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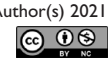

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Rethinking nineteenth-century literary culture: British worlds, southern latitudes and hemispheric methods

Sarah Comyn and **Porscha Fermanis**
University College Dublin, Ireland

Abstract

Drawing on hemispheric, oceanic, and southern theory approaches, this article argues for the value of considering the nineteenth-century literary cultures of the southern settler colonies of Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa from within an interconnected frame of analysis. First, because of their distinctive historical and structural conditions; second, because of the density of their interregional networks and relations across intersecting oceanic spaces; and third, because of the long history of racialized imperialist imaginaries of the south. This methodological position rethinks current approaches to "British world" studies in two important ways: first, by decoupling the southern settler colonies from studies of settler colonialism in North America; and second, by rebalancing its metropolitan and northern locus by considering south-south networks and relations across a complex of southern islands, oceans, and continents. Without suggesting either that imperial intercultural exchanges with Britain are unimportant or that there is a culturally homogenous body of pan-southern writing, we argue that nineteenth-century literary culture from colonial Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa — what we call a "southern archive" — can provide a counterbalance to northern biases and provide new purchase on nation-centred literary paradigms — one that reveals not just south-south transnational exchanges and structural homologies between southern genres, themes, and forms, but also allows us to acknowledge the important challenges to foundational accounts of national literary canons initiated by southern theory and Indigenous studies scholars.

Keywords

British world studies, hemispheric studies, Indigenous studies, nineteenth-century literature, oceanic studies, settler colonialism, southern colonies, southern hemisphere, southern theory, Victorian studies

Corresponding author:
Porscha Fermanis, School of English, Drama and Film, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin, 4, Ireland.
Email: porscha.fermanis@ucd.ie

Adopting a perspective that Isabel Hofmeyr has called a "southern latitude" (2018: 82), this article proposes a reorientation in methodological approaches to both nineteenth-century British literary studies and the literary histories of colonial Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, arguing that we should not only look *towards* the south for alternative "proof-texts" and revitalized canons (Steer, 2018: 4), but that we should also consider the "new perspectives on literary engagements with colonization" that can emerge by looking *from* the south (Bode, 2018: 12). This reorientation, we suggest, provides an opportunity to address and rethink the persistently nation-centred paradigms of southern hemisphere literary scholarship at their point of origin, as well as identifying the gaps and silences that currently exist in the wider nineteenth-century literary field, such as the elision of imaginative renditions of particular forms of carcerality and indentured labour exploitation that are largely specific to the southern colonies, and narratives of settlement and enclosure that rest more firmly on the principles of *terra nullius* than elsewhere. Such an approach provides a counterweight to the primacy of themes, genres, texts, period dates, and turning points that emerge from within northern, metropolitan, and trans-Atlantic contexts, as well as supplementing existing and ongoing work on India, the Caribbean, and other extra-European locations. It also provides a lens through which we can understand the shared history and structural similarities of the southern settler colonies.

Prompted by new developments in "British world" or Anglosphere studies — and the challenges posed to these developments by a variety of perspectives, from oceanic, hemispheric, and regional studies, to postcolonial, southern theory, island, and Indigenous studies — we argue for the value of considering the literary cultures of the southern colonies from within an interconnected frame of analysis that takes into account their wider oceanic contexts. First, because of the "strong historical parallels" and distinctive historical conditions that emerged in nineteenth-century settler colonies, which have tended to experience "a similar sequence of events — invasion, settlement, state-building and reconciliation" (Murray, 2008: 24).[1] Second, because of the density or thickness of south-south networks and relations, and the high volume of intercolonial traffic between the colonies and settlements under consideration. And third, because of the long history of racialized imperialist imaginaries of the south as *terra nullius* or unoccupied "blank space", which position it as demographically white and culturally British despite challenges from various forms of Indigenous and "subaltern region-making" (Clifford, 2013: 58).

While we retain the framework of British world studies to the extent that it allows for the "hyphenated forms" of identity and belonging that existed in the nineteenth century (Dubow, 2009: 3), we nonetheless seek to redress its privileging of "British" as *the* dominant identificatory category in the relationship between colonies and metropoles, its emphasis on white settler experience, and its investment in speculative claims for a global Anglo-unity in favour of examining south-south colonial exchanges and southern structural parallels across oceanic spaces. Although the focus of this article is on the literary cultures of the settler colonies of Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, these colonies, we argue, cannot be separated from their wider oceanic, transnational, and hemispheric contexts, including their shared histories of indentured labour exploitation, migratory traffic, and economic trade across the Pacific Islands and Indian Ocean.

Following Hofmeyr and others, we argue below that the structural distinctiveness of the southern settler colonies (as opposed to North American settler colonies) only fully emerges in the context of carceral and labour relations in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, where nearly 80 years of transportation and the subsequent deployment of over two million Indian and Pacific labourers form part of a shared history of labour exploitation, and reflect a broader view of Southeast Asia, southern Africa, and the Pacific as a carceral zone and labour reserve for indentured servitude (Anderson, 2009, 2016b; Woollacott, 2015: 41–42).

Notwithstanding the unevenness of cultural and historical experiences across the southern colonies, we argue for the importance of identifying structural similarities and lines of cultural connection and exchange between and among colonizing and colonized peoples. We seek to emphasize that the literary cultures of the southern colonies were culturally and ethnically diverse rather than simply white or British, and that nineteenth-century literary culture was multi-centred, allowing for the literary cultures of non-European centres such as Cape Town, Auckland, and Melbourne to come into prominence. More importantly, however, we argue that the deep structural and historical interconnections between the southern settler colonies can be illuminated by texts that bear "the traces of a different [colonial] history" to North American, Indian, and Caribbean histories (Boer, 2016: 33). We point also to the cultural importance of other, less visible mobilities and transnationalisms, including those that took place within and across Indigenous communities and diasporas (Shellam, 2020; Wanhalla, 2018).

We therefore consider the southern colonies as both a distinctive geographic region or "interregion" (Bose, 2006: 4–5), and as a potentially important unit of analysis within nineteenth-century literary studies — one that can take into account hyphenated senses of belonging within British world studies *and* unsettle the imperial scaffolding that still privileges "British" as a dominant identificatory and adjectival category (Dubow, 2009: 3). Beginning with an examination of the dense set of intercolonial relations that emerged across southern settler colonial spaces, we subsequently provide an account of the methodological developments that inform our hemispheric approach to the literary cultures of the southern colonies. We gesture, too, towards the kind of shared themes and genres that closer attention to a "southern archive" of literary productions from colonial Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa can illuminate — an archive that includes, among other genres and forms, several hundred settler novels and several thousand works of serialized periodical fiction (Bode, 2018: 7, 11), ballads and bush poetry, drama and melodrama, travel writing, periodical writing, and diaries and correspondence, as well as a wide range of diasporic and Indigenous cultural productions, from traditional oral, performance, and material cultures, to imaginative writing such as poetry and hymns, to writing engaging with various forms of "imperial literacy" such as petitions, letters, and journalism (Banivanua Mar, 2013).

Our aim in this instance is not to provide a general overview of literary scholarship on the nineteenth-century settler colonies or to outline in any detail the literary productions of various groups or national canons across time and space. Instead, we gesture towards some of the shared genres and themes that attention to a southern archive can uncover, offering a starting point that might encourage further hemispheric studies of the literary cultures of the southern colonies in the nineteenth century.

Settler colonialism and the southern colonies

Proponents of settler colonial studies have pointed to the structurally distinctive nature of settler colonialism as opposed to the sort of franchise colonialism practised in India and the Dutch East Indies, and plantation and slave societies in the Caribbean. According to Patrick Wolfe, settler colonialism is not primarily concerned with extracting surplus value from Indigenous labour but rather with replacing "the natives on their land", thereby promoting a "logic of elimination" (2001: 868). Although Wolfe distinguishes the Cape Colony and Natal from settler colonies in Australia and New Zealand (2001: 868), recent thinking has argued strongly for the inclusion of southern Africa within the settler colonial paradigm (Cavanagh and Veracini, 2017). While considering the southern colonies as settler colonies does not radically distinguish them from North American colonies, an emerging body of work has argued for their structural distinctiveness in the context of labour relations in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, demonstrating the extent to which the economies and identities of the southern settler colonies were different from the slavery-driven capitalist modernity of the Black Atlantic, as well as from the plantation economies of the Caribbean and American South and "ultra-Caribbean" models of creolization (Campbell, 2004).

Hofmeyr, for example, argues that the insights and framework of the Black Atlantic must be supplemented by a "systematic engagement with the Indian Ocean" that sees it primarily "as an arena of colonial experimentation in the control of unfree labour, whether it be slave, convict, indentured, or apparently voluntary 'free' migration" (Hofmeyr, 2007: 9, 12). Moreover, as Tony Ballantyne has pointed out, the "trajectories and sociabilities that structured convict lives" across colonial Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and the Pacific Islands "meant that they developed distinctive spatial sensibilities" (2014: 12), which Clare Anderson has called the "carceral archipelago" (2009: 93–109; see also 2016a) and Grace Karskens "nefarious geographies" (2006: 15–27). Anderson's work on carceral geographies has led her to dispute James Belich and John Darwin's emphasis on the "*settlerism* of 'Angloworld'", instead insisting on "*sojournerism*" as the defining characteristic of the "global mobilities of the British Empire" and urging us "to decenter global north assumptions about the character of mobility as migration from one place to another, and to take seriously global south patterns of circularity" (2016a: 182).

Although a part of what James W. Frey terms a wider pattern of "nineteenth-century globalization" (2019: 9), the southern colonies can therefore be distinguished from their North American counterparts by their particularly dense set of knowledge exchanges, missionary circuits, settler and Indigenous entanglements, carceral geographies, and free and indentured labour migrations across transoceanic and transimperial spaces (Ballantyne, 2002, 2012; Lester, 2006). The southern colonies, we argue, were both constructed out of and performed "a particular constellation" or network of "social relations" (Massey, 1994: 154), developed through constant contact, blending, and conflict with each other, with Indigenous and non-European people, and with Britain.[2] In the Pacific context, Darrell Tryon argues that trade and commerce provided "the first and perhaps the major catalyst which brought Pacific Islanders and outsiders together" (2009: 40), forming the Pacific space that Matt K. Matsuda describes as a "crowded world of

transits, intersections and transformed cultures" (2012: 3). Pointing to the importance of Sydney within the late eighteenth-century whaling and sealing trade, Tryon claims that between 1788 and 1840 "there was [an] extremely busy maritime traffic criss-crossing the Pacific" with ships travelling to "Sydney from London, via the Cape of Good Hope, bringing colonists, administrators and convicts" (2009: 40).

Beyond contact and trade, the whaling and sealing trade in the Pacific became an important network of transport and mobility for Indigenous people in Australia and New Zealand. Lynette Russell's study of Australian Aborigines' participation in the whaling and sealing trade, *Roving Mariners* (2012), complicates the seemingly fixed binaries of settler and Indigenous people, pointing instead to the "historical complexity" that works against the "counterposed terms" of the "apparently simple native and newcomer, settler and Indigene, invader and traditional owner, victim and victor, slave and slaver" (2012: 19, 27–29). Missionary and Quaker journeys across the Pacific also frequently intersected with these commercial and imperial routes, creating what Penelope Edmonds refers to as "imperial counter travel or counter networking". Edmonds's work reveals the complex dynamic of complicity and critique that frequently defined nineteenth-century missionary endeavours, not only in the Pacific, but in the Cape as well (2018a: n.p.). As Anna Johnston has pointed out, this southern part of the world, especially "when conceived as a geographical totality", seemed to offer Protestant Evangelicals a kind of moral and religious *tabula rasa* or virgin territory (2012: 201, 202; see also Edmonds, 2018b: 33, 34; Johnston, 2003).

"Looking east", as John McAleer insists we must, to the Cape and St Helena demonstrates, moreover, the strategic importance of the southern colonies to the British Empire in India (2016a: 78), where the seizure of the Cape "cemented the British position in the maritime region comprising the southern Atlantic and Indian oceans" (2016b: 5). In combination with St Helena and Mauritius, by 1815 "the Cape formed a chain of British way stations on the route to India, acting as a 'sub-network' within the wider British Indian Ocean" (2016b: 5), while the Atlantic Ocean was also an important transit route on the 1797 British imperial voyage to Australia, presenting numerous transimperial encounters and connecting South America with Australia via South Africa (McIntyre, 2018: 1–29). The "Cape-as-port", as Meg Samuelson has aptly designated the historic, literary, and imaginative hold of the Cape Town harbour, serves as a "distinctive tricentric orientation" that forms a "nexus of Africa, Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds" (2016: 523), where, as Gabeba Baderoon argues, the "Atlantic and Indian Oceans are the oceans of middle passage, but also of cosmology, memory, and desire, tracked in the movement, language and culture of enslaved and dominated people" (2009: 91).

As Frances Steel has convincingly shown in her analysis of Pacific and Atlantic trading and steam routes in the nineteenth century, the "Anglo-worlds in transit" present different attitudes "from what visionaries of the Anglo-world represented or imagined it to be" (2016: 270). Examining the "more layered and complex subjectivities and attendant frictions and negotiations" encountered in transpacific routes challenges the "easy assumptions of inherent Anglo-unity" (2016: 270). Transoceanic routes in particular disrupted and "interrupted the British World by linking settler colonies via the dependent, nonwhite empire, as well as more ambiguous extra-imperial spaces" (Steel, 2015: 50). Many, if not most, of the trading and military networks "created" by the British Empire

were, in fact, dependent on established interregional Indigenous and diasporic networks and routes. In the Pacific context, Tracey Banivanua Mar has traced the "shadow imperial networks" that reveal how the "mobility and networks of the British imperial past […] frequently borrowed from and built on existing networks of trade and reciprocity established by indigenous peoples" (2015: 342). C. A. Bayly, Sugata Bose, K. N. Chaudhuri, and other Indian Ocean scholars have demonstrated how European imperialists frequently tapped into the pre-existing trade and kinship networks of the Indian Ocean, Malay Archipelago and "Singapore-Zanzibar equatorial belt" (Ray, 1995: 554), such as "Indian intermediary capital" and Asian bazaar systems of finance (Bose, 2006: 73).

Encompassing three oceans (Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific) and the Southern Sea, the "blue southern hemisphere", as Samuelson has termed it, saw the mass migration of people (free, supported, indentured, and sojourning) across its waters (2018: n.p.). Crucial to studying and understanding the demographic character of the southern colonies in the nineteenth century is, therefore, what Anderson describes as the "coercive texture of global mobility" (2016a: 169).[3] Examining this "punitive mobility" through a "focus on slaves and ordinary people on the move disrupts our global northern-centric understanding of migration as largely a European phenomenon, usually with a 'start' and 'end' point", and also demonstrates "the importance of coercion in effecting the journeys that networked distant parts of the world, and the labor exploitation that ultimately underpinned global expansion" (De Vito et al., 2018: 2, 1). Of "the 36,598 white inhabitants of New South Wales at the time of the 1828 census", for instance, over 40% (15,728) were convicts (Harper and Constantine, 2010: 49); and Khosian, Māori, and Aboriginal people were also drawn into the convict system (Harman, 2012). Assisted passage and supported migration schemes helped change the demographics of Australia, as did the banning of transportation in New South Wales (1840), Victoria (1850), Van Diemen's Land/Tasmania (1852), and Western Australia (1868) (Harper, 2001: 51). However, Steel's analysis of domestic servant mobility between Fiji and New Zealand demands that we pay attention to the ongoing, "short-term and circular trans-colonial mobilities" that "tend to be overlooked in nation-centred histories of immigration and colonial domesticity" (2018: 519).

Following the abolition of slavery, the southern colonies became the setting for a staggering amount of indentured labour migration, with Indians forming 85% of the total overseas indentured immigration in the British Empire between 1834–1920 (Harper and Constantine, 2010: 150). As Anderson has shown, "Bay of Bengal mobility far outnumbered other contemporary migrations, including the better known European flows to the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand" (2016a: 182). As many as 63,695 Chinese travelled to the Transvaal during this period mainly to work on the gold mines, with a further 13,533 labouring in British Guiana, while over 150,000 Indians were sent to Natal (Northrup, 2001: 89; see also Darnell (2004) on indentured Chinese shepherds in New South Wales). "Blackbirding" and kidnapping became a common feature of the South Pacific due to the spread of plantation economies in Australia (Northrup, 2001: 94). The sugar cane industry in the colony of Queensland alone was the site of the indentured labour of "around sixty thousand men, women, and children from diverse islands in the southwestern Pacific" (Banivanua Mar, 2007: 1), while in Fiji plantation owners "brought in 26,460 Melanesians and Micronesians between 1863 and 1911" (Harper and

Constantine, 2010: 154; see also Graves, 1986 on indentured labour migration in New Zealand and the western Pacific). Although revisionist studies of indentured labour in the long nineteenth century have aimed to recognize the agency of labourers and their active participation in cosmopolitan trade networks, Banivanua Mar nonetheless stresses the fact that despite "all the exercise of agency on the part of Islanders, the labor trade was not, as many have written, a benign labor migration. It was a trade in labor" (2007: 12).

Rethinking the British world: south-south hemispheric methods

Drawing on the transnational turns in imperial and Indigenous history outlined above, the methodological framework we propose as a generative turn in nineteenth-century literary studies bears some resemblance to the vertical comparative (north-south) hemispheric approaches that have made a significant impact in American and Atlantic studies, where work by Gustavo Pérez Firmat and others has reinvigorated the field by emphasizing transnational connections and decentring the United States as a field of analysis, as well as leading to fruitful conversations between Indigenous peoples across the American hemisphere (Firmat, 1990). Whereas transatlantic approaches have tended to emphasize the interrelation between old world and new world cultures, hemispheric approaches have generally focused on the relations among and similarities between the literatures and cultures of the new world, examining what distinguishes the cultures and literatures of the new world from that of the old (Bauer, 2009: 234–250). Our approach shares with American hemispheric studies a parallel desire to seriously question the weight given to Britain in British world studies, and to consider shared southern processes of transculturation, creolization, and other forms of racial and cultural hybridity.

Attention to transnational, networked, and new imperial history scholarship has meant that the British world has itself increasingly been seen as porous or permeable in the last three decades, defined as much by mobility, migration, and process geographies as by the more sharply delineated spatial units of territorial area studies (see, for example, Ballantyne, 2014). While this consideration of the permeability of borders between and among Britain and her settler colonies in North America, Australasia, and southern Africa has "re-integrat[ed] […] imperial dimensions into the national historiographies" of former colonies such as Australia and New Zealand (Bright and Dilley, 2017: 549), metropolitan histories, geographies, and literatures have remained disproportionately in view, with a number of imperial histories examining the reproduction of a "modular" British society through "long range migration" (see Belich, 2009: 21). British world studies has also rightly faced criticism for being too focused on the experiences of white settlers, for not adequately addressing issues of power imbalances such as the indentured labour history examined in the previous section (Bright and Dilley, 2017: 549), and, like networked studies of empire, for obscuring "noncosmopolitan" and "disconnected groups" (Allan, 2007: 16; Saha, qtd. in Curless et al., 2016: 728).

Identifying the fault lines between British world studies and other forms of new imperial history, Saul Dubow has presented South Africa as a "test" and "limit case" for British world approaches to imperial historiography (both in the nineteenth century and today) (2009: 4). If British world histories can be traced back to the racialized desire for

an Anglo-Saxon commonwealth or "Greater Britain" propounded by imperial ideologists such as J. A. Froude and J. R. Seeley, South Africa was the "least thoroughly anglicised" and the "most troublesome" of all the British settlements, defying racial homogeneity and becoming emblematic of British military defeat (Dubow, 2009: 4). Concluding that South Africa and the Anglophone world more generally is neither very white nor very British in demographic terms, and looking to replicate the impressive scholarly gains made by Atlantic studies in "integrating black and African historical experiences into its frame of analysis" (2009: 20), Dubow argues for the need for a revised conception of Britishness. His version of the British world is one that is "adjectival" rather than "possessive", and takes into account the complex "elective" and "hyphenated forms of belonging", where Britishness is viewed as a "field of cultural, political and symbolic attachments" (2009: 2–3). The (southern) hemispheric approach we propose acknowledges Dubow's reconstructed and hyphenated view of Britishness but aims to further deconstruct Britishness by focusing on horizontal south-south identities, exchanges, and connections, as well as emphasizing the origins and embeddedness of British world studies in the racialized spectres of violence, labour exploitation, carcerality, and otherness that mark out the distinctive character of the interconnected southern settler colonies.

Sugata Bose's conceptualization of interregionalism is particularly apt for understanding the fluid nature of southern cultural history and geography in the nineteenth century, which, as described above, encompasses regions that cut across emerging nation states, and includes the diasporas and process geographies that structure archipelagic communities (2006: 4–5). In arguing for the extension of Bose's term (itself inspired by new Atlantic histories) from a particular Indian Ocean context to a wider southern regionalism that takes into account carceral geographies and sojourning populations, we draw on the insights of island and oceanic studies that contrast the terracentric mappable landmasses of the north with the "blue hemisphere" of the south and argue for the importance of considering oceanic studies as a "method" that can cut across regions and even oceans themselves (see e.g. Hofmeyr, 2010, 2012; see also Denning, 2004; McMahon, 2016; Samuelson and Lavery, 2019).[4] As J. G. A. Pocock noted years ago when he called for those "colonies established in the same nineteenth-century complex of oceans as Australia, New Zealand and […] South Africa" to "construct and write their own histories", the region is linked not just by oceanic worlds but by a *complex* of oceanic worlds that both enable connections and can do connecting work (1999: 499–500; see also Armitage and Bashford, 2014; Bashford, 2017).

Despite our use of a combination of transnational paradigms (hemispheric, oceanic, interregional, and so on) and our attempt to extend those studies that carve up oceans analytically into a wider southern colonial space, the potential pitfalls of these sorts of approaches are worth reflecting on. First, as Paul Giles has argued, we must resist "the prospect of simply replacing nationalist essentialism predicated upon state autonomy with a geographical essentialism predicated on physical contiguity" and to assume an "organic relationship between culture and geography" (2006: 649–650). Taking a hemispheric approach must not elide the structural differences between settler colonial societies (such as those in Australia and New Zealand) and so-called franchise colonies (such as those in India or Malaysia). It is equally important to distinguish between colonies with free and penal settlements; colonies with different levels of frontier violence in

open, closed, and closing frontier zones (Giliomee, 1981); colonies with and without informal slave cultures or indentured labour; and colonies with previous colonial settlements and those without (for example, Afrikaner populations in the Cape).

As Ralph Bauer has pointed out, a second serious concern is the danger of mystifying important differences between conceptions of the value of the nation-state; for example, as part of independence and sovereignty movements resisting Western imperialism and continued economic exploitation. Decolonial movements have often theorized their cultural identities in relation to nation statehood, and taking a transnational or hemispheric approach might be problematic at a time when land claims and assertions of sovereignty are ongoing (Bauer, 2009: 236). Moreover, while the Indigenous - colonial relationship is a fruitful one for hemispheric analysis, such binaries, even when concerned with processes of transculturation, may de-emphasize inter-Indigenous and translocal relationships that evolved independently of colonial ones. Our approach to settler colonial studies must also be mindful of the extent to which Indigenous studies scholars see it as "'primarily a settler framework' for thinking through colonial relations" (Konishi, 2019: 291), one that is rightly contested and interrogated by Indigenous and decolonial approaches that more thoroughly decentre Western epistemologies and methodological frameworks.

Towards a southern archive

Several scholars have entered the debate about hyphenated forms of "transnational 'Britishness'" by issuing a call to arms for Victorian literary criticism to more "fully engage with the new historiography of the 19th century settler empire" (Steer, 2018: 4, 1). Philip Steer's view of "culture's entanglement with the drivers of imperialism" raises the important question of how we should deal with those literary cultures and texts that currently lie outside the "global literary paradigm" (2018: 3; Allan, 2007: 16), but nonetheless prioritizes an examination of the "literary bonds between Britain and its settler colonies" and the impact of "the vast undertaking of settler colonization" on "metropolitan thought and forms" over a consideration of south-south interactions and/or structural parallels between settler colonies (Steer, 2018: 6, 1, 7). Steer's most recent work (2020) is attentive to and engages more fully with lateral connections between colonial Australia and New Zealand. However, the overarching commitment of Victorian studies to retaining British world paradigms, and "finding a place for the settler empire" within these pre-existing formations (2018: 4), makes it difficult to escape either the "limited geographical" and "temporal imaginaries" of "a center/periphery model" or the domination of canonical metropolitan authors such as Dickens and Trollope (Chatterjee et al., 2020: n.p.), as well as bearing the weight of an "underlying problem of legibility" or what Steer identifies as the "additional burden of needing to justify" a focus on "minor" or non-canonical texts (2018: 4).

While we do not attempt to establish an alternative southern canon that would reproduce the foundational logic of canonicity here, we argue that looking across an archive of literary productions from colonial Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa would allow us to see these texts and practices less as belated or derivative copies of metropolitan culture and more as important reflections of distinctively southern histories, including histories of

penal, carceral, and indentured labour regimes. A southern archive would therefore enable us to engage more directly and critically with the racialized structural inequalities of settler colonialism and its imaginative forms, and to interrogate the kinds of Eurocentricity and whiteness that such forms and practices tend to inscribe, thereby re-evaluating and destabilizing a range of familiar Romantic and Victorian genres, from the gothic novel and adventure tale, to the Bildungsroman and romance, to the ballad and lyric. It would also allow us to de-emphasize nation-centred paradigms and literary cultures, and instead to focus on the hemispheric and transnational relations outlined in the previous two sections; in other words, it would prioritize the thematic, structural, and generic similarities or parallels between the literary cultures of the southern colonies.

Studies that emphasize the national distinctiveness of nineteenth-century Australian settler fiction — to take one example — have focused on the "bush tradition", the depiction of Aboriginal characters, and the prevalence of convict and bushranger narratives (Bode, 2018: 12; Gelder and Weaver, 2018). Yet, as attention to a wider southern archive reveals, some of these thematic concerns are shared across southern settler literary cultures. Jason R. Rudy has begun the process of looking across settler poetry from colonial Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa (2017), exploring its mediatory role in negotiating between familiar British ideals and new colonial paradigms. Looking at settler fiction, on the other hand, uncovers not so much the nostalgic relation of settlers to home, but rather the prevalence of Wakefieldian sub-texts that privilege "civilised" agricultural settlement over uncultivated "wasteland" and nomadic peoples (Steer, 2017: n.p.), drawing attention to acts of enclosure, the development of principles of *terra nullius*, and the high incidence of organized settlement schemes and missionary cultures across Australasia and the Cape Colony. Thomas McCombie's *Arabin: or, the Adventures of a Colonist in New South Wales* (1845), Olive Schreiner's farm novel (or the *plaasroman* in the Afrikaner literary tradition) *Story of An African Farm* (1883), and Clara Cheesman's *A Rolling Stone* (1886) ultimately use bush narratives to "attest to, and participate in, the 'stabilization' of Australia", New Zealand, and South Africa as "pastoral locations" (Steer, 2017: n.p.). They do this in ways that bring to the fore the sense of "anxiety and bewilderment" that accompanied the development of "uneasy emergent colonial modernities for both newcomers and Indigenous peoples" (Edmonds, 2009: 109).

This uneasiness is also captured in genres such as colonial sensation and gothic novels, which unsettle the tropes of adventure and settlement by representing the "violent processes of colonization" in uncanny, antipodal, and inverted southern spaces (Gelder, 2014: 191; see also Brantlinger, 2003). While the colonial gothic, like the captivity narrative, is an important generic development in North American and other colonial contexts (Edmundson, 2018), studies of the southern colonial gothic suggest that it is marked by peculiarly antipodean inversions and by the pathological instability of a type of settlement where "death is a matter of banal routine", including heightened forms of frontier violence towards Indigenous peoples and women (Conrich, 2012: 394; Edmundson, 2018; Gelder, 2012: 383). Novels, novellas, serialized fiction, and short stories from across the southern colonies, such as Marcus Clarke's *The Mystery of Major Molinuex* (1881), Margaret Bullock's *Uta: A Story of Love, Hate and Revenge* (1894), and Percy Fitzpatrick's *The Outspan: Takes of South Africa* (1897), all represent the haunting pathology and trauma of colonialism in its most uncanny and violent forms.

Focusing our attention on a southern archive could also reveal the distinctive labour history of the southern colonies, allowing us to engage with the cultural consequences of the free and unfree migrations of Indian, Chinese, and Pacific Islander workers to places as seemingly distinct and disparate as colonial Fiji, Samoa, South Africa, New Zealand, and Queensland. A serialized novel like *Philberta: An Australian Tale* (1882–1883) by the Dunedin-based writer Frances Ellen (Thorpe) Talbot, for example, not only depicts movement across Australia and New Zealand (in this case between Victoria and Dunedin) but also showcases violence against Indigenous and diasporic peoples, including the deliberate mass poisoning of an Aboriginal tribe by ex-convict workers, the massacre of one hundred Chinese passengers on a ship bound to Hong Kong by mutinying sailors, and a blackbirding scheme involving Indian indentured labourers in Fiji. As Nienke Boer has noted of later South African fiction, such texts bear the imprint of the history of indenture and its "essential temporal condition […] [of] precarity and impermanence", while simultaneously seeking to erase that history "from their claims to legitimate residency and, crucially, land-ownership" (2016: 33).

Other settler novels depicting trans-Tasman crossings, such as W. M. Southan's *The Two Lawyers* (1881), rely on the geographic juxtaposition of free and carceral spaces, suggesting the importance of convictism not just to Australian fiction but also to that of New Zealand and South Africa, the latter of which was also a penal regime in the nineteenth century (Anderson, 2016c). The reorientation provided by a southern archive could shift the focus of studies of penal and convict literatures away from Dickens's antipodean convict returnee, Magwitch, to a consideration of Southan's *Two Lawyers*, Caroline Leakey's *The Broad Arrow* (1859), Marcus Clarke's *His Natural Life* (1870–1872), Samuel Butler's *Erewhon* (1872), and the petitions of convicts and political prisoners from Robben Island to Norfolk Island to Botany Bay. Taking into account southern carceral geographies could also emphasize, for instance, the literary circuity that forms around a figure such as the Khoi leader David Stuurman, who was imprisoned in Robben Island, transported to Botany Bay, and inspired the petitionary efforts of Thomas Pringle and Saxe Bannister, as well as Clarke's article "Stuurman–Brothers, Patriots, and Hottentots" in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1879 (Anderson, 2016c; Harman, 2012; Malherbe, 1980).

Stuurman's history and voice raises "the ethical imperative to engage with" Black and "Indigenous voices and perspectives" even when they are almost totally absent from the literary archive (Steer, 2018: 7). Attention to a southern archive would therefore need to carefully consider southern settlerism as practice and ideology while acknowledging that Black and Indigenous studies have worked to more actively destabilize settler claims of mastery and naturalization. Moving away from dominant metropolitan paradigms and rejecting "imperial framings that disavow thinking in and from those areas being studied and compared" (Mignolo, 2013: 115), the imperative set out by decolonial theorists, southern theorists, and Indigenous studies scholars such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Alice Te Punga Somerville, Walter Mignolo, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, Raewyn Connell, and the Comaroffs is not simply to identify the silences and elisions in literary studies, but to take seriously the agency of Indigenous peoples and perspectives (see, for instance, Araluen, 2017), including Indigenous transnationalism, mobility, and circulation, with recent currents in Indigenous literary scholarship "warming to the idea that literary nationalism and cosmopolitanism can be complementary" (Wakeham, 2016: n.p.; see also Allen, 2012; Byrd, 2011; Somerville, 2007).[5]

In keeping with these aims, a southern archive could reorient literary studies away from the tendency to prioritize settler print cultures and instead consider the ways in which the region's Indigenous print, material, and oral cultures work together to provincialize settler fiction. Without denying the importance of country, place, and kinship networks for Indigenous people and their struggles for sovereignty, Wiradjuri clubs could be read alongside "drover boab texts" (Farrell, 2016); the Xhosa hymnals of Ntsikana could be read within the wider missionary circuitry of the southern colonies where liberal humanitarian doctrines shaped the petition and correspondence as important literary forms and genres (Hessell, forthcoming 2021; Mokoena, 2009; Mzamane, 1983); and the cultural interactions of mobile Māori, Pasifiker, Aboriginal, and Khoisan peoples could be considered. Such an approach would "take nonfiction writing seriously as a literature" (Horrocks, 2016: 18), opening the archive to correspondence, testimonials, proverbs, hymns, protest poetry, vernacular presses, diaries, and journals, "descriptions of customs, religious beliefs, and more" (Loader, 2016: 31, 33; see also Masilela, 2003; Mzamane, 1983; Nugent, 2015).

While this unavoidably brief account of the potential value of looking across a southern archive is nowhere near exhaustive, we argue that closer attention to this archive would allow us to take into account both new studies of trans-Indigenous mobilities and the complex relationships between settler and Indigenous cultures. Understanding the southern archive — and colonialism more generally — as a site of "mutual imbrication and contamination" (Gikandi, 1996: xviii) could further loosen the hold of Eurocentric epistemologies and typologies, rethinking the aesthetic, ethical, humanitarian, and imperial relations that define the "universalist" grounds of nineteenth-century literary studies and revealing more fully "the illiberal origins of global capitalist relations" in convict and indentured labour (Ince, 2018: 2). While we necessarily approach the idea of a southern colonial interregion and its archive cautiously — and with an appreciation of the unevenness both of historical experiences and ongoing inequalities in colonial Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa — we nonetheless do so with a sense of its value in accounting for shared settler, Black, and Indigenous histories across southern colonial spaces, as well as its ability to uncover a wider southern and oceanic history of systematic colonization, sojournism, missionary networking, carcerality, and indentured labour.

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ORCID iDs

Dr Sarah Comyn https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6854-7190

Professor Porscha Fermanis https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8481-3898

Notes

1. The relative success of reconciliation, of course, differs widely in different countries and remains highly contested as a framework "designed to *manage* and neutralise indigenous difference" (Veracini, 2011: 8; emphasis in original).
2. Here, too, we must learn from Indigenous studies scholars, who have long focused on the ways in which Indigenous regions such as Oceania are defined by "a world of people connected to each other" rather than by an "official world of states and nationalities" (Hau'ofa, 2008: 50).
3. This history of mobility is revealed in the demographics shaping the different colonies and regions of the southern hemisphere. In the Cape Colony, the estimated total population in 1865 was 496,381, of which approximately 37% were "Whites" and 63% "Coloured" peoples (*Census*, 1865: iii, viii). In colonial Australia, the European population in 1860 was around 1 million (Jackson, 1977: 4); pre-colonization estimates of Aboriginal peoples (315,000 to 750,000) had, by then, declined rapidly but it is worth noting that in many parts of Northern Australia, Indigenous, and Asian populations outnumbered those of European ancestry up until the Second World War (Evans, 2007: 10–12; Ganter, 2006: 26–35). By 1874, Māori made up less than one tenth of the total population of New Zealand, but there, too, Māori populations were significant political and cultural forces for much of the century (Pool and Kukutai, 2018/2011).
4. Recent studies on various forms of "hydrocolonialism" by Isabel Hofmeyr, Meg Samuelson, and others have not just reinstated the visibility of seas and islands, but also emphasize the "imperial uses of water" through the demarcation of imperial waste categories that "sustain racialized ideologies" (Hofmeyr, 2019: 13; Samuelson and Lavery, 2019).
5. Admittedly, these Indigenous–Indigenous approaches are different from transnational, comparative, and cosmopolitan frameworks as they are conceived within imperial history, foregrounding the "terms of engagement and the particular modes of relationality articulated in and by Indigenous authors and literary texts themselves", but they are nonetheless alert to the translocal, as well as place bound, aspects of Indigenous ways of knowing and being (Wakeham, 2016: n.p.).

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