

Portland State University

**PDXScholar**

---

English Faculty Publications and Presentations

English

---

1-1-2007

# Regional Literature and 'The Liminal': Exploring the Spaces In-Between National and International Literatures

Per Henningsgaard

*Portland State University*, [p.henningsgaard@curtin.edu.au](mailto:p.henningsgaard@curtin.edu.au)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/eng\\_fac](https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/eng_fac)



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

**Let us know how access to this document benefits you.**

---

## Citation Details

Henningsgaard, P. (2007). Regional Literature and 'The Liminal': Exploring the Spaces In-Between National and International Literatures. The Limina Editorial Collective, Special Edition, *Limina*, 12-19.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in English Faculty Publications and Presentations by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: [pdxscholar@pdx.edu](mailto:pdxscholar@pdx.edu).

## Regional Literature and 'The Liminal': Exploring the Spaces In-Between National and International Literatures

*Per Henningsgaard*

University of Western Australia

*Regional literature, that often overlooked and much maligned cluster of writings whose origins are frequently said to be anywhere but here, has actually played an important role in the story of Australian literature. The theme of nationalism, which reigned as the master narrative of Australian literature from early in the history of white settlers in Australia until perhaps the 1970s, merged with or fragmented into (depending on your perspective) regionalism in the 1980s. In the 1990s, internationalism emerged from this transitional phase as the new master narrative of Australian literature. Regionalism seems to have acted as a liminal state in the evolution of an understanding of space, place and belonging. Yet, as this article will demonstrate, its relevance is not confined to the space of a decade, nor is regional literature without its contemporary proponents.*

### *I. Introduction*

At a time when Perth is reportedly poised to become the Australian city with the highest percentage of people on the top tax rate, speaking of Western Australia as outside the cultural centres of Australia is an admittedly peculiar formulation.<sup>1</sup> There is no doubt about its status as an economic centre, but Western Australia and its capital city – home to the state art and history museums, a G8 university, abundant live theatre and music, an international arts festival, the state orchestra and ballet company – do not sit comfortably alongside Sydney and Melbourne. Instead, they are regarded by residents of these two cities as something or someplace found far away from here, from metropolitan centres and modern life-as-we-know-it. In other words, Western Australia is seen as a 'regional area', where the term 'regional' is understood to mean a space on the edges of something greater, a place. And as long as such terms as 't'othersiders' and 'the Eastern states' persist – and 94% of all books sold in Australia that are published by Australian publishers, come from publishing houses based in New South Wales or Victoria – the regional conception of Australia will remain a valid way of imagining the landscape and, perhaps more importantly, the Australian people.<sup>2</sup>

However, there are many people who disagree about the relevance of conceptualising Australia in this way. These arguments came to the fore when the conversation about regionalism in Australia, and especially with regard to Australian literature, began to take shape in the late 1970s and into the 1980s. During this period, regionalism was defined and re-defined in many different ways. In fact, the only feature some of these articulations of regionalism share, is that they were all challenged by Australian critics at one time or another. But the history of regionalism in Australia, as well as the history of critics of regionalism, extends much further back in time.

The literary regionalism of the 1970s and '80s was foreshadowed by state-based political regionalism, which had been around since the early days of European settlement, inspiring historians to attribute characteristics to each state and its residents. For example, Manning Clark writes of

the colonial reaction to the Australian Colonies Government Act, which was passed by the British parliament in 1850, in his *A Short History of Australia*:

The legislative council of New South Wales ... [was] not interested in a federal assembly that could not be dominated by New South Wales; and South Australia, as a hint of future provincial loyalties, rejected the proposal as in a British sense unconstitutional.<sup>3</sup>

Though the New South Wales and South Australian governments were united in their dislike of the Australian Colonies Government Act and desire for self-government, the logic each used to reach these conclusions is entirely different. New South Wales is depicted as arrogant and self-centred, while Clark describes South Australia as having 'provincial loyalties'. The same characteristics could be said to define these two states today. With regard to this matter, Clark is content noting that 'intercolonial customs and different railway gauges [are] part of the price paid for indulging in [the] folly' of regional difference – a statement that strikes a decidedly dismissive tone, especially in its use of the term 'folly' to describe the practice of regionalism. Yet, perhaps a more striking example of the 'price paid for indulging in [the] folly' of regional difference is the threat of secession from the rest of Australia that has been part of Western Australia's political landscape since shortly after European settlement in 1829.<sup>4</sup>

Even against this background of political regionalism, it was not until October 1978 that the elements necessary to spark a substantial critical debate on the subject of regionalism in Australian literature finally began to coalesce. This landmark event was a seminar organised by Fremantle Arts Centre Press. The three-day gathering of Australian writers, many of whom enjoyed prominent national reputations, and interested locals was organised to explore the theme of 'Time, Place and People: Regionalism in Contemporary Australian Literature'. The papers delivered at this seminar by such luminaries as Frank Moorhouse, Thomas Shapcott, Elizabeth Jolley, Peter Cowan and T.A.G. Hungerford, were later reprinted in an edition of *Westerly*, thereby giving them greater circulation and cultural currency. The published versions of these papers are foundational works on the subject of regional literature in Australia; they provided the basis for much future discussion, as well as formally introducing the terms and ideas against which many future critics reacted.

The conversation gained further momentum in the early 1980s, when Professor Bruce Bennett began actively promulgating regionalism as a critical framework for understanding Australian literature. Bennett was an advocate of

a study of regions from the ground up: commencing with particular places, the biographical connections of writers with these places and their literary references to, or recreations of these places, together with a study of their intellectual and cultural milieux.<sup>5</sup>

It was around this time that significant numbers of state-based or regional literature anthologies first began to be published and, in the process, consolidated the conversation on this subject. Bennett writes about regional literature anthologies in his chapter on 'Literary Culture since Vietnam: A New Dynamic' in *The Oxford Literary History of Australia*:

Regional anthologies have been more numerous in contemporary Australia than any other kind. Frequently published in the state or region which provides their focus, these anthologies have often been designed to raise awareness of the landscapes, people and ways of living of the region. Western Australia has been the leading contributor to a regional literary consciousness, but all states and territories, and a number of sub-regions have been represented, especially those from outside the "golden triangle" of Sydney–Melbourne–Canberra.<sup>6</sup>

As Bennett observes, regional anthologies are a recent phenomenon in Australia; they do not become a prominent facet of the local publishing scene until the late 1970s and into the 1980s. During these two decades, thirteen regional literature anthologies were published in Western Australia, for example, whereas only two had been published in the previous 150 years of white settlement (perhaps surprisingly, none were published in the nineteenth century). The conversations carried out between these books published in the 1970s and '80s showcased an increasingly sophisticated

understanding of the historical and contemporary influences at work in any conception or reception of regional literature, which the earlier anthologies lacked, especially as they did not engage in any form of inter-textual debate. Since the 1980s, not a single literature anthology has been published that explicitly acknowledges it is composed of Western Australian writers. Instead, several anthologies of Western Australian literature have been published that are packaged to appear generically Australian or organised around certain themes, such as *Summer Days: Stories from Childhood*.<sup>7</sup>

Thus it seems that by the early 1990s, the conversation about regional literature and the interest of publishers in it had largely died out – perhaps because those who had campaigned so actively for its notice felt that, in the few years it had enjoyed a spotlight of Australian literary criticism, it had managed to accomplish its goals. Only the smallest of whimpers was heard on the subject in the decade of grunge rock and grunge literature, and there has been veritable silence in this regard with the dawning of the twenty-first century. Without even the dignity of an obituary, the matter of regionalism in Australian literature has disappeared from the literary and critical landscape.

But surely it has only disappeared from those aspects of the literary and critical landscape engendered by current critical practices. After all, regional literature is still being written, even if it is not being discussed in exactly those terms. In this article, using Western Australian literature as a case study, I postulate that the terms that operated in the discussion of regionalism and regional literature in the 1970s and '80s in Australia still have relevance today. Furthermore, overlooked by contemporary literary critics, regional literature has found a home – like a shiny silver coin lodged in a dim crack between the floorboards – in the liminal space between a national literature and an international literature. Locating regional literature in this way also allows for some updates to the terms of the aforementioned debate, enhancing their relevance in twenty-first century Australia.

## II. Defining 'regional literature' and 'the region'

The culture and geography of Australia have been conceptualised by writers and literary critics in many different ways, oftentimes by conflating culture with the geography of the country. One of the earliest examples of this was the conceptualisation of Australia as a dichotomy between the city and the bush. In this case, any geographical location on this vast continent could be identified as belonging to either the city or the bush, just as any Australian person was affiliated with one end of the dichotomy or the other; this was no place for the undecided.

However, perhaps the most persistent conceptualisation of Australia is that of a single, homogenous geographical and cultural landscape. A 'sunburnt country' with little or no regional variation. For obvious reasons, this way of seeing Australia poses significant problems for those interested in issues regionalism and regional literature. In the late 1970s, beginning at the 1978 seminar organised by Fremantle Arts Centre Press, a critical debate arose around this very issue and about the relative merits of nationalism and regionalism. By taking up the question of whether or not Australia is truly culturally homogenous, this debate sought to establish the validity of the concept of 'the region' in Australian culture.

Many of the writers and literary critics who were dubious about the claims of regionalism in Australia, insisted that Australia lacks the regional diversity necessary to justify such a formulation. Of course, this stance assumes that notions of regionalism and regional literature are inextricably linked to the distinctive creative output of a region. By this logic, unless all Western Australian writers produce works that are distinctively and particularly Western Australian, for example, it can be concluded that there is no such thing as a regional identity in Western Australia. Thereby, Australian culture is said to be homogenous and nationalism its ruling construct. In the absence of a distinctive and particular creative output, regionalism is assumed to no longer exist, or to have ceased usefulness as a tool for critical analysis and debate.

Of course, this is not the only way in which regionalism and regional literature can be conceptualised. The following excerpt from Doreen Massey's *Space, Place and Gender*, while it uses the term 'place' where I have chosen to use 'region', nonetheless successfully illustrates an alternative definition of regionalism:

A "place" is formed out of the particular set of social relations which interact at a particular location. And the singularity of any individual place is formed in part out of the specificity of interactions which occur at that location (nowhere else does this precise mixture occur) and in part out of the fact that the meeting of those social relations at that location (their partly happenstance juxtaposition) will in turn produce new social effects. ... The identities of places are inevitably unfixed. They are unfixed in part precisely because the social relations out of which they are constructed are themselves by their very nature dynamic and changing.<sup>8</sup>

Massey clearly believes that 'the region' is something that is defined by all of its residents, which is to say that it is 'formed out of the particular set of social relations which interact at a particular location'. This is starkly contrasted with the aforementioned conceptualisations of Australia, in which writers and literary critics defined the terms of the debate. Massey also makes the important observation that 'social relations' are by their very nature 'dynamic and changing'. Consequently, any given definition of 'the region' is also subject to change.

These changes can be brought about by any number of factors, including population change (e.g. increase or decrease in the birth rate, an influx of new residents, especially if they differ from the current population in an observable fashion); a change in the local economy (e.g. 'boom or bust', technological changes in the means or mode of production); and a sudden rise to prominence of a notable or controversial figure (e.g. politician, writer, filmmaker). Clearly, the effects of these sorts of occurrences are not limited to the boundaries of the geographical region in which they occur. For example, the election of Pauline Hanson and the One Nation party to the House of Representatives not only changed the way in which Queensland, at least for a time, defined itself as a region, but it also changed the way greater Australia thought of itself.

In Western Australia, the establishment and subsequent success of Fremantle Arts Centre Press in the promotion of Western Australian literature has been instrumental in changing East Coast perceptions of the state from a sort of provincial cultural backwater, to a literary and cultural hub. It has also changed the way other Australian states think about and approach the issues of regional publishing and regional literature, which then impacts on their definition of 'the region'. Queensland has been particularly successful in defining and promoting the idea of 'Queensland literature', largely through generous funding to the Queensland Writers Centre.

Again, Massey illustrates this point:

Instead then, of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a large proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street, or a region or even a continent. And this in turn allows a sense of place which is extroverted, which includes a consciousness of its links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive way the global and the local.<sup>9</sup>

While residents of the region in question might be the ones sitting at the table where the conversation about the definition of 'the region' is being held, it would seem there are other parties sitting at their elbows. National and international media, as well as creative work from writers, artists and filmmakers, which originates outside the region in question but finds its way in – as much does in these often sparsely populated areas – can significantly impact on a definition of 'the region'. Residents of the cultural centres will furthermore often be appealed to as an audience for regional literature.

For the purposes of this article, regional literature will be understood as literature possessing cultural value that is specific to a region, though not necessarily to the exclusion of national or international cultural value. However, regional literature often appeals only to a small audience. This audience is, of course, the residents of the particular region in which the work is set, or with which it is concerned. 'The region' can be defined as a space existing outside the cultural centres. In Australia, these are commonly referred to as the 'Sydney–Melbourne axis' or the 'golden triangle' of Sydney–Melbourne–Canberra.<sup>10</sup> Regional literature is something that is created by writers located outside

of these cultural centres, or who, at the very least, have an established relationship with a region and a readership located outside the cultural centres (usually as a consequence of former residency in that region). Defining 'regional literature' and 'the region' in this way implicitly emphasises the importance of the reader over any other constituency, in particular that of the geographical region, since it is only the reader who can assess such qualifications as cultural value.

### III. Locating it in 'the liminal'

Looking to 'the reader' for an assessment of cultural value is a fraught proposition, not least because of the prospect of identifying that notoriously elusive subject known as 'the reader'. However, for the purposes of this article, 'the reader' will be understood as anyone contributing to a definition of 'regional literature' and 'the region'. After all, as was discussed above, these terms cannot be defined only by the writers and literary critics (i.e. 'the distinctive creative output of a region'), but rather necessitate input from the consumers of these writings (i.e. 'the reader'). This may include those residing outside the region in question, given the attention devoted earlier to the impact these individuals can have on a definition of 'regional literature' or 'the region'.

Furthermore, there is ample room in this definition of 'the reader' for those who 'consume' writing in less typical fashions – not by purchasing a book or a literary magazine, for example, but rather by reading a book review in the newspaper or overhearing a conversation in a café about a local author. Even by choosing *not* to read a book by a local author, and instead opting to read the latest international bestseller, the individual is providing a commentary on the state of regional literature and the region more generally. Clearly, this way of conceptualising regionalism is not reliant on a distinctive creative output for validation, but rather on the assessment of cultural value.

This particular approach to questions of regionalism is based on the ideas of a few intrepid academics and writers who persisted in their advocacy of a regional conception of Australia, even after the popular critical debate died down in the early 1990s. Perhaps in response to the criticism sustained by their earlier articulations of regionalism, these individuals emerged with a new focus. For the first time since regionalism in Australia was unofficially launched as a subject for critical debate at a 1978 seminar, the physical region was no longer seen as the most important aspect of regionalism; instead, they emphasised the importance of the reader.

As usual, Bruce Bennett provides the most succinct overview of this trend in the discussions of regionalism and regional literature in Australia:

Now, at the beginning of the 1990s, I believe that readers should be brought more firmly into this equation. For not only has reader-power expressed itself in an increasingly commercialised marketplace, but it has also made its mark theoretically in projections of readers as makers of meaning and even as rewriters of texts.<sup>11</sup>

Regionalism emerged from the process of incorporating the reader into its critical framework as, to quote the Canadian academic Ralph Matthews, 'a sense of "identification" or "consciousness of kind" which the inhabitants of a particular regional area feel for that region and/or for their fellow inhabitants of that region'.<sup>12</sup> In this new guise, regional literature exhibits many of the features of a minority literature. For example, it is subject to the same sorts of analysis as Aboriginal literature, women's literature, queer literature, migrant literature, and so forth. Regional literature is a category of writing, after all, rather than 'the whole'. More significantly, however, the category of people to whom regional literature speaks feel the same 'sense of "identification" or "consciousness of kind"' for others within this category, as people across the aforementioned diverse categories identified collectively as 'minority literatures' feel for those within their respective categories.

Of course, there are practical reasons why most minority literatures have been (and many still are) prevented from being incorporated or accepted into the mainstream. In other words, these literatures usually represent a group smaller or less powerful than the majority, or one that is discriminated against in some way. This is equally true of regional literature, as the following excerpt from Ronald Taft's 'Mateship, Success-ship and Suburbia' illustrates:

Here, in summary form, are some of the social and cultural variables that appear to be related to the amount, quality and type of artistic and intellectual products of any particular community: the traditions of that community and those imported from other communities; the types of occupations pursued; the social and economic class structure; the possibilities of moving from one class to another; the techniques of production; the division of labour between classes and groups; the presence of particular talents and skills and educational facilities.<sup>13</sup>

Clearly, the 'types of occupations pursued' in Western Australia and New South Wales are very different (e.g. the Western Australian economy is driven in large part by the mining industry, which with the exception of coal does not have a significant role in the economy of New South Wales), thereby influencing the 'social and economic class structure' of the two states. Also, there is the 'presence of particular talents and skills and educational facilities' in New South Wales that do not exist in Western Australia, and vice-versa (e.g. Western Australian publishers often commission editors, designers and printers from the 'Eastern States', because they cannot find qualified people in Western Australia). In these scenarios, New South Wales can be understood as the cultural centre, next to which Western Australia as a region appears to be the minority. As Taft notes, these circumstances affect 'the amount, quality and type of artistic and intellectual products of any particular community'. Therefore, they must be accounted for in any study of literature or literary culture.

When regional literature is conceptualised as a minority literature, it is no longer possible to think of it as existing on a continuum in which it is located just to the left of national literature, which is located to the left again of international literature. In other words, this order does not represent a natural progression from smallest to largest – left to right – an arrangement which implicitly favours national and international literatures over regional literature. After all, both national and international literatures attempt to account for the entire world population; nationalism does this via the construct of the nation (almost every living person is a citizen of one nation or another), while internationalism simply sweeps everyone up into one giant, amorphous bundle. Both have certain characteristics and serve specific purposes, but they nonetheless expect that everyone can be fitted into one or another of these characteristics and purposes.

Regional literature, on the other hand, is not concerned with assigning every person a definitive regional affiliation. Rather, it is more particular in its approach. Its rhetoric relates only to those individuals located outside the cultural centres, or, more specifically, outside the centres of cultural production. This characteristic is ultimately what defines it as a minority literature and separates it from national and international literatures, both of which can be characterised as 'majority' literatures.

Nonetheless, there are those literary critics who insist that in fact regional literature promotes the majority culture's interests (i.e. the white, Anglo-Celtic, male perspective). Others contest this idea of 'regional interests' obstructing or denying the voices of minority and marginalised community members. If regional writing is not viewed as a monolithic entity, whereby specific traits are said to embody the regional, then it can be said that regionalism encourages diversity, rather than limits it.

To briefly illustrate this point, we need only note that arguably the most visible, in literary terms, Indigenous group in Australia are the Noongars of south-west Western Australia, who boast such talents as Kim Scott, Jack Davis, Richard Walley and Alf Taylor. It is no accident that all four of these writers have published their nationally (and, in some cases, internationally) acclaimed work with Western Australian publishers – Fremantle Arts Centre Press and the Broome-based publisher of Indigenous literature, Magabala Books. Diversity would seem to be alive and well in Western Australian and, by inference, regional literature. And, of course, regional publishers – particularly Fremantle Arts Centre Press – have been absolutely crucial in 'creating' and sustaining regional literature.

As a minority literature, regional literature is more usefully conceptualised as existing in the liminal space between a national literature and an international literature, rather than seeing it as prior to or alongside the national. Regional literature is a threshold, a meeting place. But while the

movement from nationalism to internationalism has been widely discussed in the Australian literary community, the role that regionalism played in this passage has been largely overlooked.

The predominantly nationalist conceptualisation of Australia as a single, homogenous geographical and cultural landscape, merged with or fragmented into (depending on your perspective) regionalism in the 1980s. It then came out the other side in the 1990s as internationalism. In other words, regionalism was a transitional or liminal state in the evolution of an understanding of space, place and belonging. Writing in the late 1990s, Bruce Bennett summarises the change that occurred:

The shift in one generation from local to global has been astounding. In the culture of literary criticism and theory, this shift has been signified by a move from an interest in physical “place” or “setting” to notions of a “site”, where ideologies clash and compete.<sup>14</sup>

The interest in ‘physical “place” or “setting”’ that Bennett refers to is, of course, the interest in regionalism, while the interest in a ‘site’ is more typical of internationalism. It is important to note that the essay from which this excerpt comes is perhaps the only source published in the last fifteen years that explicitly examines the interactions in Australia of internationalism with regionalism.<sup>15</sup> ‘The shift in one generation from local to global’ has been more than ‘astounding’; it has also largely escaped the notice of the Australian literary community. While there have been many published essays examining the shift from nationalism to internationalism, Bennett’s is the only essay to incorporate regionalism into this movement. This fact is perhaps more indicative of just how far regionalism has slipped from the minds of modern literary and cultural critics, than it is of the importance of internationalism as a category for critical interrogation in the early twenty-first century.

The final stage of this transition – from regionalism to internationalism – was encouraged, if not entirely created, by the Australian universities and academics, who were in turn encouraged by the economic imperatives of the Federal Government. It was around this time – the early 1990s – that Paul Keating famously encouraged a view of Australia as part of Asia. This was done in large part because Australia’s proximity to Asia meant the potential for increased trade revenue for a country that was accustomed to finding itself at great distances from its trading partners.

However, it is notable that the Australian Federal Government seemed to think an economic initiative was not enough on its own, and so undertook to supplement it with an artistic or cultural aspect. It accomplished this largely through its arts funding and advisory body, the Australia Council, which continues to fund artist- and writer-in-residence programs in Southeast Asia, joint art exhibits of Southeast Asian and Australian art, anthologies of Southeast Asian writing, et cetera. In the 1980s and especially around the time of the Australian Bicentennial, it was common for the Australia Council to fund state-based literature anthologies, but this is no longer the case.

#### *IV. Conclusion*

It will be evident by now that I prefer regionalism to other unities and in particular internationalism, since I feel it holds limited logical or emotional appeal, especially when applied to literature. But I also prefer regionalism to nationalism, in large part because of the ties I have identified between regional and minority literatures. The legacy of nationalism, like that of colonialism, is littered with examples of discrimination and abuse of power. Regionalism, on the other hand, while it has sometimes been perceived on a national or international level as being the construct of a dominant culture – it has always been acknowledged on a local level to draw strength from its very diversity, from the collective sense of belonging enjoyed by residents as a result of living outside the cultural centres.

Regional literature is at home in the liminal space between a national literature and an international literature. It is not only situated between these literatures on the timeline of literary fashion in Australia, but regional literature can also be said to exist in the liminal space between the conditions of inclusion for national and international literatures. And at their most fundamental level, such conditions shape the very definitions of these literatures. Regional literature appeals to



those individuals found on the margins of both national and international literatures, included in these unities, but not comfortably so and only because both feel the need to account for the entire world population. Regional literature takes these isolated individuals and communities into its arms, and it gives them a voice, speaking from its liminal space to the residents of its particular region but also beyond to a national and even international readership.

That is, so long as the shiny coin of regional literature is not lodged too deep in that dim crack between the floorboards. Which is, of course, the purpose of this article: to lift regional literature up just that little bit and give it a platform from which to project its unique voice, its contribution to the literary landscape and our understanding of such concepts as space, place and belonging.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>George Megalogenis and Paige Taylor, 'West booms into the top-earning elite', *Australian*, 15 May 2006.

<sup>2</sup>Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Book Publishers, 2003-04*, Commonwealth of Australia, 2005, p.6.

<sup>3</sup>Manning Clark, *A Short History of Australia* (1963), Penguin, Ringwood, 1995, p.119.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup>Bruce Bennett, 'Concepts of "the West" in Canadian and Australian Literary Studies', *Westerly*, vol. 29, no. 2, 1984, p.81.

<sup>6</sup>Bruce Bennett, 'Literary Culture since Vietnam: A New Dynamic', in Bruce Bennett and Jennifer Strauss (eds), *The Oxford Literary History of Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1998, p.258.

<sup>7</sup>The production of state-based literature anthologies in other Australian states and territories follows a similar trend, marked by a dramatic increase in production in the 1980s. However, the level of production in these states and territories never reached the levels found in Western Australia, which had an early start due in large part to its sesquicentennial celebrations of 1979. Four state-based literature anthologies were published in South Australia in the 1980s, three in Queensland, one in Tasmania, and none in the Northern Territory. Perhaps as a consequence of the later start and more moderate number of books produced throughout the 1980s, the level of production of state-based literature anthologies in these states did not fall off so steeply at the end of the decade. Since 1990, three state-based literature anthologies have been published in South Australia, five in Queensland, two in Tasmania, and a remarkable increase to six territory-based literature anthologies in the Northern Territory.

<sup>8</sup>Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1994, pp.168-169.

<sup>9</sup>Massey, pp.154-155.

<sup>10</sup>Bennett, 'Concepts of "the West"', p.81.

<sup>11</sup>Bruce Bennett, *An Australian Compass: Essays on Place and Direction in Australian Literature*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 1991, p.213.

<sup>12</sup>Ralph Matthews, *The Creation of Regional Dependency*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1983, pp.17-18.

<sup>13</sup>Ronald Taft, 'Mateship, Success-ship and Suburbia', *Westerly*, vol. 2, 1961, p. 21.

<sup>14</sup>Bruce Bennett, 'Home and Away: Reconciling the Local and the Global', *Salt*, vol. 11, 1999, p.241.

<sup>15</sup>John Kinsella's theory of 'international regionalism', which he has discussed briefly in several published interviews and delivered unpublished lectures on the subject, examines this interaction; however, he has never published a formal exegesis of his theory. In conversation with him on 12 October 2005, Kinsella informed me that his interest in international regionalism as a framework for understanding literature was on the wane, while he was increasingly interested in the application of his theory as a tool for political and social change.