# 我们的澳洲 This Australia

三十二篇生活札记 32 Real Stories of Australian

陈祎 毕熙燕 主编

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## This Australia Foreword

Australia and China enjoy a close and productive relationship on many levels, from trade and investment to education and cultural exchange, forged over almost forty years of diplomatic relations between our two nations. Key to this relationship is the fostering of strong people-to-people links at all levels. The translation and publication of our two nations' important literature is an excellent vehicle to promote bilateral understanding and friendship.

This Australia, a collection of writing from some of Australia's top literary, cultural and media figures marks an important addition to Australian literature and writing in Chinese translation. The breadth and diversity of the collection, gathered from the long standing "This Life" column in The Australian newspaper, is a testimony to Australia's diverse and tenacious peoples. I am sure that for Chinese readers this collection will be an interesting and illuminating journey through the many facets of Australians' lives.

I congratulate Professor Chen Yi and her team of translators at the English Studies School of Xi'an International Studies University for producing this excellent publication, which will help to build a cultural and academic bridge between Australia and China.

Dr. Geoff Raby Australian Ambassador to China

# 序一

## 我们的澳洲

澳大利亚与中国建立外交关系四十年有余,两国各个层面的双边交流, 无论是贸易投资还是文化教育,都沉浸在亲密而建树颇丰的融洽氛围之中。 稳固促进民间交往则是各方面友好关系的锁钥。翻译出版两国中引人注目的 文学作品,能够有效推进双方互相理解及其友谊的发展。

《我们的澳洲》将一些最为卓越的澳大利亚文学、文化和媒体作品收入囊中,是中国翻译的澳大利亚文库中不可或缺的新贡献。该书集选材于报纸"澳大利亚人"之中经久不衰的专栏"我们的生活",其宽广的覆盖面以及形形色色的主题变换,有力验证了澳大利亚人的千人千面,以及他们不屈不挠的性格。我相信中国读者会发现这本书集别有生趣,与她相伴一路走过澳大利亚生活的方方面面,不觉间发人深省,余音绕梁。

特此祝贺陈祎以及西安外国语大学英文学院翻译队伍,为大家献上这本 杰出文集,此举必将为澳大利亚与中国的文化学术桥梁添砖加瓦。

> 芮捷锐博士 澳大利亚驻中国大使



## This Australia Foreword

From June 2010 to June 2011 the Australian government is proudly hosting *Imagine Australia:* The Year of Australian Culture in China. This reciprocal cultural program is the largest ever to be hosted by Australia in China, and in 2011—2012 China will host a similar program in Australia. Endorsed at the highest levels of government, these programs represent a very positive development in Australia-China cultural relations.

The year showcases the best of Australian cultural output, with a focus on youth, Australia-China collaboration, innovation and regional engagement. *Imagine Australia* is the most significant international cultural promotion ever to be staged in China. It includes visual art, music, dance, performance, literature, film, new media, design and many other cultural mediums. The success of the Imagine Australia program has exceeded all expectations.

The Australian government, through the Australia-China Council, has for many years supported and promoted a large network of Australian Studies Centres across China, with over twenty such centres actively engaged in research and teaching related to Australia. These centres, including one at Xi'an International Studies University, make a very valuable contribution to the Australia-China bilateral relationship.

In this context, I'm very pleased to see the publication of this excellent collection of Australian writing from Xi'an International Studies University. The cultural program of the Australian Embassy Beijing has a particular focus on encouraging projects in regional China, and the publication of this work is an important step forward in this regard.



# 序二

## 我们的澳洲

始自 2010 年 6 月为期一年的澳大利亚文化年取名为"想象澳大利亚",此番与中国合作举办如此大规模的双向文化项目对于澳大利亚政府来说尚属首次,令人自豪。2011 年到 2012 年,中国也将在澳大利亚举办类似的项目。这些交流项目得益于最高政府机构的支持,有力促进了澳中文化关系的发展。

这一年见证了澳大利亚文化的种种精髓,尤其聚焦于澳大利亚的年轻人,中澳互助合作,创新发展以及区域交流。"想象澳大利亚"也是一场意义非凡的跨国文化盛宴,盛况空前,成绩斐然,羡煞众人。其间囊括了不胜枚举的文化媒介,诸如视觉艺术、音乐、舞蹈、表演、文学、电影、新传媒以及设计等。

多年以来,澳大利亚政府通过中澳理事会的努力支持和运筹维系,在中国各地建立起来一个庞大的澳洲研究中心网络,共包括西安外国语大学在内20多个研究中心。这些机构积极参与与澳大利亚相关的教研活动,群策群力,对澳中双边关系发展的贡献不容小觑。

值此时刻,西安外国语大学出版了这样一部出色的澳大利亚文集,甚为 鼓舞人心。澳大利亚驻北京大使馆文化部特别重视鼓励中国地区的(与澳大利亚文化相关)研究项目,因此该书的出版着实可谓举足轻重的一大步。

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# THIS DROUGHTFUL LIFE

#### CATHRINE EKERS

I OFTEN go for a walk on the beach in the morning. It has been dry here, but after the incredibly long hot spell that had Adelaide setting a national record, some rain has provided welcome relief.

I am still staggered by the number of mussel shells that have been washing up in their hundreds for weeks now. Some are covered in a strange coral-like growth that has clamped their two halves shut. Others are opened like pairs of wings. Last week I found another dead tortoise, its flesh rotted to smelly, seaweed-like fronds.

Its shell also had been covered in the coral to the point where it became so weighed down it had drowned. There have been a few of these during the past couple of months and I think, of all the things that make me sad, these affect me the most. This is no ordinary beach swept clean daily by the sea's tide. This one is on the shores of Lake Alexanfrina, at the Murray's mouth.

A few years ago the beach wasn't even here and the waters lapped at the grassy edge, as they had done for decades. But as the lake has receded, the beach has gradually arrived and, with it, high salinity and shallowing waters that neither tortoise nor freshwater mussel can survive, stock cannot drink and that cannot be used for vineyards, some of which until now have survived since the 19th century.

This beautiful new beach is a good 100m wide, scattered with the detritus

of earlier lives. We've turned up the remnants of an old flat-bottomed fishing boat, the stern of a much younger plywood vessel, an encrusted outboard motor, several abandoned moorings made from every heavy object imaginable and countless bottles.

A rocky reef, over which skippers in small boats previously sailed unaware and usually unaffected, extends right across one section of the bay. It serves as a haven for the birds, confused by the lack of their customary habitat and diminishing feeding grounds.

A hundred or so egrets and spoonbills, usually relatively solitary birds, flock regularly to the edges of the receding water, desperate to find something to eat. The cormorants that roosted and nested in the willows just offshore have moved on, too easily accessed by predatory foxes able to reach them and their young by crossing the dried-up bed of the lagoon. As I write, the papers are full of news about policies that are at last being put in place to rescue our vast river system. Then I read that there will be little visible result for at least three years and hear dates such as 2018 being discussed, and I lose heart. For this area, it well may be too late.

As we watch the water drop and mourn the damage to this beautiful ecosystem, we also contemplate our future here. Soon we will be closing one aspect of our business as the diminishing lake levels make it impossible to maintain any turnover. We remind ourselves we're among the lucky ones. We don't have to sell off our dairy herds, strip our orchard trees, see our vineyards die, turn our backs on a lifetime of investment or walk off land that has been in our family for generations.

But we do have to consider how to reinvent ourselves this late in our lives. While we do that, we will watch as the lagoon dries to solid, cracked mud, the bay diminishes to a trickle that is the channel past the island, the egrets and spoonbills move on and the wind whips up huge sandstorms off our endless new beaches.

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# 这"干燥"的人生

清晨我经常在沙滩漫步,那里空气干燥。但自从阿德莱德那段超长的创全国高温记录的日子过后,几场雨水带来了久违的惬意。

我仍会被沙滩上的贻贝绊脚。这些成百上千的贝壳几星期来被不断地冲刷上岸。有些贝壳上爬满珊瑚状的衍生物,将它们死死封住;还有些则张开两瓣晾在那里。上星期我又看到一只死乌龟,它的肉烂成絮状的海草样,臭气熏天。乌龟壳上也布满了珊瑚,多得足以将乌龟沉入水底活活淹死。我想,这不知是第几只我在过去的几个月中看到的死龟了。在我看到的所有令人不悦的东西中,这是最令人难过的。这里可不是普通的天天被海水冲刷的沙滩。这个沙滩位于亚利山德拉湖畔,莫里河口。

几年前,这里并没有沙滩,湖水几十年重复地拍打着绿草茵茵的湖畔。但是随着湖水的减少,沙滩渐渐露了出来。后来湖水盐度上升,水位下降,以致于乌龟和淡水贝类都无法生存。湖水既不能喝也不能用来灌溉葡萄园。 而有些葡萄园自 19 世纪以来就一直靠湖水维持。

这片沙滩有一百多米宽,遍布着各种东西的残骸。我就看到过一条废弃的旧平底渔船、一条夹板船船尾、一部舷外马达、无数酒瓶和其他杂乱重物 扎成的拴船桩子。

以前开小船的人能顺利驶过并不易察觉的一片浅礁,现在横亘在河湾一处,成了鸟类的避难所。它们彷徨无措,以前赖以生存的栖息地逐渐消失,生存领地正不断减少。

许多喜欢独居的鸟类,像白鹭、篦鹭,现在经常聚居到不断消退的湖水边,急于找到点吃的。那些通常在岸边的柳树上栖息的鸬鹚已经迁徙,因为

它们和它们的幼仔太容易被适应陆地生活的狐狸偷袭,这些狐狸现可以轻松地穿过干枯的河床捕到它们。在我写这篇文章的时候,报纸已开始大量报道最终出台的关于拯救河流的相关政策。随后我了解到这些措施在三年内不会有显著收效,当得知有可能到 2018 年才初见成效时,我已经没有信心了。对于这片土地而言,很可能为时已晚。

当我们看到日益减少的湖水,惋惜美丽生态环境消亡的时候,我们也在思考着我们的未来。不久我们就得终止一种商业途径,因为水位的下降很快就不能承载任何船只。我们不断安慰自己,我们很幸运。因为我们无需变卖牲畜,卖尽果实,坐等葡萄园彻底干枯;不用抛家舍业,背井离乡。

但是我们必须得考虑如何在为时已晚的时候,改正我们的生命中的过错。 我们在思考这点的同时,将坐视内陆湖干涸成泥塘,河湾蜕变成流过岛屿的 小溪,鸟类纷纷迁徙,疾风扬起沙尘暴袭卷更多的新沙滩.....

(选自 2008 年 6 月 14 日《澳大利亚人》"我们的生活"专栏)

孟利 译

# 文化视点

尽管澳大利亚四面环海,并且有些地方的年降雨量超过了 1200毫米,但却是人类居住的最干旱的大陆国家。全大陆平均年 降水量为 470毫米,除南极洲外在各洲中是最少的,比非洲还少 许多,只相当于各大洲平均年降水量的五分之一。长期以来,干 旱是澳洲人不得不面对的一大自然灾害。

澳洲境内水网稀疏,无流区面积大。全国共有 240 多条大小河流,分属三大水系:沿岸河流,墨累—达令水系,内流水系。但是在广大的内陆地区降雨量少,变率大,蒸发强,河水流不到海洋便注入盐湖或者是没入沙漠:在西部海岸大都是季节性河流,



### 其中一些甚至全年干涸。

大体说来,澳大利亚在每十年当中就有三年雨水很少,造成不同程度的干旱。在 1895 年到 1902 年的八年干旱当中,整个东部地区都遭遇了极度干旱,达令河水干涸,半数以上的羊群以及 40% 的牛群都死掉,给经济、环境造成了不可估量的损害。影响澳洲降雨变化有多种因素,但是最强的影响因素是被气候学家称为"南方振动"的气候现象,这主要是存在于亚洲和东太平洋地区的一种气压变化所导致的,最极端的变化就是人们所熟悉的厄尔尼诺现象。

除过综合气候的影响,过度放牧也是不可忽视的一个因素。 在这个被称为"骑在羊背上的国家",绵羊数量居世界首位,畜 牧业产值是国民经济的重要组成部分。但是畜牧业的不当规划发 展,严重破坏了植被,加重了水土流失,一定程度上也导致了干 旱。而一旦发生大规模干旱,畜牧业、农业又是首当其冲的受害 者。澳洲畜牧业发展历久弥新,著名史诗巨片《澳洲乱世情》(原 名为 Australia)中浩荡牛群迁徙的镜头就给观众留下了极为深刻 的印象。然而对于澳洲当局来说,协调好农业发展与环境保护, 寻求最佳的畜牧业发展格局,才有望给澳洲牧人带来真正的福祉, 为世人展现真正的澳洲本色。

或许也正是因为干旱,澳洲当地民众普遍关注环保,环保意识较高。常有家长对着小孩子说"Recycle bin, recycle bin",意即将可回收垃圾分类,否则将会面临市政府的重罚。举个例子,众所周知澳洲人爱好园艺,殊不知因此而专设有,甚至连裁剪后的废弃树枝都要剪小或者粉碎之后投入这个专设的箱子里才可避免受惩罚。相形之下,我国的垃圾分类工程则是渐行渐缓,有名无实。

另外澳洲人对于干旱也不乏幽默感,例如艾利斯斯普林斯一年一度的帆船比赛 Henley-on-the Todd,这项比赛是在干涸的托德河河床上举行的,船底被掏空,运动员们双脚着地跑步比赛,吸引了全国数万名观众。诚然,面对自然,积极乐观与忧患意识是同等的重要,化敌为友实可谓妙哉快哉!



### THIS UNBALANCED LIFE

#### CHRIS LLOYD

DOROTHEA Mackellar's land of droughts and flooding rains has never resonated more with me than during the past few seasons. Suddenly, what was bone-achingly parched is now flooded, and this has caused its own chaos and tragedy. We can only hope some balance will be restored.

Sometimes our world seems out of joint. Droughts, floods, gale-force winds and unexpected weather patterns all contribute. How to relate to these events? Sometimes it's the small, personal experiences that help us frame the grand occasions into more manageable stories.

The loss of a friend to the drought went some way towards helping me understand the costs involve. If only he could have hung on for a few months until the rains came.

It all started with a little fibreglass dish at the bottom of our back steps. Tiny silvery fish sparkled in the welcoming oasis that we created and so proudly called "our pond".

Fragile ferns extended their tendrils down into the rocks that surrounded the edge, providing moisture, coolness and a sense of the bush. A couple of old bricks at the bottom of the pool of water allowed the fish to flit in and out of their underwater world. We had established a miniature ecosystem in our garden.

Then Martin moved in. We don't know where he came from but one day,

- 6