



ACADEMY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES IN AUSTRALIA

# Dialogue

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## About the Academy

The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia was established in 1971. Previously, some of the functions were carried out through the Social Science Research Council of Australia, established in 1942. Elected to the Academy for distinguished contributions to the social sciences, the 374 Fellows of the Academy offer expertise in the fields of *accounting, anthropology, demography, economics, economic history, education, geography, history, law, linguistics, philosophy, political science, psychology, social medicine, sociology and statistics.*

The Academy's objectives are:

- to promote excellence in and encourage the advancement of the social sciences in Australia;
- to act as a coordinating group for the promotion of research and teaching in the social sciences;
- to foster excellence in research and to subsidise the publication of studies in the social sciences;
- to encourage and assist in the formation of other national associations or institutions for the promotion of the social sciences or any branch of them;
- to promote international scholarly cooperation and to act as an Australian national member of international organisations concerned with the social sciences;
- to act as consultant and adviser in regard to the social sciences; and,
- to comment where appropriate on national needs and priorities in the area of the social sciences.

These objectives are fulfilled through a program of activities, research projects, independent advice to government and the community, publication and cooperation with fellow institutions both within Australia and internationally.

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## President's column

### Research priority setting in the social sciences



If you were set the task of establishing a list of research priority areas for the social sciences in Australia, what would they be?

Generally, social scientists - and scholars in other disciplines - are strongly opposed to the idea of priority setting in research. The prospect immediately reminds us of the hazards of trying to pick winners, the trap of supporting the established, safe research agenda rather than the untried or unconventional; and the persistent call to move 'scarce' resources into useful /relevant /'applied' /'commercial' research and away from 'esoteric'/'blue-sky'/'theoretical' research. Worst of all, perhaps, is the prospect

that research administrators may judge disciplinary areas to have outlived their usefulness. These concerns are not limited to those in the social sciences and humanities - understandably nervous when talk of research priority setting is in the air - but also among scientists and technologists who fear that their long-standing research programs may be under threat.

The question of research priority setting in the social sciences became a real issue in July this year. The Howard government's Innovation statement 'Backing Australia's Ability' promised an increase in funding of \$2.9 billion to support research and innovation. It stipulated that the emphasis in increased research funding to ARC would be on 'areas in which Australia enjoys, or wants to build, a competitive advantage'. The government extended the idea of identifying and targeting ARC 'theme based research priorities' to other research agencies, such as CSIRO and NHMRC. It also asked for advice on how to introduce a priority setting process to ensure coordination and flexibility between agencies and avoid duplication.

The Chief Scientist, Dr Robin Batterham, established a working group of the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering and Innovation Council (PMSEIC) to develop a list of about twelve national priority areas to send to Prime Minister and Cabinet. The principal research agencies, ARC, NHMRC and CSIRO, together with the four Academies, were invited to contribute their suggested 'theme-based research priorities' to be collated and considered by the working group for inclusion in the top twelve.

The request was discussed by our Academy's Executive Committee at its July 2001 meeting. The first point raised was the danger of priority setting in research and whether the Academy should even be a party to the exercise. It was conceded however, that if ARC, NHMRC, CSIRO and the other three Academies all agreed to participate in the exercise, this Academy could not afford to ignore the opportunity to advise and help influence government policy. After all, that is one of the major objectives of our Academy. For the next two hours the Executive Committee meeting resembled a social sciences think-tank as members brainstormed, argued and negotiated a list of eight social sciences priority areas to be sent to the PMSEIC working party: To make the task manageable suggestions were organised under three main categories of social sciences research. First, broad themes, second, areas of

special Australian interest or expertise; and third, areas of cross-agency and joint Academies interest.

Before you read further you might like to pause to consider your own list of preferred social science research priorities (please justify!) and then check the degree of overlap between your list and the one generated at very short notice by the ASSA Executive.

### **Broad Themes**

**The well-being of children** The way a society raises its children is a measure of its humanity, its sense of fairness and its investment in its future.

*Research:* focus on studying social, emotional, health and learning-education problems and formulating strategies and interventions to prevent problems.

**Effectiveness of governance** The style and substance of governance, and how these factors operate to guarantee the health, well-being, and security of individuals and institutions can be improved.

*Research:* focus on how this can be accomplished most effectively.

**Quality of life** Technology and market forces are driving economic reform and real incomes. There is evidence, however, that quality of life for many is diminishing. The symptoms are increased insecurity, greater exposure to economic risk, dismantling of parts of the security net, growing inequalities and greater time pressures.

*Research:* focus on the role of these factors and community responses to address them.

### **Special Australian Interest or Expertise**

**Indigenous Australian culture and well-being** It is important to ensure engagement of Indigenous Australians in the social and political fabric of the nation.

*Research:* focus on understanding and protecting Aboriginal culture and society and fostering community health and well-being.

**The nature of the Australian population** The size, structure, dynamics and distribution of Australia's growing population is central to all policy and planning considerations.

*Research:* focus on an integrated understanding of population dimensions including growth rates, ageing, immigration/emigration and other factors and their relationship to the quality of community life and social and economic sustainability.

**Australia in the Asia-Pacific region** The social and geo-political relationships between Australia and her Asia/Pacific neighbours are a key concern of this nation.

*Research:* focus on understanding and predicting the options and opportunities in the region.

### **Across Agencies and Between-Academies Interest**

**Technological/economic changes and their impact on society** Rapid technological and economic changes are producing mixed effects; increased GDP but also insecurity and resentment among many in the community and globally. The justification of technological change is to advance well-being: Is this being realised? Do some groups experience more damage than gain? Can policy improve the sharing of the benefits of technological change?

*Research:* focus on the conditions underlying the uptake of the new technologies and resistance to them.

**The relationship between environment change and human responses** The complex interactions between the social and physical environments are of concern in times of climatological change. The interactive and cumulative effects of human behaviour and the biophysical processes will determine the quality of future life. What will these interactions be and how can they be managed to the benefit, not the detriment, of Australia?

*Research:* special focus needed on vulnerable rural and regional communities.

The Academy Executive may have arrived at a somewhat different (but, I suspect, not substantially so) list if it had time and opportunity for wider consultation. One test of whether the list has credibility is to ask whether the Academy itself backs workshop programs, research projects, symposia and publications in the social science areas it identified as priority areas. I believe the record shows that the Academy has been, or is currently, involved in most of the eight priority areas on the list.

The challenge to identify research priorities is a powerful incentive for each of us to think about the work we do or have planned, and the extent to which our pet topics and projects make a difference to the way we understand the world and contribute to its greater well-being.

**One test of whether the list has credibility is to ask whether the Academy itself backs workshop programs, research projects, symposia and publications in the social science areas it identified as priority areas.**

Meanwhile in September the PMSEIC working party met to consider the dozens of suggestions it received and to finalise a list of twelve research priority areas to be sent to Government. Bear in mind that the research priority setting exercise stemmed from the Prime Minister's 'Backing Australia's Ability' innovation policy statement

and a call for increased research funding to be directed toward areas of 'competitive advantage'. It is therefore unrealistic to expect that ASSA's eight priority areas - many of which do not proclaim 'competitive advantage' - will take precedence over such hot new developing science and technology areas as medical genomics, photonics research and research on new energy systems. At the time of writing this column (5 November) the Government has yet to announce its list of twelve. My hunch is that possibly three of the twelve research priority areas decided by the government will have substantial social science interest and focus. Watch this space for further developments.

**Leon Mann**

*Emeritus Professor Ross Parish, formerly of Monash University, died on the 5 October.*

*Emeritus Professor [Stephen Wurm AM](#), formerly of [Australian National University](#), died on the 24 October.*

*Obituaries will appear in the [Annual Report](#).*

## The Skeptical Environmentalist and His Critics

### Ian Castles

In *The Unnatural Nature of Science* (1992), Lewis Wolpert, FRS, Professor of Biology at University College, London, concluded that 'Science is one of humankind's greatest and most beautiful achievements and for its continuation, free and critical discussion, with no political interference, is as essential today as it was in Ionia'.<sup>1</sup>

In principle, the international science community accepts the vital importance of such 'free and critical discussion', and asserts the need for these values of science to be applied to the world's problems. The most recent such proclamation came from 63 academies of science after a meeting in Tokyo in May 2000:

Science is, in a very fundamental sense, the process of seeking the truth. The values of the scientific enterprise – openness, community, quality and respect for evidence – are of great importance and application to the search for sustainability. The scientific community must be involved in the broad interactive process of establishing societal priorities ... and in fostering the public understanding and the political will to ensure that progress moves in directions that correspond to those priorities.<sup>2</sup>

Regrettably, however, there are many in the science community who are more strongly committed to implementing **their** priorities than to the 'values of the scientific enterprise'. This has recently been demonstrated in their enraged reaction to *The Skeptical Environmentalist* by Bjørn Lomborg<sup>3</sup>, a book that takes issue with the claim that the pursuit of economic progress inevitably leads to an ever-deteriorating environment. Lewis Wolpert, for one, has found it convincing:

At last a book that gives the environment the scientific analysis it deserves, and provides understanding of the problems, the risks and the solutions. Essential reading.<sup>4</sup>

But many other scientists are unhappy at the attention that is being given to an alternative view, as James Woodford revealed in his review of the book for the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

For 350 pages, backed up by nearly 3000 footnotes, the Danish statistician critically examines the slogans and arguments that have galvanised much of the developed world into environmental action. It is a book that the green movement would love to see pulped; several people I have spoken to about the text have asked me not to give Lomborg any more publicity.<sup>5</sup>

Three of Lomborg's critics confronted him on the *Earthbeat* program on ABC Radio on 13 October. Alexandra de Blas introduced the segment with the comment that the new book 'has environmentalists and scientists from around the world fuming'<sup>6</sup> - and she introduced Tom Burke, environmental adviser to Rio Tinto and BP, as the author of what she called a 'damning paper' on the book.

This was the pamphlet *Ten Pinches of Salt*<sup>7</sup>, which was released by the UK Green Alliance on the same day as Lomborg's book was published by Cambridge University Press. At the launch, Burke labelled *The Skeptical Environmentalist* 'a dishonest and discreditable smear on the many millions of professionals and volunteers working to improve the environment', and claimed that the positions that Lomborg had attacked were 'a caricature of his own invention which bear no resemblance to the arguments currently deployed by environmentalists'.<sup>8</sup>

On *Earthbeat*, Alexandra de Blas asked Burke to outline his main concerns with the publication. He began his response by challenging Lomborg's credentials. He (Burke) had 'actually talked to Greenpeace, and they are very clear that they have no record of Bjørn Lomborg ... as an activist member'. When Lomborg responded that he had 'never been out in a rubber boat' but was 'a suburban kind of Greenpeace member', Burke replied:

That doesn't make you an environmentalist Bjørn. I mean that would make me a statistician because I've done some calculations.<sup>9</sup>

Tom Burke is certainly not a statistician, and it is not possible to identify his area of expertise either from his pamphlet or his comments on *Earthbeat*. In the former, he acknowledged that the Club of Rome had been wrong to argue that 'natural resources are running out', and that 'Paul Erlich (sic) did make, and lose, his famous wager with Julian Simon'. But he asserted that, as of now, 'Environmentalists do not believe that natural resources are running out', and questioned 'what is gained in 2001 by resurrecting a long dead argument only to kill it all over again'.<sup>10</sup>

Far from being 'long dead', the argument is alive and well in the scientific community: it is just that it is now presented in a somewhat more sophisticated guise than the simplistic models made notorious by the Club of Rome and the writings and lectures of Ehrlich (Professor of Biological Sciences at Stanford). For example, the statement in May 2000 by 63 academies of Science declared that human consumption reduces 'the future availability of materials and energy', and that 'if current trends in ... consumption of energy and materials ... persist, many human needs will not be met and the numbers of hungry and poor will increase'.<sup>11</sup>

Perhaps the academies do not realise it, but this assertion effectively implies that 'natural resources are running out'. If they are not, why would growth in the usage of such resources work against the satisfaction of human needs, and lead to increases in the numbers of hungry and poor?

Burke recognises that 'Professor Erlich (sic) did predict in his book *The Population Bomb*, published 23 years ago, that "In the course of the 1970s the world will experience starvation of tragic proportions – hundreds of millions of people will starve (sic) to death"'. And he even goes on to argue that Ehrlich 'was, as we all too often witnessed from the comfort of our living rooms, right ... But I cannot recall, and Professor Lomborg does not cite, another occasion on which he made this prediction'.<sup>12</sup>

This is wrong on a number of counts. First, Lomborg **does** cite another occasion - an article in *The New Scientist* in which Ehrlich urged the US to announce 'that we will no longer send emergency aid to India where sober analysis shows a hopeless imbalance between food and population'.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, there were many more such occasions: in 1969, a *New York Times* correspondent reported that the Stanford biologist 'turns out a **steady stream** of popular articles and books warning of unimaginable famine, nuclear destruction and plague if something isn't done quickly about rising population'.<sup>14</sup> Thirdly, no one denies that there are and always have been starving people in the world, including in the 1970s: images on television screens can only testify to that tragic fact, not to the existence of 'unimaginable famine'.

But finally, and most importantly, Burke is apparently unaware that the spectre of the imminent deaths of hundreds of millions raised by Paul Ehrlich in his 1968 book was not a 'prediction': it was the **most optimistic** of three 'scenarios' that he offered as a

description of the 'kinds of disasters that will occur as mankind slips into the famine decades' - and he challenged his readers to create a more optimistic one.

Paul Ehrlich was explicit that his scenario presuming 'the death by starvation of perhaps as many as half a billion people' was a 'cheerful' one with 'considerably more appeal than the others'. His fear was that it involved 'a maturity of outlook and behaviour in the United States that seems unlikely to develop in the near future'. For example, it would require the suspension of food shipments to 'India, Egypt and some other countries which [the US] considers beyond hope'; the imposition of 'a moderate food rationing program' in the US itself; and the development of a plan to contain the world's population to two billion in 2025 and 1.5 billion in 2100.

The scenarios that Ehrlich considered more likely envisaged either an early global war induced by pressures on food supplies, with more than 100 million Americans dying from the fallout from Chinese thermonuclear devices 'transported in submarines [and] detonated in the sea off our West Coast'; or famines, plagues and anarchy leading to 'a general thermonuclear war' in the 1980s, making the entire globe uninhabitable by humans. The most intelligent creatures ultimately surviving this catastrophe would be cockroaches.<sup>15</sup>

Understandably, Tom Burke and the millions he believes to have been smeared by Lomborg's analysis would prefer these false prophecies of doom to be forgotten. And they would like to anathematise Matt Ridley, author of *Genome*, for his advice to every environmentalist to read Lomborg's book 'so that the appalling errors of fact the environmental movement has made in the past are not repeated'.<sup>16</sup>

Under the sarcastic heading 'Simon says', Burke alleges that Lomborg dismisses the issue of waste by leaning heavily 'on data from his mentor, Julian Simon', and claims that *The Skeptical Environmentalist* 'fails to mention toxic or hazardous wastes'.<sup>17</sup> To a lay person, this does not appear to be so. For example, Lomborg cites US statistics showing decreases between 1986 and 1995 in the concentrations of pollutants in mussels of '28 per cent for cadmium, 36 per cent DDT, 48 per cent polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), 56 per cent dieldrin, 62 per cent polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) and 86 per cent butyl tin'; and Danish statistics showing 'declines of DDT and PCB in saltwater fish of more than 90 per cent since 1973'. And he quotes from the latest US *State of the Coastal Environment* report the statement that 'most pollutant concentrations are decreasing and none is increasing'.<sup>18</sup>

Tom Burke goes on to give the following summary of Lomborg's account of the relationship between air pollution and income levels in developing countries:

Air pollution in the rest of the world, where two-thirds of humanity live, need not be **considered**, in Professor Lomborg's view, because this will **cease automatically** as they get richer. This confuses cause and correlation, not a mistake you would expect from a statistician.<sup>19</sup>

But Lomborg **does** consider air pollution in developing countries and **does not** claim that it will cease automatically as they get richer. Indeed he recognises that the tendency is for air pollution to continue to rise in developing countries until incomes reach medium levels. Beyond those medium income levels, however, he argues that the tendency is for air pollution to fall (not 'automatically', but as a result of public preferences and political decisions) to 'the level [those countries] had before they started developing'.

Lomborg assembles the evidence for these propositions in the form of charts showing the connection between GDP per capita and particle and SO<sub>2</sub> pollution for 48 cities in



31 countries, for each of the years 1972 and 1986. The analysis includes cities in the developed world and in China, India, Thailand, the Philippines, Korea, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Venezuela. It shows that, between these two years, both types of pollution fell for all nations at all levels of wealth. Lomborg concludes that 'developing countries can not only achieve both economic growth and a better environment, but over time will get even better environment for a given amount of wealth':

This is because developing countries can buy progressively cheaper, cleaner technology from the West. The key factor here is that technology makes it possible to achieve growth as well as a better environment.<sup>20</sup>

Many scientists have become so accustomed to thinking of growth and the environment as opposites that they are unable to accept the clear message of the empirical evidence on this fundamental point. Thus Ian Lowe, Emeritus Professor of Science, Technology and Society, Griffith University - another critic of *The Skeptical Environmentalist* on the ABC *Earthbeat* segment - claimed that

... to say the problems [of the environment] will be solved by greater wealth and private property rights is economic dogma, ... not science. There's no convincing evidence that greater wealth **necessarily** leads to environmental improvement. Even Bjørn's figures show that in some cases greater wealth makes the environment better, in others it clearly makes it worse. It all depends on the starting point and what options people have.<sup>21</sup>

**Lomborg provides strong evidence that in mixed market economies with democratic institutions, the growth of income above a medium level (a level that much of the developing world has either achieved or can be expected to achieve in the not so distant future) will lead to environmental improvement and not the reverse.**

Again this is a distortion of Lomborg's argument. It is the **denial** of the proposition that problems of the environment can be solved by greater wealth that represents dogma, not science. Of course it is **possible**, with ill-considered policies, for the average wealth of medium income countries to increase but for the environment of those countries to deteriorate: this was demonstrated by the experience of the Warsaw Pact countries in the 1950s and 1960s. But Lomborg

provides strong evidence that in mixed market economies with democratic institutions, the growth of income above a medium level (a level that much of the developing world has either achieved or can be expected to achieve in the not so distant future) will lead to environmental improvement and not the reverse.

A major reason for this, as Lomborg points out, is that advancing technology facilitates both growth in average incomes and improvements in the environment. Ian Lowe cannot see this because his conceptual *schema* puts technology and 'wealth' into separate boxes, and assigns the interest in 'wealth' to a discipline whose practitioners are supposed to have no understanding of technology:

One particular problem in Australia is that much of the advice reaching government comes from economists who have no understanding of technology ... (K)ey areas of the Commonwealth public service are thickly infested with economists, carrying with them **the bizarrely simplistic view that technological change is predominantly an economic activity**. There is every reason to argue that technological literacy should be more widespread; in a

modern society it could almost be argued to be a prerequisite for positions of responsibility to understand the general principles of technology.<sup>22</sup>

On the *Earthbeat* program on 13 October, the third of the invited contributors, Stephen Schneider (Professor of Environmental Biology and Global Change at Stanford), responded as follows to Alexandra de Blas' inquiry as to why he was so 'red hot under the collar' about Lomborg's book:

Well for those of us who in my case have spent about three decades working with thousands of scientists and policy analysts and others, trying to figure out something about ... the future we face ... we end up with a maddening degree of uncertainty... We fight amongst ourselves ... and have virtually no agreement and now all of a sudden I see in *The Skeptical Environmentalist* the sub-title 'Measuring the Real State of the World', and the person who's a non-contributor to the debate has selected largely out of context the happier news.<sup>23</sup>

Schneider, who is Professor of Environmental Biology and Global Change at Stanford, was 'angry' at CUP for publishing Lomborg's book. Asked by de Blas whether this was 'just a case of the Old Boys' Club getting their nose out of joint because there's a new voice with a very different message', Schneider responded:

It was published from the social and political science part of the shop, yet this book requires a tremendous amount of natural science, physical and biological sciences, upon which a lot of these conclusions about social science are based. And what Cambridge should have done ... and I've held them they're quite derelict for this, [was] have reviewers across all three of the groups ... so they could have found out whether the grounding in the other disciplines was a balanced treatment... And I think had they done that, they would have made a very different conclusion about publishing the book.<sup>24</sup>

It is not clear that this is so: Lewis Wolpert, for one, would presumably have advised Cambridge to publish the book if his opinion had been sought. And many of the 'thousands of scientists and policy analysts and others' to whom Schneider refers might not agree that an intelligent and persuasive voice should be denied a hearing for the reasons that he gives.

It is perhaps fortunate for Stephen Schneider that Bjørn Lomborg did not review Schneider's contributions to the debate on global change and associated issues during the past 30 years. Some of these are worth recording here – not for the purpose of casting doubt on Schneider's distinction as a scientist, but in order to show that the stones he throws at Lomborg come from the occupant of a glasshouse. Here is Schneider's assessment of the prospective direction of global climate change, from a book published in 1976:

I have cited many examples of recent climatic variability and repeated the warnings of several well-known climatologists that a cooling trend has set in – perhaps one akin to the Little Ice Age – and that climatic variability, which is the bane of reliable food production, can be expected to increase along with the cooling.<sup>25</sup>

In 1989, by which time Schneider was calling for immediate action to check the prospect of global **warming**, he gave this view of the way scientists should contribute to the debate:

... like most people [we scientists] would like to see the world a better place, which in this context translates into our working to reduce the risk of potentially disastrous climatic change. To do this we need to get some broad-based

support, to capture the public's imagination. That, of course, entails getting loads of media coverage. So we have to offer up scary scenarios, make simplified dramatic statements, and make little mention of any doubts we might have. This 'double ethical bind' we find ourselves in cannot be solved by any formula. Each of us has to decide what the right balance is between being effective and being honest. I hope that means being both.<sup>26</sup>

In a recent lecture in India, Deepak Lal, Professor of International Development Studies at UCLA, recalled how he became involved in debates on the environment when he was preparing the 1990 Wincott Lecture:

Having read the scientific literature I was appalled at how the scientists – like Stephen Schneider – openly admitted they were creating alarm for a phenomenon they themselves recognized as highly speculative. My lecture not surprisingly ended up as an attack on this scientific attempt to bamboozle the public.<sup>27</sup>

While Stephen Schneider sees himself as justified in making 'little mention' of his doubts, he condemned Lomborg on the *Earthbeat* program for having 'a confidence that's not based on any significant analysis by him, or any properly balanced citation from the literature'.<sup>28</sup> As the preceding discussion shows, Lomborg's analysis cannot be so lightly dismissed. As a professor of statistics in a school of political science, he is better equipped to assess the relevant evidence, and to understand the processes by which societal priorities are determined, than many of his critics.

At the conclusion of the *Earthbeat* segment on ABC Radio on 13 October, Bjørn Lomborg summed up his position as follows:

Yes, I'm a political scientist, economist, statistician. Yes, we do actually look at things in a different way. I asked the question which is fundamental to democracy and to our prioritisation process: 'So overall, how are things going?' A lot of these people would like to sit on the debate and say 'We have the right answer'. Well no, they have the right understanding in many of these models, but the basic question of what should we do, how things are basically going, needs also to come out there, and that I think has not been coming out from science. But certainly we need to get that overview of the world and that is what I've tried to provide.<sup>29</sup>

Lomborg has made an outstanding contribution to the discussion of some of the most vital issues of our time. If parts of his analysis are unsound on scientific grounds, it should not be beyond the capacity of scientists to demonstrate this in free, critical and civil discussion. Those who have chosen instead to distort or suppress his message, or to engage in ill-tempered abuse, are doing a disservice to themselves, their disciplines and the scientific enterprise.

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<sup>1</sup> Wolpert, Lewis (1992), *The Unnatural Nature of Science*. Faber & Faber, London: 128.

<sup>2</sup> InterAcademy Panel (2000), *Transition to Sustainability in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Contribution of Science and Technology* [A statement of the World's Scientific Academies (May)] (<http://interacademies.net/intracad/tokyo2000.nsf>).

<sup>3</sup> Lomborg, Bjørn (2001), *The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*: back cover.

- <sup>5</sup> Woodford, James (2001), 'A load of hot air' in *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29-30 September. Spectrum: 4-5.
- <sup>6</sup> ABC (2001), 'Skeptical Environmentalist Debates Critics', *Earthbeat*, Radio National Home, <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/science/earth/stories/s394496.htm>
- <sup>7</sup> Burke, Tom (2001), *Ten Pinches of Salt: a Reply to Bjorn Lomborg*, <http://www.green-alliance.org.uk>
- <sup>8</sup> Green Alliance (2001), 'What's New', 29 August, <http://www.green-alliance.org.uk/WhatsNew.htm>
- <sup>9</sup> ABC (2001), *op cit.* 2-3.
- <sup>10</sup> Burke (2001), *op cit.* 6.
- <sup>11</sup> InterAcademy Panel (2000), *op cit.*
- <sup>12</sup> Burke (2001), *op cit.* 6-7.
- <sup>13</sup> Lomborg (2001), *op cit.* 350.
- <sup>14</sup> *New York Times* (1969), 'Foe of Pollution Sees Lack of Time', August 10: 53 (emphasis added).
- <sup>15</sup> Ehrlich, Paul R (1968), *The Population Bomb*, Ballantine Books, New York: 72-80.
- <sup>16</sup> Lomborg (2001), *op cit.* back cover.
- <sup>17</sup> Burke (2001), *op cit.* 8.
- <sup>18</sup> Lomborg (2001), *op cit.* 195.
- <sup>19</sup> Burke (2001), *op cit.* 9 (emphases added).
- <sup>20</sup> Lomborg (2001), *op cit.* 176-7.
- <sup>21</sup> ABC (2001), *op cit.* 8 (emphasis added).
- <sup>22</sup> Lowe, Ian (1988), 'The Mushroom Treatment' in *Australian Society*, November: 12-13, (emphasis added).
- <sup>23</sup> ABC (2001), *op cit.* 3.
- <sup>24</sup> *ibid.* 8.
- <sup>25</sup> Schneider, Stephen (1976), *The Genesis Strategy*, Plenum Press, New York: 90.
- <sup>26</sup> Quoted by Jonathan Schell (1989), 'Our Fragile Earth', *Discover*, October: 47.
- <sup>27</sup> Lal, Deepak (2000), 'The New Cultural Imperialism: The Greens and Economic Development', The Inaugural Julian Simon Memorial Lecture, Liberty Institute, New Delhi, 9 December: 3.
- <sup>28</sup> ABC (2001), *op cit.* 3.
- <sup>29</sup> *ibid.* 8.

**Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen  
Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences**

**Dr AH Heineken Prize for History 2002**

Every other year, the Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) awards the Dr AH Heineken Prize for History for **outstanding scholarly achievements in the field of European history**. This prize is part of a series – for Biochemistry and Biophysics, Environmental Sciences, Medicine and Art. The prize is a silver water clock which symbolises Clio and \$150,000 – to be used at the discretion of the recipient. The award is presented to an individual, not an institution and there are no restrictions on the candidate's nationality, age or gender.

**Closing date for applications: 1 January 2002**

For further information please contact Sue Rider at the Secretariat.

## Workshop Reports

### Mutual Obligation and Welfare States in Transition

*Deborah Brennan, Bettina Cass and Moira Gatens*

'Mutual obligation' and other key ideas of the contemporary 'welfare reform' discourse came under sustained scrutiny at a workshop sponsored by the Academy and conducted at the University of Sydney earlier this year. Additional support was provided by the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research) of the University of Sydney, Professor David Siddle, the Research Institute for Humanities and Social Sciences and the Centre for International and Public Affairs (Discipline of Government and International Relations).

The workshop examined the historical bases, current debates and emerging issues surrounding the concepts of 'mutual obligation', 'dependence' and 'community' as embedded in welfare discourse and practice in Australia and other western liberal democracies. A range of disciplinary perspectives in the social sciences was brought to bear on the issues, because of the multifaceted connotations and implications of the concepts and their various modes of implementation. These disciplines included philosophy, sociology, social and public policy, economics, law, social psychology, and history.

Several papers at the workshop analysed scholarly, political and popular understandings of 'mutual obligation', and the ways in which the implementation of the concept affects relationships between individuals, communities, labour markets and state welfare systems. Others explored debates about the continuum of dependence, interdependence, and independence, as articulated in welfare discourse and institutionalised in practice.

Whether the current Australian manifestation of mutual obligation is just and/or fair was examined in a number of papers. Professor Robert Goodin (Australian National University) argued that there are many ways in which the idea of 'mutual obligation' can be structured and made concrete in policy terms. He made the point that it is quite possible to value 'mutuality' and 'reciprocity' but to reject the Howard government's particular specification of what is involved in 'mutual obligation'. Goodin argued that requiring uniform and immediate 'reciprocity' from the unemployed is not necessary in the name of fairness, nor is it particularly just. He showed that there are many other ways that people can act in a reciprocal manner and that, from an analytical point of view, it does not have to be exactly the same individuals who reciprocate, nor does the act of reciprocity have to occur at the same time as the initial act. It is quite possible to design a system in which people help one another, in ways and at times that take account of their needs and capacities. This might mean, for example, that those who receive welfare benefits 'pay back' at some later time (rather than immediately) and that they do it by contributing to the support of others (not through participating in 'makework' schemes). Demanding repayment from people who are in a vulnerable situation, precisely at the time they are most vulnerable, is neither the only, nor the most morally desirable mechanism. Another weakness in the model of 'mutuality' present in harsh workfare programs is the claim that the failure of one party (say, an unemployed person) to fulfil his or her 'duty' excuses another party (say, the government) from fulfilling theirs. Goodin argued that the obligations of each party are

**Demanding repayment from people who are in a vulnerable situation, precisely at the time they are most vulnerable, is neither the only, nor the most morally desirable mechanism.**

independent of one another. He emphasised that the government's 'tit for tat' approach is particularly problematic when the basic needs of one party are at stake.

Dr Jeremy Moss (University of Melbourne) examined the implicit appeal to 'fairness' in the mutual obligation debate and argued that receipt of unemployment benefits cannot be said, on fairness grounds, to generate obligations on the part of the unemployed. Dr Duncan Ivison (University of Sydney) also examined the competing normative and political claims about the personal responsibility of the unemployed and, in particular, what such people 'owe' the rest of society. Ivison's paper mapped some of the theoretical connections between liberal theories of justice and notions of responsibility and addressed recent comments made by conservative critics of political liberalism's supposed problem with taking personal responsibility seriously.

Professor Anna Yeatman (Macquarie University) argued that a positive aspect of the current welfare reform debate in the Anglo democracies is that it encourages examination of the principles upon which our welfare systems are based. She elaborated a concept of individualised citizenship which she believed should be embedded in enabling and capacity-building welfare practices. She was also particularly interested in the ways in which ideas and practices of citizenship might be extended to children.

Working across traditional disciplinary boundaries and refashioning the debates accordingly, Dr Valerie Braithwaite (ANU), Professor Moira Gatens (University of Sydney) and Dr Deborah Mitchell (ANU) attempted to bring some clarity to the redesign of the Australian welfare system. Their paper gave prominence to the problem of contemporary risk as the pertinent question that lies behind the need for welfare reform. They offered a critical contrast between Mead's approach to welfare reform and an approach more compatible with Marshallian social values. Finally, they suggested practical ways of understanding mutual obligation that do not sacrifice the moral defensibility of welfare reform initiatives to purely pragmatic factors.

The side of the mutual obligation coin much less promulgated in official policy -- the obligations of *government* -- was examined by Associate Professor Alison McClelland (La Trobe University). She considered the way in which 'mutual obligation' has operated under the Howard government, and how it might operate if the proposals put forward in the Report of the Reference Group on Welfare Reform (McClure Report) were to be implemented. McClelland identified three 'welfare responsibilities of government': protecting the individual, the development of self-reliance and capacity and the promotion of social cohesion. She argued that current applications of mutual obligation may actually reduce the likelihood of governments meeting their welfare responsibilities. The harsh administration of the breaching provisions associated with welfare reciprocity is one indication of this. McClelland also raised the possibility that the 'capacity building' role of governments -- the extent to which they assist individuals, families and communities to function effectively in a changing environment - could also be reduced by current

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arrangements. This could happen if people's choices are constrained rather than enlarged by welfare practices. Further, the focus upon individual behaviour and motivation – rather than the capacity of institutions and organisations - is short-sighted. Finally, McClelland pointed out that language surrounding mutual obligation tends to reinforce social division and drive a wedge between those who receive payments and those who fund them (although in reality this dividing line is not nearly so clear).

A similar issue was addressed by Professor Terry Carney (University of Sydney) and Dr Gaby Ramia (Monash University) in the context of the administration of employment services under the Job Network. In a paper outlining the findings of an extensive empirical study, they detailed the complexity of the ways in which labour market services are delivered to disadvantaged job seekers. Their findings gave voice to the experiences and frustrations of unemployed people attempting to negotiate the intricacies of Job Network service providers. Dr Tony Eardley (Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW) explored the effects of competition in the quasi-market of non-profit employment services operating within the Job Network.

Another key issue explored was the political construction of claims about dependency underpinning current welfare debate and practice. Papers by Julia Perry (Department of Family and Community Services) and Dr Paul Henman (Macquarie University) revealed the complexity of social, economic and labour market trends in recent decades resulting in various categories of the population needing to rely in greater proportions on income support for certain periods of their life-course, and also charted changes to the social security system which impact on income support eligibility. Their findings cast doubt on claims of uncontrolled and illegitimate public dependency - one of the *leitmotifs* of current welfare reform discourse.

Professor Jane Millar (University of Bath) took a comparative international view and looked at sole parent family policies and the ways in which different OECD welfare regimes provide income support and transfer payments for sole parent families and children, and/or provide support for the parent's workforce participation. Dr Richard Curtain (an independent consultant) also introduced a comparative perspective in his analysis of the structure and practice of mutual obligation in relation to unemployed young people in Australia and the United Kingdom.

Focusing on a later stage of the life course, Professor Sheila Shaver and Merrin Thompson (Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW) explored the ways in which policy for the transition from employment to retirement figures in a changing discursive landscape of social policy citizenship. Examining the views of a group of Australians in mid-life, it compared the meanings of entitlement, rightfulness, merit and deserts which they attach to the age pension and occupational superannuation; the requirements, duties, and obligations they think are attached to such benefits, and how they believe these benefits and their financing should be shared among Australian citizens and workers.

Professor Bettina Cass and Associate Professor Deborah Brennan examined the uses of the concept of 'community' in the contemporary Australian welfare debate. The notion of 'community' looms large in contemporary Australian welfare debates. It is invoked in Commonwealth government strategies such as 'Strengthening Families and Communities' and the 'Community-Business' Initiative and has a central role in the interim and final reports of the Reference Group on Welfare Reform (McClure Report) and the government's response to the Report. Yet, unlike other concepts such as 'mutual obligation' and 'participation support,' its meanings are rarely interrogated. This

paper identified seven uses of 'community' in contemporary welfare debates. It argued that, while the term at one level draws on notions of consensus and identity of interest, the political and policy usages of this term are frequently divisive, antithetical to the functioning of autonomous, civil institutions, and mask a trend to greater individualised contractualism in welfare policy and administration.

**...new and innovative community devised and controlled support systems including employment generation are the necessary focus of effective reform in Aboriginal communities.**

Related issues were analysed by Professor Tim Rowse (ANU) in his study of the interactions of welfare arrangements and their implementation in Aboriginal communities. He asked whether

contractual and individualised state-based welfare provisions on the one hand and Indigenous community-based ideas and practices of reciprocity on the other are irreconcilable. He argued that new and innovative community devised and controlled support systems including employment generation are the necessary focus of effective reform in Aboriginal communities.

Dr Paul Smyth (University of Queensland) outlined an historical analysis of the various ways in which Catholic social thought in Australia through the 20<sup>th</sup> century had conceived of the role of church-based communities not only in the delivery of welfare but also in the conceptualisation of notions of social justice.

Workshop deliberations benefited from the contributions of observers Professor Di Austin-Broos (University of Sydney), Elizabeth Reid (former UN Resident Co-ordinator, Papua New Guinea) and Dr Dan Finn (visiting academic from the UK) who brought international comparisons to bear on the debate.

Participants at this workshop believe strongly that informed debate by social scientists and practitioners in government, community organisations and in industry is essential if mutual obligation and associated ideas and policy practices are to be more deeply scrutinised, more clearly understood, and their differential social impacts fully explored. Discussions are underway with regard to the publication of the workshop papers.

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*Deborah Brennan is Associate Professor in Government and International Relations, School of Economics and Political Science, University of Sydney.*

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## **Litigation: Past and Present**

### **Sharyn Roach Anleu and Wilfrid Prest**

We are often said to be witnessing a crisis in litigation, as increasing numbers of individuals (personal and corporate) turn to the courts to resolve disputes, law suits take up ever more time and money, and successful litigants receive ballooning damages awards. Litigiousness is usually viewed negatively, as problematic for political, social and legal institutions, and raising questions about access to justice. This two-day Academy workshop brought together 23 participants - historians, legal academics and practising judges and lawyers from Australia, New Zealand and the UK - to examine the construction and meaning of litigation from various comparative, historical and transdisciplinary perspectives.



Nine separate papers were presented under four thematic headings:

- Litigation in early modern England
- Colonial and comparative dimensions of litigation
- Litigation in contemporary Australia
- Litigation and Indigenous peoples

After a welcome from Fay Gale, the Academy's Immediate Past President, Dr Christopher Brooks (University of Durham) drew on his pioneering analysis of English litigation from 1200 to 1996 to set the stage. Discussing 'The longitudinal study of litigation' Brooks raised many issues which would be addressed throughout the Workshop, while also dispelling any simplistic association between litigation and modernisation. He presented a profile of court usage based as far as possible on the initiation of actions, and emphasised that the threat of legal proceedings can be as important a feature of the role of law in society as trials or judicial determinations. Brooks also canvassed difficulties related to the comparability and meaning of the available court records, another recurring theme in our discussion.

English court usage over the past 800 years saw five secular waves, or booms - four of which have been followed by substantial drops in court business, most spectacularly in the early to mid-eighteenth century. An unprecedented expansion in legal business made the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries the most litigious age per capita in English history. The nature and causes of this phenomenon generated considerable discussion, touching on the role of the legal profession, the emergence of the corporation, and doctrinal changes affecting the circulation of promissory notes.

'Going to law in early modern England: local and national perspectives' by Christine Churches and Wilfrid Prest of the University of Adelaide (delivered by Wilfrid in his co-author's absence) offered a qualitative analysis of the impact of law suits on the Cumbrian port community of Whitehaven during the century after 1660. They relied upon a variety of local sources as well as court records to suggest that litigation was usually begun only reluctantly, and after considerable attempts to negotiate a settlement, but nevertheless constituted an important resource for ordinary residents, who thereby gained some voice in aspects of the town's development. The Whitehaven case study also illustrates the ways in which uncertainties of outcome, in part due to the law's procedural formalism and in part to various external interventions, might encourage out-of-court settlements. The historical theme now shifted to colonial issues. Jeremy Finn (University of Canterbury) examined civil litigation in the early years of Christchurch's settlement. Finn's research, based on Supreme Court archives and contemporary newspaper reports, drew attention to the importance of definitions in determining the quantum of litigation (in this case account must be taken of large amounts of chambers' work and the use of judgment orders). Supreme Court litigation was open to a wide cross-section of colonial society, although mercantile interests made most use of it; regular plaintiffs and frequent defendants could be identified and the enforcement of judgements was of central significance.

The impact of gender preoccupied 'When married women litigate: issues from divorce and property disputes in colonial and contemporary Australia' by Hilary Golder (Sydney) Rosemary Hunter (Griffith) and Diane Kirkby (La Trobe). This paper explored the various ways in which access to litigation formed one component of the story of married women's quest for economic independence. From the origins and impact of the Married Women's Property and divorce extension legislation enacted across Australia from 1870 to 1893, the paper went on to explore late 20<sup>th</sup> century family law proceedings against a background of legal aid cuts, increasing levels of self-representation in the Family Court and efforts to

reduce the adversarialism of family law disputes. Divorce cases during the nineteenth century encouraged women to conform to a script of a long-suffering female passivity, as against male neglect and brutality.

The discussion clearly demonstrated that despite formal rules endowing women with rights in law, powerful cultural norms and informal expectations about women, marriage and paid work often act to undermine or dilute those formal rights.

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Measurement of litigation rates was squarely the subject of 'Hey, but who's counting? The metrics and politics of trends in civil litigation' by Ted Wright (University of Newcastle), but his concern was not solely with methodological or conceptual elucidation even despite the overall trend of decreasing rates of litigation over that period. Wright demonstrated carefully the ways in which increases in the numbers of legal proceedings commenced each year between 1984 and 2001 in NSW major courts of civil jurisdiction can and do drive legal policy, as claims of increasing litigation rates are picked up by policy makers and reflected in legislation. Moreover, legislative 'reforms' can trigger sudden troughs or peaks in the commencement of litigation and the perception of increasing litigiousness. Significant fluctuations are attributable to jurisdictional changes, specific issues (such as the breast implantation cases), changes to compensation for motor vehicle accidents, and other changes affecting legal rights. This lively presentation also raised numerous questions about the relationship between the numbers of court filings (either decrease or increase), perceived litigiousness and associated concerns with the alleged breakdown of social relations.

The first two sessions of the second day examined issues of procedure and identified changes internal to courts and their structures. In 'Litigation and the Federal civil justice system' a paper jointly written by David Weisbrot and Ian Davis (Australian Law Reform Commission) and presented by the latter, discussed the Commission's major report *Managing Justice* (2000), which canvassed such issues as legal education, alternative dispute resolution, judicial education, legal aid and case management in the Federal justice system. In his own supplementary paper Davis emphasised that the Federal Courts are not experiencing a litigation explosion and that the kinds of cases and citizens confronting this court are distinctive; for example, the Federal Court is the major business court in the Australian federal system. Davis also discussed the emergence of the Federal Magistrates Service, the bulk of its work being family law issues. This presentation also tackled issues directly related to the legal profession, especially recent developments in legal practice, including contingency fees, representative or class actions and advertising. These reforms underline what he called the new entrepreneurial style of legal practice which is counterpoised to the notion of law as a profession rather than a business.

Recent major restructuring of the civil justice system was the focus of 'Procedural reform and civil justice' by David Bamford (Flinders). Structural changes have arisen from a sense of crisis about lack of access to justice, and litigiousness, to which policy makers have responded. A second crucial force is 'legal consumerism', with consequent increasing attention paid to the claims and needs of users of the courts, and the development of judicial case management procedures, with the aim of

reducing delay and the promotion of pre-judgement settlements between contending parties. Public sector managerialism has also affected court administration, with the avowed aim of promoting greater efficiency and overall performance. Meanwhile the influence of globalism encourages sharing ideas and the adoption of reforms from other legal systems. Recent procedural reforms raise fundamental questions about the role of the courts, and of adjudication, in what is still formally an adversarial legal system, issues which received considerable attention in discussion after this paper.

The courts as a site for legal action in the cause of social justice was the subject of the final two papers. In 'Challenging the *status quo*: Indigenous activism and the rule of law' Larissa Behrendt (University of Technology, Sydney) argued that litigation which seeks to advance Indigenous interests needs to be undertaken in a more strategic manner than has occurred to date, while also cautioning that politically motivated litigation not so undertaken can be detrimental to progressive jurisprudence. Behrendt depicted the decision in *Mabo v Queensland* as a high point in Indigenous land rights and politics in Australia, underlining the general point that the courts have often shown an ability to deal more sympathetically and sensitively with these issues than hostile legislatures. Her paper further explored the potential to exploit the notion of fiduciary obligation in the native title context; judgments in *Mabo* suggested that even though a fiduciary obligation is not inherent in the relationships between Indigenous people and the Crown, there may be special circumstances that will give rise to a fiduciary obligation in the Crown's dealings with native title. Lastly Shirley Scott (NSW) discussed '*Terra nullius* and genocide: international law as litigation strategy for Indigenous Australians'. Scott suggested that while formal rejection of the doctrine of *terra nullius* permitted the High Court to acknowledge past wrongs and change the law, it did not fundamentally challenge the self-perceptions of non-Indigenous Australians, since past injustices could be blamed on the British authorities and racist international law. Genocide is a far more confronting concept, and even if policies of child removal pursued as recently as the 1970s might conceivably come within the ambit of Article 2 of the 1948 Genocide Convention, there seem to be insuperable legal and psychological barriers to pursuing a campaign in the courts based on this claim. Where litigation is sought to be used as a means of bringing about major social change, attention must be paid not only to legal mechanisms, but also to their symbolic role and resonance.

A final panel discussion led by the convenors provide an opportunity to revisit many themes raised during the workshop, including the problems of defining and measuring the incidence of litigation, the varying cultural, social and political roles of law courts, the judiciary and the legal profession, and the importance of history as a means of obtaining perspective and insights on contemporary issues, including purported litigation crises. After canvassing future avenues of publication, and another possible workshop on lawyers now and then, proceedings closed with a vote of thanks to the Academy, the Law Foundation of South Australia (whose generous support facilitated Christopher Brooks' visit), the Barr Smith Library, and Robyn Green, Julie McMahon and Julie Thorpe of the History Department, University of Adelaide.

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## **The Genocide Effect: New Perspectives on Modern Cultures of Killing**

***Simone Gigliotti and Dirk Moses***

'The Genocide Effect' (University of Sydney, 4-5 July, 2001) assembled twenty-five scholars from Australia and one visiting scholar from Germany to discuss genocide as it relates to the historical causation and contemporary meanings of atrocity, violence and dispossession. Scholars from history, political science, law, philosophy, anthropology, and education were asked to consider how genocide affects the speakability of trauma, the political denial/ admission of past injustice, public cultures of apology, juridical contexts of prosecuting perpetrators and establishing criminality and guilt, and the post-genocide integration of a shared history of shame and pride in the constitution of political community and morally responsible citizenship.

The initiative for the workshop stemmed from the convenors' desire to revisit what was explicit in the recent 'genocide debate' - emanating principally, though not exclusively, from the publication of *Bringing Them Home* in May 1997 - that is, the indebtedness of the debate to the Holocaust as the meta-vision for discussions of genocide. The history of unspeakability anchored to the Holocaust was evident in the repeated invocation of it in public and scholarly debate as the ultimate frame for interpreting acts and processes of dispossession in the settlement of Australia and the practice of forcible removals as intentionally or potentially genocidal. This discussion invoked the well-worn vocabulary of the Holocaust's uniqueness with largely unquestioning assumption: its silence, sublimity, ineffability, unspeakability, and incomprehensibility. The interlocutors attributed an aura of unprecedented destruction to the Holocaust, not just in the scope of the loss (the death of six million European Jews), but also to the Nazis' relentless pursuit to eliminate European Jewry from the face of the earth. It is this image of the Holocaust - total physical extermination of the Jews as an ethnic, religious and racial group - which has, according to many, isolated and distanced it from other acts of genocide.

We identify the central interpretive problematic from this debate as relating to the practical and symbolic weight, and the juridical power, of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. In relation to Australia, some commentators have denied genocidal possibilities due to a semantic deficiency: because there was not a name (conferring a legal and social identity of criminality) for acts that constituted the intentions and terms of the convention - the conspiracy to commit, direct and public incitement, attempt to commit, and complicity in genocide - then Australia's history of the expropriation of Aboriginality through territory, biology and cultural identity, does not exhibit eliminationist thought, intent and practice before 1948.

Another interpretive issue relates to society's visual conditioning to genocide. Subsequent to World War II, discussions of possible genocidal activity have been schooled in the meta-image of Holocaust atrocity: the massacre pits of Babi Yar, the industrial 'processing' and crematoria at Auschwitz, and the skeletal and emaciated corpses of liberation at camps in Germany, Austria and Poland. Because the visual collective memory of the Holocaust constructs the contemporary consciousness of genocide so indelibly, the possibility for thinking through criminal acts divorced from atrocity tropes synonymous with it undoes the work of the Convention as the template in which to read other possibly genocidal practices. The effect is inhibiting as it is unsatisfying and relates to strategies of assimilating the Holocaust into scholarly interpretation and historical and cultural consciousness as a sign of approximation - on

the one hand invoked as the universal template of genocide, yet on the other exalted in its uniqueness because of the emphasis on intentional physical murder. We would argue that the parameters of the genocide convention operate on a spectrum from possibility to totality, a concept ignored by numerous commentators who are intent on relying on the Holocaust's horrifically extreme tropes to provide an historical norm of genocide.

'The Genocide Effect' aimed to engage these issues, and was in many ways a 'testing ground' that aspired to stimulate further discussion and clarify points of contention among scholars in relation to intent, legal questions of criminality, cultural effects, and testimonial voices of genocide in first and second-generation trauma narratives.

In 'The limitations of the Genocide Convention', Tim McCormack addressed how the international criminal court would aim to prosecute genocide with respect to territorial or jurisdictional issues. Robert van Krieken introduced the theme of cultural genocide, and Jennifer Balint suggested a typology of genocide that problematised the notion of intent in thought and practice. This isolation of intent would be 'coloured' for the intensity of its genocidal expression. The ensuing debate exposed the disciplinary differences at the workshop: the need to retain the present convention in its definition and criteria for the prosecution of genocide, or the question of whether the convention would ever be revised to accommodate its alleged inadequacies (exclusion of political, sexual, disabled groups). McCormack suggested that in relation to the stolen generations, sufficient evidence existed for a charge of crimes against humanity, but other scholars were moved to debate the more functional outcomes of invoking genocide to accommodate the act of forcible removals.

In the panel 'Locating genocidal visions in the colonial encounter', Henry Reynolds examined Tasmanian history in the 1820s and 1830s as a period of annihilation, extermination and extirpation. Reynolds complicated the application of the word genocide to the colonial encounter by suggesting that only specific tribal groups were targeted, rather than Aborigines as a national group. This austere interpretation of the Genocide Convention was qualified by the argument that punishable crimes included the attempt to kill certain tribal groups. Reynolds denied the general application of

**...although the colonisation of Australia revealed sporadic or feverish genocidal impulses, one must take account of the structural processes intrinsic in settler/indigenous contact.**

genocide to Australian history, but ventured that there were, in the phrase of Dirk Moses, 'genocidal moments' that can be isolated. In contrast, Jan Kociumbas argued that the introduction of small pox into the colony was genocidal. British colonists had experimented with biological warfare in Boston before its adoption as a genocidal method in Australia.

Discussion raised much disagreement as to whether smallpox could be classed as genocide.

In the panel 'Stealing the children', Robert Manne discussed the intimate associations of the Holocaust for thinking about forcible removals, and concentrated on biological absorption, using Hannah Arendt's definition of genocide in *Eichmann in Jerusalem* as the attempt to wipe away a people from the earth, as the departure point. Russell McGregor strongly rejected the argument of genocidal intent in the state-sponsored project of forcible removals, and insisted that although the colonisation of Australia revealed sporadic or feverish genocidal impulses, one must take account of the structural processes intrinsic in settler/indigenous contact. McGregor argued that the forcible removal of children in the post-World War II period was a project of

governance of the liberal-democratic polity, and that the objectives of assimilation were the physical survival of the population and nation building. McGregor appears to agree with Manne in the necessity to isolate differences in the intentions of interwar as opposed to postwar child removals. Anna Haebich focused on case studies from Western Australia, while Anthony McKnight questioned the cultural and political investments in the speakability of the topic for non-Indigenous Australians.

In a discursive panel 'Genocide in its different contexts', Andrew Markus attempted to consolidate and interpret the strands in competing interpretations of genocide in the workshop's discussions. Tony Barta focused on Britain and Germany as comparative colonial empires that used territorial displacement and enslavement of populations to achieve their economic and racial visions, while Paul Bartrop considered Australia as a genocidal democracy through concentrating on the stolen generations.

Speakers in the panel, 'The guilt of nations: the postwar conscience and historical injustice', produced a highly animated discussion about competing visions of historical responsibility. Gillian Triggs argued for the retention of the genocide convention in its original form and re-emphasised the practical uses of genocide legislation. Konrad Kwiet questioned the utility of war crimes trials as a source of education about history. Finally, Ghassan Hage examined the 'gift' of citizenship associated with migration and entry into a country with polluted memories of a colonial past. The discussion focused on the anti-colonial project and the transactions of shame and pride invested in the paradigm of inclusion and exclusion in the political and moral project of reconciliation constructed on the basis of ethnicity and multiculturalism.

In 'Telling stories', Esther Faye discussed, with much poignancy, second-generation witnessing to parents' Holocaust trauma. Suzanne Rutland provided an overview of Holocaust consciousness in Australia through the microcosm of survivor communities in Melbourne and Sydney and their emerging visibility in response to domestic and international events. Deirdre Heitmeyer, a victim of forcible removals, talked about her own experiences and memories, and the implications of her story for historical and moral responsibility. Discussion focused around imagined and real events and the survivor as a witness in constructing 'narrative truth'.

In 'Rethinking the Holocaust', visiting German scholar Gerhard Hirschfeld appealed for more comparative genocide work, using Armenia as the case point. Raimond Gaita reflected on the moral and explicable dimensions of the Holocaust - the event's ineffability and explicability as two competing strands of interpretation which exposed moments of national anxiety and confusion. John Milfull examined Bernhard Schlink, author of *The Reader*, and his attribution to the Holocaust as a perversion of bourgeois culture. Discussion focused on the problematic of reading post-World War II events independently from the atrocity landscapes of the Holocaust.

'Confronting genocidal pasts' provided the concluding forum to assimilate the discussion of the two days. Winton Higgins considered the normative and particular aspects of the Holocaust while Colin Tatz provided a summary of the issues at stake in denying and admitting genocidal histories in Australia.

The vision of the convenors was exceeded in reality. Academy workshop funding stipulated restricted participation to exclusively scholarly exchange, which fostered a greater sense of intellectual possibility and dialogue on the sensitive topic. This environment produced lively, tense and generous exchanges that unexpectedly challenged the positions and assumptions of many scholars who may have been resistant to the practical utility of genocide as a legal, rather than cultural or political

crime. The realisation of the convenors' vision was dependent on the rigorous, committed intellectual sharing of the speakers who rose to the task of probing why the contemporary semantics of genocide, whether in Australia or Europe, remains as unsettled and disarming now as it did from the moment of its entry into law and consciousness fifty-three years ago.

*Workshop Publication Outcomes:* Visiting German scholar and speaker at the workshop, Professor Gerhard Hirschfeld was interviewed by Maria Zijlstra on 9 July 2001 for 'The Europeans' on ABC *Radio National*. Selected papers from the workshop will appear in a forthcoming publication, *Genocide and Settler Society: Frontier Violence and the 'Civilising Process' in Australia*, edited by A Dirk Moses, New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books.

*Dr Simone Gigliotti is from the Department of History, University of Melbourne.*

*Dr Dirk Moses is from the Department of History, University of Sydney.*

***Constituting a 'People':  
The Legacy of White Australia***

A Centenary of Federation Event  
14-15 December 2001  
University of Western Australia, Perth

In 1931 the eminent Australian historian Sir Keith Hancock described the 'White Australia' policy as *the indispensable condition of every other policy*. This observation has remained true for at least six decades of Federation. It certainly has been the emblem of Australian identity and a dominant influence on nearly all aspects of domestic policies and external relations. The Centenary of Federation provides an occasion to revisit the passage of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, more popularly known as the 'White Australia' policy.

This Symposium provides an opportunity for reflection on the meaning and significance of this defining event, one of the first Acts of Federation for the Australian society. Scholars in the humanities and social sciences will examine the diverse ways in which Australian society has been transformed in the aftermath of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901.

Hosted by:

The Institute of Advanced Studies, The University of Western Australia  
The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia  
The Office of Multicultural Interests, The Government of Western Australia

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## **Our Neighbours: Social & Political Update**

### **Malaysia Since 1999: Dr Mahathir Survives his Crises**

**Clive S Kessler**

For Malaysia's National Front [BN] government and especially its dominant party the United Malays National Organisation [UMNO], the 1999 election results were disastrous.

The BN coalition was decisively returned to power. But Dr Mahathir and his party suffered significant losses, caused by declining Malay support, to Malay-backed opposition parties: to Parti Keadilan, recently formed by supporters of former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, but mainly the Islamist party PAS.

The central question decided by the election concerned how many federal and state seats, and what proportion of the popular Malay vote (especially in the 'Malay heartland' areas), UMNO would lose to the Malay opposition. The crucial issue tested was the erosion of UMNO domination of the centrally important Malay vote following the 1997 Asian economic crisis (notably, its effects upon the Malaysian economy and the UMNO-based national economic 'directorate'), especially following Anwar Ibrahim's rebellion.

The UMNO fared poorly against the PAS challenge. It lost much; what it held demonstrated not its unassailable ascendancy but its unsuspected vulnerability. PAS again overwhelmingly defeated the UMNO in Kelantan, its bastion since 1959; it captured neighbouring Terengganu; and it made advances elsewhere in the peninsula, even in areas where it had never won seats before. PAS won an unprecedented number of federal and state seats throughout peninsular Malaysia.

Historically in Malaysia, when election results demonstrate a significant diminution of the UMNO's domination of the popular Malay vote, the nation's entire UMNO-centred political system is jeopardised. When demonstrably weakened by such reverses, the UMNO's ability to impose terms on the governing coalition, and thereby to set an unchallengeable agenda for the country, is placed in doubt. In 1969 PAS won about as much of the Malay vote as the UMNO; the poorly sensed implications of this setback triggered street-action and ultimately a regime-crisis (inadequately labelled simply as 'race riots'). The UMNO fared worse in 1999, and PAS far better, than in 1969. The Malay-majority constituencies that elect many members of parliament massively supported PAS, while repudiating the UMNO, its politics, and many of its figureheads.

#### **Steady at the helm: Dr Mahathir's defiant survival**

UMNO might have changed its orientation, image, and even its leadership. But it did not; instead, over the next two years Dr Mahathir Mohamad clung to power, maintaining his nerve, his authoritarian grip and his basic policy directions. Where change was needed, he would offer not new initiatives to appeal to Malaysia's clamouring new political generations but, to appease popular Malay discontent, the heads of old comrades-in-arms, notably the long-time economic supremo and UMNO party 'money-man' Tun Daim Zainuddin and his protégés (the former heroes and now widely execrated villains of Malaysia's failed and costly privatisation exercises).

The story of Malaysia since the 1999 elections is the story of Dr Mahathir's defiant survival. No politician more resembles Richard Nixon in his ability not merely to survive a succession of crises but actually to define and recreate himself in facing them. For much of last two years the flow of political developments seemed to be against him. Yet he held on until the tide turned, as the events of 11 September would confirm.



### 1. **Failed Islamist uprising**

In mid-2000 Malaysians were surprised by the brazen action of a small Islamist group. Members of *al-Ma'unah* seized a substantial quantity of arms from an army depot. Dr Mahathir warned of the dangers such groups posed; not until September 2001 would that warning resonate.

The cost of the episode was heavy, not just to reputations. Human lives were lost. But had *al-Ma'unah* gone on with its agenda, many more might have been imperiled. The main target of the group, government spokesmen suggested, was Dr Mahathir, his cabinet and the UMNO leadership. What might have happened was worrying; what did happen remained disquieting. After staging its brilliant heist, the group withdrew to their leader's village orchard to pursue old Malay mystical disciplines assuring their invulnerability. There most of them were eventually forced to surrender.

When they did and some details of their identities became known, the implications were troubling. Those involved in a similar confrontation in 1985 had been backward isolated villagers, excluded from progress and outcasts from modernity. Now, *al-Ma'unah's* followers included security personnel, engineers, computer salesmen and accountants. Born of despair or alienation, of receding economic optimism or growing religious disaffection, a susceptibility to the appeals of these *jihad*-obsessed Islamist groups was entering the mainstream of Malaysian life. Not the outcasts of development but those who should be avid partisans of Dr Mahathir's high-tech and economically modernist Vision 2020 were its protagonists. A pious revulsion against that 'brave new world', carried upwards by an osmosis of resentment, now reached the aspiring middle-class Malays produced by the UMNO's New Economic Policy [NEP] for Malay advance.

Whatever the *al-Ma'unah* threat, the committed support for its *jihad* fantasies among some marginal and insecure elements of the new Malay middle classes was a worry. Also worrying to Dr Mahathir was a widespread disinclination among the Malaysian public to accept his warnings about that threat. Opposition media suggestions that the government was behind the strange insurgency or had manipulated events to its own advantage were widely believed. Yet, following the events of 11 September 2001, with Osama bin Laden's name on everybody's lips, the brief *al-Ma'unah* uprising seems consistent with suggestions made even then that an international network of militant Islamists was active in Malaysia.

Whatever its origins, the episode did play into Dr Mahathir's hands. A month or so earlier, questions were being raised whether essential non-Malay support for the BN might be withdrawn if his Chinese coalition partners were not given extra cabinet seats to acknowledge the importance of the coalition's non-Malay support-base following the UMNO's heavy losses to PAS in 1999. Now, the *al-Ma'unah* shock served to prove that dispute irrelevant; regardless of the division of cabinet positions, BN now insisted, its actions now proved Dr Mahathir and his coalition were the defenders of moderation and intercommunal cooperation. The problem of non-Malay confidence was accordingly deflected.

Events also enabled Dr Mahathir, in the face of unceasing Islamist critiques, to claim that his religiously modernist UMNO was the champion of authentic Islamic moderation, rather than an illicit secularism as PAS asserted. When the resurgent Islamist party PAS had Dr Mahathir back-footed before the 1995 elections, he had struck at the heterodox and increasingly influential *al-Arqam* movement. This was not only a shot across PAS's bows, signalling that what the government was doing now to

*al-Arḡam* it could do later to PAS. It was also a powerful performative riposte to PAS's contention that it, not the UMNO, was the political party that genuinely promoted the Islamic cause. In firm action, not mere words, Dr Mahathir and his UMNO had defended mainstream Islam against false belief and sectarian ambition. Similarly, in 2000 *al-Ma'unah* provided Dr Mahathir and UMNO with the opportunity, in the face of renewed Islamist challenge, to act decisively in defence of religious moderation. Their argument of deeds trumped Islamist rhetoric.

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Over the years leading up to the 1999 elections, Dr Mahathir and the UMNO have paid a heavy price for their failure to present what they stand for, the cause of Islamic modernism, as a plausible form of Islam, no less authentic than the Islamist ideologues' nostalgic visions. Following the electoral rejection of the UMNO's ineptly presented Islamic modernism, an upsurge of regressive Islamist fervour and activism was likely. Yet this would prove a benefit to Dr Mahathir from September 2001, when events that would shake the foundations of

human moral imagination would make sensible people flee from militant Islamism, including the Malaysian version presented by PAS.

From mid-2000 Dr Mahathir began assiduously seeking to tar all Islamist opposition, including PAS and the Anwarist Keadilan party, with the *al-Ma'unah* brush as extremists or their apologists. For the impatient moderniser Dr Mahathir, the underlying worry was that *al-Ma'unah* and sympathy for its misguided enthusiasts could slow Malaysia's rush for socioeconomic development. Others asked the obverse question: whether the rise of *al-Ma'unah* and sympathy for its aims among the less secure elements of new Malay middle class were not themselves symptoms of a long-term slowdown in economic growth; of the frustration of marginal middle-class social expectations during the nation's post-1997 economic crisis.

## **2. Anachronistic nostalgia: recreating Malay unity?**

By the end of 2000, following a state by-election loss to Parti Keadilan in a formerly safe government seat, the UMNO appeared stalled.

In awkward times, the UMNO's usual recourse, and Dr Mahathir's impulses, are usually to attack the opposition, to foment discord among its various elements. He now seized upon the recommendation earlier put forward, without government demurral, by a Chinese lobby group to relax constitutionally mandated pro-Malay affirmative action measures. He hoped to undermine the understandings binding the ideologically diverse opposition coalition known as the Alternative Front [BA]: to generate discord between Parti Keadilan and the DAP, predominantly Malay and non-Malay components respectively of the opposition coalition; and to embarrass as un-Malay both PAS and Parti Rakyat Malaysia [PRM], the Malay-led anti-ethnicist leftist party which played within that coalition a brokering role much larger than its modest size.

The other side of this same coin was a strategy to suggest that the Malay stake in the country remained in jeopardy. The call for Malay political unity to ensure continuing Malay ascendancy, UMNO leaders asserted, was directed positively within the increasingly divided Malay community itself, not against non-Malays. But the sub-text was clear: divisions among Malays, exemplified since the fall of Anwar Ibrahim in a

crisis of popular Malay confidence in the UMNO, had made possible an implied range of non-Malay advances at Malay expense.

Yet the Malay unity for which Dr Mahathir's strategists called was illusory. The entire purpose and effect of the pro-Malay affirmative action policies since 1970, and especially under Dr Mahathir since 1981, had been to diversify Malaysia's Malay community in all dimensions: economically, socially, culturally. The hope that this diversification would not find expression politically was vain; the Malay political unity which the UMNO nostalgically invoked is a receding mirage. Since 1970 the UMNO has transformed Malay society; ironically failing to recognise the implications of its own greatest achievement, the UMNO and its leaders were left wondering why the old calls for Malay political unity grounded in traditional deference no longer work.

Younger Malays understand this well. As a group, they are the products of the UMNO's thirty years of pro-Malay affirmative action policies. Dr Mahathir has expected them to acknowledge this fact politically in timely demonstrations of gratitude. This, in a generational gesture of common defiance, they have refused. To him they are ingrates; but many of these young people impatient with the old UMNO paternalism are now voters. Their hero, the man who was once, and for many still remains, the answer to the UMNO's dilemma was languishing in prison; Malaysia was haunted by the gap which Anwar Ibrahim's removal had created.

### **3. Accumulating tensions, and growing problems for UMNO**

The political restlessness in Kuala Lumpur in early 2001 was palpable, concerning:

- unresolved tensions at senior levels within the UMNO over the national leadership succession; and parallel tensions within the Malaysian Chinese Association over the retirement of its long-serving leader and the accession of his increasingly impatient understudy;
- Malay-Chinese tensions within the BN over political issues and educational questions including the future of Chinese-language secondary schools and non-Malay access to universities;
- an emerging crisis in relations between a large part of the Indian community and the Malaysian Indian Congress, the key Indian party in the BN coalition, following Malay-Indian communal clashes in the poorer areas of Kuala Lumpur in March;
- intensified government pressure upon its political adversaries, including a new round of arrests made under the Internal Security Act [ISA], followed by attempts to have recent ISA detainees brought before courts under *habeas corpus* principles, and their arrest and detention made subject to judicial review rather than matters of ministerial discretion;
- mounting tension between the new Human Rights Commission and the government over such questions as the right of peaceful public assembly, of Commissioners to have access to ISA detainees, and the role of the ISA itself;
- Anwar Ibrahim's medical condition and the question whether he should be allowed sophisticated treatment overseas for his rapidly deteriorating spinal condition;
- the conviction for perjury, for his court testimony on Anwar's behalf, of Anwar's former private secretary, elected to the Selangor State Assembly on a surge of public revulsion against the sustained onslaught upon Anwar in the UMNO's 1999 election;
- the government's announced intention to proceed to trial on a sedition charge against the veteran defence lawyer and long-serving DAP opposition identity Karpal Singh for

his claim, made in court as one of Anwar's defence lawyers, that Anwar was being poisoned; and the elevation of Mokhtar Abdullah, the Attorney-General who directed the prosecution of Anwar Ibrahim, to a senior position on the judiciary; and

- continuing public disquiet over the rescue at public expense of leading Malay corporate entrepreneurs, close associates and beneficiaries of the UMNO-led government, leading to growing tensions between Tun Daim Zainuddin (patron of the Malay entrepreneurs and Finance Minister as well as UMNO treasurer) and Dr Mahathir; to intensifying public speculation about reported disagreement between the two over the political cost to Dr Mahathir of the financial embarrassments of Tun Daim's protégés; and to his withdrawal from his ministerial position as the eventual prelude to his complete retreat from visible politics at Dr Mahathir's side.

The next few months, many felt, might prove decisive. Among the optimists, hope grew that an entirely new post-BN pattern of Malaysian politics, civic rather than ethnic in character, was forming. Some months later, looking back on these hopes, these idealists would speak wistfully of a 'Malaysian spring' that had failed to mature into a warming political summer.

#### **4. Polarisation: UMNO versus PAS the central choice**

Malaysia's next national elections will be far more constrained than even the carefully staged triumphalist pageants offered by Dr Mahathir since 1981.

Political stability, interethnic accommodation and social peace in Malaysia have depended ever since independence in 1957 upon the UMNO's ability to command a substantial majority of the popular Malay vote, and on that basis to construct around itself an interethnic coalition of largely ethnic parties upon which it could impose its terms. That ability was shaken by the resurgence of PAS in 1999, boosted by the righteous indignation of Anwar Ibrahim's Parti Keadilan supporters. (Electoral system technicalities made PAS the major beneficiary of widespread Malay discontent: in a first-past-the-post system, opposition parties must not contest against each other but agree on an allocation seats to contest; avoiding vote-splitting is what the creation of a united Malaysian opposition front entails; it presupposes that opposition supporters will prefer any opposition candidate to the government's, even if the former pursues a very different politics from the voter's own. On this basis PAS was the beneficiary of the great discontent, not necessarily all of it Islamist, surging through Malaysia's demographically and politically dominant Malay community.)

After 1999 the UMNO had rejected the option of radical renewal under a new youth-oriented leadership; instead Dr Mahathir insisted on staying, designating as prospective successor a deputy whose patient loyalty sends the message 'no change'. The UMNO was also embattled on other fronts. Some courageous elements within the judiciary were showing an increased readiness to question arbitrary assertions of executive prerogative, including the ISA. The Human Rights Commission was displeasing Dr Mahathir and his ministers with similar displays of independence on such questions as repeal of the ISA, the rights and treatment of ISA detainees, and the right of public assembly of opposition forces.

Yet the UMNO and Dr. Mahathir would not back off. Instead, pressures on the Anwarists and the younger PAS Islamists were intensified by further arrests under the ISA; public campaigning and meetings by all opposition parties were banned; and the distribution of opposition (especially PAS) propaganda via video cassettes and compact discs as well as newspapers was now outlawed. Allegations of Taliban-like sympathies and objectives were made not simply to discredit the PAS Islamists but also to heighten tensions among elements in the opposition BA front, especially to undermine the problematic entente between the *shari'a*-minded PAS and the decidedly anticlerical DAP.

By mid-2001 these developments could be seen as preparation for the 2004 elections. It was clear what the UMNO's strategy would be. The challenge of an Anwarist 'new politics' mounted with 'new-generation' Malay support by Parti Keadilan and PRM, who had been seeking since 1999 to negotiate a merger, as well as the multiethnic human rights oriented NGO-sector was to be marginalised by 'security' arrests and a propaganda assault on radical 'political Islamists', but in other ways ignored.

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The UMNO would deal politically with the Anwarist and Keadilan challenges by side-stepping them. Instead, it signalled its strategic intention of trying to unite the many against the few: establishment UMNO Malays, less committed Malays from Keadilan and the other Malay parties, its usual non-Malay partner parties, and as much of the conventional non-Malay opposition as it might mobilise in massed confrontation against PAS. Malaysian politics would now be repolarised, not on ethnic but intra-Islamic lines. Hence the intensified pressure from government spokesmen on the understanding between PAS and the DAP, which champions non-Malay issues, over the question of PAS's ultimate commitment to establishing an Islamic state.

If the entente between PAS and the DAP could be shattered, UMNO strategists reasoned, there would be no united challenge from a cohesive opposition coalition; whatever the Anwarists might do, and whether Keadilan's merger with PRM might succeed, would cease to matter greatly. The various opposition forces would be isolated, if the PAS-DAP alliance could be undermined. Without a DAP-PAS entente, there was no united opposition coalition; and without such an opposition coalition, the rivalry conducted largely in Islamic terms between UMNO and PAS would become the main political issue facing all Malaysians, not only Malays and other Muslims. Far broader in its horizon than simply intra-Malay political disputation over the politics of Islam, Malaysian politics as whole, for all Malaysians, would now be shrunk to fit the narrower dimensions of the Malay mould, to the choice between Mahathir's Islam or the Islamists'. To government advantage, Malaysian voters would be posed the choice between the BN regimen of statist authoritarianism grounded upon horse-trading among party-ethnic elites and PAS's increasingly assertive neo-traditionalist Islamism.

Offering the electorate that clear choice in 2004 might deliver a sizeable vote endorsing party-statist authoritarianism over sectarian religious zeal. Yet, in pushing to its conclusion this logic of uniting the diverse many in Malaysia against PAS's Islamist challenge, the BN may begin evolving from a confederation of crudely and unashamedly ethnic parties into an organisationally unitary but ethnically pluralistic party: perhaps one of a more modern and democratic temper that might provide not only immediate electoral advantage but a plausible way forward for Malaysia in subsequent years. Whether the current UMNO leadership have the imagination and courage to grasp this redeeming possibility from the political brew they are concocting is doubtful.

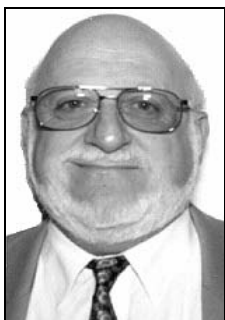
### **Dr Mahathir reaps the whirlwind**

For much of 2001, the government struggled to reassert its ascendancy. Yet the harsh measures it took only further impaired Dr Mahathir's legitimacy. However, persistent pressure from government strategists on the BA opposition coalition finally prevailed. They focused on the unresolved tensions between the opposition coalition's two largest partners: PAS with its hopes of making Malaysia a *shari'a*-based Islamic state; and the secularist DAP with its explicitly un-'Malay-centric' views of Malaysian society and identity. By late August, this key axis of the BA opposition coalition cracked. With its collapse, Dr Mahathir and the UMNO could present national politics for all Malaysians, and not just Malay Muslims, as turning on essentially intra-Malay concerns: the choice between the assertively Islamist PAS or the more gradualist UMNO, between Mahathir's Islam and the Islamists'.

Further arrests and detentions of PAS activists and Islamist militants – allegedly with connections to Afghanistan and *jihad*-type actions throughout Southeast Asia - ensued. Initially greeted with scepticism, this action was soon placed beyond questioning by the events of 11 September. Were the entente between PAS and the DAP not already dead, this would have killed it. Meanwhile, criticisms from the Human Rights Commission, the judiciary and civil libertarian NGOs of the ISA and preventive detention were silenced.

Far from boasting of vindication, Dr Mahathir coolly asserted that the Malaysian arrests were unconnected with the search for Osama bin Laden's associates and pointedly questioned US strikes against Afghanistan. But he was in charge again: he was once more the champion of moderate Islam against Islamists now tainted by association with deeds far exceeding lurid UMNO propaganda; domestic criticism of strong-handed government was discredited; and, essential as a prominent Muslim moderate to the international coalition against terror, Dr Mahathir could be confident that international criticism of his rule as repressive would end. The chill in US-Malaysian relations from Al Gore's bungled visit to Kuala Lumpur in 1998 was ended.

For Australia, old problems in our relations with Malaysia have been intensified. If sustaining moderate Muslim participation in President Bush's 'crusade' against terrorism means that modernising authoritarians must be neither challenged nor imperiled, we are likely to find Dr Mahathir an even more 'recalcitrant' neighbour than ever.



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## Indonesia's Continuing Crisis

**Harold Crouch**

After three decades of often brutal authoritarian rule, the fall of the Soeharto regime in Indonesia (May 1998) was widely welcomed as giving the country an opportunity to re-establish democratic institutions. But the last three years have seen the spread of disappointment and disillusion. Restrictions on parties and the press were removed, political prisoners were released, a free election was held in 1999, the military was forced to relinquish many of its powers and East Timor was able to vote for independence. But Indonesia's democracy has not been 'delivering the goods' in the form of economic recovery, respect for the rule of law and guaranteed security for its people.

The removal of Soeharto from the presidency was not accompanied by a thorough overhaul of his government. Old institutions remained with unchanged personnel who had little interest in reform. Nevertheless, the system changed drastically not in the composition of the political elite but in the structure of power. Soeharto had presided over a pyramid of patronage protected by the armed forces with himself at its apex. But his civilian successor, BJ Habibie, lacked the authority to step into the dictator's shoes. The result was a fragmented structure of power in which Soeharto's single pyramid disintegrated into dozens of small patronage pyramids. No president since Soeharto has exercised anything like effective control over the government, let alone the whole nation. Habibie, who succeeded to the presidency by virtue of his position as vice president, lasted only nineteen months and his democratically – although indirectly - elected successor, Abdurrahman Wahid, a mere twenty. If President Megawati Soekarnoputri survives longer, it will not be because the president has at last established the authority to control the government but because the system is so fragmented that no potential successor is able to mobilise sufficient support to launch a challenge.

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The 1999 election, the first genuine one since 1955, failed to produce a clear winner. Among the 48 contesting parties, Megawati's Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) came out on top with 34 per cent of the votes, followed by Golkar – the electoral vehicle of the Soeharto regime – with 23 per cent and Abdurrahman Wahid's National Awakening Party (PKB) with 13 per cent. After several months of manoeuvring, Abdurrahman managed to stitch together an unlikely coalition after stabbing his previous ally, Megawati, in the back. But Abdurrahman – in many ways an admirable and inspiring Muslim thinker – provided only colourful leadership while lacking the managerial skills needed to run a government. Having alienated most of his earlier allies, he was finally deposed last July and succeeded by the vice president, Megawati, whose own government inevitably reflects the fragmentation found in the parliament.

The challenges faced by the new government are enormous. The Indonesian economy – unlike those of Malaysia, Thailand and South Korea - has not recovered from the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis. Indonesia's public debt is now roughly equivalent to its gross domestic product and one third of government revenues are devoted to servicing this debt.

The government has been forced to take over many bankrupt private banks while big private corporations are still heavily in debt but survive through the simple expedient of not servicing their loans. New investment has largely dried up as foreign investors no longer feel confident in the government's capacity to provide adequate security while many of the Indonesian Chinese who left Indonesia after the anti-Chinese riots of 1997-8 are still unwilling to bring their money back. Meanwhile it is estimated that about 40 per cent of the work force is either unemployed or severely under-employed. Although Megawati appointed what was dubbed a 'dream team' of economists to her cabinet, their room for manoeuvre is restricted by the massive debt and the no less massive corruption that continues to riddle the bureaucracy.

Corruption is not limited to the bureaucracy but extends into the parliaments at the national and regional levels. Many politicians expect donations from interested groups and government departments to facilitate the passage through parliament of legislation proposed by those departments. Bribery of politicians is common during elections, especially elections of provincial governors and district heads. Megawati's own party, the PDI-P, has become notorious for losing elections in local parliaments despite being the largest party in many cases. The implication is that party members have been successfully induced to support candidates from other parties against the party's own candidate.

Corruption also permeates the system of justice – beginning with the police and rising through the prosecutor's office to the courts. Although some 'reform' appointments were made to the Supreme Court during the Abdurrahman presidency, public

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confidence is minimal. Despite a number of prosecutions of officials and businessmen involved in major financial scandals, only one Soeharto crony has been jailed and Soeharto's own trial was abandoned on the grounds of ill-health. Several other cases resulted in convictions that were overturned on appeal for highly technical reasons. It is widely believed that prosecutors make the job of judges easier by deliberately including technical errors in charges. In the most spectacular recent case, former President Soeharto's son, Tommy, won an appeal to the Supreme Court against an 18-months sentence although his partner in the crime had admitted guilt and served his term. Tommy had absconded at that time to avoid imprisonment and has since been

accused of other crimes, including the murder of a Supreme Court judge who had previously rejected his appeal. It is widely believed that Tommy could remain free only with the protection of senior members of the military or the police.

Corruption is also deeply embedded in the military and police. A former defence minister has claimed that the military only obtains 25-30 per cent of the funds it needs



from the government's budget. Part of the rest is provided from the profits of military-sponsored and military-protected enterprises that continue to obtain favours from the national and regional governments. More is raised through straight-forward extortion. The military and police also hire out personnel as private security guards for vulnerable private enterprises ranging from petrochemical complexes to night-clubs and illegal gambling casinos. And at the bottom of the structure individual soldiers and policemen take second jobs – sometimes legal and sometimes illegal – in order to make ends meet. It is not unusual for fighting to break out in the regions between army and police units who are competing for limited financial opportunities.

One of the consequences has been that the military and police often perform their 'official' duties poorly. When underpaid and poorly trained soldiers and police are sent to regions – like Aceh and Papua – where rebels are challenging the authority of the central government, the security forces often contribute to the problem. Money is routinely extorted from local shopkeepers and other enterprises and even passengers on long-distance buses are relieved of money and goods at road-blocks. Troops often become 'emotional' – as senior officers explain – if some of their colleagues are killed or wounded during operations and then take revenge on local inhabitants. It is common for troops to respond to the shooting of one of their number by beating up residents of nearby villages and then setting the village on fire – a tactic that seems to have been inherited from Dutch colonial times.

The police and the military have also often failed to maintain peace between ethnic and religious communities. It is estimated that 5000 or more people have been killed in Muslim-Christian fighting in the Maluku islands during the last three years, at least several hundred Madurese were killed by Dayaks in both West and Central Kalimantan, and several hundred more in Muslim-Christian violence in the Poso district of Central Sulawesi. Many smaller clashes have taken place and now Indonesia has 1.3 million internal refugees. This is not to suggest that it is easy to contain ethnic and religious conflict, particularly when military and police personnel are drawn from the warring communities. In Maluku, 'contamination' – as military officers call it – was so deep that both Muslim and Christian soldiers and policemen were sometimes supplying their co-religionists with weapons and bullets. In other cases bullets were being sold for economic gain. And on several occasions in Maluku – and also in Central Kalimantan – army and police units actually went into battle against each other.

From this brief picture the reader might draw the conclusion that Indonesia's future is bleak. Indeed it is hard to be a convinced optimist in present circumstances. But total pessimism is not justified either. Foreign observers often portray Indonesia as on the point of collapse leading to 'Balkanisation' yet Indonesian society has shown much resilience during the last few years.

Although communal violence of one sort or another has been common and extremely serious for those involved, the overwhelming majority of the Indonesian people has not been directly affected by religious and ethnic conflict. Certainly communal fighting has been a disaster for the one per cent of the Indonesia population who live in the two Maluku provinces and the much smaller population of the district of Poso. And it has devastated the lives of about 150,000 Madurese forced to flee their homes in two Kalimantan provinces. Separatist struggles have caused much loss of life and hardship for the two per cent of the population in Aceh and the one per cent in Papua. And citizens of Chinese descent have often been targets of violence in the past – although not so much during the last few years.

But the violence experienced so far in Indonesia still falls far short of what has been predicted in the 'Balkanisation' scenario. The sense of Indonesian identity remains strong in most parts of the country and there are no serious separatist movements outside Aceh and Papua. To some extent regionalist feeling has been assuaged by the radical decentralisation laws adopted by the Habibie government which reversed much of the absurd centralisation of the Soeharto era. Decentralisation has not proceeded smoothly and is likely to be modified by the Megawati government, but it will be impossible to reverse.

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Another scenario often propounded by foreign observers is the spectre of the Islamic revolution. Eighty-seven per cent of Indonesians are Muslims, but the country has firmly rejected the idea of establishing some sort of Islamic state or even implementing Islamic law for Muslims. In response to American bombing of Afghanistan following the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, radical Muslim organisations led demonstrations in Jakarta and other cities but the number of demonstrators rarely exceeded one thousand. Despite threats to 'sweep' Americans (and Australians) out of the country, no one was actually swept. In the 1999 election the parties now calling for the implementation of Islamic law won a combined total of only 14 per cent of the votes and the radical rejection of a female president has not prevented Megawati taking office. Islamic radicalism can of course pose problems for any Indonesian government but there is no possibility of the establishment of a radical Islamic regime.

The immediate challenge for Megawati is simply to hold her government together until the next general election in 2004. Megawati's government consists of a coalition covering almost all the major groups in the parliament. Of the three main forces backing her government, the PDI-P will certainly continue to provide its support while the Golkar is still trying to live down its close association with the Soeharto regime and concentrating on restoring public confidence in the hope of regaining support in 2004. The most likely threat to the cabinet's cohesion comes from a loose bloc of Muslim parties called the Central Axis, to which the vice president, Hamzah Haz belongs. According to the constitution, Hamzah would automatically replace the president if she were deposed. However, the Central Axis is by no means a cohesive grouping and its most prominent leader, Amien Rais, has no interest in seeing Hamzah take over the presidency. Megawati's support for the election of Hamzah as vice president was a shrewd move because he is not widely seen as a credible president. Megawati is likely to continue to receive support from the small military group that will continue to be represented in the parliament until 2004 and in the People's Consultative Assembly – which elects the president – until 2009.

**The prospect, therefore, is that a weak government will remain in office but be unable to take the decisive action that is needed to set the country on the course of political, social and economic recovery.**

The prospect, therefore, is that a weak government will remain in office but be unable to take the decisive action that is needed to set the country on the course of political, social and economic recovery. The Aceh rebellion seems likely to drag on with the rebels unable to drive out the security forces and the security forces unable to crush the rebels while the fundamental measures needed to assuage Papuan demands for

independence will probably not be taken. Ethnic and religious conflicts will continue to break out and an impotent legal system will continue to be unable to bring those responsible to justice. Reform of the military and police will continue to be limited as long as soldiers and policemen are forced to raise part of their own income while the top generals become millionaires. A full-scale campaign against corruption seems unimaginable while productive investment will continue to be deterred by political uncertainties and the security force's inability to maintain a secure environment. And a weak and divided government will have difficulty in implementing policies that impose short-term sacrifices in the interests of long-term economic growth.

There is no simple and straightforward solution to Indonesia's woes. However, it is important to keep in mind the diversity of Indonesia and to realise that the degree of the crisis varies from region to region. While some regions are undoubtedly in deep trouble, the outlook is not uniformly gloomy in all parts of the country. The best that can be hoped is that the government can maintain a modicum of political stability and security that will allow at least some regions to make small advances. But the Indonesian crisis will be with us for some time to come.



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## **East Timor's Transition to Independence**

***James J Fox***

### **A timetable for the transition<sup>1</sup>**

The transition to independence for East Timor is now in its final phase. Elections for an 88 member Constituent Assembly were held on 30 August 2001. Fretilin, the party that led the long struggle for independence, obtained just over 57 per cent of the vote, giving it 43 nationally determined seats and another 12 district seats in the new Assembly. On 15 September, this Assembly was sworn in and on 20 September, a 'Second Transitional Government', consisting entirely of East Timorese ministers, vice ministers and secretaries, was appointed by the UN's Special Representative, Sergio Viera de Mello. Mari Alkatiri, the Secretary General of Fretilin was named as the Chief Minister of this Government. Finally, on 31 October, the United Nations' Security Council endorsed 20 May 2002 as the day for the official transference of sovereignty.

The Constituent Assembly is currently in session drafting a Constitution. The first draft of this document is scheduled for completion by 19 November in time for East

Timorese to celebrate 28 November as the date of Fretilin's original declaration of independence in 1975. In the future, it is possible that East Timor will celebrate this date as its national day.

As the transition to independence proceeds, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has begun a substantial reduction in its personnel. The present peace-keeping force of approximately 8000 will be reduced to 5000 military personnel by the time of independence. Some previous serving contingents such as those from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Jordan will conclude their service on Timor; while other new contingents, including 700 members of the Japanese Self Defence Force, will take up a peace-keeping role in early 2002. The first battalion of the new East Timorese Defence Force, which has been undergoing training under Portuguese and Australian supervision, will be assigned to the eastern region of the country.

Plans remain in place for an East Timorese Police Service of 3,000 officers for which, by the end of January 2002, UNTAET expects to have trained and deployed 1,500 local officers. For the complex tasks they will face, members of this new police service lack experience and still require further training. Therefore an international police commissioner will continue to oversee a civilian police force, comprised of local and international officers, in the period after independence.

UN Civilian personnel will be reduced more rapidly than the military or police forces. The number of UN civilian staff in East Timor at the time of the elections will have been cut by roughly 75 per cent by January 2002. Further reductions will be carried through to the middle of May. A core of UN professional staff, however, will continue to serve in East Timor performing functions for which local expertise is not yet available.

UNTAET has recruited and appointed about 9,500 East Timorese civil servants. This is approximately 90 per cent of what is intended to be a small but highly efficient civil service. A Civil Service Academy has been formed and has already given training to almost a third of the present civil service staff. The future of the new nation will be in the hands of its elected leaders and this new civil service. How well they perform in the future, in what will almost certainly be difficult conditions, will ultimately be the crucial evidence on how well the United Nations has succeeded in its paramount task of bringing forth the first new nation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **The United Nation's mission in East Timor**

United Nations operations generally begin with optimism and often end in soul-searching. For the moment, many observers regard the mission's work as a significant success – given the obstacles and uncertainties that confronted UNTAET at the outset of its mission and in comparison to other recent UN missions. Other observers, including many East Timorese, are less certain of this success because they recognise the formidable challenges that remain. Thus, for example, the East Timorese student organisation, RENETIL, has produced a document questioning the UN's public assertion of its major achievements published in September 2001<sup>2</sup>.

At the beginning of its mission, the United Nations had three tasks: (i) to conduct peace keeping operations; (ii) to sustain and reconstruct a devastated area with a significantly displaced population; and (iii) to establish the political, economic and social underpinnings for a new nation. The transition to nationhood was at the heart of all of these tasks.

The first of these tasks was carried out with a high degree of professionalism that was a credit to all of the participating nations. Although peace keeping proved politically, and therefore tactically, less difficult than was initially envisaged, the process was carried out so effectively that there was little room for serious destabilising incidents.

The UN's second task – that of reconstruction and development – involved a complex (and at times uneasy) partnership between the multilateral banks, particularly the World Bank, and a host of international NGOs. Coordination was critical and the United Nations' role was central but much of the task was driven by the exigencies of the immediate situation and dependent on the particular policies of individual donor nations. The task of reconstruction is far from complete and a portion of the East Timorese population has not yet returned. Whether in fact the UN has established the basis for sustainable development is also in question.

The Secretary General's Report to the Security Council on 18 October alluded to this unfinished task of development. On the one hand, the report stressed the importance of a 'move towards a normal development assistance framework' and, on the other, it insisted on the need for the UN's successor mission to contain 'core tasks that are crucial to protecting the progress made to date'<sup>3</sup>. Recognising the economic and social limitations on development in East Timor and the long term nature of problems that the country must face – coupled with a conscious realisation of the relatively limited development that UNTAET has achieved – is in effect a realistic assessment.

The UN's third task – establishing the basis of a new nation – is certainly the most important of its undertakings and the one for which the United Nations as an institution has had primary responsibility. It is an elusive task with an array of components that appear to be at odds with one another. It is important to recognise that in transforming a small, devastated, former province of Indonesia into a separate nation, the United Nations laid different foundations from what had been before.

Under Indonesian rule, for example, East Timor had an inflated government bureaucracy of approximately 33,000 public servants. By contrast, the UNTAET has set an affordable limit to East Timor's civil service (including teachers and health personnel) of 10,500 to 11,000. The new government of East Timor will not be a source of employment, especially for young graduates, as it was under Indonesian rule.

Under Indonesian rule, the economy and particularly the agricultural/food sector of East Timor was centrally directed and greatly subsidised. East Timor was a food deficit province and its urban population – particularly its local bureaucrats, the police and military – were allocated rice as a component of their employment. Local rice distribution and fertiliser supply to farmers was managed through the government's National Logistics Agency (BULOG); in times of drought, food security was guaranteed by additional rice supplies from outside. In place of these agricultural underpinnings, UNTAET has endeavoured to promote a market economy for East Timor, eliminating all previous support systems for farmers and introducing the US dollar to replace the rupiah as the means of local exchange as well as international trade.

UNTAET adopted Indonesian law as the legal framework for East Timor and has designated this legal framework for its judicial system. Necessarily, however, UNTAET has had to issue its own regulations and directives, some of which fit uneasily within this official framework. Despite the functioning of the courts, issues relating to land and property rights have been left unresolved and, without clear resolution, the possibilities of investment in a market economy are limited<sup>4</sup>.

At the same time, while acknowledging the East Timorese leaders' desire to establish Portuguese as the official language of the new nation, UNTAET has relied on English as its working language and has continued to support the use of Indonesian in the court system and in schools. The Portuguese government has supplied Portuguese language teachers for the East Timorese school system as part of its assistance program and the new East Timorese Transitional Government, appointed in September, has reaffirmed its commitment to Portuguese as the official language of the new nation. How the transition from English (Indonesian or Tetun) to Portuguese will be effected is unclear. Indeed many of the most critical issues concerning law, land and language have been left for future resolution by an independent East Timor.

### **Major development problems for East Timor**

Issues of human rights, justice and reconciliation have dominated the attention of much of the international community in regard to East Timor. Serious injustices were committed prior to the Indonesian invasion, during the Indonesian occupation and in the period that followed the 1999 referendum on autonomy. There have been calls among the East Timorese for consideration of all these offences going back to 1975. At the same time and closely linked to the issue of human rights, there is a continuing effort to bring East Timorese refugees back from West Timor and integrate them into their local communities. This is another set of problems that will not have been solved by the time of independence.

To assist in the administration of justice in East Timor, the UN successor mission will provide a range of international personnel including 'court of appeal judges, special panel judges, court administrators and public defenders, as well as prison staff advisers and trainers'<sup>5</sup>.

Even more pressing is the problem of economic viability when the UNTAET has substantially reduced its numbers and the flow of international funds that have indirectly supported a large proportion of the population.

For the United Nations, building capacities in East Timor has involved creating an administrative system and staffing it with appropriately designated personnel. Certainly the United Nations, in cooperation with the international banks and the international community, has worked hard to lay the foundations for an open free market economy based on a respect for the rule of law, good governance and fiscal responsibility. Whether this is enough for a sustainable future has yet to be determined. There remains the need for sound development policies that will address some of the chief problems that will face the new nation. These are problems that are grounded in the nature of the territory itself and its history and will affect its future economic prospects.

The nexus of these problems centres on the present imbalance between a rural sector that employs 60-70 per cent of the less educated population on the basis of low production, near-subsistence agriculture and an urban sector whose better-educated younger population remains largely unemployed. While this constitutes the nexus of the problem, ramifications are far more extensive. Some of the related aspects of this problem may simply be listed as follows:

- Prospects for increasing budgetary expenditures with limited government revenue generating capacities;
- No immediate likelihood of substantial income from the Timor Gap resource and consequently, an overwhelming dependence on international assistance;

- Significantly diminished local trade within the region;
- Dependence on the export of coffee as the only export crop;
- Virtually no viable local industries;
- Limited international investment and investment opportunities;
- A lack of legal security in property rights and uncertainty over land law;
- A continuing flow of youth with rising expectations to urban centres; and
- A small civil service that can employ only a fraction of these graduates.

If, from among this long list of problems, one were to focus specifically on agriculture, the situation appears acute, particularly given the lack of resources allocated to this sector under UNTAET governance and for the future.

Thus, in the *East Timor Consolidated Budget* for 2000-01, which set recurrent spending at \$US 59 million, the largest proportion of the budget - approximately 37 per cent - was allocated to health, education and social affairs with an additional 17 per cent allocated to activities and training related to law and order<sup>6</sup>. Despite the assertion in the budget that East Timor's economy is 'predominantly agricultural with around 90 per cent of the population living in rural areas and dependent on agriculture for their livelihood and employment'<sup>7</sup>, only about 1 per cent of the budget was allocated to agriculture.

UNTAET set East Timor's projected budget expenditures for 2001-02 at \$US 65 million with forward projections to increase to 80.2 million in 2002-03, 99.8 million in 2003-04 and 103.3 million in 2004-05. In the 2001-02 budget, expenditure on health, education and social affairs was maintained, accounting for 38 per cent of the budget. Justice, police and emergency services plus new expenditures on defence accounted for another 17 per cent of the budget.

Agriculture was included in this budget as part of 'Economic Affairs'. This Economic portfolio was allocated roughly 2.5 per cent of the total budget, equal to the allocation to the Central Fiscal Authority responsible for drawing up the budget<sup>8</sup>.

Certainly during its Mission, UNTAET did little to address any of the major problems of agriculture in East Timor. Since these problems are at the core of future development for the new nation, it is difficult to support the view that the UN has satisfactorily developed the necessary capacities for a sustainable future. In its approach, the UN explicitly adopted the currently fashionable emphasis on 'encouraging private initiatives' that has been strongly promoted by the World Bank. Hence in its first budget, UNTAET explained that 'for the longer term, it is envisaged that the Department [of Agriculture] will generally take a non-interventionist approach to agricultural development'<sup>9</sup>.

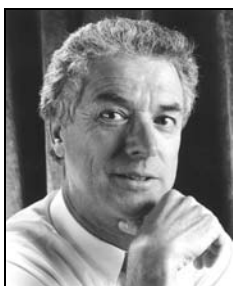
This means, in practical terms, that no agricultural extension service has been planned for East Timor despite lack of education among farmers; no provision has been made for the import of agricultural inputs, particularly fertiliser, despite the low nutrient levels of Timor's soils; and no plans, as yet, have been formulated for local seed production facilities in the territory.

For the past three years, Timor has experienced some of the highest rainfall for over a century. Three consecutive 'La Niña' years have greatly benefited farmers after nearly a decade of prolonged drought<sup>10</sup>. Basking in its non-intervention policies, UNTAET has taken full credit for these conditions by claiming that even without the rehabilitation of many of East Timor's most important irrigation systems, rice production has reached

80 per cent of its pre-ballot level and that despite the large number of displaced farmers (in West Timor in particular) maize production has reached 100 per cent of this 1998 level<sup>11</sup>. Since UNTAET maintains no agricultural monitoring capacity and has made no provision for the establishment for an agricultural survey bureau for assessing production, it can be confident that its claims cannot be seriously challenged by evidence to the contrary.

It is likely that the UNTAET's Mission will come to an end just as the El Niño-Southern Oscillation cycle shifts back toward drought conditions. The opportunities of the last two years will have been squandered and East Timor may soon have to face an El Niño drought without policies or provisions for reliable food security.

Agriculture must therefore be a sector where considerable reformulation has to occur when the East Timorese have a greater say in planning their own development<sup>12</sup>.



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- <sup>1</sup> For more detailed historical background on East Timor, see Fox, James J (2000a). 'Tracing the Path, Recounting the Past: Historical Perspectives on Timor' in Fox, JJ and D Babo Soares (eds), *Out of the Ashes: Destruction and Reconstruction of East Timor*. Adelaide: Crawford House: 1-29.
  - <sup>2</sup> RENETIL (2001). 'A Popular Challenge to UNTAET's Achievement'. (Circulating Internet Document, September 2001).
  - <sup>3</sup> Security Council (2001). Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (S/2001/983: 18 October:12.
  - <sup>4</sup> See Fitzpatrick, Daniel (2001). 'Property Rights in East Timor's Reconstruction and Development' in Hal Hill and João M Saldanha (eds), *East Timor: Development Challenges for the World's Newest Nation*. Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and Canberra, Asia Pacific Press: 177-192.
  - <sup>5</sup> Security Council (2001) *op cit*:10.
  - <sup>6</sup> Fox, James J (2000b). 'East Timor: The Task of Creating a New Nation' in Donald R Rothwell and Martin Tsamenyi (eds), *The Maritime Dimensions of Independent East Timor*. Wollongong: Centre for Maritime Policy: 44-46)
  - <sup>7</sup> UNTAET (2000). East Timor Consolidated Budget 2000-2001. Dili: Central Fiscal Authority, UNTAET: 25.
  - <sup>8</sup> See UNTAET and The World Bank (2001). Annex 1, 'Background Paper for Donors' Meeting on East Timor'. Canberra, 14-15 June.
  - <sup>9</sup> UNTAET (2000) *op cit*:25.
  - <sup>10</sup> Fox, James J (2001) 'Diversity and Differential Development in East Timor: Potential Problems and Future Possibilities' in Hill and Saldanha (eds) *op cit*: 155-176.
  - <sup>11</sup> UNTAET and The World Bank (2001) *op cit*: 20.
  - <sup>12</sup> da Costa, Helder (2001). 'Agriculture, Comparative Advantage and the Macroeconomy' in Hill and Saldanha *op cit*: 155-176.



## **Economic Globalisation, the New International Division of Labour and Women Workers in Southeast Asia \***

***Amarjit Kaur***

The remarkable growth of the Southeast Asian economies since the 1960s and their transformation from predominantly resource-based economies to industrialising ones has stimulated a rethinking of their history in terms of western models of development. Explanations for this growth have focused on economic and socio-cultural factors; the Confucian influence on economic and political institutions; and state economic policies. However, women's increased labour force participation in this transformation has been discussed primarily in terms of state industrialisation strategies. Viewing the countries from this perspective ignores the impact of demographic change, new educational policies and modernisation of the agricultural sector on women's employment. More importantly, this perspective emphasises the individual preferences of employers rather than the market/product niches in which these countries compete. This paper's central concern is women's employment in labour systems associated with export-oriented production in four Southeast Asian countries - Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia - and how increased informalisation and outsourcing have resulted in the greater casualisation of women workers.

### **Framing the global scene**

In all four countries, the state was seen as necessary for promoting agricultural transformation; bringing together the resources necessary for industrialisation; providing protection for infant industries; and investing in mass education as a prerequisite to the creation of human capital. For the most part the first moves into industrialisation in Southeast Asia were the result of government initiatives rather than arising out of the dynamics within the small existing manufacturing base in the domestic economies. Until around 1970 government strategies for development usually centred on import substitution as a way of promoting industrialisation. By 1970 the import-substitution industrialisation strategy of these countries had reached its limit because substituting domestic production for imports could not generate the resources for a self-sustaining process. The Southeast Asian economies subsequently became the location sites of manufacturing industries producing for the world market.

The switch to export-oriented production followed a period of rapid population growth in excess of 2 per cent, sometimes 3 per cent per annum, in the region after World War II. This growth was a result of the decline in mortality, improved access to modern medicine and major public health initiatives such as the eradication of malaria. At the same time, these countries experienced fertility reduction associated with the expansion of family-planning services in the decade 1970-1980, and there was a substantial difference in the trends of fertility during the period prior to 1970. Singapore cut its fertility by 50 per cent in the period mid-1960s to mid-1970s while Thailand's total fertility rate dropped by more than 50 per cent during the period 1965-70 to 1985-90. Indonesia and Malaysia also experienced a steady fertility decline<sup>1</sup>.

Rural development strategies in the 1950s and 1960s also played a key role in internal labour migration. Prior to World War II, the road network linking urban centres to rural areas was relatively poor in most countries. In Thailand, for example, after 1950 the Thai government embarked on a program of road construction that meant that rural villages were linked effectively with the larger urban centres. This was followed by the provision of bus services, which permitted rural-urban transport, and stimulated the market economy. Improved transportation facilities also facilitated rural-urban

migration and gave access to rural markets. In Malaysia, although a fairly extensive road system joined rural centres with the towns<sup>2</sup>, improvements after the 1970s further facilitated access to the rural areas. This was concomitant with the New Economic Policy and the Government's aim of moving Malays from the slower-growing agricultural sector into the faster growing industrial sector.

#### *Framing women workers*

Most studies on female labour force participation emphasise the concentration of women in domestic service, petty trade and services. In the transformation to newly-industrialising status, the new source of wage labour in assembly-line manufacturing comprised mainly women, the majority of whom were from the rural areas. What were the characteristics of these women workers? One, they were young, single, and between the ages of 15 and 25; were mostly unmarried and had no children. Two, they were mainly from the rural areas, thus reflecting a rural-urban drift. Three, they were concentrated in a few industries associated with the export production - electronics and electrical components, textiles, garments and footwear. This work offered attractive opportunities for young rural women since it gave them independence and a chance to experience the 'bright lights'. The changing labour force participation of women is thus related to the global structure of manufacturing and manufacturing production systems.

#### **The new international division of labour and the dynamics of export-oriented industrialisation in Southeast Asia**

Why did the manufacturing of labour-intensive consumer goods pass into the hands of developing countries in Southeast Asia and elsewhere? A few general points need to be made. After World War II, following the establishment of an international regulatory system, the world economy expanded and gave a further impetus to global capital markets. Direct foreign investment (DFI) represented more than simply international capital seeking out the highest returns. Firms went multi- or transnational when they wished to locate activities in more than one country. It also made sense to conduct these activities within the firm rather than through the market place. Moreover, overseas production made it possible to reduce operating costs. The substantial set-up costs in producing abroad were no longer a problem since production could be decomposed; the new transport and communications technology led to a further reduction in transport costs; and the establishment of export-processing zones facilitated the relocation of industry. More significantly, labour was much cheaper in developing countries.

The period from the 1950s onward had witnessed postwar reconstruction and a long economic boom in Western Europe. The boom conditions of the 1950s and 1960s saw rising wage levels and improved working conditions for labour in the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries. Concurrently, favourable conditions were created for trade unions and the rise of social democratic political parties. The former successfully achieved improved working conditions for their membership while the latter extended welfare legislation, both of which drove up the cost of labour. European integration also led to wage convergence, and unskilled labour at the bottom of the distribution chain became scarce and expensive. Some argued that large corporations in the OECD countries reacted to the rising wage levels by relocating production facilities, especially to East Asia<sup>3</sup>. The targeted industries were those requiring a large, essentially unskilled work force, such as the textile and electronics industries.

This relocation was due to four main factors. The first was the development of a worldwide reservoir of potential labour force. The bulk of this work force was derived from the latent over-population in the rural areas of these countries that had emerged as a consequence of improvements and mechanisation in agriculture, including the Green Revolution. These workers, who were forced to migrate to the urban areas, thus constituted an almost inexhaustible supply of available labour, their labour cost (including social overhead costs) a mere 20 to 30 per cent of that paid to workers in the older industrial countries. Moreover, since the workers were not unionised, they could be forced to work long hours while compliant governments ensured that union activity was either absent or low. Market forces thus pushed the lowest value-added part of the supply chain to areas where wages were lowest<sup>4</sup>.

Japan's investment push into Southeast Asia best exemplifies this trend. The first generation of Japanese DFI in Southeast Asia took place during the 1960s. It was based mainly around utilising either local raw materials for export production (timber, rubber products) or for import-substitution production in view of the high tariffs levied on imported durable consumer goods. Multinational enterprises (MNEs) including Sony and Matsushita set up joint venture subsidiaries during the period with only medium-scale capacity to produce electronic goods and components for local markets. In the 1970s these and other MNEs also set up parts and component companies. Additionally, there was an expansion into export-oriented integrated circuit assembly, especially in Malaysia and Singapore. This first generation of DFI involved assembly-line low value-added production<sup>5</sup>.

Following the appreciation of the yen in 1985, a new wave of large-scale assembly production took place aimed at overseas export markets, especially involving television and videocassette recorder production in Singapore and Malaysia. Thus with production costs prohibitive in Japan itself, Japanese firms moved labour-intensive production to cheaper offshore sites in the region. Between 1985 and 1990, Japanese direct investment totalling US\$15 billion flowed into the region<sup>6</sup>. This investment was aimed at creating a Japanese production base within the region to produce manufactured exports for Japan's markets in North America and Europe. At the same time, investment from Taiwan, Korea and Hong Kong also flowed into the second-tier newly industrialising countries of Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand, at times surpassing the volume of Japanese investment and reflecting the former countries' appreciating currencies and rapidly rising labour costs.

The entry of East Asian capital is particularly associated with local Chinese business networks and the expansion of small and medium enterprises, many of them family-owned and operated, and sub-contracting and small-batch production. These small firms, which are characterised by extreme flexibility in rapidly filling even small orders, make extensive use of subcontracting to overcome any disadvantages arising from undercapitalisation and the inability to handle large orders. Subcontracting and small batch production took off in the textile, readymade garments and shoe industries and also moved into low-tech electronics assembly.

Second, the development of new transportation and communications technologies made location and the direction of production less dependent on geography. This technology (eg, container ships) reduced transport costs and allowed the rapid and cheap transportation of goods from production centres to consumption centres. Third, the development and refinement of technology associated with the global restructuring of manufacturing enabled the decomposition of complex production processes into simple tasks that could be performed by unskilled workers after some initial training.

This fragmentation of industry was particularly suitable for the new consumer industries - textiles, electrical and electronics and footwear<sup>7</sup>.

Fourth, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, concerned with the poverty levels in developing and least developed nations, recommended the liberalisation of economies to eradicate poverty. Countries were advised to free their exchange and interest rates, cut regulations on prices and markets for goods and generally dismantle trade barriers. To assist these countries the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) was put in place whereby a large number of developed countries permit duty-free entry of a selected list of manufactured products if those products are imported from particular developing countries. These preferential arrangements played a key role in attracting MNEs to relocate to Asia.

### **Putting a human face on the global economy: the feminisation of labour in the manufacturing sector**

Three developments account for the increased labour market participation of women in Southeast Asia. The first relates to the conventional hypothesis that the labour force participation of women increases during the course of socio-economic development. As a great range of jobs became available, more opportunities are also available for women. The growth of employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector in the urban areas in both absolute and relative terms induced change in migration patterns, with women migrating independently of their families and influencing the provision of housing and impacting on household structures.

Second, women's labour force participation in the manufacturing sector was higher in East Asia and the four Southeast Asian countries compared with other countries (excepting planned economies in Eastern Europe). This is closely related to the fact that in most Asian societies, there is an attachment to the family as an institution and a general expectation that offspring, whether male or female, provide for their parents. This obligation includes maintaining the family unit and consequently facilitated migration to urban areas to seek employment. To take the case of Thailand, the growing population put a pressure on existing forms of subsistence, resulting in migration to seek urban jobs rather than seek new land<sup>8</sup>.

Third, access to education for girls also played a major role. The state's provision of increased educational facilities meant that education became readily available in these countries. Moreover, education policy provided both boys and girls with equal access to education, resulting in a rising level of educational attainment among girls in particular. The bulk of the government's education budget was also allocated mainly to primary and secondary education. The long-term investment in basic education resulted in relatively higher levels of literacy. Education also brought greater access to modern forms of birth control; more women were willing to practice birth control and this allowed more women into the workforce. There is evidence from surveys that women themselves delayed marriage, and had fewer children in response to economic opportunities provided by the then expanding economy<sup>9</sup>.

Women were targeted as the main work force in the export-oriented industrialisation phase because the very nature of this production niche relied on female labour. First, export-oriented industrialisation was aimed at international markets. The goods/components that were to be produced required relatively high proportions of direct labour in their production or processing. These components were limited in number and largely confined to a narrow range of goods. The first type of goods was textiles and garments, which included t-shirts, underwear, sportswear, and training

shoes. All these products could be produced with minimal technology and investment according to specifications and designs originating in the West and transferred to the lower-wage developing countries. The second type of goods comprised electronic components and assembly of consumer electronic goods for the product lines that were developed on the basis of the microchip. Consequently, only the labour-intensive part of the production process, that is, assembling the components, was relocated to the lower-wage regions. The dispersal or fragmentation of the manufacturing process obviated the necessity of a stable workforce. Rather, because these industries are consumption or demand driven, they are highly competitive and to a large extent 'fluid'.

Second, it has often been asserted that women were the preferred labour force because the work involved in the manufacturing processes described above, that is, repetitive work requiring high levels of accuracy, manual dexterity, and a 'light touch', embodied the kinds of tasks traditionally carried out by women. Others state that women's psychological make-up, passivity, docility, controllability and a capacity for hard work are also contributory factors. It is argued here that the manufacturing labour system itself plays a pivotal role in women's employment. The production niche is a low technology, labour-intensive one involving the standardised (mass) production of consumer garments, footwear and appliances. It is based on low wage costs. The predominant reason for employing women is therefore an economic one. A cheap labour force that may or may not be compliant is an economic asset to any firm. Since women's wage levels are lower than those of men employed in comparable occupations, the preferred labour force is likely to be women since they represent the lowest cost. Generally, women's earnings vary between 75-80 per cent of men's. This gap in earnings may partly be explained by differences in educational attainment and the hours worked but the fact is that women's productivity tended to be as high as men's.

**The production niche is a low technology, labour-intensive one involving the standardised (mass) production of consumer garments, footwear and appliances. It is based on low wage costs. The predominant reason for employing women is therefore an economic one. A cheap labour force that may or may not be compliant is an economic asset to any firm.**

Moreover, productivity in these production niches depends on the labour of the workers, rather than the efficiency and capacity of the technology involved. The types of tasks involved include sewing in zip fasteners, button holes etc, etching electronic circuits, tasks in which women are more efficient and reliable because they have been socialised into similar tasks in the household production unit. Additionally, women also have skills in textile production and assembly work from their cottage industry experience and are used to repetitive work from their traditional role in agricultural production, mainly planting and harvesting.

Also, owing to the gendered nature of social relations, women are more likely to submit to a patriarchal labour regime since they are largely seen as non-political; less prone to unionisation than men; and willing to submit to directive discipline, all of which are desirable traits in factory assembly-line production.

What are some of the consequences of manufacturing labour systems for gender roles in development? First, women are concentrated in the manufacturing and service sectors of the economy. Second, factory work and organisation replicates the patriarchal structure of society. Male managers supervise the women; discipline is

strictly enforced; and the male control of women is but a redefinition of gender roles accompanying the transformation of capitalist relations of production. Third, factory work is also characterised by short contracts and insecurity of tenure (the women work either on fixed contracts or on a sub-contractual basis, for example, in the garments industry). When they reach a certain age, they are often dismissed to avoid payment of 'seniority' wages. They are also the most vulnerable to dismissal/unemployment during an economic downturn<sup>10</sup>. Consequently women workers lack stability and economic security because these production niches are more vulnerable to falling demand and increased supply competition on a world-, rather than merely national-scale.

**. . . women have obtained material benefits through their immediate earned income that has given them some independence from the family, compared with existing conditions. . . there has been some improvement in their working conditions and absolute wages over time. . . [But] they encounter occupational segregation and lack advancement possibilities. Their wages are lower than their male counterparts' wages, and they have fewer opportunities to upgrade their skills.**

Fourth, alongside the lack of job tenure, women workers have little access to training to improve their skills and are also denied access to promotion. Most multinational corporations do not perceive a need to allocate funds towards the training of their permanently casual workforce. Training is normally provided on the job and learning curves are relatively short. Moreover, there is a necessity for continual learning on the job due to the highly technical nature of some production niches, for example, electronics. Since the skills learned from one job cannot be easily transferred to a position with another company within

that industry, the job marketability/mobility of women workers is further reduced<sup>11</sup>.

The manufacturing production system has therefore brought both benefits and costs to women workers. On the one hand, women have obtained material benefits through their immediate earned income that has given them some independence from the family, compared with existing conditions. Moreover, there has been some improvement in their working conditions and absolute wages over time. On the other hand, they encounter occupational segregation and lack advancement possibilities. Their wages are lower than their male counterparts' wages, and they have fewer opportunities to upgrade their skills. They thus remain a peripheral workforce in consumer-driven industries and are the first to bear the brunt of cost-cutting strategies by management.

In summary, the feminisation of labour in the manufacturing sector is fundamental to the region's export-oriented industrialisation strategy. Just as Southeast Asia's earlier imperial-led integration led to the region's emergence as a major supplier of cheap industrial raw materials, its current market-led integration has now made it a major source of cheap electronics components, electrical goods, garments and footwear for developed countries.

\*This study is part of a larger research project, *Costed, not valued: Women Workers in Industrialising Asia*, funded by the Wellcome Trust, UK.



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  - <sup>11</sup> Kaur (2000) *op cit.*

## Academy News



### Research Projects

**Creating Unequal Futures?** Sales of the book *Creating Unequal Futures?* since its release by Allen & Unwin in March, have been very promising with over 400 copies being sold in the first six months. Details of the publication are available on the Academy's website.

**'Joborr' Custom Law: People of the Rivermouth** An agreement has been reached between the National Museum of Australia and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies to co-publish a book to complement the CDROM, which will reproduce the 20 Joborr texts of Frank Gurrmanamana. A formal launch of the CD and the book will take place in mid-February at the National Museum.

**The Economic and Social Costs of Unemployment** On behalf of the Academy, Peter Saunders has reached an agreement with the University of NSW Press to publish a book on the findings from the ARC Research Project 2000, *The Economic and Social Costs of Unemployment*. It is anticipated that the book will be available in mid-2002. Planning is underway for a series of workshops to be held in collaboration with the Don Dunstan Foundation and it is anticipated that these will be held to coincide with the launch of the book.

**The Sustainability of Australian Rural Communities** Methodologies for individual case studies have been discussed by all participants and agreed, with draft chapters due for circulation in mid-November. The final workshop for the project is scheduled for 16-18 December.

**Rethinking Wellbeing** On 4 October the ARC advised that the Academy had been successful in obtaining \$70,000 in funding for Lenore Manderson (Fellow of the Academy) for her research project *Rethinking Wellbeing*. This project will bring together Australian and key international academics to consider the social, cultural and economic contexts of wellbeing, resilience, burden, health and quality of life.

Responding to contemporary economic, policy and public health debates, the project addresses issues of social capital, connectedness, social networks and social membership, and relates these interests to debates concerning inequality, poverty, homelessness, resource allocation, policy development and social welfare programs.

**Social impacts of changing water regimes in Australia** The ARC has also recognised the importance of the research proposal *Social impacts of changing water regimes in Australia*. This project has been under development in conjunction with the other Learned Academies for the past year. The project team led by Leon Mann and Graeme Hugo (both Fellows of ASSA) in collaboration with Professor Ian Rae of ATSE has been awarded \$90,000 as a National Academies Forum (NAF) project.

An understanding of the social impacts of water reform in different communities and regions is essential in order to understand and respond to industry concerns, provide reassurance, support and relief, predict how people will respond and adapt to new technological solutions, and how families and businesses will plan and make decisions about their future. Already major changes are occurring in management, availability, cost and usage of water to deal with the deterioration and degradation of Australia's water resources. Such changes are likely to have major social impacts, with implications for governments, shire and local councils, industry groups and support agencies.



## International Program



The funded exchange programs continue to attract scholars who wish to promote the development of scholarly relations between Australia and social scientists in The Netherlands, Vietnam and China.

### **Australia-The Netherlands Exchange Program:**

Four Australian scholars have been nominated by the Joint Academies' selection committee and forwarded to KNAW for approval.

*Dr Robert Poell*, University of Nijmegen, will soon visit the Hawke Institute, Flinders University to participate in a joint research project on human resources development and vocational education. His host will be Professor Roger Harris, Centre for Research Education, Equity and Work.

### **Australia-Vietnam Exchange Program:**

Australian scholars approved under this program included *Professor Margot Prior* (Royal Children's Hospital, University of Melbourne), whose visit sought ways to further develop research networks for cooperation between country scholars in psychology and *Professor Colin Mackerras* (Asian and International Studies, Griffith University) who will investigate relations between Vietnam and China since normalisation in the early 1990s. Reports on these visits will be published in future issues of *Dialogue*.

A visit by two Vietnamese scholars from the Institute of Social Sciences in Ho Chi Minh City was organised by Professor Peter Rimmer and Sue Rider. The program, which included visits to Melbourne and Canberra and meetings with university, government and council planning departments, was cancelled at the last moment for personal reasons.

### **AASSREC**

The 14<sup>th</sup> Biennial General Conference of the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils met in Hanoi on 5-9 November 2001. Professor Tony Milner presented the country paper on behalf of the Academy in the regional symposium "Globalization and its Impact on the Asian Pacific Region: Economic, Social and Cultural Dimensions". His contribution was entitled *Asia Pacific Perception of the Financial Crisis and the Progress of Globalization*. Professor George Smolicz chaired a session of the symposium, and Professor Fay Gale chaired a session of the Special Panel Discussions, "Regional and Ethic Diversity and the Cultural Resilience of the State". Fay Gale has now assumed the role of President of AASSREC until the 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial General Conference in 2003.

### **UNESCO Social Sciences Network**

The Academy will provide secretariat support for the renewed UNESCO Social Sciences Network under the direction of Professor Fay Gale. The June meeting of the Network Committee was attended by four other Fellows of the Academy: Margot Prior, Elspeth Young, Margaret Thornton and George Smolicz. In August, three workshop projects were submitted to the UNESCO Australian National Commission Networks' - Grant Applications for funding: Social Sciences Research in the Pacific; AASSREC Planning workshop for 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference; and Custom: The Fate of Non-Western Law and Indigenous Governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

## Workshop Program

Five workshops supported by the Workshop Program are presently being organised. The first, *2001 Federal Election Study* will be convened by Professor John Warhurst and Dr Marian Simms, both from the Political Science Program, Australian National University, and will be held in Canberra on 14-15 December, 2001. The workshop will discuss issues concerning the campaign, the perspectives of the parties and the role of special interests in the 2001 Federal election.

In February 2002, Professor Norman Etherington will convene a workshop in Perth on *Indigenous Peoples and Religious Change: Reassessing Mission Christianity in an International Historical Perspective*. This workshop will consider the question of the indigenisation of missionary Christianity in comparative international context - with 'christianised' communities in Papua New Guinea, New Zealand and movements in Latin America and Africa. Fellows Bob Tonkinson, Deborah Rose, Patricia Grimshaw and Dianne Austin-Broos will participate, along with scholars from the universities of Oxford, British Columbia, Michigan and Keele.

In July 2002, Dr Marian Sawyer and Professors Barry Hindess and John Dryzek will convene a workshop on *Australian Democratic Audit: Indicators* (Canberra) as part of a five-year investigative audit of the federal system. It is particularly timely for an audit to be conducted in Australia in the context of the widespread loss of trust in key democratic institutions. Fellows James Jupp, Ian McAllister, Anna Yeatman, Paul Kelly and Brian Galligan will participate.

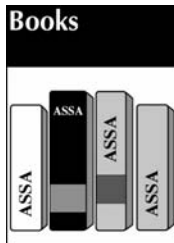
Also in July, Dr James Weiner and Professor Francesca Merlan from the Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University will convene a workshop in Canberra on *Custom: The Fate of Non-Western Law and Indigenous Governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. This workshop will bring together jurists and legal practitioners, scholars of non-western law, governance and politics and other social scientists working in indigenous societies from Southeast Asia, the Pacific and Australia.

A workshop on *Trade Economic Growth and Development in Asia: Should Labour and Environmental Standards be Part of the Equation? The Case of Bangladesh* will be held at the University of New England on 3-4 October, 2002. It is being organised by Professor Amarjit Kaur, School of Economics and Associate Professor Ian Metcalfe, Asia Centre at UNE. This debate is particularly relevant in view of recent calls for Australia to choose between being an 'Asian powerhouse' or a 'western-branch economy'. Scholars in economic history, geology and environment, geography, history, peace studies, development economics, political economy and anthropology will participate.

The Academy will sponsor a seminar at the *OUTLOOK 2002* Conference to be held in Canberra on 5-7 March 2002, titled *Rural Communities: Is the social fabric of rural communities intact or in tatters?* Professors Graeme Hugo and Lois Bryson will contribute to the program as well as Dr Margaret Alston, Centre for Rural Social Research at Charles Sturt University and Ms Lisa Chapman, Principal Research Officer, Australian Bureau of Agricultural Resource Economics. Fellows are encouraged to support this seminar, and can contact Sue Rider at the Secretariat or visit our website [www.assa.edu.au](http://www.assa.edu.au) for further details.

Further information about the Workshop Program can also be found at [www.assa.edu.au](http://www.assa.edu.au).

## Books



***Australia's Mandarins: the frank and the fearless?*** By Patrick Weller. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2001.

Patrick Weller (Griffith University) has written a major study of top public servants in Australian national government. It is something of a collective biography of secretaries of Commonwealth public service departments over the five decades since 1950. His aim is to document and explain changes in the character of these most senior and powerful public servants. The title refers to the question of primary interest to Weller: are Australia's bureaucratic mandarins truly 'the frank and the fearless' advisers to government that our norms of public service professionalism might want us to believe? The period around 1950 at the beginnings of Menzies' long tenure as prime minister had the genuine article: mandarins of the character of Treasury secretary Sir Roland Wilson here described as 'perhaps the most influential public servant in federal history' (p 1). Wilson's own words open Weller's fascinating attempt in his penultimate chapter to balance his external biography with a kind of self-portrait drawn from secretaries' accounts of their own careers (see eg pp 183-8).

Will we look back at the current generation of departmental secretaries with the same awe of high regard earned by Wilson? Weller helps us answer this question by noting that it is increasingly difficult to speak of a 'generation' in charge. Those at the top tend to stay for shorter periods in the one position and tend to see their jobs differently, more like public managers than ruling mandarins. This change in orientation reflects an underlying structural change in Australian governance. Traditional concepts of responsible government have been overhauled, often for very good reasons relating to the politically unresponsive and socially unrepresentative character of public service organisations.

Weller then sets out to chart this 50 year change at the top by reference to five core debates surrounding the role of departmental secretaries as a class of public officials. These debates structure the environment of public appreciation of the work of secretaries and Weller's aim is not so much to arbitrate each debate as to use these debates to frame his analysis of the significance of departmental secretaries. The five issues begin with the question: to what extent are secretaries increasingly responsive to political controls exercised by ministers? Second, how effective are they as public managers? Third, what is their capacity for effective policy advice? Fourth, where do they fit in as part of a career service of public administrators? And finally, how politicised is their position now?

The book is organised into ten chapters with most examining specific developments over the 50 years. For instance opening and closing chapters deal with the changing environment of governance and the possible future frameworks of secretaries' work. In between are chapters on such topics as a collective statistical portrait of secretaries, career patterns, the traditional task of policy advising, the newer task of management, performance and accountability. There are two other topical chapters: one dealing with 'secretaries' stories' from the inside, and another reviewing the implications of the Barratt case involving the 1999 sacking of the Defence secretary, which Weller states exposes 'a capacity for capriciousness, however rarely it may be exercised' by governments, and this development is one 'that cannot assist in good policy-making' (p 235).

Weller begins with standard descriptions of the place of departmental secretaries in the Westminster system (sometimes within quotation marks, sometimes not) but it takes only 12 pages to get to the debate over 'politicisation' (which Weller sees as really about increased 'personalisation' by governments) and 26 pages to the first historical source complaining about 'the shift to the American system' feared to be under way in the early 1970s. What were originally 'permanent secretaries' became 'departmental secretaries' by the time of the Hawke government. Between the 1970s fears of Americanisation and Hawke's rewrite of the public service act, there were a series of quite major reviews of the public service, with progressive relaxation of the original protections against government interference in top administrative jobs. By the 1990s, further changes stripped the tenure from secretaries' positions and made them limited term appointments. The significant change made by the Howard government in 1999 was to place all power over terminations in the hands of the prime minister of the day, confirmed by the Barratt case of that year. Weller is not necessarily opposed to any of these changes: rather, his point is to identify their cause and consequences, and to suggest ways that 'balance' can be protected, so that the reaction against mandarins of old does not produce a new crop of lemons.

Weller's initial sentence is that in 1988 Dr HC Coombs was selected as Australian of the Century. Few countries can point to a bureaucrat as their symbol of citizenship. There is something distinctive about the Australian system of public administration and it is the merit of this book that it helps us understand the place of top administrators in Australian public decision-making. Coombs would have appreciated Weller's efforts.

**John Uhr**

***Looking for Leadership: Australia in the Howard Years.*** By Donald Horne. Ringwood: Viking Books, 2001.

Donald Horne's most recent book is an extended rumination on our present discontents. It traverses the failure of the political system, the fragility of the economy, the friction with regional neighbours, the inability to achieve Reconciliation with Indigenous Australians, the loss of cohesion and tolerance, the edginess and uncertainty.

As he explores these themes Donald Horne fires off sallies at a number of shibboleths. He notes how the cult of the market has reified the process of economic exchange into a kind of supernatural force - even odder is the insistence that this abstraction is then designated the market *place*. He observes that the application of the language of the market to universities and the 'cultural industries' corrupts education and the arts. He castigates clichés such as Knowledge Nation and the Information Society for the neglect of inquiry, speculation and wisdom. He points out the silliness of the term Anglo-Celt. He suggests that 'the phrase national inquiry should be sent back for repair'.

Above all, he diagnoses a failure of leadership. An elected representative, he argues, has to reconcile the high aspirations of public life with the low comedy of what goes on privately in the competition for supremacy. A minimum requirement is thus competence in public performance, and it is the failure of the present prime minister to pass this test that opens the book. Whether at the Reconciliation Convention in Melbourne, or at the commemoration of the Commonwealth parliament at the Exhibition Building earlier this year, or even conducting his morning power-walk ('the

short-trousered boy-man striding through a series of foreign capitals like Tintin', as Guy Rundle recently put it), Howard fails the test.

A leader in a liberal-democratic society, argues Horne, has to speak clearly and persuasively. He has to touch the imagination. He cites the examples of Deakin, Chifley, Menzies and others. At times of change, he adds, we need 'great articulators' to help make action possible. Neither Howard nor Beazley have been able to state fundamental problems or suggest answers to them. Hence the grip of the prime minister's Dreamtime of the 1950s.

What went wrong? Horne returns to his own diagnosis of *The Lucky Country* in 1964 and argues that from the early 1960s to the early 1990s much of the program it set out came true. The White Australia was abandoned, a closer relationship built with Asia. The reliance on commodity exports was ended. Wowsers and conformity were discarded for greater tolerance. Aboriginal dispossession was recognised.

Leadership is credited with many of these changes, though Horne has some critical observations. He remarks on the incompetence of Whitlam's ministers and blames the neoliberal policies of Hawke and Whitlam for the disappearance of the Australian faith in national development. Other changes, such as care for the environment and emancipation of women, are seen to derive from powerful social movements.

The present condition, however, is unmistakably attributed to a failure of leadership. It is Howard who is blamed for the aggravation of our discontents. Howard's way is to invite us to feel relaxed and comfortable by stirring up resentments. His statements and silences are the itching powder of public life. Moreover, Horne insists that Howard is an aberration and a political freak who came to office by 'the accidents of politics'. If the prime minister were not absorbed in the campaign to win a third term of office, he might well draw on the rhetoric of his namesake and respond: some freak, some accident! This review is written three weeks before the election, which might resolve Donald Horne's claim.

**Stuart Macintyre**

***A History of European Housing in Australia.*** Edited by Patrick Troy. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

This book could be regarded as a *festschrift* as it is the last publication of the Urban Research Unit, later the Urban Research Program and finally the Urban and Environment Program of the Research School of Social Sciences at ANU. Patrick Troy has been head of the Program and most of the authors have participated in its research activities. Over the years the Program has undertaken extensive research on housing and this collection reflects the multi-disciplinary nature of that research and its social emphasis. The 'European' in the title refers to the objective of exploring the transfer of the form and ideology of housing to a settler society. The book is a companion volume to *Settlement*, the history of indigenous housing edited by Peter Read. However, there is little cross reference to Read's work and the 'European' theme addressed in the first chapter by Graeme Davison, is not consistently followed through in later chapters. As stated in the introduction, the eighteen chapters cover 'a selection of issues' on the history of the detached family house in Australia.

House and home have been central to this suburban nation and an Australian distinctiveness emerges from the collection, especially the importance of the home in an immigrant society and the Do It Yourself approach to housing discussed by Miles

Lewis and Tony Dingle. There is surprisingly little focus on the suburban home in its hey day from the 1880s to the 1950s, apart from Alastair Greig's interpretative piece on project homes. House and garden as gendered domains is explored by Katie Holmes, while Kimberley Webber studies kitchens and bathrooms and Nicholas Brown the adaptations of rooms and space. Patrick Mullins and Chris Kynaston analyse the home as a centre of production, although there is little gendered interpretation of this significant domestic economy.

Robert Freestone writing on 'Home as a Garden Suburb' refers to the lack of research on the suburbs as lived environments, research which has been largely left to local historians. Mark Peel's chapter on neighbourliness indicates the importance of bringing together the two streams of housing and community research. Indeed much of the Program's own housing research was concerned with the 'hard' issues of economic analysis, infrastructure and planning, addressed in this collection by Lionel Frost, David Merrett and Blair Badcock. Badcock's chapter on home ownership and equity addresses a central concern of the Program over the years.

Clem Lloyd's overview history of homelessness briefly referring to the significance for 'New Homelessness' and Patrick Troy's critique of performance based building codes and their likely impact on the standard of housing are interesting final chapters but do not round off the collection. Although this is not a book focused on urban policy, a forward look at the challenges to housing a more complex Australian population would have given the volume a satisfactory finale. Troy's introduction indicates important themes that could have been developed as a final chapter.

This is a readable and lively book, although the scanty pictorial material is disappointing. It is an excellent student text and the well edited chapters are focused and accessible. The high standard of production justifies the book's dedication to Rita Coles, an acknowledgment of her extensive contribution to the Program's fine publication record.

**Renate Howe**

***The Australian People. An Encyclopedia of the Nation,  
Its People and Their Origins***

edited by James Jupp

has just appeared in its Second Edition, published by Cambridge University Press. Contributors include over twenty Fellows of the Academy of the Social Sciences.

The volume, at almost 1000 pages, is described as 'the world's most comprehensive encyclopedia of the Australian people'. It is hoped that a review will appear in the next issue of *Dialogue*.

## Opinion

### Research and Teaching: Complementary, Antagonistic, or Independent Activities?

**Herbert W Marsh and John Hattie**

The major responsibilities of academics in the modern university are teaching and research as well as, to lesser extents, administration and community service. Indeed, some<sup>1</sup> consider that one of the defining characteristics of a research university is that all academics are expected to be active researchers and active teachers. The rationale for research universities is that these two activities are such mutually reinforcing, complementary activities that they must coexist in the same institutions and funding is based in part on this assumed complementarity<sup>2</sup>. Many researchers<sup>3</sup>, however, emphasise that plausible counter arguments can be made as to why teaching and research activities should be complementary, conflicting, or unrelated to each other.

#### Rationale for teaching/research relationship

*Research Contributes to Teaching.* Research forms the basis of the content of teaching; teachers who are active researchers are likely to be on the cutting edge of their discipline; researchers' knowledge may be more current than textbooks; and one's research can be used to clarify, update, and amend teaching. Discussing one's own research provides a sense of excitement and active researchers are more effective at instilling a critical approach to understanding complex research findings. Students appreciate teachers who present research that their teachers have actually conducted.

*Teaching Contributes to Research.* Teaching clarifies the big picture into which research fits. Teaching preparation elucidates gaps in the academic's knowledge base and students' critical questions can prompt new research directions. Sharing research efforts with an appreciative audience reinforces research activity.

*Teaching and Research are Complementary.* They involve common values (eg, rationality). Academics support normative structures that place a high value on teaching and research and the two are linked through the activity of scholarship<sup>4</sup>, the goal of creating new knowledge, and the process of questioning prior knowledge in light of new evidence within the constraints of commonly held methodologies<sup>5</sup>. Many successful academics are initially attracted to universities in order to pursue the nexus between their teaching and research. Hence, the quality of academic staff choosing to work in universities is reinforced by the existence of this nexus<sup>6</sup>.

*Teaching and Research are Antagonistic.* Ineffective teaching results from neglect of teaching in order to pursue research since the time/energy required to pursue one may be limited by demands of the other. Motivation/reward structures that support the two activities might be antagonistic. Effective researchers must be highly specialised whereas effective teachers must be very broad. There are examples of good research in non-teaching research institutes and good teaching in prestigious (non-research) teaching institutions. Universities are dividing into components devoted to undergraduate teaching by non-tenured academics and to full-time research.

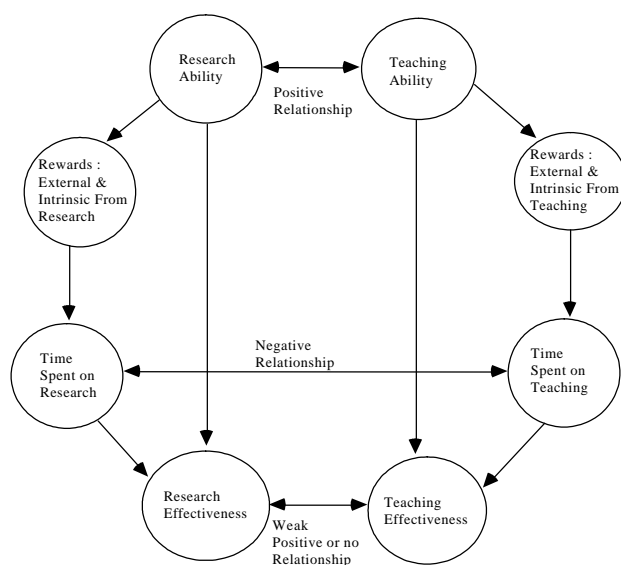
*What Should the Teaching/Research Relation be?* The rationale of modern research universities dictates that there should be a positive relation between teaching and research; without it, the claim that teaching and research are mutually supporting

activities is weakened. Creating a more positive relation – to whatever extent it currently exists – should be an important goal of universities.

### Theoretical model of the teaching/research relationship

Marsh<sup>7</sup> posited a model identifying major components of teaching and research, and how they are related. In this model, a positive relation between the ability to be a good teacher and the ability to be a good researcher is mediated, in part, by a negative relation between the amount of time devoted to teaching and research.

According to this model: (i) The underlying abilities to be effective at teaching and research are positively correlated; and (ii) Time devoted to research and time devoted to teaching are negatively correlated, and may be influenced by a motivation structure that favours one over the other. Hence, the near-zero relation between teaching and research outcomes is a function of the counterbalancing positive relation between teaching and research abilities and the negative relation between time required to be effective at teaching and research and, perhaps, the motivation to be a good researcher and a good teacher.



### Purposes of the present article

This article provides an overview of our research on the relationship between teaching effectiveness and research productivity<sup>8</sup>. We seek to: determine what the relation is between teaching and research; test predictions based on the Marsh model of the relationship between teaching and research; examine the effects of potential mediators, moderators, and variables that might explain why the relation is not more positive; and examine different settings to determine whether there are some situations or specific academic units where the relation is more positive.

In 1996, we reported a meta-analysis of the relation between teaching and research among university academics, based on 498 correlations from 58 articles. The mean correlation between teaching effectiveness and research productivity was .06. Only 20 per cent of the 498 correlations were statistically significant. This number is remarkably small given the large sample sizes in some of the studies. The correlation between the year of publication and the teaching and research relationship was -.16. Hence, more recent studies tended to find the lowest relationships.

We searched for mediators and moderators to this overall correlation, with little success. The near-zero correlation generalised across academic disciplines; measures of research productivity; measures of teaching quality; and types of university (although the relations were modestly higher in liberal arts colleges than in research universities).



We also evaluated how the teaching/research relation varied with the domain of teaching effectiveness. Based on extensive factor analysis research into students' evaluations of teaching effectiveness, we classified the different evaluation factors into discrete domains of teaching. The correlation between research and teacher as presenter was somewhat greater than between teacher as facilitator and regulator. Academics who are perceived to be knowledgeable in a broad perspective, value learning, committed and enthusiastic about teaching, and well organised are somewhat more likely to be good researchers and good teachers.

Time spent on teaching and research were hypothesised to be key elements in the Marsh theoretical model. Consistent with our predictions, we found that times spent on teaching and research were negatively correlated with each other in our 1996 meta-analysis. Time spent on research was positively related to research productivity, but was not related to teaching effectiveness. Time spent on teaching was not related to teaching effectiveness, but was negatively related to research productivity. Those who spent more time on research did have higher research outcomes, but those who spent more time on teaching did not have similar returns from their teaching. The negative correlation between time on research and teaching indicates that the role of time is worth pursuing further.

We concluded that the belief that research and teaching are inextricably entwined is an enduring academic myth. At best, research and teaching are loosely coupled activities. We summarised suggestions to better understand this relation and to discover situations or characteristics that reinforce a positive teaching-research relation. We advocated that universities need to set as a mission goal, the improvement of the nexus between research and teaching. The goal should not be publish or perish, or teach or impeach, but we beseech you to both publish and teach effectively. Universities should devise strategies to enhance the relation between teaching and research. We should continue to reward good teaching and research but also need to reward the integration of teaching and research.

We recently completed another study<sup>9</sup> to further articulate the relation between research and teaching. In addition to teaching effectiveness and research productivity, we considered a wide variety of other constructs that we felt to be relevant to the teaching/research nexus: research and teaching ability; teaching and research satisfaction; personal goals; extrinsic rewards for teaching and research; constraints to teaching and research; beliefs about the teaching/research nexus; departmental teaching and research ethos; time on teaching and research; and activity in teaching and research.

Participants were 182 academics from 20 academic departments in a large Australian research university. Academics indicated that they worked 48.3 hours/week: half on teaching, a quarter on research and a quarter on administration and other work. Teaching effectiveness was assessed with students' evaluations of teaching based on the standard university form. We focus on the overall teacher rating, but we also consider ratings of the overall course value, course materials, and teacher presentations. Research outcomes were based on submissions completed by each department for university discretionary research funds. These are externally monitored. The average number of publications was 3.73 (SD = 5.74) per staff member, primarily consisting of journal articles (2.32), conference papers (.65), chapters in books (.60), edited books (.04), and authored books (.10).

We also introduced the use of more sophisticated statistical analyses, allowing pursuit of new questions about how these constructs vary from department to department and the characteristics of departments associated with this variation.

#### Teaching/Research Relation

The relation between the overall teacher rating and total publications was again close to zero. When the many (41%) staff who published nothing over this 3-year period were removed, the relation was still nonsignificant, as was the case when we considered various components of teaching and research separately and optimally combined them with new statistical procedures.

*Departmental ethos.* Departmental ethos and other characteristics of the department may influence teaching, research, and their relation. For example, if one or the other activity is highly valued in a particular department, then excellence in that activity may be more strongly rewarded. Importantly, the near-zero teaching/research relation may represent positive relations in some departments and negative relations in others. However, multilevel analyses demonstrated that the near-zero relation between teaching and research publications was consistent across the 20 academic departments that we considered. In contrast to our predictions, differences in departmental ethos (and other department characteristics) had little or no impact on the teaching-research relation. Nevertheless, the multilevel approach to this issue is a potentially important contribution that should be pursued in the future.

*Tests of Marsh's Model.* We developed measures of new constructs to operationalise and extend tests of Marsh's model of the teaching/research relation. Teaching and research ability were measured by academic self-ratings. Motivation was inferred from the satisfaction one gets from teaching and research and one's personal goals to be a good teacher or to engage in research. Time was represented by the proportion of time each academic typically devoted to teaching and research. We then constructed a path model based on relations among these constructs.

Consistent with predictions, teaching and research outcomes are uncorrelated. Time spent on research and teaching were negatively related (-.33). Self-ratings of teaching had a moderate positive effect on teaching outcomes (.28) and self-ratings of research ability had a substantial positive effect on research outcomes (.53).

Inconsistent with predictions, self-ratings of teaching and research ability were uncorrelated. Teaching and research motivation were also uncorrelated. Motivation and time variables had no significant effect on the teaching and research outcomes beyond what could be explained in terms of the ability self-ratings. Self-rated teaching ability had no significant effect on teaching motivation or time spent on teaching.

Tests of Marsh's Model provided no support for the complementary nature of teaching and research constructs. There was, however, some support for a teaching-research antagonism for time spent on these two activities.

The results failed to support the fundamental assumption that the ability to be a good teacher and the ability to be a good researcher are positively related. Indeed, because self-ratings were likely to be positively biased by potential method effects (eg, halo effects), it was quite surprising that these self-rating variables were not positively correlated. The nonsignificant relation between self-ratings of teaching ability and research ability provided strong support for the construct validity of interpretations of the near-zero relation between teaching effectiveness and research productivity.

*Other Mediating and Moderating Variables.* We also evaluated moderating variables in a search for subgroups where the teaching/research relation was more positive. The nexus variables were particularly relevant. We posited that the teaching-research relation would be more positive for academics who believed that teaching contributed to research and vice-versa. We evaluated this moderation hypothesis for a set of 20 variables (including the nexus variables). The critical interaction, however, was nonsignificant for all 20 variables. The results support earlier conclusions that the near-zero correlation between teaching and research is very robust.

#### **Summary: dispelling academic myths**

Academics believe, many with passion, that there is a nexus between research and teaching. Support for this claim is fundamental to the basis of research universities that combine the two activities. In contrast to the myth that research and teaching are complementary constructs, the teaching-research relation is near-zero. This finding was very robust in both our studies. Particularly in our second study, measures of research publications were based on performances over three years, externally audited, the basis of research allocations, and hence are more accurate than typical self-report data. Although we had multiple indicators of research publications and of teaching effectiveness, the nonsignificant teaching-research relation was consistent. We hypothesised that the teaching-research relation would differ systematically from department to department, but found no support for this prediction.

Importantly, we also considered quite different measures of teaching and research - academics' self-ratings of their abilities as teachers and researchers. Although we would certainly not defend these measures as being more valid than our more objective measures, they were fundamentally different constructs. Because of the well-known self-report biases (eg, halo effects) that are likely to positively bias relations between these self-rating variables, we expected that these self-rating variables would be modestly or even substantially (positively) related. In contrast, we found that even these measures of teaching and research were uncorrelated. Hence, these results based on self-ratings provide strong support for the near-zero relation between measures of teaching effectiveness and research publications.

We constructed scales to measure teaching and research nexus - beliefs that good teaching facilitates research and that good research facilitates teaching. Academics supported this nexus. Items "having to teach something helps me clarify my ideas in my research work on it" and "having to research something helps me clarify my ideas in my teaching of similar topics" received mean responses of about "4 = very much" on a 1-to-5 response scale. The two scales were moderately correlated (.47). We posited that the teaching-research relation would be stronger for academics who had stronger beliefs that the two activities were complementary. However, our nexus variables were not significantly related to the teaching-research relation.

In Marsh's theoretical model, the near-zero teaching/research relation was hypothesised to reflect the juxtaposition between the **positive** relation between abilities to be a good researcher and a good teacher and the **negative** relation between the time and, perhaps, the motivation required to be a good teacher and a good researcher. Our most recent study is the strongest test of this model to date and provided some interesting results. However, the main predictions of the model were not supported. In particular, the fundamental premise of the model was that the ability to be a good teacher and the ability to be a good researcher are positively related, but

the self-rating variables used to represent these variables were not significantly correlated.

We found some support for a potential antagonism between teaching and research constructs posited in Marsh's model. Self-ratings of research were negatively related to time devoted to teaching, teaching motivation and the goal of being a good teacher. Self-ratings of teaching were negatively related to research motivation. Research time and teaching time were negatively correlated. Objective measures of teaching effectiveness were negatively related to satisfaction from research and the personal goal to be a good researcher.

There was an apparent asymmetry in the teaching/research relation. Teaching effectiveness and even self-ratings of teaching ability were mostly not significantly related to other teaching constructs (eg, satisfaction, personal goals, time, and activities). Research productivity and self-ratings of research ability were positively related to most of the corresponding research constructs. Why should there be this asymmetry in the pattern of results?

Academics receive considerable training in research and are constantly exposed to research role models. Because academics know how to be productive researchers, it follows that greater motivation, time, effort, and appropriate activities should result in increased research productivity.

Most academics receive little training to be good teachers. Even teachers who are motivated to improve their teaching and have systematic feedback from their students identifying their strengths and weaknesses do not know how to improve their teaching effectiveness<sup>10</sup>. In contrast, randomly assigned groups of teachers who met with external consultants to discuss specific strategies to improve their teaching effectiveness in areas selected by the teachers did significantly improve their teaching effectiveness compared to a control group who had not intervention. If teachers do not know how to improve their teaching effectiveness, it follows, perhaps, that devoting more time and effort to teaching may not improve teaching effectiveness. If universities want their academic staff to be better teachers, then they need to invest in teaching improvement interventions that have been shown to work.

We encourage research into different conceptions of teaching and research. We are not, however, optimistic that this will lead to finding the Holy Grail of a high and positive relation. This search appears to assume that the relation between research and teaching is high and positive and that we have been looking for the Grail under a lamplight that is broken and defective. Research consistently shows that there is no such relation. So, instead of looking for even more mediators and moderators, instead of arguing about the nature of knowledge and how the process of constructing knowledge may have close parallels in teaching and research, we maybe should accept the conclusion that teaching and research (however conceived) are unrelated and move on to ask how we should enhance this relation.

Good researchers are neither more nor less likely to be effective teachers than are poor researchers. Good teachers are neither more nor less likely to be productive researchers than are poor teachers. There are roughly equal numbers of academics who are: good at both teaching and research; poor at both teaching and research; good at teaching but poor at research; and poor at teaching but good at research. These results clearly demonstrate that personnel selection and promotion decisions must be based on separate measures of teaching and research. If universities want to

improve both teaching and research, then they need to select, retain, promote, and support academics who are great at both.

Implicit in our research is a process-product/outcome perspective on the teaching/research nexus at the level of the individual academic – that effective teaching facilitates the research outcomes of individual academics and that research productivity contributes to the effective teaching outcomes by individual academics. Alternative perspectives to the nexus issue focus on the process and culture of teaching, research, and learning. From a broader perspective, it may be important that teaching and learning take place in academic environments where active research is valued, pursued, and incorporated into the teaching curriculum<sup>11</sup>.

Although governments may claim to value the teaching/research nexus, we are concerned that worldwide trends in higher education policy and funding may undermine any potential teaching/research nexus. There exists an academic myth that all academics are active researchers, whereas the reality is that many academics at even the most prestigious research universities publish little or no research. As a consequence, particularly undergraduate teaching is increasingly done by teaching-only academics who are not active researchers and may not even have permanent, full-time appointments. Similarly, in an attempt to maximise the benefits from increasingly scarce research dollars, universities are concentrating research support on fewer research-active academics and research centres. In many cases, these highly research-active academics no longer teach in undergraduate classes and successful research centres may become ivory towers that are separate from academic departments that concentrate on teaching.

Reinforcing specialisations in teaching and research, if appropriately resourced and rewarded, may or may not lead to increased effectiveness in both activities. Without careful management, however, it seems likely that such specialisation will undermine further an apparently already fragile teaching/research nexus and reinforce perceptions of these as discrete activities. Governmental funding policies that treat teaching and research as discrete activities, or create separate institutions that focus primarily on teaching or primarily on research, may similarly undermine the nexus. To counteract this potential scenario, universities need to enshrine the teaching/research nexus into their mission statements and actively develop, implement, and reward policies that enhance this nexus. Governments need to actively encourage this nexus and include it as one of the formal requirements used to evaluate the performances of universities<sup>12</sup>. Alternatively, universities and governments need to abandon the goal of nurturing a teaching/research nexus and restructure universities according to different values – a policy direction that is likely to be unacceptable to governments, universities, academic staff, students, and the general public who continue to view the teaching/research nexus as the foundation of the research university.

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- <sup>1</sup> Crittenden, B (1997). *Minding Their Business: The proper role of universities and some suggested reforms*. Academy of the Social Sciences: Canberra.
  - <sup>2</sup> In 1990 the New Zealand government enshrined this belief into a legal requirement, stating that in research universities 'research and teaching are closely interdependent and most of their teaching is done by people who are active in advancing knowledge' (Education Act of 1989 as amended in 1990); see Woodhouse, D (2001). 'The teaching-research nexus: Lessons from New Zealand Audits'. Paper presented at the Vice Chancellor's Symposium on the 'Teaching-Research Nexus: Enhancing the Links'. The Nexus project. University of Wollongong, NSW, 3 October.) Woodhouse summarised results of a formal audit undertaken by New Zealand universities to investigate academic staff perceptions and behaviours, existing procedures and policies, and identifiable outcomes that support the teaching/research nexus.
  - <sup>3</sup> See Hattie, J & Marsh, HW (1996). 'The relationship between research and teaching - a meta-analysis'. *Review of Educational Research*, 66: 507-542.; Marsh, HW (1987). 'Students' evaluations of university teaching: Research findings, methodological issues, and directions for further research'. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 11: 253-388; Marsh, HW & Hattie, J (in press). 'The relationship between research productivity and teaching effectiveness: Complimentary, antagonistic or independent constructs'. *Journal of Higher Education*; and Woodhouse, 2001 *op cit*.
  - <sup>4</sup> Boyer, E L (1990). *Scholarship Revisited: Priorities in the Professoriate*. Princeton, NJ: Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
  - <sup>5</sup> Brew, A (1999). 'Research and teaching: Changing relationships in a changing context'. *Studies in Higher Education*, 24: 291-301.
  - <sup>6</sup> Ramsden, P & Moses, I (1992). 'Association between research and teaching in Australian higher education'. *Higher Education*, 23: 273-295. These researchers proposed a weak version of the teaching-research hypothesis in which it is only necessary for academics to be in a strong research department in order to facilitate their teaching effectiveness.
  - <sup>7</sup> Marsh, HW (1984). 'Students' evaluations of teaching: Dimensionality, reliability, validity, potential biases and utility'. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76: 707-754; Marsh (1987) *op cit*.
  - <sup>8</sup> Hattie & Marsh (1996) *op cit*; Marsh & Hattie (in press) *op cit*. The reader is referred to these studies for a more detailed summary of our work and the work of others in this field of study.
  - <sup>9</sup> Marsh & Hattie (in press) *op cit*.
  - <sup>10</sup> Marsh, HW & Roche, L (1993). 'The use of students' evaluations and an individually structure intervention to enhance university teaching effectiveness'. *American Educational Research Journal*, 30: 217-251.
  - <sup>11</sup> Boyer (1990) *op cit*; Brew (1999) *op cit*; Brew, A & Boud, . (1995). 'Teaching and research: Establishing the vital link with learning'. *Higher Education*, 29: 261-273; Ramsden & Moses (1992) *op cit*; Woodhouse, D (1998). 'Auditing research and the research/teaching nexus'. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 33: 39-53; Woodhouse (2001) *op cit*; Zubrick, A, Reid, I & Rossiter, P (2001). 'Strengthening the nexus between teaching and learning'. Evaluations and Investigations Program, Higher Education Division, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, Canberra, ACT ([http://www.detya.gov.au/highered/eippubs/eip01\\_2/01\\_2.pdf](http://www.detya.gov.au/highered/eippubs/eip01_2/01_2.pdf)).
  - <sup>12</sup> Woodhouse, (2001) *op cit*.

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