

ABOUT FACE: ASIAN REPRESENTATIONS OF AUSTRALIA

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Statement

This thesis is my own work. Preliminary research was undertaken collaboratively with a team of Asian Australians under my co-direction with Dr Russell Trood and Deborah McNamara. They were asked in 1995-96 to collect relevant material, in English and vernacular languages, from the public sphere in their countries of origin. Three monographs based on this work were published in 1998 by the Centre for the Study of Australia Asia Relations at Griffith University and these, together with one unpublished paper, are extensively cited in Part 2. The researchers were Kwak Ki-Sung, Anne T. Nguyen, Ouyang Yu, and Heidi Powson and Lou Miles. Further research was conducted from 2000 at the National Library with a team of Chinese and Japanese linguists from the Australian National University, under an ARC project, 'Asian Accounts of Australia', of which Shun Ikeda and I are Chief Investigators. Its preliminary findings are cited in Part 2.

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Abstract

This thesis considers the ways in which Australia has been publicly represented in ten Asian societies in the twentieth century. It shows how these representations are at odds with Australian opinion leaders' assertions about being a multicultural society, with their claims about engagement with Asia, and with their understanding of what is 'typically' Australian. It reviews the emergence and development of Asian regionalism in the twentieth century, and considers how Occidental strategies have come to be used to exclude and marginalise Australia. A historical survey outlines the origins of representations of Australia in each of the ten Asian countries, detecting the enduring influence both of past perceptions and of the interests of each country's opinion leaders. Three test cases evaluate these findings in the light of events in the late twentieth century: the first considers the response in the region to the One Nation party, the second compares that with opinion leaders' reaction to the crisis in East Timor; and the third presents a synthesis of recent Asian Australian fiction and what it reveals about Asian representations of Australia from inside Australian society. The thesis concludes that Australian policies and practices enable opinion leaders in the ten countries to construct representations of Australia in accordance with their own priorities and concerns, and in response to their agendas of Occidentalism, racism, and regionalism.

Abbreviations

A	<i>Australian</i>
AAI	Asia Australia Institute (Sydney)
AAP	Australian Associated Press
AB	Alison Broinowski
AB	<i>Angkatan Berita</i>
ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
A-BC	Australian-Born Chinese
ABRI	<i>Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Armed Forces, to 1999)
ACFOA	Australian Council for Overseas Aid
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADB	Australian Dictionary of Biography
ADFA	Australian Defence Force Academy
AFAR	<i>Australian Foreign Affairs Record</i>
AFR	<i>Australian Financial Review</i>
AFP	<i>Agence France Presse</i>
AFTA	ASEAN Free Trade Agreement
AGPS	Australian Government Publishing Service
AIIA	Australian Institute of International Affairs
ANU	Australian National University
ANZUS	Australia New Zealand United States (Security Treaty)
AO	<i>Australian Outlook</i>
AP	Associated Press
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASAA	Asian Studies Association of Australia
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASEAN+3	ASEAN plus China, Japan, and ROK
ASEM	Asia-Europe Meeting
ASPAC	Asia Pacific Council
ASR	<i>Asian Studies Review</i>
ATV(I)	Australia Television (International)
BBC	British Broadcasting Commission
BCE	Before Christian Era (BC)
BP	<i>Bangkok Post</i>
CAB	<i>Current Affairs Bulletin</i>
CE	Christian Era (AD)
CCCR	Centre for Cross Cultural Research (ANU)
CNN	Cable News Network
CSAAR	Centre for the Study of Australia Asia Relations (Griffith University)
CSCSD	Centre for the Study of the Chinese Southern Diaspora (ANU)
DEA	Department of External Affairs
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
EAEC(G)	East Asian Economic Caucus (Group)
ECAFE	Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East
ESCAP	Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific

<i>FEER</i>	<i>Far Eastern Economic Review</i>
FPDA	Five-Power Defence Arrangement
GEACPS	Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere
G77	Group of 77 (developing countries)
<i>H</i>	<i>Hemisphere</i>
HR	House of Representatives
IDP	IDP Education Australia: International Development Program of Australian Universities and Colleges
IMF	International Monetary Fund
InterFET	International Force for East Timor
IPR	Institute of Pacific Relations
ISA	Internal Security Act (Malaysia)
ISEAS	Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
<i>JP</i>	<i>Jakarta Post</i>
JS	Japan Secretariat
<i>LRB</i>	<i>London Review of Books</i>
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
<i>NHK</i>	<i>Nihon Hōsō Kyōkai</i>
NLA	National Library of Australia
<i>NST</i>	<i>New Straits Times</i>
<i>NYRB</i>	<i>New York Review of Books</i>
<i>PAS</i>	<i>Parti se-Islam Malaysia</i>
PBS	(New York) Public Radio
POW	Prisoner(s) of War
RA	Radio Australia
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAR	Royal Australian Regiment
RN	(ABC) Radio National
ROK	Republic of Korea
RSPAS	Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies (ANU)
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation
<i>SMH</i>	<i>Sydney Morning Herald</i>
<i>ST</i>	<i>Straits Times</i>
<i>TNI</i>	<i>Tentara Nasional Indonesia</i> (Indonesian Armed Forces-1999)
<i>TWA</i>	<i>Weekend Australian</i>
UK	United Kingdom (of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation
UN	United Nations
UNAMET	United Nations Mission in East Timor
UNCTAD	United Nations Commission on Trade, Aid, and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNSW	University of New South Wales
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
US(A)	United States (of America)
ZOPFAN	Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality

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INTRODUCTION

Australia has an image problem. The identity claimed by Australians and the perceptions of Australia held by others, especially by opinion leaders in Asian countries, frequently do not match. This thesis seeks to identify these perceptions, to explain how they were formed, to show how they have been deployed throughout the twentieth century, and to suggest why opinion leaders in ten Asian countries represent Australia as they do.

The economic implications alone justify a study of Australia's reputation in the region: but the political, strategic, and interpersonal dimensions of Australia's unique location in the vertical hemisphere of East Asia and the horizontal hemisphere of South Asia add considerably to its significance. Asian countries are Australia's closest neighbours and largest trading partners, and many Australian opinion leaders repeatedly emphasise the importance of Asia to Australia. But their assertions are rarely reciprocated by their counterparts in the region. Australia's public profile in the ten Asian countries considered here is generally low and in recent years, in several of them, has been sinking lower.¹ Information about Australia's reputation in the region has for long been erratic, scattered among official opinion surveys and media reports. Australia's neighbours' perspectives deserve to be better understood not only for their intrinsic interest but also for what they can show Australians about themselves. These considerations constitute the significance of the subject.

The main body of the thesis is in three parts. Part One sets out the theoretical basis of the study. It summarises Australians' suppositions about themselves, showing how remote most of them have been from Asian ideas about regional identity that grew throughout the twentieth century. It also proposes that an Occidental agenda has

¹ 'We don't stand these days where we once did, in the high regard of the nations around us. And yet, in that high regard lies crucial elements of our security'. Kim Beazley, resignation speech, 10 November 2001.

increasingly been used to marginalise Australians, whether or not they seek closer engagement with Asia. In Part Two, a brief historical survey of representations of Australia in the ten countries identifies common and recurrent themes and considers their variations over time in relation to changing national preoccupations. Of the three contemporary case studies presented in Part Three, two provide a comparison between Asian opinion leaders' responses to Pauline Hanson (1996-2000) and their representations of Australia during the East Timor crisis in the same period. The third selects and analyses representations of Australia in fiction by Asian Australians from the mid-1980s to 2000. Arguments about Australia as 'part of Asia' are summarised in Appendix 1. In Appendix 2, additional evidence is presented of Asian opinion leaders' representations of Australia, and further examples of responses in the region to One Nation.

The scope of the study includes the ten Asian countries with which contact with Australia has been the longest and most significant: China (the People's Republic, Hong Kong, and Taiwan), India, Indonesia (and East Timor), Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. It concentrates on these societies in the twentieth century, but its chronological range is from the earliest recorded perceptions of Australia in the region to 2000. Most of its primary sources originate from the public sphere in the ten countries: from speeches, official documents, newspapers, magazines, and monographs, in English or in translation; and in the third case study, from fiction by Asian Australians. More secondary source material is used than is usual in a thesis, but in selecting material, Asian authors have been preferred wherever possible. The bibliography is very large for three reasons: to acknowledge the material I have consulted even if it is not quoted, to indicate the sources of translated material in several languages, and to guide readers who may be more familiar with the literature on some societies in Asia than others.

The thesis takes theoretical guidance from mutual image pioneers such as John Dower, Iriye Akira, and Harold Isaacs, moving on to such later comparative culture studies as those of James Clifford, Michael Hill, and Elena Govor. It seeks to challenge Said and the Subaltern theorists not by pointing to limitations in their work, as others have done, but by reversing their generalisations about the West's constructions of

'Asia'. It applies them to Australia in a way that has not been done, and that Said, in particular, denied was possible. A guiding principle is that it would be an insult to the ten societies considered here to propose that, if opinion leaders use double standards, they should be immune from being identified as such. In analysing their generalisations about Australia, I try to avoid the trap of making equally sweeping statements, perhaps not always successfully, given the need to identify broadly shared opinions. I seek throughout, however, to present the perspectives of Asian opinion leaders in a way that does them justice, and to observe Australians' equal, if not greater, contribution to diminishing their own reputation in the region.

This is the first attempt to detect common motivations and to compare representations of Australia across the Asian region and over a long period. Synthesis and selection are inherent in the approach, but I have tried to avoid substituting my own individual perspective for the many I seek to study. I am well aware that it is impossible to cover completely either the broad universality or specific individualities in such a wide field. I am hampered, as well, by the barriers of numerous languages and scripts, and of limited access to some documents in official archives. The ephemerality of such potentially rich sources as television and the multiplicity of the Internet makes it difficult to do justice to their influence as shapers of opinion. That said, I am reassured to observe, even after the period covered by the thesis, that the representations of Australia that it identifies up to 2000 continue to be consistent with my findings.

Preliminary research was undertaken collaboratively with a team of Asian Australians who were asked in 1995-96 to collect relevant material from the public sphere in their countries of origin. Three monographs based on this work were published by the Centre for the Study of Australia Asia Relations at Griffith University and these, together with one unpublished paper, are extensively cited in Part 2 (Kwak, Nguyen, Ouyang, Powson and Myles). Further research is continuing at the National Library of Australia under the 'Asian Accounts of Australia' project on Chinese and Japanese 'Australiana', which is cited in Parts 2 and 3.² Two workshops at the National Library

² Project Administrators are Ruth Barraclough, Nguyet Thi Chu Barraclough, and Judy Laffan. Research Associates are acknowledged in Part 2.2 (Chinese), Part 2.3 (Japanese), and Part 2.6 (Philippines).

have provided me with valuable guidance from the field. Reports of commissioned surveys on trade, tourism, education, migration, and public opinion about Australia in several countries are selectively used, more for the qualitative than for the quantitative evidence that they provide. Travel for research included two visits to India and one to Singapore, as well as investigations in libraries, museums, and archives in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide. The thesis benefits from comments presented at a conference which I convened at the Australian National University in September/October 1998, 'A Tremendously Dangerous Time: Why Asia Matters'. I am grateful to Dr Denis Blight and to Anna Glynn of IDP for their support in making the conference possible.

Chinese and Japanese personal names are shown with the family name first, and Chinese are in pinyin, unless an individual has used them differently. Wade-Giles transliteration is shown where relevant for place-names and personal names that are more commonly known in that form. Japanese long vowels are indicated by a macron, except for commonly used place-names like Tokyo, Kyoto, Kobe, and Hokkaido.

I have received generous support from more colleagues and friends than can be mentioned here. They include at Griffith University Mark Finnane, Colin Mackerras, Deborah McNamara, Russell Trood, and Nancy Viviani; at UTS Andrew Jakubowicz; at UNSW Clive Kessler; at ADFA Bruce Bennett; at Edith Cowan University Cynthia Vanden Dreisen; at Victoria University Allan Patience and Richard Chauvel; at the University of Canberra Richard Broinowski, Satendra Nandan, Christina Slade, and Auriol Weigold; at the University of Sydney Kwak Ki-song; and at ANU Anthony Diller, Andrea Haese, Virginia Hooker, Anthea Hyslop, Jacqueline Lo, Gavan McCormack, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Linda Poskitt, Craig Reynolds, Aat Vervoon, Greg Young, and Shen Yuan-fang. Richard Broinowski patiently stayed the course, proof-read the manuscript, and was generous with advice and reassurance throughout.

I owe the greatest gratitude to Anthony Milner who offered me a Visiting Fellowship in the Faculty of Asian Studies, and gave me the freedom of his private library and equal

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PART ONE

SUPPOSITIONS

1.1 HYPOTHESIS AND APPROACH

A demonstrable lack of congruity exists between Australians' self-image and the representations of Australia that are common in Asian countries. While the shortcomings of Australia's perceptions of Asia have been widely researched, this thesis proposes that representations of Australia by Asian opinion leaders operate in less well-recognised ways and for reasons that await examination. This study therefore seeks to show how 'Australia' has progressively and repetitively been represented in ten Asian societies in the twentieth century, and to explain why.

In this Part, a theoretical approach to the subject is outlined, and keywords are identified. Australian suppositions about their identity are compared with indicative representations common among opinion leaders in the ten Asian societies studied here. The evolution of an Asian identity in the region is traced through the twentieth century, leading up to the deployment in the 1990s of a regionalist discourse disparaging 'the West', marginalising 'Australia' and valorising 'Asia'. It concludes by interpreting this by means of a new understanding of Occidentalism.

The origins of any individuals' beliefs about others are to be found in self-interest and self-perception, and in their projection of the preferred self in silhouette against contrasting cultures. The motives for all self-representations, I propose (following Isaiah Berlin)¹, are preservation and enhancement of the power of individuals to pursue their interests, and the reinforcement of that power by the collective. This seems to apply as well to societies and nations. As an observer of early French perceptions of the United

¹ Henry Hardy ed., Isaiah Berlin, *The Sense of Reality: Studies in Ideas and their History*, London: Chatto & Windus 1996: 19.

States realised, the picture others see of us will be created not by what we are, or what we think we are, or what we wish to be, but instead by what we seem to mean in terms of the private hopes and fears of those we seek to impress. (Echeverria 1957: 282)

Four decades later, issues of cultural difference between the black, white, Hispanic, and Asian cultures of the United States have come to be seen as 'interlaced with the issues of power, representation, and identity'. There, the representations of several cultures have become 'cultural capital', involving 'institutional structures that need to be understood and analysed within circuits of power'. (Giroux 1993)

The continuing operation of such power circuits across national and regional boundaries has been observed by a historian of China. Spence (1999) has shown how Western perceptions of the Chinese were conditioned by Westerners' perceptions of themselves. He presents 48 Western 'sightings' of China between the 13th century and the 1970s as evidence of how make-believe, hearsay, and verifiable fact have been compounded to shape Western contemporary representations of Chinese culture. Many of these 'sightings', Spence argues, are self-deceiving, self-seeking, self-consoling, or self-indulging on the West's part.

But as we will see, representations in Asia of the West, or of Australia, can be shown to be equally so. In Eastern no less than in Western societies, representations of the Other, or of the 'out-group', are readily appropriated and used by opinion leaders, and inscribed among the shared meanings and habitual language patterns of the 'in-group'. (Alfonso 1981) 'Asia', that for long lacked definition among its own people, in the twentieth century has gradually become an in-group, acquiring 'script' and imagery of its own. (Milner 1997b) Now more readily than ever, such scripts are promoted by propaganda in wartime and advertising in peace-time; rapidly transmitted by education and electronic media; and used to empower new claims about tradition, culture, and civilisation.

Western travel writers are said to have 'scripted' the continent of Europe in ways that enable the past to be seized 'as an image which flashes up at the instant when it can

be recognised'.² For centuries Western Orientalists 'scripted' the Middle East, and Asia too, as they chose. But after World War II a new generation of Western liberal intellectuals, feeling collective revulsion for the holocaust, supported decolonisation and successive movements for civil rights, human rights, women's liberation, nuclear disarmament, and environmental preservation, all of which questioned Western norms. Those who opposed Western countries' intervention in the Vietnam war argued that 'Asia' was no more a threatening monolith than was international communism. (Clark 1967) Scholars took to comparing Asian and Western mutual perceptions (Isaacs 1958. Iriye 1975. Dower 1986, 1995), and many argued that more regard should be paid to the diversity of Asia and its equality with the West.

In Australia, challenging the West's condescending view of Asia, Peter Russo in the 1960s took up the pre-war arguments of contributors to the Austral-Asiatic Bulletin. He and others urged Australians to 'live with Asia and not against Asia, to read analysis of Asia by Asians', and to see Asia first 'through the eyes and traditions and characteristics of the people who are creating the challenge'.³ In a seminal article, Jennifer Cushman (1984) agreed that Australians' fixation on studying the White Australia policy seemed dated. She urged scholars of Chinese migration to 'relocate the Chinese experience within the Chinese community itself' and to be more concerned with 'the community on its own terms', as many have since done.⁴ By the late twentieth century, as a movement for Asian studies of Asia spread,⁵ many other Western observers of Asia, Africa, and Latin America had turned to 'decolonising knowledge', using 'countertexts' in a spirit of humility, and giving unprecedented attention to the perspectives of former colonised people. (Pratt 1992. Milner 2000c) This thesis seeks to do the same for the perspectives of Australia's observers in Asian countries, even though Australia did not colonise them.

² 'A Scripted Continent: British and American Travel-Writers in Europe, c.1825-1875', Buzard 1993: ch.3. Benjamin 1940.

³ Peter Russo, 'Asia - the Challenge of Political Change in the Sixties', in Wilkes 1961. Andrews 1985.

⁴ For example: Lydon 1999, Shirley Fitzgerald 1995, 1996, Shen thesis 1998, Ommundsen 2001.

⁵ Discussion of the issue was led in Australia by Legge 1999a, Milner 1999, Morris-Suzuki 1998, and Reid 1999. *ASR* 22, 2, June 1999 also contains commentaries from the region.

Although Western imperialism was only one of a long succession of such movements, it is rarely seen as such in the societies considered here. No matching inclination to 'decolonise' knowledge of the West has emerged among Asian opinion leaders. It has either not seemed relevant to do so, or it has been against their interests to consider such a perspective.

Australia, as what follows will show, remains a relatively 'unscripted continent' in Asia. A few images of Australia that have for long been memorised in the region and at the mention of Australia they still 'flash up' in the present. New 'facts' about Australia are not viewed as inert, objective, or neutral, but are used to validate entrenched preconceptions. (Strahan 1996: 8) Australia is not entirely absent from imaginary scripts in Asian societies – in some, at times, it has been powerfully present - but the scarcity of new cues to replace old ones ensures the recurrence of limited, familiar narratives about Australia. If the responsibility to provide such new cues is Australia's more than that of its observers, it is one to which Australians have failed to commit themselves.

Keywords

Before examining narratives about Australia, the use of certain recurrent terms must be clarified. Tradition, culture, and civilisation are fundamental in the construction of representations of Australia by opinion leaders in Asia as well as in the hegira. These six keywords are briefly considered in sequence.

To argue that traditions, myths, or images are 'invented' or 'constructed' in Asian just as in European societies (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1993), is not to deny their cultural ancestry but rather to confirm its potency. Like tradition and yoghurt, culture cannot be made without earlier culture. 'Acculturation' may better describe the continuous process of invention or construction of tradition. Acculturation, as Stuart Hall describes it, is not static, but is 'a matter of becoming as well as being'.⁶

⁶ Hall in Rutherford 1990: 225.

This argument was applied to Asian societies in the 1990s by six Asia specialists in Australia, as part of an inquiry into the cultural positioning of Australia in Asia. (Milner and Quilty 1996b) One of them, Barmé, showed that even while Beijing was harking back to the Opium Wars and was preparing to 're-acculturate' Hong Kong, pre-Communist Chinese traditions and nativist culture were reviving in the PRC, where the Party had lost credibility with a new generation. Another, Morton, found Japan, far from being a unique or homogeneous culture, to be a 'complex construct invented at different times by several political and philosophical traditions'. In highly Westernised Japan, contemporary manga offer readers a choice of historical characters with whom to 'acculturate'. The Thai élite have for long identified modernisation with the West, but Reynolds' account showed how countervailing versions of 'Thai-ness' have been promoted by successive leaders. Koreans, in Cotton's analysis, are culturally derivative but dedicated to autonomy, internationally active but isolated, drawn to Christianity but deeply shamanist, hostile to Japanese influence yet imitative of it. Reeve showed how Indonesians, whose nation was an amalgam of ancient Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms, seek (with a nostalgia some Japanese and Malays share) to apply village traditions to national practice. It would be surprising if these internal contestations of identity had no bearing on representations of other societies, of the West, or of Australia.

Excessive control from the centre of the state can divide it, as events in Yugoslavia in the 1980s and Indonesia in the 1990s showed.⁷ Similar strains have been detected by Buruma (1989) in the Philippines, Taiwan, and Malaysia, where nostalgia for an authentic local antiquity coexists with desire for the trappings of Western modernity; while Singapore has had to create a national culture 'from scratch'. Indians too are torn between tradition and modernity, often asserting (as do some Chinese and Malays) that Western civilisation has 'Asian' origins. Deep and widespread as Australians' dilemmas and ambiguities in relation to Asia are observed to be by such critics as Mackay (1993), Hage (1998), and D'Cruz and Steele (2000), they are clearly matched by the identity concerns of opinion leaders in Asian countries themselves. These concerns, too, underlie representations they make of Australia.

⁷ Wimar Witoelar, spokesman for President Abdurrahman Wahid, ABC 'Holding

When Huntington (1993, 1996) claimed civilisation to be the fault-line over which coming global clashes would occur, he overlooked the local clashes taking place within each of his civilisational categories. 'Culture' or 'civilisation' are habitually used by practitioners of identity-politics to differentiate the in-group from the out-group, 'us' from 'them', both within societies and between them. Conservative leaders of Asian societies accuse those calling for political change of imbibing 'foreign ideologies' (individualism, materialism, socialism, liberalism, or globalisation) that threaten their culture or civilisation.⁸ As an Indian journalist wrote after visiting Australia, any nation that does not measure up to the ideas of another is 'condemned as something barbarous and uncivilised'.⁹ Culture-wars tend to attract fervid recruits, and the superiority of Asian civilisation is defended against the West's standards of what is civilised. (Duara 2000) Mutual insults based on culture and civilisation are difficult to counter from either side.

Representations is the term that best answers the need to point to tangible evidence, not simply to subjective impressions or collective stereotypes. Williams (1983: 269) defines a 'representation' as a 'symbol or image, or the process of presenting to the eye or the mind', that has come to mean 'a sense of "accurate reproduction"'. 'Accurate' at once invites scepticism for, as Dower (1986, 1995) has shown of Japanese and American mutual perceptions, people tend to see what they expect to see, believe what they need to believe, remember what reinforces their beliefs or aggrandises their culture or civilisation, and say what they want in their own interests to say; and these expectations, needs, reinforcements, and wants may change over time, or exist in different individuals at different levels of consciousness.

For the purposes of this study, then, representations is used for the descriptions of Australia in ten Asian societies. Representations involve projection and reputation, both of which are subjective matters. In an effort to establish an objective principle of selection, the representations analysed here have what is known in media parlance as

Together' lecture, 24 July 2001. *A* 25 July 2001: 11.

⁸ Reeve in Milner and Quilty 1996b. Said 1996: 7. Mahzarin Banarji's research at Yale identifies unconscious racist stereotyping in cognitive reactions and in-group/out-group dynamics. Annie Paul, *Psychology Today*, quoted in *TWA* 18-19 July 1998: 23.

⁹ Durga Das, *India and the World*, New Delhi: *Hindustan Times* Press, 1958.

'reach': they are endorsed by a number of similar views, they have the capacity to affect the views of significant numbers of people, and they are propagated by influential figures - opinion leaders. These are people who have access to the public sphere. The means of access considered here include speeches, official documents, the print news media, and monographs, in English or in translation. So opinion leaders, for the present purpose, include leaders of government, officials, journalists, and academics. In the third case study, opinion leaders are Asian Australian writers of fiction whose perspectives from inside Australia either confirm or challenge more familiar narratives. Australia, seen from the perspectives of Asian opinion leaders, is the common subject of their representations, and the thesis seeks throughout to do justice to their variety, complexity, and validity.

Representations of Australia may originate in personal experiences in the first, second, or third culture. Rather than become mired in circular discussion of 'diaspora', degrees of 'Chineseness', *Nihonjinron*, and their various equivalents among various Asian diasporas,¹⁰ the less politically loaded term preferred here is *hegira*. It does not (yet) invoke religion, imperialism or globalisation, nor is it the 'promiscuously captious category' that 'diaspora' has become. (Clifford 1994. Pan 1991. Wong 2001) It is flexible enough to include expatriates, exiles, refugees, alien residents, immigrants, and ethnic and racial minorities who may come and go between their first and subsequent cultures. Reflecting the diversity of twentieth century experience, *hegira* signifies not total, permanent, or forcible dispersal of an entire population from its homeland, but the exodus - voluntary or not - of some members of a community, who may or may not return, and who may or may not continue to identify with the homeland.¹¹

The power of tradition, culture, and civilisation is harnessed in the *hegira* to recreate past knowledge, and to 'invent', maintain, and reproduce communities. This can be done all the more powerfully at the end of the twentieth century by means of virtual experience and the Internet. Representations of Australia in the *hegira* may feed into or

¹⁰ Ang 1993b. Gilbert and others 2000. Wang 1999. Wong 2001. Li 2001.

¹¹ Jakubowicz 2001 prefers 'diaspora' admitting that it is freighted with Greek, Jewish, and Armenian connotations, but citing modern uses: the 'changing same' (Leroi Jones), William Safran 1991, and Paul Gilroy 2000.

feed from television, narrative film, advertising, education, and tourism promotion. Anderson recognised such texts as ‘technical means for “re-presenting” the kind of imagined community that is the nation’ (1983: 30). Much faster technologies are now in use than when he wrote, that may instantly represent one imagined nation to another. Yet even this evidence does not lead to quantifiable claims about how many people in one community, or nation, actually hold a certain view about another, or why.

The misused term ‘ethnic’ presents a problem in describing the hegira, since all Australians are former boat people, with various antediluvian ethnicities. Here, to distinguish what some call the ‘mainstream’, the ‘majority’, or the ‘invaders’, and their descendants from later arrivals, I follow Jupp in preferring ‘settler’ Australians, in spite of the fact that many who were not among the British invaders have also become settlers. (Jupp 1988, 2001)

With all their imperfections, these terms will be applied in what follows to Australian self-representations and the countervailing representations of Australia in Asian countries.

1.2 AUSTRALIAN SUPPOSITIONS

A long-standing process of self-delusion among Australians involves three suppositions: first, that Australia can whenever it chooses, and on its own terms, variously to declare itself to be ‘Asianising’, or part of Asia, or an ‘Asian’ country; second, that its claim to be a successful ‘multicultural’ society is widely admired and believed in Asian countries; and third, that ‘the typical Australian’ carries connotations that are as positive in the region as in Australia. These are briefly considered here to enable comparison to follow with Asian representations of Australia.

'Asianisation'

Rhetorical waves of enthusiasm about 'Asianisation' have risen and fallen in Australia, but particularly from the early 1980s. From 1972 to 1975 and from the early 1980s to 1996 they were mainly government-led, for several reasons. East Asia was seen as the new El Dorado that, if Australians became 'Asia-literate' and matched Asians' productivity, would drag the economy out of recession. If more Asians became Australians, the threat of Asian invasion would wither. Migrants from several Asian countries would boost population growth and expand the labour force. A series of published reports accentuated the positive about Asian engagement.¹² Successive Labor Prime Ministers commended Australia's 'historic shift' to its 'true place in Asia'. They and their Liberal successors assured their constituents that Australia was 'well-liked around here'. Indonesians, they claimed, 'have a lot of respect for us'; Australia was 'one of the least racist countries in the world'; 'Australian values' were shared by all migrants; and the intervention in East Timor in 1999, they said, 'won us respect, recognition and praise in the region and around the world'.¹³ But they showed no awareness that such euphoria for Asia might seem sudden and self-serving to opinion leaders in East Asian countries. The danger, as an Australian former diplomat warned, was that Australians might 'believe our own rhetoric while others resent it'. (Hogue 2000)

Responses from the region were rarely enthusiastic, as Milner's selection of them shows. (1997a) From Hong Kong, Australia was reported somewhat sarcastically to be 'joining Asia at last'. (*FEER* 31 March 1993) In Singapore and Malaysia, Keating's initiatives were represented as opportunistic, and Australia's claims of Asian credentials were seen to be presumptuous. Thais refused to have Australia attend a human rights conference in 1993 and an ASEM meeting in 1996. Even while Keating blandished

¹² Examples include FitzGerald 1988, Garnaut 1989, Evans 1989, Blight 1992 in Grant and Seal 1994, Smith 1995, Market Australia 1995, Evans and Grant 1995, DFAT 1997. See also Neville Meaney, 'Australia's Changing Perception of Asia', *Japan Foundation Papers*, 2, March 1997: 11.

¹³ Keating quoted by Sheridan 1997: 125. Howard quoted by Grattan, *SMH* 6

Soeharto, it was widely known in Jakarta, and resented, that Australians considered Indonesia a threat. In China – for long seen by many Australians as a greater threat – the official press in 1996 warned that Australia could not appease both its Western friends and its Asian neighbours.¹⁴ In mid-1997 Japanese officials and businesspeople questioned Australia's capacity for economic enmeshment with the region and inquired whether Australia was 'Asia or Europe or something other'.¹⁵ Indians resented Canberra's influence in keeping them out of APEC, and its double standards in supporting the world's nuclear super-power while condemning their nuclear tests. In Sydney, an Asian-Australian academic, reflecting her own 'hyphenated subjectivity', concluded, with many others, that Australia was caught between its history, its economic interests, and its geographic location, and should be seen as 'in "Asia" but not of "Asia"'. (Ang in Ang and Stratton 1996)

Some Asian leaders, on more occasions than is usually remembered, had urged Australians to identify with the region. (Appendix 1) But for an Australian Prime Minister to claim that Asia was Australia's 'true place' had the opposite effect.¹⁶ In the late twentieth century the Asia card was a powerful one for leaders in the region to play, for three reasons: because, being culture-based, there was no rational response to it, and no time-limit on its use; because, in denying Australia access to the East Asian club, it reversed the colonial and imperial racism of the past onto Australia in a way that reinforced Asian superiority without damaging Asian interests; and because, in threatening to isolate Australia from the region, it evoked a deluge of self-critical public commentary from Australia. After 1996, with a new government in Canberra and an economic crisis in East Asia, Australian suppositions about 'Asianisation' and its rewards fell into confusion, and the latest wave of Asia-enthusiasm ebbed.

December 1999. Downer quoted in *FEER* 13 August 1998. "'All share nation's values": Ruddock', *A* 9 June 1997: 3. Downer quoted by Kelly, *TWA* 11-12 December 1999.

¹⁴ Kang Bing, 'Australia must focus on Asia', *China Daily*, 23 December 1996. Fairlie 1997.

¹⁵ Kawarabayashi Seiji, Executive MD of Mitsui, Australia-Japan Symposium, 26 May 1997. Broinowski 1999a. Peter Hartcher and Tony Bond, 'Hanson: high cost, low return', *AFR*, 5 June 1997: 1, 6.

¹⁶ R.J.L. Hawke, address to ASAA conference, 1988: *ASR* 11, 3, April 1988: 31-37. Milner 1997a.

Underlying the problem was the paradox that 'Asia' was not an appropriate comparator for Australia to measure itself against. Australians who recognised this had for long taken pains to speak of individual Asian societies, rather than of Asia as a monolithic entity, and to warn of the complexities of 'engagement'.¹⁷ But their scruples were scarcely appreciated or reciprocated, as we shall see, by those in the region who were intent on projecting an Asia that was as solidly monolithic as possible, in opposition to a stereotyped West.

'Multiculturalism'

A single generation of non-racial migration is not enough to wipe out six or seven generations of well-publicised discrimination. (Jakubowicz 1997a) That Australia's experiment in multiculturalism is a success, and that it is the world's most multicultural society¹⁸ is the second of the suppositions maintained in Australia at least until the mid-1990s that many in the region do not share. At the end of the century aspiration for it has withered in Australia as well. As what follows will show, Australia is not widely believed in the region to be genuinely multicultural, and in some Asian societies it would not necessarily be admired or envied if it were.

Australian governments since the 1970s moved publicly to treat people of all ethnicities alike, while advocating the preservation of diverse ethnic cultures. But in the region, historically-based representations persisted of Australia as a culturally exceptionalist and racially-based society. As a Malaysian Australian observed, 'At one level, Asians do see one kind of Australian history. This is largely in terms of Australian fears and racial stereotypes about Asians'. (Wang Gungwu 1992b) In almost all Asian societies, multiracial division rather than multicultural diversity remained the norm, and

¹⁷ 'Uneven development and cultural diversity, both within and across the region, are arguably its defining features': Emmerson 1994. Bell 1996: 4. Within some Asian societies ethnic divisions were so wide that it seemed fanciful to accommodate them under a state rubric of 'being Asians': Milner 1997b. 'Just as our growing sophistication in perceptions of the region is being expressed in a wariness toward the category 'Asia', we are forced to come to terms with the new emotiveness attached to the concept in the region itself': Dupont, 1996. 'The closer the Westerner's viewpoint, the more Asia appears diverse; but the more committed the Asianist, the more Asia seems One': Camroux 1997:10 (translated from French: AB).

¹⁸ James Jupp, 'Waves of Migration to Australia', in Hardy 1988: 9-31.

communities were demarcated by custom or legislation according to ethnic and religious difference. So in the mid-1990s the Australian-Asian Perceptions Project found that multiculturalism attracted 'little sympathy as a doctrine in Asian societies'. Moreover, it was observed in the region that among Australians themselves there was a 'high degree of public reluctance to follow the government's "Asia" summons'. (Milner 1997a: 42-3)

Asian societies' scepticism about Australia's multicultural project derives from their own complex concerns about ethnicity and migration. The knowledge that no Asian migrants to Western countries or to Australia are obliged to go there, and that many compete to do so, even in leaky boats, hardly reinforces self-esteem in the countries they seek to leave. Migrants' evident desire to escape is no compliment to their homelands. Multicultural Australia, for all its imperfections, is seen by many as an improvement on race riots and ethnic cleansing, as two Asian Australian scholars admitted. (Jayasuriya and Kee 1999) So the Howard government's loss of enthusiasm for multiculturalism was reported in the late 1990s in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Manila, and Jakarta, as a revival of Australia's essential Westernness. In Japan, where public concern about the presence of new migrants was growing, Australia's *ta bunka shakai* (multicultural society) was much studied. It had only to appear to falter for Japanese business people to criticise the productivity of Australia's multicultural workforce, and for Japanese officials to express doubts about how well Australia understood Asia. (Broinowski 1999a)

Australia's multiculturalism was criticised in the 1990s from within as much as from without. A Chinese studies academic in Sydney, Yiyang Wang, admitted that migrants benefited from 'the abundant mainstream goodwill' in Australia and from multicultural policies, yet she and a growing group of Asian Australian academics considered multiculturalism to be assimilationism by stealth. Paradoxically, their critique of multiculturalism brought them close to cohabitation with the One Nation party. It was, they argued, 'primarily a state ideology manufactured and manipulated to serve the interests of the "white" nation, whose cultural norms demand the conformity of other

cultural groups'.¹⁹ The Australian 'White Nation', according to one of these scholars, oppressed 'Third World Looking People'. (Hage 1998)

But in their critiques of Australia Hage, Ang (2000), and D'Cruz and Steele (2000) did not raise various forms of oppression by third world leaders of their own people, or of 'white' people. For their argument, it was not relevant that Australian women had their skirts slashed with knives in Iran or were not allowed to drive cars in Saudi Arabia. None of them compared Australia's multiculturalism, with all its faults, with 'Chinese only' clubs in the PRC, 'Japanese only' signs in bars and baths, de-Westernising programs for Japanese returning from abroad, discrimination against mixed-race children in Vietnam and Korea, or pejorative descriptions of foreigners that were customary among Chinese, Thais, Malaysians, and Indonesians. Discussing the objectionable practice of 'caging' illegal immigrants in Australia for long periods while their cases were processed, Hage ignored the past 'caging' of Indochinese refugees in Hong Kong, detentions without charge or trial in Southeast Asian countries, kidnappings in the Southern Philippines, and murders of Australians in Cambodia and India. Nor did he compare racist violence in Australia with murderous internecine conflict in Burma, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, and Indonesia, or even in his native Lebanon. By considering only one perspective, these writers appeared to rely on cultural relativism which, Beatrice Faust complained, 'makes all cultures equal except white Anglo ones'.²⁰

'The Typical Australian'

A third Australian supposition that is at odds with the way Australia is represented in Asian countries involves personal and national self-image. What settler Australians see, what Asian Australians see, and what people in Asian countries see as 'typically Australian' are three different things.

¹⁹ Yiyang Wang, 'Settlers and Sojourners: Multicultural Subjectivity of Chinese-Australian Artists' in Ang and others 2000: 107-122. Dorothy Wang in Gilbert and others 2000: 44-49.

²⁰ Beatrice Faust, 'New cringe of self-hate', TWA 14 June 1997: 21.

In Subaltern writing, Westerners are rarely differentiated and are never considered as victims, but are defined consistently as oppressors. Some Subaltern scholars have distinguished 'adult' imperialist nations from others in various 'childlike' stages of development.²¹ This is the kind of insult that former colonies so strongly resented, but these critics have not hesitated to apply it to Australia. In spite of being neither a coloniser, nor powerful, nor particularly rich, Australia does not qualify as Subaltern. For the unacknowledged essence of Subalternity is racial: Australia is 'White'. Australians are labelled in Indonesia *bule* ('whities') or *Orang Belanda* (Dutchmen)²²; in China *gwailo* (foreign devils); and in Japan *hakujin* (whites). These are the generalised terms for any Western people, colonisers or not. To allow for some Australians being Asians would blur these labels and it is rarely considered.

In the face of such categorisation, settler Australians are as uneasy as any Subalterns about marginalisation and disempowerment. Their failed aspirations to build an ideal society are often expressed publicly in self-satire or self-disgust, revealing what Inglis called a 'recurring Australian image of our nation as the world's laughing-stock'. As Arndt wrote in 1991: 'It is not that Australia lacks a national identity...but that they do not like the one it has'.²³ To compensate for their uncertainty, Australians joke about their 'Ocker' tendencies. Such self-disparagement – reinforced abroad by expatriate Australians and by the British media - enhances Australian's reputation among Asian observers for being boorish and 'third-rate Western'. (Alomes and Jones 1991)

Defensively, Australians often assure themselves that they are better liked in the region than other Westerners. An Australian Embassy official in the mid-1960s advised a new arrival in Jakarta: 'Most of the itinerants will spit at you unless you are quick to convince them that you're an Australian'.²⁴ But in 1991, American reporters on the scene of the Dili massacre were spared being shot only when they convinced Indonesian troops they were *not* Australians. Being Australian was even less desirable in East Timor or Jakarta in 1999. (Part 3.1)

²¹ Guha 1983, 1988. Hage 1998: 143-4. Gunew 1994. Spivak 1988.

²² Kitley and others 1987.

²³ Inglis in Price 1991: 31. H.W.Arndt quoted by K.S. Inglis, 'Multiculturalism and National identity', in Price 1991: 18.

²⁴ Kerry Collison, *Merdeka Square*, Sid Harta: Melbourne, 1997: 62.

Australian self-definition frequently resorts to claims of a 'fair go' for all which, true or not, evoked fewer positive responses in Asian societies in the 1990s than in the 1950s.²⁵ An Australian businessman in Hong Kong remarked that whereas Australians overtly profess egalitarianism, they are covertly impressed by wealth. But in 'Asian culture', he claimed, ambition to rise in society is overt, and the emblems of status and class are gold, cognac, and cellular phones.²⁶ Whether Australians are equally materialistic or not, their self-perception as difference-denying egalitarians does not commend them to Chinese, who are repelled by 'the possessive arm of mateship around the unreciprocating Asian shoulder'. (FitzGerald 1997: 29) As we will see in Part 2, Japanese criticise the 'fair go' philosophy for making Australian management indulgent with workers; leaders in Singapore deride the welfare dependency it creates; and Malaysian students are surprised, but not impressed, to see 'white' Australians doing menial work. Within Australia, Chinese students and Indian doctors complain that the 'fair go' doesn't apply to them. Asian Women at Work, representing piece workers in Australia who in 2000 were paid between \$5 and \$8 an hour, are clearly excluded from it. 'Mainstream' Australians who claim to be egalitarian are adept at ignoring the contradictions of it that surround them. (Rutherford 2001)

Australians are deluded if they assume that what they satirise or admire about themselves will be similarly accepted in Asian societies. For a century, a contrary strain of thought has been developing in the region without most Australians noticing it.

1.3 ASIAN RENAISSANCE

Reflecting a perennial Australian desire to find a quick and easy solution to their economic problems or their identity dilemmas, opinion leaders in the late twentieth century claimed Australia was becoming an 'Asian' country. But the 'Asianisation of Asia' as Funabashi called it (1993), indicated that Asian self-views were also changing. As he showed, newly prosperous Asian societies in the 1980s were developing a

²⁵ 'Fair go': David Ireland in Whitlock and Carter 1992: 145-155; Hugh Mackay in Deborah Hope, 'Inner State', *TARB* June 1998: 25; Horne 1997; Helen Sham Ho, *SMH* 30 June 1998: 15. 1950s: see Part 2.6.

²⁶ Mark A. Amdur, 'Heads in the Sand', *FEER* 8 February 1996: 30.

generalised idea of themselves, and seeking to subsume Asian differences in the cause of Asian renewal.

In fact, the 'Asianisation of Asia' had been under way for much longer. In the late nineteenth century 'Asia' began to be used by opinion leaders in several countries to delineate an Asian regional community. Its development is traced here through two overlapping periods: Asia for the Asians, led mainly by Indians and Japanese, and Asian regionalism, when the lead was mostly taken by Southeast Asians. Others have discussed aspects of the process in greater detail.²⁷ Here, it is the effect of Asian Renaissance thinking on representations of Australia that adds a new dimension.

Asia for the Asians

'Asia' was not, at first, a self-description for the inhabitants of the region, where it was scarcely used until the late nineteenth century and was treated as a Western loan-word.²⁸ Before then, there was no sense of 'Asianism' in Asia, according to Indian historians. (Pannikar 1953. Jansen 1996) From the 1890s, however, Indian nationalists began to adopt the Western Orientalists' construction of the 'light of Asia' and the 'spiritual' East. They sought – and found - Western support for their claim that the 'voice of Asia' was religious and artistic, while that of Europe was political and materialistic.²⁹ They were joined early in the twentieth century by Ceylonese Buddhists, Japanese intellectuals, and Chinese nationalists in hailing the advent of an 'Asian Renaissance', a coming era of independence, co-operation, and prosperity.³⁰ American, European, and Australian enthusiasts for Asian cultures supported their claims.

²⁷ Anwar 1996, Bergère 1994, Camroux 1997, Hay 1970, Jansen 1996, Milner 1997a, Milner and Johnson 1997c, Morris-Suzuki 1998, Oates 1981, Tanaka 1995.

²⁸ The traditional Japanese world-view distinguished between the *ikoku* (China, Japan, and Korea), and the *gai-i* (the rest of the world). 'Asia' in a Japanese source first appeared in 1708, as a Western loan-concept; a scholar of the Tokugawa shogunate defined *Ajia* in 1713 as including East and West Asia; and a geographical text of 1810 divided the world into five Great Regions (*taishu*) of which Asia was one. Morris-Suzuki 1998.

²⁹ Swami Vivekananda quoted by Gururaj 2000. Singh 1999.

³⁰ Okakura Kakuzo 1903. Anwar 1996.

Rivalry for leadership of the Asian *Risorgimento* soon developed. Indian historians claimed it as theirs by tracing a thousand years of Indian cultural leadership, and dating the 'Indian Renaissance' from the early nineteenth century. (Nag 1957) A famous poet declared that Indian civilisation's 'radiant magnanimity' illuminated the East and was the source of all major religions, including Judaism and Christianity. (Tagore 1932) It had inspired an 'Asian sentiment'. (Nehru 1931) Nationalists called on Indian youth to 'awake, arise', and seize the moment from global upheaval for the 'awakening of India'. (Bose 1949, 1964)

Some Japanese, reacting to Fukuzawa Yukichi's radical rejection of Asia in favour of Western modernity (*Datsu-A Ron*, 1885), asserted that Japan was the 'real repository of the thrust of Asiatic thought and culture', and the equal of the West. (Okakura 1903) Japan was seen to be at the confluence of Asia and the West, 'Asia and Europe in one', central to Asia but its superior in modernity. (Nitobe 1931) From the 1920s, Japan's Pan-Asianists advocated the Asian agenda at ILO and IPR meetings, and found common cause with anti-colonial nationalists in South and Southeast Asia. They held congresses in Japan to promote the Asian Renaissance under the slogan 'Asia for the Asians'. Prince Konoe set up an 'East Asian Common Culture Society' and in 1938 declared a 'New Order in East Asia'. Japanese and representatives of neighbouring 'Greater East Asiatic Nations' who met in Tokyo in November 1943, pledged cooperation, and condemned the Western colonialists for their 'insatiable aggression and exploitation' of East Asian people and their 'inordinate ambition of enslaving the entire region'.³¹

Japan's Imperial army divided Asia into 'master races', 'friendly races', 'guest races' and, in undisputed leadership, the 'Yamato race'.³² Japan's understanding of its 'Asianness' neither then nor later precluded a 'nationalist claim to be more Asian than thou'. (Morris-Suzuki 1998) What Japanese meant by 'Asia for the Asians' was a hierarchy between states in which Japan was the 'master race', 'proper place' meant

³¹ This meeting was commemorated in 1995 at a conference in Kyoto. The process has been documented by Duara 2000, Frei 1991, Jansen 1996, Lu 1974, McCormack 1998, and Sugimoto 1997.

³² Yamato: Muta 1992.

inferiority, and 'family values' were equated with patriarchal oppression. Japan represented itself as the champion of the 'coloured races' against Western colonialism. Japanese historians selected positive national traditions to serve as 'Asian' models in opposition to the West, contrasting Japan's uniqueness, homogeneity, and productivity with Western dissension, greed, individualism, and corruption.³³ These hierarchical, civilisational, and cultural claims, together with the message that the West should learn from Japan, would be recalled by Soeharto, Lee, Mahathir and others and reinvented in the 1980s as 'Asian values', in which the West and Australia were claimed to be deficient.

Chinese for long alternated between contempt for and emulation of the West, as many studies have recorded.³⁴ Sun Yat-sen (Sun Yixian), like other proponents of the Asian Renaissance, was attracted to Western modernity even while he opposed Western control of Asian and Chinese affairs. Sun and his Chinese Pan-Asianist contemporaries stressed the antiquity and superiority of Asian (particularly Chinese) culture. Disillusioned with the West as a model of democracy and progress after World War I, they renewed China's claims of superior Asian spirituality. In Kobe in 1924 Sun spoke of 'Greater Asianism' (*Da Yaxiyazhuji*) urging 'all Asiatic peoples [to] unite and stand as one'. When he was in Japan, he repeatedly denounced 'the barbarous civilisation of Europe and America' and the violence of the hegemonic West, and called for 'Asia to be governed by Asiatics' under ethical, peaceful rulers. (Bergère 1994) But a re-reading of Tagore and Sun shows that Chinese and Indians who were lured into dependence on Japan would find themselves ostracised if they expressed wariness of the militarists' motives or of Japan's right to dominate Asia. Although they needed other Asians' support and resources, Japanese considered theirs to be the only Asian country sufficiently centralised and united to contain Western influence, and to transform itself into the West's rival.

Elsewhere in the region, Japan's 'Asia for the Asians' campaign attracted nationalists and modernisers in Vietnam, Burma, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines. Filipinos

³³ Aspects of this value-selection process have been discussed by Alatas 1977, Crawcour 1965, Dower 1986, 1995, Hay 1970, and Morris-Suzuki 1998.

³⁴ Barmé 1995, Chey 1999, Mackerras 1987, Teng and Fairbanks 1954.

had already fought in two revolutions against Spain in 1896 and the United States in 1898, between which they declared their brief independence. An influential historian in the 1920s represented Philippine society as bridging East and West, conveying European enlightenment and American modernity to the 'mediaeval lands of the Orient'. In the 1950s, he claimed for the Philippines the role of honest broker between conflicting civilisations, and interpreter between the East and the West.³⁵ In Indonesia, an 'AAA' movement flourished during the war under the slogan 'Japan the Leader, the Protector, and the Light of Asia'. In Burma Ba Maw asserted, 'My Asiatic blood has always called to other Asiatics'. He and others spoke of the 'thousand million Asiatics' whom they claimed to represent.³⁶

Whatever their rhetoric, within each Asian country, the Asian Renaissance would for decades remain an ideal among a (male) elite rather than a reality for the majority of the citizens. There was 'no Renaissance for women - at least in the Renaissance'.³⁷ What was needed, and Filipinos, Thais, and Indonesians later demanded, was a Reformation.

Japanese remained ambivalent about Asian values and even about Asia.³⁸ For many Japanese, 'Asia' was their wider imagined community, but consensus about Japan's identification with it was unstable. A Japanese group, forgetting the enthusiasm for an 'Asian Renaissance' in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Japan, India, China, and Southeast Asia that has been outlined here, declared 1994 to be the first time in history when 'Asia is to be defined by Asians'.³⁹ Such selective ambiguity and amnesia conveniently allowed Japan to wear the right face for the Western or Asian

³⁵ Benitez 1926, 1954. Iletto 1998.

³⁶ Burma: U Saw (later the assassin of Aung San) visited Japan in 1935, and ran a pro-Japan, pro Pan-Asian newspaper, *The Sun*, in Rangoon. Thein Aung, representative of Dr Ba Maw (later Japan's dictator in Burma), sponsored the *Nichi-Biruma Kyōkai* and ran pro-Japan articles in his Rangoon paper *The New Burman* in the 1930s. He entitled an article 'Asia is One', stressing the common Buddhist heritage of Burmese and Japanese, and arranged Colonel Suzuki Keiji's visit to Burma in the mid-1930s. Ang Chin Geok 1998: 154-55. Dower 1986.

³⁷ American historian Joan Kelly, quoted by Miles 1988: 13.

³⁸ 'Asian values' could imply, positively, the unique national characteristics of Japan or, negatively, the backwardness and inefficiency of other Asians. Suehiro Akira, 'Japanese Perspective on "Ajia"', *ASR* 23, 2: June 1999. Yoshino 1992.

³⁹ Ingleson, 'The "Asian ethic"', in Bell and others 1996: 263.

clubs, just as they donned yofuku or wafuku, and used Western rooms or Nihon no ma for different occasions.

Asian regionalism

The initiators of the postwar, second period of renewing or 'Asianising' Asia were Nehru and Sukarno. They sought a common code to express their doctrine of independence by peaceful means; their code was Pancasila (or its variants Panch Sheel or Pancha Sila); and their support base was as many African and Asian countries, independent or approaching independence, as they could attract. Nehru was convinced that a clash between democracies and communist states could be avoided if they accepted the principles of Pancha Sila. The Asianisers held three early meetings: two in New Delhi in 1947 and 1949 and one in Bandung in 1955, whose offspring was the Non-Aligned Movement. Bandung, Nehru said, was the 'first inter-continental congress of coloured peoples in the history of mankind'. It 'proclaimed the political emergence in world affairs of over half the world's population', and showed that Asia was 'no longer passive'.⁴⁰

India was prepared to invite Australia and New Zealand to Bandung because, Nehru said with subtle sarcasm, he didn't want 'anything like a line-up of "coloured" peoples'.⁴¹ He sent greetings and expressions of desire for cooperation to Europe and America, warning them that in the future Asian nations would cooperate only as equals. He also asked the conference to send its best wishes to Australia and New Zealand, 'for whom we have nothing but the most fraternal feelings'. (Gurry 1996) Tongue in cheek, Nehru reported to the Lok Sabha after the conference that

Australia and New Zealand are almost in our region. They certainly do not belong to Europe, much less to America. They are next to us and I should like Australia and New Zealand to come nearer to Asia. I would welcome them because I do not want what we say or do to be based on racial prejudices. We

⁴⁰ Nehru 1964, I. Nehru, speech before the Lok Sabha, in *India Panorama* 24 June 1955. Feith and Castles 1970: 454.

⁴¹ Nehru quoted by Crocker (Australian High Commissioner in New Delhi, 1955 to 1959) 1966.

have had enough of this racism elsewhere. We have it still today'. (Crocker 1966: 109)

Nehru recognised Bandung as the 'first inter-continental congress of coloured peoples in the history of mankind', but to add to their influence he needed the white dominions too. An Indian journalist who visited Australia in 1957 urged Australia to become part of 'the Bandoeng group': some Asian countries might resent that, Dr Krishnalal Shridharani said, but Australia was becoming more 'Asia-conscious' and should take the initiative. India did not want a 'coloured' Asia any more than a 'white' Australia.⁴² At Bandung, Carlos Romulo of the Philippines also sought middle ground between aligned and non-aligned Asians. Ingeniously, he condemned communist oppression as another kind of colonialism. Speaking for 'the peoples of South and Southeast Asia', he too urged Australia to be 'more sympathetic to their aspirations and desires'.⁴³

Indonesia wanted to exclude Australia from Bandung, arguing that it was a separate continent.⁴⁴ Burton, who attended as an observer, said Australia could, had it wished, have been officially invited.⁴⁵ But Australia, under Menzies, stood aloof, and the window of opportunity closed. An Indian historian predicted that when 'the nations of awakening Asia' in the second half of the century developed 'some sort of an Eastern Commonwealth of their own to assure to their growing population the indispensable means of livelihood', it would not include Australia. (Nag 1957: 781) Australia clung to restricted migration and to Britain. Fearing Asian nationalism as a front for communism, Spender had already pressed the United States for the ANZUS security treaty. Australia opted for SEATO and supported Britain at Suez, thus failing Nehru's and

⁴² Krishnalal Shridharani, special representative in Delhi of *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, quoted in *Advertiser*, 'How Indian Pressmen See Australia', 9 May 1957.

⁴³ Romulo quoted by Roberto Regala, Minister of Philippines to Australia, lecture to Melbourne Junior Chamber of Commerce, 11 July 1955.

⁴⁴ Prime Minister Widjojo quoted by Mervyn da Silva, 'Comment', in Broinowski 1982: 59. The Bandung Declaration established the Non-Aligned Movement. Of 29 delegations, 23 were from Asian countries. They were united 'as members of the same continents against their present or former rulers from another continent'. Sukarno said Bandung was the 'first inter-continental conference of coloured peoples in the history of mankind'. The ten agreed principles stressed fundamental human rights and respect for the UN Charter, and opposed 'acts or threats of aggression or to the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country'. Jansen 1996.

⁴⁵ Burton to AB, 16 February 1997.

Sukarno's tests of equality and non-alignment, and Romulo's of empathy with anti-colonial aspirations. But Nehru, whose distaste for Menzies was well known, insisted until the 1960s that Australians were forward-looking, if not officially then personally. Australians were realising, with Canadians, New Zealanders and Americans, that they belonged in the 'Asiatic-American orbit of the Pacific'. They were 'a new people', uninhibited, and free of the complexes of 'old races'; and Indians got on surprisingly well with them as individuals. (Nehru 1961. Broinowski 1998a) His distinction between the national and the individual was later repeated by a succession of Southeast Asians who criticised Australian policies while hoping for better from the Australian people.

Sukarno offered Australia membership of no such half-way category: the ANZUS alliance showed Australia had thrown in its lot with what he called the OLDEFOS (old established forces), and thus could not claim NEFOS (new forces) status. He also coined the term *Revolusi Mental* (picked up in 1971 by Malaysia's UMNO) for the process of ridding Asians of their colonial dependency. Notwithstanding the close personal contact that several Australian diplomats developed first with Sukarno and Soeharto, and the empathy between some Australian and Indonesian academics, the pejorative representation of Australia as Western persisted. As each generation of leaders repeated its predecessors' Asianisation discourse, and as the acronyms proliferated, Australia's identity was more indelibly inscribed, not in its UNESCO or ECAFE or ESCAP role as 'Asian', but rather in its UN role as 'Western and Other' (WEOG). In the Colombo Plan, SEATO, ESCAP, the ADB and other regional organisations of the 1950s and 1960s, apart from the short-lived ASPAC, Australia remained a Western, not an Asian participant.

At the 1950 Baguio conference that preceded the Manila (SEATO) Treaty of 1955, Australia and six Asian nations agreed that the region's problems deserved more attention in international fora. Australia and the 'other Western powers' – as 'white' donor nations - were warned that, if they wanted the friendship and goodwill of Asians – as 'coloured' recipients, they must learn to understand and sympathise with them. Although the Whitlam Labor government sent an observer to the NAM conference in 1974, and proposed an Asian Forum, Australia could not shed its identity in the region. As Gurry (1996) observed, Australia was still struggling with it even before Howard's

election. Australia might aspire to enmeshment with the region, but not as a member of ASEAN, ZOPFAN, NAM, the New International Information Order, UNCTAD, the Asia Group at the UN, ASEM, or EAEC. Australian leaders who talked about joining Asia did not listen to what their Asian counterparts were saying about Asian codes as the qualifications for membership.

The codes and ideologies espoused by leaders of Asian societies varied, but 'Asianisation' for all of them depended on regional solidarity. To enhance it, more borrowing occurred among them than the standard accounts have acknowledged. All sought to preserve tradition but advocated modernity; all were careful to limit rights with responsibilities, and permissions with restrictions; most took up Third World causes. Their official codes tended to select those models from Western civil society that would enhance their power and control, national autonomy, and law and order. Most execrated such other codes as universal human rights, balance of powers, and freedoms of the press, speech, assembly, and the individual conscience. Instead they advocated 'Eastern' tolerance, communalism, collective discipline, spirituality, reliance on the family, and respect for leadership. The leaders who wrote and promoted these codes, all of them men, and most of them over 70, defined the state in ideological terms. Often, they identified threats to the state - past, present, or future - as a means of checking unrest and dissent. They handed their codes down as doctrines for the betterment of their people, and had them inculcated through Ministries of Information and education systems. Like past leaders in Asia - and elsewhere - they selectively appealed to religion, history, and tradition to enhance the national authenticity and aspirational efficacy of their codes. Control and civilisation were the encompassing ideas: the first as each Asian nation's moral bulwark against the West, and the second as its means of reinforcing national self-regard. Both could be advocated to the West for its betterment, or deployed in image-wars, particularly against Australia.

The new promoters of Asian regionalism were Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew and Prime Minister Mahathir. In 1987, they were reported to have agreed to mount a joint counter-attack in the name of 'Asian values' on the Western press and on Western

views of democracy and human rights.⁴⁶ Mahathir's close adviser Noordin Sopiee, together with the Commission for a New Asia in Kuala Lumpur, in 1992 drew up 16 basic premises and principles and proposed 14 principles of cooperative peace and security, to guide Asia to 2020 (when all those involved would be dead or out of office). Although its intention was to blend the best of Western traditions with the social and cultural norms of Asian societies, the Commission also strove to codify the much-debated Asian values.⁴⁷ Like the individual countries' national codes, almost all the 'Principles of a New Asia' that resulted from the Commission's work contained a 'Western', progressive premise and an 'Asian' restriction.

It is significant that the members of the Commission for A New Asia included South Asians and also an Australian, Stephen FitzGerald. Unofficial as it was, no other purely Asian forum had included Australia since 1949. Afterwards, both Anwar Ibrahim of Malaysia (1996) and FitzGerald (1997) urged Australians to educate themselves so as not to be excluded from the planning of an Asian future by Asians. The aim of FitzGerald's Asia-Australia Institute in Sydney was to create 'an Asian community in North and Southeast Asia and Australasia'.⁴⁸ But Asian regionalists no longer wanted to include Australia officially in their community, and in 1996 Prime Minister Howard toured the region saying that Australia did not 'claim to be Asian'.⁴⁹ Australia was excluded from ASEAN/EC Human Rights meetings, from ASEM, and from the meetings of ASEAN+3 North Asian states. By means of a new approach to a familiar theory, we now consider how and why this was done.

⁴⁶ Derek Davies, 'Neo-Confucian ploys just a cynical abuse of power', *TWA* 31 December-1 January 1994-95: 16.

⁴⁷ 'Towards a New Asia', *A Report of the Commission for a New Asia 1994*, Kuala Lumpur, January 1994.

⁴⁸ AAI publicity, quoted by Milner 1997a.

⁴⁹ Australians 'do not claim to be Asian', nor 'a bridge to Asia'; no country 'can be asked to deny its history, principles, or culture'; Australia is 'not part of Asia'. Howard, speech at Presidential dinner in Jakarta, 16 September 1996; Howard, HR 21 September 1996. Beazley claimed that Howard repeated 16 times on his visit to Japan and Indonesia that Australia was 'not part of Asia'. Dobell 2001: 340. Michael Millet, 'We do not claim to be Asian', *SMH* 17 September: 1. Millet, 'Australia is not Asia, Howard tells Indonesia', *SMH* 18 September 1996: 1. *SMH* editorial 18 September 1996: 12. Michael Gordon, 'Howard achieves his modest task', *A* 18 September 1996: 1, 2. Tony Walker, 'Coalition's muddled signals perplex the neighbours', *SMH* 21 September 1996.

1.4 OCCIDENTALISM

Occidentalism is a process that has occupied leaders in Asian 'circuits of power' for more than a century, and one in which they have gained skill and confidence. Leaders whose enemy for decades was communism needed a new, threatening Other to keep their people proud, or alert, or afraid. For leaders in Asian countries the West was that Other. 'Asian values' were proposed in the 1980s and 1990s as an alternative to the Western way and as 'the way for all other societies'. (FitzGerald 1997) The starting point, as an American writer acerbically put it, was 'If we like it, it's modern; if we don't it's Western'. (Hitchcock 1994) For Americans as much as for many people in Asia, 'West' simply meant the United States, the 'global hologram'.⁵⁰ A consideration of how the West's Orientalist project was turned back to confront its originators enables us to investigate the application of Occidentalism to Australia.

Occidentalism, like Orientalism, works by projection and inversion, and always its aim, whether explicit or not, is to 'buttress a particular distribution of power and privilege within a society by showing how awful things are elsewhere'. (Carrier 1995: 9-10) Here, we will consider how Occidentalist projection and inversion occur in the discourse of Asian opinion leaders, and how they are deployed to represent Australia and Australians as both elsewhere and awful.

Asia writes back⁵¹

A central theme in the modern history of every Asian country is its seemingly contradictory attraction to and revulsion for the West. In each society, generalisations about the West, both positive and negative, implicate Australia, deservedly or not.

⁵⁰ Hologram: Baudrillard quoted by Kroker 1992: 1.

⁵¹ Michel Leiris (1950) anticipated 'a new situation, one in which the "objects" of observation would begin to write back'. Clifford 1988: 256. Australian literary scholars in the 1980s claimed that Australia and even the United States were part of the anti-colonial 'writing back' project. Ashcroft and others 1989. No subsequent Asian accounts of Australia agreed that they were.

Chinese and Japanese artists at the turn of the nineteenth century portrayed the red, hairy, gross, Western barbarians with whom they were forced to trade, in copious, resentful detail: yet they depicted 'superior men' in their own cultures as larger and paler than the lower classes. Wits in India and the Philippines fumed and joked in English about their Western colonial overlords, while adopting their language and customs. Western democracy, Gandhi is said to have said, would be a good idea, even while India prided itself on being the largest democracy in the world, and the status of some Indians depended on being as British as possible. In succession, Japanese, Chinese, and Malaysian writers urged their compatriots to 'say no' to the West, even while they were saying 'yes' to its technology, culture, and lifestyle.⁵² By 1997, as Hong Kong reverted to China, the West was said to be losing the new 'opium war' from which Asian drug exporters were thriving. A similar reversal of roles enabled Mahathir and Ishihara to inveigh against 'the West's moral degeneration', and to 'write back' the very allegations about Asian national character that Westerners had made during four centuries of colonisation. When an American teenager was caned for a graffiti offence in Singapore, Mahathir relished the 'about face' that it represented:

Europeans used to punish non-whites by whipping, but roles were reversed in the Fay case, history's amusing way of coming full circle. (Mahathir and Ishihara 1995: 102)

Post-colonial Asia would no longer sit down and take insults in stoical silence. Asians, said Mahathir, were 'a little bit more sophisticated now', and would increasingly demand a 'little maturity and sophistication from people who wished to analyse and proselytise'. (A 22 November 1996) Demanding maturity and respect from Western Orientalists who had derided Asians as 'childlike' and 'backward' was fitting revenge. Moreover, 'that Westerners should criticize our ways simply because they are not theirs is outrageous'. (Mahathir and Ishihara 1995)

⁵² Morita and Ishihara, 1989; Ishihara, 1991; Mahathir and Ishihara, 1995; Song and others 1996. Japanese however take Song 1996 as evidence of Chinese obduracy against *Japan*, calculating that it gives as much space to saying no to Japan as it does to the United States. Tanaka Akihiko, Professor of International Relations, Tokyo University, Australia-Japan Relations Symposium, 26 May 1997. Broinowski 1999a.

Demearing Western stereotypes of Malay, Javanese, and Philippine social behaviour, collected by a Malaysian scholar, were well known to these opinion leaders. They commonly included ‘magic, culture, religion, customs, superstition, running amok, aggressiveness, piracy, loyalty, etc.’ (Alatas 1977) Colonial accounts of Burmese habitually dwelt on their religiosity, determinism, crime and punishment, gambling, forgery, violence and cruelty, theatricality, male vanity, and female dominance. Confusingly, Malays were described by the imperialists as idle and easy-going, but sensitive to insult and prone to violent outbursts; lacking originality but unpredictable; polite and loyal to leaders, but morally lax, treacherous and wily. This well-remembered litany may have been in the mind of an editorial writer in Singapore who in 1993 called Australians ‘lazy bums’.⁵³ Lee Kuan Yew’s prediction about Australians becoming ‘white trash’ was another example of writing back; and so was Mahathir’s scornful generalisation:

Western societies are riddled with single-parent families, which foster incest, with homosexuality, with cohabitation, with unrestrained avarice, with disrespect for others and, of course, with rejection of religious teachings and values...To most Asians, the United States is a grotesquerie of drive-by shootings and drug overdoses. (Mahathir and Ishihara 1995)

Each of the successful Asian societies had sought to modernise on Western lines but their leaders’ main aim in doing so, Wang Gungwu argued, was to defend themselves against Western dominance. (Wang 1996) Contradictions and double standards were therefore embedded in the process. They became a common feature of leaders’ critical generalisations about the West. So Western politicians could be castigated for ignorance, hypocrisy, moralising, or ‘hectoring’, and Western journalists could be accused of arrogance and inaccuracy, and of failing to be ‘objective’, or polite, or respectful to the leaders they interviewed. Newly able to rebuke their former masters for telling others what to do – a recurrent phrase, and a particular source of irritation – Asian opinion leaders displayed the very condescension in reverse that had been

⁵³ Quoted by Bruce Loudon, ‘How Asia sees us’, *Sunday Herald Sun*, 14

meted out by their Western colonisers. Now, said Indian novelist Amitav Ghosh, they (Westerners) 'are afraid of us and that's a very nice feeling'.⁵⁴

When they used this discourse, opinion leaders in Asian countries – like others everywhere - spoke to as well as for their domestic constituencies. But projecting their own local concerns onto all Western 'white people' enabled Asian leaders to deflect blame onto an external, unspecific scapegoat, and at the same time to 'stand up' (as Mao said) on behalf of their own people. The language was both culturally reinforcing and politically exclusionary. Its purpose was to enable 'ruling elites to define who was to be included or excluded politically or socially by reference to an arbitrary interpretation of nation or region'. (Dupont 1996) It could be used to good effect internationally or domestically to valorise the in-group and to isolate the out-group by means of essentialism or religion that were hard to contest, particularly if the outsiders were sensitive about shortcomings of their own.⁵⁵ In several Southeast Asian countries in the 1990s, with the communist threat eliminated, the controlled media were amenable to constructing the West as the new shape of Evil. (Godement 1997. Yao 1994) The aim was to put the West on the defensive, making it the Other, just as Asia had been Othered for so long: 'Seen in this way, "the West" itself becomes a play of projections, doublings, idealisations, and rejections of a complex, shifting otherness'. (Clifford 1988: 272)

Leaders seeking to increase their impact habitually did so by speaking on behalf not of their own country alone, nor of ASEAN, but of all of 'Asia' against the West as a whole. So Mahathir could declare - on the grounds that he was Asian - that Howard was not welcome, not just in Malaysia, but 'in Asia'.⁵⁶ Similarly, an Indonesian journalist accused Australians of underestimating the 'deep-seated mistrust of [all] Westerners

February 1993: 55.

⁵⁴ Mahbubani 1993. Jusuf Wanandi quoted by Ingleson 1996: 262. Ghosh, speech to Melbourne Writers' Festival, 25 August 2001.

⁵⁵ Religions, being impervious to rational argument, 'give people identity by positing a basic distinction between believers and nonbelievers, between a superior in-group and a different and inferior out-group'. Huntington 1996: 97.

⁵⁶ Mahathir, quoted by Sheridan, 'Mahathir to PM: stay home', A 17 May 2000: 1. Mahathir interviewed by David O'Shea, 'Dateline', SBS TV 17 May 2000.

among many Indonesians'.⁵⁷ Yet surveys that revealed deep-seated mistrust of Indonesia among Australians evoked outrage in Jakarta. (Hardjono 1992) Whether it shared all the characteristics of the wicked West or not, Australia was rarely differentiated from it by those in the region whose empowerment depended on Occidentalism.

Edward Said doubted that the 'imaginary geographies' of Orientalism could ever be reversed, and declared that 'Occidentalism' as an alternative to Orientalism was not his concern. (Said 1978) Supporting his view, Brian Castro, an Australian novelist with cultural ties to Hong Kong and Macao, asserted that no writer in an Asian country would ever presume to draw a line between East and West as Orientalists did. (Castro 1999: 147) But Occidentalists did exactly that. The same epistemic violence, the same we/they, West/Asia distinctions of which Said accused Orientalists were perpetrated for Asian post-colonial purposes as well. (Clifford 1988: 261) White privilege was castigated for having arrogated to itself the right to speak for all humanity, yet their very whiteness made writers in the West increasingly hesitant to generalise about Asia.⁵⁸ Asian opinion leaders were turning the strategies of Orientalism back onto their originators, filtering the West through their own screens of perception, constructing the West in ways that privileged Asian preconceptions, and using the results to maximise their in-group power against the Western out-group.

What, then, is the opposite of Orientalism? Opinion is far from unanimous. Some scholars have defined 'Occidentalism' as a West-centred version of Orientalism: 'the ways that Westerners represent the West to themselves'. (Carrier 1995) Variants proposed by others include the ways Asians represent themselves to the West, and the ways the West represents itself in Asia.⁵⁹ But when Patience, in an aside, describes attacks on the West by Lee, Mahathir, and Ishihara as 'the occidental side of Said's

⁵⁷ Nova Poerwadi, 'History binds RI and Australia', *Jakarta Post* 13 October 1999. [My emphasis]

⁵⁸ Whiteness: Dyer 1988, Kimmel 1990, Spelman 1988 cited by Julie Matthews, 'Violent Visions and Speechless Days: Corporeality and the Politics of Image', in Ang and others 2000: 32.

⁵⁹ Chen 1994, Foucault 1972, Iwabuchi 1994, Sun 1997.

orientalism', he captures the sense that is relevant here.⁶⁰ Occidentalism seeks to denounce Western culture as inherently corrupt. (Yong 2001) The way Mahathir polarises and generalises the West is described by Yao as 'a kind of Occidentalism, an Orientalism in reverse'. Orientalism and Occidentalism in Malaysia's case, he argues, are equally capable of employing totalisation and othering in the production of power and knowledge. So Occidentalism is 'a counter-deployment in which Asia alone has the master voice'.⁶¹ Together, these provide a definition of Occidentalism that illuminates how Asian representations of the West in general have affected those of Australia.

It is this Occidentalism that empowers people in Asian cultures to see themselves as bonded by past victimhood and present superiority. Linking Occidentalism with 'Asian values' – a somewhat exhausted topic - enables a new understanding of both. Together, they enable Asian leaders in the process of adapting their societies to modernity, industrialism, and globalisation, to claim superiority over Western liberalism. Occidentalism proposes Asian values as the most evolved system, one from which the West should learn and the East should benefit. Just as Orientalism is said to have done, Occidentalism sets up its own self-referential mesh, through which perceptions of a generalised West are filtered. Occidentalism, then, is the knowing inversion, or deployment in reverse, of Orientalism for Asian purposes.

Of the plethora of definitions of Orientalism proposed by Said, the most fundamental has to do with the exercise of economic and political power. For him, Orientalism is a political doctrine willed over the Orient by the West, which 'elided [sic] the Orient's difference with weakness', particularly the difference and weakness of the Middle East. If Orientalism is, as Said proposes, a power mechanism, a 'corporate institution for dealing with the Orient - a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient', then as its converse, Occidentalism should deal in the same way with the Occident - as an Eastern style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the West. What remained in doubt in 2000, however, was how far the

⁶⁰ Allan Patience, 'Why Asia Needs Australia', *Quadrant*, September 1997: 21-24. [Lower case in original].

⁶¹ Yao 1994, 2001. Yong Zhong, 'What's behind white masks and yellow skin', in Ommundsen 2001: 59.

West as a whole was in fact dominated, restructured, or under the authority or power of Asia. Certainly, the West's economic interactions with and cultural debts to Asia extended back over many centuries. East Asia's 1980s-1990s high-growth decade was Occidentalism's high point. Western hyperbole about Japan as number one, and East Asian 'tigers' and 'dragons', gave weight to predictions that the 21st century would be Asia's. But at the end of the 1990s they still seemed premature.

Another reservation about Occidentalism must be made. Even critics of Orientalism such as Kabbani (1994) and Gooneratne (2000) admitted that not all Western Orientalists in Asia fitted Said's Orientalist mould. And in reverse, several Occidentalists in Asian countries did not deny their debt to such old Western ideas as self-improvement, thrift, and the work ethic, as well as to new technological ones that were often mediated by Japan.⁶² Anwar Ibrahim was in two minds: he pointed to what can be learned from the West and the pitfalls of stereotyping it, even though the West is viewed as a morally decadent civilization.

In the West, the institution of the family, regarded all over Asia as the very foundation of a civil society, is in ruins... The West is seen to be nothing more than a moral wasteland. (Anwar 1996: 38)

Not even the most dedicated Occidentalists claim superiority in power or hierarchy over the generalised West. But as the next section will show, such claims about Australia are another matter.

Occidentalising Australia

Australia is frequently Occidentalised by Asian representations of what it is not. Australia is not located in Asia, as maps, graphics, and geographic terminology have often been deployed or doctored to demonstrate. If necessary, it can even be excluded from what the Chinese and Japanese call Oceania.⁶³ Most Australians are not Asians,

⁶² This formulation is proposed to resolve the contradictions identified by Robison, 1996a: 312. Milner and Quilty (1996b) have detailed the Western origins of some Asian values.

⁶³ A Japanese account of the operation of Orientalism in Oceania explicitly

as their appearance, language, and history are selectively taken to prove. Asia Group members at the United Nations were reported to have laughed when Australia sought to join them.⁶⁴ Indeed no Australian politicians, journalists, intellectuals, or investors and not even many Asian Australians themselves claim identity with Asia-as-a-whole, as opinion surveys have confirmed.⁶⁵ Yet the more Australians use the very elements of Western self-identification and self-exclusion that emphasise their difference from an imagined Asian entity, the more Occidental discourse is applicable to Australia. Those in the region who have the most to gain from excluding, disempowering, and Occidentalising Australia find plenty of opportunities to do so.

Four themes, derived from past experience, based on accurate observation, or originating from Australians themselves, have often been used to marginalise Australia. One is that Australians substitute talk for action. Goh Chok Tong positioned himself as a spokesman for other leaders in the region when he responded to Keating's vision (as Prime Minister) of Australian integration with Asia, that Australia talked too much and did too little. Japanese, too, saw Australians as 'a people whose talent was in talk'.⁶⁶ A second familiar theme is that Australia is an economic failure. In the free-trade entrepôt of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew used Treasurer Keating's 'banana republic' epithet to warn Australia in 1991 that it was heading for Pacific island status if it failed to reduce its protection of manufactures. A third theme is that Australia should belong in Asia but Australians don't relate appropriately to Asians. Indonesian Foreign Minister Mochtar in

excludes Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii. Tanahashi Satoshi, 'Orientalism in Oceania', *Ajia Keizai (Asian Economics)*: 42, 4, April 2001: 69-74. NLA OJs 4350.5 0440.

⁶⁴ Richard Butler, personal communication, 1994.

⁶⁵ Age poll April 1992. Saulwick poll, *Age* 11 October 1993. David Midgley, Australian Graduate School of Management, *Survey of Australian Experts, Survey of Asian Managers*, AMP Investments Limited, Insights Conference 19 February 1995. Ky Cao, survey of Asian and Australian financial executives, *Economics Monitor, Access Economics*, April 1995. Australian Bureau of Industry Economics report on direction of Australian investment, May 1995. Milner 1996c. Professor Ross Garnaut, asked by the Saulwick poll to respond yes or no to 'Is Australia part of Asia?' to respond yes or no, said the question was silly, that 'Asia' was a Western concept, and that while parts of Asia were as different from each other as from Australia, areas of cultural affinity existed between Australia and Asian countries. His answer was recorded as 'yes'. *A* 6 November 1993.

⁶⁶ Goh quoted by *Australian Business Asia*, 20 October 1993. Japanese: Byrnes 1994: 172.

1986 echoed Nehru and Sukarno, declaring that Australia was in Asia but didn't empathise sufficiently with it. Australians, he said, 'should understand us better and should be aware that they belong to this part of the world'.⁶⁷ Malaysian Trade Minister Rafidah Aziz claimed to speak on behalf of 'Asia' when she said in 1995, 'We have always told Australia and New Zealand that there is no doubt you want to be a member [of Asia] but it is not clear to us you are Asian'. Her colleague Noordin Sopiee in 1996 adopted the same argument and the same manner that the British had used in the past.

Is Australia still an 'outsider', not one of us? Very much so, I'm afraid. The process of building communities in which one is a full and accepted member is a very long process...But dues have to be paid. And the road is a long one, especially because Australia is so far away and is a nation of different people, with a different culture, no matter how many Thai restaurants come up'.

He then deployed a fourth customary theme by implying that Australians were to be excluded because they were not the intellectual equals of (all) Asians. Australians were 'amongst the most vulgar and the most refined. Amongst the most enlightened and the most bigoted. Amongst the cleverest and the dumbest on this planet'. But Asians, he said, valued education 'to a point that many others cannot understand'.⁶⁸

Concessions were made by some political leaders. South Korea's President Kim Young Sam was prepared to concede that Australia had become 'a full partner in the East Asian region', presumably because of its cooperation with Seoul in the formation of APEC. In the Philippines, President Fidel Ramos said somewhat guardedly that Australia was 'accepted as a full partner in the Asia-Pacific'. (Sheridan 1997) Australia was reported in Japan in the 1990s to be engaged in *datsu-O nyu-A* ('rejecting Europe and entering Asia'), just when Japanese were revisiting their own early twentieth century dilemma about quitting Asia for the West.⁶⁹ Later in the 1990s, however, with

⁶⁷ Mochtar interview with Budiono 21 April 1986: Budiono 1986.

⁶⁸ Noordin Sopiee quoted by David Jenkins, 'Is Australia part of Asia? What Our Asian Neighbours *Really* Think of Us', *SMH* 2 November 1996: Spectrum 2, 4. Sheridan 1995: 189.

⁶⁹ Ogura Kazuo in 1992 saw Japan as risking geo-political isolation and speculated

Howard in office, these tentative views of Australia as acceptable had changed: Australian policy was labelled *datsu-A nyu-Bei* ('rejecting Asia and entering the United States'). Australian leaders' differences with Mahathir were reported as evidence of the failure of Australia's efforts to gain a foothold in Asia which Japan, it was implied, had by virtue of its Asianness.⁷⁰

Other criteria of Asianness are often cited to marginalise Australia in business negotiations or during political or economic crises. Hongkong businessman David Li advised Australians in July 1997 that 'we are all what we are', and that they should not expect to become culturally Asian, even with increased migration. Australia would continue to be identified as a Western country in the eyes of the rest of the region, and hence at a disadvantage. For Li, language, law, and sport were the criteria of Western identity: 'You will continue to speak English. You will continue to use an English-style legal system. You will usually continue to beat the English at cricket. And so on'.⁷¹ Indonesian intellectual Jusuf Wanandi (Lim Bian Kie), perhaps revealing his own identity preoccupations, identified Howard as essentially English in appearance and attitude:

He looks to us like a [sic] kind of somebody from a small city somewhere, maybe in England, looking to the region, which he doesn't see...it's life in 19th century England, man, so what is the problem?⁷²

When President Habibie accused Australia of being biased, unfriendly, and acting in East Timor from ulterior motives, he attributed the difference even more explicitly to race. He wanted 'more brown faces' in the InterFET force.⁷³ Kompas in October 1999

that Australia was the only regional country with which it might form a long-term relationship. '*Chiiki to Go to Nihon no sentaku*', *Gaikō Forum* December 1992: 4-11. In 1993, however, he wrote of an Asia-focussed future identity for Japan. McCormack 1993.

⁷⁰ Yoshida Hideo, *Asahi Shimbun* 7 July 1996: 7. Tada thesis 1997: 88, 148.

⁷¹ David Li, Chairman and Chief Executive, Bank of East Asia Ltd., 'A Tale of Two Cultures', *TWA* 19-20 July 1997: 26.

⁷² Jusuf Wanandi quoted by Hamish McDonald, 'Howard and Wahid: Colonial Man vs. the Riddler', *SMH* 2 May 2000: 1, 9.

⁷³ But President Habibie was reported to have said of Howard at their Bali

failed to identify this a move in the 'Asia game'; nor did it call it racism, as it would predictably have done if Australia had said it wanted more white faces. Instead, *Kompas* began to miss Keating (despite his white face) because Howard was now reinforcing Australia's Europeanness and its reputation for racism: 'This is a superior stance of "White Australia" which Paul Keating actually wanted to abandon'. The rules could be changed during the game, as long as Australia was the loser.

Dr Mahathir made it clear that he would decide who would join the proposed EAEC and, by a series of marginalising moves, ensured that it would not include Australia. First, he used the simple, geographic argument that it was not an East Asian nation: 'Australia forms a continent on its own'.⁷⁴ Then, in an important interview on SBS TV at a G77 meeting in Havana in May 2000, he accused the Howard government - like *Kompas*, overlooking his own earlier criticisms of Keating - of reversing previous policy and of seeking to bully its regional neighbours as if it were a colonial master:

If Australia wants to be a friend to Asia it should stop behaving as if it is there to teach us how to run our country. It is a small nation in terms of numbers and it should behave like a small nation and not be a teacher.

Next, he recalled Howard's concern about the way Malaysia's judicial system had been deployed against Anwar Ibrahim a year earlier, countering it by stating that 'generations' of Australia's indigenous people had been killed. He told white Australians to resolve their Aboriginal problem before lecturing their Asian neighbours.⁷⁵ This recitation of familiar, essentialist accusations – geographic remoteness, colonial-style interference, discrimination against indigenous people – served Mahathir's objective of making Australia a pariah state, one that could never meet his criteria for membership of the region.

meeting, 'He is my friend and my colleague. The relationship between the two countries is excellent, especially between the people, starting with the Prime Minister and...including the press'. Richard McGregor, 'All four one as the eyes have it', *A* 28 April 1999: 7.

⁷⁴ Mahathir quoted by Jennifer Sexton, 'Australia not Part of Asia, says Mahathir', *Sunday Age*, 17 December 1995.

⁷⁵ Mahathir quoted by Greg Sheridan, 'Mahathir to PM: stay home', *A* 17 May

The exclusionary stratagem has been variously interpreted in Australia. Michael Wesley argues that it reflects fears in East Asia that Australia would complicate the region's internal cohesion and homogeneity, because it is identified too closely with the very international interests against which East Asian leaders seek solidarity. (Wesley 1996) A different interpretation is proposed by Paul Kelly, who sees Mahathir's determination to override other Asian leaders' views and to exclude Australia as purely racial.⁷⁶ These elements, certainly, are on the East Asian regionalist agenda. Indeed Australia can be used to make 'Asia' look and feel more homogeneous than it is, and to give the 'Asia' discourse the regional resonance it needs. (Broinowski 1994. Milner 1996c) But a closer analysis will show that Occidental constructions of Australia are grounded in Asian leaders' domestic preoccupations, some of which have long histories.

By calling Australia 'small', and suggesting that small John Howard came from 'a small city', critics in the region condescended to Australia in the way their countries - some of them of smaller stature geographically, economically, even numerically and chronologically, than Australia - were for long condescended to by their Western colonisers.⁷⁷ Indonesian military leaders often in the 1970s and 1980s dubbed Australia the 'appendix' of the regional body: small, ignored until it hurts, unnecessary, and easily removable. Excise Australia: who cares? By labelling Australia 'a continent on its own', an 'outsider', and 'far away', Asian leaders were able on the one hand to reinforce their own putative regional solidarity and, on the other, to ensure a media response from Australians who could be relied on to agonise publicly about being 'the odd man out'. Australians could also be placed at the periphery, particularly by opinion leaders in India, Singapore, and Hong Kong, for being Britain's civilisational inferiors. But by urging Australians to behave more like Asians, opinion leaders in the region could assert the 'learn from Asia' rubric and the essential superiority of the 'Asian way': saying, in effect, 'if you're not one of us you'll never understand it'. Advising Australia to be what it was, 'Western in Asia', as dramatist W.S. Rendra did, was a warning to

2000: 1, 2. Mahathir interview with David O'Shea, 'Dateline', SBS TV 17 May 2000.

⁷⁶ Kelly, 'Firing from the chip on his shoulder', *TWA* 20-1 May 2000: 13.

⁷⁷ 'When dealing with the unknown or little-known there is a strong tendency to think of cities, countries, or groups of people as being some way smaller in size and importance than is the case for better-known areas and peoples'. Osborne 1988: 2.

Australians to mind their own business.⁷⁸ Depicting Australia as doing America's bidding in the region, Asian opinion-makers were positioning Australia as Western aggressor and bully, in contrast to what they proposed were their peaceful, defenceless societies.⁷⁹ Referring to the deficiencies of Australia's treatment of Aborigines, Asian leaders who had their own problems with indigenous minorities, interracial violence, separatist movements, and migrants, could represent Australian 'lecturing' on human rights as hypocritical and moralising. They could accuse Australia of being divisive, and at the same time, deflect criticism of their own derelictions at home.⁸⁰ Accusing Australian journalists of lying, rudeness, and lack of objectivity, Asian ministers could validate their control of their own domestic media and reinforce the message about the respect due to them. And positioning Australia as a supplicant for membership of the region, and imposing an indefinite waiting period, Asian regional gatekeepers were able to avenge the exclusionary White Australia policy as well as to enjoy visiting on Australia the past humiliation symbolised by such signs as 'Dogs and Chinese not allowed'.

Groups of states, like groups of people, can maximise their collective power by co-opting only those whose race, policies, or religions match theirs or do not challenge them. This is what Orientalism has been said to do to Asia. But this is what ASEAN also did when it accepted as members the impoverished, undemocratic, conflictual Indochina states and Burma, demonstrating its power to position Australia with other Western 'outsiders'. By imposing 'narrow' cultural regionalism, Dr Mahahir skillfully enhanced his own influence as a Third World leader and increased Malaysia's power as an arbiter of 'Asianness'. He sought to project the region's defiant response to the IMF during the economic crisis through ARFA, the proposed 'Asian Fund'. These were negotiating strategies aimed at 'Othering' the Western members of APEC (in spite of Japanese and Korean enthusiasm for its formation), of the FPDA (notwithstanding Singaporean and Malaysian participation in it), and of the ARF (even though it had a majority Asian membership). While other leaders allowed Mahathir to lead in these

⁷⁸ Rendra: Broinowski 1996: 202-3.

⁷⁹ Abdullah Ahmad, 'Opinion: On the Record: Australia must know its place', *NST* 23 May 2000.

⁸⁰ This is comparable with Australia's highly vocal opposition to *apartheid* in the 1980s.

Occidental moves, it was clearly not sufficiently in their interests to jeopardise the regional group or to erase its race-based boundaries to accommodate Australia.⁸¹

If Australia is a Western country, it is unique among them in the extent to which it is affected by interests, events, opinions, and representations of itself in Asia. But 'Asia' as a whole has been shown to be an inappropriate comparator that creates difficulties of self-definition for Australians, Asian Australians included. (Giroux 1993) For that very reason, 'Asia' is useful for Asian Occidentals as a generator of cultural capital for the in-group. Ethnic determinism, for which the out-group is criticised, is never applied as a critique to the in-group by its members: to do so would diminish their power. Thus those Asian Australians who complain – with justification – about being simplistically stereotyped and patronisingly marginalised in Australia, utilise Occidentalism to reverse the same discursive techniques onto 'mainstream' Australians'.⁸² They respond in kind to what in their experience are exclusionary identity politics, 'hegemonic multiculturalism', and 'new racism' in Australia. (Gilbert and others 2000: 2-3)

Australian perceptions of Asia are not the present subject. But it is relevant to recall that often, for over a century, they have been ill-informed and unsubtle, and have been seen as such in the region.⁸³ If the Occidental constructions of Australia by some opinion leaders in Asian countries occasionally appear to lack subtlety, that in itself may be testimony to the very ineptitude of Australians as contestants in the game of image-making that has sophisticatedly been played within and between Asian societies for centuries.⁸⁴ Moves in the game by different players will be considered in more detail in Part 2.

⁸¹ After Downer dropped official efforts in 1998 to gain admittance to ASEM, he claimed that 'membership, *per se*, is not the litmus test of Australia's engagement with the region'. Downer, 'Regionalism not viewed as creed: we don't need to beg to gain acceptance in the Asia-Pacific', *A* 4 May 2000: 11.

⁸² For example, Dean Chan, 'The Dim Sum vs the Meat Pie: On the Rhetoric of Becoming an In-between Asian-Australian Artist' in Ang and others 2000: 141; Yiyang Wang, 'Settlers and Sojourners: Multicultural Subjectivity of Chinese-Australian Artists' in Ang and others 2000: 107-122.

⁸³ D'Cruz and Steele 2000. FitzGerald 1997. Walker 1999.

⁸⁴ This point was suggested by Professor Virginia Hooker.

PART TWO

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

Every society, according to Michel Foucault, has a regime of truth and knowledge, by which it accepts certain types of discourse and makes them function as fact. But he proposes that the agency of domination resides less in the one who speaks than in the one who says nothing. (Foucault 1976, 1994) If there is such a 'politics of truth', then knowledge of the truth not only is power: what is known as true is determined by power, and nowhere more than in societies where the state circumscribes public opinion and controls what is said or not said. For in such societies silences are as powerful as speech. We considered in Part 1 how this might apply in general terms to what functions as fact about Australia in Asian societies.

In this Part, ten South, East, and Southeast Asian countries are surveyed across several slices of time throughout the twentieth century, to show how representations of Australia have been deployed in the interests of power in the Asian region with increasing sophistication. Predictably enough, representations of Australia have been carried in both directions by Asians who travel or migrate. What has been less noticed is how consistently Australia has been represented in the ten societies' public discourse not as an observable reality but as a didactic site, either for emulation or rejection. This raises a new and fundamental question: are representations of Australia in the region of Australia's making and the result of its xenophobic ignorance and ineptitude in its dealings with Asian countries, or are they created and perpetuated in the interests of Asian opinion leaders?

2.1 MYTHS AND MAPS

Knowledge about Australia reached people in Asian countries later than it reached the West, because those in power kept what was known from their people for longer than Europeans did. That did not prevent them from imagining a southern continent, and in ways that powerfully informed later representations of Australia. Myths and maps underlie two recurrent representations of Australia in Asian countries: one, that around

the very mention of the Southland hung a veil of remoteness, vastness, irrelevance, and barbarity; and the other, that Australia in consequence could be drawn into the Asian hemisphere or banished to its periphery at will.

For millions of years after the separation of Gondwanaland, and long before Wallace's Line was drawn between Bali and Lombok, dividing the Asiatic from the Australasian zoogeographic zone, the Australian continent was sequestered.⁸⁵ It was potentially a part of an emerging Indian Ocean maritime system, yet remained apart from it. The first Australians were not sea travellers nor, for thousands of years, did sea travellers reach them. Therefore we begin with Asian myths and maps that were sparse at first; and with travel in both directions, the surviving records of which were even sparser.

'Myth' is commonly taken to be the obverse of 'fact', but that does not diminish its power to attract belief.⁸⁶ Roland Barthes (1993) describes mythology as a 'system of communication...a message...a mode of signification' that can be examined and understood by means of semiology. Myth evolves from a previously constructed system of signs to become form, concept, and signification. Thus according to Barthes, societies in Asia with shared language can identify with similar myths, including a myth in which a Southern continent is the form; remoteness and strangeness are the concept; and the prospect of trade, sojourning, or settlement are the signification. Well before European explorers and colonisers arrived, a mythical Australia was a form in the imagination of people in Asian countries, and possibly also in the personal experience of some of them. Those early concepts, combined with actual encounters, either with the new settlers of Australia themselves or with reports about them, founded in Asian minds an enduring signification of Australia.

⁸⁵ Wallace, British naturalist and contemporary of Darwin, visited the region between 1852 and 1860. He argued in *The Malay Archipelago* (1869) for a line between 'two strongly contrasted divisions of the earth', Asia and Australia. Peter Raby, *Alfred Russel Wallace: A Life*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.

⁸⁶ John Terraine sees myths and 'countervailing truths' as opposed, and seeks the truth (fire) behind the myth (smoke). 'Monash: Australian Commander', *History Today*, 16, 1, January 1966: 12-20. But 'a myth is a legend built up as an ideal-type out of what the myth-makers themselves, for whatever reasons, deem to be the most important features of the

Myths, in any society, can override conclusions drawn from rational, empirical observations. It takes cataclysmic events to dispel or discredit them and, even then, as what follows will show, myths often remain more tenacious than 'facts'. As Dower (1995), Field (1991), McCormack (1993), and Muta (1992) have proposed, in dealing with Japanese mythopoeia, the 'dreary requirements of rationality' render myths with their 'dangerous allure' powerful instruments for nationalists. In 1880 and again in 1937, the campaigns waged by Yamato Takeru, a mythical son of a fourth-century CE Emperor, were officially invoked to support the divine descent of the Emperor and the invasion of Korea and Manchuria. Japanese mythology was reinstated in the school history syllabus in 1968 and the traditional practices surrounding the Imperial family continue to derive from mythology.

Maps are another medium by which a society depicts itself in relation to others, and one that can graphically inculcate ideas of self-hood and power. Maps are as capable as myths of combining accuracy with ignorance, the fanciful and the credible and, Palat (2000) suggests, of perpetuating the power that comes from uneven distribution of knowledge. Thus they remain highly influential as signifiers of difference and relationship, even at the beginning of a millennium that seems to some to have reached the end of geography, if not of history. National myth-makers (and not only in the Asian countries considered here) have often sought to enlarge the signifier that is their country and to position it at the centre of the depicted universe, either with its influence radiating outwards or with other countries' threats directed inwards.

China was a self-sufficient continental empire whose rulers, like those of Japan and Korea, subjected it to long periods of sequestration. China 'recognised no other rules as sovereign, and admitted no other state to equality'. (Pan 1991: 5) Its hegemonic status was reinforced by a 13th century world map in which China appeared in the centre, with India, Manchuria, Korea, Japan, Champa (East Sumatra), and Java encircling it clockwise. An equally state-centric Korean map Kangnido (CE 1402) of 'historical countries and capitals' outlined Africa, Arabia, and Europe, and merged India and China, but showed Korea as separate. A Thai map of the 18th century depicted

experience'. Jane Ross, *The Myth of the Digger: The Australian Soldier in Two World Wars*,

countries from Korea to Arabia, but in placing all the coasts at the bottom and all the seas at the top, it enshrined a Thai-centric vision of the world. A map in a Philippines history textbook of 1926 showed ‘the central position of the Philippines in relation to neighbouring islands and to Asia’.⁸⁷ India was ‘the central point in the Asian picture’ for Nehru. (Brecher 1958)

A Buddhist monk, Bussho Zenji, in 1279 brought a Chinese world map to Japan where, instead of China, Japan was placed in the centre by cartographers. Some of them used to depict the Korean peninsula as a ‘dagger pointed at the heart of Japan’, or the rays of Japanese imperialism reaching out to Asia. A few months before Japan attacked Pearl Harbour in 1941, *Kokumin* published a sketch map showing points of economic and military interest in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, and noted that Australia was a ‘natural treasure house’, belonging by right to Asian people, a ‘boon to be bestowed upon them that they may prosper’. (20 May 1941)

Throughout the cold war, Chinese ‘middle kingdom’ self-depiction persisted in maps showing Western weapons threateningly ringed around the PRC. ‘Cultural China’ was similarly represented by three concentric circles: the first comprising the PRC, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore; the second, the overseas Chinese huayi; and the third, Chinese educated and living in other communities abroad, zhonghua.⁸⁸ Japan had matching circles of its own. From the perspective of an Indian journalist visiting six countries in Southeast Asia, the region was ‘Outer Asia’. (Morales 1957) Indonesians, too, envisaged their country ‘at the centre of things’, larger and more important than its neighbours, particularly Australia.⁸⁹ In the late 1990s, North Korean officials declared that ‘Korea is situated in the centre of North-East Asia...It is called the “Land of Morning Calm”. That means we can see [a] more beautiful sunrise than Western and other

⁸⁷ Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1985: 12-13.
 Conrado Benitez, *History of the Philippines*, Manila 1926 and 1954, quoted by Reynaldo C. Ileto, ‘Knowing America’s Colony: a Hundred Years from the Philippine War’, University of Hawai’i at Manoa, Centre for Philippine Studies, Philippine Studies Occasional Papers Series, 13: 8, 1998.

⁸⁸ Tu Wei-ming, ‘Cultural China: the periphery as the centre’, in Tu Wei-ming, ed. *The Living Tree: the changing meaning of being Chinese today*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994: 2. Li 2001.

⁸⁹ Reeve in Milner and Quilty 1996b: 129.

Asian people'.⁹⁰ Vietnamese on the other hand described their country as a 'small balcony' looking out from Asia at the Pacific, but forming a 'natural crossroads' between two major civilisations, China and India. (Nguyen 1998: 3)

Chinese have a proud record of anticipating Western inventions, one of which is the invention of a continent in the southern seas. But the oceanic survey showing all the places visited by the imperial fleets under Zheng He and others ended in 1433 CE and did not include Australia. Nor did the surviving records say whether Overseas Chinese had ventured further south.⁹¹ Hsü Chi'yü (Xu Jiyu), a Manchu scholar-official, in 1859 noted that England's need for unoccupied territory after the loss of its American colonies was met by the colonisation of Australia. 'In recent years', he continued, with considerable accuracy,

the great island of New Holland has been obtained. The grass and weeds have been cut down in order that criminals may be banished to that place. The poor people, who have no means of making a living, were also taken there for settlement. In moving these people over a distance of 80 000 li, it was a hard and painstaking job to plan to feed and accommodate the people. (Hsü in Teng and Fairbank 1954)

Late in the Qing (Ching) dynasty, Yang Weizhan poetically advised his readers:

If you go south from Shanghai, you will find a large gold mountain and a small gold mountain / Appearing and disappearing through oceans of cloud. (Garnaut 1992)

A Chinese former official asserted in 1931 that 'Australia was first discovered by Chinese people...the British followed'. But such claims, based on a lost map of 1477, on a small soapstone carving found near Darwin in 1879, and on reports from 338 BCE

⁹⁰ Park and Chung, seminar at ANU, 13 May 1999. (My notes)

⁹¹ Ma Huan, *Ying-hai Sheng-lan: The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores*, Bangkok: White Lotus, 1997. John Gittings, tr. *A Chinese View of China*, New York: Pantheon Books, Random House, 1973: ch.7.

and later of 'boomerangs' and 'kangaroos', have since been discredited.⁹² If Aboriginal accounts of sailors arriving earlier than the trepangers from Macassar were, in fact, Chinese visiting Australia in the thirteenth century, no details of them have survived. (Mackerras 1976. Whitehouse 1995) This did not inhibit the Chinese authors of a *Natural Geography of Oceania* (1987) from claiming that Southeast Asians, not Europeans, were first to reach Australia. The *Great Chinese Encyclopaedia* stated that Chinese landed at what is now Darwin in 1432. (Ouyang Yu 1998) Thus factual observation, interwoven with mythic images, supported a virtual appropriation by Chinese of the southern continent into their imagined hemisphere, and this claim is still occasionally cited as implying their superiority over Australians and their inherited right to migrate to Australia.

What Chinese imagined powerfully influenced their enduring images of Australia. In 'My Fortune in Australia', a novella published in Mandarin in Shanghai in 1991, and in English in Melbourne in 1995, Liu Gande repeated as fact the Chinese claim to have discovered Australia, contrasting the opportunistic British colonisers in 1788 with the noble Zheng He three centuries earlier.

Convict ships came riding the waves...but, three hundred years before in the early 1400s, during our Great Ming Dynasty, Zheng He, the Ming Dynasty Grand Eunuch of Three Treasures, had already sailed to the Western Ocean seven times with fleets much grander than those of Captain Cook. On his way to the Indian Ocean, Zheng send ships to land at what is now Darwin, in Australia's Northern Territory. Interestingly, those lovable Chinese were innocent and devoid of evil intentions. Like modern tourists who chisel 'I came here on this day' at scenic spots, they carved and buried stone statues to commemorate the occasion. Then they hurriedly weighed anchor and set sail to purchase exotic treasures for our Great Emperor of the Ming Dynasty...[ellipses in original] (Liu 1995: 3, 14)

⁹² Farrell 1990. Fitzgerald 1996. Rolls 1993. Wang Shengwu, *Aozhou de faxian yu qingdai zhonggouren dui Aozhou de renshi*, Taipei 1973. NLA OCN 3950 1091. Wei Juxian, *The Chinese Discovered Australia*, Taipei: Jiulong, 1960. NLA OCN 3950 221.

As Liu's account shows, such images have lasting consequences. One way of asserting power over others is to claim to have discovered them. Another, as we shall see, is to claim greater virtue, or superior civilisation.

Not until a Russian map based on Cook's voyages reached Japan by way of Irkutsk and was published in 1794, did Japanese - at least their rulers, who begged the Russians for it, and suppressed it for 16 years - discover that the Australian continent was much smaller than the gigantic southland of their earlier imaginings. As Frei's copious research (1984, 1991) shows, accurate cartographic delineation of Australia was not publicly available in Japan until 1810, and even when a new map in 1844 adopted the name 'Australia', it remained for most Japanese a place 'beyond the bounds of amicable settlement'.

Coming to Australia, hardly anyone has made mention of that continent up to now, despite the fact that it lies on the other edge of the ocean that faces Japan. (Mitsukuri 1844)

The new map's cartographer, Mitsukuri Shogo, described Australia as temperate, fertile, uninhabited in the interior but initially with a population of 3 700 000 primitive natives and 8 000 British criminals, whose number had increased to 20 000. Ten years later, Yoshida Shoin noted that 'various countries compete for profit' in Australia, and saw it as 'most profitable for Japan to colonise Australia'.⁹³ Even so, seventeenth century maps derived from the Jesuits in China that showed an unknown Australia remained influential in Japan into the 1850s. But by 1869, the diplomat and scholar Fukuzawa Yukichi - who never visited Australia - published a fairly factual account of a country with a population of 1 400 000, rich natural resources including more gold than California, and the trading ports of Sydney and Melbourne - illustrated with standard

⁹³ Mitsukuri Shogo, *Shinsei yochi zenzu* (A new complete map of the world), with *Kon'yo zushiki* (Exploratory notes), 1844. The First Fleet actually included about 750 convicts. Yoshida Shoin, *Yushuroku* (A prison notebook), 1854. Frei 1991: 25-6.

images that could have been any Western city – and described it as ‘a new world with a prosperous future’.⁹⁴

Fukuzawa and his supporters advocated the Westernisation (in its Japanese version) of many aspects of Japanese life. But in China, one reform movement after another failed, partly because ‘China did not change fast enough to cope with the new international framework’. (Wang 1992: 4) For individual Chinese, that framework included Australia, not in any Asian vision, but as a result of the personal experiences of Chinese sojourners (*huaqiao*, ‘temporary migrants’).⁹⁵ For Japanese however, Australia was part of a national southward expansion project. Oceania by 1941 was still seen as remote, but within Japan’s reach. As if with a wild surmise, Kawai Tatsuo, Japan’s first diplomatic Minister to Australia, remarked: ‘At primary school our geography teacher did not tell us how far Oceania extended’. In 1942, at a Mombusho conference of Japan’s Co-Prosperity Sphere collaborators, European and American geographies were declared to be no longer satisfactory: now Australia was part of Asia. The idea of an ‘Australasiatic Mediterranean’ (*Go-A chichukai*) was revived from the German philosophers who had written of it the 1920s (Frei 1991:184-5), by Japanese who apparently knew nothing of Marcus Clarke’s (1877) similar fantasy for Australia. Each vision of the region - Australian, German, and Japanese, but not Chinese – proposed the inclusion of Australia in Asia more in pursuit of territorial ambition than of neighbourliness with its people.

By a process now understood as ‘cognitive mapping’, Australia was for long constructed in Korea and China as unfamiliar and distant.⁹⁶ Mao Zedong (Mao

⁹⁴ Fukuzawa Yukichi, *Sekai kunizushiki* (A glimpse of the countries of the world), 1869. Frei 1991: 27.

⁹⁵ On a Chinese map in the 1980s Australia was shown as Australasia. ‘Australasia means Oceania. Australia is part of Australasia, just as China belongs to Asia... This place Australasia took up half the map. Huge!... There on this map were places with names like New Zealand, Tonga, whatever. “Those are all colonies of Australia”, he told me. “China doesn’t recognise them so they don’t count.”... After I arrived here in Australia... I realised... that Australia has two names. Officially, it’s known as Australia. Australasia is just a nickname.’ Debate about Australia between Chinese workers, reported by one of them to Sang Ye 1996: 138-9.

⁹⁶ Mapping: Downs and Stea 1977: 6. Bennett 1985. Chinese: ‘We Chinese have five thousand years of history, five thousand years of civilisation; these foreigners are so uncultured’: interviewees to Sang Ye 1996: 45.

Tsetung), late in his life, declared: 'I wouldn't want to go to Australia: just looking at it on the map makes me feel lonely'. (Sang Ye 1996: x) For Chinese, such images persisted through the years in which sojourners from Guangdong were prospering or failing in Australia. But maps produced in Japan soon reflected the possibility of Greater East Asia including Australia. Similarly, in the 1960s Indonesian maps recorded the incorporation of West New Guinea as Irian Jaya, and some showed Australia as 'South Irian'. (Mungo MacCallum, *SMH* 5 February 2000: 49) But a Malaysian Foreign Minister declared in 1995: 'If I look at a map I will immediately say that Australia is not part of Asia' (Dobell 2001: 13), and a map of Asia on the cover of Mahathir's 1999 book obscured Australia, as did an Air France map and a *TIME* cover at the height of 'Pacific Rim' enthusiasm. (Broinowski 1996) But teachers of Australian Studies at the University of the Philippines in 1996 were eager to replace maps that located Southeast Asian countries, and Australia, at the bottom, 'about to fall off', with new ones that placed them in the centre.⁹⁷ An editorial in Singapore had a different cognitive map that reflected the opposite as its interests: Australia was 'still on the periphery of the region', while Singapore was planning to become its hub.⁹⁸

Australia is moving towards Asia at six centimetres a year: but opinion about whether this is too fast or too slow varies, in the region and in Australia as well. (Flannery 1994) Australians, who have belatedly joined their neighbours in cognitive mapping, find an inverted 'corrective' world map amusing, and accept the antipodean, somewhat self-denigrating label 'down under'. A study of the world-images of Australian tertiary students reported in 1990 that a majority of them placed Asia in the middle of their maps, and were far more aware of Asia than were students in more than 50 other countries.⁹⁹ This may reflect the efforts of Foreign Minister Gareth Evans who, to reinforce the Keating government's 'engagement with Asia' policies, produced a map in 1994 placing Australia in the centre of the 'East Asian hemisphere'. But later, Australians were warned by Blainey that foreigners could acquire misleading visions of

⁹⁷ Aurora Roxas Lim, 'How the Idea of an Australian Studies Program in the Philippines Evolved', UP, Diliman, Quezon City: 31 January 1996.

⁹⁸ *ST* quoted by Loudon, *Herald Sun* 14 February 1993: 55.

⁹⁹ Walmsley, Saarinen, and MacCabe, 'Down Under or Centre Stage? The World Images of Australian Students', *Australian Geographer* 21, 2, 1990: 165-8. Curtis Andressen and A. Maude, 'Perceptions of Asia: a Geographical Perspective', *ASR* 17, 3, April 1994: 145-152.

Australia as large, empty, and awaiting development by migrants could be created by maps in which huge salt pans in the centre of Australia were called 'lakes' and coloured green.¹⁰⁰

More than is usually acknowledged, maps can nourish imagination in the way myths do. They can be made to show whatever is in their makers' interests, and Asian representations of Australia are no exception.

2.2 CHINESE

Diversity has rarely been valued either by Chinese or Australians, and hence similarities between them are not often recognised, not even their common xenophobia. But they may be more alike than they admit. Chinese and Australians have often compensated for their own shortcomings by self-representations that reinforce their hierarchical superiority and marginalise the other.

Seclusion of a society, no matter how civilised, far from eliminating xenophobia, exacerbates it: this is as true of Australia as it is of China. Distance magnifies difference. Ignorance foments fear. So, 'every Englishman was redheaded and ... as a race the Britishers were a terribly ferocious, man-eating and boy-murdering lot', was what Mei Quong Tart was taught in Guangdong before he left for Australia at the age of nine. In 1857 a Chinese artist depicted an English sailor as a simian monster breathing fire and smoke, that ate anyone it met. (Margaret Quong Tart 1911: 5) Chinese terms of abuse for foreigners emphasised their hairiness, redness, barbarity, bestiality, and devilishness. Europeans, of course, had equally threatening images of Chinese, and counterpart insults for them, which settler Australians inherited.¹⁰¹ Such habits of mind on both sides retarded the capacity of both Chinese and Australians to appreciate each other's positive attributes, as it appears they still do.

¹⁰⁰ Geoffrey Blainey, ABC RN Boyer Lectures, 1, 11 November 2001.

¹⁰¹ In Chinese, foreigners are *waigouren*; *lao wai*, old foreigners; or *fangwailo*, barbaric foreign devils; this is contracted to *gwailo*, foreign devil. In Australian English, insulting terms for Asians generally and Chinese in particular abound: Dai Yin 1994. Rolls 1992.

Here, the representations of Australia by Chinese inside and outside China are considered in two phases of roughly fifty years each.¹⁰²

Phase 1 To 1949

The historian Gu Jiegang in the 1920s had the temerity to dispute three foundational myths about Chinese: that they alone descended from a common ancestor, they came originally from the same place, and they were civilised from the beginning.¹⁰³ And Lu Xun, in his classic novel *Ah Q*, challenged the Chinese mantra about five thousand years of civilisation, and satirised their habit of either looking up to foreigners as superior beings or down on them as wild animals. (Spence 1981. Ouyang 1994b)

But theirs were heterodox views: most Chinese had not been educated either to embrace foreigners, or to believe in equality between nations. (Sang Ye 1996) They had good reason to object to the barbarians who caused such havoc in China. A century later, convictions that Westerners were all barbarians were still reinforced in school texts, movies, and newspapers. Chinese fear of difference, intolerance of diversions from the ruling order, and anger against the West and the 'evil cult' of Christianity were variously deployed by successive regimes: by the Guomindang against unlicensed Chinese religions until 1949, by Mao against Catholics in 1957, and by his successors at the end of the twentieth century against the Salvation Army or Falungong and other qigong-based movements. (Wang 1990b) Even modern Chinese remained 'as liable as any other nations to let themselves be stirred up against conspicuously different-looking outsiders in times of crisis'. (Jenner 1992: 87) At such times, China's national civilisation was represented as being under threat from foreign beliefs and practices. (Duara 2000) But as a result of a millennium of movement in and

¹⁰² Ouyang Yu surveyed Chinese representations of Australia in the PRC and Hong Kong 1996 in the research phase of my project: Ouyang Yu 1998. Anne-Marie Brady, Christine Eckhardt, Thomas Kwok, Nicole Mies, Ines Rittgasser, and Bennis So surveyed Chinese 'Australiana' monographs and serials (in simplified and traditional characters) in the NLA for the Asian Accounts of Australia project (2000-2002) of which I am a Chief Investigator.

¹⁰³ 'People believe what they want to believe, and the Chinese today want to believe in the Xia dynasty'. The Xia dynasty is claimed to have existed over 5 000 years ago, but archaeological evidence for it is dubious. *FEER* 20 July 2000: 74.

out of China, 'the Chinese' were as imaginary a community as any other. They were multiculturally diverse inside China, challengers of the mainland in Hong Kong and Taiwan, and hegiraic in many other countries. (Mackie 1996. Godley 1992. Li 2001)

Missionaries, traders, and soldiers were the first Australians with whom most Chinese came into contact on their own soil, and their characteristics, clothes, and language were indistinguishable from those of the British in China. The earliest known visitors to China from Australia were the remnants of the mutinous crew and convicts from Cyprus, a brig they had seized off Hobart in 1828. They sailed into Whampoa, where the convict sailor William Swallow, an expert at escape and an accomplished liar, told officials he was Captain Waldron of Edward, that had been fired and sunk by Japanese. (Hughes 1986) Even after Federation, Australians in China overwhelmingly identified themselves as British, and were always prepared to go to war on Britain's behalf, as they did against the 'Boxers' in 1900-1.¹⁰⁴ The slogan of the 'Righteous and Harmonious Militia' was 'Support the Manchus: exterminate the foreigners'.¹⁰⁵ The 1900 expedition was the first of numerous armed incursions by Australians into Asian countries in support of Western interests. It was hardly surprising that Australians gained an early reputation for being at least as anti-Chinese as any Europeans. If Australian racism was anti-Chinese, Chinese racism was anti-European.

Early in the twentieth century, when many advisers from other countries were contributing to the modernisation of both China and Japan, Australian intellectuals were more notable for their absence. Thus opportunities Australia might have had to acquire

¹⁰⁴ A declaration from Guangzhou in 1839 asserted to the British: 'Our hatred is already at white heat. If we do not completely exterminate you pigs and dogs, we will not be manly Chinese able to support the sky on our heads and stand firmly on the earth... We are definitely going to kill you, cut your heads off and burn you to death... We must strip off your skins and eat your flesh, and then you will know how tough [*li hai*] we are... We ought really to use refined expressions. But since you beasts do not understand written characters, therefore we use rough vulgar words to instruct you in simple terms'. Teng and Fairbanks 1954: 36. Welch 1999: 41.

¹⁰⁵ Teng and Fairbanks 1954: 188ff. Before they became anti-foreign, the Boxers (*Yihequan*) were originally antidynastic: their first slogan was 'destroy the Manchus: restore the Ming'. Bergère 1994: 45. The enduring power of resentment against the Eight-Power Allied Forces' intervention was revealed in the late 1980s by a Chinese student in Canada who assumed that a fellow student was anti-Chinese because her ancestor had fought the Boxers. Wang 1990b: 93.

a reputation for expertise and a distinctive national personality were lost early in the modern period. The most prominent Australian in revolutionary China was George Ernest 'Chinese' Morrison, who wrote for *The Times*, advised Yuan Shihkai, the militarist second President of the Republic, and opposed the nationalist Sun Yatsen (Sun Yixian). Morrison, who lived in China until 1917, was self-represented as British and inherently superior to his Chinese friends. He was regarded by Chinese as 'an Englishman, a representative of the British royal family'. As late as 1980, the Peking Daily still considered him English.¹⁰⁶

Other Australians made some impression in China, in missionary work, in railway engineering, lexicography, and medicine.¹⁰⁷ Of the six Australian journalists who wrote from China before 1945, William Henry Donald ('Donald of Peking') reported on Japan's victory for the China Mail from 1904. It was Donald who drafted the Guomindang's declaration in 1912 that China would 'unite with the countries of the world which treated our nation and people as equals'. (Sang Ye 1996. Selle 1948) In Melbourne, William Liu supported Sun's republic and identified himself as 'one of the first Australians to accept the New China of Mao Zedong'. (Liu 1979: 25) But neither Chinese in China nor in Australia credited him or Donald with particular distinction on that account. Few Chinese, Sang Ye reported, knew that the first English-Chinese dictionary was compiled by an Australian foreign devil, adding: 'Actually it's not that they would not remember, but that they don't know and never really wanted to know'. (Sang 1994, 1996) Australia was seen in China as a British, dependent, convict society, a link in the chain of the British India and China trade, a source of soldiers in British wars, and of proselytisers sent by the London Missionary Society to China. And the British, said Sun just before his death, were the worst foreigners, 'a curse to China'. (Bergère 1994: 403)

Chinese were among the earliest arrivals in colonial Australia as crew members on French ships in 1788 and 1802, as free settlers in 1818, and even as convicts from

¹⁰⁶ G.E. Morrison 1895. A street in Beijing where he lived was for decades known as *Molisun jie*, and the route he walked from Shanghai to Rangoon was called 'Chinese Morrison's Road'. *Peking Daily* 21 June 1980. Sang Ye 1994: 107.

¹⁰⁷ William Mayers, Dr Edward Stuckey, John Williams, and others. Sang Ye in Lo 2000.

elsewhere in the British empire in 1834.¹⁰⁸ As a result of the tripling of the population between 1700 and 1850, land rentals soared, the environment was degraded, natural disasters added to the distress of the peasants, and rebellion and warfare were widespread. (Takaki 1993) Interest in working abroad was greatly heightened by conditions in southern China, where the word about Australia spread rapidly. Because of traditional Chinese disapproval of migration, and the slur of its illegality, little was made in Guangdong of their leaving: 'It was not only disloyal but unfilial for Chinese to settle overseas for long periods, since it entailed a neglect of the obligation to tend the tombs of one's ancestors'.¹⁰⁹ The ethnic diversity of Australia in the eighteenth century, and the significant presence in Australia of Chinese and people from several other Asian countries, has recently been emphasised by Australian historians.¹¹⁰ But neither Australia's cultural pluralism nor its Britishness were what drove Chinese in their thousands to gamble on going there.

To the mainly young, single men from the thirteen counties around the Canton delta Australia was simply a remote place where Chinese could find work and make money. Australia seemed 'an impossible distance into enemy territory', to men who had never before left Guangdong.¹¹¹ Some admitted they had no idea where they were. One of them, Chiang Fan-Lan, an orphan, fled from Amoy where he had gambled away the money lent by his uncle. With no family connections in China, and finding Sydney in 1851 nothing like his dreams, young Chiang admitted that he felt 'melancholy in the extreme'. Among the Chinese, depression, 'lunacy', and suicide were common. (Cronin 1982: 11-12) By 1901, as a result of Australian restrictions and the prevalence of males among Chinese in Australia, four fifths of them had left or died.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Chinese migration and settlement in Australia has been examined in detail by Choi 1975, Cigler 1983, Cronin 1982, Fitzgerald 1996, Inglis and others 1992, Loh 1989, Lydon 1999, Nairn 1956, Rolls 1992, Ryan 1995a, 1995b, Travers 1981, Yarwood 1964, 1968, Yen 1985, Yong 1977, Yuan 1983, Wang 1978.

¹⁰⁹ Jenner 1992: 114. Mackie in Reid 1996: xv. Reid in Chirot and Reid 1997: 14.

¹¹⁰ The range of nationalities represented in Australia during the Victorian gold rush is described by Rolls 1992: 78-9. Jupp 1988, 2001.

¹¹¹ Shirley Fitzgerald, 'Views of the Pearl River Delta', National Maritime Museum: 7 June 1998.

¹¹² Chinese workers: Yen 1985: 47. The Treaty of Nanking (1842) allowed British dealers to 'hire any kind of Chinese person who may move about in the performance of their work or craft without the slightest obstruction of Chinese officials'. This was the beginning of

Of those who left, some became organisers of the indenturing industry in China or Hong Kong, while others returned to Australia to become mining bosses or traders.¹¹³ It was in their interests to represent Australia in glowing terms. But the harsh reality in nineteenth century Australia was that nearly all Chinese were disenfranchised, few were entitled to social services, and few could own land, while all were subject to discriminatory colonial taxation. Their general status and attitude to Australia, and the response of settler Australians to them, has been compared in these respects to that of twentieth century guest workers in Europe and illegal immigrants in the United States, who exchanged one form of oppression for another. (Welch 1999)

Poverty and disillusionment did not prevent Chinese from comparing themselves favourably with Australians, or with any European barbarians. Even on the Californian goldfields, Australians were observed by Chinese to have a 'criminal nature'. (Yuan 1983) Literate Chinese in colonial Australia brought with them the Confucian concept of how a 'superior man' (*chun-tzu*) should behave abroad. Writers of autobiographies and diaries consciously represented themselves as following the tradition of the hero in Chinese fiction, who battles on in a foreign land, restrains himself from falling in love there, and eventually comes back to found a family, revere the ancestors, and serve the motherland. In these all-male accounts, the cultural superiority of Chinese was commonly asserted, and men who 'deserted' by marrying non-Chinese were despised. In real life as well as in their writing, they sought in the face of discrimination to create a positive impression and to 'forge positive selves'. (Shen thesis 1998) When they prospered, that was further proof of their superiority, and of the valuable contribution they had made to both countries. What Barmé observed about Chinese visual artists abroad in 1999 was equally true of these early writers: 'it is acceptance in China, at the centre of cultural hierarchy and worth, that many artists still crave'.¹¹⁴

the 'coolie trade'. Godley in Inglis and others, 1992: 1-21. 'Coolie': Rolls 1993: 41. 1901 statistics of Chinese in Australia: Travers 1981: 25.

¹¹³ Ping Que, for example, found 300 ounces of gold near Darwin in 12 weeks, went back to China in 1882 and returned with 43 men from his village. He also worked at The Union mine with 60 men. Rolls 1992: 288.

¹¹⁴ Barmé 1998. Van Leeuwin thesis 2000: 135.

Thus the early Chinese Australian autobiographers provided for their Chinese readers self-reinforcing visions of being Chinese abroad, more than penetrating observations of Australia. 'White' Australians were predominantly represented as ignorant and lacking in civilisation and propriety. (Welch 1999) Biographies and novels published in China in the 1990s still pointed to the gap of race, nation, continent, and culture between Chinese and Australians, implying the superiority of China.¹¹⁵ But addressing Australian readers in the 1890s (as also in the 1990s), other Chinese writers represented everything Chinese as inferior, and as needing to catch up to the West. Then and later, Australia was used to send improving messages back to China. This tendency to tell both readerships what they want to hear reflects, as Wang Gungwu has proposed, the 'ingrained Chinese tradition of glossing over the negative and praising the positive' (1994: 73), a tendency not unknown elsewhere.

The paucity of written accounts of Australia by first generation Chinese themselves, and their facelessness in many historical accounts by settler Australians, created an impression in Australian migration literature that their personalities were passive and their opinions negligible. (Choi 1975. Yarwood 1964. Yuan 1983) The 'submissive nature' of Chinese was what had commended them to British entrepreneurs as a mobile labour force for the Empire, and the 'loyal, faithful, intelligent, unobtrusive and hardworking' Chinese were praised for keeping unruly or unhygienic practices under control in their own way through their headman system. Indeed as the successful Sydney businessman Mei Quong Tart pleaded, 'It is not the vice of the poor Chinaman the public dislikes, but his virtues'. (Margaret Quong Tart 1911) But the Chinese in Australia were far from voiceless or uniform in their views about Australia.

Selected for examination here, in applying these general observations to representations of Australia, are protests by the Chinese; their views of indigenous

¹¹⁵ Wang Xiaoyu, 'I Want to Go Far', in *Shanghai Fiction*, 1992. Ouyang Yu in Bennett 1996: 205-212. Bi Xiyuan, *Green Card Dreams*, Beijing: Huayi chubanshe, 1996. NLA OCN 5769 6074. Wang Cangbo, *Biographies of Brave Overseas Chinese: Oceania and Africa*, Nanchang: Shijie huaren jingying zhuanlue, Dayangzhou yu Feizhou juan, 1995. NLA OCN 2260 95 4628. Yan Zhen, *I'll Tell You a Real Australia*, Beijing: Zhongguo dianying chubanshe, 1998. NLA OCN 3950 1070. Xiao Ying, *Trials and Hardship: The Australian Dream*, Beijing: Zhongguo guojiguang chubanshe, 1998. NLA OCN 5767 7133. Yi Fu, *Waking Up From Australia*, Beijing, Zhongguo gongren chubanshe, 1995. NLA OCN 5769 1050.

Australians; two contrasting accounts of Australia by an influential Chinese Republican; and representations of Australians in early Chinese Australian newspapers.

Petitions and Protests

The Chinese in Australia, left by Beijing to fend for themselves - apart from a visit by two Commissioners in 1887¹¹⁶ - resorted to two traditional methods of getting themselves taken seriously: the Australian one of forming unions and going on strike, and the Chinese one of petitioning the colonial authorities, the British government, and the Emperor. Strikes were for the labouring Chinese; petitions were for the upwardly mobile merchants (*shang*). Chinese headmen - merchants, legal workers, and clergy - several times presented carefully drafted pleas in good English on behalf of their less literate compatriots.¹¹⁷

The headmen, however, were scarcely altruistic. They were prepared to argue to the colonial authorities against an influx of lower-class Chinese, if it meant protecting their own respectability and permanent residence. Thirty Sydney merchants did this in 1878, preferring to 'negotiate extensions of rights for their own class'. (Fitzgerald 1996: 85, 88) In 1888 the same group appealed to the Inter-Colonial conference, arguing that Chinese numbers had fallen in all cities but Darwin, as if that was a good thing. A Chinese merchant in Sydney, Thomas Yee Hing, of the On Cheong company, made his fortune from the opium trade but was then prepared, as a director of the Tung Wah News and President of the Protect the Emperor Society, to argue for opium prohibition to the 1906 Royal Commission. (Davies 2001) Chinese Christian clergymen, whose efforts to convert their countrymen were often met with 'great opposition, ridicule and indifference', were eager to report to the authorities on opium addiction, gambling, and

¹¹⁶ The Qing inherited the Ming's view of overseas Chinese as deserters or political conspirators. But when their numbers grew with the gold rushes, the ill-treatment of Chinese caused such a scandal that the Qing were embarrassed into making some efforts to protect them: Yen 1985: xiv-xv. The Chinese Minister in London protested to the British government that Australian laws were inconsistent with Anglo-Chinese treaties: Nairn 1956: 92. The Chinese commissioners reported their concern at the extent of discrimination against Chinese in Australia to Beijing and recommended establishing a Consulate-General in Sydney and honorary vice-consuls elsewhere: Wang 1978: 287-301. Godley 1992: 9.

¹¹⁷ A fuller account of Chinese protests is in Broinowski 2001.

sexual depravity among their countrymen. Chinese, in response, advised them to go and convert English people.¹¹⁸

The extent of the headmen's self-interest deserves analysis. In their petitions for better treatment of their labouring countrymen they always cited the skill, diligence, and contribution of Chinese to the Australian colonies. But the merchants' philanthropy often appeared, as well, to involve the acquisition of status in their communities both in Australia and China, and a desire to impress influential Australians. They played up kinship and dialect ties with other Chinese, more than they would have done in China. (Lydon 1999. Wang 1991) To demonstrate their patriotism as Australians they put on displays for a British Royal visit in 1901, funded hospitals and schools, and supported churches and Masonic lodges. The more Chinese migrated to Australia the more potential employees and grateful protégés that meant for the headmen. The wealth they made in Australia gained influence for them in China, where merchants had traditionally been lowest in the Confucian class hierarchy. Some, like Kwong Soo Duk, acquired distinction by having multiple wives and children and establishing dynasties in Australia. (Giese 1995, 1997) Others, like Mei Quong Tart, who had citizenship since 1871, a settler Australian wife, and a house in Ashfield, enhanced their 'honorary white' status by organising fund-raising events 'combining moral worth with public display'. He supported the repatriation of Chinese refused entry in 1888 and of lepers in 1896, and he too opposed the use of opium. He wore Chinese robes on official occasions, with a minor Chinese decoration that he was reported to have bought in Beijing. (Lydon 1999. Choi 1975)

Mei Quong Tart's petitions on behalf of Chinese in Australia were important for his public profile. He objected in the Sydney press to the views of the Anti-Chinese League and to the disenfranchisement of Chinese. (SMH 9 December 1887) He made fun of the League's proposal that a special tram-car be put on for the use of the 'dirty, nasty Chinese', suggesting that if all the 'dirty drunken Europeans' were put in the same car, 'it would encourage cleanliness in both cases'; and if Chinese men lured European girls

¹¹⁸ William Young, 'Report on the Condition of the Chinese Population in Victoria', Melbourne: 1868. Another inquiry into gambling was held in Sydney in 1891. Fitzgerald 1996: 100-3.

into sin, he said, they were not alone in that. (Margaret Quong Tart 1911) He repeatedly petitioned Premier Parkes, arguing against the migration regulations. Australians would be 'unable to conceive the anger' of Chinese at the repatriation of some 300 of their countrymen, he reported after a visit to Beijing. (Jones 1997. Rolls 1992)

The earliest Chinese petition appears to have been that of Quang-Chew, a merchant in Melbourne, who in 1855 appealed to the Legislative Council against Victoria's plans to limit Chinese migration and impose discriminatory taxes on Chinese. He cited their talents, the shame of repatriation, and the vastness of Australia, but no response is recorded. (Rolls 1992. Cigler 1983) This pattern was to be repeated: fine sentiments, appeals to logic, honour, self-interest, religion, and British justice, pleas for equity with other colonists, and the usual answer - silence. Attacks on Chinese miners began in 1855 and were followed by indignant petitions for redress.¹¹⁹ Chinese merchants in Sydney in 1888 sent copies of Parkes' anti-Chinese bill to the Emperor, to the Viceroy of Canton, and to the Chinese Ambassador in London, and waited in vain for replies. Then, as the colonies began to plan for federation and to legislate for racial exclusion, two prosperous merchants in Melbourne, Lowe Kong Meng and Louis Ah Mouy, joined forces with the Australian-born Christian evangelist Cheong Cheok Hong to publish *The Chinese Question in Australia 1878-1879* (1879) and, with five others, *The Chinese Remonstrance to the Parliament and People of Victoria* (1888). The petitioners' English was good, their manner courteous, their argument logical, and their drafting careful: this was their chance to impress the government. They objected to being looked down on as 'pagans and barbarians' by Australians who could not claim the civilisation and educational standards of China. 'Which are the "pagans" - you or we?' they asked. (Lowe and others 1879) Chinese, on the contrary, they argued, were 'superior to the average Englishman' in filial affection, respect for the aged, honesty, cheerfulness, and industriousness. They were, the petitioners claimed, free from moroseness and discontent, good tempered, grateful for kindness, faithful to their employers, quick

¹¹⁹ The *History Book of Ah Po* (1860) recorded that many Chinese were injured at Lambing Flat, but none was killed. (Pan 1990) Nearly a century and a half later, Chinese history books recorded 'bloody massacres' of innocent Chinese, perpetrated by white Australians on the gold fields, and interpreted them (not surprisingly) as evidence of racism. (Sang Ye 1996: 159)

learners, clever imitators, peaceful, orderly, sober, and methodical. A Chinese workforce, with themselves as its headmen and compradors, seemed to be what they were recommending.

The centrepiece of the 1879 petition was an impression of Australia as it had appeared to Chinese in the 1850s:

Therefore, when we heard, about five and twenty years ago, that there was a great continent nearly half as large again as China, and containing only a few hundreds of thousands of civilized people thinly scattered around the coast; that it was rich in the precious metals and very fertile; and that it was only a few weeks' sail from our own country, numbers of Chinese immigrants set out for this land of promise.

By comparing Australia's size, resources, proximity, and small population with China, the headmen implied that it was natural for their fellow Chinese to migrate there. The Australian colonies, they pointed out, did not exclude Germans, French, Italians, Danes, or Swedes. They cited the teachings of Confucius and Mencius that resembled the Christian maxim: 'What you do not like, when done to yourself, do not do to others'. Their petition contained the first of several later admonitions to Australia to beware the future consequences of its treatment of Chinese.

The authors of the 1888 petition, the Remonstrance, again recited their rights under the Anglo-Chinese treaty, and quoted the Bible's teachings against discrimination: 'One law and one manner shall be for you and for the stranger that sojourneth with you'. They pointed to opportunities for complementary trade with China, and for the export of Australian wool and railway materials. But ignorant Australians, they said, had been incited to show contempt and hatred of Chinese. Now their warning was stronger: Australians would live to regret their treatment of Chinese. 'If this bill is passed, it will mark a relapse so distinct as to fix an indelible stain on the Australian name'.¹²⁰ A time would come, 'sooner than is supposed, when the presence and power of China as a

¹²⁰ Yong 1977: 13. Yuan 1983: 59. *ADB* 3, 1851-1890, 'Cheong Cheok Hong'.

great nation will be felt in these seas'. Inhumanity, they suggested, was a bad foundation for a young nation.¹²¹ Victor Hugo had similarly warned that history's judgement would turn against the West for what European 'civilisation' was doing to Chinese 'barbarism'.¹²² But such foreign foresight carried little weight in nineteenth century Australia. Nowhere did the Chinese petitioners argue that they were fellow Australians and entitled to equal treatment on that account, nor were they able with any confidence to threaten reciprocal discrimination by China against Australia.

In Darwin, where the settlers depended on Chinese market gardeners and traders, they were more supportive of Chinese protests than in the southern colonies. Chinese there in the 1880s outnumbered settler Australians by six to one, and they needed no merchants and headmen to embolden their reaction against arrests of fellow Chinese for gambling. In 1878, settler Australian and Chinese residents together petitioned against a sentence of Ah Sooeey that they considered excessive. In 1881 Leong Quong, arrested for gambling in Cooktown, complained forthrightly that the Englishmen's justice reflected their double standards on gambling and opium smoking: Chinese believed they were singled out in a community where gambling was a national sport. Darwin Chinese objected in 1905 to an allegation by Mitchell, a parliamentarian, that they were a menace to the Northern Territory. They argued eloquently in the local press that Chinese residents had a vital interest in the Territory, while it was only of political interest to parliamentarians in Adelaide who were 'ready to throw mud at it when it suits their purposes', and who constituted 'a much more serious menace to the Territory' than the Chinese.¹²³

The Chinese protests were described a century later by a Chinese Australian as a 'forlorn appeal of the subdued'. (Yuan 1983: 58) Here, a re-reading has shown the

¹²¹ Some settler Australians agreed that there would be trouble with China in future, including a writer to the press: 'I see that our Government has introduced a law admirably calculated to create for this country and for Australasia an enmity of which no man can see the end. I allude to the bill for imposing a tax on immigrants from China...It seems to be forgotten that a day may come when the Chinese, on great provocation, may undertake a war which other nations would undertake on very little provocation...China as a friend, may do us much good; as an enemy she might soon learn to do us much harm'. *SMH* 15 April 1858. Yarwood 1968: 33.

¹²² Victor Hugo 1861 quoted by Gelber 2001: 136-7.

¹²³ C. Yam Yam and others, letter to the Editor, *Northern Territory Times*, 21 July

petitions and their authors in a different light. They persistently criticised settler Australians' oppression and hypocrisy, and contributed, eventually, to social change. The headmen, and those who continued to petition Australian governments in the twentieth century were by no means supine victims. The same was true of Chinese in the United States and Canada who, far from suffering in silence, fought discrimination and protested taxation and migration laws with the same arguments about the industriousness and law-abiding character of Chinese, the same hints about their superior morality, and the same threats of future retaliation, as were used in Australia. (Takaki 1993: 207) The hegiraic Chinese must either have been in direct contact, or have been well informed about each others' activities. They identified with other Chinese abroad as their in-group, even while they sought acknowledgement both from their former in-group in their Chinese home-towns and from the settler out-group among whom they lived.

The brief consideration of Liang Qichao that follows provides illustration and confirmation of how this hegiraic pattern produced contrasting representations of Australia.

Liang Qichao

On the cusp of Federation, the young nationalist anti-Manchu activist Liang Qichao spent six months in Australia (October 1900 to May 1901), before returning to join his patron, Kang Youwei, in exile in Japan. They had been involved in the Hundred Days of Reform (*Bairi weixin*), a short-lived attempt in 1898 to revive imperial traditions. In Japan, Liang was influenced by Westernisers including Fukuzawa Yukichi and Kato Hiroyuki. He began to collaborate with Sun Yatsen (Sun Yixian), and established the Protect the Emperor Society among the Chinese hegira in several countries, including Australia.¹²⁴ In Sydney he delivered a series of lectures to the Chinatown branch of the Society. In Melbourne, Chinese clergymen introduced him to leaders of both

¹²⁴ 1905. Cigler 1983: 46. Jones 1997: 81-3. Rolls 1992: 361-5.
Liang and others made 'civilisation' their slogan in the 1900s, through such phrases as 'Competition is the mother of Civilisation', 'civilised revolution', 'civilised drama', and 'civilised races'. Duara 2000. In Australia, the Protect the Emperor Society was called the Chinese Empire Reform Association until 1904. Davies 2001.

communities. There, and in Adelaide and Perth, Liang had two overriding purposes: to 'tie ethnicity to patriotism' by inventing a Chinese community abroad bonded by common ancestry, language, and culture; and to raise money from it. He had more success with the first objective than the second. (Godley 1992. Davies 2001)

In Sydney Liang drafted his famous essay, *Zhongguo jiruo suyuan lun* ('On Tracing the Source of Our Cumulative Weaknesses', 1900) but, preoccupied with politics in China, he made no mention in it of Australia. He treated Australia then as what Ouyang Yu found in 1998 was still 'an invisible/absent country' for many Chinese. Writing to Kang, Liang commented on women's franchise in Australia, and on the welcome he had received from settler Australians and Chinese, but said he was 'in a remote part of the world'. For that very reason he urged Kang to come to Australia, for his own safety.¹²⁵

Rather than taking up the complaints of his compatriots as the Chinese merchants did, Liang applauded Australia's Western modernity and dynamism, contrasting it with Chinese tradition, hierarchy, and decrepitude. Indeed his criticisms resembled those of Westerners who advised Chinese to update their education and create a modern state, and those Lee Kuan Yew made in the 1950s of hegiraic Chinese in Singapore. Warmly and respectfully welcomed by Prime Minister Edmund Barton, by Governors and Premiers, and by many Chinese in Australia, Liang argued that Chinese who assimilated and became successful citizens abroad were not treated with hostility. If China could enrich itself and educate its people, he told Chinese in Melbourne, the foreigners' insults would disappear. Equality and individual self-esteem were the basis of Western societies, and China must emulate them by shedding the master-slave relationships that permeated it from top to bottom.

Some Western observers in past centuries had imagined China as a model society, and Chinese society was hailed as a workers' paradise in post-revolutionary Russia. (Govor 1997: 235) Liang reversed this idealisation by eliminating the West's negatives and accentuating its positives. A supporter of constitutional monarchies, he overlooked Australia's shortcomings and used his experience there and in North America to

¹²⁵ Liang letter to Kang, 4 April 1900. Davies 2001.

advocate to China his Western model of reform from the bottom up. He castigated Chinese for not balancing work and leisure, for being inefficient workers and disorderly audiences, for spitting, for sleeping on public transport, and even for their manner of walking which was 'full of pomp and ritual...truly ridiculous'. (Ebrey 1993: 338-40) The West, clearly, inspired in Liang what was later called 'Chinese self-loathing'. (Barmé 1995) Liang was critical of the Chinatowns he saw in the United States, believing that Chinese living in them retarded their own modernisation. He wanted China to become civilised, by the West's standards. His writings, smuggled back to China, were read by the young Mao Zedong,¹²⁶ but they provided Mao with much more detail on America than on Australia.

In China in 1904 Liang published two very different articles about Australia. One celebrated Watson's first Federal Labor government as an example to Chinese workers. But in the other, he attacked the White Australia policy, arguing that it was a travesty of history for the peoples of Asia to be oppressed by the 'white race' that hypocritically claimed to espouse universal brotherhood. Like the petition-writers, he threatened that revenge would be exacted 'when we yellow people have attained sufficient power to transform White Australia into Yellow Australia'. Now Liang had less need to ingratiate himself to his Australian hosts and Chinese Australian supporters; now, for the benefit of his Japanese patrons and Chinese in China, he displayed his knowledge of the politics of a 'Western' society and its imperfections. His status had changed: he was now a 'superior man' and a patriot, an Asianist defying the West. Times were changing too, and Chinese nationalists like Liang, as Sun Yixian observed, were excited by Japan's victory over Russia, seeing it as 'a defeat of the West by the East'. (Gelber 2001: 149)

The rhetorical models adopted by Liang, by the petitioners, and by the autobiographical writers of the early Chinese hegira in Australia revealed a common concern to give Chinese abroad a positive face that would benefit China, and hence themselves. Their style was derived from established literary genres, and was freighted with Confucian hierarchical values. This seemed out of keeping with Liang's reform agenda, but self-

¹²⁶ Ebrey 1993: 335. John Schauble, 'Australia visit shaped ideas of Mao favourite',

representation for them all was 'a social and political performance as well as a cultural construction'. (Shen thesis 1998) They represented themselves not as Australians but as superior Chinese 'sacrificed' to the birth of the Australian nation, where all Asians were 'bundled together as of low grade and discarded as material suitable for nation-building'. (Yuan 1983) As sojourners in the nineteenth century and nationalists in the early twentieth, their perspective remained Sino-centric, and they hoped for China's eventual revenge against the West and Australia for disparaging them. In this, whatever their political differences, they found common cause with Liang's representations of Australia as an ideal society as well as a white oppressor.

Chinese and Aborigines

Just as 'John Chinaman' was a stereotyped, peripheral figure in the settler Australian imagination of the early 20th century,¹²⁷ several Chinese accounts of settler Australians were the same in reverse. So Australians barely figured in these Chinese narratives, and when they were mentioned, it was often as unnamed 'Englishmen', peripheral to the huaqiao Chinese world. Indigenous people, too, were notable for their virtual absence from early Chinese accounts of Australia. But recent research shows how widespread was the association, from the earliest settlement, between Chinese and Aborigines as employers, traders, barterers, co-workers, spouses, co-parents, and even sharers of infection. Evidence of the closeness of their association is revealed in family names and local histories. Nonetheless Chinese like Tam Sie, Taam Sze Pui, Way Kee, Mei Quong Tart, and William Liu identified themselves as pioneers, proud of their contributions to Australia's development, and superior to the 'black savages'. (Shen thesis 1998) Chinese were regarded by some Aborigines in the Northern Territory in the early twentieth century as 'white blackfellas', a recognition both of their influence and of their marginality in settler Australian society. (Briscoe 2000)

Aboriginal culture in outback Australia, however, provided Chinese artists from the 1980s with an unfamiliar, unfenced field that changed their vision. Zhou Xiaoping left Anhui province, where he had studied visual art and worked as a graphic designer, for

Australia where he ‘discovered’ Aboriginal art in 1988. From then on, he spent long periods with indigenous people in the north and south of the continent, as well as with the Chinese Australian Jack family at the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo. At Fitzroy Crossing, where he and Jimmy Pike painted together and drew each other, he was told that the Aborigines didn’t like some white people but they liked him: ‘maybe because I can sit close to them as friends’. His painting style changed, and he rejected the set subjects and styles of traditional Chinese painting, which no longer interested him, in favour of a much less restrained technique.¹²⁸ Lin Chunyan had a similar experience: ‘Since coming to Australia I have begun to explore the concept of space. Slowly, space is beginning to unfold in my paintings’. Ah Xian, too, from the early 1990s sought a connection between his Chinese culture and that of Australia, and found that the distance between the two gave him a new vision of the China he both loved and hated. Eddie Quong, who was not an artist but an ‘A-BC’ community leader in Darwin, derived from indigenous culture a ‘typically Chinese’ message about civilisational antiquity for settler Australians:

The Aborigines have got a culture stronger than yours and mine. Don’t take that culture away from them. Your religion dates back 1995 years. How long does their culture go back? (Giese 1997: 71-4, 282)

While Indigenous people were what attracted these artists to Australia, and prejudice withered between Aborigines and Chinese in the Northern Territory who were fellow-victims of marginalisation, attitudes to indigenous people in China were another matter. At the end of the twentieth century, Australia’s discrimination against Aborigines was reported as part of the PRC’s critique of capitalism in general, more than of Beijing’s support for indigenous people. An article on the ‘stolen generations’ in the *People’s Daily* in 2000 misrepresented the issue by calling them the ‘adopted generation’. (Jiang 2001) Some Chinese accounts suggested that Aborigines were even less cultured than

¹²⁷ Broinowski 1992. Strahan 1996. Walker 1999.

¹²⁸ Zhou Xiaoping travelled widely in the Kimberley, the Northern Territory, and North Queensland. He took to Maningrida in Arnhem Land what he needed: ‘Backpack. Sleeping bag. Noodles and rice. Paint brushes. Rice paper. Sketchbooks. That’s all’. His bag, food, ink, and paper were eaten by wild pigs. Geise 1997: 68.

Australians.¹²⁹ Chinese xenophobia has been observed to be at its worst against black people. At its most benign, according to Jose (1995: 118) it delighted in their exoticism, 'colour and movement'. Bo Yang accused Han Chinese (1992: 93) of practising extreme racism against China's 55 minorities, and Choo (2000) asserted that colour prejudice occurs in Chinese communities everywhere, preventing most 'dark-complexioned persons of part-Chinese ancestry' from being accepted as Chinese. Editors of the vernacular Chinese press in Sydney and Melbourne claimed in the late 1990s that for the first time, Chinese and Indigenous Australians came together (in solidarity against Pauline Hanson and her supporters). They advised their readers to support reconciliation but added: 'as new migrants to this country we bear no responsibility to the Aborigines for the past'. (Yang 2000)

Many recent Chinese surveys of Australia include references to the antiquity of Aboriginal culture. A Taiwanese account of the pleasures of Sydney in 1999 compared the image of Indigenous Australians there and in Queensland, citing One Nation as evidence of the difference.¹³⁰

Chinese newspapers

In the Australian Chinese press, Indigenous people and Pacific Islanders (*kanakas*) were called 'blacks' or 'natives' - as indeed they were by Australian mainstream reporters. The Chinese papers commonly referred to Australians, even after Federation, as 'whites', 'foreigners', 'barbarians', or 'foreign devils'. From the late 1890s, the papers served as vehicles of protest, guides to survival, consciousness-raisers, and reinforcers of Chinese identity for their readers. They represented Australia

¹²⁹ A press article in 1991 on Aboriginal buskers in Melbourne: 'They are playing an instrument called "didgeridoo" that sends forth a booming sound with no range of tunes and tones to speak of. After seeing such a performance, no one will think that there is high art in it. Let me put it directly that these Aboriginal artists belong to the category of non-artists': Ju Zuchun, *Huan Qiu*, February 1991: 36. A secondary school textbook in 1988: 'The Aboriginal people in Australia do not know how to cultivate the soil for food, ... spin and weave, ... raise domestic animals, far less do they know material civilisation. They are still leading a life of hunting and gathering... What a striking and sharp contrast these Aborigines who are still living in a stone age present with the advanced society and material civilisation of this country!' Ouyang Yu 1998: 27.

¹³⁰ Zheng Hongsheng, *Yang Ba! Xueli*, Taipei 1999. NLAOCN 3950 5461.

and its people in ways that both revealed and influenced Chinese attitudes to Australia, then and later. They were 'an important medium through which ideas about Australia and Australians - and even about the Chinese themselves - were purveyed'. (Poon 1995: 51)

Although they strongly objected to discrimination against Chinese, the two largest Sydney Chinese newspapers habitually addressed their readers as if they were all living in China. The populist *Chinese Australian Herald* (*Kwang Yik Wah Po*) stereotyped Australians, just as the *Bulletin* did Chinese. In 1901 the *Herald* adroitly reversed the common European colonialists' theme about Asians, by describing settler Australians as 'inherently lazy', unreliable workers, prone to go on strike. In 1905 the paper 'disclosed' its finding that all Australians' ancestors were convicts. In the same year the *Tungwah Times*¹³¹, whose readership was affluent and better educated, said Australians were incapable of working in the tropics, disparagingly repeating the argument Queenslanders had used to support the use of Chinese and kanaka labour. Like the *Bulletin* and the *Lone Hand*, the paper worked not to break down barriers between Chinese and Australians, but to build them. Presumably with economic considerations as well as Chinese politics in mind, it persistently returned discrimination for discrimination.¹³²

Nonetheless the Chinese papers often cited Australia as a model. They often castigated their readers for disunity and infighting, and for failing to capitalise on the sympathy of influential Australians to liberalise migration. Zeng Lu, editor of the *Tungwah Times*, praised the Australian colonies for having come together peacefully at Federation, and the good behaviour of large crowds in Sydney streets. He commended the young nation's rapid development of transport and social services, and its conduct of the 1901 census. Always the point of comparison was China and its standing in the West. Echoing Liang Qichao, the paper urged Chinese to throw off servility, and to reform the obsolete system, to cultivate people of talent, promote social morality,

¹³¹ *Tung Wah News* was renamed *Tungwah Times* in August 1902.

¹³² Yu Lan Poon, 'The two-way mirror: contemporary issues as seen through the eyes of the Chinese language press, 1901-1911', in Fitzgerald, 1995: 50-65. In 1905 the *Chinese Australian Herald* claimed there were more infanticides in Australia than in China, and said they were the cause of demographic decline. Poon 1995: 65, n.25.

encourage progress, construct railways across the twenty-two provinces, exploit the country's natural resources and educate the people. Then who would fear being enslaved by others? ¹³³

The Chinese press in Australia preached to its predominantly male readers the dangers of commingling with settler Australian women. In early Sydney, traditional Chinese values underlay 'a perception of white women as a major cause of Australian degeneracy; they were characterised as murderers (and especially practitioners of infanticide) and as promiscuous'. (Lydon 1999: 138) The *Chinese Australian Herald* campaigned against women's rights in the early 1900s, arguing that women were inferior in 'natural law'. The paper represented suffragettes as disruptive of social order, and as contributing to the decline in Australian moral standards. Equality for women in professions or in Parliament was sternly opposed. Articles dwelt somewhat pruriently on mixed bathing and 'flimsy swimsuits', and cases of incest, rape, sexual assault, infanticide, homosexuality, and adultery were reported in detail. The *Tungwah Times* also disapproved of intermarriage, described 'foreign' (Australian) women as lewd, vicious, and domineering. It warned in 1910 that too much freedom between men and women had resulted in an increase in illegitimacy. Given settler Australians' fears of Chinese seduction of white women, it was ironic that these same women were themselves contemptuously represented by Chinese men as dangerously degenerate.

A succession of migration controversies followed Federation - the cases of Wong Sau, Poon Goey, Ng Hung Poi, and Yuk Kwan being the most prominent in the press - with always the same appeals to humanity, national prestige, and Christian principles. Local and church groups, Australia-China friendship societies, and both the Chinese and mainstream Australian press supported individuals against governments that sought to eliminate Chinese from the population. Access to public opinion, then and later, was often the key to migration. Reciprocity should have been a more powerful argument for the Chinese in Australia. But the weakness and inattention of Beijing, the unequal treaty with Britain, the lack of Chinese consular representation, and the political negligibility of the Chinese in Australia and of Australia in China combined to prevent

¹³³ Fitzgerald, 'Liang Qichao's Australian Writings', Museum of Chinese History

their effective use of such pressure. The movement in China in 1905, to boycott American goods when the United States reimposed immigration restrictions on Chinese, caused concern in Australia where support for it was voiced in the local Chinese press.¹³⁴ But the opportunity was not taken up then or later, because of chaotic conditions in China, and because the Chinese merchants would have been the first to suffer in a trade war.¹³⁵

Only after the United States and Canada had modified their anti-Chinese policies in 1944-5 was Australia shamed into action by considerations about China as its wartime ally. The postwar Nationalist Ambassador echoed the negative press Australia was getting in China – where having defeated Japan was a source of pride but where Mao's communists were on the rise. He urged the Australian government to discard its mediaeval ideas of racial superiority, and to extend wartime friendship into peace-time.¹³⁶ But in spite of the war service of many Chinese Australians, not until 1947 were Chinese wives of Australian-born Chinese permitted to stay in Australia and become Australian citizens. (Jones 1997) For two more decades, Australian politicians and public servants recited the old mantra of justification for them that less and less resembled the reality of life in Australia and was more and more discredited in the region. Darwin was often called a 'satire' on the White Australia policy. Moreover official oppression was at odds with individual behaviour: Chinese were not so insulted that they would not marry settler and indigenous Australians, and settler Australians were not so xenophobic that they would not offer personal friendship and generosity.¹³⁷ Individual migrants' accounts like that of Xie Cang (1983), a sailor from Hong Kong who lived in Australia from 1942, reflected both pain and pleasure. Australians, he wrote,

conference 1-2 July 2000.

¹³⁴ The PRC made a similar threat against the US over the MFN issue in 1996.

¹³⁵ At the time of the Poon Goey deportation controversy, the Commercial Commissioner for NSW reported criticism of Australia in Chinese newspapers: 'Were it not for the unsettled conditions in China on account of the recent revolution I have reason to believe that a general boycott of everything Australian would have been started'. J.B. Suttor to Premier of NSW, 15 October 1912. Yarwood 1967: 106.

¹³⁶ Chinese migration: Brawley 1995: 199. Choi 1975: 60. Yarwood 1967.

¹³⁷ In 1896 a settler Australian, sympathising with Chinese over the imposition of a pounds 100 poll tax, gave Ah Yoo Sin some cakes and roses. He reciprocated with three jars of ginger, a caddy of tea, and two feather dusters. Lydon 2000: 130.

disliked wickedness, loved freedom, and valued privacy; some were nice and others were obnoxious.¹³⁸

Arthur Calwell particularly outraged Chinese by simultaneously encouraging postwar migration from former enemy countries in Europe, and deporting some 600 Chinese seamen and evacuees. Because some of them were multilingual enough to pass the dictation test, Chinese said, the Wartime Refugees Removal Act was needed to keep Australia 'white'.¹³⁹ The Hong Kong press commented with considerable accuracy in 1948 that 'Australia's prestige in the East has always been rather poor because of misunderstandings over White Australia', adding that Australia's chance to provide post-war leadership had been lost.¹⁴⁰ In Beijing and Hong Kong, these and many subsequent cases were reported by the wire services and the Australian and Chinese Australian media in a feed-back loop that would remain influential as a means of reinforcing representations of Australia.

Phase 2 1949 - 2000

The construction of East and West, or of Chinese and non-Chinese, as mutually exclusive has 'seriously complicated the sense of identity of Chinese people throughout the world', two Chinese Australian writers have argued. (Shen thesis 1998. Ang in Bennett 1993) If that is so, then the dichotomous chasm between 'us' and 'them', Chinese and foreigners, China and the West, may remain as deep as any Orientalist divide. Either their own immutable sense of Otherness, or its reciprocation by the West, or both, makes identity a perpetual problem for Chinese abroad, wherever they are and whether or not they are discriminated against. Sinologist Linda Jaivin recalls going to a 'foreigners only' disco in Beijing in the mid-1980s, and also to a club in Chengdu that was barred to non-Chinese. (Jaivin 2001: 172) China, Stephen FitzGerald observed in 1994, was still 'a country where special terms are reserved for measuring foreigners'

¹³⁸ Xie Cang, *Travelling and Living in Australia for Forty Years*, Hong Kong: Yuan fang chubanshe, 1983. NLA OCN 3950 0090.

¹³⁹ Arthur Gar-Locke Chang, 'From Pymont to the Pearl River – aspects of Chinese Australian experiences', National Maritime Museum, 7 June 1998.

¹⁴⁰ *New Statesman and Nation*, 18 September 1948. AA A1838/278: 494/5/4.

behaviour', and that habit persists in the Chinese hegira.¹⁴¹ Contestation with the West over superiority, status, and power - sometimes subtle, sometimes overt - adds to the difficulties faced by hegiraic Chinese, yet it continues. Could this be due more to the power-plays of Occidentalism than to any inherent, irreconcilable difference between individual Chinese and Westerners? Is difference desired for empowerment of the in-group?

Chinese diasporic writing, whether of fact or fiction, conforms to Jonathan Rutherford's argument that it is in negotiation with the Other that people create their own identities. (1990: 25) Hence the Other is indispensable, and must be perpetuated or reinvented. In the negotiation process, Chinese project their concerns about identity, gender, and culture onto the Other. Multiple accounts by Chinese of Australia in the second half of the twentieth century, some of them recently collected by oral historians, are sufficiently consistent to justify summarising and dividing them into four groups.¹⁴² Fictional representations are also revealing, and will be considered in Part 3.

Identification

Those Chinese who identify themselves as superior to Australians commonly cite their achievement, intelligence, and culture, and emphasise their contribution to Australia, which some regard as under-appreciated. Yet several who object to Australian racial discrimination nevertheless refer to Australians as 'foreign devils'.

The founder of Hong Kong's Wing On company, Guo Quan, who battled government policy for six years in post-Federation Australia, had good reason for such views. Less successful was Tsetong, a shipping company employee who arrived in Australia in 1942, became an Australian citizen, but was 'perpetually engaged in battles': when he wrote about 'How to deal with foreigners' it was Australians he meant. (Tsetong 1983) Wong, the young manager of Sydney's Chequers nightclub, in 1957 described his

¹⁴¹ FitzGerald, comment following Chris Patten, Asia-Australia Lecture, February 1994. Giese 1997: 281.

¹⁴² Accounts: Fitzgerald 1995, 1996; Giese 1995, 1997; Loh and Ramsay 1986; Ryan 1995a, 1995b, 1997; Shen 1998.

success to a visiting Chinese journalist as an example to 'busybody Australian outsiders' of what Chinese could do. (Nanyang Siang Pau 6 May 1957) Moni Lai Storz arrived from Malaysia as a student in the 1960s. By her own account, being Chinese made her superior to the Malays in her class, to the Australian students on her 'Freedom Ride' bus, to her academic colleagues, and her business competitors. (Giese 1997. Storz 1997) Singapore-born Christine Ramsay saw herself as superior to her settler Australian parents-in-law, who were ignorant, provincial, and unsociable. (Loh and Ramsay 1986) Other Chinese Australians, who were less disparaging, were equally convinced of Chinese superiority, whether that was demonstrated by tastes in food, family values, regard for education, duty, responsibility, or diligence.¹⁴³

In multicultural Darwin, Chinese Australians continued to do as their ancestors there had done, publicly projecting their identity by recording with pride the contributions of their community to the city and the high positions many Chinese held. But when Mr Huang spoke privately to Sang Ye over yum cha, he reverted to a different identity: 'It's such a bore being with foreign devils day in day out'. (Sang Ye 1994: 116) For these Chinese, the distinction between Chinese and non-Chinese seemed impervious to change. As Wang Gungwu explained, 'the Chinese have never had a concept of identity, only a concept of Chineseness, of being Chinese and of becoming un-Chinese'.¹⁴⁴ Or, as Ouyang Yu remarked: 'Once a Chinese, always half a Chinese'.¹⁴⁵

Other Chinese Australians, of mixed ancestry or parentage, several of them women, speak of making compromises over identity, keeping one foot on each side of the cultural divide. Beryl Yow had a Chinese father and an Irish Australian mother, and married Harry Yip, a Catholic. She commented that it was 'great to be able to choose the culture from both sides'. (Giese 1997) Like Beryl Yow, Gwen Num was Australian-born: she wrote that 'with all my heart I am fortunate to have been an Austral-Asian'. (Num 1960) Jean Gittins, who left Hong Kong for Australia in 1945, consciously abandoned the confining, manipulative aspects of her Chinese identity and

¹⁴³ Kwan Liow in Loh and Ramsay 1986. Pamela Tan, 'Asian values that we can all share', *SMH* 31 July 1997: 15. Charles See-Kee, 1993, in Geise 1997: 207-8.

¹⁴⁴ Wang Gungwu, 'The Study of Chinese Identities in Southeast Asia', in Cushman and Wang 1988: 1.

¹⁴⁵ Ouyang Yu, conference paper, CSCSD, ANU, 26 September 2001.

concentrated on creating a new, assimilated self in Melbourne. (Gittins 1987) Norma King Koi described herself as Australian in her head and Chinese in her heart: ‘non-Chinese generally consider me as Chinese but Chinese consider me to be a Westerner’. (Koi 1995. Ryan 1995a) To herself, she was both. Annette Shun Wah, William Yang, Helene Chung Martin, and others whose families had been in Australia for several generations, took new pride in their dual heritage, rather than identifying with only one side of it.¹⁴⁶ But in Beijing, to be classified among the world’s 50 million *huaqiao*, Chung Martin found, one had to invest in the motherland – a modern version of tribute - even if she was *huaren*, or *aohua*.¹⁴⁷

But some Chinese in Australia reported the reverse of what readers in China might have expected. In Perth Dai Yin, researching Australian perceptions of China, found the opposed stereotypes of hard-working Chinese and laid-back Australians to be invalid: in Perth he could no longer afford to be lazy or drink beer with his friends as he used to in China: ‘Here, you keep going’. Outside working hours, he found Australia ‘slow’ and boring. In China, in contrast, he said, ‘things happen all the time’. (Dai Yin thesis 1994) He concluded that Australians saw China as an ‘outside world that is too different, too exotic, too mysterious and too sophisticated...to accept’, and an ‘impending power’. He did not consider whether the paranoia he found in Australians about China might be the equal and opposite of Chinese paranoia about the West, or how it might have influenced and determined his own representations of Australia.

Among Chinese in Australia, others again are critical and disillusioned about identity, particularly students. More than a million Chinese had left the mainland since 1978, many seeking education. Australian educational promotion from the 1980s gave many students in China their first impressions of Australia. In 1986, as a result, many idealised it as ‘a paradise, a free place’, with freedom of movement, sex, and employment, with ‘jobs for the asking’. (Garnaut in Grant and Seal 1994) Several

¹⁴⁶ Helene Chung Martin 2000; Kylie Kwong in Shun Wah 1999; Shun Wah 1999; William Yang 1984, 1994, 1995.

¹⁴⁷ Chung Martin 2000. Wang 1999. Geise 1997. ‘Overseas Chinese’ includes *huaqiao* (Chinese living abroad), and *huaren* (Chinese-Malaysians, -Singaporeans, -Indonesians, -Americans, -Australians etc.) Such ‘Chinese’ apply such terms as *aohua* (‘Chinese Australian’) to themselves. Ryan 1997: 76. K.H. Chin, ‘Chinese in Modern Australia’, in Jupp 1988.

surveys in the 1980s and 1990s revealed their disillusionment: some were cheated of fees, and others found Australia undeveloped, isolated, expensive, and unwelcoming. Many, however, facing debt and unemployment, concealed their difficulties from their families, just as sojourners had done in the nineteenth century.¹⁴⁸ Interviews with 25 Chinese university students in Brisbane (Fung and Mackerras 1993) showed how little Chinese responses to Australia had changed. Only shortly after the Australian government had paid A\$50 million in refunds to cheated Chinese students, almost all those surveyed said the Australian government was too generous in making handouts to Aborigines. But they thought educators in Australia were interested only in making money from foreign students, not in 'influencing the world'.

Educational standards were often seen to be lower in Australia than in China or in other Western countries, a view that called into question why they were studying abroad. Many of Fung and Mackerras' respondents said they were in Australia because they had failed to get in to their preferred destinations, the United States, Canada, and in some cases the United Kingdom. North America, contrary to the Chinese government's view, was for these young people 'a kind of Mecca to which all aspire to go for as long as possible', while Australia was a 'fringe' country, a land without culture, 'stable', 'slow', and unwilling to change. Australian society was seen as more free, relaxed, and tolerant than China, but Australians were ignorant about the outside world and had no interest in Asia; they were anti-foreign unless the foreigners were English or European; and they were formal, reserved, and hard to make friends with. There was underlying discrimination and hostility towards Chinese in Australia, they said, and Australians were reluctant to recognise the contributions Chinese had made to Australia. Overseas Chinese respondents to Xiao's Canberra study in the 1990s similarly reported a sense of exclusion from mainstream Australian society, from influential jobs, and from recognition of their qualifications. (Xiao 1999)

Outspokenly critical as they were of Australia, and privately of China, some of the students preferred to project China positively in public. One upbraided Sang Ye for making critical comments on SBS about China. Even if they were true, she said, he

¹⁴⁸ Chen Hong, Gordon Forth, Edward R. Rush, in Grant and Seal 1994: 298-303.

should not 'tell those foreigners about the internal affairs of us Chinese'. It demeaned all Chinese when students looted handfuls of samples from supermarket promotions, she told Sang Ye: she 'couldn't lose face like that'. But while generalisations about Chinese made her and others uncomfortable, it did not occur to her or to others of Sang Ye's informants to refrain from generalising at will about the 'foreign' Australians. Foreigners are a conventional target of Chinese dissatisfaction, and Australians are often convenient. Dissident Hou Dejiang described this in 'scapegoating' terms that others hesitated to use, but that evoked Australian treatment of tall poppies:

Deep in the Chinese soul lies the collective urge to punish anyone who would strive for freedom, who is dissatisfied with the status quo, who has ambition. Such individuals make others feel insecure, they appear to threaten family life and social order. Chinese society tries to quash such people. ¹⁴⁹

Oral histories reveal the views of some Chinese Australians, particularly the young, and women, who prefer to identify not with Sino-centricity, duality, or disillusionment, but with Australia. When Pam Con Foo, a businesswoman in Darwin and Hong Kong, took her sons to her husband's village in China, the eldest declared it to be 'nineteenth century' and said next time his mother could go on her own. Visiting China, Roma Leong See and her daughter Jenni Campbell, found their ancestors' village little changed, not prosperous, and parts of it 'very smelly'. Jenni felt she 'belonged back in Australia'. Her cousin, visiting the Great Wall, thought it primitive, crowded, polluted, and dirty. The people were rude and were eating dogs, toads, frogs, and snakes, she said. (Giese 1997: 139, 195) Film-maker Clara Law said she was one of many Chinese living abroad who didn't want to go back to China because patriarchal structures there limited their freedom. (Giese 1997: 282) A Chinese prostitute in Brisbane said that in Australia, her lifestyle was her own business: no-one either helped her or interfered with her. At 29, she had decided that making money was what mattered, and she had no intention of going back to China. (Sang Ye 1996: 1-17) A Chinese (male) migrant's way of identifying with Australia was to claim that Chinese migrants' economic prospects there were so good that Australian girls preferred to marry Chinese boys.

(Chen Yichen 1984: 176) But when Shi Guo-ying identified with Australia by writing in 1994 of her preference for Western men as lovers, she earned the fury of male readers of the Sydney Chinese press and was accused of deviance, treason, racism, and Orientalism.¹⁵⁰

The feminist historian Dora Russell contends that 'our world is the product of male consciousness'.¹⁵¹ Certainly, the four types of Chinese hegiraic responses to Australia considered here are intersected by a gendered divide that is at least as potent an indicator of identity as nation, culture, or race. Similarly, gender powerfully affects representations of the Other. Migrant men anywhere, Ouyang Yu claims, are potential violators of settler women and thus threaten the 'patriarchy of national character'.¹⁵² Yet they strongly object to migrant women being seduced by settler men. In the Chinese hegira in Australia, men appear to seek to reinforce their threatened power by asserting universal and immutable gender roles, while women seem more prepared to adapt and negotiate. This speculation will be further examined in a case study. (Part 3.2)

Projection

Representations of Australia among Chinese in the late twentieth century, whether they originate in the PRC, Hong Kong, Taiwan, or elsewhere in the Chinese hegira, contain variations as well as common themes that are summarised here from the copious literature.¹⁵³ They will be shown to be recurrent, as well as inherently contradictory. If

¹⁴⁹ Hou Dejiang quoted by Linda Jaivin 2001: 224.

¹⁵⁰ Shi Guo-ying, 'Are they happy who married Western men?' *Great World* 39, January 1994: 10; 'Women's feelings', *United Chinese Times* 28 January 1994: 12; 'Yes, I do prefer Western men', *Chinese Post* 3 February 1994: 13; 'I understand the Chinese men better!', *Chinese Post* 16 February 1994: 2. Yong Zhong in Ommundsen 2001: 67. Chinese women are said to prefer foreign men as 'plane tickets' in order: American, Canadian, British, Australian. Fairlie 1997: 22.

¹⁵¹ Russell quoted by Rosalind Miles, *The Women's History of the World*, London: Paladin, 1988.

¹⁵² Ouyang in Ommundsen 2001: 77.

¹⁵³ Sources include DFAT 1995, Fairlie 1997, FitzGerald 1997, FitzGerald 1996, Geise 1997, Loo and others 2000, Ouyang Yu 1998, Sang Ye 1996. The 'Asian Accounts of Australia' project (2000-2002) has shown that the NLA holds more than 500 monographs in Chinese (mainly published in PRC, Hong Kong, and Taiwan) about Australia. They include

they have one consistent characteristic, it is the projection of China as superior to Australia.

PRC

A recurrent representation of Australia in magazines, textbooks, histories, encyclopaedias, and reference books originating on the mainland is a physical place with a geography, not a mental place with a history or culture. It is characterised by its insignificance. Australia is not included among the 'Five Continents and Four Great Oceans' about which Chinese learn at school. Ignoring Australia results in such representations as 'uninteresting', 'isolated', 'distant', 'peripheral', and 'innocuous'. Many Australians enthused about the revived relationship with the PRC after 1972, but Ouyang Yu's research for this project in 1996 found 'no corresponding passion in China about Australia'. Interest in Australia both on the mainland and in Hong Kong seemed to him to be significant only among those hoping to study and migrate, most of whom preferred, if they could, to go to Europe, Canada, or the United States. (Ouyang 1998)

'Small, young' countries lacking influence, like Australia, are usually treated benignly in the Chinese official media, but are assigned a lowly, peripheral position in the hierarchy of nations. Chinese textbooks repeatedly label Australia as a place with no history, as 'the country riding on the sheep's back', or as the country 'in the mining truck'. Colleen McCullough's *The Thorn Birds* (1977)¹⁵⁴ and its American-made movie created - or reaffirmed - the 'wide brown land' stereotype of Australia in hundreds of thousands of Chinese minds. No other Australian novel in translation reached such publication figures, or was so often cited as influencing a Chinese image of Australia.¹⁵⁵

multiple surveys of Australian history, geography, society, and literature, and accounts of Chinese experiences in Australia in fact and fiction.

¹⁵⁴

Translated into Chinese 1983, Vietnamese 1992.

¹⁵⁵

In spite of the considerable output of Chinese translators of Australian literature, and the work of numerous Australian studies programs, scholars attracted to Australian Studies by Patrick White's Nobel Prize (1973) admitted that it was much harder to generate enthusiasm among students in the 1990s. Professor Ye Shengnian, ANU seminar, 6 April 2000. Peter Pugsley, 'Australian Literature in China', in *Generation Asia: Asialink Circle Newsletter*, 11 September 2000: 21.

By stressing Australia's isolation, vastness and emptiness, technological backwardness, lack of human resources, and reliance on primary products, Chinese texts implied that Australia, for all its advantages, lacked China's industrial capacity and its historical and international significance. Australians were often said to be friendly, harmless, simple, uncultured people, 'not very refined', with a slow-paced life, assessed as 'third-rate Western'. Several writers represented Australians as lazy, strike-prone, welfare-dependent, 'spoilt children' whose labour unions were too powerful. Some of Ouyang Yu's informants found Australians to be racists; others blamed Australia's Middle Eastern migrants; and others again made such statements as 'Race is race. They can never mix up', that revealed their own xenophobia. Underlying these conflicting views, China with its own ethnic divisions was an unspoken issue. An article entitled 'Australia is Not Really a Paradise for Asians' reported on racial vilification legislation, concluding that discrimination by 'white people' against Asians was hard to eradicate in Australia.¹⁵⁶ But the editors made no comparison with ethnic, racial, or anti-foreign discrimination in China.

Although Chinese had been doing business with Australia for well over a century, an official survey of the finance, banking, manufacturing, property, aviation, and entertainment sectors revealed in 1995 how little many senior executives in China (and in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore) knew about Australia, and how little regard they had for it, apart from as a foreign exchange and property market. 'The one thing everyone knew was that Australia was a good place to live', it reported. Respondents in all four Chinese societies were impressed with China's economic prospects, and most of them considered Australia's no better than average, while 25 per cent said they were poor, a rating they gave to none of the four Confucian-based societies. (DFAT 1995) Australia's economic recession in the 1980s-90s was observed to have forced it to promote education opportunities for foreign students, and in 1996 to have abandoned development financing (DIFF): but the quality of its education or the amount of its development assistance were not mentioned. Australia was usually ranked between third and fifth among desirable countries for education or migration - a good place for retirement, not for a profitable, stimulating, or active life. (Ouyang 1998)

¹⁵⁶ *Huan Qiu*, April 1991: 32-3. The story was a translation of a mid-1980s story

The official Chinese media, mindful of their duty to tell the people what the state wanted them to think, sought to create a positive impression of Australia, without making it irresistible to migrants.¹⁵⁷ They offset complimentary reports with stories about Chinese experiencing hardship, homesickness, and discrimination, the moral being that 'in the end you will return gratefully to the bosom of the motherland'. (Jose 1995: 168) When the official media cited Australia as an exemplar for China, they usually did so with reservations. But Chinese affairs were found to be unfavourably reported in most articles in the *Australian* in 2000, compared with 200 positive stories and only eight negative ones about Australia in the *People's Daily*. This was seen as a rejection by Australia of 'the Chinese Government's friendly gesture'. (Jiang 2001)

Australia was often represented by Chinese writers, however, as a haven of peace and progress with quiet cities (no car horns), good public libraries, clean public toilets, efficiently functioning technological and transportation systems, and large houses, where the small population's enjoyment of life was its highest priority. (Ouyang 1998) In *An All-round Picture of Australia* (1984) Chen Yichen highlighted Australians' mateship, generosity, hospitality, and modesty. It was as a result of their humanism, he thought, that Australians welcomed refugees, gave aid to poor countries, respected old people, and 'even cared for animals'. Chen's account resembled Wang Gungwu's argument about 'the Australia that Asians might not see', where every individual was an equal who counted in society, rather than as cannon or factory fodder. (Wang 1992b) A Chinese professor of Australian Literature in 1994 commended Australians for their love of reading and high regard for knowledge, urging Chinese to learn from 'the way in which the developed commercial economy in Australia has not dissipated the passion for books'. But his comment on Australians' stinginess in tipping provided him with another improving message for Chinese:

In their eyes, everyone should have sufficient wages not to receive tips or give money away. In Australia, it is rare to bribe someone. Bribing a government

¹⁵⁷ from the *Australian Readers' Digest*. Ouyang Yu 1998: 18.
Rafe de Crespigny, 24 November 1997. Fairlie 1997: 7.

official or a company executive can lead to the bribed along with the bribers being sent to gaol.¹⁵⁸

When China's bid for the 2000 Games was narrowly rejected by the International Olympic Committee in 1993, Australia suddenly attracted explicitly negative comment. The Beijing summer Olympics bid had become a symbol of China having 'arrived' in the modern Asian world, in succession to Japan in 1964, and the ROK in 1988. A 'foreign hand' was blamed: the United States and 'Western bullies' were said to have helped Australia to 'steal' the Games. (Barmé 1995. Milner and Quilty 1996b) When the Australian media accused Chinese swimmers of drug-taking in 1994-97, the Chinese press responded by alleging Australian infractions and citing the Chinese definition of hypocrisy: 'to be harsh on others but lenient on oneself'. An article in the vernacular press, 'Will Sydney Fail?' questioned Sydney's capacity, and concluded with negative comments on the Port Arthur massacre and Aboriginal illiteracy. (Fairlie 1997) A University lecturer told Ouyang Yu (1998):

It is only when we failed to get the right to run the Olympic Games that we received reports on Australia, mostly in a negative way, such as Sydney is not well prepared for the Games, the government is not giving financial support, the facilities are poor, and the locals are not enthusiastic about the Games, etc., as if they don't really deserve it. Economically, it is also insignificant...All we know about is its iron ore and wheat. We are not sure what else it has got.

In Singapore, the *Straits Times* reported that 'the West' had denied China the Games to 'cut it down to size'. But the Chinatown 2000 Olympics Committee in Sydney, seeking as always to contribute to the host community, celebrated the city's win with fireworks and dragons.¹⁵⁹ The Olympic Games, in the view of an overseas Chinese writer, was 'just one of many occasions when Chinese people seek to gain face'.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Shen Dehan, 'Ni liaojie aodaliyaren ma? (Do you know Australians?)', *Xinmin Wanbao*, 24 November 1994: 13. Ouyang Yu 1998: 51. *SMH* 6 September 2000.

¹⁵⁹ Just before the Sydney Games, 30 athletes and 10 officials were withdrawn from the Chinese squad after drug tests. But afterwards, with China third in the medal count, ahead of Australia, officials proclaimed China as winner of the most gold medals and launched a campaign for the 2008 Games. 'The West...', Lee Kuan Lee, *Straits Times*, week beginning 15

Whenever Western nations were officially represented as being 'out to get China', their criticisms were represented as 'bourgeois liberalism', aimed at thwarting China's development and modernisation. A Chinese book emulated Ishihara's response to the West: but in *China Can Say No* (Song and others 1996), the solitary mention of Australia was that it was 'innocuous', but part of a 'world conspiracy to split up China'. This conspiracy emanated from Washington, and involved the four key issues - human rights, Taiwan, Tibet, and Western encirclement of China - that were of perennial concern to Chinese officials, media, and intellectuals.¹⁶¹ At such times, Australia was observed in China (and not without reason) to lack an independent foreign policy, was labelled a 'running dog', and was threatened with government intervention in business agreements. (*SMH* 16 November 1996: 23. *A* 10 April 2000: 7) There was an accepted formula, as a senior Chinese academic commented: 'Foreign enslavement, foreign exploitation, occupation, oppression. These are the terms we use.'¹⁶² But when Canberra exercised restraint on the four issues, it was rewarded by being described as a friend of China and a 'bridge' between Asia and the West. (*China Daily* 6 August 1996) The official press was similarly complimentary when Australia refused the United States the use of the Cox peninsula transmitter for Radio Free Asia. (*China Daily* 31 December 1996)

Marginalisation of Australia in Asia was Beijing's way of defending the four key issues and projecting its superiority. Australia was often warned in the Chinese press that it could not appease both its Asian neighbours (that is, China) and its Western friends (the United States).¹⁶³ With considerable accuracy, Australia's aspirations for engagement with Asia were commented upon as unrealistic, economically motivated, and lacking the requisite cultural identification. Australia was reported to lack

October 1993: DFAT summary. Lynne O'Donnell, 'The score from abroad', *A* 6 October 2000: 38. Geise 1997: 280.

¹⁶⁰ Chen Ju-Chen, Bangkok, *FEER* 2 August 2001.

¹⁶¹ Frank Ching, *FEER* 27 May 1999: 33. Professor Freedman (University of Wisconsin at Madison), ANU seminar 13 July 1999.

¹⁶² Professor Zhang Zhenqun (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences): 'Re-enter the Dragon', *SMH* 14 June 1997: 6S.

¹⁶³ Kang Bing, 'Australia must focus on Asia', *China Daily*, 23 December 1996: 4. Fairlie 1997: 18.

independence from Britain. Australia under Howard, said an official publication, displayed 'confusion, ambivalence, or contradiction'. It lacked a foothold in both East and West, like a bat that couldn't decide whether it was a bird.¹⁶⁴ Australia was advised to stay out of 'Asian' (Chinese) affairs, to adopt a lower profile, to respect the difference of 'Asia', and to mend its relations with the PRC. Underlying these apparently contradictory, but race-based, representations of Australia was China's perpetual desire to preserve national stability and project its power.

Hong Kong

Observers in Hong Kong tended to be better informed than mainland Chinese about current events in Australia.¹⁶⁵ But they repeated so many of the same representations as their mainland counterparts that they can be thematically summarised here:

Australia is at the periphery. 'Australia?' said a young fashion buyer who turned down migration to the US because she preferred the buzz of Hong Kong, 'I feel a little bit boring over there'. (ABC RN 'Indian Pacific' 21 June 1997) A Hong Kong reference book on tourism in Australia described life as relaxed and leisurely but warned that, as the pace of Australian life was two to three times slower, Hong Kong migrants 'might find it boring and bland'.

Australia is a cultural desert. One of many 'Study Overseas' guidebooks advised potential students that Australians spoke heavily accented English and ate a lot of frozen meat, since it was 'hard to eat fresh meat' in Australia. Another Hong Kong magazine reported that Australia lacked a culture powerful enough to blend other cultures in a melting-pot. It said Hong Kong people found

¹⁶⁴ *World Affairs* (fortnightly magazine of the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs) 1996. Stephen Hutcheon, *SMH* 16 November 1996: 23. Australian ambivalence about Asia: 'A bright prospect for Australia', *People's Daily* 13 March 2000; 'Australia strides along the path to a regional power', *People's Daily*, 18 December 2000. Jiang 2001. Sun Yixian said of Liang Qichao that he had 'two ways of talking, like a rat looking both ways'. (Davies 2001)

¹⁶⁵ Articles in *Nan Pei Chi* in Hong Kong were often the work of pseudonymous Chinese Australians whose accounts of economic, political, educational, and migration issues in Australia were strongly critical, and seemed to rely heavily for information about Australia from each other, or on translations of *Time* and

migration to Australia a miserable experience, like being imprisoned. Australian achievements were taken merely to be a result of the advantages of belonging to the globalised West, and Australians needed to change if they wanted to be taken seriously 'in the world'. Hong Kong students were unable to identify any unique Australian culture, finding Australia 'countrified' and less cultured than the US or UK. (Loo and others 2000)

Australia is a 'kingdom of lazy men' (*lanren guo*). Following Paul Keating's 'banana republic' warning (14 May 1986), Australians were reported in *Nan Pei Chi* to be lazy, inefficient, strike-prone, with drug-taking, drinking, and gambling adding to their welfare-addiction problems.

Australians are the offspring of convicts. Hong Kong parents were implicitly advised by *Ming Pao* in 1988 to beware of widespread Australian malfeasance - political and police corruption, teenage crime, smuggling of drugs and weapons, horse racing fraud, and Hong Kong triads. 'Kangaroo passports', fake marriages, and prostitution were reported to be prevalent among Chinese (PRC) students in Australia. *Nan Pei Chi* listed Labor leaders who it said were corrupt, including Gough Whitlam, commenting that in Australia 'not a small number of officials are extremely dirty, and these officials defend each other like in a den of snakes and rats, as black as a bottomless abyss'.¹⁶⁶

Australians are racists. After an increase in student tuition fees in 1985 the Hong Kong papers accused Australia of racial discrimination, and cited a Malaysian opposition call to boycott Australian imports.

Praise for Australian multiculturalism and its refugee intake in 1995-96 appeared in the same issue of a Hong Kong magazine that warned that Australians opposed Asian migration. But it supported the view of the Australia First party's Graeme

¹⁶⁶ *Newsweek*. Ouyang Yu 1998: 88.
Dinghua, 'Aozhou xinzongli dengwei taiqian muhou (New Australian Prime Minister Before and Behind the Stage When He Took Office)', *Nan Pei Chi*, February 1992: 29.
Dinghua. 'Cong aozhou xinxi de zonglushu tanqi (Let's First Talk About the Palm Tree in Front of the New Building in Australia)', *Nan Pei Chi*, 18 January 1995: 20. Ouyang Yu 1998: 74.

Campbell that Australia was right to restrict Chinese migration, and argued that Chinese were unwise to migrate to Western countries. Australia's treatment of Aborigines was occasionally cited before Hong Kong's reversion in 1997 as a criticism of Beijing for maintaining good relations with Canberra. But Australia was represented as more democratic and supportive of human rights, at least of Chinese, than the PRC. (Ouyang Yu 1998) Among Hong Kong critics of Australian racism, however, none reflected on the existence of 'Asiatics Only' hotels, restaurants, and tea-rooms in Hong Kong. ('No dogs or Chinese allowed', *FEER* 23 June 1997: 89)

Taiwan

Official dealings between Taiwan and Australia are confined to education, information, tourism, and trade, but unofficial interpersonal linkages with Australia are broader and of long standing. Reports of students' experiences are generally more positive than those from PRC students. The 'clean, green' image promoted by the Australian Tourist Commission sells well in Taiwan, as evidenced by the popularity in the 1990s of a Taiwanese product, Green Oil, that is associated with Australia as a healing place, a clean zone of purity and nature'.¹⁶⁷ Many Taiwanese travel guides begin with 'Australia is the oldest continent', and go on to stress its huge size, the distances between cities, and that sheep outnumber people.

Accounts of Australia by touring journalists reached more readers in Taiwan than those in the PRC, at least until 1972. Hua Yan wrote after a sponsored visit in 1971 that she found in Australia three categories of people. Some had abandoned their homelands but regarded Australia merely as a place to live, others identified with their homelands and sent money back to relatives, and the rest identified themselves as Australians.¹⁶⁸ Two decades later in Sydney, Zhang Aolie (Leslie Zhang) collected and compared literature of the Chinese *hegira* in Australia,

¹⁶⁷ Green Oil contains eucalyptus oil and claims to cure headaches, nose complaints, cuts, burns, bites, abrasions, muscular pain, stomach ache, and seasickness. Its advertising jingle (in English) is 'Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree...' Jose 1993.

¹⁶⁸ Hua Yan, *Australia as I saw it*, Taipei: Huangguan zazhi she, 1987. NLA OCN 3950 4064.

Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the PRC for Taiwanese readers. Pointing out that his experience was longer than that of recently arrived students from the mainland, he remarked on Australians' concept of privacy that Chinese lacked. He too observed three kinds of Chinese experience in Australia:

Everyone who migrates to Australia has a beautiful dream; some succeed, some are disillusioned, and even more remain in a state of limbo [xun].¹⁶⁹

Cai Lan's account of life in Melbourne (1997) placed him in the third of Zhang's categories. Australians, he said, are lazy, but also warm and friendly. They love gambling, divorce is easy, women outnumber men and go around half-naked; markets open only three days a week, and unsold produce is thrown away the next day; marijuana is seen as more of a problem than heroin; flowers, fruit, and vegetables are cheaper than cigarettes.¹⁷⁰ Similarly even-handed, or ambivalent, in her account of Australia was Liang Qiyun, a well-known writer who migrated in 1978. She repeated the observations others made about the spacious, green environment, and about the value placed on privacy. She described Australians as simple, 'rustic', casual, friendly, and helpful; they love sport and travel; government social welfare takes care of them from cradle to grave. A collection of commentaries by Taiwanese resident in Australia was still repeating these themes in the mid-1990s. Writers seemed to be conditioned to see what they expected to see, reporting according to a formula what would strike their readers as exotic, or would reinforce Taiwanese self-esteem. They seemed attracted by the frisson of difference in Australia, but not to the point of adulation.¹⁷¹

These are only a few of hundreds of historical, geographic, literary, and social surveys, and personal representations of Australia in Chinese monographs and serials. How does such an outpouring square with Ouyang Yu's assertions in 1994

¹⁶⁹ Zhang Aolie, *The Elegance of Australia*, Hong Kong: Kaiyi chubanshe, 1996. NLA OCN 559 1321.

¹⁷⁰ Cai Lan, *Australia: Overseas Emotions*, Hong Kong: Tiandi tushu youxian gongsi, 1997. NLA OCN3950 4030.

¹⁷¹ Hu Mei and Fang Teng, *Southern Mainland - Australia*, Mount Waverley, Vic.: SBS, 1996. NLA OCN3950 4210.

and 1998 that Australia is of so little interest as to be virtually 'absent' from Chinese minds, apart from those interested in study or migration? A Melbourne University lecturer for twenty years, Yuan Zhongming, similarly proposed in the early 1960s that Australians were more interested in Asia than Asians [Chinese] were in Australia.¹⁷² For over a century, Australia has been represented as negligible or boring by those Chinese whose shared aim is to assert the superiority of their society, their culture, and themselves. Others, who seek reform or improvement for Chinese at home or abroad, select more positive representations of Australia for their examples. In both cases, the outcome is emphasis on China's difference from Australia. But among Chinese Australians, a third group chooses either to value the difference or to emphasise the similarity between Chinese and Australians, including Indigenous Australians, as fellow human beings. This pattern, with variations, will be repeated as we consider other Asian countries.

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Yuang Zhongming, *Collected Essays on Australian Culture*, Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1965. NLA OCN 4149.95 4356.

2.3 JAPANESE

The dramatic changes Japanese experienced after 1854 gave new importance to the 'invention' and preservation of tradition and national identity. Historians devised and revived unifying myths and slogans for dealing with the West.¹⁷³ Sakuma Shozan's mid-nineteenth century slogan, imitated from the Chinese, *tōyō dōtoku, seiyō gei* ('Eastern ethics, Western techniques'), was learned and repeated. But from the late Meiji period the Westernising faction led by Fukuzawa Yukichi with its daring motto *kaikoku*, 'open the country', was confronted by the Japan supremacists who turned against Westernisation with the slogan *sonno jōi*, 'revere the sovereign and expel the barbarians'.

From the end of the nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth century - and even for longer - Japan and Australia were on parallel courses, each becoming a modern nation-state; each seeking to establish new national ideologies based on identity, culture, and race; each opposing outside contestation; but each perennially concerned about its reputation abroad. Their courses soon intersected.¹⁷⁴

Up to and including the Pacific War period, as this examination of Japanese opinion will show, Australia was widely and influentially represented as lacking independence, whether from Britain or the United States, and inferior to both of them; as fearing Japan while being racially and economically antagonistic to it; as sitting on wealth it could not properly exploit and did not deserve; as being Western, unwilling to be counted as Asian; and as lacking the subtlety to heed Japan's warnings and appreciate Japanese sensitivities.

Phase 1 To 1945

¹⁷³ See Beasley 1995, Bennett 1992, Hay 1970, Tanaka 1995.

¹⁷⁴ Meredith Box, Steven Bullard, Keiko Yamada Foster, Manabu Kawakatsu, Masayo Tada, and Peter Trebilco surveyed Japanese 'Australiana' monographs and serials in the NLA for the 'Asian Accounts of Australia' project (2000-2002) of which I am a Chief Investigator.

Assiduously investigating the outside world, Japanese were consistent in their motivations. Japan's homogeneity and uniqueness, its urge to compete, and its drive to acquire new knowledge, technologies, trade, and territory were repeatedly cited in the writings of the period. The effect of these motivations on representations of Australia is considered here, and then applied to prisoners of war as a case study.

Acquisition

Japanese were active sea travellers from the twelfth century and, by the end of the sixteenth century, 'few harbours remained in Southeast Asia that they had not visited'. (Frei 1991) For three decades from 1604 the Tokugawa encouraged travel and trade, and 100 000 Japanese are believed to have gone abroad in search of commerce. Up to one tenth of them established themselves in settlements in the *namban* (Southeast Asian region) as merchants, entrepreneurs, and craftsmen, and many intermarried.

Matching China's experience, Japanese first encountered Australians as sailors and convicts. When the mutineers on *Cyprus* (in 1831), and the whalers on *Earmont* (1850) and *Lady Rowena* (1853) arrived at different parts of Japan's coast, the common impression they left with Japanese was that they were British and in some encounters, arrogant and aggressive. (Meaney 1999. Sissons 1998) Had these sailors identified themselves as Australians, the impression would scarcely have changed. In the early nineteenth century, not surprisingly, it was as a rich and virtually empty British colony that Australia was first identified in Japan. (Frei 1991. Tweedie 1994) The British connection resonated in Japanese minds because, in considering which Western country it should choose as an ally, Britain with its colonial possessions in five continents, including Australia, had more to offer than the Russians, the Americans, or the feuding Europeans. (Beasley 1955)

Foreign Minister Inoue Kaoru in 1887 dreamed of acquiring a 'new European-style empire in the Eastern sea'. Consumed by the urgent desire to modernise, to gain access to materials, to raise Japan's international standing, and to prevent Russia advancing south through the Western Pacific, several Japanese advocated a colonising

role modelled on that of the British in India, China, Southeast Asia, and Australia.¹⁷⁵ Migrants should be sent south, they said, with military support, before it was too late, 'lest the white people get all the trade'. Who would the colonists be? In the 1780s, the Tokugawa had considered sending 70 000 of its hereditary outcasts, variously known as *burakumin*, *eta*, or *hinin*, to develop Hokkaido. Criminals had for long been sent to Sado Island to work the goldmines, and the Tokugawa banished their political enemies there too. From the late 1880s, proposals were entertained to send either 'criminals' or *burakumin*, the so-called 'new commoners', overseas to establish smaller Japans. (McCormack 2000) It was their duty as citizens to go (said the *Yomiuri* in 1886), and to send remittances back to the home country. Aware as Japanese were of Britain's convict colony in New South Wales as an example, prisoners and burakumin might even have become Japan's Australian colonisers. Similar proposals were revived in the years before World War II, and observations that Australia was a convict colony recur for more than a century in Japanese textbook representations of Australia.

The Japanese navy sent training cruises to Australia in 1878 and 1886, and naval visits followed in 1903 and 1906. Civilians on these missions reported in detail on the opportunities for commerce, settlement, colonisation, and how to befriend the settlers. Among those who dwelt on economic opportunities were Inagaki Manjiro, who advised Japan to import raw materials from Australia and urged Australia to 'industrialise herself to augment our nation's economic potential'. Shiga Shigetaka observed enthusiastically that Australians had purchasing power 84 times that of Japanese, that the seasons were opposed, and that this and the nature of the two countries' products made for complementarity. Migration to the region was publicly represented in the 1890s as an urgent need, not stating explicitly that parts of Japan were over-populated with poor people (which they were), or that the authorities wanted to dispose of criminals and outcast groups (which they did), but asserting rather the need to enrich the nation, develop trade, and widen Japanese knowledge.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ Yoshida 1854. Watanabe Shujiro 1893, Hattori Toru 1894, in Frei 1991.

¹⁷⁶ In the 1880s the burden of financing Meiji Japan's strategy of industrialisation and militarisation fell heavily on farmers: 'The distress among the agricultural class has reached a point never before attained. Most of the farmers have been unable to pay their taxes, and hundreds of families in one village alone have been compelled to sell their property in order to liquidate their debts'. *Japan Weekly Mail*, 20 December 1884.

In 1875 a team went to set up Japan's display at the Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition, and toured Australia for five months, investigating manufactures, social institutions, and the workings of government. Two members stayed on, to study English and the wheat and wool industries. The official diary of one of them, Hashimoto Masato, was a precursor of many Japanese accounts of Australia as a wide, empty land inhabited by exotic animals, strange native people, and European settlers. As Chinese did, he described naked Aborigines 'like the black devil Rasetsu one sees in pictures'. He also observed the crowds of 'pitiabile' Chinese sojourners who were his fellow passengers, behaving 'just like...animals'.

Australians and everything Australian he termed 'English'. He recorded the high level of courtesy with which he and his colleagues were received, and their mutual expectations of material benefit.¹⁷⁷ Hashimoto's team member Sakata Haruo returned in 1879 for the Sydney World Exhibition, and like Hashimoto, he warned Tokyo that 'the white people' might reap the advantages of two-way trade unless Japan controlled its own shipping. Successive trade delegations expressed optimism about complementary trade in Australian wool and beef and Japanese textiles and light manufactures (*Japan Daily Mail* 19 February 1895), that justified a shipping line. Settler Australians were glowingly described as the 'bravest and most audacious among the Anglo-Saxons', and a 'flourishing and civilised people close to us in the south'. The generous hospitality of Australians was stressed in several reports, and Japanese were advised that the United States, Canada, Hawaii, and Australia were 'favourable areas' for migration. (Bennett 1992. Frei 1991. Smith thesis 1994)

As soon as they were permitted to travel abroad in 1867, Japanese had set off for Australia: first popular performers, then seamen, pearl divers, and prostitutes; sugar workers and rice farmers; ship owners, storekeepers, and even a succession of medical practitioners in Broome; and eventually founders of trading houses like Kanematsu Goshō. (Sissons 1976-1980. Walker 1999) To guard the 'national honour', the Japanese authorities tried to screen the emigrants. In 1894 and 1896, an Imperial

¹⁷⁷ Hashimoto's mission was a dry run (like subsequent Japanese initiatives)

Ordinance and a Law for Protecting Emigrants were enacted for the purpose of controlling migration, and Japanese who secured permission to go abroad were given information on Western customs (as they still are), lest they cause offence through ignorance.¹⁷⁸

But the *imin netsu* (migration fever) that infected farmers in Shizuoka, Wakayama, and Ehime had more to do with hopes of wealth than Japan's reputation. (Takaki 1993) Echoing the reports Chinese sent back to Guangdong, rumours reached Japan that gold nuggets were visible in Australian riverbanks. (Sissons n.d.) But Japanese were too late for the gold rushes. Instead, a sailor from Shizuoka, Nakagawa Tamiji, was working on Thursday Island when he and nine other Japanese backed Carbine, the Melbourne Cup winner in 1890. He and others returned with their winnings to Wakayama, where they were reportedly wealthy enough to bathe in *sake*. In northern Australia, Japanese formed small pearling cooperatives of people from the same villages, with strict hierarchies and lines of command. From 1925 to 1940 Japanese made up 90 per cent of the 'helmet divers', and their death rate was high: ten per cent in 1910. Since it was where a Japanese pearler's grave might be, Australia 'seemed closer than Tokyo' to a veteran of the pearl industry. (Ganter 1992) But in their home prefectures they became famous, which may contribute to the neglect of settler Australians' achievements as pioneers, noticed by Tada in Japanese accounts. (Tada thesis 1998)

Even today former pearl-shell divers enjoy the status of minor celebrities in Japan, comparable perhaps to our Anzac veterans, and the Japanese press remains receptive to news items relating to former 'Arafura divers'. In the 1990s Wakayama-ken still had a Thursday Island Club, and close links continued between Japanese there and people in Broome. (Ganter 1992)

Shiga (1887) and his contemporary Japanese observers of Australia were the first of

¹⁷⁸ in Australia) for the major Philadelphia Exhibition of 1876. Australia's Immigration League in the early 1900s also instructed Australians on how to represent their country when visiting Britain. Richard White, 'The Outsider's Gaze and the Representation of Australia' in Grant and Seal 1994: 22-28.

many to reverse condescending Western stereotypes of 'Young Japan' by representing Australia as younger, comparing it to a growing child. Britain, one reported, having learnt a lesson in its American colonies, was shrewdly preventing Australia from acquiring a strong navy or arms industry. (Hirose 1892) If Australia could shed British domination, it would be in its interests to join Japan in controlling future Pacific trade. But by restricting Japanese migration, Australians were seen as limiting these prospects, and enthusiasm soon cooled: 'The Japanese actually feel more rejected in Australia than they do in America', wrote Inagaki Manjuro in 1891. Increasingly frustrated by the imperialists' unequal treaties and barriers to migration, Japanese began to cite their grievances, to assert their right to settle abroad, and to demand independence for the Philippines, Samoa, and the New Hebrides, as well as Australia. (Frei 1984, 1991)

As early as 1869, Australians in significant numbers were travelling in the opposite direction. Japan was a source of trade, novelty, and an alternative to Europe. As in China, they were not much sought after by the Japanese as *yatoi* (foreign experts), apparently for three reasons: whatever expertise Australians had was little known in Japan; Japanese preferred to seek the British advisers they needed from Britain, rather than from its colonies; and Australia, lacking a diplomatic presence, was hard to contact. Until 1940 Australia was represented only by Trade Commissioners in Kobe (whose capacity to recommend Australian intellectual and technological leaders was slight) and by the British Embassy in Tokyo (whose inclination was slighter still). Australian missionaries were a different matter: the Adelaide Protestant Wilton Hack established his mission in Nagasaki in 1873, as soon as missionaries were permitted re-entry, and later sought to set up a migration scheme. The Australian Sisters of the Sacred Heart in 1908 founded the Seishin schools in Tokyo and Kobe. Father Tony Glynn established a Catholic mission in Nara and, together with Father Lionel Marsden, a survivor of the Thailand-Burma railway, worked for reconciliation between the former enemies. (Chiba 1999. Meaney 1999. Sissons n.d.) Over the years they and their influential successors contributed to some differentiation, at least, of Australia in some Japanese minds from Britain, America, and the generalised West.

The closest any Australian came to being a *yatoi* was James Murdoch, a Scottish

historian of Japan who had a Japanese wife and who, in the late 1880s, taught English and History at Ichikō (Tokyo First High School), and later at Kōtō Sogyō Gakkō (later Hitotsubashi University). Murdoch's Ichikō students included the later novelist Natsume Sōseki, and the future Prime Minister Shidehara Kijūrō. Murdoch consulted Shidehara, as head of the *Gaimushō* on Australia's behalf during the difficult post-war years. Sōseki recalled Murdoch as respected, enthusiastic, careless of formality in dress and manner, but did not ascribe this to his being Australian:

What we admired was his ability to combine all the qualities of an English gentleman with a striking bohemianism, and no-one was ever heard to utter dissatisfaction about his classes. (Sissons n.d.)

Murdoch reported regularly to E.L. Piessie in Canberra on Japan's dispute with Australia over migration. From 1897 to 1921 it was copiously documented in the Japanese Diplomatic Record Office. The White Australia policy was referred to in almost every Japanese book about Australia from 1901 until well after the Pacific war. (Frei 1991) The *Gaimushō* published two research papers in 1921, one written by the Consulate-General in Sydney. They expressed concern about Australia's official restrictions on Japanese workers, but reported that personal relations with settler Australians were warm. They predicted an era of Australian fear and protectionism, however, and warned that the White Australia policy would add to difficulties with Japan. The *Japan Daily Mail* explained that Australians were 'an imperial race' and feared that if 'ungovernable multitudes of Japanese subjects' – criminals or outcasts, perhaps - arrived in Australia that could lead to a 'lamentable degradation of race'. (Levi 1958) Japan too was an imperial race, the equal of the West, and equally exclusionary. Japan, the *Japan Advertiser* admitted, imposes rigid restrictions [on immigration] for the purpose of preventing the wholesale entrance of Chinese labour...In 'coloured' countries we find restrictions on white immigrants. The disabilities of foreigners in Japan are well known and are in many ways more stringent than those from which Japanese suffer when they go abroad. (31 January 1919)

Japan's confrontation with Australia over the White Australia policy has been studied in

detail elsewhere.¹⁷⁹ Here, it provides evidence of how Australia was losing marks with Japanese. After Federation relations were deliberately cooled, and Japanese diplomats implied that improved market access depended on improved migration conditions, which were achieved in 1905. But successive Consuls-General, rather than disputing the West's claim that the success of imperialism demonstrated white superiority, agreed with it as a principle. Japan's standard of living was much higher than that of 'kanakas, Negroes, Pacific Islanders, Indians, and other Eastern peoples', Consul-General Eitaki argued in Sydney in 1899, and classing Japan with them was a 'reproach hardly warranted by the fact of the shade of the national complexion'. (Broinowski 2000a) In 1904, after a Japanese labour inspector was asked by a train guard to move to a carriage reserved for 'coloured' passengers, the Consul in Townsville, Tayui, secured an apology from the Queensland government. Another Townsville Consul, Iejima, corresponded at length with the Queensland government over the proposal for prior agreement to the issue of passports. To Tokyo, he described these negotiations as involving 'disagreeable collisions' and 'undiplomatic language'. What Japan wanted, contrary to official Australian assumptions, was not to send large numbers of Japanese to Australia, nor to fight on behalf of other Asians against Australian discrimination: the *Gaimusho* instructed its Consuls-General to see that Japanese in Australia were decently treated, and to gain for the Japanese nation the respect of the West.

For both nations, their self-identification as different and superior overrode other considerations, no matter what the cost. One result of Australia's exclusion policy was slow growth in Australia-Japan trade and failure of Australian shipping to thrive. Another was the frustration of Japan's needs and ambitions and the souring of its early enthusiasm for Australia. This led to a third result: an undercurrent of mutual suspicion and hostility that gradually built up into the tidal wave of the Pacific War. These negative impressions remained under the surface in the post-war years and were revived when convenient.

¹⁷⁹ Brawley 1995. Frei 1991. Levi 1958. Meaney 1996. Sissons 1971, 1972, 1976. Tweedie 1994. Yarwood 1964, 1968.

Competition

The period in which Australia was represented by Japanese primarily as a site of investigation and acquisition of knowledge ended in 1905. From the time of Japan's stunning victory over the Russian fleet, Australia was described in terms of competition, first for equality, and then for dominance.

In 1905 Prime Minister Deakin tried to secure commercial preferences for Australia under the Anglo-Japanese Commercial Treaty, which Japan refused. In that year, restrictions on migration in the United States incited a Chinese boycott of American goods and great resentment in Japan, and between 1906 and 1908 inhibitions on Japanese 'seemed likely to precipitate a war' with the United States. (Bennett 1992) Australia, as the NSW Trade Commissioner reported from Kobe, was also in danger: Australians, wrote John Suttor, were 'not the best loved people by any means', and a trade boycott was again threatened. Eminent Japanese described Australian migration policy as 'selfish and impolitic', 'an offence against humanity', and 'an insulting piece of legislation'. (Tweedie 1994) Japanese officials reported, accurately enough, that Australia supported the Anglo-Japanese alliance out of 'fear, not friendship'. Australia had caught *kyōnichibyō* ('fear-of-Japan illness') since the Russo-Japanese war:

Fear of Japan entered into it...As soon as we were victorious they came to fear that we would invade Australia...They [Australians] fear Japan in the way that you fear a bogeyman in the dark because you cannot see the natural phenomena around you.¹⁸⁰

Equality with the West and hegemony over other Asians were within Japan's reach and 'accordingly the racial equality movement swept the country'. By the 1920s, Japanese were protesting 'unendurable humiliations'. Threats of war recurred whenever Japan's status was impugned, as it was by the United States in 1907 and 1913, at the Paris Peace conference in 1919, and again in 1924 when the gentlemen's agreement on

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Japanese officials: Sissons n.d. See also *Gaimushō Ōbeikyoku*, Pacific Issues Research Paper 3: 'White Australia Policy', Tokyo 1921. NLA OJN 4809.5 6521.

migration was torn up and all 'Orientals' were excluded. Tokyo's ambassador to Washington presciently warned that Japanese resentment 'would not die'. (Bennett 1992) The fact that many Japanese held contemptuous views of Chinese and Koreans that resembled white settlers' perceptions of Asians did nothing to lessen Japan's outrage at Western condescension to Japanese.

Riots had erupted in Tokyo in 1914-15 over reports that German Pacific territories north of the equator might be handed by Britain to Australia after World War 1.¹⁸¹ Gaining Shantung from the Germans had always been Japan's bottom line at Paris, according to American diplomats. (Frei 1991. Sissons 1971) It has been argued by Brawley (1995) that, on the contrary, Japan wanted territory and racial equality because it needed to export its surplus population. But Japanese were never so driven by overcrowding on the coastal plains of their main islands that they even took to the mountains or to the smaller islands in very large numbers, let alone to Shantung, Manchuria, Korea, or anywhere else. Rather than leave their impoverished, crowded communities in Japan, old people not uncommonly committed suicide, as Imamura Shohei's 1986 film reminded viewers. Japan's aspiration to compete with the best in the world, together with fear of social disruption at home, were surely the prime policy motives from 1868 and throughout the twentieth century. The fact that proposals to turn social incumbrances into colonisers were raised again in 1912 suggests that Japanese who were better off were reluctant migrants. In another guise, and with comparable lack of success, the pattern was repeated with the Silver Columbia and Multifunction Polis proposals in the 1980s-1990s.

Socio-political turbulence in Japan in the inter-war years found an outlet in representations of Australia as racially discriminatory (which it was). The race-equality movement was supported by militaristic patriots, and some moderate politicians who opposed them were murdered. In the Taishō period (1912-1926), with a mentally impaired emperor, politics were in ferment, with numerous intellectual and populist

¹⁸¹ *Asian Review*, quoted by Piesse, 15 September 1920, PM's Department, Papers Prepared in the Pacific Branch. AA A5954/1: 1203/2. Frei 1991. 'The White Australia policy persisted in – flat rejection of our protest by the British Government', *Chūgai Shōgyō Shimbum*, 29 April 1920.

movements competing for power. Between 1910 and 1935 the urban population doubled, and strikes and demonstrations disrupted daily life. (Meaney 1999) The Japanese delegation at the drafting convention of the League of Nations at Paris, led by Baron Makino, were not about to mention *burakumin*, racial murders, assassinations, or rice riots, but domestic considerations were significant for them, just as they were for Prime Minister Hughes. They reported to Tokyo what the South African leader Smuts told them, that Hughes was narrow-minded and pig-headed, even mad. With South Africa's interests in mind, no doubt, Smuts warned the Japanese that if opposed, Hughes would intensify his opposition to the racial equality clause. (Sissons 1971) The Japanese, preparing the *Gaimusho* for a policy defeat, focussed on Hughes' failings as a statesman, and their difficulties as educated gentlemen in dealing a man whose 'character is completely that of a labour leader' and who was, moreover, 'surrounded by extremists'.¹⁸²

The delegation objected to Hughes inferring that Japan was a 'predatory nation', and 'much indignant comment was published'. Hughes' speeches earned him 'great notoriety' in Japan, and for some time he and Australia in general were 'treated in the Japanese papers as the chief opponents of the legitimate claims of Japan'. The Japanese press reported that Hughes' speeches were 'characterised by the most pronounced racial prejudice, and by an assumption of racial superiority of the white races over the races of the Far East'.¹⁸³ A Diet member in Tokyo warned the Western delegations that the world did not belong to Europeans alone. (*Japan Advertiser*, 6 February 1919) The *Japan Times* cited the United States' Declaration of Independence to remind the negotiators that all men were created equal. Instances of Western discrimination not only thwarted Japan's aspirations: they gave Japan's leaders opportune external targets against which to divert domestic hostility so that they appeared to be standing up for ordinary Japanese more than, perhaps, they were.

¹⁸² The Japanese would have been aware of Hughes' *Australia Unlimited* speech in London (19 August 1921), in which he argued that for its future development, Australia required 'more men and more capital...There is room in Australia for millions of settlers on the land...'

¹⁸³ Extremists: the Australian delegation at Paris included such prominent Australians as Robert Garran, John Latham, and the historian Ernest Scott. Piesse 1926. Sissons 1971. Yarwood 1968.

Piesse, who read the Japanese newspapers, warned the government that in 1918-1920 the 'utterances of Australian public men have attracted much more adverse criticism in Japan than have those of American public men'. (Sissons 1971) All Japan was 'boiling with this cry for racial equality', Murdoch reported from Tokyo in 1919. Similar reports were reaching Canberra through British diplomatic channels, including an editorial in the *Nichi Nichi Shimbun* that warned the white peoples of America, Canada, England, and Australia against behaving like the lords of the earth. Asiatics would soon combine to break down their barriers. The *Yomiuri* warned the United States and Britain that their colonies would be overpowered by labour opposition to Asian migration.¹⁸⁴ In the 1920s, Japanese papers began for the first time to focus on Australia's treatment of Aborigines. 'As it is', Piesse summed up, 'we have been perhaps the chief factor in consolidating the whole Japanese nation behind the imperialists' who, faced with rising social and industrial opposition, had 'seized upon the [Australian] racial discrimination issue to bolster their position'. (Meaney 1996)

In the inter-war years, non-government organisations like the liberal-conservative American-inspired Institute of Pacific Relations (IPR), the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA), and its first journal, the *Austral-Asiatic Bulletin*, brought together Australian intellectuals who argued Australia's future was in Asia, that a Eurocentric view of the world was inappropriate for Australians, and that Australia should support the ideals of the new Asian states. (Legge 1999b. Mackerras 1992) They sought contact with their Japanese counterparts. One of these, Nitobe Inazo, as Director of Agriculture in Formosa had visited Australia in 1902, and had obliquely warned then that Australian migration policy

might check the eagerness of so-called reformers in Japan to adopt too readily some of the forms of Western government which are wrongly termed 'democratic' and which are now upon their trial in Australia. (*Gizen-no-teki* 1903: 165)

Japanese at the first IPR meeting in 1925 mainly tackled the American members over

¹⁸⁴

British Embassy, Tokyo, to Lord Curzon, several letters February – May 1919:

the Japanese Exclusion Act of the preceding year, enabling the Australians, as they had done by not attending the ILO meeting two years earlier, to interpret the relative lack of discussion of White Australia as absence of concern. (Frei 1991. Nakami 1935) Asian representatives at other IPR meetings suggested that the offensive 'White Australia' expression should be abandoned. A Japanese delegate said that the 'harsh and uncompromising attitude' of Australians in 1919 had not been forgotten. He described Australia as having no regard for the sensibilities of other nations and as taking 'no trouble to avoid giving unnecessary offence'. To Japanese the typical Australian was, he said, Mr W.M. Hughes. Japan's leader at the 1927 IPR meeting saw through the 'economic' excuse adopted by the United States and Australia for opposing Asian migration: it was based on 'the fetish of race superiority' and Australia's dictation test was a 'transparent disguise' for a discriminatory policy. Sixty-seven per cent of participants agreed with him.¹⁸⁵ Japan's language was becoming more pointed.

The United States' imposition of economic sanctions in 1930, followed by Australia's 'trade diversion' actions in 1938, proved to Japan that the West was unfairly thwarting Japanese development. Although it has been argued that Australia's banning of iron ore exports was an effort to prevent British mining companies sending it to Japan (Rix 1998), from Japan's perspective Australia was clearly more interested in supporting British interests than theirs.¹⁸⁶ Australia unilaterally rescinded the agreement on the Yampi Sound iron ore mine four years after Japan had invested in it. That Australian banks and investors were nervous of associating with anyone but British and Americans only strengthened Japan's righteous outrage. Underpopulated, underdeveloped Australia seemed to have 'retreat[ed] into kinship'; its manufacturers were timid and uncompetitive; and its exports were badly packaged and of poor quality. (A reputation for tawdry 'Jap' export goods was one the Japanese themselves particularly sought to shed). Australia compounded its image problems by posting Englishmen among its early Trade Commissioners in Japan. (Tweedie 1994) The

AA A1: 1919/11018.

¹⁸⁵ AA A981: Conf232. Brawley 1995.

¹⁸⁶ On a 'goodwill' mission in 1934, Latham told the *Gaimushō* that diplomatic relations were unnecessary, since the British Embassy could represent Australia with greater weight than an Australian mission could. Bennett 1992. Apparently Hirota, his interlocutor, could not but accept this expressed preference for colonial dependency.

British colonial claims in Asia were seen as less justified than those of Japan, and less in Australia's interests. Australians were described in several reports as degenerate ex-convicts living in a 'fools' paradise', obsessed with a 'crazy idea' that Japanese were bent on southward advance. Although the Dōmei newsagency admitted Japan's knowledge of Australia was 'insufficient', it repeated the view that Australia's attitudes to Japan were 'childish'.¹⁸⁷

In 1939, Menzies declared that 'the British countries of the world must stand or fall together'. In the same year, Japan proclaimed 'Asia for the Asiatics'. Late in 1940, the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (GEACPS) was announced, and the Emperor's Rescript declared that Japan would 'enable' all nations and races to assume their 'proper place in the world'. Foreign Minister Matsuoka told the Diet that Japanese had a natural right to occupy Oceania and that Europeans should return it to them. Oceania 'should be open as field for future expansion of Asiatics', he informed the American Ambassador in February 1941.¹⁸⁸ Japan's hegemony over Asia was justified with Darwinian arguments that the strong should overpower the weak, and Australia was warned that it could suffer the fate of the Aborigines.¹⁸⁹ Latham, as Australia's first Minister in Tokyo, reported that Japanese were claiming Australia's untapped resources as a matter of right, and that Australia was seen as a 'dog-in-the-manger' in Japan and elsewhere in Asia. (*Kokumin* 20 May 1941. Brawley 1995) Nor had the past been forgiven or forgotten:

It is well remembered too that Australia played the foremost part in the wave of

¹⁸⁷ *Taiheiyo Kyōkai, Gōshu no Shizen to Shakai* (Natural Resources and Society in Australia), Tokyo: Chūō Koronsha, 1943. NLA OJN 3950 4134. *Dōmei Tsūshinsha, Saikin no Gōshu* (Present Day Australia), Tokyo: Dōmei Tsūshinsha, 1939. NLA OJN 3953 7632.

¹⁸⁸ Many writers of the period argued for Australia to be included in the GEACPS. Tanimoto Kamejiro, *Daitō-A Kyōeiken to Nōgyō* (The GEACPS and Agriculture), Tokyo: Taibunman, 1941. NLA OJN 4435 8523. Nishikawa Chūichiro, *Saikin no Gōshu Jijō* (Current Conditions in Australia), Tokyo: Sanyodo, 1942. NLA OJN 4370.95 1251.

¹⁸⁹ 'Those without power are replaced by those with power. This is how the progress of humanity has developed. I sincerely hope that Australians wake up to this basic truth. If they do not, they will not be able to avoid the same fate as the original inhabitants'. Nanpō Sangyō Chōsakai, *Gōshu: Nanpō Shōsho 8* (Australia), Tokyo: Nanshinsha, 1942. NLA OJN 3953 4003.

anti-Japanism which spread through the Pacific countries after the Russo-Japanese war. (Kokumin 28 January 1941)

As patriotism took over from populism, bookshops in Japan were deluged with an Australia *bumu* (boom) of fiction and fact, some themes of which would recur in Japanese publications for long after the war. Their main claim, as Frei's copious research has shown, was that Australia belonged in the GEACPS. (Frei 1991: part 3, ch.5) Australia needed the GEACPS as much as the GEACPS needed Australia, a Kanematsu Goshō survey declared in 1942, adding that Australia had always been part of Asia. One writer proposed a long-range plan to create an Asia-Australia Co-Prosperity Sphere (*A-Gō kyōeiken*). Others urged Australia - the 'orphan of the South Pacific' - to wake up to its true identity and restore the old unity. There should be a *Gō-A chichūkai* (Australasian Mediterranean) of diverse cultures, some proposed, unified by geography and ethnology. Japanese writers found various expressions for this new unity, calling Australia a South Asian ('Austral-Asian') country, a Pacific Ocean country, or a Pacific country in the East Asian region.

Just as Australians had produced 'invasion fiction' that represented Japan as an enemy from the 1880s to the 1910s,¹⁹⁰ Japanese writers in the 1930s and 1940s did the same in reverse. Some as early as 1933 anticipated in fiction such events as the defeat of Singapore, and surprise attacks on the north coast of Australia. Many urged Australia to identify with the Asia-Pacific region as it had been before the British invasion. Australia had a vast territory to which it would admit not a single Japanese migrant, and such inequality between 'status quo' powers and 'have not' nations – expressions later adapted by Sukarno - could lead to a 'Greater East Asia War'. Australians, having at first slighted Japanese, were said later to have become grudgingly respectful, and were now fearful of Japan.

Adopting what can now be recognised as an Occidental strategy, the Japanese authorities commissioned educational texts in the 1930s claiming that Japan had the oldest heritage and culture in Asia, which justified it in setting up a new Asian order to

¹⁹⁰ Broinowski 1996. Ingleson and Walker 1989. Walker 1999.

offset Western power. Minnear (1980) has castigated the way 'inflexible Western attitudes of domination irrespective of actual domination' were applied to Japan at the time, as indeed they were by Australia. But Japanese attitudes to the West matched them in reverse, turning the Western 'yellow peril' rhetoric on its inventors, and branding the Western colonisers the 'white peril' in Asia, but never identifying Japan as East Asia's 'white peril'. Paradoxically, as Buruma (1994) has noted, Japanese admired whiteness, and artists had since Meiji shown their military as large, pale-skinned figures in Western uniforms, looming over dwarfish, traditionally-dressed Chinese and Koreans.

Soldiers leaving for the namban to fight for the Emperor were given a booklet, *Read This and the War is Won*, in which the enemy was identified as white people (*hakujin*). Wartime cartoonists, as Dower (1986, 1995) has shown, matched Allied propaganda by representing the Anglo-American enemy as mad or degenerate, or as various kinds of demon, beast, or monster. 'Devilish Anglo-Americans' (*kichiku Ei-Bei*) was the common epithet for the enemy, whose rampant individualism was said by the propagandists to underlie their unbridled exercise of power. A litany of infanticide, rape, torture, mutilation, and murder of prisoners by the Allies was cited to prove that the appropriate treatment for such animals was to beat and kill them. A Japanese soldier who ate human flesh claimed he did it because he hated the Australian enemy: more, apparently, than he heeded the express prohibition of cannibalism by the Japanese Imperial Army. (Tanaka 1996) Or he may have been hungry.

Australia was represented in the Japanese media as weakened by industrial, financial, and political problems. American troops in Australia were reported to be causing 'marked social degradation' by raping Australian women, to such an extent that Australia had protested about it to the United States. Australia, nevertheless, was mostly overlooked in the propaganda, its identity as an enemy subsumed by the AB (*Ei-Bei*: Britain-America) countries that commanded Australian troops and had bases on Australian soil. The Japanese Army opposed invading Australia and the Navy, which considered invasion in 1942, never overcame its own planners' objections. But that did not prevent speculation: shortly after the fall of Singapore, in radio broadcasts by a leading geographer at Kyoto Imperial University, Australia was called the 'Southern

Asia Continent’.

A policy document drafted at the end of 1942 listed Australia among second tier of countries in the GEACPS, along with most of Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. It forecast that by 1950 two million Japanese would be living in Australia and New Zealand in *Nihon machi* (‘Japan towns’), where they would be role models, instructing Australians and New Zealanders in agriculture. They would not intermarry: the report proposed that mixed-blood children were inferior and that intermarriage would destroy the purity of the Yamato race. A variant of this proposal, by Tsurumi Yosuke, suggested in 1943 that the White Australia policy should be abolished, and be replaced by migration of Chinese, Indians, Germans, and Italians to Australia, as well as ten million Japanese farmers. Preferably, they should be allocated a region of their own to develop in north Queensland. An official proposal of 1941 envisaged sending three million Chinese to develop Australia, ousting the ‘British’ through competition, and installing a civilian Governor-General. Novelists went further and imagined events after they had done so. (Frei 1991: ch.7)

The term for Australia’s exclusion policy was (and is) *sakoku*, the ‘closed country’ that Japan was from the early seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century, and that White Australia was seen to be. (Tada thesis 1997) The term for Japan’s colonial governors and Australia’s Governors-General was (and is) *sōtoku*, suggesting that Australia is a colony ruled by the British monarch. Together with *soboku* (‘rustic’, ‘naïve’, ‘pristine’), the three S words were commonly cited together in references to Australia. (JS 1981a) Another propaganda image reinforced these impressions. In an *anime* film released in April 1945, *Momotaro- Divine Troops of the Ocean*, the fable of the demon-oppressing Peach-Boy and his noble animal friends was reinterpreted to propose the coming liberation of the simple, good hearted people of South and Southeast Asia, among whom it implicitly included Australians. The inhabitants of the *namban* were represented as unruly jungle creatures, and included kangaroos. (Dower 1986)

After the Pacific War, a new generation persisted in the belief that Japan’s cause was just, that Japanese were the victims of the West, not the aggressors against it, and that the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were attempts at genocide planned by

white racists or Jews. (Buruma 1994) Predictions that 'one Japanese way of thinking' would be reborn were still current in 1964.¹⁹¹ Representations of Australia as Western, white, Other, and inferior persisted, because the facts supported them, but also because they reinforced the superior identity desired for Japan.

Prisoners of War

Here, a case study considers the representations of Australia made by Japanese Prisoners of War (POW). War has come to be seen as an 'inherently patriarchal activity, and rape as an extreme expression of the patriarchal drive toward dominance of the "other"'. (Tanaka 1996) But reports of atrocities committed by one's own people are still commonly denied, disbelieved, or held to be exceptional episodes, while 'the enemy's brutal acts' are seen as systematic and revealing a 'fundamentally perverse national character'. (Dower 1986) Neither side in war has ever had a monopoly of truth or virtue.¹⁹² What both sides in the Pacific War failed to consider was whether by believing one was dealing with a beast one could become a beast oneself.

The popular writer Inoue Hisashi based his novel *Yellow Rats* (1980) on two visits to Australia in 1976 and 1977. Mixing fact and fantasy, he offered his Japanese readers a stirring account of desert, danger, and desperation in the face of Western violence and racism. He claimed to have found a diary, thrown out at the ANU library, telling of Sato Shukichi's escape from a detention centre and his flight across the desert to Alice Springs. Sato's exploits among Aborigines, whom he depicted as *idiots savants*, were reminiscent of Momotaro leading his animal companions against the enemy in the 1945 propaganda film. The film and the novel both evoked *Kokutai no Hongi*, the foundational racial and religious mythology that was claimed to have motivated Japanese POWs to break out from the Cowra camp on 5 August 1944.

A ringleader among over 1100 Japanese prisoners of war (POWs) at Cowra, Sergeant

¹⁹¹ Hayashi Fusao, *In Affirmation of the Greater East Asian War*, 1964. Buruma 1994.

¹⁹² Atrocities on both sides: Tanaka 1996. Australians shooting prisoners: Warner 1982, Dower 1986. Major-General Paul Cullen quoted by Tony Stephens, 'Diggers bayoneted Japanese POWs, says Kokoda veteran', *SMH* 23 April 2001: 9.

Major Kanazawa Ryō, cited Japan's unique spirit and 2604 years of history to show that 'our conventions, our histories are different' from those of Americans and Australians. (Meaney 1999) The claim that Japanese feel shame more acutely than Westerners was proposed as the main cause of the suicidal outbreak. (Gordon 1978, 1994) Many of the Japanese prisoners dealt with their shame by giving false names to their captors, but so did many Australian POWs. (Nelson 1985) Kanazawa said Japanese 'could never have inflicted that [shame] on our families. We received no mail as prisoners, and wanted none. We were dead men'. But after claiming he could never face his family again, he and approximately two thirds of his fellow prisoners in Compound B at Cowra returned to their homes. Casting further doubt upon the enduring exclusivity of Japaneseness, Kanazawa later said he felt 'a great bond' with the people of Cowra and Australia.¹⁹³

Asada Teruhiko, another POW survivor, hovered between history, wishful thinking, and Keystone Cops in his account (1967: in English 1970) of the outbreak at Cowra. His first captors were Americans who called him a 'monkey': but he recorded comparable insults in Japanese, and did not hesitate to describe an Australian Sergeant-Major as a 'red devil'. When an engineer who was his fellow POW at Cowra took five kittens into his room and their mother did not join them, he declared that 'Australian cats are heartless'. Asada ascribed the POWs' lenient treatment to the simplicity and ignorance of Australians, who were hoping for comparable leniency when Japan captured them. Like Kanazawa, he claimed that Australians were incapable of appreciating the Japanese mind: 'Why Japanese prisoners should desire to do this could only be understood by Japanese'. They felt differently, too, from their Italian allies in the camp, because they might be commanded by the Emperor to commit suicide, or to kill their children: but also because they were Japanese. Japanese witnesses put to the court martial the exceptionalist argument that 'the cause lay in ethical beliefs rather than in reason... For the very reason that life is highly prized among us, we choose death'. (Asada 1970) But later Nakano (1984), taking the viewpoint of 'Tadao Minami', a Zero

¹⁹³ Kanazawa quoted by Gordon, who wrote: 'Japanese servicemen had been taught to believe that to be captured was to bring unbearable shame to themselves and their families... The central, burning sense of shame became increasing [*sic*] difficult to tolerate, until it drenched the 1 100 Japanese prisoners at Cowra in a collective madness'. Harry Gordon, 'Fifty years after the Cowra Breakout, healing goes on', *SMH* 5 August 1994: 11.

pilot who sounded the bugle to start the 'banzai attack', disputed Asada's and Inoue's accounts and their exceptionalist claims that 'death before dishonour' inspired the Japanese in ways Australians could not understand.

What emerged from the tortuous accounts of Cowra was the traditional, and continuing, conflict for Japanese between self-representation (*tatemae*) and real feelings (*honne*), and between the individual's desire for self-preservation and capacity of the group to exert pressure through shame. Asada described, in terms that even non-Japanese could understand, how a relatively minor issue was blown up into a threat to the group's unity, and how patriotic slogans were then invoked to coerce agreement to a poorly planned, purposeless, almost unarmed excursion that they all knew would achieve nothing.

Logic is not the strong point of the Japanese. They are inclined to be carried away with an atmosphere and also to submit their wills to that of a superior.
(Asada 1970)

With no idea how they would survive outside the camp, the POWs drank copious quantities of moonshine liquor and, taking biscuits in their pockets and armed with little more than 'the fighting spirit of Japan', hurled themselves over the barbed wire. As a doomed enterprise it was like the Pacific war in miniature.¹⁹⁴

Japanese civilians who were interned during the war provide a significant contrast with the POWs' representations of Australia. Of some 4 300, about one third were pre-war residents and two thirds were from Indonesia and the South Pacific. Among the surviving Japanese surveyed by Nagata Yuriko were *nan yō* nationalists, bankers, businessmen, journalists, academics, and prostitutes. 'Some...were common people and some...had gone native', as a Mitsubishi employee described them at the time. This cross-section of the community revealed Japanese who had sought 'personal

¹⁹⁴ Other little accessed Japanese accounts of the war are in Sugimura Masaru, *Nikki ni miru Taiheiyo Sensō* (Personal Diaries of the Pacific War), Tokyo: Bungeisha 1999. Australians' experiences are given some attention in Kamisaka Fuyoko, *Kai ni natta otoko: Naoetsu Horyo Shuryojo jiken* (The Man Who Became a Clam: Naoetsu POW Camp Incident), Tokyo: Bungei Shunju, 1986.

freedom' in Australia, as well as the offspring of Japanese fathers and Australian mothers, some of whom were Aborigines. Japanese who had worked hard as agricultural labourers, were pleased to be interned, felt 'free in the camp', and did not consider themselves outcasts. They built shrines and tea-houses, made ponds and flower gardens, and organised performances and games. Some commented on how well fed they were, to the extent of being able to dry and store surplus food.¹⁹⁵ On hearing the Emperor's broadcast on 16 August 1945, some internees didn't believe it, while others, specially Australian-born Japanese, cheered at the news that 'they lost the war'. Many disputed Australian accounts of Japanese atrocities. But the Australian public reaction to the war made post-war life difficult for the few permitted to stay in Australia, who were Australian-born or married to Australians. (Nagata 1996)

Three big bangs resounded over the Asia-Pacific hemisphere in the first half of the twentieth century: Japan's victory over Russia in 1905, Japan's attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941, and the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Each one, in its way, was ignited by Western countries' attempts to put Japan in a racially inferior place, and by Japan's refusal to stay there. Many Japanese, as Buruma (1994) has shown, continue to blame Americans, the West, or all white people for the sequence of events that began in 1854. But early representations of Australia as a semi-independent country that fought in its allies' wars, and discriminated against Japanese and their exports, and feared Japan but could not appreciate its subtlety and uniqueness, persisted throughout the century.

Phase 2 1946 to 2000

As Japanese self-esteem and international standing recovered, representations strengthened of Australia as having little apart from its natural endowments to offer Japan. Australians' ineptitude in negotiation and image-promotion, failure to understand their relative place, and imperviousness to subtle warnings, lost

¹⁹⁵ A Japanese POW of the Americans in the Philippines described camp life as almost idyllic, with better food and entertainment than they had as soldiers. Oka Shōhei, in *Furyoki* (1952), tr. Wayne P. Lammers, *Taken Captive: A Japanese POW's Story*, New York, John Wiley & Sons 1996.

them marks with their Japanese interlocutors. (Byrnes 1994) Even in the late 1990s when Japan was facing its own problems, the trend continued. In spite of official claims to the contrary,¹⁹⁶ Australia's status and influence in Japan were much lower at the end of the twentieth century than at its beginning, as this section shows.

Peace did little to change Japanese representations of Australians as Anglo-centric white racists, or Australians' views of Japan as xenophobic economic animals, for the very good reason that both societies continued to behave in those ways. Patrick Shaw reported from the Legation in Tokyo in 1949 that the mention of Australia was 'immediately associated in the minds of ordinary people with White Australia'. (Brawley 1995) In 1957, when Australia's economic interests made a commerce agreement imperative, a Japanese negotiator doubted that it would be successful unless Australia abandoned its prejudice against Asia. (Mackerras 1992) Japan paid substantial reparations for the war and Prime Minister Kishi made what passed for an expression of regret. But as it had done before the war, Tokyo threatened to reduce purchases of Australian wool unless Australia gave Japan status equal to that enjoyed by other GATT members. The carrot and stick ploy worked on the Liberal-Country Party government, indicating to Tokyo what was now Australia's bottom line. These and later episodes suggest, as well, a continuing obsession of Japanese (that Australians share) to know what others think of them, and a shared nervousness about their image. But if Australians seek acceptance, Japanese desire respect.

A Japanese Ambassador to Australia, Suzuki Tadakatsu, reported to the *Gaimusho* that Menzies' invitation to Kishi to visit in 1957 had aroused 'many objections' in Australia, including those of unions and manufacturers who believed Japan benefited more than Australia from the trade agreement. Suzuki warned Kishi that although a few academics in Australia were critical of the White Australia policy, most Australians rejected foreign criticism of it. He added that since Japanese diplomats had returned, Australians had ceased targeting the West German consulate in Sydney and now concentrated their hostility on Japan's premises. But he recommended that Japan, newly humble after the war, should not challenge Australia, advising Kishi, 'We should

¹⁹⁶ <http://www.dfat.gov.au>, May 2000.

be sensitive to this issue and remember our need for exports’.

Japan’s new eagerness to please, it appears, resulted not only from defeat and poverty.¹⁹⁷ From 1952 to the late 1960s rifts occurred in Japan between ethnic groups, young and old, modernisers and nationalists, and popular demonstrations were more violent than at any time since 1918. These differences gave the lie, once again, Japan’s officially constructed myth of homogeneity and harmony. (Sugimoto 1981) Japanese who were anxious to rebuild law and order, national unity, and international esteem, renewed their claims of Japan’s uniqueness. They repeated old accusations or made new ones against either the generalised West, or a convenient Australia.¹⁹⁸ In either case, ‘as they grew stronger, they bowed less low’. (Lee 2000)

Uniqueness

During the Occupation, their unique identity was almost all that Japanese had to believe in. Here, we consider its effect on post-war representations of Australians, first by Japanese war brides, and then by a succession of opinion leaders.

Japanese expected the worst from the Allies during what they called the ‘stationing of US forces’. (Buruma 1994) In a chilling projection of the Imperial troops’ behaviour with ‘comfort women’, rumours circulated in Japan that the Allies planned to turn Japan into an international park and would kill all but five thousand attractive women, whom they would force to serve as guides. (Dower 1986) In October 1945, just before US troops arrived in Hiroshima prefecture, the Japanese naval headquarters in Kure instructed local citizens (the majority of whom were women) on how to deal with these foreign men. They were to maintain dignity and pride, they should say nothing rather than try to

¹⁹⁷ ‘Yes’ and ‘no’ were said in the 1930s to be the only English words Japanese schoolchildren needed to know. ‘Yes or no?’ General Yamashita shouted at General Percival in Singapore in 1941. But after the war, Japanese said, they had to learn ‘thankyou’ and ‘excuse me’. Buruma 1994: 177.

¹⁹⁸ A Japanese Ambassador to Australia in the late 1960s found that the White Australia policy still existed, as did Australian fear of Japanese invasion and economic takeover. Saito Shizuo, *Osutoraria Tsushin* (Australian Correspondence), Tokyo: Kokusai Kaihatsu Janarusha, 1971. NLA OJN 3950 0486.

communicate in poor English, women should wear *mompe* (loose trousers) and not expose any part of their bodies, and women and children should not stare, laugh, or wave at the foreigners. They should not go outside alone, especially at night; and if any serviceman entered a house, they should take his number and report him at once.

Japanese and Australians approached each other warily during the occupation, but official restrictions failed to prevent interaction between individuals. Australia assumed command of the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces (BCOF) in Japan, and BCOF troops were instructed to 'show to and impress on the Japanese, the democratic way and purpose in life'. But while doing so, they were ordered not to 'fraternise' with the Japanese, and were told that if an Australian married a Japanese woman she would not be allowed to enter Australia and he would not be allowed to send her money. (Tamura thesis 1999) For many of the people of Kure, Australians were just 'Americans in unusual hats'. (Sayle: JS 1981b) But a Japanese prostitute recalled Australian troops as the worst rapists, and claimed that by agreeing to service the Australians she and others contributed to the protection of young women. (Yamada 1982. Tanaka 1996) Gang rapes of young women by Australian BCOF members were not unknown, as well as bashings of young men, robberies, and burning of brothels when they were refused entrance. Australians, one of them recorded, were widely considered the worst behaved of the Occupation troops, acquiring the label of *yanbanjin* (barbarians) in Hiroshima. But sentences for their crimes were regularly quashed in Australia. (Clifton 1951)

Marriages between Japanese women and Australian men were seen by many in both countries as tantamount to cohabiting with the enemy. The women were often said to be bar girls, 'taxi dancers', or prostitutes.¹⁹⁹ The war brides (*sensō hanayome*) were the few who sought benefit of clergy, which many others did not. In Kure, women caught in the company of servicemen were taken to the police - as Sakuramoto Nobuko was before she married an Australian and became Cherry Parker - and were checked

¹⁹⁹ The women's indignation was echoed in 1998 by five Japanese women citing deception and violence at the hands of Australian men who, they say, have preconceptions about Asian women. Hasuo Kengo and Okamoto Mayuko, '*Watashitachiwa iero kyabu janai!*' (We are not Yellow Cabs!) *Nichigō Press*, November 1998:18-19.

for venereal disease, which they took as 'a great affront to their personal honour'.²⁰⁰ When Tamura (1999) interviewed war brides in Australia, several of whom had already lived with and had children by their Australian future husbands, they all denied even having been a 'taxi-dancer', let alone a prostitute. Outside her sample, however, were several hundred others, some of whom preferred not to discuss how they met their Australian husbands. All respondents claimed it was the Australians who had pursued them, and all said their parents had opposed marriage to an Australian. Australian soldiers, said one, were 'generally regarded as a wild and unsophisticated bunch'. Her mother thought they were rough types because they were the descendants of convicts, and her father objected to the marriage because a 'mixed blood baby' would be an embarrassment to the neighbourhood. Many Japanese war brides were reluctant to communicate about their experiences until the 1990s when, with their children grown up and opprobrium reduced, they began to meet and tell their stories to each other and to others, often on Internet sites.

Young Japanese women in Kure were not taught English and grew up with wartime propaganda. They all knew the proverb 'treat a stranger as a thief'. They knew little or nothing about Australia, nor where it was, let alone that Japan had attacked it. (Clifton 1951) According to most of Tamura's informants, the Australians added little to their knowledge: 'I like Australia', was the first and last sentence Kiku Brown's husband taught her. All put off improving their English before going to Australia. For one, Australia was simply 'a dreamland where I would not need to worry about food'. Others found Australia in the early 1950s a severe disappointment: their houses were far from luxurious, the beach was boring, the department stores closed too early and were uninteresting, and the television they had hoped for had not arrived.

Japanese wives of Australians were not permitted entry to Australia until after the ratification of the San Francisco Treaty (1951). Cherry Parker, after protracted mutual efforts, was allowed to join her husband in 1952. In a case that attracted fervid, sentimental, and mainly positive media attention in both Australia and Japan, she had

²⁰⁰ Tamura 1999. Carter 1965. Clifton 1951. Teruko Blair, '*Ōsutoraria ni dakarete*' (Hugged by Australia), *Terebi Asahi*, 1991. NLA OJN 2289 1734. Yamamoto Michiko, *Betisan No Niwa (Betty's Garden)*, Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 1973.

then to wait until 1957 for permanent residency. In 1953 about 500 other war brides followed her to Australia.²⁰¹ In spite of their reservations about Australia and, in some cases, about their Australian husbands, they put on a positive show for the media. Cherry Parker received hate letters and abusive telephone calls, but publicly denied experiencing hostility. A war bride who privately thought Australia 'a real backwater', nonetheless maintained face, assuring a Japanese reporter that Australian people were friendly and showed no hostility. Others, who appeared happy in photographs on arrival in Australia, reported to Tamura feeling distraught at what they had done. But most of them clung to their role as model citizens, and to their marriages, often to tyrannical Australian husbands. Some were divorced, and some widowed. In hindsight, said several of Tamura's informants, they would not recommend marriage to 'a foreigner': marriage to a Japanese would have been preferable. But in old age, most of them claimed they had happy lives, said they belonged in Australia, and believed they had made assimilation easier for the Japanese who followed them. Cherry Parker was not one of Tamura's informants. But the thinking of an Australian authority on Japan who claimed that Cherry's experience symbolised the success of Australian migration policy after 1952 appeared to be somewhat wishful. (Rix 1998)

Japanese women who married Chinese and Koreans during the war described their identity in terms that were strikingly similar to many who married Australians and Americans. In their own view, they were and would always be Japanese, which made them inherently different from all other foreigners, Western or Asian. Tamura (2000) observed that they seemed to cling to a sense of Japanese 'blood', and even of *Yamato minzoku*, the uniqueness and superiority of the Japanese race over all others.

Other Japanese in Australia, even those who were permanent residents, were statistically more reluctant than other Asia-born migrants to become Australian citizens. A Japanese scholar in Queensland explained this in ways that revealed the self-projection of many Japanese in Australia. Taking Australian citizenship, she wrote, meant revoking Japanese nationality; Japanese felt distaste for the registration and 'alien' treatment they would then receive on visits to Japan; and they - particularly the

²⁰¹ Endo 1989. Nagata 1990. Yamamoto 1973.

men - were reluctant to forfeit what Japan meant to them. (Atsumi Reiko in Coughlan 1992) Why these were considerations that would inhibit Japanese from changing their citizenship more any other nationality, and men more than women, was an issue she did not investigate. But her subtext, like that of the war brides, was that Japan was unique and hence Japanese nationality was a superior birthright; that while it might be to other Asians' advantage to become Australian citizens, it represented a sacrifice, a step down, for Japanese; and that the war brides, because of their dire circumstances, had less to lose in becoming Australians than did Japanese men. Lee Kuan Yew observed of Japanese: 'This myth of being special makes them a formidable force as a nation, a corporation, or a team in any workplace'. (Lee 2000)

Losing marks in Japanese perceptions

Migration remained a vexed postwar issue and one that, as a negotiating strategy, was guaranteed to make Australians defensive. During negotiations for a basic treaty in 1975-6, when Japan was buying more than 27 per cent of Australia's exports, *Gaimusho* lawyers expressed continuing concern about access to Australia for Japanese investors, and for Japanese business people and their companies, compared with that for Westerners. (Mackerras 1992) Subtle indications that Australia was losing marks were again conveyed. MITI warned that Australian migration policy would be taken into account in its future planning. In the Japanese media such disparate events as the Iwasaki resort fire at Yeppoon, Australian restrictions on uranium exports, and protests against Japanese killing of whales and dolphins were all interpreted as anti-Japanese racism. But when Australia took large numbers of refugees from Indochina, this was not mentioned in 123 references the *Mainichi Shimbun* made during two months in 1979 to the refugee intake in the US, UK, and European countries. (JS 1981a)²⁰²

Two sets of perceptions appear to be operating here. On the Australian side, there was unrealistic eagerness for immediate recognition from Japan that discrimination against Aborigines and the White Australia policy were things of the past. As early as 1970,

²⁰² NHK showed its own 50-minute documentary in June 1980 on Vietnamese

even before all migration restrictions based on race were eliminated, Australian officials protested to Japan about references in school textbooks to the White Australia policy, and they continued doing so for the next three decades.²⁰³ Yet the Japanese material was scarcely inaccurate in stating that Australia had a white majority population, that it had 'continued to control Asian migration', that 'Australian natives' were pushed into the desert, were malnourished and poorly educated, with a high rate of infant mortality, and that in cities they lived in slums. (JS 1982b) On the Japanese side, representations of Australian racism were slow to change, partly because they were founded on Japan's historical experience: but also because many Japanese could not imagine why Australians should not want to preserve the asset of a white core culture. Only if that disadvantaged or demeaned Japanese did they object to it. A young Japanese assured Donald Horne in Tokyo that neither Australians nor Japanese were Asians: Australians were in Oceania, and were 'civilised like us'. (Horne 1964)

Whenever he interviewed Ministers in Japan in the 1970s, Australian journalist Gregory Clark noted, the White Australia policy was raised, usually in a hostile manner. (JS 1981a) Most of his elderly Ministerial interlocutors recalled wartime propaganda, not about Australia as part of Greater East Asia, but as one of the Western allies that had brutally exploited their Asian colonies and discriminated against Japan. Younger officials and business people included racial discrimination in their litany of complaints (including strikes, management, tariffs, and Anglo-American capital) that were regularly used in negotiations. (Sayle, Bolitho: JS 1981b. Byrnes 1994) An Asahi journalist who toured Australia in 1976 reported that Australians lacked high culture, were Japanophobic, and were poor learners of Japanese.²⁰⁴ It only took a Hidaka case, or an attack on Asian migration by Geoffrey Blainey in the 1980s or Pauline Hanson in the 1990s, for Japanese negotiators to play the race card again.²⁰⁵ But racism was still not

²⁰³ refugees and other Asian migrants in Australia. JS 1981a.
A Japanese academic specialist in Australian studies consulted 24 history books in the Japanese curriculum, to set an exam question about Australia. The only topic he found was the White Australia policy. *TWA*, 14-15 August 1993. David Ambrose, 'Public Diplomacy: Images and Perceptions', National Conference of Heads of Art and Design Schools, Kooralbin, Q.: 15 September 1993: typescript.

²⁰⁴ Inoue Hisashi, *Jakku no Shōtai* (Jack's True Identity), Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1979. NLA OJN 5947 5200C.

²⁰⁵ Professor Hidaka resigned his chair of Sociology in 1969 in protest at riot police

objected to as a principle by those Japanese politicians who in the 1980s occasionally embarrassed their advisors by disparaging Jews or black and Hispanic Americans as the cause of America's economic problems.

After 1967, when Japan replaced Britain as Australia's largest export market, representations of Australia as farm, fishery, and quarry remained as dominant in Japan as they had been before the war. Invited to comment on Australia's image in Asia in 1963, Professor Kojima Kiyoshi responded by dwelling on Japan's postwar economic growth, on its desire to equal the West, and on how expanding trade with Australia could serve Japan's agenda: 'The image of Australia as seen in Japan by people like myself is the economic image'. (AIIA 1965) In 1973, the *Asahi Shimbun* began to merge the two most prevalent representations of Australia in the term 'economic White Australia policy' (*keizai hakugō shugi*), implying that Australia preserved a high standard of living by excluding Asians and restricting foreign imports. Australians failed to appreciate the need for unity and fusion with Asia. These messages echoed the ones Japan had delivered to Australia in 1940. (Rix 1998. Tada thesis 1997)

Australia, having led the world in per capita GNP in 1901 when Japan was underdeveloped, had fallen to 16th in the early 1990s when Japan was on top. Australia was popularly perceived in Japan to be less remorseful than the United States for its prewar protectionism, and was paying the price for it. As Japan's economic 'miracle' flourished, Australia became Japan's inferior in the hierarchy of industrialised countries. Thus Australia enabled Japanese leaders to reinforce what Tada has called their 'heterostereotype of white-Western nations'. They were scornful of the 'English disease' in strike-prone Britain, of the 'ignorant' (black and Hispanic) workforce in the United States, and particularly of Australia for its cosseted labour, lack of investment capital, and dependence on the export of unprocessed raw materials. Australians, said some Japanese businessmen, 'only work hard after 5 pm.' (Kyōko Sheridan 1992: 2) A

entering Tokyo University to counter student demonstrations. In 1981 the Australian government (acting on allegations advice from intelligence organisations in Japan about connections with the Japanese Red Army) refused visas to Hidaka and his wife, who had been invited to lecture at Universities in Australia. After protests in Australia, Hidaka was given a visa in 1983, but his wife was not. Hidaka 1984. Naomi King, *ASAA Review*, 9, 3, April 1986: 132-3.

Japanese observer remarked in 1997 that what Australia and Japan had was less a relationship than a series of transactions. (Tada thesis 1997) This discourse served to reinforce in Japanese minds the importance of immunising themselves against the diseases of the West, of studying and working hard to produce exports from 'small, resourceless', law-abiding Japan, and of living in modest comfort (for example, taking few holidays and paying more for goods produced in Japan than they cost in Hong Kong). In return, surveys proliferated that assured them they were '*Namba Wan*'.

Among more than 400 private and public sector leaders surveyed in both countries by an academic team in 1984, many of the Australians believed Japanese to be inward-looking, xenophobic, inscrutable, and proud of being mono-cultural. But Japanese opinion leaders responding to the same survey found similar qualities in Australians: insularity, exclusivity, conformity, self-centredness, anti-Asian/pro-Europeanism, and racism. Laziness and lack of excellence were traits they attributed to Australians, but not to themselves; political corruption, however, was a fault they found with Japan that they might have detected, but did not, in Australia. (Meaney and others 1988) In the face of Japan's success, and apparently fearful of being accused of racism, few Australians challenged such Japanese criticisms. (Mouer 1991) An Australian businessman who had travelled to Japan 100 times, however, dismissed claims that Japanese were any more mysterious or hard to comprehend than anyone else, saying they merely 'delight in cultivating the idea'. And Australia's gradually liberalising migration program, while still objected to as an insult to Japan, was nevertheless regarded with wonderment by some Japanese respondents as a deliberate dilution by Australia of its white, Western, core identity.²⁰⁶

Most of Meaney's Japanese respondents in 1984 seemed unaware of recent changes in Australian society. Their judgements of Australia seemed 'to be a legacy from an older era'. A majority still saw the White Australia policy as an obstacle in the relationship with Japan. Indeed, just like their countrymen in Japan's Acquisition and Competition periods (above), most of the Japanese respondents still nominated physical attributes - 'natural resources' or 'agricultural products', followed by unique

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Business man: unnamed, Meaney and others 1988: 98.

flora and fauna - as the first things that came to mind about Australia.²⁰⁷ Few recognised any distinction, values, or culture, apart from the White Australia policy: they mentioned 'rustic, naïve, easy-going, open, generous, good-natured, and pioneering' - qualities they did not associate with Americans, nor with themselves. The resilience of such representations is demonstrated by several Japanese writers who, over several decades, set out explicitly to expand Japanese images of Australia, but who actually reinforced them with the expected narratives: the simple life, mateship, the large dry land, native animals, Aborigines, culture shock, and – for women - the trials of living and raising children abroad.²⁰⁸

While Japanese affairs were widely reported in Australia, the media in Japan tended to trivialise and overlook Australia in favour of more significant countries. Kawamura politely attributed this not to Japan's lack of interest or Australia's lack of significance, but to the stability of Australian politics and the absence of problems in Australia-Japan relations. (Broinowski 1982) Australia was not included among the ten countries most mentioned in the *Asahi Shimbun* in 1982, and only just made tenth among the countries most mentioned in 29 newspapers from 14 countries. Australia was mostly omitted from the comparative surveys the press made between Japan and other advanced countries. In 1983, one in five Japanese in a survey reported by Tada regarded Australia as a 'semi-advanced' country: by 1992, that response had risen to 70 per cent.²⁰⁹ In that period, with Australia claiming 'enmeshment with Asia', it was still largely ignored by Japanese media. (Sugimoto 1991) In 2000 when the *Gaimusho* announced new scholarships for students from Asian countries to attend universities in Japan, 56 000 foreigners were studying in Japan, and the plan was to increase that

²⁰⁷ An Australian Embassy survey in 1976 listed 'top of the mind associations' among Japanese as: sheep/wool, kangaroos, large country/small population, abundant natural resources, a rich country, a 'last Paradise'. This was traced to Japanese geography textbooks. Some respondents used the word *soboku* ('simple, 'naïve', also 'pristine'). JS 1981a.

²⁰⁸ Matsumura Tei, 'A Diary on Australia – Experience in the Southern Land', *Legislation and Inquiry*, 141, August 1987: 73-78. Fukuzawa Teryuki and others, *Oceania: Australia and New Zealand*, Tokyo: NHK, 1966. Adachi Ryōko, *Australia as Seen by a Woman*, Tokyo: Japan Taimuzu, 1979. Kobayashi Hiroshi, *Australia, a Country Near and Far*, Tokyo: Asahi Sonorama, 1978. Sekine and others 1988.

²⁰⁹ Rōyama Michio, survey of area specialisation conducted for International House of Japan, 1992. Tada Masayō, 'Australian Studies and Area Studies in Japan', ANU seminar 13 November 2000.

number by 10 000 a year for five years. Reporting this, the *Asahi Shimbun* gave the numbers of foreign students in the United States, Germany, United Kingdom and France, but not the figures for Australia, that were much higher than Japan.²¹⁰

In such specific reporting as there was on Australia, two related kinds of emphasis were evident: on difference, contrasting Australia with Japan (Australia's vastness and emptiness, agricultural and mineral riches, exotic animals, laziness and frequent strikes)²¹¹; and on Westernness, a preoccupation with Australia-as-West (the White Australia policy, dependence on the United States, and Australia's replica-British culture) and, since they were Western, Australians' views of Japan. Underlying this, however, were indications that there was more complex similarity between Japan and Australia than the media admitted. Australia by the late 1980s and early 1990s was seen (and saw itself) as Western, but it was officially aspiring to acceptance in Asia. When Japanese turned their minds to Australia, located at the opposite pole of the East Asian hemisphere, in the same time-zone, and with the third largest economy in the region, some observed that Australia's situation (being Western but also being the equal of Asia) disturbingly resembled Japan's (being Asian but the equal of the West).

Now Australia, like Japan, seemed to be another unique inhabitant of the periphery, as Yoshino, an *Asahi* journalist, observed in 1990. After making the usual comparison between Japan, with too many people and too little space, and Australia, with too few people and too much space, he went on to relate this to Japan's 'leave Asia and enter the West (America)' (*datsu-A nyu-Bei*) compulsion and Australia's inclination to 'leave the West and enter Asia' (*nyu-A datsu-Bei*). The Japanese, wrote Yoshino,

have long perceived themselves to be on the 'periphery' in relation to the 'central' civilisations where the 'universal' norm has been supposed to exist. China and the West have constituted the two 'significant others' from which the

²¹⁰ 'Scholarships eyed for foreigners', *Asahi Shimbun* 23 August 2000. The statistics were: USA 490 000, Germany 250 000, UK 210 000, and France 140 000. Australia in 2000 had 120 000 foreign students in undergraduate and post-graduate institutions. DETYA March 2001.

²¹¹ By 2001, the hours worked by Australians were the second highest in the OECD. ABC RN 20 June 2001.

Japanese have borrowed models and against which they have affirmed and reaffirmed their identity. (Quoted by Sugimoto 1997)

Japan's central/peripheral, inferiority/superiority complex, always present under the surface, was particularly evoked by Australia which, by virtue of being undoubtedly Western, could be seen as Japan's only rival in Asia, but which was not by Western or Asian standards the equal of Japan. Australia was a cautionary example to Japanese of peripherality and lack of enterprise.

Having for long seen themselves as superior to all Asians (as well as to Australians), Japanese were anxious about seepages of multiculturalism into their 'homogeneous' society in the form of Vietnamese refugees and foreign workers whom they could not accept as equals and who might dilute their uniqueness.²¹² They had also to confront accusations about comfort women, wartime experiments, sex tourism, and the treatment of their own minorities, Ainu, *burakumin*, and Koreans. Disadvantaged people rioted in Osaka in 1990.²¹³ Social conscience was newly aroused by deaths and suicides from overwork, violence towards and among schoolchildren, cults like Aum Shinrikyo, and the treatment of the old, the deaf, the unemployed, children returning from abroad, and 'indigenous' people. (Maher and Macdonald 1995) In the 1980s and early 1990s, some journalists and researchers turned to Australia as a foreign example for Japan in these areas of concern.²¹⁴

²¹² In Japan's 'economic miracle' period, labour shortages led to as many as one million illegal migrants from the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Iran, and China taking over Japan's dirty jobs in construction, factories, sweatshops, and brothels.

²¹³ *Kokusaiika* (internationalisation) notwithstanding, Japan was declared in 1987 by Prime Minister Nakasone to be a 'monoracial society'. Comparable assimilationist and anti-multicultural pressures existed in Australia and were given expression in the 1990s in *People and Place*, in the policies of One Nation, and in statements about Aborigines by Hugh Morgan, Tim Fischer, and Philip Ruddock.

²¹⁴ Examples include: Fukuda Hiroshi, 'The Practicability of Human Rights Education in Pre-School and Lower Primary Classes – an examination of the Australian Human Rights Commission's Report', *Kyōgaku Kenkyū / Nihon Kyōiku Gakkai Henshu (Japanese Journal of Educational Research)* 62,3, September 1995: 237-246. NLA OJs 4901 4091. Sugimoto Yoshio, *Australia: The Choice of a Multicultural Society*, Tokyo: 2000. NLA OJN 4149.95 4535. Suzuki Seiji, *Australian Aborigines: Past and Today*, Tokyo: Akashi Shōten, 1993. NLA OJN 2249 8435 1993.

Japan had for over a century engaged in what Basil Hall Chamberlain called 'protection by mimicry' of the West. In the pre-war years, Japanese had urged Australia to rejoin Asia. But by the 1980s the hierarchy had changed again, in ways that Australians failed to appreciate, wrote Murray Sayle from Japan. Foreign relations, he argued, were governed by rules set by the Japanese side. (JS 1981b) For Australia now to aspire to be 'a legitimate and central part of the region' (Keating 2000) was taken almost as an insult by Japanese. A brief analysis of press reporting from the 1970s to 2000 that follows, shows how Australia's declining relative status, and its failure to appreciate its 'proper' cultural and economic place relative to 'unique' Japan led to this reversal. It includes as examples the Multifunctionpolis project, tourism, whaling, and the Olympic Games.

A recurrent theme in Japanese media commentary of the period about Australia, one not used about other countries, was *katamoi*, 'unrequited love', the response of a superior to the persistent advances of an inferior. The expression was used frequently in *Asahi* articles about Australia in the 1970s and 1980s, referring to the frequent visits of Australian Federal and State Ministers and the infrequent Japanese visits the other way. By using the expressions *moderu* (go up to the capital) and *dekakeru* (go down from it), the journalist Aoki implied the relationship of ruler and vassal that readers would associate with feudal Japan or China. Australia was commonly represented in the media as a 'resource superpower' (*shigen taikoku*), or 'resource continent' (*shigen tairiku*) that lacked the capital, technological advancement, and labour discipline to process its own wealth.²¹⁵ In 1988, the message of uniqueness and superiority was subtly reinforced by Japan's gift - solicited by Australia - of half the capital cost of an educational Science Centre in Canberra.²¹⁶ By putting itself in the position of a mendicant, like a developing country, Australia unwittingly damaged its slender claim to equality as the matching southern pole to Japan's northern one in the region. Persistent

²¹⁵ In 1986, at the time of the Maekawa report on economic restructuring, Japanese Minister advocated to Australia the need for similar action. Aoki: *Asahi Shimbun* 1984. Tada 1997.

²¹⁶ The funds were collected by Japanese officials, with the usual grumbling from corporations with Australian connections who were annoyed at being hounded by an insignificant country in an asymmetrical relationship to recognise an unimportant event, at a time when Japan represented a quarter of Australia's trade while Australia accounted for only three per cent of Japan's.

official efforts to promote a new image of Australia as a sophisticated and culturally advanced country compounded the *katamoi* representation.²¹⁷

Australia's importance to Japan in the late twentieth century was roughly equivalent to that of Manchukuo in the early 1940s, and the relationship was similarly asymmetrical: resources and space were virtually the only terms in which Australia was discussed. In Manchukuo, Japanese had planned to develop Hsinking (‘new capital’): in Australia, they proposed the ‘Multifunctionpolis’ (MFP) project. Australia's growing popularity as a holiday destination in the 1970s attracted Iwasaki Corporation to set up a Japanese resort at Yeppoon in Queensland, an echo of the *Nihon machi*, Japan's early settlements in the *nan yō*. Criticised by Australians as an enclave of privilege, it was destroyed by fire. (Viviani 1980b) Two vague proposals in 1986-7, from the Science and Technology Agency and from MITI's ‘Leisure’ division, to establish in Australia a ‘silver city’ for Japanese retirees and (or) a ‘supercity’ for developing advanced technology in a living environment, resembled other dekadentopia experiments in Japan and elsewhere. But the MFP looked to some Australians like the pre-war ‘Trojan horse’ migration of Japanese settlers into Manchukuo. (Sugimoto 1991a) And in Japan, it looked to some business people like another bureaucrats’ scheme that the private sector would have to pay for.

By the mid-1990s the project became mired (literally) in a derelict site near Adelaide and muddied (figuratively) by mutual misunderstandings and recriminations. Some Australian political and media comment represented the MFP as a renewed Japanese invasion, with Australians employed in menial roles. This was interpreted - accurately enough - in the *Asahi Shimbun* as revealing Australians' envy of Japan's economic growth, hostility to the presence of Japanese in Australia, and lasting resentment of the Pacific war. The *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* – reversing Japan's ‘nuclear allergy’ image - said Australia had a ‘Japan allergy’.²¹⁸ Some authorities on Japan in Australia, however, warned Australians against the lure of Japan's ‘construction state’. (Sugimoto

²¹⁷ The Australian Ambassador in 1993 was instructed to seek corporate support for ‘deliberate promotion’ of Australia in Japan as a culturally and economically sophisticated country. Dalrymple 1993.

²¹⁸ MFP: Hamilton 1991. McCormack 1989. McCormack in Milner and Quilty 1998a. Mauer 1991. Patience 1991. Sugimoto 1991a. Tada thesis 1997.

1991a. McCormack 1996) Australian egalitarianism clashed with Japan's sense of 'proper place' and *han* ('group') thinking, and the result was no project, and a further decline in Japanese representations of Australia.

Contrasts in self-perceptions were repeatedly examined in surveys commissioned from the late 1970s by the Japanese Embassy in Canberra and by Australian Embassy in Tokyo. The results were bland, repetitive, and tended to flatter the clients. But only six per cent of Nippon Research's random sample of Japanese opinion in 1988 considered Australia as having 'culture or technology from which Japan should learn', and Australia was rated midway between nations whose prospects were 'bright' (PRC, ROK), or 'dull' (ASEAN countries). (Garnaut 1989) Five years later, Nippon Research found that Australia was still considered 'semi-advanced'. Australia's 'most liked country' reputation appeared to reflect its desirability as a friendly, relatively safe tourist destination, a 'fenceless zoo'. Its 'wide nature' and unique animals were recurrently represented as likeable, but also as the unearned assets of an otherwise culturally and entrepreneurially undistinguished society.²¹⁹

The surveys and articles in the Japanese media implied that Japan had unique people who were entitled to remain homogeneous while Australia, having only unique animals, was not. Two Australian chefs were refused work visas throughout 1994 on the grounds that, Australia having no cuisine, they had nothing special to offer Japan. (*SMH* 29 June 1995: 39) *Mad Max* and *Crocodile Dundee*, widely screened in Japan, nourished these impressions, as did Australian tourism promotion. Crazes for koalas and frill-necked lizards in the 1980s both trivialised and commodified Australia. A report in 1990 by the *Age* cited 'LLL' as a Japanese acronym for Australia (large, lucky and lazy). Along with Singapore and San Francisco, Sydney was one of the three desirable holiday places for Japanese: 'SSS'. (*FEER* 20 June 1991: 90) Ambassador Hasegawa in 1992 joked that Australia was known in Japan as 'RR' (rock and reef), and 'KK' (koalas and kangaroos). In 1995 he told a Japanese reporter that large numbers of

²¹⁹ Nippon Research 1993. These themes were repeated in the findings of a survey of 15 academics and business people by the *Age* in 1990. Karpin 1995, Meaney and others 1988, Mouer 1992, Myers and Hibino 1994, Nagai 1991, Sekine 1987, Kyoko Sheridan 1992, and others produced broadly similar results.

unemployed Australians were moving to Brisbane, where they could live comfortably on high unemployment benefits. (A 9 March 1995) Constantly the point of departure was 'the Japanese model': Australia's way of doing things was invidiously compared with Japan's as 'a kind of public relations exercise'. (Mouer 1992: 3)

In 1996, when the Tokyo telephone directory contained a listing for the 'New South Whales' Government Office, it inadvertently highlighted a new focus for representations of Australia. Arriving at an International Whaling Commission conference in Adelaide in 2000, a Japanese delegate said he expected Australia to be 'disgusting'. He attacked Australia's 'cultural arrogance' and its insensitivity in seeking to restrict Japan's whaling activities, noting that Australians ate cows and kangaroos and had, a century earlier, killed whales for their blubber. Delegates warned Australians of popular Japanese resentment, and suggested that Australia didn't understand science, cultural diversity, or mutual respect. But most Australians were friendly and (as it was in their interests to say) were open to learning about other cultures.²²⁰ But they didn't mention that Japan was buying votes around the world against Australia's proposed Southern whale sanctuary. (ABC RN 15 May 2001)

Japanese in Australia fed their own themes back into public opinion in Japan where, in the 1980s and 1990s, government and the media were perennially pre-occupied with the relative importance of work and life-style, and with comparing Japan with other advanced countries in this regard. An account of ten young Japanese men who crossed Australia by bicycle represented Australia as an empty site in which to have adventures and explore social alternatives.²²¹ Nakano Fujio shunned a safer career and joined the Aboriginal tent Embassy's protests in the 1970s, urged the mainstream

²²⁰ NSWhales: *SMH* 22 August 1996: 1. Whaling disputes were not new. In 1946 MacArthur as SCAP authorized a Japanese whaling expedition over the protests of Australia, UK, NZ, and Norway, who claimed that Japanese whalers were a security threat, had violated international rules, and had been inefficient and wasteful. A compromise was reached: SCAP authorized another Japanese expedition in 1947, arguing that Japan was entitled to whale meat. Levi 1958: 130.

²²¹ Hiyama Takashi, *Saikuru Yaro Chūō Toppa* (My Breakthrough to Become a Cycle Fanatic: 5000 km. Crossing of Australia), Tokyo: Rippu Shōbō, 1980. NLA OJN 3950 4275.

Japanese media to take an interest in Indigenous issues.²²² Australians' rational libertarian solutions to urban living - including such innovations as joint bank accounts for couples, house-sharing, and pre-marital cohabitation - featured in Sugimoto's *Asahi* column, *Merubōrun kara* ('From Melbourne'), along with state-financed education and health services. Having found his own preferred lifestyle in Australia, Sugimoto was critical of Japanese who brought Nihonjinron with them to Australia and mixed only with Japanese or with settler Australians, not with other Asians or Aborigines. (Sugimoto 1991b) His wife, Satō Machiko, wrote about the relative freedom of Australian women to manage their lives, to re-educate, to initiate divorce, and to speak freely about issues like rape and abortion on which women might have been less vocal in Japan. Even so, she observed in Australian society as much male-orientation and sexism as in any other. (Satō 1987) An officially-invited journalist similarly emphasised the 'richness' (*seikatsu no yūtakusa*) and freedom of Australian life, comparing it with Japan's 'control society'. At an *Asahi* symposium on Australia, mateship, fairness and tolerance of other cultures, and young people's economic independence from their parents were positively reported by Japanese who had lived in Australia. (Tada thesis 1997) Australia's social welfare system and care of the aged were frequently represented as a model for Japan, not by businessmen like those in the 1990 *Age* survey who saw them as undermining the work ethic, but by Japanese concerned about finding international solutions to growing social problems in Japan.

In spite of these reports Australia, at the end of the twentieth century, still seemed scarcely to compute in some Japanese minds. Those for whom it did register often noted that Japan counted for more than Australia in Asia. The prewar Japanese theme of Australia as 'part of Asia' was nowhere to be seen in media representations of Australia. Articles about young Japanese realising their dreams and finding personal meaning by 'going to Asia' made no mention of the young Australians who had done the same in large numbers from the 1970s. The campaign in the 1990s for a Republic in Australia was represented in the *Asahi* as reflecting Australia's need to adjust to living in the region, but despite this, Australia was still seen as 'a country of whites by

²²² Nakano Fujio, *Biriikyan de kyōkujō ryōri o* (The Best of Food from the Billycan), *Nichigō Press* November 1997: 14. Nakano (1984) also wrote about Cowra.

Asian nations'. (Tada thesis 1997) Such racial exceptionalism made it unimaginable to describe Australia as a 'bridge' between East and West: rather, that role was claimed by several writers for Japan.

Younger Japanese, according to Sugimoto, were unaware that Japan and Australia had been at war, let alone that Japan had bombed Darwin and attacked Sydney and Newcastle from the sea. The NARA treaty, that took three years to negotiate, was not well known in Japan. (Takeda 1993) Having undertaken several joint aid projects with Australia since the 1980s, Takeda observed with satisfaction, Japan had 'received a lot of credit' for an international airport building in Vanuatu while Australia's contribution, the airstrip, was un-plaques and hence invisible. Equally invisible was Australia's flourishing rice industry when, in November 1993, bags of rice were given to people in Tokyo streets who didn't know Australians ate or produced rice, but nonetheless maintained that it was 'a psychological thing: to a Japanese person, Japanese rice does taste different to other rice'.²²³

Better informed about Australia than most other media in the region, the Japanese press still reported in 1996 that Australia's Prime Minister was Shane Stone, and the *Japan Times* referred twice in an editorial to the Port Arthur massacre as having occurred in Port Moresby. (*SMH* 7 June 1996) Australia's peacekeeping efforts in Cambodia were described as 'largely unsuccessful'. (Takeda 1993) Foreign Minister Kono, asked on Japanese television in 2000 about the electoral success in Austria of the racist leader Heider, responded that his policies were an internal matter for Australia. Ishihara, the son of the Governor of Tokyo, said on NHK that the United States and the Europeans, heavily involved in Kosovo, had to leave intervention in East Timor to 'a second-rate country, Australia'.

The blue line that traced the Marathon course through Sydney in 2000 was appropriated by Japanese television commentators and called the 'Takahashi line'. A senior businessman, watching the Sydney Olympic games, asked what language Australians spoke and was surprised to learn that Australia had indigenous people.

²²³ Kanai Tadashi, managing director of JETRO in Sydney, quoted in the

During the Games, popular author Murakami Haruki sought to remedy such Japanese parochialism with his account of Australian life, both wild and domestic, in *Sydney!* (2000). To the copious detail he offered on food, and somewhat less on history, he added compliments about the real grass in the Homebush stadium and the clean and airy toilets. Australia and America, he wrote, were in a 'younger and older brother' relationship; while the United States was settled by ambitious migrants, Australia got British criminals. But Australia was the blurred backdrop for his focus on Japan's athletes, Japan's much bigger sports venues and, when Stradbroke Island appeared it was merely the setting for the Japanese movie *Honeymoon*. Australia had little more significance for many Japanese than a film set. As such, it fitted easily into the representation of 'the foreign' with little disturbance to Japan's self-image.

Therefore for Australian officials to claim that an agreement to annual Prime Ministerial meetings proved the relationship with Australia was 'in good shape' and improving (*SMH* 3 June 1997), was to fail to detect what Japanese said to each other about Australia and its declining status.²²⁴ To argue, as Meaney did (1999) that the Australia-Japan relationship was being redefined in a way that could 'break down the barriers between East and West and provide a new model for cross-cultural understanding' was to ignore the modes of representation that have been shown here to have been almost unchanged for a century. For Japanese leaders to induct Australia into the East Asia of the future would be to deny Japan's inherent superiority, either as Western or as Asian, and that had always been too much to expect.

²²⁴ *Australian Business Asia* 25 May – 7 June 1994: 3.
Between 1997 and 2001, no Australia-Japan Ministerial Committee meetings took place, suggesting a serious downgrading of the relationship.

2.4 INDIANS

Indian representations throughout the century emphasised that Australia was not, and did not want to be, fully independent of Britain or of the United States; it was committed to discrimination against Indians on the basis of race; and it could not be relied on as a participant in the Asian Renaissance. It failed to support Asian, and specifically Indian, causes because it lacked Asian identity.

Like their millions of Chinese neighbours, Indians inhabited their own vast world, with a similarly long history and comparable internal complexities. Indians in their equally far-flung *hegira* tended, like the overseas Chinese, to recreate that world abroad. The British Empire gave India early, multiple contacts with Australia and the other dominions: 'A vast network of imperial connections in government, administration, the army, the church, the law, education, and enterprise, extended from India to the Australian colonies'. (Kingston in Walker 1990) For a time, Australian Christians were included in the Anglican archdiocese of Calcutta. An Indian regiment marched in the Sydney parade that celebrated Federation on 1 January 1901. In their colonial period Indians, unlike Chinese and Japanese, could identify with Australians as fellow British subjects, sharing language, institutions, ideas, and war service. Indeed Australia then seemed as much a satellite of India as a colony of England.²²⁵

The British imperial practice of transporting labour between colonies operated in much the same way as transnational corporations now move their investments in pursuit of comparative advantage. Some Indians arrived in Australia with the earliest settlers and in convict ships. (Clark 1962: 94) Until 1839, when the Colonial Office prohibited migration of indentured labourers, Indian men found work in Australia as hawkers, cameleers, servants, horse grooms, seamen, shepherds, and sugar plantation workers. Sikhs took up dairy and wheat farming as free settlers in northeast NSW, and merchants from Sind operated in Melbourne.²²⁶ In 1866, 120 camels accompanied by 12 'Afghans' arrived in northern Australia. Most of these and other 'Afghans' were

²²⁵ Geoffrey Blainey quoted by Gurry 1996: 12.

British subjects from what is now Pakistan and was then India.²²⁷ The enterprising Abdul Wade, for example, with his settler Australian partners brought camels from South Australia, and Wade went back to India in the 1890s to select 350 more camels for their profitable Bourke Carrying Company. Bourke residents, apparently fearful of competition with the bullock trains, sought to restrict camel driving. A leading cameleer, Gunny Khan, tried to join the Carriers Union and was scorned. 'Afghans' employed by the Bourke company struck for higher wages in 1899 and were imprisoned under the Masters and Servants Act, and one committed suicide. (Markus 1979. Lyng 1927) Ahmed Medmoosha, the last 'Afghan' camel driver to survive a hard life on the Birdsville track, in 1997 declared 'We got it easy now', and said he would never go back to India. 'No way. Not my country over there, mate'.²²⁸

By 1901, there were 4681 Indians in Australia, and they were as active as the Chinese and Japanese in protesting unequal treatment, often in similar terms. When the Commissioner of Railways in Queensland in 1900 set aside special carriages for 'coloured' people an Indian, S. Khan, refused to enter them, asserting that he was 'not going to mix with Kanakas and Chinamen'. After being forcibly removed, he took action against the Commissioner, and was awarded a small amount for damages. (Markus 1979) But train carriages in some parts of Australia, like those Ghandi encountered in South Africa, remained segregated until the 1930s.

Indians in the colonial period sought to offset British control of their lives by pointing to the antiquity of their civilisation, and set out to gain international esteem by invoking their spiritual traditions. The issue of migration to Australia or other dominions was linked to these themes. They were better able than the Chinese and even the Japanese to secure London's intervention on their behalf with the Australian colonies in support of non-discriminatory legislation. (Nairn 1956) In 1922 Prime Minister W.M. Hughes, impressed with India's contribution to the 1914-18 war, invited to Australia Srinivasa Sastri, President of the Servants of India, a society that opposed indentured labour and

²²⁶ Lyng 1927. Dwight 1976. De Lepervanche 1984. Mackerras 1992.

²²⁷ Richard Guilliatt, 'The brick veneer of civility', *Good Weekend* 13-14 October 2001.

²²⁸ Medmoosha quoted by the *Australian Magazine*, 8-9 November 1997: 9.

sought full citizenship and equal rights for Indians in other Dominions. (*Argus* 12 June 1922) Australians 'welcomed him and applauded his objectives', even though the *Bulletin* warned that Home Rule would result in Indians demanding free migration within the Empire. (22 June 1922) Those Indians whose wealth and status few Australians could rival took particular exception to Australia's exclusion policy. But maharajahs didn't migrate: 'Some aristocratic visitors were indignant with the formalities they had to endure to secure entry to Australia early in this century, but apart from them most Indians arriving in this country until the 1960s had peasant or pastoral backgrounds'. (De Lepervanche 1994).

Indian nationalists were well aware that in the early twentieth century Europeans regarded the whole of Asia as a 'backward continent'. Nehru spent some months in Geneva in 1925-26 studying the records of the League of Nations, including Australia's role under Hughes in the battle with Japan over the racial equality clause. He attended the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Brussels in 1927, at which eight Asian countries were represented, and spoke against the use of Indians to fight for Britain against nationalists in other colonies. (Jansen 1996) He recommended closer contact between Asian nationalists. In China in 1939 he stressed Indians' ancient cultural links with the Chinese, and proposed a federation of India, China, and other 'Eastern countries' as a step towards a 'larger world federation'. (Deshingkar 1999)

These themes established the Indian representations of Australia that are discussed in the next two sections. In India the interrelated but contrary strivings over proximity to or distance from the British centre, over aligned or non-aligned status, and over identification with Asia or the West, were often expressed through the metaphor of club membership. For hegiraic Indians in transition between the two societies, civilisational superiority and who could claim it had more bearing on the way they represented Australia.

Members of the club

For most of the twentieth century, the 'supervisory presence' of Britain and of the United States hung over mutual perceptions of Indians and Australians. Associations

with the West and assumptions about each other condemned them to keep trying to escape from, and then relapsing into, mutual indifference, neglect, ignorance, and even distaste.²²⁹

Tensions arose between Australians who considered themselves to be British, and those Indians who, while they might oppose the Raj, had absorbed the values and status system of the imperial metropolis, and felt entitled to identify with it as at least the equals of Australians. In Calcutta in 1944, Richard Casey faced hostile politicians and journalists who objected to an Australian being British Governor of Bengal (1944 to 1946). British or not, he was an Australian, and 'Australia refuses full citizenship to Indians. That exclusive attitude [cut] deep into the Indian soul'.²³⁰ Casey recalled:

I could not have had a worse press before I arrived. They protested to high heaven against an Australian being sent to govern them. How are they to endure the humiliation of a governor from a country that prohibits Indians from entering it? (Casey 1962)

Writing his diary as *An Australian in India* (1947), Casey could not object to being addressed by Nehru as 'You British...' Indeed he wrote in those terms of himself, although he claimed to have tried occasionally to remind his masters in London of Australian interests. But as he remarked, dominion status had

the taint of subservience in Indian minds. The vast majority of Indians who think about it at all still believe that Britain gives orders on the side to Australia, New Zealand, etc., and that we touch our hats to Downing Street in private. If they only knew!

²²⁹ Supervisory presence: Bruce Bennett, 'Glimpses of India', and Satendra Nandan, 'Delhi: Among the Ruins', in Ganguly and Nandan 1998.

²³⁰ *Amrita Bazar Patrika* (Allahabad), 21 January 1944. A resolution in the Indian Legislative Assembly stated 'India does not tolerate appointment of a Dominion administrator so long as such Dominions follow the closed door policy towards the Indians'. Australian Trade Commission, Simla, cablegram, 25 January 1944. AA A989: 44/43/554/2/1.

But Indians did know, because they remembered Imperial conferences and two World Wars – one still being fought - and could not see that much had changed in the old Commonwealth. Casey's performance was reported to have been impressive, but Australian officials were deluding Canberra when they claimed that Indians attached positive significance to 'Mr Casey's Australian nationality, over and above the ability he has displayed'.²³¹

Under the leadership of Chifley and Evatt, Australia positioned itself not to change migration policy but to act as an international advocate for middle powers, especially those in Asia. Partnership with India was essential. Australia and India brought the conflict between Indonesians and the Dutch to the UN Security Council, in the face of a 'final attempt by the Dutch to knock out the young republic'. (Jansen 1996) The Indian and Australian delegations argued for the inclusion in the United Nations Charter of international accountability for trustee and non-self-governing territories. As External Affairs Minister, Evatt was described by an Indian writer as projecting a more 'likeable image' than any other Australian statesman in India or in Asia. (Gurry 1996)

Nehru, as we saw in Part 1, invited Australia to be represented at the two Asian conferences in New Delhi in 1947 and 1949. Evatt and Burton went to the second of these, on Indonesia, and the Australia was the only 'Western' country represented. Nehru and his colleagues planned the 1947 conference as an alternative forum to the 'white men's club' that the League of Nations had been and that they feared the UN was becoming. (Jansen 1996) Addressing the 250 delegates as 'fellow Asians', the Indian leader spoke on the theme 'Asia Finds Herself Again'. He went so far as to describe Australia as a 'component part of Asia', and welcomed Australian observers, saying they had many problems in common with Asian countries. He called on delegates to 'build a New Asia'. (*Speeches*, 1, 1964. Deshingkar 1999)

The change to conservative government in 1949 entrenched anti-communism in Australia for more than two decades, and the feelers that Evatt put out to Asian

²³¹ Lionel Wigmore memorandum 14 December 1945. AA A 1066/4. P145/9.
Wayne Moredout, 'Mr Casey Goes to Calcutta: the Controversial Australian Governor of Bengal, 1944-46', in Pavel and Weigold 2000: 27-32.

nationalists were withdrawn. India turned its face away from Australia, and showed more sympathy with Japan's arguments at the peace treaty negotiations in San Francisco (1951) than with those of Australia. The more Australians behaved like America's emissaries in the region, the less Indian leaders were interested in associating with them, apart from the rituals of cricket, Commonwealth meetings, and the opportunities presented by the Colombo Plan (1951). Nehru's foreign policy adviser, Krishna Menon, was particularly critical of SEATO (established 1954), calling it 'a modern version of protectorate'. He obliquely associated Australia with

certain imperial Powers, and some others, who may have an interest in joining together to protect a territory which they say is in danger. We are part of that territory and we say that we do not want to be protected.²³²

Although Nehru would later have to turn to the West for support against China, he saw SEATO - like NATO and CENTO - as being 'inclined dangerously in the direction of spheres of influence to be exercised by powerful countries'. (Watt 1967) India was not a party to the Manila Treaty or the Baghdad Pact, which were seen by Nehru and Menon as dividing nations into power blocs - the inclusion of Pakistan being a particular irritant.

To Nehru and his Congress colleagues, several of whom had been jailed by the British for their views, Australia appeared to be suffering from arrested national development. In the early 1960s, Nehru told his officials it was useless sending an intellectual as High Commissioner to Australia.²³³ For Nehru, Australia's alliances showed that Australia 'could have no opinion of [its] own on the great international issues, or freedom to express it'. (Crocker 1971) Even as he welcomed the decline of Britishness in Australians, Nehru was put off by the slavish support Australian governments gave to America's military ventures, and particularly by their refusal to recognise the PRC. India had been aggrieved at having to send its men to fight and suppress peoples with whom they had no quarrel, and who were also struggling for freedom. (Nehru 1961) Australia

²³² V.K. Krishna Menon, as Secretary-General of the India Institute in London from 1924, influenced not only many young Indians but also Subandrio (Indonesia), U Pe Kin (Burma), and Wickramasinghe (Ceylon). Jansen 1996: 21. Watt 1967.

²³³ T.T. Krishnamachari to Sir James Plimsoll, Australian High Commission New Delhi to DEA, 28 June 1963. AA A1838/274:169/10/7.

seemed to suffer from no such scruples: it was an American stooge, a 'dancing monkey', a country trained to respond to the commands of others.²³⁴ India, having been labelled an 'Anglo-American satellite' by the Soviet Union, found Australia a convenient target for these sensitivities. (Brecher 1958)

It was said both of Nehru and of R.G. Menzies that they were Englishmen at heart, with Britain as their second home.²³⁵ Nehru, who kept India in the Commonwealth as an independent republic, told J.K. Galbraith he was the 'last Englishman to rule in India'.²³⁶ Menzies' Prime Ministerial term from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s closely matched his own. Menzies considered himself 'British to the boot-heels', and declared that 'the thing that sticks firmly in the mind of the average Australian is that he [sic] is British'. He had 'little inclination for Eastern cultures'.²³⁷ Nehru on the other hand urgently wanted independence from Britain, and was impatient with Australia's lack of desire for it. He saw India as 'the central point in the Asian picture', while Menzies could not conceive of any place in an Asian picture for Australia. (Brecher 1958) Yet the patrician Nehru identified himself with a club similar to Menzies' male 'circle of light'. (Brett 1992) Just as Menzies epitomised his era in Australia, Nehru's endeavour in India was 'to transform the whole nation into a land of Nehrus'. (Karanjia 1961) Nehru was of the élite, and so exclusion from the inner circle by an Australian nouveau arrivé was a greater insult than anything he or Gandhi had suffered in England. As revenge, perhaps, or in a telling oversight, the index of Nehru's autobiography (1947-1964) omitted Australia.

The differences between Nehru and Menzies infected mutual perceptions of Australians and Indians for two decades - a period when personal diplomacy counted for much - and their legacy endures.²³⁸ Although the two leaders had at least 12 meetings

²³⁴ Crocker 1971: 200. Chauvel in Legge 1997. Gurry 1996. Broinowski in Ganguly and Nandan 1998.

²³⁵ Wolpert 1997, quoted by Robin Jeffrey, 'Passages from India', *TARB* August 1997: 6-8.

²³⁶ Nehru quoted by Lucian Pye, *FEER* 9 September 1999: 42.

²³⁷ Menzies, 'Australia's Place in the Empire', *AQ* June 1935. Meaney 1999: 112.

²³⁸ Menzies in 1939 said it would be 'suicidal' for Australia to formulate its own foreign policy. Seeing a 'great war' with communism as imminent, non-alignment was 'foolish'. As well as increasingly aligning Australian interests with American interests, he identified

between 1951 and 1962, aircraft range on the Sydney-London route had more to do with their frequency than personal inclination, and their relationship did not improve. During Menzies' 1959 visit, Nehru 'could hardly conceal his boredom and impatience' with Menzies' anecdotes. Menzies thought that they got on better, and said he would have called Nehru by his 'Christian name' had he recalled what it was. (Crocker 1966) But everything Menzies saw in Asian countries 'confirmed his belief in the superiority of the English'. (Brett 1992) When he visited New Delhi in 1959 he displayed no interest in India or the Indians, dismissing the country as too difficult for any 'Occidental' to understand. (Gurry 1996)

Menzies dismissed Casey's advice about Australia's reputation in India in 1959 as 'a sorry rag-bag of clichés'. (Gurry 1996) Menzies, a future Australian High Commissioner wrote, was 'rapidly compiling a reputation in Asia for unsuccessful defence of attitudes and interests which Asians do not admire'.²³⁹ Menzies' refusal to criticise apartheid was a source of particular irritation to Nehru, whose condition for remaining in the Commonwealth was 'strict adherence to...racial equality'. (Gurry 1996) The Indian press denounced a speech by Menzies in South Africa as establishing an axis of anti-coloured policy. (Crocker 1966) In 1954, the *Statesman* declared editorially that the White Australia policy was an affront to Asian self-respect...If it is passed over in silence that does not mean that it is forgotten. Often it rankles...To admit Asian immigration under control would be an act of high statesmanship and at the same time it would be materially beneficial to Australia. (24 June 1954. Crocker 1956) The *Times of India* echoed this, almost word for word. During the Menzies era, Australia began widely to be disliked, as another editor of the *Statesman* recalled. It was derided as the place where Anglo-Indians go to die: a three-pronged jibe at Australia's migrant selection process, Australians' pronunciation of 'today', and the country's location off the map of the known world.²⁴⁰

himself with the Empire: 'I am a Colonial, born in the colony of Victoria, and I am very proud of that fact'. (Gurry 1996)

²³⁹ The defence of internal affairs would later be commonly used by leaders of Southeast Asian countries to counter negative comment. Grant: *Age* 25 March 1961: 2.
²⁴⁰ Sunanda Datta-Ray, 'Where Good Anglo-Indians Go to Die', *SMH* 28 November 1983: 9. Broinowski 1982.

The issue of club membership, or acceptability to the group, is fundamental in multilateral relations. Here too, Menzies and Nehru parted company. The editor of the *Statesman* wrote that Menzies favoured a 'minor club of the old white dominions, leaving the New Asian and African members out in the cold'; and at Commonwealth meetings Menzies was seen as a staunch champion of South Africa. (Datta-Ray 1983) Even while élite Indians affected indifference to it, the exclusion from clubs in India of non-British people, even of Indians who were British subjects, was a long-standing irritant. The insulting practice did not end with India's independence, nor was it forgotten in other former colonies like Malaya, Singapore, Burma, and Hong Kong, where Britain's Australian subjects were observed by their Asian fellow-subjects to be accorded 'white' privileges. 'Racialism in India', wrote Nehru in 1961, 'is not so much English versus Indian: it is European as opposed to Asiatic'. He recalled railway carriages, waiting rooms, and park benches that had been marked 'For Europeans Only' as an 'irritating and exasperating reminder of one's enslaved condition'. He remembered that refugees from Burma in World War 2 took two roads, the better of which was reserved for British and Europeans and was called 'The White Road'. Such stories of discrimination, he said, had a powerful effect on the Indian mind. But it was literate Indians who could read them, not *harijans*.

The failure of the British 'white' dominions to distance themselves from discrimination against Indians, wrote Nehru, was a powerful factor in India's break with them. (Nehru 1961) Australia was often referred to in the Indian press as constituting in itself a 'white men's club', and seeking to perpetuate clubs with the same membership rules in the Commonwealth and the United Nations. The continued existence in Australian cities of all-male, mainly Anglo clubs that prided themselves on resembling 'British club[s] in India' did nothing to enhance Australia's reputation.²⁴¹ Indians and others in the developing world were attracted to Marxist-Leninism by its claim to espouse political independence and social justice based on equality regardless of sex, race, colour, and class (Myrdal 1968) and, as Crocker observed from Delhi, 'much of what passes for Communism in Asia and Africa is a reaction against race discrimination'. (Crocker 1956) But the prevalence of the club metaphor in the Indian discourse indicates that

²⁴¹ John Huxley and Maryann Stengerb, 'Meanwhile, the Adelaide Club snores on',

class/caste distinction had as much salience as racial discrimination for Indian critics of Australia. Class and caste were India's unresolved problems, and Australia was their scapegoat.

India and Australia remained officially at odds over migration. It was India, not Australia, that called in 1945 for 'recognition of fundamental human rights for all men and women, irrespective of race, colour or creed in all nations and in all international relations and associations of nations with each other'. When an Australian Minister, Bertram Stevens, said in 1945 that Australia had fought in the war to 'keep Australia white', it generated headlines in the Indian press and 'expressions of indignation were heard on every hand'. An Indian commentator wondered if the purpose of the new United Nations was to guarantee the 'security of White Australia and New Zealand'. (Brawley 1995) Another asked what was the meaning of a 'British Commonwealth' if a British subject was not free to enter some parts of it. (Chandrasekar 1944) Australian officials in New Delhi admitted that Australia had become 'one of the most hated countries in India' and that 'the large majority of Indians today associate Australia, first and foremost, with the traditional White Australia Policy'. In 1954 Crocker had only to appear in his car with 'Australia' on its plate to attract cries of 'colour bar'.²⁴²

The migration issue – with its subtext of class/caste - continued to sap the postwar relationship of goodwill, as Indian High Commissioners in Canberra - Sir Raghunath Paranjpye in 1946 and General K.M. Cariappa in 1954 - took several opportunities to point out, calling it a 'stigma on Asia'.²⁴³ Paranjpye commended the United States for its recent enactment of a migration quota (of 100 a year) for India. His daughter wrote:

²⁴² *SMH* 28 May 1994: 1, 7.

Wigmore and Mackay 1945. Australian High Commissioner, New Delhi to Evatt: 22 December 1946. Australian High Commissioner, New Delhi to Casey: 6 December 1954. AA A1838/283: 169/10/1.

²⁴³ Paranjpye speech to Wollongong Rotary Club 16 July 1946. AA A1067/1:M46/9/21. Cariappa, quoted by Francis Stuart, EA record of conversation, 24 June 1954. AA A 1838/278. Two views of Cariappa's performance were reported by Durga Das: 'The conservative section thought that General Cariappa did much harm by breaking the diplomats' code and making Australians...even more nervous. In fact they attribute a part of the anti-Indian feeling in the ruling class to General Cariappa's "indiscretions". But the people at large, including men in the universities and in business life, were all praise for General Cariappa for he talked without inhibitions as a sincere friend and told Australians to think afresh on the subject of "white Australia"'. *Hindustan Times*, 4 June 1957.

'Down under is how the Yankees locate Australia. To me as an Indian, it was White Australia...bare facedly crying out its aversion to the coloured races'. (Paranjpye 1951) Cariappa publicly advocated a large Indian migration quota for Australia and New Zealand, claiming that the White Australia policy was driving 400 million Indians and Pakistanis towards communism. He proposed that thousands of Indian ex-servicemen, 'good types', be brought to cultivate rice at Humpty-Doo. (Gurry 1996) He also suggested in Darwin that Indian teachers could teach Aboriginal children.²⁴⁴ Canberra's official response was that he was intruding into Australia's internal affairs. Driving through Ceylon on his way back to India, Cariappa described Australians as charming and generous with 'no semblance of any colour prejudice'; the Australian government, however, 'for policy reasons' maintained a 'colour bar'. The General liked to drive himself, but took his driver in case of a flat tyre or a breakdown. Apparently unaware of the double standard, he praised Australians of all classes for their respect for the dignity of labour, and for thinking no manual work was beneath them. (*Ceylon Daily News* 23 April 1956)

The obsession of the Indian press with racism in Australia and other 'white' countries in the 1950s coincided with complaints by African students in India that they were discriminated against because of their colour. In New Delhi, Crocker observed in advertisements in Indian newspapers evidence of the cultural preference for pale skin. Historically, India's class/caste divide was geographic, with Sanskrit-educated Northerners priding themselves on being paler than and superior to Southern Dravidians. Gandhi said that *apartheid* in South Africa was the Hindu caste system in another guise, and Nehru admitted that colour was the basis of caste. (Crocker 1966) Class difference included a 'colour factor' that lasted until Gandhi's time – and longer. (Crocker 1956. Parsons 1977) The Indian anthropologist Arjun Appadurai wrote critically of caste as a 'gate-keeping concept', a 'given' or 'pre-discursive' cultural

²⁴⁴ 'Soldier Speaks His Mind', *News*, editorial 23 June 1954. John Oldham, Special Adviser on Commonwealth Relations wrote: 'Indians like General Cariappa [an "Anglicised" Indian] have a class-conscious superiority to Australians or other white people and that they dislike mixed-marriages more than the average Australian does, and...that it is desirable to retain General Cariappa as High Commissioner here rather than have the "thruster" type, exemplified by Mr Ratnam [Deputy High Commissioner]'. Oldham memorandum, DEA 23 June 1954. AA A1838/278. Casey record of conversation, 8 November 1953. AA A1838/278. Watt cable to Crocker 25 November 1953. AA A 1838/278.

category that was deployed by the West, like Orientalism, to maintain post-colonial power.²⁴⁵ But as we have seen, Australia offered many opportunities to those who wanted to transform class and caste into Occidentalism.

Australia was a perfect site onto which to displace domestic racial concerns and long-standing civilisational humiliation. Frank Moraes, Gandhi's biographer, visited Australia in 1957 and commented on the perennial issue of migration, a policy he said was 'not only anomalous but dangerous'. (Moraes 1958. Broinowski 1982) A visiting Speaker of the Indian Parliament, Shri M.A. Ayyangar, suggested that 'Australia should earmark some of its unpopulated areas for Asian immigrants if Australians did not want to mix with Asians'. (*Age* 19 October 1959) Celebrated migration cases in the 1950s and 1960s involving Fijian Indians, most of them supported by the liberal press in Australia, were opposed by the conservative government, and reported by the press in India.²⁴⁶ In 1961, a letter to the *Times of India* described Australia as a country that 'would not touch an Indian with a pair of tongs'. (14 March 1961)

Frank Moraes was one of eight journalists from former British colonies invited to tour Australia in April-May 1957 at Casey's initiative. Another Indian on the tour, Durga Das of the *Hindustan Times*, declared the visit a success after they had seen a kangaroo and met Donald Bradman. He reported on the perennial issue of migration, and on Australia's need for more capital, industry, and people. He supported his message by indulging in what might be called 'identity nostalgia'. The clocks in the Hotel Australia, he complained, showed the time in no Asian country. 'How time ran in Asia and Africa was a matter of indifference to Sydney,' he wrote, 'for life in Australia is not integrated to anything that happens in those continents'. He did not speculate on whether time in Sydney was a consideration in New Delhi hotels. At the airline counter in Melbourne's Menzies Hotel, India was not listed as a destination, he observed: Australians in their thousands by-passed India on their way to Europe. This showed a 'positive lack of interest in things Asian and Indian'. Asians did not make news in Australia the way

²⁴⁵ Appadurai, 'Number in the Colonial Imagination', in Breckenridge and Van Veer 1993. Debjani Ganguly, 'Can the Dalit Speak: Caste, Coloniality and the New Humanities?', in Pavel and Weigold 2000: 93-104.

²⁴⁶ Cases included Nancy Prasad 1962-67, Ram Lal 1966, and Sheena Baksh 1964.

Britain or America did. Australian papers were provincial: Indian news came to Australia via London. Das later made a similar 'identity nostalgia' complaint on a visit to Europe.

In 1961 Peter Hastings toured several Asian countries and found the reverse of Das' identity nostalgia: Australia was viewed with 'utter indifference, or ignorance'. (*Bulletin*, 11 November 1961) Australia was 'distant, insignificant' to most Indians, Neil McInnes confirmed from India in 1960, and White Australia was 'the first thing an Indian thinks about Australia...[and] also probably the last'. (*Bulletin*, 28 December 1960) McInnes could not use the abbreviation 'W. Australia' because it would be understood to mean White Australia. (Glover thesis 1988)

In their reporting, as Casey might have expected, the Indian journalists combined projection of Indian preoccupations with reinforcement of Indian self-regard. Australian missionaries, Das reported, were 'painting ugly pictures of Hindu society with its "inhuman" caste system'. But Moraes praised the pioneering Scots and Irish who had set up a working man's paradise in Australia. He found the status of women low, as measured by their numbers in parliament. But he attributed Australia's high rate of juvenile delinquency to working women. Roads were 30 years behind the times. (Moraes 1958) Das contrasted the life-style of Indian and Sri Lankan leaders with Australia's treatment of their parliamentarians as ordinary people. Australia, he informed his Indian readers, was a land of 'capitalism without strings of socialism' in which Australian 'working men and women feel as important as any boss'. (*Hindustan Times* 7 June 1957) Another journalist in the group, Dr Krishnalal Shridharani of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, echoed Das' observations. He added that Australia was 'full of the milk of human kindness', but was like a child who refused to grow up and leave its comfortable home.²⁴⁷

A form of national sibling rivalry between India and Australia over proximity to the former imperial power continued to find expression in cricket. Expatriate journalist Tariq

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Dr Shridharani wrote: 'Before they came here there was practically nothing except the bushmen', and the 'only vegetarian bear in the world'. *Amrita Bazar Patrika* 6 May 1957. AA A1838/1.

Ali recalled that in cricket in the 1940s and 1950s, as in much else, England was everywhere the model.

Our heroes were the great English batsmen and bowlers of the time. There were great Australians, too, but, we joked, they were only Englishmen twice removed - once from prison and once from England.²⁴⁸

In 1996 Arjuna Ratnatunga made a similar crack about Australians' convict ancestry, comparing it to Sri Lankans' 2 500 years of culture.²⁴⁹ Far from sport bridging the cultural gap between Australians and Pakistanis (as Garnaut claimed it did), it became something close to war. As an Australian later observed, 'the longer they spend together, the more apart they grow'.²⁵⁰ An editorial in the *Times of India* argued that cricket had been 'vernacularised', becoming a 'clash of absolutes', or even a cultural confrontation between light and dark. (29 January 1999) Allan Border and Shane Warne were better known in India than the Australian Foreign Minister: but Downer batted on regardless, repeatedly claiming cricket as an Indian-Australian 'bond'.²⁵¹ And yet, as details emerged of years of involvement in match-fixing by some Indians, Pakistanis, and Australians, money was shown clearly to be a closer bond between them than the noble game.²⁵²

In the early 1970s, with Labor in power in Canberra, Australia was reported in New Delhi to be rediscovering the region, and making what the *Times of India* called a

²⁴⁸ Tariq Ali, 'Anyone for gulli-danda?', *LRB* 15 July 1999: 30-31.

²⁴⁹ Ratnatunga quoted by Martin Blake, *Age* 16 May 1996. Suvendrini Pereira, 'Cricket, with a Plot': Nationalism, Cricket and Diasporic Identities', in Gilbert and others 2000: 14-26.

²⁵⁰ Garnaut, *A* 6 November 1993. Greg Baum, 'Court in Two Lands, Minds', *Age* and *Sydney Morning Herald Cricket* (online), 9 January 1999. Brian Stoddart, 'Identity Spin: Imagined Cultures in Australian and Indian Cricket', in Pavel and Weigold 2000: 105-112.

²⁵¹ Brian Stoddart, 'Identity Spin: Imagined Cultures in Australian and Indian Cricket', in Pavel and Weigold 2000: 105-112.

²⁵² In the 1940s Australia played a leading role in facilitating the entry of India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka into international cricket. The 1947-48 Indian tour of Australia was 'a rite of passage, a crucial moment in history', as was the 1997 test series, in which India defeated Australia. Syd Harrex, 'Unfinished Journeys: Shocks of Recognition', Adelaide: CRNLE, Flinders University of South Australia, 1998. New Delhi Police Commissioner K.K. Paul said 'information' said to have been given by players to bookmakers was a euphemism for match fixing. Hamish McDonald, 'Rich as creases', *SMH* 3 February 2001: 29.

'Welcome Shift'. Whitlam sought to revive the idea of an Asian Forum that had first been proposed at the Inter-Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in 1947. (Deshingkar 1999) Under Labor, Australia was 'ready to put out one hand from under the American umbrella, to test the weather, and to share with some sensible Asians our thoughts and hopes about affairs in the region'. Indians asked Grant, as High Commissioner, 'Is it possible that at last Australia is joining Asia?' (Grant 1982, 1988). The pattern of one Australian party's foreign policy displacing the other was observed in India, with the result that claims of permanent change were not believed. The *Times of India* in 1976, after another change of government in Canberra, and after the White Australia policy had been officially dead for some years, editorially called Australia 'a white-dominated country this side of Suez...a historical freak'.²⁵³ When Grant called on Mrs Gandhi before leaving New Delhi in 1976 and offered to pass on the new Prime Minister a message she replied, 'What's the use?' (Grant 1982) Enthusiasm temporarily revived when Indira Gandhi visited Australia and called Australia a bridge between East and West, and again, when Bob Hawke and Rajiv Gandhi developed a 'strong rapport'. (Gurry 1995)

The findings of a survey commissioned by DFAT of business people and 'opinion shapers' in five Indian cities in 1995 revealed little change in the pattern.²⁵⁴ Most of the respondents had no awareness of Australia as a producer of high-value-added products or services, nor indeed of Australia as having a significant manufacturing sector. Indians knew Australia as large and underpopulated, with wealth derived from natural resources and primary produce. Apart from being familiar with Australians as cricket players, they knew even less about Australia than the East Asians who were surveyed for DFAT in 1994. Like them, Indians reported prevailing images of friendly, easy-going people, 'laid-back' rather than cultured, honest rather than shrewd, and lucky rather than enterprising. Australia was understood to be becoming 'more Asianised', but not to want to include South Asia in its focus, and particularly not in APEC.²⁵⁵ Australia was not a high priority destination for Indians on tourist or business

²⁵³ 'Australia Back to Old Role', 13 August 1976: 8.

²⁵⁴ N. Ram, who toured Australia for the *Hindu* and published two articles in 1989, anticipated these themes. Gurry 1995: 250.

²⁵⁵ Ross Garnaut, 'Australia's Asia-Pacific Journey', *AQ* 64, 4: 1992: 359.

visits, and Australian education, while recognised, was not regarded as internationally first-rate. (DFAT 1996) A one-off image promotion event, a short-lived marketing strategy, visits by Ministers, and promises to expand Australian studies were unlikely to change these perceptions in the short term. Australia continued to aggravate them whenever it sold defence equipment to Pakistan, objected to nuclear tests, or joined the US in demanding reductions in import protection. An Indian scholar observed that in the late twentieth century 'the regional élites' of both ASEAN and APEC 'cloaked their distinct contributions to the narrative of Capitalism in Confucian robes'. Thus they excised India from Asia: a process in which Australia was – and was seen by Indians as being – complicit.²⁵⁶ Indeed by the 1990s Australia's official definition of Asia excluded the Indian subcontinent. (Jayasuriya and Kee 1999)

Summarising the period, Gurry argued that two themes, the White Australia policy and Australia's status as a satellite of the USA, 'underpinned most of India's contact with Australia until 1972, and had considerable influence thereafter.' (Gurry 1995) Even if the British connection, cricket, clubs, and all that, was waning, why did these two negatives seem to have such lasting salience? Like all stereotypes, they depended on a combination of verisimilitude, Indian observation, and Australian self-representation, all of which kept being reinforced. But they also enabled Indians to project onto Australia - a distant, unimportant target - their own preoccupations with caste, race, subalternity, poverty, economic and social change, security, and communal and religious conflict. Indian writers and their readers derived reinforcement from dismissing Australia as merely 'a place to live' compared to India, which was 'a civilisation'. Reaffirming India as his middle kingdom, a Supreme Court judge in 1999 eloquently put Australians presumptuous enough to talk of belonging to the region in their civilisational place:

India's links with China and the South Seas stretch back into history and exude vast possibilities in the future. It is Australia that must look beyond its 'market

'Australia has traditionally had a fixed notion of "Asia" as extending no further West than Rangoon'. Grant 1995: 257.

²⁵⁶ Ravi Arvind Palat, 'Is India a part of Asia?', *Approaching Asia from Asia: Journeys, Displacements, Themes*, Sariska, India: 19-21 February 2000.

predictions' and fall in line, not the other way round...Indian interest in Australia is as intricate as it is wary. It is a place to live - part of the Indian diaspora. It is a nation out there - 'down under'. It is seen with friendly eyes, but it is not trusted as an ally for all seasons.²⁵⁷

Recurrent official bursts of mutual enthusiasm²⁵⁸ had so often fizzled into inaction that, by the late 1990s, there was more evidence among Indians in transition in Australia of changing representations or confirmation of long-held views about Australia. The next section considers them.

Transitions

For many South Asian - Indian and Sri Lankan - men, Australia was at first merely a place to work. A Sikh community was founded by at Woolgoolga on the northern coast of NSW by single men who had worked there cutting cane and farming at the turn of the twentieth century when they could not bring wives to settle with them. But by the 1970s, Sikh families were thriving in Woolgoolga, and two Sikh temples had been built. But these Sikhs of the diaspora remained 'Indians culturally'. As one of the men said: 'Wherever you go that is your country - you live and die for it...The people of the town? Most of them are coming to the right track as they get the understandings - we frankly ask them to discuss any defect in us'. He was referring to bans on them imposed by the RSL and bowling clubs, which the Sikhs saw as silly and unfair. Still they preferred the dress and customs that set them apart from local Australians. (De Lepervanche 1984) As an Indian Australian observed of such communities, it was the Australian aspect of their identity that remained vague or unarticulated.²⁵⁹

In the 1960s, only those Indians and Sri Lankans with the highest qualifications were selected for migration, and for people – mostly men - of their status, education, and

²⁵⁷ Rajeev Davan, 'Midnight to Millennium: A Metaphor Looking for a Purpose', in Pavel and Weigold 2000: 33-48.

²⁵⁸ With the 1996 program *Australia-India New Horizons* the DFAT series of single-country cultural promotions in Asia ended, but were continued in London and Washington.

²⁵⁹ Manu Madan, 'Bollywood down under: imagining new neighbourhoods' in

family background, the transition was frequently painful. Not only had they to cope with the universal difficulties of *hegira*, they were also confronted by Australians who could not pronounce their names, and who assumed that all Asians were dirt poor, illiterate, and desperate, and must therefore be grateful for any job, and for the step up in the world that migration to Australia gave them. For those whose reading had led them to expect an Australian egalitarian paradise, the disillusionment was no less profound. For Burgher Sri Lankans and Anglo-Indians whose class and 'white' associations were out of favour in their newly independent countries (1947 for India and 1948 for Sri Lanka), to be regarded in Australia as low-class and 'coloured' was another shock. Many of them spent years trying to requalify in their professions, while they worked in other jobs. Support from relatives, friends, or kindly neighbours made the difference between a successful transition and disaster. Those who welcomed change thrived: but for some, even prosperity was joyless in the face of cultural deprivation. Some blamed 'inferior' Australian civilisation for their disappointments. Even a longed-for visit home proved for some that they no longer belonged in a South Asian society: yet when they got back to Australia they felt they had left part of themselves behind. The copious literature indicates the pattern both for them and for subsequent migrant groups.²⁶⁰

Published in 1991, a survey of 144 Indian (and Chinese from the PRC, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asian countries) professional and business people in Brisbane and Sydney found that, far from exploiting the welfare or business migration systems, they were more successful than their Australian counterparts in small enterprises. Distanced from the kinship-based businesses of their first culture, they adopted a compromise between trust-based and contractual relationships that predominantly worked well. Problems of language and recognition of qualifications existed, but the main obstacles to integration in Australia for these professionals and business people were identified as bureaucratic complexity at every level, high transportation costs, monopolistic and anti-export practices, and exclusion from 'old boys' networks'. A decade later, medical professionals – many of them South Asians - protested in Sydney that they were denied recognition when New South Wales was short of doctors. As

²⁶⁰ Pavel and Weigold 2000: 135-130.
South Asian migrant accounts of Australia are in Broinowski, 'Foreword', in Vanden Driesen 1998. Other sources: Ganguly and Nandan 1998, Pavel and Weigold 2000.

Nancy Viviani remarked, it seemed absurd to select migrants on the basis of employment categories and then to deny them recognition.²⁶¹ But Indian Australian Neville Roach, Chair of Fujitsu and the author of several positive reports on multiculturalism, was convinced of Australians' acceptance of diversity and believed 'Australian Multiculturalism' should be as famous as the Australian ballot and the Australian crawl. For Australian events Roach wore his kangaroo tie, and for Indian ones his elephant tie. (Roach to AB: 31 March 2001)

But some Indian Australian women described the negotiation of identity as more complex. Vijaya Joshi interviewed 17 young Indian women in four Australian cities in 1993-4, and published the stories of six of them. (Joshi 2000) All had been in Australia since the late 1960s or early 1970s; all had migrated as children with their Hindu families, who were mainly professionals, of middle to upper class backgrounds. All recalled examples of helpfulness when they had just arrived, but they also experienced racist taunts at school, from which a common retreat was to the library, or the company of another 'outcast' child. Several found the standard of Australian education low: in India they were 'pushed more'. Patriarchy ruled in most of their families, with more restrictions placed on girls than boys. Their food, language, and clothes were from another world, and embarrassing for the children. Indians, one young woman told Joshi, 'disrupt neat Anglo-based categories'. Their Indian-Australian identity set them apart both from Indians at 'home' and from Australians, but it also pushed them into the broad, 'Asian' or 'ethnic', migrant category whose Other was 'mainstream' Australia. Thus Indians, they found, tended to come together more abroad: they created a hegiraic Indian homogeneity in Australia, while 'Indianness' was too diverse to make sense in India.

A first-generation Indian Australian student, Arundhati Parmar, was critical of the way Indian sub-cultures – Tamils, Punjabis, Sikhs - stuck together abroad, replicating the very behaviour that Indians so criticised in the British. She observed that migrant Indian parents felt guilty for having forsaken their homeland, and hence sought to raise 'good little Indian boys and girls' according to values that were now obsolete in India, their

²⁶¹ Lever-Tracy and others 1991. Nancy Viviani, *Asian Studies Review*, 15, 3:

first culture. This imposed on the children in the second culture a double burden of having to adapt to Australia but still maintain their Indianness. Indian parents stressed education as a means to financial success, not to cultural interaction, the lack of which was their fault: 'Even now, Indians interact with Australians only on a business level, not allowing them entry into their families for fear of losing their 'Indianness'.²⁶²

Most of Vijaya Joshi's informants – unlike the Chinese and Japanese observers of Australia - considered that Australians were more predisposed to accept other cultures than Indians were. But hegiraic Indians (like themselves) diversified and mixed with Westerners readily after the first generation. Indians were insulted when others observed that they 'try to be like white people', one woman said: 'but they do'. (Joshi 2000: 148) These were complex negotiations that operated on several levels: West/Asia, West/India, Australia/India, Australia/ethnic, Indian/other Indian, and Indian/other Asian in Australia. As second generation Indian Australians, Joshi's informants occupied a 'third space' between the two cultures. Being Australian, one of them said, meant 'having a choice' on different occasions about which culture she chose to be part of, her first or her second: this affected what she wore, or ate, or drank. For the women, this autonomy was what they found most positive about Australia, even though some of them were unsure in which culture to seek their marriage partners. But they thought Indian women tended to seek to marry Australians while Indian men sought Indian brides. In this respect the Chinese and Japanese pattern seemed to be repeated.

Indian residents in Australia exhibited a new form of 'identity nostalgia' when they complained of feeling ignored in India by comparison with the larger hegiraic groups of Indians in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.²⁶³ A visiting novelist, Pankaj Mishra, admitted that Indians were sensitive about such matters. The West's scheme of things, on the one hand, he said, had little space for India, but on the other there would be no modern India if it were not for the West. Australia was part of the

April, 173-5.

²⁶² Parma, *Amida* 5, 3, June/July 1999: 14-15.

²⁶³ Manu Madan, 'Bollywood down under: imagining new neighbourhoods', in Pavel and Weigold 2000: 135-140.

'West's scheme of things' that ignored India: but Mishra ignored Australians' sense of being comparably excluded.²⁶⁴

Another variant within the Indian hegira were the 'twice migrants', the Indo-Fijian community, many of whom were in Australia as a result of two processes of 'forced choice', having left their first culture for Fiji and their second for Australia. Devleena Ghosh found that many Indo-Fijians in Sydney likened these processes to the banishments recorded in the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Indenture abroad was termed *narak* ('hell') by the labourers, many of whom were of low caste. Such cultural differences soon collapsed in Fiji where they had new identities, used their own dialect, and developed prosperity and self-esteem. For Indian Fijians arriving in Australia after the coups of 1987 and 2000, one fraught relationship with indigenous Fijians was replaced by another: with South Asians in Australia, whose attitudes replicated the caste-condescension of the past. A community paper in Sydney, *India Post*, said these 'bloody cousins' would downgrade Indians' image in the eyes of Australians who could not tell the difference between them. Not surprisingly, the Indo-Fijians' complaints focussed more on the need for stronger Australian support for the democratic process in Fiji, and for increased refugee migration, than on deficiencies in Australian society. The two communities eventually agreed – reflecting Sang Ye's discussions with Chinese Australians – to avoid public washing of their dirty linen.²⁶⁵

The huge Bollywood film industry wanted 'exotic' locations for its song and dance sequences, and 13 projects were shot in Australia in 1998-99 alone. Australian settings appeared on Indian screens, even if Perth was renamed 'Springfield USA'.²⁶⁶ Indian parents in Australia and elsewhere in the hegira used these movies, readily available on video, as a means of familiarising their children with Indian culture. Star TV brought

²⁶⁴ Pankaj Mishra, quoted by Malcolm Knox, 'The West has little space for India in the scheme of things', *SMH* 18 May 2000: 4.

²⁶⁵ Devleena Ghosh, 'Home Away From Home: The Indo-Fijian Community in Sydney', in Ang and others 2000: 68-86.

²⁶⁶ Anupam Sharma, 'Indiaustralia – the plot thickens'; and Manu Madan, 'Bollywood down under: imagining new neighbourhoods', in Pavel and Weigold 2000: 135-140. Bollywood (Bombay/Mumbai cinema) is 'the single strongest agency for the creation of a national mythology of heroism, consumerism, leisure and society'. Appadurai and Breckenridge, 'Public Modernity in India', in Breckenridge 1995.

Australian series like *Neighbours* and *The Sullivans* to millions of Indian viewers; and Australian cable-TV sex movies reached so many Indian homes that some women complained that they were destroying their marriages.²⁶⁷ In spite of the potency of these IT connections in forming new representations of Australia, and notwithstanding the fact that Australian media correspondents had for decades been based in India, a Professor of Communications still seemed to have identity nostalgia in 2000. He berated the Australian media for their dependence on Associated Press, Reuters, CNN, and BBC. Australia should have sided with India in the 1970s push for a New World Information and Communication Order; and Australians, he ritually complained, were apparently unable to see the world through Australian eyes, only through those of the imperialists.²⁶⁸ In the minds of Indian opinion makers, the foundations were laid early of impressions that endured and were self-reinforcing throughout the century.

²⁶⁷ *The Week*, quoted in *SMH* 2 December 1996: 24.

²⁶⁸ K.M. Shrivastava, Indian Institute of Mass Communication, 'India-Australia: the Media Angle', in Pavel and Weigold 2000: 263-6.

2.5 KOREANS

In Korea, representations of Australia are limited to an even narrower range of recurrent themes than among Indians, Japanese, or Chinese. In the absence of greater Australian commitment to change that, and until more Koreans and Australians have direct experience of each other's society, Australia will continue to be represented in terms that reflect Korean interests, contradictions, and self-projection.²⁶⁹

South Korean representations of Australia – uncluttered as they are by any wide range of experience and opinion – provide a distillation of the recurring themes in other Asian societies. Thus they are useful as comparators with Chinese, Japanese, and Indian representations. All three North Asian societies are similarly distanced from Australia by language and script, but Chinese have more diverse contacts and Japanese more expertise. For Indians, it is lack of contact and empathy rather than written and spoken language that tends to widen the distance. Travel abroad was restricted for Koreans for longer than most of their Asian neighbours: only from 1988 did passports become available to most South Koreans. The United States has been by far the most powerful modern Western influence on Koreans, and to a greater extent even than for their Chinese and Japanese neighbours, the 'West' means America for most Koreans. The United States at the end of the twentieth century remained the chosen destination for almost all Koreans with a pent-up desire to travel, study, or migrate. Australia failed to compete with political and economic news from the United States, Japan, China, and Russia for television air-time in Korea. (Kwak 1998)

Here, a brief consideration of South Korean representations of Australia moves from early impressions to educational texts and comments by opinion leaders at the end of the twentieth century.

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'Korean' is equivalent to 'South Korean' here since North Korean contacts with Australia are minimal. Survey material on South Koreans in Australia appears in Coghlan 1992, and Coghlan and McNamara 1997: ch.7. Kwak Ki-song surveyed South Korean representations of Australia in 1996 for the research phase of my project. Kwak 1998.

Early Korean encounters with Australians were confined to a small community of Presbyterian missionaries from Victoria who from 1885 joined Americans in establishing churches, schools, and hospitals. Korea-born children in early twentieth century Australian censuses were tangible evidence of those associations. With much less public controversy than their Japanese neighbours, who had been the 'enemy', Korean war brides arrived in Australia after the 1950-52 Korean War, and hundreds of war 'orphans' were adopted by Australians. Until the government in Seoul ended foreign adoption in the late 1980s, many Korean children became Australians through adoption.²⁷⁰

The first Australians many Koreans met were male, in uniform, and hard to differentiate from British or Americans. But for long after the war – in which some South Koreans recalled being fired upon from Australian planes – Korean veterans maintained contact with their Australian counterparts as Chinese and Japanese, for different reasons, did not. A Korean journalist, Cho Kyu Chun, visiting Australia in 1957, found to his surprise that Australians were unlike British and more like Americans: sociable, frank, friendly, but holding views of their own about current affairs. Somewhat enigmatically, he reported to Seoul's Donghwa news agency that 'to Australians life is not embarrassing' and that there was about it a 'squalid decency'. He explained that endowed with sufficient resources, good labour conditions, and no pressure of population or unemployment, Australia could meet the needs of 'cultivated citizens' for a decent life, secured by the minimum wage system, a way of life Koreans could hardly imagine. He accepted Australia's official 'economic' justification for opposing Asian migration and said media reports that the White Australia policy continued were anachronistic. Above all, he endorsed Australians' indignation at Japan's attack on Sydney Harbour, and their postwar determination to seek to understand Asia better. In Canberra, he was impressed that Parliament House, surrounded by roses, 'has had no experience of fury inside of the building and no demonstrations outside of it'.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ Many 'orphans' were mixed race offspring of foreign soldiers and Korean women, against whom there was considerable opprobrium in Korea. Adopted girls outnumbered boys. Coghlan and McNamara 1997.

²⁷¹ Cho Kyu Chun, *Donghwa News Agency*. AA A6895: N57/104.

Rapid economic growth in the 1980s-1990s made South Korea, in 1997 Australia's second largest market, and resulted in a sudden upsurge in education and travel. Business migration to Australia replicated the Hong Kong 'astronaut' pattern, but many Korean cooks reversed it by working in Australia and leaving their families at home. The Korea-born population of Australia doubled between 1986 and 1991, and two thirds of them were Christians. Between the 1970s and the 1990s, more than 50 000 Koreans had migrated to Australia, most of them living in Sydney. For many Koreans, Australia was paradise, said a successful Korean-Australian businessman, Choi Chang Gurl.²⁷²

That Australia, *Hō-ju* ('a continent surrounded by ocean'), was located in South Korean school textbooks and encyclopaedias in 'Oceania', not Asia, served to entrench an impression of remoteness. Unlike Japanese who in the 1930s had expansionary reasons for representing Australia as proximate, South Koreans commonly spoke of Australia as more distant than America. But as in Japan, Australia was identified as Western, a 'continent country composed of White Europeans'; and it was seen primarily as 'a major provider of wool and raw commodities'.²⁷³ Contrasting impressions were created of Australia as advanced but backward, desirable but contemptible, important but negligible.

Australia was represented in Korean school texts as a vast, remote, exotic country where 'everything is good': but it had a short history and no cultural traditions. Australia was reported in the press as a 'paradise for workers and women', where victims of early European capitalism, including petty criminals, had established a social system of which everyone was an equal beneficiary: but it was also European-dominated and lacked a distinctive identity. Australia was multicultural, but it favoured Japanese.²⁷⁴ In the late 1980s, when student demonstrations threatened to disrupt the Seoul Olympic Games, Australia was warningly reported to have declined into a 'paradise for the young unemployed', who were said to 'do nothing but go to the beach day and night'.²⁷⁵ Australia was admired by Korean unionists for having invented industrial arbitration: but

²⁷² Kirkby and Sheridan, *TWA* 27-28 November 1993: 10.

²⁷³ Kukminsungwan, *New Study Encyclopaedia*, vol. 2, 1973: 1303. Kwak 1998: 3.

²⁷⁴ 'Australians admire Japanese culture so much, while they pay little attention to other Asian cultures. In this sense, multiculturalism is seen to create cultural discrimination, rather than promoting equity across diverse cultures'. 'Global Community', MBC-TV, 26 May 1995. Kwak 1998: 23.

South Korean business people, particularly after restraints on unionism were relaxed in the early 1990s, criticised Australian unions for being militant and strike-prone, making Australia 'not a good trade partner'.²⁷⁶ As living standards rose in South Korea, Australia's example was used, as in Japan, to send warnings to workers: 'due to the lack of competitiveness and labour in its society, people can easily become lazy'. (Kwak 1998. Dupont 1992) Complementarity in trade was 'not the result of anything Australia [had] done' but rather of Korea's economic success, said Ambassador Kwon Byon Hong, adding that the Australian media failed to reflect the importance of Korea and to correct the 'lopsidedness' of the relationship.²⁷⁷

The coexistence of 'fixed or static' negative images with 'vague but positive' ones was attributed by Kwak (1998) to the influence of Korean media and educational texts that focussed on immutable differences between Australia and South Korea, rather than reporting in more depth on change and diversity in Australia. Projection of Korean interests and national identity seemed to be involved in these representations, including reluctance to encourage migration abroad. But Kwak also pointed to the lack on Australia's part of carefully-planned long-term strategies of cultural engagement with Korea.

President Kim Young-Sam in 1994 claimed that South Korea and Australia had 'the inherent capabilities to fuse the different cultures of the East and West, of Asia and Europe'.²⁷⁸ Australia's efforts to establish APEC included an inaugural meeting in Seoul in 1989. But Australia was definitely 'not regarded as an Asian country in Korea, either geographically or in terms of its population, history, and culture.' (Kwak 1998: 3) Indeed, its claim in the 1990s for inclusion in East Asian regional fora was scornfully described by

²⁷⁵ *Hankuk Ilbo*, 2 February 1988. Kwak 1998: 25.

²⁷⁶ By 2001, challenges to Korea's rigid corporate culture were emerging: long working hours, so often cited to show how lazy Australians were, was now described differently, and unwritten rules were being challenged: 'Everyone sat at their desks, fidgeting and waiting for their superiors to leave', admitted office worker Kim Jang-ok. *TWA* 3-4 February 2001: 'Korea bends to winds of change'.

²⁷⁷ Don Greenlees, 'Envoy queries our sincerity', *A* 2 July 1996: 1.

²⁷⁸ Kim, Parliamentary dinner speech, Canberra: 17 November 1994. Kwak 1998: 13.

newspapers in Seoul as an opportunistic ploy by Australia to solve its economic problems:

In the past when the USA played a major role in the security of Asia-Pacific, Australia...played a minimal role in the region. During that period, in Australia, everything European has been preferred as developed, while anything Asian was treated as underdeveloped. But, now it's a bit of a different story.²⁷⁹

Self-reinforcing projection – as well as considerable accuracy - underlay these comments, like those of Chinese, Japanese, and Indians that were considered in earlier sections. Noting Australia's pursuit of its economic interests in the region (that paralleled South Korea's), the Seoul financial press detected a 'sense of superiority to Asian countries' in Australia, which it described as 'still a closed society'. That expression reflected Koreans' lasting resentment of both Japanese discrimination and American characterisation of the 'hermit kingdom'. The impression Australia left with the President of Seoul National University after a visit in 1997 was that Australians looked to the West rather than Asia. 'But Australia is part of Asia and it must focus more on the countries of Asia', he warned.²⁸⁰ At that time, newly prosperous South Koreans could afford to project their ambivalence onto vulnerable Australians:

Australia's dilemma is [sic] psychological one, which stems from its struggle to find its place, remaining a welfare state, on the one hand, and a White-dominated country that is reluctant to belong to Asia, on the other...While promoting investment from Asian countries, Australia has always wanted to maintain a distance from them. (*Chosun Daily*, 17 February 1989. Kwak 1998)

Korean themes about Australia were few, but White Australia was persistent among them. Together with the Australian welfare and labour system, it dominated such educational and press accounts as reached many South Koreans until at least the late

²⁷⁹ Press sources in this and succeeding paragraph: *Chosun Daily*, 17 February 1989, 9 June 1991; *Korean Economic Daily*, 8 September 1988; *Hankuk Ilbo*, 23 October 1992, 2 September 1993; *Sekey Ilbo*, 23 September 1993. Kwak 1998: 11-15.

²⁸² Russell Skelton, 'The Koreans are coming!' *SMH* 12 April 1997: 8S.

1980s. Koreans who represented Australians as racists did not, apparently, relate that to their own widely-reported prejudice against black people, or their desire for their foreign-educated children to marry Koreans. When Aboriginal culture began in the 1990s to attract some interest, and it was said to be the only aspect of Australian culture to which Koreans could relate, because of its comparable antiquity. Australia's republic debate was reported to reflect its need to 'change its identity to one that can be more appealing to Asian countries'. But the argument was circular: the *Hankuk Ilbō* (2 September 1993) claimed to speak for 'many Asian immigrants living in Australia' in calling the republic 'an empty slogan', because of the unresolved issue of racism. (Kwak 1998)

Attitudinal research commissioned by the Australian Embassy in Seoul in the 1980s and 1990s resembled surveys done in Japan in finding that Koreans emphasised Australia's physical and natural attributes rather than its cultural ones. Australians were described as kind, friendly, outgoing, casual, and informal, but not impressive. Even following a major promotion in Korea in 1992 that included a display of Australia's nine Nobel Prize-winners, Australia was not considered to be technologically advanced, but rather as a rural, primary-producing country. Nor was Australia regarded as a provider of advanced education of high quality, but as a stable, clean, enjoyable, relatively cheap place in which to study and travel. Hence Australia was reported to attract second- and third-rate students: the rejects from prestigious universities in Korea or those who could not make it to the United States or Britain. Their Australian degrees were not as highly valued in Korea, and only a few disciplines in Australia – marine science, tropical biology and zoology, and solar energy – were regarded as of international standard. Australian studies in Korea were overshadowed by British and American studies and, in the 1990s, were under-resourced to the point of near-obliteration. (Kwak 1998. Dupont 1992)

Students interviewed by Vanden Dreisen (1992) tended to compare their long history with Australia's 'short' one, and to conclude from that and from tourist promotion that Australians were uncultured and unsophisticated: 'Nobody walks with naked foot in Korea', one said, neatly encapsulating what he perceived to be the relative positions of Korea and Australia in the civilisational hierarchy.

2.6 SOUTHEAST ASIANS

Representations of Australia in Southeast Asian countries, as in the other societies we have considered, depend on who makes them, when, where, and for what motives, but certain consistencies exist between them, that persist over time. Being endowed in varying degrees with history, size, and political or economic power, China, Japan, and India have greater influence and significance than Australia. In Southeast Asia however, several states compete with Australia. There, Australian ignorance and ineptitude enable experienced opinion leaders to displace their countries' problems onto Australia. Admonishing Australia for not being Asian, and yet rejecting Australian attempts to identify with the region reinforces their power.

After many years of dealing with Southeast Asian societies, a senior Australian businessman listed the ten complaints he most often heard about Australia and Australians. Australians, he was told, were:

Little known, distant, and insignificant;
 White, British, and second-rate Western;
 The offspring of convicts, uncouth, rude, ignorant of Asia, and lacking civilisation;
 Racist, oppressive of Aborigines, and not genuinely multicultural;
 Stooges of American foreign policy, and lacking independence;
 Sports-loving, lazy, strike-prone, welfare-dependent, inefficient, and undisciplined;
 Interfering, hypocritical, and moralistic, with prejudiced and inaccurate media;
 Rich, large, empty, and technologically unsophisticated;
 Exploitative, materialistic, domineering, and condescending;
 Not Asians.²⁸¹

²⁸¹ Sir Eric McClintock quoted by Broinowski 1997. Kishore Mahbubhani in 1993 produced a comparable list of 10 heresies (about the Western media and the hypocrisy of the West in regard to human rights) and urged his American (= 'Western') audience to consider five principles (about Asian values and development journalism). Mahbubhani 1998: ch. 3.

Some of these are similar to the representations of Australia in the other Asian societies we have already considered. Like them, this Southeast Asian list contains some internal contradictions. If Australia is little known and irrelevant, why do its opinions matter? If it is distant, what threat can it pose? If Australia and Australians are so ignorant, uncultured, and antipathetic towards Asia, why accept aid from them, why send young people there for education, why go there for medical treatment, why migrate there, and why marry them? It has already become clear that the salience of representations does not depend on logic or consistency. Southeast Asian representations are distinguished from those of Chinese, Japanese, and Indians by being less able to ignore Australia. Common themes – doubtless based on experience – are that Australians are condescending and overbearing, always telling Southeast Asians ‘what to do’, and the Australian media lie about them.

Individual variations between these six Southeast Asian societies will be observed below. If one shared, fundamental preoccupation colours their world-view it is the rejection of condescension and domination by the West, and for good reason. In living Southeast Asian memory and in earlier centuries, ‘every conceivable item’ was used by Western colonisers to justify their ‘negative image of the native’. (Alatas 1977) Even the physical size, appearance, customs, and ideologies of Southeast Asians – particularly the Malays – were pejoratively represented by many colonisers.²⁸² Western domestic audiences were told of the ‘dissolute mode of life’ and the laziness and backwardness of the natives – all but those whom they had educated and co-opted. Nineteenth century Malay writers expressed concern at the way British attitudes undermined their identity. (Milner 1996c) In the Philippines too, Rizal observed that subjugation to Spain had deprived Filipinos of self-esteem. ‘Reject the foreigner’s judgment of you’, a character advises his compatriots in *El Filibusterismo*, ‘return to his contempt your fortitude and self-reliance’.²⁸³ After independence, other Southeast Asian leaders began to fire the familiar colonial representational disparagements back at their originators. As if demanding vengeance for the lectures they had endured in the past,

²⁸² More individuals than is usually acknowledged became dedicated supporters of the cultures of the colonies - some English civil servants in Sri Lanka for example. (Gooneratne 1999).

²⁸³ Rizal, *El Filibusterismo*, Manila: Jose Rizal Centennial Commission, 1957.

they now urged the West to learn from 'Asian values' and sought to instill them in those they led. To do so reinforced their new status and affirmed their superiority, particularly over Australia. That Australians were not their colonisers, and included Asian and Indigenous people, was irrelevant: Australians were Western and 'white'.

While Southeast Asians may have cared less than Australians did about being included or liked, they were particularly concerned to be respected. Alatas described the prevailing disrespect of colonial élites for those they colonised. The Westerners misplaced, or displaced, their own responsibility by attributing to the 'natives' the very traits of laziness, irresponsibility, inefficiency and so on, that they had caused and that they themselves often exhibited. (Alatas 1977) Even though they were not imperialists, the Australians' 'Westernness', their reputation for racial discrimination, their relative powerlessness, and their proximity made them ideal targets for Occidentalisation: that is, for reverse displacement of responsibility for the concerns of post-colonial élites. The insults of the colonialists provided leaders in Southeast Asian countries with a reactive grammar for representations of Australia. It was a 'far distant outpost' of the white race, a 'convicts' colony'. Australians behaved like colonisers by shooting Aborigines and excluding Asians. Australians might be 'warm and sincere persons', but they were ignorant, parochial, 'young and childish', lagging in development, pleasure loving, lazy in their 'island paradise', 'beach-combers newly arisen from the gutter', and intelligent enough only to know they need not work. Southeast Asians adapted what the colonisers had said of them by asserting that Australians were loud, boorish, unkempt, and lacking in culture. Instead of being 'little monkeys', they were 'loud and huge'. Their White Australia / Yellow Peril mentality was derived from the barbarian minds of their convict ancestors. They were yahoos and their society was decadent and second-rate. Australians, with few exceptions, were stupid.²⁸⁴

Post-colonial and racial identities, as Kay Anderson (1991) shows, are moulded with the consent of 'mainstream' society with the result that, despite decolonisation and

²⁸⁴ Quotations are from sources listed in Appendix 2. Australians are 'amongst the cleverest and the dumbest on this planet': Noordin Sopiee quoted by David Jenkins, 'Through Asian eyes: what our neighbours *really* think of us'. *SMH* 2 November 1996: Spectrum 2, 4.

multiculturalism, 'we end up unable to see people as they are, because of the seductive convenience of types that rob people of their particularity'. For Anderson, 'we' is Americans. While the stereotyping she describes has widely been shown to characterise Western perceptions of other societies, what must be asked here is whether typecasting applies in a similarly seductive manner to representations of Australians by Southeast Asians.²⁸⁵ In what follows, we first consider the role of the media in image-making, and then commonalities and variations among soldiers, students, political leaders, and indigenous people, as players or pieces in the game of gaining respect.

The easy enemy

If the West's image of Indonesia, as Mackie argues, was formed by media emphasis on its failures and inefficiencies rather than its achievements²⁸⁶, the same appears often to be true in reverse of Southeast Asian media accounts of Australia. Post-colonial demands for a New World Information Order of media objectivity and balance are tilted in one direction. Rarely are Australian opinion leaders quick with well-informed rejoinders to double standards. One exception was Peter Hastings, a friend of Indonesia, who nonetheless objected to Australia being denigrated by the armed forces paper *AB* by 'loutish' Indonesians who knew nothing of Australia's customs or language. (*SMH* 28 April 1986)

The post-war years were high times for post-independence leaders, some of whom had come to power as revolutionaries and radicals. Several stayed in power for decades and came to know each other well, particularly through the *perpetuum mobile* of ASEAN meetings. Over the years, some lost sight of their struggle against oppression, becoming secondary dictators themselves. Seeking development, they nonetheless polished their various talents as marginalisers of opposition, inventors of tradition, propagandists of values, compradors of charitable foundations, wishful founders of dynasties, or prestidigitators of future visions for both the nation and the region. Periodically, they devised scare scenarios, major and minor, for improving the discipline

²⁸⁵ Others: Dever 1997, Mahbubhani 1992, Pratt 1992.

of the masses. Skilled in getting their desired message across, those leaders whose media were compliant could readily divert attention from for their own problems and displace blame onto internal, regional, or international targets. To foreign critics they delivered sermons about the 'un-Asianness' of hypocrisy, bullying, rudeness, lecturing, or lying.

Lessons in 'development journalism', with local variations, were repeatedly delivered to Australia by Southeast Asian opinion leaders. But in 1986 the Malaysian media received instructions to run negative stories on Australia during a 'buy Australia last' campaign.²⁸⁷ This followed a similar operation against the UK in 1983, when the British media reported misappropriation of funds for a dam in Malaysia. In Indonesia in the same year (just after the executions of former PKI members, and just before general elections) the armed forces newspaper published a series attacking Australia, in response to an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on the wealth and interests of Soeharto and his circle.²⁸⁸ But the successive Indonesian Ambassadors in Canberra who preached journalistic restraint and 'objectivity' must have done so more to impress Jakarta than with any expectation of reforming the Australian media.²⁸⁹ Australian self-criticism was, inevitably, recycled by the news agencies, television, and the Australian media back to where it came from, enabling the mills of blame and displacement to grind on. Expert re-use of the Australian news media by opinion leaders in the region led Michael Byrnes almost to conclude that the answer for Australia was the very government control that was practised in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. (Byrnes

²⁸⁶ J.A.C. Mackie quoted by Watt 1967: 259.

²⁸⁷ A secret *Bakin* (Indonesian intelligence) document showed that media retaliation against Australia was officially organised. *AFR* 26 May 1986. *Kompas* admitted that 'telephone culture' calls from Kopkamtib (Military Intelligence), Hankam (Ministry of Defence), and Deppen (Ministry of Information) were 'actually meant to protect certain interests'. Budiono in Robison 1986b.

²⁸⁸ Other articles in *AWJ*, *FEER*, *Washington Post*, and *New York Times* before and after Jenkins 1986 that were equally critical of Suharto drew no reaction from Jakarta. Radio Australia was seen as conducting a vendetta on such issues as Timor, Irian, and human rights of which the Jenkins article was the culmination. Robison 1986b. Alan Dupont, 'The Political and Security Implications of Soeharto's Demise', *Asia Pacific Magazine*, 11, 1998: 30-2. McMichael 1987: 9.

²⁸⁹ An Indonesian correspondent in Australia claimed criticisms of Australia were screened out of Indonesian media reports 'on the grounds that they are discourteous and would harm good relations'. Indonesians therefore took critical reports in Australian media as 'motivated by a desire to harm relations'. Savitri Scherer in Robison 1986b.

1994) Southeast Asian élites, wrote David Jenkins, 'tend to have a much greater role in shaping domestic perceptions of Australia than Australian élites could ever hope to have'. (Jenkins 1996)

But was the victimisation, game-playing, and sleight of hand all on the Southeast Asian side? Australia could not deny its record of racial discrimination and oppression of indigenous people, its lack of independence, its reluctance to merge with the region, its march of folly in the American wake, or continuing bigotry among Australians. Human rights abuses by others were selectively criticised, while the problems of Aborigines were said to be Australia's own business; Australians presumed to instruct independent countries in the region about democratic institutions while Australia's Head of State was British; they pretended Australia's relationships with Asian countries were of prime importance while its deepest links – of defence, intelligence, and security – were with the US and the UK; and yet Australia tried and humiliatingly failed in the mid-1990s to compete with these Western allies in selling military equipment to Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand.²⁹⁰ 'The relics of White Australia policies were fundamental to regional and global relationships and Australia's image in world councils', wrote a former DFAT Secretary. (Stuart Harris in Jupp and Kabala 1993) Successive Australian governments showed much less concern than Japan – whose image-problem in the region was comparable – about Australia's reputation. These were exactly the mistakes that would lose Australia the Asia Game, if one was being played. Publicly pleased with themselves for their contributions to the region, most Australian leaders failed to acknowledge the internal contradictions of their approach to Asia. The conclusion some Asian commentators reached, and variously expressed, was that Australians' attitude to Asia was ambivalent; others said they were stupid. (D'Cruz and Steele 2000)

When the threat of Communism shrivelled in 1990 and East Asian economies collapsed in 1997, the 'patrimonial state' described by Max Weber that had favoured the personal interests of a few elderly men at the expense of the majority, went into injury time. Southeast Asian leaders were afflicted not only by popular demands for

²⁹⁰ Cameron Stewart, 'The death of a salesman', *TWA* 18-19 August 2001: 23; *A* 20, 21 August 2001.

change, but also by enemy-deprivation. The easy, customary enemy was Australia.²⁹¹ Displacement of their grievances onto Australia was particularly practised by Javanese and Malays whose culture made them best at it. Southeast Asian opinion leaders projected onto Australia their critiques of the generalised West, particularly at times when the propriety of their own actions was at issue. The more a group is concerned for its security, the more it supports leaders unlike the feared Other, Jakubowicz (2001) observes about Australians. The same argument can be applied to Australia's Asian observers.

Taking the Philippines as an example of how mutual perceptions differed in Australia and Asian countries, Milner estimated in 1993 that at least three quarters of the statements the Australian media made about the Philippines involved anarchy, violence, corruption, or sex. These elements formed a Saidian 'perceptual grid' through which Australians customarily viewed Filipinos.²⁹² But the Philippines had a grid for Australia too: ingratitude, exploitation, racism, sexism, and tourism (with the latter four often overlapping.) Australians were routinely reminded that the Philippines had stopped Japan's wartime advance, and Australian business people were often accused of having designs on the Philippines' mineral resources. Australian immigration policy was objected to when 'some of us [who] wanted to emigrate to Australia had better qualifications than those you admitted from the Middle East'. Later, Australians were accused of paedophilia and of ill-treating mail-order brides. 'The Australian tourist types who came here were loud. And huge!', and the bars they ran in Ermita competed with local interests as well as Catholic morality.²⁹³ *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* caused outrage among Filipinos in Australia and women's groups in the Philippines for its brief portrayal of a Filipina married to an Australian. None of these accusations was untrue: they were just not true of all Australians or of all Filipinos.

Often, Filipinos' craving for acceptance by others and for the esteem of the West, if unfulfilled, was offset by blaming of the foreigner for a string of offences and by

²⁹¹ Australia was seen as 'bulliable' by ASEAN leaders even in the 1970s. Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Australia's Relations with ASEAN*, 1979.

²⁹² Milner, working paper 2, 'Perceiving "Human Rights"', 1993.

²⁹³ Hernandez quoted by Jenkins, *SMH* 2 November 1996: 4.

negative representations of the foreigner's country. (Tatad 1978) Professor Carolina Hernandez explained to an Australian journalist how the 'Asia Game' of negative representation was played the Philippine way:

People have a tendency to raise the old issues if they want to win a point and put you on the defensive. They always remind the Japanese, 'Hey, you guys! You were the aggressors'. This is a technique; you know how it is.

She was describing the well-known 'shakedown': accusing someone in order to gain an advantage. In Malaysia, Noordin Sopiee made much the same point, admitting that although East Asians resented outsiders criticising any one of their countries, 'some of us also at times indulge in a little "bashing" ourselves'. (Sheridan 1995)

Comparable 'perceptual grids' existed in other Southeast Asian countries where migration was thought to be key to a better life. A region-wide migration matrix had two axes: on one axis, Australia was represented as it claimed to be - a land of freedom and responsible government, a working man's paradise of prosperity and equality, and a 'friend and neighbour' to the region. On the other axis, Australia was represented as synonymous with the White Australia policy, disparagement of Asians, and oppression of Aborigines. Where the two axes intersected they were mutually contradictory. This enabled Australia's most experienced Southeast Asian critics constantly to keep Australians in a state of reactive tension.

The migration matrix

The 'friends and neighbours' axis was drawn in the brief period of post-war enthusiasm for peace and mutual cooperation. Australia's support in Jakarta and at the United Nations for Indonesia's independence led Sukarno to exclaim 'I love Critchley!' ²⁹⁴ The Colombo Plan, fostered by Spender in 1950 partly to keep the United States involved in regional defence, was promoted as the right thing at the right time both for Australia and for thousands of young people from Asian countries. (Lowe 1994) Development

²⁹⁴

W. MacMahon Ball, 'Report of Mission to East Asia May 27 – July 6, 1948'.

programs not only served various interests in Australia but, since most of the receiving countries left third world status behind, made some contribution to them as well. Australia was the first individual country to take up dialogue status with ASEAN, and the learning process was mutually beneficial. Australia supported and made allowances for the new leaders of non-communist states, and supportive officials and academics for decades suspended judgment of their lapses. The same tolerance had often to be extended to Australia. When the Australian media reported critically on affairs in the region, governments both in Canberra and in Southeast Asian capitals found it expedient to blame the Australian messenger. Thus Australia compounded its own image problem.

For several decades after the Pacific war, Australian governments took image-promotion seriously, and sought through information and cultural relations programs to display Australia as they wished Asians to see it. Radio Australia from the 1940s was a significant source of news and information for people in regional countries. In the early postwar years a Thai who worked for Radio Australia during the Pacific war, Phraya Saraphai Phiphat, encouraged other Thais to visit Australia. Among them were Kulap Saipradit and his wife Chanit, left-wing nationalist writers who reported on Australia's government, unions, and social conditions as examples of democracy and modernity at a time when the military's control of Thailand was becoming entrenched. In more than 30 articles about Australia, Kulap and Chanit expressed their admiration for mateship, the anti-authoritarian populism of Ned Kelly, the power of unions, the dignity of workers, the equal application of laws to government and people alike, the independence of the ABC, and Australians' sharing of domestic tasks. On the other hand they were critical of unequal pay for women: Australia was 'run by men and men organise things in such a way as to benefit themselves', Kulap observed. Many Australians were ignorant of Thailand, and Thai students were unhappy that an Australian-made documentary film showed rubbish-choked canals and street scenes with naked children, dog corpses, slums, beggars, and lepers. Kulap reserved most of his attacks on the White Australia policy until after it forced them to return home.²⁹⁵

AA A433: 48/2/7053.

²⁹⁵

Later, they visited Moscow and Kulap, accused in Thailand of communist sympathies, died in self-imposed exile in Beijing in 1974. Barmé 1995.

In the 1950s Casey as External Affairs Minister, recalling his experiences with the press in India, and aware that Australian and Southeast Asian newspapers had few offices in each others' capitals, encouraged visits by journalists and other opinion leaders from the region, and often met groups of them himself. Their reports demonstrated that friendliness and neighbourliness worked, at least for some, for a while. Well before Singapore's separation from Malaysia, an invited journalist, Wong Szu, wrote a series of careful, detailed reports for *Sin Chew Jit Poh* that were highly Singapore-focussed. He found Australian hotels rather casual, and the food bland and boring: steaks and sausages did not compare with Singapore satay. Australians were confined to living on the narrow coastal fringe because of the huge and uninhabitable desert. Wong's enduring impression of Australians was of their egalitarian ethos: 'to them all jobs are alike, nothing base, nothing noble; all people are alike, no one is inferior and nobody is superior. Generally speaking, they are warm and sincere persons'. The regularity with which invited journalists, once they ventured beyond personal impressions, reported in this vein, sometimes even using identical phrases, suggested the influence of briefings and handouts from their host escort officers.²⁹⁶

At a SEATO meeting in Canberra in 1957, the government spared no effort to ensure that Southeast Asian journalists got the right impression of Australia. Thailand had hosted the previous conference in 1955, and the contrast was highlighted by Nai Sala Likitkun, editor of *Kiattisak*. He reported to Bangkok that instead of building so many hotels, Thailand should have a National Assembly like Canberra's Parliament House where visitors could be made aware of the country's history, with a library and research service where parliamentarians could do serious work, 'so that that they would be better informed than the good-for-nothing idiots as [sic] they are now'. The 30 Thai delegates to the SEATO meeting 'spent most of their time for pleasures', he complained. Canberra was a 'quiet, tiny town' that Nai Sala compared to Petchaboon, a

²⁹⁶ Wong Szu 1951, AA A6895: N57/104. Journalists on guest tours often expressed newfound understanding of the WAP. For example Asni Jowanaridhi, editor of *Sarnseri*: 'Many Thai people have believed that they were looked down upon by Australians... This feeling had much to do with the white Australia policy. Now I have found that such an immigration law is necessary if the high standard of living is to be maintained. The Thai

town in Northern Thailand once designated as a new capital: the only difference, he said, was that Petchaboon had mosquitoes. Taken on a rapid tour by road to an iron ore smelter, a cattle research station, and a lifesaving competition, Nai Sala soon reported exhaustion, homesickness, and Thai food deprivation.²⁹⁷

Later in 1957, Salim Kajai reported to Kuala Lumpur's *Utasan Melayu* on his visit with another group of invited journalists. Australia, he said, was trying to rid itself of past prejudice and to befriend Asian countries, but Australians were paranoid about communism. He reported with approval the opinion of an ALP official, that economic bribery and military pacts would not gain Australia or the 'Western Powers' friends in Asian countries. Salim told Casey that Australian journalists should visit Asia and find out the truth.²⁹⁸ In 1961 Peter Hastings did so, and reported to the *Bulletin* that as tension between Indonesians, Malays, and Singaporeans grew, people were looking to Australia to use its influence on their behalf. Malays wanted to restrict the rights and movements of Singapore Chinese, and to acquire Britain's Borneo territories (attractive because only 25 per cent of the population was Chinese) quickly, 'without any nonsense about self-determination'. They put it to Hastings that Australia should support their cause in London. A Thai businessman told Hastings that although ordinary people knew nothing about Australia, he regarded it as an advanced country and was attracted by its 'material wealth, its comfort and above all its freedom'. He too wanted the Australian government to lend its influence to cleaning up political corruption in Thailand.²⁹⁹

When Philippines diplomat Roberto Regala told an Australian audience in Melbourne in 1955 that 'many Asians' who travelled or studied in Australia overcame their misgivings about the exclusionary migration policy and found 'friendliness and neighbourliness in your midst', he was using Casey's words to imply that others still held the opposite view

people must not hold this against Australians'. *Canberra Times*, 1 October 1964: 2. Glover 1988: 77.

²⁹⁷ 'My Ten Thousand Miles from Thailand to Australia': *Kiattisak* 23 March 1957. Nai Sala and other journalists were grouped as 'Asians', often disastrously: he had no empathy with a Filipina and a Pakistani journalist in his group. AA A6895/1: N57/11.

²⁹⁸ Salim Kajai: AA A6859: N57/104.

²⁹⁹ Hastings 1961a, 1961b. Thais questioned Donald Horne in 1963 about land reform and conditions of peasants in Australia. Horne 1964.

about Australia.³⁰⁰ This contrast between Australia's official hostility and individual Australians' inter-personal warmth towards Asians was a common theme of the visitors' reports. Some of them repeated the government line that there was no White Australia policy (because no legislation explicitly mentioned it) and that concern about Asian migration was merely 'economic'. But the better their English, the less the visitors accepted such scripting. The Malay and Filipino journalists had their own agenda and got away from their escorts to interview their compatriots whenever they could.

The Filipinos found it interesting that Australia's nationalist movement of the 1890s and that of the Philippines had coincided.³⁰¹ Seeking improving messages for the Philippines, they reported that Australia had invented the secret ballot, Torrens land title, the minimum wage, industrial arbitration, and the totalizer. It had universal suffrage, an eight-hour working day, and a public health and public school system. It was known in the Philippines for various mining ventures, agricultural pumps, horse races, and the Colombo Plan. Australia, they said, was the only country in the region to have become industrialised, conquered poverty, won the class war without shooting, and established equality and federation without a revolution. Like Filipinos, 'Aussies, too, were oppressed folk with no faith in colonial justice'. Developing Asian countries needed to find 'a preceptor among ourselves', and that might even be Australia. By geography Australians were Asians, several of the journalists wrote, while Filipinos were Asians by birth. These comparisons of Australia with the Philippines were made so often by Filipino journalists that they entrenched enduring Philippine representations of Australia. Others were:

Australia is a young country, a fellow-English-speaking, anti-communist, and Christian society, 'the Colossus of the South'; less crowded, but lacking the history of the Philippines. Australia is cold and the end of the earth; 'an Asian

³⁰⁰ Roberto Regala, Minister of Philippines to Australia, lecture to Melbourne *Junior Chamber of Commerce, 11 July 1955.*

³⁰¹ These reporters were apparently unaware that a Filipino revolutionary, Zocal, a British citizen, had run a pub in Townsville in the 1890s and supported the independence cause from there. Iletto 1998.

might suggest that if Australia is really facing round toward Asia, the logical place for its capital would be Darwin, on the Asian side of the continent'.³⁰²

An Indian Malayan journalist, R.D. Patel, admitted that he 'knew nothing to start with' about Australia when he began his visit in 1959. But that didn't prevent him reporting that the 'average Australian was lacking in knowledge of Asian Countries'. He commented on Australia's support under the Colombo Plan for the printing of a dictionary and grammar for North Borneo, on the underlying importance of the Five Power Defence Arrangement and on Australia's continuing military presence on the region. For light relief, he informed his readers that he went to Taronga Park zoo and met 'some Orang Utans and other Bornean friends staying there'.³⁰³

A Chinese Malayan journalist, Kung Chou Thai from Kuching, reported that Canberra's buildings looked 'very common', and that Radio Australia's premises compared unfavourably with those of Radio Sarawak. Parliament House was inferior to the Singapore City Council building: 'In order to save public funds, Govt. had [sic] built this simple building for the Parliament', he explained. Australians knew little about Asia and seemed indifferent to it, apart from always wanting to know about Asian opinion of the White Australia policy. Some Australians, however, asked the journalists whether Asians knew 'about the affairs of our country or [tried] to understand us'. Kung did not report their answer.³⁰⁴

Another Malay journalist, Mazlan Nordin, headed his report: 'Australian people are ignorant about Asia. White policy concerns not the colour of the skin, but the standard of living.' He pursued Aboriginal issues, mentioned the money being spent on them by the government, and concluded that assimilation of Aborigines depended upon white Australians accepting them as equals. Like Kung, he did not record what response he

³⁰² Quijano de Manila 'Ow Yer Goin', Mate, Orright?', *Philippines Free Press* 3 August 1963: 34-7. Maximo V. Soliven, *Manila Times* 1965. Alejandro R. Roces, "'White Australia" policy a problem', *Manila Times* 18 November 1959. AA A1838/280: 3040/10/10/2. AA A1838/2: 1453/334. See Appendix 2.

³⁰³ 'Pat', (R.D. Patel) *North Borneo News and Sabah Times*. Journalists' group visit April 1959. 'My Five Days in Sydney', 12 May 1959. AA A6895: N59/35.

³⁰⁴ Kung Chou Thai, *Chinese Daily News*, Kuching, March-April 1960, 'Correspondence from Australia'. AA A6895: N60/27.

made when an Australian asked him about 'the Aborigines in Malaya'. In Mazlan's group of four journalists from Malaya, according to the escort officer, the other three who were Chinese allied themselves against him throughout the tour.³⁰⁵

While on one axis of the post-war matrix, Australia was represented as a friend and neighbour and sometimes even idealised by the visiting journalists, on the other axis was hostility. By the 1960s, the wave of 'Asia-enthusiasm' led by Evatt and Casey was ebbing, and Australian Ministers and officials wrapped themselves in a blanket of Cold War secrecy. Surveying opinion in some Southeast Asian capitals in 1961, Hastings concluded that Singaporeans' attitude to Australia had also changed. 'An ill-defined anti-Australian feeling' had intensified there, and a 'general disregard...for Australian feeling, prestige or even usefulness'. Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Toh Chin Chye, publicly criticised Australian migration policy; and Barisan Socialist leader Lim Chin Siong objected to two things: White Australia and SEATO (particularly to bases in Singapore). Even Hastings' Indian taxi driver informed him in 'short, rapid, lilting sentences that Australia was bad, the White Australia policy was bad, SEATO was bad and we were bad to belong to it'. But it was the 'Darwin Malays case' that, more than anything, caused left-wing politicians to 'make no bones about their dislike of Australia', a feeling that Labor's Immigration Minister, A.A. Calwell, could not have done more to create.³⁰⁶

The War Cabinet in Canberra had decided in 1941 to accept as refugees 50 Chinese and 50 Eurasians from Singapore.³⁰⁷ But in 1947 Calwell moved to repatriate Asian refugees and expatriates, among them 14 Malay seamen, British subjects, some of whom had wives and children in Darwin. A storm of protest erupted, and a Malaya-wide boycott of imports from Australia was proposed. Calwell's suggestion that the seamen

³⁰⁵ Mazlan Nordin, *Berita Harian*. Kung Chou Thai, *Chinese Daily News Kuching*. Journalist visit March-April 1960. 'Correspondence from Australia'. AA A6895: N60/27.

³⁰⁶ Hastings 1961 Calwell urged assimilation of Eastern European migrants while declaring Asians unassimilable. Post-war migrants 'would have to come from Central and Southern Europe and might include Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Yugoslavs, Greeks and possibly Italians. It should be the Commonwealth's aim to absorb such people into the Australian population.' 'Polyglot Australian Nation no worry to Mr Calwell', *Sun News Pictorial*: 9 February 1945. Lack and Templeton 1988.

³⁰⁷ '50 only bar on refugee Chinese - War cables', *Herald* 13 November 1947.

were communists was described in Singapore as a 'pack of lies'.³⁰⁸ The Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Singapore forecast agitation 'to have all Australians here kicked out, too'.³⁰⁹ To Calwell's reported assertion in Parliament that 'you can have a White Australia or a Black Australia, but a mongrel Australia is impossible', the Singapore *Free Press* reacted by accusing the Minister of 'colour-baiting' and of being the 'descendant of an ex-convict'.³¹⁰ Official comment came even from Shanghai: 'If Australia does not want Asians, Malaya certainly does not want Australians'. Kulap reported from Melbourne for Thai newspaper readers that Calwell had deported 'a small number of Malays in Sydney and Melbourne simply because they did not have white skin'. He noted that the issue 'caused the Thai community considerable anxiety' because it was something they, as students, would have to contend with as well. (1947-8. Barmé 1995) In the Philippines, a columnist proposed Australia's exclusion from the 1947 New Delhi Conference on Asian Relations. Others wrote that if Australia was included in SEATO, Manila should refuse to join it, and proposed that Australia, long before the 1990s, was said to want to be part of the region only when it seemed to its own advantage. Calwell's name was so often used that some in the region cited him as Prime Minister of Australia. The President of UMNO compared him to Hitler.³¹¹ These reports established a vocabulary and a set of representations of Australia that would be re-used in the late 1990s by Southeast Asian leaders and media, almost word for word, to justify Australia's exclusion.

In April 1948, the year intervening between Australia's participation in the two New Delhi conferences of Asian and African countries, Evatt and Melbourne academic William MacMahon Ball collaborated at the San Francisco conference. Their 'most notable success' was negotiating the domestic jurisdiction clause of the new United Nations Charter that effectively made Australia's racial exclusion policies immune to any challenge. It would have pleased Hughes in 1919. But their names have not been

Glover thesis 1988: 9.

³⁰⁸ *Sunday Times*, 24 November 1948. AA A1068/7: M47/9/2/5.

³⁰⁹ *North China Daily News*, Shanghai, 17 November 1947. AA A1838/278: 94/5/4.

³¹⁰ *Daily Telegraph* 12 February 1949.

³¹¹ Glover thesis 1988. Brawley in Grant and Seal 1994. Brawley thesis: 79.

critically associated with his in the copious literature of either White Australia or anti-Aboriginal discrimination.³¹²

In 1948, Evatt sent Ball on an official education and 'goodwill' mission to Southeast Asia. Ball understood the postwar determination of Asian countries to shape their own destinies. He expressed the hope that they would not 'seek unity in Asia alone, but a unity of East and West, based on political, economic, and racial equality' [sic]. (Ball 1950) But he plunged into a 'whole area in a state of flux and ferment'.³¹³ His visits to Indonesia and Thailand went smoothly enough. In Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, however, he was confronted by 'a new awareness of Australia in the Malayan mind'. He might have noticed a new awareness of Asia as well. An editorial claimed Australia's repatriation of Malay, Chinese, and Eurasian seamen affected all Asians: it had aroused 'one of the deepest and most vital things in the Asian mind – racial pride'. (*Straits Times* 4 June 1948) 'Asian' was being used, even then, for maximum effect. Citing 'Asian' opinion, businessman Yap Pheng Geck recommended to Francis Stuart, the Australian Commissioner, that Australians 'take trouble to study the new mentality of her [sic] Pacific neighbours'. The President of the Singapore Chinese British Association similarly stressed the 'dangerous effect of the White Australia Policy on Asian feeling'. (*Daily Mirror* 8 June 1948)

MacDonald, the British Commissioner-General, gave a dinner for Ball and invited 'Asiatic' opinion leaders to question him about 'the recent surprising acts of the Australian government'. Maintaining that Britain did not also discriminate against Asian migrants, MacDonald said a major political gesture was needed to undo the harm Australia's acts had caused to Britain and 'every other European nation interested in South East Asia'. The press comment the next day was so negative that Stuart reported to DEA general opposition to 'Western discrimination against Asia abroad'.³¹⁴

³¹² 'Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorise the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII. (UN Charter, Chapter I, Article 2:7) Watt 1967: 89.

³¹³ W. MacMahon Ball, 'Report of Mission to East Asia May 27 – July 6, 1948'. AA A433: 48/2/7053.

³¹⁴ Evatt, forced to choose between his international agenda and domestic politics,

It was futile, a former editor of the *Straits Times* afterwards remarked, to expect Ball to defend the indefensible.³¹⁵

But a Malay commentator in the Kuala Lumpur daily *Majlis* did not disagree with Australia's policy, for reasons that Dr Mahathir later supported (Mahathir 1970): he just wanted Indians and Chinese out of Malaya. He claimed that xenophobia was 'probably a natural feeling that is found in every race in this world', and didn't blame Australians for shutting out 'leeches that will disorganise their economic and social system'. Malays, he added, would do the same if they could. But Australia should take back the 14 married Malays it had insulted by deportation. (*Majlis* 5 June 1948) The desire for respect, and to save Malay face, outweighed his support for racial discrimination. A Burmese journalist invited to Australia in 1957 with Durga Das wrote in similar terms:

Here in Burma we have to smile at the Indians and the Chinese. Speaking for ourselves, we would not like any kind of people to come and settle down in our country. We know the Chinese and the Indians far too well. We are thinking hard as to how we should and can get rid of the Indians and the Chinese who are already in our country...I knew what Mr Durga Das was driving at. In Burma, Malaya, Thailand, Hongkong and South Africa, we find Indians doing big business, so I could guess what Mr Durga Das had in mind...From the experience my own country has had, I would not allow any emigrants [sic] – white, black, or brown – as we have suffered much and have learnt a bitter lesson.³¹⁶

Recalling a massacre of Chinese by the Dutch in Batavia in 1740, Alatas (1977) compared the hatred of Chinese in Southeast Asia to anti-Semitism, and claimed the colonialists were responsible for both. He did not recount other attacks on Chinese by Malays and Indonesians. Nor did he look back at how the Japanese treated Singapore Chinese in 1942; nor how King Rama VI of Thailand wrote a polemic in 1914, 'The

abandoned his envoy, implying that Ball had exceeded his instructions by saying that migration policy would have to change in the future.

³¹⁵ Stuart, Australian Commissioner, to DEA, 11 and 12 June 1948. AA A 4968/2. Rix 1988. Tweedie 1994. Henry Keys, *SMH* 12 February 1949.

³¹⁶ U Sein, *Hanthawaddy* 1 August 1957. AA A1831/1.

Jews of the East', applying European anti-Semitic stereotypes to Chinese in Southeast Asia. In Thailand after the 1932 coup, competing Thai élites exploited ethnic oppression of Chinese and Chinese desire for enrichment to establish 'pariah entrepreneurship', for which Chinese had to pay by 'systematic exactions'. Alatas did not mention, either, that migration to the Philippines had virtually ceased since the late 1930s, that Chinese access to certain occupations was barred by the post-war Republic, and that under the Constitution the citizenship principle of *jus sanguinis* excluded most Philippines-born people of Chinese blood from full citizenship until 1975. Whoever began it, ethnic prejudice appeared to have existed for more than three centuries in the Philippines and Indonesia, and in Malaya/Malaysia and Thailand for more than 150 years. Its legacy, as Alatas did observe, was post-colonial anti-Chinese racism throughout the region.³¹⁷ What is of interest for this study is to observe how treatment of the new outsiders, Australians, episodically resembled that of the traditional outsiders, Chinese, in Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand.

According to Alice Tay Ehr Soon, then a barrister, Australians were virtually indistinguishable from British in Malaya in the 1950s, and reverse racism was applied to them all: 'If the Australian was resented, it was as an *orang puteh* ('white man') and a part of the colonial institutions that dominated the country'.³¹⁸ When Donald Horne toured the 'Far East' in 1963, his Chinese host in Hong Kong warned him about Chinese and slighted Australians' intelligence at the same time: 'We are the most intelligent race in the world. If you let too many Chinese into your country they will take you over'. (Horne 1964:13) A senior Malaysian official visiting Perth in 1984 managed to disapprove of racism while approving of Australians being anti-Chinese. If Australia had no White Australia policy, he said, Australia would be 'flooded with Chinese and you would be facing the trouble Malaysia is facing today', because Australians (like Malays) could not compete with the industriousness of the 'Chinese race'.³¹⁹

³¹⁷ Reid, Wickberg, Hamilton and Waters, in Chiro and Reid 1997.

³¹⁸ Tay, 'Younger Brother to Tuan Besar' [Mr Briton], *Bulletin* 4 January 1961: 22-23. The *Bulletin* under Donald Horne had taken 'Australia for the White Man' off its masthead in December 1960.

³¹⁹ *Daily News*, 23 October 1964: 4. Glover thesis 1988: 77. Reid 1999.

In spite of these racist views – and partly because of them - Australia repeatedly became embroiled in migration controversies. The more these cases were won through political influence, media pressure, and public support, the more of all three they attracted, both in Australia and in Southeast Asia, where each country had one or more of such *causes célèbres* against Australia. They included, first, the case of Cherm Bugetr (a Thai woman employed by a British family in Perth, 1939-49), that focussed such hostile attention on Australia in 1949 that the Australian manager of one of 11 Australian tin mining companies in Thailand wrote to the Department of External Affairs expressing concern.³²⁰ Then the O’Keefe case (of an Indonesian woman married to an Australian, 1949-50) attracted press comment from India, where Australia’s action was called ‘a crime against humanity’ and ‘an insult and a challenge to Asiatics’. (Glover thesis 1988: 70) The Singapore *Free Press* and *Straits Times* weighed in again on behalf of ‘Asia’, and the Melbourne press quoted their warning that ‘Asia will judge Calwell and perhaps Australia by his actions and utterances. Calwell cannot change Australia’s geographical position, nor Australia’s need for good relations with Asia’. (Argus 11 February 1949) Singapore’s *Morning Tribune* also spoke for ‘Asia’, whose anger it said was ‘growing faster than Australia’s population...One day the people of Asia will be compelled to rise and crush this insulting ideology’. Similar, if less angry comments appeared in the Thai press.³²¹ A third case, of Gamboa (a Filipino-American ex-serviceman married to an Australian, 1948-52) was even more widely exposed, from New York to New Delhi. Gamboa invoked the United Nations Charter, and the Congress in Manila debated (but did not pass) a bill for reciprocal exclusion of Americans and Australians. Australians were reported to have been beaten up in Manila, where the press called Australia a ‘convicts’ colony’, and proposed evicting Australian residents and even invading Australia.

³²⁰ Eastman to DEA, 11 May 1949. AA A5019/1: 80/4/1. Articles sourced to Kulap said: “‘The White Australia Policy’ which has been adopted by the present Australian Government makes us wonder whether Australia lies within or without the Continent of Asia’. ‘Australia and Asia’, *Prachakorn* 11 April 1949. White Australia was ‘a policy of barbarism derived from the barbarian minds of the ancestors of the Australians’. *Kiattisak* 6 May 1949. In an interview, Kulap said he had witnessed ‘tragic and inhuman scenes, in which Asians were forced to leave Australia for no other reason than that they were Asians’. *Nakhon San*, 23 April 1949. Barmé 1995: 1, li.

³²¹ The White Australia policy proved Australia was not part of Asia. ‘Australia and

President Quirino intervened, but Calwell, boasting that he had excluded seven Filipinos with Australian wives, refused to budge. With an air agreement pending with Canberra, the Philippines authorities imposed administrative delays on Australian visas, with the effect of reducing the route's profitability for Qantas. Then Holt as a new Immigration Minister admitted Gamboa in 1952, and Spender signed the air agreement.

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Because of its demonstrated efficacy in negotiations, the Gamboa case was not allowed to rest: the blowtorch of Philippine press rhetoric was repeatedly applied to keep it smouldering in 1952, 1959, 1963-65, and again in 1996. Ambassador Cutts reported that in 1963 and 1964 he was asked about Gamboa and/or White Australia by almost everyone he met, 'from near-naked mountain tribesmen to important government officials'. Other migration cases, particularly that of prominent executive Aurelio Locsin in 1966, aroused renewed condemnation of Australia and calls for a trade embargo, and in 1971 the Philippine government retaliated by denying permanent residence to Australians.³²³ Thirty years later, the veteran journalist Max Soliven revived it, speculating that an Asian response to Pauline Hanson might boycott Australian trade and the Olympic Games: 'For better or worse, the denizens of Oz are stuck by geography and logic among us browns and yellows'.³²⁴ Soliven and his colleagues were performing the journalist's task of comforting the afflicted and afflicting

- Asia', *Prachakorn* 11 April 1949. AA A50/19/1.
- 322 Filipinos feared 'foreign encroachment', and the Philippines Immigration Act of 1940 restricted Asian migration; Filipinos didn't mind the White Australia policy applying to Chinese and Japanese, but were offended by it being applied to them. Keith Waller, CG despatch 7/49, 4 April 1949. AA A1838/2: 1453/334. Shann to DEA 1949. AA A4231/2. 'If the Australians are being sadistic in the case of Sergeant Gamboa, we cannot entirely blame them. It is the natural sadism that springs from their penal origins. Had they acted otherwise, they would be untrue to the classic tradition of beachcombers newly arisen from the gutter'. (*Evening Chronicle* quoted in *SMH* 29 March 1949: 1). Sultan Hamidii threatened to deport Australians from West Borneo. *SMH* 8 February 1949, *Straits Times* 8 February: 1, *Times of India* 6 February 1949: 1. Calwell was described by a Dutch paper in Jakarta in 1949 as 'an unmannerly brute'. Glover thesis 1988: 88.
- 323 Marvin A. Tort, 'Focus: Australia's multiculturalism policy. The Great White Shark', *Business World* 27 November 1996: 1. Residence 1971: Powson and Myles, typescript 1998. Heidi Powson and Lou Myles surveyed Philippine representations of Australia in 1996 for the research phase of my project.
- 324 Alejandro R. Roces, "'White Australia' policy a problem', *Manila Times* 18 November 1959. H.Q. Borromeo, *Philippine Herald*, 18 September 1965. AA A1838/2: 1453/334. Maximo V. Soliven, *Manila Times* 1965, *Philippines Star* 20 November 1996: 8.

the comfortable, in this case at Australia's expense. They were also playing another round in the 'shakedown' game against an Australian side that had made itself an easy, racially-defined enemy.

Fighters and the fought

In the first independence war in the region, the Philippines gained as national heroes Rizal, Aguinaldo, and Bonifacio, each reflecting the aspirations of different classes against the colonisers, first Spain, briefly Britain, and then the United States. Western, 'white' Australia was always associated with the United States in Philippine public opinion. The almost continuous, and highly visible, presence of Australians in uniform in the region evoked a similar sense of contestation between the two former colonies and the American metropolis has been observed between Australia, India, and Britain.

In Thailand, as a result of the Pacific war, another species of foreigners appeared – the Australians. If they knew little else about Australia, Thais recalled helping and feeding Australians enslaved by the Japanese in Thailand:

We knew, at least, that this latter category of *farangs* had been to war, especially fighting against the soldiers of the Land of the Rising Sun. It was in this second world war that the whites, who were soldiers, became the prisoners of war of the Japanese. In Thailand, these whites, many of them, were drafted by the Japanese Army to construct a railway from Kanchanaburi in Thailand into Burmese territory (known well as the Death Railway). Part of these prisoners of war were whites whose homeland is situated to the south of Thailand, between the South Pacific and Indian Oceans. They call themselves Australians.³²⁵

During the Vietnam war, more Australians arrived in Thailand where they too were seen, just as their predecessors had been during the Occupation of Japan and the Korean war, as a small component of the American *farang* presence, distinguished from it neither as better nor worse, but as poorer. In 1994 however, Thailand moved

³²⁵ *Kiattisak* 6 May 1949. Nai Sala Likitkun, 'My Ten Thousand Miles from

specifically against Australia, banning a \$100 million purchase of Steyr rifles from Australian Defence Industries when protestors in Australia claimed they would end up with the Khmer Rouge. The official Thai response to the implication that Thailand could not control its military was: 'Canberra cannot control its people from making speeches [against Thailand]'.

The postwar leaders of Singapore and Malaysia negotiated, as Britain pulled back from the region, to keep an allied defensive presence at Butterworth. Under the Five Power Defence Arrangement (FPDA 1971) the UK, Australia, and New Zealand were committed to consultation in the event of an external attack on Malaysia or Singapore. (Selochan 1992) Almost word for word, Lee revived Nehru's argument that 'we have had enough of being pawns and playthings of foreign powers'. But he also thought many in Southeast Asia, not just in Singapore and Malaysia, were 'secretly and privately relieved that there was a residual force'. (Lee 2000) Pragmatically, he recalled that 'none of us except the British have fought a war on our own'. Singapore preferred to be associated with Australia, he said, than tied to the United States (Josey 1976: 221-3), but that didn't inhibit him later from offering facilities to the American navy.

Whatever their public differences with Australia, when it came to defence, Lee and Mahathir apparently preferred the devil they knew. Mahathir trod a wavy line between his aspiration for leadership of the 'South', his adulation of the East, his perennial diatribes against the West, and his need for the FPDA. He too, like Nehru, inveighed against the Commonwealth but neither Malaysia nor India left it. (Camroux 1994) The defence relationship benefited Malaysia's military and Mahathir calculated that Australians – not even the Whitlam government that opposed stationing Australian troops in other countries – were not prepared to lose.³²⁶ This enabled Mahathir to take the public line that (all) Europeans were 'warlike and aggressive', had 'warlike instincts' and peace was anathema to them. Presumably referring to the United States, but not differentiating Australians from 'Europeans', he added 'they must have war. To have

³²⁶ Thailand to Australia': *Kiattisak* 23 March 1957. AA A6895/1: N57/11. Graeme Dobell, 'Australia and Asia', *ABC 24 hours*, April 1993: 38-41. Quarantine: Schofield 2000.

war they must find enemies'. (Mahathir 1999) Their latest weapon for re-colonising East Asia was capital, he argued, and the IMF wielded it. By means of this logic, he could represent Australia as one of the post-colonial oppressors of East Asia and the Third World and still keep the FPDA quarantined from controversy.

Regional security bodies came and went, official and non-official, with different members, but they were always Western-inspired and always included Australia. Southeast Asian countries never trusted each other enough to enter into mutual defence cooperation without the presence of non-regional states: the contrast with the organisations they formed to pursue East Asian economic and cultural cooperation was marked. A disjunction existed between rhetoric against the Western alliance and policy that favoured it. Australia, caught in the middle, could not improve the way it was publicly represented in the region by associating itself either with the non-aligned or with those who trusted the US.

Southeast Asians' real security concerns remained focussed more on each other than on Australia. But Australia was a convenient target for their projection. Indonesians represented the FPDA as an Australian attempt to 'ostracise' Indonesia, and argued that if Australia wanted to be seen as fully self-reliant, it should give up the Western alliance. (Hardjono 1992) Former Foreign Minister Mochtar suggested the 'anachronistic' FPDA be replaced by defence cooperation between Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. (Selochan 1992) Events in the late 1990s in Ambon, Aceh, East Timor, and Papua further showed that defence for Javanese was primarily an internal matter, while for Australians it was external. The Jakarta press reminded Australia of the potential of 200 million Indonesians to threaten it, while calling Australians' fears of Indonesia 'lingering and illogical'. (*Indonesian Observer* 24 January 1997)³²⁷

On letterhead proclaiming 'Independence Freedom Happiness', a representative of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam wrote from Saigon to Evatt in 1948, hoping his country

³²⁷ The Indonesian neighbours of the Javanese, aware of the indigenised version of the *Mahabharata* that culminates in an orgy of bloodshed between kinsmen, recalled that most of the killed and the killers in 1965-6 were Javanese. Anderson 1990.

could share the 25 scholarships Australia was to provide. He was one of the few in the region who explicitly welcomed what Ball stood for. Vietnam had been at war with the Chinese for centuries, with France for three decades, with Japan in the 1940s, and war would continue with the United States from the late 1950s to 1975. Covert American support for the French military effort in 1953 had been as high as 80 percent, and Australia in 1964 secretly secured its own invitation to support its United States ally in the undeclared war.³²⁸ Before the 'American War', few Vietnamese had heard of Australia; and during it, Australian soldiers were described as mercenaries by the North and freedom fighters by the South. (Nguyen 1998)³²⁹ After the 'fall of Saigon' or the 'liberation of Vietnam', passers-by often took Australians in Hanoi to be Russians.³³⁰ That distinguished the Vietnamese from other Southeast Asians more than it differentiated the Australians. By the 1990s, few Vietnamese in the North knew of Australia's involvement in the 'American War'. (Button 1994)

In South Vietnam, Australia began to be known as vast and prosperous, but also as sheep-eating (low-grade meat for Vietnamese). Men were believed to treat women well because there were so few of them in Australia. (Nguyen 1998) But a two-volume history of Phuoc Tuy province where 5RAR had been based, written in the North, barely mentioned Australia. Some activities of 5RAR were described as being those of United States troops. Australia was said to have experience in jungle and mountain warfare and commando tactics from previous Asian wars, and its 'fighting units consisted of a Royal Regiment with three battalions and supporting forces such as the New Zealand gunners, aircraft and tanks'. Recounting how a minefield laid by the Australians was turned against them at great cost, the history attributed their defeat to the Vietnamese resourcefulness and self-sacrifice; and brave Vietnamese suicide squads had caused the Australians to contract their cordon sanitaire until it was so ineffective that they had to resort to trenches. In December 1971 the Australians were reported to have been defeated and forced to retreat from Baria, having 'failed the mission which the American imperialists had given them'.³³¹

³²⁸ Logan in McGillivray and Smith 1997: 173-202.

³²⁹ Anne T. Nguyen surveyed Vietnamese representations of Australia in 1996 for the research phase of my project. Nguyen 1998.

³³⁰ Richard Broinowski to AB: 1983.

³³¹ Tran Quang Toai, 'The Destiny of the Australian Army in Long Dat [Phuoc

Australians not only looked like Americans, they behaved like them too, at least from the viewpoint of Vietnamese long beset by foreign invaders.³³² But Vietnam's leaders were well aware that the Australians took their troops out earlier than the United States; they recognised the Hanoi government sooner; they started aid programs more quickly; and with only six men missing in action to search for, and only small veterans' groups wanting to revisit battle sites, they made fewer demands of the Hanoi government. Australian English programs were quicker off the ground, and young Vietnamese were reported to prefer them to French. Guided, perhaps, by their maxim 'when you sail you have to follow the curve of the river', Vietnamese rapidly adapted to postwar realities, and never demanded an apology.³³³ Although they had more reason than some other Southeast Asians for negative images of Australians, they were less inclined to publicise them.

The controlled media in Vietnam were not used as a the vehicle for vengeful representations of the Australians as soldiers, or even for reports that veterans' deaths and those of their children were higher than the Australian average. Instead of castigating its former invaders, the official Vietnamese press, on the twentieth anniversary of the 'liberation of Vietnam', ran a series of front page stories on the experiences of 'Heroic Mothers' in struggles both against the French and the Americans.³³⁴ Australia took refugees and migrants and provided de-mining and development aid; it provided capital, tourism, and a market for exports; and Australians in Vietnam paid much more than the local rate, under the dual pricing system for goods and services. The centre reciprocated by silencing criticism of the past. As a general rule in Vietnam, 'if things are still under control, it won't be put in the press', according to a Vietnamese lawyer. In 2000, a Deputy Prime Minister made the trade-off clear:

Tuy]', *Journal of Military History*, Hanoi 1991: 24-7, 43. Translation and summary by Greg Lockhart.

³³² Huw Watkin, 'Apocalypse then leaves legacy of insanity now', *A* 31 August 2000: 7.

³³³ Maxim: ABC 'Chequerboard Revisited', 15 August 2000.

³³⁴ Ton-That Qyuhn Du, 'Grass over the graves', *Age* 29 April 1995: 3, 5.

since Australia played such an important role in the region, he said, Vietnam 'always highly values the friendship and cooperation with Australia'.³³⁵

Vietnamese, it seemed, were so habituated to suffering that they ceased to consider who caused it. In Hanoi, medical authorities denied to an Australian reporter that their veterans had any symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder: 'We won the war...so our soldiers felt only happiness', said Nguyen Van Nhan. A National Assembly member from the South who was prepared to describe birth deformities, war disabilities, and the residual damage suffered by every Vietnamese family, nevertheless refrained from blaming Australia for them.³³⁶ This conspiracy of postwar silence depended upon Australia officially overlooking what Sheridan called Vietnam's 'abominable' human rights record, but what for Vietnamese leaders was necessary to safeguard their hard-won gains. (A 31 January 2000: 11) Among first generation Vietnamese Australians many spoke of going back to free their country, and hoped the Australian government would understand their feelings.³³⁷ The visit of an Australian delegation was cancelled in 1994 by Hanoi after Quang Luu, a former official of the South Vietnamese Embassy, who became a boat person and then head of SBS Radio, gave an interview to the BBC Vietnamese Service saying his objective as a member of the team was to 'examine' human rights.³³⁸ A South Vietnamese Australian listed his family members who had fought and died for the Saigon regime and, like others, expressed incomprehension at Canberra's efforts to cooperate with Hanoi in anything, especially human rights. (TWA 27-8 February 1999: 29)

³³⁵ Lawyer: *FEER* 31 August 2000: 22. *SMH* 8 July 2000: 7. DPM Nguyen Man Camh, quoted by Sheridan, *A* 4 February 2000: 7.

³³⁶ In Boa Ninh (Hoang Phuong)'s novel *The Sorrow of War*, he told the story of a former soldier on the brink of madness, and wrote 'the psychological scars of the war will remain forever'. *A* 31 August 2000: 7. Dr Nguyen Huu Cat, psychiatrist in Hue, said people were reluctant to be considered mad, and consulted physicians about their symptoms rather than psychiatrists. Lt.Gen Vu Xuan Vinh said he was not sure of psychological effects, but he was sure about the effects of Agent Orange, caused by the Americans. *FEER* 2 April 1998: 38-9. *A* 1 February 2000: 9.

³³⁷ Thi Hong Nguyen, 'Living in Vietnam After 1975': Nguyen 1986.

³³⁸ This 'fiasco...reflected an appalling arrogance towards the Vietnamese as well as a totally unrealistic view of our own importance to Vietnam and to Southeast Asia generally'. Logan in McGillivray and Smith 1997: 198.

If Indochina had ‘dawned late and imperfectly on the Australian consciousness’, the same was true of Vietnamese consciousness of Australia. The influence of Chinese perceptions was strong in (North) Vietnamese textbooks, which in 1961 described Australia as developed, but with the characteristics of a colony, being dependent on agriculture and dominated by the United States: ‘Most farmers have become bankrupt and are now employed as agricultural workers in farms...Agriculture has been developed mainly for export purposes, thus the people still lack adequate food and clothing’.³³⁹ Many Vietnamese in the North were ‘surprised to learn that there is a large Vietnamese community in Australia, although this is better understood in the South’.³⁴⁰ As in Chinese accounts, Australia’s size and wealth were noted, with few details about refugee migration. As long as the Hanoi government had the Whitlam government’s support, the press in Vietnam favoured Australia, but in response to the Fraser government’s opposition to Vietnam’s intrusion into Cambodia in 1979, these representations changed:

As everyone knows, Australia is a country which sent troops to participate alongside the US in its war of invasion against South Vietnam, and commit numerous bloody crimes against our people. (*Nhan Dan* 10 July 1981)

Relations improved with the Hawke and Keating governments, and as a result the Vietnamese press ran a wide array of positive stories, as many as 62 in 1995 in *Nhan Dan*. Australia was then represented as strongly committed to Asia. (Nguyen 1998)

Indonesians were from the outset more concerned with acquiring, defending, and developing their empire than with any threat from Australia. As ABRI people joked, Australia was like the appendix of the body of Southeast Asia – small, only noticed when it became painful, easily removed, and then not missed. Australia trained thousands of ABRI and TNI officers, and took part in many joint defence exercises, progressively acquiring this role from the United States. But watchful Indonesians observed the range and purpose of Australia’s F111s and FA18s and the capacity and

³³⁹ Ministry of Education and Training, Hanoi, quoted by Nguyen 1998: 20, n.6.

³⁴⁰ William S. Logan, ‘The Angel of Dien Bien Phu: Making the Australia-Vietnam Relationship’ in McGillivray and Smith 1997: 178-202.

deployment of the Australian army and navy, especially the submarines. They read of the shift of Australian public opinion that saw Indonesia as the new prime threat in the 1980s and 1990s, even while Australian officials were claiming the opposite. In 1986, a bad year for Australia's image in the region, officials in Jakarta took exception to the draft Dibb Report (that preceded the 1987 Defence White Paper) describing 'the archipelago to our north' as the area 'from or through' which Australia could be threatened. So 'from' was omitted.³⁴¹ In 1986 the armed forces paper *AB* sought to avenge the *SMH*'s insult to their Commander-in-Chief with a series of articles attacking Australians as posing a communist threat to Indonesia, and representing them as anarchic, hedonistic, and prone to slap their near neighbours' faces without reason. A decade later in December 1995, Indonesia signed a security agreement with Australia, negotiated in secret with the Keating government. Canberra claimed it as the missing link in the chain that would keep the 'balancing presence' of the United States in what Dibb later called the 'arc of instability' north of Australia.³⁴² Indonesia's first Defence White Paper (1995) warned prophetically, though tautologically, that rapid changes in the strategic environment added to the uncertainty of the future. But in Jakarta, the agreement with Australia was represented by Foreign Minister Alatas as little more than formal acknowledgement of the status quo. It was quickly abrogated by President Habibie during the East Timor crisis.

As 'national resilience' was challenged by political and economic instability in the late 1990s, the Indonesian authorities, reversing their long-held hostility to foreign bases, even offered the hire of facilities, as Singapore had done, to the United States. This implied that their long-standing jibes at Australia for its lack of independence from America might end. Although Indonesian leaders rarely spoke about their policy change in public, they were well aware of the responsibilities Australia was assuming from the United States. They knew about Australia's mediation on Indonesia's behalf with Washington over their economy, human rights, and defence. They also knew in detail

³⁴¹ McBeth, *FEER* 15 December 1994: 18, 20.

³⁴² Paul Dibb, 'Indonesia threat forges link in security chain', *A* 30 January 1996. The Agreement on Maintaining Security committed the parties to consult 'each other in the case of adverse challenges to either party or to their common security interests'. 'Although Indonesian spokesmen have been handling it in a low-key fashion...[the treaty] overturns decades of official

about the consultation between Canberra and Washington over Australia's role in East Timor. So Jakarta's shock and outrage in 1999 when an Australian journalist, interviewing Howard, gave that role a name – 'Deputy Sheriff' – was therefore feigned: but at the time, to play this move in the 'blame Australia' game was a way of regaining national self-esteem.³⁴³

Successive Australian governments had not strongly objected either to the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, or to the murders of five men working for Australian television companies at Balibo in October 1975 (two Australians, two British, and a New Zealander) and a sixth journalist (Australian) in Dili in December 1975. Captain Yunus Yosfiah, who was responsible for the deaths at Balibo and later rose to become Information Minister under President Habibie, at the time reported their identity simply, and racially, as 'white men' (*Orang Belanda*). They were described by the Indonesian military as 'Australian communists'. (Ball and McDonald 2000) Evidence mounted, after Soeharto's fall, that they had not been caught in crossfire but killed with the knowledge of senior ABRI officers and of Australian officials. Indonesian officers were reported to have been amazed at the absence of Australian outrage at the killings, taking it as approval of the invasion. (Dunn 1983. Joliffe 2001)

Australian analysts, transfixed with the questions of who did it and who lied, largely ignored the question of why Indonesian military officers, whom Australia for two decades had successively courted, supported, and then trained, deliberately executed six men they knew to be Australian-employed journalists.³⁴⁴ The Indonesian military was trained to believe it held the Javanese empire together against threats from separatists and sectarians. ABRI had a proprietorial sense of East Timor as territory for acquisition and profit; it was acculturated to view East Timorese as backward Catholics, Portuguese as inept colonialists, and Australians (being Western and Christian) as their supporters and potential successors. They were hostile (like the military in many

Indonesian strategic doctrine'. Sheridan 'How PM has been working overtime to forge Asian link', *A* 3 December 1995.

³⁴³ Sheridan, 'Why US can't ignore Jakarta', *A* 22 April 1997: 15.

³⁴⁴ An Australian analysis that sought, by providing background to events from

countries) towards the un-uniformed, particularly the media. This was compounded in the case of Australia by the much-cited bias and intrusion of Radio Australia and print journalists into Indonesian affairs. From Indonesian cartoons and commentary, a picture emerged of Australians as ABRI saw them: ignorant intruders, subversives or, as an Indonesian ambassador later put it, 'just a bloody nuisance'. (Appendix 2) In a military crisis like that of 1975, the motivation to eliminate both the nuisance and the evidence was overwhelming.

In Indonesia after 1965 and among the few Asian members of SEATO – Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand - concern about internal insurgencies had complex origins in each country, whose common target was Chinese communism. Uniformed Australians were visibly present, once again, passing through most of their capitals to and from Vietnam, and in rest and recreation places. Australia was still perceived as supporting the West against the East, and even the Portuguese in East Timor. Indonesian observers retained their conviction that Australia's 'yellow peril' threat mentality was still alive (Hardjono 1992): 'When Australians stand up with their Asian neighbours against the harsh treatment of Asians in this part of the world, Australia will have come of age. She will have become an essential part of Asia and the Pacific'. (Kelabora 1992) But there was a 'militarist streak in the Australian psyche', others argued, and Australia would continue to collude with the West against nationalism in Asia. (D'Cruz and Steele 2000)

From 1986 the Indonesian media had repeatedly accused 'fortress Australia' of isolationism and had claimed to be amused that Australians saw Indonesia as a threat. Australia's failure in 1990 to consult its regional neighbours about intervention in the Gulf War, and even its offer in the mid-1990s to share intelligence with its neighbours, underlined the fact that it belonged to the Western intelligence community.³⁴⁵ Even when relations with Jakarta were at their warmest, a report to the Australian

1974 in East Timor from Indonesia's perspective, to remedy unbalanced reporting, nevertheless omitted the Balibo killings. Mackie and Ley in Milner and Quilty 1998a. Balibo was not mentioned in the DFAT account. DFAT 2001.

³⁴⁵ Arguing for arms control rather than expansion, Senator Evans proposed sharing intelligence from the United States/Australian 'joint facility' at Narrungar with Australia's regional neighbours. (RA 23 October 1989)

government noted underlying fragility in the defence relationship, suggesting that the ADF was more enthusiastic about cooperation than ABRI. For its part, the Indonesian military assumed that the onus was on Australia to conform to Indonesia's requirements, and constantly held over their Australian counterparts the threat of a cooling of interest if they failed to appreciate 'the conventions of civilised, i.e. Asian behaviour, and the nuances of Indonesian culture'.³⁴⁶ When Australia intervened in East Timor in 1999, these threats were quickly acted upon. (Part 3.1)

In July 2000, however, Australia's plans to upgrade its combat capacity were actually welcomed by the Defence Minister in Jakarta as a positive contribution to the region's strategic balance. Such moves in the past had been called provocative. Indonesia, the Minister now said, could not expand its own capacity inside a decade, and he even asked for Australian military help with the humanitarian relief of Maluku, where refugees were fleeing inter-religious conflict.³⁴⁷ Relativities of power and economic capacity had changed, and as a result, Australia's regional 'deputy sheriff' role was not mentioned. But customary Indonesian representations of Australia were more durable.

Teachers and the taught

A handful of university students from Japan, Hong Kong, and India had begun arriving in Australia soon after Federation. (Ingleson and Walker 1989) Thais began actively to seek opportunities to study in Perth, Sydney, and Melbourne in the 1930s, as an alternative to Japan or the United States. In the late 1940s, young Thais were enrolled in high schools and - the first of many - at Geelong Grammar. While they brought with them their culture of respect for teachers and a capacity to make friends, the young Thais collided with post-war Labor migration policy that suspected them as overstayers or subversives. More than half of the 23 Thai students in Melbourne in 1948 were reported by Kulap to be unhappy, wishing to leave Australia either to return home or to continue their studies in Europe. Kuthartut Indarathut (who later became a Privy Councillor in Thailand) declared, 'No Asian of any sensitivity could stay here.' One Thai

³⁴⁶ Australian Embassy, Jakarta, report to Minister of Defence, Senator Ray. Cameron Stewart, 'Secret warning on Jakarta ties', *A* 21 July 1994: 1.

³⁴⁷ *A* 13 July 2000: 1. *TWA* 15-16 July 2000: 15.

student declared his intention to become an immigration official in Thailand and treat Australians as he had been treated. (Barmé 1995) Students said Australian Immigration officials were as offensive, arrogant, and racially superior 'as the worst Japanese'. (Herald 28 October 1948)

Kulap called on the Thai government to investigate the students' problems. Australians, he complained, were free to live and work in Southeast Asia while Southeast Asian students were pursued by 'thought guardians' in Australia. Much as the Chinese petitioners of the past had done, he deplored the lack of reciprocity, and cited Jesus and the Buddha as examples to the Australian authorities. (*Siam Nikorn* 4, 5 January 1949) Reflecting on his Australian experience in 1950, Kulap conceded that although Australia was 'highly advanced' and had much to teach Thailand, Australians could benefit by learning values and lifestyle customs from Thais: in these respects, 'Oriental people have advanced much further than Australians; therefore the latter have no right to claim that they have a higher level of civilization than that found in the East'. Civilisation, once again, was the measure by which Australia was found wanting and Asia was validated.

The Colombo Plan (1951) was one of the world's first aid schemes. Originally a Commonwealth initiative, its educational and technical projects were extended at Percy Spender's insistence to include non-communist Southeast Asian countries, in the hope of involving the United States in opposing communism, and of countering resentment there of Australia. (Ingleson and Walker 1989) Colombo Plan funds were covertly drawn on to train security officials and police from non-communist Southeast Asian countries, and to support the army of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. (Lowe 1996. Waters 1999) The Plan was supposed partly to pay its way by opening new markets in developing countries and making Australian manufactured exports more competitive. Ostensibly it aimed at fostering goodwill, and many students were helped to feel welcome by community groups and individuals. But as the young Thais had found, official Australian sub-agendas soon came to the surface. (Tweedie 1994)

The government's concern for the Colombo Plan students - and for Australia's image - had a somewhat patronising vehicle in *Hemisphere*. (1957-1984) For the first two

years, *Hemisphere* carried no letters to the editor apart from polite exchanges about Asian Festivals. But by 1960 their tone of gratitude had changed. In response to persistent appeals from *Hemisphere's* editor for comments on Australian misconceptions about Asia, a Malayan student said Australians did not think about Asia at all, except in demeaning stereotypes. Australians, he claimed, would have trouble even pronouncing 'Thais'. An Indian student agreed that being asked condescending questions revealed the superficiality of Australians' knowledge of her country.³⁴⁸ A Singaporean student objected to the term 'under-developed', pointing out that New Guinea was not typical of all of for Asia, that great differences in development existed not only between Asian countries, but between them and Australia, and that Australia not always ahead. A common complaint of the students was that Australians showed a lack of interest in their cultures and societies, and assumed 'Asians' recently to have been tree-inhabiting primitives. An implied concern, shared by many of *Hemisphere's* correspondents, was civilisation and who could claim it.³⁴⁹

Some Asian students responded with cynicism and contempt to the insularity of the 'vast majority' of Australians who, according to an early study (Pon 1954) were so ignorant of Asia that they asked Malaysian Indians to read Chinese script or perform Malay dances, and were surprised that Asian students spoke English among themselves. Many students identified a 'patronising attitude and lack of understanding or knowledge of their culture shown by Australians', and complained that interaction with Australians was superficial and that it was hard to make friends. Pon concluded that 'the vast majority of Australians' were dismally ignorant about Asia and Asians, and hence were not hostile, but indifferent to them. The students identified various forms of discrimination: being refused accommodation, being kept waiting in offices and shops, racist comments on buses and trams, physical violence from drunks, and being left out

³⁴⁸ 'Crossing the Barriers', ABC radio documentary 1994, included Colombo Plan students' experiences of 1950s and 1960s. Two common themes were diverse experiences in Australia, and Australians' ignorance of Asia.

³⁴⁹ 'Prize-winning entries in *Hemisphere's* competition', *H* 4, 8, August 1960: 20-27. Lum Kong Keong wrote that after five years in Australia, he found that 'the average Australian' knew only the following about 'Asians': they are numerous, live in squalor and disease, eat rice, have narrow eyes, and are either the Yellow Peril or Our Nearest Neighbours'. He compared 'the sophisticated Chinese of Singapore' with 'a diseased family of peasants on the banks of the Irrawaddy', 'a starving Korean refugee', and 'a fuzzy-haired tribesman'.

of social activities. In Benn's survey (1961) they reported insults from passers-by, and Australian fathers being unwilling to let Asian students to take out their daughters. (Pon and Benn in Glover 1988) These experiences were fictionally validated in Alex Buzo's play *Norm and Ahmed* (1967). Later, however, in another play *Let Them Eat Curry!* (1981), Sri Lankan Australian Ernest MacIntyre created Australian and Sri Lankan fathers both of whom nurtured negative stereotypes and mutual ignorance. Their efforts to confine their children to mono-cultural relationships were countered by mothers who realised they had to adapt to survive.

Uppermost in the minds of the Malaysian student respondents to these surveys – and in the minds of the survey-writers - was White Australia. Just before the Singapore race riots of July 1964, a questionnaire given by Australian researchers to Malaysian Australian alumni and to most the sixth-form high school students in Kuala Lumpur and Seremban revealed widespread knowledge of the policy. Many indicated that it was a personal affront, and some called it an example of Australia's 'unenlightened self-interest'. (Jones and Jones 1965) In Sydney, a Malaysian student representative contrasted the efforts of External Affairs to improve Australia's image abroad with those of Immigration officials who invigilated overseas students' results, political comments, employment, and marriages.³⁵⁰ Highly publicised cases included, for example, that of Andrew and Jennifer Yeo who were ordered to return to Sarawak with their two Australian-born children in 1970. Instead, they migrated to Canada where 'they do not discriminate racially'. (*Age* 27 October 1970: 2) An Indian Malaysian student wrote to the Australian press in 1972 asserting that in spite of the policy having been declared extinct, it was 'very much extant' in the actions of the Department of Immigration. (Krishnan, *A* 30 May 1972)

Chinese journalists invited from Malaya sought out their student compatriots for interviews in 1957 and 1958, and reported less enthusiastically on the 'egalitarian' Australia that the Thai socialist Kulap had admired. Domestic servants were unavailable, boys who had never been in a kitchen had to take turns in cooking, and girls had to do their own washing. But the girls agreed, wrote Ng Yook Yoon, that 'it

³⁵⁰ 'Malaysian Student Resents Attitude', *Daily News* 17 August 1965. The student

was making women out of them and preparing them for wifhood'. For Australians, however, they warned, the servantless condition was terminal:

Besides being the bread-winner the head of an Australian family has to be the gardener, chauffeur, carpenter and handy man around the house. The wife has to be cook, washer-woman and shopper...At a party only the wife or the husband turns up. The other has to remain at home to look after the baby.

A Malay student wrote on similar lines for *Hemisphere*, adding her observations of the ingenious devices with which 'the Australian housewife' replaced servants: prams, shopping trolleys, and golf buggies. She observed the 'high value placed on the human individual' in Australia, as Wang Gungwu also did later. (Wang 1992b)³⁵¹ The students interviewed by Ng said they were treated as equals by Australians, and could go almost anywhere with 'no colour bar at all'. But he reported their 'keen desire to return home to help build the newly independent Malayan nation' as the leaders of the future. Students thousands of miles from Malaya, preoccupied with their studies and recreation, could lose touch with home, Ng warned. What appeared to be operating here was not only opposition to socialism, but an anti-migration, anti-brain-drain agenda similar to the one observed above in Hong Kong press reporting.³⁵²

The views of students varied according to their ethnic origins and also their gender. Many of the students from Malaya were male non-Malays who anticipated having to go back to India or China if there were 'undesirable incidents' at home: race for them was a central issue. Kung Chou Thai, a visiting journalist, in 1960 reported a debate between Indonesian and Malay students in Australia. Indonesians objected to the fact that no matter how educated and civilised Asians were they couldn't stay in Australia, while uneducated and uncivilised Southern Europeans could. Malay students, on the other hand, pointed to the migration restraints imposed by some Asian countries, and argued that Australia had a right to homogeneity. The Malays accused the Indonesian

³⁵¹ was President of the Overseas Students Council of NSW. Glover thesis 1988.
Beda Lim, 'Few servants in Australia', *H* April 1957: 7-9.

³⁵² Ng Yook Yoon, *Straits Times*. *Sunday Times*: 23 June 1957. Luke Ang Cuan Kim, Radio Malaya *Blue Network* journalists group visit August 1958: 'Malaysian Students in Australia', 14 October 1958. AA A6895: N58/129. Ang was reported by his escort officer to have been highly critical of everything on the tour.

students of being chauvinistic, and the Indonesians accused the Malays of being feudal and reactionary. But each side projected their own domestic politics onto Australia, complaining to Kung that students were discriminated against in seeking accommodation. Australians, they said, were uninterested in their countries, and so they tended to band together, regarding friendliness from Australians as false, masking a 'warning not to get too chummy with Australian girls or with any intentions of marrying them'.³⁵³

Minda Feliciano from the Philippines in 1953 made several broadcasts on Radio Australia's 'Calling Asia' program. She found Australia 'a bit conservative' and Australians 'a little too contented', but she was convinced of the truth of claims about an 'egalitarian Australia': 'They treat everyone equally, and here people can work in peace, do what they want, talk...to anyone regardless of what they are and who they are'. (RA 16,17 March 1953) In contrast to the hostile views of many male students, her description of her holiday job in a Melbourne department store as a rewarding experience revealed more about her own tact, conscientiousness, and determination to succeed in Australia than it did about her co-workers or customers. Another Philippine student, Dominador Salas, on the other hand, pointed to Australians' failure to understand the social status, obligations, indirectness, and family values with which 'the Filipino' was imbued. He portrayed Australians as being careless of social niceties and, he implied, less civilised. (*H* 4, 8, August 1960: 22-3)

As well as gender perspectives, students clearly brought cultural expectations with them. The experiences of an articulate, refined student from Pakistan confronted by an Australian bigot in *Norm and Ahmed* (1967), were a fictional prototype for the views of another Pakistani student who was critical of what seemed to him an earthly heaven tarnished by drunkenness, horse races, poker machines, and excessively easy living. Also in the late 1960s, a Chinese Malaysian student in Sydney provided a contrasting, equally culture-based perception. Study abroad, for him, was

³⁵³ Kung Chou Thai, *Chinese Daily News* Kuching. Journalist visit March-April 1960. 'Correspondence from Australia'. AA A6895: N60/27.

one of youth's enduring allurements. The prospect it offers of unknown possibilities in experience and achievement remains compelling to anyone who is possessed by ambition...and who hankers after stimulating experiences.

His expectations of free love, promiscuous girls, and of a 'throbbingly wild and delectably sinful' life in Australia not only punctured assertions about Asian values, but also revealed one reason why Lee, Mahathir, and others felt the need to make them. Siding with the patriarchs after his invitational tour of Australia, journalist Liew Choon Fatt wrote in the Singapore *Malayan Times* that parents would be 'enraged and shocked' at the behaviour of their student offspring in Australia. Many of them, he claimed in alarm, had so 'changed their national outlook and developed a false set of values' that they could be seen in coffee bars, giving little thought to study. (Glover thesis 1988)

Indonesian students were prepared for Australia by a school history textbook, *Sari Sedjarah*, that emphasised Australia's convicts, fear of Asia, restricted migration, and dependence on Western powers. (Reeve 1992) Achdiat K. Mihardja and Idrus were students and teachers in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s, and both published fictionalised accounts in 1973 of their experiences. Like the factual writers, both of them apparently expected, and found, discrimination against migrants, Aborigines, and Asian students. They represented Australian women as promiscuous and men as either violent or weaklings. Idrus satirised Australians' Anglo-snobbery and Achdiat found them incapable of a whole-hearted response to life. Both represented Australia to readers of Bahasa Indonesia as a country beneath contempt where cultivated, civilised Javanese were cultural exiles.³⁵⁴

In reverse, Australian fiction about Indonesia was found by an Indonesian specialist in Australian studies to lack credibility when it sought to create Indonesian characters. Reni Winata found Christopher Koch's novel *The Year of Living Dangerously* (1978) unconvincing. Neither she nor two other Indonesian scholars interviewed in 1992, considered how Australians were represented in Indonesian fiction. (Fisher and Leigh

³⁵⁴ Achdiat K. Mihardja, *The Dust of Love Scattered* (1973); Idrus, *The Story of*

1986) Nor did they speculate on whether Indonesians could also be as rude and offensive to foreigners as they claimed foreigners were to them. They implied that the obligation was on Australians to learn from Indonesia, not vice versa.

The student experience in Australia was often used as an example for readers in the students' home countries either to avoid or to emulate. In his famous tract, *The Malay Dilemma* (1970), Mahathir Mohamad compared the education systems the British had set up in Australia and in Malaya. In Australia (he claimed) national history was taught in English to all migrants as part of a common curriculum. In Malaya, by contrast, the British had permitted a variety of schools, curricula, and languages. But the Malays were the 'definitive people' of the country, and this was the justification for his policy of making *Bahasa Malaysia* the national language and the medium of instruction.

(Mahathir 1970) In 1974, however, as Education Minister, Mahathir's line changed. He blamed student demonstrations in Kuala Lumpur on Australian influence. He advised Australians to 'get rid of their colonial mentality' and, deploying the discourse that would become habitual from the 1980s onwards, told a press conference: 'We don't need any advice from them on how to run this country ... They should learn how to solve their own problems first; they solve their problems by shooting aborigines and having a White Australia Policy'. (*Straits Times* 9 December 1974: 1, 5) After the abolition of the policy, the Singapore government became concerned about losing Australian-trained Singaporean students, and officials alleged that Sydney was a 'recruitment, propaganda and fund-raising centre' for Malaysian and Singaporean communists.³⁵⁵

The plaintive comment of a Singaporean student in the 1960s – 'until I came here I never believed I would hear such silence' (Glover thesis 1988) – resonated down the years. Until the late 1970s, Southeast Asian students' problems in Australia had been mainly educational and cultural (involving racism, language, adjustment) and official (immigration). But from 1979, when the Overseas Student Charge began to displace Colombo Plan scholarships, students had less to be grateful for, and financial problems and concerns about quality gained prominence. In the major source countries Australia had for long been regarded as less prestigious educational alternative to the United

States and the United Kingdom, but cheaper and closer.³⁵⁶ Education ‘for profit’ brought issues of accreditation and regulation forward in new ways. Frequent publicity about how foreign students paying full fees subsidised Australian students did not enhance Australia’s standing: neither did recurrent scandals involving mismanaged English-language courses, IT colleges, and profiteering education agents.³⁵⁷ In 1984, up to 80 per cent of foreign students were reported by Brian Burke to have difficulties with the cost of living and accommodation, and with frequent changes in visa fees. Burke’s survey, carried out at the time of the Blainey debate, also indicated ‘great anxiety’ among foreign students about ‘the subsequent upsurge in racism’. In that year, he reported, a record number of them sought counselling, psychiatric help, or repatriation. (Glover thesis 1988) In 1992 an Australian report found that students in 11 Asian countries were attracted by the proximity and relative cheapness of education in Australia, but were put off by the business-like promotion of education, and by concerns about racism.³⁵⁸ A Malay student leader declared that Australian fees that were too high and also that Australians ‘discriminated against Asians, including being terribly suspicious of Asian citizens that were residing there’.³⁵⁹ In spite of all this, enrolment numbers continued to rise.³⁶⁰

In the 1980s and 1990s, accusations that Australian educational institutions were intent on draining the best brains and training the worst communists gave way to more culturally-nuanced comments. A Singapore academic with a PhD from Adelaide University lamented on a visit to Perth in 1992 that, compared to his experience in

³⁵⁵ ‘Guerilla Centre in Sydney Alleged’, *SMH* 28 May 1976: 1. Glover thesis 1988.

³⁵⁶ Pon 1954. Benn 1961. Glover thesis 1988.

³⁵⁷ *A* 6 November 1996. *SMH* 13 June 1997: 3. *FEER* 24 April 1997. *SMH* 24 July 2000: 3.

³⁵⁸ AGB Australia Research, *International Competitiveness Study*, Canberra: DEET 1991. *Age* 15 February 1992: 3. *SMH* 15 February 1992. Of the 11 countries surveyed, 7 were in East Asia. The US was widely regarded as a superior educational destination to Australia. Closure of ELICOS colleges, disputes between Australia and Malaysia, and a general perception of racial prejudice were factors in negative perceptions of Australia. The racism element was headlined and emphasised by the *Daily Telegraph Mirror*, 15 February 1992.

³⁵⁹ President of Federation Union of Malay Students, *Berita Harian* 29 November 1993. DFAT press summary, O.KL4360: 30 November 1993.

³⁶⁰ The ‘top 10 source countries’ for foreign students enrolled in Australian universities and secondary colleges in 1996 were (in order) Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, China, and India. DETYA 1996. *SMH* 7 September 1996.

1976, he personally was no longer interesting: 'one in every four faces I see is non-white, non-black'.³⁶¹ He claimed that an 'unfortunate smugness' and a new arrogance prevailed among young Australians who, unlike the previous generation, had now 'done' Southeast Asia at university. In spite of the fact that his subject was 'Australia in Southeast Asia: Eliminating Stereotypes', he claimed that even though the 'old Aussie' had been loud, boorish, and unkempt, they [*sic*] had been friendly, and some of them now lived in the region as expatriates. But this empathy had been replaced by an exploitative attitude among younger Australians, who were unwilling to mix with Asian students. In the region, the presence of Australians was no longer 'a source of great enjoyment for Southeast Asians'. (Singh 1992)

At the same time, a Singaporean Australian academic observed that the mass recruitment of students from Asian countries resulted in their sticking together, living, studying, and socialising in groups that tended to deter Australians from mixing with them. The high cost of their courses forced some to try to complete their studies in the shortest possible time and this, as well as different social habits, placed further obstacles in their way to mixing with Australians. Most of them, said Jacqueline Lo (1992), had not encountered 'any overt forms of racism'.

But neither Lo nor Singh in 1992 considered whether religious and cultural difference were being more overtly expressed by some Asian students in Australian universities. By then, many were either Australian-born or had lived most of their lives in Australia, and had adapted in ways that the visiting students had not. Singh expressed nostalgia for an earlier time when 'Asians' were special in Australia: but often the 'Asians' he saw were Australians. Lo detected enduring Eurocentric cultural assumptions among Australians and an ignorant tendency to equate 'Asian' with Chinese. They both proposed that 'Asia' was 'still not present in the Australian mental landscape'.

³⁶¹ 'The elite say "this is it, this is what we really want". The not-so-elite say "get out you bastard and take the rest of the slant-eyed shit with you"'. Kirpal Singh, 'Travelling Australia...A Personal Journey' *Westerly*, Special Issue, 'Crossing the Waters: Asia and Australia', 4, Summer, 1993: 58-62.

Lo did not reflect on the 'absence' of Australia that Ouyang Yu found in the Chinese mental landscape, its negligibility, or the phenomenon of cultural nostalgia. Like others, she was critical of Australia's perceived lack of ethics in recruiting students in Asian countries, even though she described its education system as excellent. Accustomed as many Asian students were to an unquestioning approach to learning, she wrote, they often interpreted encouragement to participate in class discussion as being singled out and picked on. Students from Southeast Asian countries, she reported, felt that if the Australian institutions where they were enrolled took no responsibility for their welfare, they represented only dollars and cents. Lo warned Australians against assuming that large numbers of Asian students meant mutual understanding between Australia and Asia, or guaranteed identification of Australia with the region. Although many warm relationships were formed, and the importance of alumni was belatedly recognised from the 1980s, Australia was not automatically assured of thousands of lifelong friends among former students. (Lo 1992) Lo's warnings were echoed around the region. In 1996 Mechai Viravaidya, a Thai Minister and a dedicated supporter of his alma mater, Geelong Grammar, was as critical as many others of the Australian government's response to Pauline Hanson. (Lewis 2000) Tony Tan, a former Colombo Plan student, was Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore during a period of recurrent official antagonism towards Australia.

In 1996, just before Pauline Hanson's sudden prominence in Australia, Australian Vice-Chancellors were warning that government funding cuts could 'scare off many overseas students'. Similar gloomy predictions were then transferred to the 'Hanson effect', and students in Malaysia were reported by IDP Education Australia to be convinced that Australia had a higher level of racial discrimination than other Western English-speaking countries. Surprisingly, in view of the multiplicity of surveys of Colombo Plan students' views of Australia, IDP reported that it did not know for how long Malaysians had perceived Australia as racist.³⁶² In Thailand in May-June 1997 many prospective

³⁶² Meredith Lawley and Denis Blight, survey of 700 prospective students, May 1997. They reported that factors influencing decisions about study in Australian universities (compared to US, UK, and Canada) were predominantly: Malaysians – much higher level of racial discrimination, but cheaper degrees; Thailand – safer country, lower quality degrees; Hong Kong – safer country, cheaper degrees; and India – easier entry, lower standards. IDP Education Australia 1997. *SMH* 1 October 1997: 6. *A* 1 October 1997: 37-8. Prior studies include: ABC RN

students asked Australian representatives how racism in Australia would affect their safety. Yet IDP recorded continued growth in enrollments from Asian countries from the time of the Blainey debate through to mid-1997, and Asian parents surveyed in 1997 continued to rank Australia third as a preferred education destination for their children at the height of media attention to One Nation.³⁶³ Only when the economic crisis hit several Southeast Asian countries did student numbers temporarily decline.

The Australian media were quick to attribute the fall in 1997 in student, business, and tourist visa numbers to Hanson, and to report a Malaysian student leader who claimed she was racially abused in Melbourne.³⁶⁴ They leapt upon the responses about racism made by Malaysian students in the 1997 IDP report, neglecting such other significant factors as recognition of qualifications, entry requirements, and who in various Asian cultures decides about and pays for study abroad. Among comments sent to the Australian's website on the 'Hanson effect', were two contradictory views. One, from Singapore, warned that Australian politicians should 'stop kidding themselves' that Hanson had no effect on Australia's reputation; but the other, from Hawaii, said that the issue was merely a media beat-up: 'Australia unsafe for foreign students...you've got to be kidding'. (A 1 October 97: 37-8) As student numbers recovered, reports of the 'Hanson effect' declined and issues of quality of education, favoured access, and bribes for graduation took their place. (A 17 January 2000:1, 3) The extent to which the 'Hanson effect' in Southeast Asia was a creation of the Australian media is considered in Part 3.1.

Projections of the inter-racial tensions in their home societies appeared to be particularly significant in the responses of some Malaysian, Singaporean, and Indonesian students to Australia. Chinese community schools had for long been a controversial issue, with which each country in the region dealt in different ways. Inter-

1994, Daroesman and Daroesman 1992, Gardner and Hirst 1990, Ingleson and Walker in Meaney 1989, Keats 1969, Saskashem 1956, Sumathipala 1956, White 1961.

³⁶³ Geoff Hiscock, Pacific MasterCard survey of 5 400 respondents in 13 Asia-Pacific countries, 'Asia Praises Our Education', *A* 26 May 1997: 4.

³⁶⁴ *A* 14 May 1997: 27. 'Student enrolments reveal the high cost of Hanson', *A* 5 August 1997: 1-2. 'Race debate turns off students: IDP', *A* 24 September 1997: 37. Brief for Australian International Education Foundation Council, Seventeenth Meeting, 18 July 1997: Agenda Item 4.6: Declining Student Visas and the Impact of the Racism Debate.

racial mixing was officially encouraged in Malaysia in the late 1990s, in acknowledgement of racial divisiveness. Of undergraduates surveyed at *Universiti Malaya* in 2000, over 95 per cent said they interacted only with fellow students of the same race. Many students were reported to object to sharing hostel rooms with people of other races.³⁶⁵ Malaysia in 2000 the university applications of 500 top performing scholars – all non-bumiputera – were rejected. (A 2 May 2001: 25) These were attitudes with which students were apparently imbued well before they arrived in Australia.

Vietnam, again, provides a contrast. Respondents to a small-scale survey there in 1996 revealed that racism was not an issue they associated with Australia, and the official press reported no problem with racial discrimination ‘especially in these days when bilateral relations are being strengthened’. (*Nhan Dan* 19 March 1992: 2) English language courses delivered by Australian institutions were reported to have displaced French and to be preferred by young people over American English. But in Australia, a Vietnamese PhD graduate detected a double standard:

If we adjust well, they will say that we steal jobs that belong to Australians, but if we don't they will say that we are lazy and an extra burden to the taxpayer. (*Nhan Dan* 16 June 1988)

Beyond the iconic kangaroos, tennis, and the Opera House, and in spite of large numbers of Vietnamese in Australia, ignorance about Australia was still reported to be prevalent in Vietnam in the mid-1990s.³⁶⁶ But multiculturalism, education and aid were recognised as Australian, particularly the highly visible My Thuan Bridge across the Mekong delta. (Nguyen 1998)

³⁶⁵ S. Jayasankaran, ‘A Nation Still Divided’, *FEER* 7 December 2000: 26-28.

³⁶⁶ In the North, ‘Australia’ is transliterated as *O-xtray-lia*; in the South, as *Uc Dai Loi* (‘great profit’). Whether ‘Australia’ was listed under *O* or *U*, it failed to appear in the *Encyclopaedia of Vietnam* in 1995 (*A to D*).

Citizens and subjects

In 1964 Australia, already an 'Asian' in UNESCO, joined ECAFE's Asian membership. Seeking comments on this event, Bulletin editor Donald Horne was told in the Philippines not to presume an Asian identity for Australia: 'Asians distrust you because you are a monarchy. You should declare yourself independent of Britain and become a republic.' (Horne 1964) Filipinos recalled forced relocation into Spanish pueblos as bonding them to Australian descendants of the first fleet; and like Australians toasting the British monarch, they recalled *utang na loob*, their debt of gratitude to Spain. The Philippines, they observed, had been defined by the claims of the Spanish church and crown, just as Australia was a collection of colonies with a British monarch. (Ileto 1998) The difference, as Filipinos saw it, was that the Philippines had long ago rid itself of its Spanish rulers.

In Vietnam, the 1975 constitutional crisis in Australia was seen as part of Australia's struggle not against the British monarchy but against US imperialism. The Party paper *Nhan Dan* declared that 'behind the actions of the Queen's representative are the hands of capitalist corporations which manipulate Australia and other countries'. (21 November 1975: 4) Lack of independence was an enduring representation. In a 1994 school geography textbook Australia was said to be a former colony, still dependent on Britain. Several respondents to a 1996 survey thought the Queen retained some influence in policy-making. (Nguyen 1998)

An Indonesian academic told Australians that because they had not fought for national sovereignty they did not have independence as Indonesians and Vietnamese understood it. (Kelabora 1992) Asians, he said, could point to the fact that Australians were still ruled by a distant European monarch 22 000 kilometres away as proof of their continuing colonial status. The Queen enabled Australia to play global politics, and without her Australia would be an 'isolated, hot, big desert in the south seas'. Soekarno had refused to visit Australia, said Kelabora, partly because he wanted the Queen to receive him, not the Governor-General. Australians were 'too willing to let the British aristocracy, politicians, generals, and academics tell them *what to do*' (my emphasis). There was a constant flow of British advisors, whom Australians, 'to the surprise of

many Asians [were] usually very happy to oblige'. This Australian subservience had since World War 2 extended to Americans as well. Ratih Hardjono anticipated Kelabora's observations, urging Australians to admit that the 'colonial spectacles through which they once viewed Asia are no longer appropriate'. (Hardjono 1992) In 2001, an Indian Australian business leader agreed that if it became a republic, Australia would be seen as 'less a symbol of the colonial legacy'.³⁶⁷

In Singapore, support for an Australian republic was linked to Australia's 'unstoppable' shift towards Asia, 'regardless of what those Asians and Australians uncomfortable with such a shift may wish'. An editorial urged Australians not to miss the related symbolism of the two issues. (Chua Huck Cheng, *ST* 16 October 1993) When they did, by voting against a republic in 1999, a Thai editorial – in the most monarchist of Asian countries – also referred to Australia's lack of Asian identity. The referendum result, it said, reinforced stereotypes of the past, showing Southeast Asians that 'Australia is not, and never has been, part of Asia' and that Australians' hearts and minds were 'thousands of miles away on another continent'. (*Nation* 7 November 1999) A Malaysian commentator, confirming that people in Asian nations that, like Malaysia, had their own monarchs were no more likely than republics to favour the Australian-British monarchy, said that either way, Australia was part of the West, 'a white country, and outside Asia'.³⁶⁸ Mahathir, as the first commoner to become Malaysia's Prime Minister, had his own differences with the Sultans as well as the British, and had no special regard for Australian vice-regal system. Neither, it appears, had the Sultan of Brunei Darussalam, who congratulated Australia's Governor-General 'Bill Haden' and Prime Minister 'Bob Howard' on the occasion of Australia Day on 24 March 1997 [*sic*]. (*SMH* 25 March 1997) Nor in Japan did having an Emperor prevent Australian subjects of the British monarch being looked down upon. Journalists concentrated on whether being seen to be a British branch office would affect monarchical Australia's trade with Asian countries. (*Yomiuri Shimbun* 7 November 1999) The Japanese public was reported to be 'confused' about Australia's status. (*Asahi Shimbun* 5 November 1999)

³⁶⁷ Neville Roach, 'Australia's Image and Identity- views from Asia and Australia', address to Austral-Asia Centre, Sydney, 31 March 2001.

³⁶⁸ Malaysian Opposition spokesman Tian Chua, quoted by Craig Skehan, *SMH* 8 November 1999: 12.

Existing representations of Australia continued to reinforce the agendas and self-perceptions of Southeast Asian observers and were unlikely to change, whether or not Australia became a republic. Nonetheless opting to retain the British monarchy was another nail in Australia's reputational coffin.

Leaders and the led

The postwar period was a fertile one for new national leaders. The 'god-kings' of modern Southeast Asia – Sukarno, Ho Chi Minh, Ne Win, Sihanouk, King Bhumipol, Marcos, Lee, Soeharto, Mahathir, and even the Sultan of Brunei – all rose to power amid crisis, and all fashioned regimes in their own image that were modern, but also depended on tradition. Of those who remained alive at the end of the century, all were over 70, and several still exercised considerable influence if not formal power. (Jory 1998) People unaccustomed to challenging those who had led them to nationhood confronted the choice Emil Salim identified between 'the rule of law or the law of rulers'. Patrimonial regimes of the nineteenth century had tradition to legitimate them. But in the 1990s the claims of tradition about god-like kings and sage rulers from whom all authority emanated were losing legitimacy in the face of demands for new – but not necessarily entirely Western - forms of democracy.³⁶⁹ Such governments and practices, as Dr Mahathir often argued, had scarcely made the West perfect, and Australia in particular was reminded by Lee Kuan Yew how much less perfect it was than Singapore.

In 1994, Singapore Minister of Information George Yeo discussed with his Indonesian counterpart Harmoko how to deal with the 'negative information' contained in foreign reporting: 'What we can do is build up our immune system, our own culture, so that we can be selective and use the information to our own advantage', he candidly proposed. (Sheridan, *TWA* 25-6 June 1994) Just as Sun Tzu instructed readers of *The Art of War* and as Machiavelli proposed in *The Prince*, the tactics of national image, manipulation of representations, and exploitation of the other side's sensitivities was proof of the

³⁶⁹ *FEER* 5 November 1998: 11 January 2001: 14-19.

sophistication of the contestants, or their lack of it. In the media image game Australia was not only Southeast Asia's major external opponent but, being less economically and politically powerful than Japan or the USA, it was vulnerable to counter-moves as they were not, and Australian political leaders were less confident and sophisticated in making counter-moves. By frequently attacking their own side, the Australian media made themselves Southeast Asian leaders' convenient vehicle, obligingly conveying their messages in both directions.³⁷⁰

'Discursive practice', according to its analysts, is generated from combinations of past and contemporary texts, and these become the referents, even if silent ones, for Southeast Asian leaders' representations of Australia, and hence of those they lead. (Foucault 1972. Fairclough 1992) They proceed from the assumption that it is right and proper to criticise Australia but not for Australians to criticise them. (Byrnes 1994: 176) Here, we will concentrate on the discursive practices that the most vocal opinion leaders have employed in three Southeast Asian countries and particularly, on their double standards in representing Australia.

Indonesians

Independence leader Sutan Sjahrir declared in 1945 – when Indonesia badly needed Australia - that Australians were Indonesians' friendly neighbours who, during the war, had been hospitable to refugees, including activists for independence, and had shared their distaste for the Dutch. 'Australians', he added, 'understand us better than Europeans do, and their democratic outlook appeals to us'. But this mutual empathy did not last. Nationalist extremism thrived on Indonesians' resentment of colonial condescension and racial superiority, both of which, as we have seen (Part 2.4), characterised Australian postwar policies.³⁷¹

Sukarno's love-hate relationship with Australians as '*Orang Belanda*' was transferred from his struggle against the Dutch, and famously articulated in 1920 in 'Indonesia Accuses'. Sukarno, well-versed in the wayang tradition, often applied it to his dealings with the Dutch and Australians. Political and social messages are conveyed to the

³⁷⁰ Budiono in Robison 1986b.

wayang audience by the dalang who manipulates conflict from behind the screen. These techniques both foster and are derived from a culture of concealment: one that concealed, for example, the deployment of paid demonstrators against selected *Orang Belanda*, and of spies, thugs, and militia against ethnic or political groups, in different parts of Indonesia and over many years.³⁷² Used by the Dutch themselves, these tactics were refined by the Japanese, inherited by Sukarno, and incorporated by all his successors into their Presidential demeanour. In the *Mahabharata* (VIII: 34, 49), the two sides of the divine being are manifested in the whole world, and in leaders, as *agni* and *soma* (terror and mildness). These are masks, exchangeable at will, or personae that can at any time magically be reversed. (Napier 1986) In Javanese tradition, surviving or absorbing 700 years of Islam and 100 of Christian influence, the leader is above criticism and has the right to dispense summary justice: 'the hand that slaps you should wear a ring'.³⁷³ The Javanese ruler can blandish those who support his agenda and blast at his whim those who don't. Sukarno's deployment of these traditions against Australia – because it was so effective - was followed not only by later Indonesian leaders but also by others in Southeast Asia who shared them.

Adapting the Javanese version of the universal story of youth's rebellion against age and students' opposition to government, Sukarno briefly accorded Australia 'new' nation status, as a supporter in 1947 of Indonesia's independence. Then Australia reverted to 'old' nation behaviour from 1949, siding with the Dutch in West New Guinea, the British in Borneo and, apparently, the Portuguese in East Timor, thus proving its fundamental 'whiteness'. The Labor right was perceived to be as 'old' and 'white' in its views as its conservative successors: Calwell's calling leaders like Sukarno 'rotten reeds' cannot have escaped the President's notice. (Brown 1995: 34) Australia's fluctuations of policy gave Indonesians good reason to represent it as unreliable and unable to deal with pressure. Linguistic and behavioural patterns established by Sukarno from 1948 – including rewards and punishments, expressions of hostility, metaphors of natural disasters, and analogies of fragmentation³⁷⁴ – were redeployed

³⁷¹ Reid in O'Hare and Reid 1995: 3-16. Sutan Sjahrir 1949: 207.

³⁷² Irvine 1996. Shiraishi in Chirot and Reid 1997.

³⁷³ Nuim Khaiyath, Radio Australia journalist, quoted by Kingsbury 1992b.

³⁷⁴ Lis Jackson, 'Nationalis and Opposition Discourse in New Order and Post New Order Indonesia', ANU seminar 21 February 2001.

against Australia by the Soeharto regime particularly at times when the President's authority was threatened.

Australia was often reminded by Indonesians that it had not been attacked, as the Embassies of other Western countries were in the early 1960s, because it had supported Indonesia against the Dutch in the late 1940s. Soeharto was prepared to brush aside even the White Australia policy when 'good relations' and Australian support were needed. He told Hastings in 1972 'colour is no problem'. (*SMH* 31 January 1972) A tour of Southeast Asian countries in 1973 by Al Grassby, Minister for Immigration, was reported from Jakarta as a great success. (Glover thesis 1988) But the familiar list of complaints was revived when Australia failed to please. A turning point can be discerned in 1975 when officials on both sides maintained their warm embrace and their averted gaze, while the unexplained deaths of six journalists became, in the Australian media, a cause that would not go away. (Jakubowicz and Palmer 2000) In 1977, Foreign Minister Malik threatened Woolcott with demonstrations outside his Embassy in retaliation for James Dunn's report to the United Nations on atrocities in East Timor. Malik evoked the Aboriginal issue: 'We can recall how the black men were cruelly treated in Australia'. (Gunn 1994: 141) In 1986, autocratic leaders facing election had reason to be nervous about comparisons with Marcos. So when the Australian media – but not only they - were particularly critical of Soeharto, Australia was told how insignificant it was, and its aid was derided by General Moerdani as 'chickenfeed', only shortly after he had stressed to his counterpart Kim Beazley the progressive and honourable role Australia had played in the late 1940s.³⁷⁵ When Australia protested about the 1991 Dili massacre, placards outside the Australian Embassy responded 'Australia look at yourself. What about the Aborigines?' (Brawley 1992) For two months, Australia was targeted by the Indonesian media for meddling, slander, and moral outrage, including by Ambassador Sabam Siagian, so that Australians almost appeared to be more to blame than ABRI for hundreds of deaths in Dili. Local critics were threatened with sterner punishment: an East Timor commander, General Try Sutrisno, said 'people who refuse to toe the line have to be shot', and another, General Mantiri, declared that 'stern action' was justified against anyone

³⁷⁵ Fisher and Leigh 1986. Beazley 1993.

opposing the government. (Milner 1998a: 87) Australia was further punished in 1995 by being offered Mantiri as Ambassador.

Labor leaders' difficulties with Indonesia tended to be forgotten after 1996. But Keating's pro-Asia statements as he took over from Hawke were not enthusiastically picked up by the Jakarta press. Keating went often to Jakarta, and in 1995 he signed a security agreement with Soeharto, but warm relations were not assured.³⁷⁶ In 1999 the security agreement was torn up following Australia's East Timor intervention and banners in Seroja asked, once again, 'Mr Howard what about the Aborigines?' The Australian Embassy was attacked more than 50 times and the Ambassador fired at: this was said to be a spontaneous response to (non-violent) demonstrations outside Indonesian missions in Australia.³⁷⁷ Abrogation of the treaty was followed by a sudden increase in refugees from China and the Middle East transiting Jakarta and arriving in Australian waters, more in a shorter time than those in the late 1970s from Indochina.

Indonesians always anticipated inter-communal violence, whether spontaneous or provoked. Nothing that happened in Java was coincidental, nor was anything new.³⁷⁸ When smoke blanketed the region in 1998 and when the Philippines Ambassador's residence and the Malaysian Embassy were both bombed in August 2000, Indonesia's

³⁷⁶ Notes on 1995: At Australia's request, Indonesia withdraws its nomination as Ambassador of General Mantiri. Indonesia is angered by Australia granting bridging visas to 18 East Timorese boat people. Association of Indonesian Importers (GINSI) threatens to ban Australian products. Ali Alatas and Habibie (Minister for Science and Technology) call for restraint in Indonesia. In spite of police presence, protesters enter the Australian Embassy, which expresses fear for safety of staff and criticises security measures. Posters appear - 'Make Australia Indonesia's 28th Province'. Miles Kupa's nomination as Ambassador is refused after the leak of his memo about Indonesian corruption and its effect on government. Sabam Siagian says Evans is too busy to do his job properly.

³⁷⁷ Australia was not alone. Lee wrote of attacks by organised mobs on Embassies in Jakarta in 1963, and 1968. When they attacked Singapore's premises in 1998-9, guarding troops were 'conveniently absent'. 'Indonesian attitudes to Singapore were inextricably tied up with their feelings toward their Indonesian ethnic Chinese. Singapore... would be a convenient whipping boy whenever there was discontent in Indonesia.' Soeharto saw himself as the mega-sultan of a mega-country and 'believed his children were entitled to be as privileged as the princes and princesses of the sultans of Solo.' Lee 2000: 270, 278.

³⁷⁸ Between the Pacific war and the major disturbances following 1997, outbreaks of anti-Chinese violence in Indonesia occurred in 1946 (Tangerang), 1959-60, 1963 (Sukabumi), 1965-7, 1973 (Bandung), 1980 (Ujing Pandang), 1982 (Surakarta), 1994 (Medan), and 1996 (Situbono and Tasikmalaya). Reid in Chirot and Reid 1997: 61. George Quinn in D'Cruz 1973.

differences with its neighbours rivalled those it had with Australia, in spite of their cultural affinity. And yet in the late 1990s, while Muslims, Christians, transmigrants, and indigenes slaughtered each other, the fantasy of Indonesian communal harmony was still upheld as an improving lesson to Australians: 'We are not used in Indonesia to having differences in opinion', a Presidential adviser claimed.³⁷⁹

Well informed as Indonesian opinion leaders were about Australians' raw nerves by the Australian media, their representations of Australia reflected not inaccuracy or ignorance as much as double standards, that were picked up and endorsed by the apologists in Australia.³⁸⁰ In a way that would have been taken as insulting in Java, Soeharto and his successors frequently made and broke engagements to visit Australia, yet outspoken Indonesian ambassadors often admonished Australians for being rude.³⁸¹ Indonesians never suggested that they needed to understand Australia, but Australians' understanding of Indonesia was never good enough: 'Australia should understand us [Indonesia and South-East Asia] better and should be aware that they [sic] belong to this part of the world', said Foreign Minister Mochtar Kusumaatmadja (21 April 86). Australia was often told not to impose its 'Western' standards on Indonesia, but in 1996 former general Soemitro advised Australia to make profound changes in its society, to curb press freedom, and to reject refugees, including East Timorese, who were critical of 'Southeast Asian' governments. (Jenkins SMH 2 November 1996: S 4). Yet no Australian leader accused him of interfering in Australian affairs, or of telling Australians *what to do*.

³⁷⁹ Wimar Witoelar, adviser to President Abdurrahman Wahid, ANU seminar: 23 October 2000. 'Social intercourse in Javanese society is governed by two principles...conflict avoidance (*rukun*)...and respect'. 'In the eyes of Javanese society, moral considerations do not confer the right to disregard the principles of harmony...Sympathy with the fate of others, responsibility for an entrusted task, or a direct appeal to moral principles cannot justify a disturbance of social harmony'.

³⁸⁰ Indonesian perceptions of Australia included 'a tangled web of simple misunderstandings, wishful thinking and uncomfortably accurate judgement': Brawley 1992. 'No two neighbouring countries in the world are more dissimilar – in their geography, history and socio-cultural features than Australia and Indonesia': Jamie Mackie and Allison Ley in Milner 1998a.

³⁸¹ 'How could we ever expect Soeharto to come if his favourite son didn't have a peaceful visit?' Canberra source on (ministerial) Habibie visit quoted by David Jenkins, *SMH* 22 May 1995.

One of the most frequently repeated Indonesian castigations of Australians was for believing they had ‘an inherent right to tell others what to do and to impose their value systems upon Asians’.³⁸² Australians were told to improve their value systems by learning from the ‘Asian way’, but to object to Indonesians or Asians for ‘lecturing’ or ‘hectoring’ Australians was a different matter.³⁸³ Australians were commonly said to be condescending racists by the very Indonesians who had no compunction about disparaging Australians as Western, or making such statements as ‘No Australian engineer is as good as a German engineer’. (Idrus in Kitley and others 1987) Australia, said Achdiat, was ‘Europe put in a wrong place’. He added the (apparently race-based) generalisation that White Anglo-Saxon Protestants, including Australians, were the most racist people on earth.³⁸⁴ Australia had a small population, lacked regional influence, and was not a member of the Southeast Asian club, and therefore it was not entitled to be critical of Indonesia, Nuim Khaiyath explained: this cultural hierarchy was repeatedly and unilaterally used to justify rules that applied to one side in the game but not to the other.³⁸⁵

These statements show how the discourse that successive Indonesian leaders deployed against Australia was adopted and amplified by those they led. They reflect the long-standing preoccupations of Javanese with civilisation, status, and cultural origins, and their inherited sensitivities about human rights, independence, national security and integrity, and Western criticism. ‘The world doesn’t understand and always character-assassinates us [Indonesians]’, President Habibie complained. (Lee 1998) Australia made itself vulnerable to retaliation by offending these sensitivities, and by appearing to declare itself ‘part of Asia’. In response, the Occidental binary trope that opposed Indonesia (as ASEAN or ‘Asia’) to Australia (as ‘the West’) was used to magnify the positive and negative characteristics of players on either side, and to exaggerate the difference between them. (See Appendix 2)

³⁸² Kelabora 1992. My emphasis.

³⁸³ Downer ‘is lecturing us to do things’, Australia is offering support to separatist groups, and Downer is scoring points from Indonesia: Ambassador Sudjadnan Parnohadiningrat quoted by Robert Garran, *TWA* 21-22 July 2001: 1.

³⁸⁴ Achdiat K. Mihardja, letter to *Hemisphere* 9, 7, July 1965: 31.

³⁸⁵ Nuim Khaiyath, Radio Australia, quoted by Damien Kingsbury 1992b.

A revealing selection of what Indonesian vernacular narratives said about Australia (Kitley and others 1987) demonstrated the equal significance of what was not said. Revisiting them in 1992, David Reeve contrasted Australians' self-perceptions – of endeavour, achievement, and even heroism – with Indonesian representations of Australia that, even after decades of Australian information, education, and cultural promotion, seemed to recognise no golden summers, no brilliant career, no fortunate life, and nothing of distinction about Australia. He concluded that Indonesians' negativity about Australia was largely due to the fact that Australia had 'provided nothing in its defence, no dispassionate and intellectually respectable counter-story, to which Indonesians have access'. Australia had, clearly, not understood or responded to the game of competitive image-projection, as successive governments' thousand-cuts attacks on Radio Australia, ATV, and official information and cultural promotion demonstrated.³⁸⁶ But Reeve, who knew Indonesia better than many Indonesians knew Australia, seemed to ascribe their negativity entirely to Australia's undoubted shortcomings. The more passionate and intellectually un-respectable the Indonesian counter-story, the more effective it seemed to be as a means of scapegoating Australia.

After visiting more than 50 other countries, President Abdurrahman Wahid put off going to Australia five times because Australia was 'not a very important destination for Indonesia'.³⁸⁷ Even with Indonesia at a low economic and political ebb, he still claimed superiority for Indonesia in four ways: by alleging that Australia was still tied to 'Western civilisation'; by claiming that 'compensating action' would soon be needed from Australians for Pauline Hanson; by speaking of restoring the relationship between people, not just governments; and by proposing a West Pacific Forum that would include Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia and several Pacific Island countries. All of these were assertions of Indonesia's capacity to marginalise Australia. Meanwhile an influential Indonesian, as others elsewhere in Asia had done in the past, dissociated

³⁸⁶ In June 2001, the Australian government re-funded ABC (\$75 million over five years) to provide a satellite television service to the Asia-Pacific region. ATVI began in 1993 (as ATV), was sold to Kerry Stokes in 1996, and closed in March 2001. CNN, BBC, NHK, and Singapore's CNA have much larger budgets.

³⁸⁷ Yasril Ananta Baharudin, chair of the MPR's foreign affairs and defence committee, quoted by Lindsay Murdoch, *SMH*, 15 June 2001: 12. Howard refused to visit Abdurrahman Wahid and Xanana Gusmao in April 2000, a conciliatory meeting proposed by Japan to take place in Kupang. Tony Kevin, 'Too early for celebrations', *AFR* 28 June 2001: 62.

official rhetoric from the friendship between Indonesians and Australians, that he said endured.³⁸⁸

Malaysians

Indonesians were hardly alone in representing others in ways that reinforced their *amour propre*. In Australia too, personal and national self-regard are consistently more potent than 'objectivity' in image-formation. (Part 1.1) In Malaysia, leaders' representations of Australia resemble those of Indonesians in many respects, and the personal, domestic, political, and regional agendas driving them are similar. But Dr Mahathir added certain features to the discursive practice that were picked up and amplified by Malaysian opinion leaders, and were publicly disputed by few. For two decades, Mahathir's representation of the generalised West as jealous of Malaysia, and therefore hostile to it, enabled him repeatedly to urge Malaysians to be on their guard against Western oppressors. His 'Islamic perspective' and sense of Malay historical continuity strengthened Mahathir's hold on power. As well he retained, and redeployed to great effect, both the British Internal Security Act, and the British technique of 'calling things by one name and doing another'.³⁸⁹

Mahathir has made no secret of his national aim to lead Malaysia to fully developed status, his regional aim for ASEAN to lead East Asian collaboration, and his personal aim to be recognised as a leader of both the Islamic world and the Third World. Early in his political career he was adept at creating headlines. His biographers explain that his widely-reported outbursts do not reflect his subsequent actions, and that he often follows his public provocations by reassurances in private: 'When it comes to the crunch, he does the reasonable thing'.³⁹⁰ One Australian observer noted that Mahathir

³⁸⁸ Don Greenless, 'Fifth time lucky: Wahid won't cancel this time', *A* 21 March 2001: 1, 10. Lindsay Murdoch, 'Wahid tells Australia: let's be friends again', *SMH* 20 March 2001: 1, 9. Wimar Witoelar, ANU Seminar 23 October 2000: 'There may be anti-Australian rhetoric but we are personally friendly'.

³⁸⁹ Mahathir 1999. John Funston, 'Thailand and Malaysia: Stable Institution in the Midst of a Crisis?' in Jenkins 1998: 83-109. Camroux 1994: 41. Kessler 1991, 1992.

³⁹⁰ Khoo Boo Teik, *FEER* 18 September 1997: 65. 'Malaysia tries to be friendly with all nations and has been very tolerant of criticisms from some so-called "friendly" nations. Sometimes these neighbouring nations take advantage of the situation and put Malaysia in a

often made initially sensible statements but then went too far. Another commended his independent nationalism, and reproached foreigners who rushed to judge Malaysia by their own standards.³⁹¹ But no-one has challenged Mahathir for showing so little of the sensitivity that he urged others to cultivate in their statements about Malaysia.

Mahathir's rhetoric - a mixture of 'personal indignation, offended national sensibility, and political over-reaction' (Yao 1994) - was so consistent over the years that even an observer unqualified in psychology might identify it as narcissistic.³⁹² Or perhaps all political leaders are narcissists, but some disguise it better.

Mahathir's agenda is based on what Buruma (1989) calls 'racial ego'. He favours socio-biological generalisations about national and racial groups. Malaysians, he has said, are 'more race conscious than most people, for Malaysians are Asians and Asians everywhere cling to race much more than Europeans or Africans'.³⁹³ Discrimination against Chinese was the issue over which Lee Kuan Yew fell out with the Malaysia he had helped to create. The race issue in Malaysia, as he observed in 1964, 'overshadowed everything else'.³⁹⁴ Race riots caused the suspension of Parliamentary democracy in Kuala Lumpur in 1969 and, when Parliament reopened in 1971, Malaysian MPs were forbidden by law to discuss sensitive racial issues in the interests of national harmony. (Josey 1976)

delicate position... There are also activities by other countries such as Australia to discredit Malaysia through screening programmes which do not portray the true situation. Australia has been warned for having been arrogant and making statements about the Prime Minister'. Rajendran 1993: 156. Milner 1998a.

³⁹¹

Harold Crouch to AB, August 1996. Milner 1998a. Milner 2000c.

³⁹²

Narcissism has the following diagnostic criteria: 'a grandiose sense of self-importance or uniqueness, a preoccupation with fantasies of unlimited success or power..., exhibitionism..., cool indifference or narcissitic rage... in response to criticism or defeat, ... in personal relationships... expectation of special favours without assuming reciprocal responsibilities, the alternation between over-idealisation and devaluation, lack of empathy, need to control'. Judy Cooper and Nilda Maxwell, eds. *Narcissistic Wounds: Clinical Perspectives*, London and New Jersey: Jason Aronson, 1995: 18ff.

³⁹³

'Those who practise racism prefer to call what they do something else'. Richard Hall 1998: 207. Mahathir quoted by D'Cruz and Steele 2000: 85.

³⁹⁴

In race riots in Singapore in the 1950s and 1960s, said Lee, the Malay-dominated police and army used a 'well-tested method'. They 'held the ring while favouring the Malay rioters - usually *bersilat* groups, thugs and gangsters let loose to make mischief'. Lee 1998: 598.

Mahathir has made it his life's purpose to ensure that the Malays, who had once taken the land from its 'aboriginal' inhabitants, remained the 'dominant culture', the 'definitive people' just as, he pointed out, European settlers had become in Australia. He even described Australian policies in racially restricting migration as 'far-sighted'. (Mahathir 1970) Racial dominance could readily be represented as a goal to be attained and as a focus of national unity. Early in his career, Mahathir found fault with Malays for being corrupt, lazy, uneducated, and disunited. After two decades as Prime Minister, he added that they were ungrateful, irresponsible, and greedy.³⁹⁵ But compared to Indians and Chinese, he claimed, Malays were inherently tolerant, courteous, unobtrusive, and self-effacing. Mahathir and Lee Kuan Yew had a long-running contretemps over such racial characterisations. When Lee claimed in 1965 that policies favouring Malays helped only 'a few at the top', his remarks were reported by the English- and Chinese-language press but not in the Malay papers. (Lee 1998) Knowing that attacking Chinese to win the Malay vote was 'the oldest trick in the book', Mahathir tended in successive crises to play the race card, declaring that 'Malays must fight as one'.³⁹⁶ Lee baited him by threatening to have Singapore become 'Southeast Asia's Israel'. Jews, as well as Chinese, attracted disparagement from Mahathir in *The Malay Dilemma* (1970) and *The Challenge* (1986). In a series of well publicised statements from 1984 to 1997, he attacked Jews, including the 'powerful Zionist lobby' in Australia that he said was close to Bob Hawke and was stirring up campaigns against Malaysia. Nor was he alone:

A derivative anti-Jewish rhetoric in Southeast Asia presented problems. In some reformist Islamic circles in Malaysia and Indonesia, a demonisation of the concepts 'Jew' (Yahudi) and 'Zionist' has recently taken root... Now that Europeans are less likely to continue these stereotypes, some of the Muslim fellow-countrymen of Southeast Asian Chinese have begun to

³⁹⁵ Mahathir 1970. Mahathir quoted by Mark Baker, *SMH* 23-4 June 2001: 17.

³⁹⁶ Malay vote: Kua Kia Soong, quoted in *FEER* 1 March 2001: 20. 'Mahathir race ploy rings alarm bells', *A* 14 March 2001: 12. In 1969 about 200 people were killed in Malay/Chinese riots following elections. Lee quoted by Josey 1976: 11. In Petaling Jaya, a poor neighbourhood in Kuala Lumpur, in 2001, an outbreak of violence between Malays, Indians, and migrant Indonesian workers was reported as the worst in 30 years. *SMH* 14 March 2001: 12.

take up the same shopworn anti-Semitic theories. (Reid in Chirot and Reid 1997. Ellipsis added.)

Having in his early years as Prime Minister encouraged the tendencies emanating from the Middle East to blame Jewish ‘conspirators’ and world-wide enemies of Islam for colonialism, communism, secular liberalism, commercialisation, and ‘predatory capitalism’, Mahathir continued to court Malay Muslim voters not only with anti-Semitism but also with matching anti-Western discourse. He claimed that the West’s education and knowledge were ‘in reality Islamic’. (Buruma 1989: 115) When the United States and Australia resisted his EAEC proposal in 1994, he was quick to claim it was ‘because of our colour’. (*SMH* 18 June)

In Malaysia as in Indonesia and elsewhere in Asia, the traditions of the shadow play have considerable influence on popular understandings of how ‘reality’ is customarily dealt with in private and ‘appearance’ in public. Such discretion is hardly an unknown phenomenon in Australian politics, business, society, or even in the media. But *wayang*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* have for centuries endowed commonly understood strategies of revenge-seeking, kinship/friendship, power, and maintaining ‘face’, with great subtlety in Indonesia and Malaysia.³⁹⁷ Australians lack the traditions, kinship, and confidence to counter such strategies. So, being seen as vulnerable and lacking subtlety, Australians are disempowered by revenge-seeking moves and by claims about ‘face’. Loss of face involves a humiliating public confrontation; it is then brooded over, perhaps for years, and it may be followed much later by retribution. Mahathir’s brooding against Australia began in the late 1960s, and was followed from the 1980s by revenge.

Evidence of Mahathir’s memory for slights and old grudges was provided by Lee Kuan Yew, who claimed Mahathir never forgot his loss of face as a student when a Chinese taxi driver took him to the servants’ entrance of a woman friend’s house in Singapore.

³⁹⁷ See Jukka O. Miettinen, *Classical Dance and Theatre in Southeast Asia*, Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1992. R.M. Moerdowo, *Wayang, Its Significance in Indonesian Society*, Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1982. Sri Mulyono, *Human Character in the Wayang*, Jakarta: Pustaka Wayang, 1977.

Revenge, Lee implied, was delivered later. (Lee 2000: 245) While Mahathir approved of restricting migration of Chinese and Indians, and discriminating against them in Malaya, he echoed Nehru's objection to similar practices in the West: Australian migration policy was 'for an Asian a reminder of the days when he [*sic*] was treated as racially inferior'. (*Straits Times* 12 July 1958) When an official invitation to visit Australia was withdrawn at short notice in 1969 for a trivial budgetary reason, and when he later went to Canberra at his own expense and was slighted by an uninterested DEA, Mahathir's grudge became huge and enduring.³⁹⁸ When Prime Minister Tun Abdul Razak, visiting Australia in 1975, was harrassed by students protesting the detention of political activists, that added a further grievance.

Keeping the score against all Australians for such events was part of the game, or the performance. 'Cultural sparring' in the public sphere, like the *wayang* rituals of face and revenge, screened the real struggle over economic and political power. As part of this sparring, 'Aussie' became a synonym for 'stupid' in prosperous Malaysia and Singapore during the East Asian boom. (Garnaut 1992) Public attacks on Australia played well in the *kampongs* where Malays were 'grinning like Cheshire cats...They reckon Mahathir has brought the Colonial blighters to their knees'.³⁹⁹ The media, shuttling between two contestants for middle power status, Malaysia and Australia, were the messengers. The Malaysian media provided a forum 'in which Malaysian civil society could express its displeasure', and in which leaders could 'celebrate their common nationality through a joint vilification of the impudent outsider'. (Camroux 1994: 44-5) In spite of the media

³⁹⁸ McIntyre memo to Parsons (Singapore) and Eastman (Kuala Lumpur), 22 January 1968. AA A1838.3027/2/1, parts 31, 32. 'Perhaps the greatest value could come from the visits of the younger UMNO party officials and political secretaries'. DEA was 'pleased that Mahathir accepted for 1968 along with Ghafar Baba and Michael Chen', but 'wanted to have [only] one in this Financial Year if not to do so would cause embarrassment; otherwise in the latter part of the year'. John Funston to AB, 9 May 2001. William Case, *Asian Analysis*, www.aseanfocus.com, August 2001.

³⁹⁹ Kuala Lumpur resident quoted in *Time* 5 August 1991. Schofield 2000. According to Napier (1986) the donning of the mask-face deliberately creates uncertainty about what is being communicated. Its purpose may be to thwart a specific message: 'as with Lewis Carroll's Cheshire cat, there is a deliberate attempt to seize the very expression that indicates the ambivalent, yet highly arresting, stage between a laugh and a frown, between fear and aggression...the leonine apotropaic face...commands attention precisely because it thwarts our apprehension about what its meaning might be...In that it discourages dialogue, it is not communicative...It says "hands off" in an unambiguous way, but it does so through its own expressive ambiguity'. [Ellipsis added]

noise, neither the defence nor economic relationships suffered during the period, and in 1992 Australia remained the fourth largest investor in Malaysia. (Crouch 1994)

Mahathir's greatest promotional success, embracing all three of his agendas, was in applying racially exclusionary criteria to East Asian regionalism. (Part 1.3, 1.4) Over the years he changed his ground over whether or not Australia was acceptable in Asia, thereby keeping Australians on the defensive. The stronger Malaysia's economy and his personal power became, the more he could oppose Australia's inclusion. As early as 1983, a Malaysian official had defined Australia out of the region on racial grounds that were hard to challenge: 'Australians see themselves as part of Southeast Asia? Impossible. Australians are far too conscious of their white skins ever to become part of the region'.⁴⁰⁰ An Australian was invited to the Commission for a New Asia in 1992 (see Part 1.4), and in the following year Mahathir even urged Australia to realise it is 'of this region, 'it's not part of Europe'. (Dobell 2001) But in 1995 he moved effectively to veto Australia's inclusion in the ASEAN leaders' summit that discussed wider East Asian regionalism, arguing that Australia was not East Asian. It would not be considered as such until it behaved in an 'Asian' way by not criticising its neighbours, he said. Australia might one day identify itself with Asia so much that it had to be accepted, or it might have to wait until 70 per cent of its population was Asian. (RA News 16 December 1995) None of Australia's friends in the region was willing or able, then or later, to change Mahathir's stand.⁴⁰¹

In 'The Stranger' (1950), Georg Simmel observed how minority status became self-perpetuating for people who failed to fit an established social framework of Familiars.⁴⁰² Malays were practised at dealing with Strangers in their midst by assigning them minority or infidel status. Mahathir and his colleagues extended the same treatment to

⁴⁰⁰ M.A. Razman, 'The Malaysian View', in 'The Asian View of Australia: How Others See Us', *SMH* 28 November 1983. Compare Edgar Wickberg's description of the inclusion and exclusion alternately applied to Chinese in the Philippines from the sixteenth century to the 1970s. Since then they have existed 'somewhere between marginality and inclusion', a state in which they constantly have 'something to prove'. Chiro and Reid 1997: 154. Brawley 1992: 257-8.

⁴⁰¹ Jose Almonte, National Security adviser to Fidel Ramos, at a June 1994 meeting of ASEAN 6 + 4 (Indochinese states plus Burma), said Australia was not discussed: none was 'bold enough to say Australia is part of Asia'. Dobell 2001.

other countries, particularly those ‘who are here today and stay tomorrow’ and could not sail away, like Australia. Mahathir staked his leadership of East Asia on defining all East Asians as Familiars and all others as Strangers. He demonstrated it by excluding Australians on the basis of racial difference, something there were unlikely ever to be enough Asian Australians to change. Some Malaysian Australians adapted his Stranger strategy and redeployed it as a critique of Australian society from the inside. (D’Cruz and Steele 2000)

The 1992 Perth conference (cited above) on ‘Outside Images of Australia’ provided Malaysians and others with an opportunity to tell Australians *what to do*. At the invitation of the hosts, Singapore academic Kirpal Singh wrote a provocative publicity flyer:

Australia. Racist? Insensitive? Conservative in business? Outmoded in attitude? Protectionist? Insular? Insecure?...A nation and its people need to know how the rest of the world looks at them in order to plan and project for the future.
(Singh 1992)

Malaysia’s Trade Minister picked up these themes, ignoring their possible application to her country. She restated Mahathir’s objection to Australians imposing their values on Asians; she advised Australians not to hurt others, since negative images were hard to erase; and she cautioned Australians to beware of offending their Asian neighbours or risk losing business in the region. She said Australians, having belatedly recognised who they were, should humbly ask ASEAN to decide when or if Australia was an Asian country.⁴⁰³ Restate, warn, advise, caution: these were the colonisers’ terms, revisited on Australia by the formerly colonised.

If Australians were unaware of smarting ‘Asian’ sensitivities, it was not for lack of reminders from Malaysia. Mahathir in 2000 said Howard – who had described the jailing of Anwar as a reversion to authoritarianism - was no longer welcome to visit

⁴⁰² Hamilton and Waters in Chirot and Reid 1997.

⁴⁰³ Dato’Seri Rafidah Aziz, Outside Images of Australia Conference, 6-10 July 1992. Grant and Seal 1994: 270-272.

Malaysia. He drew on the familiar list of ten complaints, citing Australia's treatment of Aborigines, its 'failure to admit the stolen generations', its hypocrisy, and its non-Asianness:

If you want to be a part of Asia...you don't go around giving advice to everyone on how to run their country when you're not doing a good job of it yourself in your own country. ⁴⁰⁴

Mahathir used race-based terms to describe PAS leader Fadzil Noor, who had met with Downer, as 'running away to white men with brown men's problems'. He then turned to Indigenous issues, asserting that Aborigines outnumbered others by 17 to one in Australian gaols, that Australia should attend to its own problems, and adding that the ABC 'cannot tell the truth'. (ABC RN 21 June 2001) He had Australia excluded from an Asian regional preparatory meeting for a United Nations conference on racism in 2001, and barred Australia from using bilateral economic arrangements with Singapore to gain entry to AFTA. Needing Chinese coalition support electorally, and newly concerned about Malaysia's brain drain, he even alleged that Chinese in Australia were forced to learn English with an Australian accent, which he mockingly imitated at an UMNO conference: 'The rine in Spine fell minely on the pline'. ⁴⁰⁵

The more concern mounted about how Mahathir was running Malaysia, the more he responded with threat scenarios and with marginalising moves against Australia that, as his 'whipping boy', had for long contributed to his triple agenda. But Australians' recurrent public ineptitude, as well as the steady decline in their regional reputation since World War II, gave Mahathir plenty of opportunities to deflect blame and racial tension onto Australia, and to use the double standards that made his accusations hard to contest. ⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁴ Greg Sheridan, 'Stay away, arrogant Howard: Mahathir', *A* 6 July 2000: 1, 8. Facing disaffection within UMNO, Mahathir warned Malays against ingratitude for the country's stability. After the Downer / Fadzil Noor meeting, he described Australia as a lackey of the pro-Israel United States establishment. *SMH* 22 June 2001: 11, *NST* 21 June 2001. An UMNO delegate commented: 'It was the same thing he always says...we are immune to his speeches'. *A* 22 June 2001: 7.

⁴⁰⁵ *A* 27 June 2001: 23. *FEER* 7 June 2001: 28-9, 17 July 2001: 62.

⁴⁰⁶ Allan Patience, *SMH* 10 December 1993. Greg Sheridan, 'One Perfect

Singaporeans

More than to any other country in the region, Louis XIV's dictum that he was the State applied to Singapore and Lee Kuan Yew. In Opposition, his youthful views about democracy, freedom of speech, and preventive detention had been liberal if not radical. In 1957 he even declared that 'island nations are political jokes'.⁴⁰⁷ Lee created the island city-state in 1965 in threatening circumstances, and never tired of reminding Singaporeans that in such a 'dangerous part of the world' they would have to 'breed a rugged generation to ensure [their] survival', just as his Hakka forebears had done. (Barr 2000b) Accused of suppressing dissent, and interfering in citizens' private lives, Lee used the defence of the present danger: 'Had I not done that, we wouldn't be here today'. (*ST* 18 August 1986) Another of his repeated warnings was against 'exuberant' democracy that, he asserted, led 'to undisciplined and disorderly conditions which are inimical to development'. (Palat 2000)

Lee was the creator and leader of a prosperous society, but the young in the 1990s called it 'Singapore' and 'Asia Lite'. In the view of an experienced observer of Singapore, he had

nowhere terribly exciting to lead them to. The vision he must hold before their eyes is more often the black vision of what may come about if they do not give him their wholehearted support... They are to be threatened into virtue, to be brow-beaten into virility and sturdy independence.⁴⁰⁸

Unlike Mahathir, Lee cared little about what others said about him, though he expected them to be interested in what he said about them (Josey 1976: 47); he neither suffered

⁴⁰⁷ Whipping Boy for Malaysia', 6 November 1991. Camroux 1994. D'Cruz and Steele 2000. 'If you believe in democracy, you must believe in it unconditionally. If you believe that men should be free, then they should have the right of free association, of free speech, of free publication. No law should permit those democratic processes to be set at naught, and no excuse... should allow a government to be deterred from doing what it knows to be right'. Lee quoted by H.P. Lee, 'Asian values are a dangerous myth', *SMH* 27 December 1997: 19.

⁴⁰⁸ D. J. Enright, former Professor of English at University of Singapore, quoted by Josey 1976: 46. *Bulletin* 6 February 1996: 60-2.

fools nor gave unearned admiration. Unlike Malays, he never doubted his superiority and that of those like him. To encourage educated Chinese women to reproduce and discourage uneducated Malays from doing so he saw as not racist but pragmatic. For the best of the British he met as a student and as a statesman he retained life-long esteem. He called himself an 'Anglified Chinaman': like Nehru and Menzies, he was *au fond* half an Englishman.⁴⁰⁹ Like Mahathir, he practised social Darwinism and national typecasting, expressing higher regard for individual Englishmen and New Zealanders than for Australians who, he said, had 'lucky country mindset' (Lee 2000: 402), and who with their endless self-castigation made themselves an easy enemy.

Lee's earliest encounters with Australians,⁴¹⁰ like those of most Singaporeans of his generation, were with tall, dejected soldiers giving away their weapons after Japan took Singapore. (Lee 1998) From his perspective, Australian troops had 'packed up and refused to fight' when the Japanese advanced upon Singapore in 1942.⁴¹¹ As a young socialist politician after the Pacific war, Lee was spied on by British Special Branch and consequently, was suspected by Australian policy-makers. Led by their US and UK contemporaries, the Australians preferred the conservative Lim Yew Hock and made no effort to cultivate Lee, whom they associated with the Singapore communists. When he won the 1959 election, Canberra publicly expressed its concern. (Clark 1967) Hastings reported that Lee was suspected of being a communist fellow-traveller, adding that only time would tell.⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁹ A former British diplomat noted Lee's 'knack of arousing antipathy', his 'pugnacious and irreverent personality', and said his 'bluntness and dynamism and clarity of thought [were] in tune with [Europeans'] own approach to problems'. 'By the exacting Malay standards of courtesy and human dealings he was too clever, brusque and uncivil'. Josey 1976: 40-44. Anglified: Buruma 1989: 151.

⁴¹⁰ An estimated 250 Australians were living in China and Hong Kong in 1940. Others were managers of rubber plantations in Malaya, of tin mines in Thailand, and of estates in India and Ceylon. Ingleson and Walker in Meaney 1989: 314.

⁴¹¹ Minchin 1990. Minchin's book was banned in Singapore.

⁴¹² The same applied to Hastings' prediction that Singapore was 'slowly fading as an entrepôt': Hastings 1961b. By the 1990s Singapore was the world's third largest oil refiner, a major global manufacturing and service centre, had the world's busiest port, and a larger GNP than Australia and the UK. Zakaria 1994. Australia misjudged other Asian nationalists, for example displaying 'costly ignorance' of Ho Chi Minh's motivations by thinking him a scripted Chinese puppet.

If such experiences proved to Lee the stupidity of Australians he, unlike Mahathir, did not brood over them. Concerned about defence, he advised the British, New Zealanders, and Australians in advance of Singapore's impending 'divorce' from Malaysia. (Lee 1988) He was pragmatic enough to seek some expertise from Australia – though he sought much more from elsewhere - in building Singapore. Harry Bland, Secretary of the Labour Department, advised him on compulsory arbitration, and he based Singapore's Industrial Relations Court on the Australian model. With the help of Australian Laurence Hartnett he established Singapore's arms industry. (Minchin 1990) Lee's view of Australia's discriminatory migration policy was equally pragmatic: he found the Blainey debate of the mid-1980s 'unnecessarily crude'. But if the Chinese or Japanese had discovered Australia first, he said, their policies might have been more exclusionary.⁴¹³ What Lee was like Mahathir in resenting, however, was being told by foreigners who lacked his intelligence or knowledge *what to do*. (Josey 1976. Emphasis added) Mahbubhani, as head of Singapore's Foreign Affairs in 1995 asked Western economists at Davos not to 'advise us what to do about the freedom of the person, and we will not advise you. Allow history to be the judge'.⁴¹⁴

Australia retained its importance in Lee's threat analysis. In Singapore's early days Lee appealed to Menzies, who 'carried weight with the Tunku', for help against Singapore's unstable neighbours. He often took the opportunity of making speeches in Australia to send back warnings to Singaporeans of the 'gruesome implications' of Malay nationalism. The validity of the tactic was proved in reverse: when an Australian journalist approvingly reported Lee's attacks on Malay politicians, Lee recalled that 'my first sin in the eyes of the Alliance leaders was to have received a favourable press in New Zealand and Australia'. (Lee 1988) But as his power and Singapore's prosperity grew, Lee's deference towards Australia correspondingly shrank. Canberra rejected a proposal he and Goh Chok Tong (then Finance Minister) made in 1966, that Australia should become Singapore's raw materials base, sending partly processed products to be finished in Singapore for regional export and marketing. This rebuff was followed by public derision from Lee of Australia's multiple shortcomings. In 1971 he commented on

⁴¹³ SMH 17 November 1988. *Herald* 18 August 1988. Jupp and Kabala 1993: 28.

⁴¹⁴ Kishore Mahbubhani, quoted by William Safire, *New York Times News Service*, 3 January 1995.

Australia's bastardising of the English language, its combination of protectionism, low value-added resource exports, and union power. It lacked civilised attractions, Lee declared, although his eldest son 'rather liked it' as a place for a holiday. (Minchin 1990) In 1976, Lee again echoed Nehru, telling Australian Parliamentarians they had a reputation in Southeast Asia for being 'an open, frank and uninhibited people...[with a] robust spirit...often bubbling over to rambustiousness [*sic*]'. ⁴¹⁵

Lee continued in the 1970s and 1980s to marginalise Australia, condescendingly calling it a 'continental island-paradise of the South Pacific', where such 'strong and vigorous people' were bound (eventually) to prosper because the world's resources were finite. Australians, he said, were 'intelligent enough to know that they need not work so hard since nature has endowed them with so much'. (Josey 1979) He signalled to Australians and Singaporeans alike that the success of ASEAN's united front on civil aviation, textile quotas, Indochinese refugees, and exclusionary regionalism, were due to Lee in his self-appointed role as back seat driver of the Association and feisty scourge of the *gwailo* and *mat salleh*. (Minchin 1990: 245) His much-reported epithets for Australians, the 'dole bludgers of the South Pacific' and the 'poor white trash' of Asia, were recycled from Australians' self-criticism. ⁴¹⁶ The more Singaporeans prospered, the more their opinion leaders picked up Lee's double-edged castigations and expanded the familiar ten complaints: Australians were self-satisfied, brash, condescending, arrogant, profiteering, slow, sloppy, over-familiar, crude, casual; they had a short-term attitude, were not export-oriented, and regarded weekends as sacrosanct. ⁴¹⁷

⁴¹⁵ Lee was probably referring to the 16 Labor MPs who had boycotted Lee's lunch in protest at the detention without trial of his political opponents and at his curtailment of trade union rights. Ellipsis added.

⁴¹⁶ 'It is clear that the longer we delay in [developing cooperation with Southeast Asia] the further our economy will fall behind. Before long, as some gloomy people predict, we might become the poor whites of Asia'. W. Macmahon Ball, December 1979, quoted by Brown 1980.

⁴¹⁷ 'Confidential survey of 25 senior executives' in Singapore by Gibson's PR company for Australian High Commission, Singapore. Two thirds of the responses were business-related and virtually all were negative. Criticism focussed on difficulties facing Singapore investors in Australia and the inefficiency and uncooperative attitude of Australian companies. Demands for lower prices, control of labour and delivery, and more competent Australian business people were common. *Business Review Weekly* 25 April 1986: 22-3. Deborah Johnson rediscovered this for me.

Singapore's situation was indeed vulnerable, its success admirable, and it deserved recognition for them. But in seeking the motivations underlying opinion leaders' representations of Australia, the concept of 'moral panic', used by Michael Hill (1999) in analysing religious movements, can be applied to both Singapore and Malaysia. Moral panics perennially involve the state in producing, amplifying, and managing crises over security or identity that represent it as constantly threatened. Communist subversion and communal tension were the two invented traditions, called 'myths of origin' by Hill, that were often cited as the cause of recurrent crises. These were consistently met by demands for unity. Lee founded his tiny nation on an 'ideology of survival'. (Chan 1971) As a Singapore Minister admitted in 1970, 'One of the things we can do to get...down the road a little faster is to raise the spectre of total disaster as the alternative'. The *Straits Times* said it was important 'for Singapore leaders from time to time to frighten their people'. Its Sunday edition headlined a report on the 1997 dispute between Malaysia and Singapore: 'Singaporeans now more aware of vulnerability'.⁴¹⁸ An asset in the construction of moral panic is a compliant media and non-government sector, and Singapore's 'macho-meritocracy' could ensure it had both.

Moral panic, according to Cohen⁴¹⁹, is mediated by four components:

- exaggeration and distortion, including overestimating numbers and seriousness of incidents, symbolisation, using labels and symbols to create images that are larger than life;
- manufacturing news, selecting people and events that conform to existing images and stereotypes; and

⁴¹⁸ Minister quoted by R. Betts, *Multiracialism, Meritocracy and the Malays of Singapore*, PhD thesis, MIT 1975: 141. *Sunday Times* 11 May 1997. *Utasan Melayu, Straits Times* quoted by Michael Leifer, 'Israel's president in Singapore: political catalysis and transnational politics', *Pacific Review* 1, 4, 1988: 344. Ellipsis added.

⁴¹⁹ 'Macho-meritocracy': Ezra Vogel, 'A Little Dragon Tamed' in Sandhu and Wheatley 1989: 153. Moral panic: 'A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylised and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people...' Cohen 1973: 9, 38-40; Jock Young 1971. Hill 1999.

reaction and control, involving authorities and interest groups in managing deviants.

These components resemble the elements of game theory that Byrnes (1994) applied across the region, even if in calling it an 'Asia Game' he overstated the extent of uniformity, cooperation, and team spirit among the players. These moves had for centuries been played within Asian societies and between them, as much as against neophyte outsiders like Australia. They reappear in two other cases of moral panic engendered through the media: East Timor in 1999-2000 and Pauline Hanson in 1996-2000 (considered in Part 3). They occur in representations of Australia by opinion leaders in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, as well as in their attacks on each other. The moral panic theory offers a persuasive interpretation of behaviour common to them all, although the way they applied it to Australia varied, and although Australian policy and Australians' behaviour often invited it.⁴²⁰

Indigenous and less indigenous

Accounts of Australia by Southeast Asians, later than but similar to those by Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans, sometimes echoed the view that Indigenous Australians were the only people who made Australia distinct from any other Western country and were genuinely 'Australian'.

In Thailand in the 1930s Australia's visibility was limited to a few food imports, horses bought by the nobility, tin mining operations, and tentative educational ventures. An exceptional article on Aborigines in the daily *Pramuan Wan* said Indigenous numbers had declined from 300 000 in 1788 to 50 000 in 1937, and described difficulties facing those who survived, adding that if they became extinct, the white population would be pleased. Even after the Pacific war, Australia was described in the Bangkok press as 'originally an island inhabited by cruel cannibals'. (Barmé 1995) In Vietnam, a 1994 school geography text stated that Australia's native peoples had been almost wiped out. Some respondents to a survey in 1996 thought Australia had been invaded by

⁴²⁰

Cohen's criteria are equally applicable to the Howard government's

Spanish and Portuguese colonists in the eighteenth century who took it from the native Red Indians [*sic*]. (Nguyen 1998: 25)

The fact that Aboriginal issues were rarely raised by Singapore leaders or in their media confirmed two of the characteristics of the discursive practice observed above: that, with no hinterland and no indigenes, this was not an issue that would work on Singaporeans as a scare tactic; and that Aboriginal people were less useful than settler Australians as examples of what to do or not to do. Yet the fact that a book by a Singapore academic, *The Singapore Dilemma* (Rahim: 1998b), included in its index under 'Australia' only Aborigines and the White Australia policy may indicate the salience of indigenous/race issues for intellectual observers.

Aboriginal issues were frequently evoked, as we have seen, when leaders in Southeast Asian countries sought to expand the Australian target for attack. Posters challenging Australia over its treatment of Indigenous people appeared on Indonesian streets in 1991 after the Dili massacre and again in 1999 during the East Timor crisis. In 1992 Soeharto, probably with the international television coverage of Dili in mind, told Keating it was a good thing there were no video cameras in the early stages of Australia's national development. (Malan 1992) Since Aborigines had neither human rights, nor self-determination, nor independence, Australians should not criticise human rights violations in ASEAN countries, said an Indonesian academic. (Kelabora 1992) Australians were too busy with their own concerns to care about Aborigines, who could only protest through 'brutality and aggressiveness', Hardjono explained to her Indonesian readers. (1992) Another Indonesian scholar spoke in 1997 of Indonesia's experience of nation-building, and advised Australians that they had much to learn from his country in dealing with cultural issues of indigenous and multicultural conflict.⁴²¹

In Malaysia, after some 900 died in the riots of 13 May 1969, the discussion of racial tension was prohibited, to put it 'beyond the reach of race demagogues'.⁴²² Watchful for communal hostility, and protective of Bumiputera rights, Mahathir often referred to

⁴²¹ management of Australian public opinion before the 2001 election.
Soedjati quoted by Jakubowicz and Palmer 2000.

⁴²² Abdul Razak quoted by Loo and others 2000.

Australian Aboriginal issues, as we have seen, when he was under attack. In 1991 a four-part documentary series in English and *Bahasa Malaysia*, *The Ugly Face of Australia*, was shown on Malaysian TV3. A direct response to the film *Turtle Beach*, it dealt with racially discriminatory treatment of Aborigines and Asians in Australia, focussing on a dysfunctional group in Western Australia, and creating the impression that destitution was deliberately inflicted in Aborigines everywhere. Australians, Mahathir declared, 'solve their problems by shooting Aborigines and having a White Australia policy' (Brawley 1992), and Europeans had no concern for the rights of 'people who inhabited Asia before they came'. (Mahathir 1999) This was more than mere rhetoric: it was a negotiating strategy that Mahathir used again in February 2001 to exclude Australia from participation in a UN conference of Asian countries on racism where, if Malaysia had nothing to be defensive about, Australia might have presented a good target.⁴²³ If Mahathir's representational objective was to demonstrate his leadership of Islam and the 'South' by making an exclusionary example of Australia, he succeeded. At issue in international law, however, was what was meant by 'indigenous people'.

Attitudes to the concept of indigenesness vary as widely in Asian societies as in Australia. Governments in Indonesia and Malaysia, and also in China, India, and Japan, are strongly opposed to the notion that any 'nation' exists within their nations. Even the term 'indigenous peoples', with its implications of historical priority and group continuity, poses linguistic and political difficulties in Mandarin, Japanese, and Thai. How can a *Bumiputera* or a *Pribumi* be any less a 'Prince of the Earth' or 'son of the soil' than an *Orang Asli*? Malays who have benefited from the *Bumiputera* policy for more than three decades are reluctant to lose it. Although 'Natives' are recognised to exist in East Malaysia, laws relating to the peninsular 'aborigines' contain protectionist and assimilationist provisions, with scant endorsement of self-determination. In Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam, discourse about 'indigenous peoples' scarcely resounds in national politics until instability or demands for reform arise. Then, the

⁴²³ Preparatory conference in Tehran of Asian countries for the UN World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Related Intolerance (Durban, August 2001).

contenders in Southeast Asian and other countries often seek to reverse the public focus onto the shortcomings of European colonists like Australians.⁴²⁴

Shifts of perception that had belatedly taken place in Australia since the 1970s had yet to be replicated in most Asian societies in the 1990s. 'Indigenous peoples' still meant, for numerous African and Asian governments, those oppressed by 'saltwater' colonialists, not people whom they or their forebears might have oppressed. If Indigenous people constituted a 'Fourth World', that was located within the other three worlds, not in the Third World. It was often contested internationally by leaders on grounds of self-determination and non-interference – rights they did not always extend to their Indigenous people. In Japan and the Philippines, as in Australia, the concept began to have real political and legal impact in the 1980s-90s, when 10 to 20 per cent of the Philippines' population were classified as Indigenous Cultural Communities, and the operations in Mindanao of an Australian company, Western Mining, were challenged by representatives of Moro people in the Philippines Supreme Court (1996-97). Visiting Australia in 1995, President Ramos claimed the moral high ground, saying some Australians were 'still racists who have not yet come to terms with their own aborigines'.⁴²⁵

The cultural contempt in which New Order policy-makers held the 'primitive' Papuans, Dayaks, and others among Indonesia's 300 ethnic minorities, was widely reported; and the view of many in *ABRI*, that Papuans were savages and Acehnese were Islamic fanatics, was described as 'internal colonialism' by Anderson (1998). Some Javanese adopted religious/heathen terms⁴²⁶ and replicated the discourse of the Western colonisers - 'unhygienic', 'immoral', 'stupid and lazy' - to describe ethnic minorities. (*FEER* 29 March 2001: 60-62) Once again, those who feared fissiparousness and

⁴²⁴ Japanese governments resisted formally accepting Ainu even as an ethnic minority until 1997, and after that remained reluctant to accept them as 'indigenous', as did the PRC in relation to its non-Han people. India's indigenous people were argued to be descendants of the original inhabitants who had suffered invasion or conquest from abroad. Benedict Kingsbury 1998.

⁴²⁵ 'Importance of Australia and New Zealand', *Manila Times*, 16 August 1995.

⁴²⁶ For example: Catholic, Protestant, and Pentecostalist churches in Mataram, Lombok, were gutted in January 2000 and sexual graffiti on the walls included '*Basmi Anjing Yesus Sandel*' ('Abolish the Jesus dog sluts'). *A* 24 January 2000: 8.

violence in the Republic, and the loss of its internal 'colonies' found Australia an expedient site on which to displace blame. So Australia's dealings with Aborigines – scarcely a shining example of economy⁴²⁷ – were cited at times when Indonesia's ethnic minorities were being treated with particular contempt and violence. Australian journalists were told their reporting of Indonesia's ways of dealing with its problems lacked 'balance', which some admitted it did. But Indonesian references to Australia's treatment of Aborigines were rarely 'balanced' with acknowledgement of their achievements, of the funds they received or the land that had been returned to them.

The ambiguities that indigeneity posed for Southeast Asians and Australians alike remained unresolved at the end of the century. Occurrences in Indonesia of ethnic cleansing, and a recrudescence of racial violence in Malaysia did not inhibit leaders from telling Australians *what to do* about race relations. Nor did D'Cruz and Steele (2000) hesitate, holding up Malaysia as a model, to call "enlightened" Anglo-Australian efforts to promote Aboriginal rights 'sham spaces of renegotiation'. As ageing leaders are replaced and more Southeast Asians become Australians, the challenge to Australia to resolve its own ambiguity and to use greater finesse in dealing with its critics is greater, not less.

At the beginning of this Part, three possibilities were considered as general causes of Australia's image problem in the region: Australians' self-projection, Australia's inept policies and ineffective communications with Asian countries, or Asian opinion leaders' interest in perpetuating negative representations of Australia. We have identified a consistent pattern, with its roots in the past, showing that all three factors operated throughout the twentieth century and for even longer. The first two have received copious attention by others. The third has been examined here in an effort to break new

⁴²⁷ When Senator Aden Ridgeway criticised mandatory sentencing (in NT and WA), Aboriginal deaths in custody, and Howard's refusal to apologise to the stolen generations to the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, he argued that non-indigenous Australians used the rhetoric of reconciliation but did not act on it. Howard commented: 'I don't think Australia was ever a racist country'. *A* 27 March 2001: 7.

ground by showing how 'image-wars' against Australia coincide with recurrent crises in the Southeast Asian countries whose opinion-leaders wage them.

PART THREE

TESTING TIMES

With a measure of understatement, Gareth Evans admitted in 1991 that Australia had ‘something of an image problem’ in the Asian region. That problem, and the question of agency for it, is central to the present hypothesis. In Part 1, we saw how and why Asian opinion leaders’ representations of Australia reinforce their national and regional self-images. The historical origins, common themes, and local variations of this process in ten Asian societies were examined in Part 2, and the extent of Australia’s agency in its image problem was compared with the construction of representations by opinion leaders in the region. Three case studies of the late twentieth century, in this Part, are used to evaluate these findings.

By tracing the suppositions held in Asian countries about Australia through the century, we have seen how persistent and potent they are. Current representations derived from them are constantly and deliberately re-confirmed, re-deployed, or changed according to opinion leaders’ interests. The process in recent practice, both inside and outside Australia, is now examined in case studies that compare media coverage in Australia and in the Asian countries where most of it appeared, of two contemporaneous issues: first, Pauline Hanson and the One Nation party and second, Australia’s intervention in East Timor during InterFET. Then, leaving the media sphere, a reading of recent fiction by Asian Australians examines their representations of Australia from the inside.

3.1 TWO CRISES

Between 1996 and 2000, Australia was involved with Asian countries in two crises that revealed a wide disjunction between the views of Australian and Asian opinion-leaders. In the region, Pauline Hanson was less a ‘phenomenon’ than in Australia. With more pressing concerns, most political leaders in the ten Asian countries considered here

avoided the Hanson issue. They did not avoid the East Timor crisis, which was described like a war, with Australia represented as if it were the aggressor. But in both cases, it will be argued here, the common purpose of opinion leaders, and the outcome, was to scapegoat and marginalise Australia.

The differences between the two crises are reflected in the way the Asian media covered them. Both were contests over public image. But in Australia, from the time of Hanson's inaugural speech, most media comment - outside her support base - was negative, and criticism quickly spread to the Prime Minister for being slow to repudiate One Nation and what it stood for. Critical comment from Asian opinion leaders, however, was slower to emerge. When comment appeared in the media, much of it was in English; much was sourced from Australia or from Australians in Asian capitals; and few statements about it were made by Australia's leading critics in the region. The massive political and commercial retaliation that the Australian media anticipated did not eventuate - with the important exception, it will be argued here, of Australia's continued exclusion from the East Asian regionalism process.

In these respects, the crisis in East Timor can be seen as exactly the opposite. In 1999-2000, public opinion in Australia predominantly approved the government's support for self-determination. While the loss of East Timorese lives was deplored, the Prime Minister was scarcely criticised for intervening - merely for overstating Australia's triumph and re-stating its subservience to the United States. Some even accused him of having cynically delayed intervention.¹ But in Southeast Asian capitals, cries of outrage were raised at once against Australia and throughout the period, even by opinion leaders in countries whose troops were part of InterFET. Canberra was punished by a distinct cooling of relations with Jakarta and by further marginalisation in the region.

¹ Some Australians argued that protracted Australian connivance with Indonesia resulted in needless loss of life in East Timor. Tony Kevin, 'Essay - Our Man in Purgatory', *TARB* October 2000: 20-22. Birmingham 2001. Haigh 2001a. Martinkus 2001.

The approach taken in these studies is qualitative and thematic. Analysis by others of both crises is drawn on here without repeating it in detail.² What the two issues, One Nation and East Timor, have in common is that both were used to justify Australia's continued exclusion from regional fora. The paradox raised by the two cases is their absence of congruity in all but a single common outcome – something approaching regional pariah status – that was brought about by manipulation of representations of Australia.

One Nation³

What the Australian media quickly called the 'Hanson phenomenon' showed that views like hers had more support than many journalists and other Australians had realised before her inaugural speech in Parliament on 10 September 1996. (Economist 24 February 2001: 31-2) Xenophobia resembling that of many settler Australians a century earlier had re-emerged when the electorate endorsed Howard in 1996. Some writers echoed Blainey in bemoaning the loss of 'old Australian identity' and the 'Anglo-Celtic core culture'. (Dixson 1999. Sheehan 1998) But even opinion leaders who sought to bring 'the private pains and needs of real people to public attention', did not anticipate the significant trend in public opinion that Hanson exemplified. Nor did they notice a trend among Asian Australian academics to contest Hanson's reassertion of global white identity. Thus their own élites, in an 'anti-debate culture', shared responsibility with Hanson for One Nation.⁴

² *On Hanson*: Adams 1997, Fairlie 1997, Harsono 2000, Jakubowicz 1997b, Kingston 1999, Leach and others 2000, Lewis 1997b and 2000, Louw and Loo 1997, Manne 1998, Stratton 1998, Woods 2000a, Young 1996. *On Timor*: Aditjondro 1998, Aubrey 1998, Ball 2001, Ball and McDonald 2000, Birmingham 2001, Budiardjo and Leong 1984, Cotton 1999, Domm 1998, Dunn 1996, Dupont 2000, Fox and Soares 2000, Fischer 2000, Gunn 1991, 1994, 1999, Joliffe 1978, 2001, Kingsbury 2000, Leaver 2001a and 2001b, Maher 2000, Maley 2000, Martinkus 2001, Ryan 2000, Singh 1995, Suter 1982, Taudevin and Lee 2000, Taylor 1991, Tiffen 2001, Toohey and Wilkinson 1987, Turner 1992, Van Klinken 1999, Walker 1998, Woods 2000b.

³ Research for this case study is based on an examination of articles in the English language and vernacular press, mainly in the Southeast Asian countries where the majority of coverage occurred, from October 1996 to October 1998. From then until 2001, the coverage was sporadic and repetitious. Translations were made by Australian diplomatic posts and the articles were collected in DFAT.

⁴ Role of media: Dick Morris, *The New Prince: Machiavelli for the 21st Century*,

How events are constructed and selectively remembered by individuals has been shown by Gergen to depend on the social processes in which they are immersed. That seems to be equally applicable to the national and regional public spheres considered here.⁵ The 'objective' construction of events is commonly assumed in Western societies to be safeguarded by 'freedom of the press'. But media freedom is not only relative, it is an illusion in any society. All news media are to some extent controlled, whether by a President, a Prime Minister, a 'press baron', or someone else. Governments everywhere seek to influence the media, in their own countries and others, overtly or covertly, with varying success. In different degrees, communicators reflect the influence of their controllers in the way they set up 'framing structures' in the media. These, in the communications jargon, include the opinion leaders' editorial 'line', their international 'newsmag', their world-views, and the 'expected discourses' of their consumers. The stories ('newsfeeds') created by communicators and journalists ('content providers') have to fit into these 'newsframes' or be spiked. Communicators anywhere 'always try to work to appeal to their peers, their readers, their paymasters and the authorities', and the journalist's basic techniques for doing so are simplification and exaggeration.⁶ But in order to maintain demand for their product, media managers commonly use 'deviance' as a core ingredient of news.⁷

In Australia, Pauline Hanson's policies were simplified and their outrageousness exaggerated. She was a rich source of deviance, a 'gendered political oddity' (Louw and Loo 1997), not least when she recorded a 'pre-assassination' video in November 1997. With the Howard honeymoon period coming to an end, Hanson enabled the media to vary the national newsfeed from the current controversies over multiculturalism, Mabo, Wik, and native title, while maintaining their framing structure. The media's regional newsmag presupposed that Hanson would play equally well in

2000. Elites: Saul 1994. White identity: Suvendrini Perera, 'Futures Imperfect', in Ang and others 2000: 8-9. Anti-debate: Louw and Loo 1997.

⁵ Kenneth J. and Mary M. Gergen, 'Narrative and the Self as Relationship', in Kenneth J. Gergen, ed. *Refiguring Self and Psychology*, Aldershot, UK: Dartmouth, 1993: 204. Shen thesis 1998: 213.

⁶ Just as tradition can be 'created' on a foundation of expected discourse, so consent can be 'manufactured'. Herman and Chomsky 1988. Jakubowicz and Palmer 2000. Lewis 2000. Loo and others 2000.

Asia: but there, media coverage of Hanson confirmed earlier analysis (Tiffen 1978, 1989) of how different from Australia's their newsframes were.

The media in most Asian countries had more on their collective mind. The five years of the 'Hanson phenomenon' were turbulent times in East Asia. Governments changed in Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand; several constitutions were amended or rewritten; Hong Kong returned to the PRC and China and Taiwan confronted each other; a Deputy Prime Minister was sacked and jailed in Malaysia; Indonesian fires caused serious pollution; and the economic crisis, Ambon, Aceh, Papua, and East Timor were issues of such magnitude that racism in Australia was almost a 'non-story'. Reports of similar issues like Heider in Austria, Le Pen in France, and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, could attract more media interest than Hanson. (Manne 1998: 92)

So the media in East Asia were quite slow to respond to the Hanson newsfeed. English language papers in each capital gave the story several bursts of intensive coverage, but the vernacular press paid it less attention. The peak periods were November-December 1996, May 1997, and October 1998, with a revival in February-March 2001, and with quieter periods in between. Only Japan and China had journalists assigned to Australia: the other countries sourced much of their content from correspondents, stringers, wire services, the Australian media, the Asian Australian media, and the Internet. A second set of occasional 'content providers' included special correspondents, academic commentators, editorial writers, and writers of letters to editors. A third source was the feedback loop, the stories about the stories: summaries in the Australian media of what Asian media said and vice versa. Of all these accounts, the majority were written by Australians, many of whom were residents in East Asian countries. It was, as Australian analysts observed, 'almost like a heated discussion among Australians themselves', a 'self-enclosed discourse'. (Lewis 2000. Louw and Loo 1997) Nevertheless, the first burst of critical reporting was such as to cause Australian diplomats in December 1996 to plead with Ministers in Canberra to distance the government from Hanson's views.

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Ericson and others 1987. Woods 2000a. Louw and Loo 1997.

Editorials, letters, and commentaries that were written by East Asians have more significance as representations of Australia, than those by Australians. Several letters written to *Asiaweek* in October 1996 by Chinese Australians who had migrated from Southeast Asian countries endorsed multiculturalism as giving them a sense of belonging, but one labelled Hansonite Liberals ‘rednecks in yuppie turtle-necks’ with whom encounters were ‘far from pleasant’. (1 November 1996: 4-5) The media in several Southeast Asian capitals reported the views of prominent Asian Australians: none of them, however, was cited as an exemplar of Australian multiculturalism’s success.⁸ An exception was a profile of ‘multicultural champion’, paediatrician, and art connoisseur Dr John Yu, who reversed the usual discourse by referring to Australians as ‘we’, and by advising Asian Australians to look at themselves before criticising Australia. ‘All parts of the community need to be tolerant’, he said. (But that article was written by an Australian, in an Australian magazine).⁹ Among letters to editors in Bangkok were several (over ‘Anglo’ names) who agreed that Hanson was racist, but inquired whether it was also racist that *farangs* could not buy land in Thailand and were discriminated against by the labour market, the dual price structure, and the loss of rights on marriage. One writer inquired which Southeast Asian countries had migration policies that were not based on race. (*BP, Nation* 5-8 November 1996)

The Thai newsframe of the period provides a ‘perceptual grid’ against which media coverage of Hanson in the other East Asian countries can be compared. Editorials in English set the agenda late in 1996, warning Australia about damaging its acceptability in the region, and commentary followed that widened the critique of Australia by harking

⁸ In a critical piece about Hanson, Max Soliven mentioned meeting Australian Ambassador Miles Kupa (whose parents were Czechs) and his Indonesian-born wife Zuli, both Australian career diplomats, without citing them as an example of multiculturalism. (*Philippines Star* 20 November 1996: 8) Commentaries were sought from Australian academics Ramesh Thakur, Arief Budiman, George Aditjondro, and Kee Pookong, television researcher Dai Le, print journalists Dewi Anggraeni, K.C. Boey, Florence Chong, Ratih Hardjono, Maurice Perera, and S.P. Seth; Vijay Joshi, and Kunda Dixit of the wire services were used; and Sydney’s Deputy Lord Mayor Henry Tsang and the Unity Party’s Jason Yat-sen Li were interviewed in the Southeast Asian press.

⁹ Yu quoted by Chris Pritchard, ‘Multicultural Champion’, *Asia Magazine* (Singapore) 20-22 February 1998: 16-18. ‘Being Asian here isn’t a problem... Most of the time I don’t think of myself as Asian, just Australian... We’ve done better on race than any other country’.

back to past issues. Editor Pichai Chuensuksawadi of the *Bangkok Post* was particularly vocal, echoing the Australian media in urging Howard to ‘make it clear to countries in this region – of which Australia is a part – where his government stands’ (28 October 1996); adding ‘Howard’s position must be clarified’ (1 November 1996); and warning that ‘Asian eyes will be watching’ (4 November 1996). The publication in 1997 of *Pauline Hanson: the Truth* and Howard’s delayed statement of dissociation from her views gave the Thai English language press an opportunity to revive its news agenda, with derisory reports of Hanson’s claim about Aboriginal cannibalism and her prediction of a female Asian hybrid cyborg future President for Australia. *Nation* warned Australia that such views would keep it out of Asia (25 April 1997), and advised Howard that his statement, while better late than never, left him with ‘more to do’ (13 May 1997). In a series on the Australian way of life, a Thai writer expanded the news agenda by personalising and generalising it: many Australians, he said, were ignorant, racist, and lazy, inward-looking, and self-indulgent, and few of them were millionaires. Another, who warned that if ‘foreigners’ were allowed to own land in Thailand, protests similar to those of Asian Australians against Hanson would occur, did not reflect on whether such views resembled those of Blainey in 1984 and were equally xenophobic. A third recalled being disparaged as an ‘uncivilised Asian’ in a Victorian school, but went on to speculate about Hanson’s ‘criminal ancestors’ and their takeover of the land from Aborigines. (*Thai Rath* 7-9 May 1997. Embassy translation) As if to balance these examples of Thai racism, *Nation* added some positive lifestyle stories about Thais in Australia.¹⁰

After the 1998 Queensland election, the Thai press reported that Hanson had the support of a quarter of the electorate or one in 12 Australians, and that many Thais thought she was the Prime Minister. *Nation*’s editor Kavi Chongkittavorn wrote ‘Hanson fans racism, Howard adds fuel’. He claimed that ‘Hansonomania’ was now a ‘permanent feature’ in Australia, that the number of racists was ‘fast growing’, and that ‘Australia must slay its racist demons’. (*Nation* 5 June, 18 June 1998) ‘Don’t look south for examples of moral leadership’, warned a letter-writer from Sydney frequently published by the *Bangkok Post*, Loki Ragnarokssen. A pseudonymous pro-Hanson

¹⁰ Kulachada Chaipipat, *Nation* 19 November 97. Wee Soo Cheang, ‘Hanson? No

response, arguing aggressively for an end to Asian migration to Australia, set off a storm of letters that was closed by the editor on 14 August 1998. At *Nation*, a 'One Nation' page was opened on the paper's website. The editor claimed even after Hanson's defeat in October 1998 that One Nation still had 8 per cent support, and named Aden Ridgeway as Australia's 'first' Aboriginal Senator. But providing balance, he profiled the Unity Party candidates. (2 October 1998) *Nation* and the *Bangkok Post* said Thais now looked forward to 'improved ties' with Australia as 'partners in the region'. A spokesman for the Foreign Ministry commended Australia for the result, saying 'Australia really is part of the region and we are able to take them at their word when they say they want to be part of Asia'.¹¹

Elsewhere in the region, the Singapore *Straits Times* and *Jakarta Post* began in mid-September 1996 to carry straight news reports about Hanson from the wire services, and commentaries from their correspondents in Australia. In October and November, the familiar Singapore line reappeared about Australia being an undesirable place to live. Australians individually were not racists – another familiar theme - but 'collectively as a society' especially among the 'less educated working class' it was reported to be a different story. (Sydney: Chong, *ST* 12 October 1996: 36) In December, the words 'Aussie Die – Go Home' were painted on the wall of the Australian International School in Singapore. (A 12 December 1996) Reports of an upsurge of racially motivated attacks against Asians in Australia were supplemented in the *Jakarta Post* by another well-known line: 'Racist views are alive and well'. (Melbourne: Anggraeni, *JP* 25 October 1996: 4) Then several reports appeared, sourced from Reuters and AFP, of polls showing Australians' growing support for Hanson. Criticism of Howard's refusal to condemn Hanson was picked up from the Australian media and commented on in Singapore and Jakarta. Speculation that Hanson had affected Australia's defeat for a Security Council seat originated in the Australian, and Thakur's comment on it appeared in the next day's *Straits Times* (24 October 1996). After Richard McGregor suggested that 'it wouldn't take much to revive memories of the White Australia policy and these might impact on tourism and foreign investment' (A 9 October 1996),

¹¹ hassle, say Thais', *Nation* 20 November 97.
Chitikul Kobsak, quoted by Craig Skehan, 'Asia hails Hanson loss', *Age* 6 October 1998: 1.

discussion of these issues began in the regional media. Investors in the region were reported to have taken up One Nation as a new negotiating strategy, one of Australia's 'three negatives': the tax system, industrial relations, and Pauline Hanson. She was, an Australian tourism official reported, an 'Australian totem in Asia'. (AFR 5 June 1997: 1, 16) The *Far Eastern Economic Review's* survey of senior executives found, predictably, that more than 60 per cent of South Koreans and Malaysians considered Australia 'less attractive'. (A 10 December 1996) The *Straits Times* reported that Hanson was a factor in the 10-15 per cent drop in Australian tours for June 1997. (SMH 15 May 1997: 2) A warning by the Malaysian High Commissioner in Canberra about danger to students appeared first in the Australian (A 18 November 1996) and then in the Singapore and Malaysian press. But press reports in several capitals later denied any damage attributable to the Hanson phenomenon in education, trade, investment, or tourism.¹²

In Japan, earlier positive press reporting of Australia's multicultural experiment changed in 1984 with the Blainey controversy, in 1988 with Howard's anti-Asian migration statement, and in 1996 with his election. Reports about Hanson gave rise to a further spate of articles asking whether White Australia was really dead, and linking her views to long-standing conservative policies in Australia.¹³ A senior Japanese executive interpreted Hanson as evidence of Australia's incapacity for economic enmeshment

¹² 'Thai trips weather Australian race row', *BP* 5 November 1996. Corben, AAP, 28 April 1997. Survey of 200 business leaders in KL, Manila, Bangkok, Jakarta: 6-7 per cent responded that they were less likely to do business with Australian companies and 21 per cent said they were less likely to travel to Australia. But 84 per cent thought Australia a favourable place to do business and 88 per cent thought it a favourable tourist destination. (SMH poll, 8-18 July 1997. *Thailand Times*, Reuters 22 July 1997) Exports: David Southwick, Director, The Body Collection, Melbourne: AFP, *Antara* 1 June 1997. Education: *Nation* 16 June 1997. Fastlane International Corporation (Taiwan) claimed at least 20 per cent of students had cancelled plans to study in Australia in 1997 and many had transferred to Canada. (*Nation* 12 June 1997) Overseas students: DETYA, *Survey of International Students Studying in Australia*, 1998. Chi Kang Gooi quoted by Warren Osmond, 'Exploding the Hanson Myths', *Campus Review* 16 July 1997. J. Francis, 'Students undeterred by the Hanson Factor', *Sunday Star* (Malaysia) 23 August 1998: 21. Investment: Maurice Dunlevy, 'Asian Investment unhurt by Hanson', *A* 29 August 1997: 36.

¹³ Matsumoto Naoki, '*Tokusho: Ōsutoraria no jinken sabetsu ronso o kangaeru. Hanson mondai to gōshu shakai*' (Considering Australian Debate over human rights discrimination), *Nichigō Press* December 1996. Staff writer, '*Hanson giin ga shingata-age. Tōmei wa "Porin Hanson wan neshon"*' (HR Member Pauline Hanson raises the flag of her new "One Nation" Party), *Nichigō Press* April 1997.

with the region, asking obliquely whether Australia was 'Asia or Europe or something other'. The *Gaimusho* in June 1997 indirectly suggested that the level of respect for Australia in Japan had fallen as a result of the Hanson phenomenon, and implied that Japan would give less support to Australia's access to ASEM.¹⁴ Another *Gaimusho*-sourced report in March 2000 proposed that Australia's importunity in seeking Japanese funding of InterFET had damaged its standing in Japan and that, because it had fallen out with Indonesia, Australia was seen as unwelcome in ASEAN+3. Tokyo, with many problems of its own, including acceptability in the region, and whether or not it was an Asian nation, subtly used these related issues in the media to reinforce Japan's standing at Australia's expense.¹⁵ A significant political extrapolation from the Hanson phenomenon was made to the Australian press by an adviser to Prime Minister Hashimoto. The issue, he said, was having a 'serious impact' on Australia's standing in Asia, implying that Japan's offer of support for Australia to join Asian regional forums would be withdrawn until Australia could show it wanted to be part of Asia.¹⁶ Through the press, Australia was being advised that it had lost marks in Japan's estimation.

Press commentary reflected Japan's official line. Professor Toru Yamaguchi of Keio University wrote in the *Mainichi Shimbun* that there were 'ominous signs' that Australia was turning away from Asia and that friction with Asian countries would be the result of 'subtle changes' being made by the Howard government. The *Asahi Shimbun* translated Hanson as saying Australia was being 'swallowed' by Asians (she had said 'swamped'), and suggested that Australian support for this view was strong. The *Asahi* asserted editorially that the 'White Australia of the past still lingers', that the Coalition parties were fundamentally Anglo-Saxon and dependent on the United States and that, having rejected the West for Asia, Australia was now rejecting Asia and returning to the West.¹⁷ Other Japanese papers expressed concern about support for Hanson and the

¹⁴ Kawarabayashi Seiji, Executive MD of Mitsui, Australia-Japan Symposium, 26 May 1997, in Broinowski 1999a. Peter Hartcher and Tony Bond, 'Hanson: high cost, low return', *AFR*, 5 June 1997: 1, 6.

¹⁵ Funabashi Yoichi, *Asahi Shimbun*, November 1999, and Sekine Masami, Keio University, quoted by Robert Garran. 'Western talk worries Japanese fellow aliens', *A* 7 March 2000: 8.

¹⁶ *SMH* 11 June 1997: 8. *AFR* 11 June 1997: 1, 16.

¹⁷ 'Ajiajin ni nomi komarete shimau', *Datsu A nyū Bei*. Tada thesis 1997: 89, 91.

'danger that this kind of movement poses to the dignity and reputation of multicultural Australia'.¹⁸

Japanese and Korean television crews covered the establishment of a One Party branch on the Gold Coast, expressing fears that Australia would revert to a White Australian policy. (ABC RN 2 July 1997) Japanese tourists there were reported to have experienced abuse and had objects thrown at them.¹⁹ Originating from Sydney, an influential manga series considered the Hanson phenomenon through the eyes of two young Japanese characters. They wonder if it means Australia's multicultural experiment has failed, but also speculate about anti-Korean prejudice in Japan. Well-informed about Howard's refusal to have a park named the 'Canberra – Nara Peace Park', the characters say Howard had earlier held anti-Asian views similar to Hanson's, but withdrew them to gain election: 'There are suspicions that he is sympathetic to Hanson'. They worry that Hanson is tarnishing Australia's 'reputation and fame' and that Australia 'will go down to the third-rate country'. Their newspaper is forced to retract its earlier praise for Australia's multiculturalism. With its 1.5 million circulation, the series raised the level of mainstream Japanese media interest in One Nation.²⁰

In China, the official media paid little attention to Hanson. But Malcolm Fraser reported that the first question Chinese leaders asked him in Beijing was about her, and the second was why Australia did not publicly condemn what she stood for. (Fraser, ABC RN 21 August 1998) One Nation gave the PRC a rare opportunity to reverse the human rights discourse against Australia, of which some opinion leaders took advantage, by attacking Australia over its alliance with the US and its acceptability in Asia.²¹

¹⁸ *Mainichi Shimbun*, *Sankei Shimbun*, quoted by A. Donaldson and Russell Skelton, 'Japan Media warn on Hanson Vote', *Age* 7 October 1998. <http://www.theage.com.au/daily981007/news/news27.html>

¹⁹ Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute survey, September 1996. Carolyn Collins, 'Racism and the Asian Tourist', *A* 14 October 1996: 10.

²⁰ Kariya Tetsu, *Osutoraria no kiki* (The Crisis in Australia), *Oishinbo* 65, 1998. Kariya wrote earlier *manga* on Aboriginal food, suggesting that Indigenous people's traditional cuisine resembles Japanese. 'Gekitotsu Aborijini ryori', *Oishinbo* 37, 1997.

²¹ Australia's 'parrot-like' allegiance to the US was jeopardising its efforts to win acceptance in Asia. Canberra was 'eager to ape Uncle Sam at every step'. *China Daily* 4 November 1996. Fairlie 1997. One Nation had aroused 'concern and unease': Vice-Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi, *A* 12 August 1998: 2.

Turning from press commentary to statements by Asian political leaders (as the media reported them), we find greater restraint. The Hanson issue was distinguished by the averted gazes of almost all political leaders, including Malaysians. Dr Mahathir made a positive speech about relations with Australia (*NST* 20 October 1996); Anwar Ibrahim called on Malaysian youth groups not to over-react (*Berita Harian* 5 November 1996); and Marina Mahathir, visiting Melbourne, said Hanson had been given too much publicity. (*Star* 17 November 1996) Trade Minister Rafidah Aziz took up the education link, calling upon Malaysians in Australia to return if they were discriminated against. Sourced from Antara, this appeared in several Southeast Asian papers on 10 and 11 November 1996. Foreign Minister Abdullah Badawi said Malaysia was offended and students were worried about their security. (*Utusan Malaysia* 22 November 1996: 12) In December, Mahathir dismissed Hanson (who had called Malaysia 'a very racist country') as 'a person of no consequence', and declined to enter discussion with someone 'who is a little bit moronic'. (*New Paper* 2 December 1996: 15) But when an UMNO student leader in Australia claimed to have been abused for being Asian, her remarks were widely reported and Mahathir announced that if such incidents worsened, students might be given protection or brought home.²² The Malaysian High Commissioner spoke for his ASEAN colleagues through the Thai press, warning that the issue had been allowed to drag on too long and was not good for Asia-Australia relations. (*BP* 31 October 1996) From Perth in May 1997, Minister Rafidah was reported as describing Hanson as someone like Lorena Bobbitt, whom Malaysians read about but didn't discuss. (*Nation, Utusan Malaysia* 2 May 1997) However when Mahathir, in June, stated publicly that overseas Chinese were unassimilable and were prone to form enclaves, the similarity between his views and Hanson's was not challenged. (*A* 4 July 1997: 14)

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Adrina Shazlin Sukor, Vice-President of the UMNO Club in Melbourne, quoted by Adeline Ong, 'Racial abuse: Students will be protected, says PM', *Business Times* 17 December 1996: 2. Malaysia's Education Minister made a similar statement. *Sun* 18 December 1996: 1. Cecilia Leung, a Melbourne student leader, and Grace Lee, of the Australian-Chinese Community Association, also claimed that abuse had increased. *NST* 18 December 1996: 24. Kim Bailey, a Malaysian-born Australian, was called a 'stupid bitch' and told to 'go back to Vietnam' by a driver from whom she solicited money for Down's Syndrome children. She

The responses from other countries were also inconsistent. Mechai Viravaidya, a Thai Senator, Geelong Grammar alumnus, and member of the Order of Australia, while visiting Melbourne, expressed 'dismay and disappointment' at the retarded conscience of the Australian leadership, and warned that it would be damaging 'like a time-bomb'. His call for Howard to resign was widely reported.²³ But six months later, with the Baht under pressure, Thailand's Foreign Minister denied that Hanson was damaging Australia's reputation (AAP 28 April 1997) and later again, the Prime Minister thanked Australia for its rapid response, calling it a 'major regional power' that could catalyse others to help. (A 12 February 1998)

Goh Chok Tong called robberies and assaults on Singapore troops in north Queensland in October 1996 an 'isolated incident' and said race was a divisive issue everywhere, adding that Singaporeans would continue to go to Australia as tourists and students. But just before Howard's visit in March 1997, Goh said people-to-people ties had been damaged, making Singaporeans more wary about going to Australia. Australia would always have one foot in and one out of the region, he added: its 'colour of skin', political thinking, and social environment, were 'different from Asians'. Contradicting his earlier view, Goh added that Australia would never really be part of Asia, with which his colleague George Yeo also reversed himself by agreeing.²⁴

Foreign Minister Alatas took the opportunity of a pre-election visit to East Timor to say One Nation was damaging Australian-Asian relations. (BP, AP 9 May 1997) But Indonesia's Trade Minister, welcoming Australian investment, later called One Nation a side issue, merely 'part of democracy'. (Luhut Panjaitan, TWA 17-18 February 2001). A former Philippine Foreign Minister argued that the 100 000 Filipinos in Australia represented billions of dollars worth of aid to Australia and challenged Pauline

²³ kicked the door of his car. The magistrate hearing the case said many defendants 'reacted instinctively to racist remarks'. *Bernama*, Sun 12 May 1997: 13.
AP, Reuters. *Sunday Nation* 27 October 1996. BP, Sunday Magazine 10-16 November 1996.

²⁴ George Yeo, Minister for Information and Arts, said if well managed, the Hanson debate could 'bring Australians and Asians closer together'. He was confident that Australia would 'become, more and more, a multiracial society, not just in numerical terms, but deep in the Australian soul'. But he added: 'However it is Asianised, Australia will remain a predominantly Western society'. Yeo quoted by Michael Richardson, 'Silver lining to Hansonite cloud', *A* 29 August 1997: 7. Yeo interview, ABC 'AM' 24 March 1997. *ST* 25 March 1997: 4.

Hanson's assertion that Asians did not assimilate. (Manglapus, *Manila Standard* 17 June 1997: 6) ASEAN Ambassadors in Canberra continued to keep their statements of concern low-key, apparently taking into account Australia's contribution to the IMF bailout, to defence cooperation, education, trade and investment, and passing up the opportunity publicly to add to Australia's embarrassment over Hanson.

In a little-noticed article, 'Racism is Everywhere', an Indonesian academic argued in 1997 that One Nation represented a reaction by unemployed Australians to their government's ambition to 'secure the Asian market'. He detected a reaction against the intense interest taken by prosperous Jakarta people in tourism, education, and property in Australia. But in 'Asia', Ariel Heryanto pointed out, people like Hanson were in positions of esteem and responsibility, and Australians were being accused of racism only because Asia (in the mid-1990s) was economically stronger.²⁵

In summary, then, rather than causing shock or amazement across the region, the Hanson phenomenon served to confirm that anti-Asian and anti-Aboriginal racism persisted in Australia, which was hardly news. It resonated in the region at a popular level in the familiar news agenda: education, tourism, investment, indigenous issues, Australia as an economic suitor, and Australia as (not) part of Asia. As an 'expected discourse' however, political leaders in Asian countries where domestic discussion of racial issues was discouraged did not take it up. If racism was everywhere, then controversy between their own communities that could not be manipulated was better avoided. (Heryanto 1997) Some responses from the region illustrated that racism is indeed ubiquitous. Australia's social problems were seen as minor, and in themselves attracted limited official concern, although they could be used for the purposes of moral panic. The One Nation phenomenon clearly registered, but political leaders whose

²⁵ Ariel Heryanto, 'Rasialisme Mana-Mana', *Tiara* 7 September 1997. Embassy translation. 'We need not open our eyes wide to understand that racialism in Asia is equally bad if not worst [*sic*] in comparison with that in Australia. However, as Asia is undergoing an economic upturn Australians have been placed in the seat of the accused with Asia becoming its judge... People like Hanson are found in many Asian regions. They spiritually instigate hatred against everything that is foreign (western). In Australia Hanson has become an object for despise [*sic*], source of dirt which embarrassed the country and an object of fury of the people. In Asia people like Hanson does [*sic*] not raise a controversy. In fact, many have been projected as nationalist figures, heroes and respectable people'.

economies and even governments were threatened at the time, and who discouraged domestic discussion of racial issues, chose to play it down.

Having begun this case study by considering differences between Australia and its Asian neighbours, we conclude by observing three similarities that the rise of Pauline Hanson reveals between them. First: during the One Nation ascendancy, Australia was shown in the media to be as anxious as any of its neighbours about racial difference, crime, enclaves, ghettos, or race riots.²⁶ Moral panic was generated by the Australian media in ways that were comparable to those we have observed in some Southeast Asian societies. The Australian media defined Hanson in the 'stylized and stereotypical fashion' and as the 'threat to societal values and interests' that Hill (1999) observed in moral panics in Singapore. (Cohen 1973: 9. Hill 1999) Second: Australians were shown to be as mistrustful of their politicians as many of those demanding reform in Asian countries, and as reluctant to 'join the brave new world their élites insisted was inevitable'. (Saul 1994) And third: Asian and Australian opinion leaders alike extrapolated from the issues raised by Hanson to comment on the essential problem of Australia's identification with the region. Howard first denied that Hanson was a problem (because it was not raised with him in Japan or Indonesia in 1996) and stressed that Australia was not an Asian country, and then declared that Australia didn't have to change its identity to succeed in Asia. His response to One Nation was cited, particularly by the Thai and Japanese press, as the key to Australia's regional inclusion or exclusion. While Howard might deny that it mattered, the persistence of public debate about Australia's 'engagement' with Asia sent signals to the region that this was a sensitivity that could be exploited.²⁷

Thus the most significant effect of One Nation on representations of Australia in the Asian countries considered here was its use by opinion leaders to valorise the Asian in-group and relegate Australia to the out-group.

²⁶ Hugh Mackay, 'Hanson amplifies society's whispers', *TWA* 26-27 October 1996: 2. 'Anxious': Walker 1999.

²⁷ 'East Asian States will make the definitions and judge whether Australia will be accepted as part of their club... At a time when Australians began to think of themselves as part of Asia, or at least of having a future in Asia, I know of few East Asians who say with no

Two Timors²⁸

The sad experiences of the East Timorese resulted from being caught for many years between three colonialisms, Portuguese, Japanese, and Indonesian, and between two large neighbours, Indonesia and Australia. In Australia, policy and public opinion were similarly drawn in opposite directions, between the perspectives of Jakarta and of Dili, and between cultural relativism and opportunism, and this ambivalence, as always, made Australia more vulnerable to negative representations in the region. Australia was said in New York and Washington and in the Asian Wall Street Journal to have 'won' the tactical war in East Timor and become a 'good Asian neighbour'. (*AFR* 3 April 2000. Milner 2001: 20) But it was represented as just the opposite in several Southeast Asian countries. There, as far as an 'image war' was concerned, Australia was the loser.

To show how and why this happened is the purpose of this case study. It first seeks, by examining East Timorese, Indonesian, and other Asian representations of Australia, to show how the image war was waged and won. It then considers opinion leaders' interests, asking what they stood to gain from making the claims they did.

For decades, the Indonesian armed forces and the pro-independence resistance were in effect at war in East Timor. In Australia, the metaphors of war were often applied: *The War Against East Timor*, *A Dirty Little War*, 'Sky Assault on Dili', 'Warriors for Peace', *War, Journalism and Australia's Neighbours*, the 'forgotten war', and so on. Indonesia was reported as threatening war in 1999, and Howard was said to be 'prepared for war when the crunch came'. (Birmingham 2001: v) Episodic Australian contact with East Timor predated Federation and included World War 2. Direct warlike involvement on the ground intensified between 1999 and 2001, first under UNAMET, the body policing and supervising the referendum, and then under InterFET. It was,

reservation at all that Australia belongs to their region'. FitzGerald 1997. Paul Kelly, 'The Asian Imperative', *TWA* 10-11 July 1997: 25.

²⁸

Documentary research for this case study is based on an examination of newspaper reports in Southeast Asian countries and Japan from December 1998 to February 2000 – the period of greatest Australian prominence in the independence process. Websites: Bibliography 3.

both in appearance and in effect, an anti-colonial war. But it involved two sets of paradoxes. First: the former colony Indonesia was now the 'colonial' power from which East Timor with Australia's support sought independence. Second: InterFET was established not for war-making but for peace-enforcement under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter; Australians and Indonesians were not enemies but allies; they were obliged to consult each other in East Timor; and prisoners taken by InterFET had to be handed over to the Indonesian authorities.²⁹

The media in Australia and in the region, thus deprived of a 'real' war and a 'real' enemy, were frustrated at not being able to place the story in a 'war' newsframe. With little actual conflict to report, and such deaths in 'battle' as there were occurring only on the other side, they resorted to an image war. As an otherwise forgettable American movie said, 'war is show business'.³⁰ The Australian media revived old wartime epithets to demonise the enemy, and added some new ones for them: 'bully-boys', and 'rampaging' militia.³¹ Some of their reporting was fanciful: claims about heads on sticks along the road to West Timor, and 500 000 missing East Timorese for example.³² The media anywhere, as an Indonesian academic observed,

²⁹ President Habibie on 9 June 1998 announced that he was considering autonomy for East Timor. From July 1998, pressure mounted in the US Senate and in the UN for a ballot on autonomy or independence. On 19 December 1998 Howard wrote to Habibie urging a referendum with a long autonomy period. Habibie agreed on 27 January 1999, offering autonomy or immediate independence. The Security Council on 11 June established UNAMET to organise the ballot, which was held on 30 August 1999. Militia with TNI backing implemented a scorched earth policy from 4 September and UNAMET, whose unarmed police were unable to prevent violence, withdrew. Australia negotiated at the APEC summit in Auckland (11-12 September) for a 'coalition of the willing'. US General Shelton threatened that IMF financial support of Indonesia would be blocked, and Habibie agreed to a peace-keeping force (12 September). InterFET forces landed in Dili on 20 September and TNI completed its withdrawal on 31 October 1999. UNTAET took over from InterFET on 23 February 2000. Recent detailed accounts are in AIIA 1998, Aubrey 1998, Birmingham 2001, Brenchley 1999, Broinowski 2001, Fox and Soares 1999, Fischer 2000, Hidayat 1998, Joliffe 2001, Kingsbury 2000, Ryan 2000, Sheridan thesis 2001, Tanter and others 2001, and Tiffen 2001. Websites: Bibliography 3.

³⁰ Dustin Hoffman in 'Wag the Dog'. Richard Woolcott, 'The Shaping of Australian Diplomacy', Convocation 2000, University of Queensland, 9 November 2000: typescript.

³¹ Other examples include *warlords*, *extremists*, *hate crime*; 'Dressed to kill', *TWA* 18-19 September 1999; and 'Let's knock some sense into Jakarta', *A* 12 October 1999. Milner 2001. Torney-Parlicki 2000.

³² Jon Greenaway, 'Return to Dili', *Eureka Street*, 9, 9: November 1999: 16-20.

tend to take the side of their own country. All media thus tend to dichotomize, demonize, and dramatize. International conflict is often reported as the goodies against the baddies, us against them.³³

If the third millennium began early with the advent of the Internet in 1992 (as composer Phillip Glass claimed), then Somalia, Bosnia, and East Timor were the first wars of the new millennium. Under Internet scrutiny East Timor, like them, had to be a quick 'non-war' and this contributed to making it an image war. The conflict in East Timor was reported world-wide in real time on Internet and by cellular phones, as well as on television, shortwave radio, and transistor radio (thousands of which were donated by Japan).

In May 1998 the Trisakti students' *'reformasi'* slogan had been broadcast to listeners across the Indonesian archipelago.³⁴ The graffito *'merdeka'* ('independence') written on the sides of trains carried a new, anti-government meaning. In Cipinang prison where Xanana Gusmao was held, prisoners used smuggled laptop computers and set up their own satellite so that they and their guards could watch the fall of Soeharto on international television. Less visible to the world through these modern technological means, however, were the violent events in the months preceding UNAMET's intervention and in the weeks between its forced withdrawal and InterFET's arrival.

The Australian media relied on three main sources: their correspondents on location, the wire services (AAP, AP, AFP, and Reuters) and other media (BBC, CNN), and briefings from UNAMET and InterFET. By 1999, Australia was significantly circumscribed in reaching hearts, minds, and ears in the region by successive governments' shrinking of Radio Australia's footprint and the evisceration of serious current affairs on the privatised ATV.³⁵ As well, echoing Balibo in 1975, representatives of the Australian media were 'not deeply informed' before they went to East Timor to

³³ Majid Tehrenian, 'Communication and Conflict', *Media Development* 4, 1996: 4.

³⁴ Amrih Widodo, 'Spectacles, Rumours, Violence: Changing Cultural Landscape and Cultural Citizenship in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia', Canberra: ANU, typescript.

³⁵ Hodge in Kingsbury 2000. Kevin Rudd, 13 November 2000: <http://www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au/cpp/transcripts/krudd.html>

cover UNAMET, and some were police roundsmen, as one of their colleagues in Jakarta admitted.³⁶

Although it might have been assumed that Indonesians would be better informed, government control of press and television reporting on East Timor had been enforced for so long that the knowledge of many Indonesians living elsewhere, about the affairs of a province derided as '*Tim-Tim*', was shallow. (Mackie and Ley in Milner 1998a) The vernacular media in Jakarta, though newly liberated, still relied heavily on military briefings, correspondents in Timor, and the wire services including Antara. In this second national crisis in 12 months, Indonesian journalists were either unwilling or unable in 1999-2000 to use Internet and foreign television with the same enthusiasm as they did during *Reformasi*, and damaged infrastructure in Timor made communications less accessible. Moreover, this was 'war'.

In East Timor and in Australia before the intervention, supporters of East Timor's independence had accused Australia of complicity in genocide because of its practical, if not principled, support of Soeharto.³⁷ They pleaded with Canberra to intervene, pointing to the contradiction between the claims of Australian leaders to uphold human rights in the region, and their betrayal of East Timorese.³⁸ Many Australians supported the East Timorese refugee community; their broadcasts out of Darwin had for years attacked Indonesia; and independence leaders Ramos Horta and Xanana Gusmao had lived in Australia and married Australians. All this, of course, enhanced perceptions in Jakarta of Australia as hosting the enemy and hence of becoming the enemy. In the light of Australia's rejection of refugees on boats leaving Indonesia in 2001, it is ironic to recall the Indonesian ire that Australia had earned in 1995 for taking in East Timorese boat people. Yet neither this, nor Australia's efforts during UNTAET and InterFET, prevented it being castigated again by East Timorese during UNAMET for having complied with the re-'colonisation' of East Timor.³⁹ No country, whether in an image

³⁶ Louise Williams, 'Asia Through Australian Eyes', Walkley Media Forum, Sydney: 12 March 2001.

³⁷ Xanana Gusmao in Domm 1998. Jose Ramos Horta quoted by Peter Craven, *A* 5 April 2000: 39.

³⁸ Einfeld in Aubrey 1998. Taudevin and Lee 2000.

³⁹ Otelio Ote, *Timor Post*, 'Reporting on East Timor', conference paper,

war nor a real war, can be the friend of both sides. Australia could not expect much friendship from either side, since each side had good reasons to mistrust Australia.

Australia's efforts to internationalise the intervention in 1999 did not deflect the blame. In most of the media in Southeast Asia, as what follows will show, Australia was represented as the aggressor that had betrayed its long-standing commitment to Indonesia in its hour of greatest need.⁴⁰ A useful means of understanding this blame-displacement process is suggested by René Girard's analysis (1972) of scapegoating and 'victimage'. It may be too simplistic to apply to Indonesia his proposition that the earliest cultures were formed when primitive peoples discovered the power of the mob over the scapegoat. But more complex uses of common cause against a victim or an enemy in order to consolidate a community are as observable in contemporary Australia and Indonesia as in earlier societies. People everywhere support leaders who are as different as possible from what they fear. Opinion leaders who manipulate myths can convince the community of the guilt of the scapegoat and can justify attacking it, ritually sacrificing it, or murdering it. In a modern community substitutes are adopted for murder of the scapegoat. One of these is 'trial by media'. Media identification of a scapegoat – particularly by talk-back radio - releases violent emotions and re-regenerates community self-esteem and solidarity.⁴¹

Australians had felt guilty about East Timor ever since World War 2, and desire to displace that guilt onto Jakarta contributed to the public's support of the intervention in East Timor in 1998-2000. That in turn invited scapegoating from Indonesians who were conscious of their military's guilt, as well as from their Southeast Asian neighbours who were nervous about their own communal tensions. How Australia was scapegoated is shown by a selection of the media responses from Indonesia and the region.

MEDIating Globalisation: Challenges for International Journalism in the 21st Century, Brisbane, Q.: 16-17 July 2001.

⁴⁰ Howard claimed the East Timor intervention had 'done a lot to cement Australia's place in the region'. Brenchley 1999: 24.

⁴¹ Philip Hunt, 'Myth and the Media', conference paper, *MEDIating Globalisation: Challenges for International Journalism in the 21st Century*, Brisbane, Q.: 16-17 July 2001. Jakubowicz 2001.

Indonesia

Critical representations of Australia in the Indonesian media gained volume during UNAMET, and rose to a crescendo during InterFET. Their main themes were humiliation, victimisation, betrayal, and displacement of guilt. A series of accusations against Australia, some familiar from the past, and some new, were added to the blame-Australia news agenda.

Earlier, Foreign Minister Alatas' predecessor, Adam Malik, had revealed the New Order's insouciance about East Timorese lives and at the same time established a model of this blame-Australia discourse when he declared that, in the first 15 months of 'civil war' in East Timor (1975-76),

the total [killed] may be 50 000, but what does this mean if compared with 600 000 people who want to join Indonesia? Then what is the big fuss? Is it possible that they may have been killed by Australians and not us. Who knows? It was war. (Quoted by Jardine 1995: 31)

With InterFET's arrival imminent, Alatas still sought to blame Australia, insisting that Indonesia could 'refuse certain troops from certain countries' – particularly Australia and New Zealand.⁴² He called Australian troops 'trigger-happy', and President Habibie inelegantly described Australia as having pissed in Indonesia's face. (A 12 October 1999: 8)

The newly liberated Indonesian media had little practice in sorting out truth from rhetoric, or in criticising their leaders or the armed forces. They were more accustomed to attacking Australia. Having been prohibited under Suharto from commenting on the President, his family and friends, or on 'divisive issues' like East Timor, old habits died hard. Television journalists had still to check their footage on killings in East Timor very carefully in case screening 'awful things' should embarrass the *TNI*.⁴³ During

⁴² Alatas told CNN: 'Don't give us ultimatums. Don't talk to us about peacekeepers'. *AFR* 9 September 1999: 1. Sheridan thesis 2001.

⁴³ Bina Bektiati, *Tempo*, conference paper, *MEDIATING Globalisation: Challenges*

UNAMET, senior *TNI* officers were quoted by the Jakarta media as 'deeply resenting' Australian reports of their support of the militia in East Timor, and as calling the vote 'fraudulent'. (Thayer 1999) Intellectuals interviewed on television in Jakarta expressed shame and helplessness in the face of evidence of the activities of the army and the militia in East Timor, but they too resorted to the familiar, reassuring discourse of the past to project their hurt feelings onto Australia. So Howard and the Australian media were termed 'intrusive' and biased in favour of independence. The behaviour of Richard Carleton and his '60 Minutes' team during the voting provided timely confirmation of the perception that Australians were 'becoming too intrusive and boastful'.⁴⁴ The arrival of the big, loud Australians was reported as an invasion, which it resembled, at least from the viewpoint of those opposed to it.⁴⁵

As in sport, so in war, Australian reporters adopted the viewpoint of the 'visitors', while the Indonesian media did the same for their 'home team'. (Broinowski 2000b. Ryan 2000) The presence of contingents from 21 other contributing countries was virtually ignored, and the perspectives of Australia and Indonesia were disregarded by each country's reporters. Imperialism has been called 'a vast competitive game in which one cheered the home team'. (Gelber 2001: 119) But in East Timor it made no difference who was the real imperialist.

The liberal *Jakarta Post* initially called on Indonesians to swallow their pride and agree to a peacekeeping force. (*JP* 3 September. *AFR* 4-5 September 1999: 8) A few days later, however, when it reported the UN Security Council's vote to establish InterFET, the paper described the choice of Australia over Indonesia's objections, to head the force, as 'rubbing salt into the wound'. Australia's sudden 'aggressive policy' towards Indonesia was an unprecedented blow to its dignity. (*JP* 17 September 1999) Two days after InterFET landed, *Kompas* ran a front-page story about the speed of the troops'

for International Journalism in the 21st Century, Brisbane, Q: 16-17 July 2001.
Hidayat in Kingsbury 1998.

⁴⁴ *FEER* 23 September 1999: 8-12. Fischer 2000.

⁴⁵ Indonesian military, naval, and air force deployments during the first two weeks of InterFET in September 1999 outnumbered InterFET by three to one. The speed of InterFET's deployment made it appear to have more than its actual 5 000 strength. McDonald, *SMH* 22 June 2001: 1, 6.

deployment, but the next day, using wire service pictures and CNN footage of the same event, it too described the Australian troops' behaviour as 'aggressive'. It compared them to the militia, while making the valid point that Falantil had not equally been forced to disarm. ('Milisi "Peace-keeping"', 23 September 1999) Kompas also speculated that Australia's ambition was to take over East Timor to get its oil. (20 September 1999) Accusations from Indonesian officials and commentators about the bias of InterFET and the Australian media soon followed. When Indonesian papers reported complaints by members of the national Islamic movement that 'this nation has been ridiculed' by Australia, they revealed what hurt the most: all the other accusations were, in some sense, retaliations for that.

The counter-attacks continued. Umbrage was taken at Howard having opportunistically imposed the autonomy issue on a 'lame-duck' President Habibie in the midst of a financial crisis. Australia was reported to have flown 'black' surveillance missions over the archipelago. More than 50 demonstrations took place outside the Australian Embassy. Anti-Australia t-shirts were worn, Australian flags were burnt, and the Ambassador was fired at in his car. Middle-class Indonesians expressed outrage at television footage of Australians burning Indonesian flags and troops manhandling East Timorese. 'Australian troops torture militias', and 'Interfet troop [sic] tears RI flag' were front page headlines in *Indonesia Observer*. (28 September 1999) Australian InterFET troops around Suai (the site of one of the worst pre-InterFET massacres of civilians) were reported to have 'showered a group of refugees with bullets as they were returning to their homes'. (*Media Indonesia* 7 October 1999)

After militia leader Eurico Guterres wrote to Downer threatening to 'sacrifice' Australian diplomats and journalists to 'save East Timor', Arief Budiman observed from Melbourne that for the Habibie government and *TNI*, 'mobilising an anti-Australia attitude, taking advantage of both the popular sentiment and the intellectuals' frustration, [was] a convenient way out'. (*Age* 19 October 1999) Not that the accusations made against Australia were uniformly 'untrue': they reflected the situation from the government's preferred perspective. They enabled a veil of double standards to be drawn over the military's behaviour, reversing the discourse of blame. Reviving familiar anti-white, anti-colonial sentiment against Australia served to shore up Indonesians' self-esteem.

Representing Australians – who were known to see Indonesia as a military threat - as the ‘real’ enemy, served to excuse and justify the actions of *TNI* and the militia.

With few attacking moves available to Jakarta, the familiar agendas of development journalism, Asian values, race, and colonial oppression were redeployed to blame Australia. Ali Alatas told ABC TV that ‘critical journalism offends people’ (26 October 1999), and academic Salim Said declared on ABC radio that condescending behaviour would be acceptable from ‘other white countries but not from Australia’. (RN ‘AM’, 17 September 1999) He later described Howard as ‘like a nineteenth century European standing on a beach and thinking he will have to watch out for the little brown uncivilised neighbours that lie to the north’. Habibie played his own race card, saying he wanted ‘more brown faces’ in InterFET. He and other leading Indonesians accused Australia of being unfriendly and acting from ulterior motives, including wanting access to East Timorese oil. Projecting Indonesia’s own concerns, the Jakarta press speculated about Australia having territorial ambitions to take over East Timor and to fragment the Republic. Indonesia’s Ambassador to Australia in 2000 declared InterFET had done nothing for international peace. Australia, he said, had used the pretext of humanitarianism to commit ‘unilateral armed intervention into the internal affairs of a developing country’. It was a coalition ‘outside the framework of the United Nations’.⁴⁶

From late September 1999, the Australian media gave Jakarta several opportunities to personalise the ‘blame Australia’ news agenda while invoking familiar themes. They included reports of Howard’s claim that Australia was now the ‘strong man of Asia’, his premature welcome of an election victory for Megawati Sukarnoputri, and his Defence Minister’s talk of ‘hot pursuit’ into West Timor. The most prominent stories, in the *Bulletin* (28 September and 12 October 1999), concerned Australian intelligence about *TNI* activities and Howard’s reported reference to Australia’s support as ‘Deputy Sheriff’ for the United States in the region. *Kompas* interpreted the latter as confirming Australia’s white racist identity: ‘This is a superior stance of “White Australia” which Paul Keating actually wanted to abandon’. Former Ambassador Sabam Siagian told the media Australia had ‘either a shallow knowledge of political dynamics in Indonesia or

⁴⁶ Arizal Effendi, *A* 10 February 2000: 6.

an arrogance in ignoring them'. (TWA 25-26 September 1999:13) Indonesians whose predecessors had for decades displayed colonial arrogance towards East Timor represented Australia as a coloniser, ignorant and insensitive about 'Asia'.

However it was expressed, opinion leaders' agenda was to reinforce the Asian in-group, once again exiling Australia to the out-group. During the crisis, Jusuf Wanandi accused Howard of 'talking as if East Timor is already your colony'. But in June 2001, he told the Australian press that blame for the souring of relations rested with *TNI* and the Habibie government, because the armed forces were damaged and humiliated by the plebiscite in East Timor. The rest of the élite, he wrote, was more disturbed by Australia's rhetoric than by its conduct in InterFET.⁴⁷ By November however, the xenophobia of Howard and Beazley's election campaign gave him a renewed opportunity to argue in the *Jakarta Post* that Australia had been reduced to regional and international pariah status, and to doubt 'whether Australia really belongs to East Asia'.⁴⁸

In an image war, the more sensational the visual newsfeed, the more potent it is in reaching the widest, least educated audience. As Baudrillard observed, 'It doesn't matter what industry you work in...sensationalism always gets the best press'.⁴⁹ Television is a yawning vacuum that has to be filled hourly with 'substance of just enough consistency as will offer no obstruction to what must fill the same hole the day after'.⁵⁰ So in late September and early October 1999, Indonesian television ran over and over the same film clips of armed Australians tying up and disarming East Timorese, giving visual resonance to representations of Australians as big, bullying invaders. Interviews were shown with militia leaders who accused InterFET, and particularly Australians, of torturing militiamen and burning them alive. On 24 September, Cosgrove was called 'Major-General Cockroach' in *Republika*. At the end

⁴⁷ Jusuf Wanandi, 'Time for Indonesia to face facts about its role in Timor', *SMH* 11 June 2001: 16. Jusuf (Lim Bian Kie) in the 1970s was a member of the Indonesian Special Operation Group (OPSUS) under Ali Moertopo, then deputy chief of BAKIN, and a member of OPSUS's affiliate, the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), which he later directed. (Gunn 1994: 122)

⁴⁸ Jusuf Wanandi, 'Great nation reduced to a Pacific pariah', *A* 16 November 2001: 13.

⁴⁹ Jean Baudrillard, 'The third degree', *ARB* April 2001: 3.

of the InterFET period, another image that resonated (on the front pages of several papers) was of Cosgrove being decorated like a war hero by Queen Elizabeth. It provided visible confirmation, to any who were still in doubt, of Australia's lack of independence, its Westernness, and its view of its own triumph in the East Timor 'war'.

The more democratic a country, Phillip Knightley argues, the less its leaders can expect to win a protracted war.⁵¹ This is because the media will not uncritically support patriotism for long, and because voters will soon begin to object to wars that they see on television. Australia's (new) image problems began during UNAMET and, in spite of the efforts of the army's publicity experts, continued through InterFET into the UNTAET phase. Indonesian media reported an Australian soldier offering to pay for intelligence in East Timor, interception by the Indonesian air force of RAAF planes, and orders to the Indonesian navy to pursue Australian submarines. The behaviour of UNTAET staff, their lack of expertise, and their failure to deliver jobs to young men in Dili while offering opportunities to young women, were reported as the responsibility of the majority contingent, Australia. (Of a total of 7886 troops in UNTAET, 1600 were Australians). Staff of NGOs were reported to have offended the local population with their waste, inefficiency, ignorance of languages, and apparent wealth; aid workers from the Philippines claimed Australians were hated more than any others for their arrogance, and reported that some had been sent home for 'cultural insensitivity'. (Ryan 2000) Many of these complaints were faithfully reported by the Australian media and recycled in the region.

Indonesia's neighbours

Military coalitions, an Australian army observer in Dili remarked, are scarcely 'feel-good combinations'. (Ryan 2000) By blaming Australia, the Indonesian and other ASEAN media, even in countries that contributed to InterFET, reinforced each other at a time when ASEAN solidarity was fragile. The images of Australian troops that dominated the regional media coverage of the East Timor crisis as soon as they arrived were rarely

⁵⁰ David Malouf, 'Drowning in a torrent of disposable words', *A* 14 May 2001.

⁵¹ 'I'd tell them [the American public] nothing till it's over and then I'd tell them who won': US government censor in 1943, quoted by Knightley, 'When the

positive, even in the Asian countries that had sent contingents. On 22 September an AP photo showed an Australian soldier in sunglasses being welcomed by East Timorese. But on the same day *AFP*'s image of a big Australian pointing his gun at a cowering militiaman, hands on head, appeared in Malaysia (*NST*), Singapore (*ST*), and Australia two days later (*TWA*), and commentary about Australian 'aggression' began. As Denise Woods (2000b) has shown, a variety of captions, framing, and cropping of the same images resulted in pictures that were capable of different interpretations in various papers. What the *Weekend Australian* described as a gun-search, 'taking no chances' (25-26 September 1999), was captioned in Malaysia's *New Straits Times* as 'Strong Arm...an Australian soldier pins down an alleged East Timor militiaman while another aims a gun at him...' The pictures that Australians saw in their media of Australian troops (men and women) playing sport or making friends with East Timorese children did not appear in the Indonesian media nor, after the first few days, in the media in other regional countries. Instead, the implicit news agenda suggested white racist aggression against innocent Indonesians.

Indonesia's neighbours had a dilemma over Timor. They succumbed to international pressure, overcame their principles about non-intervention, and supported UNAMET, InterFET, and UNAMET, ostensibly at Indonesia's invitation, but also out of concern about fragmentation of Indonesia, their own countries, and ASEAN. They were unwilling to become involved in any direct conflict against *TNI* or the militia, and were therefore assigned to the East and interior, leaving more dangerous areas to the Australians. (Ryan 2000. Sheridan 2001) In the self-censored media in Malaysia and Singapore, reporting that might have been seen as too critical of Jakarta's treatment of its province soon found a substitute target in Australia. This vacillated, supporting Australia but warning that others in the region thought Australia was intrusive and overbearing.⁵²

Mahathir was in New York in late September 1999, and facing an election in November, he used the AP photo for all it was worth. Ignoring the caption that explained what the

⁵² media are a menace', *SMH* 27-28 October 2001: 37.
 Thai Update conference, 26-27 April 2001: Hogue, *Asian Analysis*, December 2001. <http://www.aseanfocus.com/asiananalysis>

Australians were actually doing, he said Australian troops were 'pointing guns at almost everybody' and asked 'Is it necessary to point guns at people who are obviously unarmed?' (*NST* 1 October 1999) Malaysia, having for years supported Indonesia's suppression of the independence movement in East Timor, at first sought to lead InterFET, until resistance was expressed to having a Muslim commander. (AIIA 1999c) Malaysia then reluctantly contributed 30 people to InterFET. Mahathir sought to recoup this loss of influence by complaining to Kofi Annan of Australia's heavy-handedness, demanding that Australia scale down its presence to allow ASEAN countries to operate in a 'less belligerent' way.⁵³ Australia had forced Indonesia to hold the 30 August ballot, Mahathir claimed, and before that 'nobody was being killed in East Timor. Today a lot of people are being killed – because you handled it wrongly'. He told PBS the East Timorese had voted for independence only because they had been promised money and protection by 'foreigners'. He described the Australians' behaviour as 'disgraceful' and called for their numbers to be reduced. (*Antara* 1 October 1999)

Support for Mahathir was quickly reported in Kuala Lumpur in racial terms. It was 'better for the peacekeeping duty to be assumed by our own kin than unrelated persons', said an opposition leader from PAS. A commentator summed up Malaysian opinion leaders' usual views: Australians 'do not look like Asians and their country is not part of Asia and, perhaps, they look down on Asians'. (Zainal Affin, *NST* 1 October 1999) A senior Malaysian army officer added another, but still race-based argument: claiming Malaysians were ready to serve in East Timor, he said that troops from ASEAN countries could 'assimilate better in East Timor as they share many similarities with Indonesia's culture'.⁵⁴ Malaysian papers took their lead from UMNO politicians who said Australia was arrogant and 'Asia' did not need a protector, calling the Howard doctrine 'Howard's howler'. (*Star* 28 September 1999) By talking about 'policing Asia', *Star* repeated, Australia had displayed 'unmitigated arrogance'.⁵⁵ Howard's claim (as

⁵³ Mahathir quoted by Stephen Romei and Robert Garran, 'Howard returns fire on Mahathir's troop attack', *A* 1 October 1999: 2. Mahathir quoted by Mike Steketee, 'Keating's last stand', *TWA* 9-10 October 1999: 27.

⁵⁴ Lt.Gen.Datuk Abdul Aziz Hasan, *NST* 2 October 1999.

⁵⁵ *Star*: *A* 12, 13 October 1999. The 'Howard doctrine' proposed a more active role for Australia in Asian security, support of Western-oriented interests and values, and a bilateral rather than regional approach to Asian countries. It was seen by critics as an effort to take advantage of the crisis in East Timor to move away from reliance on collective security

reported) about Australia's 'Deputy Sheriff' collaboration with the United States was inflated in the Malaysian press to 'US Marshal'. This enabled Australia to be cast in the role of Western aggressor and bully, in contrast to small, peaceful, defenceless Asian societies.⁵⁶

In Singapore, where Lee had in the past begged the United States to be the 'Sheriff of the Pacific',⁵⁷ some early media reports were more critical of Indonesia than of Australia. An academic commentator said Indonesia was now a dead weight dragging the region down. A Reuters report explained that InterFET had a UN mandate to use 'all necessary measures' to stop the killing, to deliver humanitarian aid, and to enforce the results of the referendum. Australia was said to have become a regional power at last, 'not in Asia but of Asia, determining Asian outcomes directly'. (ST 21 September 1999) But this was soon offset by reports of clumsy, arrogant Australians who needed to learn 'Asian' manners, tried to exert unwanted influence, and used megaphone diplomacy: 'Canberra may find it useful to pursue the quieter public style that Asian diplomacy is known for...consensual modes and softer shades have their advantages'.⁵⁸ By 25 September, unanimity among ASEAN media was back in place, with both the *Straits Times* and the *New Straits Times* reporting Thai concerns about the 'aggressive, provocative' approach taken by Cosgrove. In mid-October, Singapore sources reported that some 6000 militiamen were being trained in West Timor to identify and kill Australians to avenge their comrades and their families. (AFP, Reuters, *SMH* 11 October 1999: 11)

The Thai government offered more support to InterFET than any other country in the region, but as a developing country in economic difficulties, they hoped to be subsidised for it by Australia or by the UN. Financing the Thai contingent and others,

mechanism and adopt a more militaristic and hegemonic role in regional security relations, with US backing'. Wade Huntley and Peter Hayes, 'East Timor and Asian Security', NAPSNet@nautilus.org, 24 February 2000.

⁵⁶ Abdullah Ahmad, 'Opinion: On the Record: Australia must know its place', *NST* 23 May 2000.

⁵⁷ Lee quoted by Theodore Friend, Foreign Policy Research Institute, 'Indonesia: Confronting the Political and Economic Crisis', 16 February 2000: NAPSNet@nautilus.org, 23 February 2000.

⁵⁸ Asad Latif, *ST* 21 September 1999. *SMH* 25 October 1999: 1, 15. Frank Devine, 'Forget about big-noting in Asia', *A* 23 September 1999: 13.

including the South Koreans, was a contentious issue for Australia and Japan throughout InterFET. (Ryan 2000) The Thai interest was encoded in media comments that Australia should have done more to involve Jakarta in the planning and logistics of InterFET, and in media criticism of the Australians' higher rates of pay. It was a Thai defence official's comment that anticipated Mahathir's 'gun-pointing' allegation. He said: 'We are not going to point guns at the heads of people like we have been seeing Australians soldiers doing on television. That doesn't look good – it's terrible'. (Reuters, *NST*, *ST* 25 September 1999) For the reformed Thai military, it was important to assert such scruples.

Critical Thai comment on the 'Deputy Sheriff' issue followed, with a foreign affairs official calling it 'inappropriate'. The *Nation's* editor said it was 'a bit of a slap in the face', and reinforced this with a lecture on Asia-essentialism: 'In Asia, modesty is a virtue. Canberra needs to learn more and become more sensitive to the rest of the region'. Linking East Timor to One Nation, Kavi recalled how Howard's failure to reject One Nation's views had 'damaged his government and raised ire throughout Asia'. He then turned to Asian regionalism, finding it ironic that UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan had said Australia should be accepted as an Asian country for the purposes of InterFET, and adding that 'unfortunately it is not an accepted fact in this part of the world'. Australia, wrote Kavi, was not and had never been part of Asia, and the hearts and minds of Australians were 'thousands of miles away on another continent'.⁵⁹ Asian identity was represented as giving the Thai contingent superior sensitivity with the East Timorese. The Thais' experience of dealing with domestic insurgency and refugees were claimed to make them better at humanitarian and agricultural extension work than the Australians who had brute military strength but were not Asians.⁶⁰ They played the culture card by objecting to Australian troops wearing 'warlike' sunglasses, and failing to appreciate that 'Asian cultural norms' required eye contact. This was echoed by the Malaysian commander and picked up by the media. (Ryan 2000)

⁵⁹ Kavi Chongkittavorn, editorial and opinion, 'Regional Perspective: Australia is an Asian partner, but...', *Nation* 27 September 1999.

⁶⁰ General Teerawat Putamanonda, 'Australia's Defence and Strategic Roles in the Region: A Thai Perspective', conference paper, Canberra: ANU, Thai Update 2001, 26-27 April 2001: typescript.

Even in Japan, Australia in general and Howard in particular came in for criticism along similar, race-based lines. The *Sankei Shimbun* quoted its Sydney correspondent on the 'Deputy Sheriff' issue: 'Comments such as these are received by neighbouring Asian nations as an attempt to force "white" ideals upon them'. (*SMH* 30 September 1999: 9) In mid-October, Mahathir's column in the *Mainichi Shimbun* warned Japanese readers that East Timor could turn into 'Australia's Vietnam'. Australia was part of a Western plot to break up Indonesia, and with unmitigated arrogance was already talking to the United States about policing Asia. Indonesia had been pressured into offering the referendum, even though, Mahathir claimed, in 25 years there had been 'no massacres' in East Timor. (A 12, 13 October 1999) The aggravation of Japanese officials at Australia's demands for funds was reported: another familiar complaint.

In summary, the UN forces in East Timor were depicted in Australia and in the US as heroes, exercising restraint under great provocation and danger.⁶¹ Having to report a war without an enemy, the Australian media resorted to demonisation of the militia and the *TNI*, but Australian journalists also challenged and exposed successive governments for past hypocrisy and pragmatism, present triumphalism, and for assuming responsibility to the US for security in Southeast Asia. In the regional media, on the other hand, different news agendas operated, and quite different constructions were quickly placed on the same newsfeed. Indonesians displaced their humiliation onto Australia by representing it as the white colonial enemy that had betrayed and insulted them. Australia was perceived to have revealed its underlying antagonism by supporting Christians against Muslims and by conspiring with the West to break up Indonesia. (AIIA 1999b) In other ASEAN capitals, the media opted to support Indonesia by drawing on familiar stereotypes of Australians as arrogant, intrusive, loud, ignorant, insensitive non-Asians. Direct criticism of Jakarta, or of alleged atrocities by *TNI* or the militia, was avoided in news media that, controlled or not, endorsed each country's official news agenda. Selection and framing of visual images revealed the incongruency of perceptions, and the failure on all sides to investigate multiple perspectives contributed to a rapid hardening of attitudes.

⁶¹ Major-General Peter Cosgrove, Larry Adler Lecture, Sydney Institute, Sydney: 20 June 2000.

Whenever people rage against a foreign country using the mythology and ritual of scapegoating they are, explicitly or not, criticising their own society.⁶² Scapegoating occurred in at least equal measure on the Australian side during the crisis. The opportunity to make a useful, principled, neighbourly contribution, and to be seen to make it, was lost when national hubris and political advantage took over. Few Australians sought to stress to the fundamental human concerns and common interests of their East Timorese, Indonesian, Southeast Asian, and other Asian neighbours – even though events powerfully demonstrated their extent. Instead, with the exception of Xanana Gusmao, opinion leaders continued to stress the essential differences between Asians and Australians, as if nothing had been learned in a century.

Most significantly, this second case study, like the first, shows how the in-group 'Asia' was deployed as a customary device to isolate and scapegoat Australia, and thus to reinforce regional solidarity. In both cases, the aim and the outcome was the deployment of old and new representations to Australia's detriment.

3.2 IN OTHER WORDS

As the face of Australian fiction about Asia changed in the 1990s, so did the faces of those writing it.⁶³ Almost completely displacing an earlier generation of settler Australian narratives involving Asian characters and countries, the new writers were predominantly Asian Australians, and female. Others have selected Asian Australian novels for study as literary texts.⁶⁴ The survey approach adopted here provides evidence, concentrated in two decades, of representations of Australia from the inside, some of which confirm the earlier views discussed in Part 2, while some challenge them.

All writing, as Legge (1999) emphasised, is 'embedded in particular national and regional cultures' that have 'different agendas and produce different narrative outcomes'. Texts always 'draw upon and transform other contemporary and historically prior texts', as Faircough (1992: 39-40) proposed. It is a recognised hegiraic phenomenon for new settlers either choose to identify with the host society, or accuse it of not accepting or appropriately regarding them. (Gilroy 2000. Safran 1991) At its most fundamental, hegira poses choices of emphasis between similarity and difference, concession and confrontation. These traditions and options underlie all the 'narrative outcomes' examined here. In all of them, writers' Asian first cultures are brought face to face with Australia as their second (or in some cases third) culture. If Asian writers cite the myths, ideologies, and traditions of their first cultures as evidence of their civilisational superiority, they may be expected to be as influential as in the past in shaping current representations of Australia.

Most of the new Asian Australian novelists grew up while migration laws were changing in 1968-1973, many of them were educated in Australia, and many wrote in English.

⁶² Frank Ching, 'Governments vs. Citizens', *FEER* 11 September 1997: 32.

⁶³ A list of fiction by Asian Australians since 1965 is in Bibliography: 4. Texts selected for consideration here were published between 1983 and 2000 and contain representations of Australia. A current cooperative research project of which I am involved as Chief Investigator, between ANU, Griffith University, and the National Library of Australia (2000-2002) on texts about Australia in Chinese and Japanese, will make resources for further study more accessible.

⁶⁴ See Gilbert and others 2000, Ommundsen 2001.

The multicultural policies of the Australia Council and of State literature funds helped some to write with grants, fellowships, and prizes. Some of the post-Tiananmen students became permanent residents and continued to write in Chinese, for Chinese Australian publications like *Otherland*, or for publication in China. Some wrote fiction for readers in other languages in their original countries, and some were translated into English. Because of the newness, authenticity, and mastery of writers who knew Asian societies and Australia equally well, the numbers of earlier settler Australians who felt confident to write about contemporary Asia correspondingly shrank, and those who still did so tended to concentrate on the past.⁶⁵ Asian Australian novelists could access two or more languages, generations of family narratives, mythology and magic, and the experience of hegira that was still fresh at least in their generation's memory. Theirs was virtually the only contemporary fiction published about Asia in Australia and Australia in Asia from the mid-1980s to 2000.

In Australia, the success of the published writers shows that they, at least, did not suffer significantly from what Buruma and Adorno warned was 'a new form of discrimination' resulting from multiculturalism. They had the advantage of newness that resulted from superior knowledge and from writing interesting, non-mainstream fiction.⁶⁶ As first or even second generation exiles, and willingly or not, most of them inhabited the fringes that foster innovative fiction. They and their counterparts in other hegiraic societies were typical of the 'romantic outsider living on the edge of the bourgeois world'. (Buruma 2001) By permitting that 'secular clerisy', Australia provided writers from several Asian societies with relative freedom to publish on topics that were conventionally unmentionable in their first cultures: family violence, sex, and death in particular. (Fen in Ommundsen 2001)

To the extent that common ground existed between these writers, their fiction reveals

⁶⁵ Chris Koch, Nick Jose, and Marya Glyn-Daniel have continued to write fiction about Asian societies, drawing on the past. In 2000-1 some contemporary Asian fiction by settler Australians appeared: Bern Le Hunte, Penelope Trevor, Caroline Shaw, and Margaret Barbalet.

⁶⁶ Buruma 2001. A similar phenomenon was evident in the UK, Canada, and the US: writers included Lan Samantha Chan, Vickram Chanda, Jung Chang, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Anita Desai, Amitav Ghosh, Gish Jen, Ha Jin, Maxine Hong Kingston, Ishiguro

the hegiraic concern in Australia (Ang 1993b) about who to be, who to be like, and who to like. Likeness and liking are often congruent, but rarely in novels of the hegira does a liking of difference motivate the characters. Their presuppositions about Australia are influential, and the more the first culture is valued as a source of empowerment, the less these views are likely to change. This applies particularly to adult male characters. For several of the children in these narratives, however, the first culture is often a site of rejection, while entry to the second culture (Australia) is desired and envied. Sometimes, resolution is achieved by finding a 'third space' between likeness and difference, liking and distaste. There, the writers or their characters - particularly the women - relish their freedom to establish themselves as separate from both their original and their adoptive cultures, and able to move in either direction at will.⁶⁷ In the United States, bookshops are full of 'Weep for Me Asian memoirs' of Chinese women as victims whose virtue is rewarded by acquiring wealth and an American husband.⁶⁸ Such closure is less common in Asian Australian fiction. There, women who find happiness-ever-after are often alone.

In these narratives, perceptions of Australia are framed by the Occidental reversal of Said's 'accepted grid'. Some writers choose to ignore Australia; some maintain the mytho-magical realism of traditional narrative; others focus on the hegiraic experience; others again represent Australia as the 'arse end of the world' and confirm it as a site of anti-Asian racism; but their stance differs according to gender and to the length of time they have spent in Australia. For the longest-resident writers, inversion of the first culture's representations of the second enables them to make ironic commentaries on both. These representational variants are considered in sequence below.

Ignore

Some Asian Australian fiction ignores Australia altogether, particularly when it is not written in English. As Ouyang Yu found in researching images of Australia in China in 1996, and writes in his novel (unpublished 2001), Australia for many Chinese is a non-

⁶⁷ Kazuo, Hanif Kureishi, Luong Ung, Adeline Yen Mah, Timothy Mo, Bharati Mukherjee, Fae Myenne Ng, Arundati Roy, Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Amy Tan, and Sean Wong. Joshi 2000. Gooneratne 1991, 1996. Lazaroo 1994.

existent or 'absent' country. Hence Chinese Australians have little more to reinforce their self-esteem as migrants than they did a century ago. Some writers feel like spiritual orphans, as their choice of subjects shows. Wu Li's *Confessions* concentrates on Chinese student life in an 'ethnic' Sydney with no 'ordinary' Australians: a German woman falls in love with a Beijing boy, an Italian man marries a Shanghai girl. Ding Xiaoqi's second play, *Kiss Yesterday Goodbye*, is similarly set in Australia but has no Australians in it: her Chinese student character, his wife, and his lover, could be overseas students in a love-triangle anywhere. (Ouyang 1994) Brian Castro went to school in Sydney, and much of his writing involves Australia and Asia, but in *Drift* (1994) and *Stepper* (1997) the Australian connection is irrelevant. Nor does Australia appear in Sri Lankan-born Michelle de Kretser's novel *The Rose Grower* (1999), nor in Korean-born Don'o Kim's *Password* (1974). The Australian content of Melbourne novelist Adib Khan's three novels has progressively shrunk, and *The Storyteller* (2000) ignores Australia completely in favour of the (more exciting) experiences of a dwarf in the Delhi underworld. In these books, for these writers, if Australia appears, it is either a secure viewing platform from which to observe the turbulent outside world, or a dark city outside a brightly-lit Chinatown.

Much post-Tiananmen Chinese Australian fiction is social-realistic and thus seeks to criticise evils in contemporary society. In Ding Xiaoqi's first play *Gateway to Paradise* (1991), students whose knowledge of Australia is vague expect to make their fortune but are disillusioned with the 'sham paradise': a former surgeon works as kitchen hand in Chinese restaurant, an artist becomes a gambler, the daughter of a Red Army soldier converts to Christianity.⁶⁹ The Australians they meet are 'either kind old men and women who do not have children and believe in God or AIDS-ridden people who should be avoided'. (Ouyang 1994) Australians, frequently identified as 'foreigners', play as little part in these narratives as they did in Chinese sojourner writing a century earlier.

Myths and magic

⁶⁸ Suh-kyung Yoon, 'The Crying Game', *FEER* 12 April 2000: 64-66.

⁶⁹ Sham paradise: a Hong Kong student wondered which side she was on, having become a foreigner, a yellow devil, overnight when her family arrived in Australia. At university she often thought 'Western ways are really ignorant', but was prepared to admit that 'Eastern ways' were no better. Sang Ye 1996: 162.

The frisson of irrationality, the pulling-power of myth, and the allure of magic are not usually the stuff of mainstream fiction for grownups in Australia, where 'myth' is often used as synonymous with 'unbelievable': but they merge with 'real life' in much Asian Australian fiction.⁷⁰ So in fiction by Arlene J. Chai (1995, 1996, 1998), by Merlinda Bobis (1999), Ang Chin Geok (1997) and Beth Yahp (1992), *feng shui*, water spirits, ancient curses, and enigmatic prophecies are at work. They affect overlapping generations and exert real control over the characters', even after they arrive in Australia. 'Mirror people' are always around in Lau Siew Mei's *Playing Madame Mao* (1999), emerging in times of crisis in human form, as melodramatically as in Chinese movies and traditional stories. As if reflecting the spiritual death of the hegira, homeless 'hungry ghosts' are particularly virulent characters in Australian Chinese fiction.

The influence of an Indonesian child-spirit, a potent curse, and a medium reach from Java to Melbourne in Dewi Anggraeni's *Journeys Through Shadows* (1998). And in Suneeta Peres da Costa's novel *Homework* (1999), Mina is born with feelers on her head that give her special instincts to cope with Australian suburban life and the bizarre behaviour of her Goan parents. Women are often the mythmakers in these narratives. But in Christopher Cyrill's very spiritual and watery *Hymns for the Drowning* (1999), Adam visits an India-like place, the 'Old Country', sometimes in his dreams, or through the Internet in his local Australian library. 'Ghost stories', myths, and magic become more significant, not less, in dislocated lives. For hungry ghosts wandering in Australian limbo, they provide a life-line to the first culture.

Hegira

The 1980s-1990s was a new decade of hegiraic writing in the West, most of it autobiographical. In an age of global mobility when, as Salman Rushdie said, 'every family has somebody living abroad', characters in fiction also go to seek their fortune in the West. Whole families flee from whatever most oppresses them in an Asian country in the hope that the West will be better. Echoing Uyen Loewald's earlier *Child of*

⁷⁰ *Guihua lianpian*, 'ghost stories', signifies a pack of lies. Jaivin 2001: 395.

Vietnam (1987) and many American-Vietnamese stories, Nam Phuong recounts in *Red on Gold* (1991) her parents' experience under the French, then the Vietnam war, the traumas of re-education, several efforts to escape, and her marriage to an Australian in the 1980s. But as a story of hope for a better future, it is not typical: disillusionment, misfortune, and other oppressions often await others who flee to Australia, like the Japanese war brides in Yamamoto Michiko's *Betty's Garden* (*Beti san no Niwa* 1972) Ang Chin Geok's account of the Ong family's travels from China (Hokkien) to Singapore and then to Australia, is a chronicle of their declining fortunes, wasted by incompetent patriarchs. In Lillian Ng's *Silver Sister* (1994) a peasant girl from Guangdong retraces the journey made by many Southern Chinese men before her, and with the same motive, to get away: to Hong Kong, to Singapore and finally, without any knowledge of it, to Australia. Migration to Australia for many of these writers and their characters is a fictional escape route, a bolt-hole down which to get away, a new address, rather than a guarantee of a better life or a considered or permanent change of identity.

Place and time often alternate in these novels between several countries and centuries. Yasmine Gooneratne's story of a Sri Lankan family in *A Change of Skies* (1991), like Ang's novel, spans three generations of travellers. Lau Siew Mei's actress moves in reality and imagination between Beijing and Singapore, playing the part of Madame Mao (both are named Jiang Ching) and becoming the lover of Singapore's 'Chairman' in the late 1980s. In Lillian Ng's *Swallowing Coughs* (1997) Syn's narrative moves between Sydney and Beijing, with no bond to either; and her first novel *Silver Sister* (1994), turns the conventional story of the Chinese man struggling to make his way abroad into a young woman's narrative. In both novels, Ng reflects on the loss of 'homeland'. She and other writers have objected strongly to having to deny their Chinese origins in order to become Australian citizens: her home is Australia, she says, but her homeland is China. (Ng to AB, August 2000) ⁷¹

Writers who return from Australia to revisit their first country often resort in fiction to express the contrasts. Dewi Anggraeni does this in *Parallel Forces* (1998) and *The Root of all Evil* (1987), to contrast unspiritual, comfortable Australia with corrupt, male

⁷¹ A more detailed analysis is in Shirley Tucker, 'Beyond belief: Representation

chauvinistic Indonesia. Adib Khan's protagonist in *Seasonal Adjustments* (1994) goes back to visit his family in Bangladesh, and is torn between the spiritual aridity and intolerance of Melbourne and the religious hypocrisy, xenophobia, sexism, and extremes of wealth and poverty that affront him in his first country. Arlene Chai's Philippine/Australia divide also lends itself to dichronic treatment, with a young woman returning to seek her roots on an island in the South China Sea. (*On the Goddess Rock* 1998) Brian Castro's account of sojourning and migrating Chinese (*Birds of Passage* 1983), one of the early Asian Australian novels, establishes the model of the protagonists who feels he belongs nowhere. Lillian Ng's character Syn, while explaining China to her fellow-Australian tourists, reflects on how she has changed from being Chinese into something like them, or something else again. (1997) Christopher Cyrill's journeys of the mind between Australia and India are less anguished, perhaps revealing the difference between leaving China and simply travelling away from India. (1993, 1999) Many of the hegiraic writers record dislocation as an enduring personal experience: as Brian Castro puts it, 'I want to be someone else somewhere else in order to see myself.' (Castro to AB: Broinowski 1996)

Indian women writing in Australia find themselves drawn to both past and future and in two directions, confusingly represented by the East (Australia is East of India, but Southern, and also Western) and the West (India is West of Australia, but 'South', and also Eastern). Several of them opt in their writing and in their lives for what Homi Bhabha (1990b) called 'the Third Space'. In it they are 'free from the residues of cultural traits normally ascribed to the dominant Indian' or alternatively, Australian (or Western) cultures. Its boundaries are fluid and allow the individual to establish herself as she wishes: 'The third space speaks of autonomy and agency; specifically, of the women's ability to negotiate their identities in the context of two equally dominant (but not dominating) cultures'. (Joshi 2000) Her view is supported by novelist Vijay Mishra who, writing of 'hyphenated subjectivities', argues that for them, no essentialising choice between one national identity or another is necessary. For Mishra, the hyphen itself is a signifier of 'the vibrant social and cultural spaces occupied by diasporas in nation-states as well as their ever-present sense of the "familiar temporariness"'. (Mishra 1996)

'Arse end of the world'⁷²

Lives splintered in one society often remain shattered in another. While some of these writers, or their characters, find Australia a source of happiness or at least of security (Dewi Anggraeni, Christopher Cyrill, Yasmine Gooneratne, Lau Siew Mei, and Nam Phuong), more of them do not. Forewarned as many are against Australia as 'cultural exile', or a 'step down', the mistake the characters have made in migrating hits some of them at once and others later.

In a surprise ending to Simone Lazaroo's *The Australian Fiancé* (2000), her young Eurasian who is later revealed to have been a 'comfort woman', leaves her Australian lover in Broome and goes back to Singapore. So does Adib Khan's elderly Muslim Indian, Khalid, in *The Solitude of Illusions* (1996). At the end of Chandani Lokuge's *If the Moon Smiled* (2000) Manthri, who has left dangerous Sri Lanka for an isolated, dreary life in Adelaide in a loveless marriage to Mahendra, fades away in depression and disorientation. Even worse, Pandora, the Chinese Malaysian wife of Singapore dentist Jonah Tay in Hsu-Ming Teo's *Love and Vertigo* (2000), is so miserable in Sydney that she goes back to Singapore and jumps out of a window. All have fled from war, race riots, or family disharmony in their first countries, but none has found bliss in Australia.

Parents leave their first culture and try to re-establish it in the second culture, Australia. But for the children in these narratives, school is often a site of escape from the first culture into the second. Equally, it can be a torture-chamber in which they are made painfully aware of their difference, and particularly of that of their parents. Those who integrate successfully still carry the guilt of having rejected their parents' culture. Those who are too successful, like Deepa in Suneeta Peres da Costa's *Homework* (1999) find school in Australia a long exercise in dumbing down. For Brian Castro, and for Adib Khan's characters, school is racist as well. In Beth Yahp's novel (1992), a Catholic Chinese school in Malaysia is just as horrendous.

⁷²

Description of Australia attributed to Keating by Hawke, in R.J.L. Hawke, *The*

While Peres da Costa, Gooneratne, and Anggraeni are wryly amused by these culture wars, the response of some other writers is to blame Australia for them. Male Chinese writers particularly contrast the antiquity of their civilisation with 'young', uncultured Australia. 'One of the commonest things repeated about Australians', wrote Brian Castro in a collection of essays, 'is that they do not put great value on intellectual production'. Australia suffers from 'devastating conformity'. In 'Asia' (Hong Kong) egalitarianism is 'immediately seen as a sign of weakness. Backslapping egalitarianism is interpreted as the height of rudeness'. (Castro 1999) Civilisational dyspepsia afflicts several characters in his fiction who are isolated intellectuals in the country of the Yahoos. Nowhere, however, does Castro reflect upon whether the 'fear and loathing', 'devastating conformity', and detestation of egalitarianism that he identifies in Australia may also be found among Chinese. Nor does he or others discuss how Australians or other foreigners are treated in China.⁷³

Chinese suffer, according to G r mie Barm  (1995) and Sang Ye (1996), from acute 'self-loathing'. Some of the writers project it onto Australians, in fact and fiction alike, criticising their lack of interest in and regard for 'Asian' (Chinese) culture. Ouyang Yu, a prolific writer who feels unrewarded in Australia, bitterly echoes Castro's critique in his articles, poems, and fiction. Australians, he writes in his novel, *Eastern Slope Chronicle* (unpublished 2001), are obsessed with national identity, lacking the history China has to go with it. Dao, his protagonist, expresses his bitterness in irony. In China, he remarks, foreign guests are made welcome without their Chinese hosts meaning it: but Australians don't even try to make Chinese welcome. Australians' stupidity is demonstrated by their knack of fixing simple things with their hands, while Chinese are technologically sophisticated in a developing country. The paradox reveals the pain: for men convinced of their inherent superiority, Australian 'egalitarianism' demotes them to

⁷³ *Hawke Memoirs*, Port Melbourne: William Heinemann, 1994.
Chinese, with their cultural heritage of five thousand years, and their history of possibly six hundred thousand years, looked down on 'the citizens of this country, with its two hundred years of white settlement and its forty thousand years or more of history'. Sang Ye, comparing his long bicycle rides in China and Australia (1994: 23), satirised this condescending Chinese stance: 'Those bloody Australians are so bloody uncultured. They don't even have a history. Even rubbish they'll think of as treasure'.

an inappropriate rank in the Australian hierarchy. Dao's wife, arriving in a west Melbourne suburb, insults both Australia and her husband by saying it looks like where peasants live in China. But on a visit to China, Dao finds much to criticise there too, and is irritated by the lack of interest shown by Chinese in Australia. He despises Australians for their ignorance, but is equally angry with Chinese for their xenophobic arrogance.⁷⁴ Dao, like Ouyang – and like Syn in Ng's novel revisiting China – finds himself a 'foreigner in both countries'. Chinese voices in Ouyang's poems counter Australian bigotry with racism and arrogance of their own. (Ommundsen in Ang and others 2000: 102-3)

In Ding Xiaoqi's story 'The Angry Kettle' (1994), the undeclared war that rages between a young Chinese woman and her condescending Australian co-tenant is really over who should pay the greater respect to the other's civilisation. Chinese Australians as represented by Liu Guande and Huangfu Jun (1995) and Lillian Ng (1997) live in a real or virtual Chinatown, regarding Australians as 'foreigners' whose culture is non-existent or not worth knowing about. Ng admits that she cannot rid herself of her Chineseness sufficiently to write fiction about Australians, or 'Caucasians'.⁷⁵

With more empathy, Fang Xiangshu and Trevor Hay interweave Chinese and Australian experiences of each others' country in *East Wind, West Wind* (1993), but of the two, the greater culture shock is Fang's. The novel concentrates on China and Chinese, subjects that appear to be of more interest to both writers. A young Chinese exchange student in Australia is confronted by 'a vast living space, unsupervised and unobserved by neighbours' that makes him feel as light-headed with loneliness as his gold rush precursors. While 'mainstream' Australians expect him to think he has arrived in the land of milk and honey, Fang hates their food: cheese is a 'vicious substance' and rare lamb is a 'disgusting thing'. Another surprise for the two writers comes when Victorian police behave with true Oriental despotism towards the innocent Hay.

⁷⁴ Oral historian Diana Giese, whose empathy with Chinese in Australia exceeded Sang Ye's, found some interviewees put her, as 'an ignorant Westerner', through 'endless initiation rituals, played devious games, and made an art form of never saying what they really meant'. (Giese 1997: 291)

⁷⁵ Ouyang Yu, 'An interview with Lillian Ng', in Ommundsen 2001: 115.

In her three accounts of the dark side of migrant life, Taiwanese-born Julie Xia represents Australians as lacking emotion and compassion, and Australia as 'a strange and disappointing country'. Writing in Chinese, she recounts the experiences of British, Finnish, and Indian migrants, all of them negative: the Indian wife of an Indian-Australian commits suicide. A part-Chinese woman feels she 'does not belong anywhere' even though she has been in Australia a long time and has two children. Her selfish Australian husband and his relatives 'can't empathise with people living in exile from home'. Having passed the migration barrier Asian Australians, like the protagonist in Lawrence Wong's story 'The Oriental' (Ouyang 1994) are still denied entry to 'mainstream' Australia. Lawrence's Irish boss says:

'You are not Australian. You read Chinese books and eat Chinese. You are only an Oriental born in Australia. Even with an Australian passport, your Oriental nature won't change'.

The Lawrence character retorts in neo-remonstrance style:

'But is this your place? You white men always blame us for not being loyal to Australia and for not participating in social activities. You have to educate yourself and widen the scope of your mind. You absolutely refuse to accept other ethnic minority people and lay the blame at their door for refusing to be assimilated'.

The story ends in a truce with mutual acceptance of difference. Wong, an Indo-Chinese refugee, argues that Chinese in Australia should regard themselves as Australians, not identifying themselves as Taiwanese or PRC.

Explicitly stated in these narratives or not, the generalised West's ignorance of Asian cultures and Asians' sense of exclusion from a society that doesn't deserve them are common themes. Writers are irritated by repeatedly being invited to debate the difference between 'Asian' and 'Australian' identity at literary festivals, in the company of 'Asians' they would not have identified with in their countries of origin. Some are bemused at being classed as 'ethnics'. Several of them object to Australia's generalised

view of Asia and Asians, and to Australians' inability to recognise differences between people from different Asian countries. But some of their Asian characters generalise about the West or about 'mainstream' Australians or 'Anglos'. Complicating the double standard - and not left below the surface for long - are the hierarchies preferred by Chinese (mainland Han, Taiwan, Hong Kong), Chinese Malaysians, Chinese Filipinos, and Chinese Vietnamese; or Indians and Indian Fijians; or Sri Lankan Burghers, Singhalese, or Tamils; or Japanese or Koreans; each with their own culture at the top. The hierarchies that originate in their first cultures, or are re-created in Australia, can generate tensions of their own making.

A related theme of the fiction, particularly for Chinese Australians, is their sense of being demeaned by settler Australians. Syn in Lillian Ng's 1997 novel has been a barefoot doctor during the Cultural Revolution. She joins the unskilled 'ghettoised' workforce in Sydney because 'her qualifications failed to be recognised in Australia'.⁷⁶ This comment by academic Tseen Khoo reveals more about the critic than about Syn, who is too ignorant of the Australian system to complain about it. Khoo's implication is not that Syn failed, but that ignorant Australians failed her by not appropriately valuing the medical experience she acquired in an older, superior civilisation.

Race

Hung Le makes comedy out of the painful experience of being Vietnamese Australian and insulted on a tram by an 'Anglo' who blames him for the war: not in Vietnam but in Malaya. (1997) Almost every published account of Australia by an Asian writer of fact or fiction includes an experience of racism, whether it is being confronted by 'Asians Out', Ching Chong' taunts, 'Go home' slogans; or by a 'Norm' experience on a train; or by sweeping statements about 'Asian culture'. (Buzo 1967. Gooneratne 1991. Lazaroo 1994) One thing all these writers know about and all their characters expect to encounter is White Australia. It appears as a predictable horror story at Customs, in the streets, in schools, at job interviews, among the in-laws, and on many other occasions.

⁷⁶

Tseen Khoo, 'Selling Sexotica: Oriental Grunge and Suburbia in Lillian Ng's

Most knew about it before they reached Australia. In post-war Singapore, white people reasserted 'their opinion that they were the undoubted masters of all the black and brown peoples in Singapore, and we could like it or we could lump it', says Peng An in Ang's novel (1997). Her daughter grows up in Townsville where children of Maltese and Greeks gang up with the 'white Australian' kids against her and her brother. In Hsu-Ming Teo's novel (2000), eight-year-old Grace is in agony at school in Sydney:

It wasn't just that we looked different; our accents and the Singlish we had grown up speaking marked us out as pariahs in the playground. Everyday English was a minefield of mispronunciations for us. I wanted to assimilate. I wanted to wash myself into a clean whiteness; bleach myself into Advanced Australian Fairness. Instead I pissed my pants, and was considered a dirty little Chinese girl.

As a counterpoint, there is often one decent person - a school friend (in Hsu-Ming Teo's *Love and Vertigo*), a neighbour (in Gooneratne's *A Change of Skies*, Adib Khan's *The Solitude of Illusions*, Perez da Costa's *Homework*, and in Simone Lazaroo's *The Australian Fiancé*), a lover (in Brian Castro's *After China* 1992), a woman outcast of some kind (in Don'o Kim's *The Chinaman* 1984), or several of them (in Sang Ye's *The Finish Line*) - who provide refuge, even though it is never more than temporary. Sang Ye wonders whether a bike-riding foreigner would be taken in for the night anywhere in China.⁷⁷

Then there is reverse racism. Human cognition selects skin colour, religion, caste, gender, ethnicity, and language as the determinants of difference and similarity. In several Asian societies, these identifiers have the support of law. Multicultural societies seek to obliterate these categories as grounds for discrimination, and to deny their

⁷⁷ *Swallowing Clouds* in Gilbert and others 2000: 164-172. My emphasis.
 'Can you imagine a Chinese family trusting their home to a foreigner who is neither a relative nor an old friend, but a stranger?' Shang Rongguang, 'The Americans I know: not much different from us Chinese', in Wang Jinguang, *Westerners through Chinese eyes*, Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1990: 171. Racist insults: Norma King Koi in Giese 1997; Kwan Liow, William Yang, Ien Ang, Jennie Kee, Irene Kwong Chee Moss in Broinowski 1996: 211. Shun Wah 1999. Helene Chung Martin in Chung 1988. Adib Khan 1994. Ouyang Yu 1998: 33. Ommundsen in Ang and others 2000: 90. Ryan 1997: 76.

existence: multiracial societies acknowledge they exist, and even enforce them. In either type of society, what has been called the 'judgmental unconscious' makes people blind to their own failings but acutely aware of those very faults in others. (Parker 1994) Double standards derive from first cultures and the desire to preserve them.

Thus according to Ang Chin Geok, Chinese saw the Europeans in post war Singapore as

ugly little men with pink skin mottled by patches of freckles, and their orange-haired women with large noses and protruding teeth shouted at us, ordered us about, and said to one another, 'The boss won't mind you having a poke with one of these little brown monkeys, just don't get silly and think about marrying one of them'.

Chinese, Ang comments, are 'efficient insultors, succinct and cruel'. Her fictional Ong family nurtures hereditary hubris against foreigners, and even after Peng An goes off with a 'red-hair ape' to live in Australia, she tells her children the *gragos* (Eurasians) stink. Conditioned to believe in her superiority, even among Overseas Chinese, Peng An cannot accept that in Australia 'she [is] a slope-head, a chink, a slant-eye, second-class, or less'. She and other Hokkiens 'had always considered themselves the elite group in Singapore'. Racism can cut both ways. The young Eurasian woman in Simone Lazaroo's novel (2000) is doubly discriminated against because she is too European for the Chinese majority in Singapore, and too Chinese for the 'Anglos' in Australia.

Sang Ye's interviews with Chinese in Australia contain some choice examples of their own ignorance, prejudice, and stereotypes, as well as the usual insulting epithets for Australians or for Westerners generally. Compared to these, the terms that distinguish Australians from 'ethnics' - 'skips', 'skippies', or 'Anglos' - are only mildly derogatory.⁷⁸ In James Goonewardene's novel *The Tribal Hangover*, Harindra's contempt for Australians as third-rate British emanates from their failure to acknowledge Sri Lankans' intellectual, cultural, and civilisational superiority. Racism, when practised by

⁷⁸ Chi Vu, *A Story of Soil*, Footscray Community Arts Centre, August 2000.

Australians, is represented as white supremacism. When practised by Asian Australians, it is maintaining cultural standards and civilisational superiority.

In Gooneratne's much-cited passage, a distinguished Australian professor declares on radio that Asians are the scum of the earth. But he is matched by the satirical account of a Sri Lankan patriarch in the novel, clinging to his cultural superiority in the face of Australian moral decadence. (Gooneratne 1991)

Gender

Earlier fiction about Australia by Indonesian writers Idrus (1973) and Achdiat (1973), and Korean Don'oo Kim (1984) projects male views of most Australian women as immoral and of men as uncultured and insensitive.⁷⁹ In some of Kim's, Castro's, and Khan's novels, an exceptionally sensitive woman is found to provide solace to the lonely protagonist. No such company is available for Ouyang Yu in his misanthropic, Melbourne-hating poetry (1995, 1997). In Ouyang's novel, Dao Zhuang is married to Chinese woman with body odour 'as strong as almost all the foreigners from the West [he] had met'. The relationship fails because she is a demanding and domineering feminist (he says). 'Women's law' rules these days according to Dao, who is angry that no matter how well educated, he can't get either a job or a woman. At the same time he is dismissively scornful of Australians as boring, conservative, ignorant, and xenophobic. Dao believes Australian men have to go to China for money and sex, and Australian women are 'unlikeable'. Sang Ye's informants tell similar stories, and so do men in Lillian Ng's, Hsu-Ming Teo's, and Cher Chidzey's fiction.⁸⁰

In his survey of Chinese fiction set in Australia, Ouyang Yu found that Australian men were particularly disdained in Chinese male opinion as womanisers and 'because of their enormous corrupting power in seducing the Chinese girls'. Chinese men criticised Chinese women who had Australian partners. In James Chang's novella *Moonlight under the Southern Cross*, the daughter of an Australian professor who falls in love with

⁷⁹ Complaints about how Western narratives represented Asian men – as eggheads or wimps, *kung fu* masters or *ninja/samurai*, or as feminised, freakish, deviants (Gilbert and others 2000: 9) – failed to analyse Asian fictional representations of Australian men.

⁸⁰ Cher Chidzey, *The House with 99 Closed Doors*, forthcoming: MS 2000.

a Taiwanese is seen as exceptional because she doesn't smoke or 'act impudently'. Her unusual decency is emphasised to Chinese readers: 'Perhaps influenced by her learned family, she is not like other Australian girls who are disgustingly flirtatious and impertinent'. (Ouyang Yu 1998, 1994)

Yuan Wei, a Chinese student writer in Sydney, and Li Binyong, a Shanghai poet, both write disparagingly of Australians in gender terms. Their characters find Australian women not civilised enough to pursue, and Australian men 'don't have much ambition and don't aspire to much, a trait probably unsurpassed by any other country'. Li asserts in his autobiographical narrative that 'a few days with them' is enough to know how limited the experiences and knowledge of Australians are: money, beer, and women, and bad language used by everyone, 'from top leaders in the government to the ordinary people at grass-roots'. In Li Wei's novel, *Human Nature Lost*, about a group of Chinese gamblers in Sydney, British and Greek Australians appear briefly, but settler Australian men are represented only as whoremasters with designs on Chinese girls, and who treat the club's cashier as a sex object. (Ouyang 1994)

The more traditional the male in these stories, the more he clings to his convictions about superior status in a foreign environment, and is angry and humiliated when it is not acknowledged. He is as if desexed by the hegiraic operation. A professor of Chinese in Queensland argues that for Chinese men, to create an acceptable wen-wu ('brain-brawn') profile in a foreign country was essential, like 'recovering a lost manhood'. Male Chinese writers who tried to do this in the West threatened the silent patriarchal hierarchy of the national character, Castro told Ouyang Yu.⁸¹ From diasporic studies by several male sociologists, Jakubowicz (2001) observes a common desire for a future 'dream home' where they will get respect and recognition. But this is not necessarily all that women want.

In Chandani Lokuge's *If the Moon Smiled*, Manthri has an idyllic, protected childhood in Sri Lanka, but her arranged marriage there begins with rape. She and Mahendra move

⁸¹ Kam Louie, 'I married a foreigner: Recovering Chinese masculinity in Australia', and Ouyang Yu, 'An Interview with Brian Castro', both in Ommundsen 2001: 39-56 and 73-82.

to dreary Adelaide's 'green and brown jigsaw puzzle', where their children become estranged from them and reverse Mahendra's expectations, with the boy turning to rock music and drugs and his sister studying medicine and refusing an arranged marriage. Manthri, who cannot adjust to Australia, fails to stand up for her children against their tyrannical husband, and seeks solace in Buddhism. Mahendra wishes he had never taken his children away from parent-fearing Sri Lanka. But in Ernest MacIntyre's play (*Let's Give Them Curry!* 1985), both the Sri Lankan and the Australian patriarchs cling to their convictions of superiority and separateness, while their wives are alike in acknowledging that their children now inhabit a multicultural world.

Misery, as we have seen, is the lot of several of the women in these narratives. Most of them believe they are leaving patriarchal oppression behind: but in Australia, either the men they meet or the men with whom they have migrated turn out to be inadequate. 'Mountains and rivers are easier to alter than a man's or a woman's behaviour', notes Ng in *Swallowing Clouds*. Her protagonist Syn has a doomed affair with married, fat, kinky Chinese butcher in Sydney's Chinatown. The relationship is doomed, but she justifies it with Chinese proverbs: 'a woman without a man is like a vine without stakes for support'. In Australia as in China, she reflects, 'a woman's livelihood still depended on getting and keeping a man.' The same is true for Simone Lazaroo's young Eurasian (*The Australian Fiancé*), who has a child by a Japanese in Singapore and is then picked up by an Australian and taken to Broome, eventually to face rejection. Anggraeni's young Indonesian woman Maryati (*Journeys Through Shadows* 1998) goes from one Australian lover to another and then to a Japanese Indonesian in her search for happiness. In Peres da Costa's *Homework* Mina's mother goes as crazy as the patients she treats. But all of them will go anywhere for love. In Anggraeni's summation: 'a woman thinks a man wants to marry her because he loves her and wants to make her happy. A man thinks it's time to end his celibacy, and this woman happens to be there'. (Anggraeni 1998)

Some of the women in these narratives escape from the patriarchal confines, adapt, and make friends in Australia, if only for the sake of their children's future. For some, like the Sri Lankan Australian and Chinese Australian women in Gooneratne's novels (1991, 1996), life in Australia is liberating: 'The invisibility offered to exiles by chance

can bestow on us a freedom we may not have enjoyed "at home". (Gooneratne1991) But when a young Filipina, an Australian graduate, carries on about being liberated from labouring over a hot stove, she is brought up short by her Philippine grandmother, for whom owning a stove represents modernity, and exclaims 'Leave my stove alone!' (Bobis 1999). The first culture is not amenable to change by the hegira.

Inversions

Proponents of 'Asian values' have urged the West to adopt filial piety, morality, and spirituality in place of individualism and materialism. It therefore comes as a surprise to read Australian novels about dysfunctional Asian families.

In Ernest MacIntyre's play (1985) and Chandani Lokuge's novel (2000), authoritarian fathers find it hard to convince their Australianised children that they need Asian values. They consider Sri Lankan culture superior to Australia's, which is not part of the 'imperial process'; Australians are ignorant of Beowulf, Chaucer, and Shakespeare. Australian men have designs on Sri Lankans' wives and daughters.

But Asian patriarchs no longer command unquestioning respect from their children in Australia. In Chi Vu's play, *A Story of Soil*, (2000) Tien has a 'skip' boyfriend, and she and her siblings exercise power over their parents by being bilingual: Vietnamese for pocket money, English for defiance. Tien's brother says 'They're like children here - we're the adults'. Their father laments: 'A man can go to places so different that he will no longer recognise who he once was'. In *Homework*, to Mina's distress, her father, a Goan nationalist, excavates a storage under their house for explosives and burns the place down. Cher Chidzey's novel challenges 'Asian' filial piety as non-existent and undeserved. (MS 2000) The father of a Singapore family is a violent, sleazy, old man with three wives:

He bashes my older brother, Leper, almost every day. He whacks me over the knuckles, when I put my book at an angle to the edge of the table, accusing me of picking up western ways. His rubbish theory is 'a gentleman and scholar must have proper procedures. The eyes, ears, hands, and heart, must be focused'. I

am not a gentleman, so why should I follow this nonsense?...Maybe God will find a new father for me. [Ellipsis added]

A similar subversion of family values appears in Hsu-Ming Teo's *Love and Vertigo*. Father is a bully, brother a layabout. Pandora is cursed for being a girl, and rejected as a devil child, yet she and her sisters are dutiful daughters and wives, getting ready to repeat the pattern. But Pandora suicides and her daughter Grace's boyfriend turns out to be bisexual. Another inversion of notional Asian family values appears in Ng's *Swallowing Clouds*: Zhu the Chinatown butcher is driven by fear of his manipulative wife, and his desire for respectability in the Chinese community. Both of them mistreat their handicapped daughter, and the affair between Syn and Zhu is driven by their grinding and grunting self-interest. Dysfunctional relationships are also central in the fiction of Anggraeni, Cyrill, Ang Chin Geok, Lau Siew Mei, and Perez da Costa. Even in hegiraic experiences where politics motivates the writers' displacement from their first culture, it is family dynamics, eroticism, and gender roles that are foregrounded in most of their narratives. The predominance of women writers may contribute to the prevalence of these themes. But the extended families in these novels are motivated by power, wealth, and sex are what motivate the extended families in these novels, not the Asian values Southeast Asian leaders would recognise. Perhaps the hegiraic experience in Australia has corrupted them. Or perhaps it allows them to be honest about human behaviour everywhere.

There can be only one generation of first generation Asian Australian fiction, film, drama, and poetry before 'being Asian' is no longer new. But while it lasts, the new fiction shows Australians as many might not see themselves. Large, lumpen, white, racist, hypocritical, ignorant, and unsubtle if not downright thick is how Australians (but not Americans) often appear to writers whose perspectives combine 'prior knowledge' (Part 1) and first-hand observation. Occasionally, individual Australians are observed to be kindly, even friendly; but their friendliness is often devalued as superficial, simple-minded, or selfishly motivated. The Asian observers don't want to sink to their level.

To summarise this case study: by 2000, Asian Australian fiction had clearly displaced contemporary settler Australian fiction about Asia. The collective confidence of 'non-

hyphenated' Australians to write about contemporary Asia had dwindled: even to find an appropriate label name for themselves seemed beyond them. They could no longer compete with the language, local knowledge, family histories, myth and magic, and real life experience of Asian Australians, or with the capacity of such writers to satirise both sides and several identities.⁸² In much Asian Australian fiction, multiculturalism is represented as a figleaf for the maintenance of power by an Australian 'mainstream' that does not deserve it. Racism still rules, though much of it is mutual. Preconceptions about Australia predispose writers to represent it as, at best, an ambiguous site for the resolution of Asian hegiraic conflicts. Although the Asian Australian novels have characteristics in common with the Asian American literature analysed by Lee (1999), isolation from and contempt for the second culture are recurrent themes in the Asian Australian narratives that occur rarely in their American or British counterparts. The second- or third-rate status generally ascribed to Australia but not to America or Britain by Asian opinion leaders makes civilisational superiority a more bitterly contested area in Asian Australian fiction. Instead of seeking to marginalise Australia, as many opinion leaders in Asian societies have been shown to do, several Asian Australian writers use their relative freedom to create and occupy a third space. Hence as opinion leaders, they describe a different Australia, less confined to the ten complaints that so circumscribe representations of Australia in the region.

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A significant gap persisted, however, in film and television: apart from the pioneering work of film-makers Clara Law, Pauline Chan, Teck Tan, Sekiguchi Noriko, and Tony Ayres, and actor/directors Hung Le, Chi Vu, and Tony Le Nguyen, the Asian Australian presence was much more visible on the streets than on the screen. Iva Tora, 'Pallid television', *A* 30 August - 5 September 2001: 'Media' 14.

CONCLUSION

As its title, *About Face*, implies, this thesis has sought to turn Australians' usual perspective around to 'face' the other way. Australian perceptions of Asia have been examined elsewhere. Instead, an attempt has been made here to trace the origins, development, and motivations of Asians' representations of Australia, as far as they are revealed by opinion leaders in ten Asian societies. These have been shown to differ from what many Australians assume about themselves and from what Australian leaders suppose are others' perceptions of them. They vary with time and country, but recurrent themes have been identified throughout the twentieth century. They reflect observable Australian reality, but are clearly shaped by the interests of opinion leaders in representing Australia, and themselves, in ways that emphasise superiority or inferiority, difference or similarity.

Australia is more exposed than distant or more powerful Western countries to double standards, scapegoating, and exclusion by its Asian observers, and yet its leaders have ignored warnings and many have shown little awareness of a need to improve the national reputation. Australia invites attack. Asian leaders have with increasing confidence and sophistication used cultural strategies, particularly since the 1990s, to Australia's detriment. 'Culture', together with concepts like tradition, ethnicity, and nationalism, has become a 'recognised idiom for self-definition, political negotiation, and international trade and diplomacy'. (Wu and others 1992) Cultural contestation can occur at times when Australia is economically stronger or weaker, politically conservative or reformist. Cultural language from the world's margins is now said to be more clamorous than that from the centre, and it leaves Australia out in the regional cold, neither master nor subaltern, metropolitan nor peripheral.⁸³

⁸³ Homi Bhabha quoted by Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'Deprovincialising Australian History', seminar paper, CCRC, HRC, ANU: 16 May 2000. Australian (and Japanese) ambivalence about Asia (D'Cruz and Steele 2001) is matched in D'Cruz's former home country, Malaysia, where Mahathir in 2001 called on Malays to 'fight as one' against non-Malays. William Case, www.aseanfocus.com/asiananalysis August 2001.

The thesis concludes that Australia's failure appropriately to negotiate its cultural place in the region and to make itself more relevant and useful to its neighbours have contributed to a damaging decline in its reputation.

'Face'

What on the 'face' of it appear to be factual observations about Australia have been shown here to have more complex origins and motivations. 'Face' is involved in the competition between good and evil that permeates Hindu literature, together with the belief that to invert or reverse a magical mask is to destroy its power. (Napier 1986: 217) The deployment against Australia of reversed insults and double standards originates in such traditions. 'Face' is also a strategy of shaming another, particularly in the public sphere: in Islamic tradition, 'a shame that is not spoken about is no shame'.⁸⁴ So media controlled by opinion leaders can be deployed to displace shame and blame, even for their own problems, onto Australia. 'Face' is implied, as well, when Japanese distinguish *tatema* from *honne*, the presentational from the essential, or the mask from the wearer. Australia loses marks in Japan for insensitivity and lack of appreciation of Japan's uniqueness. 'Inscrutable' has for long connoted the West's inability to see through the Chinese face. So 'face' is evoked by Chinese Australians who, seeking proper acknowledgement of their contributions to Australian society, at the same time maintain 'face' with Chinese everywhere. Indeed 'face' is claimed to be an exclusively Chinese phenomenon, since Westerners say 'sorry' more readily than Chinese: 'to Chinese, apologies require a great loss of face, and face is not something spent lightly'.⁸⁵ Australia is generalised with the West as falling short of such Chinese standards. And in another use of the term, Chinese and Australians have been 'faceless' in each others' literature, indistinguishable from all Westerners on the one hand or all Asians on the other.

⁸⁴ William Maley, 'Afghanistan under the Taliban', Asia-Pacific seminar, ADFA 5 September 2001.

⁸⁵ Zhou Xiaoheng, Tianjin academic, quoted by Elisabeth Rosenthal, 'Company says

For this thesis, however, the most important function of 'face' is as *amour propre*. This impels the Occidentalising agenda that has been shown to serve the common interests of opinion leaders in Asian societies throughout the twentieth century. It resonates when a Thai editor calls Howard's 'Deputy Sheriff' role (as reported) 'a bit of a slap in the face', and when Habibie says Australia has 'pissed in Indonesia's face'. Asian 'loss of face' is claimed to be hurt of a different order from what Western societies know as personal embarrassment, or as damage to national self-esteem. The outrage felt by Indonesians, Indians, Japanese, and Malaysians when Australians fail to appreciate the civilisational hierarchies and cultural understandings summed up as 'face' finds vengeful expression in marginalisation, hostility, condescension, and withdrawal. They identify Australians racially with the imperialists by invoking the bonding discourse of Occidentalism. So Australia, unable to shed its Western identification, becomes the post-colonial scapegoat. Such Asian exceptionalism reverses the Orientalist discourse, and derives its force from proposing not only that Westerners are unacceptable in Asia, but that Australians are the least acceptable.

In ASEAN, an experienced observer remarks, 'face' has been elevated to the status of a defining operational goal'. (Dobell 2000: 86) Yet the desire to ensure that 'face' is preserved is hardly confined to Asian societies.⁸⁶ If this thesis were to endorse Asian exceptionalism about the West while deploring Western generalisations about Asia, it would adopt the very double standards and condescension that people in Asian countries so justifiably resent. A guiding approach of Part 1, therefore, and throughout the thesis, has been to deconstruct such exceptionalist arguments and to show how they serve the agendas of opinion leaders in the ten societies, if not always those of all their people. The well-worn litany of much literary/cultural commentary – issues of identity (national, social, sexual, personal) or post-coloniality (gender, class, ethnicity, race) – is subsumed in Occidentalist agenda of blame, responsibility, restitution,

⁸⁶ sorry for those who can't', *SMH* 4 January 2001: 7.
Dobell, 'Asia and Australia' *ABC Radio 24 Hours*, April 1993.

and culture wars. Occidentalism implicates Australia both as an individual society and as 'Western'.

In Part 2, an historical survey reveals that Australia in various Asian communities is represented through what Jose (1993) calls 'a mixed application of logic, fantasy, and extrapolation from what has already been established'. These understandings reflect factual reportage, reforming or cautionary agendas, and assertions of superiority, depending upon the agendas of opinion makers. Their repetitive patterns are sustained because Australia itself remains proximate and different, conveniently vulnerable, and an 'easy enemy'. Often, Australians have failed to appreciate how enduring and potent is the conviction that Asian countries outrank Australia in civilisational terms, and how exasperating is Australia's failure to appreciate it. 'Proper place' in the civilisational hierarchy entitles opinion leaders in Asian countries to lecture Australians in ways they would resent in others. The discourse of Asian regionalism makes them ten against one, and gives them the option of referring to themselves as nations or as 'Asia', thus including Australia or excluding it, punishing or rewarding it at will.

As a society that 'has come about through mutual absorption of life-ideas, often in hostility, among peoples of many cultures' (Jose 1996), Australia is – and will remain - both like and unlike its neighbours, and they will continue to stress similarities or differences, whichever is in their interests at any time. So representations of Australia, as the case studies on Part 3 confirm, depend on each Asian society's self-representations. Opinion leaders hark back to familiar themes, and pick up discourse from each other. Reversing the insults of colonialism, complaining of Australian ignorance of Asia, and objecting to being told what to do are persistent responses, or negotiating strategies, that reappear in such crises. Often, as we have seen, Asian opinion leaders' criticisms of Australia seem to coincide with unrest at home.⁸⁷ Reactions in the region to

⁸⁷ See, for example, results of a Malaysian survey in 1995 on high percentages of young people smoking, watching pornographic videos, gambling and taking hard drugs. Concern was expressed in Jakarta about school-age children in gang fights, and in Thailand about young people abusing alcohol and even middle class girls leaving school to become prostitutes. In Singapore in 1995, arrests of juveniles doubled over 1994, as did the rate of drug addiction and

One Nation and East Timor, though muted in one case and vocal in the other, have been shown to have a common outcome in reinforcing regional solidarity and marginalising Australia. The writers of Asian Australian fiction, though they describe the hegiraic experience both positively and negatively, and in great variety, both confirm and challenge the ways Australia is represented in their first societies and by other Australians.

Australia's image problem

The thesis has shown that familiar complaints about Australians as racist, ignorant, uncouth, lazy, hypocritical, confrontationalist, and so on, constitute a serious image problem for Australia. Representations of Australia as lacking real independence, as a client state of the US and a subject state of the UK, and as ambivalent about Asia, are statements of fact.⁸⁸ So are many of the representations, voiced particularly by Asian Australians, about the shortcomings of multiculturalism and Australian ignorance about Asia.

But deconstructing them has revealed that more complex agendas operate. Majority opinion in the region supports a continued US military presence; East Asian regionalists would not be much moved by a change to a Republic in Australia; racial discrimination is widespread in Asian societies and between them; and irrelevance, distance, and Westernness aren't cited when observers in Asian countries seek the advantages of Australia's education, health, tourism, investment, exports, and defence cooperation. Australians' ambivalence about Asia is matched by the dilemmas of opinion leaders in countries.⁸⁹ Some Asia-born critics of multiculturalism pursue in Australia the ideological, hegemonic,

divorce. 'Family matters: Modern day tensions strain Southeast Asia's social fabric', *FEER*, 1 August 1996.

⁸⁸ 'There is a perception that we are making the US, rather than Asia, our number one priority'. Malcolm Fraser, *A* 30 April 2001.

⁸⁹ For example: D'Cruz and Steele, *Australia's Ambivalence Towards Asia*, 2000; Mahathir, *The Malay Dilemma*, 1970; Mochtar Lubis, *The Indonesian Dilemma*, 1983; Sheng Lijun, *China's Dilemma* 2001. David Shambaugh, 'China's Ambivalent Diplomacy', *FEER* 15 November 2001: 29.

and racial agendas they bring with them. Double standards and displacement of blame are persistent face-saving strategies.

Asian Australians can wield great influence on changing both the reality of Australia and the representations of Australia in their first societies. As contributors to an inclusive Australian identity, they can not only challenge and redefine 'what it means to "look" Australian' (Li 1998) but they can ensure that as a new Australian reality develops, it is recognised in Asian societies. Even so, representations of Australia in the region that have remained consistent for over a century are unlikely to change unless it is in the interests of opinion leaders that they do so. This implies that Australians will need better to understand not only what their neighbours' perspectives are, but also why they have them, and how to influence them to change. Among Australia's 'competitor' countries, Taiwan and South Korea make greater efforts than Australia does to be better known, Japan commits huge resources to being differently known, and Singapore is more determined to become influential. Australia, seeming to care less now about how it is known, gives less official attention than in the past to the perspectives of its observers in regional countries.

The thesis concludes that representations of Australia in the ten countries are constructed by opinion leaders' agendas of Occidentalism, racism, and regionalism in pursuit of their own domestic priorities and concerns. These representations are skillfully deployed as part of a complex game involving objective observation as well as deliberate manipulation and regional exclusion. In this game, Australia is particularly vulnerable a result of its proximity, its policies, its difference, its lack of appreciation of its neighbours' concerns, and its failure to deal appropriately with its own image problem. Much more sophisticated public diplomacy is required of Australia if it is to become, and be seen to become, more useful, interesting, and relevant to countries in the region.

APPENDIX 1: PART OF WHAT?

Australians perennially debate their identity. Some, at various times for more than a century, have suggested that their country is, or will become, 'part of Asia', or 'an Asian country', or 'a bridge to Asia'. But Australians commonly refer to their society as 'Western'. They never propose that all Australians are Asians. Few explain why Asians should need them as a bridge to anywhere. Some try to resolve the identity question by posing a choice between history and geography, tradition and aspiration, reality and rhetoric, likeness and diversity. Others resort to the tautology that Australia is Australia.⁹⁰ What the identity-debaters rarely consider, however, is the opinion about Australia of people in Asian societies.⁹¹ But as FitzGerald – who in 1997 remained into two minds about the issue – pointed out, 'It is the region that will define us, not us it'. (FitzGerald 1997: 93)

A summary of views from Asian countries, presented here, casts doubt on Brawley's claim that only in Japan's southern-expansion period was Australia was considered to be part of Asia by Asians. (Brawley 1992) In other Asian societies and at other times, it has also been suggested. In fact, the confusion of many Asians on the subject can be shown to parallel that of Australians. It is more productive to consider the underlying factors that in different circumstances since World War II have caused these views to change. They emerge from the following summary.

- 1941: Japan's Foreign Minister Matsuoka claims the white race should be expelled from Oceania: 'We have a natural right to settle in the region. White men occupying Oceania are due to return it'. (Brawley 1992)
- 1942: A Kanematsu Gōshō survey says Australia has always been part of Asia, and proposes an Asia-Australia Co-Prosperity Sphere (*A-Gō kyōeiken*). Other Japanese writers assert that Australia was once part of Asia, and that Australia - the 'orphan

⁹⁰ Australian views are discussed in more detail in Broinowski 1999d, Mackerras 1992, Milner 1996, Milner 1997a, Woodard 1992.

⁹¹ Exceptions are: *Age* poll April 1992, Saulwick poll October 1993, Jenkins 1996, D'Cruz and Steele 2000.

of the South Pacific' - should wake up to its true identity and restore the old unity with Asia. (Frei 1991)

- 1947: Nehru says Australia is a 'component part of Southeast Asia'.⁹²
- 1949: In Thailand, the press debates whether or not Australia belongs in Asia. Most countries in the world consider that it does: therefore it is unacceptable that Asians should not live there. Resisting this, the White Australia policy proves Australia is not part of Asia.⁹³
- 1949: Australia is 'racially isolating and insulating herself from the Oriental countries', and Chifley's proposed Pacific Pact should be called the 'White Pacific Pact'. (Vicente Villamin, 'Spain and Australia', *Manila Bulletin* 28 May 1949).
- 1950s: Mao Zedong calls Australia 'that great south land - the heritage of the Asian people'. (Brawley 1992)
- 1957: Gunnar Myrdal, author of *Asian Drama*, on a visit to Australia describes Australia as part of Asia.
- 1957: Krishna Menon, Indian Foreign Minister, says Australia is part of the Asian continent. There is warmth of feeling towards Australia at Bandung, but Australia is not part of Asia.⁹⁴
- 1957: Dr Krishnalal Shridharani, an Indian journalist visiting Australia, finds it becoming more 'Asia-conscious', and urges Australia and NZ to become part of 'the Bandoeng group'. Some Asian countries might resent that, but Australia should take the initiative: 'a "coloured" Asia would be as bad from our point of view as "white" Australia'.
 - 1957: Another Indian journalist on the same visit, Durga Das, says Australia's fate is linked to that of Asia and it has to pull its weight in the region: 'Australia is in the Asian region and is not more distant than Japan, Korea, or Outer Mongolia'. Australia may hold 'the key to the peace and progress of Asia'. (*Hindustan Times* 31 May 1957. 4 June 1957)
 - 1958: Indian writer Frank Moraes describes the six Southeast Asian countries as 'Outer Asia', in Asia but not entirely of it. Australia, with two windows opening out on the Indian and Pacific oceans, is 'screened from Europe by the vast land mass of

⁹² K.C. Beazley, 'Making Choices: Education, Asia and Australia's Future', AAI Asia Lecture series, UNSW: 21 September 1993.

⁹³ 'Australia and Asia', *Prachakorn* 11 April 1949. AA A50/19/1.

⁹⁴ Menon quoted by Alejandro R. Roces, *Manila Times* 7 November 1959. AA A1838/283: 169/10/1.

Asia and Africa, and separated from the mother country which is Britain by some ten thousand miles'. (Moraes 1958: 129, 161)

- 1960: Journalist Kung Chou Thai, from Kuching, declares: 'Australians like to think themselves as part of Asia with many friends in Asia. But they will never be Asians'.⁹⁵
- 1961: A Singapore official tells Peter Hastings, 'Australia is part of Asia. More and more a part of it'.⁹⁶
- 1963: A Chinese Australian argues that Australia never was white, and that 'Asia has always been part of Australia'. (A.W. Loy, *SMH* 10 July)
- 1963: Australia's admission as a member of ECAFE at a meeting in Manila is reported in the Australian press under the headline 'We belong to Asia!' But the Manila press comments that Australia's backing of the UK and Malaysia over confrontation shows the reverse.⁹⁷
- 1974: Prime Minister Whitlam's efforts to establish an Asian Forum are abandoned for lack of regional support.
- 1986: Savitri Scherer, *Kompas* correspondent in Canberra, claims that Geoffrey Blainey articulates 'the subconscious desire within the traditional Australia psyche to strive to make this continent more "British" than its geographical situation could possibly ensure'.⁹⁸
- 1992: Dr Song Hee-Yhon, President of the Korean Development Institute, says he does not consider Australia to be part of Asia. Australia and New Zealand look to him like orphans.⁹⁹
- 1992: Malaysian Trade Minister Rafidah Aziz tells a Perth conference, 'We have always told Australia and New Zealand that there is no doubt you want to be a member [of Asia] but it is not clear to us you are Asian'. (Grant and Seal 1994)
- 1992: Singapore diplomat Kishore Mahbubhani proposes a 'common Asian home' that, like the common European home, would reduce or dissolve racial differences. It would include Australia and New Zealand.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁵ (Kuching) *Chinese Daily News*, March-April 1960: AA A6895: N60/27

⁹⁶ Peter Hastings 'What Asians think of us' *Bulletin* 11 November 1961: 19-20.

⁹⁷ Eddie Martellino, *Evening News* 9 October 1963.

⁹⁸ Scherer, 'The Tyranny of Cohabitation: Australian-Indonesian Relations' in Robison 1986b.

⁹⁹ Asian Securities Analysts Council, Tokyo, 4 November 1992.

- 1992: Indonesian Ambassador Sabam Siagian says, 'In the final analysis, the problem is not how others see Australia. Such a problem calls only for public relations gimmicks in order to bring about cosmetic improvements. The real problem is how Australians see themselves and the sense of mission they perceive in their relationship with neighbouring peoples. It could well be that Australia, in that process of empathy and solidarity with its geopolitical environment, will discover its existential identity as part of the Asia-Pacific region...It would be superfluous if I were to say that we in Indonesia warmly welcome Australia's desire to become part of the Asia-Pacific region'.¹⁰¹
- 1993: A Malaysian intellectual says Prime Minister Keating should not assume that 'we, in Asia, are hanging around waiting to embrace Australia in the way he seems to think'. A *NST* editorial says, 'Asia would welcome Australia to be part of it and not merely to exploit this economic vibrancy of the region. Keating can proudly claim the need to "show what Australia is and who Aussies are" and that it is not just a derivative culture linked to former homelands of a distant, isolated white camp. But first it must prove that it is proud to be part of Asia'.¹⁰²
- 1993: A newspaper editor in Singapore wonders whether Australian claims of Asianisation have 'more to do with domestic political consumption than any real determination to tune in to Asia'.¹⁰³
- 1993: Australia should realise it is 'of this region and not part of Europe'. Australia can be part of Asia only after 70 per cent of its population is Asian. (Mahathir 1993. Dobell 2001: 4)
- 1993: A Malaysian Foreign Ministry official says, 'Australians see themselves as part of Southeast Asia? Impossible. Australians are far too conscious of their white skins ever to become part of the region'.¹⁰⁴
- 1994: Jose Almonte, National Security adviser to Fidel Ramos, at a meeting of ASEAN 6 + 4 (ASEAN plus Indochina states plus Burma) says Australia has not

¹⁰⁰ 'Japan Adrift', *Foreign Policy* 1992, in Mahbubhani 1998: 112-3.

¹⁰¹ Sabam in Grant and Seal 1994: 355.

¹⁰² *NST* editorial cited by M.G.G. Pillai, *A* 5 May 1993: 11.

¹⁰³ Bruce Loudon, 'How Asia sees us', *Sunday Herald Sun*, 14 February 1993: 55.

¹⁰⁴ M.A. Razman, 'The Malaysian View', in 'The Asian View of Australia: How Others See Us', *SMH* 28 November 1983.

been not discussed: no-one is 'bold enough to say Australia is part of Asia'. (Dobell 2001)

- 1994: Indonesians expect more of Australians because they are 'always telling us you want to be accepted as part of the region'. Australia should 'discover its identity as part of the Asia-Pacific region'. (Sabam 1992) Australia is 'part of the West located down South'. It is the 'odd man out with an identity crisis trying to get in'. ¹⁰⁵
- 1994: Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong proposes the formation of ASEM to President Mitterand, and later says Australia is welcome in it. But he urges greater efforts from Australia to become part of Asia. Australia is 'the most Asianised country of Western origin. Australia's location and evolving cultural mix place it in a good position to link up Asia and the West'. ¹⁰⁶
- 1994: Dr Ian Lin, President of the Hong Kong Business Association, says multicultural groups in Australia are the key to exporting, and that Australia is the only Western nation in Asia.
- 1995: Sondhi Limthongkul, publisher of *Asia Times*, says, 'To be part of a region, you [have to] understand the culture. I think in a sense Mahathir is right...Australians, don't try to be Asians. Be Australian, but always remember that you live here, and have to be our partners'. ¹⁰⁷
- 1995: President Fidel Ramos describes Keating's statement that 'Australia really belongs to Asia' as 'a most welcome pronouncement to us here'. Touring Australia, he cites diversity, trade, APEC, and dialogue with ASEAN to show that Australia 'has become a part of Asia'. ¹⁰⁸ 'The Philippines welcomes Australia as an active player in the Asia-Pacific region'. (Canberra, 22 August 1995) 'As the AFTA starts to take effect, Australia must ensure that it is not left out of the region, especially since your country now sees its future more and more closely linked to Asia'. (Sydney, 16 August 1995)

¹⁰⁵ Julia Suryakusuma, *A* 15 March 1994.

¹⁰⁶ *A* 13 September 1994: 2.

¹⁰⁷ Sondhi quoted in *SMH* 4 July 1995: 5.

¹⁰⁸ Ramos quoted by Powson and Myles 1998.

- 1995: Dr Mahathir says of Australians, 'If they want to be Asianised they must become culturally Asian. You should not go around saying you know better than anyone else. This is not what Asians do'. ¹⁰⁹
- 1996: Kirpal Singh's view, that Australia is 'in Southeast Asia' and looks as if it will stay there, is echoed in a survey of students at his university in Singapore who see Australia as culturally Western, but as a country in the Asian region. (Blackburn 1996)
- 1996: Dr Mahathir says, 'If Howard says Australia is not an Asian nation, he is merely stating a fact'. Australians should not presume to 'become Asians' for 70 years. ¹¹⁰
- 1996: Mahathir's adviser Dr Noordin Sopiee asks, 'Is Australia still an "outsider", not one of us? Very much so, I'm afraid. The process of building communities in which one is a full and accepted member is a very long process...When you were rich, you Australians were Europeans. Then you became Americans when America was rich. When Asia gets rich, you become Asians...The only reason Australia is cosyng up to Asia is because we have the crown jewels, the loot. To be fair, one has to ask whether Australia would be interested if we were still impoverished. ...But dues have to be paid. And the road is a long one, especially because Australia is so far away and is a nation of different people, with a different culture, no matter how many Thai restaurants come up'. ¹¹¹
- 1996: Australia is excluded from ASEM, and loses its bid for a Security Council seat. A UN observer comments, 'Western Europeans doubt Australia's loyalty to the "Western European and Others" group while Asians scorn Australia's credentials as an Asian country and resent what they perceive as Australia's lecturing and patronising attitude towards them'. (Jenkins, *SMH* 2 November)
- 1996: A Malaysian Australian academic argues, 'It is not a question of becoming part of Asia. More challenging than that is to stand by the best of the values that have been transplanted here and persuade our neighbours that these can co-exist with Asian traditions and also assist in the modernisation that countries in Asia

¹⁰⁹ Mahathir quoted by Luke Slattery, *A* 19 May 1995: 11.

¹¹⁰ Michael Dwyer and Damon Kitney, 'Mahathir Warns Against Funny Remarks', *AFR*, 2 October 1996.

¹¹¹ Quoted by Jenkins, *SMH* 2 November 1996: Spectrum 4.

themselves want. Getting to know and understand Asian ways is an integral part of that process...Indeed, Australia's opening to Asia may be a mirror image of Asia's opening to the West'.¹¹²

- 1996: A radio journalist in Hong Kong lists the points against Australia's inclusion: '1. They [Australians] were very arrogant in the past towards Asians, so Asia cannot accept them; 2. They are still white with white faces, not oriental looking. Basically, if you look at us, we're Oriental but if you look at them, they're Western, like the English and Americans. Despite their attempts, it would be extremely difficult [for them to become part of Asia]. I was there for a week three years ago and my impression, from my journalistic instinct, is that the "becoming part of Asia" scheme won't work'. (Quoted by Ouyang Yu 1998: 87)
- 1997: Dr Mahathir declares, 'If you want to become Asian you can't just say, well, we are Asian because geographically we are close to Asia. You should say we are Asian because we have an Asian culture, an Asian mentality'.¹¹³
- 1997: A Japanese academic writes, 'There is no clear definition of the so-called "Asian values", nor is there any common understanding on what this means. In this situation, it should be understood that to argue "whether Australia is Asian or not" is not constructive for the future of this region'. (Sato 1997)
- 1998: In Canberra Dr Kriengsak Chareonwongsak, Executive Director of the Institute of Future Studies for Development, Bangkok, urges Australians not to abandon their involvement in the region.¹¹⁴
- 1998: President Habibie compares Indonesia, a nation of 211 million people, with Singapore, a 'red dot' on the map, and with Australia which is not Asian. (ABC TV 20 June)
- 1998: Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai says Australia, as a regional power and a regional player, may be able to assume an additional role in consequence of the economic crisis. (A 13 February: 16)
- 1999: UN Secretary General Kofi Annan regards Australia as an Asian country for the purposes of InterFET. This is disputed in the Thai press.¹¹⁵

¹¹² Wang Gungwu, 'National Choice', *ASAA Review*, 20, November 1996: 1-6.

¹¹³ Mahathir quoted by Harold Crouch, 'Feasting with Tigers', *SMH* 24 May 1997.

¹¹⁴ Kriengsak, Canberra: IDP Conference, 30 October 1998.

¹¹⁵ Kavi Chongkittavorn, editorial and opinion, 'Regional Perspective: Australia is

- 2000: After the economic and East Timor crises, and after the verdict against Anwar, Singaporeans distance themselves to some extent from Malaysia and Indonesia. They recommended that ways be found to include such other 'relevant' players in the ASEAN + 3 process as Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Australia.¹¹⁶
- 2000: Australia under Howard is described by an official commentator in Beijing as a 'bridge' between East and West. 'Militarily and politically, Australia follows the United States. Economically, Australia had close ties to Japan and wants to extend its economic influence in Asia. Culturally, Australia wants to keep her links to Europe. Australia has to learn how to balance these three forces'.¹¹⁷
- 2001: Thai General Teerawat says Australia is part of the Asia Pacific but not of East Asia. (Canberra: ANU Thai Update 26-27 April)

From this brief summary, it can be seen that when including Australia in Asia serves individual Asian countries' interests, or maximises their joint impact, they represent Australians as 'part of Asia', or as becoming so. Those interests include acquiring territory, setting up large coalitions of member states, expanding Asian nations' future influence, and gaining more economic support from Australia. Within Asian societies, those who oppose their leaders seek political support from Australia by stressing humanitarian commonality. At such times, geographic proximity and similarity are given more emphasis than cultural difference.

When excluding Australia is in Asian opinion leaders' interests, they represent Australia as white, Western, British, an American stooge, anti-Asian, lacking Asian manners and culture, racially unqualified, an example to be avoided, geographically distant, outside East Asia, ignorant of Asia, and culturally different.

an Asian partner, but...?', *Nation* 27 September 1999.

¹¹⁶ Simon Tay, 'ASEAN, East Asia and the Pacific: Ideas on the New Regionalism', AAI, *Asia-Australia Papers*, 3, June 2000: 22-31.

¹¹⁷ Lynne O'Donnell, 'Middleman Howard fits the diplomatic bill in China', *A* 3 September 2000: 7.

APPENDIX 2: THE PERCEPTUAL GRID

Borrowing Milner's notion of the 'perceptual grid' (1993) that filters Australian impressions of the Philippines, we observed in Part 2.6 that the process does not operate only in one direction. Here, summaries of additional public comment about Australia from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore confirm that significant perceptual grids were in place there for longer than most accounts of recent controversies acknowledge. A further summary follows of commentary in the region on Pauline Hanson and One Nation, supplementing the examples selected in Part 3.1.

Philippines

Multiple comparisons of Australia with the United States and the Philippines appear in the media and in public discourse. They are mostly invidious, implying sibling rivalry with Australia for the regard of America, the father-figure. For example:

In the Australian accent, 'today' is pronounced like 'to die'; in Australia, unlike the Philippines, 'cockney English is the national language'. Australians' convict ancestors were used to develop the country; convicts of the imperial powers built early churches in the Philippines too. Ill-prepared Australians were saved from Japanese invasion by heroic Philippine sacrifice at the Battle of Bataan; Filipinos have never been adequately compensated for their efforts. Australia is the size of the continental USA but unlike Americans, Australians haven't conquered the frontier. Australians live in five crowded cities on the edge of an uninhabitable desert where European refugees are made to work; but Filipinos have got less wealth out of richer soil. Australia has huge traffic jams; unlike Philippine drivers, Australians 'all drive on the wrong side of the road and U-turn wherever they like'. Australia has short working hours, shorter drinking hours, and limited night-life; the Philippines is more stylish and fun. The cost of living in 'endless red tile suburbia' is high; and red tiled roofs epitomise the colonial past that the Philippines has left behind. Australians have a cultural cringe, no-one studies their literature and history, they lack a sense of national identity, and there is nothing Australian about Australian culture; while the Philippines has

the latest from Broadway and traditional drama - as well as a long-running debate about its American-based curriculum. Australia has an exodus of cultural talent and little local individuality; 'the only indigenous music is that of the aborigines and this could hardly be called music' compared to the traditions of Germany and the Philippines.¹¹⁸ Australia takes the Philippines for granted and treats it with benign neglect.

Indonesia

Australia is represented in much Indonesian public discourse in contradictory terms: insignificant but troubling, threatened but threatening, uncultured but condescending. Australians do not know their place, but they challenge Indonesia. For example:

Australia has no history, culture, or civilisation: Indonesians are 'the heir to world culture, not the Australians'. Australia is 'historically a land of criminal outcasts, a nation of ex-convicts with a lower level of culture and civilisation', where the strong oppressed the weak and killed the original inhabitants.

Australians believe they have an inherent right to 'tell others what to do and to impose their value systems upon Asians, if necessary by means of foreign aid or even by force'.

Australia is a junior member of the Western alliance, and American bases in Australia are part of the US global satellite spy system. Australians believe Indonesia is a permanent threat. But Australia threatens and seeks to isolate Indonesia by means of its economic ties to the US and Japan and its political activities in the Pacific. Australia runs a deliberate and orchestrated media

¹¹⁸ Sources: AA A1838/280: 3040/10/10/2. AA A1838/2: 1453/334. Waller, CG despatch 7/49, 4 April 1949. AA A1838/2: 1453/334. Shann to DEA 1949. AA A4231/2. Alejandro R. Roces, "'White Australia' policy a problem', *Manila Times* 18 November 1959. H.Q. Borromeo, *Philippine Herald*, 18 September 1965. AA A1838/2: 1453/334. 'Ramos goes to the land of Crocodile Dundee, koalas', *Philippine Star*, 18 August 1995: 1. Maximo V. Soliven, *Manila Times* 1965, *Philippines Star* 20 November 1996: 8. 'Ramos Visit to End Australia's Benign Neglect?' *Malaya*, 14, 159, 26 June 1995: 5.

campaign to discredit Indonesia internationally. Indonesians have no historical record of conflict with Australians, nor 'with the Maoris [sic]'.

Australian journalists are rude and the Australian media are out of control and intrusive. But the Australian Government 'protects and blesses the actions of its media' in spreading 'slander, hostility and subversion'. The Australian media don't employ Asian journalists, which proves they are prejudiced against Asians.

Australians are insensitive, patronising, sanctimonious, hypocritical, arrogant, pretentious, and condescending. They are loud, unfriendly, and untrustworthy. They are ignorant of the massive problems facing Indonesia, and of its different political culture. They are isolated, and their geographical location makes them cold. Australians' knowledge of Asia is 'biased, erroneous and outdated', and 'culturally inbred' as a result of having non-Asians teach Asian Studies.

Australians are racists and anti-Asian: 'Although the White Australia policy has been formally abrogated, racial discrimination is still being practised in Australia', and 'many Indonesians believe the White Australia policy is still in place'. Australians see [all] Asians as poor and miserable, incompetent and untrustworthy, inferior and dangerous, unpredictable, irascible, irrational, illogical, technologically incompetent, with leaders who are corrupt, barbaric, aggressive, expansionist, and genocidal. The Australian left is hostile to Asian right-wing governments, seeing them as corrupt, brutal dictatorships; the Australian right sees [all] Asians as incompetent, aid-dependent, and dangerous, needing to be kept at a distance.

Australia is Western, not Asian. It is the 'odd man out with an identity crisis trying to get in'. Australia may claim it is part of Asia, but ASEAN still regards Australia as being 'Western'. Indonesians expect more of Australians because they are 'always telling us you want to be accepted as part of the region'. But Australia should 'discover its identity as part of the Asia-Pacific region'. Australia

is 'part of the West located down South'. Australians are 'just a bloody nuisance'.¹¹⁹

In her influential account of Australia for Indonesian readers, *The White Tribe of Asia* (1992), an Australian-educated journalist who was later an adviser to President Habibie referred repeatedly to Australia as the 'land of the kangaroo'. Some of Ratih Hardjono's perceptions were new and others reinforced existing Indonesian preconceptions:

The White Australia policy was an attempt to unify the country on the basis of religion and language, with race as its fundamental concern. (75-6) Australia remains uncertain of its identity, fearful of its neighbours, and dependent on its allies. (146) The size of their country makes Australians xenophobic. They concentrate on their own concerns 'for they are surrounded by space', although communications technology is changing them. (114) If the capital of Australia had been Darwin, relations between Australia and Indonesia would also have been different and a better understanding would probably have been reached long ago. (118)

It is difficult to find anything specifically Australian in Australian culture. (180) Albert Facey (author of *A Fortunate Life*, 1984) is typical of Australian men: egalitarian, loyal, reserved, resentful of superiority and difference. (71-2) Tim Winton (novelist) is typical of Australian young people: uninterested in travel

¹¹⁹ Sources. Culture: Achdiat quoted by David Reeve 1992. Sabam Siagian 1992 quoted Barbara Tuchman 1983: 'To feel itself a nation, a people must have not only independence and territory but also a history'. Lack of tradition: Australia is a 'young country without the long cultural heritage of its Asian neighbours': Ambassador Marpaung, *AFR* 4 July 84. Criminal history: Julia Suryakusuma *A* 15 March 1994. ASEAN human rights: *A* 15 March 1994. Human rights, Australian media, Australian characteristics, Asian Studies, White Australia policy: Joseph Kelabora 1992. Ikrar Nusa Bhakti in Fletcher 1998. Independent foreign policy, White Australia policy: Kitley and others 1987. 'Europe put in a wrong place', Achdiat quoted by Glover 1988: 22. Threat to Indonesia, faults of Australians, media conspiracy: *AB* quoted by Robison 1986b. Ikrar Nusa Bhakti in Fletcher 1998. Western alliance: *Suara Karya* 4 Dec 1985. Australian media: Reeve 1992. Conflicts with Australians: Budiono in Robison 1986b. Australian ancestry, ignorance of Indonesia, particularly of *Pancasila*; but also Indonesians don't seek to understand Australia: Savitri Scherer in Robison 1986b. Part of the region: Jenkins in Robison 1986b. Aborigines, media: Fisher and Leigh in Robison 1986b. 'Australian journalists are rude. They use pejorative and offensive language, they bully and criticise Indonesia, and portray Indonesians as primitive'. Ali Atlas 1991 quoted by Kingsbury 1992. West down South: Sabam Siagian quoted by

abroad, concerned to maintain order and stability, limited in their general knowledge (about Asia). (89) Australians generally 'dislike foreign ideas and any thinking that is not genuinely Australian'. (136, 143)

'Today's Australia has been created by the sweat of immigrants, and now, two hundred years later, they cannot be accused of being just thieves, for their contribution and dedication have made Australia known as a modern nation internationally'. (104) The air is clean, there are lots of road signs, and an abundance of everything. The streets are as empty as a public holiday in Indonesia and are so clean that it seems someone must sweep them every morning. 'The houses are big and are shaped like boxes'. (112)

Vietnamese migrants in Australia are poorly educated and as a result of their wartime experiences there is a high crime rate in areas where they live. (96) Migrants are hostile to later arrivals and fearful that their jobs will be taken by Indochinese newcomers. (89) Asian migrants are the least welcome. They remind Australians that they are themselves newcomers. But now 'it is the Australians who are "out of place" in this "brown and black" part of the globe'. (88) Australia's assimilation of migrants compares unfavourably with Indonesia's acceptance first of Indian traders in the fifteenth century, then of Islam, then of 'later arrivals' [Chinese?]. What would happen if Australia began accepting 'black' African migrants? (75-88)

While her account was not uniformly negative, Hardjono took Indonesia as the norm against which to measure Australia. Neither she nor the other commentators cited above made reverse comparisons with Indonesians' lack of interest in Australia, nor with Indonesian attitudes to Chinese, religious minorities, and ethnic groups. Nor did they mention racial or political violence in Indonesia. They did not cite Javanese

Milne 1992. Sabam quoted by Milner 'Perceiving "Business Ethics"' 1993: 29-30. Odd man out: Julia Suryakusuma, *A* 15 March 1994. 'Bloody nuisance': Sabam 1992.

attitudes to Irianese or speculate about the welcome Indonesians might extend to 'black' African migrants.

Malaysia

Representations of Australia, like much public discourse in Malaysia for more than two decades, closely reflect the pronouncements of Prime Minister Mahathir, and are episodic. His response in 1974 to Australian criticism of Malaysia's official handling of student demonstrations included all three of the complaints – racial discrimination, indigenous issues, and neo-colonial interference – that set the agenda for other Malaysians in later episodes: 'We don't need any advice from them on how to run this country. They should learn to solve their own problems first: they solve their problems by shooting Aborigines and having a White Australia policy'. (Brawley 1992) Episodes include:

As Deputy Prime Minister, Mahathir was reported to have responded to the arrival of Indochinese refugees on the coast of Malaysia with the words 'shoot them'. Claiming he had said 'shoo them away', Mahathir complained that the Australian media lie: 'It is very difficult to be nice to the Australians as they are so inclined to telling lies and insulting those they claim as friends'. (A 17 March 1992: 3. *FEER* 18 September 1997: 65) Mahathir's supporters echoed him: Australians were insensitive, compared to the 'sensitive' Malays, said Abdullah Badawi on Australian television. (2 December 1993. Loo and others 2000: 212-3)

In the 1980s, Australians joined Western green groups and local Penans in protesting against Malaysian logging operations in Sarawak and Papua New Guinea, and Prime Minister Hawke objected to the detention without trial and the hanging in Malaysia of Australian drug criminals Barlow and Chambers. Mahathir, under domestic pressure from environmentalists and some lawyers, responded by accusing Australia of hypocrisy, interference, and neo-colonialism. Australians had a 'superiority complex' and imperialism was not dead. (Camroux 1994: 42) He furiously objected to Hawke's description of the execution as 'grotesque and improper' and 'barbaric'. That evoked the personal indignities that Mahathir, the Malays, and Muslims had for long suffered.

Mahathir declared that Australia considered itself 'the judge in this region and must determine the standard that must be adhered to by all'. (Crouch 1991:15)

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, when Mahathir was at odds with judges in Malaysia and was cracking down on dissent in the media, he was criticised in 1988 by Australian Labor politicians for detentions under the ISA. The Keating/Suharto APEC initiative threatened to marginalise Malaysia, and Soeharto publicly put Mahathir under inescapable pressure to attend the Bogor meeting.¹²⁰ The Australian narrative film *Turtle Beach* (Stephen Wallace 1991) and ABC TV's fictional series *Embassy* (1990) enabled Mahathir take public umbrage, to exhume old insults, and to exact revenge from Australia. Blanche D'Alpuget's novel (1981) had attracted little controversy, but Mahathir banned the film of *Turtle Beach* – which it is doubted he had seen – claiming that its footage of an attack on Indochinese depicted Malaysians as 'barbarians who kill refugees' and was 'grossly unfair'.¹²¹ The scene recalled the 'shoot them/shoo them' incident in so many words, and showed Australian diplomats cracking up with mirth over it. Mahathir objected to 'General Mahmoud's' extra-marital affair with a Western woman, and to the Australian government's deceit in claiming it had no influence over the ABC. Mahathir instructed the Malaysian media to run only negative stories about Australia, and to emphasise and exaggerate stories about Aborigines and 'Australia's discriminatory immigration regulations'.¹²²

A BBC documentary, because SBS showed it in March 1988, was also taken to be evidence of Australian anti-Malaysian sentiment. The Malaysian media strongly objected to the series, and when TV3's retaliatory documentary on Aborigines was shown the *New Straits Times* commented, 'where [TV3] dredged such garbage from one can only guess'.¹²³ Mahathir made a second 'buy Australia last' threat, and also

¹²⁰ After Seattle, Suharto said to journalists, 'I will invite him [Mahathir] and he will come' to the next APEC meeting in Indonesia. Dobell 2000: 40.

¹²¹ Brawley 1992. Unseen film: D'Cruz and Steele 2000: 228. 'Non-film': Sharp 1992.

¹²² Cabinet directive quoted by Richard McGregor, 'AM', ABC RN, 19 February 1991. Schofield 2000.

¹²³ *NST* 26 June 1991. Kessler 1991. Peter Mares and Graeme Dobell in 'Asia and Australia', *ABC Radio 24 Hours*, April 1993: 38-41. The *AWJ* of 22-3 November 1990, reporting Malaysia's objections to *Embassy*, was banned in Malaysia. Reports of it in the Malaysian media

warned that he was banning Australian television programs and restricting Malaysians studying in Australia. An ABC crew was depicted by the cartoonist Lat driving a garbage truck loaded with 'the latest' from Malaysia. (*NST* 5 August 1991)

Mahathir, under pressure with a coming election and an allegation that he was 'Baba Malay', did not attend the Seattle APEC meeting in 1993. Australia, he asserted, was not part of Asia 'because Australians do not have the values of respect and manners that Asians do'. (*AFR* 25 November 1993) An UMNO Youth Wing leader – who had just returned from an invited visit to Australia – said Keating's description of those who didn't attend APEC as 'recalcitrants' showed he was uneducated and that relations with Australia should be downgraded.¹²⁴ The Premier of Kelantan said Keating was rude, lacked understanding of Asian sensitivities, and asked, 'What do you expect of a leader whose forefathers were ex-convicts and social discards?' (*FEER* 30 November 1993)

The Malaysian press, both in *Bahasa Malaysia* and in Chinese, lengthened the list of complaints against Australia – the treatment of Aborigines, the quality of education, unfair trade, Keating's 'rude' behaviour with the Queen, and Australians' 'impertinent remarks and hurting China' when Sydney was chosen in 1993 to host the 2000 Olympic Games. But Malays were warned not to behave as badly as those who had wronged them (*Berita Harian* 29 November 1993), and the Defence Minister restated the long-term commitment to cooperation with Australia.¹²⁵ Briefed from Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta's *Merdeka* agreed that Australia 'needs a lesson' (3 December 1993), and the Borneo and Hong Kong press also responded. The problem, according to the *Oriental Daily News* (9 December 1993) observed, one of 'face': Keating had an 'overbearing mentality' and his comment was not just a slip of the tongue. But, the paper added, more than face was involved: 'Australia is in recession. It needs the trade with the Asia Pacific'.

as an 'Asian/Western cultural' confrontation began in April 1991, at the same time as Mahathir's promotion of the EAEC. Byrnes 1994: 176-7.

¹²⁴ Keating was 'vainly trying to play off one Asian leader... against another'.

D'Cruz and Steele 2000: 62. The context of Keating's remark is in Dobell 2000: 40.

¹²⁵ Datuk Najib Abdul Razak, quoted by Crouch 1994. Some defence visits to Australia were cancelled during the period. Schofield 2000.

Australia was observed in 1993 to have become interested only when Asia was prosperous. 'A late entry fee is payable', said Tunku Ahmad Yahaya, who urged Australia to show what it could contribute to the region, to stop trying to dictate terms, and to send more people to the Asian Institute of Management.¹²⁶ Noordin Sopiee, a former editor of the *New Straits Times*, accused Australia of wanting to join 'Asia' only when it was rich. He said Australians were too haughty to attend Bandung conference of 1949 (in fact Malays did not go, being not yet independent, while Australian officials were present as observers). Australia, he said, was a country about which most Malaysians had no views and knew little, apart from the fact that it was far away, had white people, kangaroos, and leaders who were 'very active in condemning other people, mostly Asians'. Further, Australians were 'by culture opinionated', lacked humility, and thought themselves superior to and 'more civilised than Asians'. Dr Noordin asserted that the 'most fundamental basis for [East Asians'] regional consciousness is economic'. The best thing about Australia, he said, was its investment.¹²⁷

When two scholars in Australia, 'pluralists from an Asian and a Western background', analysed *Turtle Beach* in 2000, they found that the novel and film – two texts by then largely ignored in Australia – were even more insidiously anti-Asian than Mahathir had claimed. (D'Cruz and Steele 2000) 'Words and images are used to conjure up a Malaysia to which Anglo-Australia is comfortably superior', they wrote. 'Words are used in [Anglo-Australia's] dominant culture to band and exclude', and 'language and its use become a dominant public manifestation of xenophobic sentiment'. Superiority, exclusion, xenophobia, racism: these, they claimed, not only permeated the two texts but also all of 'Anglo-Australia'. Further, the two *Turtle Beach* texts were said to demonstrate not only the self-righteousness of the writer and film-maker, but also the 'gap between covert colonial metaphor and overt post-colonial rhetoric' in Australia as a nation. D'Cruz and Steele attributed these motivations to all 'Anglo-Australians', whom

¹²⁶ Tunku Ahmad Yahaya, director of Sime Darby, November 1993. Dobell 2001.

¹²⁷ Noordin added: 'Australia is such a rich melange of diversity and contradiction. Australians are amongst the most vulgar and the most refined. Amongst the most enlightened and the most bigoted. Amongst the cleverest and the dumbest on this planet'. David Jenkins, 'Through Asian eyes: what our neighbours *really* think of us'. *SMH* 2 November 1996: Spectrum 2, 4.

they labelled colonialists. Malaysia set an example to ‘a would-be regional partner who also happens to be a truculent and sermonising neighbour, always judging other people, always judging them negatively, *and always telling other people what to do.*’ (D’Cruz and Steele 2000: 342. Emphasis in original)

Singapore

Commentary from Singapore often evokes migration and race. An invited Singapore journalist in 1957 reported that Australians were not racist, but the migration policy was. ‘Australia does not consider itself a partner of Asia, but if she intends to stand side by side with the Asian countries this mistake she must endeavour to eradicate’.¹²⁸ The Singapore *Straits Times* said Australian policy reminded ‘an Asian’ of the days when he [*sic*] was treated as racially inferior. It dismissed Australia’s economic and cultural excuses. ‘The Asian’ did not object to immigration regulation, but to the exclusion of Asians on racial grounds. (12 July 1958)

In the Singapore press, Australian racism was a perennial theme, and Australians were described as ‘what they have always been suspected to be: insular in reflex and spirit in spite of their society’s cosmopolitan mix’. (*ST* 22 October 1993: 34) But stereotyping of others by race was as common among Chinese in Singapore as in Malaysia. In the 1970s Tan Kok Seng wrote about ‘Red Hairs’ in racist and sexist terms that echoed Lee:

An Asian – certainly a Chinese – is born with a mind which is by nature more acute than that of a European. What use he makes of it is another matter, of course, but the acuteness is there.¹²⁹

Lee’s exhortations to Singaporeans to work harder often accompanied his claims that Australia was undeservedly prosperous and had little prospect of relevance or success in the dynamic region of the future. (Minchin 1990: 181-2. Dobell 2001:8) His views were widely reported, often by Australians who endorsed them. Lee claimed that

¹²⁸ Yu Ching Hao, *Nanyang Siang Pao*: Commission translation. AA A 6895: N59/35.

¹²⁹ Tan Kok Seng, *Son of Singapore* (1972), and *Man of Malaysia* (1974), both

'ordinary Asians' were envious of Australians as large people with large cattle and large wallets who drank a lot. But he advised Australians to cease being a derivative society and become a 'primary' one. (*SMH* 17 March 1986) Lee called Whitlam a 'sham white Afro-Asian' for offering to accept out of 8 000 Indochinese refugees only the 65-100 who had Australian education, leaving the rest in Singapore to threaten its welfare system. Australia then agreed to take thousands more. (Lee 2000: 395) In the mid to late 1980s, the supposed 'brain drain' of educated Singaporeans to Australia was countered in the media by a series of stories on Australian racism, economic decline, rising unemployment, and corrupt practices in education, that enhanced Lee's warning: 'Only failures migrate'.

At these times, such positive stories about Australia as were available were dropped by editors. (Sharp 1992) In 1992, when John Dawkins as Treasurer spoke in Singapore of Australia repositioning itself in Asia and discarding Eurocentrism, the *Straits Times* prominently reported the Saulwick survey showing that a majority (69 percent) of Australians did not see their country as part of Asia and that 40 per cent (a minority) felt Australia should not welcome investment from Asia.¹³⁰ Later, when Dawkins as Education Minister was urging Australians to become 'Asia-literate' Lee, though no longer Prime Minister, picked up both issues in Australia and declared that Australians 'must be weaned from welfare dependency and become self-reliant and competitive'.¹³¹ He urged Australia to develop a core of Asian experts and to put aside its fear of the yellow peril.¹³² To convince others that Singapore was cosmopolitan and moving with the times, the familiar contrast with Australia as lagging behind was evoked. (*FEER* 12 August 1999: 31) When Sydney was awarded the Olympic Games, Lee put it down not to Australian capacity but to the United States seeking to 'show Western political clout' over China. (*ABR* November 1993. Camroux 1994: 50)

¹³⁰ Singapore: Heinemann Educational Books (Asia).
Joseph E.E. Peters 'Australian Music: positioning for Fluidity Within Asia' in Grant and Seal 1994.

¹³¹ Lee, April 1994, quoted by Gerard Henderson, *SMH* 21 November 2000: 14.

¹³² But Australia, an editorial claimed, had more academic Southeast Asia experts than any regional country including Singapore. *SMH* 23-4 March 1994: 30.

Lee often contrasted his pragmatic and polished conduct of foreign policy with that of North Americans and Australians, representing them as rough, crude, and lacking in finesse and depth. He understood the purpose of foreign relations as being to ensure that a state had as many friends and as few enemies as possible, not special relationships, bridges, or mates. 'When you talk about foreign policy, and unless you are a big power...you are really talking about your neighbours. Your neighbours are not your best friends, wherever you are'. (Lee quoted by Josey 1967) When Howard announced his vision of a relaxed and comfortable Australia in 1996, and Downer proposed in 1997 that Australia's large contribution to the IMF bailout fund was about 'regional mateship', these notions may have resonated with the Australian electorate, but not with Lee Kuan Yew. When Australia was mentioned in Lee's memoirs it was often in a lecture about what *not to do*: protect industries, cosset unions, and suffer from a free press. Journalist Paul Kelly noted during the economic crisis, 'White trash doesn't help bankroll sick economies'. But the economic crisis didn't stop Lee contrasting Australia with gutsy little Singapore, surrounded by turbulence: 'We expect Australians to have enough stamina and perseverance to see things through. We have had to develop those qualities'.¹³³ He advised Australians to put up for the time being with not being accepted by the new East Asia.

While invidious comparisons with Australia were a means of reinforcing Singapore's claim to be the 'regional hub', underlying fears were detectable, and also some envy of its apparently unworried, laid-back neighbour. In the 1990s, when concern was reported about the next generation of Singaporeans, rising levels of school truancy, stealing, gangs, drug and alcohol abuse, vandalism, gambling, pornography, and teenage sex, all were attributed to Western influence. Asian values were being taught, but it seemed the young were rejecting them.¹³⁴ One of Singapore's few opposition politicians described the system as having lived off its citizens' fears for 40 years: fear of the Internal Security Department, of being sued for defamation of government members, and of losing their jobs. The best people, said Opposition politician J.J.

¹³³ Lee quoted by Greg Sheridan, 'The judgment of the Lion', *TWA* 18-19 November 2000: 12.

¹³⁴ 'Singapore students prefer the tidal wave', *SMH* 1 September 1994.

Jeyaretnam, were leaving Singapore because they could not live under a system that offered no public forum for controversial views.¹³⁵ Australia beckoned them to escape.

Singapore academic Kirpal Singh in 1992 supported Lee's point about the disjunction between neighbours and best friends and displaced the blame for that onto Australia's racism. He used Lee's words, arguing that while Australia might see itself as 'the land of milk and honey, the land which gives everyone a fair go, the land where you can still go out and strike opal, or gold or uranium', in Southeast Asia it was seen as a land that was hard to get into, one that 'whites' wanted to keep for themselves. Australian images abroad, he claimed, were limited to koalas, kangaroos, and the Sydney Harbour bridge. Tourism advertising was all about cattle stations, the outback, beaches, and Aborigines, and these images, particularly in Asia, were 'not very impressive'. He appeared to be concerned about jobs for Southeast Asians in Australia. Australian management was laid-back and inefficient so, he asked,

How can Australia, if it is at all sincere about wanting to be a partner with Asia or Southeast Asia, carry on satirising and ridiculing aspects of its neighbours' lifestyles? How can Australia bypass the vast and rich resources of Southeast Asian personnel in preference to lesser ones from the white countries?

Singh advocated Australian-funded image-creation in Singapore. To improve its image abroad Australia should set up the equivalent of a British Council in every Southeast Asian capital. 'Imagine what the impact would be in terms of creating a truer awareness of what Australia really is and stands for'. (Singh 1992) Kirpal Singh had taught Australian literature for more than twenty years and might well have qualified to run such a Council in Singapore, had the Australian government cared enough about its image problem to establish one.

¹³⁵

Jeyaretnam quoted by Hamish McDonald, 'Singapore dissidents get a chance to speak freely', *SMH* 29 November 1997: 19. Christopher Lingle, 'Asia's "white peril" just a red herring?', *A* 10 October 1994.

One Nation

In the media in each Asian country, Hanson and her party were inserted into the local newsframe, reflecting each society's concerns more than creating new representations of Australia.

In Hong Kong in the twelve months from September 1996, 299 articles about Howard appeared in the *South China Morning Post*, 189 about Hanson, and less than half that number for each of Australia's other political leaders. Leading Australia-related topics included education, sport, immigration/Asia, and racism in that order. (Gale 1997) A survey of Asian executives in July 1998 found that the perceptions of a majority towards Australia had changed for the worse; more than 75 per cent of Malaysian respondents said the Australian government had done too little, and just over half of all respondents said One Nation had made them less likely to invest in Australia. But nearly half said it didn't affect their choice of Australia as a business destination. (*FEER* 9 July 1998) The Australian Tourist Commission opportunistically asked for a \$25 million package to compensate for losses it claimed were due to Hanson.¹³⁶ Transfield's loss of a \$2 billion shipbuilding contract for the Malaysian Navy was blamed on Hanson too. (*TWA* 11-12 October 1997: 2)

In other capitals, the Hanson newsfeed from Australia was linked to local issues. One Nation attracted little media interest in Beijing, but it exposed Australia to attack over other grievances: Australia's support for the United States' bombing of Iraq, and capitalist countries' treatment of indigenous people. An AFP report about the PRC connecting Hanson to Australia's loss of a UN Security Council seat appeared in several Southeast Asian papers, as did Reuters' story about a racially motivated attack on the office of Alfred Huang, deputy Lord Mayor of Adelaide. (*Indonesia Times* 5 November 1996; *Bangkok Post* 25 January 1997) Australian media speculation about Hanson's possible effect on education, trade, and employment was repeated in the

¹³⁶

Trade slowed throughout Asia because of the recession, not because of Hanson. A report that Taiwan Sugar Corp had pulled out of Australia in protest were later reported to be false. Chong, *A* 6 October 1998: 24.

region. Following four attacks on the Chinese Consulate-General in Sydney, officials said parents in the region were concerned about students' safety and, through the ethnic press, urged victims of racist incidents to contact them. *Sing Tao* claimed on 13 November 1996 that the rate of racial abuse against ethnic Chinese had doubled in a month. This reappeared, through Reuters, in various Indonesian papers on the same day. Asian retailers were reported to have asked for 'Australian Made' to be taken off export products; Tim Fischer warned that Australia's US\$46 billion export trade with Asia was in danger and that losses would result from Hanson's statements; this too was reported in the region. (AP, *KNI* 4 November 1996) Reports of syringe attacks on Asian students were denied, but not before they had reached many in the region.¹³⁷

In Manila, reporter Cristina Peczon responded to Australian reports of anti-Asianism in Australian cities by recalling racial slurs about 'cheap Filipino maids' from a visit to Australia in 1995. A Philippine student paper, reversing the colonial insult, called Hanson an 'uneducated fish-wife from a hick town'. (*Isyu* 14 November 1996: 12) Max Soliven revived the decades-old speculation about an Asian trade boycott against Australia. (*Philippine Star* 20 November 1996) One Nation's views were claimed by a Malaysian doctor in Adelaide (*Sunday Times* 24 November 1996) to underlie restrictions on foreign doctors' right to practise in Australia.¹³⁸

The Australian and then the Southeast Asian press took up another familiar theme: Aboriginal issues and the backlash against them that One Nation represented.¹³⁹ One letter-writer astutely asked why Asia Watch failed to cover racist attacks in Australia. (*ST* 23 November 1996) Another stated (inaccurately) that 90 per cent of Aboriginal people were unemployed or underemployed, and made up 50 per cent of the prison population. (*JP* 12 August 1997) But many were sourced from Australian reporting. An editorial in Jakarta was headed 'Australia "Hides" Black History'. (*Suara Nusa* 27 May

¹³⁷ 'Syringe Attack Rumours Unfounded', *Australian Education International News*, 13 August 1998.

¹³⁸ Examples include: *Sun* 9 May 1997, *NST* 31 May 97, *Merdeka* 25 July 1997, *Borneo Bulletin* 6, 8, 9, 12, 13 August 1997. Chong, 'Australia slaps 10-year ban on foreign doctors', *ST* 21 November 1996: 4.

¹³⁹ Examples include: *NST* 3 December 1996:1 and 20 December 1996: 12, *Philippine Daily Inquirer* 5 February 1997: 8, *Sunday Times* (Malaysia) 18 January 1998: 10.

1997) In Hongkong, the *Standard* detected in Howard's refusal to apologise to Aborigines his covert support for Hanson. (8 November 1997) One Nation leader David Oldfield's remark that Aborigines had been 'killing and eating each other for 40 000 years' was highlighted in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. (10 December 1998: 36) When Aboriginal athlete Cathy Freeman and Vietnamese refugee Tan Le were chosen as Australians of the year in 1998, reports of Hanson's claim that this was politically motivated appeared around the region.

The Hanson issue became an explanation for many events in Australia, related or not. A *Bernama* report of an extortion case in Melbourne headlined the nine 'Asian student' victims, but did not mention that the four accused were Asians also. (*NST* 9 November 1996) Letters to editors recalled incidents of racism encountered by Malaysians, often as students, in Australia; while others wrote that they had no such experience. Hanson, a *Straits Times* editorial said, was a threat to Australia: 'what well-meaning Asians worry about is the country falling victim to the trend, which would hurt business, trade, educational and cultural ties'. (6 May 1997) A letter-writer in Singapore who said he had been beaten up in Sydney appositely asked why so many incidents were called 'isolated'. (*CBA* 29 August 1997) One perceptive Australian found it strange that having just withdrawn its public affairs officers from Australian posts, DFAT should have to set up an Images of Australia Unit to deal with the Hanson fall-out. (Stewart, A 3 September 1997: 9)

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