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Table of Contents

Vol. 15, # 2 & Vol. 16, # 1, 1997-8

EDITORIAL 10

FEATURE ARTICLES

YIYAN WANG **Language, Time and Introspection: Margaret Atwood and Jia Pingwa** 13

RAYMOND A. YOUNIS **Race, Representation and Nationhood** 43

GERRY TURCOTTE **Response: Venturing into Undiscoverable Countries: Reading Ondaatje, Malouf, Atwood and Jia in an Asia-Pacific Context** 65

LISA LAW **Third Cultures in Vancouver, Hong Kong and Singapore: Filipino NGO's and Sites of Transnational Activism** 73

RAOUL PERTIERRA **Global Localities: Toronto and the Filipino Diaspora** 91

NOBUAKI SUYAMA **The Evolving Pattern of Canada's Immigration Policy-Making** 115

| | | |
|-----------------------|--|-----|
| WANNING SUN | "Monster Houses", "Yacht Immigrants", and the Politics of Being Chinese: Media and Ethnicity in Canada | 143 |
| LAURE PAQUETTE | Canada in the Web of East Asian Relations | 159 |
| WILL STRAW | Dilemmas of Cultural Nationalism | 189 |
| ROWLAND LORIMER | Letter to the Editor | 197 |
| <u>REVIEWS</u> | | |
| Terry Craig | Renate Pratt. <i>In Good Faith: Canadian Churches Against Apartheid.</i> | 205 |
| Mark Colavincenzo | Michael Ondaatje. <i>The English Patient</i> | 209 |
| NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS | | 231 |

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EDITORIAL

This issue of Australian-Canadian Studies is based on a number of presentations which formed the program of a one-day seminar held in October 1997. The seminar was titled "Australasia-Canada: New Connections" and featured speakers from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan and Canada.

At the time of the conference, the so-called Asian economic crisis was just entering its most serious phase with major currency devaluations occurring in many countries in the region. In the current context given the reversal of fortunes in Asia, the focus of many of the discussions would likely be quite different than those which took place last October. Who could have envisioned the swift fall of Suharto as a direct consequence of the economic crisis?

The articles which form this issue, however, provide the substance in the relationships between Australasia and Canada. Following the arguments developed by Cooper, Higgot and Nossal in their book *Relocating Middle Powers*, this issue highlights the transnational links which bind Australia and Canada through the mediation of their interest and engagement with Asia. The events of 1997 took place in Canada's *year of Asia* when it played host to APEC—a key forum for regional negotiation.

To the extent that these articles enter into such a transformed social and economic period, they are testimony to longstanding projects and practices reflected in the scholarship represented here. They suggest that long after this current "crisis" abates, there will continue ongoing concerns ranging from global economics to the lived experi-

ences of Asians in the national societies of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Of the eleven papers presented at the conference, we are publishing seven in this volume. Others may appear in future issues and we thank the authors for their interest in presenting their work on the day.

Two submissions in the area of literature provide an extended reflection on key authors in Canada and Asia (China). In "Language, Time and Introspection," Yiyan Wang compares the two novelists Margaret Atwood and Jia Pingwa. Wang tracks the manner in which their work traverses cultural and psychological boundaries. Raymond Younis moves the terms of the examination of literature by grounding his analysis in the works of Malouf and Ondaatje. (A lengthy review of *The English Patient* is also included in this issue.) Gerry Turcotte re-produces the response he gave at the seminar but develops his argument in relation to the critical perspectives adopted by Wang and Younis.

A major section on migration is the focus of three articles. Two of these examine the Filipino migrant experience albeit in very different contexts geographically and culturally. Lisa Law tracks the route which Filipinos take from the Philippines to Singapore to Hong Kong and eventually to Vancouver. The article looks at a constellation of institutions and policies which mediate the experiences of the Filipino domestic worker. Raul Pertiera traverses the territory between the local and the global using the example of Filipino migration to Toronto.

The case of the Toronto Filipinos reveals surprising cultural exchanges between vastly differing cultural and national formations. A third perspective on migration is developed by Nobuaki Suyama in his examination of Canada's emerging immigration policies. Suyama argues that a "closed-door" policy development style has been replaced by a much more open one. His paper analyses the change and explores the likely explanations.

One of three papers from the media and communications strand of the seminar is printed in this issue. (The remaining two will be published in the upcoming communications issue.) Wanning Sun examines the treatment of "Chineseness" in the Vancouver *Sun* newspaper.

The relationship between English language media and the Chinese language press comes in for special attention.

The issue is supplemented by an additional perspective on bilateral relations between Canada and a number of Asian nations in an article by Laure Paquette. Though not a presenter at the conference, Laure Paquette's paper fits in perfectly offering an overview of the political relationships operating in the region. Will Straw provided the closing remarks to the conference reflecting on the theme of the struggle faced by cultural nationalists in the contemporary context of national pluralities and cultural hybridities. It strikes an important chord in signalling the end of a particular manner of thinking about the "nation" and the reconstruction of the national formation as a site of numerous cultural possibilities. Rowland Lorimer's "Letter to the Editor" complements Will Straw's material in its review of Canadian Studies via a discussion of Cameron's book *Taking Stock: Canadian Studies in the Nineties*.

There are many persons to thank for both the help provided in mounting the seminar at the Canadian Consulate General in Sydney and the subsequent publication of the papers in this issue. Thanks to the following for their institutional support: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, UWS, Nepean; Research Centre in Intercommunal Studies, UWS, Nepean; Centre for Canadian Studies, UWS Macarthur; Canadian High Commission; Consulate General of Canada; Association for Canadian Studies in Australia and New Zealand. Thank you also to the following individuals: Allen Virtue, Consul General and Cheryl Adlard of the Consulate General of Canada, Sydney, Paulette Montaigne of the Canadian High Commission, Warwick Wilson, Elaine Lally, Samantha Crockett, Kjersten Johnson, Luntharimar Longcharoen, Phuong Phan from UWS.

The production for this issue has been accomplished with the help of Richard Lever, Lynda Haig Thoresen, and the many referees who have reviewed the articles. Thanks to all.

Hart Cohen

YIYAN WANG
LANGUAGE, TIME AND INTROSPECTION:
MARGARET ATWOOD AND JIA PINGWA

Margaret Atwood¹ of Canada and Jia Pingwa² of China are outstanding contemporary writers who are representative of their respective cultures. Both are prolific producers of novels, short stories, poetry and essays, which command enormous readership and academic attention. Although they write from very different cultural backgrounds and in different languages, Atwood and Jia share a preoccupation with the function of language, notions about time, and perceptions of the self. These themes express the authors' concern with social alienation and also figure in their characterisation of individual subjects in the context of their own societies. Atwood has a wider audience internationally, for her writings in English are more accessible to the international community, whereas only a few of Jia's writings have been translated into English. However, Jia has been widely read by readers in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Chinese speaking communities in other countries.

Jia and Atwood are concerned about the cultural identities of their own country and are successful in representing their cultural traditions. Their cultural roots, different in terms of their gender, culture, language and narrative style, are shown through the various stories they tell about their different societies. Their distinctive literary imagination and narrative manners also reflect their different senses of their mission