Overview of
"Transformation of Australian Studies in a Globalising Age"
26-27 July 2014
At Sophia University, Tokyo Japan

---The First International Conference of
The Australian Studies Association of Japan---
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The purpose of this conference is to exchange perspectives, observations and ideas about Australian studies among scholars from a broad range of academic disciplines such as history, literature, cultural and media studies, politics and law from Australia and Japan as well as other countries, and then to conduct a comparative and inter-disciplinary analysis of the issues surrounding Australian studies in the globalising world.

The theme of this symposium is "Transformation of Australian Studies in a Globalizing Age" and the key concepts are "globalisation," "multiculturalism," and "transformation" in the context of postmodernism and postcolonialism. Through multicultural policies and the everyday reality of multiculturalism in Australia, a radical transformation of Australian society has occurred corresponding to continuing globalisation. In this conference, we intend to look at these key concepts from diverse viewpoints, not just from the conventional dual perspectives between Japan and Australia, or China and Australia, Canada and Australia and so on. On this occasion, we would like to share research by Japanese, Australian and other international scholars and teams in the field of Australian Studies, especially from a Postcolonial and Cultural Studies perspective. We would also like to encourage topic-related contributions from outside these confining parameters so as to cater for academic plurality. We thus consider the issues of "globalisation" and "multiculturalism" and analyze and discuss them from multiple viewpoints and deepen our understanding of these concepts in order to have a more comprehensive view of the future.

The Australian Studies Association of Japan (ASAJ) was established in 1989 and will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2014. The major purposes of establishing the association were to promote Australian studies in Japan, nurture Japanese scholars who were very enthusiastic about Australian studies, and provide them with opportunities to present their research results. During the 1980s and 1990s, the number of scholars who specialized in Australian Studies was quite limited and most of them were not always pure Australian studies specialists. The sessions held at the yearly...
conference, therefore, were not fully satisfactory in terms of the variety of disciplines as well as the number of research papers. However, in the last 10 years, the association has drastically changed along with the development of Australian multicultural society. Australia started to attract a great deal of attention from Japanese scholars as well as worldwide academics, a number of Japanese students started to obtain degrees from Australian universities, and more Australian studies research than before, covering the fields of economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, and literary/cultural studies, began to be published.

We believe that the 25th anniversary is a good opportunity to hold an international conference in order to share our achievements with Japanese as well as overseas academics. The ASAJ International Conference in 2014 will surely be a step to a new phase in Australian studies. Lastly, we would like to express our deep gratitude to the Australian Embassy Tokyo, the Australia Japan Foundation, Sophia University, and the Resona Foundation for Asia and Oceania for their moral and financial support.