Klagenfurt EASA Conference promises to be a big Event.

The organizer´s call for papers has had an excellent response from all over the world: with 75 individual presentations the Klagenfurt conference will break all previous records. Is this really surprising? On the one hand it is. In the early 90s a book with the optimistic title 'The death of Nationalism in Australia' was published, and independently, an eminent Australian scholar opined that no more juice could possible be squeezed from this particular lemon. But facts speak louder than academic pronoucements and what they indicate is the stubborn relevance of the question. The last Australian government chose to place unusual emphasis on cultural policy, and the present one has declared that it will revise these policies. The mottos however have, in both cases, been 'Distinctively Australian' and the discussion has consistently been on "The future of Australia´s cultural development." While the issue of the Republic continues to loom, no change on Australia´s fascination with itself can be expected.

The keynote address will be given by Graeme Turner (U of Queensland, author of _Making It National_, 1994, and _National Fictions_, 1986 and 1993). He will reconsider the uses of Nationalism in contemporary Australia. Kay Schaffer´s paper (Kay teaches at the University of Adelaide) "'Dances With Wolves' or 'Strictly Ballroom': How Feminisms Negotiate With Australia´s Nationalist Histories and Mythologies" is subtitled "A Pas De Deux about Questions of Identity and Difference", and will be the first in a series of feminist discourses on Nationalism. Livio Dobrez, whose work at ANU on questions of post-modern approaches to issues of nation and nationalism is of great interest to us, will be third plenarist. His paper is titled "Australian Discourses of Contact, Appropriation, Nationalism, Consciousness and postmodernity."

European and American contributors will, understandably, concentrate on questions of a subtext of nationalism in the works of individual Australian

authors. A few examples: Yonka Krasteva (U of Veliko Turnovo, Bulgaria) will discuss Janette Turner Hospital; Igor Maver (U of Ljubljana, Slovenia) contemporary Australian poets; Luisa Percopo (U. of Cagliari, Italy) and Robert Ross (Edward Clark Centre for OZ Studies, Texas) will both explore the "anti-nationalist" fiction of Thea Astley; Tania Peitzker (Berlin) will scrutinze Dymphne Cusack; and Yasue Arimitsu (Doshisha University, Kyoto) will do the same for Brian Castro.

Australian contributors will address a wide range of issues. These range from the Sydney Olympics ('The sale of the Millennium', Enno Hermann) to the 'Macdonaldization of Australia' (Paul Gillen), from representations of Australia's Red Centre (Michael Cathcart) to new fewer than four papers on Australia´s most startling MP Pauline Hanson. Well represented will be issues of the media and popular culture (10 papers); Aboriginality (8 papers); Australian History (7); Autobiography (3); Multiculturalism (3); Racism (4); Regionalism; Contemporary Theory; and the Re-Mythologization of Australia. If I may single out one paper at this point (in brashly post-modern fashion, declaring my own interests) it is Cassandra Pybus´ 'James McAuley and Australian Colonial Policy in Papua and New Guinea.'

A conference is not just an academic event, but also a social one. There will be many Australian friends of Europe in Klagenfurt whom to meet again will be a personal pleasure. Among them are John Barnes, Bruce Bennett, Carl Bridge, Robin Gerster, Kerryn Goldworthy, Anthony Hassall, Laurie Hergenhan, Sylvia Lawson, Albert Moran, Wenche Ommundsen, Ken Stewart, Andrew Taylor, Helen Thomson, and many more.

Because both DEETYA and the Australia Council have given generous financial support to this conference, we will also have a WORDFEST involving quite a number of writers (Marion Halligan and Venero Armanno) and poets (Dian Fahey, John Kinsella, Mark O'Connor, and Beate Josephi.)

If you are interested in participating, please direct your enquiries either to Aurora Alonso (conference GM, mail: aurora.alonso@uni-klu.ac.at) or directly to the convenor Adi Wimmer (Institut fuer Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universitaet Klagenfurt, A-9020 Klagenfurt; Mail: adi.wimmer@uni-klu.ac.at)