

Anti-Minorities History: Perspectives on Aboriginal-Asian Relations

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Not ‘fragmentary’ in the sense of fragments that refer to an implicit whole but fragments that challenge not only the idea of wholeness but the very idea of the ‘fragment’ itself (for if there were not to be any wholes, what would the ‘fragments’ be ‘fragments’ of?) – Dipesh Chakrabarty²

In this process, ‘Australia’ might cease to be seen as a convenient universalist salient point from which to ‘read’ Asia. Instead, people and places in Australia would become part of the problem to be understood and ‘read’ – in an interconnected series of points upon the earth, not only reflecting but becoming objects of reflection. – Tessa Morris-Suzuki³

I. Limits of Minorities History

Let us ask ourselves, once again: why do we study the Aboriginal-Asian encounter? The simple answer has already been given in this volume: because such a history has been largely neglected in Australian historiography. Exploring how discourses of “Indigenous” and “Chinese” have historically been separated, Ann Curthoys describes this omission as ‘an uneasy conversation’.⁴ Facilitating the conversation between the Indigenous and Asians in Australian political debate is indeed an urgent and important part of our Whitewash project. However, this article does not necessarily aim to make the conversation “easier”. Instead, my purpose here is to look into Aboriginal-Asian relations from a different angle by “unfocussing” on Australian history. By re-casting our purpose in studying Aboriginal-Asian relations, I am seeking a way of emancipating Aboriginal (and Asian) history from Australian historiography. I will first briefly look at Aboriginal historiography and show how such an indigenous/minorities history has served to re-shape Australian (national) history in the last thirty years of the twentieth century. Secondly, I will examine some studies about Aboriginal-Japanese relations to allow us to meditate on the conditions of multi-cultural/multi-national experiences in Australia. Finally, I will sketch some methodological possibilities for writing Aboriginal-Asian relations as “anti-minorities history”.

The emergence of “minorities history” has urged historians to re-think the writing (or not writing) of national history. As Dipesh Chakrabarty says, ‘The expression “minorities histories” has come to refer to all those pasts on whose behalf democratically minded historians have fought the exclusions and omissions of mainstream narratives of the nation.’⁵ In short, “minorities history” created the field of writing “anti-national history”. However, this obviously important contribution to history writing ended up revealing its weakness as well as its strength. Minorities history is, by definition, always “marginal”. The more historians emphasise “how marginal they are”, the more we place minorities history in a “minor” part of our historiography. In Chakrabarty’s words, ‘such “minor” pasts are those experiences of the past that always have to be assigned to an “inferior” or “marginal” position as they are translated into the academic historian’s language’.⁶ Confronting this problem of the “marginalisation of minorities”, historians began to write minorities history in a “less minor” way by integrating it into the “new national history”. Therefore, the fundamental epistemological problem with writing “minorities history” seems to me to be that historians have to choose between either *marginalising* minorities history, or integrating it as part of an “alternative master narrative”.

However, first, we need to bear in mind, as Benedict Anderson clearly points out, that the very notions of “minority” and “majority”, or “ethnicity”, are the products of colonial modernity. ‘[T]he politics of ethnicity,’ Anderson writes, ‘have their roots in modern times, not ancient history, and their shape has been largely determined by colonial policy.’⁷ Therefore, when writing minorities history, we should be aware of the risk of reinforcing the artificial binary of “majority” and “minority”. Furthermore, we cannot overlook the importance of Gassan Hage’s work on “fantasies” of white supremacy in “multicultural Australia”. Hage argues that *both* racists *and* multiculturalists take the “white nation” for granted and try to control Aboriginal and migrating populations as their political objects through white authority/supremacy.⁸

I would argue that the “risks” identified by Anderson and Hage have been apparent in Aboriginal history in Australian historiography.

II. Creating A Nation?: Aboriginal Historiography

Since William Stanner challenged the ‘Great Australian Silence’ in his famous public lecture,⁹ the overriding purpose of studying Aboriginal history has been, more or less, consistent: finding and creating a place for Aboriginal history within Australian national – if not nationalistic – history. This project started by challenging previous Australian historical studies which had largely neglected the colonial oppression, exclusion and exploitation of Indigenous Australians. C.D. Rowley’s trilogy,¹⁰ Peter Biskup’s *Not Slaves Not Citizens* (1973),¹¹ and Raymond Evans’ *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination* (1975)¹² are probably the best examples of important works from the earlier stage of Aboriginal historiography, which narrated Aboriginal history as an anti-national history of Australia. However, since the 1980s, the historians’ project shifted from describing Aboriginal people as passive objects of colonisation, to seeing them as active agents of Australian history. Henry Reynolds’ groundbreaking work, *The Other Side of the Frontier* (1981)¹³ and other related works emphasised the violent conflict between the indigenous people and the settlers.¹⁴ Corresponding to this shift, historians also began to explore the ways in which Aboriginal people flexibly adapted to the colonial regime, and their positive contribution to shaping Australia. In other words, historians began to shift Aboriginal history from “minorities history” to a “less minor history” of Australia. During this second major stage of Aboriginal historiography, Aboriginal history came to be written as a part of the “new national history”.

Many historians have persuasively argued for the Australian pastoral frontier as a site for this new national history. For example, Dawn May who studied Aboriginal labour in the Queensland pastoral industry claims that the success of Australia’s major export activities (the cattle industry) ‘owes much to the contribution of Aboriginal labour.’¹⁵ Ann McGrath’s controversial book *Born in the Cattle* (1987) emphasises Aboriginal stockworkers’ positive memories of their life in pastoral frontiers and stakes out a place for them in ‘our national legends’:

The Aboriginal stockman in cowboy hat, bright silk shirt, jeans and elastic-sided riding boots is a familiar sight in much of rural Australia. Yet so far he has been excluded from our

national legends because of racism and his position in the story of colonialism. [...] Aborigines wanted their story to be told.¹⁶

Such scholarship shifted the purpose of studying minorities history from writing “anti-national history” to creating an “alternative national history”. Through this process, minorities became at the very least “less minor” and, at most, a part of “our national legends”. In other words, Aboriginal history became “less dangerous”. Chakrabarty describes this shift as follows: ‘The transformation of once-oppositional, minority histories into “good histories” illustrates how the mechanism of incorporation works in the discipline of history.’ One of the most paradigmatic statements for the writing of “good history” or “less minor history” in the context of Australian national history can be found in the introduction of the book, *Creating A Nation* (1994):

This book explores the myriad ways in which both women and men, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, have contributed to the economic, political and cultural life of the separate colonies and then the nation.¹⁷

Before carrying our discussion further, let me make it clear: I have no intention of dismissing the importance of the Aboriginal or the Asian contribution to Australian nation-making. However, it is worthwhile examining whether Asian and Aboriginal people in Australia were as nationalistic or patriotic as dominant white Australian elites. Does the notion of ‘we all contributed to the making of the nation’ really correspond to minorities’ consciousness, or is it a response to a contemporary Australian public consciousness which demands such a new national memory? On the epistemological level, this question leads us back to our starting point of conceptualising “minorities” whose histories were “neglected”. As long as we begin our historical inquiry from the notion of “minorities history”, our choice is limited to either the intellectual marginalisation of minorities through their relegation to a stream of anti-national history, or the integration of minorities into an alternative master narrative. Minorities are necessarily “minor” when we problematise and challenge the political majority’ and its hegemonic history-making. Therefore, we cannot doubt the importance of uncovering the history of exclusion and exploitation of “minorities”. However, our next step is debatable: when historians want to write a “less minor history” in order to emphasise the minorities’ agency, we end up writing a “good history” which reinforces and reproduces nationalistic history by re-shaping it.

Is there any way of writing a “less minor history” without creating a new master narrative? Can the position of minorities in history be anything other than either “minor”, or a part of “major”?

In considering these questions, I want to emphasise that the value of our project of studying Aboriginal-Asian relations lies not only in its capacity for expanding our historical knowledge but in its potential for *overhauling our ways of thinking history and of constructing knowledge*. The exploration of Aboriginal-Asian relations becomes, therefore, not an end-product but a point of departure which opens up new and interesting perspectives on the possibilities of writing an “alternative minorities history”.

In the next section, I will mainly look at the historiography of Japanese-Aboriginal relations as an example of the Aboriginal-Asian encounter. If we approach history from within the “minorities” framework introduced by colonialism, then the Aboriginal-Japanese encounter constitutes a “more minor” event than Aboriginal-Chinese relations in Australia by dint of demography. Since the population of Japanese migrants was much smaller than that of the Chinese, Aboriginal-Japanese history is probably less important in terms of contributing to Australian nation-making. Indeed, Aboriginal-Japanese relations could be one of the most ‘marginalised pasts’ in Australia. The question is *how to shrug off this minorities framework and “unmarginalise” Aboriginal-Japanese relations without integrating them into either Japanese or Australian national history*.

III. Aboriginal-Japanese Relations

At first glance, the history of the Aboriginal-Japanese encounter is no exception to the earlier described historiographic shift from “anti-national history” to “re-creating national history”. Twenty years ago, the first published collection of studies on the Aboriginal-Asian encounter in Australia appeared in a special issue of *Aboriginal History* (Volume Five, 1981). In this volume, Athol Chase discussed Aboriginal-Japanese working relations in the pearl industry in Cape York. He described the close and friendly relationship between Aborigines and Japanese labourers under the oppressive colonial regime.¹⁸ More recent work by historians has emphasised not only

how badly both Asians and Aboriginals were exploited by colonialists, but their role as vital economic agents who were indispensable labourers in northern Australia. Regina Ganter's detailed and eye-opening study of the rise and fall of the Australian pearl-shell industry clearly asserts this point. *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait* (1994) opens by saying, 'At the faded margin of Australian historical consciousness are the shadows of a once vibrant industry which provided the pulse of bustling little townships on the northern extremities of the continent.'¹⁹ Here, she suggests that 'Australian historical consciousness' should not forget this "marginalised history" of Australia. However, soon after this, Ganter tells us that a constant characteristic of 'pearl-shell fishery in Australian waters' has been 'that it was conducted by foreign nationals.'²⁰ At the level of the pearl-shellers' domination, the Australian colonial industry constantly competed with and resisted Japanese migration by protecting its lugger-ownership.²¹ At the level of labour power, most of the divers and other workers were mainly either non-white migrants, many of whom were temporary visitors, or indigenous peoples.²² Therefore, the history of the pearl-shell industry in Australia necessarily crosses the boundary of Australian nationhood. In other words, the history of the pearl industry in northern Australia is not just a part of Australian national history. It is the history of a place where 'All kind of nation been...', to use the phrasing of one Aboriginal person from Lockhart River.²³

Studying Australian colonial oppression and the exploitation of labourers from 'all kind of nation' may lead us to a minorities' marginalised history of Australia. On the other hand, emphasis on how people from 'all kind of nation' contributed to the Australian economy may create a new Australian national history. However, through the very notion of "every kind of nation", both Chase's and Ganter's works indicate and imply *something more than "Australia"* is happening here.

Keeping this problem in mind, let us now examine some of the Japanese literature. In Japan, the history of the Australian pearl-shell (as well as trepang) industry has been discussed largely in the context of Japanese migration history. In other words, the purpose of these studies has been chiefly to augment Japanese *national* history through praise of the *internationally* acclaimed Japanese divers' excellence, their contribution to the industry, and their possession of particular national characteristics,

such as their endurance in the face of Australian racism. For example, Kyuhara Shuuji writes:

[In Australia] Japanese fishery people went through numerous difficulties, fought them out, and with their bravery and efforts, risking their lives, they improved diving technology and found new fishing grounds. With original and exquisite Japanese skills, without peer among peoples of other nations, they have developed the pearl industry.²⁴

Japanese historians often emphasise Japanese migrant workers' contribution to the "industry". However, it is difficult to discover in their works "how Japanese contributed to the Australian economy". Furthermore, Japanese historians normally do not pay much attention to Japanese encounters with Aboriginal people. Aboriginal-Japanese relations are often not discussed or, at best, are "marginalised" in the context of Japanese migration history. Ogawa Taira's *Arafura-kai no Shinju* [Pearls in Arafura Sea] (1976)²⁵ describes the Aboriginal-Japanese encounter in one section of one chapter. However, his account is surprisingly biased and is full of racism towards Aboriginal people, as indicated by the section title: 'Primitive Race, Bushman'.²⁶ His discussion here is based on oral histories from Japanese ex-pearl divers. The stories introduced by Ogawa include reports that Japanese divers were attacked and eaten by 'bushmen'. 'It is heard that three Japanese were eaten in *Showa* 7 [1932]. In inland Australia, even though Japanese buried the bodies, they were dug up again (by the Aborigines) the next morning.'²⁷ With regard to Aboriginal women, Japanese ex-divers told Ogawa that they had 'the rut'. He also describes 'settled bushmen' who worked for the pearl or trepang industry. According to Ogawa, settled Aborigines were employed because they did not demand money and were satisfied with clothes and tobacco. In addition, their ability to hunt fish, birds and kangaroo was very useful. He says 'their sense of smell and sight demonstrate extraordinary superhuman-like talent, which is almost akin to animals.'²⁸ He closes this section by describing in a positive manner missionary efforts to settle down and "modernis[e]" Aboriginal people. Ogawa's work also contrasts strongly to the ways in which Chase and Ganter describe peaceful and friendly Japanese-Aboriginal relations under the oppressive colonial regime. For example, Japanese ex-divers told Ganter about the Japanese-Aboriginal relations as follows:

We treated them like one of the family. Everyone had their own work to do, we didn't have to communicate very much. [...] There was no corporal

punishment, only verbal abuse, if something went really wrong. The people on the boat were like one family.²⁹

Ganter summarises these findings with the statement that ‘Aborigines and Japanese refer to each other as “honest”, a term that expresses mutual respect.’³⁰ In contrast, while also admitting friendly aspects of the relationship between Aborigines and Japanese, Ogawa narrates the encounter through negative characteristics of “lack” (of understanding, of shared etiquette) and “excess” (of violence). Due to the lack of understanding as well as different manners and customs, exchanges of blows were so common on the boat, Ogawa alleges, that disputes sometimes ended with serious injury, or even murder.³¹ In addition, Ogawa gives an example of a white manager who treated his Japanese workers like members of his family.³² Referring to Ogawa’s work, David C.S. Sissons applies words like “mutual respect” and “honesty” to Japanese-white relations.³³

In sum, for historians writing Japanese migration history, the Aboriginal-Japanese encounter is *something less than “Japanese history”*. The Japanese contribution to the pearl industry and their experience in colonial Australia are narrated as separate from their encounter with Aboriginal people. It is worth investigating why the works of Ganter and Ogawa, both based on the oral histories of Japanese ex-divers, produce such different images of Aboriginal-Japanese relations. Ogawa’s discussion of Aboriginal societies was enmeshed in the racist discourse of the 1970’s which Ganter is free of in the 1990s. Furthermore, Japanese interviewees may have reacted differently according to who the interviewer was, a male Japanese or a female Australian. Different questions and approaches by the interviewees may also have resulted in the collection of different types of stories. However, what I would like to suggest is that our focus should not be on which one of these two versions of the past is a “right story”, or indeed “the right story” any more than it should be on attempting to integrate these different standpoints into one story. Instead, we may need to stay with and pay attention to this difference. In other words, by comparing and “connecting” two oppositional descriptions of the Aboriginal-Japanese encounter –as “more than Australian history” (Ganter) and “less than Japanese history” (Ogawa) – we may be able to create an historical arena in which we can think through those histories which can never become a part of “national legends”.

Before further developing this conceptualisation, I would like to consider briefly the work of a Japanese journalist. In 1980, Nakano Fujio published an English article, 'Japanese Pearl Divers of Broome'.³⁴ Later, based on his English article, Nakano published a Japanese book, *Mari- to Masatora* [*Mary and Masatora*] (1986)³⁵. This is probably the only Japanese literature focussing on the history of Aboriginal-Japanese relations. Of particular interest here is the divergence between these two works. While Nakano's English article claims that the multi-racial culture in Broome 'must be a facet of Australian society, and a part of Australian history',³⁶ his Japanese work shows little intention of integrating Broome culture into an Australian national narrative. Instead, the first chapter of Nakano's Japanese book is titled, 'Town [Broome] that was made by Japanese!'³⁷

Nakano's work is based mainly on the oral history of a Japanese ex-pearl diver (Masataro Okumura, popularly known as "Masatora") and his Aboriginal wife (Mary Okumura) in Broome. Both Japanese and English writings by Nakano position themselves in the conjunction in-between Australian, Japanese and Aboriginal histories. The story of Masatora's background corresponds to Japanese migration history, while Mary's story tells the history of Aboriginal lives on a missionary reserve. Masatora's memory of his working experiences is closer to Ganter's argument rather than that of Ogawa's. He tells how many different ethnicities worked together, more or less harmoniously. At the same time, Masatora has been consciously against racism, which he has faced not only from white Australians but also from some Japanese who looked down on him for marrying an Aboriginal woman. At the beginning and near the end of his Japanese book, Nakano describes how, on the death of his best friend, Masatora murmurs, 'It's us who made this town (Broome). We made it... Kaino did a good job, too.'³⁸ 'It was not *Ketou-san* [whites] who made a company big,' Masatora reflects. 'It was not *Ketou-san* either who made this town big. All are our job.'³⁹ However, by describing Mary's responses of nodding to him and holding his hand,⁴⁰ as well as many Aboriginal people attending Kaino's funeral,⁴¹ Nakano indicates Masatora's "we" and "our" do not actually refer exclusively to "Japanese" but instead embrace the earlier quoted formulation of 'all kind of nation[s]'. Reading Nakano's *Mari- to Masatora*, it also became clear that Masatora's 'we made this town' does not mean their contribution to either "Australia"

or “Japan”, but something more local – Broome. Because Mary and Masatora’s stories do not directly correspond to “Australia”, but more to Japanese, Aboriginal and other nationalities, this “locality” does not necessarily represent a part of “Australia”. Rather, Broome becomes *a place of conjunction* or *a site of convergence* between different places, cultures, and nations. Therefore, it is self-evident in Nakano’s own writing that the multi-nationality of Broome is both “more than” just a facet of Australian national history and “less than” a part of Japanese migration history.

Stories of Aboriginal-Japanese encounters are marginal and local in both Japanese and Australian national histories. This is because their relations inevitably indicate something “more than Australia” or “less than Japan”. You cannot fully integrate Aboriginal-Japanese relations into any national history. However, because of the very nature of the notion “more than Australia, less than Japan”, its marginality and locality indicate the point of “conjunction”; the conjunction in-between indigeneity and other nationalities within which the framework of “Australia” or any other “nations” lose hold. This should not only apply to Aboriginal-Japanese relations, but also Aboriginal-Afghan, Aboriginal-Indonesian, Aboriginal-Chinese, and so forth. I believe this “conjunction” is one of the gateways for writing an “anti-minorities history”. Anti-minorities history should, I believe, be a project of paying attention to these multi-cultural/multi-national chains of conjunctions of different people and places.

IV. Sketching Anti-Minorities History

Tessa Morris-Suzuki’s proposal of “anti-area studies” opens up further avenues of exploration for anti-minorities history. Morris-Suzuki argues that under the pressure of recent nationalism, ethnocentrism and globalisation in Australia and elsewhere, we need to re-examine the notion of “area studies”. She claims that area studies, along with other traditional disciplines, too often take the certain nature of social space for granted. In this search to create ‘a single framework for the interdisciplinary study of social wholes,’ she argues, entities such as “Latin America” or “Southeast Asia” have been unquestionably “real” and “integrated”.⁴² As an alternative template, Morris-Suzuki suggests a paradigm of *anti-area studies* which will seek ‘to reverse the

process of spatial integration'.⁴³ In such a project, it is crucial to analyse "different" social processes and interactions by using "different" sorts of social and geographical maps.⁴⁴

Morris-Suzuki sketches four possible examples of anti-area studies. The first comprises comparative studies of different nations' indigenous histories by focussing on their encounter with the modern nation-state. The second involves the study of a particular set of ideas varied around the world – such as the late 1960s student movement. The third would comprise research on global organisations such as the World Bank or United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). A fourth framework would involve looking at the local event 'in terms of the practical, everyday ways in which people experience and deal with the unsettling effects of global economic change in a number of very different sites throughout the world'.⁴⁵ Of these four proposals, the first – comparative studies of different indigenous communities – represents a possible way of practicing "anti-minorities history" through the comparison and connection between different indigenous (or any other minorities) histories.⁴⁶

Morris-Suzuki's proposed overhaul of area-studies provides is indeed a useful starting point. But I would like to propose my model of anti-minorities history, as mapped out here in my examination of Aboriginal-Asian relations, as a means of pushing her fourth example of anti-area studies even further. By focussing on the "connections" of different migrant and indigenous groups in a certain locality, anti-minorities history crosses the national and area boundaries without being entrapped by essentialistic notions of the "nation", "Asia", or "ethnicity". Through studying northern Australian towns such as Broome, Darwin or Thursday Island, one may find a web of connections between people from around the world – people from China, Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, the Philippines and Aboriginal Australia. Once again, our focus is not on "origins" but on "conjunctions" – on those connections which end up with "more" or "less" than a history of a certain "area" or "nation". In other words, by "unfocussing" national histories, the role of anti-minorities history, like that of anti-area studies, will be to uncover non-elite ways of connecting local and global. In a similar vein to Ranajit Guha's contrast between the subaltern and elite mobilisation in colonial India,⁴⁷ anti-minorities history pays attention to the "horizontal network" of

the different people across the globe rather than study the “vertical integration” of globalisation by the hegemonic nation-states.⁴⁸ Because this project is by nature multi-local and multi-cultural, it requires the collaboration of scholars studying different people and places in order to make such “global yet local connections” visible. Moreover, as Morris-Suzuki warns, this project is not for integrating histories into one “social whole” or single discipline. Instead, anti-minorities history should explore the boundary-crossing problems by using diverse disciplinary approaches as well as a wide range of knowledge from different areas.⁴⁹

But my model of an “anti-minorities history” is not only congruent with Morris-Suzuki’s prescription for “anti-area studies”. It is equally pertinent to the project of “deprovincialising national histories” discussed by Donna Merwick and Dipesh Chakrabarty in a recent colloquia at the Australian National University.⁵⁰ During these discussions, Merwick suggested that we should focus on the migration of people, and their identities, which easily cross national boundaries. To Chakrabarty, our challenge was not so much to see across boundaries but to *think without centres*. In the context of anti-minorities history, I understand their suggestions to mean imagining history as a series of “fragments” and “connections” that cannot be integrated into national narratives. As Chakrabarty puts it, we should stay with ‘what is fragmentary and episodic precisely because that which is fragmentary and episodic does not, cannot, dream of the whole called the state and therefore must be suggestive of knowledge-forms that are not tied to the will that produce the state’.⁵¹ Studying the stories and localities of conjunctions among different people and places, anti-minorities history tries to pay attention to *the web of connections without centre*. Needless to say, such a web should not be understood as an essential whole to be known or exercised. Rather, this web is *an unreachable open horizon* that facilitates the expansion and dispersion of the local conjunctions.⁵²

By focussing on locality, and *unfocussing* the nation, anti-minorities history allows us to study conjunction, and to pay attention to the web of connections. Through this process, Aboriginal-Asian relations as anti-minorities history can be a course to “deprovincialising Australian history”. As Ganter stressed at the Whitewash conference and in her essay for this volume, the new histories must ‘pin themselves on the cross-roads, on the threads that link populations rather than retrace, affirm and

reinvent boundaries between them'.⁵³ I believe that the direction Ganter is indicating is highly relevant to this project. By unfocussing national histories and boundaries, the project of anti-minorities history will articulate the connections among diverse "minorities" without any "major" or "central" point of reference, in which the very notion of "minorities" may not be necessary any more.

For my own part of this project, I am interested in exploring histories of Aboriginal-Japanese relations based on oral history research by setting up a dialogue between academic and Indigenous modes of historical practice. I quote from Deborah B. Rose explaining the Aboriginal epistemology:

And knowledge, in all Aboriginal systems of information, is specific to the place and to the people. To put it another way: one of the most important aspects of Aboriginal knowledge systems is that they do not universalise. Moreover, the fact that knowledge is localised and specific is one of the keys to its value.⁵⁴

We are apt to overlook important things that lie nearby. The way Aboriginal people operate their knowledge is, in fact, the ideal model for practicing anti-minorities history.⁵⁵

¹ I would like to thank Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Donna Merwick, and Ann Curthoys for discussions that have helped me to explore the idea of 'anti-minorities history'. Mayumi Shinozaki of the National Library of Australia helped me to effectively survey Japanese literature. I am also grateful to Philippa Webb, Jinki Trevillian, and John Docker who kindly read the manuscript and made grammatical corrections and other numerous valuable suggestions.

² Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'Radical Histories and Question of Enlightenment Rationalism: Some Recent Critiques of *Subaltern Studies*' *Economic and Political Weekly*, 8 (1995), 757.

³ Tessa Morris-Suzuki, 'Anti-Area Studies' *Communal/Plural*, 8 (2000), 22.

⁴ Ann Curthoys, 'An Uneasy Conversation: The Multicultural and the Indigenous.' in John Docker and Gerhard Fischer (eds), *Race, Colour and Identity in Australia and New Zealand* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2000), 21-36.

⁵ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 97.

⁶ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, pp.100-01. Although my argument here seeks to problematise such 'major/minor' dichotomy in the framework of 'national history',

Chakrabarty's article moves to develop the conception of 'subaltern pasts' (pp.101-06.), which is not directly related to my discussion in this article.

⁷ Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia, and the World*. (London ; New York, Verso 1998) 328.

⁸ Gassan Hage, *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society* (Sydney: Pluto Press, 1998).

⁹ William E. H. Stanner, *After the Dreaming: Black and White Australians – An Anthropologist's View* (Sydney: Crows Nest, 1968). See also, Ann McGrath, 'Contested Ground: What is "Aboriginal History"?' in Ann McGrath (ed) *Contested Ground: Australian Aborigines under the British Crown* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1995), 365-366.

¹⁰ C.D. Rowley, *The Destruction of Aboriginal Society* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1970), *Outcasts in White Australia* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1971), *The Remote Aborigines* (Canberra: National University Press, 1971).

¹¹ Peter Biskup, *Not Slaves, Not Citizens: The Aboriginal Problem in Western Australia, 1898-1954* (St Lucia: University of Queensland press, 1973).

¹² Raymond Evans, Kay Saunders and Kathryn Cronin, *Exclusion, Exploitation and Extermination: Race Relations in Colonial Queensland* (Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Co., 1975).

¹³ Henry Reynolds, *The Other Side of the Frontier: An Interpretation of the Aboriginal Response to the Invasion and Settlement of Australia* (Townsville: History Department James Cook University, 1981).

¹⁴ See, for example, Fergus Robinson and Barry York, *The Black Resistance: An Introduction to the History of the Aborigines' Struggle Against British Colonialism* (Camberwell: Widescope, 1977), Noel Loos, *Invasion and Resistance: Aboriginal-European Relations on the North Queensland Frontier 1861-1897* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1982).

¹⁵ Dawn May, *Aboriginal Labour and the Cattle Industry: Queensland from White Settlement to the Present* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 1.

¹⁶ Ann McGrath, *Born in the Cattle: Aborigines in Cattle Country* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987) viii.

¹⁷ Patricia Grimshaw, et. al. *Creating A Nation* (Ringwood: McPhee Gribble, 1994.) 1.

¹⁸ Athol Chase, "'All Kind of Nation": Aborigines and Asians in Cape York Peninsula', *Aboriginal History*, 5 (1981), 7-19.

¹⁹ Regina Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers of Torres Strait: Resource Use, Development and Decline 1860s-1960s* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 1994) 1.

²⁰ Ganter, *Pearl-Shellers* p.1.

²¹ Ganter, *Pearl-Shellers* Chap. 4.

²² Ganter, *Pearl-Shellers* Chap. 1.

²³ Chase, 'All Kind of Nation', p.11.

²⁴ Kyuhara Shuuji, 'Shinjusaishuu to Dekasegi Imin [Pearl Divers and Migrant Workers]', *Rekishu Kouron*, 5 (1978), 136; 'Wakayama-ken no Osutoraria Dekasegi Imin [Migrant Workers from Wakayama Prefecture to Australia]', *21 Seiki Wakayama*, 7 (1986), 108.

²⁵ Ogawa Taira, *Arafura-kai no Shinju [Pearls in Arafura Sea]* (Tokyo: Miyuki Shuppan, 1976).

²⁶ Ogawa, *Arafura-kai*, pp.190-96.

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- ²⁷ Ogawa, *Arafura-kai*, p.193.
- ²⁸ Ogawa, *Arafura-kai*, p.193.
- ²⁹ Quote from Ganter, *The Pearl-Shellers*, p.55.
- ³⁰ Ganter, *Pearl-Shellers*, p.55. See also, Chase, 'All Kind of Nation', p.13.
- ³¹ Ogawa, *Arafura-kai*, pp.196-203.
- ³² Ogawa, *Arafura-kai*, p.95. To be fair, Ogawa also describes the incident that a Japanese man hit the white manager. (pp.202-03)
- ³³ David C.S. Sissons, 'The Japanese in the Australian Pearling Industry', *Queensland Heritage*, 3 (1979), 22. Sissons does not discuss Aboriginal-Japanese relations in this article.
- ³⁴ Nakano Fujio, 'Japanese Pearl Divers of Broome', *GEO*, 2 (1980), 112-21.
- ³⁵ Nakano Fujio, *Mari- to Masatora [Mary and Masatora]* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunju, 1986).
- ³⁶ Nakano, 'Japanese Pearl Divers', p.120.
- ³⁷ Nakano, *Mari- to Masatora*, Chap1.
- ³⁸ Nakano, *Mari- to Masatora*, p.11, 199.
- ³⁹ Nakano, *Mari- to Masatora*, p.11.
- ⁴⁰ Nakano, *Mari- to Masatora*, p.199.
- ⁴¹ Nakano, *Mari- to Masatora*, p.11.
- ⁴² Morris-Suzuki, 'Anti-Area Studies', p.19.
- ⁴³ Morris-Suzuki, 'Anti-Area Studies', p.20.
- ⁴⁴ Morris-Suzuki, 'Anti-Area Studies', p.20.
- ⁴⁵ Morris-Suzuki, 'Anti-Area Studies', pp.21-22.
- ⁴⁶ See, for example, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, 'Collective Memory, Collective Forgetting: Indigenous People and the Nation-State in Japan and Australia' *Meanjin* 53 (1994), 597-612.
- ⁴⁷ Ranajit Guha, 'On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India' in Ranajit Guha (ed), *Subaltern Studies I: Writing on South Asian History and Society*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982), 1-8.
- ⁴⁸ Or, you may want to correspond such an anti-minorities history to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's conception of 'Rhizome'. See, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis: University Of Minnesota Press, 1987).
- ⁴⁹ Morris-Suzuki, 'Anti-Area Studies', p.22.
- ⁵⁰ The Colloquia 'Deprovincialising National Histories' was held by Humanities Research Centre, ANU, May 2000.
- ⁵¹ Chakrabarty, 'Radical Histories and Question of Enlightenment Rationalism', p.757.
- ⁵² Or, you may want to see it as a 'spatial application' of Foucault's notion of 'genealogy' as elaborated in Michel Foucault, 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' in *Language, Counter-memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977)139-64.
- ⁵³ Regina Ganter "Mixed Relations: Towards reconfiguring Australian history" in this volume, pp **Ed note for Lindy: please cross-reference to the concluding sentence of Ganter's chapter in this volume**
- ⁵⁴ Deborah B. Rose, *Nourishing Terrains: Australian Aboriginal Views of Landscape and Wilderness* (Canberra: Australian Heritage Commission, 1996), p32.

⁵⁵ For further discussion on this point see Minoru Hokari, *Cross-Culturalizing History: Journey to the Gurindji Way of Historical Practice*, PhD Thesis (Australian National University, 2001).