras’ birth at the Pompidou Centre, will present her artistic work based on Marguerite Duras’ texts and films.

The 2015 Sonia Marks Lecture on The Language of Narratology took place on 9 October. Professor Gerald J. Prince from the University of Pennsylvania demonstrated how narratology has been marked by many controversies and disputes over time. He spoke of the plural “narratologies” are frequently used to designate the field, the proliferation of such narratologies, and, perhaps most tellingly, the distinctions made between classical and postclassical narratology. His discourse argued that despite the many differences between various perspectives, there are a number of tasks that govern all narratological work.

Also in October, the French department co-sponsored a lecture and seminar by Professor Herman Lebovics - “The Future of France Foretold in Its New Museums.” Professor Herman Lebovic is the SUNY Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor in the Department of History at Stony Brook University, New York. His research has focused on issues of culture and the state, and in particular, on the influence of the colonies and overseas dependencies on metropolitan France. Musée des Civilisations de l’Europe et de la Méditerranée

We were fortunate to add to our cohort of speakers the French writer, François Garde, whose novel What Became of the White Savage enjoyed phenomenal success in France where it won nine literary prizes including the prestigious Goncourt Prize in the first novel category and the poet from New Caledonia, Nicolas Kurtovitch, who spoke about the development of artistic creation in New Caledonia and “La Tentation Caméléon et le métissage culturel: Ecrire en Nouvelle Calédonie.”

Poet, playwright and writer, Nicolas Kurtovitch has won numerous prizes for his work, including the Prix de Poésie du Salon du livre insulaire d’Ouessant and le prix Antonio Viccaro. In 2011 he received the Prix Popaï, de la littérature Néo-Calédonienne for his novel Les Heures italiques. He was the official representative for culture and youths issues in the Southern Province, and later member of the cabinet of the President of the Government of New Caledonia from July 2014 to April 2015.

In his talk Kurtovich presented how various Matignon Agreements and later the Nouméa Agreement have created new opportunities for the development of artistic collaborations and our encounter with the Other. We need, he said, to make the most out of this situation and to explore as much as possible the space, between Pacific and Western cultures, that we inhabit. To write of our encounter with the Other
news

in a pluri-ethnic and pluri-cultural situation is the particular path he tries to follow.

**Departmental Seminars:**
Dr. Agnès Pelage's talk on family sociology concluded a very successful, lively series of departmental seminars for the semester. The various seminars and talks, presented by our colleagues, Post-graduate and Honours candidates as well as Honorary Associates, highlight the important contribution of our colleagues engaged in French and Francophone cultures. Please see our events section on the department website for a complete listing: http://sydney.edu.au/arts/french/

**French Studies: Student Profiles**

**Callista Barrit** completed her joint Honours thesis in French and Anthropology. Her study examined the implications of discourses about climate and migration in the context of the French Pacific - New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna. By comparing external representations of climate change-induced migration and local understandings of the environment and mobility, she argued that representing people in the Pacific at risk of being displaced by rising sea levels as 'climate refugees' is a disempowering and victimizing Western narrative. By examining the history of French colonialism, environmental destruction and forced displacement in these territories, she has shown that the current narrative about climate refugees is a continuation of the history of colonial power relations in the Pacific. Contrasting Western humanitarian discourses with indigenous engagements with ecological surroundings, she demonstrated how indigenous Pacific Islanders are creatively imagining alternative futures for themselves. This included cultural activism that resists the colonial legacy of dependence by drawing on their own resources to address the modern challenges they face, including climate change.

**Nathalie Camerlynck**
**Self-Translation and plurilingual poetics after Beckett: Raymond Federman, Nancy Huston and Vassilis Alexakis.** Natalie's research focuses on self-translation and plurilingual poetics in relation to life writing. It examines the works of Raymond Federman, Vassilis Alexakis and Nancy Huston, specifically stories of childhood.

**Robert Boncardo, PhD candidate, co-tutelle with Aix-Marseille University, successfully presented his viva voce on ‘Political Appropriations of Mallarmé’ by video conferencing. The jury was composed of three examiners in France and three in Australia. Robert received ‘Mention très honorable avec félicitations du jury’, the highest grade in French Universities. Félicitations!**

**Annabelle Doherty**
**Living the Past through French Heritage Film: Historical Thinking and Cinematic Cultural Memory Félicitations!** This recently completed thesis examines the French heritage film, a contemporary genre of historical film, which like other nations’ heritage cinema is often neglected or dismissed as providing “historical thinking” or encouraging a deep understanding of the past or “critical gaze” upon history. In comparison to precursor or parallel genres designated as “serious historical film”, the genre is traditionally regarded as a mere costume drama of fantasy, “romance and adventure”, presenting “history as spectacle” for audiences’ entertainment and “visual pleasure” in a surface and trivial reconstitution of the past. In terms of cultural memory, French heritage cinema is typically confined to being either a reflection of present socio-political and economic contexts or a celebratory cinematic
vehicle of nostalgia. This study sets up however the hypothesis that French heritage cinema encourages historical thinking: the “corporeal effect” of heritage cinema’s cinematographic language through its “visual and aural sensuality” stimulates spectators to acquire a complex, multi-layered, multi-faceted “cinematic cultural memory” of historical events, figures and landscapes.

Clément Extier

The Fragmentation and Reconquest of the Self in the fiction of Drieu La Rochelle

Clement’s research focuses on desire in the literary writings of Pierre Drieu la Rochelle and the articulation of death drives and life instincts in relation with the construction of the self in Drieu’s literary production (poetry, short stories, novels, and essays). It investigates these two poles through what appears as the two major figures in Drieu’s literary world, war and sexual relationships.

Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies

Conferences

A Conference on Communication in the Ancient Near East was held on 11 September under the auspices of the Ancient History Document Centre at Macquarie University. Of the eight papers presented, four were by scholars associated with the Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies. Dr Louise Pryke spoke on Imagery in Sumerian Love Poetry, Dr Sam Jackson on the Relationship of Egyptian Royal Inscriptions to other texts, Dr Luis Siddall on Sennacherib’s ‘Public’ Inscriptions, and A/Professor Ian Young on Hebrew Biblical Texts as Flexible Communications.

Other papers included Dr Noel Weeks’ reflections on the role of ‘Experts’ in Intellectual Communication, while a visiting Scholar from the Hebrew University (Jerusalem), Peter Zilberg, considered the role of Dragomans (interpreters) in Achaemenid Babylonia. Dr Gareth Wearne read a paper on 4QMMT questioning whether it was addressed to the Qumran community or whether it derived from it, and Professor Alanna Nobbs gave a lively account of a dysfunctional family revealed in Papyrus Letters (late Antique Egypt). The conference, though brief, thus spanned texts from a period of well over 2000 years, and was attended by about 50 visitors.

In November A/Professor Ian Young attended the Society of Biblical Literature Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, USA to present a paper titled ‘Ancient Hebrew Without Authors.’ The session is being held in response to Ian’s 2014 book, co-authored with Robert Rezetko, Historical Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew. The SBL Annual Meeting is the largest conference in the (very large) field of Biblical Studies, averaging 6,000-8,000 attendees. Since joining with the American Academy of Religion to host a joint conference, the number of attendees has passed 10,000.

At the International Asian Scholars Convention Professor Suzanne Rutland presented two papers as part of three sessions dealing with the history of the Jews in Asia, coordinated by Dr Myer Samra. Her papers dealt with the role played by Australian Jewish Leibler in India’s full diplomatic recognition of Israel in 1992 and with Professor Gross examining the education of Jewish children in Beijing today, exploring how the individualised learning style of the Montessori system facilitates the children’s learning, particularly of their heritage-language, Hebrew. On 1 December Dr Avril Alba will give a paper at the Sixth Annual St Pauls College Symposium, ‘The Good Citizen and the Pope: The Moral Implications of Laudato Si’.

Visiting Scholars

HBJS hosted a large number of visiting scholars in 2015. In May Professor Sergio DellaPergola was a Sir Zelman Cowen University Fellow. He is an Emeritus Professor of the Harman Institute of Contemporary Judaism at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and an expert on world Jewish demography. Professor Della Pergola gave guest lectures in JTCT2607:Israel in the Modern Middle East as well as the joint seminar on Perceptions and Experiences of Antisemitism among Jews in Italy with the Department of Italian Studies on the 21 May. Professor Dany Blatman of the Hebrew University, also in Sydney as a Sir Zelman Cowen University Fellow and Professor Renee Poznansky of Ben Gurion University, also hosted a research seminar in May for HBJS post graduate students.

In August, Professor Zehavit Gross of the School of Education at Bar Ilan University and honorary research associate with HBJS visited Sydney as part of the Pratt research project she is conducting with Professor Emerita Suzanne Rutland on Jewish Education in Australia, Asia and the Pacific Region. With Palestinian Human Rights activist, Bassam Eid, she conducted a departmental research seminar on ‘Peace Education and Human Rights as a Challenge for Higher Education’ on 24 August. She also presented with Professor Rutland on ‘Antisemitism in the Schoolyard: Combating Racial Prejudice Early On’ at the Centre for Independent Studies (CIS) on 27 August. Professor Rutland also was an invited speaker on the issues of playground antisemitism at the CIS Consortium held at the Gold...
Coast the week before.

In October Professor David Myers from UCLA spoke to JCTC3601 students on the topic of ‘Liberation or Catastrophe: 1948 and its Consequences’. Dr James Jordan of Southampton University, in Sydney as a Mandelbaum Scholar, and Professor Tom Lawson of Northumbria University gave a combined research seminar on the topics of ‘Genocide in the Living Room: British Television and the Holocaust’ and ‘Colonial Genocide and the Holocaust’ respectively. HBJS in conjunction with the Masters in Museum and Heritage program also hosted a booked out Sydney Ideas lecture on 3 November ‘Curating Between Hope and Despair: Jewish museums in Europe today’ given by Professor Barbara Kirschenblatt Gimblett, Professor Emerita of Performance Studies at New York University and Chief Curator of the Core Exhibition at POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews. Professor Kirschenblatt Gimblett and Professor Myers were in Australia as visiting scholars at Monash University’s Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation.

Book launches, Public lectures, Media and Exhibitions

Suzanne Rutland’s new book, with Sam Lipski, has had an Israeli/American edition published by Gefen Publishing (Jerusalem). A launch of this edition of the book was held at the Begin Centre in Jerusalem on 7 October 2015, with a prestigious group of speakers. The Australian Ambassador, Dave Sharma, gave the opening address. He was followed by Elyakim Rubenstein, Judge of the Supreme Court; Natan Sharansky, well known Russian activist and later Israeli leader; Professor Rutland and Isi Leibler, who played a leading role in the Australian Campaign for Soviet Jewry, working closely with both Bob Hawke and Malcolm Fraser. Editor of the Jerusalem Post, Steve Linde, wrote a review of the book published on 15 October, stressing that ‘Let My People Go is a fascinating account of how the small Jewish community of Australia, under the inspirational leadership of Isi Leibler, played an extraordinary part in the exodus of Soviet Jewry a quarter of a century ago.’

Dr Avril Alba was involved in a variety of public events during the last quarter including interviewing Jennifer Teege, author of ‘My Grandfather would have Shot Me’ at the Jewish Writer’s Festival as well as being interviewed regarding her own book ‘The Holocaust Memorial Museum: Sacred Secular Space’. On 7 October she facilitated a Sydney Jewish Museum and Vellium event which involved a screening of the Nazi propaganda film Ich Klage An and a panel discussion panel with Professors Danielle Celermajer, Miles Little and Ron McCallum on the rights of the disabled and the euthanasia debate.

Dr Alba also appeared on ABC’s Compass program ‘The Jewish Roots of Jesus’ and as a panel member for The Moral Compass on the topic of ‘Religion in Public Schools’. She delivered a public lecture ‘Remembering in Good Faith: Fifty Years of Nostra Aetate’ at the Nostra Aetate 50th Anniversary Symposium held at the Great Synagogue on 28 October and gave an interview on Radio National’s The Religion Report with Andrew West on the same topic. On the 8 November she gave the Shmuel and Betty Rosenkranz Oration at the Kristallnacht Commemoration held at the Jewish Holocaust Centre, Melbourne and on 17 November was a guest panelist for the conference Women of Faith: Building Community Together hosted by the Australian Partnership of Religious Organisations at Parliament House.
This year Waverley Council decided to undertake a project celebrating the Jewish community in Waverley, where the highest proportion of Jews in New South Wales reside. Professor Suzanne Rutland acted as historical consultant for the project. Led by community liaison officer, Simone Collins, the Council has created a website, entitled ‘Eat, Pray and Naches’ (Yiddish for ‘proud enjoyment’ or ‘satisfaction’), which focuses on the waves of Jewish migrants who settled in the area between 1945 and 1985, with over 100 stories being featured: http://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/recreation/arts_and_culture/eat_pray_naches_jewish_community_stories

Dr Michael Abrahams Sprod was appointed to the Council of Mandelbaum House and its Academic Advisory Committee. Both Professor Emerita Rutland and Dr Avril Alba have been appointed as Australian representatives on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, which holds biannual meetings in Europe and focuses on issues relating to remembrance and education in relating to the Holocaust. On ‘Antisemitism in the Schoolyard: Combatting Racial Prejudice Early On’ at the Centre for Independent Studies (CIS) on 27 August. Professor Rutland also was an invited speaker on the issues of playground antisemitism at the CIS Consortium held at the Gold Coast the week before.

On 27 August Dr Lynne Swarts gave an After Dinner Lecture for Mandelbaum House, on ‘Imaging the Unimaginable: Art, the Holocaust and the aesthetics of ‘Horror.” Lynne also did a guest Lecture for JCTC 2606: The Holocaust: History and Aftermath Lecture title: ‘Imaging the Unimaginable: Art, the Holocaust and the aesthetics of ‘Horror.” Lynne also received a Dean’s Excellence in Teaching Award for Teaching in Tutorials on 2 October.

Indonesian Studies

Professor Michele Ford facilitated the Indonesia-Australia Higher Education Forum, sponsored by the Australian Department of Education and the Indonesian Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education on 10-11 November in Jakarta. The event was attended by 80 senior academics and policy-makers from the two countries.

Dr Vannessa Hearman gave a lecture in Amsterdam hosted by Amnesty International (Dutch section) on tackling the legacy of the 1965-66 anti-communist killings in Indonesia. She also participated in the international conference ‘1965 Today: Living with the Indonesian Massacres’ in Amsterdam held by the
NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies, KITLV and the University of California Los Angeles on 1-2 October 2015.

In the wake of the controversial actions of the organisers of the Ubud Writers’ Festival in Indonesia, Dr Hearman was interviewed by ABC Radio National, community radio 3CR and The Guardian and wrote opinion pieces for The Conversation and The Diplomat. The Ubud Writers’ Festival (28 Oct – 1 Nov 2015) organisers cancelled book launches, photo exhibitions and panels sessions dealing with the 1965-66 anti-communist killings after police pressure. Two of the panels were to be chaired by Dr Hearman and Professor Adrian Vickers.

Professor Vickers also wrote an opinion piece published in Asian Currents on the Festival ban. He participated in other panels at the Festival.

Prior to the festival fiasco, Professor Vickers participated in the Conference “All I Need is Love? Nation, Affect and Aversion in a Post-Imagined-Community Asia”, held at the National Taiwan Normal University on 23-24 October. Professor Adrian Vickers’ and Dr Julia Martinez’ co-authored book, The Pearl Frontier: Indonesian Labor and Indigenous Encounters in Australia’s Northern Trading Network was launched on 8 October by Professor Jean Gelman Taylor (UNSW) at the University of Sydney. An Indonesian launch of the book took place at the Ubud Writers’ Festival.

Coordinators of the network, Professor Michele Ford and Drs Thushara Dibley and Vannessa Hearman are based in the School of Languages and Cultures. The network involves colleagues from other sections of the university including Associate Professor Simon Butt (Law), Dr Jeff Neilson (Geography), Dr Robbie Peters (Anthropology) and Dr Russell Toth (Economics). Postgraduate student involvement has also been part of our activities as will be detailed below.

Since funding was awarded, with additional support from the Sydney Southeast Centre, the network has done a number of things. Monthly lunchtime meetings have been held during semester to discuss a piece of work in progress by one of the participants. A number of PhD students regularly attended the meetings, where they were given a chance to formally comment on academics’ work and to participate in the general discussion.

On 16 October 2015, the network held a roundtable on the challenges facing policy-makers in Jokowi’s Indonesia. Fourteen academics from seven Australian universities were joined by three activists from policy-oriented NGOs in Indonesia at the roundtable. The roundtable organised panels on the themes of human rights, development and economics, environment and resources and systemic challenges. The following week, on 23 October 2015, we held a workshop for postgraduate research students whose research incorporates some element of activism in Indonesia to share their research and to explore ways of applying that research in the public domain. Nineteen students from ten universities

Images: CEPA participants
attended, including 4 students from the University of Sydney.

**Future plans**
Participants in the human rights panel of the policy round table are contributing to a special edition of Inside Indonesia magazine, co-edited by Michele Ford and Thushara Dibley. The special edition will be published in January 2016.

A symposium entitled ‘Activists in Transition: Contentious Politics in the New Indonesia’, will be held in late 2016 and will examine the changing landscape for activists in Jokowi’s Indonesia. We aim for an edited volume to be published arising from the symposium.

Early next year, a webpage showcasing work at the University of Sydney related to social activism and policy advocacy will be unveiled.

**Italian Studies**

*Codice Rustici. 1 Facsimile, 2 Saggi, a cura di Elena Gurrieri; edizione critica, a cura di Kathleen Olive e Nerida Newbigin. Florence: Olschki, 2015.*

Dr Kathleen Olive (Honorary, Italian Studies) and Emeritus Professor Nerida Newbigin are presently in Florence for the launch of their edition of the Codice Rustici, an illustrated manuscript from the fifteenth century now in the Seminario Arcivescovile in Florence, compiled and illustrated by the Florentine goldsmith Marco di Bartolomeo Rustici. This extraordinary manuscript purports to be an account of Rustici’s journey to the Holy Land in an unspecified year in the 1440s. It is a large volume, 281 folios and 42 cm tall, and it is famous for the pen and watercolour images of Florentine churches and monasteries that illustrate the first 30 folios. The text has received less attention and this new edition radically changes our understanding of what it is.

The work is divided into three books: the first describes the city of Florence and its churches, monasteries, convents and hospitals, supplementing each description with a life or miracle of its titular saint; the second describes the journey, from Genova to Alexandria in Egypt, with long sections on health and diet and on the rhetoric and consolation of philosophy, as the author prepares himself in body and mind for the Holy Land; and the third describes Egypt, Sinai, and the Holy Land, incorporating the legends from the Desert Fathers and the stories from the Old and New Testaments onto the physical descriptions of the places visited. Two final sections, on astronomy and agriculture, were added towards the end of his life.

Until Kathleen Olive’s PhD thesis on the manuscript, completed in 2004, the work had been regarded as an authentic account of a journey that had genuinely taken place. In 2013, when funding for publication of the manuscript in facsimile with a critical edition became a real possibility, Kathleen and her supervisor Nerida Newbigin returned to the question of Rustici’s sources. Microfilm was digitised, computers were upgraded, and the process of checking, editing, annotating, and reviewing the sources was begun anew.

Within a structure that is his own invention, Rustici’s text is largely copied from manuscripts that he had been able to read in the libraries of the convents he frequented or to borrow from friends. They are often unreliable – bad translations from bad Latin originals – and he is unduly respectful of what he is ‘downloading from the manunet’. Plagiarism, however, is not an issue: the Codice Rustici provides a glorious insight into what it meant to live in a republic where literacy extended through society, where artisans exchanged and copied and read books, where new ideas circulated and were discussed, where education and self-improvement were valued.

With the transformation of web resources in the intervening decade, especially databases and full-text editions, it was possible to identify sources for a large part of Rustici’s text: vernacular translations of the Golden Legend, the Lives of the Holy Fathers, the Bible, Boethius, Cicero, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Dante, the physicians Master Gregory and Aldobrandino of Siena, a treatise on agriculture by Crescentius, histories of Florence by Villani and Brunetto Latini, Martinus Polonus’s Chronicle of the Popes, a portolan treatise, and above all Ptolemy, author of the great treatises on Geography and Astronomy and creator of the first scientifically accurate maps, and translations of sermons by Augustine, and finally Nicholas of Poggibonsi’s 138 account of his journey to the Holy land.

The facsimile and the edition are accompanied by...
essays by Cristina Acidini, Elena Gurrieri (librarian of the Seminario Arcivescovile, who coordinated the publication project), Franco Cardini, Francesco Guerrieri, Francesco Salvestrini, Timothy Verdon, Kathleen Olive, Nerida Newbigin, Simone Martini, and Alice Cavinato. The publisher, Leo S. Olschki with the financial support of the Ente Cassa di Risparmio di Firenze, has spared no expense in designing the two-volume boxed set, bound in wooden boards covered with pearl grey silk. A leather-bound set was presented to Pope Francis on 10 November when he visited Florence for the National Conference of the Italian Church. The volumes will be launched publicly in the Florentine Baptistery on 28 November.

New Prizes and Scholarships for students of Italian Studies
The Department has established a new prize and five scholarships for students undertaking Honours in Italian Studies, thanks to a generous donation by Ms Silvana d'Iapico-Bien and a large bequest from Ms Judith Russell Ryan. Both the prize and the scholarships will be awarded to students admitted to the Honours program in Italian Studies on the basis of their academic results. As per the will of the donor, the Judith Russell Ryan scholarships have been titled ‘in fond remembrance of Signora Tedeschi’.

Congratulations to….
• Dr Valentina Seffer, for being awarded her doctorate.
• Elspeth Abraham (third year Italian), winner of this year’s edition of “Premio Italia”, the National Prize for University Students of Italian organized by the Embassy of Italy in Canberra as part of the celebrations of the “Week of the Italian Language in the World”. Elspeth’s short story “In cerca di Cappedduzza” (In search of Cappedduzza) is a delightful story about a trip to Sicily. Elspeth will receive a return flight ticket to Italy offered by the Italian Institute of Culture in Melbourne.

Events
Dr Francesco Borghesi organised the symposium ‘From Ancient Theology to Civil Religion, from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment’, which was held on the 9th and 10th of November 2015 and brought together specialists in the conceptions of religion, politics and philosophy of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. Among the issues addressed by the workshop are the following: the diffusion of the idea of concord during the Renaissance; the nature of the critique of Christianity in the Italian Renaissance and in the Enlightenment; the role of cosmology in the development of a civil use of religion; the discourse of prophetology from Machiavelli to Kant; the application of Hermetic theories in European encounters with the Islamic, Jewish and Chinese civilisations between the fourteenth and the seventeenth century.

The symposium was generously supported by the Sydney Intellectual History Network and the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Further information, including the list of participants, can be found here: http://sydney.edu.au/intellectual-history/news-events/symposia-and-seminars.shtml#ancient

Presentations
Ass. Prof. Antonia Rubino:

“Mobility, multilingualism and Italian migration to Australia”, ALAA/ALANZ/ALTAANZ 2015 Conference “Learning in a Multilingual World”, University of South Australia, Adelaide, 30 November-2 December 2015.


Dott. Paola Marmini and Dott. Nicoletta Zanardi (Honoraries, Italian Studies) and Dr Mariella Totaro-Genevois will present their book “Sapori...”
della memoria / Of Food and Memories at the Italian Museum in Melbourne (25 November 2015) and at Friends of Balmain Library (11 December 2015).

Department of Japanese Studies

Congratulations to Dr Olivier Ansart for being elected as Fellow into the Australian Academy of Humanities and to Dr Samantha Haley for winning a Dean's Citation for Excellence in Tutorials with Distinction.


He also delivered a talk in Cambridge on 16 October 2015: "Japan-Korea: History as a Tool for Reconciliation?". He was invited by Dr Barak Kushner, as part of his ERC project "The Dissolution of the Japanese Empire and the Struggle for Legitimacy in Postwar East Asia."

More details here: http://warcrimesandempire.com/blog/2015/10/16/japan-korea-history-as-a-tool-for-reconciliation/

Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies

Jamie Torres in Australia

World-renowned interpreter of Charango, Jaime Torres is a living legend and exponent of Latin American folk music. After 23 years, he is touring Australia again on a quest to establish a cross-cultural dialogue between remote Aboriginal communities and the Indigenous communities in his native northern Argentina. The tour kicked off with a concert in Sydney on Saturday 28 November at the Seymour Centre.
The following departments and programs are located in the School of Languages and Cultures:

Arabic Language and Cultures
Asian Studies Program
Buddhist Studies Program
Chinese Studies
European Studies Program
French Studies
Germanic Studies
Hebrew, Biblical & Jewish Studies
Indian Subcontinental Studies
Indonesian Studies
International & Comparative Literary Studies Program
Italian Studies
Japanese Studies
Korean Studies
Modern Greek Studies
Spanish & Latin American Studies

More Information

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