Editors' Note

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Welcome to the first on-line issue of *JASAL*. Over the last four years *JASAL* has developed into a significant forum for discussions—held across many media—about Australian literature, and how that literature relates to contemporary local and global circumstances. Going on-line means that *JASAL*'s discussions of Australian literature and how it reflects both national and global disciplinary and socio-political debates now will reach a more widespread readership.

The desire for a robust debate that engages both a national and international author- and readership is reflected in *JASAL*'s choice to partner with the National Library of Australia (NLA) in developing an open-access professional publication. We are grateful for the NLA, and especially to Bobby Graham, of the Library's Web Publishing Branch, for all her assistance in *JASAL*'s conversion to the use of Open Journal Software through Open Publish, the Library's open access journal project.

This fifth issue amply illustrates *JASAL*'s commitment to moving between careful consideration of cultural texts and larger disciplinary and social considerations. A common misperception that accompanied the "turn to theory" in the profession across the last few decades was that it was also a turn away from textual analysis. Quite the contrary, good theorising is anchored in close analysis of the myriad cultural texts through which we represent and maintain our cultural being—something that the articles in this volume 5 of *JASAL* amply demonstrate.

In "A Dreaming, A sauntering: Re-imagining Critical Paradigms" Gail Jones begins with the story of a childhood memory, a "dream of bones." That story furnishes the essay with an heuristic model for exploring a "critical attitude" that takes into account the irreconcilable differences of "your" and "my" experience, and for imagining a mode of "cultural dreaming" that is both an ethical stance and a politics of hope.

Catherine Padmore also reflects on the power of a "cultural dreaming" in "Fragmented and Entwined." Here the stories that anchor theorising are "migratory, fragmented and multi-vocal" migration fictions which reveal the "gaps" between past and present, this place and that one, self and other, and whose "final textual gap" is the space where teller and listener fall silent and, listening to both the said and the not-able-to-be-said, contemplate "something beyond." Gaetano Rando too is concerned with the ways in which texts—in this case poems by first generation Italian Australian poets—reflect the migrant's experiences of cultural difference and diaspora. The human complexities of these experiences continue to reshape the interface between languages in Australia, unsettling the categories of nation and literature.

The idea of an "imagined community" in a fractured, globalised world is also taken up by Ron Blaber in "The Populist Imaginary." Here the stories are two of David Ireland's novels, which Blaber uses to anchor his argument that a "populist imaginary" in a post-nationalist world serves less to suture difference than to remind us that "the question of national or collective identity can never be totally settled," that we "await its moment in an ever present next time." And the articles that immediately follow on from Blaber's serve to remind us of the fabrications and violence of foundational populist imaginaries.

In "Insane Lane: Crowds and Violence in Australia" David Crouch closely reads William Lane's invasion tale "'White or Yellow?' A Story of the Race-war of A.D. 1908," suggesting a lineage between its racist fantasies and contemporary Australian political debates and cultural representations. That lineage is clearly traced by Catriona Ross's A. D. Hope prize-winning article, "Prolonged Symptoms of Cultural Anxiety," which presents John Marsden's popular young-adult *Tomorrow* series as a contemporary instance of the Australian inflection of the invasion genre. Similarly, Sean Sturm is concerned with a species of invasion narrative in "George Chamier and the

Native Question" when he examines Chamier's novels of settler society in New Zealand in order to trace the ways in which such literatures erase and appropriate the peoples and cultures that precede settlement.

Sturm's conclusion—that the "native question" is a "settler bind" that, unlike the Gordian knot, cannot be cut, that "settlers and Māori . . . are tied together"—is implicitly developed in Lydia Wever's "Globalising Indigenes." In this article Wevers reads a range of New Zealand, Australian and Pacific indigenous texts to think about the ways in which globalisation leads to the category "indigenous" displacing the category "native" in our literary and political thought. Her comparative approach takes into account differences in colonial histories and contemporary politics, yet at the same time suggests that the concatenation of new material circumstances (globalisation) and a new "critical attitude" (to cite Gail Jones) together point to a loosening of the ties that bind the individual to the nation-state, and so point to a space of re-imagining a "politics of location and identity" within which indigenous knowledges have not only a resistive purpose but also a capacity for the sort of "cultural dreaming" that Jones imagines as not only possible but vital.

Individually and collectively, the articles in this volume of *JASAL* belie the remark of Prime Minister John Howard cited by Blaber: "This country has put aside its sense of introspection and examination and [sic] its identity. There is no longer that perpetual seminar about Australia's cultural identity." Rather they illustrate Blaber's sense that "the question of national or collective identity can never be totally settled"—how could it be given that at any one moment "who we are" not only responds to "where we are" at this moment in this place in this world, but also to our (historically contingent) "cultural dreaming"?

Thus Patrick Buckridge in "Being Elsewhere" gives us a finely grained sense of not just one poet and his work—Peter Austen, a Brisbane poet who served in World War I and ended his days in Egypt—but also of how his sensibility as a "soldier poet" was shaped by Australia's then involvement with a particular international community of politics and poets. Similarly, Jane Frugtneit reconsiders the work of an earlier Australian writer when she reads the title of Christina Stead's novel *For Love Alone* as an interrogative, and finds evidence in the text for a connection between anorexia and the demand/need for love. And, moving forward in the history of (*pace* John Howard) Australia's "perpetual seminar," Alice Healy's "Impossible Speech"

presents a nuanced discussion of Kate Grenville's *Lilian's Story* and its translation to film by Polish immigrant Jerzy Domaradzki in order to argue the ways in which both are conditioned by their author's times of their "writing"—and so how both tell us how representations (translations) of "who we are" always are contingent on where we are (our socio-political circumstances), always mediated by our "populist imaginary," yet always hopeful that our "cultural dreaming" will be just and inclusive.

Alison Wood's article, "Operatic Narratives," about the prolific collaboration between the composer Larry Sitsky and the poet Gwen Harwood examines, for the first time, the cross-media complexities of opera composition by two twentieth-century Australian artists. In their musical and poetic collaboration Sitsky and Harwood drew on a wide range of European myth and narratives, from the medieval, the early modern and nineteenth-century periods, promiscuously crossing boundaries of nation, historical periodisation, language, artistic form and self-definition in their imagining of performative possibilities.

Performative possibilities in another sense are the focus of the issue's closing article, where Lyn Jacobs considers the fiction of Gail Jones, tracing the motifs of photograph and film and the reiterated metaphors of light, shadow and mirroring in them. Jacobs finds the fictions "at times enigmatic investigations of the unpredictable nature of lived performance," and always a celebration of the potential of narrative and image to be a form of remembering "from which we may draw and interrogate meaning." Such remembering (or "rememory" in Toni Morrison's coinage) too can be a form of cultural dreaming.

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