

tooism' whereby ideas and policy perspectives derived from traditional (i.e. European and Anglo-American) sources have been accorded taken-for-granted status and faithfully reconstituted in quite different (Antipodean, Asia-Pacific) circumstances. In policy terms, traditionally, this has resulted in an (ironic) disregard for geo-political context, and an often desperate pursuit of security within the strategic confines of far-off protectors.

On the rare occasions when these themes have been addressed in terms of their location within a broad theoretical tradition emphasis has been placed upon the superficial nature of a realist-rationalist divide in Australian IR thinking which, it is contended, has produced a narrowly constituted 'English School' of realism in scholarly circles but, ultimately, no adequate basis for analysing international relations from an *Australian* perspective.<sup>1</sup>

Since the 1970s, however, and since the debacle in Vietnam in particular, an increasing minority of Australian commentators, from across the ideological spectrum, have voiced their concerns about these policy and intellectual commitments. Most, in this regard, have expressed concerns about the tendency, associated with traditional theory and practice, towards engagement in 'other peoples wars'. Many have urged a more nuanced appreciation of Australia's location as an independent multicultural actor in the coming 'Asian century'. All have emphasised the necessity for something other than traditional political fealties and grand-theorised simplicity regarding Australia's role as the furthest Western outpost in an anarchical global arena.<sup>2</sup>

For all this there have been indications in the last decade or so that the traditional policy and analytical commitments are now acknowledged as, at least, problematic by many within the mainstream IR community, and that a more nuanced and more comprehensive foreign policy agenda is now in place. Indeed it has been from this quarter that proclamations of 'new thinking' on foreign policy and security issues have emanated in the 1990s, alongside claims for new policy initiatives suggesting a reformulation of traditional geo-strategic premises in favour of neo-liberal approaches to 'cooperative security' and 'economic realism'.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See M. Indyk, "The Australian Study of International Relations" in Surveys of Australian Political Science ed. D. Aitken (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1985)

<sup>2</sup> For a recent overview of these concerns see G. Cheeseman and R. Bruce eds. Discourses of Danger and Dread Frontiers (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1997)

<sup>3</sup> See in particular, G. Evans, Cooperating For Peace: The Global Agenda for the 1990s (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1993)