

conceptual and strategic space for a more secure integration into the Asia/Pacific region.

What I have in mind here, in relation to the Indonesian example above, is a subtle but crucial shift in focus, which in no way ignores the incidence of 'external' conflict among the global elite states, but which places much more significance upon the everyday realities of life inside those societies most significant to our regional future. Special attention might then be paid to the often subtle indicators of change taking place in what to a great extent remain alien 'black-boxes' for most Australians. As some pioneering works of this kind have illustrated such inquiries can reveal a not so endearing reality.⁹¹ On the other hand, as even the sketch of the Indonesia situation above indicates, there is evidence not only of embedded corruption and repression but also of increasing space for a more participatory political arena, where the influences of a globalised economy and world order might be managed in favour of the great majority of Indonesia's peoples rather than just its ruling clique.

This is a space beginning to emerge in other areas of the Asia/Pacific to the extent that the IR mainstream in Australia (including its neo-liberal offshoot) can no longer assume a static "recurrence and repetition" as the (Westphalian) foundation of their foreign policy planning. It is an important space for Australian society also, because it is in this space that Australia's sense of its future self and its relationship with the region more generally might indeed prosper and develop. In the current Australian context this might allow the IR elite, and the general community, to contemplate more seriously official rhetoric about our future as part of Asia, and to just as seriously ponder the implications of a recent proposition that, in the next millennium, the 'West', or more specifically the United States "will not be calling the shots".⁹²

This, of course, is where even a moderately critical realism verges on the heretical in the Australian context - when the question is raised of whether it is actually in our interests to continue to cling to the global coat tails of the USA, of whether we actually need a US protector, of whether the costs outweigh the benefits of the ANZUS alliance. These, nevertheless, are crucial and timely questions for Australian society to ask in the late 1990s as it confronts, at last, an identity beyond the British Monarchy.

⁹¹As in the work of Robison and Goodman, *The New Rich in Asia* op. cit. 1996; and G. Rodan, *Political Opposition in Industrialising Asia* op. cit. 1996

⁹²See J. Gray "The West no Longer Calling the Shots" op. cit. 1997; and in more general terms see S. Fitzgerald, *Is Australia an Asian Country?* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1997)