A New Wave of Media in a Multicultural Society
Sophia Symposium

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The Australian Studies Association of Japan (ASAJ) held two symposia in the past. The first was "Globalisation and Media – Australia and Asia" held at Sophia University in Tokyo in May 2010 and the second, “Literature, History, Film and Media Studies in the Globalising Age,” was held at Doshisha University in Kyoto in September 2012.

For the 2010 Symposium, we invited two Australian scholars, Prof. Rodney Tiffin (the University of Sydney) and Prof. Gay Hawkins (the University New South Wales/University of Tokyo). They discussed Australian politics and journalistic issues through the media represented by SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) which forms a link in the chain of Australian multiculturalism. We also invited a Japanese scholar, Prof. Shiramizu (Komazawa University) who gave a lecture on ethnic media in Japan.

For the 2012 Symposium, we invited four panelists, Prof. Kate Darian-Smith from the University of Melbourne (Australia), Prof. Shiao-Ying Shen from the National University of Taiwan (Taiwan), Prof. Guang-Lin Wang from the Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade (China), and Prof. Yeon Lee from Sun Moon University (Korea). Prof. Darian-Smith discussed Australian television from a historical perspective, Prof. Shen gave a paper on Antipodean women storytellers from Australian movies, Prof. Wang talked on translating fragments in Shanghai Dancing by Brian Castro, and Prof. Lee and Prof. Suzuki from Sophia University (Japan) both discussed media in the multicultural societies of Korea and Japan. We had a commentator, Prof. Tsumo Kanayama, from Ritsumeikan University (Japan). This ASAJ symposium was coordinated by Prof. Yasue Arimitsu from Doshisha University (Japan). We thus had a productive discussion covering culture, history and mass-media and could exchange a variety of ideas about multicultural and globalising societies in various areas of Asia.

Based on these discussions, we chose the theme: “A New Wave of Media in a Multicultural Society” for the 2014 Sophia Symposium. This theme aims at theorising social influences of the transformation of mass media from the conventional to the new digital communication. We focus on how the use of new media such as SNS, Facebook, and twitter has been changing the traditional views of history, culture, and society and particularly focus on a comparative study of Australia and Japan.

Theme Examples:
- historical accounts of the development of lifestyle media in society
- transnational media and the emergence of Australian/Japanese culture

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Transformation of Australian Studies in a Globalising Age

- new identities in Australian/Japanese cultures
- new technology or online activities: SNS, Facebook and twitter, and their impact on society
- media literacy/education in the digital age
- crisis reporting

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