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Translation, Transnation: A Note from the Guest Editor

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Many of the contributions to this special issue featured as part of the second Literary Translation Winter School & Festival, held by Translation and Interpreting Studies at Monash University, in conjunction with the British Centre for Literary Translation and La Trobe University. “Translation, Transnation” assembled students, writers, professional translators, language teachers and others with a special interest in literary translation in a week-long residential program of hands-on translation practice accompanied by panel discussions and a number of public talks by international speakers. Working from Italian, Japanese and Mandarin Chinese into English, our resident writers and translators worked to produce a consensus translation of a work or works from each invited author. This unique way of approaching the task of translation highlights not only the great challenge in producing works of literature in translation, but also emphasizes the crucial dialogues that take place between writer and translator.

Literary translators Brigid Maher (Italian), Elise Foxworth (Japanese) and Ouyang Yu (Chinese) joined writers in exploring the challenges posed by the theme of transnationalism in translation. The Italian stream translated an excerpt from Indian-Italian writer Laila Wadia’s novel *Amiche per la pelle* (2007), in which she explores multiculturalism in modern-day Italy. The Japanese stream translated poems by Zhong Zhang, a third-generation (*zainichi*) Korean poet in Japan. They also tackled the work of Kaku Aizawa, a Japanese poet, writer and translator, whose essays and poetry primarily take up Japan’s relationship with the Korean peninsula, and the stigmatization of Koreans in Japan. In the Chinese stream, Melbourne-based writer-translator Ouyang Yu guided his group through the poems of Shu Cai, a Chinese writer and translator from French.

The articles that precede the translations in this special issue are closely connected with this theme. Peter Morgan opens with comments on the current state of literary scholarship, arguing for an appreciation of issues to do with language and translation, rather than of nation and identity, in order to respond to shifting national paradigms, which see the institutional framework for literary study as increasingly comparative and global. Jessica Trevitt picks up on some of these themes in her exploration of the works of transnational writers Nam Le and Janette Turner Hospital, drawing attention to the relationship between the translational and the transnational. Like Le and Hospital, Tomoko Takahashi also uses her personal background, writing and translation practice as a way of reflecting upon her multiple national identities, as she discusses in her article. Finally, Morgane Vernier bases her investigation of transnational writing on a comic play she wrote as a French exchange student at Monash University, composed in her adopted language, English.

This special issue of *The AALITRA Review* dedicated to the topic “Translation, Transnation”, aims to give further prominence to the connection between transnational writing – literature that uncovers some of the effects of globalization on literature from all parts of the world, including travel writing, life writing, migrant, refugee and Indigenous fiction – and the practice of literary translation, adding emphasis to a more inclusive and multifaceted view of literature in translation.