

**REPORT ON THE 6TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
ON AUSTRALIAN STUDIES  
BEIJING, 25-29 OCTOBER 1998**

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The 6th International Conference on Australian Studies was held in Beijing from 25 to 29 October 1998. Sponsored by Peking University's recently established Australian Studies Centre and the Australia-China Council, the conference was held at the Da Yuan Guest House located in the hutongs not far from the West Gate of Peking University. The Da Yuan Guest House built, in 1912 comprises a walled complex of buildings in the style of a traditional Chinese garden with a lake, a long corridor to an island pavilion and a carved stone monument inscribed with the Emperor Qianlong's calligraphy. It was a beautiful and relaxing venue for the conference.

This conference was one of many conferences that were hosted by Peking University during 1998 in honour of the centenary of the University. It was hosted by the Australian Studies Centre which was established in 1996 and is thus a relatively new centre. The conference also marked the 10th anniversary of the establishment of the Australian Studies Association in China. The conference was well attended by both overseas and Chinese delegates with a large Australian delegation of invited speakers with a wide range of backgrounds in Australian Studies including several board members from the Australia-China Council. All delegates had a printed program that included abstracts in English and Chinese. It was clear from the wide ranging program those involved in Australian Studies in China had reason to celebrate the growth and development of their field throughout the country. Both in terms of the number of centres and the breadth of coverage in Australian Studies, with the support of the Australia-China Council interest throughout China has mushroomed since the establishment of the Australian Studies Association there ten years ago.

The program was structured round a central theme of Sino-Australian cooperation and encompassed focussed sessions on Trade and Economy, Education, Literature and Culture and Politics as well as morning plenaries which discussed issues such as globalisation, Australia's foreign policy and Strategic Studies. The Opening ceremony was chaired by Professor Hu Zhuanglin, from Peking University, a personality well known in the field of Australian Studies and addressed by dignitaries from both China and Australia. These were the Vice-Chancellor of Peking University, Professor He Fangchuan, the Vice-Head and Deputy-Director General of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, Professor Zhang Xiuqin, Mr Stuart Simson, Chairman of the Board of the Australia-China Council, Mr Richard Smith, Australian Ambassador to China and Professor Hu Wenzhong, Chairman of the China Australian Studies Association.

As always with international conferences hosted in China, the hospitality was generous and concern for overseas delegates attentive. The program also covered a variety of social activities including the conference banquet, visits to a teahouse, the Summer Palace and a tour of Peking University.

The papers are scheduled to be published later this year.

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