Australia’s Distinctiveness in a Globalizing World:
Towards a New Area Studies

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* The world around us is inescapably international [calling] our imaginations to venture beyond narrow group loyalties and to consider the reality of distant lives
- Nussbaum (1997: 10)

In a world without walls, we can no longer think and act as if only the local matters, as we owe solidarity only to those within our own city or state
- Annan (2002: 6)

I. Introduction

In this paper we sketch a case for a fresh approach to Australian Studies programs in Japanese universities. By ‘fresh’ we mean programs that move beyond ‘orthodox Australian Studies’ – the rather inchoate and often under-theorized collection of subjects and courses generally taught under that hold-all rubric. The theoretical coherence for which we are aiming (and which we acknowledge requires greater elaboration than we can provide in this paper) needs to incorporate aspects of globalization theory and cultural studies (including gender studies), linking these into Japanese academic programs on globalization (see, e.g., Miyoshi & Harootunian 1996; Befu & Guichard-Anguis 2001).

At this point we are obliged to declare an interest in the argument we are proposing. We are both Australians. We have both taught Australian Studies courses in Japan. But we submit that a fair reading of our paper will show that we are aiming for something higher than mere academic chauvinism. Our case for Australian Studies could justifiably be generalized to Melanesian Studies or South Pacific Studies - to suggest just two of many possibilities.

What we are proposing are Australian Studies programs that have broader scholarly significance than the prevailing ‘orthodox Australian Studies’ courses of study. We favor Australian Studies programs that are intellectually ambitious and less politically correct – programs that are moving beyond being an ideological appendage to Australia’s cultural diplomacy in East Asia, especially in Japan. Our proposals would entail the comprehensive reform of current, frequently ad hoc Australian Studies practices in Japanese universities and elsewhere (see, e.g., Monash University n.d.; Daniels 1988; Ballyn 2000; Huang 2000; Pons 2001; Lawson 2002). This could include, for example, replacing programs that rely primarily on

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temporary or visiting academic staff, usually recruited from Australia on short-term contracts, teaching their own specialist interests (e.g., literature one year, labour history the next). Sounder, academically grounded arrangements are required to build up focused research centres, specialist graduate courses, and strong introductory undergraduate programs.\(^{(2)}\)

We also note that for this to be fully successful the unfocused credit system - ‘smorgasbord’ - of conventional Japanese undergraduate liberal arts degrees would need some reforming too (Willis 2002). An extreme version of the critique to which we are alluding is outlined in an interview with Brian McVeigh. Professor McVeigh attacks what he describes as 'simulated schooling' in Japan: \(^{(3)}\)

You could say the term applies to all levels, but the higher up you go, the more you see it. Students know by now that it is about passing exams, about memorizing and repeating. Almost no one learns for the sake of knowing, of growing. There is also a hidden agenda that dates from the Meiji period. The goal of the elites is to make students feel more Japanese [...] If you do not have citizens who can think for themselves and be a watchdog on the government, you get corruption and politicians ruling to maintain power. In foreign affairs, how can you engage, say, China if [the Japanese] people cannot face their war responsibilities? And how can you produce leaders if their education is unreal? (Fic 2002; see also Patience 1984; Cutts 1997; Hall 1998; Metraux 2001; McVeigh 2002.)

While not wholly endorsing Professor McVeigh's criticisms, he has highlighted a case that needs answering - the view also of many leading Japanese educators, over many years.\(^{(3)}\) The time could well be ripe for enacting some real educational reforms in Japan in light of the challenges posed by globalization. But the case for reform (especially when made by foreigners) should keep Professor Wang Gungwu's observation in mind:

Each country and its leadership will have their priorities for their respective universities, each university will try to work out what it has to do to serve these priorities and save itself. But the needs of the time for the university as a global institution must include the need to understand and explain the process of globalization that is taking place around us (Wang Gungwu 2002: 278).

II. 'Orthodox Australian Studies' in Japan

At first glance, Australia does not have a compelling claim for uncontested inclusion in Japanese university area studies curricula. Australia’s population is small: not quite twenty million people in a landmass almost the same size as the United States. The country is geographically distanced from the major power centres in the world. Its economy is largely reliant on resource exporting, which is good for Japan’s economy but not so good for Australia’s over-all economic outlook (Bryan & Rafferty 1999; Alexander 2000; Garnaut 2001). It has a limited military capacity. While it also has distinct middle power ambitions (or presumptions), its means for realizing these are not equal to the task (Cooper et al. 1993; Leaver & Cox 1997; Cooper 1997). Yet, as a major resource exporter, Australia has undoubtedly benefited from Japan’s post-World War II demand for raw materials. One Australian correspondent even claimed that 'Australian coal and iron ore kick-started Japan’s industrial-exports miracle' (Goodall 2001). The continuation of this instrumental relationship looks assured for the foreseeable future. Both sides appreciate the commercial
advantages in the relationship and mostly manage to conduct it without undue fuss (Dobell 2000: 195-9). Even so, there are what Professor Camilleri calls 'limitations' inhibiting the relationship from maturing in ways that we could reasonably expect in a globalizing world. He lists "... the cultural and political distance separating the two societies, Tokyo's preoccupation with issues of Northeast Asian security as against Canberra's focus on Southeast Asia, and the still lingering historical sensitivities associated with the Second World War" (Camilleri 2000: 309). It is these very problems that intelligent area studies programs could help resolve, to the considerable advantage of both sides, and to the region.

Despite being an ideological appendage to the instrumental (trade) relationship between Australia and Japan, the 'orthodox Australian Studies' courses that developed in Japanese universities over the years have been fostering lively interest in Australia among significant numbers of Japanese undergraduate and graduate students. Some have gone on to postgraduate study in Australian universities, perhaps motivated by their exposure to Australian Studies programs in Japan. At the same time graduates from Japanese universities might have been able to take some of their knowledge gained from Australian Studies courses into their subsequent careers - especially where access to this knowledge is relevant to managing aspects of the relationship (whether in diplomacy, trade, tourism, or whatever) between the two countries. And hopefully knowledge gained from Australian Studies courses has replaced some of the myths and prejudices about Australia in some Japanese minds (see, especially, Tada 2002).

So Australian Studies programs are not an inappropriate focus for Japanese universities seeking to redevelop their area studies courses. However, if these Australian contributions to area studies are to become more than an ideological appendage to an instrumental relationship - i.e., more than a diplomatic tool - the time has come for them to be re-configured within a soundly theorized area studies framework, one that is at least as academically grounded as it is diplomatically useful.41

III. The Decline and Revival of Area Studies

In the 1950s, area studies emerged - and even flourished - in some impressive liberal studies programs in universities around the world. This occurred with two broad educational aims in mind: (i) to foster interdisciplinary research and teaching in liberal education programs; and (ii) to focus on states, societies and cultures of strategic significance. The programs reached their peak during the 1960s and 1970s, often in the ideologically fraught atmosphere of the Cold War. One has only to cite the Japanese Studies program at Harvard and the Indonesian Studies program at Cornell (with legendary scholars like Edwin O. Reischauer and George McT. Kahin among their respective founders) to recall how prominent area studies became in post-War universities. But throughout the 1980s and 1990s they began losing students and resources in the fashionable rush to 'relevance' in more vocational courses (e.g., business studies, IT studies, hospitality and tourism studies). At the same time scholars like Edward Said mounted a telling critique of the 'orientalism' in programs taught under a variety of Middle Eastern and South Asian area studies banners - programs accused by Professor Said of imposing a 'subaltern' consciousness (or 'internal imperialism') on the minds of colonized peoples (Said 1979; see also Said 1993; Morris-Suzuki 2000).

Despite these setbacks, prospects for a renewal of area studies courses have never been higher (Wallerstein 1997; Tessler 1999; Katzenstein 2001; Pye 2001). The main impetus for this is found in the
Our advocacy of reformed area studies courses in universities is based on the conclusion that they could become an effective way of nurturing the interdisciplinary programs recently investigated by Martha C. Nussbaum, the Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago (Nussbaum 1997). Professor Nussbaum investigated programs in gender studies, religion studies, and ethnicity studies (especially African-American studies and studies of non-Western societies) in a core of fifteen American colleges and universities. She collected data about curricula and literature resources; surveyed teaching methods; elicited views and opinions through interviews (conducted and taped personally and by research assistants); and she examined course evaluations. She then submitted the programs to a close philosophical interrogation. In the process, she persuasively demonstrated how interdisciplinary and an internationalizing focus characterize the successful programs highlighted in her book. She shows that students exposed to the kinds of liberal education programs she has investigated will be capable of rising to the challenges of a globalizing world. As she explains: ‘Many of our most pressing problems require for their intelligent, cooperative solution a dialogue that brings together people from many different national and cultural and religious backgrounds’ (Nussbaum 1997: 8).

It is our contention that area studies courses cognizant of the philosophical issues and pedagogical methods analyzed by Nussbaum are likely to develop into the progressive curricula she is advocating. They can be developed into the very programs urgently needed - in Japan and all round the world - for understanding the contemporary realities of internationalization (kokusai-ka). It has already been noted that internationalization needs to be more than a ‘superficial coating of “internationalness”’. Rather, it requires the ‘internationalizing of attitudes or the acquisition of an international mind’ (Jacques 1992: 53). As Nussbaum explains:

It is up to us, as educators, to show our students the beauty and interest of a life that is open to the whole world, to show them that there is after all more joy in the kind of citizenship that questions than in the kind that simply applauds, more fascination in the study of human beings in all their real variety and complexity than in the zealous pursuit of superficial stereotypes, more genuine love and friendship in the life of questioning and self-government than in submission to authority. We had better show them this, or the future of democracy in […] the whole world is bleak (Nussbaum 1997: 84).

A retreat from area studies in universities today would be counterproductive, not only to universities themselves (and their students), but also to the world’s need for educated understandings of globalization. As Nussbaum concludes: ‘It would be catastrophic to become a nation of technically competent people who have lost the ability to think critically, to examine themselves, and to respect the humanity and diversity of others’ (Nussbaum 1997: 300).

Over a decade ago the author Shiba Ryotaro wrote that many Japanese people too frequently ‘… lean one on another for support against the outside [world] like sloppy drunks’. He noted: ‘If Japan is to have a hand in creating the civilization of the 21st century, we will need a change of […] educational and political systems, but above all a change of heart’ (Shiba 1991; see also Befu 2001; Befu & Guichard-Anguis 2001; Lie 2001). One of the ways for Japan to achieve this change of heart - to win an influential and civilizing
role in a globalizing world - is to challenge students’ perceptions and understandings, to take them beyond the 'shores' of their immediate (Japanese) cultural experience. A less hesitant, more confident Japanese presence in global affairs is now called for. To educate young Japanese otherwise - i.e., to mis-educate them - would be to seriously constrain their intellectual, cultural and spiritual development.

IV. Globalization

So what is meant by globalization? Princeton’s Professor Richard Falk has observed that globalization is almost a Jekyll and Hyde condition. At a very simple level, it unleashes two related transforming realities on the world: (a) predatory globalization and (b) globalization from below (Falk 1999:127-36; see also Falk 1993; Streeten 2001).

(a) Predatory globalization is about shifting more global capital from the poorer parts of the globe to the already rich areas (thereby increasing global inequalities). It is possible to refer to it as neo-imperialism via the Internet in view of the billions of dollars that shift around the globe at the touch of a computer key during any one period of trading on stock markets, futures markets, and currency trading markets. It is ideologically present in neo-liberal economic theories that form an apology for the aggressive behaviors of these markets. It is evident in the widespread environmental pollution premised on manipulated markets and mindless consumerism. It is collaborative with institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and with many trans-national and multi-national conglomerates that pursue profits by exploiting poorer states already crippled by debt burdens and the crass and selfish indifference of the rich world (Stiglitz 2001; see also Cassidy 2002; Patience 2002).

(b) Globalization from below is about the evolution of global citizenship. It is about people all round the world learning to value each other as fellow humans, hence it incorporates a deep and extensive critique of globalization from above. It means coming to an educated realization that we have to work together to establish peace and human rights. It means co-operating to provide access to food, health, and shelter, and to offer each other relief from natural disasters (e.g., global warming, earthquakes, floods, HIV/AIDS). It is about understanding that all this is in the interests of the entire world. It is not about the world's rich minority persisting self-righteously to proffer to the impoverished majority of the international community more cold and inadequate charity. The new and hopeful globalization is evident in the controversial rise of humanitarian interventions around the globe - e.g., by the UN and its agencies, by other non-government organizations, and by governments in a variety of bilateral and multilateral arrangements. It is also laudably present in the recent establishment of an International Criminal Court to prosecute cases against those accused of crimes against humanity (International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, 2001:72; Singer 2002b).

For Professor Falk the challenge is to amplify the second form of globalization, while placing effective limits on the former. This means encouraging the growth of a

…global civil society [to] encourage a human rights and democracy orientation toward global citizenship - the world as delightfully heterogeneous, yet inclusive of all creation in an overarching frame of community sentiment, premised on the biological and normative capacity of the human species
to organize its collective life on foundations of nonviolence, equity, and sustainability (Falk 1993: 50; see also Waterman 1998).

Education is a major means for achieving Falk’s objectives. As the 1998 Nobel Economics Laureate Amartya Sen points out: “The contribution of basic education to development is not [...] confined to economic progress. Education has intrinsic importance ...” (Sen 2002). It contributes to progressive social developments like female equality, environmental awareness, and the nurturing of a democratic consciousness which includes demands for participation and accountability in hitherto authoritarian and corrupt political regimes, encouraging them towards one or other of many possible ‘transitions to democracy’ (Gaerlan 1993; see also Huntington 1991; Laothamatas 1997; Inoguchi 1998).

Our argument assumes that area studies programs conceived in the light of Falk’s globalization from below - a globalization that welcomes a global civil society where people are comfortable with each other, where they recognize and enjoy their cultural differences and the multiplicity of deeply-felt identities, where they co-operate in order to solve problems that threaten global security, to live in a civilized world order - are likely to be both attractive to students and of scholarly value in the university of the twenty first century (Taylor 1992; see also Taylor 1989; Taylor 1999). But this admittedly liberal (as opposed to a realist) view of a renewed approach to area studies in universities is immediately confronted by Realpolitik area studies practices that still exist - if somewhat in decline - in many universities round the world.

V. Realpolitik Area Studies

Scholarly analyses of major strategic, security, diplomatic, foreign policy and economic features of superpowers and big powers provide Realpolitik (i.e., plausible, but not always ethically responsible) rationalizations for designing and delivering area studies curricula in American Studies, European Studies, and Asian Studies. American Studies programs in Japan, for example, should be able to provide coherent explanations of the US superpower’s political and economic systems, its foreign and defence policies, its historical and cultural development, as well as the history and politics of its relations with Japan. And Japanese students could reasonably ask in their European Studies programs about the contemporary impetus for Europe’s integration - whether it constitutes the birth of a new superpower. If so, what kind of superpower - will it be unilateralist, or will it be democratically collaborative with the world (a new, less ‘anarchic’ superpower)? What does this all mean for Japan? Contemporary East Asian Studies programs in Japanese universities should presumably focus on China’s potential as a superpower in the region. Will it remain a united state, or will it disintegrate like the old Soviet Union? (Chang 2001; Pei 2002; Studwell 2002). If it remains united, will it be a post-communist superpower? How will it relate to East Asia in general, and to Japan in particular?

We acknowledge the strategic relevance of Realpolitik area studies courses. But it is our view that when they focus predominantly on superpowers or big powers, they are open to criticism on four scholarly fronts.

First, if they are taught uncritically, or without a wider comparative focus, students are in danger of being absorbed (or persuaded or seduced - even brainwashed) into the ideological apparatuses that all big
powers have deployed throughout history to impose what may be depicted as 'subaltern mindsets' on colonized or otherwise subjugated peoples around the world, in the interests of the metropolitan powers. British imperial histories of India, for example, can sometimes be read as an apology for Britain's colonizing ('civilizing') of the Indian 'hordes' (Fieldhouse 1973: 84-7; see also Low 1973). This viewpoint has been radically challenged in recent years by post-colonial and subaltern studies (Spivak 1995). Throughout the Cold War, some American Studies and some Soviet Studies programs were used (sometimes subtly, sometimes very unsubtly) by each of the superpowers, for their own purposes - e.g., by funding publications, research projects, selected personnel, and curricula believed to be sympathetic to their respective (if not always respectable) ways of participating in world politics. If this is done covertly, without any accountability - e.g., by laundering funding and resources through philanthropic organizations - then its manipulative intentions will undermine any academic advantages, especially where inconvenient truths are glossed over in deference to an 'official' line.

Secondly, superpowers and big powers are not the only players in international politics - nor are they always the winners (Johnson 2000; Nye 2002). The withdrawal of the US and its allies from Vietnam in 1975, and the defeat of Soviet forces in Afghanistan, prior to Osama bin Laden and al Qa'idas, indicate that superpowers can sometimes be held accountable to militarily unsophisticated ethnic communities and states.

Thirdly, Realpolitik area studies tend to be uniformly political, sometimes forgetting that there is more to the world than politics. Equally important cultural, literary, linguistic, artistic, gender, historical and religious issues tend to be neglected if the curriculum focus is limited to narrow strategic issues (in effect making them collaborative with strategic studies). If area studies programs are to fulfill their roles as engaging liberal contributions to university curricula in a globalizing world, such programs must be free to venture well beyond being mere handmaidens to realist International Relations apologies or rationales for the world as we think we know it.

Fourthly, as the world globalizes, the need for wider-ranging area studies courses in universities will become obvious. As noted in our earlier references to Nussbaum, today's students need to be informed about, and to know how to deal with, contemporary increases in global human mobility through increases in trade and commerce, increases in travel (tourism, business and educational exchanges, cultural exchanges, refugees and asylum-seekers, human trafficking, conventional migration), and increases in information availability (media, Internet). More than ever before, young people require an education in global citizenship; they need to know (by being well taught) how to feel at home in the whole world, not just in their own comfort zones or within parochial or narrowly regional contexts.

In short, we are proposing that the old Realpolitik rationale for area studies is no longer legitimate. If area studies courses are to be revived successfully in universities, they need to be re-configured and revitalized in the light of the burgeoning scholarly responses to globalization.

With this in mind we return to our focus on Australian Studies in Japan.

What we are intimating here is that the Japan-Australia relationship contains possibilities for an area
studies focus that contributes to globalization from below. While our focus in this paper is on Australian Studies, its corollary - of necessity - is a renewed approach to Japanese Studies, a discourse that also needs considerable rethinking in the light of globalization. To help situate our discussion, we briefly outline a view of the similarities in Japan’s and Australia’s status in the Asia-Pacific region.

VI. Two Estranged States on the Edge of Asia

Beyond the limited instrumentalism of their established trade relationship, Japan and Australia face oddly similar problems in their relations with neighboring states in their geo-political region.

Japanese estrangement - even alienation - from Asia has long been noted. It remains a scar on Japan’s on-going diplomacy. Even during the Meiji Era, Japan’s ‘modernization’ was more a process of copying economic and technological structures rather than absorbing the so-called secularism and rationalism that provide the determining cultural components of what is loosely referred to as ‘Western modernity’ (Keene 2002). Nor was the post-Meiji Era an opening up to Asia. Asian societies and economies (especially Korea and China) were pressed - sometimes ruthlessly - into the war strategies of the Japanese government, resulting in widespread suffering. That this history remains a problem for Japan’s reputation in the region is now an unavoidable, if uncomfortable fact (Buruma 1994). Since the Second World War, Japanese governments have largely been reluctant to apologize meaningfully for this negative period in their dealings with countries like Korea and China. A few expressions of regret - mostly perceived as inadequate - have been proffered at various politic moments. This reluctance - often seen as aloofness, even arrogance - has needlessly prolonged tensions in Japan’s relations with East and Southeast Asia generally (Dirlik 1996). While this counterproductive diplomacy persists, Japan’s reputation for hubris in the West and South Pacific will also persist (Yoshino 1992; Ching 2002).

Australia, too, has a history of self-inflicted alienation from Asia. From the time of European settlement in 1788 an ‘anxiety’ about Asia prompted Australians to exclude Asian settlers, while seeking to remain under first a British and then an American security umbrella (Walker 1999; Burke 2001; Goldsworthy 2001). This anxiety was based on a toxic combination of colonial dependency (maintaining a ‘British’ identity in a distant part of the British empire) and racist fears of a ‘Yellow Peril’ - later a ‘Red Menace’ - thought to be about to sweep out of China, through Southeast Asia, to engulf Anglo-Celtic Australians (Broinowski 1990). The worst example of this racism was the so-called white Australia policy (1901-1973). This policy was repealed by the Whitlam government in 1973 - though the policy was largely ignored by governments from the mid-1950s, permitting not insignificant numbers of Asians to settle in Australia from that time (Meaney 1995). Since 1973 Australia has pursued a non-discriminatory immigration policy that has seen large numbers of settlers arriving from Asia (Jupp 2001; Jupp 2002; see also Coghlan and McNamara 1997; Jayasuriya and Kee 1999; Lopez 2000; Burley 2001).

But in the minds of many Australians the country remains nostalgically linked to its dependency on Britain and America. While there have been attempts to ‘engage’ with Asia in recent years, they remain patchy and inconsistent even if there have been a few gains along the way (FitzGerald 1997; McGillivray and Smith 1997; Keating 2000). The rise of populist political organizations like One Nation (a right-wing political group reacting against globalization and Asian immigration) has been watched ruefully by many
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potential friends in Asia (Leach et al. 2000). And today, as Professor Milner has noted, the Howard government seems more inclined to promote a ‘... comfortable and even complacent Australia, rather than a tenacious, resourceful and Asia-sophisticated community’, one that would ‘engage’ with Asia rather than retreat from it - the latter course appearing the preferred course of the current federal government (Milner 2001; see also Rix 1999; Kersten 2001).

Similarities in Japan’s and Australia’s unfortunate beliefs in their respective cultural/racial superiorities have kept them on the political (if not economic) edge of Asia. Sharing critiques of their estrangements from Asia could constitute preliminary grounds for imagining a more adventurous bilateralism - one that goes beyond the shallow instrumentalism that presently consigns the relationship to complacency. Sooner rather than later we would need to move beyond merely comparing and critiquing each country’s estrangement from Asia, to more positive forms of bilateralism. It is disappointing that a more mature bilateralism hasn’t developed long before now - as it might have if, for example, the tragic-comic maneuverings surrounding the multifunction polis (MFP) had been treated with greater seriousness on both sides. (5)

VI. Australia’s Distinctiveness in a Globalizing World

We are not arguing for a bi-lateralism between Japan and Australia that is only a diplomatic success story - positive though this goal most certainly is. We are also suggesting that a maturing of the relationship, beyond the instrumentalism that presently limits it, could become an educational contribution to the growth of globalization from below. This maturing should permit, for example, Japan to engage directly with Australia about three ‘core’ areas of international (or global) relevance: (i) Australia’s treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; (ii) its multiculturalism; and (iii) its proximity to Asia. We suggest that these three core areas are not simply aspects of potentially better-theorized Australian Studies programs. Related to the three core areas are other areas that undoubtedly are of importance too - e.g., literature, film, art, drama, music. They need to be integral to any explorations of the three core areas of our focus on Australian Studies. Our approach, here, is a ‘big picture’ one: further refinement is unquestionably necessary.

(i) Reconciliation with Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

European settler-colonialism (or ‘settler capitalism’) on the Australian continent proved holocaustal for its Indigenous populations (Denoon 1983). The cruel - sometimes savage - marginalization of Indigenous peoples has remained deeply problematic ever since. As Geoff Clark, chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, has noted, Aboriginal communities today ‘... are crippled by social problems, substance abuse, domestic violence and chronic division and disputation within communities and families’, (6) This constitutes a calamity in the midst of non-Indigenous Australians whom aggregate statistics place among the healthiest, best-educated and richest populations on the globe (Rowse 2000; see also Neill 2002; Nettheim et al. 2002; Rowse 2002). In this sense already Australia is a contemporary microcosm of the inequality that many colonized peoples routinely experience and which predatory globalization is currently intensifying around the world.

In recent years there has been a growing consciousness of the significance of Aboriginal Affairs in Australian public policy. In the 1970s the Dunstan governments of South Australia began the great drama
of acknowledging Aboriginal ownership of land by granting the Pitjantjatjara people (a once large Aboriginal community inhabiting substantial parts of South Australia and the Northern Territory) legal title to parts of the state identified as traditional Pitjantjatjara lands (Summers 1981). On 3 June 1992 the High Court of Australia, in its famous Mabo judgment, found that the colonial doctrine of terra nullius (that the land was unoccupied on the arrival of the Europeans) was legally invalid and that in certain circumstances descendents of those peoples originally displaced from traditional lands may be accorded compensation or return of traditional lands.

Since the Mabo ruling, demands for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians have been increasing. As the Prime Minister noted on 22 July 2002, at the opening of Reconciliation Place, a new precinct in Canberra: ‘... there will be no debate about the desirability of placing at the symbolic national centre of the constitutional life of this nation, a special area which not only honours the contribution of indigenous people [… ] but also honours the importance of the process of reconciliation’.

Broadly there are two kinds of reconciliation being advocated in contemporary Australia. The first - substantive reconciliation - is ambitious and envisages a revolutionary transformation of the living conditions and life chances of Indigenous peoples in contemporary Australia. The second - practical reconciliation - is more pragmatic and less ambitious. The former is seen as a 'progressive' approach to Indigenous advancement in contemporary Australia. The latter is seen as a conservative - in some cases reactionary - response to the progressive initiative.

Substantive reconciliation entails governments enacting a mixture of comprehensive legal reforms promoting Aboriginal community development focusing on health, housing, work-generating, and education programs. It includes the provision of compensation payments by governments to Indigenous people who can establish traditional claims to land where those claims can no longer be restored, and compensation to victims of past policies (including the forced removal of part-Indigenous children from their mothers - the so-called 'stolen generations'). It involves providing support for traditional and semi-traditional community development. Its most symbolic element is the proposed signing of a legal treaty with Indigenous peoples, to be ratified by the federal parliament, acknowledging that contemporary Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the descendents of those who suffered invasion and unjust displacement from their lands upon European invasion. Their descendents are still disadvantaged in the dominant structures and practices of contemporary Australian life. The treaty would also include a formal apology to Indigenous peoples for past sufferings and injustices. The Howard government has recently rejected proposals for a treaty and a formal apology to Indigenous peoples as recommended in the report of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.

Proposals for practical reconciliation come mainly from the Howard government. Prime Minister Howard himself is a strident critic of substantive reconciliation. He is especially opposed to any official apology for past wrongdoings, on the grounds that the evils of history are not the responsibility of those in the present. (He has, however, expressed his own personal regret that Indigenous people might have suffered in the past.) He argues that practical reconciliation involves the implementation of well-targeted policies that will lift Aborigines from their poverty and alienation and enable them to enter mainstream Australian life. He also argues that any special (e.g., affirmative) policies towards Aborigines would be
unfair to other minority groups and that all Australians, including Aboriginal Australians, should be treated equally before the law and by governments and other social institutions. Howard’s position has been given some support from among Aboriginal leaders who see welfare handouts keeping Aborigines dependent and marginalized. Noel Pearson, for example, one of the most impressive Aboriginal leaders to emerge in recent times, has complained of the lack of "...innovative policies aimed at helping communities overcome passive welfare". Nonetheless, at the Reconciliation Place opening, ATSIC chair Geoff Clark pointed out that the idea of the precinct was 'deficient' without a treaty: 'At the end of the day it’s the certainty and security that a final agreement will bring to future generations - rather than conflict'.

The search for meaningful reconciliation between Indigenous and colonizing non-Indigenous peoples is not new in the world. The American First Nations peoples have been coping with related problems for over two centuries. Similar problems confront the Indigenous populations of Siberia, Canada and Greenland. A comparable situation is evident with the Ainu peoples in contemporary Japan (Morris-Suzuki 1994). How does a globalizing world view these matters? How, in particular, is globalization from below going to confront them?

Increasingly, human rights interventions are talked about by the international community and sometimes enforced by its agencies. As Robert Jackson has noted: 'The doctrine of humanitarian intervention is a positive ethics in which human rights displace state sovereignty as the primary normative consideration in deciding questions of intervention' (Jackson 2000: 251; see also International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty 2001; Singer 2002). This is the way of the globalizing future, as such violators of human rights as Slobodan Milosevic and General Pinochet are discovering, not always comfortably. While not ignoring the myriad controversies inherent in this global issue, the condition of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander peoples is no longer a discrete aspect of Australian domestic social problem-solving. It is increasingly a global problem inviting global critiques and/or interventions. Thus Australia’s responses to global criticisms of the treatment of its Indigenous peoples, and to demands for changes in this treatment, take on a far wider scholarly significance than even the events and the participants themselves (Smith and Ward 2000).

(ii) Multiculturalism

More positively, the monumental publication The Australian People, edited by James Jupp, offers contemporary evidence of how Australia is emerging as a relevant social experiment in globalization from below (Jupp 2001; see also Jupp 1998; Castles et al. 1998; Hage and Couch 1999; Cope and Kalantzis 2000). The Australian People catalogues over 120 different ethnic communities that make up the ethnic pluralism of contemporary Australia. The number of languages, religious and cultural traditions, forms of social pluralism, demographic complexity, and gender relations that Australia’s multiculturalism encompasses makes it one of the most interesting experiments in globalization from below that the world has yet seen. In a sense Australia can be regarded as a test case in the construction of global citizenship.

This is not to suggest that multiculturalism has been without its opponents. We highlight four critiques of multiculturalism: all are opposed to multiculturalism as an apology for large-scale immigration programs; they all depict multiculturalism as a liberal plot to dilute traditional Australian life and culture. However, we believe that a defence of Australian multiculturalism is eminently plausible.

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(a) Anglo-Celtic nostalgics claim that the foundational institutions of Australian society - e.g., the rule of law, representative democratic government, family structures, churches, community organizations, schools and universities, trade unions and political parties, and our artistic and literary achievements - all owe allegiance to Anglo-Celtic cultures with their roots in Britain. But this nostalgia overlooks conflicts with British power structures and traditions that Celtic and other non-English peoples, especially the Irish, experienced during the harsh convict years of settlement (Hughes 1988). It also wrongly presumes a homogeneous Anglo-Celtic culture in Britain that has long been an ethnically plural society (Hechter 1975).

(b) Some labour market rationalists are inclined to point to ethnic diversity in the work place as being a social problem with serious economic consequences. And they suggest that increased immigration will simply add to the pool of unemployed. This is one of Geoffrey Blainey's arguments in his controversial book *All for Australia* (1984). But studies by Lever-Tracy and Quinlan (1988), Collins (1991), and Cope and Kalantzis (1997) all point to ways in which ethnic pluralism has transformed workplace relations in Australia, sometimes improving, in some instances reviving effective trade unionism and facilitating cultural linkages that contribute to industrial harmony and productivity - at least as much as they work against it. At the same time, Australia's post-War economic development would simply not have been possible without large-scale immigration policies that have been particularly effective since multicultural policies began during the Whitlam and Fraser governments in the 1970s (Patience 1989).

(c) In his controversial book *The Future Eaters* environmentalist Tim Flannery (1994) has demonstrated that the Australian continent's geological fragility constitutes a serious environmental issue for contemporary Australia. This fragility is evident in thin top soils that should not be intensively farmed (but often are being farmed intensively), the salination of large tracts of land through irresponsible irrigation, and other bad farming practices such as indiscriminate tree and forest felling, the introduction of exotic plants and animals destructive of the environment (including sheep and wheat, two staple agricultural industries in Australia). Threats to the environment are also evident in the expansion of cities like Sydney, increasing pollution and spreading into green fields space. Flannery's solution is to lower population numbers by lowering immigration (even suspending it indefinitely). He is opposed to multiculturalism because it would bring more people of greater diversity to Australia. But the central flaw in Flannery's case is that soil de-salination, reforestation, and the regulated growth of cities are all vastly expensive activities. They require a larger economy, greater expertise and highly skilled workers to achieve their goals. Paradoxically, this could mean more immigration, not less.

(d) There has always been racism and xenophobia in Australian culture - as there is in all cultures, including Japan. In Australia its presence was dramatically evident in the white Australia policy. Since its repeal in 1973 Australia has been accepting and successfully settling large numbers of non-white settlers (Vasta and Castles 1996; Hage 1998; Jayasuriya & Kee 1999; Barkan 2000; Docker & Fisher 2000). Residual racism can be mobilized by cynical politicians, but probably not for long. And, the Howard government has recently announced increases in immigration targets - including immigrants from Asia.

What this says about Australian multiculturalism is that, despite the odds, it has been a noteworthy success. It is arguably of global significance. As mentioned earlier, it is successful in ways that are positively
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suggestive of the viability of global civil society. Australia’s relatively peaceful handling of its growing ethnic pluralism is evidence that global harmony is not just an idealistic dream. Australians are not sure why they have been such successful multiculturalists, nor are we all that confident that we can maintain this enviable record. Even so, if Australians are intuitively practicing what Professor Charles Taylor has labeled the ‘politics of recognition’ with such apparent success, there is perhaps something for the world to consider (Taylor 1993; see also Freeman & Jupp 1992; Castles & Miller 1993; Kukathas 1993; Bennett 1998; Castles & Davidson 2000). One of the strengths of Australian Studies in Japan has been its focus on multiculturalism. Japanese scholars could well contribute (some have already contributed) to an international examination of the Australian experiment in global citizenship.

(iii) Proximity to Asia

Australia’s geo-political situation on the edge of Southeast Asia may seem at odds with its predominantly (though not exclusively) European cultural origins (Passmore 1992; Hirst 1993). This ‘Europeaness’ is routinely the target of Dr Mahathir, Prime Minister of Malaysia, who insists that Australia is not ‘Asian’ and therefore does not deserve a place in major regional forums like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) or at the annual Asia-Europe Summits. Dr Mahathir’s persistent insulting of Australia begs the question of what ‘Asian’ means - as does his jointly authored (with Ishihara Shintaro) and equally crude defence of ‘Asian values’ (Mahathir and Ishihara 1996). The cultural, linguistic, religious, political and regional pluralisms of Asia are arguably the region’s most significant (and interesting) features. For a multicultural country like Australia to expect - much less request - to be integrated into this ‘Asian mosaic’ seems hardly remarkable (Evans 1993). The advantages of Australia’s proximity to Asia - for both Australia and Asia - deserve greater respect than the Dr Mahathirs of the region allow (Patience 1997).

In addition to Australia’s multiculturalism, the country’s experience as an effective and stable constitutional democracy is not irrelevant to Asian states heading along their own various and dynamic pathways to democratic governance. Australia’s experience includes a federal system of government and this experience, too, is relevant to states like Indonesia and Burma struggling with separatist movements and civil and regional conflicts. Indeed, Australian expertise in federalism may not be irrelevant to a future China as it ponders a democratic way forward while maintaining national unity (e.g., as far as Tibet and Taiwan are concerned).

Australia also has established social institutions that have been effective in opening up good relations with Asian states. The most noteworthy of these are its schools and universities - its education system - where thousands of Asian students (especially from Southeast Asia, including Malaysia) have received - and are receiving - their education (Andressen 1993). Equally its health systems (including its world class public hospitals) and its legal systems (in which judicial independence and habeas corpus are constitutionally entrenched) are well established. Its banking and commercial institutions mostly function according to accountable and stable principles in law and in terms of closely monitored professional ethical codes.

In economic terms, Australia’s resource base provides promises of complementary trade relations with most of its Asian neighbours. This base also provides endless opportunities for joint venture developments that could see the rise of value-adding and large scale manufacturing industries in Australia.
As the trade relationship with Japan demonstrates, Australia is a stable trading partner. At the same time, Australia's food production is amongst the cleanest and most economical in the world. And while labour costs are probably higher in Australia than those of most Asian economies (though even this gap is narrowing), Australian manufactured goods are competitive in Asian markets.

In diplomatic terms, Australia maintains close relations with the United States, with Britain, and with the European Union. At the same time, in the very recent past, it placed high priority on relations ('engagement') with its Asian neighbours (some of whom, like Japan, are also partners in the American alliance) (Irwin 1996; Evans & Grant 1998; Knight 2000).

In short, Australia's proximity to Asia - especially in terms of its 'Europeaness' in an Asian geo-political setting - should be seen as something that justifies an academic focus, in terms both of teaching and research. In multilateral and bilateral terms, Australia can be a useful player in the Asia-Pacific region. Its links with Western and Asian states and within various regional and global networks (e.g., APEC and the Commonwealth) offer real possibilities of Australia working closely with its neighbours in the region to understand and negotiate the many challenges being thrown up by globalization.

VIII. Conclusion

In this paper we have sketched a prima facie case to show that Australian Studies programs are capable of being a great deal more than an orthodox accompaniment to a limited instrumental trade relationship - one that is also in danger of falling into complacency. For Australian Studies courses to make positive contributions to contemporary Japanese university curricula, it needs to be established that Australia is an area studies focus of fruitful academic interest in a globalizing world. It's time to move on from the prevailing 'orthodox Australian Studies' approach in Japan. The relationship between Japan and Australia needs scholarly interrogation to show that it could become more than just a good trade partnership. Australian Studies programs should be leading, not following, in this intellectual exercise. They can do this by focusing on the three core areas of distinctiveness we have identified to nurture educated awarenesses of other peoples, other nations, other places.

At the same time, Australia's contemporary coming to grips with the justice issues involving Indigenous peoples, its successful multiculturalism, and its proximity to Asia make it especially noteworthy for Japanese academic area studies programs. Separately, and together, these issues point to the promise of re-theorized Australian Studies programs that call into play Nussbaum's liberal education reforms, Falk's globalization from below, and Taylor's politics of recognition. These are profound international issues that are leading Australia into an era of developing global citizenship. Whether this means maintaining a narrow focus on Australia, or whether Australian Studies courses should become part of a larger area studies 'imagining' (e.g., Oceania Studies, South Pacific Studies) deserves close and immediate consideration (Anderson 1991; Alagappa 1995; Tada 2002).

Related issues are calling for a revived Japanese Studies, for similar reasons. Muto Ichiyo sees all this in dramatically globalizing terms:
We need to identify in the people’s struggles of today those facets which reflect the new realities of the world, and in those facets which point to a liberated future. And we need to find ways to consolidate those elements and relate them to the 21st century to which we aspire. In other words we need bridges (Muto 1993: 155).

Whether or not we agree with visionary aspects of Muto’s dream, the fact remains that an academic version of his position is increasingly plausible. Intellectual bridges need to be built across age-old chasms of mutual ignorance and prejudice. They need formulating within theoretical frameworks converging around the major issue of globalization, its possibilities and its discontents. As the processes of globalization speed up, the words of the English metaphysical poet John Donne can be slightly recast. No longer is any society an ‘island’ sufficient to itself - if it ever was. Today, when the bell tolls, it indeed tolls for the entire globe.

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Notes

(1) While acknowledging that this is a broad generalization, we note that even so there has been an impressive development of scholarly writing in Australian Studies over the past twenty years or so. For example: White (1981); Graubard (1985); Daniels (1988); Hergenhan (1988); Walter (1989); Saunders & Evans (1992); Whitlock & Carter (1992); Grimshaw et al. (1994); Nile (1994); Jamrozik et al. (1995); Hudson and Bolton (1997); Carter (1998); Day (1998); Wiseman (1998); Walker (1999); Bulbeck & Carter (2000); Nile (2000); Jupp (2001); Tada (2002).

(2) We may ask why there are not more Japanese scholars - especially those with PhDs from Australian universities (of whom there are some impressive examples) - more in evidence in tenure-track academic positions in these programs.

(3) We note, for example, the reported remarks of Professors Shiraishi Takashi, Ishi Hiromitsu, Ikegami Tetsuhiko, Shinotsuka Eiko, and Jack Gourman at the Yomiuri International Forum held in Tokyo on 11 July 2002 (Discussing International Competitiveness of University Education) in The Daily Yomiuri, 28 July 2002. ‘Overall most Japanese universities are at the world level, but our top-class schools are in trouble. They need to be bought (sic) up to the level of those universities considered to be the best in the world’ (Professor Ikegami). Related reports are available in: (i) ‘Tuning in to the changing face of higher education’, The Japan Times, 6 October, 2002; and (ii) ‘Japanese Uni Students Study Less’, by S. Lunn, The Australian, 14 October, 2002. Professor Chung Dai Kyun of Tokyo Metropolitan University has stated that ‘Japan’s academic institutions, particularly universities, should take additional doses of internationalization’, The Daily Yomiuri [Special Report - Panel Discussion; ‘Gaikokujin’ (22)], 20 September, 2002. See also Cutts (1997); Hall (1998); Metraux (2001).

(4) It may, of course, be argued that there can be both economic (diplomatic) and academic grounds for promoting Australian Studies in Japanese universities. Our concern is with the priority given to the economic grounds, perhaps too frequently at the expense of the academic grounds - or at least with a bureaucratic indifference to the scholarly value of those grounds.

(5) For a negative account of the MFP, see McCormack (1998). There has yet to be a positive account written about the at-times-visionary MFP idea. A more sympathetic account is needed before a balanced understanding of the issue can be reached.
(6) Clark, as reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 June, 2002.

(7) Howard, as reported in *The Canberra Times*, 23 July, 2002. See also Grattan (2000); Markus (2001). Reconciliation Place is situated before Old Parliament House on the southern shore of Lake Burley Griffin, within Canberra’s Parliamentary Triangle precinct, close to the ‘Aboriginal Tent Embassy’ (a protest site that has been in existence for over thirty years).

(8) Consider, for example, the following extract from a recent speech by Professor Lowitja O’Donoghue at the Australian Refugee Forum on 10 September, 2002:

   On Mother’s Day this year, I made my usual pilgrimage to the Colebrook Memorial at Eden Hills. For those of you who don’t know it, there is now a marvelous remembrance to the Stolen Generation on Shepherd’s Hill Road. It’s the site where so-called ‘half-cast’ children lived, having been taken from their mothers, mainly in the tribal lands of northern South Australia. The Church took upon itself the duty of care (not terribly well, in my opinion) and the children came under the jurisdiction of the Protector of Aborigines. These are children who were neither fully black nor white. They too, lived on the brink between daylight and darkness. Their mothers were most certainly black, but their fathers were not. They were Irish, Englishmen, Chinese or Afghani. I was one of those children. My father was an Irishman. I was removed from my mother when I was two and didn’t see her again until I was in my thirties. The pain I saw in her eyes when we met, I will never forget. It vividly painted for me the terrible error committed against Aboriginal families by Assimilation. And the consequences are still felt throughout this Country.

(9) Pearson, as reported in *The Age*, 7 May, 2002. See also Pearson (2000).

(10) ATSIC chair Clark, as reported in *The Canberra Times*, 23 July, 2002. See also Reynolds (1996).

(11) Taylor argues that a philosophically progressive multiculturalism (resulting in real and effective social and foreign policies) will open people constructively and creatively to human diversity. Within the social and individual diversities of others we come to recognize ourselves. In the process we become familiar with - at home in - our shared humanity across the globe. Social pluralisms, ethnic variabilities, and human individualities are therefore to be comprehended as potentially beneficial, enjoyable, and complementary. They should not be assumed automatically to justify estrangement, hostility, or conflict. Where ‘misrecognition’ occurs (i.e., where there is prejudiced devaluing or rejecting of people on ethnic, economic, religious, gender, or physical grounds; where there is a provoking of alienation between peoples; where there is discrimination against people by powerful agencies such as governments) human rights are immediately violated, human persons are harmed. Misrecognition imposes self-loathing, marginalization, loneliness, negative discrimination, violence, and alienation on its victims, often resulting in anti-social reactions, mental illness, crime, violence, and even terrorism. The politics of recognition is far more than mere toleration: it requires deep understanding, empathy, and the acknowledgement of shared human experience on a fragile globe. It entails what Taylor refers to as "the oneness of diverse beings who come to see that they cannot attain wholeness alone, that their complementarity is essential, rather than of beings who come to accept that they are ultimately identical" (Taylor 1999: 14). Without this complementarity and the sharing there can be no globalization from below (Singer 2002a).

(12) As evidenced, e.g., in the thinking of scholars such as Professors Kato Megumi (Meisei University), Sawada Takahito (University of Shizuoka), Sekine Masami (Keio University) and Takeda Isami (Dokkyo University).

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Australia’s Distinctiveness in a Globalizing World: Towards a New Area Studies

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Stimulated by Martha C. Nussbaum’s book, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education* (1997), we propose a revitalization of area studies programs in universities, to encourage them to respond to the profound academic challenges now being thrown up by globalization. The paper sketches a critique of conventional area studies in favor of the kinds of ‘internationalizing’ curricula advocated by Professor Nussbaum - and by many others, including some leading scholars in Asia - e.g., Singapore’s Professor Wang Gungwu.

In the light of Nussbaum’s recommendations, we outline a new approach to Australian Studies in Japanese universities. This approach is based on what we identify as Australia’s distinctiveness in a globalizing world.

We suggest that this distinctiveness has three core components:

(1) Reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians;

(2) Australian multiculturalism (e.g., as a micro-model for global citizenship);

(3) Australia’s European cultural heritage in proximity to Asia (e.g., modeling the politics of recognition).

We propose that Australian Studies programs in Japanese universities are justified on two important grounds - viz.,

(A) Acknowledging that the Japan-Australia relationship can (and should) be broadened and deepened,

and by

(B) Integrating Australian Studies in Japan into a renewed area studies framework.