

***That Picture of us Together on the Castle Bridge in Verona. Bruce
Bennett in Italy***

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Do you remember, Bruce, that picture Teresa took of the two of us on the bridge of the Castle upon the Adige in Verona? We were both smiling, and Teresa too, a sort of breeze in the air, sunshine, silver clouds passing. I have been looking for it... sure you have it... can you please have a look too? I'm sure we can find it. You know how things tend to be submerged in houses... it is like thoughts and memories, you know how sometimes one international conference we went to together gets confused with another; one place that saw us together lecturing, discussing, meditating on Australian literature gets mixed with another: Lecce with Verona or Udine, Klagenfurt with Trento or Debrecen (we really loved your red socks there!), Copenhagen with Venice or Barcelona - remember how Teresa and I got tanned in Sitges? We liked to escape sessions sometimes and you joined for a cup of coffee, a chat and a good laugh. Searching our minds we find you there always, not blurred by time, but firmly present, a cherished friend. Your open smile the first thing, like a welcoming and a homecoming, an embrace in itself, a recognition of a friendship long cultivated and always new, a readiness to include, enthusiasm always in the making. Yes this is the quality we mostly see in you, dear mate, the capacity to let the other enter your space and share his or her ideas and feelings, in an exchange that always left us all enriched. You are curious and warm, open and friendly, generous and full of care and good humour, ready to communicate to others your deep knowledge unpretentiously, in spite of your status as an acclaimed academic and scholar who received wide international recognition and honour. Your Penguin *Literature of Australia* gave a stunning and innovative reading of our beloved Australian literature - we and our students always treasure it.

Teresa remembers how you used to run in your desert boots around the Verona stadium, near her place, were you were hosted during your visiting professorship at her Faculty of Foreign Languages. And you didn't wear a coat but only big jumpers in the cold weather in Trento - where you held your first visiting professorship in Italy, when Teresa was at that University. When you came to lecture my students in Udine you were wiser (or more experienced) and had a warmer longer jacket, fitter for the cold of the Italian North-East. Of course Lecce was better climate wise, with Bernard and Maria

Renata holding the reins of Australian scholarship in Southern Italy. You were generous in coming, you liked lecturing our students and sharing ideas on our research and telling about yours. I think Italy was a good place for you, and you for Italy, for us. We miss you, that's all. Please think of us, and come and visit when you can.

love,

Antonella and Maria Teresa (and all of your many Italian friends)

Maria Teresa Bindella, now happily retired, is full professor of English Literature at the Universities of Udine, Trento, Milano Cattolica and Verona. She wrote relevant studies on Scott, Hardy and Stevenson, and has also explored colonial and post-colonial literatures in English, organizing meetings with writers and critics from Australia, Africa, the Caribbean, the South Pacific, and international conferences, among which memorable are one held at the University of Udine on Australian Literature in 1987 and one in Trento in 1991. As a founding member she was on the committee of **EASA** (European Association for the Study of Australia) and wrote articles for various international literary magazines on Malouf, Christina Stead and Epeli Hau'ofa. Maria Teresa Bindella also acted as Pro-Vice-Chancellor at the University of Verona, with full responsibility for international relations – showing that research, teaching, and institutional commitments can be fruitfully balanced and combined.
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Antonella Riem Natale is Full Professor of English Literature and Language, former Dean of the Faculty of Modern Languages, University of Udine, President of the Italian Conference of Foreign Languages, President of ALL (<http://all.uniud.it>). She is the founder of the *Partnership Studies Group* (http://all.uniud.it/?page_id=195), editor in chief of the series ALL (Udine, Forum: <http://www.forumeditrice.it/percorsi/lingua-e-letteratura/all>) and of the online journal on the literatures in English *Le Simplegadi* <http://all.uniud.it/simplegadi>. She coordinates internationally and nationally funded research projects on the *partnership* model in the literatures in English:
http://www.sciencesystemfvg.it/index.php?page=ricadute&id=72&open=2009#vedi_cotenuto

Former member of the EASA board, she promotes and coordinates cultural events and international conferences on the Literatures in English. Among her significant monographic studies and collections of essays: *The Art of Partnership. Essays on Literature, Culture, Language and Education Towards a Cooperative Paradigm* (Udine: Forum, 2003), *The One Life: Coleridge and Hinduism* (Jaipur: Rawat 2005), *The Goddess Awakened. Partnership Studies in Literatures, Language and Education* (Udine: Forum, 2007) and *Partnership Id-Entities: Cultural and Literary Re-inscription/s of the Feminine* (Udine: Forum, 2010). For the ALL series, Riane Eisler's *The Chalice and the Blade* (Udine: Forum, 2011) and *Sacred Pleasure* (Udine, Forum 2012) were published in Italian, with a special prologue by Eisler (<http://www.forumeditrice.it/percorsi/lingua-e-letteratura/all/?text=all-english>). At the moment she is working on a volume on the figure of the Goddess in the literatures in English, both within the 'canon' and indigenous 'minorities'