

Australian Patterns: Cultural and Historical Influences in Australia's International Orientations

Stephen Alomes

"That great America on the other side of the Sphere." Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, 1851

"Out of the Pacific comes for us life or death. For America and Australia the Pacific holds vital interests." Prime Minister W. M. "Billy" Hughes, 1921

In the last months of the 20th century the world watched as the world power of the contemporary era, the United States of America, struggled to make its way out of the mangrove swamps of Florida electoral systems. Finally, when it had concluded that George W. Bush, the millionaire son of a millionaire president, would be the 43rd President of the United States, new questions arose for Australia and Japan. For two political leaders facing an uncertain future, Australian Prime Minister John Howard and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, the prospect of a visit to Washington to meet with the new president was high on their agendas. At a time when many countries have "special relationships" with the United States perhaps a visit to the imperial court of the global era, photographic opportunities with President Bush at the White House, might enhance their standing with their own electorates.¹⁾ While they also had higher national concerns, including keeping the US in the Asia/Pacific region, like all politicians they placed a high priority on their own political futures.

Ritual Visits

In Australian history, the visit to the courts of power and significance overseas has been a recurring motif in political life. From the era of the steamship onwards, colonial politicians made their way to London. After the Federation of the six colonies to form the Australian nation in 1901, visits to London for the Imperial Conference, and later for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers conferences became frequent. Additionally, these gatherings were usually held in London in summer, preferable to winter back home. At the height of the Season, this allowed the Australian party to attend Wimbledon tennis and Ascot; Australian Prime Ministers could sometimes watch Test cricket matches at Lords or the Oval between the old foes, imperial Britain and formerly colonial Australia. In the new era of the American alliance and the 707 jet, the glitter of Washington beckoned the leaders of America's most loyal ally. Coverage

¹⁾ After his inauguration, Bush rang Mori, according to Japanese reports, e.g. *Japan Times*, January 25 2001. See also: "Parade of nations gravitates to Washington," *Mainichi Daily News*, March 15 2001.

in the American media was limited, except when the Australian Prime Minister's wife Sonia McMahon wore a split-sided evening dress to a White House dinner.

A second motif also defines the world's most isolated, most international and, arguably most modern, country, Australia in relationship to great powers overseas. Australians would welcome the great from overseas.²⁾ The welcomes included royal tours, including that of the first reigning monarch, the young Queen Elizabeth in 1954. In different spheres Australians welcomed the US Navy as the Great White Fleet in 1908, General MacArthur in 1942, the actors Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh in 1948, the Beatles in 1964 and Bill and Hillary Clinton in the 1990s. Overseas stars have until recently been indispensable currency of high value at the major awards nights of Australian film, television and music.

Arguably, such orientations towards overseas centres of power are more important than the frontier in Australian history. These cultural patterns in Australia's international orientations also changed over time. From the 1960s when Prime Minister Harold Holt was at home in shirt sleeves in Asia as in a dinner suit in Washington, Australian prime ministers and foreign ministers have travelled to Asia, as well as to the great capitals of Europe and the USA. Nor would welcomes always be unqualified. In two dramatic incidents, 98 years apart, tensions showed. The Fenian Irish tried to assassinate the Duke of Edinburgh in 1868. Shouting demonstrators and a can of green paint, as well as loyal followers, welcomed the first ever serving American President to visit Australia, Lyndon Baines Johnson on his progression through Sydney in 1966. Occasionally, Australians welcomed their own home in dramatic ways such as the returning diva of grand opera, Dame Nellie Melba in the 1920s. Or troops returning from the foreign wars in which Australia habitually participated. Or Aboriginal boxer Lionel Rose, after his world title fight victory over Fighting Harada in Tokyo in 1968. The triumphal return has acquired a new dimension in the last two decades. World-beating Australian sportsmen and women, from the first ever conquerors of the US in yachting's America's Cup in 1983 to the world championship cricket, rugby union, women's hockey and netball and Davis Cup teams, have added a new triumphalism. "Returning" from even closer to home, the Australian Olympic team received its victory parade in October 2000.

These two patterns, the visit to the courts of importance overseas and the welcome to the famous from overseas, indicate an important characteristic of Australian history. Unlike the USA which was settled and invaded by Europeans in the 17th century, the Australian colonies were originated by the British the original convict colony at Botany Bay in 1788. Australia then evolved in the era of the world system of imperialism and industrialisation, perhaps the first important phase of the process we now call globalization. Convicts, their guards and later free settlers claimed no manifest destiny or religious vision in their settlement. While the pilgrims on the *Mayflower* gave thanks to God for their safe arrival, the Australian settlers had a party. Given both these general differences, Australia has always stood in a closer relation-

²⁾ S. Alomes, "Ceremonial Visions of Australia," in Stephen Alomes and Bob Bessant, eds, *Visions of Australia: the 1890s, 1940s and 1970s*, La Trobe University Press, Melbourne, 1987.

ship to its British and European inheritance than the US.

A Settler Colony Fears Invasion

The first determinant of Australian orientations towards the world was suggested only a week after the First Fleet arrived in Botany Bay on January 26 1788 when the French ships of La Perouse appeared in Botany Bay. That great navigator, who came in search of knowledge, not land, would sadly disappear, never to be seen again; however, by the early 1800s the Napoleonic Wars meant that Britain settled Van Diemen's Land, later Tasmania, in 1804 to prevent French intrusion into their new southern sphere. Two ships, one carrying my forbears, arrived on the Derwent River in February 1804, establishing Hobart.

Invasion fear would be the major theme of Australian foreign policy for the next 168 years, until the Australian withdrawal from Vietnam War after the election of the Whitlam Labor government in 1972. Invasion fear led to the second characteristic, the reliance on a great power as a protector, first the British Empire and the Royal Navy, until December 1941, and then the United States. The third related aspect was the assumption that the loyalty to the great power had to be maintained through payments on a defence insurance policy. As a result Australian troops participated in the wars of the Great Power, from the Sudan in 1885, the response to the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 and in the South African War of 1899-1902, through the two world wars, to Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War of 1991. The fourth characteristic of Australian culture which would influence Australia's interaction with the world, as recently as the Australian leadership of the first Interfet forces in independent East Timor, is a romantic conception of war as part of the Australian experience. The fifth characteristic, which derived from the time, place and character of Australian settlement, in the eras of imperial expansion and then of Social Darwinism and the new imperialism, was a difficulty in coming to terms with the land. Feeling unsettled in the land for the first century after 1788 and unable to come to terms with its indigenous people, the Aborigines whose land they had invaded, Australians had their invasion fears reinforced. As a result, in a vicious circle, they looked away — they looked more to Europe and less to their region which was, until decolonization, dominated by European foes and friends of Britain.

Invasion fear was first based on the size of the continent, (today the 6th largest country on the earth) and the small population to defend it: from 859 settlers in 1788 to 3 million in 1891, just over 5 million in 1921, 7 million in 1945, and 10 million in 1961. Today, the population is nearly 20 million. Fear somehow reduced knowledge of distance, which made invasion difficult. Beijing is closer to London than to Sydney while Osaka is 6433 kilometres by sea from Brisbane, Guangzhou 5966 kilometres and Jakarta 4888. Later, hope and fear would be related to the political and the economic. The radical ideal was of a southern land free of northern wars and northern vices and class divisions and the Federationist ideal was of "A Nation for a Continent," so different to the patchwork quilt of Europe regularly torn to shreds by endless wars. The economic included the false idea that Australia, if only the Inland Sea could be found, could be a rich land easily supporting 150 million people — as a result it must appeal to

the overcrowded nations of Asia. The crucial point, however, given the persisting errors of popular imagery in some newspapers and textbooks in different Asian countries, is that the invasion fear firstly concerned Europeans. France was feared in the 1800s, Russia during the Crimean War 1850s, and France and Germany in the 1880s. Both had acquired colonies in the South West Pacific. The incursion of the French into the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu), New Caledonia and Polynesia and, even more, the German claim on part of New Guinea on Australia's northern doorstep, encouraged the formulation of an Australian Monroe Doctrine regarding the South Pacific.

Social Darwinism and the inability of Australians to adjust to their land would deepen the dimensions of invasion fear. The early settlers found "a land of contrarities," of paradoxes, of black rather than white swans, of strange hopping marsupials such as the kangaroo and the wallaby, strange birds and flowers which at first seemed songless and scentless. They also found a dry, unforgiving land in which drought was normal, except around the south eastern and south western coasts. Explorers gave landmarks names like "Mt Disappointment." While some free settlers and emancipated ex-convicts found a kind of freedom and openness in the "Bush," the term Australians use for the country, the dream of English-style small farms was only realised in small areas. A land more suited to sheep and cattle grazing than agriculture and the cunning of large landholders who amalgamated lands prevented this romantic Bush dream being achieved. Holding 18th century views of the Aborigines, occasionally romanticised as noble savages, but normally dismissed in economic terms for not having built great cities or farms, the settlers failed to come to terms with the land or its original inhabitants. This made Australians, particularly the elites, look all the more towards Britain and Europe. In these respects the Australian colonies had a settler colony experience, involving dependence as well as dominance. This colonial situation was of great significance, even if less dramatic than that of the invaded subject colonials, the Aborigines, who were violently dispossessed from their lands and from the culture which went with the land.

An Imperial Division of Labour and Industry for Settler Colonies and Federated Nation

An imperial division of labour and industry would reinforce that colonial experience, even across a distance of over 30,000 kilometres by steamship. Australia would ship wool, wheat, fruit and dairy products to Britain in increasing amounts from the 1880s. The expansion of British commercial institutions, including publishing, would see the loss of talent to the imperial centre in many fields. In a parallel process came the import of British imperial or colonial products, from books for the empire market to British proconsuls in Australian institutions, including the universities, private schools, some professions and the Church of England. In the era of Dominion Culture, as I have termed it, when the British Empire was closing in upon itself, from the early 1900s to the Ottawa Agreement of 1932 and after, Australia became more part of Britain than ever. British imperial propaganda, the Social Darwinist idea of the same blood, and the more real and bloody link formed by sacrifice in wars, made Australia less independent, and more British, in the decades after Federation.

The Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act stated that “the Commonwealth shall be taken to be a self-governing colony.” Britain passed the Statute of Westminster in 1931, giving greater autonomy to the “Dominions.” The conservative Australian government of the 1930s did not ratify it. Australia would not ratify it until the Labor Curtin government in the dark days of 1942. In the early 20th century the pledge or salute to king, country and flag taken in schools, the loyal toast at dinners, and the romance of empire as expressed in Empire Day from 1905 rooted Australian citizenship in loyalty, in loyalty to the Crown. In this sense the form of belief socialised by school Civics courses and by public ceremonies, including Anzac Day to remember the war dead, was that sovereignty was based on this relationship rather than being vested in the people. Although there were dissidents, some Labor politicians, some Irish Australians strongly opposed to Britain’s role in Ireland and more general Celtic and liberal traditions, Australians learned to think that they were British in this era from 1900 to 1941 or even into the 1950s.

Social Darwinism: Race, Nation and Empire

Why this mixture of blind loyalty and political indifference? For two reasons. First, arguably like many developed countries in the later years after World War Two, Australia had acquired a “Wirtschaft society” in which economic matters and private standard of living were more important than matters of national and international reason. A second reason can be found in a different ideology. Social Darwinism and new forms of invasion fear underlay this perception as well. In the 19th century Australia had a predominantly British and Irish population, along with smaller minorities, Aboriginal Australians, Germans, Chinese and other Europeans and North Americans, many of whom had arrived during the 1850s gold rushes. Racism was the product of self-interest: the settlers dispossessed the indigenous Australians from their useful land; self-interest and fear motivated the gold diggers who attacked Chinese miners at Lambing Flat in New South Wales in 1860 and 1861. In only one respect, did racial restrictions on immigration, which tightened further in the 1880s, have any validity — the legitimate opposition of unionists to employers bringing in cheap, often indentured, labour. Australia was ‘the workingman’s paradise’ in the 19th century, with one of the highest standards of living on the planet, partly because labour shortages kept wages high, except during the 1890s depression.

Social Darwinism, however, was the principal ideological determinant of racism in the era leading up to the White Australia policy, known officially however as the “Immigration Restriction Act” of 1901. Social Darwinian fears of threatening nations and races began by focusing on the threat of other European powers, first France and Germany from the 1880s, before moving to the rising nations of the East, China and Japan. The idea of the unity, and the historic heritage and racial purity, of the British race would be fanned by the fires of new imperialism. Its romantic and rhetorical qualities appealed and it was disseminated in every possible way, from propagandistic socialisation in schools and in public ceremonial to contemporary popular culture, in song and story and on the stage. The trumpeters of the new imperialism

were not worried that their music sheets were based on a flawed analysis of social reality. They put aside the fact that the purity of the race was an absurdity, for it was comprised of Angles, Saxons, Picts, Jutes, different varieties of Celts, and Normans and had later received smaller infusions from Europe of Italians, French, Germans and Jews. In inter-war Australia the myth of 98% British was achieved by ignoring parentage. The Norwegian father of the great Australian writer Henry Lawson would be forgotten, as would any other varied heritage. In a different cultural sphere in Japan, the Yomiuri Giants did a similar thing when they claimed a “pure-blooded period” of 13 pennants without any gaijin in the 1960s, ignoring Sadaharu Oh’s Chinese father and Taiwanese passport.³⁾ The idea that Darwinian principles of biological evolution regarding plant and animal species over millions of years could be applied to nations, which were artificially identified with race and blood, leading to a fight and the “survival of the fittest” was a rhetorical and propagandist ideal. It reflected the tendencies and tensions of the West in the late 19th century — the competition between European empires (and from the 1890s the American empire) in the scramble for colonies, the heightening fears of war in Europe and the angst of elites and the middle classes regarding the rising forces of popular democracy and working class militancy.⁴⁾ The underlying Social Darwinist idea, that racial strength and virility could be assessed by the birth-rate, also derived from these fantasies, ones which seem to have disappeared in the low-birth rate modern world of today.

War, Nation and Imperial Loyalty

The ‘crimson thread of kinship’, the rhetorical blood tie between mother country and colonies, would acquire a kind of reality in the first two decades of the 20th century. It would be created through sacrifice, through the shedding of the blood of Australian troops in the cause of empire, first in the South African War of 1899-1902 and then in the Great War in which Australia participated from April 1915. The baptism of fire of the Australians and New Zealanders, when the volunteer soldiers’ bravery was considerable, occurred in the military disaster known as Gallipoli. This attempted landing in the Dardanelles peninsula, when British and French forces fought against Turkey, led to the creation of ANZAC Day on April 25, historically the national day in Australia.⁵⁾ This was seen as the birth of the nation as Australia had now participated on the world stage. A combination of imperial tradition, egalitarian and democratic sentiment and the social bonds amongst the ex-servicemen engendered by the war

³⁾ Robert Whiting, *You Gotta Have Wa*, Vintage, New York, 1989, p. 162.

⁴⁾ In a theme which appealed to Australian, as well as American and British, political scientists and Italian elite theorists, fears of mass democracy and the tribal emotions of the lower orders, sometimes also seen as eugenically inferior, were emerging. In the 1930s such fears focused on popular misconceptions of other countries as a cause of war.

⁵⁾ Recently Gallipoli has become a site for a kind of pilgrimage of young travelling Australians interested in their mythic past as well as in our current Turkish connections through immigration. “Never Forget: Australians flock to Turkish battlefield,” *Asahi Evening News*, February 10 2001, reported on this contemporary fusion of tourism and pilgrimage.

experience would locate war at the centre of national symbolism and national identity. Recently, this was reconfirmed in a different way when the commander of the Australian Interfet peacekeeping troops in East Timor, General Peter Cosgrove, was made Australian of the Year by the Australia Day Council.

Australians would romanticize war because of two contrasting facts. World War I had a mass impact as Australia lost 60,000 dead and had 226,000 wounded from a population of 5 million. Later wars, however, had a lesser impact on a country which has only once been invaded, in 1788. The former experience led Prime Minister Billy Hughes to reply in vociferous way when President Woodrow Wilson asked at the Versailles Peace conference what right a nation of 5 million had to influence policy for a world of 1200 million, including control of the mandated former German territories to its north and the Japanese call for a declaration of racial equality. Hughes is reported to have answered "I speak for 60,000 dead. How many do you speak for Mr President?"⁶⁾

Australian war tradition is, like most national myths, simplistic. As the television stations report, in each country, "Our Olympics," national memory recalls only "Our War." Like contemporary Olympics jingoism, the narrative tells the story of 'our' wartime experience and has little to say about other combatants, even on the same side. The ANZAC story rarely refers to the British Indian, French African or French troops and usually refers to the British only in terms of the dangerous incompetence of their officers. Until recently, the significance of the Dardanelles campaign in Kemal Ataturk's building of the modern Turkish state was also unknown. Today, in Australia, the "NZ" part of ANZAC is often passed over, even as New Zealand is becoming increasingly integrated into Australian economic, social and cultural life. However, the ANZAC fusion of a democratic and romantic myth of the Australian soldier with the official myth of imperial loyalty would acquire importance in a country which had hitherto mainly celebrated colonial or state occasions or the new imperial festivals, such as Empire Day.⁷⁾ The commemorative day which would become Australia Day, January 26, always had problems, particularly for those who believed in a genetic or racial conception of national character and development. A country pioneered by convicts in the first decades after 1788 made the First Fleet hardly something to celebrate. Nor was independence, either of the colonies from the 1850s or Federation associated with the dramatic events of the birth of a nation. Britain readily gave independence in domestic affairs, not wishing to face a repeat of the American War of Independence.⁸⁾ Federation in 1901, similarly, was inspired by defence and by the end of customs duties between the colonies. Then, as now in celebrating its centenary,

⁶⁾ Despite the USA's brief participation in "the Great European War," as some called World War I, its total death toll was higher than Australia's.

⁷⁾ Empire Day was celebrated into the 1950s on May 24, by which time it had become "Cracker Night," a night for bonfires and fireworks rather than outdated patriotism. In the 1950s, Coral Sea Week reflected the new American influence; however, its appeal disappeared in the conflict over Australian participation in the Vietnam War.

⁸⁾ This followed the 1839 Durham report on the Canadian colonies.

besuited politicians and constitutional lawyers have had difficulty in capturing the public imagination. Even the important reality that Australia is one of the world's oldest and few continuing democracies, and pioneered the secret ballot and manhood and womanhood suffrage, in the 1850s and 1890s respectively, is an abstraction rather than something which lends itself to myth or legend. Nor is Australia Day on January 26, a mid-summer holiday period event which celebrates the arrival of the first convict fleet universally appealing as a national day. As the Aboriginal Day of Mourning at the 150th anniversary of European settlement, on January 26th 1938, suggested, it is difficult to celebrate a day of settlement which was also Invasion Day.⁹ Perhaps, when the republic is achieved, a new national day will replace days remembering war and invasion.

The romantic conception of a nation born through war would be made possible for four reasons, as well as the Anzac Legend and the human cost of World War One: (1) Australia got off lightly in later wars, both World War Two and colonial frontier wars, (2) the volunteer military tradition and the historic Australian rejection of mass conscription, except for service in the South West Pacific from 1943 (3) the democratic conception of the army, that officers could rise from the ranks as well as from elite training schools, and above all, (4) that Australia would never again face war on its soil, except for the Japanese air raids on Broome, Darwin and Townsville. The large guns which characterised Australia's port cities were not needed and the only naval threat, Japanese midget submarines in Sydney Harbour, was quickly dealt with. Australia lost only about 36,000 service personnel in World War Two, a number similar to the death toll of the fire-bombing of Dresden. This was also much less than the deaths from the many other acts of modern barbarism and an overall death toll of around 60 million during this war, for which nearly all participant nations were responsible. More Australians died in traffic accidents in the 20th century than in war, posing other questions about that "good idea" called "modern civilisation," if I might appropriate Mahatma Gandhi.

The romantic Australian myth of the Digger, the soldier and democrat, would have particular appeal in 1999-2000. In those years, Australia had abandoned two decades of putting Indonesian stability and Timor Gap oil ahead of human rights and ideas of self-determination in East Timor to support East Timorese independence. The role of Australian military peacekeepers as the leaders of Interfet would be celebrated with massive popular enthusiasm

⁹ The 150th anniversary of Australian settlement in 1938 demonstrated all these uncertainties. Its 'March to Nationhood' pageant and other major celebrations left out both the convicts and World War One. Not only was another war threatening but the conflict over two defeated referendums on conscription had been bitter and divisive, as had been British policy in Ireland. Also, as happened again with January 1 2001 Federation Day celebrations in Sydney, many people in the other states saw 1938 as just a Sydney or New South Wales thing.

¹⁰ One bizarre suggestion, aiding the popularity of neither Australia nor the USA in Indonesia, was that Australia should be a "deputy sheriff," acting on America's behalf in the Indonesian archipelago, an idea publicly countenanced by the foreign policy amateur, Prime Minister John Howard and reiterated in February 2001 by new US Secretary of State, Colin Powell. Robyn Lim, "US needs allies, not deputy sheriffs," *Japan Times*, February 12 2001.

in Australia, reflecting both traditional nationalism and, ideally, a new approach to questions of justice for a small society near Australia.¹⁰⁾

Loyalty to the Great Power — Britain and America

The foreign policy results of the British blood tie, invasion fear and the imperial aspect of the ANZAC tradition was in one view blind loyalty. In 1937 several critics in the new *Austral-Asiatic Bulletin* warned of the gathering clouds of war in the Pacific as well as in Europe. However, others, traditionalists in the unofficial elites who contributed to foreign policy debate, believed that Australia should simply follow the wise counsel of the Foreign Office in Westminster.¹¹⁾ Australia did not have a separate External Affairs Department until 1935 and its first overseas missions, aside from the High Commission and the state Agents General in London were only established in Washington in 1939, Tokyo in 1940 and Chungking in 1941.

Australia would, however, look to America even before Prime Minister John Curtin's call to America in December 1941 after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, and the sinking of the British battleships near Burma. Prime Minister Alfred Deakin had invited the US Navy visit of 1908, the "Great White Fleet," at a time of "racially-based" fears of invasion (whether Japan or Germany) while Prime Minister Billy Hughes went to the Versailles Peace conference via Washington. Similarly, American economic and cultural influences had a long history, as suggested by the choice of American nomenclature for the two houses of the Australian parliament, even under a Westminster system.¹²⁾

The question of Australian alliances with the two great powers, Britain and the USA, is complex. In one view a country benefits if it is allied with the great economic and military power of the day as Australia has been in the 19th and 20th centuries. In a different view, a client state is taken for granted and the interests of the Rome of the day will always outweigh those of its provinces, particularly the less difficult ones. In a third view, Australia has been an active ally, seeking to maximize the benefits of alliance with degrees of independence and as a progenitor of major treaties including the first Australian pact without Britain, the ANZUS defence pact of 1951 and the APEC treaty of 1989.¹³⁾ From this perspective, more beloved of foreign affairs and diplomatic policy specialists than of radical nationalists, Australian ministers

¹¹⁾ The *Austral-Asiatic Bulletin* (nos 1, 2, 1937) was conscious that its arguments for an Australian policy and a reorientation towards the region 'would have been branded disloyal and refused a hearing five years ago'.

¹²⁾ The American connection has been continuing, both warm and difficult, as documented by Harper, Churchward, Bell and Bell and Dunn. Americans founded several great Australian institutions: the coach company Cobb and Co (which ran coaches from Tokyo to Yokohama in the 1870s), Foster's beer and the J C Williamson theatre business. At the same time the British connection also continued in the 1950s, as Britain had substantial forces "east of Suez."

¹³⁾ Contemporary defence and economic treaty relations are replete with ironies. The American bases in Okinawa, several exactly where the Marines landed in 1945, defend Japan against attack. Australia may have been a "stalking horse," acting on behalf of Japan, or Australia and Japan may have played this role, acting on behalf of the USA in establishing APEC according to some interpretations.

and diplomats have advanced Australia's interests within the negotiating and diplomatic frameworks of alliances, rather than merely making bellicose gestures of independence. Thus, in cultural terms we might even note two styles of Australian foreign minister, reflecting the polarities of these debates. In style and manner at least one tradition resembles that of the bushranger, the wild colonial boy such as Ned Kelly while the other is that of the imperial proconsul, happier in pinstripe suits than in khakis and a broad-brimmed hat. From different political perspectives a number of Australian leaders and foreign ministers have been seen in either role. These personifications of the two contrary roles and orientations have usually cast Labor ministers, particularly H. V. Evatt as the bushrangers, and conservatives including Menzies and McMahon in the pinstripes or dinner suit of the imperial proconsul. In reality, both groups generally accepted the traditional orientation to the great power as Australia's basic interest, while most conservatives sought to influence and modify alliances. From the Liberal Harold Holt to Labor's Bob Hawke, the imperial proconsuls of both sides looked to America, not Britain as the great power. Similarly, both parties share the contemporary reorientation towards Asia.

More disturbing for the advocates of the view that Australian foreign policy has been characterised by "independence and alliance" have been the views of retired diplomats, such as Alan Renouf, former head of the department, in his book "The Frightened Country" or Malcolm Booker in his work "The Last Domino." Similarly, the historian of Australian international relations, W. J. Hudson has demonstrated the failings of "blind loyalty" when Menzies joined the old imperial camp, while trying to act as an honest broker between Britain and Egypt in the Suez Canal crisis of 1956.¹⁴ Cliches of loyal support from "tune in with Britain" (a variation on a 1930s radio slogan), and "All the Way with LBJ" (Holt), "We'll go a waltzing with you" (Gorton) and "where you go we go" (McMahon) in the 1960s suggested limp dependence, not stout independence. Harold Holt's 1966 enthusiasm over the Vietnam commitment, that Australia would "get protection in the South Pacific for a very small insurance premium" showed a lack of understanding of both insurance payouts and strategic decisions.¹⁵

Discovering Asia — in War, Cold War and Peace

In the 1950s and 1960s, memories of the Pacific War and the Cold War's Asian aspect simultaneously enhanced and delayed Australia's adjustment to a changing Pacific and a new era.

¹⁴ Hudson sees this as the last case of blind loyalty to the former "Mother Country." W. J. Hudson, "The Suez Crisis," pp. 114-129 in Carl Bridge, ed, *Munich to Vietnam: Australia's Relations with Britain and the United States since the 1930s*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1991. Menzies was a creature of an earlier world, of empire, tea and cricket. His loyal provincialism even extended in the 1960s to the idea of calling the new Australian currency a "royal," an idea which was also laughed out of court. However, in trade and security his government embraced Asian engagement and American relations, even if he himself felt uncomfortable with the changing world of post-war decolonization and internationalisation.

¹⁵ S. Alomes, *A Nation at Last?*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde NSW, 1988, p. 202 ; David Day, *Claiming a Continent*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde NSW, 1996, p. 411.

They encouraged engagement with the region. For example, Australia was one of the architects of the creation of the 1950 Colombo Plan for educating students from South East Asia. However, Australia still defined the region in terms of the old coupling of fear and the role of the great Western power. While Australia was selling wool and wheat to China, which it did not diplomatically recognise, and had signed the major trade treaty with Japan in 1957, the old invasion fears were around wearing new colours. The Yellow Peril had also become the Red Peril, expressed in Cold War fear of Communist China. Despite some Christians, liberals and Leftists who stressed the importance of 'living with Asia', abandoning White Australia and building on Australia's role in support of Indonesian independence against the Dutch in the 1940s, Menzies and others clung to an older order, centered on the great power alliance. Recognising that foreign policy often exists more for domestic purposes, the Menzies government won numerous 'fear' elections from 1949 to 1969, even though the Communist Party in Australia was politically weak.¹⁶⁾ As small defence budgets suggested, and later defence analyses showed, Australia had little reason to fear any invasion.¹⁷⁾ However, the Korean War and the fear of World War III resulting, the 1950s Malayan emergency, the 1960s Konfrontasi between Indonesia and Malaysia and the Vietnam War kept the warning bells regarding invasion at the centre of Liberal-Country Party coalition election campaigns. Aided by the long post-war economic boom the conservative government offered what some saw as stability and others saw as an ice age in Australian politics. Not that alliance came without costs at home as well. British nuclear tests in the 1950s damaged the health of service personnel and Aboriginal peoples and irradiated the land in parts of central Australia. American missile co-ordination and intelligence bases from the 1960s may have put Australia on the map in any future nuclear war.

Redefining Australia I: Sixties Dissent and Reforms

In the 1960s this conflict came to a head over the Vietnam War. Never was either public enthusiasm for America or popular dissent more dramatically demonstrated. At the same time as loyalists worshipped at the court of Washington, the can of green paint and the protests that met "LBJ's imperial procession through Sydney in 1966 suggested that not everyone paid homage to the American Caesar. While Australians have been socialised into American popular culture by the mass media, a pattern of dissent and uncertainty also characterises the relationship. In political terms, it is an "unequal" or "ambivalent" alliance, given American ignorance of Australia and competing "special relationships." As well as radical and peace movement caution about endless participation in "other people's wars" there is a popular disquiet about American hyperbole, the overwrought culture of the people referred to in Australian vernacular rhyming slang as "Septics," Septic Tanks rhyming with Yanks. But per-

¹⁶⁾ It only ever won one seat — in the Queensland parliament.

¹⁷⁾ Low defence budgets in peacetime were one of the benefits of relying on a great power.

¹⁸⁾ "Welcome to the 51st state" was the title of one piece by a persistent critic of Americanisation, the broadcaster and former advertising executive, Phillip Adams, *Australian*, 16-17 September 2000.

haps these doubts are weaker than the enthusiasm engendered by visits to Disneyland or today to Fox or Warner studios' Australian backlot theme parks.¹⁸⁾

In the Sixties a range of other conventional values and policies were challenged at the same time as demonstrators took to the streets to oppose the war and the American alliance: Australia's failings with regard to basic rights for Aborigines (a campaign led by Communists, Christians and students), the White Australia Policy (led by the same groups), restrictions on civil liberties and political and moral censorship. These Australian and international movements were also made possible by the end of Social Darwinism and of Western colonialism, the former including both the belief that the Aborigines were a dying race and race-based invasion fear.

Redefining Australia II: Nationalism, Multiculturalism, Economic Restructuring and an Asia/Pacific Regional Reorientation

The historian of immigration James Jupp notes the 1970s policies under the reforming Whitlam Labor government: the official declaration of a universal migration policy in 1973, meaning the end of the White Australia Policy on immigration and the Racial Discrimination Act of 1975. In both areas Australia is far ahead of many countries in the region. Jupp also notes that in practice most changes had occurred under the post-Menzies Liberal governments of the 1960s. Part of this reorientation was expressed in symbolic terms by Gough Whitlam, after taking office on December 5th 1972: recognition of China and withdrawal from Vietnam. The social and cultural changes were already occurring. Even as young Australians were still heading off to London many went instead to South East Asia, either as their goal or took the 'hippie trail' to the traditional destination on the other side of the world. Not all these changes have been understood in parts of Asia. Japanese textbooks until the 1990s and Thai newspapers¹⁹⁾ in the wake of the 1996 Pauline Hanson phenomenon did not seem to realise that the White Australia Policy has been dead and buried for a quarter of a century, or that the first Japanese immigrants of the modern era had gone to Australia in the late 1960s.

These shifts towards Asia and the US in Australia were also the product of transitions in trade, in air routes, in newspaper international bureaux and of changing school textbooks. By 1970 imports from Britain had dropped to 22% compared to the US 25% and Japan 12%. In the same year Japan took 25% of Australian exports, the US 13.5% and Britain only 12%.²⁰⁾ Today, British trade, if not investment in Australia, has declined further. More importantly, Japan relies on Australia for much of the food and energy it needs to survive. In the early

¹⁸⁾ Anthony Milner, "What is Left of Engagement with Asia?," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol 54, no 2, 2000, p. 178. The defeat of the republic was also interpreted as a rejection of the region.

²⁰⁾ *A Nation at Last*, pp 178-9. In 1960, 36% of Australia's imports were from Britain, which took 26% of exports.

²¹⁾ ND Harper, *Our Pacific Neighbours*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1960; D. Edgar, *Australia and Her Northern Neighbours*, Hall's, Melbourne, 1964; P. F. Connole, *Australia and the Near North*, Brisbane, Jacaranda Press, 1961.

1960s I studied social studies textbooks entitled *Australia and Her Northern Neighbours* (1964) and *Australia's Pacific Neighbours* (1960).²¹⁾ The new discovery of Japan and the two countries' mutual interests would be expressed in the NARA treaty of co-operation and friendship of 1976. New air routes and slightly reduced airfares have also reduced the gap between Australia and the countries of the Asia/Pacific region. While Australian commodity exporters were focusing on North East Asia from the 1950s, in Australian popular consciousness 'Asia' meant the nearer countries of South East Asia, which more Australians had visited, whether in holiday on Bali or in Singapore and Bangkok on a stopover en route to Europe.²²⁾ Not until the Garnaut Report of 1989 did most Australians begin to recognise the importance of North East Asia, to use Garnaut's terms for a region known locally as East Asia. Although Australian bilateral relations with Japan, trade with South Korea and awareness of China go back much further, the reconceptualisation of the Asian region today found in "ASEAN+3" is new.

The fundamental shift in Australian orientations to the world has been the product of diverse migration and the policy, if not the reality, of multiculturalism, as well as the product of shifts in trade, defence and foreign policy. The closed and fearful era of Australian life, which resulted from the fusion of invasion fear, Social Darwinism and the British Empire closure and then the closure of the Cold War, has gone. The world's largest island, like those other islands, Britain and Japan, has demonstrated that island status is not necessarily a synonym for insularity. A major world trading country, which now takes immigrants from every continent and refugees from Asia, Africa and Latin America, has the potential for either tolerance or intolerance.

However, Australia is a special case in its experiences of citizenship and diversity, partly because it is the archetypal modern, or some might say post-modern, society. Australia is deracinated, immigrant, urban, affluent, predominantly secular, and influenced by the derivative culture of the international and global eras, even though it has adapted some social and cultural forms and institutions in its own ways. This partly explains how Australia has undergone a transition from an Australian-"British" monoculturalism to contemporary pluralism and the multicultural ideal. Australian immigration has worked for six reasons: (1) the long boom era of expansion, (2) Australia's small population size and that of its immigrant communities, (3) the diversity of migrants — there is no imperial-economic minority which threatens division as in Canada, Fiji, New Caledonia, Ireland, (4) the homogenising tendencies of both Australian society and the modern society of the mass media era, particularly the power of peer groups to

²²⁾ Australia, as the only major developed country south of the equator, recognises the terms Southern and Northern Hemisphere. The American conception of the "Western Hemisphere," that is the USA plus its Monroe Doctrine territories, is almost unknown in Australia, even amongst the educated non-specialist population.

²³⁾ A possible seventh reason is that Australia has become a predominantly secular society, with few religious bars to intermarriage, particularly of later generations. Even the 1950s-60s days when a "mixed marriage" was between a Catholic and a Protestant are long gone. Not that intermarriage across culture, ethnicity or class occurs without some tensions in Australia, or in any society.

integrate and assimilate younger generations, (5) the end of the fear of the foreign which had worsened in the first 40 years of the 20th century and was based on ignorance and lack of exposure to different traditions and, finally, (6) the absence in Australia of a sense of superiority rooted either in being an older society or of having been an imperial power.²³⁾ Despite Australian sub-imperialism in the South Pacific and racism towards the conquered Aboriginal peoples, the former settler colony is generally free of the legacy of the imperial ego. It is not easy for an immigrant people, derived originally from convicts and then from diverse immigration, to declare that they are superior to other peoples. The dual disappointments of being a colonial inferior in the British system and of dealing with a dry and difficult continent have encouraged pragmatism, even cynicism, and a degree of rough and ready tolerance. Australians don't feel the need to claim superiority, despite the outbreaks of Australian sporting jingoism in recent years.

Some would disagree with this analysis and would indict Australian racism in the strongest terms. Others, in contrast, would argue that Australia is a multicultural society. I query the overall validity of both assertions. The evidence suggests that racism towards Aboriginals is strong in rural Australia and in Queensland and parts of the Northern Territory and Western Australia, but is in decline or departed elsewhere. In one respect Australia has, however, changed less than she and others might imagine. It is not multicultural in the sense that the USA is in the current era, with its large and separate Hispanic societies and economies as well as cultures. The multicultural ideal has guaranteed tolerance but the reality, Australian and global, is one of integration of the streams into what I call the "big river" of Australian life, changing it as they enter it.

Five Steps Forward, One Step Back: Fundamental Change and Populist Reaction

Paul Kelly, the Murdoch journalist, author and advocate of restructuring, has argued that the five characteristics of the Australian federation settlement, the agreed settled policies of the nation, were abandoned in the reforms and reorientations of the 1970s-1990s. The five policies were: white Australia, industry protection, wage arbitration, state paternalism and the reliance on the great power. Paradoxically, the new nationalism of the Whitlam government which had been used to support Australian culture and identity, would be transformed by the Keating government into a republican nationalism which would endorse the internationalisation of Australia and the abandonment of all the traditional national policies. Enraptured by the religion of the level playing field, the Hawke-Keating governments dumped past policies, good and bad, and worshipped at the shrine of free trade. Those changes would bring new economic opportunities and appeal to the elites, in the money markets, IT and the bureaucracy. They would also bring costs for those retrenched from manufacturing as clothing, textiles, footwear, cars and small manufactures were increasingly imported. Combined with a decline in world commodity prices, from over a third to less than a quarter of world trade by value, the rationalisation of banking and government services and the consolidation of small farms, rural Australia was particularly hit by socio-economic change.

Conservative, older Australians felt dispossessed by the changes and this disempowerment found a populist vehicle in 1996 in Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party. Support for her policies of economic protection, reduced immigration and less government assistance for Aboriginal Australians can be located in social rather than just political terms. One Nation supporters tend to be older, male working class Australians with lower levels of education and to be found in Queensland or in country towns. However, they are a minority of less than 10%. Their protest vote suggests that Hanson populism is symptomatic, not organic. It reflects a larger disease in the body politic, popular disenchantment with three things: the social impact of revolutionary restructuring, the growing gap between rich and poor and the sense of social and cultural dispossession felt by older Australians. These factors, I believe, not race or immigration, have produced this unusual earth tremor in a normally politically stable continent.

In contrast, consider the Olympic celebration of Cathy Freeman as a national hero and the journey of the Olympic torch, beginning with the elders of the people of Uluru, the Governor General and a bare-footed Nova Peris Kneebone. That symbolism suggests the end of over two centuries of incomprehension and prejudice by the invaders. A treaty of reconciliation is the next step, although one that John Howard will not take. The multicultural debate is similarly complex. The departure of nationalist rejection of foreigners and the way in which new immigrants have embraced Australia have together encouraged a pluralist tolerance which is fundamental. Opposition to immigration in general and Asian immigration in particular is a minority phenomenon, with less support than Le Pen's *Front Nationale* in France. The current implosion of Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party — a cartoonist recently pictured the One Person Party — suggest that the Hanson populist reaction to the restructuring of Australia is now in retreat.²⁴⁾ Despite this, the Howard government is playing for conservative votes through a more rigid approach in immigration and refugee policies.

Bilateralism, Multilateralism and Change in Asia/Pacific Trade and Security

What does a small to middling power, a major trading nation and a geopolitically isolated country want at this moment, not only of the inauguration of an American president but also of a possible new world-system in the 21st century and third millennium?

In bilateral relations with the US, in security, it wants continued American engagement in the Asia/Pacific region and the guarantee of the defence of Australia if threatened with invasion although this guarantee has never been unconditionally given. It shares this desire with Japan and perhaps several other countries in the region. In trade, as it contemplates the limited pro-

²⁴⁾ In more conservative rural and far-flung Australia, it still managed 9% of the vote in Western Australia and strong regional support in parts of Queensland, in state elections in February 2001. Except, in WA, the WA Greens were likely to hold the balance of power in the upper house and in Queensland, in the words of one headline, the trend was one of "the city bites back." Although One Nation won about 20% of the votes in the rural electorates it contested (about half the state's electorates) a massive swing to Labor put the conservative parties on the back foot.

gress of APEC and of the World Trade Organisation, it wants increased access to American markets, in December even entertaining the idea that Australia should join an enlarged NAFTA, which would also take in most of Latin America.

In the immediate region, the South Pacific and Indonesia, it wants, ideally, to avoid the Balkanisation of the region or localised instability leading to the involvement of larger powers. Governments, although not necessarily Non-Government Organizations or public opinion, are likely to place a higher priority on these national interests than on the new human rights agendas. In terms of regional diplomacy in South East Asia, the December 2000 government White Paper on defence anticipated larger expenditures and continuing engagement in the region. Australia will continue its active involvement in joint defence exercises with Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, the US and New Zealand, unless the character of government changes dramatically in those countries. Australia also wants to see the extension of free trade and for it to be admitted to regional forums.²⁵⁾

The failure of APEC as an umbrella organisation to realise its aspirations in the 1990s era of the Asian economic crisis might also lead to a predominant Australian emphasis on bilateral trade relations, with the US, Japan, China and South Korea. Those relations will be strengthened if Australia can successfully expand its role as an exporter of value-added foods, software and services as well as its continuing role as a commodity exporter.

An Asian or Asian/Pacific Forum which includes China, Japan, Korea, ASEAN and Australia — with or without the USA — may reduce the fears in the region which arise from past memories of imperial expansion from several sources. Perhaps ASEAN+4 might work in a way in which APEC has so far failed? Or perhaps the APEC ideal will take 10-20 years to realize. It will depend on what happens to American engagement with the region and whether a future Australian republic draws closer in trade and population and, in the case of a declining American role, is able to play a tune less influenced by the trumpet calls of Uncle Sam.

Australia in a 21st Century Global World

These changes pose the question of the Australian future in the immediate future and in the 21st century. Is the current reorientation of Australia towards Asia a reflex action,²⁶⁾ a search for a third great planet to orbit around? Is that all it is, even though Asia is not an empire or a nation but at most a geopolitical and economic conglomeration rather than entity?

In the long-term it must be asked in foreign policy and defence, in economics and trade, in population and in society and culture, how will Australia change in the 21st century? Politically, Australia is certain to become a republic. The defeat of the 1999 referendum was not the product of residual Anglophilia. It was a populist expression of disillusionment with

²⁵⁾ Improved electronic communications, faster and cheaper air travel and increased knowledge may bring Australia more into the region, one which now often stops, in consciousness, at Singapore and Jakarta.

²⁶⁾ While Asian and American priorities make sense today, it would be unwise for Australia, as a result, to dismiss the great European economic bloc, of around 300 million people, as merely the past.

politicians and the idea of a President chosen by Parliament and the political savvy or cunning of Prime Minister John Howard, probably the last monarchist prime minister of Australia.²⁷⁾ What sort of society will Australia become in the 21st century? Asian? Global? Or an Australian-inflected fusion of both tendencies? Australia will become increasingly connected to the Asia-Pacific region, but as there is no such thing as “Asian,” it will become one of many diverse societies within the region. Its population will become more Asian in character, but through the predominance of intermarriage that will produce a different result. In this process the Orientalist conception of the exotic, the Eurasian, will become as redundant as any hyphenated terms which are rarely if ever used to describe marriages between different races and ethnicities in Australia today. Miscegenation, or racial intermarriage, the great Social Darwinist fear, will successfully occur, ensuring the social cohesion of the future Australia of the 21st century. With the passing of the last generation of leaders who remember the colonial period, and know how to beat the anti-imperialist drum to benefit themselves and their party, such as Prime Minister Mahathir²⁸⁾, different and deliberate misperceptions of Australia as a last outpost of white empire will also disappear. Fantasies of shared Asian culture, stretching from the Middle East to North East Asia, will retreat as we all share an increasingly globalised cultural pattern.²⁹⁾

In economics, the great danger Australia faces in the short to medium term is that its splendid isolation, thousands of kilometres distant from the potential wars of the region, will have a less pleasant economic mirror. It could be left out if the world breaks into trading blocs. Then, despite economic growth, the Australian currency will continue to fall prey to the pirates of the currency markets; this will confirm the worst suspicions of the populist critics of the new international orders of the World Trade Organisation and the World Economic Forum.

In defence and foreign policy, Australia will certainly retain two orientations, although the order of priority is unclear. One will be a focus on the Asia-Pacific region, and, while the USA remains the world's leading strategic and economic power, America will remain the corner-

²⁷⁾ See: S. Alomes, “Populism, Disillusionment and Fantasy: Australia Votes,” *Overland*, 158, Autumn 2000.

²⁸⁾ Perhaps, once the Mahathir generation, which knows the domestic benefits of old anti-colonialist rhetoric and the uses of arguments about Asian culture (in Mahathir's formulation sometimes meaning the right to repression as UMNO maintains its control over Malaysia), has passed, Malaysia will be shaped even more by the globalising tendencies of economics and culture.

²⁹⁾ Ahmed Ali Al Mualla, Ambassador to Japan from the United Arab Emirates, suggested in the *Japan Times* on the Emirates' 29th Foundation Day, Dec 2 2000, that there was a “similarity of our values, as both nations belong to Eastern culture and adhere to its tradition,” an exaggerated assertion of similarity between Japan and this part of the Arab world. President Mohammad Khatami, of Iran, also found philosophical similarities between cultures when visiting Japan. (*Japan Times*, Feb 8 2001). As Cavan Hogue points out (“Perspectives on Australian Foreign Policy, 1999,” *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol 54, no 2, 2000, p. 142) neither the term “Asia” or the term “the West” are at all clear. Asia was originally the term for an eastern province of the Roman Empire while ‘the West’ can, likewise, be defined in terms of wealth, government, heritage, social and political attitudes and culture, with completely different results.

stone of Australia's security, 'the key to stability' in the region, according to recently retired ambassador to Washington, Andrew Peacock.³⁰⁾

In Australian defence policy, regional involvement and increased expenditures will be complemented by further down-payments on the US defence insurance policy, without a guarantee that Australia will be able to claim if disaster strikes. It will still be hoped that Australia's special relationship with the US will be more important than America's other "special relationships" when it comes to deciding to go to war or not. Although Australia had a reprise of a century earlier, with new Cold War fears of the Russian navy in the 1980s and then with French nuclear testing in the 1990s, such echoes of the past are unlikely to recur. More positively, on the likelihood of Australia facing invasion in the next ten to fifteen years, defence reviews for the last 20 years have found there to be no threat. One defence reviewer has even suggested that the only country in the world with the military capacity to successfully invade Australia is the USA; since the peaceful invasion by Hollywood, McDonalds and Microsoft has achieved dominance in several fields this also seems unlikely.

In society, as a result of the cultural invasion, Australia will become closer to the US — more Americanised unless it shares in an international reaction of the local against the global.

Only time, cost and jetlag offer major barriers in an English-speaking country. Paradoxically, narrowcasting and desk-top publishing and Internet distribution, the forces which might make for ethnic linguistic, cultural and economic ghettos, might also aid local culture in resisting the tidal waves of the 21st century. Ideally, Australia will in future reject the failures of the USA, as it has in the past regarding gun laws and health provision. Since Australia has no military-industrial complex to drive technological innovation it might realise that the decline in government assistance for industry on the American economic rationalist model (although not necessarily the American practice) was a 1980s folly, to be abandoned.³¹⁾

Similarly, a return to the traditions of state social assistance, reduced in the era of the religion of small budgets, will occur, ideally with services delivered increasingly at the local level.

If not, Australia will face the social inequality and consequent social problems which rep-

³⁰⁾ Fred Brenchley, "Great White Hope," *Bulletin*, 19 Dec. 2000 — Jan. 2 2001.

³¹⁾ This discussion does not address either the current "old economy, new economy" debates nor the question of how Australia can move from an exporter of commodities to one of value-added products, something which has already begun to happen in food, services and tourism.

³²⁾ The great Australian problem, rooted in the colonial habit of mind and changing international power influences, is that on the three occasions it has begun to place a higher valuation on its own culture, the 1880s, the 1940s, and the 1970s, that cultural self-discovery has been overrun by the economic forces of international culture, first British and then American imperial culture and popular culture and then the globalising forces of today. Each time a government has looked to support Australian culture, such as the Labor governments of the 1940s and 1970s, economic difficulty (post-war austerity and the post-OPEC recession) and a change of government have weakened the commitment. New technologies and commercial forms have also made many an Australian cultural spring short-lived. Today, economic rationalism has seen a contraction in the universities and in public broadcasting, at best a steady state in the arts and even in some cases in Australian government cultural and educational work as part of the nation's diplomacy.

resent the great failure of triumphal American capitalism. Individualism is necessary, but the cult of individual greed and the “devil take the hindmost,” from Adam Smith to Ronald Reagan, has severe social costs. In the jargon, if not the ideology, of 1950s-60s American social scientists, the result is a dysfunctional society.

The new international Australia of the 21st century has shed both that fatal insular combination of invasion fear and Social Darwinism and the underpinning lack of self-confidence which led to an often-blind dependence on a great power. A combination of the inevitable republic, which has established a moral claim to the continent through reconciliation between invaders and settlers, with the re-establishment of active, participatory citizenship, a greater affirmation of its own culture³²⁾ and closer ties with New Zealand might see a return to the late 19th century when Australasia seemed a social laboratory for the making of a better world. However, an Australia which succumbs unqualifiedly to the ideological laws of economic rationalism and the technological-economic imperatives of globalisation will face social instability.

Let me to return to culture and to the insecurities expressed in the celebration of the visit to or from the great centres overseas. It is an orientation to the centres of global capital, power and status, which is significantly, but not only, Australian. In the 19th century the American expatriate writer Henry James found it a “complex fate” to be an American at a time when this New World country still sought the warrant of the European Old World for its cultural achievements. I believe that, given Australia’s colonial experience, a settler society somewhere between the Manifest Destiny of the USA and the subject colonial experience of the colonised, as analysed by Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi, it is an even more complex fate to be an Australian. However, at the beginning of the Third Millennium, traditional differentiations between West and East, Old and New World, and even between Orientalist and Occidentalist ideologies, matter less and less. When the modern or developed countries of the world share more and more characteristics, perhaps it is a complex fate to live in the modern world. This is not just a question regarding the Pacific and Americanisation, even in an era when the “MTV Doctrine” is more influential than the Monroe Doctrine. It is a matter of globalisation, global warming and global trade, both the unstoppable juggernaut of global capital and the patterns of regional resistance.³³⁾

In recent decades change has been greater than continuity, both in Australia’s international orientations in general and in the cultural-political tradition of the Australian visit to and from the courts of power overseas. A country’s culture will always shape its international orientations. In Australia, formed by change ever since 1788, its Pacific future may be created anew. It might be shaped in new forms as well as recreated along the lines of past tradition and habit. For an evolving New World country that is reason for hope rather than fear.

³³⁾ Aside from cultural resistance, political demonstrations against the World Economic Forum in Melbourne in September 2000, just before that other global spectacle, the Olympic Games, have been part of an international pattern of opposition to aspects of globalisation.

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<Summary>

Stephen Alomes

Ever since the first and last invasion of Australia in 1788 the country has been oriented towards overseas. Early invasion fear was focused on European powers during the Napoleonic Wars. In the era of the New Imperialism this fear was then compounded by the other side of such aspirations, fear of conflict and Social Darwinist conceptions of a coming war between rising nations which were equated with races. As a result loyalty to a great power would be the cornerstone of Australian foreign policy and in some aspects of Australian life. In culture, its reflection would be visits to and from the courts of the great imperial powers overseas.

Australia has been, in one view, lucky to have been the colony, and then the client state, of the two great strategic and economic powers of the 19th and 20th century world systems, Britain and the USA. In a contrasting assessment, such a dependent orientation has major costs as well as benefits. In economics this means truncated industrial development. In security and defence, there have been the "down payments" on the "insurance policy" counted in casualties in major wars and colonial frontier wars.

This has meant two other costs: one, the irradiated legacy of British nuclear testing; and, two, American intelligence and strategic positioning bases which may have put the 'lucky country' on the map in any future nuclear war. Finally, loyal allies are praised for their loyalty but have little influence on policy — their "special relationship" is but one of several and the national interests of the great power will be the final determinants of action, whatever the ink on the treaties says.

In recent decades Australia has given up the fears of military invasion and assumptions regarding the population, space and racial imperatives of any would be invader. Both because of, and aside from, the Cold War it has become interested in its region: in trade with and security arrangements, both in South East Asia and North East Asia.

It has also begun to forge more independent policies in trade, foreign policy and defence, in foreign policy, at times aspiring to the ideal role of the 'honest broker' associated with countries which see themselves as middling powers. A country which led in the early years of the United Nations, supported Indonesian decolonization in the 1940s and helped shape the Colombo Plan in the 1950s has again begun to play a creative role. It has sought to influence Cambodian and East Timor developments in the 1990, been a leader of the Cairns Group of commodity exporting nations and, with Japan, was an initiator of APEC. However, its initiatives still take account of the continuing American cornerstone of its security policies.

Australia's reorientations have been made possible by increased population size, affluence and technological sophistication, and by multicultural diversity of population. They have brought a new confidence to Australia, fundamentally reinforced by a new willingness to come

to terms with its land and its Aboriginal people, and as a result with its region. As elsewhere in the developed world, these changes, combined with economic restructuring on the American/global free market model, have had a less positive legacy, popular disillusionment with politics and with politicians.

Australia has achieved the 19th century goal of "A Nation for a Continent" with relatively abundant resources for its small population of around 20 million, and the world's oldest tradition of peaceful democracy. As a result, it might look to the 21st century with confidence. However, Australia is still troubled by being outside of all the major trading blocs. In defence, isolation is an advantage: while few countries in the world are easier to attack no country is harder to successfully invade.

How will Australia develop in the 21st century? Will it become an independent republic, a globalized society and an Asian country (or all three)? How will its international orientations adjust to a future in which American dominance might retreat? To understand the present and future of Australian international orientations we need to appreciate the patterns of the last two century and the evolving changes of recent decades as Australia finds its place in the Asia-Pacific region.