

# INFORMATIONEN

## Asian Studies in Australia

The present paper can offer no more than a brief guide to the study of Asia in Australia, and it is concentrated primarily upon the academic work of universities and other comparable organizations.

In the pages which follow, I discuss the major centres dealing with the various regions of Asia, the nature of their work and their publications. I do not attempt to provide a full catalogue of work in progress, but I hope that some colleagues may find it helpful to learn of journals and other serials where they may follow up their own interests, and some institutions which it may be useful to contact.

### General

Throughout Australia, there are nineteen universities, and a larger number of Colleges of Advanced Education or Institutes of Technology. Almost all universities have some commitment to Asian Studies, and some of the colleges and institutes include Asian Studies in a liberal arts program.

Of the universities the Australian National University (ANU: P.O.Box 4, Canberra, ACT 2601) is the most important in the field. The Institute for Advanced Studies at ANU was established purely for research and postgraduate teachings, and the Research School of Pacific Studies deals with East and Southeast Asia as well as with Oceania. The Director, Professor R.G. Ward, is a geographer who has worked in Papua New Guinea. Among the general activities of the Research School is a biennial series of international seminars: in 1979 the subject was Hong Kong, in 1981 Indonesia, and in 1983 the topic will be "The Philippines after Marcos".

Also at ANU, the Faculty of Asian Studies is concerned with undergraduate teaching as well as postgraduate work and research. The Faculty is the major centre for classical studies of all regions of Asia, but it also works in modern and contemporary affairs. It teaches twenty languages, from Japanese to Arabic, including modern and classical Chinese, Indonesian and Malay, Thai, Vietnamese, Hindi and Sanskrit. Linked with the essential language training, the Faculty also offers courses in literature, philosophy, history and archaeology, anthropology, political science and economics. The Dean of the Faculty, Dr J.T.F. Jordens, is a historian of the Indian independence movement and the Congress Party.

Within the Research School of Pacific Studies, the Development Studies Centre, which is funded by the Australian Development Assistance Bureau of the Australian Government, trains students brought from overseas on questions of development economics and demography. The Centre publishes several series of research papers: recent titles have dealt with village power structures in Bangladesh, Australian and Southeast Asian rice trade, and the value of children in the families of tea estate workers in West Java.

Also within the Research School is the Department of International Relations and its Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, which publishes occasional papers. The academic staff of the Royal Military College, Duntroon (ACT 2600), in another part of Canberra, are involved in two journals, the 'Pacific Defence Reporter' (editor, Denis Warner) and 'War and Society' (joint editors, Peter Dennis and Roger C. Thompson). For the study of international relations generally, outside the immediate concerns of military matters, the major journal is 'Australian Outlook', published by the independent Institute of International Affairs (P.O.Box E181, Queen Victoria Terrace, Canberra, ACT 2600). The Institute also publishes scholarly monographs, conference proceedings, and a five-yearly survey of 'Australia in World Affairs'.

Outside Canberra, as I have observed, most universities and some colleges and institutes have a commitment to Asian Studies, but I shall refer to them under the regional sections below. One may note, however, the School of Modern Asian Studies at Griffith University in Brisbane (Nathan, Queensland 4111), which contains a Centre for the Study of Australian/Asian Relations (Director: Dr Nancy Viviani) and which undertakes general teaching and research on present-day China, Japan and Southeast Asia.

Among Australian libraries, the collection of Asian material held in Canberra is unsurpassed, though there are important smaller holdings in the various state collections. The Australian National Library (Parkes, ACT 2600) and the Asian Studies Division of the ANU Library (Divisional Librarian: Miss Enid Bishop) have been granted special funds to maintain their Asian collections, and they are particularly strong on nineteenth and twentieth century Chinese and Japanese material.

Finally in this section, but very usefully, one may mention the Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA: Secretary, Mr J.L. Ingleson, School of History, University of New South Wales, P.O.Box 1, Kensington, NSW 2033). The Association produces a 'Review' three times a year, which includes Notes on various areas of study, and also annual lists of Australian Publications on Asia and of Theses and Dissertations on Asia.

## West Asia

On contemporary matters, West Asian (or Middle Eastern) Studies is one of the weaker academic enterprises, though there is, of course, a strong tradition of biblical study and of classical Hebrew due to the Protestant Christian training maintained in a number of religious houses and seminaries. Only three universities, however, teach Arabic. These are the University of Sydney (Department of Semitic Studies, University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW 2006), the University of Melbourne (Department of Middle Eastern Studies, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Victoria 3052) and ANU (Faculty of Asian Studies). ANU also offers a course in Persian.

For the most part, the study of West Asia has been based on religious studies, philosophy, literature and archaeology, and in some universities this interest has been combined with Graeco-Roman studies (the Department of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Queensland in Brisbane has a program of research and teaching on ancient Anatolia and the Hittite civilisation). More recently, however, there has been some development in the study of the contemporary Arab world, particularly in departments of political science. The Australian Middle East Studies Association (AMESA: c/o Dr I. Herrmann, Footscray Institute of Technology, Footscray, Victoria 3011) publishes a monthly 'Bulletin' and occasional papers, including 'The Middle East in Australia: Australian Publications 1975-1980' compiled by Michael Grant.

Further contacts: Professor A.H. Johns, Faculty of Asian Studies, ANU  
Dr Amin Saikal, Department of Political Science, Faculty of Arts, ANU.

## South Asia

Among universities, Hindi is taught at the University of Melbourne and, combined with Urdu, in the Faculty of Asian Studies at ANU. The South and West Asia Centre of the Faculty, whose head is Professor J.W. de Jong, also teaches Sanskrit and associated languages such as Pali, Prakrit and Classical Tibetan: Professor de Jong is the editor of the international publication, 'Indo-Iranian Journal', published by Brill.

In the Research School of Pacific Studies at ANU, the Indian History Section, headed by Dr Ranajit Guha, is concerned with research on modern Indian history: it was recently responsible for a major conference on the concept of the "subaltern" in South Asian history and society.

Besides ANU and Melbourne, there are groups of scholars working on South Asian studies at Monash and La Trobe universities in Melbourne, Sydney and New South Wales Universities in Sydney, the University of Western Australia (Centre for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA 6009), and the Western Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT: Hayman Road, South Bentley, WA 6102).

The Association for South Asian Studies publishes the journal 'South Asia' (c/o Dr Don Ferrell, Department of History, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria 3083).

Further contact: Dr J.T.F. Jordens, Faculty of Asian Studies, ANU.

### Southeast Asia

Given the proximity of the region to Australia, it is not surprising that Southeast Asia is the strongest area of specialism, with particular emphasis on Indonesia. Indonesian is the most widely taught language both in schools and at tertiary level, and most institutions dealing with Asian Studies have established a Southeast Asian section. Here I can mention only a few of them.

Outside Canberra, the Centre for Southeast Asian Studies in the Faculty of Arts at Monash University (Wellington Road, Clayton, Vic. 3168), whose Director is Dr David P. Chandler, publishes a series of 'Monash Papers on Southeast Asia'. The Dean of the Faculty, Professor J.D. Legge, is a scholar of contemporary Indonesia, and Dr Margaret Kartomi, of the Department of Music, is one of the few ethnomusicologists working in the Asian field in Australia.

The Department of Indonesian and Malay Studies at the University of Sydney publishes a 'Review of Indonesian and Malay Affairs' (RIMA: editor Mr Rudy de Jong) and the Sydney University Library is engaged in a specially funded project on 'Bibliographic Information on Southeast Asia' (BISA: Director Ms Helen Jarvis).

The James Cook University of Townsville (Queensland 4810) has a newly-established Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, with a journal entitled 'Kabar Seberang'. Dr P.P. Courtenay of James Cook is an organiser of the Malaysia Society of Australia.

Because of the concern with Australian Aboriginal culture and prehistory, and the relationship also with the island peoples of the Pacific, anthropology and prehistory are strong academic disciplines, and several university departments in this field include Southeast Asian interests. Im-

portant journals in this field are the 'Bulletin of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association' (Dr P. Bellwood, Department of Prehistory and Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, ANU) and 'Mankind' (Dr Grant McCall, Department of Sociology, University of New South Wales, PO Box 1, Kensington, NSW 2033).

In the Research School of Pacific Studies at ANU, besides the Development Studies Centre, mentioned in the General section above, the Department of Economics is engaged in a specific Indonesia Project, and publishes a regular 'Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies'. Like other areas of the Research Schools, the Department is frequently engaged in consultancy work for the Australian and Asian governments, particularly involving the introduction of new technologies and farming techniques in Southeast Asia. The Department of Political and Social Change, under Professor J.A.C. Mackie, who has written about the Soekarno period in a book entitled 'Confrontasi', is concerned with Indonesia and also with the Philippines. The Department of Anthropology (Dr J.J. Fox, specialist in Timor and Roti) and its sister Department of Prehistory and Anthropology in the Faculty of Arts (Professor J.A.W. Forge: Bali) both reflect the triple interest in Australia, the Pacific and Southeast Asia. The Department of Pacific and Southeast Asian History includes a section dealing with Vietnam (Dr D. Marr and Dr G. May).

The sister Research School of Social Sciences deals generally with Australian concerns, but the Department of Demography has an Indonesian Population Dynamics Program.

The Faculty of Asian Studies, besides programs in Indonesian and Malay language, history and culture, also teaches Thai and, very recently Vietnamese. The Thai program, under Dr A.V. Diller, is well established, but the new venture in Vietnamese funded by a grant from the Australian government, is a special case. Curiously, despite Australia's several years' involvement in the Vietnam War during the 1960s and early 1970s, there was no formal teaching and study of Vietnamese language and history at any Australian university until 1982: with the influx of refugees in recent years, Vietnam is now studied not so much as a foreign culture, but rather as the background to a new minority in Australian Society.

Further contacts: Dr Keith Foulcher, Flinders University,  
Bedford Park, South Australia 5042.  
Dr C.C. Macknight, Department of  
History, Faculty of Arts, ANU.

## China

The Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Melbourne (Professor H.F. Simon in linguistics) and the Department of Oriental Studies of the University of Sydney (Professor A.R. Davis, shortly to retire) were the two earliest to teach Chinese, both the classical and modern languages. The School of Modern Asian Studies (Professor C.P. Mackerras: modern opera and minorities) at Griffith University is, as the name implies, chiefly concerned with contemporary affairs, and includes an economics program (Dr K.B. Bucknall). Elsewhere there is an active Language program at Macquarie University (Dr Paul Jiang: North Ryde, NSW 2113), in the Department of Japanese at the University of Queensland (Mr Clayton Bredt: St Lucia, Qld. 4067), and in the School of Human Communication at Murdoch University in Western Australia (Professor Benjamin K. T'sou, Murdoch, WA 6150).

The Centre for Asian Studies at the University of Adelaide (Professor Michael Yahuda: North Terrace, Adelaide, South Australia 5000) teaches Chinese and Japanese, with an emphasis on political science (Professor Yahuda and also Professor Bill Brugger of Flinders University) and on rural development and policy (Mr. Andrew Watson).

In Canberra, the China Centre of the Faculty of Asian Studies (Dr R.R.C. de Crespigny) teaches modern and classical Chinese and undertakes postgraduate supervision on research on early China (chiefly Qin/Han and Nanbei Chao) and on the contemporary scene (Dr Pierre Ryckmans, alias Simon Leys). The China Centre also has a Visiting Fellow who is responsible for the teaching of Korean Studies (Professor K.T. Jeon).

In the Research School of Pacific Studies, the Department of Far Eastern History (Professor Wang Gungwu) is concerned primarily with the late Qing and Republican period, but has also special projects on the Yuan (Dr Igor de Rachewiltz), on Shang and Zhou (Dr Noel Barnard) and on relations of China with Southeast Asia. Dr Alan Thorne of the Department of Prehistory is working on the archaeology and early migrations of the Chinese people. Miss Audrey Donnithorne of the Department of Economics studies the present-day economy.

The Contemporary China Centre of ANU includes members of all parts of the university, and also from government. The journal of the Centre, 'The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs', is concerned with present-day China. 'Papers on Far Eastern History', published by the Department of Far Eastern History, deal with Chinese and Japanese classical and modern history. 'The Journal of the

Oriental Society of Australia', produced through the Department of Oriental Studies at the University of Sydney, is concerned with Chinese, Japanese and Southeast Asian literature and philosophy and history.

Further contacts: Dr R.R.C. de Crespigny, Faculty of Asian Studies, ANU;  
Mr Andrew Watson, Centre for Asian Studies, University of Adelaide.

### Japan

Japanese was a regular school and university subject before the Second World War, and it is now, with Indonesian, the most common Asian language taught. At most universities, it is associated with the teaching of Chinese in a department or centre of Oriental or East Asian studies. The University of Queensland (Professor Joyce Ackroyd) has a Department of Japanese, with a large enrolment and an association with some of the major mining companies trading with Japan. There is a special program on Translation and Interpretation. The Faculty of Asian Studies at ANU has a Japan Centre, which teaches modern and classical language, literature and history, and which has achieved, under Professor A.A. Alfonso, a high reputation for language training. There is now a master's degree course in applied Japanese linguistics, funded by the Japan Foundation.

Also at ANU, the Department of Far Eastern History in the Research School of Pacific Studies has an interest in Tokugawa and Meiji (Dr E.S. Crawcour). The most important recent development, however, is the establishment of the Australia-Japan Research Centre (Executive Director: Dr P.D. Drysdale), supported by the Australian and Japanese governments, by major foundations and by the business community, with close links to counterpart organisations in Japan. The present interests of the Centre include minerals and agricultural trade, labour and finance markets, and topics are considered not only in terms of the two countries but more generally for their implications on the whole Pacific community.

Elsewhere in Australia, there is similar concern with the Japanese economy and business affairs. The University of New South Wales has a Japanese Economic and Management Studies Centre, and the School of Modern Asian Studies at Griffith University in Brisbane has scholars involved in the economy and the bureaucracy of post-war Japan.

Besides the institutions mentioned above, there are significant groups of Japanese specialists at Melbourne, Monash and La Trobe universities, and the Swinburne In-

stitute of Technology, Victoria, at the University of Adelaide and the South Australian Institute of Technology, at the University of Sydney and at the University of Tasmania. The Japan Studies Association of Australia (JSAA) holds regular annual conferences.

Further contacts: Dr Alan Rix (President, JSAA), School of Modern Asian Studies, Griffith University, Nathan, Queensland 4111;  
Dr Stephen Large, Centre of Asian Studies, University of Adelaide, S.A. 5000.

### Conclusion

The formal study of Asia in Australia was well established only in the late 1950s, and it was strongly influenced at first by the European tradition, with particular interest in classical studies. Upon that basis, however, there has now developed a lively and evidently quite effective scholarly interest in the present-day changes and developments of most regions of Asia.

There are two major difficulties in the way of further development: firstly, there is as yet not great acceptance of Asian languages as a subject of importance in Australian schools (this reflects a general monolingual attitude in the community at large), and as a result, teachers and their students at tertiary level concentrate great efforts on the achievement of language competence before effective research can be attempted. Secondly, Asian Studies, like all other fields of education and research, has been suffering for several years from an erosion of government funding; and in Australia, unlike the United States and other countries, there is no strong tradition of private interest or aid for tertiary education.

On the other hand, it may fairly be argued that Australia is a good place for Asian Studies. The Australian government and economy depend to a very large extent upon relationships with one part of Asia or another, and this practical relationship has encouraged scholars to look at the region in practical terms. For most Australians, Asia is a matter of day-to-day concern, rather than a place of idealist romance. Like anyone else, they will make many mistakes through ignorance, but they have a real need to learn, and their study of Asia should continue to benefit from experience.

Rafe de Crespigny, Canberra