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Unsurprisingly, Australia was the geographically farthest I have travelled from Europe. Yet, unlike past stays in India or the United States, Europe seemed to be both far away and close and concrete. Being asked about my experience in 'downunder', this is the first thought that springs to my mind. This discovery was especially interesting to me, as somebody who is dealing with a "Europe" that is hard to define and diverse from within, as a space that is undergoing constant changes and whose many borders and boundaries, real and imagined, are being constantly renegotiated. In the programme which I lecture into, the Erasmus Mundus MA "Euroculture – Europe in the Wider World", we hold that Europe cannot be understood from only an inside perspective, but needs to be seen from the outside, in order to grasp the different perceptions and roles that the EU plays in the world, as well as the expectations that rest on Europe in many ways.

In autumn 2012, I was in Melbourne at the invitation of the EU Center at Monash University. During the short time I was in Australia, I gained a good impression of the many projects and ideas, as well as of the close collaboration between those who research Europe from 'downunder': A workshop was held jointly with the NCRE in Christchurch and a lecture was organized together with the EU Center at RMIT.

During my time in Melbourne, I had the feeling that seen from afar, Europe equals Brussels and Strasbourg with its political and economic power much more than is the case when looked at from Pune or Indiana. With the EU Centres in New Zealand and Australia, universities have built a tremendous infrastructure and carry out research that is impressive both in terms of outreach and output. With the insights into how the EU is acting in the Asia-Pacific and how it is seen from the many countries that have been researched into, we arrive at a better and multi-faceted understanding of the perception of the EU and have a much better basis to discuss concepts such as "normative power Europe" or the tasks for the newly formed European External Action Service.

My thoughts for further research and topics which could be worked on collaboratively: Europe is more than the EU. It is more diffused and less fixed once you ask for 'Europeanness' and once the focus is on the citizens' level. At

a public lecture in Melbourne, I was asked for Pascal Mercier's "Night Train to Lisbon", a novel that I knew well and had read in many ways, but not as the European novel, as that it was perceived by the professor who asked. SBS Radio had just aired a series on Multiculturalism in Australia and thus asked me for my take on European perspectives. ABC National Radio was preparing a wonderful series on "Who is Germany?" as part of the programme Creative Instinct. The topics discussed in all these instances were those of transcending borders, of (im)migration, of what multiculturalism actually means, of when integration works and how it is framed and organized politically. In all these areas, the perspective on the EU and European integration would be bottom-up and that would mean to track exchanges and mutual influences, to look for solutions that are found 'downunder' that would be useful to apply in Europe – and *vice versa*. There is a large agenda for researchers in the field of European Studies and many ways to expand the fields of research and to complement existing projects.