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Foreword

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Dear Readers of the *International Studies Journal*,

It is my enormous pleasure to hand to you the latest issue of *International Studies: Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal* from the Faculty of International and Political Studies at the University of Lodz in Poland. This issue is unique in many ways. First of all, it has been created in a close academic collaboration with the Australia, New Zealand, Oceania Research Association (ANZORA), based in Krakow, Poland. It was exactly on 11 December 2020 when ANZORA and Faculty of International and Political Studies at the University of Lodz co-organised the 12th International Conference on Pacific Studies – a unique event happening each year in Poland, with no match in Europe. The conference's topic was *Australia in the Time of Crisis: Climactic, Cultural, Economic, and Political Solutions*. This topic appeared the most desirable and indeed pertinent, as the interdisciplinary researchers from Poland and abroad were given an opportunity to present the results of their research on the crisis in the Antipodes, climate change in Australia, including the fires from 2019 and 2020, security management during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the position of the Commonwealth of Australia in its region.

Three diplomatic missions took honorary patronage over the event. Those were the Australian Embassy in Warsaw, the Embassy of New Zealand in Warsaw, and the Polish Embassy in Canberra, Australia. The partner institutions were the University of Bergen in Norway, the Polish Geopolitical Society, and the Academy of European Careers Foundation.

I am proud to say that this edition is based on the eight insightful articles written by eight female specialists. The authors come from different backgrounds, represent various branches of science: political science, international relations, security studies, international law, literature, linguistic studies, and history. They work in academia, private companies and at the consular mission, which all brings forth the widest possible perspective usually not that readily available to achieve and to present to the readers.

The topic of this issue is highly interesting, demanding and not yet analysed, especially in the European literature; therefore, it does require further research. Discussions on the contemporary challenges in Australian politics and culture, the current obstacles, future crisis scenarios on crises situations, as well as particular problem-solving methods are made predominantly in the Antipodes, not in Central Europe. Yet, as we live in a global village, the complications and difficulties occurring far away from Poland, both in the geographical and political sense, do have a direct effect, sometimes even a negative impact, on us too. Thus, it is vital first to understand the mechanisms of crises appearing on the Australasian continent, and second – to make us prepared for the effects of any forms of crisis: humanitarian, climate, military and hybrid.

This issue begins with an article by H.E. dr Monika Kończyk, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney, who presents the history of Polish-Australian relationships, as well as current and much demanding tasks and responsibilities of this role. Then Professor Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney, the Chair of the British and Commonwealth Studies Department at the University of Lodz, talks about the long-lasting and multi-layered cooperation between the British and Commonwealth Studies Department and the Australian Embassy in Warsaw. The third article is written by Professor Maria Antonina Łukowska from the University of Lodz, who was the co-organiser of the 12th ANZORA and University of Lodz conference. Her research focuses on the role of Australia in Wojciech Gutkowski's colonial dream, as well as the ideas of distance and isolation in his utopian thought. The next article is written by the Guest Editor of this volume, dr Joanna Siekiera. She performs the legal analysis of the term, definition and usage of the rule of law in the public sphere in the Commonwealth of Australia. Agnieszka Kandzia-Poździał, M.A., member of ANZORA, presents the outcome of pertinent research on the coronavirus pandemic and its consequences for the Australian economy. Another ANZORA member, working at the University of Social Sciences in Lodz, Dr Jowita Brudnicka-Żółtaniecka, focuses on social

trust in Australia during the pandemic. The issue is completed by the article from dr Anna Kowalcze-Pawlik, academic secretary of the *International Studies* journal, who presents the outcome of her research on eco-anxiety and anger in Australian poetry.

Such a varied and colourful palette of scientific articles written by Polish female specialists from different disciplines and representing diverse backgrounds speaks volumes of the hidden potential of the Pacific Studies, Australian Studies, and New Zealand Studies in Polish research. Dear Readers, get inspired by these works and remember that Polish science is also about the Antipodes.

December 2021, Bergen
Dr Joanna Siekiera

The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney – the Activities, Tasks and Responsibilities

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Abstract

The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney is one of the thirty-seven consulates that function in Australia. The scope of duties and work of the consulate is set up by the rules and directives of the Polish Foreign Policy Strategy for 2017–2021 and is determined by the Consular Law and other regulations.

Keywords: Polish-Australian relations, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland, Sydney

Introduction

The Polish Embassy in Canberra and The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney are two diplomatic missions that perform their political and consular duties in Australia. Additionally, there are five Honorary Consulates that

support the Embassy and Consulate's work. The Honorary Consul in Perth, Mr Paweł Bitdorfis, is the first and only Polish Honorary Consul worldwide who is able to prepare and certify extracts, excerpts and copies of documents, thanks to the decision of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2020).

The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney was established in 1941 and had operated until July 1945. The first Consul General of the Republic of Poland was Mr Sylwester Gruszka, Polish soldier, diplomat and consular officer. In July 1945 The United Kingdom and The United States abandoned their Polish ally, withdrawing recognition from the London-based Polish government in exile. On March 16, 1948, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs issued the act establishing the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney. However, at that time, the office did not open. On February 1, 1957, the Consulate General was re-established in Sydney with a consular district covering the entire territory of the Commonwealth of Australia. The office was officially opened in March 1957.

The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland is located in Sydney with jurisdiction in: Australia (the Commonwealth of Australia), excluding the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and seven additional Accredited Pacific countries: Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu, Nauru and Micronesia. The area of the consular jurisdiction covers over 7 687 million km². The consulate operates daily, except weekends and national holidays, both Polish and Australian. There is a special emergency telephone number active 24/7. All information, including contact details, can be found on the official webpage *Poland in Australia* – www.gov.pl/australia. The consulate is active on social media, like Twitter and, quite recently, Facebook.

The basic tasks

The legal basis for the operational functions of the Polish Consulate is legislated in the Consular Law Act ('the Act') (*Ustawa z dnia 25 czerwca 2015 r. Prawo konsularne, Dz.U. 2015, poz. 1274*). The Act specifies procedures for appointing consuls of the Republic of Poland, consular duties, the proceedings required in the presence of a consul, rules for collecting consular fees and procedures for appointing honorary consuls of the Republic of Poland and their duties. The main responsibilities of a consul are to protect the interests of the Republic of Poland and its citizens abroad, strengthen ties between the Republic of Poland and its citizens and persons of Polish origin residing in the host country, as well as to support the development of economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation between Poland and the host country.

The nature of the consular work in Australia is determined by and depends on the size and activity of the resident Polish community. In the 2016 Census

Report there were 183 974 entries regarding Polish ancestry. Due to the high number of people who have declared their Polish background, the activity of the consulate office is definitely dominated by issues related to the Polish diaspora. Thus, the consular tasks include: passport applications, organisational process and conduct of passport duty visits in other capital cities (Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane, Adelaide, Hobart, Darwin) as well as in other places of the consular district, setting up meetings and events that promote Polish history, culture and language. The Australian Polish community has a tremendous cultural potential: there are a great number of recognised well-known artists among them and many young emerging talents. The consulate cooperates with them by organising concerts, film screenings, and meetings with authors. Furthermore, the Polish Government offers financial support to Polish organisations' projects to cultivate Polish heritage and create strong community relations. It is worth mentioning that the consulate in Sydney in 2020 coordinated and dealt with 50 such projects that were beneficial for the Polish community in Australia.

It should be emphasised that there are more and more people interested in having Polish passports. Thus, in recent years consuls have noticed a growing number of requests to initiate confirmation of Polish citizenship procedures through descent. The applicant needs to fill out an application form for the Regional Voivodeship Office (*województwo*) and present all relevant documentation proving his/her Polish heritage.

The consulate provides support across a wide range of legal matters, including the implementation of the Polish justice and administration authorities' requests for the delivery of official documents and conducting hearings for Polish citizens with pending cases in Polish Courts. Furthermore, the Consulate General together with the Polish Embassy deal with extradition matters. For requests of extradition cases from the Australian authorities, the consul provides logistical support to Polish officials. The consulate also deals with a large number of cases related to the transcription of foreign civil status documents at the Polish Registry Offices (*USC*). The consulates can also provide services of the Registry Offices, as consuls have the legal competencies to marry two Polish citizens abroad. The Consul General, since her arrival in 2019, has married three couples.

It is important to emphasise that a consul protects the rights and interests of the Republic of Poland and its citizens within existing international law regulations. Australia and other countries of the consular district respect the international regulations, and the consul has not been notified of any discrimination cases purely due to the Polish origin of a person.

The consul also provides consular assistance to Polish citizens in serious accidents or sickness, arrests or detention cases, acts of physical or mental abuse. The support is also provided to families of Polish citizens overseas in the event of death. If a Polish citizen finds himself/herself in a dire financial situation, he or she can request

financial assistance from the consulate. The consul will facilitate contact with relatives or friends who should send the money through a bank or a company that provides such services. In particularly justified cases, the consul may provide the refundable financial assistance necessary for a person to return home. With some cases “a one off” financial allowance can be granted as well. In cases requiring a consul’s intervention concerning Polish citizens located further away from the Sydney office, the consul asks for the support of local honorary consuls.

The Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney also deals with foreigners and their requests for assistance in many legal and personal matters. The main task is to provide information regarding Schengen and the Polish visa application process. The airport transit Schengen visa (A-Type), Schengen visa (C-Type), National visa (D-Type) are the types of visa issued by the consul.

The Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney works towards developing friendly relations and cooperation between Poland and the countries of the consular district. The consul is a member of the Consular Corps and liaises with other consuls and governmental authorities, mainly the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to cooperatively solve problems, exchange information as well as attending meetings, events and conferences. The consul is also responsible for developing and maintaining good and respectable relationships with the local authorities.

It is worth mentioning that in 2020 Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC, The Governor of New South Wales visited for the first time the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney. Together with representatives of local authorities and Polish organisations the Governor attended the decoration ceremony of Australian citizens who had been awarded by the President of the Republic of Poland, PhD, Andrzej Duda, in recognition of their services to Poland and the Polish diaspora. Furthermore, last year the *Parliamentary Friends of Poland* group was established at the New South Wales Parliament.

One of the tasks of the Consul General of The Republic of Poland in Sydney is to develop and deepen economic and scientific cooperation, as well as to promote the Polish economy and science. The Polish Investment and Trade Agency in Sydney and other organisations, supporting Polish business, are the active partners for the consul to build the economic Polish – Australian network with mutual meetings, information exchange and bilateral assistance during study visits and workshops. For example, in 2020 during the Sydney business event, the Consul General with the director of PAIH (Mr Jakub Wilhelm) were promoting Poland as a country of choice for its reliable market and safe business investment environment.

The time of crisis

The year 2020 was an unprecedented year not only for Australia: large fires, which burned nearly 12.65 million hectares, with approximately 2.9 million Australians directly affected by them, followed by record-breaking floods and then the outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic worldwide have influenced the work of the consulate with taking on additional, specific duties.

During the time of bush fires and floods, one of the primary tasks for the consulate was to inform Polish citizens in Australia about the existing danger. The important element for people travelling to Australia is to register their trip on the Polish Ministry Foreign Affairs portal *Odyseusz*¹ [*Odysseus*]. Once the person is registered there, the consul can send notifications via mail or short messages.

In times of crisis, the consul has systematically sent materials to tourists and residents that are logged in on the Polish portal. Furthermore, the reports and current data have been sent to the Ministry, and then, accordingly, special instructions have been posted on the official webpage and on various social media.² Thanks to the consular reports, information for travellers about the changing situation in Australia³ has been regularly updated.

During the pandemic, the consulate has experienced a significant increase in the number of enquiries regarding the current legal and factual situation related to travel to Poland and Australia. It is important to point out that the possibility of leaving Australia has also been limited, as the Australian Government introduced in March 2020 a ban for international travel for Australian citizens and permanent residents, as well as those with dual citizenship.

Additionally, due to the worldwide pandemic, the Australian borders have been closed to incoming foreigners. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade data sent out to the diplomatic missions shows that at the beginning of 2020 about 4,000 Poles were staying in Australia on various types of visas. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, more than half of them decided to leave Australia. In January 2021, there were approximately 2,700 of our compatriots still in Australia. Besides the crisis reports and personal inquiries, the consulate has helped Polish citizens to return to their home country. In March and April 2020 the consuls were responsible for the logistics of the successful *Flight Home* initiative of the Polish Government and the Polish Airlines *LOT*.

The pandemic situation has also influenced the way that the consulate operates and provides consular services. Personal contacts have transformed into online consultations. The consul has been taking part in various Zoom conferences with

¹ More information: <https://odyseusz.msz.gov.pl/>

² The information for Poles because of the COVID-19 pandemic: <https://www.gov.pl/web/australia/informacja-w-zwiazku-z-rozprzestrzenianiem-sie-koronawirusa>

³ More information: <https://www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja/australia>

other consuls, Australian authorities, representatives of Polish organisations and schools. Additionally, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland personally has prepared special letters and video recordings for several occasions, e.g. a story for children for International Children's Day, messages for Polish citizens for the National Day and for Christmas.

Since September 2019, the Consul General of the Republic of Poland with the team has tried to renovate and improve the consulate's premises and surroundings to make it more friendly for clients and visitors. The Polish Consulate in Sydney is the face of Poland. The entrance and waiting room have been updated. There are pictures of Polish cities on the walls and the TV screen shows films about Polish history, culture and tourism. There are plans for further renovations in the near future.

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Monika Kończyk – PhD, Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Sydney. She holds a PhD in law. She defended her doctoral thesis in 2017 at the University of Gdańsk. She has a Master's degree in both English philology and biology. She has also completed other postgraduate studies in management and mediation. Outside these immediate fields of expertise, she participated in the Argo Top Executive Project run by the National School of Public Administration (Warsaw) and IESE (Barcelona).

Dr Kończyk was the Pomeranian Chief Education Officer between 13 April 2016 and 26 August 2019. Prior to taking up the position of Consul General in Sydney, she had been an international representative of the National Section of Education of NSZZ Solidarność (Independent and Self-governing Trade Union Solidarność). Between 2006 and 2016, she was a member of the European Trade Union Committee

for Education (ETUCE). As part of her broader outreach and engagement, she represented Polish teachers' unions in the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee at the European Commission. She also served as a member of the European Commission Advisory Committee on Vocational Training (ACVT).

Mrs Kończyk worked as a research assistant at the University of Gdańsk, and then as an English and biology teacher in secondary schools in Poland. In 2012, she participated in the scholarship program run by the Japan International Labour Foundation (JILAF). She currently holds the position of a fellow of the German Marshall Foundation. For exceptional services in education, she was honoured with the Medal of the Commission of National Education.

In 2018, the President of the Republic of Poland awarded Dr Kończyk with the Silver Cross of Merits for her outstanding contributions in the educational space as well as for her targeted social and community initiatives.

Australian Studies at the Lodz University: Co-operation Between the British and Commonwealth Studies Department, University of Lodz, and the Australian Embassy in Poland

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Abstract

The article discusses the history of academic co-operation between the British and Commonwealth Studies Department at the University of Lodz and the Australian Embassy in Poland. Over the years the co-operation took the shape of a regular academic exchange and led to substantial academic, educational and cultural projects on Australia which resulted in a number of book-length studies.

Keywords: Australian studies, Australian Embassy in Poland, British and Commonwealth Studies Department, University of Lodz

Co-operation Between the British and Commonwealth Studies Department, University of Lodz, and the Australian Embassy in Poland started in 1998 when Margaret Adamson was the Ambassador of Australia in Poland. It included academic, educational and cultural fields of interest.

Academic projects

1999–2000

“Culture At the Local and Global Levels: British and Commonwealth Contributions to World Civilisation” and “Australia’s Cultural Diversity as a Foundation for National Identity and Unity”.

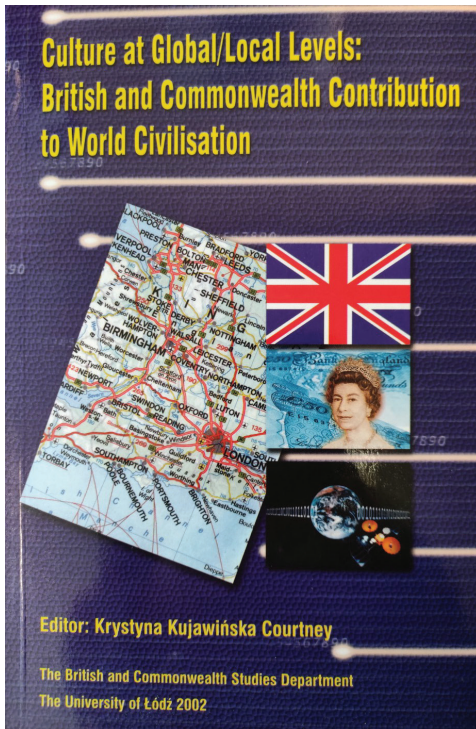


Illustration 1. Book cover.

Photo: Beata Gradowska

The results of these projects were published in the monograph *Culture at Global/Local Levels: British and Commonwealth Contribution to World Civilisation*, ed. Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney, Łódź: Wydawnictwo Biblioteka, 2002, pp. 303.

2000-2002

“Australian Multiculturalism to Poland and Beyond in the Perspective of European Integration.”

The British and Commonwealth Studies Department (University of Lodz) co-operated with three Australian universities: the Australian National University; the University of Southern Queensland; Adelaide University as well as the Australian Embassy in Poland. The project included the organisation of a cycle of symposia devoted to Australian multiculturalism in selected Polish cities and towns: e.g. Łódź, Warsaw, Gdańsk, Kraków, Wrocław and Natolin. Her Excellency Margaret Adamson, Dr Krzysztof Batorowicz (The University of Southern Queensland), Marek Edelman and Krzysztof Zanussi participated in the seminar organized in Lodz. “Australian Days” accompanied the symposia, which included showings of Australian cinematography (6 movies) preceded by lectures, exhibitions of Australian culture and Australian cuisine in major restaurants.

2003

The *International Studies. Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal* published a special thematic volume presenting the outcomes of the project: *Australian Multiculturalism to Poland and Beyond in the Perspective of European Integration*, ed. Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney, 2003, vol. 5, no 1.



Illustration 2. /S volume cover

Educational projects

2002–2003

The eminent Australian professors: Jerzy Zubrzycki, Jerzy Smolicz and Krzysztof Batorowicz gave a two-week course in Australian studies to the students of the British and Commonwealth Studies, University of Lodz.



Illustration 3. Jerzy Benedykt Zubrzycki

Source: public domain

Jerzy Benedykt Zubrzycki (1920–2009) the father of Australian multicultural policy. Prof Zubrzycki lectured at the Australian National University in Canberra, where in 1970 he founded the faculty of sociology. He was the chairman of Australian Ethnic Council and a member of Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs. Professor Zubrzycki initiated the publication of an international periodical *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology*.



Illustration 4. Jerzy Jarosław Smolicz

Source: public domain

Jerzy Jarosław Smolicz (1935–2006) was the director of the Centre for Intercultural Studies and Multicultural Education at the Adelaide University and one of the developers and champions of the Australian multicultural policy. His academic research centered on cultural multiculturalism in multiethnic societies. He lectured in e.g. Great Britain, USA, New Zealand, India, Canada, and Germany. Professor Smolicz was awarded the Order of Australia for his work in multicultural and linguistic education, and the Order of Merit of the Republic of Poland. In 2002 the UNESCO granted him the Linguapax Prize.



Illustration 5. Krzysztof Batorowicz

Source: public domain

Prof. Krzysztof Batorowicz was the founder and director of the Multicultural Centre at the University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba. He authored many monographs and scholarly articles devoted to the multicultural problematics.

Australian academics employed in the Department of British and Commonwealth Studies:

- Professor Garvin Perram, PhD – 2000–2002 and 2007–2008
- Professor Michael Goddard, PhD – 2004–2006
- Professor Justine Lloyd, PhD – 2003–2004
- Professor Jerzy Zubrzycki, PhD -2000/2001
- dr Gaye Pool, PhD – 2001/2002
- dr Krzysztof Batorowicz, PhD – 2000/2001
- Evan Williams MA – 2006/2007

In the years 2004–2010 Professor Maria Łukowska, PhD, served as the director of the Australian Studies specialisation and conducted MA seminars for the students of the Faculty of International and Political Studies at the University of Lodz.

Cultural projects

2003

The Department organised the *In Deserts, Forests, and Orchards: Meetings with Papua and Aboriginal Culture* conference together with the Łódź Archeological Museum. A rich collection of material culture exhibits and film presentations of various documentaries accompanied the conference. The outcome took the form of a collection of essays *Wśród pustyń, buszu, lasów i ogrodów: spotkania z kulturą Papuasów i Aborygenów*, eds. Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney, Bronisława Kopczyńska-Jaworska, and Anna Nadolska-Styczyńska, Łódź: Wydawnictwo Biblioteka, 2003, pp. 137.



Illustration 6. Book cover

Photo: Beata Gradowska

2004

In 2004 the Department published *Shakespeare's Local Habitation*, a collection of essays authored by international scholars, mainly researchers affiliated with Australian universities.

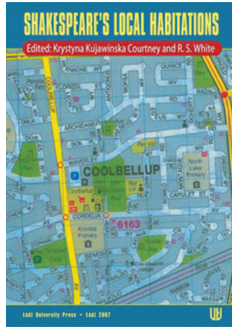


Illustration 7. Book cover

Photo: Beata Gradowska

Shakespeare's Local Habitations. Eds. Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney and Robert S. White. Łódź: Łódź University Press, 2007.

2005

In 2005 the Department organised an international conference *Multiculturalism At the Start of 21st Century. The British-Polish Experience. Australian Theory and Practice* attended by representatives of many countries e.g. Australia, Sweden, Great Britain, Russia. The event was sponsored by the Embassy of Australia in Poland.

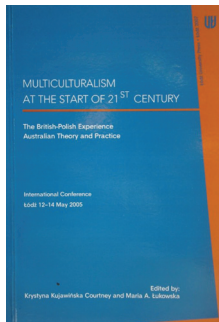


Illustration 8. Book cover

Photo: Beata Gradowska

The publication *Multiculturalism At the Start of 21st Century. The British-Polish Experience. Australian Theory and Practice*. Eds. Krystyna Kujawinska Courtney and Maria Lukowska. Łódź: Łódź University Press, 2007.

Other selected forms of co-operation with Australia

In 2001 the Department hosted a delegation of members of Australian parliament: Senator Chris Schacht, Senator for South Australia, Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs, and others who delivered lectures. A number of lectures by Australian novelists and poets were organised in co-operation with the Lodz City Council and together with Teatr Małych Form [Small Forms Theatre] in Lodz two shows of the Australian Kropka theatre. It was at that time that four visits by Professor Sev Ozdowski, Ph.D. were held. Professor Ozdowski gave lectures for students and staff members. In 2003 Professor Ozdowski was the Minister of multiculturalism and Immigration in the Australian government. He works currently at the Western Sydney University. He often supports our academic activities with books and periodicals.



Illustration 9. Sev Ozdowski

Source: public domain

Activities of the Australian Studies Academic Work Group

In 2003 the Faculty established an Academic Work Group devoted to Australian Studies. Its aim was to propagate our research in various periodicals, conferences, projects, symposia and lectures.

Over the years the Department received over 1000 books, encyclopedias and periodicals from the Embassy. In 2004 the Embassy donated to us Australian DVDs and a TV set.



Illustration 10. The departmental Australian Studies Centre

Photo: Beata Gradowska

In 2013 the University of Lodz awarded the Australian Embassy in Poland the *Medal Universitatis Lodziensis Amico* upon the request from the British and Commonwealth Department.



Illustration 11. University of Lodz medal *Medal Universitatis Lodziensis Amico*

Photo: Beata Gradowska

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Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney – PhD, Professor at the University of Lodz, Faculty of International and Political Studies, Head of the Department of British and Commonwealth Studies, co-editor-in-chief of *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, and editor-in chief of *International Studies. Interdisciplinary Political and Cultural Journal*. She conducts research in the field of literary and cultural studies. Owing to her initiative, the Australian Studies became a part of the Department she runs. She has published numerous interdisciplinary volumes on British and Commonwealth cultural relations, focusing on national identity, cultural appropriation, propaganda, censorship and artistic innovation.

Distance and Isolation. The Role of Australia in Wojciech Gutkowski's Colonial Dream in *Journey to Kalopeia*

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Abstract

This contribution is an attempt at a different reading of Wojciech Gutkowski's *Journey to Kalopeia* (1817), which may be of interest to both Polish and Australian readers in the twenty-first century, since it tries to connect Polish history with the dream of the Antipodes represented by Australia. Gutkowski's book, unknown until 1913, when it was deemed a utopian novel of little scientific value, gained recognition in the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. At that time it was studied as a political treatise and an Enlightenment model for the creation of an ideal utopian-socialist-communist state. This paper offers a new reading of the work in question, discussing its cultural-historical aspects as a precursor of a specifically Polish model of a utopian-colonial state.

Keywords: Wojciech Gutkowski, *Journey to Kalopeia*, Australia, Utopia, utopian socialism, utopian-colonial treatise.

Wojciech Gutkowski's *Journey to Kalopeia*, completed in 1817 and presented for publication at the Warsaw Scientific Society as a political treatise, was a controversial work that aroused interest only after its discovery in 1913. Published in 1956, it can be approached in many ways: as a utopia, a fairy tale, a quasi-historical account, and above all as a manifestation of socialist-communist thought which in the last decade of the 20th century can also be read as an educational treatise (Brański 67–83). This article approaches it as a colonial treatise initiating a discussion on the possibility of creating an independent Poland after the partitions. In this context *Journey to Kalopeia* was a pioneer endeavour. Even though it contained all the elements of Polish utopian colonialism, it was not known for many years in the period when other Polish concepts of utopian colonialism were being born. Gutkowski's colonial conception revealed two basic determinants of Polish colonial thought: distance and isolation.

The article offers a reading of Gutkowski's work from the perspective of political anthropology, and narrows it down to the considerations of the legitimacy of colonial policy. Using the cognitive tools characteristic of ethnohistory, the Author applies the emic/etic analytical procedure, in which the emic layer is an analysis of the conceptual systems contained in the text of Gutkowski's work as the text of culture. The etic layer, on the other hand, is constituted by studies concerning the work as made by external observers and their studies. Therefore, the Author's goal was to rediscover Gutkowski's work, not as a proposal for a new political system for Poland but as an example of a new proposal for the colonial policy. The aim of these considerations is, therefore, to analyse a specific "grammar" of Gutkowski's ideas about an ideal colonial state, the main paradigms of which were distance and geopolitical isolation. Located at the antipodes of Gutkowski's previous experiences, Australia became the site of his utopian vision. The question arises, what could Gutkowski's knowledge of Australia be in 1816?

The extent of knowledge about Australia in Polish culture became first tested in the second half of the eighteenth century, when two Polish citizens, residents of Gdansk of Scottish origin, Jan and Jerzy [John and George] Forster, took part in James Cook's voyage in the years 1772–1775 as cartographers who made maps of Australia and Oceania for the purposes of the expedition (Słabczyński 342–351). We also know that the first Pole to set foot on Australian soil was Ksawery Karnicki (born in 1750, died in 1801 in Cherbourg). Karnicki was a precursor of Polish Utopian colonialism; after the first partition of Poland in 1772, he emigrated to Chile from where he sailed as a whaler to Australia. A participant in the Bar Confederation and the American War of Independence, together with Paweł Michał Dołęga Mostowski he established the so-called "County of Bridges" or "New Poland" in Florida (Kujawińska Courtney, Penier, Chakrabarti 22). However, he did not leave any descriptions of this country. Gutkowski's knowledge about the continent was, therefore, limited to information about its part, New South Wales and its

role as a penal colony. The role of Australia in the Polish consciousness of the first decade of the nineteenth century was based more on imaginations as an island and remote space than on any specific knowledge.

Wojciech Gutkowski (1775–1826) was a Polish military engineer, a lieutenant colonel in the Engineer Corps, military educator, writer, freemason, economist, the author of a utopian novel and a representative of Polish political thought of the Enlightenment period. For financial reasons, he started his service in the army very early, as a minelayer in a military school at the age of 14 (in 1789). On 1st May 1794, he was promoted to the Conductor of Military Engineering rank, with an assignment to the Zajączek Corps. In this formation, he went through the uprising campaign of 1794. After the final partition of Poland, he remained in Lublin and devoted himself to agronomic studies and the study of foreign writings on technology, inventions and industry. On 12th January 1807, he joined the Polish army in the rank of captain, and after a short service in the 4th Infantry Regiment he was assigned to the Engineer Corps. In 1808, Gutkowski became a lecturer at the Company School of Artillery and Engineers located in the Warsaw Arsenal, and when this school was renamed The Elementary School of Artillery and Engineers in 1810, he was entrusted with the post of commandant or second-in-command and then promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. Thanks to his conscientious work and the support of Prince Józef Poniatowski, he also became deputy head of the Engineer Corps. In 1811, he was appointed an associate member of the Society of Friends of Learning as a person “proficient in mathematics, agricultural works and the improvement of young people in the sciences of war”.

He fought in the War of 1812 on the Bug River and during the retreat found himself in Germany. He survived the siege of Wittenberg and was taken prisoner by the Austrians. In 1814 he returned to Poland. He continued to serve in the Engineer Corps in the army of the Kingdom of Poland and was appointed commander of engineers in Lublin. While staying in Zamość as a professor of architecture at the Zamojskie Lyceum, in 1803 Gutkowski published, first under a joint editorship with B. Kukolnik and then exclusively under his own editorship, 18 volumes of the *Zamojski Dziennik Ekonomiczny* [*Zamość Economic Journal*] that contained encyclopaedic information on agronomy, technology and raw materials important for agriculture and rural architectural engineering. In 1806, he published the *Economic Catechism for Farmers* (a practical guide to animal husbandry, fruit farming, horticulture, arable farming, etc.).¹ He also translated into Polish and published A. H. Meltzer's work *Description and Imaginings of a New Machine Invented for Sowing Grain*. During this period, he promoted the technological advancement of agriculture in the “physiocratic” spirit. In 1805, he published his translation of Bossi's textbook *Fundamentals of the Drawing Rules*. Thanks to his scientific

¹ All translations mine own, if not otherwise indicated.

mobility, he was appointed, at a young age, a corresponding member of the Imperial Economic Society in St. Petersburg (probably as early as 1803) and in 1810 became a member of the Royal Economic and Agricultural Society in Warsaw.

The Lublin period of his life was connected with both his prominent career in the Freemasonry of the Kingdom of Poland and his activity in the organisation of local scientific endeavours. Already at the turn of 1811 and 1812, he was a member of the Warsaw Lodge of Isis, in 1816 he was a member of the Lodge of Equality in Lublin and in 1818, during the election of the “officials of the Lower Chapter” of the True Unity Lodge in the Lublin Valley, he was appointed Master of Ceremonies. Two years later, he was a Scottish Knight of Saint Andrew: fifth degree, in the Lodge of Equality. Together with other prominent Lublin Freemasons in 1816, he developed a vigorous campaign to establish a provincial branch of the Royal Economic and Agricultural Society in Lublin. He drafted the statute of this Society and two years later the statute of the Lublin Society of the Friends of Learning. At this time he also edited “The Rules and Duties of Cadets of the Elementary School of Artillery and Engineering” and in 1812 published an excerpt from Carnot’s book on the defence of fortresses (Bartyś 1983).

In 1817 Gutkowski wrote the utopian novel entitled *Journey to Kalopeia, the Happiest Country in the World, where without Money and without Property, Wealth and Industry, Light and All Goods Are in Greatest Abundance, and where Volume Two of the History of the Life of Boleslaus II, King of Poland, Is to Be Found*.² The narrative was probably written in 1814 and presented by Gutkowski to the Society of Friends of Learning on 24th November 1817. It tells of a utopian land of happiness in Australia founded by the surviving Boleslaus II the Bold who turns it into New Poland. The citizens of this land, the Kalops (Kalop is a Pole, in Polish: “Polak” spelled backwards), live in the greatest system in the world and are not inclined, under any circumstances, to leave it. The elected Committee of the Science Department strongly condemned the novel on the basis of a critical review by Stanisław Węgrzecki and rejected it on the pretext that it was not a scientific work but a novel (Gross 20–21).

After this criticism, *Journey to Kalopeia* was forgotten for many years, and so was its author who did not sign the work. It was not until 1913 that W. M. Kozłowski published an article on Gutkowski’s work, using one of his manuscripts (Kozłowski 313–331). He emphasised the Polish character of the work and its extraordinary originality, indicating that the text is not only a political treatise (Najdowski 8–9). Signs of authentic interest in the work appeared only in 1956, when Zygmunt Gross edited the text and provided an introduction. In his

² Original title in Polish: *Podróż do Kalopei, do kraju najszcześniejszego na świecie, gdzie bez pieniędzy i bez własności bogactwa, przemysł, światło i dobre wszystkie mienie jak najwięcej wygórowało i gdzie tom drugi historii życia Bolesława II, króla polskiego, znajduje się*. This paper follows the edition by Z. Gross (Warsaw 1956).

review of the book as well as in the introduction Janusz Górski refers to the Polish tradition of socialist utopianism and the plebeian current in Polish social thought (Górski 49). Similarly, Leszek Guzicki (1964) in his doctoral dissertation and later in a related article draws attention to the socio-economic dimension of Gutkowski's work and to his utopian-socialist conceptions. An intriguing interpretation of the *Journey* is provided in the criticism of Janusz Marchewa (1975), who perceives in it a manifestation of Polish messianism and the millenarianism of the Polish socialist concepts. In his 1976 publication on the Polish socialist thought in the 19th and 20th centuries, Marian Żychowski refers to the *Journey* as one of its first manifestations. Irena Koberdowa goes much further, attributing Gutkowski's "communist" views to his idea of creating model industrial and agricultural settlements (103). *Journey to Kalopeia* becomes the departure point for Rett Ludwikowski's reflections on the main currents of political thought in the years 1815–1890 (466). Maria Borucka-Arctowa (1957) finds an undercurrent of the anti-feudal ideology in the *Journey*, while Bogdan Suchodolski (1963) notices links between its Author's beliefs and the thought of Thomas More as well as the French Enlightenment movement of Étienne-Gabriel Morelly. The volume by Julian Bartyś (1983) devoted to Gutkowski and his work is, on the other hand, characterised by superficiality and a perfunctory approach to the sources. In the 1990s, Roman Andrzej Tokarczyk (1993) mentioned Gutkowski's *Journey to Kalopeia* when writing about Polish Utopian thought (33).

All these past studies examine Gutkowski's work in the context of his life and views in a one-sided, socio-political manner. It is no coincidence that studies written under different socio-political circumstances in Poland focused exclusively on its political and innovative aspects, placing Gutkowski's text in the socialist or even communist tradition of the Polish Enlightenment. It is also no coincidence that another aspect of this novel has been overlooked; namely, its supposed purpose, to be read as a colonial treatise since at that time the Polish colonial thought was out of the question. In my opinion, however, it is necessary to look at the work from this perspective and ask where, why and how Kalopeia or mythical "new Poland" was founded. These questions, in turn, generate yet another one concerning the extent of knowledge about Australia in Poland at the time Gutkowski was writing his work.

The very existence of *Journey* means that already at the time of the partitions of Poland there emerged the idea of creating a new free country in a very remote area of the world. Looking at the plot of the *Journey* one can notice one characteristic feature. The state of the Kalops was established as anew on an unknown land, on an island, without any surrounding neighbours. This brings to mind another outstanding writer and thinker of the Polish Enlightenment, Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, who admired Great Britain and envied it its insular location and the lack of hostile neighbours:

Ah, how good it is to be an *island* (Author's emphasis); how it would ALL have been torn apart long ago, if England, like us, had been situated among predatory and invading peoples (Niemcewicz 99–100).

Gutkowski writes in the introduction to his novel that his protagonist, a land-owner who owned several villages, sold them or entrusted the management to his brother.

After the partition of our country in 1796, I became so melancholy that the effects of this melancholy started to get worse and worse, so I decided to leave the country and travel around the world to distract myself a little.³

Subsequently, he visits various countries, makes his observations and focuses on Kalopeia, “the happiest country in the world, equal to a paradise on earth”, located in New Holland (Australia), where he travels together with French engineers. Next, he moves towards the interior, into the colony of New South Wales and to the English-managed Port Jackson near Botany Bay (56). There he meets the representatives of the indigenous population and describes them as follows:

They are engaged in hunting, grazing cattle and sheep, the meat of which they are fond of; they cover themselves with somewhat leathery skins and they also have a type of sheepskin duvets. (58)

Soon he even gets to know their language and hospitality:

[A]nd with the inhabitants we have become well acquainted, who would be glad to keep us with them forever. (59)

About the country itself he writes:

The land, which is very fertile, gives them the opportunity to keep numerous flocks, but in spite of this they move from place to place together with their huts. (59)

The narrator then sets off for the interior describing the river journey in these words:

³ It concerns a French naval officer, L.A. Bogueville, who described the lands he visited on his voyage around the world, and these descriptions gained wide readership in the first half of the 19th century (Gutkowski 267).

I had to pass through several cataracts [...] Having thus sailed some thirty miles, I met fewer and fewer people, and on approaching any more populous region, I noticed dreadful forests and thickets on the lofty mountains, almost hiding in the clouds. (59)

He meets local people and asks them about the area:

When questioned about the size of these forests [...] they replied that no one dares to venture deeply into them, that they are impassable for the density of the trees, the decaying beds, for the rocks, cliffs, swamps, and for the multitude of predatory animals found in these parts. They have heard from their predecessors that great hordes armed with boats travelled along the river in order to find a better place to live. They understand, therefore, that either predatory animals or numerous cannibals killed and devoured the expeditions. For a long time no one has ventured deep into these parts on the grounds that they would never come back. (60)

These impenetrable thickets, the richness of the untamed nature and its wildness, as well as the myth of cannibals become elements constitutive for the construction of the isolated place to which the protagonist is heading:

[A]fter seven days of the most horrible sights and imaginings [...], where in the evening the peculiarly shrill roaring of various animals against the rocks filled us all with fear and silence, on the eighth day we saw the countryside opening up. (61)

Through this barrier of isolation the protagonist reaches the “Kaloepen Border”, marked by a brick pillar with a representation of the Sun, on which there are inscriptions in Polish, French, English and Latin informing the newcomers about the state border and the laws observed beyond it. Here he encounters a reality completely different from the rumours:

Such inscriptions in various languages, elaborately carved, [and] the beautiful structure of the stone pillar, clearly indicated that we were entering a refined country. (62)

When he meets the inhabitants who speak Polish and who find out that they are dealing with Poles:

the mutual contentment and [the joy of] conversations will be easily guessed by everyone, when a thorough knowledge of the language facilitated such. [...] Throughout the conversation the two locals showed much light and knowledge, [they] were somewhat modestly dressed, but so tastefully that we took them for heirs or eminent persons of the court in this settlement (63).

The natives they meet turn out to be shepherds of extraordinary beauty and wisdom. The guests are invited to the seat of the headman of the municipality who declares that:

The Kalops have particular respect for the Poles, although they do not know them, which comes from the fact that the first founder of their country and the [giver of] the happiness they experience and which is not to be found anywhere else in the world was a Pole, which is why the Polish language became the national language. (66)

When visiting the community, it turns out that it represents an extraordinary richness and manifestations of such thriftiness “that even in England a farm could not match it” (67).

In addition, all modern inventions are available, such as the telegraph, and the life of the inhabitants is regulated according to a set order. The communities have been named: Caution, Attention, Vigilance, Eavesdroppers, which is supposed to protect the inhabitants from enemy attacks. The narrator learns about the complicated system of power and social advancement, the system of defence organisation, the high development of civilisation and of the military, and then he gains the knowledge of Kalop customs. The citizen of this country remains from birth to death under the protection of the state and the state religion. There is no private property and all goods are commonly owned and collectively produced. No one suffers from hunger or poverty. Everyone has equal access to all common goods, to education and to work. Social hierarchy is based on clerical hierarchy, and everyone occupying successive layers within the organisation remains in a functional relation to the State. The protagonist becomes acquainted with the foundation myth of the Kaloepen State or “New Poland” in the antipodes. Its perfection creates a sense of isolation from the rest of the world since nobody wants to leave this paradise. Interestingly, Kaloepia has no foreign policy, is absolutely self-sufficient, and protects its economic and social achievements. There is a complete separation of Church and State there, which is reinforced by the foundation myth.

Boleslaus the Great, the founder emperor of our state and this happiness we are experiencing, is Boleslaus II called the Bold, king of Poland [...] who [sided] with a certain number of mighty and enlightened Polish friends persecuted almost as much as he by the clergy [...] They arranged among themselves and decided to go with Boleslaus wherever their eyes would carry them to found of a new colony. To this end, they prepared a large library, a storehouse of various tools, and persuaded and hired many of the most skilful craftsmen, artists and manufacturers, whom they later acquired in France and England, to such an extent that their entire population of both sexes amounted to over 600 people. Above all, they made sure that they did not lack anything that might serve to establish a new colony and expand the light. (130–132)

Afterwards, they set sail from Gdansk to Genoa and Lisbon, and sailing around Africa and the East Indies searched for an island. Initially, they opted for Sumatra, but it was not to be. A storm directed them to New Holland:

The Supreme Creator himself seems to have indicated to him (Boleslaus the Bold) that he should establish his colony here. Sailing around the shores of this huge island, he saw few people, and having convinced himself by circling around it that this new and still unknown land was an island, he stopped at one convenient place that was fit for ships. (132)

After a long search for a suitable area to settle in, having crossed deserts and immense mountain ranges, he found a fitting place:

The climate was mild, the land exceptionally fertile, and [inhabited by] the large population of herds playing with their flocks, which were driven from place to place and fed together with their possessions and fruits; the pleasant attitude of the inhabitants, their gentle and hospitable character, all this pleased Boleslaus the Great a great deal. (135)

They decided to establish their colony there and settle in that place using the material goods brought in by ships and then to burn the ships. From the description of Kalopeia we surmise, it was to be a land as rich in resources and as happy as the ancient mountainous and forested Arcadia (Kopaliński 53), with the difference that it was to be an enlightened country, not as primitive as its prototype. Boleslaus started with educational work with the indigenous population and persuaded them to such an extent that all the tribes voluntarily recognised the supremacy of the Polish language and culture, which happened within six years of his arrival. The natives were educated in crafts, arts and state administration. In the year 1088, therefore, he was to offer the country a constitution, the content of which the author includes in his work.⁴ Kalopeia was to be a constitutional monarchy (empire) and at the same time a functional state, where private property did not exist and universal egalitarianism prevailed. The official language was Polish and the citizens formed a nation-state by their own choice. They bore Polish surnames and these surnames testified to their righteousness (Prawdicki, Dobraczyński⁵). In a few days, the protagonist gets to know Kalopeia as an ideal state and is even received by the monarch descending directly from Boleslaus the Great. He becomes acquainted with the calendar established by Boleslaus, the educational system, the complex administration, state holidays and rituals connected with the cycle of human life, in which the state intervenes from the cradle to the grave. He is so enchanted with the organisation of the colony that he speaks of his delight as follows:

4 "Constitution or Kalop State Laws" (Gutkowski 172-264).

5 These Polish surnames can be translated as Trueman and Goodman, respectively.

I have already spent two months in the capital, and every time I went out into the city, I could not get enough of the sights that surrounded me; every day something new and very interesting was revealed to my sight. The inhabitants of the capital number 200,000, but the city with its spacious streets, great squares and gardens occupies more space than the most extensive European cities. (168–169)

Kalopeia itself is to stretch from the Tropic of Capricorn to the island of Diemen (Tasmania). Its size is 600 Kalopean miles, with an inner sea similar to the Caspian Sea that has an underground connection with the Ocean. It lies between 37th parallel south and 160th meridian east from Tenerife's highest peak. As to the country itself:

In addition to this, about 10,000 square miles are still wild scrubs and forests, and everything is separated by mountains inaccessible on all sides, so that in the country [...] mild air temperate always prevails and neither excessive heat nor cold is experienced. [...] The people there are very handsome, witty and fair, the women peculiarly beautiful. The animals, birds and reptiles are larger than ours. (170)

The Kalops owe their beauty and development to their isolation. They travel abroad only for educational and informational purposes and to acquire the latest civilised inventions. They are isolated both geographically and politically, but not in terms of their cultivated consciousness, which is symptomatic of the Enlightenment thought. They are also supposed to be well informed about the world and at peace with all other nationalities:

I have been told that they usually pass Poles for travelling and so, in spite of the war that is going on between the various maritime nations, they are simply let loose. (171)

Reading *Journey to Kalopoeia* along these lines thus leads one to a conclusion that it is not only a political treatise, or the first socialist-communist utopia, but above all a colonial treatise, a specific utopian-colonial vision of a "New Poland" created in an isolated place, separate and remote from its author's European political and social experience. This vision found its continuators in later years and in a manner completely independent of Gutkowski's ideas (Łukowska, *Stępień* 153–172; Łukowska 2014, 543–558; Łukowska 2016, 256–264). This is a vision of the formation of a "New Poland" far from aggressive neighbours, secluded and brought into existence as a result of a very specific social contract with the indigenous population. It was to be created in a peaceful, law-abiding and perfect manner, based on modern thought and civilisational achievements, undisturbed by any outside interference.

The colonial premises on which Kalopoeia was based differ from those characteristic for Western European colonialism, and so is its model of colonial thought.

Its essence could be encapsulated through attention to five aspects: historical, political, economic, social, and cultural. In the historical aspect, Polish colonialism was born out of the loss of independence in the period of partitions as a desire to regain independence in a utopian form. It resulted in numerous examples and even real-life experiments to create a “New Poland”, most often on islands, far away from Europe. In its political aspect, it focused on the creation of an independent democratic state, isolated from its neighbours, i.e. potential enemies or invaders. It manifested itself in the form of a belief in peaceful coexistence with the native inhabitants of distant areas and a belief in the possibility of convincing them to become subordinate to and a part of a superior civilisation represented and guaranteed by legal acts. The train of thought intensified in the 20th century when, with the country’s regained independence, it took the form of actual attempts to establish Polish colonies on other continents. In the economic aspect, it pointed to the need to acquire new areas for agricultural purposes, manifesting itself in the legal acquisition of land and its economic exploitation together with the native and indigenous population. Such thinking later resulted in the establishment of settlement colonies on the periphery of the colonised territories. The social aspect of Polish colonial thought was apparent in the aspiration to create utopian egalitarian and agrarian societies. It expressed itself in the forms of establishing close cooperation with colonised societies, which was regulated in the form of established joint works or constitutions through a kind of social contract. The cultural aspect translated into striving for unrestricted development of national cultures and religions, without any restrictions imposed on the colonised peoples. This was to be visible in the peaceful coexistence of different cultures, customs and faiths, religious and cultural tolerance and an offer to accept Polish cultural models as a reasonable choice by the native population. In reality, the paradoxical result of this type of a model was – in cases of actual colonisation of foreign cultural areas – a much stronger integration of the Polish colonisers with the existing indigenous culture than in the identification of the colonised population with the Polish cultural models (Łukowska, Stępień 170–171).

This paper discussed Wojciech Gutkowski’s work from a perspective diverging from a purely political analysis of his treatise. His work is regarded here as an innovative attempt at writing a colonial text containing a suggestion that it would be wise to break the social stalemate resulting from Poland’s loss of independence. Therefore, it can be interpreted as a proposal to rebuild Poland’s sovereignty “elsewhere”, in isolation from the previous troublesome geopolitics. The colony was to become the source of Poland’s integrity, independence and democracy, far from enemies, persecutors and partitioners. Therefore, Gutkowski’s work should be approached not only or not solely from the perspective of political studies, but can be read through the lens of colonial studies, as an attempt to create an Enlightenment model of a utopian-socialist-communist state.

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Understanding of the Rule of Law in the Antipodes

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Abstract

Understanding the rule of law in the Antipodes, that is in the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand, as a legal value is clear to both of these societies. The rule of law, oftentimes called the state of law, is the basis of the system of values, as well as legal culture, which determines which social values are legally protected and how high their position *de facto* and *de iure* is. The hierarchy of the rule of law in the Antipodes shows undoubtedly how various legal norms, unwritten and those codified ones, protect the democratic system with all its principles, along with the rights and freedoms of citizens and persons residing in these two countries.

Keywords: rule of law, state of law, law, Antipodes, Australia, New Zealand

Introduction

This article focuses on the legally protected value of the rule of law in the legal systems of Australia, or the Commonwealth of Australia, as the title of the state in accordance with the constitution of 1901, and New Zealand.¹ Importantly, there are no major custom differences between the two countries on the Australian continent. After all, they belong to the circle of Western culture based on the Judeo-Christian values. In both countries, which are spatially relatively close, human rights, attitude to the state and law, and finally, the rule of law are understood in a similar way. The rule of law is the fundamental legal concept in both Australian and New Zealand societies. Both these societies are based on the legal system of their former colonial ruler Great Britain, because the present legal systems of these independent states were created upon the British common law. Australia gained independence on January 1, 1901, and New Zealand on December 10, 1947. Additionally, countries in the Pacific region such as Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu are members of the intergovernmental organisation called the Commonwealth of Nations.² The states gathered in the Commonwealth maintain full independence both in internal and external politics, but they recognise the British monarch as their head of state. The Charter of the Commonwealth of Nations was signed in 2013 in order to emphasise the legal values of its members, such as democracy, the separation of powers, the rule of law, and the concept of good governance, also known as the principle of good administration in the public sector.³

Understanding the rule of law in the Antipodes,⁴ that is Australia and New Zealand, as a legal value is clear to both of these societies.⁵ The rule of law, oftentimes

¹ New Zealand does not have a constitution understood as a single written act of the highest rank among the sources of national law. In fact, its system of constitutional sources consists of numerous documents dating back to the subordination of the British Empire, modern laws passed by the Parliament in Wellington, and British common law, including constitutional mores. Cf. Siekiera 115–121.

² Previously, this organization, bringing together the former dominions and colonies of the British Empire, was called the British Commonwealth of Nations. Commonwealth of Nations. Web. 23 November 2021. <http://thecommonwealth.org/member-countries>

³ Charter of the Commonwealth signed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Head of the Commonwealth, Commonwealth Day 2013 of March 11, 2012. The heads of governments of the Commonwealth countries adopted the Charter earlier, on December 14, 2012.

⁴ Simplified terms will be used intentionally in this article in order to emphasize the fact that the legal systems and societies in Australia and New Zealand are very similar, and often patterned after each other.

⁵ The author discovered this both in her academic and personal life during her doctoral studies at the Faculty of Law of the Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand in 2015–2016.

called the state of law, is the basis of the system of values, as well as legal culture, which determines which social values are legally protected and how high their position *de facto* and *de iure* is. The hierarchy of the rule of law in the Antipodes shows undoubtedly how various legal norms, unwritten and those codified ones, protect the democratic system with all its principles, along with the rights and freedoms of citizens and persons residing in these two countries. The lawmakers are required to ensure such a level of the rule of law that, inter alia, the person brought to court was to be judged in an impartial, transparent and fair manner; every person, regardless of their characteristics, such as age, sex and gender, sexual orientation, origin, nationality, religion, philosophy or the lack of it, health condition, party or professional affiliation and financial status, was treated in an equal manner by any of the state institutions. Such treatment ought to uphold the protection of the rights, freedoms of the individual person, as well as guarantee consistent, fair and impartial decision-making of administrative decisions and court judgments in accordance with the applicable law, which is available to read, understand and obey.⁶

Regional leaders

Australia and New Zealand are the largest countries in the South Pacific: they are the largest in area, the most developed, and therefore prosperous. They are taking back from one another the right to be called the leader of the Pacific. Australia has long been mentioned as a regional leader, a role model for Oceania⁷ micro-states, but New Zealand is more and more often seen as a champion and the global supporter of the interests of the Pacific islands on the international arena. Historically, there has always been a strong link between the governments of Canberra and Wellington and the rest of the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICT).⁸ Thanks to the positive image of Australia and New Zealand in the South Pacific Ocean, these countries have gained numerous supporters and trading partners from both Pacific and Asia.

Over time, thanks to such international approach, Australia began to be treated as a supportive, highly developed guardian, regularly providing humanitarian aid

⁶ Rule of law: Web. 23 November 2021. <https://www.ruleoflaw.org.au/guide/index.html>

⁷ The term "Oceania" is not a scientific concept hence it is in vain to find its definition in legal acts. It is the collective name for the islands of the Central and Southwest Pacific Ocean. It includes both sovereign states and dependent territories.

⁸ This is because not all entities located in the Pacific region have full legal personality, often remain legally dependent on Great Britain or they have decided to remain in close legal and political ties with other, larger countries, such as the USA, or New Zealand, in order to reap the benefits of international aid and financial infrastructure that they would not be able to provide for themselves.

to the people of the Pacific islands. *A contrario* the Oceania micro-states have become used to receiving the humanitarian aid from the Australian government. Such help has been delivered through the Australian Aid program.⁹ PICT made their existence dependent on the regional policy of Australia, without which they would be doomed by any humanitarian and economic disaster. A good example, illustrating the annual increase in spending from the Australian budget on aid to micro-states, as well as Canberra's growing commitment to a permanent presence in the region, and thus the real political influence on them, is the development subsidy for Papua New Guinea of USD 436 million, as well as USD 175.8 million sent in 2003–2004, and already USD 383.1 million in 2004–2005 to PICT. It should not be forgotten that Australia perceives the South Pacific as “its natural sphere of influence” (Herr and Bergin).

From the beginning of its independence, Australia has decided to create its own image of the advocate of the rule of law, democracy, and national values. Such national principles result, after all, from the Anglo-Saxon mentality combined with the Protestant ethics and morality, which requires helping the weaker and sharing prosperity, but also spreading education and the values of democracy with the rule of law in the lead. One can therefore agree with the Australian status of the “regional power” as its regional policy has become “an essential element of the regional architecture of relations” (Fijałkowski 301). The profitability of integration, or rather the initiation of projects to strengthen bilateral ties with New Zealand and PICT, in the case of Australia, lies in the conduct of the mutually beneficial regional policy. For micro-states in Oceania, this *de facto* means huge sums of money for their underdeveloped economies for the development of primary education, road infrastructure and health care. While for the government in Canberra the most crucial aspect here is to maintain a stable, safe and prosperous neighbourhood, which will not constitute any potential threat, but rather become a possible source of co-operation, and later also meaningful economic partners.

Australia, however, is accused of using a so-called “neo-colonial policy” whereby trying to strengthen democratic values in the poor and underdeveloped PICT, the government in Canberra tries to impose its own rules and norms in return for financial aid (Sprenzel 308). Currently, in the third decade of the 21st century, it is indicated that the Commonwealth of Australia has adopted a wait-and-see position in its own region. In addition, five potential functions that Australia will take in its regional policy can be identified as follows: the function of the initiator of changes in the region; the conciliator-mediator; the soft power superpower through the promotion and transmission of information and its own national cultural, political, social and legal values, educational and cultural exchange as the main tools; structural promoter of the formalisation of integration in the Pacific region; and finally

⁹ Australian Aid. Web. 23 November 2021. <https://australianaid.org>

the regional leader by virtue of own competences and manager of the sustainability of the standards created by the Federal Parliament in Canberra (Kozielski 224, 245, 294–295; Murray 29–37).

Thanks to such a controversial regional leadership stance as practised by Australia, New Zealand has gained the status of the new Pacific role model, not being considered as a superior element but an equal entity in regional relations. The promotion of the principles of the democratic rule of law by the government in Wellington is perceived quite differently, and thus much more positively, by PICT than Australian regional policy. It is New Zealand that has repeatedly emphasised and still emphasises the long period of identification with its region. The national interests of the New Zealand government and its foreign activities have been focusing solely on its neighbouring islands in the Pacific Ocean. Importantly, the regional policy of this country, already independent from Great Britain, was not beneficial only to New Zealand itself. All unilateral acts, bilateral and multilateral agreements in the Pacific took into account the problems and needs of the island populations of PICT. After all, the remaining micro-states in the South Pacific achieved the status of independence relatively recently after New Zealand, during the two waves of decolonisation movement (1962–1970 and 1974–1980), closely observing New Zealand's independent aspirations.¹⁰

Such a way of conducting foreign policy was dictated by a clear vision for the region, the calculation of profits and losses, in which direction regional integration should be conducted so that New Zealand could benefit from it. The efforts race against Australia for the position of the Pacific leader is not without significance too (Baker 138). It is New Zealand, not Australia, that has a longer history of political commitment to its region, through the promotion of its own values as a democratic society, the rule of law and equality of all before the fair law. New Zealand politicians, scientists and social activists proudly emphasise this fact, somehow legitimising such a policy and showing the necessity of further intervention by New Zealand in the internal affairs of countries in the South Pacific.

Along with the political and legal development of the process of decolonisation of the entities in Oceania, the unrest that characterised the region with the French, British and American nuclear tests (1946–1994), doubts about the Australian initiative of the South Pacific Community,¹¹ the New Zealand Department of Foreign Affairs decided to adjust the existing framework for regional co-operation. In 1971 a new regional organisation was established. This time this IGO was composed

¹⁰ The process of decolonization was not over when the 23 territories were still under colonial rule, absorbed within someone else's borders, or in the form of negotiated free associations with their own former administrators (Quanchi 18).

¹¹ This organization has been operating continuously since 1945, currently under the name of the Pacific Community, whose Secretariat possesses the international legal personality: Pacific Community. Web. 23 November 2021. <https://www.spc.int>

exclusively of local governments, while not the former metropolitan states.¹² New Zealand's interest in forming an entirely new regional grouping was dictated in part by the implementation of a new foreign policy that took greater account of domestic interests due to the shift in New Zealand's geopolitical centre and its distancing from the USA and Australia (Baker 138).

An interesting and legitimate memory is the idea of creating a Pacific Federation, a supranational organisation in the shape of the then European Communities. Although this vision was created during the Frank Corner administration (1967–1972) being the Minister of International Affairs, it has its prototype in the perception of own country's role in the region by the 19th century Prime Minister of New Zealand, Richard Seddon. According to this philosophy, New Zealand would be the decision-making centre of regional policy, reflecting its due geopolitical position in the region. This state should conduct a realistic, coherent and effective foreign policy, especially at the regional level, in order to promote the good values of the rule of law, obedience to the law and ensure the prosperity and stability of citizens for the benefit of all participants of this policy.

However, the culmination of New Zealand's policy-making in the region, and the consequent declassification of Australia as the regional leader, turned out to be the intervention in the Papua New Guinea civil war, the so-called Bougainville crisis (1988–1998). Australia could not act as an impartial mediator at the time, as it officially supported the government in Port Moresby, sending the military aid against the rebels.¹³ It was New Zealand that was much more accepted by the participants of the war along with the Pacific observers as a fair moderator of peace talks and the leader of the first team supervising the implementation of the terms of the truce.

In the third decade of the 21st century, New Zealand is also more favourably perceived by PICT heads of state rather than Australia due to the policies of Jacinda Arden's Labour Party government. From 2017 the Prime Minister has been pursuing a policy of strengthening political and legal co-operation with the countries in the Pacific, presenting New Zealanders as part of Oceania, supporting the micro-states in international legal efforts to reduce the effects of anthropogenic climate change, presenting New Zealand as a progressive state, based on secular values, promoting same-sex marriage, consent to the adoption of children by such couples, as well as liberalisation of the abortion law.¹⁴

¹² Pacific Islands Forum. Web. 23 November 2021. <https://www.forumsec.org>

¹³ That is against the Bougainville Revolutionary Army.

¹⁴ *Parliament removes abortion from Crimes Act* (18.03.2020), the official website of the New Zealand Government. Web. 23 November 2021. <https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/parliament-removes-abortion-crimes-act>

Close bilateral co-operation – Trans Tasmanian partnership

Australia is New Zealand's closest partner in defence, security as well as economic co-operation and trade. Both countries share historical ties from the times of the British Empire, including the formation of joint troops during World War I and World War II.¹⁵ Due to their high position in the South Pacific region, the governments of Canberra and Wellington have a strong influence on the activities of other countries; therefore, they shape a unique system of regional co-operation based on the adoption by micro-states of principles and legal norms prevailing in the Australian and New Zealand legal systems.

New Zealand and Australia belong to the same cultural and religious circle, that is to the Anglo-Saxon countries, shared with, among others Great Britain, the USA and Canada, a similar legal system, including the political system, language and customs in public or private spaces. From a broader perspective, these countries are part of the civilisation of the "Western world" which definitely distinguishes them from the Asian countries in the North Pacific or micro-states in Oceania. The functioning of the latter group of states is still based, despite the European (colonial) system being previously imposed, on the tribal structure, traditional values passed down by successive generations, attachment to land, shared use of ocean goods regardless of the boundary lines enforced by the colonial states. Often in the literature, bilateral relations between Canberra and Wellington are referred to as the Tasman Partnership (trans-Tasman relations) due to the Tasman Sea dividing these countries (Robinson 43–51).

At this point, reference should be made to the significant movement of people, mainly workers and students, right from the beginnings of settlement in the Antipodes until the present day, where considerable border traffic between the countries in question still exists. The constantly increasing ties, or rather economic interdependence, as well as tourism exchange in the Tasman Sea expressed this statement by the Australian politician back in the 1960s: "We want economic integration, we want military integration, but also integration in the sphere of diplomacy. We want to act together as much as possible, even if we are two separate nations." As Sir John McEwen, the representative of the Australian House of Representatives in May 1965, later the Australian Prime Minister (1967–1968) pointed out, both countries saw great potential in strengthening bilateral co-operation. It was the aforementioned social homogeneity that was the starting point for building political and legal relations, so strongly supported by the politicians of both countries. An example of this is the trade unions of Australia (the Australian Council of Trade Unions, ACTU) and New Zealand (the New Zealand Federation of Labour, NZFOL) joined in mutual co-operation under the name "trans-Tasman world of work" (Harford 133–149).

¹⁵ Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC).

One of the first bilateral agreements between Australia and New Zealand, finally autonomous from Great Britain, was the 1944 Canberra Pact signed during the war against Japan.¹⁶ This bilateral agreement was a response to the growing imperialist ambitions of the United States in the Pacific. None of the remaining island states participated in the consultations, which confirmed the speculations that the close Australia-New Zealand alliance had (and has today) the real power to shape the geopolitical image on behalf of and for the benefit of the entire South Pacific (Bennett 45–53). The main assumptions of the bilateral agreement were to tighten co-operation but also to establish broader local co-operation which was a novelty in foreign relations, where the governments in Wellington and Canberra officially opposed locating military bases on the territories of the former British dominions (McIntyre and Gardner 10–22).

The second, no less significant, factor that held the bilateral co-operation together was the Japanese policy of spreading international peace towards the countries of the Pacific. *De iure* political agreements between Tokyo and Washington referred to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the Pacific Ocean, although it *de facto* divided the spheres of influence of these two powers.¹⁷ Importantly, the third major player in the region, the then Soviet Union, was reluctant to allow the US-Japan alliance to penetrate the area economically (Kukułka 309–310, 591). It should be remembered that military and defence coordination was the main area of co-operation between countries in the Pacific so far.

Currently, however, Australian-New Zealand co-operation mainly relates to combat the effects of climate change and ocean changes, such as sea-level rise, soil erosion, warming of and ocean acidification, which all in turn lead to a decline in biodiversity and weakening food chains, and finally the real danger of food security for the inhabitants of submerged islands in Oceania, doomed to migrate and leave their homes. The most severe from the legal point of view is the actual threat of losing statehood by the submerged islands, which in fact has become the main integration factor in regional policy in the South Pacific in the 21st century.¹⁸

¹⁶ Signed on January 21, 1944.

¹⁷ United States Note to Japan, November 26, 1941, Dept. of State Bulletin, vol. V, no. 129, Dec. 13, 1941.

¹⁸ The author currently works at the Faculty of Law of the University of Bergen, and as a legal advisor at the Bergen Pacific Studies Research Group, where she is responsible for analyzing legal documents regarding legal solutions to the effects of climate change in the South Pacific region. Web. 23 November 2021. <https://pacific.w.uib.no>

Rule of law in the system of values

The rule of law is both a value in itself but is most often understood as a set of values, goods and legally protected terms that can be referred to by individuals regardless of their characteristics, such as age, sex, education, status, origin, nationality, religion or its absence, etc. Equality before the law and the state of law are also synonymous terms for the rule of law.

In addition to the difficulties in defining the term of the rule of law, which, as can be seen in the above paragraph, is a rather broad, vague term, there is also the issue of the axiological interpretation of whether the rule of law supports “moral good” (Rule of law). Most of the lawyers accept the thesis that the rule of law supports basic human rights, those listed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948. Considered as a universal source and affirmation of human rights, the Declaration puts the rule of law in the first place: “(...) human rights should be protected by the rule of law.”¹⁹ Also, the legal order of Australia and New Zealand is based on respect for human rights, where the human individual is placed at the centre of decision-making, law-making and governance, unlike in Eastern civilisations, mainly Asian countries, where the community has the first place as the highest good, as the individual must adapt to it well and take care of it.

There are four main principles in the Australian legal system. These are equality before the law, fairness, the right to representation and transparency.²⁰ These features, which at the same time are also legally protected values, can then be defined by their function or real impact on citizens. Hence, to the extensive catalogue of the rule of law in the Antipodes, one should also add commonly emphasised values, such as mutual control of three types of power and the tripartite division of powers; respect and observance of the rights of accused and victims; presumption of innocence; independence of the judiciary; right of assembly; freedom of speech; access to justice, transparency of the public authorities and public administration; understanding of the law, which is a novelty in the context of comparative legal studies, where the rational legislator is required to create such provisions that their norms are understandable, legible, consistent and unambiguous for their addressees.²¹

The New Zealand legislator understands the rule of law in a similar way, dividing it, however, into other factors: powers exercised by the members of parliament and

¹⁹ Preamble of the Declaration. Web. 23 November 2021. <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights>

²⁰ Legal translations. Web. 23 November 2021. <https://legal-translations.com.au/australian-legal-system>

²¹ Australian Parliament. Web. 23 November 2021. https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/House_of_Representatives/Powers_practice_and_procedure/00_-_Infosheets/Infosheet_23_-_Basic_legal_expressions

officials are based on legal authority given to them by the law; there are minimum standards of fairness, including transparency, openness and reasonableness of regulations; the law should impose protection against the abuse of wide discretionary powers, and thus limitations on the freedom of action of state organs; discrimination on any ground is unfair and therefore illegal; no person should be deprived of his or her liberty, status or other vital interest without being able to be fairly heard before an impartial court or tribunal.²²

The rule of law, both in the legal systems of Australia and New Zealand, is derived from the old English document Magna Carta Libertatum, the Great Charter of Freedoms from 1215. Although *de iure* it is not a legally binding and therefore obligatory source of law, it is included in the canon of the constitutional sources of Australian and New Zealand law. Its basic assumption, which gave the basis for the functioning of a just system of the rule of law, was that the English King John Lackland undertook not to take action against a person other than on the basis of a lawful sentence. For the first time in modern history, the Magna Carta pointed out that no one, not even a king, is above the law (Australian Parliament).

In the context of the rule of law, an important principle is that laws may not be enforced, abandoned or suspended without the consent of the parliament, which upholds the rule of law. Also, prerogative powers (the monarch's prerogatives) were limited by the rule of law. It should be remembered that *de iure* the British monarch is the head of state of both Australia and New Zealand, and the *de facto* real representative of the monarchy in the Commonwealth of Nations member states is the governor-general (Bożyk 2001; Bożyk 2009).

Conclusions

The primal meaning of the rule of law in both of Australian and New Zealand legal systems means the principle according to which the nation should be subject to law, including state officials and the legislators themselves, where every person is accountable and treated equally before the law, regardless of his or her innate or acquired characteristics, and no one can be punished, unless the court finds a violation of the law. Australia and New Zealand are secularised countries where the role of the church is relatively insignificant, the number of people belonging to religious communities is decreasing every year, and the values of the liberal society are gaining stronger support. This is reflected in the laws, mainly in the matter of the permissibility of abortion, same-sex marriage, and the equalisation of their rights with two-sex couples, including the adoption of children, subsidies from the state budget for gender reassignment operations or participation of transgender

²² New Zealand Ministry of Justice. Web. 23 November 2021. <https://www.justice.govt.nz/about/learn-about-the-justice-system/how-the-justice-system-works/the-basis-for-all-law>

people in public life, which is expressed by financing the activities of associations run by these groups, or introducing a separate legal category that recognises the existence of more than two biological genders.

As countries that are in the orbit of the culture of the Western legal order, whose economic index is on one of the highest in the world rankings and whose standards of living are one of the highest, Australia and New Zealand continue to be a role model for other states and dependent territories in the South Pacific region. Oceania micro-states depend almost entirely on fixed funding for humanitarian and economic development, but this is supported by the explicit expectation of the political support for the interests of the governments in Canberra and Wellington. Promotion of Western values with democracy, equality and the rule of law is also an essential part of this. Thus, the perception of the rule of law will, therefore, with a high degree of probability, be incorporated into the legal and social systems of states and dependent territories in the South Pacific.

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The Coronavirus Pandemic and Its Consequences on the Australian Economy in 2020

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Abstract

The fight against the Coronavirus continues around the world. The pandemic affects individuals and families and social groups, states, and economies. Like any other economy in the world, Australia's economy has to deal with the effects of a pandemic. Australia has chosen its own way of fighting the disease and its consequences. It was not possible to avoid an economic recession, but at the same time, political decisions, aid provided, and social behaviour can be assessed as very effective.

Keywords: Australia, pandemic, coronavirus, Australian economy, pandemic economic consequences

2020 was an extremely difficult year for Australia because the country has been hit very hard, twice as much. At the beginning of the year, bushfires ravaged more than 12 million hectares of land, tourism was devastated, and thousands of small businesses lost months of seasonal income. Australians were also affected by the global pandemic. The entire world was struggling with the outbreak of an epidemic that affected individual households and entire economies. Australia quickly closed its borders and imposed strict rules of social distancing, thereby avoiding the serious economic consequences of this pandemic. This article is devoted to the analysis of the country's economic situation after almost a year of fighting the global pandemic. The activities of the authorities and their impact on internal conditions and relations with other countries have been analysed.

Authorities' first actions

The first case of Covid-19 was identified and confirmed on January 25, 2020 in Victoria. Chinese visitor showed symptoms and has been tested. Australia reacted almost immediately. The development of the situation began to be observed. On February 1, 2020 Australia introduced a compulsory quarantine for all citizens returning from China and additionally, the borders closed for all people travelling from China.

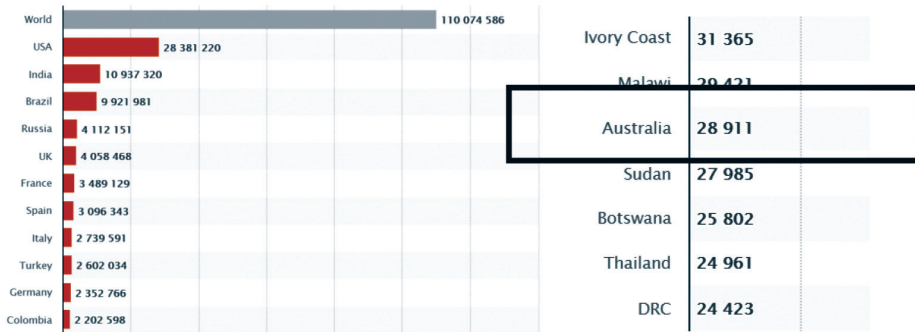


Figure 1. Number of Covid-19 cases in Australia and worldwide (as of February 17, 2021)

Source: Number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases worldwide as of February 17, 2021, by country Web. February 18, 2021. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1043366/novel-coronavirus-2019ncov-cases-worldwide-by-country/>

All of Australia's external borders were closed on March 20, 2020; people who were not residents of the country were not allowed to enter. Inner borders also were closed by some states. All residents returning to the country were subject to mandatory hotel quarantine. The pandemic seemed to have slowed down and new cases were sporadic. Unfortunately, there was an incident at the quarantine

hotel in Melbourne in May. The second, a much more severe wave of infections broke out in Victoria. Daniel Andrews, the Prime Minister of the state, labelled by newspapers “Dictator Dan”, reacted immediately, closing the state for three months (with masks, curfew, and travels no more than a few miles from home, and just one hour a day outdoors for exercise). Initially, these solutions seemed radical, but over time, the decisions were appreciated by society and the media and with 77% approval rating in Victoria for Andrews’ handling of the pandemic.

On March 25, 2020 the Prime Minister appointed the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission (NCCC). It was a new body tasked with advising on the fight against the pandemic. The main task of the NCCC is to prevent or mitigate any effects of the pandemic, including those of social and economic nature, and to do so collaboratively. As the Australian Prime Minister said, “There are, there are no blue teams or red teams or, there are no more unions or bosses. There are just Australians now; that’s all that matters. An Australian national interest and all Australians working together. And I thank all of those that are coming together in that spirit” (Morrison).

Throughout the crisis in Australia, cases of human-to-human transmission (Cockburn) of the virus in direct contact within the same state, city or even family were monitored very intensively and carefully. The observation of the families led to the most serious freezing of activity in the state of Victoria. In order to introduce all preventive measures and restrictions, the authorities very quickly decided to introduce a state of emergency and human biosecurity emergency.¹ The declaration of human biosecurity emergency gives the Minister for Health “expansive powers to issue directions and set requirements” in order to fight the pandemic. On the basis of these acts, the principles of social distancing, the obligation to wear masks and some further restrictions, e.g. numbers of permitted participants in different types of social gatherings were immediately introduced. These acts generally forbid Australians to leave the country. Borders and seaports have been closed, flights limited only to the most important purposes, e.g. related to defence force and security (*Maclean and Elphick*). Citizens were prepared for large-scale testing, social restrictions, cancellation of cultural and sports events and remote work where it was possible. Retired doctors were encouraged to go back to work. Campaigns on public health and safety were carried out. The action was conducted in different languages to reach most ethnic groups for whom English was a second language. In Australia, in total (as of March 2021) almost 29 thousands of people fell ill with coronavirus, 909 people died. Each week, an average of over 250 thousands tests

¹ State of emergency has been introduced by Daniel Andrews – premier of Victoria, at March 16, 2020 and in March 2021, the extension of the state of emergency until December is still under discussion in local parliament. Two days later after Committee meeting the human biosecurity emergency was declared in Australia by Governor General David Hurley (based on Section 475 of The Biosecurity Act 2015) first time in history.

were performed (with varying frequency in different states – most in Victoria and New South Wales).

With the introduction of social restrictions the Australian government decided to close non-essential services (e.g. pubs and clubs were closed), but many industries such as manufacturing, construction and retail have been still operating. But when the borders were closed, there were problems with deliveries to and from China (Australia's largest trade partner). Already in March 2020, PwC Australia published the first report on economic changes and forecasts. The first effects affected: domestic companies (mainly related to tourism, in particular student tourism) and companies exporting goods to China and importing from China. The closure of the borders caused business losses at the end of March. Over time, the accumulated stocks were exhausted, deliveries were not regular, the import of goods decreased and other companies (also not directly involved in the import or export of goods from and to China) felt the financial consequences of these changes. At the same time, commodity prices rose (the Chinese government was expected to stimulate their economy spending more on infrastructure), and as the number of confirmed coronavirus cases increased and China's economy slowed, the Australian Dollar depreciated against the United States Dollar to levels not seen since the global financial crisis (Thorpe et al. 2).

Consumption and employment

All of this had its first consequences very quickly. Employment was immediately hit by the pandemic. In total, nearly one million people in Australia lost their jobs during that period. Infected people were unable to work for more than two weeks and some of the active workers died. In 2020 the unemployment rate in Australia seems to have been influenced by the coronavirus pandemic, reaching 7% in October of that year. The unemployment rate peaked in July when it reached 7.5%.

Global supply chains were also disrupted – mainly in terms of liquidity. International trade costs have increased significantly. Companies had to start using reserves, which caused them to deplete quickly. Trade was not possible at the same level as the year before. This applies not only to the import of goods but also to export. The pandemic has hit many industries in the Australian economy. The most affected areas were: gastronomy, electronics, tourism and recreation as well as education and culture:

The exclusion of international students and temporary visa holders from public financial support may have been partly to minimise the imposition on the Commonwealth budget, but it also played into a nationalistic 'Australia first' rhetoric that the prime minister employed for broader political reasons. Many multicultural groups, universities, churches and charities have, instead, provided financial support (O'Sullivan et al.).

The Coronavirus Pandemic and Its Consequences on the Australian Economy in 2020

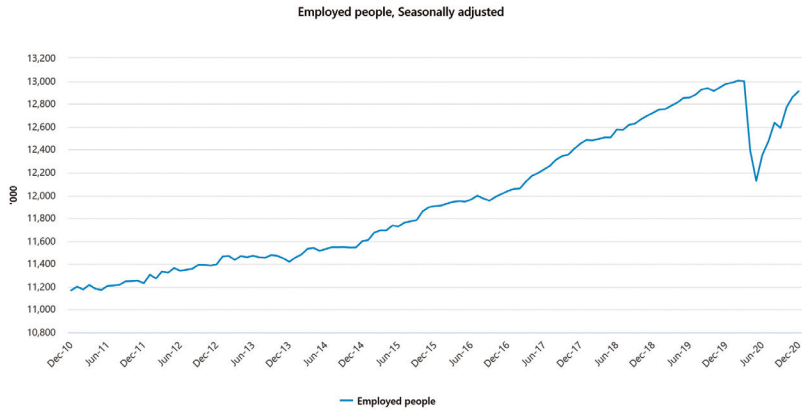


Figure 2. Employed people in Australia in 2020

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021c), Labour Force as of December 2020. Web. February 20, 2021. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/dec-2020>

Household consumption decreased significantly. In June 2020, Australia recorded the largest GDP decline of around 7%: this was mainly due to a reduction in household spending by 12.5%. People started saving; more of their household budgets were set aside as savings. In times of crisis, consumers are more careful about spending their money. The direction in which money is spent is also changing – primarily on home, food and gambling (in Australia). Australians began to spend less and were more likely to shop online and in small local stores.

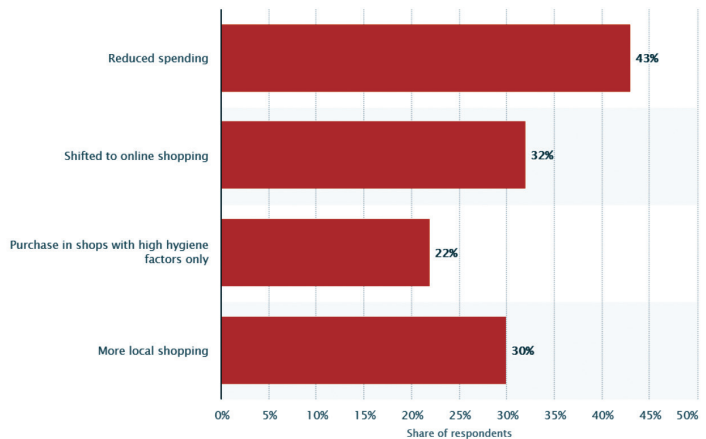


Figure 3. Consumer shopping behavior changes as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Australia in 2020

Source: Consumer shopping behavior changes as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Australia in 2020. Web. December 12, 2020. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1192200/australia-consumer-shopping-behavior-changes-as-a-result-of-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Compared to other major economies in the world, the Australian government reacted remarkably quickly. In mid-March, the government introduced the first stimulus package of AUD 17.6 billion. The package was intended to secure jobs and protect the health of Australians. 10 days later, a second stimulus package of AUD 66 billion was announced. As part of this package, assistance was provided to:

- 1) Casuals and sole traders (coronavirus supplement of AUD 550 a fortnight for the next six months, help for jobseekers, tax-free assistance for small and medium-sized enterprises – AUD 10,000).
- 2) Households (assistance for seniors or people receiving benefits).
- 3) Pensioners (subsidy for pensions at an average of AUD 219 per year).
- 4) Employers who want to keep staff (AUD 100,000 for small businesses to maintain jobs) (Judd 2020).

On March 30, 2020 the largest economic support package – worth AUD 70 billion – was unveiled by the government. The “JobKeeper” program is aimed primarily at employers who can receive up to AUD 1,500 per two weeks both for full- and part-time employee (provided that the employee was associated with the company for one year before the pandemic began). Companies were very eager to use this program to keep jobs. Therefore, the government has decided to introduce further enhanced versions of “JobKeeper”. Other organisations were also eligible for assistance from the program. Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission registered charities were supposed to show a 15% decline (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021b). Then they could apply for subsidies to operate and maintain jobs.

JobKeeper 2.0

EMPLOYER ELIGIBILITY

JobKeeper 1.0
Currently 27 September 2020

JobKeeper 2.0
Extended to 28 March 2021

END DATE

Current JobKeeper 1.0 Basic Test

- 30% decline in aggregated GST turnover (50% decline for businesses with aggregated turnover of more than \$1 billion)
- 15% decline if a registered charity

JobKeeper 2.0

No change to decline percentages (30%, 50%, 15%)

TURNOVER DECLINE TESTING

To be eligible from 28 September 2020 to 3 January 2021:

- Measure decline using actual GST turnover in both the June and September 2020 quarters to 3 January 2021, relative to comparable 2019 periods

To be eligible from 4 January 2021 to 28 March 2021:

- Measure decline using actual GST turnover in each of the June, September and December quarters 2020, relative to comparable 2019 periods

JobKeeper remains open to new recipients provided they meet the existing eligibility requirements and the additional turnover tests during the extension period

OTHER INFORMATION

JOBKEEPER 2.0

Currently **\$1500 PER FORTNIGHT** for all eligible employees till 27 September 2020

WORKED 20 HOURS +	OTHERS
\$1200 PER FORTNIGHT from 28 September 2020	\$750 PER FORTNIGHT from 28 September 2020
\$1000 PER FORTNIGHT from 4 January 2021	\$650 PER FORTNIGHT from 4 January 2021

STOP 28 March 2021

WORKER ELIGIBILITY

20+ work hours test (look-back to February 2020)

- From 28 September 2020, eligibility for “full rate” (Tier 1) JobKeeper depends on employee working in the four weeks of pay periods before 1 March 2020 for 20 hours or more on average
- ATO discretion to apply an alternative test if employee’s hours were not usual during February 2020 reference period
- Employer must nominate which payment rate is being claimed for each employee

JobKeeper 1.0 eligibility rules for employees are unchanged

Apprentices and trainees in place on 1 July 2020

- Wage subsidy of 50% of the apprentice or trainee’s wages paid until 31 March 2021. In addition to the existing support for small businesses, medium-sized businesses employing 199 people or fewer will now be eligible for the subsidy, for wages paid from 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021.

JobKeeper eligibility continues for sole traders, a partner in a partnership, a beneficiary of a trust, a shareholder or director of a company

20+ work hours test (look-back to February 2020)

- The 20+ hour test (see above) also applies to sole traders and eligible business participants from 28 September 2020, calculated by reference to time spent “actively engaged in the business”

SOLE TRADER AND ELIGIBLE BUSINESS PARTICIPANTS

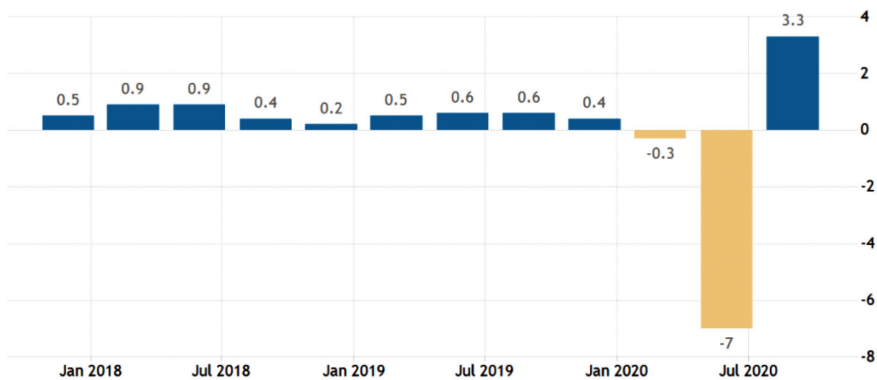
JobKeeper payments “relative to the compensation of employees (COE) were highest in Arts and Recreation Services (25.0%), down from 51.3% in the September quarter. Accommodation and Food Services (16.6%) recorded the second-highest share of JobKeeper relative to COE, down from 45.0% in the September quarter” (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021b).

The government introduced numerous aid programs for companies, employees who lost their jobs or those who wanted to keep them. There was even a “Home-Builder” program that brought about a spectacular effect. “HomeBuilder” provides eligible owner-occupiers (including first home buyers) with a grant to build a new home or substantially renovate an existing home. In this way, the residents benefit, and so do construction and renovation companies. In total, Australian residents submitted over 93,000 applications for funding (Australian Government 2020). Thanks to this program and record low-interest rates spending on renovations increased by 5.2% and new home construction by 3.4% (Hutchens, Chalmers and Janda).

Economic strength

Additionally, The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) cut interest rates to a record 0.25% at its extraordinary meeting in March, and then extended its low-cost loan facility to domestic lenders to keep the flow of cheap credit flowing in the economy.

Despite the introduction of many forms of aid, Australia recorded a GDP decline in the second quarter of the year, first by 0.3% and then by 7%. As the decline was recorded in two consecutive periods, we can speak of a recession (Samuelson and Nordhaus 99), which – it is worth emphasising – last occurred in 1991. Moreover, the 2020 recession was the deepest in over 30 years.



Source: Australia GDP Growth Rate, Trading Economics. Web. February 20, 2021. <https://tradingeconomics.com/australia/gdp-growth>

However, this was not just a pandemic effect. The tense political situation on the Canberra–Beijing line also contributed to the deterioration of the economy. Since Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison began soliciting an independent investigation into the origins of the Coronavirus, Chinese authorities have threatened to boycott some Australian goods. In late April 2020, Australia publicly backed such an investigation. And a few days later, the Chinese government issued the first decisions. Australian companies: Kilcoy Pastoral Company, JBS’s Beef City, Dinmore and Northern Cooperative Meat Company have been banned from exporting beef to China.² Formally, due to problems with labelling and health certificates; informally, it is a response to the Coronavirus investigation and to the fact that the Chinese concern Huawei was excluded from building a national 5G network. According to the Chinese Ministry of Trade, duties were imposed following an investigation since 2018 which showed that Australian barley was dumped in China to the detriment of domestic producers.³ Significantly higher duties were also imposed on wine. In Australia, this conflict is described as “Australian–China trade war” (Grant, Dziedzic and Xiao). What is interesting, in the face of problems with the supply of iron ore from Brazil (where the pandemic is at an advanced stage), China must count on Australian raw material, and dealing with Australia seems to be both: a model of behavior and a warning to other countries that would like to start or support similarly investigation or impose their own trade conditions in the future.

The closure of borders and increased trade tensions with China caused exports to drop 3.2% in September, and about AUD 3 million in the end of the year, reflecting reduced demand for mining resources, tourism and education services, and the aforementioned food products (Bloomberg News 2021).

Already in September, the Australian economy showed its strength and began to rebound significantly. An increase of 3.3% was recorded, which has been much higher than expected. It may take another two years for a full recovery to the pre-pandemic state. Of course, if nothing wrong happens again. However, it is possible to draw first conclusions and make a preliminary summary of the economic situation during the pandemic.

The economic recovery we are witnessing today is Australia’s largest GDP growth since 1976. In December 2020, another (second in a row) increase of 3.1% was recorded. However, the economy shrank by 1.1% in 2020 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021a). Commonwealth Bank economist Gareth Aird pointed out that owing to the pandemic as well as the “radical” government response 2020 would go down as “the most unique year to date in the history of the Australian economy” (Hutchens, Chalmers and Janda).

² So far, these companies were responsible for approx. 20% beef exports to the PRC.

³ Before the introduction of the duty, about 70 of total Australian barley exports was sent to China.

The good economic performance at the end 2020 shows that the Australian authorities have handled this difficult period quite well. There is a slow recovery from this complicated situation. After some restrictions have been eased, a marked increase in household spending can be observed. People started trading more intensively with cash that returned to the economy. Expenditure on goods and services increased much more than expected: “Spending by households rose 4.3% [last quarter of 2020], but remained 2.7 down through the year. Spending on goods rose 2.8% for the quarter and is up 6.2% through the year. Purchase of vehicles rose a record 31.8%, reflecting elevated household disposable income and shifting spending patterns with continued limitations on some expenditure items such as international travel. Spending on services rose 5.2%. This reflects a partial recovery with spending down 7.8% through the year. Recreation and culture, hotels, cafes and restaurants and health all continued to rebound as movement and trading restrictions eased” (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2021a).

Conclusions

There are several conditions that contributed to this good economic performance. Australian authorities and health care dealt relatively quickly with the high viral threat. COVID-19 was not as common as it was in other countries. Large number of tests performed and rapid and radical restrictions prevented the spread of the disease. There are sometimes protests related to restrictions, social tiredness and frustration, but the majority of society trusts the actions of the authorities and supports the decisions made. As a consequence, quick control of the epidemic allowed for the lifting of restrictions wherever possible. Mentioned in this article aid programs and packages for the economy protected it against long recession. Fiscal and monetary support helped saving many jobs and businesses. This, in turn, increased public confidence in the state and federal authorities, increased employment and the mentioned revival in household spending. Private investment rose nationally, which also effected the overall GDP result. Climatic conditions are also important for the economy. Favourable weather conditions supported the agricultural and farming sectors and helped elevate national output.

Australian response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has, thus far, been among the most successful in the world⁴ and the government’s economic recovery plan has been working efficiently.

On the one hand, Australia may owe some of its success to geographic conditions. The island country can close its boundaries much easier and faster.

⁴ The USA economy contracted 9.5% between April and June 2020, while the UK economy contracted 20.4%, pushing it into recession as well. The economy of France fell by 13.8% and that of Japan by 7.6%.

On the other hand, we must not forget about the very effective activities implemented in this country. Past problems with bushfires have shown that Australia needs a strong and determined leadership. It seems to be successful during the pandemic. There was (or still is) effective action, effective policy and leadership, and collaboration between the public and private sectors. Even a slight increase of cases immediately has brought further restrictions. The vast majority of residents complied with the requirements set by the government and showed great trust in the state authorities. Even now, with the disease seemingly under control, the population is acting with caution. A temporary ceasefire between political parties allowed greater social trust to build in the proposed solutions. Decisions were made beyond divisions. Experts, not politicians, had the decisive vote on the pandemic. Flexible and constructive social and economic solutions were introduced. Fighting a pandemic is very costly, but as the case of Australia shows, it can be managed effectively. The OECD forecast shows that 2021 will be much better for the Australian economy, with economic growth estimated at 2.5%. Some sources forecast an even greater increase of 6%. However, it is important to remember that with the advent of new strains of the virus, further restrictions, changes and economic downturns may be inevitable. Still, the actions of the authorities may be so effective that the economy, despite the difficulties, will continue to grow at the level of a 3–4 percentage points.

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Societal Security Trust Issues in Australia during the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020

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Abstract

In late December 2019 and early January 2020 the first cases of a new coronavirus occurred in Wuhan. It is a virus characterised by similarities to SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) and MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome). On January 25, 2020 the initial case of infection by SARS-CoV-2 caused the disease COVID-19 in an Australian patient who later died from it. During my PhD thesis defence in September 2018 I would not have thought that one of the possible security scenarios which I designed for the South Pacific region, related to epidemic threats, would soon come true. Despite some obvious and high indicators resulting, for example, from a geopolitical location in the vicinity of China, the probability of an epidemic outbreak seemed nigh unbelievable. This article focuses on societal security. It is impossible to make a solid analysis of an epidemic impact on societal security in various countries in a single article; therefore, I concentrate specifically on the case of Australia. The goal of this article is to explain how Australians cope with the epidemic and if they are

prepared for a drastic change in their lifestyles. Do they put trust in governmental institutions? What issues appear to be main societal threats in Australian society during the pandemic? I conclude with thoughts about new societal directions that are going to be implemented should the scale of the pandemic persist. Due to limited length, my overview is not exhaustive; instead, it focuses on core findings about the condition of Australian society during the pandemic.

Keywords: Australia, pandemic, national security, societal security, COVID-19

Introduction

Day by day we observe and participate in diverse situations, see common reactions as well as differences in declared behaviors. Opinions about the epidemic can be shaped in varied ways depending on what people see in the streets, and what media resources they watch and read. It is estimated that about 16% of Australian society is epidemiologically at risk because of their 65-plus-age and 18.7% is 0–15 years old (Australian Bureau of Statistics qtd in. O’Sullivan et al. 134–151). In September 2020 there were no documented deaths cases caused by COVID-19 in the group of citizens aged up to 15 years old and there were 651 documented deaths cases for the group of citizens over 60 years old since January 20, 2020. Trust and its societal institution are crucial issues during the times of an epidemic crisis all over the world. Paul Dembinsky postulated long before the COVID-19 outbreak the necessity of coping with the lack of trust both to everything and everyone: citizens to government, institutions to central authorities etc. After the financial crisis in 2008 trust has been lost in a transnational way and rebuilding it was classified as a 21st century challenge for modern democratic states (Brudnicka). Trust becomes even more central and critical during periods of uncertainty due to organisational crisis. Trust is, itself, a term for a clustering of perceptions (Chervany and Mcknight 3). The term belongs to a category of “societal values” which is wider than the definition of “value”, because it refers to most of the socially acceptable values which are actively present on a daily basis. Because of the very existence of values, there is the possibility to find a compromise in order to cooperate for the common good (Piwowarski 243).

Human beings are social creatures and feel the necessity to live among others from whom they expect to receive love, help, and satisfaction of their basic needs. The most well-known hierarchy of human needs is the so-called Maslow’s pyramid. Among the most basic needs, also known as the needs of scarcity, one can mention: physiological needs, security, and acceptance. Without those, one can never

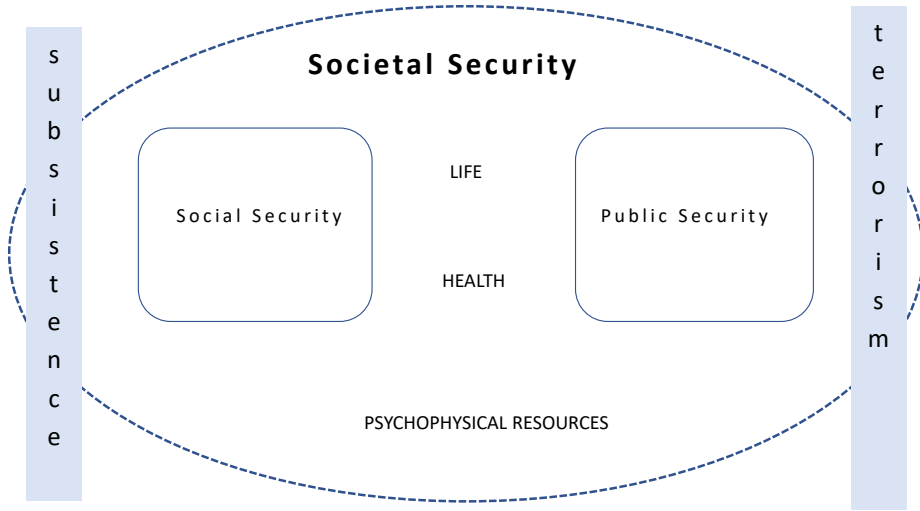
meet the needs of higher order which are needs of, inter alia: respect, recognition, and self-realisation. On a macro scale, in what can be identified as a society, there is a catalogue of needs of: acceleration of creating a modern civil society; including ensuring national security; creating individual security; control over the public administration; enhancement of positive national values; education; defence of the homeland territory (Skrabacz 186–189). In the 1980s Robert Ulman noticed the necessity of balancing the individual and state/national security (Ulman 130–133). An example of such balancing could be the decrease of military spending in favour of the social spending in many, especially European, state budgets. Many definitions of the term “societal security” can be summarised as: one of the categories of national security, focusing on ensuring existential foundations of living, ensuring the possibility of self-realisation (material and spiritual), especially creating workplaces, healthcare, and retirement insurance.

Some methodological findings have to be made. There is a need to separate the terms “societal security” and “public security”, because, until recently, those terms have not been used in widely understood security studies and their definitions’ ranges have been combined with some vital interests of a state. Societal security is associated with the reduction of probability of an undesirable phenomenon occurrence and the reduction of risks associated with issues of survival, quality of life, and national identity; while public security – directly with the protection of life, health, and property of citizens from the risk of terrorist attacks (Gierszewski 32).

Another existing term is “social security”. According to Cambridge Dictionary social security is “a system of payments made by the government to people who are ill, poor, or who have no job”.¹ The *Lexicon of Social Politics* defines it slightly differently: social security is a state of freedom from paucity, the consequence of which is the lack of means of subsistence. The risks are: diseases, accidents at work, disabilities, senility, job loss, maternity, death of the breadwinner (Rysz-Kowalczyk). There are shared elements in the definitions, like the risk and the fact that where in social security they focus on material resources, in societal security they mention material but also psychophysical resources, originating in economy, policy, culture, etc.

These definitions show that a simple comparison of the societal impact of the epidemic situation on various countries has to include so many factors constituted for societal security, that it requires a separate monograph with explanations of, for instance, historical evolution of the term “social security”. The picture below shows a graphical representation of the mentioned terms’ dependencies.

¹ Social security. Web. 16 May 2021. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/social-security>



The dotted lines mean that various securities' fields have to maintain flexibility in crossing their competencies. It relates to a potential situation of, for instance, losing subsistence because of health issues caused by a terrorist attack. I am not a proponent of security sectors' closed categorisation, so the dotted line being the frontier of societal security should remain open for free movement of national resources and institutional interactions.

Selected events in the development of the pandemic situation

On January 23, 2020 the passengers of a flight between Wuhan province and Sydney were screened on arrival, the outcome of which was the detection of four cases of coronavirus infected people within two days. Soon border restrictions were implemented: first for journeys for non-essential-reasons and then for non-citizens and non-permanent residents. Then came an automatic ban on public gathering of more than 500 people, and a rugby match and the Formula 1 Grand Prix 1 racing event in Melbourne were closed just hours before the start. Strict physical distancing measures introduced by the government were inconsistent in some opinions. The behaviour of Prime Minister Scott Morrison can be considered an example of such inconsistency: he ordered public restrictions and at the same time declared he was attending a major rugby league match. Such contradictory attitudes of a sports fan on the one hand, on the other, a policy decision maker, led to complex psychological and political outcomes. Josh Frydenberg from the Liberal Party of Australia defended the Prime Minister and said he “would have done the same given

the opportunity” and “[that it was] good on him (the Prime Minister) for being passionate about his country and his footy”.²

There is no doubt that such a politician should lead by being an example during an extraordinary time like the period of a lockdown. Pictures from the stadium show he was sitting in a crowd without a mask, which is evidence of a measure of insensitiveness,³ while other residents of Victoria were forced by law to live in isolation for the first six weeks. The bad reception of this incident in public opinion should not come as a surprise. Victorian Premier Dan Andrews neither wanted to comment nor begrudged him taking part in a “footy” celebration.

The not quite politically correct sequence of the Prime Minister’s actions affected the trust level especially in South Australia, where 62% of Australians are less appreciative of Scott Morrison’s efforts during the pandemic (OECD 17). Yet, at the same time, Queenslanders in 76% were satisfied with his work during the pandemic (Evans et al. 6): “Political trust has increased significantly in Australia in times of the COVID-19 pandemic and is strong in comparison with the trust levels in Italy, the UK, and the US: For the first time in over a decade Australians are exhibiting relatively high levels of political trust in the federal government (from 29 to 54%), and the Australian Public Service (from 38 to 54%)” (Evans et al. 4).

Evidently, the lack of decisive and consequent policy leadership causes a sense of anxiety and uncertainty. In the long run, it could generate a rise of doubts about possibly double standards and about the efficiency of the restriction measures taken. Considering every territory specified as an autonomic unit could also weaken central authorities. Doubts about the safety of children attending school form another example that could be perceived as a divergence in the government and states lines. In the first waves of the pandemic most Australian schools remained open with some reduction of attendance at the epidemic peak. Eventually, time of closure – and further reopening rules – of schools and early childhood education and care (ECEC) varied across state and territory jurisdictions, but the entire education system has faced some obstacles. For example, while 79% pupils from the Northern Territory went back to in class learning, only 3% in Victoria were in attendance (Sacks et al online). Normally there are four main ways of educating young Australians: based teaching and learning (in classroom); independent homeschooling; “school on air”, meaning implementation of some online equivalents; and school-led remote learning. The last one is based on giving students homework resources

2 Joshn Frydenberg Defends PM’s Appearance at NRL Game Amid Coronavirus Pandemic. *The New Daily*. 13 July 2020. Web. 21 June 2021. <https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/2020/07/13/frydenberg-morrison-rugby-coronavirus/>

3 Consumer psychologist Adam Ferrier agreed with that sentiment, saying it was insensitive on ScoMo to be attending an NRL match during the Victorian lockdown, Scott Morrison Criticised for ‘Insensitive’ Outing during Victorian Lockdown. Web 21 June 2021. <https://7news.com.au/sport/rugby-league/scott-morrison-criticised-for-insensitive-outing-during-victorian-lockdown-c-1175489>

and assignments. Obviously, the popularity of this way of schooling increased during the pandemic but some new problems occurred. Those were problems like: restricted ability to monitor individual students' progress, increased social isolation and reduced ability to support students' well-being, differential levels of access to technology – including the Internet and devices – to support learning, interrupted learning support for the children with additional needs, and many others (Sacks et al. online). There are no unambiguous results of studies on how the virus affects children, but the numbers show that the symptoms of COVID-19, in comparison to other groups, are lower in range. The Lancet Child and Adolescence research showed that during the pandemic's first wave “children and teachers did not contribute significantly to COVID-19 transmission via attendance in educational settings” (Macartney et al. online). But, in fact, most Australian students stayed at home despite the other educational modes' disadvantages. Only those whose parents could not take care of them have been allowed to attend traditional classes. When the governmental restrictions wound back, Prime Minister Scott Morrison insisted that all the pupils should return to their educational institutions (Mercer online). Once again central and local political messages were discordant. It reflects the lack of responsibility or blurred responsibility for children's health and for potential virus transmission from them to the teachers and the rest of school staff.⁴ More specifically:

- in Victoria state willingness for the children to stay at their homes dominates: “The message from Victoria has been clear and consistent”. “If you can learn from home, you must learn from home, and that message has been understood and heeded”;
- in New South Wales children were made to head back to school with safety measures taken, for instance: body temperature checks or extra classroom cleaning;
- in Queensland pupils went back to school with the increases and decreases in the number of infected being monitored;
- in Tasmania kindergarten children and primary school students went back to schools and kindergartens, however, children aged 7 to 10 years old were encouraged to continue learning from home (Alvaro online);
- in Western Australia all students had to return to schools with some medical exceptions, for instance: when cases of chronic health issues had been present in a child's family (Laschon et al online);

⁴ Senoid Thomas, one of Australian parents says: “I do think there have been quite confusing, mixed messages from the government regarding school closures and the situation surrounding children. (...) So it really depends on the individual's own outlook and assessment of the situation rather than there being a clear or concise guideline.” (Mercer).

- in the Northern Territory schools were reopened (Heaney online) as in New South Wales, but those parents who felt uncomfortable with their children going back to educational institutions were not obligated to send them back there (Bermingham online).

The trust level relating to Australian local authorities seems to be more acute in public opinion. Only 37% think that the state premiers are handling the coronavirus situation well. The highest performing state premier is Mark McGowan from Western Australia, while Steven Marshall from South Australia takes the second position. The poorest performing premiers at this time were Anastacia Palaszczuk from Queensland and Gladys Berejiklian from New South Wales.

The prolonged uncertainty which the parents felt about the process of their children heading back to school was surprising: “Every night we wait for the email. Sometimes it comes in the late afternoon, but many nights it doesn’t hit my inbox until 10 or 11 p.m. Eventually, it arrives, written by a beleaguered school principal letting us know that my son’s high school is still closed” (Letter 169 online).

Schools are not just places for learning. Children’s isolation will have lasting consequences, including diminishing children’s ability to continue their education. For some children schools are the places safe from abusive families and sometimes only educational institutions can provide them with a nutritious meal. Statistics are terrifying. While figures on violence against children remain difficult to collect there are studies showing that one in six women in Australia has experienced physical or sexual violence and one in four – emotional abuse. Even if only some of those women have children and some are single, there are still some “red flags”. A survey conducted by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) shows that 20% of Australians purchased more alcohol before the pandemic and 70% of them drink more than usual. One third used alcohol daily and 28% reported that it helped to cope with stress and anxiety (FARE).

The Australian Psychological Society issued an information leaflet on coping with coronavirus anxiety, especially with regard to children. There are some basic precautions like: washing hands frequently, avoiding touching one’s face, staying home in case of feeling unwell, seeking medical help when experiencing the appearance of possible COVID-19 symptoms. There also is a tip to not to be scared of talking with children about the risks of the pandemic. All that parents should do is to maintain a calm manner of speaking, clarify all misunderstandings and rumors about it, say that feeling anxious is typical in such situations and that it is nothing to be ashamed of, and not to overwhelm kids with unnecessary information, and allow them regular contact with the people they are worried about.⁵

⁵ Australian Psychological Society. Tips for Coping with Coronavirus Anxiety. Web. 7 July 2021. https://www.psychology.org.au/getmedia/5a4f6500-b5af-4482-9157-5392265d53ce/20APSI-COVID-19-Public-P2_1.pdf

From my pedagogical experience, I can only agree fully with these statements and add that it is very surprising how important it is to limit the exposure to the media, as some children are more sensitive to the suffering of others, especially those aged 7 to 13. One of my pupils was so worried about her grandmother's health, that during an online lesson she replied to my question about her future dreams with "I just want my grandma to stay in good health during this pandemic." It was a very heart-touching moment in a school teacher's experience.

More than half a million Australians who experienced the aforementioned violence did so in the presence of their children (*Family, Domestic* vii-viii.). There are also additional concerns about the schools in lockdown: social isolation, decreased students' well-being, and loss of education. There are still some challenges for the educational system to face: what role should the technology play in the delivery of all the modes of education and how will the technology landscape evolve to meet this role? How is the interruption in education caused by COVID-19 going to alter the learning trajectories of Australia's children? How can those that have been disadvantaged be prevented from being left behind? (Sacks et al online)

The situation of students in higher education was similar. Over one million students and 100,000 staff employed by 43 universities were based at home. Many students had problems paying their bills because they lost their jobs during the lockdown period. "If, one month ago, someone had told me 'in a month's time you are going to be struggling to pay your bills, food and rent', I wouldn't have believed it", said a student from Australia on an ABC podcast (Maslen online). The situation was difficult in places where the virus transmission was not declining, like in Melbourne. Even though the Victorian government provided funds in the form of one-off \$1,100 for struggling international students in April 2020 and the number of students that obtained it was more than 21,000, it was still inadequate. The central government suggested that the international students who are not able to support themselves should go back to their homelands. It caused anxiety because of the possibility of the students losing visas and of them having no financial resources for the tickets home. And here we can once again see the dualism of political narration: foreigners are encouraged to leave Australia while national borders are closed. The options for returning home were disappearing. "I think I will lose [my] visa because the government also said just go home if you cannot support yourself", a student said. "And then there is no ticket that I can afford. Maybe I will just be kicked out forcibly", said an Australian student from Nepal (Henriques-Gomes online). On the one hand, they could feel unwanted as people who take over Australians' workplaces, but at same time they do not want to lose their last chance to get a decent higher education in Australia. Six out of ten respondents chosen from international students said they had lost their jobs because of the pandemic and 15% of them had found a new job. Such indications could raise suspicion that foreign students are one of the most suffering groups in the labour market: "One in four respondents shared his or her

bedroom with at least one other person who was not a partner, with 11% sharing a bedroom with two or more people. More than 200 respondents said they were forced to “hot-bed” – meaning to sleep in shifts, with the bed used by different people at different times. Despite such privations, one-sixth of respondents worried that they might face homelessness” (Ross online).

A problem other than financial ones is shared by other societal groups and it concerns the psychological aspect of the COVID lockdown and pandemic situation; namely, loneliness. It is estimated that 63% of respondents have felt lonelier since the epidemic outbreak. The life of international students appeared to be particularly precarious. A Sydney student said: ”I think no one would even know if I had died in my room if it wasn’t for a month when my landlady would come and ask for rent. Other than that, no one would even know.”⁶ Such an opinion is shocking in all its brutal honesty.

In Australia one can find also pandemic outcomes more typical for this country than others because of its multicultural society. Some traditional groups can be misguided by rumored old ways of treatments without medical evidence. There is a huge need to create information channels in languages other than English, because the existing channels are not sufficient. Some cultural minorities are more vulnerable to racial abuse and this is especially true of Chinese, who are innocent victims of the geopolitical conflict between world powers. Prominent Chinese-Australians have written an open letter calling for an end to racial abuse towards Asian-Australians:

Chinese and other Asian-Australians have been in Australia since the 1800s. They have helped to build this nation, fought for Australia in both world wars and are deeply loyal citizens. (Fang and Yang online)

Family is one of the most important factors when facing racism, poor financial situations, etc. Considering how people have gotten through difficulties in the past, the family is the societal institution that could provide the greatest support, also by reminding people that many problems related to COVID-19 are limited. Respectful and open conversations about mental and physical concerns can be fundamental in these difficult times.⁷ Depression and anxiety strongly affect family ties. These disorders affect adults and children, regardless of gender. In times of the pandemic there are some crucial matters: first of all, to take care of already diagnosed patients with

6 ‘No One Would Even Know if I Had Died in my Room’: Coronavirus Leaves International Students in Dire Straits. Web. 7 July 2021. <https://theconversation.com/no-one-would-even-know-if-i-had-died-in-my-room-coronavirus-leaves-international-students-in-dire-straits-144128>

7 Australian Psychological Society. Coronavirus (Covid-19) Anxiety and Staying Mentally Healthy. Web. 7 July 2021. https://www.psychology.org.au/getmedia/5f9cc6d4-ad5c-4b02-8b7f-d4153cb2ba2b/20APS-IS-COVID-19-Public-Older-adults_1.pdf

mental problems, and secondly, to sensitise the entire society in order to primarily pick up on symptoms of mental illnesses, such as a drop in energy, increased fatigue, apathy, anxiety felt in the mornings (which doctors call “free flowing anxiety” – one is anxious of the coming day). It also means feeling indecisive, problems with concentration, thinking badly about one’s self. If such a state lasts for more than two weeks, one should start looking for help from a specialist. In these moments people in our nearest environment play a crucial role. This means family and friends, as someone stuck in a toxic situation is not able to evaluate a potential problem in an objective way. Mental illnesses are very common and not limited to depression. They could become a mix of disorders: depressive ones, anxiety and substance abuse disorders. One in five (20%) Australians aged 16–85 experience mental illnesses at any age in this range. Of the 20% of Australians suffering from a mental illness in any year, 11.5% suffer from one disorder and 8.5% suffer from two or more disorders (Australian Bureau of Statistics). The National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing (NSMHWB) of The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) provides the most comprehensive (albeit dated) estimates for mental disorders of Australian adults both over their lifetime and during the last 12 months. The Department of Health has said that there are no plans to fund another survey on mental health by the ABS (Cook online). During the time of pandemic rethinking such a statement should be highly recommended. A report commissioned by the Royal Australian & New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) estimated that in 2014 the costs of severe mental illnesses in Australia were \$56.7 billion per year. This includes the direct economic costs of severe mental illness resulting from the use of health and other services, as well as indirect costs resulting from loss of productivity, as some ill people are unable to work (Cook online). Responsibility for funding and regulating mental health services in Australia is shared between the Australian, state and local governments. However, as stated in the Parliamentary Library publication, *Health in Australia: a Quick Guide*, their respective roles are not always transparent. On August 4, 2017, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to the Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan which established a national approach for collaborative government effort from 2017 to 2022. According to all strategic documents there are two main groups in which mental illnesses caused by the pandemic could be extremely difficult to fight: the homeless and Aboriginal community.

Recent information on homelessness was taken from the study conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2016.⁸ Since 2011, the number of homeless people in Australia has increased by 13.7% and it is estimated at 116,427 cases. 20% of these are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, which is a decrease, compared with 26% in 2011. In Australia’s capital cities during the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak a massive operation got underway, aiming to take about 7000 homeless people

⁸ ABS Census of Housing and Population.

off the streets (Knight online). The homeless were supposed to find accommodation in empty student dormitories, hotels, and motels. Jenny Smith – the chair of Homelessness Australia⁹ stated: “I’m not aware of it happening on this scale before” (Knight online). The CEO of Launch Housing in Melbourne – Bevan Warner – said: “It’s shown that homelessness is solvable. For the first time, we’ve got an opportunity to work with them from rough sleeping into a permanent home and a good life” (Knight online).

The profile of the people who need housing also changed and it is estimated that there are more than 160 000 families waiting for an affordable place to live. As the Federal Minister for Housing, Michael Sukkar, comments: “Every year the Federal Government provides more than \$6 billion in Commonwealth Rent Assistance and support to the states and territories to deliver social housing through the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement” (Borys online).

There are also expert opinions stating that dealing with homelessness by fighting the after-effects comes at higher costs than solving the problem before people get on the streets (Borys online). Shocking material about homelessness during the pandemic in Australia is shown on the Youtube channel “Invisible People”¹⁰ where a wider audience can learn about the causes of homelessness.

Aboriginals are three times more likely to experience high or very high levels of psychological distress than other Australians, are hospitalised for mental and behavioural disorders at almost twice the rate of non-Indigenous people, and have twice the suicide rate than that of the rest of Australians. The breadth and depth of such high levels of distress of individuals, their families, and their communities is profound. The NSW Health plan mentions the most important issues to consider when developing pandemic services for Aboriginal communities:

- significance of family life and tradition in Aboriginal communities,
- the realities of living that create a challenge for the control over the pandemic,
- planning for effective communication,
- inclusive and participatory process of consultation with Aboriginal communities and their health services,
- traditional and multiple households: extended families in one household, more than one “home”.¹¹

⁹ Homelessness Australia (HA) is the national peak body for homelessness in Australia and was defunded by the Federal Government in December 2014. It now operates on a voluntary basis and has no employed staff. Web. 7 July 2021. <https://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au>

¹⁰ American non-profit organisation, The organization educates the public about homelessness through storytelling, educational resources, and advocacy. The organization was founded in November 2008 by an activist and former television executive, Mark Horvath. Web. 7 May 2021. <https://invisiblepeople.tv/>

¹¹ NSW Government website. Pandemic Planning with Aboriginal Communities. Web. 7 April 2021. https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/pandemic/Pages/engaging_aboriginal_communities.aspx

It is quite clear that a strong link between financial resources and mental problems exists. The Australian government has established loans for small- and medium-sized businesses in a package of USD 66 billion. Because of the early social distancing measures and other precautions taken in New Zealand and Australia, it was possible to create a safe zone (social bubble) for the movement of people and goods between those two states (the trans-Tasman travel initiative). The special relationship between Australian and New Zealand is established not only in the tourism sector, but also in terms of societal cohesion: about 570,000 New Zealanders live permanently in Australia. A business partnership has been established between the local and central authorities.

The post-COVID-19 “policy settings that were finally settled upon by the government are looking as though they will reflect a complex mix of ideology and pragmatism and are likely to provide the issues on which the next national election is contested” (O’Sullivan et al. 145). Despite various problems in the area of societal welfare it does not seem that societal trust, understood as vertical trust in line authorities and habitants, was damaged to any great extent. That is why the results of trust level (according to media coverage) are even more interesting. Only 20% of people have confidence in social media; 39% in television; a little less in newsprint and the highest level of trust is located in the radio. Those numbers are separate from the confidence levels expressed in the opinions of scientists and experts. In the table below the general trust survey results are presented.

Australian services	Level of societal trust (%)
Government	29–54
Army	78
Health services	77
Police	75
Social media	19–20
Television	32–39
Newsprint	29–37
Radio	c. 38–41
Experts’ opinions	77

Source: Based on data, Evans et al. in: *Political Trusted Democracy in Times of Coronavirus: Is Australia Still the Lucky Country?* (4–5)

Conclusions

There are some key issues involved in reducing COVID-19's negative impact on society, like expert knowledge-based political and administrative decisions as well as a sufficiently financed, effective healthcare system. There is also a need for accompanying elements, such as public trust that guarantees respect for the law and for its implementation. According to the report titled "Political Trust and Democracy in Times of Coronavirus: Is Australia still the Lucky Country?", it can be assumed that Australians put a lot of trust in their homeland's public institutions. But some general conclusions, such as the following, have to be made.

Australia is an island country and the implicated isolation can be favourable for virus infection prevention. The way of life in Australia – because of the great area it covers and of families living in houses rather than apartments – also looks different than in Europe. Australia is characterised generally by a warmer climate, as well. While I am not an advocate of comparing any European country to Australia, it should be mentioned that a cluster of large coastal cities could create demographic conditions similar to those in Europe. The double hierarchy of government authorities was a crucial issue in fighting COVID-19. Thanks to that, state governments could apply an appropriate model of crisis management including specifying geographical and urban conditions. In comparison to the situation in New Zealand, immediate political decisions concerning the pandemic in Australia led initially to almost zero virus transmission (Thompson online).

The public quite well receives the restrictions implemented by the local and central authorities. It is tempting to say that they have to adopt three evaluation criteria: institutional trust statistics, the number of anti-lockdown protests, and reactions to "controversial" technological innovations that are supposed to help COVID-19 prevention. First, according to the discussed report titled "Political Trust and Democracy in Times of Coronavirus: Is Australia Still the Lucky Country?", it seems that Australians put trust in their institutions. Confronting it with other sources of information – first Google search results of the phrase "trust Australia Covid" – proves it being high and even higher when compared to the delayed survey on the subject of trust in Australian society: "The ANU survey found between January and April, 2020 confidence in the federal government surged from 27% to 57% and confidence in the public service recovered from 49% to 65% as Australians gave a thumbs up to the coronavirus response" (Karp online).

Moreover, there is a high level of trust in Australian statistics compared to COVID-19 world surveys. While data management in other countries is perceived as "sloppy", Australia's Chief Medical Officer said: "The only numbers I have total faith in are the Australian numbers" (Ross "How Do We?" online).

Protests in Australia against lockdown started in the first days of September 2020 and were repeated at the end of November in Melbourne. Hundreds of people

clashed with the police. In effect 16 people were arrested and 96 fines were issued, for offences including not wearing a mask, violating public gathering directions, travelling more than 25 kilometres from home, assaulting the police and failing to state one's own name and address.¹² Nevertheless protests under the slogan "Let us work" do not seem to lead to chaos spreading throughout Australian society.

That non-rebellious character was reflected also in the eager use of the Covid-Safe App that is supposed to track people who've had possible contact with the virus. The government recommends installing such an app but it is voluntary. About 1 million people downloaded the app in the first days. Unfortunately, it was not possible to avoid some misunderstandings, the consequences of which were unsuccessful communication of the infection and – in the long run – a possible collapse of trust. The trust level in the central authorities differs from that in the local authorities.

There are a couple of groups in society that are more fragile than others during a pandemic. In Australia, like in any other country, there are seniors, children, and people with comorbidities, but there are also groups specific to Australia, like Aborigines and immigrants looking to change their lives thanks to education and work in Australia. These communities need help in various areas from grocery shopping, to economic prospects, to mental health. The last factor was an issue that was brought to the general public before the pandemic even broke out. Nowadays the isolation, lockdown and obvious economic deterioration of lifestyle will result in mental problems of varying severity to a much wider extent.

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“Time Has Caught on Fire:” Eco-Anxiety and Anger in Selected Australian Poetry

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Abstract

This essay discusses fire as a significant factor shaping Australian social and cultural life. It focuses first on the climate-change induced emotions such as eco-anxiety and anger that can be tied with the Australian landscape, and then moves on to a discussion of the presence and function of fire in selected contemporary Australian poetry. The reflection on the poetics of trauma in the second part of the essay is accompanied by a discussion of solastalgia connected with land dispossession as an experience of the First Nations expressed in the Aboriginal literature in English.

Keywords: emotions in Australian literature, solastalgia, metaphors of anger, Anthropocene, Australian wildfires, trauma

[...] have we eaten in the heart of the yellow wheat
the sullen unforgetting seed of fire?
And now, set free by the climate of man's hate,
that seed sets time ablaze.
Judith Wright, "Two Fires"

"There is a country/ burned of ashes/ far beyond the stars:"¹ Introduction

Fire is the element that has not only transformed the Australian landscape: it has also affected the patterns of social, economic and political life, impressing itself on the Australian culture in more than one way. While c. 1.3% of Australian GDP is spent to cover the preventive measures, the response to its spread and the destruction it wreaks yearly, fire costs human and animal lives, with c. 100 human fatalities and 83 properties per annum (Ashe et al.). Its environmental, social and economic costs are connected with strong emotions, which politicians come to acknowledge, addressing them in policy development on local and central levels (Ashe et al. 1). However, the logic of total average costs does not articulate the toll of bushfires and wildfires as ecological disasters; neither does it reflect the range of human emotion tied to the overwhelming sense of loss in the aftermath of such destructive events.

Wildfires are, as Stephen Pyne underlines, the consequence of urban and industrial development in the 19th and 20th century. Their appearance and prevention were systematically approached only in 1939, when the Black Friday fires led to the emergence of the first bushfire protection policies. These, however, did not suppress the big fires of 1974–1975 or 2002–2003, or Black Saturday of 2009 (Pyne), or indeed the catastrophic fires of 2019–2020. The images of raging Australian bushfires readily covered by international media present only a part of a complex picture, whereby emotional responses to blaze are not limited to these connected with loss only, and come attached to the cultural traditions of fire management which are much older than the white presence in Australia. The history of fire, its emotional resonance and expression, is embedded within the Australian cultural imaginary, with collective memories of fires and the accounts of fire-related events making an impact on the Australian literary output.

The interconnectedness of fire and emotion in the Australian landscape is articulated by David Horton in a meditation which links the climate, the landscape and the feeling human body:

¹ Lionel Fogarty, "Kargun". In *Kargun*. Coominya, Old: Cheryl Buchanan 1976.

This is an Australian landscape, and I try to view it with Australian eyes, my body attuned to the rhythms of the country as much as to the movement of blood in the veins. Here is a land where climate and landscape have shaped the vegetation, where climate, landscape and vegetation have created a particular fire regime for this area, and in turn, that fire regime has helped to modify the pattern of vegetation. It is a complex interplay in a land of complex ecology, whose secrets have been hard to unlock. (71)

This essay offers a brief consideration of the complex relationship between fire and Australian culture, addressing the whole range of emotions tied with that particular element. It briefly discusses the central importance of the conceptual metaphor of anger as heat and danger in Western culture to underline the reliance of language on the emotive potential of fire and its imagery. The phenomenon of climate-change-related anger, its social effects and its possible representations in Australian literature are briefly outlined with a larger aim in mind. The motivation behind this very introductory study is to trace and discuss possible occurrences of fire in literature, with a special focus on how anger and fire are discussed in selected Australian poems. These include Aboriginal poetry in English, with two important caveats. Aboriginal literature in English dates from David Unaipon's *Native Legends* (1929) and encompasses such classics as Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker)'s book of poetry, *We Are Going* (1964). It has become a vast territory, where a non-Aboriginal, non-Australian literary historian will be at a loss. Yet, to leave it out of consideration altogether would be a gross oversight. Additionally, the cultural significance of fire in Aboriginal cultures has been different from the modern post-industrial Western prohibition of fire (Macaulay), hence the writing of First Nations' authors was approached with this objection in mind.

Even though an extensive analysis of the metaphorical uses of fire in Australian literature as such and Aboriginal literature in English in particular goes well beyond the scope of this study, one can risk a hypothesis that an emotive exploration of the patterns, severity and duration of Australian fires is one of the Australian literary topoi, possibly connected to the more general social, economic and cultural concerns such as individual and generational traumas of wildfire-survival and land dispossession. This has been briefly addressed in the present writing through an introductory discussion of eco-anxiety and solastalgia defined in the second part of the essay. As one of the ways of coping with the increase of eco-anxiety is to look for its representations as well as the expressions of resilience and hope that can be found in creative fiction (Affifi and Christie), these are briefly addressed in part three which provides a sketch of the (metaphorical) presence of fire in the contemporary Australian poetry.

“All that rage:” metaphors we live by

Metaphors related to anger have been discussed extensively: in cognitive linguistics anger conceptualisation in American English has been provided by Lakoff (1987), and Lakoff and Kövecses (1987) look at it interculturally, arguing that expressions of anger are symptomatic of coherent conceptual frames which we all share as human beings (cf. Charteris-Black). They point to the embodied character of the emotion, and the fact that the physiological effects of anger are likened in human languages to insanity, a dangerous animal, to burden, but also to a rise in heat and internal pressure, to the point of burning, as in:

She was doing *a slow burn*.

He was *breathing fire*.

The central metaphor which occurs in these two examples can be described as ANGER IS HEAT. We might think of it as a fluid and then ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER, but we might also think of it as if pertaining to a solid substance; then anger is conceptualised as ANGER IS FIRE (Lakoff, Lakoff and Kövecses). This metaphorical entanglement of anger with Western thinking about the elements seems of particular interest in the wake of the catastrophic climate-change which rather justifiably awakes a range of emotions, with anger as a commonly addressed option which resonates in many societies, including the English-speaking Australian population.² Gibbs discusses this affinity between bodies and elements stating that:

bodies can catch feelings as easily as catch fire: affect leaps from one body to another, evoking tenderness, inciting shame, igniting rage, exciting fear. [...] Communicable affect can inflame nerves and muscles in a conflagration of every conceivable kind of passion. (Gibbs n.p.)

The double bind between anger and fire is a point on which Blanche Verlie elaborates in her study of “Climatic-affective atmospheres:” “While affects may function like fire, fires are also affective” (4), she claims. Unsurprisingly, Verlie uses the Australian summer of 2018/2019 as a study case for her discussion of “climatic-affective atmospheres” as the record-breaking heat in January worked to enrage tempers and temperatures alike: “This summer has been dubbed another ‘angry’ one. [...] it is not just the climate that is angry. Many Australians are getting angry in the heat, and about the heat” (Verlie online). Fires rage, as not only the time seems to be out of joint: the climate is. The emotive potential of fire in this particular instance relates to the aftermath of the natural disaster, but comes to engulf also its causes,

² It would be interesting to note, to what extent the patterns of fire and anger expression described above are present at all in over 200 language groups classified as Australia’s indigenous languages.

as the summer of 2018/2019 became for many the eye-opening moment in their approach to the Anthropocene and the climate change-induced environmental hazards (cf. Roelvink and Zolkos, Bladow and Ladino).

As an affective response to environmental change, anger has been addressed as one in the possible reactions subsumed under the more general term, eco-anxiety, defined by Panu Pihkala as distress connected with profound environmental change which has the bearings of an "ecological crisis" ("Anxiety" 4). Even though the occurrence of eco-anxiety is increasing only now owing to the rapid climate change and growing awareness of the impending climate catastrophe, especially in young populations, anxiety and the accompanying "difficult emotions" – which in the environmental context are dubbed "ecological emotions" – have long been triggered by environmental events on a catastrophic scale, with such terms as "ecological trauma," "Anthropocene Horror," "environmental melancholia," climate distress, solastalgia, climate grief, mourning, environmental despair, eco-guilt emerging only in recent years (Pihkala "Anxiety" 4), to systematically describe a phenomenon specific for the Anthropocene. In this way "ecological crises and social crises become intertwined into socio-ecological crises and catastrophes," with a number of social and psychological vulnerabilities as factors conducive to the emergence and severity of environmentally-induced distress.³

Pihkala argues that "Anxiety often breeds anger, and repressed anger may manifest as anxiety" ("Eco-Anxiety" 10); anger can, therefore, be addressed as one of the ecological emotions that accompany the state of distress caused by environmental change. As a state which is generated and sustained by affective contamination, eco-anger can potentially be shared within the dominant frameworks of public feelings (Antadze). "Climate rage," "eco-anger" or "terrafurie" has been recognised as culturally dependent, and as the vast cultural history of anger suggests, its expressions can also vary according to gender.⁴ Anger is multi-dimensional and "may have a vastly important role in resisting injustice and providing energy to act," therefore it is also worth investigating its occurrences not only in the discourse surrounding catastrophic events, but also in more subtle cultural reactions to them, which might be connected with the emergence of versatile forms of "transformational resilience," "emotional resilience," or "affective adaptation" (see Pihkala's discussion of the terminology in question). These, I would argue, can be found in various forms of cultural expression, with literature serving as an important tool in promulgating and disseminating emotive patterns of reaction, coping and, possibly, resilience.

³ According to Pihkala climate anxiety has a practical dimension, related to the adaptive measures one can take to protect themselves from the hazardous circumstances.

⁴ For a discussion of anger, grief and climate change see also Kleres and Wettergren; Gibson et al.; for a discussion of eco-anxiety and indigenous groups, see Middleton et al.

“Culture a-Burning:” The past which is never gone

The Australian landscape, touched and shaped by fire, heaves with symbolic meaning: the threat of destruction demands vigilance while living with fire demands resilience. The constant change that landscape undergoes through fire does evoke emotional reactions, with anger and grief as understandable responses to fire-related loss. It is in contemporary poetry that the imagery of the Australian landscape is evoked, and its readiness to burst into flames becomes a significant trope, as in John Kinsella’s “fire poems” such as “Bushfire Approaching” or the lines opening the volume *Peripheral Light*:

There are days when the world
Buckles under the sun, trees blacken
To thin wisps, spinifex fires. (3)

As Grace Moore and Tom Bristow demonstrate, fire remains a destructive force in the imaginary of Australia’s most eminent contemporary eco-poet. A portent of doom, it always looms on the horizon, and its memory and future occurrence cause traumatising anxiety:

Kinsella’s fires occasionally warm, but mostly they are catastrophic and destructive, sweeping across the land and spreading terror. These fires are symbolically complex and at times contradictory. Often, they are invested with what Massumi describes as the “could-have/would-have logic,” in that if a specific fire does not result in widespread destruction, it remains a harbinger of fires to come. (345)

In *Earthly Delights* (2006) Stephen K. Kelen uses direct, descriptive language to address in detail the workings of the “revenge spirit of many firesticks” – as “the new year feels incendiary”. He asks a plain and yet dramatic question “What starts a fire?” (47) similarly to Kinsella underlining its anthropogenic character:

Lightning strike , flicked cigarette,
foolish prank or a psychopath –
al Qaeda goblins play with matches.
Bushland, fences and permanent homes
are kindling the future X-ed for burning. (47)

The threat of wildfire destruction that affects neighbours and strangers alike is revealed in the course of the poem to work metaphorically, as the rage of the fire-storm is likened to an act of terrorism by the “al Qaeda goblins”. Towards the end of

the poem, the terror of the catastrophe gradually subsides, obliterated by the realist attention to the smallest detail in the world that fails to respond adequately and is quick to forget: "the fire chief asleep on the job/ telephone ringing and ringing" (48). Once "The bushfire move[s] in next door", the danger loses its immediacy. What threatens our neighbour is no longer that terrifying, seems to be the implied message, further strengthened by the quiet irony of the closing statements:

An old man chokes on fumes
and dies. It's sad. And it's bad for people
losing homes and lifetime treasures.
It takes a few years to get back on your feet. (48)

The pragmatic bluntness of such an ending is juxtaposed with the omnipresence of the danger:

The bush burns all day, all night,
its glow like a sunset. A state of emergency
ensures we live in interesting times. (48)

A similar poetic strategy in the approach to bushfires, this time treated literally, can be found in an earlier, 1994 poem by Kate Llewellyn. In "Magpies", she contrasts a realist observation of the wildlife and its concrete, albeit somewhat noisy, beauty with the horror of the fiery death happening elsewhere. The enumeration, which in Kelen's text serves to paint a picture of urban human lives, here is used to a much more universalising effect. Fire-related loss happens to the Australian landscape with humans treated as its integral part; the vastness of the destruction is highlighted by the caring focus on the "micro-description" of magpies' art:

Magpies found this fountain [...]
They made a midsummer opera [...]

While all this was happening
A hundred fires swept the State.
Great trees exploded,
birds and animals caught fire.
People died and houses burned,
Yet still these magpies sang
Around the fountain in the tree. (62)

The daily dangers of fire and its aftermath are present also in the poetry of Grace Perry's *Be Kind to Animals* (1984), in "Bushfire", "After fire" and "Morning"; Caroline Caddy constructs her poems along patterns similar to those of Perry, Kinsella,

Kelen and Lewellyn in the texts written between 2007 and 2010, but these accounts of bushfires strike a very personal note. Their very structure seems to be affected by the heat of the blaze, with caesura visibly marking the verses interspersed on the page (“Fire 1”, “Fire 2”, “Fire 3”, “Aftermath 1”, “Aftermath 2”, “Firebreak”, “the burning car”, “Diminished Responsibility”). The lyrical reaction to loss by fire, leaving the speaking self defenceless and almost speechless in the face of the catastrophe (“has the fire whipped the word from my head?”, “Aftermath 1”), operates on the premise that fire is a force of utter destruction. Still, even in the poems which read like a traumatised survivor’s eyewitness account of the blaze, there is a sense that survival is more than an option, as they tend to utilise imagery sourced from the natural world to herald resilience and the hope for regeneration:

The intimate ties between the natural world, the individual sense of the self and belonging to a place are also the subject matter of the poetry of Judith Wright (Bureau). The poetic voice of the twentieth-century Australian literature, and the Nobel Prize nominee, Wright notes:

Australia is still for us not a country but a state of mind. We do not speak from within but from outside. From a state of mind that describes rather than expresses its surroundings or from a state of mind that imposes itself upon rather than lives through landscape and event. (1969, 301, qtd. in Bureau 68)

Written around the same time as the passage above, her “Flame-Tree in a Quarry” expresses that sense of connectedness, incorporating the re-visionary sense of coming together with the landscape, the painful past and the transcendent present. The initial death-like barrenness of the landscape and the short-lived vision of life offered by the “bush of blood” lead to an overwhelming sense of oneness with the fiery universe, which permeates the landscape, its elements and the speaking I:

From the broken bone of the hill
stripped and left for dead,
like a wrecked skull,
leaps out this bush of blood. [...]
flesh of the world’s delight,
voice of the world’s desire,
I drink you with my sight
and I am filled with fire.
Out of the very wound
springs up this scarlet breath –
this fountain of hot joy,
this living ghost of death. (62)

What Bureu calls "the poet's metaphysical projection" (72) can be thought of as a budding sense of ecocritical imagination. Wright's poetic realisation that human life and death are but a part of a natural cycle is recognised by John Charles Ryan as a "time-plexity" which "enfolds Aboriginal temporalities and the time of plants [...] Elements of historical time, the mythologised (chronos) time of nationhood, the cyclical (Kairos) time of nature and the experiential time of human generations" (Ryan 176). Judith Wright's poetry looms over the horizon of contemporary Australian literature, not only because of the quality of her writing, but also because of its political undertones. As a poet, she understood the task of poetry to be also about accounting for the past, and saw it a vehicle for expressing "the complex relation of past and present to present and future readers" (McMahon 25 qtd in Ryan 177). Wright, who in the course of her career became a staunch supporter of the Aboriginal rights, was preoccupied with Australia's difficult heritage and expressed that preoccupation through her poetry and activism. The Aboriginal way of life emerges in her environmentally aware writing as a model to emulate, while the First Nations' sense of relatedness to the natural world and its "vegetal cadences" (Ryan 178) is a pattern clearly visible in her poetry. Within such a paradigm, whose traces are observable in "Flame-Tree in a Quarry", fire is a phenomenon, whose cyclical occurrence and natural potency as a source of revitalisation plays a part in building imagery imbued with less ominous significance than in the Poetry of Kinsella, Cadby or Perry. The eulogy for the past once burning and turned to ashes from which it will be reborn emerges also in Wright's 1955 *The Two Fires*, even though the poem opening the volume does not leave any hope to humanity, as the anthropogenic fire of the nuclear blast is portrayed as the epitome on human-created disaster:

For time has caught on fire, and you too burn:
leaf, stem, branch, calyx and the bright corolla
are now insubstantial wavering fire
in which love dies. (123)

The cyclically burning element enabling generation here becomes a lethal force: "the whole world burns. The ancient kingdom of the fire returns" (123) to consume and devour; the life-giving and myth-making properties of the element transformed through human interference beyond recognition.

As seen in Wright's poems, the anthropogenic fires blasting through Australia since 1788 have more than one meaning and evoke more than one reaction. In the long history of human presence on the Australian continent fire was used both by the Aboriginal groups and settlers as a tool of land management, but also as a weapon in the history of colonial conquest and resistance (Pyne). The practice of controlled fire-stick burning, also known as "cultural burning" is a tradition which has been discussed in connection with subtle changes occurring in the Australian

landscape for approximately fifty thousand years, such as the increase in the number of fire-resistant vegetation and changing patterns of forestation, leading to a decrease of high intensity fires in the areas where grass-eating game was introduced (Pyne). The practice was banned, once Australian fires, hitherto managed and controlled by the indigenous populations, acquired notoriety in the newly-formed colonial state, and as the Aboriginal patterns of fire control were disrupted for almost two hundred years. Fire-hunting became an almost obsolete custom, while industrial fires turned into a new norm. As Pyne concludes, the history of wild-fires in Australia is connected with the fact that aboriginal fire was supplanted by anthropogenic fire: "The history of colonisation (which is a kind of biotic conquest) is thus a history of eruptive fire" (82). The colonisation of Australia is alluded to through the metaphors of fire as anger by T. Birch in his "'The Invisible Fire': Indigenous sovereignty, history and responsibility." The Aboriginal scholar Irene Watson elaborates on the same theme with recourse to the same imagery: "Franz Fanon saw the 'smoking ashes of a burnt-down house after the fire has been put out (but) which still threatened to burst into flames again.' I ask the reader: in relation to Australia, has there even been an attempt to put the fire out." (Watson 17). Fire is here an element evoked rhetorically to historicise the Aboriginal experience of colonisation. It is exactly this experience that remains the locus of Aboriginal poetry in English, albeit fire seems to fulfil a rather different function within it.

In Australian literature anger seems to be evoked, expressed and studied not only in connection with bushfires, but also, and perhaps predominantly, in connection with the colonial past: the told and untold stories of displacement and dispossession; the stories of resistance and conflict; the hardships of migration and settlement; the stigmas tied with the convict system; the traumas of the first and the second world war (Shoemaker). To this sum of all these rages, one could add the trauma of place-based distress or "solastalgia," the disruption of the fundamental sense of belonging to a place (Haugen Askland and Bunn), which seems to be an experience shared by the Australian population and possibly emergent also historically, both amidst the colonisers and the colonised, albeit for strikingly different reasons. As Oodgeroo Noonuccal writes in her canonical poem "We Are Going" in the first collection of Aboriginal poetry in English:

We are as strangers here now, but the white tribe are the strangers.
We belong here, we are of the old ways.
We are the corroboree and the bora ground,
We are the old ceremonies, the laws of the elders. (Oodgeroo "We Are Going" 148)

Even though this poem has been read predominantly as a sign of resignation and the unheard plea of the subaltern, it gives voice to a collective sense of injustice and offers itself as a political manifesto (Harris; Hodge). As Anne Brewster argues:

"The first-person voice [...] in effect mimics the immediacy of embodied protest" ("Australian Aboriginal" 48). Oodgeroo's assertion "we are the lightning bolt... quick and terrible" is read by Brewster along political lines, which, at the same time, remain ecocritical, as a sense of continuity which Oodgeroo points to in her poetry stems from the oneness of her "tribe" with all the elements. Even amidst the complacent tones of "we are going", the objection to unlawful dislocation sounds very clearly and strikes a resonant cord in the reader. Oodgeroo's writing is symptomatic in this respect for later Aboriginal poetry in English; as already Adam Shoemaker points out: "if there is any school of Black Australian poetry, it is one of social protest" (201). Past dispossession and displacement are the challenges that continue to affect present generations:

Let no one say the past is dead.
The past is all about us and within.
Haunted by tribal memories, I know
This little now, this accidental present
Is not the all of me [...]. (Oodgeroo 92)

Contemporary Aboriginal poetry in English is to a large extent poetry of protest, as Shoemaker notes, Brewster emphasises and Bob Hodge underlines; it is through it that the task of collective identity formation seems to be realised, with the campfires of the past, the present and the future serving as a metaphorical site, where a sense of belonging and collective identity can be achieved. Already in Oodgeroo's poetry the insistence on the unifying power of the fire of the campsite is commensurate with a continuing sense of identity, a tradition that might change, but will continue despite anger and trauma:

A thousand camp fires in the forest
Are in my blood. (Oodgeroo 92)

Brewster discusses the significance of trauma and anger with the Aboriginal poet, Jeanine Leane, in the interview published in *Giving this Country a Memory: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices in Australia*. In the interview, Leane points to poetry as the vehicle for social protest the significance of the emotional unburdening oneself through writing which stands behind the heightened emotional intensity of her first volume of poetry *Dark Secrets*. The poetic voice disclosing the dark secrets of domestic violence and institutional racism speaks to those larger patterns of trauma as an effect of disasters and warns against the burnout which accompanies anger. At the same time, however, there appear the characteristic nods towards resilience and hope; as another contemporary poet, Romaine Moreton, notes in her "Rimfire": "You can put the flame out / [...] but there will always be fire" (29).

The colonial experience of over two centuries of systematic exploitation of land to render it more habitable has led to the dramatic changes in the economic, social, political and cultural situation of the First Nations. The systematic control of land and the ban of culture burning and fire-hunting affected the Aboriginal inhabitants of the country, leading as a result to a change in the ecological patterns of land management; these in turn seem to have affected the whole of the Australian society. It was already in the 1950s that the Australian forestry began to realise that controlled burning of land is a practice which protects the country instead of destroying it. For the Australian landscape to blossom and grow, it has to go through its ordeal by fire. Such is the poetic lesson of Mark O'Connor's "Fire-Stick Farming" (1990):

To grow flowers in Blackheath, Australia,
set fire to your field. Let flame
sing the delicate dust-seeds
of native shrubs. Soon they sprout. (132)

A similar realisation, that to survive is to learn from the First Nations, seems to gleam through Billy Marshall-Stoneking's poem. "The Seasons of Fire" adopts the imagery, the narrative patterns and myth-making qualities of traditional Aboriginal poetry. The formulaic "There is Law for Fire" and the refrain: "You have been there, you have seen it./ You know all the names of Fire" (48–50) underline what has become a hard-won knowledge for the Western culture: to bypass the knowledge and the experience of the First Nations may be unwise, if not perilous. As wildfires ravage the continent, gradually, it is realised that the old patterns of controlled bushfires are beneficial to the Australian landscape and that a return to the First Nations' customs of culture burning may be a way towards survival, as "Low-intensity fires are necessary to the ecology [...], restoring soil composition by recycling biomass and thinning out older growth" (Macauley 37). However, to manage fire through culture burning is connected with a change in the way one understands one's place in the world. An acceptance of a changed approach to the Australian fire demands an attitude based on an integration with it, rather than the suppression of its unwanted.

Conclusion

To the Western mind fire is an element which fascinates and scares, its power harnessed through industrialisation and stripped of its former philosophical, mythological and symbolic meaning (Macauley). Similarly to fire, anger has also been contested in the Western culture: even though from the position of political

activists and thinkers it has a liberating potential, its usefulness is critiqued by the proponents of non-violence in conflict resolution. This essay offers only an introductory sketch of the presence and connectedness of eco-anxiety, anger and fire in Australian culture, but the relationship between them seems to emerge as a part of the Australian social, cultural, political and ecological landscape. The evidence for that complex relationship can be glimpsed not only in the media discourse focusing on "terrafurie", but also in the contemporary Australian poetry. If there is a lesson to be drawn from the analysis connecting Australian affective geography with poetry, it seems to point to the significance of understanding how political and environmental changes are evoked, and in what way they are represented. It is only through such an understanding of affective geographies that we can possibly plan for and negotiate emotional regimes which might help all of us all to address, and channel vulnerabilities which are best signalled through literature.

A discussion of fire in Australian culture would not be complete without recourse to its long pre-contact history and the suppression of the First Nations' "fire culture". Admittedly, it is difficult to approach it from the unavoidably Eurocentric perspective of an outsider to the Aboriginal history and culture in particular and to Australian culture in general. Still, a reflection on the history of and significance of fire in Australia, which includes both a repression of cultural burning and the Aboriginal poetry of protest, points to a very simple, but evident truth: to forget the past means to put the present in hazard's way, and to forego a chance for the future. The localised Australian disasters are after all, "sentinel events of processes that are intensifying on a planetary scale" (Oliver-Smith 45). These events are something that we should all feel strongly about, as the emotional landscapes marked by eco-anxiety and eco-anger are something that we all share and something that we will possibly finally learn how to co-inhabit – if only we learn the lessons of offered through the Australian poetry.

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