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Australian-Asian Research Collaborations in the Humanities

Mapping the Present,
Planning the Future



VOLUME 1

**Australian-Asian Research Collaborations in the
Humanities: Mapping the Present, Planning the Future**

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VOLUME 1

Australian-Asian Research Collaborations in the Humanities

Mapping the Present,
Planning the Future

Preface

This report was commissioned at a time when the internationalisation of Australia's higher education system was developing strongly. International students were arriving from the region in growing numbers and larger cohorts of local students were studying in Asian countries under the New Colombo Plan. The number of Asian-born faculty appointed to Australian universities was also growing, fuelling substantial collaborative research involving individual scholars and institutions in Asia. The Australian Academy of Humanities' application for funding for the present report was inspired by an interest in identifying existing patterns of collaboration in humanities disciplines, and a desire to build on this capacity for future engagement. The report was written with an eye to the future.

Between the submission of the draft report in 2019 and its publication came the COVID-19 pandemic. In Australia, the government's first response was to close the country's borders to visitors from China, the initial epicentre of the disease. Shortly afterwards, entry was prohibited to all but Australians returning from abroad. Border closure both symbolised and foreshadowed profound changes in Australia's higher education system. International student numbers immediately collapsed and are unlikely to recover to earlier levels in the foreseeable future. By May, costs in revenue to the sector were projected at between \$3 billion and \$4.5 billion, pointing to a severe contraction of the higher education workforce, including its research arm.

This report needs to be read in light of these momentous developments. Whatever the pace of recovery in regional economies, and however sturdy the existing foundations of humanities education and research in various countries in the region, the rupture occasioned by the pandemic is likely to prove profound. There will be a before and an after. For research in and about Asia, and especially collaborative research, the immediate impediments to international travel pose extraordinary challenges, mitigated only in part by the internet. And yet the need could not be more pressing.

The report provides a snapshot of humanities in selected Asian countries on the eve of the pandemic, with data from the preceding five years or so. It supplies a proximate point of departure for re-engagement with the humanities sector in the region as the world emerges from this crisis. Maintaining current connections, expanding networks remotely, and proceeding with the planned writing and publishing projects that link different realms of humanities scholarship are activities that might help preserve something approaching the status quo in collaborative research.

In the different future that now beckons, engagement with Asia remains paramount.

Antonia Finnane

18 MAY 2020

About this report

The report is the outcome of a Learned Academies Special Project, funded by the Australian Research Council.

The project was directed by a team of five Fellows from the Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH): Professor Antonia Finnane, honorary professorial fellow at the University of Melbourne; Emerita Professor Lesley Johnson, Griffith University and University of Technology Sydney; Adjunct Professor Kam Louie, University of New South Wales; Associate Professor Helen Creese, University of Queensland; and Professor Robin Jeffrey, National University of Singapore.

Of the team, four are Asian studies specialists. The fifth, former Academy president Lesley Johnson, is a cultural studies scholar and specialist in the sociology of education. As president, Professor Johnson took significant steps towards building relations between the AAH and its Asian counterparts, and this project was designed in the final phase of her presidency.

The team was led by Antonia Finnane, a historian of China who has lived and worked there, and who over the lifetime of the project has been concurrently engaged in scholarly collaboration with Nanjing and Fudan universities.

Kam Louie, former Dean of Arts at the University of Hong Kong and head of the Asian Studies Section within the AAH, brought to the project

experience of institutions in both East Asia and Australia, knowledge of relationships that link them, and a sense of the potential for the future development of humanities-based exchange and collaboration.

Helen Creese is a cultural historian and translator who works collaboratively with Balinese scholars on historical, literary and media projects and with a number of her former graduate students in the language and linguistics departments of several Indonesian universities.

Brigid Freeman, an experienced researcher in educational policy, served as manager and chief researcher for the first two years of the project, and is responsible for the greater part of the research contained in the country profiles.

Emily Dunn, who graduated with a PhD in Chinese studies from the University of Melbourne, joined the project as researcher halfway through its course. She conducted interviews for the project and wrote the collaboration chapter.

Dr Kylie Brass, Director of Policy and Research at the AAH, has played a key coordinating role for the duration of the project, as well as contributing substantially to the written chapters.

Acknowledgements

We have sought and received criticism and practical help on a range of matters from our colleagues around the country and in some cases overseas. Whatever the report's shortcomings, they are not due to the lack of excellent advice.

We owe special thanks to Professor Vera Mackie FASSA, University of Wollongong; Dr Nicki Tarulevicz, University of Tasmania; and Adjunct Professor Kenneth Wells, University of Canterbury, all of whom have written for the report; to Professor Anne McLaren FAHA, University of Melbourne, for advice on the executive introduction; and to the following for various roles played in the course of developing the report: Associate Professor Michael Barr FAHA, Flinders University; Dr Mridula Chakraborty, Monash University; Professor Robert Cribb FAHA, Australian National University; Associate Professor Jia Gao, University of Melbourne; Emeritus Professor John Fitzgerald AM FAHA, Swinburne University; Associate Professor Catherine Gomes, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT); Professor Ariel Heryanto FAHA, Monash University; Dr Andrew Jackson, Monash University; Professor Joseph Lo Bianco AM FAHA, University of Melbourne; Associate Professor Morris Low, University of Queensland; Associate Professor Roald Maliangkaij, Australian National University; Professor John Jorgensen, La Trobe University; Associate Professor Katherine McGregor, University of Melbourne; Professor Meaghan Morris FAHA, University of Sydney and

Lingnan University; Professor Tessa Morris-Suzuki FAHA, Australian National University; Associate Professor Nana Oishi, University of Melbourne; Professor Garry Rodan FASSA, Murdoch University; Associate Professor Nicholas Thomas, City University of Hong Kong; Associate Professor Akiyoshi Yonezawa, Nagoya University.

We are indebted also to those who generously agreed to be interviewed for the project: Dr Lennon Yao-chung Chang, Dr Adam Clulow, Professor Tony Coady FASSA FAHA, Professor Deidre Coleman FAHA, Dr Christen Cornell, Associate Professor Bruce Crossman, Professor Michael Keane FAHA, Professor Nicholas Evans FBA FASSA FAHA, Dr Romit Dasgupta, Dr Paul Farrelly, Associate Professor Catherine Gomes, Professor Emeritus Barbara Hatley, Dr Vannessa Hearman, Associate Professor Anna Johnston, Professor Sarah Kenderdine, Emeritus Professor Samuel Lieu FRAS FRHistS FSA FRSN FAHA, Dr Amrita Malhi, Associate Professor Kate McGregor, Professor Anne McLaren FAHA, Professor Meaghan Morris FAHA, Dr Annie Pohlman, Professor John Powers FAHA, Professor Wanning Sun FAHA, Professor Chihiro Kinoshita Thomson, and Associate Professor Brian Yecies.

Dr Christina Parolin, Executive Director of the AAH, has been a steady supportive presence on the horizon of the project from its inception, in which she played an active role, through to its completion.

Executive Summary

In the years leading up to 2019, a number of higher education systems in Asia took a turn towards the humanities. South Korea, where ‘humanities education’ has become a buzzword, is one example. India is another. The release of the Draft National Education Policy for India in 2019 caused a stir due to its embrace of a liberal arts education for all tertiary students. A policy shift of this order underscores the importance for Australia of fostering knowledge about and engagement with humanities in the region.

What are the humanities in Asia? Why do they matter? Where do they belong in relations between Australia and Asia? Scholarly collaboration between Australian academics and institutes of higher education and their counterparts in Asian countries provide some answers to these questions, while suggesting others.

Collaborative undertakings in the humanities encompass higher education, research training, and research projects. They have the capacity to generate unique forms of knowledge about our shared region, while in themselves constituting significant relationships between the different countries involved.

The Australian humanities sector in higher education institutions has played a high-profile role in facilitating the turn towards Asia. Language learning, the brokerage of international relationships by area studies specialists, international exhibitions and conferences, academic exchange schemes and collaborative research have built bridges between Australian and Asian institutions, facilitating mobility and information flows between countries throughout the region.

In international research collaboration, the place of the humanities is less visible. This is due in part to the dearth of data for assessing the strength of humanities collaborations and the scope for their expansion. The conventional methodology for identifying international research collaborations involves tracking co-authored journal articles. Scholarly work in the humanities, by contrast, mainly takes the form of books and book chapters. This report addresses the resulting data gap.

The report was commissioned by the Australian Academy of the Humanities (AAH) and funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC). It is premised on a view of Asia-related expertise as important for the well-being of Australia and Australians in areas of national interest ranging from culture to security. Its objective is to identify the current standing of Australian-Asian research collaborations, and the potential for expansion in the future as a means of strengthening of Australian-Asian links between higher education and research systems.

The report adopts a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative system mapping with qualitative data collection and analysis. It aims to fill the data gap by documenting existing humanities engagements with Asia and, by surveying the humanities teaching and research fields in select Asian countries, ascertain potential areas (at the time of writing prior to the COVID-19 epidemic, see [Preface](#)) for future growth.

The initial phase of research for the report entailed data collection to produce profiles of humanities research in seven Asian countries or territories – China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore – as well as in Australia. Full versions of the detailed profiles are available online. The summary report, *Australian-Asian Research Collaborations in the Humanities: Mapping the Present, Planning the Future*, provides chapters on the humanities in Asia, the humanities in Australia, Australian-Asian research collaborations, and brief overviews of the seven jurisdictions mapped for the project.

The Federal Government’s interest in Australia’s exercise of soft power, articulated in the review launched by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in 2018, underscores the report’s significance and relevance in the national arena. It serves as a resource for policy makers and researchers in both government and higher education to make evidenced-based assessments about future opportunities for research collaborations in the Asian region.

Key findings

1 The level of interest and engagement by humanities researchers in Australia in collaborating with Asian partners is evident across institutions, disciplines, and geographical areas of study, and has been for many years.

2 Correspondingly, levels of interest in cooperation and partnerships on the parts of humanities scholars and academic departments in Asian universities are reasonably high. There exist strong foundations for future growth and significant potential for enhancing research in the region.

3 Australia-based scholars are relatively strong collaborators, but available data indicates overall a trend towards working with European or North American partners, even though Asia is a stronger field of research focus than North America. Diaspora scholars show a high incidence of research collaboration overall.

4 Despite steady engagement in Asia-oriented international research partnerships, data for ARC-funded projects in 2005–2015 show no noticeable increase in numbers of such partnerships over time. Institutional support from governments, funding bodies, and universities is relatively weak, and Asia-orientated collaborative research in the humanities is currently in danger of flatlining.

5 In Australia, humanities fields that show the strongest incidence of collaboration are history, archaeology, and cultural studies, with China providing the highest number of collaborations in these fields. Very low levels of collaboration were recorded for some other important fields, including philosophy.

6 Factors facilitating or impeding research collaborations:

6.1 Personal links between scholars are an important driver of collaborative research. Such relationships are often longstanding, having formed during in-country postgraduate research or over sustained periods of academic exchange. There are undeniable advantages in sustaining involvement over long periods of time, at both individual and institutional levels.

6.2 The *complementarity* of skills and interests is a factor in relationships. This is particularly evident in the case of archaeology, which is strong in Australia and a prominent area of research collaborations without being particularly strong in Australia as an Asian studies field.

6.3 The ‘diaspora advantage’ is clear, with a high proportion of Asian-born academics developing international research partnerships. A ‘non-diaspora disadvantage’ is the obvious correlative. Fostering the former is likely to reap further rewards, but the latter needs redress.

6.4 Institutional twinning arrangements and Memoranda of Understanding provide enabling frameworks for collaborative research, but interviews conducted for the project suggest these are rarely the reason for the establishment of research partnerships. The impetus is more likely to be research priority and complementarity of research interests.

6.5 Most international collaboration in the humanities takes place at the level of individual projects. ARC Discovery Projects and smaller institutional grants for short-term research or seeding projects are the most important sources of funding for such projects.

6.6 There are relatively few opportunities for high capacity research projects, with funding for fellowships and postgraduate students, to foster research collaboration. The ARC-funded Centres of Excellence are the premier scheme directed at building international profiles, research collaborations, and multidisciplinary expertise.

6.7 In the Asia region, political-cum-national sensitivities pose problems for both domestic and foreign researchers in most places. Although the constraints vary in severity, academic freedom is an issue in many parts of the region, and one with which many Australian academics have had to deal in the context of research partnerships. Strategic planning and support for research is needed to build functional research partnerships that are appropriate and feasible for individual countries.

7 A significant impediment to the development of research collaboration policy is the paucity of readily available data on humanities in Asian countries. There is a dearth of English-language information on vast areas of higher education and research in countries in our region. Information on humanities sectors overall is fragmented across institutional and governmental sites.

8 A rethinking of the place of humanities relative to the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines in collaborative international research agendas is necessary. Research focused on major societal challenges such as ageing populations, or the uptake of artificial intelligence requires multidisciplinary input and the distinct contribution of the humanities.

9 Key features of humanities study and research in Asia include:

9.1 Humanities in Asian countries draw deeply on heritage cultures, but as an academic category they are broadly similar to humanities in the West and subject to the same pressures from global ranking systems. Debates over the ‘crisis in the humanities’ are not uncommon and are conducted in terms familiar to those employed in Australia.

9.2 There are distinguishing as well as shared features of the humanities across the region which must be considered, understood, and managed if relationships are to be established and supported. For example:

- ▶ in Malaysia and Indonesia, programs or even academic departments in faith-based humanities, dealing with ‘revealed knowledge,’ are run alongside modern secular programs and departments;
- ▶ in China, humanities programs are delivered within a formal Marxist framework, which informs without invariably determining approaches to research;
- ▶ Gender studies, a well-developed area of humanities scholarship in Australia, takes the form of development studies in many Asian countries (although there are marked differences across the region).

9.3 Cultural engagement with Asian societies means engagement with the humanities, or at least with areas covered by humanities research. In many of the Asian countries surveyed, the humanities are viewed as the academic home of national culture, sometimes at the expense of any idea of a ‘critical humanities’. Research and publications are frequently orientated towards preserving that culture.

9.4 Across the region, the institutional frameworks within which humanities are taught and research conducted are very much the same with respect to the positioning of each university in the national and international system. This creates pressure on the humanities due to the significance of STEM outcomes for rankings. It also creates opportunities, as most institutions and scholars are interested in international links.

Opportunities

1 The significant potential for enhancing research in the region could be realised through the growth of research networks, the building of shared bodies of knowledge featuring distinctive Australian contributions, and the targeted training of postgraduate students to ensure continuities in research relationships. Humanities scholars are well-placed, sometimes uniquely so, to exploit this potential.

2 The establishment of a monitor of humanities study in countries of Asia, to serve as a national and international resource centre, would be an important first step towards leveraging humanities expertise in Australia for the purposes of strengthened research collaboration.

3 A collaborative humanities data collection process, involving partner countries, would help in enhancing the visibility and functionality of humanities programs across the region and address the uneven nature of the data, especially English-language data, in terms of quantity, quality, and accessibility across systems.

4 Such a centre, properly established and resourced, would not only be useful to stakeholders in Australia, but would also send a strong signal to the region

of Australia's interest in and engagement with Asia. It would support and promote the humanities domestically and internationally, showing Australia's capacity for innovation and leadership in research.

5 There is strong evidence that diaspora networks are vital to the strength of Australia's research collaborations and outputs. The role of diaspora researchers in leading many international collaborations should be recognised by universities and governments.

6 In Indonesia, the best universities are now starting to make their way into the international league tables. As Indonesia's research interests turn outwards, Australia-Indonesia specialists will play a key role in their home institutions in encouraging these broader research connections. Indonesia should figure prominently in Australian plans for increasing research collaboration in the humanities.

7 Japan's enthusiasm for internationalisation, its open academic culture, the enhancement of its English-language capacity, the strength of Japanese language study in Australia, and the enhanced importance of Japan in the changing security environment of the Indo-Pacific are factors that signal opportunity for collaborative exchange. On the Australian side, barriers to humanities researchers from participating in important national programs, such as the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science scheme, should be removed, so that Australian researchers can compete on their merits.

8 Korea's active internationalisation agenda and its core of research-intensive universities provide a strong foundation for future development. Recent growth in undergraduate enrolments in Korean language and culture in Australian universities may increase postgraduate enrolments and foster a new generation of collaborative researchers.

9 While the humanities make up only a small proportion of research and teaching in Korean universities, and less than 20 per cent of students are likely to be enrolled in humanities programs at any one time, this is a sizeable base in comparison to Australia and higher than other countries profiled in this report. Korea offers strong opportunities for engagement in the humanities and wider cultural sector. The National Museum of Korea, the National Palace Museum of Korea, and the National Folk Museum of Korea all having a dedicated research function.

10 Singapore is an important regional partner for Australia, its long-standing significance confirmed by the 2015 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP). The creation of the Australia Singapore Arts Group to take advantage of the 2015 CSP offers a model for enhancing humanities exchanges and partnerships through a formal government-to-government framework.

11 India is one of the most promising countries for collaboration in the humanities, with major new investments through its Scheme for the Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) together with English language conditions, and emerging strengths in digital, environmental and public humanities.

12 Long-standing relations between Australian scholars and universities with their counterparts in China offer opportunities for deepening collaboration in teaching and research. The Academy's relationship with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in particular offers unique opportunities for wider sector engagement in the humanities in Australia and China. The establishment of a new National Foundation for Australia-China Relations on the Australian side introduces a potential source of support for sustained cultural and research collaboration.

Introduction

ANTONIA FINNANE

The Australian humanities sector in higher education institutions has played a key role in facilitating the turn towards Asia. Language learning, the brokerage of international relationships by area studies specialists, international exhibitions and conferences, academic exchange schemes and collaborative research have built bridges between Australian and Asian institutions, facilitating mobility and information flows between countries throughout the region. These same activities reflect the reorientation of research and classroom teaching in Australian universities, and the changing character of education and research in Asia. If all this seems obvious, it nonetheless merits restating as a reminder of the place of the humanities in Australian-Asian cultural, educational, and diplomatic relations.

Despite playing this pivotal role in international collaboration and Australia's engagement in the region, the humanities sector has not figured prominently in the policy context of international research collaboration. Collaborative undertakings in the humanities, encompassing higher education, research training, and research projects, have the capacity to generate unique forms of knowledge about our shared region, while in themselves constituting significant relationships between the different countries involved.

In recent years, a number of higher education systems in Asia have taken a turn towards the humanities. These significant policy shifts underscore the importance for Australia of engagement with humanities in the region.

1. AIMS

This report seeks to identify patterns of humanities research engagement across Australia and Asia, in order to highlight the potential for building shared fields of knowledge, strengthening regional networks, and enhancing Australia's reputation and influence in the region. Its aims are fourfold:

1. to identify the characteristics of successful Australian research collaborations in the humanities, with a view to demonstrating impact across the region, identifying possibilities for future development, and expanding Australia's research capacity;
2. to survey the humanities disciplines in selected Asian countries and territories and provide policy makers with insights into their importance and their place in the overall research matrices of significant regional partners;
3. to ascertain factors that enable or impede the development of Australian humanities research collaborations in Asia; and

4. to assess what strategic investment might be required to enhance Australia's capacity to engage in research collaboration across the Asian region, for the purposes of enhancing Australia's long-term prosperity and security at a time of unprecedented change.

2. HUMANITIES COLLABORATIONS: THE DATA GAP

One reason for the humanities sector being overlooked in the context of international research collaboration is the dearth of data by which to assess the strength of humanities collaborations, and the scope for expansion. Thomas Barlow's 2014 report *Australian Research Collaboration in Asia* omitted humanities from its coverage largely because it employed a bibliometric methodology using incidences of co-authored journal articles, which are easy to track through publication databases but do not adequately capture the form taken by humanities collaborations. As pointed out in *Smart Engagement with Asia* (Ang et al., 2015), 'a significant proportion of publications in the HASS [humanities, arts and social sciences] sector take the form of books and book chapters' and increasingly non-traditional outputs rather than journal articles, and there are as yet no comprehensive indices for the full range of outputs, although the major providers (such as Scopus and Elsevier) continue to develop more sophisticated and expanded coverage.

This project is a response to the problem of opportunity cost connected with these obvious shortfalls in data. It is designed both to document existing humanities engagements with Asia and, by surveying the humanities teaching and research fields in select Asian countries, identify potential areas for future growth. Although the information was collected before the COVID-19 pandemic, there is every reason to believe that these areas of potential research still hold and that, in fact, the recovery from the pandemic will necessitate new areas of research, including at the interface of the humanities and sciences. The data generated by the project should serve as a resource for researchers, institutions and policy makers interested in searching out possible partners for research collaborations, helping to identify useful areas of overlap between disciplinary strengths, and openings for engagement.

3. WHY ASIA?

Shortfalls in data apply to humanities research across the board. The particular focus on Asia here is explained by the rapidly changing demographic, economic and security environment in Australia's greater region. Over the last forty years, economic growth in the region has changed the world balance of power, created demand for Australian resources – not least education – and led to fundamental changes in Australia's foreign relations. Recognition of this was articulated in the 2017 *Foreign Policy White Paper's* description of Australia as 'focused on our region [and] determined to realise a secure, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific' (Australian Government, 2017).

3.1 The region

This project has been carried out at a time of rapid regional economic growth. In the current century, Asian countries have stepped up their investment in research and infrastructure, to a point where some now rank among world leaders in research and development (R&D) investment. These are among the grounds for strengthening Australian-Asian research collaborations as set out by Barlow (2014) and Ang et al. (2015). As these earlier reports indicate, stronger Australian engagement with research institutions in Asia will allow Australia to keep pace with cutting-edge, Asia-focused research, tapping into regional sources of funding and magnifying the impact of Australian research.

Humanities research and activities have inevitably been caught up in the expanded net of research investment. The turn towards creative and cultural industries in Asia is an example and has led to significant collaborations with Australian researchers (Turner, 2015; Keane, Yecies and Flew, 2018). Institutional incentives connected with the world rankings systems have resulted in rapid growth in publications in the HASS sector in Asian countries, and in increased visibility of the humanities in bibliometric data.

3.2 Australia in regional context

Based as they are in a mainly English-speaking society, in a country that is situated in close proximity to the states of Southeast Asia, Australian researchers are in a good position to get in on the ground of an expanded humanities research enterprise in Asia. For most universities in Australia, elementary frameworks for initiatives in research cooperation or collaboration are already in place by virtue of the internationalisation of higher

education. That Asia is the focus of universities' internationalisation strategies is due largely to the growing dependence of the sector on fees paid by students from China, India, and Southeast Asia.

There are other important factors at play. The region has become a focus of government policy in the higher education sector, with emphasis placed on educational exchange programs through various schemes such as, most recently, the New Colombo Plan. The size of the Chinese market and the scale of its own research sector have attracted industry interest, with corresponding research initiatives in science and technology. Multiple submissions to the 2018 Soft Power Review undertaken by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) show a high degree of engagement with Asia, arising from a general shift in awareness of where Australia sits in the global order, irrespective of immediate economic interests.

As an immigrant nation, Australia has a particular interest in building shared platforms of knowledge with Asia. The internationalisation of education here has implications different from those in China or Japan, for example, where foreign students will generally return home at the completion of their studies. Australia, by contrast, retains a relatively high number of its international students. Expanding diasporas, particularly from China and India, are creating numerous bridges between Australia and the countries and communities of Asia. Corresponding connections between humanities enterprises create loops of expertise and cultural understanding that can be applied in the international and the domestic arenas.

Finally, it is important to recognise the significance of the humanities in Asian societies. From Bollywood to Confucius Institutes, regional powers are showing a high degree of interest in projecting their own cultures onto the world stage. In an era of heightened nationalism, history has become a subject of ever keener interest. The recent Rohingya crisis in Burma and the scandal of Uyghur detentions in Xinjiang highlight anew the significance of religion as an organising principle in Asian societies. These are all areas in which humanities research can make a crucial contribution and the call of Asia to humanities scholars could hardly be louder.

4. METHODOLOGY

The project adopted a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative system mapping with qualitative data collection and analysis. The rationale for the mix of methods is that conventional metrics (including bibliometrics) are unable to capture the range of international collaborative work taking place in the humanities. Quantitative research for the report carried out substantially in 2015–2017 used the data available at that time. We have drawn on publicly available data in addition to data on request (including from the Australian Research Council (ARC)); commissioned interviews on key areas of potential to shine a light on data; taken advice from researchers across the spectrum, including counterparts in Asia; and used interviews or case studies to profile specific initiatives at researcher, institutional and multi-institutional level.

The research focuses primarily on the priority regional relationships identified in the 2012 *Australia in the Asian Century White Paper* (Australia with China, Japan, India, Indonesia, and South Korea), and subsequently singled out for attention in the 2017 *Foreign Policy White Paper*. Two additional cases of Singapore and Hong Kong have also been included due to their links with Australia in terms of demographic movements and academic connections, and their significance as regional hubs of higher education and research.

5. THE STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

This is a short form report containing chapters on the humanities in Asia, the humanities in Australia, Australian-Asian research collaborations, and brief profiles of seven Asian countries or territories (China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore).

Full versions of the detailed data-rich humanities research profiles are available online.

Despite the large number of Asian studies experts in Australia and the many years of experience of Asia on the part of administrators within the higher education system nationally, there is a widespread lack of familiarity with Asian educational and research cultures among educators and researchers in Australian universities. For this reason, attention has been paid to providing an interpretative context for the actual data. The opening chapter on the humanities in Asia and a brief introductory essay on the humanities in each place ahead of the

relevant profile in the online reports are designed for this purpose.

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The Humanities in Asia

ANTONIA FINNANE

DEFINING HUMANITIES

‘Humanities’ is a term and a concept widely deployed in Asian education systems, whether in English or in translated forms. It is an imported term, and a modern one. By and large its usage in Asia shows a replication of the Anglophone divide between the humanities and sciences. The shared terminology stems from the spread of European influence through Asia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries during the high tide of European imperialism.

COLONIAL ORIGINS AND POSTCOLONIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Colonialism in Asia and elsewhere brought European systems of knowledge into contact (and conflict) with other systems of knowledge. Among the outcomes was the nineteenth-century tendency towards a cultural split in higher learning: Western science versus Eastern philosophy, literature, and fine arts. The humanities became a battleground for competition between imported and indigenous cultures.

Decolonisation in the course of the twentieth century meant a move away from the humanities towards science and technology as the main focus of education. India’s first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru typified this shift, ‘viewing science and technology as the way out of poverty, disease,

illiteracy and ignorance...’ (Gorur and Rizvi, 2015, p. 425).

In teachers’ education and the education of women the humanities continued to feature strongly. The feminisation of the humanities continues to be evident in undergraduate studies across the region, including Australia (Neubauer, 2019, pp. 28–29).

SYSTEMIC DIFFERENCES

The homogenisation of education systems across the region is evident in patterns of schooling, with divisions between primary, secondary, and tertiary education now standard everywhere. Universities stand at the apex of each system. At the same time, different histories have given rise to nationally distinct patterns of study, research, and publishing in the humanities in Asia.

COMMUNIST AND NON-COMMUNIST SYSTEMS

The divided nations of China and Korea show obvious contrasts. In mainland China and North Korea, governed by Communist parties, Marxism-Leninism was established as a core epistemology in the 1950s and continues to be the normative framework for researchers in the humanities and social sciences. In South Korea and Taiwan, stronger connections with the past were maintained during the Cold War while democratisation in the

1990s brought liberalisation in higher education and research.

Counterintuitively, the humanities are accorded greater weight in mainland China than in some neighbouring countries. For President Xi Jinping, 'telling the China story well' is part of the People's Republic of China's soft power campaign, which needs input from the humanities. In Japan, by contrast, Shinzo Abe's government tried to scale down humanities and social science programs so as to devote resources to 'areas that better meet society's needs' (Grove, 2015).

FAITH-BASED HUMANITIES

In some countries, faith-based humanities are a feature of higher education and research, with courses in divine or 'divinely revealed' knowledge offered alongside courses in human knowledge. Islamic universities are an example, and in their more liberal form they are not unlike Australia's University of Notre Dame, where majors in chaplaincy and theology are in the mix of study streams offered to arts students. India's Aligarh Muslim University, founded in 1920, has a Faculty of Theology and a Department of Islamic Studies but otherwise offers the full suite of courses likely to be found in any comprehensive university.

In non-Communist societies of East Asia, most notably Hong Kong and South Korea, there are Christian colleges dating from missionary days, but rather few universities with indigenous religious foundations. Most faith-based institutions in the region have changed character over time from dedicated centres for the study of a particular religion to something approaching the comprehensive or liberal arts university.

GENDER AND/OR WOMEN'S STUDIES

Nominally equivalent categories of education and research in different countries sometimes prove to differ from each other in content. Gender and/or women's studies provides an example. This field is represented across the region, usually in the form of women's studies and usually with a focus on developmental and social reform issues.

The *Asian Journal of Women's Studies*, published at Ewha Womans University in Seoul, typifies the field of women's studies in Asia in its focus on contemporary social problems. At the time of writing, just one of the past five issues (Volume 18) had a primary focus on the humanities. A

similar stress on contemporary issues is evident in Indonesia, where women's studies serve local government and aid agencies through supplying information for planning and policy formation (Resurreccion, 2011, p. 27). In China, the China Women's University in Beijing offers courses in law, business, finance, and women's leadership, reflecting its origins as a women's training centre affiliated with the state-sponsored All-China Women's Federation.

Elsewhere, a trend towards the metamorphosis of women's studies into gender studies is evident. This has met with criticism from some champions of women's studies for social reform. The pioneering Research Centre for Women's Studies at SNDT (Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey) Women's University in Mumbai is a case in point, its turn from the social sciences to the humanities criticised by a former director as a surrender of its principles to 'academic gatekeepers' (Krishnaraj, 2018, p. 230). The transnational journal *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, launched in the year 2000, has many articles canvassing gender issues or employing gender as an analytical perspective and shows the engagement with gender studies more generally across the region.

AREAS OF STRENGTH

Different countries in the region have different research strengths. Ranking systems are far from being a perfect index to these but provide a broad-brush picture of areas of excellence. The 2017 QS Top Universities listings show Asian universities performing well in a number of key disciplines or study areas, and indicate comparative levels of performance.

In **archaeology**, the University of Tokyo is placed first in Asia, closely followed by Peking University. At Peking University, the School of Archaeology and Museology has collaborated with the University College of London's Institute of Archaeology to form the International Centre of Chinese Heritage and Archaeology, now in its fourteenth year.

In **English language and literature**, the regional heritage of British colonialism is apparent. The National University of Singapore (NUS), founded in 1928, is ranked 15th in the world in the QS general rankings system. In India, Delhi and Jawaharlal Nehru Universities are both in the top 100 globally for English literature.

In **history**, the University of Tokyo and the University of Kyoto vie in the QS rankings with the

NUS. Japanese historical research has international breadth; its contribution to Chinese history is especially marked and is recognised in China. At NUS, strong research performance is linked to a tradition of international recruitment that brings to the university a mix of scholars, including many Australians.

In **linguistics**, the QS rankings place Peking University and the University of Hong Kong (HKU) equal 10th in the world. Both have ongoing research in neurolinguistics. Together with the Chinese University of Hong Kong and Nanyang Technical University in Singapore, HKU is linked to the Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language, led by Professor Nicholas Evans (Australian National University) – an exemplary case of national and international collaboration.

In the **performing arts**, Indonesia has four universities in the top 100, with the Indonesia Institute of the Arts in Yogyakarta ranked 24th in the world.

Communications and media studies are strongest in Singapore, with various Hong Kong universities following suit.

Cultural studies are not separately ranked but have flourished in Hong Kong, where they are well-represented by a dedicated department at Lingnan University, and in Singapore, with a PhD program in cultural studies available at NUS.

In **philosophy**, the Chinese University of Hong Kong is tied for 30th place, while Peking and Renmin (People's) Universities also have philosophy departments ranked within the top 50 worldwide.

RESOURCES FOR HUMANITIES RESEARCHERS

Libraries and archives

Libraries and archives in Asia contain collections of global significance but vary in their openness and ease of use for visiting scholars. While public libraries are generally open to casual entry, university libraries normally require a letter of introduction from a home institution. In India, the use of the National Archives by a foreigner requires a letter of introduction from a home institution, along with a letter from the local diplomatic mission. Foreign researchers in Indonesia and China go through similarly complex processes. In China controls over use of research collections have tightened during the Xi Jinping era (King, 2016; Feng, 2017; Sharma, 2018).

Digital collections

The digitisation of libraries and archives is occurring on a vast scale across the region, making available more material than could easily be surveyed in a single lifetime. Accessibility varies between countries, and sometimes between genres of documentation, or types of archive. The National Archives of India set up a portal 'to make its rich treasure of Indian Archival Records available to one and all' (National Archives of India), ensuring that these archives can be accessed freely. The Beijing Municipal Archives permits remote access to its pre-1949 digitised collection. Post-1949 materials in Chinese archives are being digitised in increasing quantities, but can be accessed, if available at all, only in the archives reading room.

OUTPUTS

Journal articles, monographs, and book chapters are standard forms of communication of humanities research across Asia, with competition for places in world university rankings encouraging a trend towards the homogenisation of outputs. International recognition of academic publications in Asian countries is low overall, and for the humanities in particular, reflecting the cultural particularities of humanities research and the obstacles to international communication posed by language differences. In parts of Asia the emphasis on journal articles *per se* can inspire discontent, being seen as 'inappropriate and unfair' in fields where publications are just as likely to take other forms (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014, p. 43).

Cultural variations

Despite homogenisation, genres of publishing show some cultural variation across the region. In Japan, publishing in university bulletins (*kiyo*) and association journals (*gakkaishi*) is common, although emphasis is increasingly being placed on English-language international publications. In Indonesia, by contrast, scholars often publish in media outlets and blogs.

India boasts a flourishing printing and publishing industry with strong international ties. The best Indian-based publishers, such as Permanent Black and Orient BlackSwan, often collaborate with foreign academic presses. The *Indian Economic and Social History Review* is among the top-ranking humanities journals in Asia. Fake or 'predatory' journals also abound in India. In 2017, the University Grants Commission released a list of more than 36,000 journals that it would recognise

for purposes of assessment (University Grants Commission).

While India struggles with the proliferation of fake journals, China struggles with models of academic publishing management as it shifts from public to private systems. In this highly centralised state, Beijing dominates the field of journal publication, facilitating control of content as academic journals move into the category of private cultural enterprise.

The university presses

The university press is a manifestation of the relationship between the research university and book publishing, and can support the university's brand name. Changes in communications technology have led to the closure of many university presses in recent decades, but others have been established. In China, university presses have proliferated since the 1980s. They are responsible for a large number of academic journals, and in book publishing have strong although not always scholarly (research-based) humanities lists.

In India, Oxford University Press has served as the benchmark in academic publishing since being established on the subcontinent in 1912. Among local university presses, a number have succeeded by 'embracing new technologies to make themselves visible in cyberspace' (Das, 2015, p. 66). Jadavpur University Press, founded in 2011, illustrates this very well with a strong humanities list directed at a general reading public (Jadavpur University Press, 2016).

In Japan, by contrast, the top university presses publish serious scholarship in small print runs, depending on a high rejection rate for their status. Books with a lighter scholarly apparatus, designed for less academic readers, tend to be published by semi-academic commercial presses.

Hong Kong University Press has developed a successful survival strategy, specialising in Hong Kong film, Asian sexuality and gender studies.

English-language publications

The importance of citations for university rankings means a strong trend towards publishing in English-language journals. Interviewed for the project, Dr Brian Yecies (University of Wollongong) described the bonus system operating in South Korea as feeding a 'frenzy' to publish in highly ranked, usually English-language, journals. In China, the trend is evident in the production of

English-language journals designed to increase citation rates for China-based research. Examples are the *Frontiers* series (*Frontiers of History*, *Frontiers of Philosophy*), edited by leading scholars in China and published by international commercial presses. Even in Japan, long resistant to the imperatives of English-language learning, considerable emphasis is now placed on English-language publications, at the expense of funding for Japanese-language academic journals (O'Dwyer, 2019).

Wider use of English has the potential to increase collaboration between researchers based in Australia and their counterparts in Asia, but simultaneously breeds resentment and resistance amongst researchers in countries where English is not widely spoken (Flowerdew and Li, 2009, p. 13). Thailand is an example, with some academics feeling that 'if they publish in top-tier journals in English, the results will be largely inaccessible to the wider Thai society' (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014, p. 42). Circumstances there, as in Japan, are naturally different from in India, Singapore and Hong Kong, where English-language publishing is strong for historical reasons.

INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

It is an irony that the humanities – often belittled for their marginal contribution to the projects of nation-states – attract exceptional levels of political intervention and government control. In the humanities more than in any other scholarly domain, the question of academic freedom is frequently raised by researchers, professional associations, and sometimes the media.

Nationalism, the State, and academic freedoms

Throughout the region, the limits of academic freedom tend to become visible when issues of national sensitivity and state security are broached. Criticism of the government of Singapore by academics is almost on a par with criticising the monarchy in Thailand or the Communist Party in China. In Indonesia, films, publications and academic forums on the 1960s killings have all attracted censorship. In South Korea, an academic publication on the issue of wartime 'comfort women' in 2015 led to a court case and uproar around the question of academic freedom. In India, students in the state of Madhya Pradesh read in their history textbooks that, contrary to facts, China was defeated in the Sino-India war of 1962 (*Times of India*, 10 August 2017).

In Australia, there are comparable degrees of sensitivity on particular subjects – ANZAC day is the outstanding example – but the impact on scholarship, publishing, teaching, and quality of higher education has been minor. By contrast, the Asian Development Bank finds that ‘limitations on academic freedom and autonomy constitute a barrier to excellence in HEIs in a number of countries in Asia’ (Asian Development Bank, 2011).

The value placed on academic freedom in the West tends to be shared by humanities researchers in Asia, and in some cases has institutional protections and expressions. Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Taiwan all rank quite highly on the score of academic freedom. This is not true of Singapore or Malaysia, despite the legacy of British institutions (Westa, 2017; Ming et al., 2017).

In India, political influence on the appointment of university leaders is widely apparent, with the associated ‘stifling of academic freedom’ viewed by economist and philosopher Amartya Sen as the main reason why India has no world-class university (Sen, 2015). The effects are compounded by the rise of Hindu nationalist activism on campuses. It is worth noting, however, that academic freedom remains a topic of public interest and debate in India. Likewise, in Japan, pressure on universities to fly the national flag and sing the national anthem at graduation ceremonies has met with complaints of infringement on the autonomy of universities (*Japan Times*, 17 June 2015).

China and academic freedom

In China, education is ideological, and has become more so in recent years. In December 2016, President Xi Jinping called on universities to be strongholds of the Party, and pointedly raised the ‘basic question’ of who was fit to carry out the ‘sacred mission of engineering human souls,’ implying political criteria for the selection of academic staff (Fitzgerald, 2017). In December 2019, two of China’s leading universities, Fudan and Nanjing, were reported to have removed the principle of ‘freedom of thought’ from their charters (Fifield, 2019).

Hong Kong, despite having returned to the sovereignty of the People’s Republic of China in 1997, enjoys a measure of independence from Beijing by virtue of the Basic Law, which guarantees academic freedom and the autonomy of higher education institutions. In recent years, this independence has been eroded. Incidents of censorship and self-censorship were on the rise

even before the city’s universities were convulsed by anti-government protests in 2019 (Kong, 2018).

CONCLUSION

Australian discussions about Asia tend to be grounded on an assumption of difference between East and West. In higher education and research there are certainly many differences, both between Australia and Asia, and between different countries within Asia. Yet there is also a shared intellectual and institutional history of humanities learning.

Among the commonalities is a shared interest in international collaboration, driven in part by the incentive of rankings, and also by generational change. In Australian universities the proportion of Asia-born academics is steadily increasing (Oishi, 2017, p. 17). Upper-tier universities in every Asian country are hiring young graduates who have completed their PhDs at universities in the West. These early and mid-career faculty bring a world outlook to teaching and research, and seek opportunities for international partnerships.

The importance of English internationally means that Australia has natural advantages as a source of skills and a site of English-language research. However, this does not compensate for local weaknesses in Asia-related knowledge. In the humanities more than in any other area, differences in language and in research cultures militate against the formation and success of research partnerships.

As intra-Asian collaboration strengthens, policies that foster language-learning and cultural knowledge are needed to create and maintain Australian-Asian research ties in the humanities – and other areas as well. Cultural knowledge includes familiarity with the scope and character of humanities research in countries of Asia, and the environments – institutional, political and social – within which humanities research takes place.

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The Humanities in Australia

KYLIE BRASS AND LESLEY JOHNSON

INTRODUCTION

The nature of humanities scholarship in Australia has been significantly reshaped by a series of changes to the higher education sector over the last five decades. Since the 1980s, the university system has been transformed by a process of massification, with further periods of expansion into the twenty-first century through the uncapping of student places and an internationalisation agenda that has driven fee-paying international student numbers to now comprise over a quarter of the system. There has been an increased focus within universities and government higher education policy on research rather than teaching, and on building strengths in medical, engineering, and biological sciences and in applied research. In response to changing institutional and policy contexts the humanities have positioned themselves as more overt partners to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, and more obvious contributors to a national policy agenda dominated by science, technology and innovation.

In the same time period, the humanities have transformed from within: while maintaining strong disciplinary foci, new collaborative areas of inquiry have developed, and the humanities continue to engage with the turn to digital and data-driven research. The content and critical perspectives of the humanities disciplines have always been central to Australia's cultural life and to developing deep

understanding of other cultures and societies; and the humanities remain at the heart of topical and often contentious debates about Australia's national life.

NATIONAL ROLE

A comprehensive survey of the humanities in Australia, published in 1959, opened with a Foreword by then Prime Minister Robert Menzies, who positioned the humanities as a moral imperative – a 'check' on the excesses of modernity: 'If we are to escape from this modern barbarism, humane studies must come back into their own; not as the enemies of science, but as its guides and philosophic friends' (Grenfell Price, 1959, p. xi). Menzies was in part responding to the findings of the Murray Report which he had commissioned – the first national inquiry into the state of university education in Australia – which presaged greater government influence in the development of higher education (Commonwealth of Australia, 1957). The Murray Report had identified that Australia was lagging in the humanities, which Menzies in his Foreword characterised as a function of the country's 'youth', geographical isolation, emphasis on local travel and sport and lack of philanthropy.

The humanities were influenced in the 1950s, but more particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, by a cultural nationalism that led to an increased interest in studying Australian history, literature, and

culture. The first chair in Australian Literature was established at the University of Sydney in 1963. The study of Australian history was pioneered at the University of Melbourne starting in 1913, followed by moves to explore Australian history at other universities in the following decades. It flourished at the University of Melbourne from the beginning of the 1950s, and subsequently at all universities. With the development of library holdings of Asian and Pacific materials over this period, Australian historians began to take an interest in undertaking studies of these regions and of Australia's regional relationships. Other disciplines such as archaeology also developed an Australian focus in this same period, with pioneering work in Australian prehistory beginning in the mid-1950s that led to a far more detailed understanding of early human settlement that had preceded white invasion by many thousands of years.

The dismantling of the White Australia policy over the course of the 1960s and 1970s and the embrace of multiculturalism during the 1980s challenged the focus on Australia within a nationalistic framework. New conceptual geographies, as Robert Dixon called them in his contribution to a collection of essays entitled *The Humanities in Australia: Taking Stock* (Dixon, 2012, p. 161ff), were being explored as scholars in Australia began to look outward for new frameworks for their disciplines. What 'Australia' stood for had become an increasingly contested object of study, and the place of the nation in humanities scholarship, as Ien Ang remarked in the same volume of essays, 'has been fundamentally unsettled in our contemporary globalised world' (Ang, 2012, p. 183).

RECOGNISING INDIGENOUS CULTURES AND HISTORIES

A key challenge to the existing nationalistic framework was the emergence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders studies. As David Bennett has noted, a watershed event in the history of these studies was the establishment of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Studies (AIATSIS) in 1961 with an interim Council. An Act of Parliament in 1964 established The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies; in 1989 a revision to the Act had ensured an Indigenous majority on its Council (Bennett, 1998, p. 1). Its main purposes were to conduct, facilitate and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies and to train Indigenous researchers.

The national referendum on amending the constitution in relation to Aboriginal peoples in 1967 signalled a crucial shift by Australian governments away from assimilation policies towards policies based on self-determination and human rights. This was associated with a related move in research in which Aboriginal people increasingly became the initiators rather than simply the objects of Aboriginal studies. Similarly, the *Native Title Act 1993* (Commonwealth) led to research in archaeology, prehistory, history, anthropology and linguistics gaining significance as researchers became involved in providing evidence for native title claims (Bennett, 1998, p. 3).

These positive moves were, however, undermined somewhat from the early 1990s onwards, with a number of historians characterising the writing of Australian history as hindered by a 'black armband' view of the colonial period (Blainey, 1993). Several prime ministers became involved in what became known as the 'history wars' that ensued as they debated how this history should be told.

With the expansion of the Australian higher education system in the late 1980s, what have been referred to in some contexts as 'the new Humanities' began to be increasingly important. New areas of study such as postcolonial studies, gender studies, Australian studies, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies and non-Asian area studies (Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East) burgeoned in the context of a growing self-consciousness about a range of intercultural matters.

A TURN TO ASIA

Alongside these developments, and increasingly interacting with the debates about Australia's national identity and its place in the world, 'Asian studies' began to grow significantly in Australia. Japanese languages and studies were taught early, in the interwar years, at the Universities of Melbourne and Sydney. Chinese languages and studies were introduced in the immediate post-war period. With the establishment of the Australian National University as a major research institution in 1946, the broader field of Asian studies was pioneered as a significant field of research in Australia. As Anthony Milner notes, however, it was framed initially within a colonial framework focusing on 'oriental,' exotic civilisations (Milner, 1999). In the 1960s and 1970s, 'Asian studies' emerged more clearly with the establishment of departments at, for example, the University of Western

Australia and Griffith University, one of the newer universities established in Queensland in the early 1970s. Asian studies was code in the 1960s and 1970s for the addition of Southeast Asian studies to existing East Asian studies programs (Finnane, 1995). The extraordinary popularity of Indian history and the proliferation of appointments in this area in the 1960s, gave way to greater emphasis on China from the 1970s onward, and to the flourishing of Southeastern Asian studies, particularly at Monash University which became a powerhouse in this area (Milner, 1999; Asian Studies Association of Australia, 2002).

These developments coincided with the question of whether Australians should understand themselves as part of Asia, a question that overlapped with debates over the identity of the nation itself.

The strength of Asian studies in Australian universities has been influenced over the years by Australian government policy concerning links with Asia, as has the teaching of Asian languages. Over the last few decades, successive Australian governments have pursued economic links with Asia (with a particular focus on China), and more recently in a context in which Australia is transitioning from a traditional reliance on resources and commodities to a services sector with higher education a particularly strong area of growth. The international student market has been a sustained focus of internationalisation strategies pursued by Australian universities over the last ten years. These developments have been accompanied by a growing interest among all Australian scholars, including in the humanities, in collaborations with scholars in Asia. The pursuit of such links has been facilitated by the significant growth of international students from Asia studying in Australian universities.

The broader national context shows that recent patterns of migration and mobility are transforming Australia's relations with countries in the region (Ang, Tambiah and Mar, 2015). Overseas migration has given Australia a richly multicultural, ethnically diverse population with a very large proportion of Australian residents born overseas (28.1 per cent), including large numbers of residents originally from Asia (for example, China, Hong Kong and Taiwan: 447,370; India: 397,180; and Malaysia: 153,870). In addition, with approximately 20 per cent of Australians having one or more parents born overseas, approximately half of all Australians were either born overseas, or have close family born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015). The

Diversity Council of Australia has estimated that around 17 per cent of people living and working in Australia identify as being of Asian origin (O'Leary, 2015, p. 9).

The role of these diaspora in 'wiring Australia into the region through global networking' is not widely understood (Ang, Tambiah and Mar, 2015, p. 5). University policy makers, for example, are yet to incorporate the role of diaspora researchers into their strategic thinking about driving international collaboration – partly because it is a challenge to conventional top-down approaches of universities' international collaboration strategies (Anderson, 2016).

THE POLICY STATUS OF THE HUMANITIES

Though the humanities have retained a strong teaching profile at Australian universities (Turner and Brass, 2014), humanities scholars have increasingly sought competitive research funding, adapting to a paradigm developed (and continuing to be developed) by scientific research. This has involved taking on multiple research projects, working in teams and often with international collaborators, producing outputs in scholarly, peer-reviewed journals (while continuing to publish scholarly books) and addressing a set of science-focused national research priorities (food, soil and water, transport, cybersecurity, energy, resources, advanced manufacturing, environmental change, and health), which emphasise the role of research in contributing to economic productivity.

Further shaping humanities research since the 1990s has been a policy focus on facilitating collaborative research between university researchers and external industry bodies and other possible beneficiaries and end-users of research. This first emerged with the establishment of the Australian Research Council (ARC) Key Research Centres and Linkage Schemes in the 1990s. Responding to this policy framework, humanities scholars have formed productive links with a range of external bodies such as museums, libraries, and other cultural institutions, as well as not-for-profit organisations, government agencies, and the private sector.

Pressure to pursue this goal for all research has increased considerably in recent years and new measures of 'Engagement and Impact' were incorporated into the 2018 round of Australia's Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) research assessment audit, administered by the ARC. The move to evaluate and encourage greater links

between university researchers and external bodies is, of course, indicative of a particular model of the national role of university research. Universities are also being encouraged to integrate real world research into undergraduate teaching programs through ‘work integrated learning’. Research is becoming an explicit teachable skill for work preparedness even in undergraduate courses. The primary emphasis currently is on its economic value to the nation, particularly as Australia seeks to transform its industrial base and move towards a greater reliance on services and knowledge-based industries. While the value of other partnerships for university research is recognised by current policy, this economic emphasis places implicit pressures on all university researchers. Achieving the ‘right’ balance between impact and quality, and discovery and applied research is an ongoing issue.

MAPPING THE HUMANITIES, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Concern about maintaining capability and building capacity in this policy context was the focus of a 2014 report produced by the Australian Academy of the Humanities, in collaboration with the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia. The *Mapping the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences in Australia* report took a system-wide data-mapping approach to describe and appraise the state and potential of humanities, arts and social sciences (HASS) tertiary education, research and academic workforce. The report was consciously modelled on a mapping of the science higher education and research sector undertaken by the Office of the Chief Scientist, *The Health of Australian Science* (2012). While *Mapping the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences in Australia* identified ‘a strong and resilient HASS sector which makes a major contribution to the national higher education system, to the national research and innovation system, and to preparing our citizens for participation in the workforce,’ it also pointed out several key challenges for the future. These include risks and challenges to succession of the academic workforce and pathways for early career academics, including casualisation, the ageing workforce, and gender disparities. The report also concluded that Australia’s demand-driven system has led to market failures with implications for the national interest (Turner and Brass, 2014, p. 91) and that there were systemic impediments in national programs which have prevented the full contribution of the HASS sector.

FUNDING SCHEMES

The humanities’ access to national-scale funding schemes, such as the Commonwealth-funded National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy program, the Cooperative Research Centres (CRC) program, and even the ARC’s Centres of Excellence Scheme, has been limited by the criteria established for such programs. This has had consequences for the development of international collaborations of significant scale (Turner and Brass, 2014, p. 2). In Australia, there are no federal government programs specifically for humanities, arts and social sciences research, unlike STEM-specific programs (Harris and Meyer, 2011), although the 2019 announcement of a one-off Special Research Initiative for Australian Society, History and Culture will predominantly support projects in these research fields. HASS fields have made some inroads into the CRC program through cooperative relations with science but have been hampered by sustained periods when humanities, arts and social sciences researchers were ineligible for such programs in their own right, and the subsequent level of engagement has been variable.

The absence of a policy mechanism for delivering independent advice to government from the HASS sector has been significant in the framing of research policy initiatives. The premier advisory mechanisms for research and innovation in Australia, the National Science and Technology Council, and Innovation and Science Australia – ‘an independent board responsible for providing strategic whole-of-government advice on all science, research and innovation matters’ (Innovation and Science Australia, n.d.) – have little to limited HASS expertise in their membership, nor is HASS expertise represented on federal research infrastructure funding and investment planning bodies. The release of a National Science Statement (Australian Government, 2017) acknowledged the role of the humanities, arts and social sciences as part of the wider research and innovation system, but Australia does not have a comprehensive research strategy at federal level which encompasses both STEM and HASS. The release of the Innovation and Science Australia’s strategy to 2030 implies a role for the humanities in delivering the skills and knowledge for digital literacy, but as yet there are no substantive programs in place to execute that agenda.

INTERNATIONALISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

In terms of the status and potential of international collaboration, across both education and research domains, there have been a number of policy initiatives with a regional or international focus in recent years. *Australia in the Asian Century* (Australian Government, 2012) commissioned by the then Prime Minister Julia Gillard and presented by Ken Henry called on Australians to all ‘play our part in becoming a more Asia-literate and Asia-capable nation’ (p. iii). The White Paper emphasised Australia’s relationship with China, India, Indonesia, Japan and South Korea, with cultural and/or public diplomacy a key tenet: ‘The arts, culture and creativity can broaden and strengthen Australia’s relationships in Asia, both formally and informally’ (p. 8). Henry recommended that the government ‘support Australian researchers to broaden and strengthen their partnerships with the region as Asia grows as a global science and innovation hub’ (p. 10).

Specific recommendations included encouraging university students to undertake part of their degree in Asia; increasing participation in university-level Asian studies and Asian languages; encouraging universities to have a presence in Asia; and supporting Australia-Asia teaching and research linkages. The report recommended strengthening bilateral architecture and various strategies to enhance people-to-people links. The White Paper suggested some urgency in this, observing that ‘as the international focus on Asia intensifies, Australia will face more competition for opportunities to collaborate with the region’s most capable researchers. Sustaining Australia’s present links will need continued investment and stewardship by governments, our leading scientists, innovators and institutions’ (p. 267).

The current Federal Government does not have an Asia-specific strategy of the order described in the Henry White Paper, but its International Education Strategy (released in 2016) does include a research collaboration agenda around ‘enhancing international cooperation through in-country projects, research collaboration, two-way mobility and transnational education.’ The Department of Innovation, Industry and Science maintains several bilateral international research programs (with a focus on China and India).

On the part of Australian universities, the internationalisation agenda, which the next chapter addresses, has been characterised as overly focused

on supply-side dynamics of international education. Leask and Murray say this focus will be ‘inadequate in the future’ and that there are ‘perverse polic[ies] ... influencing student choice, in particular the tight nexus between international education and migration to Australia’ (Murray and Leask, 2015, p. 191). While there is evidence that some of these ‘dominant trends’ are being reversed, ‘new legislation regarding skilled migration [is] likely to be off-putting’ and there are other disincentives in the system for recruitment of researchers and teachers.

A report by the British Council on global education rated Australia highly on almost all measures to the extent that Australia ranks equal first alongside Hong Kong, the Netherlands, Malaysia and the UK on indicators such as openness of higher education systems, quality assurance and degree recognition, and international student mobility. However, Australia placed 30 of 38 countries on measures relating to ‘outbound scholarships and foreign languages provision’ (Ilieva and Peak, 2017). The provision of and demand for languages other than English at Australian universities has been subject to volatility over time. There have been periods of sustained increase in enrolments, for example, over the first decade of the twenty first century, but structural barriers persist (Turner and Brass, 2014). Access to languages courses at regional universities has been patchy, although the emergence of consortia-based approaches has been effective. The crisis in languages of lesser demand (LLD) remains an ongoing issue, with new funding models for the higher education sector at turn of the century making it difficult to run smaller classes (Asian Studies Association of Australia, 2002).

At a system level, Australia’s international collaborative agenda is still being led by international education initiatives and much less so by an international research engagement. The data used to understand international research engagement and underpin strategy are largely focused on volume metrics (income or bibliometrics) and less so on quality measures (via the ARC’s Excellence in Research for Australia exercise, for example) or qualitative components. In the humanities, levels of international engagement can seem relatively low based on these indicators, although survey work has shown the breadth of engagement at the individual researcher level. What is missing is a larger strategic agenda about how this grassroots activity is driving relationships in the Asia region. At federal government level, international research collaborative programs

are oriented towards the STEM disciplines; by contrast there are no programs specifically aimed at encouraging such collaboration for HASS researchers and in some programs explicit exclusion of HASS fields, for example, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Fellowships which was formerly open to researchers across all disciplines. Current policy mechanisms also tend to support bilateral arrangements, and not multi-national research engagement.

In the arts and cultural arena, Australia's galleries, libraries, archives and museums have increasingly stronger links into the research sector together with cooperative links with cultural and collecting institutions in the Asia-Pacific region. For the humanities and arts fields, this opens up potential for engagement in areas of both cultural and research diplomacy.

INSTITUTIONAL AUTONOMY AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Freedom of inquiry and expression within higher education context has been the subject of a recent government review in Australia. The Independent Review of Adoption of the Model Code on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom was established in response to several high-profile incidents at universities in 2018, including the cancellation of a talk by Quentin Van Meter at the University of Western Australia in August 2018, and student opposition to Bettina Arndt's speeches delivered at La Trobe University and the University of Sydney. Arndt and Van Meter were external speakers on controversial speaking tours; both had sought to express views in their speeches that were thought to further marginalise vulnerable groups, being sexual assault victims and transgender individuals respectively. Student and public opposition to these events was framed in some quarters as an effort to censor conservative viewpoints.

As this debate unfolded it was revealed that the then Minister for Education, the Hon. Simon Birmingham, had decided to veto \$4 million in competitive grants that had been awarded by the ARC to humanities, arts and social sciences projects through its rigorous academic peer review processes. This decision – which was brought to light through the Senate Estimates process – was only the second time a Minister had intervened in this way. The subsequent Minister, the Hon. Dan Tehan, has since introduced a 'national interest test' to the ARC's grant application process. These

developments raise the prospect of self-censorship in the humanities, perceived or actual.

More recently, debates on the balance between freedom of speech and censorship at Australian universities have been heightened by a focus on 'foreign interference'. In late August 2020, the Federal Government introduced the *Australian Foreign Relations Bill*, which would allow it to 'cancel and prohibit arrangements, memoranda and partnerships that are not consistent with Australia's foreign relations' or in the 'national interest.' Among the proposed measures, Australian universities will be required to monitor their engagements. A number of recent high-profile cases of Chinese involvement in university research have gained widespread media attention, focused on science and technology collaboration between Australia and China. The humanities may be less immediately impacted by this agenda, and in fact have a role to play in building trusted relationships on the basis of deep cross-cultural knowledge and expertise.

CONCLUSION

The Australian system, and the humanities within it, may be characterised as being in transition with tensions between 'global' and 'national' imperatives – its higher education system both 'borderless' and subject to global trends, yet also parochial. The conditions exist for more sustained collaboration in the humanities, not least as the providers of some of the most important infrastructural linguistic and cultural capability. A recent UK report has suggested that we are in a global 'Fourth Age of research' in which 'leading edge research and innovation is shared across countries' with 'more research active universities ... intensely engaged with partners in other countries,' heralding a shift from a 'national base to an international network' (Adams and Gurney, 2016, p. 7). At the disciplinary and individual researcher level it is also the case that the viability of networks and the capacity to sustain long-term collaboration will be vital to the health and longevity of research. Australia has not yet realised the potential of humanities knowledge networks within or beyond its borders.

Increased effort among individual Australian humanities scholars in collaborating with colleagues in Asia suggests that Australian humanities scholarship will undergo major changes in the decades ahead. Local and international collaborations will challenge our

conceptual geographies and sense of shared history. Added to this will be the increasing interest in both questioning the dominance of science and technology frameworks in defining and understanding the major global challenges of our time. There will be opportunities for science and humanities researchers to work together on these issues. This is happening in interdisciplinary fields, such as the environmental humanities and the medical humanities, and increasingly through problem-based research centres funded by universities or via the ARC Centres of Excellence program. Such developments will be important for the future of collaborations between humanities researchers in Australia and Asia.

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Humanities collaboration between Australia and Asia

EMILY DUNN AND ANTONIA FINNANE

INTRODUCTION

Rapid economic growth throughout Asia along with the increased integration of global political, economic, cultural and knowledge systems over the last half century have had profound effects on Australia's research and higher education sectors. Australian universities are now increasingly connected with partners in Asia, with implications for research and teaching in the humanities. Australian academics travel as international visiting fellows to Asian destinations, supervise overseas students from Asian countries, and contribute to international conferences in the region. Informal scholarly networks connect Australian centres of humanities teaching and research to their counterparts in South, Southeast, and Northeast Asia.

These scholarly ties serve Australia's national interest well. Like collaborations involving other disciplines, collaborations in the humanities can serve as a form of cultural diplomacy, improving understanding between nations and gathering information about other societies. Collaboration of this sort is a core feature of internationalisation in the higher education sector.

This chapter draws on interviews conducted for the project and from the country and regional profiles to reflect on humanities collaboration between Australia and Asia.

Internationalisation

Internationalisation involves intentional and structured processes designed by governments, institutions and individuals to meet a range of objectives in higher education by expanding international engagements. At a system level, we noted in the previous chapter, Australia's international collaborative agenda is led primarily by international education initiatives and much less so by international research or scholarly engagements. Historically, this can be explained by national governments pursuing internationalisation in higher education for broader political and economic objectives. While this remains the case, at the institutional and discipline levels internationalisation is increasingly valued as a means for circulating knowledge, stimulating innovation in teaching and learning, and improving the quality of education and research.

Key features of internationalisation that emerge from research and interviews for this project include:

- › incorporation of international perspectives in curricula
- › use of English as a medium of instruction
- › international partnership agreements between higher education institutions
- › increased student and faculty mobility

- › transnational education (including via branch or offshore campuses, and twinning programs)
- › research collaboration.

The weighting of these features varies according to national contexts, as noted in the humanities profiles developed for this report. In Indonesia, an important aspect of international collaboration is faculty travelling abroad to undertake research higher degrees. In Japan and Korea, internationalisation has focused on retaining domestic students and attracting international students. In India, a Study in India program (SII) was launched in 2018 with the aim of substantially lifting international student numbers. In China, internationalisation is focused on assisting selected universities to achieve ‘world-class’ status, and to stimulate innovation and economic productivity. This has led to increased funding for selected universities, and to increased postgraduate mobility.

Internationalisation is commonly included among measures of quality in university rankings, which are in turn interpreted as both indicating and influencing future performance in the knowledge economy. East Asian nations, together with Singapore, have experienced significant success in chasing ‘world-class’ recognition (Oktafiga, 2016; Tilak, 2016). To the extent that research collaborations between Australia and Asia are shaped by the rankings, these help to define inter-country relationships.

Internationalisation is also increasingly recognised as an important contributor to national economic outcomes, particularly as the World Trade Organisation’s General Agreement on Trade in Services continues to open global markets for students, teachers and researchers. Nations seek connectivity through this mechanism, but also compete for global talent and the economic dividends of internationalisation. The stakes are significant: annual education exports from Australia in the financial year 2016–2017 stood at \$28 billion (Australian Government, 2018).

Student mobility

Despite structural differences between systems, student mobility is a major element of internationalisation in all of the higher education systems considered in this report, and has direct implications for research collaborations in the humanities. China and India feature strong outbound movement, supplying students to Australia among other places. In Japan, Korea,

and Taiwan, the recruitment of international students and the retention of domestic students is an important generator of university revenue. Hong Kong and Singapore both seek recognition as education hubs and are active in recruiting international students.

International student destination choice is based on a variety of considerations including language, immigration policy, cost and quality of education, social capital, work and study regulations, safety, and living conditions (Asian Development Bank Institute, 2014). Australia performs well as a destination on all of these counts, attracting high enrolments of international students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels: in 2018, international students accounted for close to 25 per cent of all enrolments (including offshore), having increased by 11 per cent since the previous year. Of these, around one in five was physically in Australia, while around 8 per cent were enrolled in humanities, arts and social sciences (HASS) areas (Norton and Cherastidtham, and Grattan Institute, 2018). Outward bound mobility is also growing, with Asia a favoured destination for short courses. Study in Asia specifically is supported by the Overseas Higher Education Loan Program (OS-HELP), which since 2013 has included targeted funding for preparatory Asian language learning, and by the New Colombo Plan (NCP), announced in 2014.

At postgraduate level, international mobility is supported by government scholarships from Australia and elsewhere. It is recognised that international postgraduate students make a significant contribution to the research capacity of their host countries, and to global knowledge production. In the humanities, where international students are present only in modest numbers, there is room for growth which might be achieved through focused strategies.

Faculty mobility

Australian universities have always recruited international faculty, initially from the UK and since World War II increasingly from North America and Asia. International faculty choose their destinations based on a range of considerations such as immigration policy, living conditions and currency exchange rates.

There is strong international faculty mobility from Asia to other regions. In 2015, Asian-born academics made up 15.4 per cent of all teaching and research positions in Australian universities (Oishi,

2017). The flow of academics from China and India in particular is expected to grow over time (Balasooriya, et al., 2014).

Mobility at any career stage seems to be beneficial both for the researcher and for the receiving institution. This said, Australian institutions differ in recruitment patterns of international scholars. Among the Group of Eight universities, the University of New South Wales has the highest proportion of Asian-born academics, with 22.5 per cent in 2015. The Australian National University has seen the steepest rise in such appointments, from 5.9 per cent in 2005 to 15.5 per cent in 2015. In this group, only the University of Melbourne saw a decline in the decade to 2015, dropping from 7.3 per cent in 2005 to 3.8 per cent in 2015 (Oishi, 2017). The impact of low numbers of Asian-born academics on an institution's research engagement with Asia-based scholars is a topic worth further research.

While the movement of students and scholars from the global south to the global north (including Australia) has long given rise to concerns about a 'brain drain', recent analysis points also to a 'brain gain'. Migrant scholars often straddle their country of origin and country of residence through research projects, the international sponsorship of visiting fellows, intensive teaching, and ultimately longer-term positions back in their home country.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS

International research collaboration is both a factor driving mobility (whether for faculty or postgraduate students), and also an outcome of mobility.

General features

Funding for collaboration is increasing globally, primarily in top-tier research institutions, and strong intra-Asian research connections have been developing, with China a dominant partner. Historically, China and Japan report lower incidences of international collaboration than Australia-based scholars, although that situation is changing (Teichler, Arimoto and Cummings, 2013, p. 144).

Factors that increase the likelihood of international collaboration include: being male, having parents with tertiary education, having undertaken a postdoctoral fellowship; having earned an advanced degree (PhD or postdoctoral fellowship) abroad; working at universities and holding a senior

rank (Rostan et al., 2014, p. 140; Vabø et al., 2014, pp. 191–92). Interviews conducted for this project were mainly of senior scholars and not inconsistent with these findings.

A 2014 report for the Australian Council of Learned Academies found that Australia had formed strong regional collaborations in non-humanities fields of study, especially with China, noting that more effort would be needed to build research links with India, Korea, and Thailand (Barlow, 2014). The research for this project uncovers specific areas of collaboration between humanities researchers based in Australia and Asia, and strengths that could be leveraged to further these relationships.

Australian-Asian collaborations in the humanities

Bibliometric data show that Australia's collaborations in the arts and humanities have been increasing in recent years, with a near-current international co-authorship rate of 34 per cent of indexed journal articles (Scimago Journal & Country Rank, 2017). Australian-Asian co-authorships are rising correspondingly, particularly with China, although numbers overall are small. Among key Asian countries, India has low rates of collaboration (20 per cent), while China, Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, and Japan all range between 30 per cent (Indonesia) and 42 per cent (Singapore). In raw figures, on the basis of co-authored papers, China is the leading collaborator among Asian countries, followed by Japan, India, and Singapore (Bayliss, 2016).

It should be noted that because bibliometrics are primarily based on journal articles, this data does not capture the full range of collaborative activities of the scholars involved. It does not, for example, include collections published in books – which is a major medium of humanities publication – nor does it take account of publishing through electronic media (which is, for example, often the medium of choice in Indonesia).

Scholars' reasons for collaborating are complex, and shaped by a range of personal, institutional, and national circumstances. For Asia-based partners, the Australian higher education environment is attractive owing to its high degree of academic freedom and world-class universities. In an international scholarly environment dominated by English-language research, Australia also offers a regional alternative to the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States.

On the Australian side, shared research interests and the prospect of knowledge transfer are key motivators, particularly for researchers who identify with area studies. Collaboration can often be crucial for access to research materials. Furthermore, among Asian-Australian academics (irrespective of their field of study), the incidence of collaboration with Asian researchers and institutions is high (Freeman, 2014). According to Oishi (2017), 'over three-quarters of [Asian-born academics] (76.1 per cent) have collaborated with scholars in Asian countries.'

PATHWAYS TO INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Building relationships

International collaboration often occurs under the rubric of international partnership agreements between universities. Yet agreements of this nature are largely aspirational, and do not necessarily indicate activity. None of the interviewees for this project mentioned international partnership agreements as fostering their collaborations. In two cases, participants' collaborative relationships actually led to international partnership agreements.

Indeed, interpersonal relationships are often critical for establishing and sustaining international collaboration. Early exposure (through, for example, language study or PhD fieldwork) can lead to enduring academic relationships or can establish the basis for forming these relationships at a later career stage. While new technologies have opened up new possibilities for collaboration, the importance of face-to-face interactions in collaborative research is borne out by the scholarly literature and interviews conducted for this project.

Building capacity

Humanities research in Australian universities is supported by the Australian Research Council (ARC) via several grant categories. Collaborative research can be among both the processes and the outcomes of such grants, either by being built into the grant application at inception or emerging as a consequence of conference and publishing activities in its course. The largest ARC funding grants available to academics interviewed for this project are through the Centres of Excellence scheme. The capacity of grants awarded to the Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language and the Centre of Excellence in Creative Industries

and Innovation permitted the enrolment of international postgraduate students and otherwise facilitated scholarly networking.

ARC grants are a key resource for smaller research projects, with Discovery Projects being the most common. More modest grants are available from universities, from country councils supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) (such as the Australia-India Council), and from international grant bodies, such as the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation in Taiwan or Monbukagakusho (formerly known as Mombusho) in Japan. Asian scholars likewise have access to funding through a variety of national grant bodies.

The China Scholarship Council offers indirect support to collaborative humanities research through its investment in overseas visiting scholars programs for PhD and postdoctoral researchers. A large number of Australian universities have signed up to this scheme, which requires the signatories to provide supervision to up to ten PhD students, and academic hospitality for up to ten postdoctoral researchers. The scheme has implications for medium or longer-term collaborations in the humanities and deserves study in its own right.

DIGITAL HUMANITIES

The digitisation of the humanities has developed at scale in the present century, helped by government funding for the digitisation of cultural heritage items, and publishers and libraries moving to digitisation of books and journals. A field of digital humanities has emerged, with professional associations across the world and a number of centres in Australia as well as across Asia.

Developments in information technology are among the drivers of research collaboration. The emergence of digital humanities as a vibrant and fast-growing international field is a significant development. Digitisation can be a cost-effective means of opening up certain areas of research for distance engagement. For example, Sarah Kenderdine, former President of the Australasian Association for Digital Humanities (established in 2011), has worked with numerous Asian scholars and industry professionals on collaborative projects involving galleries, libraries, archives and museums (GLAM). Kenderdine worked with scholars in India on a five-year project on Hampi, an ancient Hindu Kingdom in southern India which is now a UNESCO world heritage site.

Such collaborations in the digital humanities hold ‘massive potential changes in scholarship’, Kenderdine observed in an interview for this project. In Australia, the National Library of Australia’s digitisation projects have made a great volume of Asian and Asia-related materials freely available to researchers around the world. In China, the Beijing Municipal Archives (although not its Shanghai counterpart) allows free access to digitised documents from before 1949. The National Digital Library of India provides generous open access to a vast and growing corpus of digital resources.

While digitisation can lead to greater access to important materials, and assist collaborative research, it can also involve manipulation of data and gatekeeping. In China, digitised back-issues of journals are routinely manipulated to remove content originally published in the print version but considered too sensitive for reproduction in digital format. The result is that commercially-available digital knowledge platforms comparable to JSTOR in China ‘are stealthily redacting their holdings’ without notifying subscribing libraries in Australia and elsewhere of what has been deleted (Tiffert, 2019, 2020). To some degree, ‘collaboration [of users] across disciplinary and professional boundaries’ is a prerequisite to rendering the digital data serviceable and ensuring the dynamism of the field (De Weerd, 2016).

IDENTIFYING THE CHALLENGES

Colonial legacies and political environments

Differences in scholarly culture and convention between Asia and Australia can make collaboration – particularly co-authorship – difficult. The hegemony of English-language scholarship and the dominance of Anglophone academic convention is sometimes felt as a continued form of colonialism, or even as a form of neo-colonialism. Both diasporic and other academics in Australian universities have commented on the need for recognition by universities of different forms of academic writing as legitimate outcomes of research. Short, in-depth articles and published forums are examples that might be appropriate to collaborative research.

Generational differences in approach must also be acknowledged, along with changing political contexts. National political sensitivities can challenge the capacity of Australian researchers to engage with local scholars, with some topics being essentially ‘off limits’ for study: the 1965

massacre in Indonesia; Tibet; the Singaporean government. In China, liberalisation has been succeeded by stricter censorship in recent years. Topics such as constitutional democracy, universal values, civil society, neoliberalism, and freedom of the press have been off limits to researchers since 2013 (Tiffert, 2020, p. 2). In India, intensifying nationalism poses challenges for researchers, both domestic and international. Comparably, in Australia the Minister of Education can reject projects approved for funding through the ARC’s competitive peer-review processes. This prerogative has been used in two known instances, the first in 2005 and more recently in 2018 when 11 humanities, arts and social sciences projects, including Asia-related research, were rejected for ARC funding by the Minister.

Cultural competency

Cultural competency, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity are all vital ingredients in successful Australian engagement with Asian humanities research. Building collaborative relationships requires significant cultural awareness. Opportunities for engagement can be jeopardised by a failure to think through practicalities. Professor Nicholas Evans provides a simple example: in India and China, accommodation and other expenses for visiting scholars may well be covered for approved conferences, creating a cultural expectation of reciprocity that can be difficult to meet in Australia.

Most collaborators interviewed for this project have Asian language skills, either acquired or native, along with significant cultural knowledge. Naturally, many identify with the field of Asian studies. Indeed, one of the challenges for building closer relationships between humanities sectors in Australia and Asia is how to engage more academics from outside the Asian studies area. Cultural studies and archaeology are among the disciplines where strong collaborations have been forged without particular area studies strengths.

In Asia, Australian studies programs help to build cultural competency, and are a site of convergence between Australia-based and Asia-based humanities scholars. DFAT supports Australian Studies Centres throughout Asia. These centres are significant for building scholarly networks. The Indian Association for the Study of Australia (Eastern Region) has been running international conferences since 2007, and its counterpart in China, founded in 1988, from much earlier again.

Linguistic proficiency

Education systems in Asia have invested heavily in English as a medium of instruction in order to accelerate internationalisation, create ‘world-class’ universities, and attract international students. This has opened the door to enrolment by students from non-English-speaking backgrounds in English-language postgraduate programs. Humanities disciplines are typically more language-sensitive than science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, and interviewees for this project reported that supervising students from Asia for whom English is a second language can be unusually intensive. Yet there is much to gain. As Professor Michael Keane remarked in an interview for this project: ‘you develop cultural capital, you develop cultural relationships; you get invited back [to the country of origin].’

The status of English as a world language means that on the Anglophone side, a lack of capacity in a foreign language need not be an obstacle to collaboration. That said, opportunities for collaboration will remain small in the absence of a healthy levels of language capacity across the system. Australia has low and even declining numbers of local enrolments in advanced-level Asian language courses. Enrolments in Indonesian have fallen by around 40 per cent from a peak of 482 EFTSL (equivalent full-time student load) in 2001, flatlining since 2014 (Hill, 2020). Enrolments in East Asian languages look heartening on the surface (see Japan Foundation 2019), but because these high enrolments are driven by international student recruitment (McLaren, 2020), they hold no promise of enhanced Asian language capacity among humanities researchers. The Chinese Language Fellowship Program run by the National Bureau of Asian Research in the United States offers generous one-year fellowships for intensive language training in the People’s Republic of China or Taiwan, and is a possible model for building strength in Asian languages among emerging researchers.

A matter of concern for humanities researchers working in the Asian studies area is the lack of recognition accorded to research publications in Asian languages. In an interview for this project, Professor Chihiro Thomson described her publications in Japanese as a means by which to disseminate Anglophone scholarship to the Japanese world, adding that ‘when I publish in English, I do the reverse.’ In the context of the Australian academic system, however, ‘it’s a

constant battle to justify what I do, and I think it’s not fair.’ Citation rates, difficult for humanities research in general due to the weight given to publications in refereed journals as opposed to in book form, are even more difficult to ascertain for foreign language humanities publications.

Funding

Across the region, there are complaints of limited and often shrinking resources for humanities higher education, research, and the arts, with adverse effects on international collaborations and exchanges (Pant and Dass, 2018). In Indonesia ‘there is no funding for professional artists’ and a consequent lack of reciprocity in the performing and visual arts (Mitchell and Teychenné, 2018, p. 340). In China, humanities funding has increased in line with the government’s growing interest in history and philosophy as soft power, but with ‘freedom of thought’ being excised from the charters of leading universities, the flow-on for productive research seems limited (Tiffert, 2020, p. 3).

On the other hand, initiatives in the HASS area in many parts of the region show a shift from instrumentalist to liberal understandings of higher education. In Singapore in 2016, the Ministry of Education announced a 45 per cent hike in funding for HASS programs, signalling its interest in broadening the focus of higher education beyond the STEM disciplines. In India, a similar step was taken with the establishment of a new National Research Foundation in 2019, and the launch of a grants scheme aimed at fostering a culture of research with specific interests in interdisciplinary research.

In Australia, funding for collaborative research in the humanities is available from the ARC, other government and non-government sources, universities, and overseas sources, although support is light relative to the STEM areas. Country-specific science collaboration initiatives such as the Australia-India Strategic Research Fund and the Australia-China Science and Research Fund are theoretically open to all research fields, but in practice these have focused on science and technology issues and less on social and cultural themes. In the postgraduate area, high fees for international students can deter top students from undertaking humanities programs here.

In 2014, the Federal Government made a significant gesture towards supporting Asia-related study when it announced NCP funding to support

Australian undergraduates undertaking courses and internships in Asian countries. If extended to support upper tertiary and postgraduate research in Asia, NCP funding could be exploited to support research partnerships between Australian and Asian institutions and individual researchers.

Stratification

World ranking systems are criticised for exacerbating stratification and diverting resources from domestically significant areas of development. In China, a series of projects aimed at identifying key research universities and targeting research-related funding have helped the top institutions improve world rankings, but they have also resulted in a high degree of stratification in the Chinese higher education system, with Beijing universities the great beneficiaries.

World rankings can also mislead, because systems that rank universities as singular entities do not necessarily show research capacity in specific areas, including in the humanities. Such rankings may not reflect openness to collaboration, or necessarily show the likely degree of fit between institutions in terms of research orientations. It may be more effective to rely on academics' pre-existing knowledge about research partners.

CONCLUSION

As noted by Ang et al. (2015), 'international research collaboration has a strong potential to be a powerful form of smart engagement [with Asia]'. In the humanities, research collaboration with Asia currently has many manifestations, extending beyond co-authored journal articles. Partner investigator arrangements supported by ARC funding, the hosting of PhD scholars from Asian universities, international conferences leading to multi-authored works, and translation projects directed at dissemination of research results all fit a broad category of collaboration.

Both the achievements and shortfalls in collaborative humanities projects point to ways forward. In relation to achievements, NCP funding provides a model for modest funding initiatives in early-career research, laying the foundations for possible future research partnership. For research on a larger scale and at a more advanced stage, Centres of Excellence demonstrably provide scope for collaboration and show a useful model for future planning. In the HASS sector generally, there exist some notable research partnerships between Asian-born and local academics. These should

provide foundations for collaboration with Asia-based researchers.

Nationwide, collaborative research endeavours are often spread quite thin. Despite some long-running collaborations fostered through research centres, including ARC Centres of Excellence, and occasional one-off funding initiatives, there is no national dedicated funding scheme to support humanities research collaboration with Asian partners. A high incidence of collaboration involving Asia-born academics demonstrates the scope for collaboration with Asian countries, while the low incidence among other researchers shows the relative dearth of resources in Australia for nurturing capacity in this area.

Before these imbalances can be addressed, the desirability of collaborative research in the region needs to be recognised, embraced, and promoted by the humanities sector in universities, as well as by government and other higher-order decision makers. Strong policy will produce the funding necessary to support enhanced collaborative research endeavours among humanities scholars across the region, with benefits to the knowledge economy in the region at large.

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Regional overview

THIS CHAPTER PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE
JURISDICTIONS COVERED IN THIS PROJECT.
FULL PROFILES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE.

CHINA

The People's Republic of China (PRC), founded as a socialist state in 1949, has a civilisational heritage that is deeply respected by the country's people and taken seriously by the state. The cultural foundations of the humanities are strong. Knowledge of history, philosophy, and literature was at the core of China's historical education system, and in the PRC it remains a valued attribute. Political leaders from Chairman Mao to President Xi Jinping have been at pains to demonstrate their competence in these fields.

In higher education, an emphasis on science and technology since the beginning of the Reform Era in the 1980s resulted in weakening enrolments in the humanities and relatively soft support for humanities research. In recent years a growing recognition of the political importance of the humanities on the part of the ruling Communist Party has meant an increase in funding in these areas. National politics gives a distinctive character to humanities education in China, with classes in Marxism compulsory for all university undergraduates. The importance accorded to history and philosophy, central to Marxist epistemology, is reflected in the discipline spread of key humanities research bases established by the Ministry of Education in 2011 (see table).

Distribution by Discipline of Key National Bases for Humanities Research in Regular Higher Education Institutions (2010)

History	12
Philosophy	12
Linguistics	8
International Studies	8
Chinese literature	7
Ethnology	4
Journalism and Communications	4
Archaeology	2
Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan Studies	2
Religious Studies	2
Foreign Literature	1

Source: Zhongguo gaoxiao renwen shehui kexue xinxi wang. (2010). [News website for China's higher education humanities and social sciences.] Retrieved from <https://www.sinoss.net/list.php?catid=350>.

The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, carved out of the Chinese Academy of Science in 1977, is the most important single centre for humanities research nationally, with thirty-one research institutes and around 3,000 researchers spread across the humanities, arts and social sciences (HASS) disciplines. Humanities research is otherwise well represented in all C9 universities (see box below), especially Peking, Fudan, and Nanjing. Other strong humanities programs are to

be found in Sun Yatsen University in Guangzhou, Renmin University in Beijing, East China Normal University in Shanghai, Jilin University in northeast China, Nankai University in Tianjin, Wuhan University in Hubei, Shandong University, and Xiamen University in Fujian.

C9 universities are similar to Australia's Group of Eight (Go8) and enjoy substantial funding advantage. C9 comprises Peking University, Nanjing University, Tsinghua University, Harbin Institute of Technology, the University of Science and Technology of China, Fudan University, Zhejiang University, Shanghai Jiao Tong University and Xi'an Jiao Tong University. Competition for entry into these elite institutions through the nationwide *gaokao* (college entrance examination) is intense.

International engagement

In a competitive international environment, China has been proactive in engaging with leading universities around the world. Academic staff and postgraduate students at elite universities are encouraged to apply for funding under various schemes, to spend time at universities outside of China, and repatriate their knowledge and skills. The focus is on assisting selected universities to achieve 'world-class' status, particularly through developing their capacity for innovation and creativity – recognised features of Western education and research. There is a sizeable brain drain: PhD students who go abroad have a low rate of return to China. Numbers returning have grown in recent years, attracted by employment opportunities in prestigious institutions, especially the Chinese Academy of Science and, since 2008, a variety of programs clustered under the 'Thousand Talents' recruitment plan.

Collaboration with Australia

Collaborative partnerships in the humanities most commonly involve researchers in Chinese studies, although international exchanges and conferences have also resulted in short-term cooperation and co-publication in other fields. International co-authorship with Chinese researchers is rising modestly, reflecting the intensification of collaborative activities. Humanities research, like some other areas of study, benefits from a diaspora

advantage due to the growing number of local faculty of Chinese origin.

Correspondingly, Australian Studies Centres based in language and humanities departments in universities and academies across China provide key points of contact for Australian institutions and individual scholars seeking to engage with Chinese researchers.

Targeted funding support in Australia for research collaboration is weak, but funding has historically been available through the Australian Research Council and, on a much smaller scale, the Australia-China Council and its offshoot, the Foundation for Australian Studies in China. Further funding opportunities may arise with the creation of the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations as successor organisation to the Australia China Council.

Prospects

Modest increases in academic exchange and conference activities involving humanities scholars in China and Australia show the potential for closer association and more ambitious undertakings in collaborative humanities research. Numerous instances of bilateral talks between aspiring partners show the interest in such research felt in both countries. For research involving China itself, perceived and actual obstacles to closer working relationships are posed by the lack of freedom of movement, association, and speech in the PRC, monitoring by security authorities, and the goals of funded research, which in the humanities are often explicitly political. While sensitive topics may be off limits, this need not prevent collaboration in less sensitive areas. Such collaboration is particularly important at a time of strained relations between China and Australia because of its significance for maintaining strong informal channels of communication between the two countries.

HONG KONG

Humanities research in Hong Kong shows the hybrid legacy of Anglophone and Sinophone traditions. The oldest university – Hong Kong University (HKU, established 1911) – was developed on a British model, and followed a Western curriculum. Over time, its humanities staff and students increasingly researched and studied non-Western, particularly Chinese,

cultures. A comparable diversity is found in the other eight government-funded universities, all of which compete for research funding under the government's Research Grants Committee.

While HKU is the oldest and most prestigious university in Hong Kong, the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) is the largest. It boasts particular strengths in Chinese-language scholarship, and Chinese studies. Baptist University, City University and Lingnan University are also strong in the humanities, while the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and Hong Kong Polytechnic University excel in certain humanities disciplines. Today, Hong Kong boasts faculty members of world-renown in disciplines such as linguistics, history and gender studies, and its universities house humanities schools that consistently achieve high international ranking.

The reversion of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty in 1997 meant a significant degree of reorientation in university teaching and research. Despite fears of political interference and cessation of academic freedom, most Hong Kong humanities scholars continued to research and publish on topics of genuine scholarly concern without fear of censorship for over a decade. This relative freedom was eroded in later years. In 2015 the disappearance of five booksellers who sold material critical of the Chinese government served as a signal that there were limits to what was tolerated by Beijing. Self-censorship, entrenched in mainland China, is now a growing challenge to humanities research in Hong Kong. Beijing's imposition of a new National Security Law in June 2020 effectively extended central government authority over schools and universities in Hong Kong. In the judgment of the International Centre for Non-Profit Law (ICNL), the National Security Law 'will exert a chilling effect on academic institutions, partnerships, and exchange' (ICNL, 2020).

International engagement

The Hong Kong government has been keen to support universities in their efforts to implement internationalisation strategies that include various activities such as staff and student exchanges and schemes such as Universitas 21. The number of international students enrolled in Hong Kong universities (some 15,000 in 2015) is modest, but efforts are being made to encourage more. The overwhelming majority of such students are from mainland China. Both the government and university administrators recognise the influence

and importance of the mainland for Hong Kong's future and increasing numbers of joint projects with mainland universities have been carried out in recent years. The National Security Law (2020) is likely to have a dampening effect on collaborations with universities outside of China.

Many Hong Kong students go abroad for further study, or to the mainland, the most popular overseas destinations being the United States and the United Kingdom. Australia, though not in the same league, has about 13,570 Hong Kong students enrolled in higher education programs. Small numbers of Australian tertiary students spend time in Hong Kong through university exchange programs.

Collaboration with Australia

Many of Hong Kong's higher education institutions have formalised international agreements with Australian higher education institutions, facilitating staff and student mobility. Major collaboration initiatives tend to be within the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) sector, but Hong Kong's reputation and achievements in the cultural area have provided the foundations for some fruitful collaborations in the humanities. Cultural studies, fashion, cinema, and the media are notable areas for scholarly exchange, conferences, and co-publication. Institutional collaborations in the humanities include RMIT's joint degree program with Hong Kong Art School and Flinders University's collaboration with CUHK in the Bachelor of Creative Arts (Digital Media).

Hong Kong universities have a high number of international faculty and faculty with overseas education. These include Australian and Australian-educated scholars who have been significant players in the higher education and research sectors, responsible for initiating and sustaining research networks. The first dedicated department of cultural studies in Asia was established at Lingnan University by an Australian scholar, Professor Meaghan Morris (University of Sydney).

Prospects

In terms of staff and student numbers, Hong Kong is relatively small. However, the sector comprises several prestigious, research-intensive universities with humanities research strengths. The Hong Kong government and individual universities have actively pursued internationalisation and scholarly collaboration. Australia is well-placed to take advantage of this situation, especially since

Hong Kong universities use English as a medium of instruction. As a Special Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China, moreover, Hong Kong offers interesting cultural, social, and political perspectives on China. Whether Australian universities can continue to exploit the advantages that Hong Kong has historically offered depends in some measure on the impact of the National Security Law (2020) on the willingness of universities in Hong Kong to partner with universities overseas on topics in the humanities and social sciences that are considered sensitive by China's security authorities.

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INDIA

India has contributed richly to world culture. The country's current production of literature in more than a dozen languages (including English) is unsurpassed, and its film industry is the world's largest, now gaining new prominence through providers like Netflix. Alongside these contemporary contributions, India's ancient sites provide archaeological evidence essential for understanding the human past. Disputes over this rich heritage can be bitter, placing the humanities at the heart of politics. History, archaeology, language, film and literature can even provoke street battles, as particular interests struggle to present their versions of the past and the acceptable present as the sole legitimate stories.

Since independence in 1947, India's government-sponsored universities have emphasised teaching over research. Moreover, the elite research and higher-education institutions have focused largely on science and commerce. Research in the humanities has historically received only modest funding support, and has long depended for its reputation and impact on outstanding individual scholars, or small collectives, including members of a widespread diaspora. While the higher education system has more than eight hundred universities and tens of thousands of colleges, the top echelon of universities as measured by world rankings is dominated by institutes of technology or science, which have limited delivery of humanities programs.

The inadequacies of the Indian education system in general and the higher education system in particular are recognised, and the weaknesses of the humanities sector have been acknowledged. A 2014 report from the Ministry of Culture called for the establishment of Institutes of Arts and Culture, to emulate the success of the Institutes of Technology. With the Draft National Education Policy released by the government of India in June 2019 came recommendations for strengthening humanities education across the higher education sector, and for supporting humanities research. Specifically, 'arts and humanities' make up one of the four funding divisions of the proposed new National Research Foundation.

International engagement

Leading public universities in India show a formal commitment to internationalisation through agreements with other universities around the world. The formation of research collaborations (though not explicitly in the humanities) is encouraged. In addition, a number of promising, privately funded universities are sponsored by backers with significant overseas connections, or whose wealth in part stems from enterprises founded overseas. Such institutions are eager for mutually beneficial international links. However, large-scale connections and exchanges still face bureaucratic hurdles that require committed partners on both sides. Importantly, the 2019 Draft National Education Policy stresses the significance of internationalisation for lifting the standard of higher education in India.

Collaboration with Australia

Humanities collaborations account for perhaps 10 per cent of all Australia-India research collaborations, and Australia-India collaborations in turn account for only a fraction of all international research collaborations. In the past, and today, the most fruitful collaborations with Australia have been based on relationships between individual scholars and specific projects. Thematic essay collections have been perhaps the most common product of such collaborations, usually arising out of conferences both in India and Australia.

A successful model for university collaborations is embodied in the IITB-Monash Research Academy, a partnership more than ten years in the making between India's top-ranked Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB) and Monash University.

While this collaboration is built around science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, there seems every reason for humanities scholarship to be incorporated into such partnerships. The University of Queensland, attempting a similar model, may prove a pioneer in such inclusion (University of Queensland, 2018).

Prospects

For success in collaboration, persistence and long-term institutional commitment are essential, as the IITB-Monash Research Academy suggests. A further example that has relevance for Australia is Canada's Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute, founded fifty years ago and having maintained a presence in India and Canada ever since. In the past fifteen years, Australia has acquired an Indian diaspora now more closely approximating Canada's long-standing Indian presence. That diaspora will increasingly manifest itself in Australian life, as it has in Canada. With that presence, curiosity about lives, histories and cultures of India will grow and manifest itself in literature, digital media and a craving for Australian perspectives. At the same time, the diaspora's connections seem certain to increase interest about Australia in India. Scholarly collaboration can flourish on the back of such curiosity and help to satisfy it in nuanced and insightful ways.

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INDONESIA

With more than four thousand higher education institutions catering to over six million students, Indonesia has a large and rapidly expanding higher education system. Primary responsibility for the sector rests with the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education. Islamic institutions, superintended by the Ministry of Religion, make up 20 per cent of the total. Over 90 per cent of higher education institutions are private, with universities and institutes making up

15 per cent overall. The majority of enrolments are in technology and the social sciences, particularly in education, business and economics. Courses in the humanities make up around 7 per cent of undergraduate enrolments.

Research is dominated by a small group of a dozen elite universities which are responsible for 85 per cent of research outputs. National research priorities focus on the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, but the humanities play a significant role in the national education system. Compulsory courses in Indonesian language, English and religion in all undergraduate degree programs give all tertiary students some exposure to humanities disciplines. Humanities teaching and research otherwise serve national imperatives to ensure unity amongst Indonesia's multiple ethnic and linguistic identities and at the same time celebrate diversity and culture. A flourishing community-based arts and cultures sector ensures that traditional and contemporary literature and performing arts thrive outside the academy.

Comprehensive humanities programs are located predominantly in the first generation of post-Independence universities, notably the top-ranked University of Indonesia and Gadjah Mada University in Yogyakarta. Research outputs in these areas increasingly take the form of publication in internationally indexed, English-language humanities research publications, which have grown from a low base of seven in 1996 to 173 in 2014 (see Table 1). The Center for Humanities and Cultural Research within the Social Sciences and Humanities division of the National Research Institute (LIPI) incorporates research on language and culture, minorities and violence, religion, and cultural heritage.

Identity, diversity and culture is one of the priority areas of the newly established National Science Fund (DIPI).

Humanities Publications by Subject Categories, Indonesia, 1996–2014

SUBJECT CATEGORY	1996	2014
Language and Linguistics		32
Religious Studies		12
History		8
Literature and Literary Theory		8
History and Philosophy of Science	4	6
Conservation		3
Philosophy	1	3
Archaeology (arts and humanities)		2
Visual Arts and Performing Arts		2
Music		–
Museology		–
Classics		
Arts and Humanities (miscellaneous)	2	107
TOTAL	7	173

Source: SCImago Journal & Country Rank. (2016). *Indonesia*. Retrieved from <http://www.scimagojr.com/countrysearch.php?country=id>

International engagement

Although Indonesia's tertiary sector is consistently ranked low in comparison with other middle-income regional Southeastern and East Asian nations, its elite institutions aspire to world-class status. Internationalisation is supported through strategies such as upgrading staff qualifications and providing incentives for academic staff to publish internationally. Regional partners, particularly Japan, Korea, and China, are increasingly important in teaching and research, but Australia is a major destination for government-supported international postgraduate students. Strategic partnerships, staff and student exchanges, and international collaboration overall are still at low levels. In the humanities, research mostly focuses on topics related to Indonesia, limiting active engagement with international trends more broadly.

Collaboration with Australia

Collaborative humanities research between Indonesia and Australia is relatively strong, with Indonesia second only to China in the 2013 Australian Academy of the Humanities' *Survey of the International Collaboration of Fellows*. Most collaborations are project-specific, led by the small group of Australian Indonesianist scholars working mainly in language, linguistics, literature,

and history. Indonesian partners are often former research students who have studied in Australia.

A recent shift towards a more integrated humanities and social science approach in research has extended the range of Indonesian collaborative partners to local and non-government organisations. The arts and performance disciplines are strong in Indonesia and are an important avenue for cooperation and engagement outside the academy, for example through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Indonesia-Australia Institute creative arts grants, and programs supported by the Australia-Indonesia Centre at Monash University such as the Australia-Indonesia Essay Series and ReelOzInd short film competition.

Prospects

Owing to both its proximity and size, Indonesia has unquestioned strategic importance for Australia. Indonesian specialists will continue for the foreseeable future to provide the linguistic, cultural and social knowledge crucial to business, trade and diplomatic relationships. In particular, humanities disciplines will provide core skills for enhancing the understanding of Islam in our region. With a rapidly expanding middle class, strong demand for education, increased emphasis on English language capacity, and a national commitment to improvements in quality and access, Indonesia is predicted to become a leading player in international education. Its best universities are now starting to make their way into the international league tables. As Indonesia's research interests turn outwards, Australia-Indonesia specialists will play a key role in their home institutions in encouraging these broader research connections.

JAPAN

The humanities are a well-established area of study and research in Japan. They embrace the full suite of disciplines and interdisciplinary areas of study to be found in Western universities. A minority of undergraduate students (less than 15 per cent in 2012) major in humanities, but many more take core humanities subjects. In 2016 this meant a total of 2.8 million students enrolled in humanities at undergraduate or postgraduate level.

The University of Tokyo (a comprehensive national university) is generally regarded as the top humanities university. Its undergraduate students all undertake two years of humanities study before

specialising in later years. Private universities, accounting for around three-quarters of the total, include leading humanities universities such as Waseda, Akita International, and Sophia.

The national humanities institutes show where Japan's humanities research strengths lie (see table). The research activities are mostly Japan-centric, the various institutes specialising in areas such as Japanese language and linguistics, literature, and history. The bulk of research publications in the humanities are published in Japanese, with limited exposure to the outside world.

JAPAN'S NATIONAL INSTITUTES FOR THE HUMANITIES (NIHU)

National Institute for Japanese Language and Linguistics (NINJAL; *Kokuritsu kokugo kenkyūjo*), Tokyo

National Institute of Japanese Literature (NIJL; *Kokubungaku kenkyū shiryōkan*), Tokyo

International Research Centre for Japanese Studies (*Nichibunken*), Kyoto

Research Institute for Humanity and Nature (RIHN; *Sogo chikyu kankyogaku kenkyūjo*), Kyoto

National Museum of Japanese History (*Rekihaku*), Sakura

National Museum of Ethnology (*Minpaku*), Osaka

In both teaching and research, humanities in Japan are currently facing significant challenges arising from the weakening performance of Japanese universities relative to others in the region, the lack of international exposure for Japanese research, and the declining number of undergraduate students due to the greying population. In 2015 the eighty-six national universities (around 11 per cent of all universities) were asked to shut down, scale down, or refit humanities programs and departments in order to 'serve areas that better meet society's needs.' In fiscal year 2017, places in humanities and social sciences combined had dropped markedly compared to the previous year. Without redress, a corresponding shrinkage of staff levels and research capacity in the humanities seems inevitable.

International engagement

Japan has a long history of adopting and adapting foreign knowledge, although a rich tradition of translation has meant that scholars have tended to learn foreign ideas in Japan, and in Japanese, rather than being exposed to them in study abroad. Since the 1980s, the words 'globalisation' and 'internationalisation' have become familiar in discussions of higher education. Beginning in 2009, the government launched a series of initiatives designed to restore competitiveness to the Japanese system through increasing international student and staff mobility: Global 30, Reinventing Japan, Go Global, and Top Global Universities.

Results are mixed. Of around 300,000 foreign students in Japan in 2018, the overwhelming majority were from China, Vietnam, and Korea. The implications are more regional than global. Outbound student numbers exceeded 200,000 in 2017 but consisted mostly of students taking short courses in English-speaking countries, including Australia. In the research sector, there has been a rise in internationally co-authored publications but mainly in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) area. The strongest partner is the USA, followed by China. Among international faculty, appointments from China are predominant, especially in STEM departments. United States and United Kingdom appointments are more likely to be found teaching humanities.

Collaboration with Australia

While Australia-Japan connectivity stems from trade and business interests, there is a flow-on effect for humanities. The Australia-Japan Foundation, established by the Australian government in 1976, supports international partnerships in areas including the arts, media, and education. The Japan Foundation and Toyota Australia promote Japanese language education at key institutions. Now a well-established subject area, Japanese language studies have attracted many scholars from Japan to Australia, facilitating international cooperation and collaboration in research and publishing.

Japanese and Australian universities have numerous agreements covering research collaboration, again mainly in the STEM area, but the push for internationalisation in Japan is producing collaboration across the spectrum. Examples in or including humanities are the Monash-Kyushu collaboration, funded by the

Global 30 Project to develop a ‘strategic hub area for top-global research and education’; and Ritsumeikan University’s College of Global Liberal Arts, established in collaboration with the ANU’s College of Pacific and Asian Studies. The venerable Japan Society for the Promotion of Science supports research in the humanities and social sciences as well as the natural sciences but in Australia is partnered with the Australian Academy of Science and supports only STEM projects.

Prospects

Since the 1990s, Japan has been overshadowed by China in almost every aspect of Australian economic, social, and cultural life. It retains considerable soft power. The appeal of Japanese popular culture, especially *anime* and *manga*, to a new generation of students, along with growing Australian tourism, shows that there is more than trade statistics to Australian interest in Japan. Other factors point to the potential for shared humanities research partnerships in the years ahead: Japan’s present enthusiasm for internationalisation; its open academic culture; the enhancement of its English-language capacity; the strength of Japanese language study in Australia; and the enhanced importance of Japan in the changing security environment of the Indo-Pacific.

SOUTH KOREA

Academic activity in South Korea (hereafter Korea) has a broad remit to serve the nation, society and culture. For the humanities, this means the role of nurturing a sense of national well-being or ‘happiness’. Accordingly, when the Ministry of Education announced a major commitment to the humanities in 2015, it was under the rubric of *Happy Education for All, Creative Talent Shapes the Future*. The Promotion of Humanities Program, launched that year, was aimed at fostering regional world class humanities research institutes and simultaneously at leveraging the humanities locally for ‘enhanced quality of life’. At the same time, it reinforced the emphasis on creativity evident in the 2013 Creative Economy Plan, which was explicitly directed at economic development and job creation.

‘Humanities education’ is currently a buzzword in Korea. It is given currency by popular writings about the nexus between reading, culture and power, is promoted by significant industry figures,

and supported by cultural policy, including through emphasis on the creative industries. Although the humanities make up only a small proportion of research and teaching in Korean universities, the size of the higher education sector means that the number of humanities enrolments is relatively high compared other countries or territories profiled in this report. Leading universities (including Seoul National University, Korea University and Yonsei University) provide liberal arts undergraduate programs, and undergraduate and postgraduate humanities programs. They have teaching and research strengths across the range of humanities subjects, traditional and new. The digital humanities are a rapidly emerging field.

The National Research Foundation provides dedicated funding to the humanities through a number of schemes, including the ‘Humanities and Social Sciences Basic Research Program’ and ‘Humanities Korea’, the latter aimed at developed humanities research infrastructure. The ‘Popularization of the Humanities’ scheme links pure research outcomes to the broader community. Research is undertaken in accredited research universities, government research centres, industry-related centres, and museums. The National Museum of Korea, the National Palace Museum of Korea, and the National Folk Museum of Korea all have dedicated research functions.

International engagement

The Korean government actively pursues internationalisation. Higher education institutions increasingly reward international collaboration, and a number of leading universities participate in international academic networks. International engagement is supported through exchange programs for university researchers and visiting scholars. The Korea Foundation, a government agency responsible for promoting Korea, supports a range of engagement initiatives, including direct support of overseas research on Korea. The majority of Korea’s humanities research publications are published in Korean. As a result, international humanities research publications outputs are low and are concentrated in language and linguistics, visual and performing arts, and history (see table). The *Asian Journal of Women’s Studies* published out of Ewha Women’s University, is an example of an English-language journal promoting international scholarly communication across the humanities and social science fields.

Humanities Publications (and ‘Arts and Humanities, Miscellaneous’) by Subject Categories, Korea 1996–2014

SUBJECT CATEGORY	1996	2014
Arts and Humanities (miscellaneous)	26	369
Language and Linguistics	12	123
Visual Arts and Performing Arts	0	90
History	0	78
Literature and Literary Theory	0	74
Philosophy	2	60
History and Philosophy of Science	18	58
Religious Studies	0	35
Music	1	17
Archaeology (arts and humanities)	0	13
Conservation	0	7
Museology	0	4
Classics	0	1
TOTAL	59	929

Source: SCImago Journal & Country Rank. (2016). Korea. Retrieved from <http://www.scimagojr.com/countrysearch.php?country=id>

Humanities collaboration with Australia

Collaborations between Australian and Korean researchers represented a very small proportion of international collaborations identified in the 2013 Australian Academy of the Humanities *Survey of the International Collaboration of Fellows*. The Australia-Korea Foundation, established by the Australian government, allocates grants to support initiatives that promote engagement with Korea. The foundation’s priorities include Korean language and literacy, science innovation, and society, culture, arts, sports and media.

Prospects

Korea represents a potential strong partner for Australian humanities scholars, and not only for those with Korean cultural expertise and language capability. Korea’s active internationalisation agenda and its core of research-intensive universities provide a strong foundation for future

development. Recent growth in undergraduate enrolments in Korean language and culture in Australian universities may increase postgraduate enrolments and foster a new generation of collaborative researchers. With the expansion of Korean studies in Australia, there is every likelihood that collaborations between humanities researchers will increase. The increasing importance of the Korean peninsula in regional and international geo-politics underlines the need for expanding Australian expertise.

SINGAPORE

With world-class universities, a highly internationalised academic workforce, and well-funded cultural institutions, Singapore offers a developed infrastructure for the study of humanities and the pursuit of creative arts. The National University of Singapore (NUS), ranked second in Asia in the Times Higher Education 2019 index, has a full-scale Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, while Nanyang Technological University (NTU), ranked sixth in the same index, has a College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences that is rapidly developing comparable strengths. Humanities streams or humanities-related courses are offered at the other four public universities. A dedicated liberal arts college, Yale-NUS, was founded in 2011 and has been a flashpoint for debates over academic freedom in universities.

In both teaching and research, the humanities in Singapore trail the pursuit of science and technology, and the political environment is not favourable to critical studies of Singapore itself. Nonetheless, there is a contemporary appetite in Singapore to embrace research in the humanities, and funding has been increased in recent years. Digital humanities is a developing field represented by institutional research clusters and a system-wide network. The evolving digital world of gaming, museum exhibitions, and live storytelling are all serviced by humanities scholarship. Over a period of nearly two decades between 1996 and 2014, the number of indexed humanities publications grew more than tenfold (see table below).

Humanities Publications (and ‘Arts and Humanities, Miscellaneous’) by Subject Categories, Singapore 1996–2014

SUBJECT CATEGORY	1996	2014
Language and Linguistics	13	97
History	5	47
History and Philosophy of Science	4	44
Philosophy	2	40
Literature and Literary Theory	1	30
Visual Arts and Performing Arts	1	21
Music	2	16
Religious Studies	1	13
Archaeology (arts and humanities)	–	6
Conservation	–	2
Classics	–	1
Museology	–	1
Arts and Humanities (miscellaneous)	12	131

Source: SCImago Journal & Country Rank. (2016). *Singapore*. Retrieved from <http://www.scimagojr.com/countryssearch.php?country=id>

International engagement

Singapore encourages international engagement and its tertiary sector has both a high rate of international appointments and high proportion of local staff with degrees from overseas. Through initiatives such as the Presidential Young Professorship (NUS) and the Nanyang Assistant Professor scheme (NTU), leading universities offer attractive salaries and research funding even to early career researchers, part of a strategy to compete for global talent. International collaborations are supported by universities through the National Research Foundation, and through government-to-government agreements.

Collaboration with Australia

Researcher and student mobility between Singapore and Australia is fostered by geographical proximity, shared regional interests, and a common language. In science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and business disciplines, Singapore is one of the top five countries among Australia’s tertiary collaborators, along with China, Japan, the US and New Zealand. Humanities collaborations are more difficult to calibrate, but it is clear that in Asian studies (history, cinema, cultural studies, linguistics, religious studies) Singaporean and Australian scholars frequently cooperate in conference and co-publication activities. Government initiatives are important for opening up other areas of collaboration. The Australia Singapore Arts Group (ASAG), formed in consequence of the Australia-Singapore Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) signed in 2015, has overseen the development of significant exchanges and partnerships in the creative arts.

Prospects

Singapore is an important regional partner for Australia, its long-standing significance confirmed by the 2015 CSP. Humanities collaborations are worth fostering in this context among others. For Australia-based researchers Singapore also offers access to a network of connections with the rest of the region. A small but prosperous and energetic state, it is exceptionally well positioned to serve as a site of collaboration between scholars from across the Indo-Pacific. The creation of the Australia Singapore Arts Group to take advantage of the 2015 CSP offers a model for enhancing humanities exchanges and partnerships through the formal government-to-government framework of the CSP.

VOLUME 1

Australian-Asian Research Collaborations in the Humanities

Mapping the Present,
Planning the Future

