

Abstracts

“We’re gonna need a bigger boat”: (Australian) Literary Images of Man from a ‘Species-Centred’ Perspective

Horst Prießnitz

Abstract: Disziplininterne wie – externe Faktoren haben die akademische Beschäftigung nicht nur mit der Literatur Australiens in eine ihre Existenz bedrohende Situation gebracht. Die Wiederentdeckung der anthropologischen Relevanz von Literatur sowie deren Fundierung in evolutions- und soziobiologischen Erkenntnissen könnten einen Weg aus dieser Krise weisen. – Aldous Huxleys Empfehlung, den Menschen und sein natürliches *Habitat* in den Mittelpunkt des Interesses zu rücken, hat mit der Ausrufung des ‘Anthropozäns’ sowie der Formierung der ‘Neuen Humanisten’ ein konkretes Echo gefunden. – ‘Ökoliteratur’ befasst sich mit den Auswirkungen des menschlichen Handelns auf die fragile Umwelt, ‘Anthropoliteratur’ mit denjenigen auf die verletzbare physische und psychische Natur des Menschen. Literarische Bilder vom Menschen stehen hier im Vordergrund, weil sie Konstanten, Veränderungen und Gefährdungen des traditionellen Menschenbildes registrieren. Der ‘Nutzen’ ihrer Untersuchung kann darin gesehen werden, dass sie als Stimme der Spezies, Thesaurus konkurrierender Selbstwahrnehmungen, utopische bzw. dystopische Antizipationen trans-/posthumaner Identität sowie als Archiv nicht-biogener menschlicher Werte darauf aufmerksam machen, in welche Richtung wir uns entwickeln und gleichzeitig einen Fundus von Erinnerungen an das bereit stellen, was wir einmal waren.

The Impact of Christianity on Australian Indigenous Art

Elisabeth Bähr

Abstract: In 2007, Shirley Purdie won the \$ 15.000 Blake Prize for Religious Art with her painting “Stations of the Cross.” She was the first Indigenous artist to do so. Yet, when studying books on Indigenous art, one encounters a quite significant number of images concerning Christianity. What enables Indigenous artists to create paintings with Christian themes, even though one of the primary characteristics of Indigenous art lies in the narrative connection to the artist’s country in its special Indigenous sense? What enables Indigenous people, who in their own views of religion include neither guilt nor original sin, to become involved with Christianity? What understanding or interpretation do the artists have of the Christian elements in their paintings? Are there differences between the works of artists who live in the larger cities and those who live in the outback? Some evidence and tentative answers for these questions compose this article.

Populate *and* Perish? Folgen eines hohen Bevölkerungswachstums in Australien Reinhold Grotz

Abstract: The “Third Intergenerational Report” of the Department of Treasury (2010) predicts a “big Australia” of 35 Mio. people in 2050. This would mean 60% more Australians within four decades. In order to meet this target it would afford a very high increase in immigration compared to former decades. What pros and cons can be found for such a fundamental change in politics and what are the consequences? The article discusses the advantages of a fast growing population and explains the risks and threats that evolve of this. Special attention is given to effects resulting from climatic change, the needs of additional settlement space, and infrastructure. Finally the lack of skilled labour is discussed and possibilities for alternative solutions rather than a much higher immigration are shown. The results suggest only a little economic surplus from a “big Australia.” Many of the existing urban areas already suffer from inadequate infrastructure and ecological systems in vast areas are very vulnerable to intensified using.

Adaptation for the Postcolonial Community: *Jindabyne’s* Contested Spaces Renate Brosch

Abstract: In this article, I discuss the Australian film *Jindabyne*, an adaptation of Raymond Carver’s short story “So Much Water So Close to Home”. Starting from the premise of contemporary adaptation studies, that such remediations should not be judged on the basis of fidelity to the literary source, I argue that the achievement of *Jindabyne* lies in its very deviations from the text. By transporting the story to an Australian setting, the film introduces the issue of interracial relations into the narrative and thus adds a postcolonial dimension to the story. Instead of focusing on individual psychology and the marital problems of a couple, the film shifts the focus to the social effects of the denial of historical culpability on the part of white Australians. I investigate the techniques and strategies which produce interest in a small-town community burdened with the continuing heritage of colonial injustice, especially the film’s use of visual images as a means of transnational appeal. Images of borders and border-crossings express its engagement with interracial proximity and conflict. In my response oriented interpretation I hope to show how the movie succeeds in enlisting the participation of viewers and uniting them into a temporary ‘imaginary community’ with a postcolonial agenda.

Post-Mabo Literature: New Discourses in Australian Fiction

Geoff Rodoreda

Abstract: This paper examines new developments in Australian prose – particularly in novels dealing with historical themes and relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians – since the Mabo High Court decision of 1992. More than any other event in Australia’s colonial/postcolonial history, the Mabo judgement, in which the High Court for the first time recognised a form of native title to land for Australia’s Indigenous peoples, has turned a conventional reading of Australian history on its head, altered notions of Australian identity, and ushered in a new dynamic in relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. These themes are reflected in the principal motifs and the narrative structure of many Australian novels since 1992. This paper aims to identify the characteristics of what the author calls a post-Mabo literary space, by referring, briefly in each case, to a number of novels published by Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors over the last 20 years.

Talk-back Radio and the 2005 Cronulla Riots: Attributing Blame for Social Disharmony

Evan Williams

Abstract: This paper considers media events surrounding the Cronulla Riots. On Sunday 11 December 2005, some 5000 people marched peacefully (at first) through the Sydney suburb of Cronulla in protest against what they perhaps believed was an unprovoked attack on a pair of surf-lifesavers by a Lebanese gang. However, during the afternoon the peaceful protests to “claim back the beach” turned violent and anyone of vaguely Middle Eastern appearance who came into view of the mob was attacked. Before the riots took place, various arms of the media published and broadcast provocative articles and programs concerning Lebanese violent crime, depicting a crime wave, and promoted the then forthcoming protests. In particular, this paper considers the role talk-back radio may have played in contributing to the scale of the riots through its marginalisation and vilification of Lebanese migrants. The Australian Communications and Media Authority’s response in applying anti-vilification provisions of the Commercial Radio Code of Practice is also considered.

Ein Bild spricht tausend Worte: Erzherzog Ludwig Salvators Hobart (1881)

Eva Meidl

Abstract: The Austrian Archduke Ludwig Salvator (1847-1915) visited the Melbourne World Exhibition of 1880/1881. This provided him with the opportunity to travel to Tasmania where he spent ten days to research for his book *Hobart Town or Summer Holiday Resort in the Antipodes*. During that time he also drew illustrations of

Hobart for his book ‘according to nature’. His images of Hobart challenge the stereotypical view that the colonial era is presented primarily through British eyes. The Archduke’s drawings produced 130 years ago are a rarity not only because the book had a small print run, but also because some of the drawings depict colonial dwellings, which no longer exist. This essay discusses some of these drawings within their historical context and underlines their importance as Tasmania’s visual and cultural heritage.

Durch Revolution zum idealen Staat? Utopische Entwürfe aus den ‘Nervous Nineties’

Annegret Maack

Abstract: The last decade of the 19th century was characterized by social unrest, unemployment, strikes, bank crashes, the formation of the Australian Labor Party, and the discussion about the political future, e.g. dependence on the mother country or a federation of the Australian colonies and autonomy; these are topics dealt with in the literature of the time. This paper discusses “utopias that predict a harmonious domestic future” (Albinski 1987, “Survey” 17), as in Andrade’s *The Melbourne Riots* (1892), Rosa’s *Oliver Spence, the Australian Caesar* (1894), Tucker’s *The New Arcadia* (1894) and Lucas’s *The Curse and Its Cure* (1894). These works depict societies which have abolished competitive capitalism and corruption as a pre-requisite for a cooperative way of life. Thematically, they share common ground in their rejection of Communism and valorisation of the work of each individual. While writing, these authors were fully aware of popular English and American utopian literature, especially Bellamy’s and Donnelly’s novels.

Enlightenment and/or Empire: Two German Perspectives on the Australian Aborigines

Judith Wilson

Abstract: This article examines the image of the Australian Aborigines in texts by two writers considered to have had a formative influence on the image of Australia in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Georg Forster and Friedrich Gerstäcker, and attempts to establish the extent to which their image of the Aborigines is transformed (or not) in the process of cultural mediation; and, in Gerstäcker’s case, in response to personal experience and cultural contact. The study aims to test Russell Berman’s thesis that Germany, a latecomer to the colonial arena and a marginal player in the imperial stakes, developed a colonial discourse that was different, more nuanced, more sympathetic to the situation of the colonized than that of its imperial model and rival, England. While there are significant differences in Forster’s and Gerstäcker’s representations of the Aborigines, it will be seen that Enlightenment does not prevail over Empire, that their texts in fact reproduce the stereotypical polarization so typical

of colonial discourse. Each author, does, however, contribute to a discourse that is different, or at least distinctively German, by establishing himself as a German authority and inscribing his-story into the history of the colonial enterprise and the history of Australian discovery and settlement.