

Connectedness and Being: Reflections

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When I arrived in Australia in late 1955, I had been born in a British occupied colonial society in Malaya, had lived through the Japanese invasion and occupation of Malaya, and where I experienced firsthand World War II and was shocked to see the retreating backs of former colonial British administrators and soldiers, endured the early post-war guerrilla warfare attempt by the Malayan communist party, composed predominantly of ethnic Chinese, to wrest power in Malaysia, and watched with pride, from our first floor window, the visit of the Indian national leader Subhas Chandra Bose to his troops in Malaya. One of my adopted brothers, Anthonisamy, had joined Bose's Indian Nationalist Army (INA) stationed in Kuala Lumpur. I arrived in India in 1948, the year Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated. I lived for seven years in Independent and post-Gandhi India (1948-1955), witnessed the early post-Gandhi struggle to open the temples to those who then were still called Harijans,¹ and witnessed the early and continuing struggle by the Indian state to make Hindi a national language, with continuing resistance rising from the south. In 1957, I witnessed at first hand and through student activism in my (linguistic) home state of Kerala, the local Communist Party's reach for power that was to lead to the world's first ever communist government to be elected through the ballot. I had been the first (non-salaried) fulltime assistant at AICUF (the All India Catholic University Federation) in the very early 1950s. And I arrived in Australia on a Government of India passport, issued at Madras, and a Malayan identity card.

¹ Harijans, a term coined by Gandhi himself, translates as "people of god" (Hari is a name used for god in Hinduism) and refers to poor and lower castes in Indian society. But nowadays, the term Harijan, with its Hindu connotations, has less currency. Dalit or Bahujan is the term used more commonly now.

Yet all those shifts and changes in geographical, political and cultural locations and living had not prepared me for the Australian society that confronted me. I had moved from societies I experienced as of connected people in Asia to a society and a people in Australia who valued their autonomy, individual space and separateness. As a student in India, I had hung on to a strap to hold my balance in a bus, and if the bus was crowded and a strap was not to be had, I would reach for a stranger's shoulder to keep my balance: such personal contact was not possible in Australia. Why not? I wondered. I also recall a bus ride around downtown Brisbane early one morning after my arrival in Australia, when I leaned over and asked the gentleman seated beside me for page 5 of his newspaper, which he was not reading. He looked at me with a mixture of total surprise, increasing disbelief, then horror and fear, all in successive flashes. It was a common practice in India for pages of a newspaper to find themselves in several pairs of hands during a bus or train ride, but which would be handed back to the owner during or at the end of the trip. It took me a while to realise that such physical and other forms of intimacy, or of sharing of space and belongings, were not possible with people of predominantly Anglo stock, and with those non-Anglos who were consciously or unselfconsciously socialised into Anglo Enlightenment values of hyper autonomy, rugged individuality and individual privacy.² People I met with Southern, Central and

² Thomas Keneally, a leading Australian novelist, captures, with a touch of resignation, the "inevitable" arrival that the Asian presence in Australia engenders in Anglo Australia. Australia, he reports,

doesn't want much to do with Asians and their cultural impact,
but it can't just sell goods to Asians, and not accept the other.
You've got to accept the inevitability of it all [. . .]. (qtd. in
Vinocur 1)

But then he reports that Anglos find consolation in the robustness of Anglo culture to assimilate the alien. He adds:

East European backgrounds had fewer concerns over issues of physical or other privacies and intimacies, but nor were they regarded with any respect by their West European, and especially Anglo, cousins.³

Post-war Australia was a mixture of formally instituted racism through a White Australia Policy and a degree of tolerance towards people-of-colour. This tolerance may have been due to an innocence born of people living in unreflective isolation, or due to the assumption of the World War II soldiers returning from parts of South East and East Asia where the Japanese had been defeated and put in their place, that Asians generally were once again seen to be behaving themselves under the tutelage of wise colonial officials. The associated assumption may have been that the children of these Asians would be well-behaved too. The dominant Australian culture, equipped with the confidence bestowed by Allied victory, was thereby enabled to welcome overseas students with a great deal less anxiety, occasionally in the manner that one would welcome and pat bewildered creatures that had strayed in. Except for the period of the old 6 o'clock "swill", when Australians downed as many beers as they possibly could between 5 and 6 pm, before the law and the publicans poured them on to the streets,

By 2020, the country will be much more visibly Asian but still completely and identifiably Australian. It's because Australian popular culture is such a powerful entity, it subsumes any immigrant culture. Even if the families that arrive are as big as platoons, you still have to send your kids to school, and they're Australianised, sometimes in the roughest way possible. But it happens. (qtd. in McKew 58)

³ Such distinctions were also not always clear cut, for there were Europeans who were exposed to certain racial ideologies, for instance, one experienced a reserve. The father of a young man who frequented our family home in Melbourne at one time thought I was not a suitable person for his son to have anything to do with. Later, the son explained that his father had been a member of Hitler's youth movement.

where they snarled and abused people-of-colour if encountered. If they cornered us overseas students, they would claim to recognise us by our mothers' and aunts' features, which they announced they got to know very well, really well indeed. Since then, I find the sight of Australian "diggers" in uniform, especially on Anzac Days, nauseating. In such behaviour as theirs lies the bravado of arrested adolescence of child soldiers or of tales nurtured in guilty sexual encounters and kept from their sweethearts, wives and mothers to be spilt only when legless with alcohol. Well, except for all that, life in Australia was relatively benign, and I tend to recall the 1950s as "better times".

Overseas students were very few in number in those days and there were relatively few of us at Melbourne University, where I studied. I was not even aware if students were protesting about inadequate "facilities," nor was I aware of any, whether Asian or Australian, who were questioning the dominant Anglo characterisations of Asian people, events and issues. However inadequately, I addressed those issues at tutorials and through my essays, as they rose out of intellectual and moral questions encountered in my studies as well as through socially encountered racism.⁴ In my

⁴ By the 1970s and 1980s, my concerns had moved to the cultural process and product of Australian education, and among my co-researchers were Peter Sheehan (originally at Melbourne University, and now at Victoria University), and Brian Crittenden (La Trobe University). While the '60s spurred Australian culture on to greater autonomy, freedom and choice, it also became obvious to some of us working at the Centre for the Study of Innovation in Education, at La Trobe University, and especially to Professor Peter Sheehan with whom I was collaborating in philosophical, cultural and policy areas at the time, that we were in danger of losing the bonds of cultural belonging. But which was to be the preferred cultural group to which we would belong? This question was also reflected in debates at that time around the issue of multiculturalism. For a while an "inclusive" Australian culture was juxtaposed against exclusive ethno-religious cultures, until the "inclusiveness" was exposed as Anglo-European culture writ large. Similarly, the "Australian values" debate has not quite recovered its Anglo identity. It then appeared for a moment that mutually accountable modes of negotiation might restore

classes, I attempted to draw attention to the institutional racism that was reproduced at both official and unofficial levels of Australian culture. For example, my research found that most of the witnesses at a commission of inquiry looking into the behaviour of the Chinese on the NSW goldfields in 1858 reported that the Chinese were for the most part exemplary citizens; yet, despite this positive finding, the commission believed that they were not fit to stay in the colony, or had to pay a higher tax for doing so (see D'Cruz, 1973: Chapter 1). No Australian historian I had read at that time had condemned the commission. At tutorials, I wanted to know why those historians were still drawing salaries from their universities despite the fact they were not addressing these important issues. I must have been a real pain. Still I persisted.

some of those social bonds. In the 1990s I included health care, through nursing practice and nursing education, in my research with Joan Bottorff, Grace Tham (both formerly of RMIT), Jane Hall and others, and taught courses in Health, Education and Psychoculture. In the 80s and 90s, Bernie Neville and I were exploring, with our Masters students at La Trobe University, alternative modes of consciousness in traditional and contemporary cultural settings, and introducing them to *other* ways of knowing than reason alone. Teaching at La Trobe University's Graduate School of Education for twenty years was a rewarding experience; while we had to justify the courses we taught, I was never stopped from teaching anything I thought was important. But, if I remember correctly, it took Bernie Neville and I at least two or three years to get the Masters course on Modes and Structures of Consciousness through the University's Board of Studies. By 2003, while I was at the National University of Malaysia teaching cultural linguistics, I had returned to issues of Australia's relations to people-of-colour *within and outside* Australia, in the company of William Steele (then at Victoria University). In 2008, my enquiries include a concern over (more autonomous) Australian values and (more interdependent, and for want of a better term) Asian or non-Anglo values, as well as an interest in contemporary Asian political leadership.

My reasoning to myself was quite simple—I knew at least one Chinese, Ah Hin, my eldest and most senior (adopted) brother, to be a good person. It did not even occur to me that the immigrant Chinese in the Australian colonies, as a people, could be any different. It was initially a gut feeling. And so too were the Japanese soldiers we met in Malaya during World War II; not all of them were cruel or barbaric, as they were often portrayed in post-war Australia (D’Cruz, 1973: Chapter 2.) A few of these apparently “barbaric” people became our family friends, before they were repatriated to their homes after hostilities ceased. One of them arrived on the eve of his repatriation with a huge mound of white cloth, for which we were grateful since all cloth was scarce during the war. On closer examination, they were new, unused, lap-laps, which the Japanese soldiers used for underwear. We still were thankful, for they could be stitched together into sheets and then into shirts and blouses. These were gut feelings of mine about the Chinese and the Japanese, but they were also drawn from limited but direct knowledge of the people concerned, and these feelings of mine ran slap-bang against Australian community attitudes towards people-of-colour. Nor could I identify then a single instance where Australians welcomed one or other group of people-of-colour, including, of course, their own Indigenous people.

Publicly, I wanted to be told why I could not have easily learnt from secondary sources how exemplary the Chinese were, and why I was forced to dig for it on my own in primary source materials like reports of royal commissions?⁵ Why was the full and

⁵ Some time in the mid-60s, I recall with embarrassment buttonholing a poor Chinese student outside the Commerce Building at Melbourne University and haranguing him about not taking Australians to task for misrepresenting the Chinese immigrants throughout Australian history, as he plaintively protested, but I am not a history student, I am doing commerce. That earned my wrath even more. No excuse, I declared. Then study Australian history, and protest! At times I wonder about that poor man; he’s probably running a huge corporation in Hong Kong, Malaysia or Singapore, recalling that weird Indian student concerned over some Chinese who lived and died in Australia

true story about the Chinese not told in Australia? Increasingly, I became aware of the manner in which anti-Asian racism had become so naturalised amongst Anglo Australians as to be invisible to them; indeed, the symbolic violence of racism was inscribed at the everyday level of vernacular language. I still recall, for example, the blind anger I experienced in 1957 when a respected old Jesuit theologian confessed to me his acute embarrassment over a memory dating back to his childhood in Melbourne. In his early teens he was apprenticed to a baker. Every morning he turned up for work around 4.00 am, and the baker would call out his first duty: Bury the Chinaman!⁶ Translated, it meant he, the apprentice, had to dig a hole out the back and bury the bucket of human excreta accumulated during the previous day. The baker's self-worth could only hold up after another human being, a coloured one, had been reduced to human excreta.

In history tutorials I was told I was talking politics and assuming moral positions (which was not on); in literature I was told I was expounding politics and philosophy; in philosophy I was told I was indulging in speculative philosophy when what was called for was analysis and more analysis, and so on. It was the heyday of analytical philosophy in Australia. Subjects were controlled in water-tight compartments of knowledge, and the final arbiter in all disputes was reason, and generalised reason alone prevailed. Individual experience, or intuition, counted for little or nought. While formalised knowledge was compartmentalised in institutions of learning,⁷ the

a century before. He will never know how close he, as a Chinese, was to me because of Ah Hin, my eldest and senior most (adopted) brother.

⁶ Goldie Osuri reminds me that Maxine Hong Kingston, the Chinese American novelist, countered this emasculating racist term "Chinaman" in one of her novels which she named *China Men* (1980). (Personal communication 2008).

⁷ When, in the mid-60s, I recall quoting Heisenberg's uncertainty principle to make a point in the introductory paragraph of an class essay, the tutor instructed me in a note in the margins to remove that reference for not only was it too esoteric in the context of what was being written, but was also sourced from outside the discipline I was engaged

socialscape, where and how people lived, was itself compartmentalised racially: those who were Anglo white were inside, and people-of-colour were outside. Protestants were on the inside, Catholics on the margins, people-of-colour clinging to the rim, and Indigenous people, still non-citizens, were off the radar. It was also a left-out society. The poorer working classes and the rural poor were off centre, though there always seemed to be a strong dash of sympathy for the battler in Australian life and its literature. While the Irish, the poor and the non-urban folk were grudgingly allowed space in the sun, people-of-colour, Indigenous and others, were kept further away. On consideration, I almost believe the omission was a blessing in disguise, for in the shadows people-of-colour could retain something of their own ways, unlike the Australian Irish, who, for the most part, appear to have become indistinguishable from their erstwhile Anglo “betters”.⁸ One hopes that people-of-colour have been rendered less homogenised through neglect.⁹

in, which (I think) was in the area of ‘theories of politics’. On another occasion, I was asked to remove a reference to that popular radio serial *Dad & Dave*—set in mythical rural setting of Snake Gully, in the Shire of Gundagai (NSW), a serial which in its hay day ran for 15 years from 1937 onwards, 4 times a week, at 15 minutes a session, and I caught on a re-run in the mid-50s—because (I was instructed) the reference was from ‘popular/folk writing’, whereas the essay I was writing was set in the formal discipline of “history”.

Today I am a follower of a radio program titled *Australia All Over* led by “Macca” (Ian McNamara) on ABC Local Radio Across Australia, on Sundays between 5.30 am and 10.00 am. It’s mostly recollections of times gone by and of things done and experienced which are rarely possible today. It is overwhelmingly ‘Anglo’ in reminiscences, and nostalgic, something I have little problems with given that I’ve lived in such a culture for well over half a century and believe that, as with the notion of *karma*, the past, the present and the future are linked by our thoughts, words, and deeds.

⁸ In 1957, standing in front of Burns Oates bookshop at the top of Bourke Street, Melbourne, I watched the long, seemingly unending, annual St Patricks Day procession,

There appeared little relief from any quarter, except that my university term papers, through which I mounted my counter attack, were curiously and generously marked with strong though for the most part quizzical encouragement from a few senior staff, who encouraged me to continue my research,¹⁰ as well as the friendship and support of a few supportive Australian friends.¹¹ Those class papers were subsequently

of school children and adults, with Archbishop Daniel Mannix at its head, wend its way up Bourke Street and up past Parliament House. Within a few years the annual procession had stopped happening.

I am informed (in 2008) by a trade unionist in Melbourne that Irish workers who came to Australia in the last 15 or so years have retained their cultural identity. While worldwide today, Ashis Nandy (2008:xii) notes, Ireland has carved for itself “a creative role as a culture that has been a victim of colonialism and, as an heir to the European civilisation, can claim access to the worldviews of both the rulers and the ruled.”

⁹ This is my guess that has yet to be tested.

¹⁰ Melbourne University's political scientists William Macmahon Ball and Lloyd Churchwood, and historian Alan Martin, come to mind. Political scientist Alan Davies was an exception, for he took me aside several times to encourage me to keep writing, despite the fact my writing breached traditional genres and protocols; he also drew my attention to what he termed my “new genre” in political writing, a genre that utilised psychocultural insights to explain individual and social behaviour. (I was not even consciously aware of using psychocultural insights to do anything; I just wrote. It was also the first time I encountered the word “genre.”) A. F. Davies, of course, was *the* exponent of the psychological genre in Australian political writing. As Head of Politics at Melbourne University, he also ensured that my small book, *The Asian Image* was prominently displayed in the mounted glass cabinet that advertised the Department's publications.

¹¹ Friends like Jim Bowler and Geoff Lacey at Melbourne University and Newman College were among those carrying the anti-racist fight through organisations like the

published in journals¹² and later a few of them were published in *The Asian Image: Episodes in Australian History* (1973). *The Asian Image* came into being as a response

Immigration Reform Group, and such efforts, together with those of law-enforcers, were also to be found among bureaucrats (Tavan 2005).

¹² Fresh-faced, on arrival I was taken aside by older and knowing overseas students and coached on the finer points of staying on, together with the cautionary note about not making it difficult for others by rashly deciding to pass too many exams at once. Exams, it was explained, were mostly passed or failed for strategic reasons--passing one or two exams a year, which one could get away with in those days, extended one's stay in the country by quite a bit, quite a few years actually. During that extended stay one could have a lot of fun, we were told, and, if one were careful, one could work on nights and accumulate a sizeable nest egg at the end of our stay. After the first three of the four exams in my first year, I glowed with a feeling of accomplishment, and told my friends that I had done well. That night I was again taken aside by a senior who asked what on earth I thought I was doing; so I failed in my last exam, having handed in partially completed answers and feeling I had not completely let the side down. An Anglo-Irish Australian I had befriended early on was distraught over how I had allowed myself to be manipulated by a group senior; for me, greater concrete group solidarity over individualistic personal autonomy was not an issue, especially when the group was, for all intents and purposes, mine (for a discussion on concrete/abstract relations, see D'Cruz and Steele, 2003: Chapter 4). Besides, the senior in question then was an older Chinese student (and therefore a priori a good bloke) who was never short of a quid and doing an accountancy course, who (he assured me) after 7 or 8 years had passed a mere 5 or 6 subjects. That was unbeatable achievement, and we duly looked up to him.

Then there was that immensely wise and kindly civil servant before whom I had to appear annually and account for my academic (non-)performance, who, unknown to me, coincidentally read and wrote for one of the journals I wrote for, and who, more by his manner than anything else, wisely reassured me that my continued presence in the country was obviously justified by my published essays. He didn't seem bothered

when a person of some consequence in academia took me aside one day in late 1972 and gave me a little unwelcome advice, the gist of which was that if I persisted in publishing the kind of articles I was then publishing, I could forget a university career in Australia. Gauging my feelings, his last words were— “start packing.” Typically, my response was to gather a few of my published articles and reprint them in book form, *The Asian Image*, my first book. That reflex became a hallmark: whenever criticised over an article or book of mine, my reply was to produce another article or, preferably, another book. It drove my critics insane, which, at times, was one of the few consolations for living among them.¹³ I was not aware then of anyone else who was

whether or not I passed or failed miserable things like exams. Once I caught his name on his desk name plate, and it seemed familiar; I recollected who he was some time later. The fact that we both wrote for the same journal never come up in discussions. However, on the last occasion we met, he suggested I might consider passing a subject or two in the following year, but said not to fuss over it. Such wisdom! Such unadulterated wisdom in the Australian public service! [Yes, he is still alive, and he still writes from abroad, where I believe he has lived for many years. And, no, I have not met him since those public service days.] However, as I acquired a family including two children, the need for additional income led me to doing a postgraduate degree, which was completed in minimum time, with the thesis, as I recall, committed for publication even before it was submitted for evaluation (D’Cruz and Sheehan 1975; Chippendale 1977). The incentive was there on that occasion to complete my academic commitment on time.

¹³ While there was an element of defiance in my response, it was also the first time in my life that I felt the sensation of helpless vulnerability; I was vulnerable because I had a family and they were in a way being threatened. There was one other time when I felt really vulnerable, and that was in 1964 when I found myself late one night in a hotel room in Saigon (South Vietnam), just before the big US build-up of troops started in earnest in that unfortunate country. Late one night with the sound of shelling in the distance and as I wrote a piece for *The Australian* (30 January 1965, 9; 26 February

questioning the historical and moral basis of what passed for knowledge or bleached knowledge, at least in parts of the university;¹⁴ for that matter, I wasn't aware of mounting any such challenge myself. I wrote because I was irked, and I was irked because nonsense was being said and written about my people, that is, people-of-colour, whether Chinese, Indian, Japanese or whoever, about whom I had some direct knowledge, and who feature in *The Asian Image*.

After I had been writing and publishing for a decade, I came across Syed Hussein Alatas' seminal work, the then recently published *The Myth of the Lazy Native* (1977). It was what I needed at that time, someone (in Asia) who was addressing issues no one I knew in Australia seemed remotely interested in. I contacted Syed Hussein Alatas, who at once invited me to visit him at the National University of Singapore, which I did and where he graciously received me and a friendship was forged. He passed away in 2007.¹⁵ In the late 1970s, I made contact and visited Ashis Nandy, in Delhi. His writings, beginning with *The Intimate Enemy* (1983), have seriously influenced my thinking. Without pretensions, I must say that he writes as if he has direct access to issues I am wrestling with, and he was arriving at admirably sharper analyses and better conclusions. Unashamedly, I acknowledge that these two intellectuals gave me real friendship and intellectual ballast, which I have valued over the years.

Three other specifically Indian influences shaped my outlook in a lasting manner. Firstly, after I arrived in India from Malaysia, sometime around 1952 or 1953, in Madras I came across a book by a Frenchman which introduced me to India—*Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies* (1816) by Abbe J. A. Dubois. Dubois was a French Christian missionary. The first English edition was published in 1816. It opened up an India that was for the most part closed to a Catholic Indian of the Latin rite. So much of

1965, 9), I was gripped with this fear that if anything happened to me my family would be in danger. I wrote home about how I felt that night.

¹⁴ There possibly were others, but I personally was not aware of any.

¹⁵ A volume of essays has been dedicated to the memory of the late Syed Hussein Alatas, titled *Political Actors and Ideas in Contemporary Asia* (2008).

our culture had been bred out of us through our westernized Christian formation, leading me to repeatedly cry out in anguish: They have given me a God, but I know not where they have put my culture. Or, perhaps more accurately, they have taken away my culture, and I know not where to find my God. Indian Latin Christians knew more about Rome (the seat of Catholic power) than about Rajkot (where Gandhi was born); we knew more about London (the seat of British imperial power) than Lucknow (a culinary centre in North India). I was 19 or 20 years old, and this might have been Abbe Dubois's India but I instinctively recognized it as my long withheld inheritance; for me, it was India in the flesh and sweat, armpit whiff and all. I had long sought such a fountain without realizing it, and now I drank thirstily, deeply and greedily. Whatever its limitations,¹⁶ and there are many, this book by a Frenchman drew me as nothing else did into the throbbing life of my people, which had been blocked out by the western cultural trappings of a mission-exported Catholic faith and a colonial English education.¹⁷

The association with these South Asian families provided me with a sense of lived and shared cultural identity, location and security (disparagingly described as “ghettoes”) with which I was then able to negotiate more confidently with Australians more generally. Lived association with these Indian sub-continental families, or “little

¹⁶ Some of which were evident as I read them the first time, others, more serious, I identified later.

¹⁷ In mid-50s Australia, the Australian Catholicism I encountered was split four ways: in addition to what passed for Australian culture, bog-Irish culture was evident in town and country parishes; at the University of Melbourne, there was the studied Irish orientation of people like Australian-born Vincent Buckley (and Irish-born Archbishop Daniel Mannix himself); the English-oriented Catholicism of the likes of Australian born (later Archbishop) Eric D'Arcy; and the European Continental-oriented Catholics, like Australian-born Max Charlesworth, Bill Ginnane and the like. In the then near-frontier towns like Cunnamala and Quilpie (in Queensland), I've run into priests of Germanic and other backgrounds.

cultures”, concretised the grand narratives of Indian culture by giving me a better understanding of what I was comfortable with, enabled me to negotiate, from a secure base of an associated alternative network, with both the broader Western and the local white Australian cultures. Now I too began to feel local; initially, the location was constituted of my own and the two families’ patches. I recall one of my academic colleagues cautioning me against the dangers of being trapped in a “ghetto”, while I myself found the experience very liberating. At last, I felt, I could “belong” in Australia through a group of my own. “Ghettoes” (a euphemism, disparagingly used to describe family, ethnic, religious or other such group environments) became important conduits for some of us immigrants in charting and making for locality. I began to see the largely Anglo Australian and the State sponsored campaigns against “ghettoes” as a ploy to deprive me of my ethno-cultural group particularity and one designed to dissolve me in the vat of an abstracted public culture that drew its values primarily from one culture, the dominant Anglo culture.¹⁸ By now, parts of me were no longer available to my Anglo friends, and that disoriented them. I tried to explain my position, but they just couldn’t get it. (...)The agents of both the State and Church fed off the little and more concrete cultures, while curtailing any autonomous existence on the part of the little cultures. It took some years between my initial experience of the homogenising tendencies of Church and State and the subsequent understanding of their corrosive effects on the more concrete little cultures and on my own micro lived culture.

For the first half century or so of my life in Australia, I had stood toe to toe and slogged it out with the Anglo denigrators of people-of-colour in Australia. It slowly dawned on me that as I was punching away, I was becoming the enemy I wanted to vanquish, determined to reduce the opposition to my singular viewpoint, as would any worthy champion of the cyclopean Enlightenment. I had coped with life by effecting a million compromises at the interpersonal level; but I had held together my ontological

¹⁸ For a more general discussion of some of these concepts (eg, the more abstract/concrete aspects of psychoculture, Anglo culture, the public culture, multiculturalism, etc), see, (D’Cruz and Steele 2003: Chapters 1 and 4).

integrity with an apparent seamlessness while maintaining a billion bristling mutinies against the counter pressures to conform to the dominant Anglo culture pressing on me from every side. But the mutinies could only be sustained once I understood how a dominance of reason and habit had failed me miserably by truncating life's possibilities to anorexic proportions. I had to learn to belong in different ways.¹⁹ Aquinas, Augustine and Francis had to find spaces beside a Sankara, a Dalai Lama and a Gandhi, and assume proportionate roles. I decided that I would still fend off blows, make my points, forge alliances, *and* allow for greater diversity in desirable alternative futures we could live with.

It has been by default a great adventure, not all of it pleasant. In time, Janus-like, I reared my head with tired but searching eyes to simultaneously face an Australia *and* an Asia. In 1973, with an Australian passport and my family, I had returned to India for the first time since I had left it in 1955, heralding the start of another, more painful as well as a more rewarding adventure, which, of course, was unknown to me at that time. But through half a century of socialisation in Australia, and the influences of Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Malay and other cultures, I still take my bearings from the compass of my Malayali mother's inclusive yet discriminating values, refracted through all those other influences. While not a hybrid (a category I reject because of its heritage of biological racisms), I am fed by many cultural strands, and *my* primary reality "is necessarily experienced from [my] own [Indian] horizon of intelligibility" (Estava and Prakash 11). Yet, I am also an Australian *because* of such cultural mixes. It takes all sorts to make Australia, and I am one of those sorts. The fact that many cultural influences run through me does not make me ambivalent, it makes me inclusive. For all that, I am more comfortable declaring—*I'm a Melburnian*. It's Australia I have problems with.

¹⁹ On her way to her death in Auschwitz, twenty-nine year old Dutch born Etty Hillesum (212) wrote: "It is the only thing we can do, Klaas, I see no alternative, each of us must turn inward and destroy in himself all that he thinks he ought to destroy in others."

For complete information on the late Prof. J.V. D'Cruz please go to:

<http://arts.monash.edu.au/mai/staff/vdcruz.php>