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Australian Perceptions of the Orient

1880-1910

by

Rodney John Travers Cummins, BA (Hons) Deakin, BA LaT,

ACP (UK), AdvCertEd ATTI, TPTC Melbourne TC.

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Deakin University, March 2001
I certify that the thesis entitled: *Australian Perceptions of the Orient* 1880-1910

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INTRODUCTION

If we are to come to some understanding of the process of Australia’s becoming a nation in cultural, political and constitutional terms, then it is necessary to study how the Orient influenced this process. It is essential here to come to some understanding of the meaning of the term ‘Orient’ and ‘Orientalism’. Where does the Orient begin and end? For Edward Said, some of whose premises will be questioned in this thesis, the monolithic Orient includes Islamic lands and the remainder of Asia: ‘…a lot of what I said applied equally to Indians and Filipinos and Japanese and so forth’. ¹ The major point of departure from Said in this thesis is that for Australians there was no such monolithic place as ‘The Orient’, imaginary or otherwise.

Nevertheless, useful in our understanding of Australian perceptions of the Orient during the period is Said’s basic proposition that Orientalism was a method of ‘dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’.² In essence, Said is arguing that Orientalism was a methodology used by France and Britain to control the Middle East and then their colonies further to the east. According to John Mackenzie in Orientalism: History, Theory, and the Arts, before Said’s examination, Orientalism had a positive connotation or at least a neutral one. Orientalism was taken to encompass one of two things: either the scholarship and administrative policy according to Indian laws and customs associated with Sir William Jones of the East India Company and the Asiatick Society of Bengal towards the close of the eighteenth century, or a nineteenth century artistic movement. ³ Emmanuel Wallenstein counters this argument in ‘Eurocentrism and its Avatars: The Dilemmas of Social Science’. No matter if the Orientalists saw themselves as scholars engaged in sympathetic appreciation of Oriental texts and
civilisations, the term ‘Orientalism’ is really a stylistic and abstract expression of the characteristics of non-Western civilisations. Orientalism therefore denotes these characteristics as the obverse of ‘civilisation’. Implicit here is Said’s understanding that a justification for European control was the reiteration of ‘European superiority over Oriental backwardness’. However, accounts of the Orient, like those of James Hingston and Alfred Deakin, do not sit altogether comfortably with this Orientalism, derived mostly from that of Britain and France. Colonial status and geography provide some of the clues to why this might have been so.

Despite some dissenting voices in such journals as the Bulletin, generally Australians - particularly the Anglo-Australian upper classes - considered themselves to be British, and Australia as an inseparable part of the British Empire. Unlike their fellow Britons in the metropole, however, and even if they felt racially superior to many Orientals, Australians were neither the rulers of the Empire nor wielders of any power in the Orient. One could perhaps argue that with Australia’s limited population and relatively insignificant military might, such an observation is unimportant. This thesis suggests otherwise. This is not to ignore that Australia’s population rose from 2,231,531 in 1880 through 3,765,339 in 1900 to just 4,425,083 in 1910. By way of comparison, at the end of the June Quarter 2000, the population of Queensland numbered 3,566,400 million and that of Victoria 4,765,900. The views of such a small population may have been unimportant in scale of world affairs, but there is little reason to conclude that Australians themselves felt their views irrelevant. If nothing else, there was their sense of their membership of the British race; and that their population was tiny compared with those of their Oriental neighbours.
But Australia was not the centre of Empire. The fact that Australia had few opportunities to assist Whitehall in the maintenance and administration of imperial power allowed Alfred Deakin, for example, to remain solidly Imperialist, while at the same time talking to British statesmen, as his biographer Walter Murdoch put it, ‘in terms less obsequious than they were accustomed from “colonials”’. Geography, combined with their colonial status, therefore gave Australians a different perspective from which to view the Orient from someone like Lord Curzon, sometime Viceroy of India and noted English Orientalist, sure of his position at the centre of the Empire and the absolute superiority of the masters of the British Raj.

When reading texts relating to Australian perceptions of the Orient, cautious readers should still bear in mind the ready acceptance of racial classifications during this time, even though in Australian Oriental excursions and perceptions a range of opinions and behaviours can be seen. Ruby Madden, for example, participated in the giddy whirl of the 1903 Great Coronation Durbar in Delhi, thus by extension sharing the social benefits of her class and of British rule in India. Alfred Deakin, on a deeper level looked more critically and dispassionately at the effects of that rule and pondered the implications and lessons for Australians and their new nation that was coming into being. George Morrison displayed a seeming indifference to the suffering of the Chinese, which mirrored the indifference to the feelings of Australian Aboriginal society he had displayed as a young man. Charles Pearson looked with considerable anxiety at the ‘lower races’. These were ‘increasing upon the higher’, and he speculated that this was much to do with ‘the work of our own hands’. This was because it was the duty of the higher races ‘to establish peace and order; to make roads, and open up rivers to
commerce; to familiarise other nations with a self-government which will one day make them independent of ourselves'.

None of these was thinking and writing in a vacuum. Nineteenth-century ethnologists linked evolutionary theory and classification according to physical measurements and types with progress. Between 1853 and 1855, the French ethnologist, Joseph Arthur, Comte de Gobineau, argued that races could be classified according to their physical and mental qualities. In *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*, he wrote that the ‘Arian [sic] race’ was ‘the noblest, the most highly gifted in intellect and personal beauty, the most active in the cause for civilization’. In all, Gobineau classified ten ‘great, independent civilisations’. The first seven, headed by ‘The Indian civilization’, all included Aryan stock to explain the character of their civilizations. In China, for example, ‘the light of civilization had been carried thither by Arian colonies’, but the ‘substratum of the social structure was composed of elements of the yellow race’. At the bottom of the list were the American Alleghanian, Mexican and Peruvian civilizations. Absent are the ‘yellow’ and the ‘dark’ races, the latter being ‘the lowest on the scale’ because of the ‘animal faculties that stamps the negro with the mark of inferiority to other races’. The former race was only a little better. Gobineau details physical, intellectual and moral qualities that dictated that a society ‘composed entirely of such elements, would display neither great stamina nor capacity for anything great and exalted’. J. C. Nott, M. D., in the Appendix to the American edition of 1856, spelled out why Gobineau’s views should be accepted: ‘He views the various races of men rather as a historian than a naturalist, and while he leaves open the long mooted question of *unity* of origin, he so fully establishes the *permanency* of the actual moral, intellectual, and physical diversities of races as to leave no ground for
antagonists to stand upon.'¹⁵ A Victorian school text book of 1878 reflected Gobineau's classifications. Its author, A. Buckley, divided humanity into six divisions, classifying them according to physique and geographic locations. He informed students that the 'Caucasian or Indo-European race' was superior because it included 'the most celebrated races of ancient times' and extended 'from the Ganges to the British Isles'.¹⁶

In this climate of thought, Ruby Madden, Alfred Deakin, George Morrison and Charles Pearson reflected for themselves and us what it meant to be white and British; to be white and Australian; and to be white in the face of the dynamism of Oriental races no longer in stasis, as Curzon and the Orientalism of the metropole would have them. Their reactions, varying from simplicity to complexity, from certainty to doubt, and from surety to fear, are far from Said's conception that 'Orientalism failed to identify with human experience, failed also to see it as a human experience'.¹⁷

Further to the concept of control underpinning Orientalism, Said argues that little 'truth' can be found in Orientalism, because the 'Orient' is a construction of language:

... the real issue is whether indeed there can be a true representation of anything, or whether any and all representations, because they are representations, are embedded first in the language and then in the culture, institutions, and political ambience of the representer. If the latter alternative is the correct one ... then we must be prepared to accept the fact that a representation is eo ipso implicated, intertwined, embedded, interwoven with a great many other things besides the "truth", which is itself a representation.¹⁸

While this present thesis has little argument with the idea that the 'truth' is described in language, and that it therefore varies with each reading, there remains the central problem that Said fails to address. The Orient, monolithic or otherwise,
actually exists. It is not a geographical entity, but this does not mean that it is impossible to distinguish between it and the West. Danielle Sered, in *Orientalism*, agrees with Said that the Orient is constructed through language, and in particular that a single subject matter is therefore created where none previously existed. It is the Orientalist scholar who creates and defines the Orient, thereby giving it life. But as Robert Kapp points out, to remain protesting with the difficulties of interpretation because of language leads to the choice of either departing the scene or reaching some sort of agreement with oneself and getting on with it.

In a 1991 interview, Said attempted to strengthen his proposition about the imaginary Orient as opposed to "facts":

Orientalism as a theory gradually comes to include everything, so that what we would normally talk about as the particulars of human experience are always herded under the general rubric of Oriental, so that the Oriental character becomes a kind of fictional creation, a kind of an ideological and fictional creation that has a life of its own, and is totally untroubled by what we might call in naive way "facts." So that any evidence in the Oriental world is marshalled to prove Oriental despotism, Oriental sensuality, Oriental depravity, Oriental luxury, Oriental degeneration, and so on. So Oriental becomes an adjective quite free floating, quite without reference to actual Orientals.

Here a major weakness of Said's methodology is revealed. The above is little more than his own imaginative illumination of his own feelings of rejection as an 'Oriental':

The life of an Arab Palestinian in the West, particularly in America, is disheartening. There exists here an almost unanimous consensus that politically he does not exist, and when it is allowed that he does, it is either as a nuisance or as an Oriental.

Thus Said's definition of the Orient and Orientalism cannot be separated from the political man. This construct of the political man is descriptive of both Said himself and the formulation of the Orientalism that he proposes, an Orientalism that 'dehumanizes'. Orientalism is therefore a discourse that is
by no means in direct, corresponding relationship with political power in the raw, but rather is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power, shaped to a degree by the exchange with power political (as with colonial or imperial establishment), power intellectual (as with reigning sciences like comparative linguistics or anatomy, or any of the modern policy sciences), power cultural (as with orthodoxies and canons of taste, texts, values), power moral (as with what “we” do and what “they” cannot do or understand as “we” do). Indeed, my real argument is that Orientalism is – and does not simply represent – a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with our world.24

Critics have taken Said to task. An American academic, Erin Carlson, disputes Said’s logic, which used ‘the same binary logic it desired to criticise’ by conveying the impression of an Orient ‘whose essential contrast remains incomprehensible by Occidental reasoning’.25 The Sinologist, Simon Leys, is adamant that the physical and intellectual boundaries of China are sharply defined, although Leys does not give the exact boundaries, except to write that ‘they encompass a reality that is so autonomous and singular that no sinologist in his right mind would ever dream of extending any sinological statement to the non-Chinese world’. This discredits the idea of a specialist Orientalist speaking for a broader mythical “East”. Furthermore, Sinology has mainly been the work of Chinese intellectuals over the centuries, and therefore it is not a product of Western Orientalism.26 Sara Suleri, in The Rhetoric of English in India, also accuses Said of conceptual blockage when it comes to the ‘monolithic other’. She argues that where India is concerned, the imperial literary experience is a joint affair that culminates in the colonial gift of nation.27 B. J. Moore-Gilbert, in Kipling and "Orientalism", also employs India to critique Said. He argues that the British relationship with Islamic culture in India was more complex than Said’s account of the West’s relationship with the Middle East. The British concern was to neutralise Muslim antagonism, especially after the Indian Mutiny.28 This again is at variance with the notion of a single Orient, although Moore-Gilbert agrees with Said that
‘the Orient is synonymous with stability and unchanging eternity’. Moore-Gilbert, however, demonstrates that the Anglo-Indian community and the metropole were at odds over the consequences of this. The metropole, using the stasis as proof of degeneracy, put in programs of reformation. The Anglo-Indians saw not degeneracy but integrity and vitality, and were therefore justified in their resistance to “modernisation”. Moore-Gilbert’s analysis of the Anglo-Indian community after the Mutiny parallels the proposition contained in this thesis that the Anglo-Australian community held similar feelings. As with Kapp and Suleri, Moore-Gilbert takes up the issue of language, arguing that at a fundamental level Said’s reliance on literature above other discourses forming Orientalism is a naïve approach, given that post-structuralism has questioned the idea that literature is ideologically innocent. In India, for example, the Orientalism of Anglo-Indians was partly generated by the political realities of their own situation, fearing that they and Whitehall were unprepared for any consequences that might arise if the apparent Russian designs on Afghanistan were not given more attention.

Even where Said has used history as a discourse, this has not been without its critics. David Kopf, in ‘Hermeneutics versus History’ (1980), claims that Orientalism is one of the works of Asian intellectuals, such as the Bengali reformer Keshub Chandra Sen and Rabindranath Tagore, ‘groping for a grand synthesis of East and West in order to resolve their identity crisis.’ He argues that Said proceeds as if Orientalism was ‘a concrete historical reality: as an ideology, a movement, and a set of social institutions.’ His most serious reservation is that Said has confused key issues by distorting historical reality. Said simply drops names, dates and anecdotes. Thus his profoundly structural and synchronic methodology is diametrically opposed to history. According to Kopf, Orientalism
as history varied with time and place. It was never monolithic, it was not a set of unified propositions universally accepted by scholars and administrators in the West.34

Perhaps the sharpest criticism of Said’s methodology can be found in John M. MacKenzie’s, Orientalism: History, Theory, and the Arts. Like Kopf, Mackenzie argues that Said’s historicism is essentially ahistorical, because he ignores the idea that the arts and politics usually operate in counter-point rather than in conformity. Furthermore, at the expense of popular culture, Said concentrates too exclusively on élite texts or high culture. Thus he fails either to examine the wide range of imperial materials available to historians - including juvenile literature, the stage, advertising, the cinema, national ceremonial and popular music – or to consider the intended audience of different areas of Orientalism.35

Focussing on Britain, the Middle East and India in the 19th and early 20th centuries, MacKenzie’s main argument is that European arts sought contamination at every turn, restlessly seeking renewal and reinvigoration though contacts with other traditions. And both Self and Other were locked into processes of mutual modification ...36

This is contrary to Said’s perception of Orientalism. Said argues that for ‘every idea about “our” art spoken for by Arnold, Ruskin, Mill, Newman, Carlyle, Renan, Gobineau, or by Comte, another link in the chain binding “us” together was formed while another outsider was banished.’37 Mackenzie examines how European art, architecture, design, music, and theatre were influenced by the Orient, and he therefore concludes that there was no immutable distinction between the Western ‘Self’ and the Oriental ‘Other’, unlike Said’s binary approach. The ‘Other’ could equally well be found in late nineteenth-century Europe.38 Mackenzie maintains
that despite cultural differences, nineteenth-century painters were fascinated by characteristics they found in Oriental societies, characteristics their own society had repressed. The artists then incorporated these into their paintings in an attempt to renew the highly-urbanised, industrial society in the West.39

Following from this, MacKenzie sees in art a European desire to recreate a feudal, chivalric, pre-industrial world uncomplicated by social relations.40 This view parallels that of the view of the journalist and travel writer, James Hingston, and others that ‘Merrie England’ could be seen in Japan. The thesis also extends this idea in another direction, that of monuments and antiquity. Here, the thesis contends that Australians could discern the traditions and the past they had left behind them in their countries of origin. Likewise, Mackenzie argues that Orientalist paintings reveal not imperialism, but ancient verities lost to Europeans. The paintings do not condemn the Orient for letting things fall into ruin, but instead they depict echoes of the artists’ own lost world.41 According to MacKenzie, Orientalist paintings presented this as an heroic world with clear legal obligations and retributions, often reflected in bright colours and light, compositional rhythms and a sense of geographical space.42

If Orientalist art allowed the viewers to reflect on their own world, the theatre also provided an opportunity to do the same. MacKenzie argues that theatrical entertainment through the portrayal of the Other was really an excuse for satire and parody of the Self.43 The Oriental settings, including the fabric and characters, gave the audience a fresh look at themselves.44 This point is taken up in the examination of the *Mikado* in the ‘Invasion’ chapter of this present thesis.

Orientalist artists, argues MacKenzie, were those most out of sympathy with dominant political ideas of the time. Orientalist art therefore does not portray a
barbarous East to be subjugated and civilised. On the contrary, it was at its most radical just when imperialism was at its height, and its object was to encourage, not to disparage invigorating contamination.45 Once more, this reflects the insight of one ex-patriot Australian, Henry Black, who told a Tokyo audience that 'human feelings are universal and everybody has the same heart'.46 Much the same sentiment underlies Deakin's musing that the nature of the consumated union between the Hindu and Anglo-Saxon would profoundly modify one another.47

Mackenzie's Orientalism is one that thus argues that Orientalist art did not take the opportunity simply to separate the moral Self and the depraved Other.48 It is a world far removed from Said's imagined Orient of despotism, splendour, sensuality and cruelty.49 As Mackenzie rightly points out, in the canon of Orientalist paintings, there are many Eastern wells and the genuine refreshment to be found there.50 This thesis will show how this symbolism was important to Australian travellers, who felt the same emotions at these wells.

Thus in offering a critical reading of Said's arguments, the thesis examines the implications of the Orient in Australian and other literature, and posits that Australian Orientalism was more contradictory than the model presented by Said. Oriental debate becomes significant during the latter years of the nineteenth century, and as such was a particular form of late nineteenth-century modernity. Put another way, the latter two decades of that century saw the inaugural moment of Orientalist discourse in Australia. The debate that emerged was part of the framing of Australia as an independent nation, even though its realisation lay fairly well into the future, but in anticipation that Australia needed to find its place, the Orient had to be considered, if for no other reasons but the proximity of its large populations, and its growing military power.
Even the nomenclature ‘Australia’ can be imprecise. Ien Ang and Jon Stratton make the fundamental point that there is a difference between the geographic, spatially-bounded nation-state and ‘Australia’. The name is not a given, but is always in a state of construction and reconstruction, and therefore the relationship between the geographic and the discursive nominations is always subject to change and contestation. This has become particularly important in the post-modern Australia seeking to recognise itself as part of Asia rather than a country culturally bound with its British settler origins. Ang and Stratton claim this to be a radical viewpoint.51 Although agreeing with Ang and Stratton about the difference between geographic and discursive nominations, this thesis takes as its starting point that there have always been those in Australia who have concerned themselves with the definition of their nation in this way.

By examining figures from different Australian backgrounds and social classes, the thesis therefore argues that Australian preoccupations with and perceptions of the Orient was a two-way process. Australians were not just looking ‘East’; they were also consciously and sub-consciously looking at themselves. Their interaction with the Orient was part of the process of self-discovery of themselves as ‘Australians’. To this end, the focus will not solely lie with the dominant Anglo-Australian upper social stratum. Despite social differences in the people figuring in the thesis, there is a commonality in that all were literate to some degree, the Protestants, in particular, imbued with a knowledge of the Bible, which in turn influenced their interpretations of both Australia and the Orient. As early as 1817, Samuel Marsden with the help of William Cowper had established the Auxiliary Bible Society in Parramatta. At the public meeting attended by Governor Macquarie establishing its inauguration, a large committee was formed ‘to make a
house to house visitation of the town for the purpose of ascertaining the extent to
which the inhabitants were supplied with the Word of God, and what amounts of
copies of the whole Bible or of the New Testament would be properly required to
supply the existing wants. Even if the Society did not last long, non-Catholic
families recorded their births and deaths in a family Bible and gave a copy of the
Bible to their children. In addition, some families also owned a Concordance to the
Bible.

The importance of the Bible becomes especially clear in the Holy Land, but
Protestant travellers such as James Hingston carried their Bible with them in other
lands. Hingston’s articles, for example, are studded with Biblical references, with
which no doubt his Protestant readers would readily identify. In particular, the
Bible summons up for him and his readers the timelessness of the Orient.
Accordingly, the Orient can represent for them not only the truth of their
Christianity, but also how the Bible could represent the Orient. One expected to
find, and therefore did so, the sheep being shepherded, women drawing water from
the wells, as well as the darker sides of lust, cruelty and despotism. If Salome had
danced for Herod, then Oriental houris still plied their trade, even if the reality was
not quite so satisfying as Salome’s performance. The thesis will analyse and
interpret this strong, Biblical identification and interpretation of the Orient.

This commonality of literacy enabled these Australians to communicate
their ideas through letters, diaries, books, journals, and newspaper articles. Where
journals and newspapers are concerned, attention is focussed on those of the largest
metropolitan readership. The *Bulletin*, which was also read nationally, falls into
this category, as do the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the Melbourne *Argus* and the *Age.*
The latter two may fairly be taken as revealing the conservative and the more
radical faces of the Australian dailies. The *Geelong Advertiser* has been chosen as the major representative of newspapers printed outside the major cities of each colony/state, not only because Geelong was a significant country seat, but also because its newspaper, first published 21 November 1840, is the oldest Victorian regional daily newspaper still in print.

Even if in a fairly selective well-educated company, those addressing this debate included major figures in Australian consciousness and political life. The Orient figures prominently, for example, in the reflections of Alfred Deakin, the future Prime Minister of Australia, and the eminent politician and author, Professor Charles Pearson. Deakin was concerned with the immediate geopolitical proximity of Australia and Asia. His *Irrigated India: an Australian View of India and Ceylon*, *Their Irrigation and Agriculture* and *Temple and Tomb in India* are books not merely concerned with technology and architecture.\(^{54}\) In them Deakin said much about Indian civilisation and society, and in so doing drew remarkable parallels with Australia, not the least being that Australians and Indians had much to teach each other.\(^ {55}\) Charles Pearson was deliberately addressing the future, viewing Asia as Europe’s nemesis. He envisaged an Orient poised to dominate the Occident. His *National Life and Character: A Forecast* is required reading for anyone wishing to understand what led to the ‘White Australia’ policy.\(^ {56}\) Was the policy simply one of fear of being swamped by Orientals, or was it also based on the certainty that Orientals were lower down the evolutionary scale? Although Pearson attempted to show that ‘inferior races’ and ‘lower civilisations’ did not mean they were sub-human, it is somewhat difficult to disregard that suspicion:

... from first to last I use the words “higher” and “lower” with no reference to the essential value of a race, which it would be hard to determine, but with regard to its actual position
in the world ...[the higher] has a larger proportion of educated men, and of men owning property, and is more capable of self-government.57

John Tregenza, does not agree with R. C. K. Ensor that the ‘first effect of this powerful and original book was to carry to victory the “White Australia” policy, and with that to make racial exclusiveness a leading feature in the self-governing portions of the British Empire’.58 Tregenza agrees, however, that Pearson’s influence, particularly through the articles he wrote for the Melbourne Age and Leader, contributed substantially to framing the attitudes of educated opinion in Australia during the 1880s.59 Pearson began writing articles soon after his arrival in Melbourne in 1874. After his election to Parliament in 1878, the articles probably became his principal source of income. As there is no complete record of his contributions, no accurate count of the articles can be made.60 Among his effects, however, a notebook identifies 650 articles between August 1880 and February 1884.61

These men, however, were by no means the first to conclude that the Orient would have a large role in how Australia would develop. Australian interest in the Orient can be traced back to the earliest days of settlement. It is therefore useful to look briefly at the first perceptions of Australia by James Mario Matra, Sir George Young, Alexander Dalrymple, and an anonymous writer that New South Wales, as an ‘Austral-Asiatic’ colony, could supplant Spain, Portugal and Holland in the supply of Asiatic products.62 Their proposals set the scene for trade being an ongoing link between Australia and the Orient.

Born to a wealthy family in America and educated in England, James Mario Matra lost his inheritance following the War of Independence. He spent the remainder of his life in the service of Britain, sometimes as a sailor, at other times
in minor diplomatic posts.\textsuperscript{63} He had been on board the ‘Endeavour’ during Cook’s initial voyage to New Holland.\textsuperscript{64} Following this voyage, he spent 1778-1780 as Embassy Secretary at Constantinople. Matra then fell ill and returned to London and offered his advice on the affairs of Europe to the North, Rockingham, Shelburne, and Portland administrations.\textsuperscript{65} Meeting little success, he wrote to Joseph Banks in July 1783 about a rumour he had heard ‘of two plans for a settlement in the South-Seas…’\textsuperscript{66} Matra then presented to the North-Fox coalition ‘an Object, to the consideration of our Government, which may in time, atone for the loss of our American Colonies.’\textsuperscript{67}

In this proposal, Matra saw Australia as an ideal place from which Britain could develop trade with China, Japan and Korea, arguing that NSW could produce ‘every various and valuable production of Europe, and of both the Indies … as well as the sugar-cane, tea, coffee, silk, cotton, indigo, tobacco, and other articles of commerce that have been so advantageous to the maritime powers of Europe …’\textsuperscript{68}

Young put forward a modification of the plan. He saw great advantages for English trade, because of the geographical proximity of China and the Spice Islands: ‘all kinds of spice, likewise the fine Oriental cotton, indigo, coffee, tobacco, with every species of sugar-cane, also tea, silk, and madder’ could be produced in the colony.\textsuperscript{69} He proposed that ships of the East India Company could make port in New South Wales: ‘… this passage will be found more short, easy, and a safer navigation than the general route of the China ships – from Madrass through the Streights of Molucca’.\textsuperscript{70} In a pamphlet, ‘A Serious Admonition to the Publick on the Intended Thief Colony at Botany Bay’, Alexander Dalrymple put forward yet another reason why a colony should be established. In the pamphlet he was actually referring to Norfolk Island:
The objects proposed to your consideration by this establishment are to supply India with cordage, and with masts, for want of which the maritime force employed in India has often been reduced to distress. 71

The undated anonymous plan supported the settlement of the colony because of what the author considered to be the economic value of the products, and the equability of climate. The Pitt administration finally adopted Matra’s scheme. Unfortunately for Matra, he was not necessary for its implementation. Following Banks’ advocacy on his behalf, he was instead offered the consulship at Tangier, which he accepted. 72

The proposals of these early proponents have value in more than the suggestion that Australia was a good base for Britain to extend its commerce at the expense of others into the Orient. The recognition of Australia’s geographical nexus with the Orient grew stronger with the passing of the years. Trade with the Orient would become an important consideration for Australia in its own right. Australia’s proximity to the Orient lent itself to commerce in the region, and this sometimes quite differently to the manner anticipated by Matra and his contemporaries. Alfred Deakin, for example, would investigate possible commerce between Australia and India; Charles Pearson and others, fearful that the Orient would swamp Australia’s manufacturing and commerce, would look nervously to the Orient. Thus trade between Australia and the Orient would take on a greater significance than that of fiscal rewards, either to Britain or to Australia. Included in this were the fierce arguments that the growth of Oriental trade into Australia would be part of the disintegration of the Australian labour force. 73 It was even possible to foresee a day when the industrial might and trade of the ‘Black and Yellow Belt’ would profoundly change the ‘temper of mind in Europe’ 74 Whatever individual Australians may have thought about themselves as members of an
emerging nation, their collective identity could not be divorced from the racial assumptions of the day. Clearly Charles Pearson was drawing no distinction between the decline of European civilisation in both hemispheres.

In the 1930s, Ian Clunies Ross and Jack Shepherd opened the doorway to broader research of this earlier period than that of Deakin and Pearson. John Ingleson and David Walker followed up this discourse in a paper at Sydney University, and later published as ‘The impact of Asia’. Ingleson and Walker briefly cover much of the same ground as Clunies Ross and Shepherd, but additionally trace developments to the 1980s. ‘The impact of Asia’ predates much lengthier books by Broinowski and Walker, which will be discussed further on.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that when necessary this thesis will extend before and beyond the years of its title. 1880 to 1910 were not magical years in themselves, but the period is examined because it follows the initial Chinese immigration during the gold rushes. It looks forward to Federation, and includes the growing hostility to ‘Orientals’ and the aftermath of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901. The thesis will not examine the White Australia Policy, which has been dealt with at considerable length by other writers, including Myra Willard as early as 1923 and Sean Brawley in 1995.

While some Australians may have remained culturally bound to their British settler origins, not all did so. Ang and Stratton’s ‘radical’ post-modern viewpoint was there from the beginning of British occupation of Australia. Until recently, according to Ang and Stratton, ‘Asia’ and ‘Australia’ were always seen as absolute binary opposites. Some earlier Australians saw themselves as part of Asia, even if others resolutely refused to do so. We have already seen that in 1793 James Mario Matra, Sir George Young and an anonymous contributor were laying
emphasis on the idea of Australia as an ‘Austral-Asiatic’ colony capable of
supplying England with all the Asiatic and Indies products that were hitherto under
the control of the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the Dutch. 79

The thesis acknowledges this past interest. Australians did not suddenly
gaze curiously to the Orient of their north and west. Early contacts, proposed or
otherwise, helped to formulate their responses. Edward Gibbon Wakefield, for
example, looked towards a bright Australian-Asian future: ‘without exception’
Australia was in the best position of any country to trade with Asia. 80 In Australia
itself the gold rush of the 1850s brought with it Chinese migrants, whose
descendants were to be found in occupations other than market gardening. This
helped generate the prejudice of the trade union movement and the fear of a
Chinese takeover of Australian labour. 81 By the late 1890s, for example, Chinese
agents were in control of banana marketing in Sydney and Melbourne. 82 Charles
Pearson stated confidently that in the small space of five years the Chinese had
taken over the manufacture of furniture in Victoria, thus ruining the prospect of
employment for white Australians. 83

Not all Australians were so gloomy. In 1887, despite his doubts that
Australians would allow cheap Asian labour to replace that formerly done by
convicts, Marcus Clarke thought that the good climate, food and education of
Australia would lead to the development of a healthy national ‘type’, providing
that the ‘breed’ did not become extinct. This extinction could be avoided by the
introduction of other national stock, and thus ‘Australasia’ could stretch from
Malacca and Singapore to New Zealand. 84 In somewhat the same vein, Cardinal
Moran saw civilisation radiating out from Australia to all other Eastern nations.
The difference between his notion and that of Clarke’s was that Moran envisaged
missionaries venturing forth from Australia.\textsuperscript{85} Despite Clarke’s desire to remove the taint of convicts from Australia, the East India Company had seen Australia as a land that could transform criminals. It attempted to recruit time-expired convicts, by holding out a ‘future profession and pursuit to a class of men in which they may become useful to their country instead of returning to those habits and practices which first occasioned their expulsion from it.’\textsuperscript{86} India beckoned so strongly to the convicts, that many attempted to escape there. To stop the traffic, Governor King ordered that Masters of ships had to enter a bond of £500 not to take any convicts from the colony, with a bond of a similar amount not to take ex-convicts without the Governor’s permission. The same penalty would apply if the men were landed in any part of the East India Company’s territories.\textsuperscript{87}

The new ease of travel that came with the introduction of fast steamers and regular schedules allowed Australians to see the Orient for themselves. In the nineteenth century, such men as John Smith, James Hingston, John Stanley James, George Russell, George Nicol and Alfred Deakin visited the “East”, writing about their experiences. Smith, Hingston, James and Deakin first published their accounts in Australian newspapers, accounts that were later reissued in book form. Russell’s account is in the form of a diary, as is that of Nicol. Smith’s account appeared in the \textit{Sydney Morning Herald} between 1863 and 1864. When it appeared in book form in 1865, he was fully aware that it contains nothing to warrant a claim on their [the general public’s] attention. Egypt and Palestine have now been so often gone over, and so much has been written about them, that it is not easy for a traveller to strike out anything original. Valuable books on these countries will, no doubt, still be produced, but the authors of such books must not hurry as most travellers are obliged to do, but take good time, so that by painstaking investigation, based on previous study, they may unfold new facts or work out
new theories; or they must have the genius to set old facts and theories in new and attractive lights.”

This preface, written from the University of Sydney, sets the tone of the book, which is not nearly so immediate and engaging as that of Hingston. David Walker, in ‘Travellers to the Orient’ drew attention to Hingston’s book, which until then had been forgotten. In The Oxford Book of Australian Travel Writing, Ros Pesman, David Walker and Richard White theorise that the Australian traveller could be both coloniser and colonised, and claim that travellers repeatedly wrote that their experiences were created by what they had read in European literature. They further argue that much Australian travel writing derives from a fascination with the slum. Pesman, Walker and White furnish little substantiation of these remarks, but they certainly provide the impetus for the examination of how Hingston may have modelled his book, and for an investigation of the fascination of dirt and erotica to be found in the Orient.

The modern genre of Asia as a travel story for Australians emerged in the nineteenth century. James Higston’s book, The Australian Abroad on Branches from the Main Routes Round the World, was the most successful in this. Originally published in London in 1880, it was reissued after the ‘favour found with the Public’ as a single volume in an Australian edition in 1885. There can be little doubt that it and John Stanley James’ Occident and Orient: Sketches on Both Sides of the Pacific encouraged others to visit the Orient. These books are valuable windows into how Australians saw not only the Orient, but also themselves. Hingston and James consistently muse about the nature of what they are seeing and how this nature can be translated into their own lives, spiritually and geographically.
Not all Australian tourists were so perceptive. Herbert Syme, the son of the proprietor of the Melbourne *Age*, David Syme, visited India twice, the first time in the company of Alfred Deakin. He left a record of his second visit in 1895 in the form of a ‘Diary’ for his family. The ‘Diary’ was clearly written after the event, its foolscap card pages illustrated with photographs. Syme’s observations give us an insight into how some wealthy Anglo-Australian travellers reacted to what they saw. Absent are the philosophical musings of others such as Hingston and Deakin.

One thing that their visits to the Orient revealed to these men was that there was no such geographical entity as ‘The Orient’. Although they may have still used such the English nomenclatures as ‘The Middle East’ and ‘The Far East’, they took care to distinguish between these various Orients. Each land was different and entire to itself. Sometimes this difference was imaginary, drawing on the imagery of such works as *The Arabian Nights* and the Judaic and Christian Scriptures; at other times it drew on wishful thinking that what they saw was the unspoiled “Merrie England” of past centuries transplanted to their North; and at yet other times they looked through the eyes of British imperialism. Their accounts clearly reveal that Edward Said’s proposition that Orientalism is concerned with the dominance of a monolithic Orient, an imaginary geography of half the world, inhabited by inferior peoples, is too sweeping. This is not to argue that all Australians were of like mind. Often, for example, there is little sense in the letters of Amy Madden and in the ‘Diary’ of David Syme that India - apart from the torments of its climate - is other than an imaginary place come to life for their benefit as Imperial visitors.

Other nineteenth-century Australians actually took up residence in the Orient. Mortimer Menpes’ *Japan: A Record in Colour* is a valuable insight of how
one of them attempted to look seriously at and appreciate the constituents of an
Oriental civilisation. At least as far as Japan was concerned, Menpes and his
American contemporary, Lafcadio Hearn, exhibited little sign of believing that they
were visitors from a superior civilisation. Hearn argued at length that the different
Japanese way of thinking was equally as philosophic and moralistic as that of the
Occident, and also that much spirituality existed in Japan.

Traditional Christianity had its followers, but for many the new scientific
discoveries and historical studies of the nineteenth century opened the door to
questioning whether the Bible revealed the literal truth when it came to questions
of morality and knowledge. The thesis examines how the gap left by religious
doubts were partly satisfied by Australian encounters with the Orient. By 1893,
Charles Pearson could write that religion would ‘gradually pass into a recognition
of ethical precepts and a graceful habit of morality’. The scientific spirit, he
thought, would ‘dissipate the larger part of traditional religion’. In National Life
and Character, Pearson attacked Christianity for failing to inculcate ‘humanity,
purity, and regard for family ties, except in a very general and abstract way’. But
were science and faith in progress enough to keep ‘our’ civilisation strong? He
thought not, and ended by suggesting that perhaps all that could be done was ‘to do
our work in life, and to abide the issue’ and ‘stand erect before the eternal calm as
cheerfully as our fathers faced the eternal unrest’. Such philosophical speculation
and advice did not appeal to everyone. There were those who genuinely felt a need
to fill the vacuum left with the weakening of their Christian faith. Spiritual inaction
was not enough. The chapter ‘Spiritual Quests and the Orient’ argues that in their
search for spirituality in the Orient, Australians perceived much that was good; but
also included is an examination of the more troubling aspects, and the unease
following their encounters. Some of the answers appeared to come from the Orient, but fortunately from that section containing the ‘Caucasian or Indo-European race’. Rather than the Bible figuring largely in the interpretation of the Orient, some Australians – notably Alfred Deakin – looked seriously at Hinduism and Buddhism. An amalgam of Indian beliefs had found its way into Theosophy, the rise and fall of which in Australia has been thoroughly documented by Jill Roe in *Beyond Belief: Theosophy in Australia 1879-1939*. Alfred Deakin at one stage was certainly interested in Theosophy. Annie Besant’s Australian lectures attracted large audiences, and the lectures themselves were published in book form in 1908.

To help understand the yearning spirituality of Alfred Deakin, apart from Deakin’s own *Temple and Tomb in India*, Al Gabay’s detailed exploration, *The Mystic Life of Alfred Deakin*, traces Deakin’s search for guidance and meaning. With Gabay’s examination of Deakin’s lifetime spiritual turmoil in mind, the reading of Deakin’s own Indian books is illuminated. His friend, W. H. Watt, went so far as to describe Deakin as having an ‘Oriental cast of mind’. Other biographies, Walter Murdoch’s, *Alfred Deakin: a sketch*, and J. A. La Nauze’s, *Alfred Deakin: a biography* (1965), also add considerably to our picture. Murdoch, an old friend of Deakin, paints a sympathetic portrait of the man; La Nauze gives us a larger, more academic portrait, although neither he nor Murdoch give more than a few pages to Deakin’s concern with India or his spiritual quests.

Another Australian resident in the Orient was George Morrison, who as a young man in Chinese dress walked across China into Burma. Later he became the Chinese correspondent for *The Times*. If we are to come to understand how some educated Australians such as Morrison felt about their own position as Australians, then his account of his walk, *An Australian in China: being the Narrative of a*
*Quiet Journey across China to British Burma*, his personal correspondence, and his 'Siege of the Legations' combine to present an Anglo-Australian who had a resolute view of himself as an Englishman, despite the title of his book.¹⁰⁶ His writings again reveal that Australians did not see the Orient as monolithic. They show that Australians were prepared to change their opinion when it suited their interests, particularly in what appeared to be matters of national security. In this manner, Morrison swung from being an ardent Japanophile to an ardent Japanophobe. C. P. Fitzgerald’s ‘Dr George Morrison and his Correspondence, An Appreciation’ and Lo’s editorial comments in Morrison G. E. and Lo Hui-Min, *The Correspondence of G. E. Morrison*, grapple with these concepts.¹⁰⁷ Cyril Pearl’s *Morrison of Peking* is different.¹⁰⁸ Although purporting to be a serious study, it is, in the words of another writer, Angus McDonald, little more than a hagiography.¹⁰⁹ Sterling Seagrave, *Dragon Lady: The Life and Legend of the Last Empress of China*, is very critical, accusing Morrison of deliberate distortion of events in China, particularly during the Boxer uprising, in order to further his own career. In the process, Morrison’s fabricated reports have become the ‘half-truths’ accepted until now.¹¹⁰ Whenever the occasion arises, Seagrave presents Morrison in unflattering terms. He was a man with ‘a wandering smile’; with ‘an ear for scurrilous rumour, medical gossip, and sexual innuendo’; a man who ‘misread all the signals and blundered backward into greatness’; a ‘voyeur entranced by lesbianism’; and a ‘devout racist’.¹¹¹ Somewhere in between Pearl and Seagrave is a complex Morrison presenting to himself and the West sometimes contradictory pictures of China and Japan.

*The School Paper* was a reader for Victorian State School children, many of whom would proceed no further in their education. It is an important source of how
Australian views were formed, for it was the principal tool in the teaching of reading to these pupils. Its passages would be read and studied until the teachers were satisfied that their students had mastered and understood the text. Between 1897 and 1902 it presented, if somewhat innocently, a mixture of racial intolerance and British imperialism in articles such as ‘Gordon in China’, ‘The Chinese at Home and Abroad’, ‘Japanese Customs’, and ‘England, a mother of nations’.

This primary school reader also offered confused pictures of Australian identity and romantic Oriental fantasy in articles like ‘India and the Indian Mutiny’ and ‘Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves: a story from the "Arabian Nights"’. Documents such as The School Paper are important, for they are evidence of how Australians were taught to think about the regions to their north-west. These pupils were among those who after leaving school, joined the trade unions, and who were involved in the anti-Asian labour protests during the coming decades of White Australia.

White Australia and the fears that led up to the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1901 is the subject of an important study, Australia's Outlook on Asia, by Werner Levi. At the time Professor of Political Science, the University of Minnesota, Levi took a position that Australians saw themselves in an outpost of Empire surrounded by hostile enemies. They measured everything by this and the distance from Britain, including the ‘Far East’. Convinced Japanese imperialism in Pacific had begun, Australians concluded that only federation could successfully contain the dangers that had arisen in Australia's neighbourhood. As will be shown in this thesis, Levi’s argument is not entirely satisfactory, because it ignores the way Australian travellers to the ‘Far East’ made their journeys with little more difficulty than that of a voyage ‘Home’. Levi also ignores the fervent welcome given to the various Japanese squadrons on the occasions of their visits to
Australia. There is agreement, however, with Levi's further argument that by 1912 Japan was seen as an enemy by many Australians, who feared that without the assistance of British naval units in Pacific waters they would be at the mercy of a Japanese-Chinese military invasion.\textsuperscript{116} Levi's argument is strengthened by the detailed examination of the military situation, particularly Australian fears about the growing power of the Japanese navy and the consequences stemming from the Anglo-Japanese Alliances of 1902 and 1905 in D. C. S. Sissons' MA thesis, 'Attitudes to Japan and Defence 1890-1923'.\textsuperscript{117} The thesis is thus an early and important contribution to the literature. Rather than simply accepting as a given that Australia was in a state of panic, Sissons theorises a number of responses varying from the dismissal by the military of the immediate threat of invasion to near hysteria in some quarters. He quotes Hutton, the General Officer Commanding the Military Forces in 1904. Hutton's view was that the Japanese success had changed the situation. This did not necessarily mean invasion, but Hutton was sure that Japan and China were looking longingly at Australia.\textsuperscript{118} Sissons further demonstrates a change in attitude in the Labor Party, which went from anti-militarism and pacifism to enthusiastic support for compulsory training. Sissons suggests this came through an increased fear shown by the increased membership and influence of Australian National Defence League, which advocated compulsory military training and increased naval defence because of the Japanese menace.\textsuperscript{119}

J. V. D'Cruz, in \textit{The Asian Image in Australia: Episodes in Australian History}, takes up the story of Australian fears, particularly those of the Chinese.\textsuperscript{120} He argues that the constant reporting of the bloodshed in the Indian Mutiny was responsible for the anti-Chinese feelings seen in the restrictive New South Wales
Chinese Immigration Bill. He further posits that these feelings continued, citing the
use of such phrases as ‘yellow hordes’. The problem here is a confusion of cause
and effect. It is not enough to say that because parallels can be found in time that
this is proof of causality. Nevertheless, D’Cruz’ work is useful in establishing the
connection between Anglo-Indian and Australian insecurity. Furthermore, it also
raises the issue of how this thesis should approach the research.

Essentially, the methodology employed in this thesis is to go ‘ad fontes’,
not to define the ‘real’ meaning of the various contemporary texts, but to suggest
‘possible’ explanations, both to the Australians of the period and to contemporary
readers.

Illustrating one of the difficulties facing the researcher attempting the ‘ad
fontes’ approach is a much lengthier work dealing with Australians and the
Chinese than that of D’Cruz. The sequel to Sojourners, it is an account of the
Chinese-Australian relationship from 1888, Citizens Flowers and the Wide Sea by
Eric Rolls. The book is about the Chinese domiciled in Australia, and covers
subjects from work to culture. Rolls eschews the academic approach:

I do not annotate my books because I work from such a huge mass of material that it would
take me at least a couple of years to annotate Sojourners and Citizens and I am unwilling to
lose the next book in self-justification. In research for the next book I came across a simple
one-sentence statement by a scientist that one might have expected him to reach in the
course of years of work, yet he assembled twenty-two witnesses to support him. This
seems to be saying, ‘I know nothing; here is the source of my writing.’ I could find as
many props for some of the statements in these books and what is intended as a work of
literature would become and exercise in methodology. I take full responsibility for the
knowledge that I have accumulated.121

Herein lies the problem. Citizens is very detailed and at the same time easy to read.
But how much of it is accurate? The lack of references has nothing to do with
Rolls’ taking full responsibility. He misreads the necessity to provide such
references, which are there not only to support a particular argument. They are also there in order for others to see if there might be a different interpretation. Rolls makes the claim, for example, that by 1891 Chinese of all ages comprised about twenty percent of the adult male population and they made up nearly about twenty percent of the workforce. This figure seems very high. The lack of reference not only precludes the figure being used in this thesis, the figure may also slip into the public perception as accurate. It may or may not be. Geoffrey Blainey asked how Rolls had arrived at the conclusion in *Sojourners* that on the goldfields ‘the Chinese suffered no more sickness than anyone else.’ Blainey rightly pointed out that years of research would be necessary to arrive at this conclusion. Rolls’ explanation is another example of his disregard for documented argument:

> In going through thousands of newspapers from all over Australia, I kept a tally of the percentages either in my head or on slips of paper. Since they varied little it seemed altogether reasonable to make the statement.

However, providing the reader approaches *Citizens* with a degree of caution, Rolls supplies interesting vignettes of Chinese life in Australia, even if they are often unqualified and without comment. *Citizens* fulfils Rolls’ understanding of the historian’s task:

> The amount of time that academic historians spend discussing the work of predecessors and contemporaries seems to be an inordinate waste of time. A historian’s job ought to be to read everything that can be found to read on the subject, to decide what happened and then tell it as a good story.

That being said, this thesis makes sparing use of *Citizens*.

> Given the nature of qualitative research, the thesis makes no claim that the outcomes cannot be interpreted in other ways; that the writer has decided what happened and has told it as a good story. For example, it will soon become apparent that the research has concentrated almost entirely on male Australians and
their perceptions, including the engendering of the Orient as a seductively feminine place. This is not to deny that Australian women thought about and travelled to the Orient. Many obviously did. The thesis concentrates on men for a number of reasons, the least important of which is the limitation of the thesis length. Much more important are the following considerations. Firstly, the period was very much one of male domination, both in social and public life. The racial theories of the period certainly inherited the idea that the male gender was both physically stronger and morally superior. At the simplest level this was made clear: at Sunday School children were taught that in Eden, Eve had weakly surrendered to the serpent and had then set about tempting Adam. As a consequence of this inherent tendency to disorderly conduct, there was a general acceptance that men should command and women obey. Even the Christian marriage service confirmed this. Men therefore held public office and the most responsible positions in employment.

A result of the foregoing is that most of the documentation in the public domain is that composed by men. An obvious example of this is the work of Alfred Deakin, the parliamentarian and journalist sent on official Age business by David Syme. Another good example can be seen in Charles Pearson. Not only was he a politician with access to material, he had also been the Principal of the Presbyterian Ladies College, Melbourne. This last position is an illustration of just how dominant were men in high office. Secondly, women did travel, but because this was in a private capacity their letters either remained in the families or were often discarded. That women travelled to the Orient is clear from the letters of Ruby Madden in the National Library of Australia. It is more difficult, therefore, to demonstrate women’s perceptions when their letters are generally absent from the
public domain. Such a case can be seen in my mother’s paternal family. A very
large collection of Cumming letters was given to the State Library of Victoria in
1973. These letters cover the period 1850-1891. Not one of these letters is from
Georgina Cumming, yet I have vague memories of her telling me about her travels
when I was a boy. The only remaining artefacts from her interest in the Orient are
some Japanese curios in my possession and a book by John Clark Marshman:
Memoirs of Major-General Sir Henry Havelock, K.C.B., awarded to her at the
‘Ladies’ College’ as ‘First Prize: Health 1879’. Havelock helped suppress the
Indian Mutiny. Likewise on my mother’s maternal family, my great-aunts, Sybil
and Patricia Blundell, travelled to Ceylon, India and Algeria. The only record of
their experiences is Patricia’s photograph album, c.1907, in my possession.

Clearly, there is an equally important feminist viewpoint, and very probably
this could throw up entirely different interpretations. In Duty Free: Australian
Women Abroad, Ros Pesman also points to the letters and diaries that are probably
‘stored away in trunks, attics and basements’.125 If oral histories are to be recorded,
then no time should be lost, for very few, if any, female travellers from the period
are still alive. There may nevertheless be value in interviewing people who
remember the stories told to them by these women. However impressionistic these
hearsay accounts may be, some picture will emerge. Whatever the case, Pesman
notes that when European women travelled, they always did so ‘at the behest of
men’.126 Her exploration demonstrates that Australian women, even if within the
constraints of the conventions and expectations of the time, were pursuing wider
agendas rather than that of a single ‘woman’s trip’, and were thus more
independent than those of their European cousins.127 Focussing her examination on
the travels of Australian women to Europe, Pesman claims that the main purpose of
European travel was to acquire the culture that was lacking in new settler societies, as well as sharing the status of the women’s British counterparts. This was true where social manners were concerned, but worth exploring is the possibility that Australian women were also genuinely interested in Oriental culture for its own sake, rather than simply seeing it as a curiosity or in the same light as the fashionable japonalia. Even if the majority of travellers merely touched it en route to Europe, Pesman notes that some Australian women deliberately journeyed to the Orient. Among the former were Australian women furthering their careers by foreign study, such as Isla Bloomfield, who set out to China to learn more about the treatment of infectious diseases. Another woman, Mary Gaunt, besides attempting to escape the restraints of looking after her aging parents, travelled to China to meet ‘her need to explore the world in the manner of her brothers’. If this is correct, then further research could examine whether other women travelled to the Orient for the same reasons as Bloomfield or Gaunt, and whether their perceptions once there were different from those of men.

The male, upper-middle class Australian perceptions of Orientals and the Orient can be found in the verbatim printed interviews and comments of “Lauderdale” in *Punch’s Illustrated Interviews* of 1904. The interviewees, were all members of the parliament, including Alfred Deakin, and as such wielded considerable influence. Given the dominance of the husband in the Victorian and Edwardian family structure, their views may also have been held by their wives and daughters. Generally, the interviewees are condescending rather than fearful of Orientals. The Japanese, for example, were industrious, little brown men, ‘the least of many evils’. These interviews do more than simply record facile judgments. They make available the background that led to the formation of the men’s views.
“Lauderdale” coaxes his subjects, more often than not with flattery, unwittingly to expose their Weltanschauung for all to see.

Three recent books about Australia’s encounter with Asia, Alison Broinowski’s, The Yellow Lady: Australian Impressions of Asia (1992), Robin Gerster’s Hotel Asia (1995), and David Walker’s Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia 1850-1939 (1999), contribute much to our understanding. The authors examine Australian responses to Asia over a much longer time frame than this thesis, and are therefore necessarily broader in their brushstrokes. Broinowski’s work is groundbreaking insofar that it brought Australian-Asian encounters to a wide modern audience. Her examination concentrates on Australian literary and artistic perceptions of Asia. Although Broinowski attempts to define where Asia begins and ends, definition is important here. As her ‘Asia’ does not include the Holy Land, it is not encompassing as the ‘Orient’ of this thesis. The thesis, however, supports her conclusion that Asia is neither geographically nor culturally monolithic. Nonetheless, Both Broinowski and Walker assume that the Orient and Asia are one and the same, rather as Ang and Stratton have done, and therefore barely touch on North Africa and the Middle East. Gerster, however, includes extracts from C. E. W. Bean’s guide book for soldiers: What to Know in Egypt. He makes the point that Bean reflected a view that Eastern disease and immorality was more dangerous for the Australian soldiers than the actual enemy. The thesis, in ‘Dirt and Erotica’ further develops this notion of Oriental impurity to show how it became a distinguishing mark between the Self and the Other.

Within the limitations of ‘Asia’, Broinowski presents a broad overview of how Australians perceived, borrowed or rejected ‘Asian’ culture. Thus her subjects
include Chinoiserie and Japonisme and their influence on the Heidelberg painters, silent film, the invasion narrative, and theatre

The ‘chronological core’ of Broinowski’s study attempts to trace ‘the progressive fragmentation of ‘Asia’ into many conflicting and disputable impressions of various countries and millions of individual humans.’ In order to do this, the examination rests on the claim that for ‘more than a century most settler Australians defined Asia not as many diverse countries but as one and as a generalised source of threat.’ This present thesis, whilst acknowledging that many Australians felt threatened by the Orient, contends that they did not all see ‘Asia’ as a ‘generalised source of threat.’ Instead the contention is that when Australians felt threatened, they perceived the danger as coming specifically from China and Japan, the ‘yellow races’. Nor does this thesis agree with Broinowski’s generalisation about ‘most settler Australians’. The generalisation, drawn from artistic sources, is like the curate’s egg: good in parts. Certainly some, perhaps many settler Australians felt uneasy at times about China and Japan, but this does not mean that they always thought this way about ‘Asia’ as a whole. It is clear from reading accounts of the various lands of the Orient, that travellers like Hingston and Deakin felt reasonably comfortable amongst ‘Orientals’. Their articles, published first in newspapers and then as books, throw doubt on Broinowski’s assertion that it was not until the mid-1960s that ‘these Antipodean images were widely challenged’.

As the first anthology that brings together what seems to be a comprehensive view of Australian ‘literary travelling to the East’ from the last half of the nineteenth century to the 1990s, Robin Gerster’s Hotel Asia is an important assessment of Australia’s contact with the Orient. As with Broinowski before him
and Walker after him, Gerster covers a much wider time-frame than this present thesis. He has assembled the anthology into historical and social perspectives, each section introduced by editorial comments.

But as with any anthology, one of the difficulties facing Gerster is that of selection. Taking the view that Australians looked at Asia through an Orientalism closely resembling that of Said and Broinowski, he has chosen writing that fits both this proposition and his agreement with Broinowski that Asia-Pacific geography was less important for the formulation of an Australian identity than was European history:

Colonial Australian writers subscribed to prevailing imperial ideologies in their fetish with Asia as not only essentially and irretrievably ‘different’, but as backward, degenerate, barbarous. As, in short, ‘uncivilised’ and in dire need of Britain’s benign influence.\(^\text{138}\)

This present thesis does not take such a dogmatic stance.

To defend his position, Gerster claims the structure of *Hotel Asia* implies a critical and interpretive perspective of Australian travel writing.\(^\text{139}\) About Hingston, for example, he comments that the journalist ‘spent much of ten months’ travelling in the East in 1879 trying not to be seduced by Asia’s ‘vicious sensualities’.\(^\text{140}\) But was this so? Hingston certainly alluded to sensual aspects of the Orient, such as the houris he came across in his travels, but most of *The Australian Abroad* exhibits a far wider curiosity and a willingness to see the Orient through fresh eyes. And although at times Hingston finds some Oriental behaviour not up to the standard of British civilisation, he does not continually lump together his hosts as ‘backward, degenerate, barbarous’. Such epithets were reserved for the universally hated Turks and for special occasions, such as visiting the sites of the Indian Mutiny. Elsewhere there is generally a sense of meeting people on their own terms, nowhere more so than in Japan. It would be misleading, however, to give the impression that
Gerster’s comments should be ignored. Qualitative, literary interpretation does not and cannot lead to a ‘correct answer’, but is always subject to review and modification by others. This being so, I believe that Gerster is on firmer ground when he recognises the imperialist George Morrison writing ‘as an Englishman’ in his report of the Siege of the Legations.¹⁴¹ When editorialising about foreign correspondents such as Morrison, however, Gerster takes the position that for Australians

   Bad news from Asia is good news because it makes Australians feel better about themselves. Australia might be a bit dull, but at least it’s ‘civilised’. Whereas over there…¹⁴²

Once again, this is a little too selective. Even if bad news has this effect on Australians, such news is not confined to Asia. One could just as easily say that bad news from Bosnia or Kosovo awakens the same feelings in Australians. Moreover, this generalisation should be further qualified: depending on the ethnic background, not all Australians will react the same way, although some Australians may have their feelings of racial superiority re-enforced thereby. Thus Gerster is too exclusive when dealing with Asia, and too inclusive when dealing with Australians. Nevertheless, providing the reader bears these comments in mind as well as the problems associated with interpretation, Hotel Asia clearly demonstrates that Australian travel writing over the years has not been myopically absorbed with the European travel experience.

As already indicated, this thesis is concerned with how Australians viewed race in their coming to terms with their own European heritage and Australia’s geographical position. In Writing the Colonial Adventure: Race, Gender and Nation in Anglo-Australian Popular Fiction, 1875-1914, Robert Dixon concerns himself with how Australia was seen as a place of adventure in literature.
Concentrating on the single cultural aspect of Australian narrative writing, he interweaves the notions of imperialism, masculinity, adventure and romance as expressed in the ‘ripping yarn’. Most of Dixon’s discourse is not concerned with South-East-Asia. His examination of texts that are set in ‘the borderlands of the new Australian nation’, including those of imagined invasions, leads to an understanding of how these novels helped in the process ‘to centre the nation by narrating the limits of its territory and civility’. Dixon argues that the ‘paranoid, masculine’ invasion narratives of the first decade with their radical inconsistency, facility and fallibility are important measures for modern readers to apply to ‘a way of grasping the work of such discourses in shaping the nation’. Australian perceptions of the Orient are as inconsistent as these texts. This thesis argues, for example, that Deakin’s views about the Orient varied according to time and place, even if, as Dixon points out, he was closely associated with the Lone Hand.

Walker’s Anxious Nation, although a more detailed and penetrating history of Australian encounters and responses to Asia than either The Yellow Lady, Hotel Asia, or Writing the Colonial Adventure, is an immensely readable account. Its central proposition is that from the late nineteenth century there was a growing belief that developments in Asia would have increasing impact on Australia. By examining a range of Asia-related political and philosophical discourses not discussed by Broinowski, Walker presents the reader with a more comprehensive view of Australia and Asia, very carefully documenting his sources.

The theme of Australian-Asian relations is discussed within a much wider setting than is the case in The Yellow Lady and Hotel Asia. Walker enlarges the vision to include the interaction between the Occident and the Orient. Thus attention, for example, is paid to the views of Theodore Roosevelt, from which can
arise a complex discussion about Australian views of femininity, masculinity and race when confronted by the notion that Australia’s future was bound up with Asia: the ‘Awakened East’. Walker introduces the views of influential men like Pearson and Deakin, to see how they perceived the geo-political threat of awakening Asia in the 1880s led to fears of racial annihilation. What follows is a penetrating discussion of the interweaving of climate, the need for a larger population, and the debate about whether the male or female principle would determine the course of Australian life. Walker shows how Australians became increasingly apprehensive in the face of the ‘Yellow Peril’, and how the perception grew that the proximity to Asia required them to work and behave differently to other Europeans.

Walker pushes his readers to follow up his sources, providing them with the philosophical bases for how Australians viewed the Orient. This present thesis extends these bases. For example, where Walker discusses the ‘Antique Orient’ in terms of history and imagination, the thesis enlarges the discussion to show that the very antiquity of its customs and monuments revealed to some Australians that the Orient, rather than in stasis or decline, was vibrant and flourishing. Paradoxically, these same civilisations exhibited at the same time cultural aspects that seemed never to change, such as the enduring patience of the Egyptian fellah, the Indian ryot, and the Chinese peasant. Paradoxically, too, the ruins and the ancient monuments spoke of how mighty principalities and powers could disappear. Thus Australians could compare their own Occidental civilisation far away from Europe with that which they saw in the Orient. The thesis also extends Anxious Nation in the more detailed examination of the effects of the Indian Mutiny. Additionally, the thesis includes the further step of arguing that Australians took sieges as a metaphor for their own isolation from the metropole. Neither Gerster nor Walker
question what Morrison was doing in his report of the Siege of the Legations. They accept his report on face value, not contrasting it with others in order to question his motives or to place such reports in a more theoretical framework. The thesis also presents a more complex picture of Hingston and Deakin’s conflicting perceptions of how the Orient enlarged their understanding of human nature. Clearly both Broinowski and Walker touch on many aspects of this thesis, but neither to any great extent examine the fundamental propositions of Edward Said to see whether they apply to Australian encounters. Walker briefly argues that Said’s ‘Otherness’ parallels the notion that in generally Australians have been establishing that ‘Australia was neither Aboriginal nor Asian’ and that as a result, much energy was therefore expended in setting up barriers between Australia and Asia. This thesis looks more closely at Said’s Orientalist arguments, particularly where power and domination may or may not come into play, for these cannot be separated from his understanding:

... Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism, as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. Fundamental to this understanding is the idea of a single Orient formed in the Occidental imagination, ‘what I call an imaginative geography’. In a companion volume of the same name to the 1997 Art Gallery of New South Wales’ exhibition, Orientalism : Delacroix to Klee, Roger Benjamin makes the point that although the ‘Orient’ was a mythical place, at least for many nineteenth-century Europeans it had a precise location in the desert countries of North Africa and the Middle East. Thus with the mythical, his definition accords with that of Said’s Orientalism, although the precise location is at variance. Benjamin also parallels Said in his discussion of the cultural misunderstanding which occurs in the
‘Oriental mirage’, when the ethnocentrism of the painter, the traveller or the photographer ‘invariably skews the image.’¹⁴⁹ Travellers such as James Hingston, who saw the Holy Land and Japan as they wished to see it, support Benjamin’s ‘Oriental mirage’. But as with Said, Benjamin remains focussed on a narrow conception of the Orient, Benjamin’s defined by the mainly European paintings of Orientalism. It was not until the nineteenth century that it became associated with a mainly French genre of painting. Before that, Orientalism described the work of the scholars and members of the Asiatic Society of Bengal and the related administration of Sir William Jones of the East India Company during the late eighteenth century.¹⁵⁰

It is against such a background that this present thesis looks at Australians and the worlds of the Orient that they discovered. It suggests that for them the Orient was no unified, imaginary entity. The wide variety of their experiences opened up many discourses, running the gamut from the laudatory and the inspirational to the mysterious and fearful. Their discourses were an essential part of Australians coming to terms with their own increasing sense of national identity, as well as their perceived growing isolation from Britain. The intervening years between then and now saw a resurgence of Australian identification with Britain, but since the Second World War, this identification has undergone considerable change. The discourses examined in this thesis are therefore important in helping present-day Australians examine themselves vis-à-vis the complexities of the Orient today, in which once more they are attempting to define their place and role.
41 Ibid, p.67.
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.
53 As examples of this knowledge of the Bible, the author of this thesis has inherited three family Bibles. One was obtained by a Presbyterian, John Cumming, in 1868 from the Religious Tract Society. Another is inscribed ‘To Frank Cumming from his Mother. Psalm 119.9. 1880’. Another is inscribed ‘Martin Petrie Blundell Jr. St. Kilda 10 January 1857. John 5th Ch & 9th V Acts 17th Cha 11 V’ Such inscriptions point to a familiarity with the contents. The Blundell Bible, as well as recording the births in the family from 1846 to 1890, also contains five more chapter and verse notes on the endpaper. The Blundelles belonged to the Church of England. There is also a copy of *A New and Complete Concordance to the Holy Scriptures on the Basis of Cruden*. This was the twenty-eighth edition, published in 1867, but the purchase date is unclear. The volume first belonged to John Cumming, but is later inscribed by his daughter in her own hand, ‘Grace V McKellar’. This dates her inscription towards the latter years of the nineteenth century, which in turn is another indication of the familiarity that some Australians had with the contents of their religious scriptures.
57 Ibid, fn. p.69.
60 Ibid, p.160.
64 Ibid, pp.4-5.
65 Ibid, pp.97-100.
82 Ibid, p.91.
91 Ibid, pp.xiii, xv.
93 Ibid; John Stanley James, "The Vagabond", *Occident and Orient: Sketches on Both Sides of the Pacific*, Melbourne, George Robertson, 1882.
94 Herbert Syme, Diary 1895 [manuscript], National Library of Australia, MS 6751.
100 Ibid, p.211.
101 Ibid, p.344.
103 Tregenza, Professor of Democracy, Op. Cit.,
108 Cyril Pearl, Morrison of Peking, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1967.
111 Ibid, pp.6, 7, 274, 280, 425.
116 Ibid, p.36.
118 Ibid, pp.33-34.
119 Ibid, pp.72-4.
123 Ibid, pp.ix-x.
124 Ibid, p.552.
127 Ibid, pp.9.
129 Ibid, p.158.
130 Ibid, p.58.
131 Ibid, p.68.
135 Ibid, p.xiii.
136 Ibid, p.16.
137 Ibid, p.17.
144 Ibid, pp. 13, 137, 143-4.
147 *This is Social Thought: Interview with Edward Said*, Op. Cit.
149 Ibid.
150 Ibid, pp.3-4.
CHAPTER 1.

TRAVEL

The returned traveller to Australia comes back to it a wiser and gladder man.¹

On a visit in 1904 to the home of Robert Harper, Esq., M. H. R., “Lauderdale” noticed ‘an immense number of splendid specimens of Japanese art’. Harper responded, ‘Yes, I collected all these during the time I had my health trip, you know,’ claiming that his health had broken down because of constant attendance at the first Parliament of the Commonwealth. An opponent had drawn attention to his absence, but ‘after long confinement to my room, I was ordered to take a sea voyage, and, what is more, the House voted me leave of absence; but, even so, I am happy to say the record of my attendance has been better than that of my opponent, Mr. Reid’.²

Just as Reid drew attention to Harper’s absence from Parliament, so Harper in his turn draws our attention to a fundamental shift in Australian travel that occurred during the nineteenth century. Australians had become tourists, and their itinerary included the Orient. In this way, Australians confirmed their supposed knowledge of the Orient, but at other times found this knowledge sitting uncomfortably with notions of what they had expected. There were contradictions between their own imperial sureties and the overwhelming antiquity of the lands they visited. At times, these Oriental civilisations seemed to reveal truths at least as old as their own Christianity in such monuments as Borobudur in Java and Indian ‘documents carved in permanent characters, incapable of being falsified, and placing us at once en rapport with the place and people’.³ The Orient was not just Edward Said’s imaginative imperial construction to be dominated, where ‘the
ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority’ could be seen. A future Australian Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin, marvelled at the ruins of the Kootub Minar: its only Western rival was Giotto’s campanile. Such monumental engineering cast doubt on the conventional Orientalist notions of Western pre-eminence.

That Australians were interested in the traveller’s tale becomes very clear from the popularity of accounts in the press. Not only James Hingston, but John Stanley James (“The Vagabond”), and Alfred Deakin wrote books that were first published as a series of articles, James’ tour of California and the East appearing in the Argus and the Australasian, and Deakin’s account of India in the Age. Travellers’ tales, ancient and modern, illuminate life. They are explanations of who and what we are, defining our sense of place and purpose. The stars and the gods who inhabit the dark worlds of the night heavens travel on their silent journeys. Even today, the constellations bear mythological names. If the heavenly journeys are those of the immortals, so human journeys become a metaphor for life itself. We travel from birth to death, each new experience the equivalent of a place visited. In this manner, Homer’s Odyssey is not simply a story of the adventures of Odysseus on his way home to Ithaca from Troy, and not just the places he visits and the people and gods he meets; rather, through the adventures of the hero we can experience our own struggles writ large.

Apart from Græco-Roman mythology, Europeans - and this includes Anglo-Australians - have taken for their own the Oriental Biblical mythology. In the Old Testament, there is the expulsion journey of Adam and Eve. Noah sails over the great waters. Moses and the Israelites flee from Egyptian bondage to freedom in the Promised Land of Israel. The Christian New Testament starts with
journeys: the Magi from the East, and the flight of the Holy Family. Christ is continually on the move, and while doing so he tells the parables of ‘The Good Samaritan’ and ‘The Prodigal Son’, in both of which the main protagonist is on journey. Christians read about Christ’s descent into Hell, and then the ascent into Heaven. Finally, in the Acts of the Apostles Christians read about how these men travelled abroad from the Holy Land. Such tales teach Christians that they must become pilgrims through life. The Australian traveller and pilgrim, James Hingston, armed with the Bible as his guidebook and The Canterbury Tales in mind, explored Palestine in the 1870s. The Canterbury Tales, written by Chaucer around 1386-87, is the archetypal English pilgrimage adventure. Hingston, in his The Australian Abroad On Branches From The Main Routes Round The World, first published in 1879, speaks of his own journey from Joppa to Jerusalem, a distance of some forty miles: ‘It is Chaucer’s Canterbury Pilgrim procession shifted into the present time.’ The pilgrimage was so hard in that harsh land, that ‘I am glad that I am of the country whose prevalent faith requires none’. Even earlier, he had wryly commented, ‘We are all pilgrims, in fact, and our trouble is to know from whence and wither bound. Travel helps to make us very tolerant. Until the day comes when we shall know who and what are right, whom is he that shall say that others and their doings are wrong?’ Before this, reflecting on a view in another city that seemed to be the original of the Willow Pattern plate, Hingston remarked that Shanghai was dirty and ugly, with the exception of ‘this water and willow tea-house’ which was ‘a shrine that makes a pilgrimage to it as excusable as any pilgrimage ever made!’

An earlier English writer, somewhere between 1666 and 1672, John Bunyan, had also used the Christian metaphor in his Pilgrim’s Progress.
Overcoming all obstacles, his hero, Christian reaches his final goal, the accomplished journey a metaphor for the good life. It is not unreasonable to assume that many nineteenth-century Australian travellers would have been familiar with this work, although perhaps the subsequent second part about the pilgrimage of Christian’s wife would have not been so well known to them. What we can be sure of when we read Hingston’s account of his Oriental travels is that he expects his readers to be thoroughly familiar with the Bible, which is the ‘guide-book for the longer journey of life’.  

Most educated Australian travellers would have read or been told about the epic journeys of such men as Marco Polo, Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama. Additionally, there was the model before them of the voyage of Captain Cook. Clearly, however, there is a difference between these journeys and that of Hingston. Hingston undertakes his for pleasure. Hingston is a modern man: a tourist. Neither Polo, nor Columbus, nor da Gama, nor Cook were tourists. Neither were those convicts – either time-expired or escaped – who made their way from the Colony of New South Wales to India. As discussed in the ‘Introduction,’ masters of unloaded ships that had brought supplies from India to New South Wales took back with them small numbers of these men, much to the annoyance of the authorities in India.

Another model for the Australian traveller was that of the Grand Tour marking the entire class of British ‘gentlemen’. It was part of the process of enlightenment that in time became the universal experience of the modern tourist. Hingston’s tour on ‘Branches From The Main routes Round The World’ is a Grand Tour that in the process of discovering the ‘Other’ is also a process of self-discovery by the wealthy in eighteenth-century England. Other similarities are not
hard to find. Firstly, only the moneyed classes could undertake such foreign travel; and secondly, the Grand Tour – or in the Australian case, travel ‘Home’ to Britain – was part of the finishing touches to middle and upper-class education. But as James Buzzard points out, Western culture became associated with masculinity and imperial expansion. Tourism was more often seen as a feminine pursuit. In the Australian context, Ros Pesman, David Walker and Richard White argue that such a distinction can be found in Australian travel. Men were the brave adventurers in Asia or the Pacific. European travel was mostly the preserve of women. In support of this, perhaps Oriental adventures such as that in Sir Richard Burton’s *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al Madinah and Meccah*, (1865), would have more likely to have been read and emulated by men than women in a society that was bound more by class and gender than today’s. Indeed, Burton’s writings about Arab and Indian sexual habits – *The Perfumed Garden: of the Shaykh Nefazui* and *The Kama Sutra of Vatsayana*, (1883), were unlikely reading matter for genteel, upper-middle class ladies, instead belonging more to the library retreats of their cigar-smoking husbands. Pesman, Walker and White point in addition to the notion in Victorian society that ‘Home’ belonged to the sphere of women, and thus by extension, travel to England rather than to the Orient. In *Duty Free: Australian Women Abroad*, Pesman further enlarges the differences of travel between the genders.

It is men who have embarked on the heroic journeys of myth and literature, of exploration, of naming, of adventure, of quest, of discovery of the self and the world. The Grand Tour was a male rite-of-passage, a process of male acculturation and ‘sowing wild oats’. Travel was male territory and its metaphors were male-gendered; the language of travel is of conquering virgin territory, of penetrating the landscape, of knowing and possessing. That this is true can be seen in almost any nineteenth-century travel book. If we go no farther afield than James Hingston’s comment to his Melbourne audience,
quoted at the opening of this chapter, we can see that it certainly applied where
Australians were concerned.

Australia, at the bottom and far side of the world, had suffered from ‘the
tyrranny of distance’. Uncomfortable sailing ships were slow, and because they
were at the mercy of wind and tide, were also dangerous and unpredictable
compared to steamships. A voyage to Australia was quite literally a voyage to the
ends of the earth. The arrival of dependable steamships altered the very nature of
how Australians could now view the distance separating them from their European
metropole. In 1877, for example, the Argus reported that ‘The steamer, Stad
Amsterdam, of the Orient line, arrived here [Adelaide] this morning after a passage
of 47 days, having left Plymouth on October 31.’ When the Messageries steamer,
‘Ville de La Ciotat’, arrived in Melbourne on 6 January 1893, the Age noted that it
‘left Marseilles on 3rd December and experienced rough weather in the
Mediterranean, but from Port Said to port it was all that could be desired.’

The Suez Canal, opened in 1869 and viewed as Australia's lifeline, really
made it possible to contemplate a visit to England, that country upper-middle-class
Anglo-Australians called ‘Home’. When Herbert Syme travelled on ‘the good
ship Oceania’ to India in 1895, on board was an heiress from South Australia
‘going home to be presented you know’. Furthermore, steamships offered the
inducement of seeing the world for pleasure. The forerunners of the modern cruise
liners had been launched. Companies such as P&O offered berths, not only en
route to Europe, but also to the Orient. These mail-carrying ships gave passengers
the chance of shore excursions. Their very names invited Oriental fantasy: Bengal,
Coromandel, Ganges, Peshawar, and Mirzapone. Rather than charting a course
on a geographical Great Circle, the passage ‘Home’ might now take in Java, Singapore, India, Ceylon, and Egypt. Richard White, in 'Sun, Sand and Syphilis: Australian Soldiers and the Orient, Egypt 1914’ argues that because of this voyage to Britain, before 1914 Egypt was the most important representation of the Orient for Australians. He bases this argument on the idea that many of the travellers found relief from the monotony of shipboard life by taking side visits to Cairo and Luxor. Additionally, because Australia depended on the Suez Canal for commercial and strategic interests, British and Australian imperial interests coincided, dividing the world into ‘British, foreign and native’. Australians ‘still thought of Egypt as the Near East’.23

While this last may be correct, doubt must be cast on White’s argument about Egypt’s representing the Orient for most Australians. As argued throughout this thesis, Australians saw the Orient as a conflicting, multi-layered concept, each layer significant in different ways. The very fear of invasion from either China or Japan demonstrates just how large these two countries loomed. It can be more successfully argued, as Ros Pesman has done in Duty Free: Australian Women Abroad, that the majority of women travellers took the Suez route until the 1950s and 1960s.24 For these Australians, Egypt might well have represented the Orient.

Anglo-Australians soon took advantage of the new route to Britain. On Wednesday, 29 January 1851, George Russell of ‘Golf Hill’, Victoria, booked passage on the P&O Steamer ‘Hindustan’ from Calcutta to Suez at a cost of 1,000 rupees: about £100. On Tuesday, 4 February 1851, he noted in his diary that

She seems a fine large vessel, the largest steamer I have yet seen. She has three decks, upper, middle or main deck, & lower. The saloon is on the main deck, & is of considerable length, with a table running along each side & an open passage between, seats being placed on both sides of the tables, which can thus allow a great number to sit down to meals. The state rooms run along each side of the saloon, & would be comfortable for two passengers;
but they are all fitted with three sleeping places ... On the lower deck is another double row of sleeping cabins. Mine is one of those. A few days later, on Monday, 10 February 1851, he described the regular habits of passengers at sea: chess, backgammon, reading, walking the deck, discussions, while the children were ‘always gambolling about the deck’. When they were fortunate enough, the passengers had ‘a little music occasionally from some of the ladies, there being a piano on board’. En route to India, Deakin played quoits on deck. En route to India, Herbert Syme managed ‘thank goodness’ to avoid the two Indian men on board. Perhaps he occupied the time, as Deakin did, with quoits. The interior of the Ville de La Ciotat was similarly admired by the Age.

The music room is supplied with a grand piano, is beautifully furnished and is artistically decorated with illustrations of La Fontaine’s Fables. Mirrors are so arranged as to give the apartment a spacious appearance... Thus the voyage to England could be reversed in considerable luxury. Frederick Jobson, D. D., a Wesleyan Minister, published an account of his visit to Australia to attend the Australasian Methodist Conference, held in Sydney in January, 1861. Despite his wife being ‘of delicate frame’, she accompanied him in September as they ‘sailed in one of the Peninsular and Oriental Company’s steam-ships; and after lingering in Egypt and Ceylon, on our way, we reached Australia before the end of the year. Jobson describes the steamer “Ripon”; its ‘comfortable accommodation’; the activities on board – ‘there was considerable time left to the thoughtful and serious reading and reflection’; and his fellow passengers ‘of both sexes [who] were not sparing of the bitter-beer, any more than of wine and spirits; especially they who were returning to the thirsty plains of India; and the daily scene at table in the saloon was that of a brilliant assembly at a banquet. Amongst the passengers were ‘a few colonists returning, by the Overland Route, to Australia... From Suez, Charles Pearson wrote to his daughter Hilda that the captain of his ship took me to see a beautiful new French ship, the Oceanie, which is on her way to Melbourne and which has a splendid dining-room stretching all across the ship, and beautiful cabins with electric lights, and a drawing room with writing tables... Electric lights were a new marvel of the age. In Melbourne, Pearson’s city, the Australian Electric Company exhibited electricity for the first time in 1882,
illuminating Spencer Street Station in November. The City Council installed street lighting in the central business area on 8 March 1894.34 In the intervening year, the *Age* said of the ‘Ville de La Ciotat’

The ship is fitted throughout with electric light, and has a perfect installation. The electric globes in the saloon hang in rows from the ornamental ceiling, and the evening transforms itself into a fairy scene.35

The Suez route allowed Australians to remark the ‘Arabs’ without leaving the electric comfort of their ships. Charles Pearson wrote that in Aden the Arabs came on board with beautiful things to sell:

> gold-embroidered cloths and pretty shawls and ivory boxes and ostrich feathers. As the people on board our ship are all French and Germans, the Arabs do not ask them for as much money as they want the English to give...I bought some embroidered work, and got it very cheap, but then I took care not to speak French or German.36

At Suez, the Arabs were less accommodating, the ‘fishermen boating about the ship and people came on board as they did in Aden, only the things were not so good, and they asked higher prices.’37 Before him, James Hingston observed that the inhabitants of Port Said looked dishonest: ‘What their “last occupation” had been might be guessed at better than answered, and there was not a lady with “forty” on her painted face who would have declared to be more than twenty-five.’38

Comfortable travel was not confined to the England-Australia route. On 6 December 1890, Deakin noted in his India diary ‘Passed German Steamer & sighted Orient’.39 James Hingston noted in the *Argus* that his ship, ‘The City of Tokyo’ was ‘of the large size of 5,500 tons register’ which had ‘made a pleasant passage of 21 days’ from San Francisco to Yokohama.40 Discomfort, however, could still be present. On his voyages to India and back, Alfred Deakin experienced
nausea and seasickness from the bad weather, and the dreadful rolling and the pitching of the ships. The oppressive heat near the sub-continent added to his misery.41

By 1912, Burns, Philp and Company had established a regular shipping service to Japan. Australians could see for themselves ‘what our mother land might have been like in the days when it was called “merrie England” ’42 China also beckoned. The Orient was enticing Australia abroad to see the mysterious ‘Far East’ for themselves. It mattered not that the ‘Far East’ was really the ‘Far West’. Or did it? Australians set out to explore the world at their door. What better way to do this than first to arm themselves with the experience of others?

Hingston’s *The Australian Abroad* today has become almost ‘utterly unknown’,43 but there can be little doubt that it formed part of the essential reading of the would-be Anglo-Australian traveller during the latter decades of the nineteenth century. For Alfred Deakin, no travel writer could surpass ‘our bright and original “J. H.”’44

The first editions of two heavy volumes, published by Sampson Low, Marston Searle, and Rivington, London, were suitable only for reading in either a public library or in the comfort of one’s home. It could fairly be described as books for the armchair traveller. The Australian edition of 1886, published by William Inglis, was different. The two volumes were reduced to one small enough to accompany a traveller whose eyesight could stand the strain of deciphering the tiny print. Depending on the particular edition, bound in either yellow to red cloth, its cover was enticing. There, spyglass in hand, a bearded Australian gentleman, embossed all in gold, topee on head, sheltering under an umbrella, was riding a
camel resolutely into the desert. In the distance, shaded by a few palm trees and barely rising above the sand dunes, is the oasis whence he had come. Were this not enough to entice the traveller, on the spine of the volume stands a Chinaman in front of a pagoda. He is the very model of the Chinaman of the Orientalist imagination: pointed hat, long moustaches, embroidered silk robe, pantaloons, and on his feet slippers with curved up toes. Inside the front covers can be found advertisements further wetting the appetite for the Orient. The Union Steamship Company of New Zealand has ‘splendid steamships’ that are waiting to carry the traveller to the ‘South Sea Islands’. ‘The Original and Only SUGAR BONUS COMPANY in Australia’- the Foochow & Calcutta Tea Co., - is offering a special blend of unrivalled teas for 2s.6d. Inside the back cover are much of the same enticements. ‘The Calcutta Tea Association’s Pure, Unadulterated, Fragrant, Full-Bodied Teas made in the Indian gardens of old John Bull’ are much to be preferred to ‘the shady, insipid, doctored teas of John Chinaman’, which are ‘POISON IN THE CUP’ and ‘nearly as injurious to the consumers as the deadly Opium’. The publishers – William Inglis and Co., - were offering ‘OUR HERO’ (Life of General Gordon) … the eventful life of the ‘Christian Hero’ … at only sixpence a copy. Thus the book promised an Orient that was not only exotic in the true sense of the word, but was also had about it that hint and sniff of danger that one might expect in the mysterious East.

Despite the tongue-in-cheek admonition by its author in the Preface of the 1885 edition that ‘nothing in the way of a Guide Book was intended by the Author in these chapters of travel talk’, these Australian, pocket-sized editions could be so used. Tongue still firmly pressed, Hingston hopes that the book

may be a companionable one on any of the routes by which Australia is left, or by which it is reached … At sea or on land, on board ship, on the rail, by the bedside of the invalid, or
in the travelling bag of the tourist, the book is one equally adapted for the beguilement of otherwise unoccupied hours.\textsuperscript{45}

We should take Hingston’s comments about his Guide Book seriously. With good reason, he took no other guidebook with him except the Bible round the main branches of the world. A guidebook invests ‘reality’ into a tourist’s experience. It is often the first representation for the tourist. Additionally, with another’s vision in front of him, the tourist may find it difficult to distinguish between what is worthwhile and what is not.\textsuperscript{46} Such is the power of pre-suggestion, that it has now become a tourist cliché that the Taj Mahal is as beautiful by night as it is by day. As we shall see later on, it takes a traveller without the benefit of a guidebook, like George Russell, who can inspect the building for its construction faults rather than for its symbolism and beauty.

We know very little about James Hingston. There is, for example, no entry in the \textit{Australian Dictionary of Biography}. He is a lying English cockney in Hugh McCrae’s \textit{My Father and My Father’s Friends}, in which McCrae’s father believes that not a single, true word in Hingston’s writing.\textsuperscript{47} He may well have been correct in his aspersion, for Hingston himself warns his readers that travel books, presumably including his own, can lie. He has read, he says, of folks who wrote of riding on camel as easy, but camel riding to be enjoyed has to be commenced early in life, and the rider really should be wearing corsets ‘after the fashion of a modern belle… and I know the reason why’. The tourist will endure shaking, possibly followed by brain fever, and a loose tooth removed without forceps before end of journey. As for wigs, chimney pot-hats and spectacles, these would not be kept for two minutes. ‘Yet I have read in books of travel read of folks who wrote of riding on camel as if it were a thing of course’. The criminal code, he concludes, might be amended to include camel riding as well as stone-breaking.\textsuperscript{48}
The other account of Hingston is in Phillip Mennell’s *The Dictionary of Australasian Biography: comprising notices of eminent colonists from the inauguration of responsible government down to the present time (1855-1892)*. The details are scant. James Hingston was born in London, 1830, and arrived in Melbourne, 1852, to spend a year on the Victorian diggings. From 1853 onwards he served as a public notary and patent agent in Melbourne, all the while being a prolific contributor to local journals. Mennell continued,

His best-known productions are the series of articles entitled “Travel Talk” which appeared in the *Melbourne Argus* under the signature “J. H.” Two volumes of selections from these articles were published in London by Sampson Low & Co., in 1879 and 1880 under the title “The Australian Abroad,” and a colonial edition in one volume was published in Melbourne in 1885.\(^49\) Mennell was not correct, for the articles also appeared in the *Argus* under the pseudonym ‘A Victorian’.

His brother, E. P. Hingston, was the English editor for the American humorist, Charles Farrar Brown, better known as Artemus Ward.\(^50\) This is noteworthy, for in the *Saturday Review*, 8 October 1870, we read that ‘Mr. Mark Twain, as the author chooses to call himself, is a Californian humorist after the fashion of Artemus Ward’.\(^51\) In 1866, Ward had lectured in England about the American West, as well as contributing to *Punch* about how he saw English shrines. The pilgrim character in his contributions has an obvious echo in Twain’s *The Innocents Abroad*. The *Saturday Review* also took the occasion to refer somewhat disparagingly to American tourists.\(^52\)

Australians on tour sometimes met Americans, and in so doing discovered them to be better travelling companions than the British. The Australian Methodist pilgrims, John and Elizabeth Reed, *en route* from Baalbek to Jerusalem,
found, it must be confessed, Cousin Jonathan much more sociable than Brother John. It may just have happened, but so at any rate, it was, that the ‘Stars and Stripes’ meant much more in our wanderings than did the ‘Union Jack.’ John is often too reserved, waits for an introduction, and had perhaps the bump of conservative caution over-developed, and so passes by on the other side. Jonathan says, ‘Good day! Glad to see you! Where did you come from?’ And when you have responded to such friendliness and exchanged cards, he says, ‘Come right along; share with us.’

An 1870 edition of *The Innocents Abroad*, entitled *The New Pilgrim’s Progress* with an ‘Introduction’ by Edward P. Hingston, cheekily placed the book in the orbit of Bunyan’s earlier work. With this in mind, it does not take too much imagination to see the connection between *The Innocents Abroad* and *The Australian abroad*. It is instructive, therefore, to take a closer look at Twain’s volume, and in the process understand from where it draws its inspiration, and the further similarities between it and the Australian work. Before we do so, we should also note that Hingston himself was compared with Twain in several reviews reproduced in the Australian editions of *The Australian abroad*.

Hingston’s book, said the *Daily News*, is ‘quaintly original, facile in style, showing novel powers of observation … all the originality of the Mark Twain writings …’

The *Home News*, 13 February 1880, praised Hingston thus: ‘Crisp, fresh and racy, he reminds of Mark Twain and yet shows the sober earnestness of the genuine Anglo-Saxon’. In a later issue, 10 November 1880, the *Home News* lauded Hingston:

And if he lacks that quaintness of style which the American writer has made peculiarly his own … he displays an innate veneration for things sacred, the absence of which makes ‘The Innocents Abroad’ more than distasteful to the cultivated mind.”

The Illustrated London News noted
Nor is the writer humourous only; he can be pithy, picturesque, and even eloquent upon occasion. His humour, however, presumably Australian, but very much in the American manner, is his chief characteristic; and it is sometimes irresistible...  

Mark Twain had been appointed in June 1867 by the San Francisco newspaper *Alta*, and also by the *Tribune*, New York, as the special correspondent to report on the voyage of the *Quaker City*, a paddle steamer taking ‘pilgrim’ tourists on pleasure cruise to the Mediterranean and the Holy Land. The cruise and the reports by Twain – the *Quaker City Letters* - established Twain’s fame as writer. Americans from then on loved him and he came home a celebrity. The reports were published as a book, and by the end of year 31,000 copies sold at $3.50.  

Hingston and Twain had at least two things in common other than a travel book to the Holy Land. Firstly, Twain agreed about the discomfort of riding in the Orient. In his case it was the donkey that was the cause of his aches and pains:

Our bones were nearly knocked out of joint, we were wild with excitement, and our sides ached with the jolting we had suffered. I do not like riding in the Damascus street-cars'.

Secondly, there was the matter of lying. Twain claimed that little use was made of the *Quaker City Letters* in writing *The Innocents Abroad*. Contrary to this, one of Twain’s biographers, DeLancey Ferguson, makes it clear in his Introduction to *The Innocents Abroad*, that more than half the book is based on the letters.

Although the immediate success of *The Innocents Abroad* might suggest that nothing like it had ever appeared before, such is not the case. Twain drew on a number of forerunners, including well-known American guidebooks such as *Harper's* and *Appleton's*, although he was at pains to complain throughout *The Innocents Abroad* that books like these were too informative. An American relying
on these for guidance would not only know what to see, but also how they should feel, and how they should talk about their experiences on their arrival back home.60

By the end of the two books, however, we are aware that despite the similarities, there was a major difference in the way the men approached their travels, and this difference provides a clue for the way we might consider how Australians were seeing the Orient. Amusing as his book may be, Twain seemed to have learnt little about the East. He was really far more interested in his own comfort and his travelling companions. He summed up the whole adventure, not as we might expect with new revelations about the Orient, but instead with a prosaic remark. If he were to embark on the voyage again, it would be more pleasant the second time round, because now that he had met and got to know those on the first trip - ‘pleasant old people on shore’, he would make certain that they would be the same passengers again.61 Hingston was far more revealing. Even if at times he merely reinforced the Orientalist fantasy and prejudice of his day; and even if he played the part of the Christian pilgrim following in the footsteps of his Saviour, nevertheless Hingston was also on a journey of real discovery. His was two journeys in one. The first was to the Orient; the second a journey round himself. In the course of these journeys, the Orient took on new meaning and significance, and the Australian traveller had learnt more about how he fitted into that antique world. At the same time, he explored his own strengths and weaknesses. His was an account of how the traveller through both the Orient and life should learn from what he sees. Thus Hingston did more than emulate his American model. The humour and the lightness of touch were there, but in addition Hingston became a philosopher of some substance.
For Hingston, Orientalism was synonymous with an Australian looking for a sense of place in a world that was the fabulous East of the Arabian Nights:

If you have ever thought that the “Arabian Nights” was all nonsense and romance, and “Lalla Rookh” all imagination and fancy, what think you now?” he asks himself and us when he visits the Taj Mahal, ‘— now that you have looked upon Lucknow and its palaces — you have seen what Delhi and its surroundings have had to show — and have now come to this wonder of all wonders. Are your thoughts what they were; or what say you? You are silent, and silence is an all-sufficient answer.52

The Orient, a repository of the wisdom of civilisations older than his own, was the cradle of the human race, [which] will yet likely be the home of the last of those who shall tread the earth, when its course shall, like ours, be run, and it finishes as the burnt-out cooled cinder which all worlds must become.63

Anglo-Australians, whether native-born or immigrant sons and daughters, lived close to Hingston’s ‘Eastern world’, their Near or Middle West, even if they did not like to admit it. It was at one and the same time an Orient to be admired, despised and feared. They could almost remember the first European settlement of their country. In their immediate environment was antiquity. The Aboriginal inhabitants they had displaced were an ancient race. Perhaps these new arrivals could find something familiar and comforting, something that was not foreign to them, to take away their unease? Travel opened this possibility for them. Hingston certainly found reassurance in the most unexpected places:

Half a lifetime had gone by like a dream since I had dwelt in a tent at Fryer’s Creek Diggings, in Australia. That was in 1852. It lasted five months then, and I thought thereafter that I had done with tent life for ever. It came then after the finish of one’s voyage to Australia, and was occurring here now (Palestine) at the middle of a journey to England, to which, as an Australian absentee, I was returning after that long, long time. These tents here seemed so familiar a sight to one’s Austral eyes that I involuntarily looked about for the digger’s pick, shovel, frying pan, and pannikin. On a calculation of the sort of life I was going into, I had also gone back to something like the digger’s dress — a blouse, belt, and riding-trousers of no fine quality.’64
The sense of antiquity was ever present in Hingston’s journey. He marveled continually at such sights as Borobudur - ‘Truly, this Boer Buddha may be called a temple of temples – one artistic, harmonious whole, built up of many! The world has no like to show to this work of a great people who have passed from earth, but left a record so fair behind them’, but he was also able to reconcile the relative modernity of his own civilisation with that which he sees in Japan. There he found a people who represented what the British might be if their native blood had not been ‘mongrelized’. There was comfort in such thoughts about Japan, even if they might be wishful thinking on his part. If Hingston could find similarities, then Australians were not alone, surrounded by potential enemies, even if they sometimes felt cut off, adrift in a sea of anxieties. It was with a mixture of relief, sadness and pathos that Hingston described a stone-blind kangaroo in the Kioto menagerie:

It stood up to take the cut turnips I offered, and held my hand with its little hand-like forepaws as if it would detain me. It was the only Australian that I met in that city of Kioto, and it is characteristic of travelling Australians to greet each other gleesomely.

Hingston is surely a representative a man of his time. When we read his book today, we are struck by just what he expects his readers to have in common with him. Firstly, there is the very language he employs. His is the language of the educated reader, the language of such writers as Charles Dickens and Sir Walter Scott. It is the language of a writer who knows nothing of the sound-bite of radio and television. Hingston’s language is to be savoured, read and re-read by those in no particular hurry to reach the end of his journey; the language, indeed, of the Oriental fantasy. If we are prepared to take the time to do more than skim it, his language will open the doors into the Orientalism of his day:

The towers, temples, palaces, and tombs; the wretched huts, bespattered with discs of dung, drying for fuel; the men with their tortoise-shell combs for head-dress and table-
covers for leg-wraps; the women and children with ringed noses and toes, and white metal anklets; the shaven-headed men in yellow gaberdines; the nearly naked forms of humanity which have been to one like a study of “subjects” in the dead-house of a hospital; the blood-red mouths of the chewers of betel and areca; the distended goatskins of the water-carriers—looking like the swelled body of the animal itself pulled out of a pond after a month’s immersion; the palkis and their heavily-freighted bearers; the confectionary sellers and the everlasting rice; the eternal curries and those aromatic, breath-sweetening, Bombay ducks, with that “chota-hazri” of tea and toast at six a.m.; the coin-decorated foreheads, and those sidewalk exhibitions of domestic life, in which the presumed phrenological examination of the head is so prominent, and that tongue-scrapping so needlessly obvious; the street money-changers; the endless beggars; the cocanut-anointed skins; the long-haired men; the never-shaven men; the half-shaved ones and the no-haired men; the endless styles of turban head-dress; the shoeless feet and the sandalled feet; the half-shoe with the up-curved toes; the night scenes of street-strewn sleepers; the public tank Washings; the perpendicular and horizontal caste-marks; the white-marked, the red-marked ones; the red and white dotted noses; the squatting cloth-vendors with their bales; and the itinerant merchants, with shawl-tied packages. 68

The above passage appears to sit fairly comfortably with Said’s observation about Orientalism: ‘a manner of regularized (or Orientalized) writing, vision, and study, dominated by imperatives, perspectives, and ideological biases ostensibly suited to the Orient’. 69 Hingston seemed to see the Orient through these perspectives. The new science of his day also found its place. The Veddah race in Ceylon: ‘is nearly as untamable as the gorilla, and must be somewhere near that missing link between the two of which Darwinians are in search’. 70

This perspective was not always the case. If it were, then the Orient would be an imaginary one, constructed by Hingston to suit his imperial vision. He was conscious of the ‘feeling of the traveller throughout India … that he is in a foreign land, the land of other people, and liable at any time to be kicked out of it’. 71 He was also conscious that a visitor to the Orient

is but a poor observer, however, and at best a wasted traveller, who gives all his observation to works of art and inanimate nature; who neglects, as he journeys, to notice the sounds to be heard from that human harp of a thousand strings that responds
everywhere in similar notes, but upon which circumstances play such ever-changing variations.72

The Orient to which Hingston responded was not static, as Curzon would have it, but one that, despite its sometimes unchanging appearance, was dynamic and on the move. Hingston was at one here with Pearson’s conception that the black and yellow races of the Orient, would borrow European science and develop their own worlds. In this dynamic situation, the white races would not be able to withstand the pressure of competition and must ultimately conform to an Oriental standard of existence. This would, according to Pearson, lead to a situation where population control would be absolutely vital. Were this not undertaken, the impact of an Orient that was becoming more skilled, as well as increasingly populous, was likely to be overwhelming. Even the power of the United States of America would decline in comparison.73 Pearson was echoing Hingston’s fears that probably hundreds of millions of Chinese would soon flood the world, as the Goths and Huns had done in the past.74

Hingston’s travel writing also sheds light on the education of his élite readers. He and they brought with them on their Oriental journeys a wealth of prose and poetry. Almost every second or third page of Hingston’s book contained a reference to a poet or other writer. There are occasions when the quotations flowed so thick and fast that there were more than one to a page. Sometimes he quoted directly, the writers including Browning, Burns, Byron, Chaucer, Coleridge, Cowper, Dryden, Goethe, Goldsmith, Heber, Hood, Keats, Longfellow, Moore, Pope, Shakespeare and Tennyson. At other times the quotations were indirect, Hingston assuming that his readers would know to whom or to what he was referring. It is not surprising, therefore, that his own writing takes on the quality of poetry:
But all the eloquence of all the tongues that were ever attuned to speech could not give one
the sensations experienced when gazing upon the Agra Taj, the Delhi Kootub Minar, and
this temple of Boer Buddha – labours to which those of the modern architect are but as the
squeak or a rat to the roar of a lion.\textsuperscript{75}

The Holy Land section was studded with Biblical references, which in itself
throws light on the religious Orientalism of nineteenth-century Australians vis-à-
vis Palestine.

In the end, perhaps what impresses us most about James Hingston is that he
 gained wisdom and self-knowledge through his Orientalism. He drank the filthy
water from Well of Knowledge in Lucknow and attempted to drink at Well of
Purification. As might be expected, he compared the sight of these Indian wells
with the woman of Samaria. There is more, however, to it than this conventional
nineteenth-century allusion. It is if India for Hingston might hold the eternal secret
of the meaning of life. Looking at himself and the other pilgrims, he used the
moment to discuss risk-taking:

\begin{quote}
I follow only the example of thousands whom I have no right to say were less wise than
myself. If we learn by travelling what fools they are in this world, we also learn how we
have been equally befooled in other ways.\textsuperscript{76}
\end{quote}

This is an entirely different order of risk that Twain envisaged in the discomfort of
travelling with unknown companions a second-time round. It was easier for him to
explore the trope along the Mississippi with Huckleberry Finn in 1884.

Mass tourist travel had its unlikely origins in Thomas Cook’s Baptist piety.
By coincidence born in Melbourne, (Derbyshire), England, on 22 November 1808,
Cook always regarded the Scriptures as his guidebook to life, and thought of travel
as ‘a form of missionary enterprise’.\textsuperscript{77} His ventures to the Orient took on this
missionary flavour: ‘British India has many attractions for an English traveller, and
our desire is to see how the influences of Anglican society, government, and Christian and philanthropic efforts, show themselves in Calcutta and Bombay (Mumbai), and other places.\textsuperscript{78}

In the hands of his son, John Cook, the firm was not always so wedded to Non-Conformist Christianity. From 1877 until 1893, the Government of India appointed Cook to arrange pilgrim visits to Mecca. By the time competitors had undercut Cook’s fares, Thomas Cook & Son had carried 25,000 pilgrims thence.\textsuperscript{79}

In 1869 what Thomas Cook called ‘a great event in the arrangements of modern travel’ and ‘the greatest adventure of my tourist life’ took place.\textsuperscript{80} His first party of tourists visited Egypt and the Holy Land, even though they were by no means the first to go there. In 1835, Murray’s \textit{Handbook for Travellers in Egypt} had been published, and by 1843 the British consul in Cairo was complaining about a ‘flood’ of tourists.\textsuperscript{81} In the \textit{Stamford Mercury}, 26 April 1872, Cook spoke of the tour as marking an epoch ‘in one’s life to be able to come and see these wonderful places and countries, and with the Bible in one hand and Murray in the other, to trace out sites and scenes immortalized by imperishable events’.\textsuperscript{82} 1873 saw the establishment of an office in Shepheard’s Hotel, Cairo, and with it reliable dragomans, couriers, porters, and boatmen.\textsuperscript{83} In 1873, William Maughan, a British tourist was delighted with the Shepheard’s introduction to Egypt:

\begin{quote}
Warriors, statesmen, artists, poets, philosophers, invalids, civilians, merchants – every rank in society of all nations, from crowned heads downwards – have wiled away the balmy hours in the grateful shade of that pleasant verandah, watching the constantly shifting picture of oriental life here presented to view.\textsuperscript{84}
\end{quote}

An Australian tourist in the Holy Land, J. J. Malone, pointed out that the dragoman was ‘a necessary evil’.\textsuperscript{85} He also discovered that the jehu or driver could add to the excitement of travel. On one occasion, his jehu ‘seemed to take an insane
delight in tumbling into deep ruts and charging at huge boulders, as though he wished to show how nearly he could accomplish a capsize without actual achievement. On another, he drove so fast round a mountain that the axle of the wagon snapped,

and the Sheik and myself, portmanteaus and lunch-basket, were flung out precipitately, and got mixed up with the slush in a miscellaneous and unexpected fashion. The jehu kept his seat with the blandest smile upon his face, spite of the withering hail of invective that saluted him.  

Cook's Orient had become a regular and safe part of the tourist scene.

Another Australian, Douglas Sladen, wrote about the Nile service:

the beautiful Arab servants, in white robes, and bright red tarbooshes, sashes and slippers, glide about, filling up tea-cups as fast as they are emptied and bringing fresh varieties of Huntley and Palmer to compel people to over-eat themselves.

Hingston was not so fortunate during his Nile travels:

For that excursion I am, for my sins I suppose, provided with a guide who is the incarnation of much that is detestable. That he never washed was nothing, because not to wash is the custom of the country; but he was a boundless liar, and thieving is no word for his aggressions upon all portable property. I thought that I was inured to all guides and their vagaries, but this one abused the privilege that they mostly seem to have in making themselves obnoxious.

Not for him was John Cook's sanitised Egypt to be kept at a distance:

... we could not allow Egyptian officers or Pachas on the upper deck in the tourist season. Many of them 'with due deference ... are yet not as cleanly as they shd. be. You are quite as strong upon that point as I am.'

Nevertheless, by 1879 John Cook was able to claim that of all the British and American travellers to the Holy Land more than three-quarters toured under his arrangements. In 1902, John Kelman, a writer and traveller in the Holy Land, reported that the 'only boats of any kind we saw on fresh water between Hebron and Damascus were two on the sea of Galilee, manned by Syrians in red jerseys, on which the magic letters were inscribed, "COOK."
Cook's tours and the paths set out in the various handbooks published by John Murray were part of the tourist phenomenon of people attempting to experience the authenticity of the region they were visiting. In the case of the former, the very fact of the separation between the Egyptian crew and the tourists reveals the deception. The tourists were seeing what Dean MacCannell, in *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, has described as a 'front region set up for touristic visitation'. Thus they could return home with souvenirs of what they thought was truly the society they had visited, so that others share these same experiences vicariously.93 Today such experiences may be given to others by videotapes and slides, even television reportage, but in Hingston's time the lecture was a popular method.

Australians took advantage of Cook's services, but arranging passage from Jaffa to Jerusalem, George Nicoll was not pleased when the agent tried to overcharge him. 'Well, if I have to pay that much, I said, Jerusalem will not see me,' said Nicoll, who then bargained the price from £6 to 15/-: 'had I been simple I would have been imposed upon.'94

In the same year that John Cook made his claim about tours to the Holy Land, his firm was advertising tours to Australia and New Zealand. The next ten years would see Thomas Cook & Son firmly established in Australia.95

The firm branched out into Japan and India over the coming years, so successfully that it received the approval of the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon. *Cook's Excursionist*, 1 March 1898, and later on 11 August 1906 printed part of one a speech given by the Viceroy shortly before resignation:

... the cause of travel as one of the supreme duties of an Imperial race. It seems to me that no man has any right to be a citizen of this great Empire unless he knows something about it, and the only way to know it is to take advantage of the opportunities for travel, which,
formerly the monopoly of the rich, are now brought within the reach of the relatively poor.\footnote{96}

These imperial sentiments were close to the heart of wealthy Anglo-Australians, but how many of them wanted to lose their monopoly and rub shoulders with the ‘relatively poor’ is a matter for speculation. Australians might have thought of themselves as egalitarian and living in a brave new democracy, but the likes of Louis Esson, Vance Palmer and Frank Wilmot, despite their hopes, found their idealism somewhat at odds with reality.\footnote{97} If further, they had read Hingston’s accounts of Oriental accommodations, they might well have been prepared to forgo exclusivity: ‘One finds soap and lamp duly charged as extras in all Eastern hotel accounts.’\footnote{98} Australian travellers visiting Cawnpore, the scene of one of the most horrible massacres in the Indian Mutiny that had so rocked the foundations of complacent imperialism, perhaps stayed in the same hotel where Hingston had seen the less-than-encouraging notice on the door of his room:

> Visitors will be good enough not to kick or strike the hotel servants, but to complain of any misconduct to the proprietor; also to lock up their bedrooms (but not the bath-room) before going out.\footnote{99}

They might also have recalled with some alarm that Hingston had arrived to hear that the hotel-keeper, a European, as the result of a stab-wound was undergoing surgery. If, too, before their Oriental expedition they had consulted the 1891 edition of Murray’s \textit{Handbook for Travellers in India and Ceylon}, they would have read that the ‘intending traveller cannot do better than to apply to Messrs. Thos. Cook & Son for advice’.\footnote{100} Everything from baggage insurance to accommodation could be safely left in the capable hands of the firm. Itineraries, railways, bullock carts, tongas, dak gharries, palanquins, jinrickshaws, elephants, accommodation in India’s premier hotel, the Great Eastern in Calcutta to jungle dak bungalows, nothing was left to chance.\footnote{101} Thomas Cook & Son had earned the
title of ‘Booking clerk to the empire’. Rather than simply offering a passage ‘Home’, the firm had enlarged the Orient for Australians.

Some Australians not only visited the Orient, but liking what they saw, they settled there. George John Lang, a barrister who wrote fiction about Sydney colonial days, was involved in a scandal and left for India in 1842. There he became a successful lawyer and newspaper owner. His novels, including The Weatherbys (1853) and The Ex-wife (1858), were satirical accounts of pre-Kipling British social life. They generally did not look down upon Indians as inferior beings. This is at odds with Said’s Orientalism, which aimed at ‘dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’.

Two Australians enjoyed considerable success in Japan: Henry James Black and John Smedley. Aged five, Black went with his parents to Japan. There he became thoroughly Japanese. He acted on the Japanese stage, earning fame both as an orator and a performer of rakugo, a mixture of philosophy, politics and off-colour jokes. The London Gramophone Company recorded his performances and appointed him their first representative in Japan. There seems to have been little British Orientalist arrogance in his character. ‘After all,’ he said to a Tokyo audience, ‘human feelings are universal and everybody has the same heart.’ Smedley became a Yatoi, a foreign expert, in his case an architectural expert. His range was considerable, from teaching at Tokyo University in the late 1870s to being responsible for the design of buildings, pavilions for public occasions, and stage sets in Tokyo and Yokohama. When he returned to Australia, he organised displays of Japanese art at the Sydney Intercolonial Exhibition 1877. Critics found his oil paintings ‘rich with the splendour and the havoc of the East in their blending
of grotesque figures, uncouth architecture, and brilliant colouring'. They liked the ‘correct and quaint representation of a Japanese theatre’ which he exhibited at the Art Society in 1889.107

In China, George ‘Chinese’ Morrison, late of Geelong, established his reputation both as a travel writer and a foreign correspondent. After studying medicine, he set out in Chinese dress to walk across China to Burma in 1894. This remarkable exploit he described in his book, *An Australian in China, Being the Narrative of a Quiet Journey across China to British Burma* (1895). A recent writer, Angus McDonald, who traced the same journey, had this to say about his predecessor’s effort:

By Morrison’s standards it might have been a quiet journey, but by any normal reckoning it was an epic. China at that time was an atrophied empire teetering on the brink of collapse, a revolution waiting to happen, a mass of corruption, rebellion, addiction, starvation and misery. In its interior, foreigners were a rarity – pale-skinned, blue-eyed devils regarded at once with wonder and fear, derision and hostility. In the decade before Morrison set out, there were regular anti-foreign riots along the Yangtze.108

Morrison’s own book was not simply a travel story. It was an account of a world to which Morrison was one of last witnesses. The details and descriptions of what he saw and encountered were closely observed and precise.109 During the course of his journey he found China to be a land of great contrasts. The people were friendly, but seemingly indifferent to poverty, pain and suffering. He reserved his contempt, however, not for the corrupt Chinese officials that he either met or heard about, but for Western missionaries:

During the time I was in China. I met large numbers of missionaries... they unanimously expressed satisfaction at the progress they are making in China. Expressed succinctly, their harvest may be described as amounting to a fraction more than two Chinamen per missionary per annum.110
“The Vagabond” before him had much the same thoughts. Missionaries might do better to save souls at home. The preach to the Chinese, ‘And the result is --- ?’

Morrison remained many years in China as foreign correspondent for the London Times. During the course of his life in China, he gave an account of the Chinese Reform Movement and what he thought gave rise to it, stressing the corruption of Chinese life: ‘It is quite true that the official classes are corrupt but so are the people from the very lowest to the very highest they are all corrupt’. (sic). Above all, this Australian traveller-sojourner, despite his antipathy to the corruption and misery he saw on all sides, really tried to understand why the rebels so acted and the cause of peasant suffering. He understood that all was not well in China when headless bodies floated past him while he was fishing in a stream, even if the sight did not interrupt his sport. In the end, however hard Morrison may have tried to understand the Orient, he remained much the same person when he left China as when he arrived. The Chinese were ‘aliens in language, thought and customs … working animals of low grade but great vitality’, in a country that had once followed the same ideals that Britain still espoused. Only with the help of Britain could the Chinese return to those ideals.

Anglo-Australian travellers to Japan, perhaps having read Hingston, found there a country to their liking. He had told them that ‘Japan is the land of health – of all climates the nearest to perfection’, and, furthermore, those who travelled for the pleasure of seeking the world would find a new one there of ideas, manners, customs, sport, and pleasure. ‘No land could afford more delight, he said, ‘Any one who wishes to get away from himself for a time – to see “fresh scenes and pastures new” – will find the newest and the freshest in the land of the Rising Sun’. Lady Barker, another Anglo-Australian, described the Japanese as ‘a generous and brave
people, frugal, thrifty, scrupulous, clean ... wonderfully ingenious, and full of patriotism and devotion to their institutions'. Lady M'Eacharn made

a great many friends in Japan. It is surprising what a number of very nice people there are there, both Japanese and European. I enjoyed my trip immensely, and hope to again pay a visit to the Land of the Chrysanthemum.\textsuperscript{117}

Both of these views of Japan were clearly disingenuous and patronising. This was an Anglo-Australian Orientalism born from British imperialism: foreigners could be quaint, providing they stayed within exotic places such as ‘the Land of the Chrysanthemum’. A visit to Japan could also be painful at the time and in its lingering consequences:

In Japan they are artists in this line [tattooing] and it is a common thing for visitors to get an anchor or something on the arm as a memento of the place. I may add that it is a very painful process. A Spanish gentleman who was very proud of his wife had her portrait tattooed on his chest and it being a lengthy and large order it hurt him considerably. Before the pain had nearly gone his wife ran away with another man.\textsuperscript{118}

Not all travellers to Japan were quite so enthusiastic on their return to Australia. In 1908, Louis Esson wrote about the ‘ Asiatic menace’ and the ‘many dangers for the white race of the Pacific’ in The Lone Hand, warning his fellow countrymen and women about the danger to their north and what should be done about it: ‘I feel sure Australia must be kept white, and have severe immigration laws ... We'll have to find out what races will blend and prohibit all the rest’.\textsuperscript{119}

Late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Anglo-Australian travellers carried with them expectations of what they hoped to encounter, and firmly held beliefs that would colour their experiences. They expected to find great contrasts between Oriental rulers and their subjects, and so they did. Russell noted on Monday 10 March 1851, that Cairo lived up to all his expectations. There was a great mosque, as well as bazaars filled with ‘cotton goods from Europe, silks and
manufactures from the east, pistols, swords &c from Damascus, tobacco & the long Turkish pipes in abundance'. The streets were crowded with people and coffee shops. An occasional official on a 'gaily caparisoned & beautiful Arab horse' jostled his way through camels, donkeys, and people clothed in a variety of costume from many countries. It was 'an exceedingly interesting & bustling scene, & one on which I gazed with great satisfaction for a considerable time; the whole scene is so different to what is seen in an English town, & so perfectly characteristic of Eastern life'.

The Turkish pipes and smoking that Russell noted were symbolic of the Orient. The banyan – a loose flowing jacket worn by Hindus – became popular in Britain in the early eighteenth century, conflated to the then exclusionary men's activity of smoking. The 'smoking room' of late Victorian houses was often of Oriental design. David Syme, the proprietor of the Melbourne Age, smoked a hookah. His biographer, C. E. Sayers, remarks that were this a regular habit, then Syme was one of the few Europeans to smoke a water pipe for pleasure rather than just seeking the experience. Sayers gives no supporting evidence for this claim. Given the fashion for Eastern smoking rooms and smoking caps, it is possible that many smoked hubble-bubbles. The artist Rupert Bunny wrote, 'It gives a man a sort of luxurious feel of being an Oriental Pasha, as he lies in his chair, smoking...'. To reinforce the Oriental otherness of Jerusalem, Malone pictured a trader squatting in his doorway and smoking his 'nargileh'. John and Elizabeth Reed commented about the smoking they had seen at a Jewish wedding in the Holy Land.

In the intervals of conversation the older ladies smoked these bubbly pipes called *narghiles*, passing the tube round according to the Socialist doctrine of equal opportunity. The younger ladies puffed their cigarettes. This was the first time we had ever seen ladies
indulging in the fragrant weed, for our lot had been cast ‘out back’ in quiet Australian
towns and in a capital city counted somewhat conservative, and we did not think the scene
at all improved by the spectacle. We saw in Cairo a short time afterwards French young
ladies as skilful in fingering their cigarettes after dinner as any fashionable young man; so
we must have been ignorant of the advanced tastes and habits of the female world and very
old-fashioned.\textsuperscript{126}

The bustle of Oriental markets and streets can be read in many Australian
accounts of travel.\textsuperscript{127}

It is not surprising that Russell visited the mosque, another symbol of the
‘Oriental’ or ‘Other’. A Christian site in Cairo, such as the Virgin’s sycamore tree,
did not hold such exotic significance. A visit to the mosque could be recounted at
home, but there was little that could be said about a tree.\textsuperscript{128} When George Nicoll
and his companions visited Saladin’s tomb in 1886, it was ‘splendidly carpeted and
kept clean, so we had to remove our shoes before entering.’\textsuperscript{129} The Reeds visited the
Great Mosque in Jerusalem. Devout Methodists, they could neither forget their
religion nor Australia. Ignoring the fact that other footwear was apparently safe
from Oriental thieves, the Reeds decided it was both too troublesome and too risky
to take off their shoes,

\begin{quote}
for they might be stolen, even from the doorway of this holy place. So we put on more
shoes in the shape of old flopping straw slippers, which were very difficult to retain.
Sometimes it takes two to help put the slippers on - in our case a ragged boy and a greasy
negrass. Then, of course, there must be backsheesh (sic) for both. Boots, Bostock’s best,
profane! Straw slippers, dirty, dilapidated, holy!!\textsuperscript{130}
\end{quote}

Inside the mosque, looking up at the pulpit but too afraid to ascend, John Reed
wondered rhetorically, ‘What would have happened, if one had so ventured, and
have lifted up his voice to declare the gospel of Jesus Christ?’\textsuperscript{131}

Oriental travel fed preconceptions. For the painter Arthur Streeton, the
Orient was a dangerous place of feminine wiles where Western masculinity might
weaken. He went so far as to warn his fellow artist, Tom Roberts, about this in
1907. There were even dangers at home. Melbourne so far had avoided trouble, but not Sydney with its ‘luxurious langour’ which was ‘semi-eastern’.132

George Russell’s curiosity led him to look closely at the construction of the Taj Mahal and then comment disparagingly about its construction. We feel that had it been built in the Colony of Victoria it would have been a very much better building. This was the type of close inspection that revealed the ‘real Orient’ beneath the veneer of civilisation that could be uncovered by the traveller:

At first sight it appears as if built of the finest white marble, which is ornamented with stones of different colours inlaid in it and representing flowers and plants. On closer inspection we found that what appeared fine blocks of marble were only thin slabs cemented to a slab of slate. These were then fixed on to the sides of the building in the same way that mahogany or rosewood is fixed on to furniture, which is called veneering work. This fact rather detracts from the durability of this fine building; but it does not affect its grandeur.133

Such fakery bespoke of Oriental decadence, even where British authority reigned, and the traveller could tour unarmed and without fear ‘of all pillage and brigandage, except upon the part of guides, servants, and hotelkeepers’.134 Such brigands surely belonged to that class of humanity Kipling referred to as ‘lesser breeds without the Law’ in one of his hymns.135 Australian visitors to India, such as the cyclists G. W. Burston and H. R. Stokes, and the socialite Ruby Madden attending the Great Coronation Durbar, Delhi 1903, exhibited the same racist outlook.136

Deakin was able to see beyond the giddy whirl and fantasy that was Ruby Madden’s India to understand that the traveller had to look hard to find British India. For him, India and all that could be seen there was ‘Asiatic to the core’. There was hardly any European aspect to be found, despite the presence of the British occupation. Everything was ‘essentially foreign’.137 Hingston had
understood that the traveller’s Delhi was the one seen ‘a day after the fair’. The Delhi of Orientalist fantasy could only be observed in the mind’s eye. These revelations were at odds with those of travellers who had discovered ‘the real India’ or lands ‘behind the veil’. Perhaps the real India and Burma was that of Rudyard Kipling? For the Australian singer, Peter Dawson, Kipling’s descriptions were so accurate that when he travelled there he found Kipling’s pictures continually and forcibly recurring in front of him. Dawson’s advice to visitors was that they should first study Kipling, then leave all other guidebooks behind.

The poet was a thousand times better. In his autobiography, Dawson described the thrill he felt at Simla when he eventually reached there in 1931. Most of us, he said – and by this he meant his contemporary Australians - had read or heard ‘Route Marchin’.

Oh, there’s them Indian temples to admire when you see.
There’s the peacock round the corner an’ the monkey up the tree,
An’ there’s that rummy silver-grass a-wavin’ in the wind,
An’ the old Grand Trunk a-trail’ like a rifle-sling be’India.
While its best foot first ...

Thrilled when he saw the monkey and peacock of the second line, he went on to say that ‘Every animal, scene, incident, cow, bird, and elephant reminded in some way of the great man’s writings’. As for Burma, standing there was the old Moulmein Pagoda just as Kipling had described it. So impressed was he by this, Dawson quoted thirteen lines of the poem. Here, indeed, was a blurring between Oriental fantasy and reality. At least for this Australian, the imagined had become the truth.

But what was the truth to be gleaned from Oriental travel? In 1954, on his return from the Holy Land, C. S. Cameron would write, ‘We have now returned to Australia, even with her limitations, having a deeper and a greater appreciation of
this fair land.’¹⁴² Many late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century travellers, however, believed they had discovered a deeper truth than a simple appreciation of their own land. Their discovered ‘truth’ was that Australia was vulnerable to Oriental aggression. Hingston repeated his warning about the similarity between the Chinese and the Goths and the Huns.¹⁴³ James cautioned that the armed strength of the Celestial Empire meant both offence and defence. When the time was right, the Chinese would take the initiative.¹⁴⁴ Alfred Deakin foresaw that within twenty-five years the map of Asia and Europe would be changed, and with it the changes in travel would bring Australia closer to the ‘Old World’, with its greedy struggles. Great danger accompanied these changes and unless a federated Australia prepared itself to resist invasion, the gap might be bridgeable. ‘In the interests of peace,’ he wrote, ‘we should be prepared for war’.¹⁴⁵ Before an election in 1909, he suggested that Australia should ally itself with America.¹⁴⁶

Thus travel, with its new reliable steamships and the growing tourist services, meant that Australians visited not only the ports on the England-Australia route but also lands such as China and Japan. Theirs were journeys not only to and through the Orient, but also around themselves in their finding their place in a world they did not rule. In doing so, they arrived at various formulations of the ‘Orient’, not all of them comfortable, and some of them contradictory to perceived wisdom. Australia was not an imperial power like Britain and France, and therefore the views of Australian travellers modify Said’s argument that the Orient was an imperial construction wherein the West was superior. Certainly the opening of the Suez Canal, meant that Egypt, visited on the way ‘Home,’ fitted comfortably into a preconceived model of camels and deserts, of mosques and decadence, from
whence could come a weakening of imperial masculinity. This was the imaginary Orient come to life described by Edward Said, which had to be dominated, if not by Australians then by superior European colonial powers. But other Orient in their antiquity, such as India and the Netherlands East Indies, displaced these notions of European superiority. Further to Australia’s north were the ‘yellow’ Orient of China and Japan. These Orient were dynamic, not the static civilisations of European Orientalism. Even here there were contradictions. The ‘Chinaman’ in his pigtail standing in front of an ancient pagoda and the ‘Merrie England’ of Japan gave an illusion of stasis, which allowed some Anglo-Australians, confirming their British superiority over the ‘other’, to look condescendingly at quaint ways of the Chinese and Japanese. But not all Australians felt like this. Some, like Henry James Black, stayed and adopted the manners and customs of these Orient. Others believed that the dynamic, ‘yellow’ races would soon employ European technology to change the face of the world map. Australia was vulnerable. Hingston had remarked of Twain that he was neither ‘Innocent’ enough nor sufficiently ‘Abroad’.147 In their failure to cast off all their delusions, so too were his fellow Australians in their fear of the Yellow Peril and their pursuit of White Australia. On his return to Melbourne from the Holy Land, the Rev. J. J. Malone, P.P., declared in 1911, ‘One requires to travel in the East in order to fully appreciate the blessing it is to be born on a white man’s country, and live amongst a clean-skinned people.”148

NOTES
1 “J. H.” on “Travel” [Argus, 10th February, 1885.], in James Hingston, The Australian Abroad on Branches from the Main Routes round the World, Melbourne, Inglis, 1886, p.vii.


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Arrival of Stad Amsterdam*, Argus, Melbourne, 19 December 1877.

'The New Messageries Steamer', *Age*, Melbourne, 6 Jan 1893.


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Ibid, pp.6-7.


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'A Look at Japan, by a Victorian', *Argus*, Melbourne, 26 January 1878.

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Ibid.
URL: http://etext.virginia.edu/railton/innocent/iahompag.htm, [cited 4 May 1999].
Ibid, p.382.
Ibid, p.130.
Ibid, p.487.
Ibid, p.238.
Ibid, p.331.
Ibid, p.249.
Ibid, p.130.
94 George Robertson Nicoll, 'The Life and Adventures of George Robertson Nicoll 1824-1890', [manuscript], Sydney, 1890, National Library of Australia, MS 3292, p.165.
97 For a detailed discussion of the hopes and disappointments of these men, see David Walker, *Dream and Distillation: A Search for Australian Cultural Identity*, Canberra, Australian National University Press, 1976.
107 Ibid.
121 Orientalism: visions of the east in western dress URL: costumeinstitute.org/oritext.htm, n.d. [cited 7 October 1999].


Ibid., p.71.


For examples of their behaviour, see Walker, *Anxious Nation*, Op. Cit., pp.30-31


Peter Dawson, *Fifty Years of Song*, London, Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1952, p.106

Ibid., pp.104-5.


CHAPTER 2.

ANTiquity and Monuments

My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty and despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.¹

White Australians were newcomers in an ancient land. Their arrival meant the displacement of the aboriginal inhabitants by an Aryan race, defined by one of their number, Charles Pearson, as a Higher civilisation by virtue of their higher intelligence and more resolute will.² Such justification allowed European arrivals to vindicate their occupation and usurpation of the lands of another race, but even so there was still a sense of insecurity. The British mother country was at the far side of the globe, its mighty army and navy not at the immediate disposal of the Australian colonies in time of need, despite the fact that the British Empire circled the world. Australian insecurity arose from the threatening presence of the populous Orient. Australians themselves were not the rulers of the British Empire, so for them this Orient was not something to be dominated. Perhaps, seen through Anglo-Australian eyes a new understanding of it could occur, and through this understanding a lessening of fear and tension. Perhaps even an affinity could be seen. Perhaps Australians could read in its antiquity and monuments a sense of their own belonging, and learn from this great past to their north and west just how they themselves could cope with the present. No less an Australian than Alfred Deakin wrote a series of articles about India for the Melbourne Age. In his India notebook he wrote ‘India begot his own father & mother’.³
Australians carried with them their European past, but they had no peculiarly Australian 'Golden Age' on which to fall back. If as MacCannell suggests, the restored remnants of dead traditions are essential components of modern community and consciousness, then perhaps the Australian encounter with the traditions and antiquity of Oriental civilisations blended into their own.¹ Perhaps it was all part of the process of trying to become part of Asia that came to the fore in the last decades of the twentieth century. If nothing else, the antiquity they met were reminders of the traditions and the past they or their Australian forebears had left behind in Europe.

Although it was possible to consider the Orient simply in terms of a magical Arabian Nights fantasy, as a place to be plundered for exotic tastes in furniture, clothes and food, not everybody took the Orient so lightly. It was obvious that Orientals were not newcomers like themselves. In the Orient the very monuments of which Deakin had written spoke of civilisations older than those of Europe, civilisations that had risen and fallen. In Oriental lands could also be seen faces that seemed as old as time itself. Here was a conundrum: at one and the same time the Orient was unchanging but dynamic. If this conundrum could be solved, then perhaps Australians could learn from the answer how they could survive in what was seemingly a hostile and unfriendly environment.

Charles Pearson's National Life and Character was one of the most philosophical treatises on the subject, reaching readers outside Australia. In 1892, Maurice Macmillan wrote to Pearson discussing both the title page and the number of copies to be printed. He was afraid that Pearson's chosen title, Orbis Senescens, 'would puzzle the public' and that "'National Life and Character: a Forecast" would do as well as any other."¹ Puzzle the public the title might well have, for the
Latin is ambiguous. Perhaps it could be translated as *The Aging of the World*, or as Pearson used ‘Decay’ in some of the chapter titles, then *The Decaying of the World*. Half a year later, Macmillan wrote that they were ‘nearly at the end of the 1250 copies of your National Life & Character and as we kept the greater part of the type standing at the printers it seems advisable to print another 750 copies in the present form.’ Generally the book had been reviewed well, even if *The Athenæum* had been irked by the lowly place accorded to Europe in this colonial effort:

The reader can indeed discern that Mr. Pearson’s point of view is not London or Paris, but Melbourne. He regards the march of affairs from the Australian point of view, and next to Australia what he seems to see most clearly is the growth of the Chinese power and of the native populations of Africa. In this forecast, in fact, Europe loses altogether the precedence it has always enjoyed. It appears here as not only the smallest, but as the least important continent, nor is allowed even that kind of theoretical precedence which might come from historical greatness … The political facts which occur to him most readily are the laws which have been passed at Melbourne, or Sydney, or in New Zealand.  

Theodore Roosevelt wrote Pearson a long letter, in which he enclosed a copy of his review in the *Sewanee Review*, so that Pearson could ‘know how much effect your work has had even in places so remote from where it was written.’ He informed Pearson that it had been widely read in Washington.

I don’t suppose that any book recently, unless it is Mahan’s “Influence of Sea Power,” has excited anything as like as much interest or caused so many men to feel that they had to revise their mental estimates of facts; and I say this, although I don’t myself altogether agree with your forecast. I took so much pleasure in reading it that I was very glad to have a chance of saying something about it in print.

From India, Pearson’s friend Herbert Strong spoke about *National Life and Character*, and wrote to Pearson, ‘No one seems to have heard of it, and it might amuse them to read something new, for instance something about the country they are intended to govern...’
In Australia, both individual and newspaper comment praised the book. John Spence, a South Australian politician, who had been a member of the Legislative Council in 1891 and Chief Secretary in the Downer Government from June to October in 1893, informed Pearson that he had just read your book and feel that I should write to say how very much I enjoyed its perusal and I may say reperusal. For I have read it a second time much of it aloud to Mrs. Spence who highly approves of the book and we are both in full sympathy with your views and generalizations. I now thank you for putting your views on record and hope for good results therefrom.  

Sir Henry Wrixon, a Member of the House of Representatives in Victoria, was both effusive and critical, thus showing us that the book led to considerable philosophical speculation amongst the political élite in Australia.

I have read down here with great pleasure indeed with admiration your book on “National Life & Character”. The philosophical character of the speculations, the wealth of knowledge & illustration, & the clear, talking style made it an enjoyment to me that books do not now so often. … I see that some of the papers criticise it as “depressing,” and so indeed it is, but the more important question is whether the speculations are sound & true. On this point I don’t know that you make sufficient allowance for the effect of experience in checking tendencies that, until they are tried, appear to have it all their own way…In all the 4000 years of human history, have we ever got very far away from human nature? However I suppose that you hold that the changes you contemplate are in accordance with human nature.  

On 5 January 1893, the Age published a London review of the previous day. This clearly looked forward to the White Australia Policy, and in so doing claimed that Pearson had argued Australian fears convincingly.

Dr. Pearson maintains that the European race in Australia has now nearly reached the territorial limit of expansion as a settling population. He cites instances in support of this contention, and further vindicates from the charges of narrow selfishness the attitude of Australians in respect to the measures taken to exclude from the continent the flood of Chinese immigration.

The author states, however, that owing to climatic peculiarities and the geographical position of Australia he foresees in the future a considerable increase of the inferior races amongst the Australian population.
As might be expected, Pearson himself was delighted with the reception accorded to his book. He wrote to his daughter Maud that he had received compliments from Professor Strong, Mr. Bryce and Frederic Harrison: ‘What is more to the point they all say that other people are reading it.’

In another letter, his pleasure is even more obvious.

The Westminster Gazette has published my portrait, and a very flattering review of my book. The Pall Mall Gazette has also reviewed me very favourably ... I have had a very kind letter about it from John Hughes, the author of Tom Brown at Rugby. So you see I am very cock-a-hoop.

After Pearson’s death, National Life and Character continued to have an impact. Phillip Mennell, the compiler of The Dictionary of Australasian Biography, wrote to Pearson’s widow about an article he wished to place in The British Australasian And New Zealand Mail: ‘I was always proud to think Dr. Pearson had a little regard for me, as I had much for him.’ He later informed her that the article and the photograph she had lent him appeared on 11 July 1894. In January 1896, the widow expected to receive royalties of between £60 and £70.

Perhaps the best indication of how high was the respect for Charles Pearson can be seen in letters from Alfred Deakin. When in London in 1887, he wrote that he had declined the K.C.M. G., and then continued,

I instantly recommended you in the strongest terms... it is possible you may have had a cabled offer & declined. But I fear that it has been thought impossible to go outside those now in London. If so I am very sorry because as I told him you had far higher claims & were far better fitted to do honour to the order....Hence I tell you what has transpired because I have long felt that an Imperial recognition of your services was due to you because the recognition in the colony must always to an Englishman of your birth & connections be more or less incomplete.

Five years later when Pearson was returning to England, Deakin wrote to him that his influence was ‘not be measured by times of meeting & closeness of private intimacy...’ Deakin continued the letter with an assessment of Pearson’s
colonial experiences. Pearson had really been the parent of the actions and words of other men. He concluded,

At all events do not forget that owing very much to you personally I shall be very glad if you will give me what opportunities you can of discharging my debt in some small degree.²⁰

On Pearson’s death, he wrote to one of Pearson’s daughters (the letter gives no indication to which) reaffirming the honour with which he had held Pearson.

I admired your father greatly & loved him dearly so that it was a pleasure for me to say anything of him which could in however small a degree assist to a better appreciation of his character, abilities & career.²¹

Pearson saw neither a monolithic Orient nor a moribund nor stationary Asia as depicted by the English Orientalist, Lord Curzon and others.²² As late as 1910, John Murray was still carrying an advertisement that alluded to the stationary Orient. One such advertisement was for the ‘Wisdom of the East Series, Edited by L. Cranmer-Byng & Dr. S. A. Kapadia,’ a series which included translations of books ranging from The Burden Of Isis, Being The Lamentations Of Isis And Nephys to The Sayings of Lao Tzū. This advertisement claimed that the editors had a very definite object: ‘They desire above all things that, in their humble way, these books shall be the ambassadors of good-will and understanding between East and West, the old world of Thought and the new of Action.’²³ For Pearson, it was conceivable that the opposite view of the world as correct: European nations would remain stationary while the Black and Yellow Belt, including China, Malaysia, India, Central Africa, Tropical America, would forge ahead.²⁴

For Australians, that the Orient was ancient there could be no doubt. James Hingston on his travels described Damascus as the oldest city in the world.²⁵ He
also found in the Holy Land that Bethlehem was ageless; so old was this small town that it was impossible to conceive of any change in its characteristics, and this was just 'a little hill-top corner on the road to nowhere'. Like an old fossil, Ramleh smelt as if the streets had not been washed since the time of King David. If the Biblical cities and villages were old, then what did the cities, monuments and ruins of other Oriental lands say about the past? Still with his familiar Bible as a reference, Hingston wandered through the museum in Cairo. He discovered a wooden figure among the mummy cases that, reckoned against 'Hebrew dates', must have been placed in a tomb about the same time that Adam was created. For a man who took the Bible as his guide, such a discovery was disturbing. Even more worrying was the sight of more things in the museum that were even older than Adam. Such discoveries, he noted 'will not square well with our chronology'. The ancient Egyptian civilisation, moreover, was certainly not one of the lower civilisations that Pearson was to describe. Hingston recognised that its medicine—particularly surgery, for at least half of modern surgical instruments were in use—and mathematical science were advanced sciences. Egyptian navigators had discovered the route to the Cape three thousand years before the Portuguese. Ancient Egyptian craftsmen were skilled in the art of stained glass. The cements and mortars used in their monuments were better than those of modern Europe. The paint they employed would never deteriorate in the sun and the weather. Heliopolis was a combination of Cambridge and Oxford where even Greece came to learn its letters. Predating the Christian belief of eternal life, the Egyptian scriptures were older than those of Confucius, Buddha, Moses, and Mahomet. Perhaps a Biblical connection could be found, for the priests, both in their ordination and dress,
resembled Christian bishops. The followers certainly practised many things of the Christian creed.\textsuperscript{29}

Such nervous musings later found their echo in somebody of more substance and weight in Australian life than James Hingston. Alfred Deakin saw Indian villages older than anything he had seen elsewhere. These ancient mud villages had been built and rebuilt so often that the mounds on which they stood had risen by about one hundred feet.\textsuperscript{30} Although Deakin did not resort to the Biblical analogies of Hingston, nevertheless he was so moved by the timelessness of what he saw, and what this antiquity might be saying to the modern world, that he could only express his thoughts for his Australian readers in a poetic language that drew on Christianity:

\begin{quote}
Nowhere is life more evidently the offspring and prophecy of death, for the land is marked with ruins as the sky with stars, and the very villages are built upon the sites of scores of others, melted to dust under the feet – fallen one after another like beads upon the rosary of time.\textsuperscript{31}
\end{quote}

Herbert Syme wrote of India:

\begin{quote}
The teeming humanity that everywhere meets the eye, the sounds and sights of the bazaar, the temples and buildings indicating greatness of a race that was a nation centuries before the British raj was heard of, all help to form a series of scenes unlike anything in the civilized world.\textsuperscript{32}

Thus the Orient was somewhat more than the stuff of fanciful tales. It seemed also to have an historical depth beyond that of Europe. In its ruins and monuments, and in its enduring cities and villages, it might have pertinent lessons for the fragile Australian colonies.
\end{quote}

Although Thomas Cook on his trip of discovery round the world had found the Chinese city of Shanghai to be nothing more than a maze of filthy streets crowded with ‘pestering and festering beggars in every shape and hideous deformity; sights, sounds, and smells’,\textsuperscript{33} for James Hingston it summoned up
entirely different reactions. There he saw a city so ancient that it had every mark of
time. He saw temples that were black with age and decay. No doubt they had been
burnt to the ground and then rebuilt time and time again.\textsuperscript{34} Paralleling Deakin's
observations about the rebuilding of Indian villages, these Chinese temples rose
phoenix-like from the ashes of their destruction. Such longevity and reincarnation
might have suggested in the Orient there was more than backwardness and
barbarism. Here was an enduring soul, even a spirituality that perhaps was missing
in the Christian West. Gibbon had written about the rise and fall of the Roman
Empire. In the Orient, was evidence not only the rise and fall of civilisations, but
also their rise again.

Egypt and the Holy Land – for Australians the misnamed ‘Middle East’ –
were geographically distant from Australia. India was much closer, but there was
an ancient Orient that was closer still. Monuments and ruins could be seen in
countries such as Java, Cambodia, China and Japan. David Walker has pointed to
the idea that in 19\textsuperscript{th} Century Orientalism, majestic ruins are a recurrent image. In
this imagery, European Orientalists argued that because great Asian civilisations
seemed to be in these ruins, modern Asia was little more than a primitive remnant
of a turbulent past. Modern Europe was a symbol of the future.\textsuperscript{35} It can be argued,
however, that the conclusions Australians drew did not sit comfortably with those
of their contemporaries in England. In Allahabad, Hingston found the remains of a
former city in temples and tombs that spoke of thousands of past years.\textsuperscript{36} For him,
the stone monuments in India were an enduring record of a land with a history at
least 5,700 years older than that of Christianity. This history was so old that even
when historians argued among themselves about the dates, the matter of 2000 years
or so was trifling in the full story. Indian stone monuments were the equivalent of
this land’s written history. If we extend Hingston’s analogy a little further, a written history does not mean that the civilisation that wrote that history was itself in ruins. Thus Australians did not necessarily see the Orient from an English Orientalist perspective. The nearby ruins of Borobudur - that wondrous ‘Temple of Boer Buddha’ - could only lead Hingston to conclude that the Javanese were an artistic race. Artistry does not necessarily die with the building of such temples. If that is so, then the Javanese did not belong to a primitive remnant. Alfred Deakin a decade later was writing in much the same vein as Hingston. Indian monuments were ‘unimpeachable witnesses’ and ‘documents carved in permanent characters’. Even more than this, because of their permanence the documents could not be falsified and therefore placed Australians ‘at once en rapport with the place and people’. Furthermore, Deakin does not confine his observations to the past character of the Indians. The ruins found in a country, he notes, illustrate the religious temper, political condition, and artistic capacity of its people. That being so, then it follows that Deakin believed that the Indian people were not remnants, but were a race that was still imbued with their inheritance. This was not the conventional Orientalist gaze at a land peopled by a static race; rather it was in accordance with the different Australian vision of a dynamic Orient that did not necessarily discard its inheritance while still being prepared to engage with the modern world. This was the same Australian Orientalist gaze to be discussed in Chapter 7 that saw a Japan retaining its past qualities whilst entering the modern world with startling rapidity.

In Cambodia the ruins of Angkor Wat came to light in 1860, when the French naturalist Henri Mouhot turned a forest corner. What he saw, he wrote later, was like being suddenly ‘transported from barbarism to civilisation, from profound
darkness to light'. These temple ruins, spoken about by earlier Portuguese travellers, had been the subject of Orientalist fantasy and scepticism in much the same way as stories of King Solomon’s mines and Eldorado had been. Angkor Wat, sacked by the Thais in 1431 and then abandoned by the Khmers in 1432, was seldom visited until Mouhot revealed their existence to the West. One significant Australian reaction to Angkor Wat illustrates that not all Australians were as prepared as Hingston and Deakin to credit present populations with the same strengths as their forebears. In National Life and Character, Charles Pearson was firmly on the side of the conventional Orientalist perceptions found in England. While he was ready to admit that the Cambodian ruins were magnificent, there was no possible way for him that the living Cambodians had any possible links with the ancient builders. Pearson argued that the race that built Angkor Wat must have been exterminated or have lapsed into barbarism. To admit that the present inhabitants were as gifted as those of the past would have undermined the general thrust of his argument about the dangers of allowing Higher races to sink to the level of the Lower races. Where the ruins of Angkor Wat are concerned, close reading of National Life and Character reveals that his argument against the nineteenth-century Cambodians is based more on religious grounds and simple denigration than on anything more substantial. The architectural geniuses who built Angkor Wat were ‘Brahmanic in faith’ and the present population is ‘of the Annamite type, and which has contributed nothing to the world’s history’. As substantiation of his argument, in a footnote he quotes Wallace’s Malay Archipelago, (pp.104-106), in which Wallace claims that ‘the present inhabitants “look upon these relics of their forefathers with ignorant amazement, as the undoubted productions of giants or of demons”’. 
The importance of Borobudur, that 'wondrous 'Temple of Boer Buddha',
came to the fore under the administration of Thomas Stamford Raffles, after he had
been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Java. Having heard about the monument,
he ordered Cornelius, a surveyor at Samarang, to inspect it. The monument itself
was first described by Raffles in his History of Java (London 1817), and later by
John Crawfurd, Raffles' main collaborator, in A Descriptive Dictionary of the
Indian Islands and Adjacent Countries. Although Crawfurd admired the
architecture, the sculpture was not to his taste. Restoration work and a
photographic survey was commenced by the photographer Kinsbergen in 1872. Not
all the monument could be photographed because of sand and debris covering it to
a depth of four feet in parts. After Kinsbergen, the Dutch archaeologist, Brandes on
discovering the hidden reliefs 1866, excavated them in 1890. The inquisitive
Hingston took the opportunity to visit Borobudur. Immediately his fantasy took
over from reality. The sheer magnificence and size of the ruins so overwhelmed
him that he first abandoned his usual unconventional Orientalist outlook. To begin
with, it was glory to England, and no thanks to the Dutch, who had been too busy
making money for the last two hundred years, that Borobudur was uncovered. The
work of art – a collection of temples making up one harmonious whole - that had
been uncovered was a dream in stone that only a painter like Turner could capture.
'Boer Buddha' was also a sermon in stone that put to shame the electroplating,
gilding, lacquering, and French polishing of the modern age of utilities and
makeshifts. The next step – and the one away from conventionality - for Hingston
was to draw a lesson from what he had seen. This temple was not built like modern
makeshifts, which were made to be thrown away, but built to last for all time. The
Orient was once again an example for Australia to emulate rather than to dominate
and to deride. But the size of Borobudur left Hingston uneasy, like Pearson after him, about attributing it to the same kind of people that he saw around him. He retreated to the nagging inner voice of conventional Orientalism. As nothing could be compared to this great monument, the builders, therefore, must have been ‘a great people who have passed from earth’. It was an unnerving message conjured up by the monument. If it were true, then for Hingston and others like him, the British – certainly ‘a great people’, one of Pearson’s ‘higher races’ – would join the ‘evanescent’ Oriental races in eventual oblivion.

Hingston then put his imagination to work, and in an obvious analogy to the resurrection of Christ, he related the legend of Borobudur’s construction. In the story Hingston unfolded we read a strange amalgam of Egyptology and the Old and the New Testaments, even if he does not refer directly to these sources. Thousands, he said, laboured to build ‘Boer Buddha’. On his travels, Hingston was soon to visit Egypt, so the thousands that laboured to build the pyramids were clearly on his mind, for he compared Borobudur not only as complete as the pyramid of Cheops, but as a pyramid-temple touched by the crumbling Land of Time. The Old Testament comes into play with the idea that each stone was given a number and then put in place without mortar like those in Solomon’s temple by ten thousand specially chosen men. Finally, the sculptured figure of Buddha was erected. It is at this point that Hingston’s reference to the New Testament is displayed. How could he explain the magnificence of the Javanese temple other than in unearthly terms? Three days, Hingston wrote, was given to the construction of this miracle. The parallel is unmistakable. Three days after his crucifixion, Christ rose from the dead. His accusers had said that Christ had told his followers that he was able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days. Miraculously in Christ the temple
had been rebuilt. Thus in Hingston’s account of the construction of Borobudur, Solomon, Christ and the Buddha become as one.

For somebody as devout as Hingston appears to have been, there could only be a religious explanation for the temple’s construction. He therefore concluded his legend with worshippers bowing silently in adoration of the crowned figure of the Buddha glowing in the sunset:

If Labor est orare be truth, then would the building of this Boer Buddha be but one act of worship. He is bold and rash, regardless of justice and judgement to come, who, in these latter and grovelling days, shall say that our time and labours are any better expended.51

The reality was not quite as Hingston would have it in legend. Instead of the miraculous three days, the construction took place in four different periods, between AD 775 and 856.52 This is not to suggest that Hingston believed the legend he was relating; rather, his account is an analogy of fruitful building. One could say, perhaps, that these ruins in the near Orient were symbolic of what a new people in Australia could accomplish, if they put their energy and soul into the task: a new nation could rise in the Antipodes. Conversely, the ruins were also a reminder that it was possible for mighty empires to disappear, such as the one in which Australia was a far outpost, dependent on the might of the metropole for its protection.

If the enormous ruins of ‘this Boer Buddha’ could take one’s breath away at the thought of the colossal energy and harnessing of a people required to build it, miraculous or otherwise, then there was yet another reaction to be had in Djockjakarte. There, in the centre of this bustling, noisy Oriental city was another old temple, possibly a palace, adorned with rich carvings, a quiet old ruin, with its broad and silent courtyards paved with marble, now stained and time-eaten, was a curious solitude’.53 What are we to make of this observation? The ‘curious solitude’
must give us pause. The Orient, with all its energy was also a place that could offer a feeling of being alone yet not alone. It can offer in its antiquity a way into a kind of spiritual communion with oneself. There is no suggestion in Hingston’s words that this solitude is a lonely one. The ruins could be those of *either* a temple *or* a palace. There is the notion here that church and state are one and the same; that there is a mystical interweaving of the spirit and the body, even perhaps a model for the new Australia. It is difficult to ignore how Hingston sought out antiquity and then subsequently compared it with the fragility of the products of the Western industry. It is as if he was suggesting that Oriental antiquity must be reckoned with if the Occident is to stand the test of time. Javanese ruins spelled out the possible consequences for the Occident, including British Australia. It did not matter how gifted or how devout a people might be, if something went wrong then these people would disappear. If they did not become extinct, then there was the possibility that their talents would be uncultivated.

The ruins of the temples of Prambanan induced such thoughts in Hingston. Once again, these ruins were enormous, consisting of carved stones in their tens of thousands. In the Java Hingston was exploring, there was, he thought, a modern population of eighteen million people. He wondered why they were not so devout or art-loving as their forebears, and he was led to the conclusion that it was the result of having the Dutch for their masters. Even given that Hingston felt himself thoroughly British, and that British rule was the best possible rule, there is still something rather uncomfortable in his comments. An Occidental power has stifled the spirituality and the creativity of an Oriental race rather than bringing the rule and wisdom of a superior society. The sight of the jungle covering the stones of this temple was a stark Oriental lesson for Hingston that if attention is not paid to
the dignity of a people, then ‘Nature reclaims and draws again within the earth all
that man takes thereout and leaves upon its surface’.54

Antiquity to the north also drove home to Hingston the spirituality of the
Orient. In Japan he visited a fifty-foot high statue of the Buddha Dai Butsa,
pronounced ‘Dieboots’ he tells us - so old that it looked as if the ancient Greek
gods were instrumental in its making. This Japanese statue, looking as if untouched
by time and as strong as the surrounding hills, drew from him comments that it was
like something to be worshipped. The Buddha Dai Butsa, with its look of ‘peace,
contemplation and eternal rest,’ had ‘a veritable “Presence” distinctly to be felt’.
He could do nothing but respect it.55 George Nicoll was amazed at the size of the
‘Daibutsu’. There was ‘room in his nostril for a man to crawl through.’56

The Australian writer Douglas Sladen also felt a sense of profound antiquity
when he visited beautiful temples and wild wisteria groves.57 Australian Christians
were thus forced by the Orient to take stock of their own spirituality. Here, as
elsewhere in the Orient, Hingston did not feel it necessary to be the missionary.
Later Australians sometimes felt the same. To his surprise, the “Vagabond”, (John
Stanley James), found that Chinese towered over Europe when it came to
intellectual achievements and spirituality. He noted that the missionaries had not
discovered a land of ignorance and barbarism, but instead a better standard of
education than in most places in Europe. The science of logic had been in China
before Aristotle laid down its methodology in Europe, and China was employing a
code of morals devised before Socrates. In a cutting aside to the missionaries, the
“Vagabond” commented that in China there had been no philosophers to equal
Philip of Spain or Charles of France. These European philosophers, said James,
believed that God was pleased when a heretic was either tortured or put to death.58
George Morrison went so far as to positively decry missionary endeavours as a complete and useless waste of time and effort. He sarcastically described their efforts in mathematical terms: ‘their harvest may be described as amounting to a fraction more than two Chinamen per missionary per annum’. The converts were ‘Rice Christians’ who would go from mission station to mission station and be converted in turn in order to get food.\(^59\) Thus Japanese and Chinese antiquity, peace and beauty were a powerful Oriental combination.

Farther to the west, the antiquity of India offered a different set of insights into human behaviour. Although not a ruin, the Taj Mahal was a monument to something other than that which the Occident had produced. ‘What monarch in the West would have dared to erect a monument to even his best and dearest each stone of which cost the life of a subject,’ wrote Herbert Syme.\(^60\) Yet such was the case with the Taj Mahal. In *Temple and Tomb in India*, Deakin struggled to find words and comparisons to express what he saw and felt. The monument was ‘beyond praise’.\(^61\) At one and the same time, the Taj Mahal both enchanted and repelled him. He first attempted to credit the Occident with the its glory, a Frenchman and some Italians contributing to the jewel work, but he admitted that ‘the chief glory remains with Asia’.\(^62\) The glory was part of its repulsion. In Europe, the Orient was often seen as a gorgeous place of sexuality and barbarism; a place to be plundered for its riches and where the mores of the West could be ignored.\(^63\) This Oriental tomb, the Taj Mahal, touched Deakin in a manner so Eastern that as a Christian and a Caucasian he felt it to be foreign and almost idolatrous. The imperialist in Deakin had hitherto seen the employment of human energy in the conquest of the earth, but untold human energy had gone into the construction of this building. Additionally,
the building was neither more nor less than a tomb of a dead woman. Christians, thought Deakin, would shrink from such a personal tribute.\(^{64}\)

It should be remembered that throughout his life Deakin was an intensely spiritual man, and certainly not a conventional Christian.\(^{65}\) This Islamic tomb, although it seemed idolatrous, made him reflect on the meaning of life and death. There was no easy answer to be found in its beauty. The Taj Mahal was an appropriate and worthy bridge between the two worlds of life and death, but was ‘this Death’s? or Death’s remembrancer?’.\(^{66}\) Deakin’s questions are rhetorical. We must supply our own answers, even perhaps to the idea that Australians might find in the monument a bridge between the Occident and the Orient. Whatever complex and confusing thoughts Deakin might have had about the meaning of the Taj Mahal, he fell back to Orientalist fantasy. Singing to the eye ‘in the crystal cleanness and lark-like melody of Mozart’, the Taj Mahal was an enchanted and ageless place that had not built by human hands, ‘but to have unfolded like the fabled city that “rose slowly to a music slowly breathed.”\(^{67}\) If Deakin disliked the idolatry of the fabulous tomb that was the Taj Mahal, then Hingston had no such hesitation. He did not see it as a shrine to secular love, but instead as the ‘grandest shrine of divine art that the world can show’.\(^{68}\) As so often when he was confronted by ancient monuments in the Orient, he was forced to question his own beliefs and this from a man who took the Bible as his guidebook and had an intimate acquaintance with it. Unchristianlike, he admitted the possibility that there might be no resurrection after death, but that mattered not. To see the Taj Mahal was sufficient reward in itself:

Other worlds there may be, or may not – we may attain heaven or paradise, or fail to do so – in those worlds, or in such scenes of the Hereafter, there may be better things for our new
eyes than is the Taj at Agra. It is, however, impossible for human imagination so to conceive.\textsuperscript{69}

We should not forget that Hingston was ever given to flights of fancy and exaggeration. When he is in Agra, nothing is so beautiful as the Taj Mahal, but when he is in Java the ruins of the ‘Boer Buddha’ are equally graceful and elegant.\textsuperscript{70} It is also worth recalling that in Australia there was absolutely nothing to compare in antiquity, scale or beauty with either Borobudur or the Taj Mahal. Even more telling is the notion that for both Deakin and Hingston there was nothing in the Occident to compare with these wondrous monuments of the Oriental world. Herbert Syme wrote in his India Diary that every tourist must make it his first duty to visit the Taj Mahal,

\begin{quote}
... undoubtedly the finest piece of work in the world. Altho. I had seen the Taj before it did not seem any less glorious now. I think I appreciated its beauty better the second time. Like a good picture it discloses new beauties the oftener you look at it.\textsuperscript{71}
\end{quote}

At Shah Dera he saw the marble sepulchre and beautifully carved tomb.

The only thing that spoiled the effect was a modern kerosene lamp & the garrulousness of the priest who talked as if he were trying to sell the tomb.\textsuperscript{72}

For less sensitive Australians like Ruby Madden, monuments such as the Elephant Caves were simply a sight-seeing duty to be endured. They were more interesting than beautiful. I rather expected something like the Jenolan Caves, but this is merely a huge temple cut out of the rock, with huge pillars and enormous carvings on the walls, all cut out of the rock, representing the life of “Shiv” and his wife...It was very interesting, altho hideous as those sort of things generally are... the charm of the tea, which we brought with us, appeared much greater than the temples...\textsuperscript{73}

It would be wrong to give the impression that Australians were the only Occidentals trying to explain the significance of ancient monuments. In a speech, given on 7 February 1900 to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the then Viceroy of India, Lord George Curzon, admired the ‘Kutab Minar’, which Alfred Deakin
before him had called the ‘Kootub Minar’. Unlike the Australian, Curzon was not so prepared to ascribe greatness to the monument. For him, it was the work of a foreign Muslim, that invading vandal and iconoclast, Aurungzeb. Perhaps the Taj was worthy of admiration, but it had to be kept in mind that in its construction a Hindu temple had been torn down. Thus for Curzon, the monument was simply a reminder of religious fanaticism.\textsuperscript{74} Before him, however, Deakin had seen only a ‘tower of Gothic boldness and aspiration’ which was ‘incomparably more beautiful’ than the Washington column. Its windows were unsurpassed and ‘with its colour, site, and symmetry, the Minar, as a whole, is without a rival’.\textsuperscript{75} Whereas Curzon might have had the imperial mindset of the British conqueror tempered by a lofty ideal of British benevolence and protection for the conquered, Deakin was not coming from the same angle, either geographically or metaphorically. Although Deakin considered himself to be British, he also thought of himself, having been born in Victoria, as thoroughly Australian. He was, therefore, looking for something other than the story of conquest in his exploration of antiquity. When, for example, he saw the Dagobas of Buddha, for him they were still in some way inhabited and not deserted. They were a lofty inspiration of the past, and certainly more inspiring than ‘idols fashioned in the fevered present, half in doubt and half in dread’.\textsuperscript{76} Compared with Curzon’s prosaic comments, this is an enormous leap into the depths of the self. Here is not the conventional lip service paid by Curzon to the Orient as being the birthplace of the six greatest moral teachers the world had seen. For Curzon, their creeds ‘may be said to have divided the conquest of the universe’.\textsuperscript{77} Again we note that Curzon uses the term ‘conquest’. It is not difficult to imagine the militaristic context of such terminology. Deakin, confronted by the monuments and antiquity of faith, might be thinking of conquest, but this was a
metaphorical conquest of an entirely different order. The Dagobas certainly
conquered, but their conquest was that of any feelings that Deakin had about his
modern, Occidental superiority. The aspirations of the industrialised, nineteenth-
century Occident were shown to be false idols; the tranquillity of the ruins
demonstrated that the pace of nineteenth-century Australian life was little more
than a modern disease.

The antiquity, therefore, to be found the worlds of the Orient turned
Australian beliefs into dust. Before leaving home, many Australians assumed that
the Orient was dirty and diseased, and \textit{ipso facto}, the Orient must be degenerate.
The Legislative Council of New South Wales, for example, in response to petitions
from Sydney and country gold miners in 1858 introduced a Bill to restrict Chinese
immigration. A Select Committee Report, tabled 16 September, spoke of the ‘filthy
and dirty habits’ of Chinese, which would inevitable lead to ‘the breaking forth of
disease’.\textsuperscript{78} But in India were ruins that told Deakin that his own civilisation, and not
those of the Orient, was the more morally diseased.

The reactions of Deakin and Hingston to Oriental antiquity denote that at
least some Australians were prepared to question their own morality. Given that
most Australians, like James Hingston, were nominally Christian, it comes as
somewhat of a surprise to read some of his reactions that he described to his fellow
nationals. The very centre of the Christian world was obviously Jerusalem. There
Hingston found a city so ancient and rebuilt so many times that he thought there
was as much of it below as above the surface of the ground.\textsuperscript{79} In this city of
monuments and shrines, however, there was little but disappointment. In the
manner of the true pilgrim, Hingston visited all the places where his Saviour had
been: the Mount of Olives, the ruin of the house supposedly used by Christ when
foretelling the destruction of city, and the parable of the Ten Virgins; Gethsemane; David’s Tomb; Alceldama — “the field of blood”, the Potters’ Field”; the house of Caiaphas; the stone sealing Christ’s tomb; the stone on which Peter denied Jesus and the stone on which the cock crew; the Tomb of the Virgin; Bethany and the house of Lazarus; and the supposed room of Last Supper. Of this last, Hingston commented, ‘Its four bare old walls look ancient enough to guarantee it genuine; but this thing has to be thought of, that none of the writers on the subject of this land and its holy places appear to be unanimous upon anything further than that the Mount of Olives, the Jordan, and the Dead Sea, are where they always were and look much the same as ever.’ If Hingston had stopped his reminiscences at this point, then there would be nothing at all controversial about them. But he does not. In much the same way that as the dagobas in India caused Alfred Deakin to look inwards, so do these supposed antiquities of Jerusalem for James Hingston. This ancient, Middle Eastern city was not solid bedrock on which to stand firm in one’s beliefs. The antiquities he beheld taught him the lesson that apart from geographical entities, almost ‘everything else is a matter of faith, and therefore, unfortunately, of controversy’.

Everything else? On the surface Hingston was referring to the actual sites that might be not be the real sites at all. Even the vault-like Chapel of the Invention of the Cross was ‘a title admitting of more than one construction.’ Between the Jerusalem lines we understand that he was reflecting on more than just Jerusalem. The city, complete with its antiquities, was a metaphor for the present world. Nothing should be taken at face value. Hingston had entered Jerusalem as city of shrines but had found in its place a city of shows. He had, of course, left behind him in Melbourne a city undergoing boom times. Perhaps he was thinking of the
ostentatious displays of wealth that could be seen there. The lesson of Jerusalem for Hingston is bitter: 'It is but more scales dropped from one’s eyes, and more illusions of a lifetime vanished, which, being illusions, are better gone'. He found some comfort in Joppa, which according to historians was older than the Biblical Flood. It allowed Hingston a smile, for here Jonah passed through 'on his famous whaling adventure'. This was surely an allusion at which his educated readers would have also raised a knowing smile as they recognised Herman Melville’s *Moby Dick*, published in 1851. Laughter aside, the ancient met the new in Joppa, the second oldest city in the world: the stone houses were so solid that it looked as if Saint Peter himself could have slept there. How different this must have been to the tents of the Victorian goldfields that Hingston had known on his first arrival in Australia; and how they must have reminded him of the imposing bluestone mansions springing up in Melbourne and the Western District.

In their own way, these mansions were like the imitation Gothic churches. They bespoke a solidity of a history that did not really exist. When the Europeans arrived in Australia, they believed that it was *terra nullius*, a land without a history. There was no sense of an indigenous past. Indeed, the Aborigines were among Charles Pearson’s evanescent races, soon to disappear. Unlike the New Zealand Maoris, so evanescent were they, that they did not rate a mention in the index of *National Life and Character*. The impressive stone buildings of cities such as Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney therefore gave all the appearance of a history that did not really exist. At best it was transplanted from Europe; at worst it paled into insignificance beside the antiquity of the Orient for those Australians who had the opportunity to travel. It was these Australians, rather than those who did not leave Australia’s shores, who would be confronted by civilisations older than their own.
For the more astute of these travellers, the easy assumptions of their spirituality and heritage could be questioned. It was they who would grapple with the concept of the evanescence of the Orient and find it wanting. Theory was not quite the same as reality. Men such as Hingston and Deakin drew their conclusions from what they actually saw, unlike Professor Pearson.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre with its Orthodox services was another Holy Land monument that attracted mixed feelings from Australians, depending on their Protestant or Catholic persuasion. Hingston was sarcastic about the sarcophagus inside the church: “Pilgrims kissing it as though it were the tomb of Jesus!” For other Protestants, the strange rituals were off-putting.

A grey-bearded old bishop, wonderfully arrayed, was upon his throne. What a contrast between that splendidly attired and bejewelled under-shepherd and the Divine Shepherd, who, as they affirmed, had given His life for the sheep hard by! The old gentleman took no part in the service, except occasionally, as it seemed to us, very carelessly, to cross himself…. No address was given, but a priest, who was beautifully attired in white and gold, with his back to the congregation, and took his share of the wearisome intoning.

By way of contrast, the Roman Catholic priest, J. J. Malone, was inspired. His comments not only illustrate not only his awe engendered at this Oriental monument, but also the sometimes bitter Protestant-Roman Catholic division of the time in Australia.

To those who do not appreciate the purpose and meaning of Christian symbolism the whole ceremony must have seemed a fanciful, if not foolish display; but the figurative language of Christian faith has a poetry of its own that, to a man of faith, is intelligible and exalting. In the court of the King of Kings, pomp and pageantry have, surely, a place as well as in the throne-rooms of the world, and shall until “this mortal put on immortality,” and we become spirits glorified.

Pushing further into the Middle East, Hingston found more confirmation that his own civilisation had barely begun in comparison with the worlds of the Orient. In Aden he came across the remains of Roman defences and forts. There
also were immense tanks left behind by the ancient Egyptians. Perhaps as a reflection of Australians' awareness of their own fragility on the edge of a what was in many aspects a hostile, dry continent, Hingston commented that these tanks would be much the same for the next two or three thousand years. There was also a sobering message to be found in another city, this time Alexandria, which had been the London of its day, the metropolis of the world. Rome itself had grudgingly admitted that it was second to itself in greatness. Even if Hingston had seen the tanks of Aden seemingly eternal in their life-giving nourishment, what else could he say about the antiquity of Alexandria but that antiquity did not always guarantee eternal greatness? Alexandria might have had the library of almost a million books, but there was nothing left of this seat of learning. Hingston drew from this the lesson that sometimes all the greatness of a place lies in its past.

Given that Hingston was extremely well read, as can be gathered from the number and range of allusions he makes in The Australian Abroad, he must have been familiar with the lines from Percy Bysshe Shelley's Oriental sonnet, Ozymandias, quoted at the start of this chapter. Alexandria, for all its antique renown, was now as empty of greatness as the level sands that had swept aside the glory of Ozymandias. It is unfortunate, therefore, that Hingston did not foresee the antics of Nazi Germany when he commented about another lesson he drew from Alexandria. Had he done so, his own place in history would have been assured. While he acknowledged that perhaps history could repeat itself, it was, however 'satisfactory to think that it cannot do so in that matter of book-burning'. Had he been a better-read historian, he would also have remembered that the works of Confucius had been burnt in China.
If Alexandria might have sent forth bleak messages from its antiquity, it was a comforting thought for Hingston that he could return to Egypt a thousand years hence to stand at the foot of the pyramids and the sphinx and see that everything was much the same. This idea of stability is found again and again in his writing, but it is not the moribund state that Curzon saw in the Orient. Rather it is something to be emulated. The Orient is showing the Australian that if the foundations of a civilisation were good, then that civilisation would be built on more than footings of desert sand. Even if the civilisation might have vanished, nevertheless there remained an enduring quality that stood the test of time. The ancient Nilometer, Hingston noted, had been studied for over 1600 years to see what the river would do. In the same manner, did not the modern Dutch watch the dykes preventing the sea from flooding their cities? The Nile River had ebbed and flowed since the days of the ancient Egyptians, bringing with it ‘fearful flood, grateful fulness and requisite overflow, or low water and consequent famine’. In other words, the natural world and its cyclical nature, as much as anything made by human hands or thought, determined the course of history. That is, of course, unless God intervened in the course of human affairs. Hingston looked at Cleopatra’s Needle, which had been erected on the orders of Thotmes the Third, ‘the Pharaoh that held the Israelites in bondage thirty-four centuries ago’, and soon to be moved to London. Although Hingston regarded himself as an Australian, despite having been born in England, there still remained with him the pride that came with being part of the British Empire, the centre of which was London. Here was another lesson to be learnt from antiquity in Egypt: what appeared new was not always so. As a ‘British-born man’ who owned a stake in the waterway, he proudly gazed upon the Suez Canal and discussed the four million sterling
purchase price - 'some part of which we have all contributed' - simultaneously having a shot at 'the handsome commission' of the Rothschilds. He implies by this that the Rothschilds are really not British-born as he and other Australians are: somehow a crafty section of the Orient had inveigled its way into British society. Hingston showed here that for him the Orient was not a single entity, but a composite of many worlds, some of which were to be despised. We recall his racism in nauseating Jerusalem, where the Jews should be cleared off the face of the Earth. The modern Suez Canal was no more than the old one, first constructed by old Egyptian King, and then reconstructed by Caliph Omar. The old one had been cleared out, leading him to conclude that there was nothing new under the sun. If the Jews, like the Canal, should be cleared out, then perhaps Oriental antiquity was teaching that the same thing should be done with the original inhabitants of Australia.

The Orient, therefore, was posing great moral questions. It was easy enough to follow Christianity in the Holy Land, but other Oriental worlds showed different paths. Naturally, for the devout Christian these worlds could take on the flavour of Christianity. If a well came in sight, then here was an instant reminder of people 'among whom our Saviour walked'. Hingston saw professional and amateur water carriers, who lingered at Indian wells to talk, as did the woman of Samaria. It was as if for Hingston these Biblical reminders suggested that India might hold the eternal secret of the meaning of life. At the same time that he wrote of the wells, he gave a pitiful account of monuments to the Indian Mutiny. What is the meaning of this juxtaposition? Perhaps he was suggesting the disconcerting notion that while the worlds of the Orient went on forever, the British-Australian world was so fragile that it might disappear in the face of such unchanging antiquity.
Australians also found another disturbing element to this enduring side of the Orient. Not only monumental ruins could be found in its antiquity. Civilisations were more than just stones, numbered or otherwise, piled upon stones. A mark of civilisation was its intellectual and spiritual life. Hingston found intellectual and spiritual achievements far older than any in the Occident. The Vedas, the sacred writing of Hinduism, included the Rig Veda, which was the oldest piece of literature in world.\textsuperscript{105} That which may have appeared superstitious from afar, when seen at the source was thus transformed into something quite different. Benares, Hingston discovered, was not only the most ancient of all habitations of the world, but the city and its temples also had a halo of sanctity given by the touch of time. Benares was so old it was crumbling before European antiquity began. The stones lay where they fell, the city seemingly left to fate and supernatural power.\textsuperscript{106} Once again, we must take Hingston’s comments with the proviso that he was inclined to spin traveller’s tales. Wherever he was became the oldest and greatest. If Benares was the oldest human habitation, what had become of Damascus? Nevertheless, the very fact that he enthused so much about the spirituality of this Indian city is a mark of how it has unsettled him. ‘Hindooism’ was not simply superstition, but was also the ‘natural religion of mankind’. According to Hingston, Professor Max Mueller traced in Hinduism the earliest forms of worship beyond those of primitive savages.\textsuperscript{107} But there remained in Hingston the residue of an earlier Orientalism. He really did not quite want to accept what he had seen with his own eyes, and in an effort to shake off reality he denigrated the inhabitants of Benares. It is as if he was falling back on the view of the Orient as a place of enervating languor and decadence, an image often repeated in Orientalist art, both European and Australian.\textsuperscript{108} The people of Benares simply sat around and watched their houses
falling down. The only thing that mattered to them was being blessed by the priest, and having their faces smeared and painted with holy pigments.\textsuperscript{109} To his credit, however, Hingston was equally sceptical about other spiritual encounters. We recall his scepticism about the sacred sites shown to him in the Holy Land when he comes across the holy sites of Buddhism. He looks at the Bo tree under which the Buddha supposedly meditated, and when he was told that it was planted ‘two hundred and eighty eight years before our era began’, we can feel his disbelief. The tree was not very sturdy.\textsuperscript{110} Earlier in Ceylon he had ascended the pilgrim path to the top of Adam’s peak to gaze at the footprint of the Buddha. Cynically he commented that the Buddhists must have appropriated it from ‘our first forefather’, and then compared it with other supposed miraculous footprints of ‘One who thence ascended from it’ shown to him on Mount of Olives, as well as two of Mahomet’s. The remarkable thing about all of these footprints was their enormous size: ‘Perhaps the great ages to which these ancients of the earth lived shrivelled them up, so that they died of the size of modern men at last’.\textsuperscript{111} Herbert Syme was equally amazed at this temple.

To the average visitor after he has comprehended the antiquity of the temple and the magnitude of the design the whole seems very tawdry and he naturally comes to the conclusion that the Buddhist religion per se must be very strong to depend on so little. That it is strong is evidenced by the fact that it is professed by 500 million of people & altho. it is not making headway in India this I think is mainly owing to the superiority of the Hindu religious casts [sic], that is to say the Brahmins. After all 2000 years of hereditary culture in the art of governing and religion must assist a religion against one that only depends on its principles.\textsuperscript{112}

Hingston’s comments could be taken as typical of those about the unchanging nature of human behaviour, either in the West or in the East. While this may or may not be true, the different worlds that Australians encountered in the Orient confirmed for them that even if human nature was more or less the same
everywhere, the Orient itself was unchanging. The monuments and ruins, the bustling and crowded cites, the religions, the learning, the faces of the peoples and their occupations, all of these seemed eternal. There was the additional revelation that not only were all these unchanging, there was the paradox that in this unchanging nature there was also a distinction to be found between the stationary and dynamic East. For Alfred Deakin, the unchanging nature of the Orient could be seen in India, which was ‘just as it was when entered by Alexander, neither a civilised nor an Europeanised country, but “the cradle of the world and the garden of the sun”’.113 “The Vagabond” found the same thing in China, where nothing original could be seen: ‘Everything here is the same as it was thousands of years ago, when our ancestors wore blue woad and the skins of beasts’.114 The caste system in India, the customs of the East, the grinding of corn in Canton in the same way as had been done for thousands of years and the method of dying silk there, the Chinese reverence for tradition, all these pointed to the unchanging nature of the Orient for Hingston.115 For George Russell, the bustle of Cairo streets showed at one and the same time a dynamic and unchanging world.116

A major pre-occupation of nineteenth-century painting, according to James Thompson, was an East that in turn was ‘Imagined, Experienced, Remembered’.117 Here Thompson is referring to European Orientalist painting, but this is absolutely true of the East of the Australians quoted above, for they were writing of the Orient when they were actually there. The Oriental worlds they were seeing were not only in front of the eyes as they wrote, but their recorded observations revealed that these Australians, experiencing the sights and smells, were remembering the imagined Orient before they set out from Australia. In their minds there was the consequent transmogrification of the seen Orient into a mixture of fantasy and
truth. The ancient Orient could not be what was actually before them, and yet it
was. Hingston looked at the Egyptian fellahs and imagined that they were working
as their forefathers had done from the beginning of time.\textsuperscript{118} There is no way that he
could know whether this was true or not, but somehow they must be made to fit
into an imagined antique Orient. Exactly the same happened when he sighted Arabs
folding their tents. They were doing this in the same way as their forefathers ‘had
done for all time’.\textsuperscript{119} He attended a Druse wedding in Lebanon, at which the women
were wearing a veil hanging from a projecting horn on their headdress. The manner
in which this was worn denoted the marital status of the woman, and Hingston
recalled the First Book of Samuel, where at Samuel’s birth mother said that ‘her
horn was exalted’.\textsuperscript{120} John and Elizabeth Reed on their pilgrimage from Adelaide
in the first years of the twentieth century, were amused by the same horn.

\textit{Notwithstanding ‘Women’s Rights’ of modern times, or perhaps, as a Syrian protest
against the spirit of such a movement, the Maronite patriarch has issued a bull against it, so
that it is doomed, and now but seldom seen. Who amongst our ecclesiastics dare interfere
with the headgear of ladies?}\textsuperscript{121}

The very sight of camels in Egypt put the seal on the paradox, as it were, of
the combination of the unchanging and the new. In Egypt the camel was ‘the right
thing in the right place. Railways and steamboats, as new things, are not so’.\textsuperscript{122}
Camels might have suited the imagined picture of an unchanging Orient, but
Australian travellers like Hingston, as well as the native Egyptians, were able to
avail themselves of the comforts of modern transportation. Deakin likewise found
in India ‘Splendid railways, roads, telegraphs conquering immense distances’.\textsuperscript{123} It
was true that British imperialism had brought these nineteenth-century marvels
from the industrial West, but the Orient was quite prepared to adopt them
enthusiastically.
The rich traditions of Islamic, Buddhist, and Hindu scholarship encountered by Australians helped fill a spiritual gap that was being felt at home. Buddhism in particular gave rise to such movements as Theosophy, which Jill Roe has described as promising ‘a new unity amid the bewildering changes of modern life’. Their encounters also taught them not to despise Oriental intelligence and artistry, as evidenced in the monuments and buildings. In such encounters they discovered radically different modes of thinking. They were, of course, not alone in this, for other Europeans did the same. In this both comfort and discomfort was to be found.

Comfort came in the understanding that the Orient gave about the uncertainties of life. The nineteenth century had seen a quickening of industrial technology. With this came also a quickening in materialism, as we have already noted in the possessions of the wealthy. Alongside this were the arguments generated around the writings of Charles Darwin. Inevitably there were conflicts between organised religion and science. The certitudes of the past were fading. Hingston came to terms with this in Calcutta, where he observed some conjurers performing an illusion with a coin. Their dexterity ‘knocked away the last supports of materialism’ and Hingston went to bed that night no longer prepared to sit ‘in the seat of the scouter’. In an obvious reference to Hamlet, he had found that there were more things in heaven and earth to understand than could simply be explained away by Western knowledge. Herbert Syme was not so philosophical. In his diary is a photograph unaccompanied by any deep remarks: ‘Native Conjuror’. Likewise Alfred Deakin simply noted in his diary without further comment, ‘Jugglers... 2 cobras - 6ft snake smaller mongoose.’
For thoughtful Australians, the ancient Orient could teach the West that Occidental progress might be an illusion. Hingston stumbled on the same lesson in Jerusalem when he was shown the chapel where the crown of thorns the “true cross” had been found ‘more than three hundred years after they were used at Calvary!’ It was vain, therefore, for Westerners to think their civilisations were better than those of the Orient. If nothing more could be learnt from the Oriental than this, then the conjuring, relics and ruins had done their work. At Akbar’s tomb at Futtipore, ‘the traveller looks around on a scene of decaying temples, palaces and tombs, and thinks of the utter vanity and wretched uselessness of all man’s doings’. 

Discomfort was also there for Australians. If they lived in the Antipodes where their security appeared fragile, then the Orient could amply demonstrate that their fear of annihilation was justified. The antique Orient was full of places where civilisations had risen and fallen. They could visit Delhi in British India, which had existed ‘nearly 2000 years before our era’ and had risen and fallen continually as invaders came and went. Like Oriental fashions, the city was ancient and unalterable. Given such Oriental history, Australians might have speculated on the lasting qualities of the British Empire, and with it the safety of the Australian colonies. If they looked at the history of India before the arrival of the British, then they could read little more than ‘a record of feverish ambitions, zenana intrigues, court treacheries and sanguinary usurpations’. Furthermore, British India was ‘won by the sword, is still held by the sword, and can only be retained by the sword’. Little wonder, then, that alarmists found ready hearers for their strident voices. Francis Adams, using Borobudur as an example of what happened to the Hindu ‘Aryans’ at the hands of the Malays, who were similar to the Chinese he thought,
warned of the danger from the Yellow race: ‘The Asiatic and the Turanian must either conquer or be conquered by, must either wipe out or be wiped out by the Aryan and the European’. A less strident voice, that of Charles Pearson, if a little more accurately than Adams’ when it came to racial groupings, warned that Australia should be prepared to defend itself against Asian invasion. Pearson was even hopeful that if the British departed from India the wholesale religiously inspired massacres of the past would not be repeated. Occidental imperialism could, therefore, change the supposedly unchanging nature of the Orient. Alas, as with Hingston and the burning of books, Pearson was unable to see into the future. Hingston had been correct when he had learnt from the Orient that there were no such things as certainties. Perhaps the only immediate certainty was to make sure that Britain did not abandon the defence of its Australian dominion. Even so, the monuments and antiquities of the Orient demonstrated forcibly to Australians that mighty empires collapsed. What appeared to be solidity might be no more than the veneer that Russell found at the Taj Mahal. At its height, Akbar’s Moslem dynasty in India demonstrated wisdom, power and glory, but then came the inevitable decline. Empires and powers, no matter how powerful, could vanish so completely that nothing could remain of their peoples but the stones with which they built. The ruins of Tripoori Poorum were witnesses to that. They looked as if they had been buried for thousands of years, and as great as they were, nobody could tell from them who had built them.

Thus lessons of degeneration could be culled from such ruins. Delhi had been shorn of its grandeur, the golden glory of Dondera had been destroyed, and in Lucknow the halls of the Haroun Alraschids and Scheherezades had all been converted into government offices. The monumental lesson for Australians who
confronted Oriental antiquity was that everything disappeared, 'leaving but wrecks behind. Such is the lesson of Lucknow!'\textsuperscript{140}

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85 A glimpse of this wealth can be seen in Cannon, *Australia's Upper Middle Class in the Edwardian Age*, Op. Cit. "Lauderdale" conducts interviews with wealthy Australians, and both the conversations and the accompanying photographs reveal how these upper-middle class men are inordinately proud of their large mansions.
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CHAPTER 3.

AUSTRALIAN SPIRITUAL QUESTS AND THE ORIENT

Hitherto I had but half a belief in miracles, but I retired that night convinced that there was more in heaven and earth to understand than he thinks for who sits in the seat of the scorners.¹

As Australians looked about them in the latter half of the nineteenth century and in the first decade of the twentieth, they saw a land seemingly older and harsher than those of Europe whence they or their forebears had come. Australia, however, did not offer them the spiritual comfort of ancient Gothic churches or cathedrals. Christian Australians had perforce to build such edifices for themselves, Roman Catholic, Anglican or Protestant, no matter how out of place in antique Australia these new buildings were. The churches looked as if they had been standing for generations, but this was an illusion as fragile as that of the Australian foothold in the southern continent. Despite their apparent solidity, the bluestone and brick also belied the insubstantiality of Christianity that some Australians felt. The encounters of these Australians with the Oriental lands to their north helped them bring a measure of faith and hope back into their lives. Sometimes this was a meeting with the Biblical world; at other times, it was an encounter with Hinduism and Buddhism. Deakin made many notes in his Indian notebook, including ‘all religions are Oriental & with the exception of the Xian their sacred books are all written in Oriental languages.’ Generally, his comments about Buddhism were favourable when compared to other religions; for example:

- Buddhism apathy & indifference all other faiths ... no fanaticism no exclusiveness no warmth
- Temples neglected priests degraded. No revolting rules as Hindu
- No intolerance as Islam
Present day conflicting deities in temples.
No means to attain ideal
Priests “clergy of reason” teachers of others

Buddhism and Hinduism, helped by a generous sprinkling of Western mythology, in their turn gave rise to a growing interest in Theosophy. Among Deakin’s effects is a certificate from India admitting him to the Society on 21 February 1895, and an Indian pamphlet, *An Important Discovery Regarding Jesus Christ*.

The pamphlet proved ‘beyond a shadow of a doubt’ that the ascension of Christ was ‘myth pure and simple’. It claimed Jesus was taken down alive, lived to an old age, and was buried in the Khan Yar Street at Srinagar.

Opposite the photograph of the dead Messiah’s tomb, we have given a picture of the living Messiah... The picture discloses the blessed features of the Promised one, in whose expectations millions have passed away. Blessed is he who sees him and rejects him not.

The photograph was of ‘Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Chief of Qadian, Panjab, *the Promised Messiah*.’

Many nineteenth-century Oriental paintings with their references to the Christian and Judaic Scriptures, provided an insight, imaginary or otherwise, into the world of the Biblical past for the Christian believer. Other paintings, such as Gérôme’s *Prayer in the Mosque of ’Amr*, also portrayed the world of Islam. Paintings such as this one showed a genuine respect for Islam, the scribes and young boys portrayed in them as genuine Koranic scholars. Those who were fortunate enough to own or see paintings like these could see that in the Islamic world literacy and religion were combined. The Islamic world was not, therefore, entirely barbarous.
The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were marked by English Christian missionary endeavour, some of the most notable examples being the work of William Carey in India and David Livingston in Africa. Missionaries, despite their good intentions, were not always kind to their proselytes in Asia. James Hingston observed that in Ceylon, Bishop Heber had called all men vile. Hingston took exception to this sobriquet. For him, such a description could equally well apply to the white race. As far as he could discern, the Cingalese was a decent, tall and graceful man. Further to the north-east, he also looked favourably on the Japanese approach to religion. In China, he was prepared to consult an astrologer, even if he claimed that this was simply from curiosity. He decided that he would frame the horoscope and hang it like an old needlework piece on his wall when he got home. If this had been simple curiosity or souvenir hunting, then his remark about the reaction of Ah Kum, his Chinese guide, suggested otherwise. Ah Kum sneered at ‘this man and his profession, but then what could a heathen Chinee know about spiritualism?’ Furthermore, another element of doubt can be read in Hingston’s relating of the event. He was offered an official translation of the horoscope, but he did not bother with it, because ‘it is as well not to know one’s fate.’ Everywhere that Hingston went he carried his Bible with him as his guidebook, so such an aside should not be taken so lightly as Hingston might have had his readers do. The devout Christian was prepared to acknowledge that in what some might see as heathen superstition there could possibly be an element of truth. In this simple encounter with a Chinese astrologer we may glimpse some of the journey that other Australians like Alfred Deakin would take into Oriental enlightenment.
Apart from his political career, which included the Prime Ministership of Australia, Deakin had entertained considerable success with his Indian articles written at the request of David Syme and published in the Melbourne *Age*, the Sydney *Daily Telegraph* and the Adelaide *Advertiser* between 1891-2. His friend and biographer, Walter Murdoch, wrote that Deakin's account of the chief irrigation systems was not only graphic, but that not even Kipling had written more sympathetically and admiringly of the Anglo-Indian engineer. Deakin's articles later appeared in book form as *Irrigated India*, edited by Charles Dilke and Philip Mennell (1892), and *Temple and Tomb*, Melbourne (1893). This, however, does not fully explain why Watt should have so described Deakin in his 'Obituary Testimonial'. Al Gabay, in *The Mystic Life of Alfred Deakin*, posits a more complex response, one which suggests that Deakin's Oriental mind was one that followed a lifelong quest of spiritual discovery, exemplified in his double divination of 17 October 1885.

Deakin had concluded his reading of Thomas Carlyle's *Past and Present*. In a quandary about the direction of his life, and considering whether politics should be his best field, he opened Chapman's *Homer* at random. There beneath his fingers were some lines from Book XIII of *Iliad*. These he copied into his journal 'Clues', underlining two of the lines.

*Far-seeing God grants some wisdom of the mind,*  
*Which no man can keep to himself.*  
*That tho but few can find,*  
*Doth profit many, that preserves*  
*The public weal and state,*  
*And that who hath, he best can prize.*
Having done this, he returned to Carlyle’s ‘superb’ discussion of religion: not a ‘Morrison’s pill taken from without, but a ‘reawakening of thy own Self from within,’ the essence of which ‘was to keep that ‘Inner Light … alive & shining.”

This double divination revealed to Deakin that wisdom was God-granted, and having received wisdom no man could keep that wisdom to himself. Instead, there was a duty to share it for the commonwealth, and this implied for Deakin firstly, an ‘Inner’ responsibility to his Creator, and secondly, an ‘Outer’ responsibility to work for social and political reform. If Gabay is correct in his interpretation of Watt's description, then the Orient might have been seen by Deakin's contemporaries as a repository of wisdom even more challenging than the Christianity of the West. Certainly for Deakin himself, the later ‘Grand Prophecy’, bound up as it was with the cause and effect of ‘Karma’ as expounded by Theosophy that he received in 1881 through the uneducated medium, Mrs Armstrong, influenced his whole life and thought. He understood from this prophecy that

before long, I should be officially sent to London to appear for Victoria before a tribunal which was not a court of law but a gathering like a court, that would deal with the interests of Victoria, of Australia, & of the whole Empire – I was to attend, to belong to, & to address a tribunal which she described as the highest in the land – It was to sit in London, & its consequences were to be very great. 

The prophecy was fulfilled on 6 January 1887. Deakin was selected to lead a Victorian delegation to a consultative Colonial Conference called by the Imperial Government in London. The fulfilled prophecy had provided ‘irrefragable evidence that the world as we know it is but glimpsed at one or two angles & remains for us absolutely uninterpretable.”
If the world for Deakin was 'uninterpretable', this is not to say that he did not attempt to interpret it. David Syme had invited Deakin to visit India as his special representative, and the articles he received from Deakin aroused great interest about the possibilities for irrigation back in Australia. On this ostensibly exploratory mission to find out if Indian irrigation methods could be applied to Australian farming, Deakin made a close study of other aspects of Indian life and religions, at the same time observing that the whole Indian irrigation system might be doing the opposite to what was intended. The object of the system was to relieve famine, but in reality, it condemned India to a rising population followed by further famine.

_Temple and Tomb_ contained separate chapters on Hinduism, Brahmanism and Buddhism. Deakin commented that his observations had shown him that even if the Hindus appeared distant and foreign to Australians, this distance was diminishing every year: ‘Politically and intellectually, as well as geographically, we are already allied,’ he wrote. Furthermore, he told his fellow countrymen and women that they also shared the superstitions to be found in Oriental religions: ‘There are warnings to us from pagan temples and monitions from the Muhammadan tombs.’ Murdoch was not so sure about the quality of Deakin's findings, suggesting that the chapters on Hinduism, Brahmanism, Buddhism were more like thoughtful student summaries rather than notes taken by a careful observer. They might well have been written without Deakin ever setting foot in India. However, in Deakin’s India notebook, is the careful observation, ‘Modern Brahmanism is Buddhism in a new purse.’ Murdoch also thought that _Irrigated India_ and _Temple and Tomb_ should be considered as a single book that was a 'brilliant journalistic tour de force [...but not] an enduring
addition to literature,' although Deakin's eye and his grasp of history, which was
deeper than that of most Englishmen, allowed him to see the significance of what he
saw. Deakin's observations, therefore, were not simply snapshots in a globe-trotter's
collection.²³ If Deakin's observations about Oriental religions could have been written
by a student at home, at least they had more substance to them than the racist ranting
of the Sydney *Bulletin* about the reception given to the visit of the Japanese naval
squadron in 1906. According to the *Bulletin*, Australians had nothing to learn from
Asians.

... ultimately the higher brain and the loftier type must prevail. The Caucasian is not "played
out" and the way to future advancement is not by patterning our religion and our civil
organisation on the Asiatic.²⁴

However, the Orient did have something to teach Australians about religion,
even if sometimes it simply meant a deepening of their own Christianity. James
Hingston certainly thought so, when he reminded future travellers about the accuracy
of the Bible they should carry with them, not only on their travels but also on 'the
longer journey of life.'²⁵ Hingston's journeys were certainly pilgrimages of intellectual
and spiritual discovery, and thus wherever he went the scenes confronting him
reminded him of the Bible, thereby confirming the reality of his faith. Thus when he
looked at the coffee sheds and their owners sitting cross-legged in an Eastern market, it
was 'a very eastern scene, reminding one of an old print out of an old Bible.'²⁶ The
porters carrying oranges back from orchards near Joppa were doing so in such a
manner that he imagined them to be like those men that he had seen in old Bible prints
bringing back bunches of grapes as specimens of what awaited them in "The Land of
Promise".²⁷ The very sheep he saw in Syria commanded a new respect from him,
because they were the obvious descendants of ‘Bible sheep.’ Indeed, throughout Syria he used the Bible as his guidebook and historical reference. For Hingston, there could be no doubt about the accuracy of Biblical prophecy. At Jericho, he and his companions saw a troupe of women dancing, whereupon one of the party looked at the 13th chapter of Isaiah and discovered a curse that had been put upon Babylon: ‘... and satyrs shall dance there.’ The Biblical allusions were not just confined to the Holy Land. In India, Hingston came across professional and amateur water carriers, who lingered at the wells so that they could indulge in conversation just as the woman of Samaria had done.

However Orientalists may debate the power structures of Orientalism, in nineteenth-century Orientalist paintings the wells were sources of refreshment. Oriental wells in like manner were clearly symbolic for Australians of the period. In 1875, a few years before Hingston had grappled with the meaning of the eastern well, the Town and Country Journal explained that the ‘Women at the Well’ symbolised the ‘unchanging’ nature of ‘Asiatic peoples’. The journal illustrated this with the biblical accounts of Jacob meeting Rachel at the well, and how Christ had spoken with the woman of Samaria. Hingston himself drank from the Well of Knowledge in Lucknow, and attempted by subterfuge to do the same at the Well of Purification. For him at these occasions it was as if India might hold the eternal secret of the meaning of life. The unsettling answer that seemed to come to him was the possibility that while the Orient might go on forever, future European civilisation was fragile. In 1908, Louis Esson noted the same timelessness conveyed by Indian women at their wells. The Australian missionary, T. B. Fischer, was not such a Doubting Thomas as James
Hingston. On a visit to India in 1912, the women at the wells reminded him of the people ‘among whom our Saviour walked,’ a sight which spurred him on to convince young Australians to help send the lamp of God’s work, ‘that light to brighten dark India,’ and thus remove India from ‘the blackness of sin.’

The timelessness summoned up by the wells presented yet another aspect. While the wells conveyed biblical allusions either leading to practical missionary endeavour or speculation about the nature of European civilisation, this same timeless quality begged the question whether Oriental spirituality was genuinely deep or simply a quality leading to helpless apathy and fatalism. This certainly concerned Hingston. In the end, he was inclined to the view that the latter was the dominant result. It could be seen in the unchanging fashions and customs, and in the half-sleepy calmness and acceptance of whatever Fate delivered. For Hingston, this belief in Fate meant that Orientals had no ambition, which in turn led to laziness, because there was little need to worry about the future. The Oriental was certain that Paradise beckoned, and was therefore satisfied to wait for it. Worse than this, the idleness so engendered by this fatalism nursed vicious sensualities. Such a comment suggests that Australians, like their counterparts in Europe, were actively seeking a titillating sexuality in the Orient, a sexuality that could be seen in Orientalist paintings of harem scenes. Rana Kabbani argues a contrary position; that these paintings are moral statements about the repressive European bourgeois social codes of the time, rather than what was actually to be found in the Orient itself. Whether or not Hingston was actively looking for some kind of escape from the mores at home, he was absolutely certain that Eastern faiths led to ‘the enslavement of the human mind, the saddest sight that a Western-
world man can look upon!” Presumably, this deadening effect was not to be found in the Eastern faith of Christianity. When required, therefore, the ‘East’ could be a somewhat flexible geographical description that excluded the Holy Land.

Deakin, however, directly compared Christianity with Hinduism and Buddhism. The enslavement noted by Hingston was seen by Deakin as a ceremonial and sacerdotal weight that Buddhism had lifted from Hindu shoulders, a weight that had so developed that it oppressed a whole people in the same way that religious shackles had done at the time of Christ. Buddhism had replaced these shackles with pity and spiritual democracy, and had done so because the Buddha had delayed the ‘consummation of his liberty’ and his reincarnation as the Gautama

to teach others the way of salvation, without any possible advantage to himself [...] He was in Hindu eyes a true Saviour and Redeemer [...] the “Light of Asia” for many hundred years.

The reference to the “Light of Asia” is to The Light of Asia or The Great Renunciation (Mahābhīnīshkramana). Being The Life and Teaching of Gautama, Prince of India and Founder of Buddhism (As Told in Verse by an Indian Buddhist) by Edwin Arnold. This was a text read by Theosophists, of whom Deakin had been one for a while. Broinowski suggests that those who knew ‘The Light of Asia’ as a popular brand of tea outnumbered the readers of Arnold’s book. Deakin himself claimed that the study of Sanskrit had given a ‘new tone and turn to nineteenth century thought.’

A century later, an Australian Buddhist, the Venerable Adrienne Howley, wrote that the first translators of Buddhist texts were Theosophists, who translated according to their own personal understanding. Deakin went on to criticise Buddhism as having strayed from its pure path and message, just as contemporary Christianity had done. It was now ‘ecclesiastical in the highest degree, and bears an extraordinary resemblance
in its externals to Roman Catholicism.\textsuperscript{47} He damned its contemporary practice of worship, ‘if it can be honoured with that name,’ because it consisted of ‘deafening noise, meaningless repetitions of formulas, and offerings of flowers and food.’\textsuperscript{48} Deakin made another direct comparison with Christianity when he quoted the Gautama as having declared that religion was ‘nothing but the faculty of love,’ which thus supported ‘an earlier version of the great Christian maxim.’\textsuperscript{49} Such deliberations support Murdoch’s claim that Deakin was not commenting from first-hand observation, because by the time Deakin toured India Buddhism was no longer practised in India, having virtually disappeared in the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{50} Deakin saw instead its legacy in Brahmanism, which had left a race that might ‘fairly claim to be the most religious people in world.’\textsuperscript{51} Everywhere that Deakin looked, he saw evidence of this, both in the social and political life of the country: ‘even sanitary observances, culinary practices, household customs, and racial relations are made part of a ritual.’\textsuperscript{52} Although this might first appear to be a compliment from one seeking spiritual enlightenment, it was not really that. Deakin regarded Indian creeds as survivals ‘from primitive times, which the Anglo-Saxon race has long outgrown,’ supporting this with Carlyle’s protest against ‘Pagan religion’ as ‘quackery’, even though ‘Millions in the East believe in it to-day, disdaining the imputations of quackery or dupery.’\textsuperscript{53} If Australians, such as Deakin’s friend Charles Pearson, were fearful of what they saw or imagined to be in parts of the Orient, Deakin conversely found in the followers of Brahmanism and Hinduism a people themselves subjugated by fear. Brahmanism, which according to Deakin was not a religion but instead provided the metaphysical basis for Hinduism. It had as its main doctrine a spiritual Pantheism, wherein the ‘Divine is equally present in all substances.’\textsuperscript{54} This philosophy had done little more
than ‘tighten the bondage of superstition upon the people by encouraging the
multiplication of idols,’ which in turn had fettered the Indians with ‘the most arrogant
sacerdotalism that the world has ever beheld.’ Thus ‘Hinduism was and is a religion
of fear.’ There was a lesson here for his Australian readers. In particular that they
should not be seduced by brilliant essayists ‘like Max Müller who have not visited
India, and charming poets like Sir Edwin Arnold who have ... [dwelt] upon the higher
phases of its faith.’ Australians should be aware that these higher phases were of little
more importance for most Hindus than ‘Shakespeare, Beethoven, and Kant exist for
dwellers in the back lanes of our cities or the average sundowner of the bush.’ That
might have been so, but the argument in itself did not necessarily diminish the
essential truths for seekers of enlightenment among those Australians not from the
outskirts of society. The more well-to-do, including Deakin himself, had libraries that
included the works of the great European writers and philosophers. Theosophy also
continued its appeal well into the twentieth century. In his brief flirtation with
Theosophy, Deakin had taken the chair in the Second Olcott Buddhism lecture held in
the Freemasons’ Hall, Melbourne, in May 1891. The lecturer made a number of
important points: firstly, that Theosophy was opposed to sectarianism; secondly, the
hope that a true religious sense would come with Theosophy; and thirdly, that in
Buddhism could be found a religion that freethinkers could take for themselves,
because its practical morality and its law of ethical causation (karma) were followed
by one-third of the world’s population. According to The Age, the audience heard that
Buddhism taught that ‘a good man should be respected [...] unmerited misfortune
should be relieved, and the bad man should be punished.’ Apart from those
reasonably economically secure in the audience, such a message might also have
spoken to those ‘dwellers in the back lanes of our cities or the average sundowner of the bush’ whom Deakin had so abruptly dismissed.

James Hingston had written that India was in ‘all probability, the Ophir of the Old Testament’. For him, then, India was a place where spirituality existed, a spirituality he found in the ancient text of the Rig-Veda. The Vedas he described as the sacred writing of Hinduism, with the Rig-Veda being the oldest piece of literature in the world. Deakin, too, was impressed. In his Indian notebook are quotations from the Rig-Veda as well as details about the number of syllables, words, poems, books and age: ‘Mahabharata 7 times Iliad and Odyssey. 220,000 lines.’ They meant ‘3000 years of memory alive at present time committed to memory’. The ‘Colossal unparalleled epic poems’ were as ‘the Old Testament is to Jews New Test to Xtians & Koran to Islam.’ To read the ‘Mahâbhârata & Râmâyana…brings prosperity, health & wisdom & children wipes away any guilt – Krishna’. He also observed that Bishop Cotton had advised students ‘to use one hymn of Rig-Veda in their daily prayers’.

Hingston also had great respect for Buddhism. When he visited the ‘Boer Buddha’ (Borobudur), he learnt that learnt that many of the Buddha’s moral teachings and doctrines were identical with those taught afterward by Christianity. This link between Christianity and Buddhism was contrary to the Occidental premise that Oriental religious expressions were perverted and pagan examples of human culture. Thus the Holy Land was not the only repository of true faith. Even as far away as Japan, Hingston could see that the statue of the Buddha Dai Butsa had a look of ‘peace, contemplation and eternal rest […] with a veritable a veritable “Presence” distinctly to be felt,’ thereby enforcing respect. He noted that in the “Three Caskets”
‘into which the doctrines and teachings of Buddhism are divided,’ contained a code of morality ‘similar to that of Christianity which Buddhism preceded by some centuries.’ In fact, the similarity was anything but vague, for Buddhism condemned ‘all that our Ten Commandments forbid.’ John Stanley James, "The Vagabond", noted that wherever he travelled through the East the same face of the Buddha could be found, a face that did not display human passions. The Buddha would always be represented as the same cross-legged figure ‘from Dai Boodsa, in Japan, to furthest India.’ The passionless features of the Buddha always conveyed a sense of sedate power, ‘a supreme unconsciousness – a wisdom far removed from this world.’ For Christian Australians, here was another parallel with Christianity: ‘The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.’ "The Vagabond" compared the representation of the Buddha with Christian representations of the ideal figure. None matched the Eastern image: ‘It personifies the spirit as the Venus de Medici does the flesh’. This was material revelation for ‘those who have read Mr Edwin Arnold’s work.’ Here he was referring to The Light of Asia, an indication that many Australians were taking more than a passing interest in Buddhism. Hingston noted Buddhism had more followers than Christianity, and its doctrines had been set in writing before the Christian era.

In their search for spiritual enlightenment, Australians found in the message of The Light of Asia a pathway into a new awakening. It popularity can be seen in the diverse readership. The artist Arthur Streeton admired the book, and even a drover in one of Furphy’s stories had read it.
The new awakening was that of Theosophy. The speed of change was dividing Australians, and Theosophy pointed the way to a reunification.\textsuperscript{75} The official ‘Objects’ of the Society showed how the movement could do this.

To form a nucleus of the universal Brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.
To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.\textsuperscript{76}

On his return from India, Deakin wrote in his ‘Boke of Prae & Prase’ that he wished to ‘speak the word & do the best for this country & its people.’ He would do this without any regard of the welcome given to him.\textsuperscript{77} Gabay cites this prayer as a Theosophical idea.\textsuperscript{78} This is possibly correct. Deakin had met Annie Besant, the president of Theosophical Society, on her lecture tour in 1894, and she had persuaded him to join for a trial period.\textsuperscript{79} He did so, becoming first secretary of the ‘Ibis’ branch in Toorak.\textsuperscript{80} It was a natural move for Deakin, who had long striven to live by an ‘Inner Light’. His private journals reflect this struggle. When examined, his faith, although he was nominally an Anglican and referred to himself as a Christian, was a blend of Judaism, Neo-Platonism and Gnosticism. The Buddha, Socrates, and Mohammed were among his ‘World Teachers’. \textsuperscript{81} Deakin saw no conflict between these beliefs and his workaday life. A medium, Emma Hardinge Britten, had ‘repeatedly prophesied that I should become a Spiritual teacher & preacher but apparently connected with my profession too’.\textsuperscript{82} Before joining the Society, he had read H. P. Blavatsky’s \textit{Isis Unveiled. A Master-key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology}, and was impressed with the conception of the truth therein.\textsuperscript{83} Unfortunately Madame Blavatsky claimed to have produced manifestations in Madras. A friend of Deakin, Richard Hodgson, investigated these and pronounced them fraudulent. After Hodgson’s
findings were published in *Harbinger*, Blavatsky fled India. He was also a friend of Ernest Besant-Scott, later knighted and Professor of History at Melbourne University. Scott was the anonymous editor of the *Austral Theosophist*. Theosophy claimed that it was not a belief system requiring members to leave their own religion. Its aim was to seek out the Truth. Australians were told that they could remain with Christianity, because Christ symbolised ‘a certain stage of the unfolding of the Divine Spirit in man, a stage at which unity is practically realised – when the Spirit in all forms is known as one.’

With its combination of Indian and esoteric mysticism, Theosophy spread rapidly, branches soon established over the continent. It held out the promise of Australians becoming a new race of ‘sun gods’. Queensland’s tropical climate, and its population of British, Germans, Italians, Chinese, provided the right conditions. The prediction was based on Madam Blavatsky’s *The Secret Doctrine*, in which she described humankind as divided into root-races, each in turn being supplanted by a higher one in an evolutionary cycle. At the end of the nineteenth century, the Aryan race would evolve into the spiritually-perfected, sixth root-race. In this doctrine, with its division of humankind into higher and lower races, can be seen Pearson’s earlier, independent argument of the same structure, although Pearson did not see any evolution of the lower races into higher and spiritual perfection.

Alfred Deakin had already grappled with reincarnation, which may be one of the reasons that he was attracted to Theosophy. Reincarnation made sense of a world filled with disparities. With reincarnation ‘the nascent qualities, the latent capacities & the unexpected powers inherent in the soul are slowly brought to maturity,’ he wrote.
On a lecture tour in 1908, Annie Besant expounded the theosophic doctrine of evolution to Australians. Besant had become prominent in the struggle of women to gain the right to employ contraception. In 1877, she and Charles Bradlaugh faced prosecution for publishing a British edition of the first contraceptive guide for the layperson, *Fruits of Philosophy*, written by an American medico, Dr Charles Knowlton in 1832. The trial drew enormous crowds. Those inside the Court heard Sir Hardinge Gifford, who was prosecuting the case, tell the jury that the book was ‘a dirty, filthy book, and the test of it is that no decently educated English husband would allow even his wife to have it.’ The trial went against the defendants after an ambiguous jury verdict, but following a number of appeals the verdict was overturned. Besant then wrote a six-penny pamphlet, *The Law of Population: Its Bearing Upon Human Conduct and Morals*, which had sold 175,000 copies before she withdrew it on joining the Theosophical Society in 1891. Three years previously, a bookseller in New South Wales had been prosecuted and fined five guineas for selling the pamphlet, a conviction which was set aside in the Supreme Court of New South Wales. When Besant, therefore, arrived in Australia it was to an audience already familiar with her name. Besant twice altered her views on population to accord with the teachings of Theosophy. Her first change was that birth control was not required, because Theosophy taught that the transmigration of souls meant that there could be no alteration in the total numbers. By 1900, she had reverted to her earlier Neo-Malthusian views. 

In a lecture, she told her audience that reincarnation was part of the Christian heritage.
[It was] not a doctrine you should take from Hindu or Buddhist, not a doctrine that you should borrow from Greek, Roman, or Egyptian, but a doctrine that belongs to you in your own religion. It is part of the early teaching of the Christian Church. It has been taught in many forms, this pre-existence and rebirth of the soul.96

She argued that not many Christians believed in either an ‘everlasting hell’ or an ‘everlasting heaven’. It was an argument drawn from Hinduism and Buddhism, although modified to suit theosophical belief, despite her telling another audience that the ‘same that is true of Hinduism is true of Buddhism.’97 For Theosophists, the law of Karma meant that ‘You cannot get away from the results of your own actions.’98 Besant was presenting a simplification of Buddhist and Hindu philosophic expositions of Karma. In Theosophy, a belief in reincarnation meant a belief that suffering automatically follows evil. The inevitable result was

remediable, educative, and purifying, so that the man is the better, nobler and purer for it.
Heaven becomes rational when it is temporary, and when in that heaven you can become better than when you left the earth.99

So that Christians in her audience could be convinced of this law of Karma, Besant quoted St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians.

"Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." That is what we call the doctrine of Karma, that every man reaps exactly as he sows.100

In another lecture, she extended the claim to include reincarnation in the belief systems of all the great religions of the world, including those of Egypt, Chaldea, and Assyria ‘some 9000 (sic) or 10,000 years before the Christian era.’101 For good measure, she added Judaism and the poets Goethe, Robert Browning, and Dante Gabrielle Rossetti.

Australians were not isolated from the rationalism that had come with the new discoveries of science in the nineteenth-century. Teachings such as Darwin’s theory of evolution had thrown into debate the whole issue of creation and the position of the
Christian Church. Besant turned to science, thus combining the teachings of the Orient with those of the West: ‘And coming right down to our own day, let me remind you how Huxley declared that there is nothing in the analogy of Nature against reincarnation, but there is very much in support of it.’ Besant produced Theosophy’s version of science, and she did so in a way calculated to produce a response from the older members of her audience, who were ‘young and vigorous at the time when Darwin’s theories convulsed the scientific world.’ She also appealed to those who believed the Aborigines of Australia were of a lower race than the white population. This idea was not new to Australia. In his 1862 lecture to the Acclimatisation Society in Sydney, Dr George Bennett argued that if it were not ‘for the animal and vegetable products introduced into this colony, from its earliest formation,’ white Australians ‘would have been a wandering, half-starved race, subsisting, like the aborigines, upon the products of the chase, roots, and grubs, and clothed in opossum, squirrel and kangaroo skins’. Later, Charles Pearson posited much the same view.

The mere wearing of clothes, as savages do without changing them, and the disuse of artificial tribal restrictions on the inter-marriages of relations, are believed, by some of those who know the Australian aboriginal best, to be almost as much responsible for his decay as the diseases of European origin that scourge immorality.

Besant asserted that Darwin was wrong in his theory that parents transmitted moral qualities to their children. She illustrated this with a family that had produced a musical genius. For the following three generations, the family went down, before again producing a genius.

But that does not look so much like transmission, as it looks like Nature preparing a body for a genius, with the nervous organism which is necessary for the full showing out of the artistic power.
In this process of preparation through reincarnation, even criminals would meet their victims after death, and then come back better for the experience.\textsuperscript{108} Besant combined this idea with the supposed lack of morality of the Australian Aborigine.

... take a savage; that savage, for example, may be one of your aboriginal inhabitants here whom Darwin has put on record. The savage does not know what we call good and evil, he does not know what we call right and wrong.\textsuperscript{109}

Here was Orientalism in its crudest form applied to indigenous Australians. The audience was informed that the Aborigine only knew the satisfaction of physical craving. Australians could not appeal to the Aborigine, because he did not even possess the sensitivity of a child. The Caucasian child was on a higher level of existence.

[...] the child's soul has many experiences behind it of murders and robberies, and of all the results that flow out of them, and in the life beyond death has had imprinted on the memory of the spirit the results which grow out of the experiences of human life.\textsuperscript{110}

Whether Australian audiences made any connection with this brand of Orientalism or not, they could not believe other than Theosophy had its roots in India. Besant told them that in English translations, British religion and thought was being fertilised by Indian Scriptures, Indian philosophy and Indian drama. Only the Indian race and their language could have done this.\textsuperscript{111} Then followed an extraordinary justification for British imperialism in India.

And sometimes a nation is set apart like that, kept for a while encircled with a wall that cannot be over-climbed until she has grown great and strong and full of the loftiest thought; and then her border is broken down, her land taken, and her people subjugated, in order that the treasures there accumulated may become the world's wealth and possession, common instead of national property, taking their part in the helping of the world.\textsuperscript{112}
This is no Orientalist argument about bringing European culture to reform the Orient of its depravity and backwardness. It suggests that at least in India there was a civilisation equalling any other in the world.

Before its virtual disappearance from Australian life, Theosophy attracted considerable attention, as the lectures of Annie Besant and the brief membership of Alfred Deakin testify, even if the actual membership numbers were comparatively low. In 1896, the membership numbered 267. This rose to 390 in 1901; 551 in 1906; 953 in 1911; and 1391 in 1914. In its heyday, because of a perceived lack of spiritual fulfilment in conventional religion, Theosophy’s esoterism of Hindu, Buddhist and occultism fired some Australian imagination. William Hack wrote about this in an unpublished account for his children.

I went though the most terrible misery when I gave up the Xian platform. I saw that the old dogmas were bad & untrue, but I had nothing to put in its place; & that state of mind is wretched indeed. Theosophy was the only stability in his life, which included the librarianship at the Theosophical Headquarters in India followed by membership of the Adelaide branch.

With the passing of the imperial connections between India and Australia, the interest in Theosophy died with it. Its transience ironically reflects the Buddhist teaching of anicca, the impermanence of all things.

The West has often seen Islam in a different light to that of Hinduism and Buddhism. A number of reasons lie behind Islam’s poor image. For many centuries, Christians and Muslims fought each other for the possession of territory, in both
Europe and the Holy Land. During the nineteenth century, French and British colonialism extended into Islamic civilisations. It is with this struggle for European domination that Edward Said, as a Palestinian Arab, is mostly engaged in his Orientalist discourse.\textsuperscript{117} His social science concept of Orientalism is one that legitimised Europe's dominant power over the Middle East and North Africa.\textsuperscript{118} Woven around Orientalism is the imagery generated by Oriental fairy tales. In France, for example, this occurred in the middle of the eighteenth century, with translations of Arab and Turkish tales.\textsuperscript{119} In England, Richard Burton not only translated Islamic literature, he had travelled disguised as an Egyptian doctor to Mecca and Medina, subsequently publishing an account of his perilous pilgrimage. Thus both France and England developed a picture of the Islamic Orient that was a mélange of pleasure, barbarity and terror.

It is against this background that it is possible to develop a conception of Australian reactions to Islam. Australians had read the same English Oriental tales; but although these tales remained in their subconscious, Australians started from a different geo-political perspective. As such, Australia did not wield power in the Middle East. As part of the British Empire, however, they shared some of the benefits accruing from British possessions. A downside to imperial possessions meant being prepared against revolt; hence the British armies stationed around their Empire and Australian involvement where necessary, such as the South African War.

Along with their British Motherland, Australia saw the Islamic world as dangerous. Hingston warned that Islam was a fighting faith, one in which its followers believed they could achieve salvation by the killing of non-believers.\textsuperscript{120} Such a warning
could be coupled in Australian minds with an event that took place other than in the Middle East. Ever present was the memory of the Indian Mutiny, in which Islamic soldiers had revolted against their British colonial overlords. As discussed in ‘India’, it was that event that drewustralians and Anglo-Indians together in their feelings of isolation from the metropole. According to Charles Pearson, Islam was beaten in the Indian Mutiny. Pearson also looked even further in his warning about the danger posed by Islam. China was the source of his greatest fear. Muslims were waging active propaganda there. The basis of the threat lay in what Pearson saw as a general agreement about the nature of the ‘Mahommadan’. He might ‘be commonly distinguished from his Buddhist countrymen by his erect bearing and fearless tones.’ If this were so elsewhere, then ‘Islam in this country also transforms its votaries into military fanatics.’

From an assumption that observers generally agreed with his description of a Muslim, Pearson built an argument of terrifying, if improbable proportions, for his fellow countrymen.

The accident of a leader of genius arising to combine the Mahommedans in a common organisation might conceivably transfer sovereignty to a follower of Islam. In that case it is difficult to suppose that China would not become an aggressive military power, sending out her armies in millions to cross the Himalayas, and traverse the Steppes, or occupying the islands and the northern parts of Australia, by pouring in immigrants protected by fleets. Luther’s old name for the Turks, that they were “the people of the wrath of God,” may receive a new and terrible application. It seems reasonable to suppose that such a visitation can only be possible in the distant future, and not unreasonable to hope that it may never occur. Should it, however, take place, the ultimate effect would probably be to drain China of population and wealth, which die out gradually wherever the Crescent floats in triumph. The military aggrandisement of the Empire, which would provoke general resistance, is, in fact, less to be dreaded than its industrial growth, which other nations will be, to some extent, interested in maintaining. Still, even a ten years’ conflict against forces far greater than Tamerlane’s, and inspired with as
ferocious a spirit, would be something so horrible that we may well pray for it to be never anything more than an evil dream.123

Quieter Australian reactions to Islam can be placed against such an emotional outpouring. In his search for spiritual enlightenment and guidance, Alfred Deakin studied Islam. He focussed his attention on the Prophet, wishing to consider Islam ‘only at its source, to enquire into the origin of this mighty human agency’ in the period immediately before and during Mohammed’s life.124 Deakin’s Islamic gospel does not present an image of destruction and warfare. Instead, a man is revealed, who like Isaiah was commanded to ‘Cry’ or ‘Recite’. Deakin noted his approval of Mohammed’s acceptance of his message and role; the Prophet ‘heard & believed the verdict of his senses.’125 Deakin firmly believed that a Divine hand was guiding Australia to its inauguration as a Commonwealth.126 This may account for his different view of Islam. Perhaps he too, like Mohammed, was subject to Divine guidance. The problem lay in the recognition of whether such communication was really from God or not. Deakin tested Mohammed’s revelations against others, such as had been given to other visionaries like the Hebrew prophets, Swedenborg, and closer to home, Bunyan and Fox. There seemed to be little cause for doubt. Deakin came to the conclusion that the Prophet had felt a voice speaking Arabic ‘flow into him, as if from an outside source, a certain communication which he remembered & repeated’127 Unlike Pearson’s raging against Islam, Deakin was in awe of such faith and its messenger. The last sentence in the treatise reads ‘There is no God but God, & Mohammed is one of his prophets.’128 This looks like a quotation from an Islamic prayer, but the final phrase shows that it is Deakin’s own. Deakin had accepted and incorporated at least part of Islam into his own belief system, despite Pearson’s warning of its dangers. Much of the religion he did not agree with, but because of his admiration of the Prophet, he was prepared to recognize it as the ‘purest of all forms of monotheism.’129 The Koran was delivered with ‘instinct with energy & insight, with heat & light, with fire of conviction & flame of aspiring zeal.’130
While Deakin criticized some of the Koranic doctrines, especially that of sensuous rewards in Paradise, the central message of ‘good works & exactly proportioned rewards’ and the entry into heaven of those ‘who believe & do good works’ accorded with his own ideals. The message of the Prophet, relying as it did on feelings rather than ‘thick spun argument’, pointed to the existence of God.\textsuperscript{131} Deakin’s comment about the purity of its monotheism is an echo of that purity Hingston had discovered at Agra. There the severe simplicity of worship could be imitated by all other religions, including Christianity.\textsuperscript{132} Nevertheless, if the Taj Mahal was the grandest shrine in the world, Islam could also show another, less-pleasing face, that of the ‘grotesquely luxurious place’ of Akbar’s palace. It offended the Australian’s sensibilities, because although all the other decorations were gone, it was full of bathrooms and fountains.\textsuperscript{133}

Islam, therefore, sent mixed signals to Australians. It was monotheism of the purest form, one that could inspire the spiritual path of a future Prime Minister. It was also a warning of what might occur if its message of heavenly rewards translated into sybaritic luxury on earth. In an age when Australia was feeling increasingly vulnerable because of events outside its control, such as the growing Japanese military power, some saw Islam converting its followers into dangerous fanatics. It had done so in India, and might yet do so in China. Thence an Islamic militancy might spread south to Australia.

The mixed signals sent by Islam could, therefore, be taken as paradigmatic for the Australian search for spirituality in the Orient. There was much to admire in its theology and morality, as there was also in that of the Indian religions. If Islam’s believers were devout, then some Australians, such as Hingston, had confirmed their own Christianity on encountering biblical reminders like the women at the wells. If others felt that their Christianity was insubstantial, then the solutions they sought in India proved to be a mixed blessing. Even if it seemed to accord with the rationality of the new Darwinian science, and even if it held out the hope of drawing Australians
together in a period of change, Theosophy, drawing on Buddhism and Hinduism, in the end was as illusive a belief system as that expounded by the Christian churches. Over-riding all this, as the Indian wells had suggested, was a misgiving that Oriental civilisation was eternal, whereas that in the Occident might be otherwise. It might not be enough, as Hingston had remarked, merely to sit in the seat of the scorners. If Australians were to be safe from invasion, they had either to await a miracle or take active steps themselves. The search for spiritual guidance from India, in itself was not sufficient in the face of the threatening Oriental menace from China.

NOTES
2 Alfred Deakin, Notebook 1889, Deakin Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 1540/10/2/4.
3 Certificate of Admission, 21 February 1895, Deakin Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 140/5/3.; An Important Discovery Regarding Jesus Christ, Lahore, Albion Press, Deakin Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 1540/5/629.
5 Ibid.
7 Ibid, pp.7, 4, 34, 50.
8 Ibid, p.70.
9 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
26 Ibid., p.382.
27 Ibid., p.384.
28 Ibid., p.382.
29 Ibid., pp.427-8.
30 Ibid., p.430.
31 Ibid., pp.292-3.
38 Ibid., p.478.
39 Ibid., p.447.
43 Ibid., pp.82-3.
46 Adrienne Howley, *The Naked Buddha: A Simple Explanation of a New Religion*, Sydney, Bantam Books, 1999, p.64. The comparison between two translations of Verse 50 from the *Dhammapada* is an example of how this can occur. The original Pali text reads:
Na parasam vilomani na parasam katākatam
attano' va avel khóya katam akatani ca
A Theosophical translation reads 'Let the aspirant observe not the perversities if others, not what others have done; rather should he consider what he has one and what he has not done and what he has yet to do.' Hariscandra Kaviratna, *Dhammapada: Wisdom of the Buddha*, English-P*H*i ed., Pasadena, Calif., Theosophical University Press, 1980, p.23.
A non-Theosophical translation reads 'Think not of the faults of others, of what they have done or not done, think rather of your own sins, of things you have done or not done.' Juan Mascaro, *The Dhammapada: The Path of Perfection*, Penguin Classics, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1973, pp.42-3.
48 Ibid.
49 Ibid., p.89.
52 Ibid.
53 Ibid., p.47.
54 Ibid., p.52.
55 Ibid., p.53.
56 Ibid., p.57.
57 Ibid., p.50.
58 Ibid., p.51.
60 *Age*, 20 May 1891, p.6, cited Mary K. Neff, *How Theosophy Came to Australia and New Zealand*, Sydney, Australian Section, Theosophical Society, 1943, p.58.
63 Deakin, Notebook 1889, Op. Cit..
65 Wallerstein, Eurocentrism and its Avatars, Op. Cit..
70 Ibid.
71 Romans: 1 Corinthians 3:19.
72 James, Occident and Orient, Op. Cit., p.142.
73 Hingston, 1886 #180], p.8.
76 Annie Besant, and Theosophical Society in Australia, Australian Lectures 1908, Delivered at Cities in the Australian Commonwealth During Her Tour in the Winter of 1908, Sydney, George Robertson & Co. for the Australasian Section of the Theosophical Society, 1908, endpaper.
85 Ibid, p.94.
86 Annie Besant, 'Theosophy and Christianity', in Annie Besant and Theosophical Society in Australia, Australian Lectures 1908, Delivered at Cities in the Australian Commonwealth During Her Tour in the Winter of 1908, Sydney, George Robertson & Co. for the Australasian Section of the Theosophical Society, 1908, pp.1-2.
93 Ibid, p.40.
95 Ibid, pp.61-62.
99 Ibid.
102 Ibid, p.31.
103 Ibid.
107 Ibid, p.35.
109 Ibid, p.46.
117 'I saw myself as one of these people who in fact comes from that part of the world, trained and educated in this one, and in a certain sense living in both, and therefore more able to understand the clichés and the stereotypes, which is what Orientalist images are, of this world as they're deployed in my world, the world from which I come, the Arab world, but also able to see in the Arab world the clichés and the myths about, not only ourselves, but about the Westerner, which are equally malicious and equally useless in understanding the politics and the detail of everyday life.' This is Social Thought: Interview with Edward Said, Op. Cit.
118 Wallerstein, Eurocentrism and its Avatars, Op. Cit..
119 Chloe Garcia-Roberts, The Oriental Fairy Tale URL:
http://www.wesleyan.edu/~cgarciarob/orientaltales.html, [cited 7 October 1999].
122 Ibid, p.132.
126 Gabay, The Mystic Life of Alfred Deakin, Op. Cit., p.120.
131 Ibid.
133 Ibid, pp.300, 304.
CHAPTER 4.

DIRT AND EROTICA

We have written letters to our folks in Aussie land,
Saying we are leaving Gyppo shit and sin and sand.¹

A downside of foreign travel is the feeling of national inadequacy at the sight of the achievements – the ‘good’ - of other countries. The upside may well include a feeling of national superiority when viewing the disease, dirt and squalor. In this case, ‘we’ take on a moral superiority towards the ‘others’ whose civilisations have led to our disgust.² In the nineteenth century, it was a given that health and disease were the products of moral and social conditions.³ Alison Bashford argues that from the late 1860s, working-class masculinity in Australian hospitals was therefore replaced by middle-class femininity and purity.⁴ If Bashford is correct, then the Orient was a confusing experience for male Australians. Unlike Australia, it was a moral sewer, but it was also feminine and seductive.⁵ When we look at the reactions of Australians during the period under discussion, not only do we find this moral superiority, but we also detect also a desire to seek out the dirt and the disease. This desire is what Dean MacCannell, in The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class, designates as a desire to see life as it is really lived: an ‘authentic and demystified experience’⁶. For example, Herbert Syme’s visits to the temples in Benares:

The temples are simply filthy & malodorous so that it was a treat to get out of them & into the bazar. If cleanliness is next to godliness then the Benares are very low in the scale of righteousness.⁷

This consciousness suggests at the very least that Australians had inherited a supposed British sense of racial superiority, as in Charles Pearson’s ‘higher races’. As
further confirmation of this, in *Purity and Danger*, the anthropologist Mary Douglas argues that moral values are upheld by beliefs in dangerous contagion, and that pollution can be employed analogously to express general views upheld by a society. Those who pollute are always in the wrong. ⁸ Pesman and Walker also suggest that the Australian tourists’ obsession with dirt was the supreme test of the social efficiency of the country they were visiting.⁹ Thus Australians could prove that the degeneracy of the ‘lower races’ was the direct result of the ‘calm, half-sleepy indifference to circumstances’.¹⁰ Abundant traces of Oriental degeneracy, according to the English writer, John Kelman, could be observed in the smutty Syrian humour.¹¹ He disliked not only the dirty humour, but also the physical dirt, the stench of the houses, the flies and disease of Syria, all of which made the sunshine terrible.¹² An encounter with Oriental notions of purity at the Sikh Golden Temple at Murrihar could lead to disgust in somebody like Herbert Syme. ‘That it may not be polluted by the foot of the unbeliever we remove our shoes at the threshold & put on a pair of consecrated affairs that are unpleasant to walk in.’¹³

Richard White argues that Australian soldiers in Egypt during the First World War believed that British imperialism brought with it decent hygiene.¹⁴ Where it was missing, there was disease and dirt. In Egypt in 1863, John Smith found the village of Samalood ‘filthy in the extreme, and well frequented by half starved dogs and naked dirty children.’¹⁵ He also found the streets of Nazareth ‘narrow, torturous, and filthy’.¹⁶ In 1886, Port Said disgusted George Nicoll.

This is a filthy dirty place... Had a walk in the Arab town, where the poorest of the Arabs are located. Their huts are wretched in the extreme, black and dirty hovels. Slops and dirt are thrown into the street. A great many have no homes and are allowed to lay in the streets and on the side walk all night.'
He could not get away fast enough. The city lacked sanitary arrangements and the Canal was polluted by hundreds of people washing and bathing in it.\textsuperscript{18} His hotel was equally off-putting:

The food is very bad, made up dishes of sheeps brains and other mysterious ingredients, bad coffee and sour wine. The Jerusalem wine is very bad. Sweet thick and treakley.\textsuperscript{19}

Perhaps worst of all was the gathering and drying of animal droppings to sell as fuel for food shops.\textsuperscript{20}

There is much competition in this occupation and it requires great diligence to make a few coppers; this is how the poor girls and boys make their living on the streets.\textsuperscript{21}

Cairo in 1887 was little better, the ‘streets crooked, and filthy half naked Arabs poor and poverty stricken begging for their living and sleeping in the open on the roadsides.’\textsuperscript{22} Again, there were no sanitary arrangements: ‘All kinds of filth and slops are thrown on the streets.’\textsuperscript{23} He was not surprised that plagues carried off the thousands who drank unfiltered water from the same places in the Nile where dirty linen was washed. The smell was overpowering.\textsuperscript{24} Clearly here was a connection between morality and disease.

In Cairo are a great number of blind people, particularly young children. The flies are very bad and get into their eyes, the mothers & nurses being careless. The children are unable to drive the flies away.\textsuperscript{25}

In 1802, the British had exhibited the same reaction on arrival at Port Phillip. James Tuckey, the First-Lieutenant of H. M. S. Calcutta, described the ‘savages’ they saw: ‘the face of one was deeply pitted as if from the small pox, though that disease is not known to exist in New Holland ... some of them were so abominably beastly, that it required the strongest stomach to look on them without nausea...’\textsuperscript{26} In their turn, later white Australians, by continuing to seek out and describe the dirt of Oriental lands, could point out the beastly inferiority of the ‘other’. Thus another possible
conclusion is that, surrounded by a threatening Orient, Australians felt it necessary to do so in order to justify their evolving White Australia Policy. Once again, they were demonstrating that Australian Orientalism was a complex mixture of admiration, disgust and fear.

Australian men liked to see themselves as virile and hardy, a people who had left the decadence of old world behind. According to J. J. Malone, the Irish-Australian priest from Melbourne, the pet aversion of the English tourist in the Holy Land was ‘the great unwashed’. Malone was scathing of what he considered to be the ‘exquisite sensibility’ of English olfactory nerves ‘put to the torture by the malodorous East’. These nerves were far too delicate, though the Englishman ‘need not have gone further to irritate them than the slums of London’. In actuality, Kelman’s writing shows us that the English investigated the malodorous just as keenly as did Australians. Writing about the monastery at Mar Saba, Hingston merely observed the wasted lives, whereas Kelman did not hold back.

Everywhere dirt reigned supreme - unspeakable filth in open drains and putrid litter. In one place, where the smell was sickening, a monk was lying asleep by the side of a broken drain, covered with flies in great black masses on his face and arms. In another place an abominable-looking dish of food, fly-blown and disgusting, was pushed with a spoon in it half through a hole broken in the bottom of a cell door. And everywhere throughout this palace of disgust was to be read the prayer, “O Christ, abide with us!”

For Nicoll, Jerusalem was ‘a perfect quagmire of filth’, a phrase he used several times about Jerusalem, and also about Damascus. In Jerusalem were dirty bazaars and no sanitary arrangements. Damascus was badly drained, the river running through the middle acting as a sewer. Dirt was the measure of the Oriental city for Malone, which gave him the opportunity to condemn the city where Christ was
crucified: ‘squalid and insanitary’ Jerusalem was a place where garbage was flung into the streets and open gutters carried away the sewage. Filth thus allowed Malone to express his racist, moral superiority.

I have just returned from a stroll through the filthy village street. It is the dirtiest, dreariest, most dismal-looking place … inhabited by a mongrel tribe of Arab and Bedouin…

The ‘mongrel tribe’ - apart from Malone’s inaccurate thought that the Bedouin were not Arab - suggested that Orientals were little more than animals. It is not surprising, therefore, that other Australian tourists should equate unpleasant beasts with the Orient. Syme felt quite bloodthirsty when he heard that the bark of the jackals at night in India. They seemed to be saying, “I have found the body of a dead Hindoo”. The Reeds found mangy dogs and fleas in the Holy Land. Malone thought the pariah dogs, resembling Australian dingoes, roamed about like Bedouin in Damascus.

they are dangerous as an excited Mahommedan. Scavengers of the city, they feast on its offal, and grow fat, and impudent, and lazy. I have seen sympathetic natives buy bread in the bazaars and feed them. Judged by the refuse that is flung everywhere in the open street, this seems a wasteful superfluity.

Perhaps these dogs and fleas symbolised for such Christians not just the nature of Orientals in the Holy Land, but also the anti-Christ, for was not Beelzebub the Lord of the Flies who dwelt on the dung heap?

Dirt and lack of sanitation led to another mark of Oriental degeneration, that of leprosy. Malone told his readers that the disease was so revolting he would spare them any description. The chance, however, was too good to be missed.

Suffice it to say that, with the progress of the disease, the hair falls from the head and eyebrows, the nails drop off, joint after joint of fingers and toes decay, eyes, teeth, tongue
gradually disappear, and the sad remnant of humanity that survives might almost be dug up out of the grave...\textsuperscript{37}

Malone revelled in the details, which allowed him, like Hingston and Pearson had done before him, to castigate the Turks. Malone seemed unaware that his castigation also revealed a streak of cruelty in himself. He argued that it was a bad thing that the Turks ignored the old sanitary law that drove lepers out of villages and cities to prevent infection.

[The] insanitary Turk to-day ignores it, and the tourist of the Holy Land may make up his mind that he will, somewhere or other, come into contact with that most hideous and hopeless of all ills that flesh is heir to - the frightful disease of leprosy. The sightless eyeballs they tried to turn to us, the maimed hands they held out to us, the husky voices with which they plead to us, as out of the mouth of an open sepulchre, must haunt us with the feeling of the repulsive forever.\textsuperscript{38}

The seeming delight that Malone exhibited here is akin to the pleasure shown by other Australian travellers when they ventured into areas they might otherwise avoid in their own cities. They could leave the comfort of their own homes and gaze at the poor in such cities as Calcutta to see the most crowded, confined, filthy & wretched-looking places that are probably to be found in any city in the world’.\textsuperscript{39} They could satisfy a curiosity that would not be sanctioned back in Melbourne. Herbert Syme noted that

Calcutta has been called the “City of Palaces.” It ought to be called the “City of Smells.” Indeed the air of Calcutta is quite an acquired taste.\textsuperscript{40}

“Vagabond’s” friend, ‘M’, could not wait to see an execution by decapitation in China.\textsuperscript{4} Hingston attended a cremation in Benares, an event that he described in great detail, even to what happened when the body swelled with the heat and the skin burst. Almost as an excuse for his curiosity, he took the opportunity to moralise about suttee, claiming that the British did no favour to Hindu widow. The custom of not
remarrying was as unalterable 'as all customs of the East'. The unfortunate lady would spend the remainder of her days as 'the most miserable of all womankind'.42 George Russell was another one who saw dead bodies of the poor floating down the Ganges, and several cremations.43 Much later in 1884, Herbert Strong wrote to Charles Pearson, 'I think you have seen all these ghats, so I needn't describe them.'44 'Ghats' or 'Ghauts' were stairways down to rivers, and these were associated both with cremations and ritual bathing. On 16 January 1890, Deakin noted in his diary that he visited the ghats in Brat. 23 December 1890 was a mixture of Indian and English customs. Deakin combined his visit to cremations with one to the Towers of the Dead and their attendant vultures. Obviously Imperial cleansing was required. Following the vultures, he noted, 'Parsee Cricket and Lawn Tennis'.45 Near the back of his diary can be found the notes for an article on cremation.

sheds on one side where mourners chant & sing a monotonous chant - six iron pillars 2 ft apart - pieces of wood over 6 ft long - blaze reflected - burning flesh46

In Benares, Herbert Syme saw both ritual bathing and cremations side by side,

a peculiar sight. There must have been thousands of Hindus engaged in purification of body & according to their belief - of souls. The river was very dirty but the righteous or those in pursuit of it in bathing in it & also drinking it. Further along we saw the burning Ghaut where we saw the body of an aged man being washed prior to cremation.47

American residents in Japan were also fascinated by cremations. 'How much better,' wrote Griffis, 'is the method of returning to the earth by pure, quick fire, than by hideous, slow decay'.48 Edward Morse, a natural scientist, wondered how long it would take before American prejudice disappeared so that 'this sanitary process' could be used in the United States.49 Although none of these knew it, the shores of Lake Mungo in Australia was where an Aboriginal woman, about twenty years old, was.
cremated some 25,000 years ago, the first-known cremation in the world. Cremation was first legalised in Australia under the South Australia Cremation Act, 19 December 1891. The first Australian crematorium began operations at the West Terrace Cemetery, Adelaide, in December 1903. Built in English Gothic style, with the chimney in the form of a bell tower, the facility hid its purpose. The crematorium was demolished in 1969. Today nothing remains but the gates. The first cremation, that of a Sikh whose religion required it, was a public spectacle. Families came to see the fun. Rumours spread. These included the re-use of coffins and the resale of their decorative fittings after the bodies had been removed. The bodies were then cremated in groups. The ashes were supposedly divided into equal parcels to be distributed to the relatives. One rumour had it that a person had sat up in the coffin before it was consigned to the flames. Here was Adelaide copying Syme’s tale of Benares.

If ever a corpse is unfortunate enough to revive after being carried down to the Ghaut it is never allowed to go back to his sorrowing relatives, the creed being that a man may never have another chance to be as well prepared. Besides it would do the priests out of their fee. Holy mud is accordingly stuffed into his mouth and he dies as a matter of course.

This interest in bodily destruction had its parallel in imagined Oriental brutality. After visiting a hut, which ‘smelt abominably’, Malone connected the dirt with the cruelty of the inhabitants of the village.

On the way back, in a butcher’s shop, a young lamb was playing with the children. The butcher seized it, drew a large sheath-knife across its throat, and flung it, gasping, on the footpath. The children laughed. It was sad and sickening, and gave us a disrelish for the savage and his young barbarians which will save money.

His words flew in the face of Christ’s exhortation that Malone should love his neighbour. The savagery of his attack makes it tempting to think that perhaps this was a universal Australian attitude. That this was not the case may be seen in a comparison
between Hingston's short account of his visit to the condemned cell in Canton and the longer and far more gruesome account by George Wingrove Cooke, an earlier English reporter from China. That Hingston had read Cooke's description is more than possible, for Cooke had been the China correspondent for *The Times* during the years 1857-8. His reports had been published in book form under the title *China and lower Bengal: being "The Times" correspondence from China in the years 1857-58*. The book was certainly available in Australia.

Unlike Cooke, Hingston was far more interested in how the prisoners were coping with their impending deaths, and thus he was attempting to shed some real light on the inner nature of the Chinese. The Englishman appeared to delight in the horrific detail of the executions, real or not, and in so doing perpetuated the mythology of the barbarous Oriental. Cooke actually achieved the opposite of his intentions. Without realising it, he demonstrated that he and his English readers were the barbarians, vicarious or otherwise.

This is the Acedama, the field of blood, the execution ground of Canton. The upper part of that carpenter's shop is the place where nearly all the European residents have, at the price of a dollar each, witnessed the wholesale massacres of which Europe has heard with a hesitating scepticism. It was within this yard that the monster Yeh has within two years destroyed the life of 70,000 fellow-beings. These crosses are the instruments to which those victims were tied who were condemned to the special torture of being sliced to death. Upon one of these the wife of a rebel general was stretched, and by Yeh's orders her flesh was cut from her body. After the battle of Whampoa the rebel leader escaped, but his wife fell into the hands of Yeh - that was how he treated his prisoner. Her breasts were first cut off, then her forehead was slashed and the skin torn down over the face, then the fleshy parts of the body were sliced away. There are Englishmen yet alive who saw this done, but at what period of the butchery sensation ceased and death came to the innocent woman, none can tell. The fragment of rope which now hangs to one of the crosses was used to bind a woman who was cut up for murdering her husband. The sickening details of the massacres perpetrated on this spot have been related to me by those who have seen them, and who take shame to themselves while the confess that after
witnessing one execution by cutting on the cross, the rapidity and dexterity with which the mere beheading was done, deprived the execution of a hundred men of half its horror. The criminals were brought down in gangs, if they could walk, or brought down in chairs and shot out into the yard. The executioners then arranged them in rows, giving them a blow behind which forced out the head and neck and laid them convenient for the stroke. Then came the warrant of death. It is a banner. As soon as it is waved in sight, without verbal order given, the work began. There was a rapid succession of dull crunching sounds - chop, chop, chop. No second blow was ever dealt, for the dexterous man-slayers are educated to their work; until they can, with their heavy swords, slice a great bulbous vegetable as we slice a cucumber, they are not eligible for their office. Three seconds a head suffice. In one minute five executioners clear off a hundred lives. It takes rather longer for the assistants to cram the bodies into rough coffins, especially as you might see them two into one shell, that they might embezzle the spare wooden box. The heads were carried off in boxes; the saturated earth was valuable as manure.\textsuperscript{56}

By comparison, Hingston exhibited a far greater understanding of the Orient and the difficulties inherent in cross-cultural relationships. In ‘Fear and Desire: Aborigines, Asians and the National Imaginery’, Annette Hamilton suggests that Australians, in their specific construction of ‘Asians’, differentiate them from other forms of ‘Otherness’. Australians do this through of a combination of fear and desire, and this act of construction is really part of the process of Australians finding their own identity. When Australians meet ‘Asia’ in this way, they also meet the problem of cross-cultural relationships, and this problem involves the transgression of racial and identity boundaries.\textsuperscript{57} Hingston’s account of the Canton prisoners accords with Hamilton’s proposition, for the meek acceptance and fatalism shown by the prisoners demonstrated the ‘Otherness’ of these particular ‘Asians’. By contrast, Cooke’s lurid description suggested that the ‘Otherness’ of the Chinese barbarians was really the inner ‘Sameness’ of the prurient English. This poses the problem of whether one culture is superior to another.
Edward Said argues that Orientalism is in part an attempt by Europeans to confirm their own identity as superior to that of all non-European peoples and cultures, thereby restating their own European superiority over Oriental backwardness. When we compare Hingston’s account with Cooke’s, then Said’s proposition at this point holds up with that of Cooke but not with Hingston’s. In writing about the very foreignness and barbarity of the executions, Cooke thought he was informing his readers of the superiority of Western culture, which had given up such barbarity. Hingston, on the other hand, in his lack of interest in the bloody detail - the ‘rapid succession of dull crunching sounds - chop, chop, chop’ of Cooke’s account – was far more concerned in discovering the humanity of the condemned men.

At first reading it may appear that Hingston was suggesting that the men lacked the Western notion of life being dear and sacred, and therefore the Chinese were ‘Other’. The concluding phrase – ‘in poor condition’ - turns this reading on its head. Even if at other times Hingston found Orientals ‘Other’ in their outlook, at this juncture he revealed that the Chinese, when not ‘in poor condition’, actually valued life. Thus the Australian in this particular contact with one of the worlds of the Orient, and at this particular moment of sympathetic, human understanding and reaching out to the prisoners, contradicted the deliberate ‘Otherness’ of European Orientalism. In his ignoring of the prisoners’ emotions, and in his emphasis on the bloody details, Cooke systematically painted a word picture of Oriental cultural inferiority and ‘Otherness’. The curious and unintended upshot, however, is that in doing so Cooke communicated the ‘Sameness’, because the English attended the executions as if they were simply at another spectator sport somewhat akin to bullfighting, the only
difference being that men and not animals met their death. Perhaps he had forgotten that that just over 100 years previously the execution of Jonathan Wild at Tyburn Way in 1725 drew an audience of over 200,000, who sat in special galleries. From these galleries, they watched Wild, while on scaffold, pick the pocket of the parson attending him, and then die unrepentantly holding the corkscrew he had taken.59

Little, apart from the geographical distance, separated Canton, Madrid and London. Even when an Australian wrote at some length and presenting similar details, there was not the relish shown by Cook. Nicoll simply records the horror:

[At the Canton Jail] we saw prisoners going about with large square boards, like tables on their necks. They could neither sit lie down or use their hands in an upward direction. We saw the dungeons where prisoners went to their execution. It was just in the open street among passers by. Seen through a pottery work is the cross where some are nailed & crucified & tortured to death also the place where condemned kneel down to be beheaded the executioner takes a large knife or sharp cleaver & with one chop the head rolls off. We then went to the Temple of horrors where is various machinery for putting people to death, all to be seen through an iron grating in the public market, so that passers by can take heed & warning. Full sized wax models of people being tortured in machines such as placing cauldrons of boiling oil, some being tortured to pieces, & mutilated, cutting off hands, feet, nose, ear etc.60

All this can be tempered by Hingston’s comment, when he looked at the execution ground proper. The ground was blood-stained from the thirty victims of the previous month, which ‘seemed great sacrifice until one looked at the superabundance of humanity that exists in crowded China, and thought of the millions that might well be parted with for the benefit of others.’61 But Hingston was not really telling his Australian readers that the Oriental Chinese were so barbarous, for in the next sentence he once more commented quite deliberately about the mind-set of the Occidentals who thought in such a way: ‘Looked at in that cynical light, this cleansing away of the people in batches of thirty seemed almost one of the ways of Providence.’62 He thus
penetrated sharply the Orientalist notion of the cheapness of life in the East. In its place he was putting the men to whom he given the tobacco. He made no mention of the crimes for which the thirty had been executed, and we should remember that capital punishment in England had been used for relatively trivial offences. The cruel practice of transportation had been visited by England upon Australia until 1840, that is to say, within living memory of some of Hingston’s readers. Cheapness of life, therefore, was also to be found in the West.

Whereas it is easy to say that because Hingston was sympathetic in a way other than that of Cooke, such a statement, despite the foregoing argument is not sufficient to demonstrate that most Australians were of the same sentiment. The fear of China, which played a large part in the formation of the White Australia Policy, brought forth the racist elements in Australia. The *Bulletin*, ever anxious to portray the Chinese in the worst possible light, could not resist the chance presented to it during the Boxer Uprising of 1900. The *Bulletin*, which over 1900 said very little about the Chinese situation, nevertheless took the opportunity of emphasising Chinese brutality when it presented itself in a report received about an allied attempt to capture some Chinese forts. In its presentation of the foray, there is a disturbing similarity with Cooke’s description of Chinese executions. The *Bulletin*, pandering to what was clearly a sense of the darker side to its readership, lingered almost pleasurably on the bloody details. Decapitation was a powerful symbol of Chinese barbarity, so the journal reported that when the allies captured some Chinese forts, the Jap. Commander, in leading his men to the assault, was beheaded. The Chows have many experts in the gentle art of beheading - there is much of it to be done in the Flowery Land. The executioner has his victims kneeling before him in a row, and generally a very long row, and their arms are tied behind them. As each one’s turn comes, the butcher’s assistant catches hold of the subject’s pigtail and pulls forward his
head, whereupon the headsman severs the neck with one lazy-looking slash. The Chinese executioner never cuts twice - that would be beneath his dignity. In the rare cases when through some accident the neck is not severed, another man comes along and hacks through the rest of the neck with a knife.\textsuperscript{63}

With all the tales of dirt, disease and cruelty, travellers could expect to have their ideas of the poxy Orient confirmed on their visits. As far back as 1858 in the Legislative Council of New South Wales, there had been talk of the ‘filthy and dirty habits’ of Chinese with the certain knowledge that ‘the breaking forth of disease ... is a matter of dreaded expectancy’.\textsuperscript{64} Hingston wrote of the ‘dirty, demoralizing Chinese element’ in Melbourne.\textsuperscript{65} Even the reasonably impartial Morrison claimed that the Chinese could ‘thrive amid foul and penetrating smells’.\textsuperscript{66} Nicoll objected to Canton:

In Naples it is bad but Canton beats the world for crush of humanity, dirt and filth & it is a terrible ordeal to go through ... the streets being so narrow & crooked & he [his guide of 20 years' experience] cannot see for millions of humanity.\textsuperscript{67}

He found the European quarter of Hong Kong beautiful, but

the Chinese quarter is disgustingly dirty. They are a dirty ugly race.\textsuperscript{68}

No doubt there was an element of truth in these claims, for John Stanley James - “The Vagabond” - on his visit to Shanghai noticed the stench when he crossed a canal, ‘the Cloaca Maxima of the place’. ‘M’ objected to the smells around them, but James, ‘as a truthful historian’, admitted that the purity of the air was surprising, given the way the lanes crowded in on one another. He went so far as to write that the canal smelled only half so bad as the banks of the Yarra or the streets in Sydney.\textsuperscript{69}

To disabuse further the Orientalist idea of the combination of disease and decadence of the East, there was the cleanliness to be found there. Hingston even observed a pilgrim carrying his own bath beside the River Ganges, and he also
reported on mixed bathing in Japanese bathing houses.70 Travellers’ tales of such
immodesty, as well as the stories they told of the Japanese geisha aroused curiosity
about the women that could be found in that land.71

Then there was the Japanese bathing house, where the ‘simplicity of sinless
times still prevails’, and would remain so until the Japanese had learnt enough about
European ways to separate the sexes and clothe themselves properly. 72 As for the
Chinese, James was of the opinion that they were much cleaner than the average
European, with bathing houses for all classes of society.73 For Hingston, naked Chinese
for the rude traveller ‘soon become no more of interest than naked flies’.74

The Orient, whether in its individual lands or as a mysterious whole, was a
place of sexual promise for English-speaking societies. Said argues that the Orient was
a region of untiring sensuality and unlimited desire.75 Another Orientalist, Danielle
Sered, has further suggested that such thinking leads to a European perception of the
Oriental man as a weak, feminine being that poses a threat to white, Western women.
By contrast, the Oriental woman is there to be dominated. This generalisation has no
national boundaries, and is one that concludes for its believers that the sensual, and
passive Orient ‘displays feminine penetrability and supine malleability … [and
compared to the West] is always the Other, the conquerable, and the inferior.’76
Streeton’s warning that the feminine, passive seduction of the Orient was a danger to
Western masculinity, confirms the arguments of both Said and Sered.77 This fear is
further compounded by white emotional hostility towards sexual relationships between
black men and white women, a hostility that could even prevent political equality.
Such equality would grant the freedom for such sexual relationships.78 One way of
degrading such relationships was to categorise the black races as sub-humans at best. This was done throughout the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{79} Thus Cuvier could write

\begin{quote}
The Negro race … is marked by black complexion, crisped or woolly hair, compressed cranium and a flat nose. The projection of the lower parts of the face, and the thick lips, evidently approximate it to the monkey tribe: the hordes of which it consists have always remained in the most constant state of barbarism.\textsuperscript{80}
\end{quote}

In 1895, Herbert Syme’s feelings at the Monkey temple in Benares were similar:

\begin{quote}
Why the Hindus adore the monkey I don’t know unless he was an ancestor of theirs which is not improbable judging from the similarity of its tricks with theirs. Like all Hindu temples the Hanuman is filthily dirty, and there are only monkeys & priests to be seen there both being equally objectionable.\textsuperscript{81}
\end{quote}

Annette Hamilton argues that for present-day Australians, sexual relationships with ‘Asians’ transgress the racial and identity boundary and provide access to the ‘mystical’.\textsuperscript{82} If this is so today, it was certainly true of Victorian and Edwardian times. For all manner of reasons, ranging from a lack of contraception to an economic system in which marriage played its part, bourgeois women remained ‘pure’ until marriage. In \textit{The Dark Angel: Aspects of Victorian Sexuality}, Fraser Hamilton writes that copulation for these women belonged to the marriage bed, but that no such restrictions were placed on men. It was accepted as fact that men learnt about sex ‘from the gutter’.\textsuperscript{83} It was also accepted that Victorian men felt a strong, insidious attraction to Oriental women.\textsuperscript{84} Ronald Hyam argues that British imperial expansion during the Victorian era and the subsequent control of the British Empire was underpinned by sexual dynamics. Sexual relationships maintained the invisible bonds, particularly in Africa and Asia.\textsuperscript{85} Male ex-patriates were expected to indulge in casual sex with the willing participation of the natives.\textsuperscript{86} As Australia was a part of the Empire, this allowed Australian men the opportunity to indulge their Oriental fantasies, even if this
indulgence was being reduced by the Purity Campaign in Britain. This campaign against regulated and licensed prostitution grew in strength, so that by the end of the Edwardian period sexual relationships between the rulers and the ruled in the Empire had virtually disappeared, with the exception of the fighting forces. In its place, the British concept of masculinity meant sexual restraint and ‘cleanliness’.\(^7\) To achieve this, the élite public schools of the empire emphasised the playing of games and other activities such as Scouting. As late as the 1970s, the school song of Carey Baptist Grammar School in Melbourne contained the chorus: ‘Carey’s true sons will through life play the game!’

We can but speculate upon the origins of Orientalist sexual fantasies. Many paintings depicted scenes of slave markets. W. J. Müller said about one painting, ‘The scene is of a revolting nature, yet I did not see, as I expected, the dejection and sorrow I was led to imagine.’ In the painting, purchasers were removing the clothing of female slaves. Müller thought the Abyssinian and Circassian slaves were very beautiful, but the tallow fat melting over bodies from their hair made the Negresses less so.\(^8\) It was but a small step from paintings, which might be hung at least in the smoking rooms of respectable homes, to the collection of Oriental erotica.

This erotica came in many forms: books, photographs, Oriental prints and carvings. Britain was the main exporter of the pornographic photograph, which led to Alfred Dyer, a Purity fanatic, to reside in India from 1888 to 1911. He was afraid that the flood of British obscene photos would set off another Mutiny, in which all white women would be raped.\(^9\) In the early years of the twentieth century, many postcards picturing male and female Europeans in seduction scenes were distributed.\(^9\)
Erotica was assiduously collected in the Victorian England and America, including Indian prints of *kama sutra* couples and Japanese erotic woodcuts. Screens and fans, which implied sexuality, were also part of the collections. The collections of David Scott Mitchell and William Dixon in State Library of New South Wales testify that Australians were not immune. Mitchell’s collection includes *La Fleur lascive orientale: cintes libres ineditis, traduits du mongol, de l’arabe, du japonaise, de l’indien, du chinois, du persan, du malais, du tamoul*, etc. Dixon’s collection includes a Japanese book of coloured erotic drawings and a Japanese scroll illustrating in colour the fate of three shipwrecked fishermen. It also contains three copies of different editions of John Cleland’s *The Memoires of a Woman of Pleasure: or, The Life of Fanny Hill*. While this novel has nothing to do with the Orient, it is of interest insofar as its author spent thirteen years in the legal department of the East India Company, Bombay.

Australians saw Oriental sexuality at first-hand. When Trollope visited the Chinese quarter in Ballarat, a police sergeant told him

[a more degraded life it is hardly possible to imagine. Gambling, opium-smoking, and horrid dissipation seemed to prevail among them constantly. They have no women of their own, and the lowest creatures of the streets congregate with them in their hovels. Boys and girls are enticed among them, and dwell with them, and become foul, abominable, and inhuman...]

This sounds very much like simple prejudice, and we should therefore regard its accuracy with considerable scepticism. By the mid-nineteenth century, China had fallen from grace in the eyes of Europeans of both hemispheres. It was no longer the model civilisation, but a country wherein filth, torture and corruption dwelt. The Chinese were even blamed for their consumption of opium.
What has been documented, however, is the fact that in Australia many Oriental prostitutes plied their trade. In 1896, there were more than 200 Japanese prostitutes, and about half of these were in Queensland.98 Thus it would not have been difficult for Australians to generalise about the imagined sexual depravity of their neighbours. The available literature could but whet their appetite.

Alfred Deakin gave his Australian readers what he knew they wanted to hear about the Indian women, who were covered with

as much as metal and stone can embellish the human form ... In some cases the arm from wrist to elbow is almost covered with variegated bangles of silver, gold, coral, bone and other materials; there are several more above the elbow, while six or eight anklets about each foot keep up that tinkling which roused the wrath of the prophet Isaiah against certain daughters of Jerusalem.99

Genuine disgust, rather than fanciful embroidery, then crept into his description. Rings had deformed the noses and ears of these women. His Indian notebook contains the remark, ‘Women superstitious & religious.’100

But Deakin was not without a sense of humour, and lest his genteel Australian women readers might be priding themselves on their civilised manner of dress, he warned that white women ‘who are fond of appearing in full undress’ might note that all Indian women ‘are careful in every case to have a covering for their breasts, and that no Hindu woman under any circumstances wears false hair’.101 In his diary, he noted that the women washed their hair and tied it into a pigtail.102 What is more, India women of all classes were modest and dignified.103 We can only wonder what the matrons of Toorak thought about Mr Syme’s young protegé, when he so chided them on their dress and conduct, and how his remarks might have dashed the hopes of potential travellers to India.
Had they read *An Australian in China*, these travellers might have expected more satisfaction in the Flowery Land, for Morrison’s idealism about China even extended to the Chinese women he saw on his epic walk across the country. He much preferred a Chinese smile to the ‘misshapen little dot with black teeth that we are asked to admire as a Japanese beauty.’ All Australians, however, did not hold such admiration. Smiles aside, James Hingston had found little to praise: ‘I see no pretty Chinese women here,’ he reported. As for the ‘compressed foot’ so admired in China, ‘It is most unpleasant.’ Elderly Chinese men and women grew shrivelled and hideous beyond other humanity. Death must, I thought, be afraid to approach some of the ancient beings that I saw, who had for years been ‘plainly flying the blue peter at the fore’.

On the brighter side, even if the young George Morrison did not carry Hingston’s book with him on his Chinese trek, he had certainly read it, for Hingston’s comments about the tortured feet were firmly embedded in his mind. Unlike Hingston, he was not prepared to allow even this unpleasant deformity to detract from his comparison. The ‘walk of the Chinese woman is more comely than the gait of the Japanese woman as she shambles ungracefully along with her little bent legs, scraping her wooden-soled slippers along the pavement with a noise that sets your teeth on edge.’

Australians looking for erotic pleasure could seek out Oriental dancing. If they went to the Holy Land, they could see for themselves what an Englishman, John Kelman, had called “body-dances”. Performed by nomadic Arabs, the dances were ‘pantomimic, and their crude realism is unspeakably disgusting’. For prurient Australians, Nautch dancing, even if disappointing, could be seen in Java. Both the music and the dancers were inclined to put one to sleep. ‘Rajah’ Inglis was also
none too impressed with Oriental dancing, this time in India, but he took the
opportunity to try to link India and Australia for his readers:

Their dance is not unlike the corrobory of the Australian aborigines. The two races are not
unlike each other in feature, although I cannot think they are in any way connected.111

One of the photographs in Herbert Syme’s Diary is a commercial print containing the
words ‘Dancing Girl’. Underneath the photograph Syme wrote his own caption:

‘Nautch Girl’.112 In India, Deakin was decisive: ‘Nautch the cleverest & most
accomplished of their sex.”113

In the Orient, ‘black-eyed Houris’ were to be found everywhere. Hingston was
quick to point out, however, that they were often secluded for life in the harem and the
zenana. His understanding of this treatment was that in the Orient it was believed that
women ‘have no soul, can give no trouble here and hereafter.”114 In Nazareth, Smith
gazed on the young girls. ‘I was not particularly struck with it in those I saw, but still
there were many pleasing faces and lithe forms among them.”115

In Australia, as in Britain, this was an era when excessive modesty prevailed at
home. Charles Pearson put it bluntly: ‘ [The] woman has been the moral element in
households – the personification of duty and purity in family life.”116 From high
starched collars to long dresses, clothing concealed the body. A ‘fast’ woman showed
her ankle.117 But in the Japanese bathing house, Australians could gaze on naked
flesh.118 Hingston’s American contemporary, William Griffis, also reported the same
amoral Japanese attitude to nudity, and the similarity of the reporting of the two men
shows us that that the Japanese bathhouse was a universal titillation for Westerners.
Griffis saw a man emerging from a bathhouse, naked
as when he stepped out into the world, His copper hue, like a lobster's, is intensified by the
boiling he has just undergone. He walks in a self-exhaling cloud of auroral vapours, like a god
in ambrosia. He deigns not to make his toilet while in sight, but proceeds homeward, clothes in
hand.\textsuperscript{119}

In her dynamic thrust forward, Japan still appeared to retain a purity lost to the
West. Hingston noted that the 'simplicity of sinless times' still prevailed there.\textsuperscript{120} This
idealistic picture, an obvious comparison with the notion that the East was a place of
houris, nautch dancers and erotic pleasures, might well have raised a chuckle when the
readers discovered that Hingston was talking about something that could be found in
every town: the Japanese bathing houses. In them, he observed the communal bathing
of men and women, and he noted with due solemnity that perhaps the day would come
when the Japanese would bathe apart or at least use costumes, when they 'learn that
such is European fashion.'\textsuperscript{121} Here was a very different picture from the bathing boxes
at such beaches as Sandringham, and the neck-to-knee costumes of the Australian men
and women taking to the water. In 1902, Victorian primary school children were
taught that the Japanese were very clean, and were given a description of how they
washed in the bathrooms of their houses.\textsuperscript{122} Many of these Australian children might
well have come from working-class homes where bathrooms were absent.

Thus physical and moral dirt and cleanliness was to be found wherever
Australians looked. It did not matter whether they stayed at home or travelled to the
Orient. Tourists discerned disease, poverty and immorality abroad, but equally they
found cleanliness, wealth, and morality.

Not a dancing room is to be seen, nor do I see there the crowds of ragged children that run
about Melbourne streets, apparently as unowned as the dogs in Constantinople.\textsuperscript{123}
James Hingston was writing about Adelaide. This chapter has discussed Australian attitudes to Oriental dirt and erotica together, in order to demonstrate that in the mindset of the time, there was a connection between the two. Dirt, disease and squalor could be, and were equated with a lack of morality and degeneration. If one wanted to find people further down the moral social scale than oneself, one way to do so was to look for these conditions. The chapter has argued, therefore, that Australians were little different from the European and American cousins in doing this in the Orient, thus allowing them to acquire a moral superiority over the 'other'. Further to this, however, the chapter suggests that at times there were minor differences in Australian attitudes. Although the sexual mores of British were still uppermost, Australians, even though they might have been seeking sensual pleasures forbidden at home, were still prepared to acknowledge that it was possible to understand that not everything was what it seemed to be on the surface. To be sure, there was dirt, disease and sexuality. There was also cruelty. At the same time in the Orient could be found the same humanity beneath the suffering as that of Australians, to say nothing of the modesty and cleanliness. More than one Australian observer noted this, comparing the Orient favourably with that of Australia. If there was one overriding reason why Australians might have been so keen to discover that they were morally superior to Orientals, it could well have been that they shared Pearson fears, that the higher races were in danger of losing their noblest elements. The irony was that in just a few years the coming immoral carnage of World War I would transform Victorian and Edwardian shibboleths, thus justifying their fears.
NOTES
McCannell argues that this is a modern alternative to past social systems. There seems, however, little reason to believe that this was not always the case in Western civilisation. The very word ‘barbaric’ has its root in the onomatopoeic Greek βαρβαρός [bárbaros], imitating the unintelligible babbling sounds uncouth foreigners made. βαρβάρειν [barbarzein]: to behave like a barbarian; to side with the Persians.
16 Ibid, p.268.
19 Ibid, p.165.
20 Ibid, p.197.
21 Ibid, p.198.
22 Ibid, p.197.
23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
26 James Tuckey, Voyage to establish a Colony at Port Phillip, quoted in James Bonwick, Port Phillip Settlement, London, Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1883, p.28.
31 Ibid, p.188.
35 Reed, Two Australians on Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Op. Cit., pp.64, 126.
37 Ibid, p.335.
38 Ibid, p.335.
44 Herbert Strong, to Charles Pearson, Mahalleshwar, 24 January 1884.
63 'Answers to Correspondents', Bulletin, 14 July 1900.
75 Said, Orientalism, Op. Cit., p.188.
76 Sered, Orientalism, Op. Cit.,
110 Hingston, *The Australian Abroad*, Op. Cit., p.120.
121 Ibid
CHAPTER 5.

THE HOLY LAND

"... but pardon me, if I say there is one long journey that I think could hardly fail to interest
even you, and which if you should allow me to partake I should be so happy."

"Indeed! Where would you wish to go, young Alfred?"

"To the Holy Land, dear father; to those places consecrated in our hearts by the most sacred
associations; to Jerusalem, that city which was once the most glorious city upon the face of the
earth. To Bethlehem, where the Redeemer of the world was born. Oh! how do I long to walk on
the Mount of Olives, where my Saviour has so often walked with his disciples; and to weep on
Mount Calvary where he suffered! Surely of all other objects of curiosity there are none so
worthy of visiting as these."

So wrote Mrs Barbara Hofland in 1825. The sentiments are in her instructional
book for young readers about her fictional pilgrim, Alfred Campbell. In this
sentimental novella, the young hero and his recently-widowed father tour the Holy
Land, in order that the author may present ‘in a form acceptable to Youth, the leading
facts, and most interesting descriptions of the places spoken of, as given by approved
authors; for which purpose she has diligently read all the latest and best publications.’

The novella can be taken as paradigmatic of the majority of succeeding books about
Palestine, whether published in Britain, America or Australia. The authors have an
overriding concern to demonstrate the veracity of Scripture as demonstrated in the
sights and sounds of the Holy Land. William Maughan, from Roseneath, Scotland,
 wrote that ‘it was our inestimable privilege to tread ... in the very footsteps of Our
Blessed saviour, and to stand on the summit of that tremendous granite mountain
where Jehovah Himself condescended to talk with sinful man.’ In the early 1860s,
John Smith from Sydney spent a Sunday ‘chiefly in trying to make myself familiar
with the scenes that must have been constantly before the eyes of our Saviour in the
days of his youth, at least as far as they were natural and not the work of man." Almost
a century later, another Australian pilgrim, C. S. Cameron, noted that he wrote *A Tour Through the Holy Land* ‘with one single and basic thought in mind - to make known, and to try and further establish the authenticity and veracity of the Scriptures of Truth.’ An earlier Australian, James Hingston, always carried his Bible with him as his reference, and therefore saw Palestine in terms of Scriptural writ. The Bible was his map, its words not only the cartography of what he should see, but also how he should interpret what was before his eyes. Hingston planned his excursions so that 'henceforth the lands of the Bible will be familiar to us as our own village and its surroundings'.

*En route* would be Jerusalem, Damascus, and all the holy places that ‘countless thousands of pilgrims’ had visited, including ‘the manger at Bethlehem, the village of Nazareth, the baptismal Jordan, the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemena, the house of the Last Supper, the Via Dolorosa, Calvary, and the Holy Sepulchre’. Thus his visit to the Holy Land, unlike his other Oriental travels but like those of Mark Twain’s companions in *The Innocents Abroad*, was in the form of a pilgrimage. All would be interpreted in this context. On his return to Sydney via Palestine in 1886, George Nicoll, who had left school at 12 years to learn the trade of ‘a mast, block and pump maker,’ also included copious Biblical references in his journal. He even gathered some water from the River Jordan ‘to take to Sydney for christening purposes.’ He recorded in his journal what happened at the Jerusalem Hotel, Jaffa, on 8 December 1886.

On looking over the visitors book in the sitting room, and saw immediately in front of my name, that of Rev. Dr. De Wit Talmage, wife and daughter, with the remark that he had crossed the Red Sea dry footed. “Thank God dry footed”. He had left for Jerusalem, about 40 miles distant, the previous day.
The Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage D. D., the incumbent at the Great Brooklyn Tabernacle, later wrote an account of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, which was not only published in America, but also in Sydney. It was a 666 page, illustrated ‘book for the masses … the nine hundred and ninety-nine out of the thousand’.¹⁰

Thus the central argument of this chapter is that unlike Australian perceptions of the other lands of the Orient, their Holy Land Orientalism differed little from that of the metropole.

The nomenclature ‘Holy Land’ tells us that the citizens of America, Britain and Australia considered Palestine as a special place. They ventured into Palestine with a vision already formed by their Christianity. The Holy Land was a place of pilgrimage; a country where preconceived ‘truths’ could be observed wherever the traveller went. ‘Jesus Christ was a Syrian, and we must orientalise our thoughts of Him before we can rightly understand the Christian revelation,’ wrote John Kelman, who together with the artist John Fulleylove travelled to Syria and consequently published The Holy Land in 1902.¹¹

Kelman’s sentence reveals the lengths taken by Westerners in order to justify their distortion of what they saw. As for orientalising themselves, the nearest most European travellers approached that state was to dress in ‘native costume’ when not in places such as Cairo and Jerusalem. Before leaving Cairo, Alfred Campbell and his father, on the advice of the British Consul,

procured at this time Turkish dresses, Mr. Campbell having previously suffered his beard to grow, and cut off his hair. No circumstance which had yet occurred, inspired our travellers so strongly with a sense of the vast distance they were now from their native country, and that
they were indeed “strangers in a strange land,” yet obliged to affect the appearance of those who were hostile to their faith, indifferent to their safety…

Fact quickly succeeded fiction. Francis Frith, an early photographer of the Holy Land, was photographed dressed as a Turk. Richard Burton, disguised as ‘an Indo-British subject named Abdullah, by profession a doctor, aged thirty, and not distinguished … by any remarkable conformation of eyes, nose, or cheek,’ undertook a journey to Mecca. Kipling’s fictional character, Kim, could keep such Orientalism at a respectable distance, because though he was ‘burned black as any native; though he spoke the vernacular by preference, and his mother-tongue in a clipped uncertain singsong; though he consorted on terms of perfect equality with the small boys of the bazar (sic); Kim was … a poor white of the very poorest.’ The British upper classes, except perhaps for Burton, were not so successful in their orientalising. T. E. Lawrence dressed as an Arab during his time with King Feisal’s men during World War I. This complex man, haunted by his own sexuality and identity, admitted his failure to assimilate.

In my case, the effort for these years to live in the dress of the Arabs, and to imitate their mental foundation, quitted me of my English self, and let me look at the West, and its conventions with new eyes: they destroyed it all for me. At the same time I could not sincerely take on the Arab skin: it was an affectation only.

It was more than an affectation for most. Closer inspection of books on the Holy Land reveal an Orientalism containing an underlying streak of anti-Semitism that forced many of their authors to look down on the inhabitants, of Palestine, Arabs and Jews alike, the last being particularly reviled. In this light, Kelman’s description of Christ as ‘Syrian’ was sufficiently ambiguous to retain a civilised respectability.
Overlaying the pilgrimage was the metaphor of the 'tent'. By choice or necessity, tourists to the Holy Land occupied tents. William Maughan found near Jericho 'a regular congregation of tents occupied by sundry parties of English, Americans, Germans, French, each nationality being distinguished by their flag.'\(^{17}\) Claude Conder's *Tent Work in Palestine: A Record of Discovery and Adventure*, first published 1878 and dedicated 'To His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales' was a much-quoted book on the Holy Land. Lieutenant Condor, R. E., under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration, arrived in Palestine 1872, and by 1875 had surveyed 4700 square miles, with the object of confirming the 'historic and authentic character of the Sacred Volume'. His survey would show the Bible 'not as a dead record of a former world or of an extinct race, but as a living picture of manners and of a land, which can still be studied by any who will devote themselves to the task.'\(^{18}\) The book, written as if in the field, contained his 'personal history'.\(^{19}\)

The 'tent' immediately placed Victorian and Edwardian readers outside city comfort, as well as being a reminder that the ancient Israelites had lived in the desert. Herbert Rix, an English author and painter, related how in Jerusalem he saw in a shop in a shop 'quantities of woven goats-hair, used for tent-making, which our friend told us had actually been woven in Tarsus, where St. Paul worked at the same handicraft.'\(^{20}\) Fortunately, as two Australian Methodist pilgrims to the Holy Land, John and Elizabeth Reed, discovered in 1909, 'the luxuries as well as the necessities of life are provided in camp life, and the conveniences of a complete hotel may be packed on horses and camels.'\(^{21}\) Not long afterwards, a Roman Catholic priest from Melbourne, the Rev. J. J. Malone, P.P., was not so pleased. Train travel had removed some of the
romance from the Holy Land pilgrimage: ‘It is a land that should only be travelled on foot, as the moujik travels it today, and the pilgrim or crusader in the Middle Ages.’ The luxury of modern travel robbed much of the ‘sanctity’ from his sacramental visit to the Holy Land. That might have been so, but Malone also observed that ‘Life and property are not so sacred here as they are in our own sunny South, or amongst the civilised Western races,’ so presumably he was glad to have the luxury of the railway.

The plains of the Holy Land were clearly more than a simple geographical allusion. Palestine was where Christ had shaken the dust of the city from his feet. For Edwardians, urban culture lay at the bottom of what was wrong with their society.

Physically it tends to rear an unhealthy race. Mentally it tends to create a people of quick, superficial intelligence. Morally it tends to bring about three results. First, the absence of the nature element, the lack of all that is beautiful, the overcrowded homes, and the influence of the street all cooperate in bringing about an excitable disposition. Secondly, poverty, while encouraging a love of the weak, incites all to fight for themselves when their opponents are their equals...lastly, the habit of regarding the external character and of neglecting the internal causes the untruthfulness which exists among the poor.

So strong was this concept, that as late as 1924 C. A. Guy, late Commissioner for Rovers for Ceylon, and Chaplain of the 8th Colombo (St. Michael’s) Troop, could write in *Scouting and Religion*

Nature teaches us the greatness and goodness of God. It is the town-dweller, not having so much opportunity of studying the handiwork of God, which is tempted to deny God.

We need look no further than the Scout Movement to see how these British concepts became ingrained in young boys and girls all over the world, including those in Australia. The Boy Scouts began in Australia, South Africa and New Zealand in the same year as in Britain, and the Australian Girl Guides commenced in Tasmania in
1910. The Movement had its origins in a pamphlet written in 1907 by Robert Baden-Powell, in which he proposed a training scheme to help ‘the development, moral and physical, of boys of all creeds and classes’. The scheme was an answer to the poor standard of recruits during the Boer War. ‘Our purpose is not merely to keep up smart “show” troops, but to pass as many boys through our character factory as we possibly can: at the same time, the longer the grind that we can give them the better men they will be at the end,’ he was later to write. Fresh air and camping was the way to build character.

Living out in God’s open air, among the hills and trees, and the birds and beasts, and the seas and rivers – that is, living with nature, having your own little canvas home, doing your own cooking and exploration – all this brings health and happiness such as you can never get among the bricks and smoke of the town.

Baden-Powell informed Scouts that people grew ‘pale and seedy,’ because they lived in rooms ‘where the windows are seldom opened and the air is full of unwholesome gases and germs.’ Opening a city window was not enough.

... to be healthy and strong, you must keep your blood healthy and clean inside you. This is done by breathing in lots of pure, fresh air, by deep breathing, and by clearing out all dirty matter from inside your stomach, which is done by having a “rear” daily, without fail; many people are better by having it twice a day.

Outdoor Scouting could combine cleanliness with something akin to the tour of the Holy Land. Guy told Scouts that an outstanding feature of camping was ‘Orderly Duty’. The metaphoric implications of this menial task and the humbleness required of Christians on their discipleship are clear; and just as many writers about the Holy Land spoke of the Bible as their guide-book, so Guy also wrote that the Bible was the map of the Christian pathfinder: ‘to put it all shortly, the Bible tells us how we ought to live and walk; it shows us the path of God’s commandments.’
Even when reality did not meet with expectation, there was still a determination to see God in the muck. "I cannot write lightly of Holy Palestine," wrote Frith with what he considered sufficient justification.

It is true that the natural features of the country are, for the most part, monotonous and comparatively uninteresting — that the towns are paltry and dirty in the extreme — that the Turkish Mohammedan population is ignorant and bigoted — that the Arabs who infest its solitudes are the laziest, the most cowardly, and worthless set of fellows — in a word, and in every sense of it, the greatest vagabonds in existence; yet, in spite of all this, and overwhelming it all triumphantly, comes the thrilling recollection — that this was the country of Abraham and the Prophets! these the cities of David! and — first and last, and mingling with every line of its eventual history — that this was the spot of his earth chosen by its Creator from the beginning, upon which the plan of his salvation should be finished.36

It comes, therefore, as something of a shock to read how James Hingston began his account of the Holy Land in terms other than might be expected from a God-fearing Christian. Palestine is the 'Land of the Cross and the Curse,' a land which was 'holy in name, thought and theory only. In other aspects it is the unholiest country, and so provocative of additional curses as to account for its wretched condition.'37

This unexpected, honest writing paralleled that of the Americans, George Train and Mark Twain. The former, visiting the Holy Land on his way back from Australia wrote in a letter from Jaffa, Syria, April 12, 1856,

I have been to Jerusalem, and have returned again, delighted and disgusted; delighted while traveling in the hallowed associations of bygone ages - disgusted at the utter desolation of nature. My ride was tedious, my lunch bad, my horse sore-footed and sore-backed.38

Mark Twain, already well known as a humorist on the lecture-platform, and having learnt to write with the rhythmic qualities of his southern speech, claimed he did not swear 'for amusement; only under pressure'.39 Given this, we can readily understand that the erstwhile Mississippi pilot was not looking for the same things as
his fellow Quaker City pilgrims were seeking. He knew even before they opened their mouths what they would say about Holy Places, ‘because I have the books they will ‘smouch’ their ideas from’. Unlike them, he remained silent unless he honestly reacted to what he saw. 40 Some of his sharpest comments were left out of his articles and the ensuing book. One of the pilgrims, Jack Nostrand, was alleged to have said, ‘No wonder Jesus walked!’ when he was told of the cost of hiring a boat at the Sea of Galilee. In the same manner, Twain omitted what he had written in his notebook about the Holy Land: ‘No Second Advent – Christ been here once, will never come again’. 41

Instead, in an Alta letter, Twain writes about his disappointment thus:

> But the severest thing that has been said about Palestine was said here in Jerusalem. A pilgrim with his periodical ecstasy upon him (it usually comes in a flush of happiness after dinner) finished his apostrophe with, "O, that I could be here at the Second Advent!"
> A grave gentleman said, "It will not occur in Palestine."
> "What"
> "The Second Advent will take place elsewhere--possibly in America."
> "Blasphemy!"
> "I speak reasonably. You are in the Holy Land. You have seen the Holy Land once?"
> "Yes."
> "Shall you ever want to come here again?"
> "Well--no."
> "My friend, the Savior has been here once!" 42

Train was equally sarcastic:

> The clergyman who visits Palestine and spends a short time at Jerusalem most likely will alter the diction of his discourse. A sermon on the Holy Land before and after the visit would be most unlike. 43

Nicoll recorded similar views:

> Professor Briggs my companion was quite exhausted, so we rested for a couple of days and had a talk over our journey and both came to the conclusion that it is the most miserable and barren country in the world, he had travelled a great deal but these barren hills beat the record. 44
In his account, Twain parodies another predecessor, William C. Prime, who published *Tent life in the Holy Land* in 1857. Prime becomes ‘Grimes’ in Twain’s account of Palestine. Curiously, the Anglo-Indian-cum-Australian, ‘Rajah Inglis’, the Sydney importer and tea merchant who popularised ‘Billy Tea’, had entitled his 1888 autobiography *Tent Life in Tiger Land*. Perhaps Inglis was hoping to cash in on the popularity of the metaphor. If so, then he must have been disappointed. *The Sydney Bulletin* savaged his book.46

Just as Prime and Twain visited the same places, so did Hingston. The similarity between the Twain and Hingston descriptions is startlingly similar when we compare the two books side by side. For example, both Twain and Hingston visit the monastery of Mar Saba.

Twain: ‘Some of these men have been shut up there for thirty years ... They are dead men who walk.’

Hingston: ‘To eyes accustomed to the work-a-day world and its ways, the life of these men at Mar Saba looked a strange waste of existence’.48

Twain and Hingston were almost echoing the words of the photographer, Francis Frith, in 1862, and Josias Leslie Porter in 1864, the writer of Murray’s *Handbook For Travellers in Syria and Palestine*. Frith described the caves above the monastery as ‘cell-like apertures, some of them partly built up with masonry: they were once the abodes of ascetics, who had devoted themselves for the remainder of life to this dismal entombment, depending even for their daily food upon the monks of the convent.’49 Porter was equally dismal: ‘Never did the taste of anchorite select a spot better adapted for gloomy devotion and useless solitude than the glen of Mar Sâba.’50

In 1902, John Fulleman wrote that ‘you come up to a lofty ridge from which are seen the dreary towers of Mar Saba, like the “blind squat turret” of childe Roland’s
adventure, "with low grey rocks girt round, chin upon hand, to see the game at bay."

When one actually arrived at the monastery, it was to find that ‘Mar Saba is a sort of combination of prison and asylum, where lunatics are kept under the charge of monks condemned to this place for heresy or immorality.’

Hingston enthused over his visit to Damascus, ‘The Pearl of the East’. Hingston was not alone in so describing Damascus. Maugham wrote that Damascus was ‘so often styled the ‘Pearl of the East,’’ and the Australians, John and Elizabeth Reed, referred to Damascus as the ‘Pearl of the Orient’.

In Hingston’s eyes, Damascus, sacred, ancient and wonderful, was almost beyond praise. The Bible as his Guide-Book, Hingston began his chapter:

"Thus saith the Lord God ... the head of Syria is Damascus!" That declaration by Isaiah, in his 7th chapter, rings with a clarion-like clearness, and all new meaning, as we look upon its great subject ... The first of all recorded cities ... the fairest of all cities that be... Men’s fancy cannot picture anything superior.

Later Hingston recorded simply that ‘Mahomet called it Paradise and would not enter’.

The Reeds read more into the Prophet’s refusal.

‘Man can enter Paradise but once; I will not take mine in this world.’ So he turned away from the vision with tear-filled eyes. How much that turn of Mohammed’s head and those tears meant in the history of the world, who can calculate?

Twain’s view was also more jaundiced view than that of Hingston:

If I were to go to Damascus again, I would camp on Mohammed’ hill about a week, and then go away. There is no need to go inside its walls. The Prophet was wise without knowing it when he decided not to go down into the paradise of Damascus.

Another such comparison can be made about their respective descriptions of the city. Hingston described it in terms of the conventional Orientalism of his day:

Such is Damascus seen from its hill-sides – Eastern and dreamy – the very spirit of all that is poetical.
Twain was much more forthright. We are left in no doubt about his true feelings:

I think I have read about four hundred times that when Mohammed was a simple camel-driver he reached this point and looked down upon Damascus for the first time, and then made a certain renowned remark. He said man could only enter one paradise; and he preferred to go to the one above. So he sat down there and feasted his eyes upon the earthly paradise of Damascus, and then went away without entering its gates.59

All this raises the question of why Damascus appears to be relatively more favoured by writers of the Holy Land than Jerusalem. To answer it, we must look at a number of descriptions.

The fictional Alfred Campbell saw ‘Damascus before them in all its beauty, lying in the middle of a vast plain, like a luxurious garden, from which minarets, domes, towers arose, giving the impression that this was a “city of palaces,” amongst which a river of pure water, the most precious of all the gifts of nature in a thirsty soil was seen to flow.’60 Reflecting the British Orientalism of the early nineteenth century, when Alfred compared ‘this view to that of Shooter’s Hill, in the neighbourhood of London …his father considered it, although striking, and from its peculiar characteristics very interesting, inferior to that on the whole.’61 Here, too, are the ‘minarets’, a common symbol of the exotic Orient.

This same fantastic Orientalism continued in Murray’s 1868 Handbook. Porter describes what the traveller may expect to find inside the city:

Then a hundred miniature lamps of every form and colour, glimmer among the branches of trees, above fountains, and along balustrades, reflected in the river below. Turbaned heads and venerable beards loom dimly through clouds of smoke; and here, probably on some elevated bench, a storyteller is perched, reciting, as only an Oriental can recite, one of the tales of Antar, or the ‘Arabian Nights,’ to a crowd of eager listeners.62
Half a century later, Damascus could still be the site of the fabulous for the Australian priest, J. J. Malone.

I can hardly realise I am in Damascus, the Oriental city of romance, Baghdad not excepted, beyond any other Western dreams. The very name of it has something of the perfume of the damask rose born in its gardens, something of the flavour of the damask plum grown within its orchards, something of the witchery of the “open sesame” of the “Arabian Nights,” ...63

The two Reeds looked down on Damascus and beheld ‘a scene as rich and grand beyond description - a great oasis of loveliness on the edge of the desert... Hebron may, with some uncertainty, vie with it for antiquity, but Damascus is supreme in its beauty.”64

The reality was different. Despite this, Porter stretched imagination to fit British Orientalist preconception when describing a café on the banks of the Barada River. It was

a collection of straggling, rickety platforms, perched over the waters, and shaded by old mats and half-withered branches. In daylight it has a wretched look, but at night it is like a scene from the Arabian Nights.65

It took the photographer’s sharp eye to capture the truth. Frith expected to find the minarets, mosques and fabulous mansions of his imagination, but there was only one mosque to be seen. Indeed, ‘splendid mansions of the luxurious Damascus, overlaid with mosaics, and sparkling with fountains, resolve themselves into the rickety fabrics revealed in the Photograph, mysteriously tacked together with scraps of lath and timber, and plastered with that hot yellow mud.”66

Smith was somewhat uncertain:

From a little domed building on the crest of this hill (about two miles from the bridge) we obtained the famous view of Damascus which travellers have vied with each other in extolling. And truly it is worth going a long way to see; though I must acknowledge that in regard to the city itself I was a little disappointed... 67
All the disappointment could be explained away with a glimpse inside the houses, the splendour of which, according to Porter, was within the 'rough mud walls and rickety-looking projecting upper chambers'. Hingston wrote that these interiors were as beautiful as the 'gorgeous and gauzy wings' inside the 'mud-coloured casing from the locust'. According to Porter, if one visited Jewish houses on the Sabbath, 'they will be found to be clean, and their fair inmates will be seen all blazing with gold and jewels.' Frith added a cautionary note: 'It is true that the interior courts of these wretched-looking tenements are fantastically brilliant and splendid; the mosaics are there; the tinsel and the fountains are there: but be satisfied, O European luxuriast, to admire and enjoy them at a distance.' Nicoll saw 'rich Jews' houses, the furniture of one room here cost £10,000, the room is gorgeously fitted up, solid marble carvings from floor to ceiling, and exquisitely carved furniture, inlaid with pearl, silver and gold, surpassing anything I have ever seen...'

Up close, Australians could still enjoy the Oriental noise and bustle. As illustration of this, we need only read their descriptions of what they and their Bible referred to as the 'Street that is called Straight'. For Hingston, it was a 'tolerably straight' mercantile bazaar-street crammed with donkeys, mules, camels, and multitudes of many races either buying or selling the 'wondrous contents' of the 'semi-markets'. The Reeds found much the same.

Crowds of people were abroad - veiled women, multitudes of children, workers of one sort and another; sellers of bread, fruit, sweets, spreading their goods on the sides of the pavement, and so still more narrowing our way; caravans of ugly camels with immense burdens, laden donkeys, many dogs apparently by the score - and through all we went at a great rate, coachman shouting, 'To right,' 'To left,' people flying this way and that, Australians holding on to the bumping carriage, and fearing that about half a dozen people would be killed before we got through.
By the time the Camerons arrived in the 1950s, camels had given way to motor cars, but otherwise it was still unlike anything in Australia.

One requires to keep eyes, ears, and also nose alert, for it requires more than a casual observation to sort out the conglomeration of sights, sounds, and smells that one encounters...Cars, donkeys and pedestrians choke the thoroughfare as we laboriously pursue our way, foreign visitors in a strange land.76

It would be misleading, however, to leave the comparisons this way. There is much more, for example, to Hingston’s account of his travels than a regurgitation of what he is expected to feel. As we travel with him, we experience his delight at the unexpected, and conversely his disappointments. We share his curiosity, but we can be taken aback when his racist views shoulder his benevolence to one side. When we consider what he had to say about Damascus, we might expect a kindly view of Jerusalem and its inhabitants, particularly when he considers the Bible as the only handbook that he really needs to see him through the sites of the Holy Land. Instead,

One expects to find the stream pure at its source, however defiled it may become in its onward flow, and so, looking at Jerusalem as a fountainhead, one’s disappointment is great indeed. It is but more scales dropped from one’s eyes, and more illusions of a lifetime vanished, which, being illusions, are better gone.77

For Nicoll, Damascus was the oldest city in the world, just as he had been told, in which there was the novel sight of people dressed just as they were in Abraham’s time.78 But the comparisons of Damascus and Jerusalem, including their inhabitants, confirm that Australians and their cousins from Britain were not prepared to drop their illusions. Not only did they all view the Palestine as the ‘Holy Land,’ there was also no difference in their anti-Semitism. Little good could be seen in the Jews, who had centuries before had hounded Christ to his death. Unlike Damascus, Jerusalem was the
site of the crucifixion; *ipso facto*, it must be condemned. According to Hofland, when the traveller entered Jerusalem,

> every idea of beauty and grandeur is instantly banished, and the mind reverts only to those which consider it as lying under a curse. Narrow streets, filthy bazaars, miserable ruins, and a general air of wretchedness and desolation, pervade it on every side. 79

Nicoll wrote that the Jewish Quarter was

> the filthiest place in the whole City and a perfect quagmire. Their houses are hovels of filth and darkness made with unburnt bricks of mud and straw, black and some built with rough stones. 80

For Porter, the streets of Jerusalem were ‘not very filthy’. 81 His italics warn us that he was trying to see the city in a good light, but he soon sounded a warning.

> Vegetable and animal matter to an enormous extent is thrown into the courts, streets, and waste places within the walls, and there allowed slowly to decay. Most of the houses are destitute of proper sewerage, and badly ventilated; while not a few of them, especially in the Jewish quarter, are dripping with damp. The cisterns and reservoirs, both covered and uncovered, which abound in the city, are permitted to become stagnant and foul. 82

Hingston’s description of ‘Nauseating Jerusalem!’ reads, despite his denials of carrying any other guide-book but his Bible, as if he were consulting Porter. We know why the district is so grotty and what should be done about it:

> People who exist amidst such filth, and add to it daily, well knowing that decent folk from far lands are continually coming to see their city, should be cleared off the face of the earth as mere nuisances to it. 83

If Hingston were alone in this anti-Semitism, his remark could be considered an aberration. It is not. For example, Porter considered the whole Jewish community to be idle loafers living on the contributions of European Jewry. 84 Kelman claimed they were neurotic, effeminate and ‘monstrously supercilious’. 85 Baden-Powell sketched a bejewelled, nouveau riche woman in the same way in which German anti-Semitic publications of the 1930s portrayed Jews. 86 In their clothes and their manner, like Hingston before him, Malone saw a people who were fouling Zion:
They glide past us in every street and laneway, clad in a kind of variegated bath-gown, and wearing a greasy fur or felt cap over their head, from beneath which two loose ringlets depend over their ears. They look degenerate types of the royal race of Israel. There is timidity in their gait and demeanour, as though they felt they were intruders in a city that their national crime had demolished, and yet made immortal.87

Here then was the crux of the matter: because they had condemned Christ, the Jews were criminals, and therefore Jerusalem could no longer be the 'stream pure at its source'.88 For Malone, Jerusalem, 'the city that inspired the psalms of David, and drank the tears of St. Peter and Mary Magdalene' was the saddest most melancholy city in the world full of sad-faced people.89

Given the foregoing, it can therefore be argued that Palestine was an Oriental land pre-formed in the imagination, much like the French and British Orient posited by Edward Said. Unlike that of the French and British Orientalism, however, there was a major difference in the Australian approach. Where it touched on the Holy Land, Australian Orientalism was not one that sought political conquest and rule. In all other respects, there was no difference. An imaginary Holy Land was set against the Palestine of reality. Sometimes the two coincided; on other occasions reality betrayed the imaginary. A market place could be 'a very Eastern-looking scene, reminding one of a print out of an old Bible'.90 For Hingston, the Syrian sheep were 'Bible sheep!'91 About the same time as Hingston, the Englishman Thomson wrote that he could never see shepherds and their flocks without being reminded of 'those beautiful allusions to pastoral life that abound in the Bible.'92 John Fulleylove illustrated Kelman's text with four watercolour plates of shepherds and their sheep.93 Maugham described a colony of lepers 'on whom the traveller may well bestow a small donation,' on the waste ground
outside a gate to Jerusalem. Hingston saw lepers begging at every gate of every town ‘much as they did in the olden days, and will in the days to come’. As if in confirmation, Malone saw them at Gethsemane.

There could be no escape from this kind of reality. Hingston, contemplating the Valleys of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat, compared them with the stories in Jeremiah and the First Book of Kings. He pronounced, ‘thus we get our ideas from the dead world of the past’. But ‘the dead world of the past’ was only dead insofar that the Biblical accounts of Hinnom and Jehoshaphat related the stories of the terrible human sacrifices to Moloch, and the visible presence of more Jewish tombs than Hingston could imagine. The landscape might have had a ‘dead’ appearance, but the Biblical Orient was very much alive. These valleys were what they were because of their Biblical descriptions. This preconceived Holy Land included the Syrian sheep and prescribed that lepers would always be found begging outside town gates. The markets were ‘Eastern-looking’ because they were filled with imaginary, remembered images seen in old Biblical prints. This Orient therefore fulfilled many romantic notions nineteenth-century Australians.

But there is yet another face to the Australian picture of the Holy Land. We can extrapolate from The Australian Abroad that nineteenth-century Christianity was not always a pleasant or particularly illuminating experience. Hingston let slip that the idea we have today of Victorian religiosity may be no more real than the Holy Land of their imagination. He ironically recounted how Hassan, his dragoman who had accompanied ‘nineteen distinct sets of pilgrims from Egypt to the Holy City,’ satisfied doubts and quelled skepticism. The dragoman interrupted a discussion about the story
of Joshua and the sun, neatly pointing out the truth of the story. Although the Bible related that Joshua had commanded the sun to stand still, nowhere did it say that he ordered it to resume its course.

I had that right feeling on such matters even as a child when a zealous curate vainly endeavoured for half an hour to prove to me an half-a-dozen Sunday-school children, that Jacob was not lying to his father in saying that he was Esau. An elaborate essay followed, to show that it was a deception and not a lie, and that deception was justifiable when the end was good, and that it was good of Jacob to get what he did by deception! I lost the run of that curate, but I have good hope that he became ultimately promoted and died a bishop.  

Matters of religion could be as much a mystery then as now, and its professional practitioners equally as boring. It therefore follows that if something in the Holy Land did not equate with Biblical imagination, it could be reported as inexplicable, because that was the way God wished it to be:

Travel in Palestine and Syria is likely to lose much of its charm to those whose early education has only been secular. The Bible as guide-book for such travel has another and stronger charm for those who in their youth have made it the guide-book for the longer journey of life.  

Twain was blunter than Hingston.

Palestine is desolate and unlively. And why should it be otherwise? Can the curse of the Deity beautify a land?  

Palestine was even a place of danger. Near Jericho, John Smith narrowly escaped from Brigands. When he tried to obtain information at Nazareth about the route to Damascus,

the accounts I got were by no means encouraging. The country was in an unsettled and lawless state. Robberies were common.  

The previous fortnight, a party of Americans had been robbed.  

The hardy Hingston could not always resort to the stratagem of religious mystery to explain away reality. Jerusalem was not the Holy City of Biblical
imagination. It was smelly and dirty like any nineteenth-century city, Oriental or Occidental. Where the Holy Land was anything but holy, the barbarous nature of the inhabitants, rather than the inhospitable terrain, could be held accountable. Fortunately, British Imperialism sometimes came to the rescue of Australians.

...solace to be found in thinking it is safer to be in Damascus in this year of our Lord than it would have been some years earlier. Before the English consulate was established here, no Christian or Jew could claim a right to tread the side-walks of the city.¹⁰⁴

On such occasions as this, Hingston was even prepared to place the despised Jew above the hated Turk. His Orientalist racism in the Holy Land could even be grounded in what he thought was Biblical reality. People ‘of the vilest [kind] to be found in Palestine’ inhabited the Jericho district, where Sodom and Gomorrah once stood”.¹⁰⁵ In Genesis we read that the men of Sodom and Gomorrah were wicked, and that fire and brimstone destroyed the two cities. The smoke was like that of a furnace.¹⁰⁶ Christian Australians, reading either the Argus or The Australian Abroad, would have easily recognised the metaphor of Hingston's explanation that the climate was the cause of the vileness of the present inhabitants, because the heat ‘would bake and blacken anyone”.¹⁰⁷

The Holy Land was not completely black and desolate for Australians. The climate and scenery reminded them of home. Between Nazareth and Galilee, the Reeds found that the ‘weather was pleasant, the sky like an Australian sky for blueness, and if the road was in parts very rough, had we not often gone across country in our own land and graduated as riders and drivers in Bush University”¹⁰⁸. At the Sea of Galilee, the morning was ‘bright and warm, like a bright spring day in Australia’.¹⁰⁹ The scenery on
the way to Damascus reminded Malone of ‘the zig-zag railway on the road to the Blue Mountains in New South Wales.’

This chapter has therefore contended that Australians, Europeans and Americans alike saw Palestine as an Oriental land pre-formed in the imagination, confirming that of the imaginary French and British Orient posited by Edward Said. Later chapters will argue that this was not the case with other Oriental lands. Occidental travellers visited Palestine as a place of pilgrimage, even the necessity of camp life reminding them that ancient Israelites were not city dwellers. These pilgrims looked at the Holy Land through Biblical eyes in order to prove the truth of their Christian Scriptures. Where reality revealed unpleasantness, their prevailing anti-Semitism could find explanations. While a professional photographer might capture the dirt of Damascus, for most it remained the ‘The Pearl of the East’. By contrast, as Jesus had suffered crucifixion there, Jerusalem _ipso facto_ had to be reviled.

Nevertheless, Palestine did open Australian eyes, such as those of the Reeds, to a wider Oriental world beyond their country’s shores.

We Australians have thought little of Buddhism and Mohammedanism. We are in danger of thinking the world is but one continent, perhaps one state, or even one little village. We need to lift up our eyes, and look beyond the seas that encompass our island. An occasional Indian shopkeeper in the city, or an Afghan or Chinese hawker in the country, may have for a moment set the door ajar which hides us from the great and wonderful and needy world. Behind that polite Hindu, behind that strong Afghan or Chinaman, can you not see hundreds of millions, who live in what we think of as ‘the uttermost parts of the earth’?

At the same time as this enlightenment, a visit to the Holy Land did not necessarily lead to greater tolerance.

They have ancient civilizations, great religious systems, but they need Jesus, the only Redeemer of humanity, and the Light of the world, who is to reign from the rivers to the ends of the earth.
Australian religious imperialism was alive and well.

NOTES
1 Barbara (Mrs.) Hofland, Alfred Campbell, The Young Pilgrim: Containing Travels in Egypt and the Holy Land, London, John Harris, 1825, pp.6-7.
2 Ibid, p.iii.
7 Ibid, p.380.
10 T. de Witt Talmage, From Manger to Throne: embracing a new life of Jesus the Christ, and a history of Palestine and its people, Sydney, Dobell, 1889, p.2.
13 Francis Frith, Egypt and the Holy Land in Historic Photographs: 77 Views by Francis Frith, Dover Photography Collections, Introduction & Bibliography by Julia Van Haaken; Selection and Commentary by Jon. E. Manchip White, New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1980, Plate 1. In 1862, Frith published a four volume series about Egypt and the Holy Land: Sinai and Palestine; Lower Egypt, Thebes, and the Pyramids; Upper Egypt and Ethiopia; and Egypt, Sinai, and Palestine, Supplementary Volume. The plates were accompanied by 'articles' or commentaries. Frith probably undertook the publication after his photographs were awarded a medal at the International Exhibition in London that same year, because each second title page is engraved with the award. See Julia Van Haaken, 'Introduction', in Frith, Op. Cit., p.xix. For Frith's photographic techniques, see also pp.xi-xii.
19 Ibid, pp.vii-viii.
23 Ibid, p.311.
24 Ibid, p.397.


33 Ibid p.144.


40 Ibid

41 Ibid, p.16.


65 Ibid.
70 Ibid, p.464.
82 Ibid, p.80.
90 Ibid, p.382.
91 Ibid.
98 Ibid, p.393.
102 Ibid, p.269.
103 Ibid, pp.269-70.
109 Ibid, p.129.
112 Ibid, p.49.
CHAPTER 6.

INDIA: CRADLE OF THE WORLD

Thank God I came to India, it so thoroughly reconciles me to Australia; if spared, I hope to be out there again this time next year...¹

Apart from the advantages to the East India Company discussed in the Introduction, Australians had other early links with India, ‘the brightest jewel in the British crown’.² India was the site of the fabulous. Additionally, because of a range of imperial connections, including the works of Rudyard Kipling, trade, the sea route to Europe, and religious organisations, India had a special place in the Australian imagination.³ Deakin, for example, on the night before docking in India read Kipling’s Plain Tales From The Hills.⁴ Australians also saw the sub-continent as strategically important for the defence of Australia against what they saw as Russian territorial ambitions.⁵ Such fears also extended to a similar worry about Japan. Despite this, and even if they were not always consistent, some Australian visitors were able to distinguish the darker sides of British Imperialism in India, the twin evils of racism and opium. Even the benefits of the mighty irrigation works were questionable. These Australians could do this, because they were not directly involved in the administration of the Raj. The contradictions to be found in India were also reflected in Australian opinions. Some Anglo-Australians argued in terms of race that the British presence outweighed the darker aspects. These representatives of the Australian élite saw India either through their British eyes or simply as a rather uncomfortable setting for a grand social occasion. Others tried to grapple with the Hinduism and caste system. Above all, the Indian Mutiny had burnt itself into the Australian psyche. ‘The Siege’ chapter will examine how the sieges of Cawnpore and Lucknow became part of Australia’s own siege mentality.
This present chapter will discuss a different facet: that of the growing sense of isolation in the Anglo-Indian community, and how many Australians shared their Heimweh. This was the feeling that although British they were alone, orphans somehow abandoned by the Metropole, never really able to return to her comforting arms. Thus in ways expected and unexpected, some Australians felt a genuine affinity with India and its inhabitants.

‘Fabulous’ India held a special place in both Britain and Australia. The British had always envisioned India as the ‘Gorgeous East’, and there is little reason to suppose that early Australian settlers were any different from their metropolitan colleagues. B. J. Moore-Gilbert has pointed to the idea that India had been seen as an El Dorado, where fortunes could be made by enterprising Englishmen who were willing to brave the climate. Such an entrepreneur had even entered Thakeray’s Vanity Fair in the character of Jos Sedley and his ‘lucrative post’ at Boggley Wallah. This is not to say that India really was an El Dorado with streets paved with gold. The Australian George Russell attested to this on his visit to Calcutta. On Saturday, 18 December 1850, he wrote in his diary

... although Calcutta has been designated a city of palaces ... it has large & populous quarters that are the very reverse of all this. Nothing can produce a greater contrast ... between these miserable, filthy & confined quarters and the gorgeous, rich & elegant display which is seen from the parade or Tank Square.

On leaving Calcutta on Monday, 8 February 1851, he noted that

Although there is a great deal new to be seen, particularly for one who has not seen anything of Eastern life, and the city from some positions has a fine & even splendid appearance, still there are great portions of it that are the most crowded, confined, filthy & wretched-looking places that are probably to be found in any city in the world.

Australians might not have to live in the same poverty as those unfortunates outside the palaces, but the warning was there, that all would not necessarily be
gorgeous. Nevertheless, Australians could still envision India as a wondrous place, full of history, and possibly barbaric. ‘India’, wrote James Hingston, ‘is the land of the wonderful, and the proper home of all that is imaginative, fantastic, sensuous, and extravagant. Its past has been as the transformation scene of an extravaganza.’ For Alfred Deakin, ‘India’ was such a magical name that the country was ‘in all probability, the Ophir of the Old Testament, the scene of Sinbad’s trials, and certainly the heart and crown of that far “gorgeous East” which stately Venice held in fee’. To reach it, one ‘seems not only to have travelled a thousand miles, but a thousand years’.

On the flyleaf of his notebook he wrote a quotation from Hazlett: “The cradle of the world & garden of the Sun”. India certainly caught the imagination of Herbert Syme:

Four years ago in company with Mr. Alfred Deakin I visited India and so much did I enjoy the trip I determined that if ever the occasion offered I would go again. It is hard to say what the charm of India consists. It may be as Kipling says, “If you’ve ever heard the East a callin’, you wont never ‘erd naught else’.

To Australians the first sight India was thoroughly Eastern. In Delhi were fabulous thrones adorned with ivory, and jewel. The very walls of the palaces, as well as the ceilings supported by alabaster pillars, were alive with birds, flowers and fruits, all fashioned from inlaid mosaics and silver filigree. Here was the stuff of Orientalist dreams: ‘It can be better imagined if the absent lamps are included, as also the dark-eyed houris who go so far to make up Asiatic notions of heaven’, enthused Hingston. It was just as well, maybe, that such a country could be brought into line with the modern and more prosaic world by ‘the ascendancy of the British character, and under the shelter, where so required, of British dominion’. The socialite Ruby Madden on her way to the 1903 Coronation Durbar in Delhi combined the opposites nicely in her description of Bombay (Mumbai).
Bombay is a fascinating place with lovely buildings and the natives and their cattle carts are so picturesque. It is hopeless to try and describe it ... The fashionable part is where Gov. House and everybody lives and reminds me so much of Darling Point.\textsuperscript{15}

For Deakin, Bombay was a city of

Cleaner houses & temples painted cream green white & chocolate. 6 stories (sic) high. Carved woodwork lattices. Verandahs. Idols cleaner & better dressed - streets cleaner. Palms against sky flush ... Women and children chanting children in carriages. Winding streets - bazaars and markets clean & crowded.\textsuperscript{16}

Perhaps India under this rule was already breaking away from the imagined Orient. If the fabulous architecture were not enough to satisfy the baser senses, then the intellect could also have its fill. India was ‘in some senses a miniature of the world’, wrote Deakin, where religious history consisted of exactly the same controversies as in the ‘schools of Amsterdam, the colleges of Rome, and the lecture rooms of German universities’.\textsuperscript{17}

If the India of fable and fantasy captured a part of the Australian imagination, there was a far more substantial element. Imperial connections allowed India to be seen as a trading partner; as a source of immigration, particularly that of Anglo-Indians; and India as a spiritual source. India even penetrated the domestic interiors of Australian houses from the 1850s. At the apogee of the British Raj, metropolitan power was demonstrated in international exhibitions. As in England, these exhibitions stimulated demand in Australia for the chintz style and paisley design, even if this was only a brief craze.\textsuperscript{18} Along with interior decoration came new words from India: ‘verandah’, ‘gunny’ sack, ‘quili’ (cooler) and ‘bungalow’. The trio of Kipling, Norman Lindsay and Cobra boot polish gave Australians the snake-charmer Chunder Loo, his name soon to be
transformed into the rhyming slang for ‘spew’. In Bombay, Ruby Madden loved her bungalow:

   It is strange to have no doors and walk into the sitting room at once with all the doors opening out all round. It gives you a feeling of being in a summer house.20

   ‘Verandah’ and ‘bungalow’ were useful descriptions of building styles, even if the latter sometimes implied a somewhat different meaning in Australia than it had in England. In England, it signified a small, detached house, whereas in Australia it was closer to the original word, in that it could be a separate building from the main house. Sometimes such a bungalow would not have glass windows, but instead it would be enclosed by a flywire verandah.21 Robert Campbell, a Scotsman who had immigrated by way of India to New South Wales, built the first Australian house in ‘...whole-hearted Indian bungalow form’.22 Campbell was the first independent merchant in Sydney Cove, and his wharf supplied Sydney with Indian goods brought from Calcutta. These supplies included foodstuffs, clothing and live animals.23 The Kashmiri shawl, for example, became a fashionable item of clothing.24 Campbell’s ships even carried goods from Calcutta for Phillip Russell, which were then forwarded from the Sydney wharf to ‘Golf Hill’, the Clyde Company’s squatting run near Geelong, Victoria.25 There were other Indian connections in the Port Phillip district, and their names have survived in various city streets. For example, Melbourne’s Swanston Street recalls the Hobart banker, Charles Swanston, late of the Madras Army, later Secretary to the Governor of Madras. He was the principal financier of many squatting enterprises. Mercer Street, Geelong, commemorates George Mercer, a Scottish ‘nabob’, whose Calcutta-born son, Major William Drummond Mercer, moved to Fyansford. Other sons also lived there on and off. The family was better known in Calcutta and Britain than Robert Campbell.26
Trade between India and Australia closely supported the concept of Empire. This trade had begun very early in the story of Australian settlement, and as David Walker has suggested, was a familiar part of the early world of the colony. Coal to India was the first colonial produce ever exported from NSW, but the fact that only sporadic supply ships returning to India could carry the coal meant that the trade faced considerable difficulty, even though the establishment of the East India Company opened up the market for New South Wales. Before the introduction, however, of regular shipping routes between the metropole and Australia about the middle of the nineteenth century, the arrival of East Indiamen meant that the colonists enjoyed a measure of comforting security. Household items, such as soap, candles, cloth, rice, sugar, and earthenware were imported from India. Foodstuffs in the way of spices, pickles, chutneys, curry powder, and tea soon appeared on Australian tables. Indian tea became especially popular in the Australian domestic scene. It was promoted by the colourful, be-turbaned James ‘Rajah’ Inglis, who betwixt his commercial activities was a member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly. He proclaimed that Indian teas were superior to Chinese, and he sold his under the brand name ‘Billy Tea’. So successful was this promotion of the Indian product that by 1897 it dominated the market. As an advertisement in Hingston’s *Australian Abroad* proclaimed, India teas were produced in the gardens of old John Bull, were cheaper, and what is more, unadulterated by opium and other poisons. The appeal to the very Australian sentiment of ‘Billy Tea’ combined with the cleanliness of Empire was hard to resist. Although trade between India and Australia had lessened after the Indian Mutiny, it was still 2.11% of the total Australian import bill, 1887-91.
Trade between Australia and India also opened up the settlement of the Swan River district of Western Australia. Lieutenant-Governor James Stirling thought this was a suitable district for exporting horses and wheat to India. Anthony Trollope, on his visit to Australia to see his son who had migrated in 1865, also thought Western Australia seemed specially adapted for horse breeding. There was, however, he considered a problem in that although India was a great market for the animals, there were no middle traders. The breeders would find it impossible to breed the horses, charter the ships, and conduct sales. Nevertheless, between 1890-1900, Australia exported 50,000 ‘walers’, remounts and sporting horses to India.

India was also suggested as a source of livestock. The Acclimatisation Society in Sydney listened to a lecture by Dr George Bennett in 1862. He told them that in 1854, the Zoological Society in London had received pair of wild sheep of the ‘Punjaub’. Bennett then suggested that there were several other species of wild sheep to be found in British India, and all these could be acclimatised in Australia.

The Society was also interested in importing Indian silkworms and the appropriate vegetation. In 1870, the Curator Riddell Museum, Agra, A. C. L. Carleyelle, furnished the Society a lengthy report, in which he suggested that some varieties might be suitable, providing that Indian vegetation was first acclimatised.

Trade was not necessarily on a grand scale, but even a minor Australian export could lead to good relations between the two countries. Hingston found, for
example, that Australia had been the chief source of theatrical supplies in Bombay, and as such as held in high regard for its services.\(^{38}\)

During his visit to India to report on irrigation there, Alfred Deakin was led to the idea that free trade between India and Australia would be mutually beneficial, and to this end he suggested that there should be open ports and no fiscal impediment to closer union between two countries. In his opinion, the commercial benefits might not be immediate, but eventually both countries would gain from this trade.\(^{39}\)

Deakin had gone to the Orient at the behest of David Syme of the Melbourne *Age*. Syme wrote to Deakin, suggesting that after eight years in office Deakin might like a holiday.

> What do you say to a trip to Egypt to report on irrigation there? It need not occupy you longer than 4 to 5 months, & if you started now you wd just get there in the proper time to see the crops growing, and it is the coolish season of the year. You could make it an enjoyable trip & get materials for an interesting book & be back in time to take your place in politics again... Of course you wd go as representative of the *Age*. Think it over & let me know.\(^{40}\)

A few weeks later, Syme again wrote to Deakin, asking him to direct his enquiries to subjects other than irrigation. In doing so, Syme had in mind any commercial advantages that might come Australia’s way. Deakin was to look at the suitability for Australia of crops, such as millet and rice, but additionally the

> Jute and flax industries may be worth special attention, as they are very important. Dundee manufacturers have transferred their machinery & hands to Calcutta ... The cotton industry is also important. Extensive mills are to be found both in Bombay & Calcutta.\(^{41}\)

Deakin was also instructed to make the articles he sent back readable, including ‘social and other matters’ as often as possible, illustrated with sketches and photographs. The *Age* would pay all expenses, but Syme asked Deakin ‘to procure free pass on Government railways.’ The trip was ‘to occupy 3 months, an
additional month to be allowed for finishing the papers, & you to be paid at the rate of £750 a year, & say £250 for the 4 months.'

In the company of Herbert Syme, the son of David Syme, Deakin set off. The results of his visit, although satisfying David Syme’s requirements, went much further. Deakin thought deeply about all he encountered in India, philosophising on subjects from imperialism to spirituality. His articles, when published in book form, also found him fame beyond the shores of Australia, although not before considerable worry on his part. On his return to Australia, first having obtained permission from David Syme & Co, he prepared to publish *Irrigated India: An Australian View of India and Ceylon, their Irrigation and Agriculture*. The only condition placed upon him was that he had to acknowledge the *Age*. Deakin was expected to bear some of the costs involved, which meant negotiations with various publishers. Wyman & Sons of London, were prepared to publish 1,000 copies of a volume of 236 pages at a total of £133. Deakin turned to another publisher. Cuts were suggested. Deakin was told in a letter that Phillip Mennell had overruled these in a telegram:

Dilke just returned India thinks must be published entire. Will cost hundred for thousand copies. If you will contribute fifty will manage balance.

Mennell wrote to Deakin, confirming that Sir Charles Dilke thought the book should be printed ‘pretty much as it stands’. It would cost three times as much to publish it in Australia, so providing Deakin put down fifty pounds it would be printed in London by Thacker Spink & Co. Mennell expected few sales in England, but would have the book ‘puffed here and in America & India - also New Zealand and Australia.’ Mennell considered the book ‘too miscellaneous in character’ for the India Office to distribute to their officers as an expert work on irrigation. Deakin agreed. Mennell wrote that he had cut the book to bring it ‘within
reasonable limits’. This no doubt would grieve Deakin, but the book was now ‘really agricultural & irrigational,’ and therefore the critics would treat it ‘much more easily and get its drift.’ It would be printed in larger type, but excisions had reduced the price by £16 to a total of £95. Deakin’s account would be drawn on for £50 the following mail.47

During these negotiations, Deakin confided in Charles Pearson the strain he was feeling. He did not know what would be left in the book.

I have had to pay towards its publication & suppose it will appear in some form & at some time. I have no hopes of its success or of its interest…
I did it at request & under misapprehension - but it is needless now to refute that. It is dead before it appears. Let it rest.48

Publication settled, the book drew an audience beyond Australia. As Mennell had expected, the India Office was distinctly uninterested in this Antipodean work:

Mr. Deakin, who is an intelligent man, & interested in public affairs, is capable of feeling & does feel enthusiasm about Irrigation India, & there is no doubt but that the subject is one to which an Englishman may justly be enthusiastic…
Any one who cares about such subjects can get as much information as he pleases from our Moral and Material Progress Reports, & other publications. Those who do not care about such subjects would, I am afraid, refuse to listen to the voice of the Charmer, whoever he might be.
The only chance would be to get a few facts inserted in some popular book of travels, or history of India such as is read in schools. But this is not a matter for the Secretary of State. About ten years ago the two brothers Strachey published a very excellent book, not “popular” but distinctly “readable” entitled “Public Works in India.” But it had no success whatever.49

Fortunately, other readers thought otherwise. John Ottley, a retired Punjab Irrigation Official, noted that Deakin was ‘one of the greatest authorities on irrigation (his work being a classic)’.50 H. M. Hardy of Adelaide wrote to Deakin that when he was returning from London on the ‘Mooltan’, he had met Mr W. P.
Sangster, Superintending Engineer P. W. E. Irrigation Branch, Punjab, India, who told him

he wished to obtain a copy of a book on Indian Irrigation which I understand to be yours altho he gave the name as "Deacons book" & which he understood contained the best description yet published of these works.\textsuperscript{51}

From America, F. H. Newell, of the U. S. Geological Survey, Washington. D.C., wrote,

I have lately been reading with great interest your fascinating book "Irrigated India." It is by far the most readable book on this rather uninteresting subject which I have yet had in hand, and I wish to thank you for the pleasure as well as information you have given.\textsuperscript{52}

Later, Newell would write that \textit{Irrigated India}

has not been pushed in this country as it deserves. I only know of the copy brought here by an Englishman - and the second copy - or more - procured by the U. S. G. S. Library at my request after looking over this first copy. If your bookseller would place copies in San Francisco, Salt Lake and Denver, I am sure the book would find an appreciative public.\textsuperscript{53}

\textit{Temple and Tomb} interested Newell so much,

that I have read it through and through and hope to read parts of it aloud to my family. I envy you the rare gifts of observation and description exhibited in all your writings.\textsuperscript{54}

Also from the United States came a letter from L. G. Carpenter of The State Agricultural College, Colorado.

Your reports are very graphic in their descriptions, and show an unusually comprehensive view of the situation and the understanding of the conditions such as very few of our own students of the subject have acquired.\textsuperscript{55}

In England, the success of \textit{Irrigated India} led a suppliant to Deakin:

I hope to arrange, with your consent for you to meet the Siamese Envoy Extraordinary & Minister Plenipotentiary The Marquis of Maka Yotha who would doubtless consider it an honour to meet the Victorian Federal Delegate the Honourable Alfred Deakin M. P. especially when he is acquainted with your irrigation history for I am informed by my daughter that the Legation is being instructed by H. M. The King of Siam to enquire for a suitable engineer. I would then hope that the fitness of myself for irrigation advisor to the Siam Govt might be introduced.\textsuperscript{56}
Such was the price of fame arising from David Syme’s interest in irrigation and trade.

This Australian interest in trade was not simply commercial, although profit could not be excluded from the equation. Many saw India as a strategic bulwark against the threat of Russia going to war and thereby gaining an Indian base. Among these was Alfred Deakin, who was certainly interested in preventing Russia from doing so. War and profit down the ages, however, have gone hand in hand. Deakin without a hint of irony noted that a Russian war meant the export of Australian horses and general supplies to India. Manufacturers of the future would also be required to take India into account. Almost as an oblique reference to this, although it was probably to do with the expense of constructing irrigation works, is the comment in his India notebook that it was a ‘manifest misuse of language to speak of outlay in works of permanent utility.’

But for Australians, India was not simply a potential source of monetary wealth. The spirit could also be satisfied by an encounter with this great jewel of Empire. ‘To see it is to satisfy one that there is an object in life’ wrote Hingston. Surprisingly, British imperialism and spirituality worked in symbiosis. If Australians were to see ‘it’ for themselves, then they should do so safely. If India remained part of the Empire, and did not become the Russian stronghold that Deakin feared it might, then this was possible. Hingston reminded his readers that India had been owned by every great nation at some time in its past history: Egyptians, Bactrians, Medes, Persians, Greeks, Syrians, Turks, Tartars, Mongols, Portuguese, Dutch, and French had all gained a foothold. None, however, had ‘held greater power in it than little England, and none have held it longer’. The Reverend W. H. Fitchett, in _The Tale of the Great Mutiny_ was quite certain that
Englishmen had the wherewithal to govern India. India had developed ‘all that is proudest and most manly in the British character’, because to rule men was the Englishman’s daily business.62

Firmly in Hingston’s mind was the same idée-fixe that the English were best suited to have dominion over the sub-continent, and there is no reason to suppose that his view was exceptional amongst his fellow Australians of the time, who vacillated between referring to themselves as Australians and British. Empire was part of the Australian psyche, and we can see in the idea of India being a place of potential Russian threat, along with the idea of enlisting its aid against a possible invasion by Japan that British Imperialism and Australian Orientalism went hand in hand. Hingston, for example, did not see the incongruity of the climate preventing a European race colonising India and the fact that the good government meant that 150,000 British could live peaceably among 240 millions.63 In a school textbook of 1892, Round the Empire, which continued to be used at least until 1919, the inspirational idea of so few English living amongst and ruling so many Indians was very firmly placed in front of children, alongside another marvel of English fortitude in such a climate:

That we do keep it will seem more wonderful when we reflect upon the fact that among all the 315,000,000 of inhabitants in the country, only about 150,000 are of British birth: that is, there is only one Englishman for nearly 2,000 of the natives. Besides this, the climate is not good for white people. 64

In 1895, British rule seemed so secure that Syme wrote in his diary

Another thing that strikes even an Australian is the way in 270,000,000 of people are ruled by a handful of whites. There is a proverb to the effect that as long as the steps of Laurence’s horse are heard in the Vale of Peshawar so long will the British Raj endure in India. That it does not depend on such an insecure foundation one has only to visit India to find out.65
In a grand sweep, Hingston remarked that English rule was in the best interests of the Hindus, for under Britain they were less ill-used and educated everywhere. England had brought the benefits of hospitals. The trains introduced by the English could be used for holy pilgrimages. Best of all, there was now justice in India. No longer could the natives be improperly beaten. As if in confirmation of this last idea, his eagle eye lighted upon the notice about not kicking the servants and keeping the bathroom unlocked, which was on the door of his Cawnpore hotel bedroom.

Herbert Syme saw a Delhi that was ‘lighted by gas & all sorts of improvements such as clean streets a high pressure water supply, in fact it is a very pucca native state.’

The benefits of imperialism were plain. Cleanliness, godliness, justice and Empire were thus synonymous.

Other Australians were not so sure of the benefits brought by British imperialism. Charles Pearson gave a more sober estimation of the Raj. The benefits alluded to by Hingston brought danger with them. India itself might now be industrialised and more law-abiding than before, but this had been achieved at a considerable cost. Along with British justice, the English had carried their science and engineering skills into the East, with the result that India now had not only railways, but also a measure of unpopularity. Certainly there was peace and quiet in India, but this was because no native wanted to be marked by the police. Indian officials were also anxious to gain favourable notice at Headquarters. To do this, they promulgated such things as new plans of broad streets to replace alleys. The better standard of living thus achieved, along with the better methods of food production and distribution, brought with it a consequent decrease in disease and
famine. Therein lay the danger. The subject race, argued Pearson, could be multiplied into a rival. This would happen because the people would take advantage of this new prosperity by multiplying rather than by raising standards of comfort.\textsuperscript{60}

Deakin thought much along the same lines, although starting with the benefits that irrigation had brought to India. The real mission of irrigation, he wrote, was to maintain life and minimise famine in India. As a result, in five or ten years a doubling of the population could occur, which at first sight might appear to be a matter for congratulation. With this population growth, other benefits would accrue: peace; plenty; health; morality; increased production; increased consumption; and increased trade and wealth. The ‘broad fact remains that the gain in 10 years exceeds the population of Italy or Prussia’.\textsuperscript{70} Deakin was certainly aware that in India much remained to be done to conquer disease, his diary recording, ‘Cholera carries off terrible percentage every few years’.\textsuperscript{71} Despite this observation, Deakin parted company with Pearson, for he did not see the expected increase in population as a threat to Australia. Instead, he saw it as useless. The problem essentially was one of mistaking quantity for quality. Deakin asked rhetorically whether the humanitarian effort brought real gain or progress; and real benefit to either the individual or the race.\textsuperscript{72} ‘But is the ryot’s life worth living? That is the essential question,’ he wrote. He answered his question with a comparison of the ryot’s life with that of a European. The only Europeans who might answer in the affirmative were factory slaves and streetwalkers. The only purpose, therefore, of irrigation was to allow the ryots to multiply until starvation reduced their numbers again. Thus British rule was opening up new land to feed thousands, and the new irrigation schemes were allowing the Indians to multiply in
their tens of thousands, rather like rabbits or locusts. Mournfully, Deakin closed with ‘Such is “the riddle of the painful earth” presented most impressively throughout India’. The history of British conquests of the elements in India ‘concludes, not with a paean but with a melancholy question – Cui bono?’

In his diary, he noted, ‘Famine is really a battle… Average five acres worked by flesh & blood’

Amongst the jottings in his India notebook, is a quotation, but as there is no comment of his own, it is difficult to say whether Deakin thought the Indian masses were becoming more politically aware or more compassionate:

Utter want of political ties among the masses of natives. Individually they are the kindest & most compassionate people in the world, but outside their own little circle of family and caste they are utterly heedless. Changing with famines - Wheeler

Hingston’s view was little different. He saw the Indian ryot living in a perpetual struggle with starvation, death coming as a happy release from unhuman-like misery. This was a somewhat more melancholy understanding, which drew an Orientalist metaphor of irrigation as symbolic of the mysterious East, because the Indian engineers could make the water flow just where they pleased. The continuing evidence of their skill was yet another example of the enduring ways of the Orient. Using the same familiar simile as Deakin, Herbert Syme saw not so much skill as duplicity in the Indians, who would make the Burmese farmers ‘an easy prey to the Indian, who like the rabbit in Australia is gradually ousting him out of house & home.’

The Australian-born Deakin looked at India in a different way to that of the metropolitan administrators. Australia was neither part of the occupying government nor the military force that ensured the maintenance of British government. As an Australian, there was no need for him to seek justification for the British occupation, so his comments about British rule are revealing of a
different viewpoint than that of the English administrators, or even those of English-born Australians like James Hingston. Deakin did not entirely accept the rationalisation that because the British occupation of India had brought nothing but benefits for the sub-continent, it was completely justified. He saw rather that this Oriental land was a compound of contradictions. Even the justice so admired by Hingston was not always present: "Police torture & extortion still occasionally appears." There was still 'celibacy of widows & child marriages'. In Bengal, widows comprised 21% of the population compared to 9% in England and France. He noted that 'Silent millions always easily taxed. Rich cry out.' Moralistcally, he recorded, 'Eng all formerly had concubines. Soldiers still.' To balance this there is also his comments, 'Have raised the peasant but put down his rulers & pillagers' and 'Lord Selbourne said "Judgments of native judges bear much favourable comparison as a general rule with the judgments of English judges."'

Herbert Strong was surprised by what he thought was a complete lack of interest by some of the British in how their subjects lived:

The officers are very pleasant fellows, but they evidently look on me as a fool, because I ask so many questions, none of which they will answer, whether from ignorance or superior intelligence I refrain from conjecture. They seem to know absolutely nothing, except their drill; I dare say they know that. But about the religion and the languages they seem to know nothing ... The officers here seem to take little interest even in Egyptian affairs.

Strong, exhibiting the intellect that had led him to become Professor of Classics at the University of Melbourne, was much more inquisitive. He found a native officer, who speaks English and [I] explored the native town with him. This is really interesting, but it is terra incognita to the military guardians of our dusky millions. In fact, they would not believe that there could be anything of interest for any one to see there. I however have seen more temples and back slums than most officers in the Empress' service."
However much the English may have thought, like Curzon, that British 
dominion and British character was in the ascendancy, or like Hingston that the 
English were the best suited for rule, Deakin perceived British rule as little more 
than military absolutism controlled by two or three men. The immense distances in 
India meant that all business was conducted by correspondence rather than by 
people on the ground. In the end, this particular Oriental land had, in fact, 
conquered its conquerors. India was ‘British neither in race, religion, language, 
policy, sentiment, nor aspiration’, and the British there were no longer ‘British’ but 
‘Oriental satraps’. It was not the case of the Hindus adapting themselves to their 
imperial masters. To the contrary, India was British ‘only in flag, in fame, and in 
name’. 87 These observations were strikingly similar to those of his friend and 
political colleague, Charles Pearson, who later warned of the danger that in the 
long run, lower civilisations had a more vigorous life than higher ones, and that the 
conquered absorbed the conqueror’. 88 It is possible that here Deakin was thinking 
of conversations that he may have had with Pearson. We know that he listened to 
Pearson, for as Al Gabay has cogently argued, he was later to be greatly influenced 
by National Life and Character, especially the sections in which Pearson warned 
about the perils of race in the ‘tropical belt’. 89 We cannot, however, be absolutely 
sure about this, for Deakin also displayed ambivalence about the benefits of British 
rule, and he certainly regarded Indians as a race that could teach something to 
Australians through an interchange of university students, even if in many ways 
they were enigmatic as the Sphinx, and whose ‘Oriental secretiveness has passed 
into a proverb’ 89.

As with so much of Australian Orientalism, Deakin’s views of India 
showed a further mixture of admiration and disdain. On the one hand there was the
admiration for intellectual achievement, and on the other the typical British
Orientalism of the time. Rana Kabbani, in her study of European attitudes to
Islamic countries, posits that the masculine ideal in Orientalist paintings depicts
predatory, loathsome or ugly figures. Deakin saw no signs of change in the native
princes, who still stuck to their ‘same selfish and sensual ideals’, so that if the
British left them to their own devices their dominions would relapse into their
previous state. He justified this with the remark that the East aged little, and altered
never. This justification, again, was plucked straight from the conventional
Orientalism found in paintings of the time, where the Orient was shown to be
timeless, a quality that was apparently missing in the Occident. Orientalist painters
found quasi-feudal cultures that settled scores by quick vendettas. Gauged from
Deakin’s observation, such feudalism was to be denigrated, although MacKenzie
suggests that the painters and their audience were, in fact, admiring such feudalism,
because it celebrated personal relationships and loyalty. Given Deakin’s remark, it
would seem more likely that this was not the case, but that the Oriental masculine
‘Other’, at least among the Indian rulers, was not a figure for admiration, but rather
one of medieval and barbaric backwardness. In his attack on Indian treachery, W.
H. Fitchett baldly stated that the ‘worship of force is natural to the Eastern mind’.
In his turn, Deakin found hydra-headed superstitions and barbarous customs
combined with despotism in India. In Benares, for example, he noted without
further comment: ‘Monkey Temple - a fraud’. Deakin, therefore, entertained little
doubt that British rule was beneficial in India. Even in the most advanced
kingdoms, there was nothing like the ‘invisible atmosphere of peace’ before the
Europeans arrived. This was the greatest testament to the efficacy of British rule.
India was not London, Paris or New York, so it did not matter that the régime was
imperfect; the improvement over those of the past was immense.97 Hindus had
 gained greatly under British rule.98 They had done so because British rule had been
 strictly utilitarian, given that India could never actually become British except in
 rule and principle. Acknowledging this, the British chiefs had taken Indian
 characteristics upon themselves, and like the Brahmans, wearing an invisible and
 sacred thread of authority, looked down from lofty heights on those not of their
 own caste.99 This observation mirrors the observation in Deakin’s India diary:

 Muhammadan [sic] idea of God highest - Parsi practice highest … Brahminism has infinite
 adaptability.100

 Deakin had told “Lauderdale” in an interview that books were his pleasure
 and his library his playground, which he had filled with volumes he had purchased
 over thirty-five years.101 Sartor Resartus by Thomas Carlyle was the foundation of
 his collection, and one might reasonably expect to have found John Stuart Mill’s
 discussions of utilitarianism and liberty. The engineering works carried out by
 England were all in aid of the common good, and were of the ‘widest and most
 fruitful utility’, unlike the memorials and temples of previous rulers.102

 Combined with this reference to utilitarianism, there is also faint praise.
 While Deakin at this point was praising the efficacy and necessity of British
 administration of this Oriental possession, elsewhere he was also prepared to
 acknowledge that others outside the British Empire might not be quite so
 enthusiastic:

 Impartial foreigners who praise the present administration are astounded at its cold and
 haughty character, its want of touch with native aspirations, its almost contemptuous
 indifference to their prejudices and ideals’.103

 Here, rather than the English, the Australian in Deakin was stepping outside
 the realm of British imperialism; paradoxically, he was ignoring what was
 happening to its Aboriginal inhabitants in his own country. In Deakin, we can
observe the warring sides of Australian Orientalism, the most predominant perhaps being the notion of Empire. With the possession of India, the British Empire was a power of the first rank. It was imperative that England retained control of India, for if another power took over, then England would lose its influence in world affairs, unless this was ‘redressed by growth and cohesion of colonies which have become commonwealths, dominions, and federations’ around the world.\textsuperscript{104} Such a weakening of British rule was disturbing for loyal Australians. As Trollope had remarked of them, their love for England, the Queen, and English government could not be doubted.\textsuperscript{105} Equally, there was a stirring of political independence and nationalism in Australians, even amongst those of the élite social stratum. When Sir Malcolm Donald M’Eacharn was asked whether he preferred England to the colonies, he could only reply, ‘Well, yes and no’.\textsuperscript{106} Deakin, while admiring British rule in the Raj, could also see it as somewhat against the nature of democracy as he understood it from the point of view of a colonial Australian. Australia was on the way to being an independent nation, and British India was in stark contrast to this. Under British rule, there was no self-government in India; and no voice of either native or white administrators – except for a few picked men – could be heard. Most of the administration were mere ciphers who could ‘exercise only such illicit influence as permitted to women in England’.\textsuperscript{107} This meant that the British government of India was ‘anti-democratic in every respect… exotic … nomadic, always external to the country, always personal, and capable of unlimited abuse’.\textsuperscript{108}

Given his criticism, Deakin was still the Imperial Australian, so that he fell back on a rationalisation of this anti-democratic rule, by justifying it as in the best interests of the Hindus, who were either too lazy or incapable of doing what England was attempting. Thus the ‘excellent motives’ inspired a British rule that
was a ‘paternal’ and ‘benevolent tyranny’. This same strand of benevolent and paternalistic tyranny was later to be employed by twentieth-century Australian governments in their treatment of the Australian Aborigines, in particular in the practice of removing mixed-race children from their Aboriginal mothers. Perhaps Deakin agreed with ‘Rajah’ Inglis’ summation of the stupor of the Hindu. Inglis described how the Hindu would sit in front of a large pile of ashes outside his dwelling:

I have seen a native sit till half-choked in a dense column of this smoke. He is too lazy to shift his position; the fumes of pungent smoke half smother him; tears run from his eyes; he splutters and coughs, and abuses the smoke, and its grandfather, and maternal uncle, and all its other known relatives; but he prefers semi-suffocation to the trouble of budging an inch.109

Given such indolence, the energetic benevolece of British Imperialism was a good thing. Certainly Inglis had absolutely no doubt at all that the Indian could not help himself. The Indian was little more than a quarrelsome child, and even then one that could barely do more than grumble:

... their apathy and laziness is amazing. They are very childish, petted and easily roused. In a quarrel, however, they generally confine themselves to vituperation and abuse, and seldom come to blows.110

Where blows were concerned, the Indian Mutiny haunted British minds, including those of Anglo-Indians and Australians. According to John Marshman, the English biographer of one of the heroes of the Mutiny, Major-General Sir Henry Havelock, K.C.B., there was little doubt that what had happened once could easily occur again:

In the annals of human guilt, there is no blacker page than that in which the atrocious murders of Cawnpore are inscribed. And it can be no matter of surprise that those feelings of goodwill towards the natives, which a long period of friendly intercourse had created in the minds of their European masters, should have given place to feelings of mistrust and
even detestation after the deliberate perpetration of such crimes. A century will scarcely suffice to restore that confidence in the native character which the atrocities committed during the mutiny at various stations, and more especially at Cawnpore, have so completely obliterated.\textsuperscript{112}

This view was not entirely accepted by some Australians. Alfred Deakin saw the Indian Mutiny as simply one episode in the government of India by the sword. If the British Raj had to ensure that such an uprising never took place again, then there was nothing new in this. Using the powerful linguistic device of three repetitions to underscore this notion, Deakin made certain that his readers understood that in his opinion warfare and this Oriental land could not be separated. India ‘has been won by the sword, is still held by the sword, and can only be retained by the sword’. In Asian politics there was no distinction between might and right, meaning that India would always be ruled by a ‘supremacy of arms’.\textsuperscript{113} The British India that he saw was under the total control of the large British army.\textsuperscript{114} The Mutiny still obviously shaping his thoughts, Deakin then resorted to the conventional imperialistic jingoism that sat oddly with his more liberal views.

To reconcile his remarks, we must remember that Deakin, like his intellectual mentor, Charles Pearson, ranked various Indians according to their ethnic origins. We can then understand how Deakin believed that not all Indians were the civilised inheritors of the Sanskrit language and literature, that Aryan group comprising the poets, metaphysicians, mathematicians, statesmen, and intellectual leaders of India. Most were either descended from the Muslim invaders or from the original non-Aryan inhabitants living ‘in a condition of barbarism not much superior to that of the Australian aborigines’.\textsuperscript{115} It was no great step for
Deakin to summon up those images of the dastardly rebels and compare them with the British soldiers, the handful of daring whites, with their backs to the sea, the source of their supplies, and their faces set steadfastly (sic) inland, determined by indomitable courage, inexhaustible resource, and superhuman energy to dominate the mighty empire and master its innumerable hordes. That was the situation in India a hundred years since, and that is the situation to-day.¹¹⁶

These brave Englishmen were confronting ‘half-savage races’, and clearly, even for the most thoughtful Radical, the idea of elections and representation did not fit the Indian situation.¹¹⁷

Just why Deakin considered Indians to be ‘half-savage races’ is puzzling, for he must have met a good many educated Indians on his travels. He even related an encounter he had with three of them on a train to Jaipur, although there can be little doubt that this encounter was much embroidered upon by him. Perhaps it was merely apocryphal, for the conversations are given in exact and great detail. The notes for this article can be found towards the end of India diary. Earlier in his diary on the actual days involved, Deakin wrote in his of three uncomfortable days and nights in a dreadfully rocking train.¹¹⁸ The three men involved, a Brahman, a Muhammadan landowner, and Banya of Bengal, illustrate Indian social conditions, as well as political, economic, and religious ideas. When he learned that Deakin was an Australian, the Banya, the poorest and most interesting of the group of travellers, told him that although Indians were aware of the improvements in agriculture, education, housing, medicine, their poverty prevented them taking advantage of them.

“Tell the people far away, tell that we - the masses - in India are poor, are ignorant, are wretched beyond all conception of theirs, and that we need all their wisdom and their assistance to lift us up and be what we ought to be. We need teaching and help - much
teaching and great help" Above the noisy rattle of the train ... he uttered his despairing wail.\textsuperscript{119}

This was no savage, even if he was uneducated. In Deakin's notes, the 'Bunya' is given a 'Caesarian head'.\textsuperscript{120} The truth is that there was education in India, even if by Deakin's visit it had not reached all the masses, and even if there is some argument today about its purpose and quality. While it is also beyond the scope of this present thesis to examine Indian education closely, a brief look at it will help balance what seems to be preponderant Australian accounts of Indian ignorance. Additionally, whilst this thesis will not examine minutely the nature of British Imperialism in India, the discussion will also shed some light on the reasons behind British educational policy and its effects, desired or not, therefrom.

Before the British arrived, the masses were ignorant, but the same could not be said for a well-entrenched, educated minority. R. C. Majumdar, H. C. Raychaudhuri and Kalinkinka Datta claim that their education was the equivalent to that of the Middle Ages in Europe, because it did not include Mathematics, History, Political Philosophy, Economics or Geography. Elementary education confined itself to the three Rs and religious myths and legends, whilst higher education consisted of the study of classical Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian.\textsuperscript{121}

Under the British control of Warren Hastings, there was a revival of Indian learning, and the Calcutta Madrasa was founded in 1781. This was followed by the foundation in 1784 by Sir William Jones of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in Calcutta, and the Sanskrit College in Benares by Resident Jonathan Duncan in 1792. William Carey set up schools in Calcutta, and published Bengali translations of Bible. In so doing, he promoted Bengali prose literature, as well as laying the foundation for English education. By 1823, a Committee of Public Instruction was
operating in Bengal, and it attempted to establish a Sanskrit College in Calcutta. While Government policy was to back the Committee of Public Instruction, advanced Indian and European thinkers preferred a system of education on Western lines.¹²²

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Europeans theorised a relationship between Sanskrit, Greek and Latin which was not accidental. They concluded that European languages developed from the original Sanskrit language of the Brahmans. Although the British and French enthusiasm did not last long, it was maintained by German Romantics like Friedrich and William von Schlegel, the latter the first Professor of Sanskrit at Bonn.¹²³ Deakin was interested in the debate, for his Indian notebook records that there are 10,000 Sanskrit works. Noting the two periods and dates and types of works, such as law, epics, philosophy, he observed, ‘Sanskrit dead longer than Latin. Ceased spoken 300 BC.’¹²⁴

The Committee of Public Instruction divided into ‘Orientalists’ and ‘Anglicists’. The ‘Anglicists’ adopted a ‘filtration theory’ devised by Macaulay and John Stuart Mill.¹²⁵. In effect, this meant that although education in English was primarily for the few, the effects would ripple down to the masses through the vernacular literature.¹²⁶ The real aim was to educate a small elite to form such a stable political foundation that ‘even a political revolution will not destroy and upon which after ages may erect a vast superstructure’.¹²⁷

By 1835, the ‘Anglicists’ were in command. Lord Hardinge introduced a regulation that public service positions would be filled by an open and competitive examination, with a knowledge of English given preference. Viswanathan argues that such a requirement was to use the mechanics of language as ‘an instrument for
ensuring industriousness, efficiency, trustworthiness, and compliance in native subjects'.

Largely confined to the Hindu middle-classes, the aristocracy and Muslims eschewing it, the former preferring to study in the old way, and the latter being against any form of Western learning, the spread of this education was fairly rapid. This meant that the Muslims lost their influences as Indian rulers. The educational system soon developed into a hierarchy of schools, each leading to the next stage, and finally to the universities, these being an Examining Body modelled on London University. This education inspired Indians with the liberal ideas sweeping Europe.

Alfred Deakin saw the results of this education during his visit to a session of the Sixth Congress. His reactions display both his disapproval of the racism that appeared to be holding the educated Indians from governing themselves and also his compromise with why this should be so. Firstly, he attended the Congress and was impressed by its proceedings. Because of the Muslim’s eschewal of State Education, the members were Hindus. Deakin reported that those who spoke were as eloquent as any to be found in the House of Commons, and nothing else distinguished them from their English counterparts other than their names. This was hardly surprising. Earlier, Charles Trevalyan had said that educated Indians ‘speak purer English than we speak ourselves, for they take it from the purest models, they speak the language of the Spectator, such English as is never spoken in England’. One of the reasons for this was the English style used in Calcutta journals and newspapers, the editors of which deliberately employing an Addisonian style in articles ranging from English fashions to etiquette. Deakin went so far as to say that it was preposterous to think that such an able group of
men could not form a representative body.\textsuperscript{134} Secondly, there is the problem why did he then not take the extra step and tell his Australian readers that this is exactly what should happen? Again, it seems to have been the case of justification for the British Raj, employing the argument that these Congressmen were not representative of Indians as a whole. A brilliant handful in this ‘dependent empire’ was not enough to make any sudden change.\textsuperscript{135} The ‘filtration theory’, that was designed to ensure the stability of English rule in India, had thus found its way into Deakin’s thinking.

Additionally, at least one Anglo-Australian was also not above his own superiority when it came to the English language. Herbert Strong, on his way back to England in 1884, wrote to Charles Pearson about the limitations of education he observed at Decca College:

Here I saw the Professor of Sanskrit; and I saw a native with a vile accent, teaching English to a class of natives; reading out a play of Sheridan’s and paraphrasing it. The thing was done well; but I think the authorities are blameworthy in letting English be taught by anyone but an Englishman.\textsuperscript{136}

Race, therefore, could not be separated from the worlds of the Orient that were visited by Australians, and India was one of these worlds that threw up contrasting images that both fitted and challenged Australian preconceptions. Thus Deakin resorted to stereotypes when confronted with justifying British rule. It did not matter that in the Congress the Indians for all intents and purposes were the same as their English counterparts. It was simply impossible that the hordes could govern themselves. ‘Rajah’ Inglis was even more scathing:

For what? A sprinkling of thinly-veneered, half-educated natives, want a share in the loaves and fishes in political scrambling, and a few inane people of the ‘man and brother’ type, cry out at home to let them have their way.\textsuperscript{137} The answer was a resounding ‘No’, until the Hindu was given
the energy, the integrity, the singleness of purpose, the manly, honourable straightforwardness of the Anglo-Saxon; his scorn of meanness, trickery, and fraud; his contempt for oppression of the weak; his self-dependence; his probity. But why go on? When you make the Hindoo honest, truthful, God-fearing Englishmen, you can let them govern themselves; but as soon ‘may the leopard change his spots,’ as the Hindoo his character. He is wholly unfit for self-government; utterly opposed to honest, truthful, stable government at all.\textsuperscript{138}

As already discussed, James Hingston in his travels round the sub-continent had also faced the problem of justifying British rule. He looked at how the English treated the Indians, and he was not always impressed by what he saw. Even the English children treated their Indian nurses, who could speak very little English, as if they were not real people. The children liked them in the same way ‘that little girls fancy a hideous Dutch doll before all the finer ones’\textsuperscript{139} But in his writing there is also the stereotypical interwoven with acute observation of reality, an amalgamation of what he expected in India and what he really saw. Thus he expected Indians to be devious Orientals, and so they were. As men of the East, they simply could not be trusted. You could haggle with them and eventually strike a bargain, but really to no purpose, for they would find various ways of wriggling out of the agreement struck.\textsuperscript{140} They were undoubtedly uncivilised, for he saw two of them brawling in Delhi in a manner that looked to English eyes ‘an unfair way of fighting’.\textsuperscript{141} If they were not scrapping, then they were soft, feline and cringing in their efforts to beg. Such a race could not be compared to ‘the Maori, the Kaffir, or the Red Indian’, who had natural dignity.\textsuperscript{142} Herbert Syme was disgusted with the demands for ‘bukshish’, the pester for which made everybody’s life a burden. Kandy was much too beautiful for the people who inhabit it. Altho they are not such a nuisance as those of Colombo still it is bukshish everywhere.\textsuperscript{143}

In India the cold weather helped:
The natives are very torpid & by walking very slightly quicker you can get far enough away before they collect their thoughts. I thus escaped extortion.\textsuperscript{144}

Syme’s speed allowed him to get into his carriage, and although the Indian ‘certainly did shout from a distance of 30 yards’, Syme’s hearing was ‘not good for bukshish beyond 19 yards besides it is not polite to shout.’\textsuperscript{145}

In fact, India was a mass of contradictions. Deakin observed it was a continent & not a country … conservatism & rapid change. Diverse races languages religions. Men speaking tongues like our aborigines & priests learned in the highest philosophy\textsuperscript{146}

One way of resolving the contradictions was by explaining them in terms of the climate. As if to confirm their ideas, Carleyelle wrote in his report to the Acclimatisation Society in Sydney Wales that he had heard that the heat and droughts in Australia were worse than could be found on the plains of India.\textsuperscript{147} He did not quite believe this, for he had been informed by persons who have resided in Australia, that Europeans, - nay even ladies with only a good parasol, - are able to walk about, in the day time, during the hottest season, in Australia. Now this is certainly a thing which Europeans cannot do, during the hot season, or when the hot winds prevail, on the plains of India.\textsuperscript{148}

Herbert Strong wrote to Charles Pearson that

Bombay seemed to me like a vapour bath, in fact like Sydney in its doggiest days and I wd. not live there for untold crores or lacs or whatever the term may be (for we are bound to adopt the elegant phraseology of the country in wh. we dwell.)\textsuperscript{149}

It was much the same further to the north:

Here it is facetiously called cool, and it is the fashion to make one’s teeth chatter when the thermometer marks anything under 70\textdegree \textit{Fahr}; so I fall in with the custom; but it is horribly hot really … I would not live in India for any money; all the pomp & luxury cannot palliate the harm of the climate…\textsuperscript{150}

On her visit to the Coronation Durbar, Ruby Madden hated the climate, which got in the way of her sense of occasion:

This is an appalling place for skins and I have suffered tortures with wind, it burns and dries you up and your lips get chapped till you could scream with pain. I am brick colour,
yet always wear a veil and take all sorts of care. The water is like iron. It is certainly not
the place to look your best in.\textsuperscript{151}

The remedy did nothing for her sense of fashion:

I am very sad because Mr Edgerley says we MUST wear solar topees if we go out in the
daytime and we want to know when we can wear our smart hats, and what’s the use of
them, he said they would be far less use if we got sunstroke, so Auntie is bearing me off
today to buy one. They are extremely unbecoming and I shall not create a sensation
looking like Judge Molesworth …there is some comfort to think everyone else will look
equally hideous.\textsuperscript{152}

To escape the heat, she wanted to take cold baths, but older Indian hands prevailed.

I couldn’t stand the lake warm ones, and asked Rebecca to give me one quite cold, and
enjoyed it immensely and felt so refreshed. However I was boasting of this at the Yacht
Club in the evening and giving people tips how to keep cool, but the only effect it had was
to cause extreme consternation amongst them. “I was on NO account to take a cold bath, it
gives you all sorts of illnesses,” and Aunt Bea told me I mustn’t think of it again, so I
return once more to my horrid “flanelletty” wash in the morning.\textsuperscript{153}

Perhaps the Indian constitution was better able to withstand the rigours of
immersion. Adjoining the Diwan i. Khas, Herbert Syme saw the royal bathrooms,
‘all of course of marble & very cool & refreshing it must be in summer altho when
we saw them the thought of a bath sent a cold shiver down the backbone.’\textsuperscript{154}

Another way to reconcile the contradictions in India was to blame
Hinduism and the caste system. Hingston wrote that Hinduism had taught Indians
always to be subservient to those who misused them: their favourite god was Shiva,
who destroyed them.\textsuperscript{155} This justified anything that the British might do in India.
Indian subservience was allied to the Orientalist theory that the East was
unchanging. ‘Caste’ was part of Hinduism, and caste meant that the Indian found
government by a foreign power natural. This would not change until caste was
abolished, and because nothing changed in the East, the British government of
India would continue. Caste kept Hindus in a position where they could not break
out of their isolated bands and abject subjugation to combine against their foreign rulers. Caste was also so strong that none of his guides, either in India or Ceylon, would eat with him. It was easy to rule a people so divided. If they did unite, they could withstand all the combined armies of the world. ¹⁵⁶ This circular logic was not far removed from that of Deakin’s view of Indians, particularly when it was reinforced by Hingston’s descriptions of Indians as well-featured men with slim arms and legs, even if they did have smaller chests than Europeans. ¹⁵⁷

In an engaging aside tinged with irony, Hingston reasoned that caste had something to do with the effects of the hot climate, for even the English were now adopting its practices. With little else to occupy their spare time, their chief amusement was the giving of and attending formal dinners, ‘to which all who go have to study tables of precedence and manuals of punctilio’. ¹⁵⁸

Charles Pearson later also argued in a different context that the white race would ultimately conform to an Oriental standard of existence. ¹⁵⁹ For Hingston, the dinner table of India was an example of the British section of the race doing exactly that, and this some fourteen or fifteen years before Pearson published National Life and Character. Yet it is difficult to believe that Hingston really felt that the English were as oriental as their Indian subjects. His account of his travels, however, is often contradictory, and the reader must take care to separate fact from fiction, and acute observation from ironic humour.

Where there can be little doubt is the overwhelming impression given to Hingston of the underlying nature of the Indians. The poverty, dirt and disease, and the unending struggle to exist that he saw, were all signs leading him to the firm conclusion that the ‘Hindoo’ was totally subservient to his master, and totally without any sense of warding off death. When death came, the Indian gave up his hold on life without a struggle. ¹⁶⁰ Herein lies another contradiction, which sheds
some light on the inner struggle felt by Australians between what they actually saw and the inner voice telling them about the barbaric Indians.

Attitudes such as this were a mixture of reality and fiction, sympathy and disgust, admiration and fear. Deakin could write in the early 1890s that Indians, although they seemed distant and foreign, were already allied to Australians, both politically and geographically. He particularly admired the dignity he saw in Indian rural life, which in its socialistic sharing of produce, industry and hospitality put to shame those who wasted the land simply for commercial gain. There is a parallel to be found in Pearson’s thoughts about socialism. In National Life and Character, Pearson discussed the passing of charity from control of the Church to the State in Western countries, and although he acknowledged that the expectation of obtaining relief in this way might be fallacious, it could hardly be doubted that the vagrant poverty in large communities had been considerably reduced. Hingston, like Deakin, also admired the Indian peasant. He saw agricultural labour as the most honourable of occupations. He commented that the Cingalese were surprised at British conception of political life as being a noble one. For them, politics was ‘actually a low thing’, not so far above the work of the distillers and the brewers, who like the pimps and the panders, ministered to ‘the gross appetites of animal nature’.

Deakin, even when admiring the rural socialism he saw in India, nonetheless was not prepared to admit that the lower orders of Indian society were quite so admirable as that socialism might suggest. The average man of low caste was almost always ‘idle, shiftless and careless creature, docile, good-humoured, and servile’, while the average morality of the masses was correspondingly low. When these remarks were combined with his observation the Indians were like
children in their love of jewellery, display, thriftlessness, thoughtlessness, and credulity, then he blended much of the fantastic Orientalist notions with his more positive outlook. Even so, Deakin was inclined to surrender to the most colorful Orientalist language when the occasion came. While admitting that the hot climate dictated everyday clothing in India, so that men wore the minimum decent working attire, the clothes of the rajas were gorgeous and those of the Parsi women were spectacular. These bejewelled women wore blue silk breeches, slippers, and turbans. ‘King Solomon in all his glory was not attired like one of these’, and the only parallel he could convey to his readers back in Melbourne was that of the old scriptural prints ‘in which apostles appeared like a troop of Josephs’.

In further support to the argument that Deakin was letting his imagination take over, was his comment that only women of the lower classes could be seen in public; the others lived under lock and key in ‘seclusion of the zenana’. These effusive descriptions were far more imaginative than those of Hinston, except for the note in Deakin’s diary that some men wore Chinese shoes with soles that reminded him of ‘Wellingtons’; and ‘Parsees tending to projecting thickish nose’. The nearest Hinston came to wonderment at bright Indian clothing was not at the sight of women or Rajahs, but when he saw sailors on a ferry. Their dazzlingly white cotton blouses, bright bandannas, many-coloured shawls, and turbans made the European captain’s uniform ‘but a mean thing’. All in all, thought Hinston, the clean, grand, and pretty Eastern dress was better suited to the climate, and ‘one’s eyes turn in disgust from any Europeanly-dressed, and consequently gawky-looking creature that may happen to pass’. Hindu soldiers grew indistinguishable from their clothing. It ‘becomes them more than ordinarily, or they become it’.
By way of contrast, Ruby Madden was entranced at the sight of the Maharajah of Mysore.

So nice and quite young, with the most exquisite emeralds and diamonds you ever saw. He had a collar round his neck, and then chains to his waist of huge pear shaped stones, an aigrette in his turban and arm bands to match, and he was dressed in yellow satin. He speaks English beautifully and is so good looking.\textsuperscript{172}

At a State Ball, other gorgeous Indians caught her attention.

The Rajahs surpassed themselves in jewels and looked like moving jeweller’s shops. Capt. Cameron introduced me to one of his little boys, the Rajah of Rutklam who was in the Cadet Corps uniform so he had an attendant with him dressed in yellow satin to wear his jewels, an enormous diamond sun in his pugaree and a ruby and diamond necklace of immense size. Such a quaint idea.\textsuperscript{173}

This did not mean that Australians noted absolute equality between the Indian aristocracy and the Imperial masters. Herbert Syme related a story he had heard of Maharajah of Kapurthala:

\[\ldots\text{one season he was staying at Mussoorie a hill station & while there he entertained very often giving a ball one week & a garden party or so the next. All Anglo-Indians went to his entertainments but none of the women would dance with him altho he dances very well. One person whom he asked \"if he might have the pleasure\" turned to her husband \ldots and asked him right out loud if she might dance with the Rajah \& he replied no.}\textsuperscript{174}

Such social niceties were insignificant when set beside the opium trade. For Australians at the turn of the century, opium and degeneracy went hand-in-hand. William Lane once tried a pipe of opium in Australia. It lulled the senses into the acceptance of miscegenation and ‘a deadly slough of sloth and deceit and filth and immoralities’.\textsuperscript{175} Therefore Australians, unlike their earlier England counterparts De Quincey and Coleridge, did not see the Orient as a repository of desirable hedonism, in particular, the source of opium. The Indian opium trade was repulsive and completely undesirable. ‘Let a spade be called a spade,’ wrote Hingston, ‘\ldots this opium business is little less disgraceful than was the slave-trade of old!’ As
such it was a dark spot on English commerce. It was discreditable that the agricultural fields of Patna, once famous for the growing of rice, had been turned over to the profits to be made from the opium poppy.\textsuperscript{176} For Deakin, the trade was abominable and only carried on by Government sanction. It was clear, he wrote in *Irrigated India*, that the moral sense of the English would not allow it to continue.\textsuperscript{177} This seems more pious hope than truth, for the only support he gave for this idea was that one of the benefits of English rule in India was the State control of opium.\textsuperscript{178}

Opium aside, Alfred Deakin felt it necessary that Australians understood Indians.\textsuperscript{179} Indians and Australians were all ‘part of one empire, and thus linked to one destiny’.\textsuperscript{180} This understanding was surely not simply because Indians and Australians were all Imperial subjects. Overriding all else was the memory of the Indian Mutiny. When Australians and the Anglo-Indians are compared, it is possible to see a close similarity.

The Indian Mutiny had certainly made the Anglo-Indians well aware that theirs was an uneasy situation. No longer could they feel secure under the British rule. To them, Indians had become untrustworthy ‘others’, while at the same time their own homeland seemed far distant, confirming that they were ‘exiles’ in a foreign land. This sense of being an exiled community surrounded by danger gave them a sense of corporate identity, which hitherto had been lacking.\textsuperscript{181} Even Rudyard Kipling, their best-known voice, gave vent to their sense of isolation, and their sense that those in England gave little more thought to anything other than their annual seaside resorts.\textsuperscript{182} Moore-Gilbert, in *Kipling and "orientalism"* reads in Kipling a sense of outrage at this supposed indifference to the Anglo-Indians’ sense of India as a place of hell and purgatory:
... an evil land

That is near the gates of Hell.\textsuperscript{183}

Moore-Gilbert further argues that in the poem ‘Christmas in India’, Kipling was alluding to the idea that the improved communications technology between India and England had done little to overcome this isolation:

O the \textit{Heimweh}, ceaseless, aching! O the black dividing Sea and alien Plain!\textsuperscript{184}

If we look closely at the above quotation, a number of its references support Moore-Gilbert’s contention. Firstly, there is ‘\textit{Heimweh}’. Here the poet is using the German word for ‘home-sickness’; thus there can be no doubt of the intense separation felt by the Anglo-Indian community. Secondly, the reference to the ‘black dividing Sea’ is directly from Hinduism. If a Hindu crossed this sea to another country, then he or she would lose caste and be defiled. When Gandhi, for example, decided to leave India for England, he was summoned before the elders of his Banya caste and pronounced an outcaste.\textsuperscript{185} Thus the Anglo-Indians were in a sense outcasts from their metropole and from the Indian community in which they resided. The ‘alien Plain’ confirms for us this sense of belonging nowhere. If the Anglo-Indian felt this sense of exile, surely it was equally true of Australians, who were even further away from their England metropole, even if they persisted in calling England ‘Home’. In \textit{Australian Nationalism}, Robert Thomson contends that the wealthier echelons of Australian society reproduced the English refinements of daily life, and resented being considered ‘colonials’.\textsuperscript{186} If this is the case, then it follows that despite their protestations, they were considered not to be truly English. There is thus a sense of exile, much the same as that sense felt by the Anglo-Indians.

But observed by Herbert Strong, there is a curious corollary to this. He saw the same sense of exile in those British ‘Indians’ who had made India their home
All the Indians directly they go home seem to grumble and fret to get back...[they grumble] about the expenses of being at home, and the way they abuse the genial rain and snow is sickening to listen to.\(^{187}\)

Herbert Syme also commented on how the Anglo-Indians exhibited their sense of place, revealing that they were attempting a form of power-based security:

If you have the misfortune to travel in the train with a government official even if the journey lasts a couple of days he will take little or no notice of you and the lower in rank he is the more distant he will be. In short, the Anglo-Indian looks upon the tourist as a nuisance and little better than a native.\(^{188}\)

He returned to this theme later in his diary when he wrote about an Anglo-Indian official and his family travelling on the same train from Kandy as himself.

C. S. his wife child & ayah. Anglo-Indian children are a nuisance and this one was simply awful. She was pale and sickly like the rest.\(^{189}\)

When the man ordered refreshments,

The C. S gave us a good idea how Anglo-Indians run their own show ... He said “I have no change but I will send it down to you in the morning by a coolie.”\(^{190}\)

In Lucknow, the Eurasian and English school pupils were listless: ‘There does not seem to be that go in them that is found in English and Australian schoolboys.’\(^{191}\)

For Syme the Indians were no better.

The Indian maxim seems to be “never hurry. There is always tomorrow.” If a native wishes to go by train anywhere he goes to the station when he is ready. If the train is not going for a bit he goes to sleep & if he feels hungry he departs in search of food. If while he is away or asleep the train comes & goes again, he does not swear & say “Dam Dam” [sic] after the manner of the Sahib tongue ... he simply falls to sleep again & waits for the next with perhaps a similar result.\(^{192}\)

The insecurity brought by the Indian Mutiny to the Anglo-Indian community was also shared by Australians, particularly by Anglo-Australians, in their sense of isolation. The Mutiny drew the two communities closer together. Moore-Gilbert argues that the Anglo-Indians were no longer simply the British abroad.\(^{193}\) Neither were the Australians. Vance Palmer was adamant about this:
We, who have in our power the makings of a glorious nation with no sordid past ... are content to imitate the customs of old degenerate nations, and to let our individuality be obscured by the detestable word “colonial”.194

Palmer’s protestation can be placed in the context of the two communities, that of the Anglo-Indian after the Mutiny and that of the late nineteenth-century Australians. Deakin had reminded Australians that the little garrison of Anglo-Indians had overcome crises and perils, and that his fellow Australians had this in common, even if they seemed to forget that ‘they have made their home neither in Europe nor America, but in Austral-Asia – Southern Asia’.195 Drawing on what was absolutely familiar to Australians, the colours of their own landscape, he painted a word-picture of the country he saw while on a night journey from the Western Ghats. The evening light had suppressed the bright green of the tropical foliage, and the landscape that he saw was ‘strikingly Australian’, rather like that around Mount Victoria and Mount Lofty.196 It was the same as the landscape he had seen on the direct route between Bacchus Marsh and Ballan by moonlight.197 India and Australia were alike in the ‘faint purple setting that reminds one of the rich Australian haze’.198 In what might be seen as a counterpoint to Deakin’s word-picture, in 1896, Arthur Streeton painted his masterpiece, *Purple Noon’s Transparent Might*. All Australians may not have recognised the quotation of the fourth line from Shelley’s *Stanzas Written in Dejection, Near Naples* (1824), but they certainly would have recognised the colours of their landscape. India was not, therefore, completely the landscape of Kipling’s *Jungle* books. ‘I am glad I have seen this place,’ Herbert Strong told Pearson, ‘because the scenery is really fine, though not stupendous.’199 Deakin also noted the landscape around Darjeeling in his diary:
The pines are & much smaller in their serried ranks than Australian foliage & the hills are the same dull brown. A pinkish warmth flows down the great valley & the vapours rise and vanish…The houses weatherboard and white and with tin roofs like Australia.

Under the pencilled inscription ‘India’ over ‘Notes from 1889 Darjeeling’ Deakin also noted that he saw ‘cleared patches of garden & dry grass like Mt Macedon’. In his Notebook was a completely different observation: ‘Jungle dank & poisonous tress & snaky creepers’. Herbert Syme actually saw Australia in the Lucknow botanic garden:

Here we catch a breath from home for driving along one of the paths we come across upon a small plantation of blue gum (sic) saplings. It quite did us good to see them held in such esteem.

Vegetation to one side, Alfred Deakin told Australians that if they were to comprehend the mutiny, they had to ‘realize modern India.’ This was complex, for modern India was also British India, and to comprehend that, Australians also had to comprehend the Mutiny. This Australian Orientalism saw past an imagined India of fables and princes into a complex reality of competing tensions; into an India that was driven by both the past and the present. Deakin understood the mutineers believed they had to ‘throw off a galling political yoke’ and ‘secure salvation by expelling an impious creed.’ In these words lie the feelings of the Australian-born democrat vis-a-vis the English metropole, but Deakin was also tugged by more conventional strings.

Although on the one hand Deakin believed Indians and Australians had much to teach one another, when it came to consideration of the Mutiny he allowed an Orientalism that taught that the Orient was barbarous to surface. This Orientalism demonstrates just how powerfully, despite the intervening years and the evidence of his own eyes, the Mutiny played on the Australian imagination and feeling of insecurity. ‘Subtle and treacherous [Hindus] by inheritance […] met their
European masters with the grave, placid, impenetrable face of innocence and submission,' he wrote. Rather than possessing the intellects he had seen displayed in the Sixth Congress, Deakin now beheld a 'credulous Oriental mind fermented with prophecies and omens, mysterious warnings and insensate libels of rancorous malice, until at last it blazed up into the fires of open rebellion.'

The expressions of European solidarity in the face of isolation in Australian descriptions of the Mutiny parallel those in the accounts discussed later in the 'Siege' chapter. In each, the native Orientals are cowardly and the British heroic. Deakin's writing was no exception: 'gallant Englishmen who fell leading them [Hindu soldiers] into action were found to have been shot from behind.' Perhaps from an Orientalism such as this it is possible to extrapolate the idea that a White Australia Policy might protect Australians from the treachery of coloured citizens: not even British bravery could give protection from the cowardly shot in the back.

Deakin was also aware that inside the British lurked dark forces that could be awoken by the cruelty of Oriental treachery: bodies swung from trees in retribution, while the British soldiers carried mementos of their losses: 'A tress of a child's hair has had its hecatomb of victims; a lady's glove or trinkets has steeled hearts against mercy.'

If all this might have seemed confusing to Australians back home, then the School Paper further complicated matters for young primary school pupils in August 1897. Therein they could read a simplified account of the Indian Mutiny, but one which seemed to assume that Australians were, in fact, from the metropole: 'To make matters worse, the numbers of British troops in the country was very small, and, at one time, it seemed as if all India might be lost to us.' The remainder of the account is a simple account of the Mutiny, but as a stirring
reminder to these young readers that they were British, it concludes with a visit of
of Prince of Wales to India in 1876, who ‘won the hearts of the native princes and
people by his kindly manners. He was warmly received by the natives of all
parts’. In order to drive home the message of British imperialism as a worthy
contribution to world affairs, and that they too should behave as good citizens of
the Empire, the boys and girls were told about the proclamation of the late Queen
Victoria as Empress of India in 1877: ‘Since that event, the inhabitants of India
have vied with their fellow-subjects in other parts of the globe in showing their
loyalty on all possible occasions’.211

In Orientalism, Edward Said has argued that Orientalism is ‘a way of
coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient’s special place in
European Western experience’.212 His approach includes India. Fundamental to this
conception is that the Orient is ‘other’ and alien to the West.213 That this approach
is too narrow, at least as far as some Australians in the second half of the
nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth were concerned, was that
even in such a small detail as the light of the landscape, the Orient that was India,
and the Occident that was Australia had become as one. Add this to the close ties
felt between the Anglo-Indian and Australian communities, and between the
similarities and kinship that Deakin saw in Australians and Indians, then despite the
‘otherness’ of ‘Gorgeous India’, the concept of there being a single and different
Orient for Australians is greatly diminished. Nonetheless, there was still no
absolute certainty. British Imperial rule, with all its disadvantages, was still seen as
desirable. Despite the similarities between India and Australia, the presence of
what Pearson referred to as the ‘Yellow Belt’ was still ‘other’ and menacing.
NOTES

8 Ibid, p.278.
15 Ruby Madden to Lady Madden, Bombay, 10 December 1902, National Library of Australia, MS 5607.
16 Deakin, Diary, India, Op. Cit., noted Bombay on page 30 October 1890.
20 Ruby Madden to Lady Madden, Bombay, 10 December 1902, Op. Cit.
21 This is a personal observation of buildings, such as "Cobramunga", Murriabit, New South Wales. A fuller discussion of the bungalow style can be found in the 'Invasion' chapter.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid, p.15.
37 A.C. L. Carleyelle, [manuscript], Report on the proposed introduction of Indian Silkworms, and the acclimatisation of Indian Timbertrees and Plants in Australia; in accordance with instructions contained in letter No. 1472, from F. M. Lind Esqre, C. S. Commissioner Agra Division, hearing reference to a Requisition forwarded to his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General of India, by G. Bennett Esqre. M. D., Honorary Secretary to the Acclimatisation Society of New South Wales, Agra, 1870, National Library of Australia, MS 4060 NK 4427, p.163.
40 David Syme to Alfred Deakin, Melbourne, 31 October 1890, Deakin Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 1540/10/29.
41 David Syme to Alfred Deakin, Melbourne, 18 November 1890, Deakin Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 1540/10/31.
42 Ibid.
48 Alfred Deakin to Charles Pearson, Melbourne, 14 December 1892, Deakin Collection, State Library of Victoria, Box 439/5a MS 7321.
50 John W. Ottley to Claude Johnson, Coopers Hill, Surrey, 24 April 1904, Deakin Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 1540/10/85.
51 H. M Hardy to Alfred Deakin, Adelaide, 27 June 1917, Deakin Papers, National Library of Australia, MS 1540/10/98.
54 Ibid.
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61 Ibid, p.255.
67 Ibid, p.294. (See Travel chapter).
71 Deakin, Diary, India, Op. Cit., ‘Notes from 1889 Darjeeling’.
73 Ibid, pp.54-5.
74 Ibid, p.55.
78 Ibid, p.249.
70 Syme, Diary 1895, Op. Cit., p.27.
72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
90 Deakin, Diary, India, Op. Cit., noted on page 31 October 1890.
93 Ibid, p.133.
95 Trollope and Joyce, Australia, Op. Cit., p.93.
99 Ibid.
100 Inglis, Sport and Work on the Neapul Frontier, Op. Cit., p.132.
105 Ibid, p.31.
107 Deakin, Irrigated India, Op. Cit., p.27.
110 Deakin, Diary, India, Op. Cit., handwritten page number 24, in December 1891.
116 Majumdar, 1967 #496], p.812
118 Ibid, p.93.

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Ibid, p.141.

Ibid, p.139.


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Ibid, p.2.
CHAPTER 7.

JAPAN: MERRIE ENGLAND?

In Japan we have no Nineveh or Babylon to disentomb, no Jerusalem to uncover of its superincumbent debris ... ¹

As early as 1783, James Mario Matra had seen trading possibilities with Japan, and this formed part of his proposal for the colonisation of New South Wales, a discussion of which can be found in the Introduction to this thesis. From the signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1902, Japan held a special place in the Australian romantic imagination. The terms of the Alliance allowed Britain to concentrate its naval strength elsewhere than in the Pacific, and the Japanese defeat of the Russian fleet in 1905, led to Australians becoming increasingly fearful about their security. ² Japan was seen as totally different from other Oriental lands, this partly because of the its appearance; partly because of the craze for japonaiseries; and partly because of a strong willingness to identify it as a model society, an Oriental ‘Merrie England’. British literary magazines read by Australians from the 1860s reinforced this view by way of stereotypes of Japanese politeness and culture, as well as praising the leap that Japan had made into modernity. ³

This leap has echoes to the present day in Australians’ on-going struggle to come to terms with their own identity. If Australians in the nineteenth century thought they recognised ‘Merrie England’ in Japan, then perhaps they saw that they too were at the receiving end of European colonial decentredness. Even today, just as Japan strives to remain a part of the non-West in the face of European modernity, so Australia is
striving to put forward its own separate identity and come to terms with its own post-colonial experience in relation to the ‘West’. There is more in common between the two nation-states than the nineteenth-century delusional notion that Japan was an unspoiled time capsule of a mythical English past. Neville Meaney points out that both Australia and Japan towards the end of the nineteenth century were ‘undergoing a sociopsychological revolution which was transforming their ideas of the monarchy, nation and race’. Meaney draws the parallels between both countries embracing nationalism as a way of coming to terms with their rapidly changing situation in the world. Meaney argues that despite their misunderstandings, the destinies of the two societies were and still are closely interwoven because of their geopolitical and geocultural environment. Suggested but not fully spelled out by Meaney is the mirror image of Japan’s fortress mentality until the coming of Commodore Matthew Perry’s American naval squadron in 1853 and the fortress Australia of the White Australia Policy. Meaney refers to the Japanese wishing to retain their ‘national essence’ in their quest for modernity and acceptance. Was this ‘national essence’ so very different from Australian pride in their British descent? In a speech defending the ‘Immigration Restriction Bill’, Alfred Deakin referred to the Japanese as the people who were among the ‘highest and most civilized nations of the world ... [who] most nearly approach us’. It was as if Deakin was still seeing in the Japanese the same qualities of his own forebears in ‘Merrie England’.

Earlier, on his visit to Japan, James Hingston, determined to make his admiration of most things Japanese appeal to the best in his readers, declared that the bells in the temple at Shiba were ‘certainly the sweeter’ than those he heard at the
Church of St Mary at Cork. The Japanese were not like other Orientals when it came to religious matters, for just as he lived his life in good order, so too were his ideas and religion. Not for him the fanaticism of the Hindus or the Muslims; instead he neither scowled at anyone of a different faith nor thought that by killing him he would also get into heaven. In fact, as far as religion was concerned, like the French, it troubled neither him nor his wife. In 1989, Humphrey McQueen, an Australian associate professor in the Department of International and Social Relations at Tokyo University, visited Matsue, the city where the American writer Lacfadio Hearn had had taught in the Middle School in the 1890s, before becoming a Japanese subject. He was known in Japan as Koizumi Yakumi. Matsue had become ‘a mecca for European tourists’, so McQueen ‘turned myself into a Yank and ploughed from one spot on the map to the next until I had ‘done’ Matsue before its attractions closed at 5.00 p.m.’ Hearn, like Hingston, also thought that the Japanese were ‘the happiest people in the world’. It is as if the West was deliberately trying to see in Japan the lack of stress in their own societies. Even the religion of the Japanese was mild and cheerful. The Japanese, wrote Hingston, had ‘kicked out the Jesuits, two hundred years ago,’ and since then his religion had not made him a ‘fanatic or misanthrope.’ This meant that all remorse was foreign to his nature. Thus Hingston was pursuing the notion that in matters of spirit, the Japanese were essentially the same as how Anglo-Australians saw themselves: quiet and tolerant. His comparison with the Irish church bells may well have been a sideswipe at Australian Roman Catholics, given the Protestant social ascendancy of the time, which was a good example in itself of the then Protestant Australian intolerance.
Even a visit to a Japanese theatre afforded Hingston, like the American William Griffis, the opportunity to compare Japan with England. Griffis thought the productions he saw were 'perhaps as good as Shakespeare and Sophocles attended'. The shows that Hingston attended were like those five hundred years previously in Britain before 'avarice had eaten into heart of the world, and made money-making the end, aim and object of existence.' Struggling to find words to justify this, Hingston decided that the reason must be because 'Avarice has not got hold of the Japanese as yet ... Frugal, temperate and happy, he takes little thought for to-morrow, and none for the day after.' This all meant that the Japanese could spend any extra money he had on jugglers, open-air dramas, and Eastern storytellers under umbrellas. Hingston, of course, was subscribing to the notion that this race of people was like that to be found in unspoiled England of five hundred years before. This Oriental land was one where the modern, nineteenth-century Australians could find a pure, albeit mythical British past in their own region. There were those, like Charles Pearson and William Lane, who believed that Australia was a land where a new society could be built, one which discarded the soiled manners and decadence of industrialism. By extension, then, Japan might well have been seen as a 'white' Oriental land. Hingston even described the theatres in Japan as 'public vehicles' that were 'undefaced by the huge advertisements that those of England and America hateful to one's eyes,' and thus the point about the focus on money-grubbing by modern industrial societies was made. But so that his readers would not be too offended by his disparaging of 'Home', Hingston was also careful not to push the comparison too far. After his comments about the lack of advertising, he showed that there was a downside for Australian visitors to a Japanese theatrical performance. The scenery was lacking and the stage
was lit by candles alone. The only exits and entrances were from doors at the back of
the stage, but worst of all for ‘English ears’ was the queer music, which continued
‘while the speakers are declaiming’. Herbert Syme felt similarly at the native theatre in
Calcutta.

It was the first time I had ever heard an Indian band in all its glory. I don’t want to hear
another... The blowing down of the walls of ancient Jericho had hitherto been a mystery to me.
I am now convinced that it is quite feasible & the explanation is easy. Joshua engaged a Hindu
band for the performance.\textsuperscript{22}

This was very different from what Annie Besant would tell Australians a
Theosophical lecture in 1908. Besant told her audience that Oriental music was
actually more subtle than that of the West, because ‘what is called flatness by the
Western ear is due to gradations of sounds too fine for the ordinary Western ear to
hear, and yields tones which are most exquisite to the trained sense’.\textsuperscript{23} For Hingston, a
twenty-minute visit was quite enough:

The thirst for knowledge in that direction is slaked. You feel as if you had seen it before, and
did not wish to see it again – a feeling of full satisfaction.\textsuperscript{24}

Thus honour was satisfied, but despite his wish to compare Japan with the
England of five hundred years previously, Hingston did not see the obvious similarity
with Shakespeare’s Globe theatre, the exits and entrances of which were like those he
described in Japan. Nor did Hingston compare the Japanese theatrical districts with
Colombo’s white quarter, a place he found to be thoroughly boring and stagnant. In
Colombo there were no concerts or theatre performances. Instead, ‘the dissipations of
place appear to consist of an evening drive to hear the military band play on the
beach.’\textsuperscript{25} Thus, while twenty minutes of Japanese theatre were enough to satisfy
Australian eyes and ears, Hingston could not even find that much pleasure where white
men and women had settled in the Orient. McQueen, a century later, was also bemused by Japanese theatre. On 11 June 1988, he visited the Takanababa reconstruction of the Globe. To his surprise it was pink. As nobody knew anything about the appearance of the original Globe, the Japanese architect ‘built a Rosicrucian theory around computerised stage machinery and proclaimed it authentically Elizabethan, at least since ‘1988’.’

The production he saw was of Salieri’s *Falstaff*, possibly performed because of the name’s link with Shakespeare. It was ‘a sheer delight … Only Ford’s jealousy aria towards the end of Act One – a duet with clarinet – was outstanding.’ This mixed reception echoed that of Hingston. During his three years in Japan, McQueen saw more productions of Shakespeare’s plays, again with the same amusement and bewilderment. He learnt that the authorities had changed the ending of *Hamlet* following an attempt on the Emperor Meiji’s life in 1911: ‘The king could no longer be killed.’ In one *Hamlet* he attended, the actors dressed in typical Japanese costumes, and the frenetic speed of ‘the retainers rushing on, falling to the floor and spitting out their one or two lines before leaping out of the way,’ surpassed ‘the fake naturalism in many current western Shakespeare productions.’ Traditional Japanese elements, the martial arts, the emotional ferocity and the barbarism of medieval Japan ‘brought us close to the bloody images of the Danish court’. McQueen also saw a production with a *kabuki* female impersonator in the lead. He was scathing. The revival of a 1884 production ‘would have charmed the Shakespeare Preservation Society. Only the Ophelia delighted me.’ The following day he attended *Broken Hamlet*, set in modern Tokyo, a production that Shakespeare would have enjoyed, ‘as
a man of the theatre', because it must have been similar to the productions of Restoration England in its departure from the text. A ‘good time was had by all, including the audience.' 30 He also disliked the kabuki-style delivery of the love scenes in The Tempest. 31 King Lear was worse.

Suzuki Company of Toga performed their version of Lear, which was dreadful ... This time they shouted but lacked any focus for their undiminished dynamism. Nothing came of the noise. 32

The intervening hundred years seemed not to have widened Australian appreciation of Japanese theatre.

The rise of Japanese sentiment in Australia seemed unstoppable. In 1874, the Town and Country Journal ranked the Japan Mail alongside the best newspapers in the world, because of the excellent reasoning and political writing in its pages. It also judged Japan, in a ‘wonder-achieving age,’ to be one of the greatest wonders. 33 When James Hingston arrived in Japan in 1878, he wrote that although Japan had been opened to the West for only sixteen years,

Scarcely an Australian can but remember some one from some part of Australasia who has made Japan a home. To see how they are all doing there, and the wonders of the newly-opened country, are attractions that outweigh many other considerations. 34

He was delighted to have as his guide in Yokohama ‘Mr. J. H. Brooke, formerly Minister of Lands in Victoria, and M. L. A. for Geelong, [who] has been for nine years a Yokohama resident, editing the Yokohama Herald.' 35 By 1888, everything Japanese was being received with enthusiasm in Australia. On the entertainment side, Japanese gymnasts were performing in Sydney, while on the artistic side, the painters Tom Roberts and Charles Conder were hard at work, the former painting Mrs Louis Abrahams in his aesthetic studio, the latter Bronte Beach
and *A Holiday at Mentone* in the japoniste style. Articles about Japan by the ex-patriot, Mortimer Menpes, were published in *Magazine of Art*, and a celebrity portrait of Mr Y. S. W. Lee, a respected South Australian Chinese, was printed in the *Lantern*. The Brisbane house of Judge G. W. Paul was being admired, and in Melbourne others wondered at and bought the Japanese goods on display at the Centennial Exhibition.36

There were those in the English-speaking world who tempered this romanticism. In 1900, Kipling for one was puzzled about why Japan was held in such esteem. For him ‘the Jap [had] no business savvy.’37 Other British commentators were also critical of the Japanese as an imitative rather than an inventive people.38 The Victorian Education Department at times could also be less than enthusiastic. In what might have been seen as a light-hearted article about Japanese customs, a racist view was given to Class IV pupils in 1900: everything the Japanese did was back to front, including their writing ‘finis’ on the title page and putting the footnotes at the top. The Japanese mounted their horses on the opposite side. All the harness was fastened on that same side. Likewise, the mane of the Japanese horse fell on the opposite side. The horse was fed in the opposite direction: the ‘head is put where his tail ought to be’. Likewise the Japanese sense of direction was strange: ‘east-north’ and ‘west-south’.39

Such criticism, however, did not stop the praise of wealthy Australians. An eminent Victorian Member of the Legislative Council, Sir Malcolm Donald M’Eacharn was very proud of the silk Japanese tapestry landscape on the wall of his mansion in Kew. Somewhat immodestly, he showed it to the society reporter, “Lauderdale”, and boasted of his collection.

I should like to show you … some very excellent specimens of Japanese art. A number of people complain that Japanese (sic) have no idea of perspective. I think you will acknowledge
that this directly refutes that statement, for it is the finest and most artistic piece of Japanese work I have seen.  

A remark like this, with its emphasis on perspective and ownership, says as much about the ignorance of Anglo-Australians as it does about the artistic abilities or otherwise of the Japanese, but it does demonstrate to some degree the importance of Japan in Australian eyes. The fact that a member of the upper echelon of Victorian society was prepared to display and talk about his collection in this manner suggests that for him the Japanese were a people to be reckoned with, just as Hingston had done about fifteen years before. There was even the idea that the Japanese might have come from a similar racial stock as themselves.  

The English writer, Alexander Colquhoun, called Japan ‘the eastern England’ in his book on China.  

If such a view were held in the Mother Country, it is therefore not unremarkable that Australians held similar views. Many of them were either first or second generation Australians, whose reading included English journals and literature. Given the influence of the *Argus*, a conservative newspaper, in which James Hingston’s articles were first published, his writing probably contributed to the favourable Australian perception of Japan, especially as that country occupied such a large part of his commentary. Nearly all that he saw was civilised in a distinctly un-Oriental way. Here was a country of the same landmass and population size of Britain. It was the ‘merrie England’ of the past before the English were ‘mongrelized’, and in addition its people were frugal in their ways and as polite as the French.  

This romantic, if racist view, of English history ignored the squalor of five hundred years ago, squalor that was the equal of any that Hingston must have seen on his Oriental travels. This was a mythical England ‘in the time of the tournaments and
the hawkings, and the jesters and the Joyous Life,' before industrialisation changed the face of the countryside.\textsuperscript{44}

Such wishful thinking was also extended in Hingston’s comment that Tokyo was ‘the London of Japan.'\textsuperscript{45} We can see here once again the attempt by an Australian, seemingly surrounded by Oriental foreigners, to discover a civilisation like that of England in his near neighbourhood. He was prepared to draw upon the Utilitarian theories of Bentham and Mills to strengthen his comparison even further. So intent was he to show his fellow Australians that they could feel secure in the knowledge that a great civilisation was to their North, that he went the extra step in declaring confidently that the Japanese were better than the English in applying ‘the greatest happiness of the greatest number – which has been defined to the end and aim of civilisation and legislation,’ because having been in both England and Japan, he had seen this for himself.\textsuperscript{46}

Such a comparison, however, was a minor part of Hingston’s descriptions. If the Japanese were better than the English in this one respect, it was thanks to the English that they had made such strides in their progress to modernity. English Imperialism was never far below the surface of Australian thinking, and Hingston could push it to the limits of credulity in the case of Japan. He dismissed contemptuously the first European nation to gain a foothold in Japan. The Dutch ‘would have muddled on here for another two hundred years,’ achieving nothing, for it was the English who were responsible for trading progress.\textsuperscript{47} His rationalisation for this idea is disarmingly incredulous and racist. Whenever he could, Hingston disparaged the Dutch as colonial imperialists. In Java, the people who built the temples
at Prambanan did not have the Dutch as their masters; and because the Dutch had been
too busy moneymaking for two hundred years, it had been up to the English to uncover
the ruins of Borobudur. As for the Dutchmen in general, 'They disappoint me as
Englishmen, for whom I am always mistaking them.' He reserved his particular scorn
for the women: 'The Dutch ladies ... develop in after-life to a bulbous form that does
not look so graceful.'

No doubt this dislike of the Dutch as colonialists in Australia's near
neighbourhood led to these aspersions, but Hingston's claiming that Commodore Perry
as England's 'eldest son' in America is English imperialism carried as far as the
imagination could allow. This quasi-Englishman, with the help of a letter from
President Fillmore and a man-of-war to back up the letter, had opened up Japan. If he
had not done so,

mere travellers for health or pleasure would have seen nothing of all the beauties of Japan and
all the surprises it has in store for the traveller from the Western world. That Western world,
and the world generally, would have been deprived, also, of all the benefit and delight that the
curious merchandise and manufactures of Japan have given to them; also the amusements that
its native actors, conjurers and acrobats have created whenever they have been seen.

Australians like Hingston were looking at Japan in this romantic light, not just
for the security they saw in having a country similar to 'Home' in their region, but
probably also because of the notion that Australia, too, might model itself on Japan as
well as on England. Australians might become a race of 'sun gods,' thought Bernard
O'Dowd. This Theosophical thought is not so very different from the religion of
Japan that Hingston so admired, a religion in which the Emperor was a direct
descendant from the sun. It was the sun that became the emblem on the Japanese flag.
If Japan could be seen in the light of the sun, then for Hingston its people formed part
of a model society, which unlike China, was energetically making its way into the modern world. According to Hingston, the Chinese were so conservative by nature, that they objected to all innovations, whether these brought improvement or not. As a result, China had not adopted a national currency, and had even sold Hong Kong to the Japanese Government. Japan, on the other hand, was adopting European customs. Even if the progress was slow, it could still be seen everywhere. He acknowledged that Japan had resisted inroads from the West, and had only made innovations because of the threats of war. Nevertheless, ‘they wisely endeavoured to get the best return for it.’ China had also been threatened by the West, and had even fought the so-called Opium War, which very likely Hingston had in mind as he looked at the failure of China to make progress. Other Australians were not so quick to agree with him about the lack of progress in China, perhaps the most diametrically opposite view being that of Pearson, who believed China had been forced into the fellowship of nations. Be that as it may, Hingston declared that Japan had gone in for total change, even so far as replacing an Oriental feudal government that had been in place for a thousand years. As examples of this, the Mikado had replaced the tycoon, and there was now a Representative House of Parliament. The Japanese had even ‘rechristened’ the city of Yedo as Tokyo, which was the equivalent to renaming London or New York. All this had been accomplished with remarkable, almost pantomime rapidity, and now ‘Every visitor will pat the lively Japanese on the back, and wish him and his pleasant country good speed.’

As might be expected, Hingston also idealised the people who inhabited the Japanese islands. Their English might have been strictly limited, but they spoke it
better than the Chinese. Although this most polite, cheerful and pleasant of people were a small in height, and he accounted for this obvious disparity from Australian and English stature, and perhaps dourness, by the easily digested food they ate and their abstention from alcohol. This explanation might have satisfied the middle-class Australian sense of propriety, but it is difficult to believe that Hingston had not come across saké in his travels. His more astute readers would have kept in mind his comments that travel writers had been known to lie. Church-going Australians could read in his description of the Japanese that they were the cleanest of mankind, washing once a day, even if without soap. He reminded his readers that cleanliness was godliness.

As a mark of modernity, Hingston noted that the Japanese were changing their hairstyles to those that were fashionable in Europe, and they were also adopting all European customs, including clothes. Earlier in 1872, Griffis noted that the men were giving up wearing their swords and traditional costume for ‘the more serviceable, but not so becoming dress of the civilised world.’ Hingston observed that unfortunately the short legs of the Japanese meant that ready-made American or English clothes did not quite achieve the right effect. The tails of claw-hammer coats dragged on the ground, while the black dress trousers wrinkled up, exposing baggy round feet. In spite of this, the Japanese was just the kind of cabman needed in London, because he was satisfied with nothing more than his due. The reference to London is more than complimentary, for once again Hingston was declaring that the Oriental Japanese was better than his English equivalent. Nevertheless, as if aware that his Australian readership might disapprove of this comparison, he soon tempered it with the comment
that dressed in his own clothes, the 'happy Japanese looks like to a Christmas pantomime sprite, with a mixture of blue and white hieroglyphics and heraldry stamped upon his back.'

Clearly, no matter how much the Australians might have desired a 'white' Oriental land to their north, there was a boundary that the races should not cross. If crossed, this boundary would lead, as Pearson predicted, to the possible absorption by Oriental races, and at the very least, according to the many articles and cartoons in the Bulletin, a threat to white Australian women.

This distrust was not entirely one-way. In 1895, The American journalist, Lafcadio Hearn, published Out of the East, in which he noted much about Japanese life, and in particular the Japanese response to Western culture and aesthetics. According to Hearn, rather than being the objects of Western curiosity and Western superiority, the Japanese thought themselves to be more cultured than Europeans. The more the Japanese learnt of Western aesthetics and emotions, the less were they impressed by them.

Hearn castigated his readers for calling the Japanese a race of mentally incapacitated and essentially materialistic children, just because they seemed oblivious to the best in Western art and thought. Such a view was a 'very imperfect recognition of the fact that Japanese thought and sentiment have been evolved out of ancestral habits, customs, ethics, beliefs, directly the opposite of our own in some cases, and in all cases strangely different.'

Hearn's next remarks revealed an understanding of the Orient that was far deeper than the usual clichés, such as Streeton's idea that the Orient was a feminine, seductive place that sapped Western masculinity, or Hingston's view that the Eastern mind was dreamy. Hearn saw a Japan where men kept their wives and their minds
hidden but nevertheless real. Hearn understood that a different morality was in force, a morality strongly rejecting that of the Occident. He was also aware that it took more than a superficial glance, if a Westerner were to cross the division that separated the Japanese way of thought and that of the West. His observations do not imply that the West should control or dominate the Japanese. On the contrary, the ‘mental and moral power of race, its highest intellect, strongly resists Western influence,’ and that included those Japanese who had either visited Europe or who had been educated there. Hearn perceived that the behavior of the West in a general sense remained mysterious to the Japanese, and the reason for this was because filial piety, not love, was the moral cement of Japanese society. This was the same filial piety that Hingston and Morrison had seen in China. Whereas both Hingston and Morrison had seen little more than an Oriental desire to have the respect of children, Hearn was more discerning:

For the Oriental the law of life is duty. Affection must, in every time and place, be subordinated to duty.

He realised that this concept replaced ‘love’ in the Western sense, and that therefore much of Western literature was revolting to the Japanese moral sense. Hearn understood that the Japanese man was repulsed, not by passion, but by the way Western literature treated this passion ‘in relation to virtuous maidens, and therefore in relation to the family circle.’ The Japanese man kept his family apart from other eyes:

[The] innermost intimate life of that family will never be revealed to you. All that you see to suggest it will be refined, courteous, exquisite, but of the relation of those souls to each other you will know nothing. Behind the beautiful screens which mask the further interior, all is silent, gentle mystery. There is no reason, to the Japanese mind, why it should be otherwise.
Japanese literature contained passionate love, but this was inspired only by physical attraction, and the heroines in the stories were nearly always professional dancing girls.\textsuperscript{77} Even though the Japanese wives might be kept out of sight, this did not mean that the men's masculinity was limp.

The Australian artist, Mortimer Menpes took up residence in Japan. His 1901 book of 100 full-page colour illustrations, with text by his daughter, Dorothy Menpes, \textit{Japan}, was well reviewed in \textit{Black and White}: ‘It is a charming volume, and contains some of the most delightful of Mr. Menpes's Japanese studies.'\textsuperscript{78} \textit{The Times} was even more fulsome:

Mr. Menpes's pictures are here given in most perfect facsimile, and they form altogether a series of colour-impressions of Japan which may fairly be called unrivalled. Even without the narrative they would show that Mr. Menpes is an enthusiast for Japan, her art, and her people; and very few European artists have succeeded in giving such complete expression to an admiration in which all share.\textsuperscript{79}

The \textit{Australian Biographical Dictionary} of 1934, notes that Menpes 'won fame by his pictures of Japan,' and that he 'presented fifty of his copies of great masters to form the nucleus if the Commonwealth National Gallery.'\textsuperscript{80} In 1988, Australia was represented by three of his works at the 'Japonisme' exhibition organised by the Council of Europe.\textsuperscript{81}

Menpes tried to penetrate the mystery that lay behind the Oriental screen of the Japanese character, and he believed he had discovered the source of the mystery: it 'would be utterly impossible for the Japanese to keep art out of their lives.'\textsuperscript{82} This pull of art was so powerful that 'every Jap (sic) is an artist at heart in the sense that he loves and can understand the beautiful.'\textsuperscript{83}
As with Hearn, Menpes also drew unfavourable comparisons at the expense of the West. His love of all things Japanese appears a little disingenuous, but there still comes through his work an attempt to base his comparisons on European realities. His middle-class Australian readers, abreast with the latest decorating styles, might well have been shocked to be confronted with his dismissal of their efforts: no Morris wallpaper could be seen in the simplicity and good taste of the Japanese house.\textsuperscript{84} Menpes also did not spare their sensibility, when he informed them that ‘true artistic spirit is wanting in the West.’\textsuperscript{85} He was prepared to side whole-heartedly with his Japanese hosts in his preference for Japanese art:

A Japanese authority has boasted that the only living art of today is the art of Japan; and the remark is not so much exaggerated as it may at first sight to the European. Art in Japan is living as art in Greece was living.\textsuperscript{86}

The analogy with ancient Greece is noteworthy, for Greece was honoured as the cradle of western civilisation, its language and culture studied in private schools and universities. The comparison of Japanese art with that of Greece therefore makes the immediate point that Japanese civilisation was as cultured as was that of the western model. Such enthusiasm might well have struck a chord in Australian homes, for there reading was well established among the middle classes at least, as a glance at the photographs and comments in Lauderdale’s interviews in \textit{Australia’s upper middle class in the Edwardian age: Victoria’s Representative Men at Home} will reveal. Many squatters also possessed libraries, their favourite books accompanying them on their travels. In 1897, Tom Archer told the Yokohama, \textit{Japan Gazette}, that as early as the 1840s his Queensland squatter uncle’s favourite reading included

the works of our old poets, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare (I don’t remember Milton being one of them), Dryden, Massinger and Ford, and he was also thoroughly well read in the works of
nearly all our modern poets and historians. On his numerous exploring journeys, in later times, he never omitted to carry with him two or three volumes of a pocket edition of Shakespeare ... he was thirty-two when he joined us.87

Although geographically distant from the seats of European learning, nineteenth-century Australians - including Menpes himself - were not entirely ignorant of their cultural inheritance, and therefore Menpes' references to European classical civilisation were likely to have been readily understood. Compared with the Europe they had left behind them, Australia was a harsh and sometimes impenetrable continent. The landscape certainly was anything but neat and tidy. To some extent, Australians tried to make up for this in the botanic gardens of the cities, such as the one laid out by Baron von Mueller in Melbourne; or in the English-style gardens of the middle classes; or in the cottage gardens of the poorer classes. Expressed here was an obvious longing for some sort of quiet and restful order like that of the English landscape. In Japan, Menpes told them, could be found what they were seeking: nothing happened there by accident, and the perfection of that perfect balance had been obtained by the perfect placement of everything, both inside and outside the houses.88

The same Australians who read Menpes' account of Japan might also have read that of James Hinging. If they had, they could recall his description of the carpenters' bazaar in Damascus, where the workmen sat in the same way as those in Japan, holding the plank with their feet. Hingston lectured his readers that such carved wood was evidence of a love of the art of wood-carving that had been neglected by the Western world since the time stucco had been applied to rough picture frames.89 The lands of the Orient, therefore, were reminding Australians of a heritage that had not only been lost to them when they left their original mother countries, but perhaps had
been lost in the mother countries as well. Japan, however, was not simply part of a timeless and moribund Orient, but a land that seemed alive and well on its way to modernity, even if it retained what Hingston saw in such things as mixed bathing as a 'sinless simplicity' that the West had lost.\textsuperscript{90}

Sinless simplicity, however, was not quite so simple as Hingston would have his readers believe. It was bound up with something from which most Australians were trying to escape. In 1903, "Lauderdale" wrote that the Australian squatter was no longer an ignorant yokel, but 'an educated gentleman who maintains an establishment in town and spends his money freely in those thousand-and-one luxuries which cause the circulation of money and benefit the classes who supply the luxuries which they are not wealthy enough to enjoy.'\textsuperscript{91} Aside from his Oriental reference to luxuries, "Lauderdale" thus stressed the importance of money in Australia. In Japan, however, Lafcadio Hearn found the opposite. In \textit{Gleanings in Buddha Fields} (1898), he praised the Japanese acceptance of poverty.

The charm of Japanese life presents us with the extraordinary phenomenon of poverty as an influence in the development of aesthetic sentiment, or at least as a factor in deciding the direction and expansion of that development. But for poverty, the race could not have discovered, ages ago, the secret of making pleasure the commonest instead of the costliest of experiences, - the divine art of creating the beautiful out of nothing!\textsuperscript{92}

This divine Japanese art arose from the natural beauty of landscape, which led to artistic presentations of visual beauty.\textsuperscript{93} The Orient was teaching Hearn that materialism and beauty did not necessarily go together. For somebody coming from Melbourne, where money bought gracious living, this was a change. The pleasure Hingston found was not that of the whirl of garden parties, the 'At Homes' of the society columns of the newspapers. In Japan there was a 'universal cheapness of
pleasure’ that led to inexhaustible contentment in Japanese common life. But if there was one lesson above all other that Japan taught to Hearn, if not to the Australian squattocracy, it was the realisation that great beauty was only for the rich in the Occident.

James Hingston had also been taught a lesson in Japan. He partook of Japanese food, that is the simple fish and rice meal which he called ‘Chow’. Just as Hearn had discovered beauty in poverty, so in this simple food, the staff of life, did Hingston find the ‘way our ancestors lived before we got vitiated and smoke-dried, mistook our ways in the world, and the objects of life.’ Such a lesson was all part of the commonly held belief that the Orient was timeless, and one could learn from such timelessness. Hingston saw it wherever he looked, be it in corn grinding in Canton, in water carriers at the Indian wells, in the fellahs in Egypt, or in the men working in the fields near Bethlehem. The Australian eye beheld that which it wanted to behold, even if the subject did not quite fit reality. Hingston, however, was aware of this, and on the occasion of his discussing the lesson learnt from the Japanese meal, he used his humour to qualify his remarks about life. The food may have been simple, but it was no simple matter to eat it, for the Japanese used chopsticks, which he hated, and knelt down to eat. There was nothing for it but to buy himself a knife, fork and spoon. He decided that if he were going to stay in Japan for any length of time he would purchase a folding chair made with ‘practicable’ tabletop Here was the other great lesson the Japanese meal taught him: ‘To do at Rome as Rome does is very well to talk about, but does not apply to Japan. The Romans did not require me to eat with skewers.’ In the *Argus* article, as well as *The Australian Abroad*, he wrote that he had failed ‘to make
any progress in taking up rice curries with two penholders. 'He also warned his readers that rice and fish were the staple of Japanese food.

In fish everything is eaten, the shark and the octopus included. The latter, which is a great curiosity in British aquariums, is a common article in Japanese fish markets.  

Joking aside, Hingston was well ahead of his time in displaying a courtesy towards the Japanese, given the conflicting views that were to arise with the growing military power of Japan. Hingston tried to pay the jinrickshaw ‘centaurs’ a reasonable amount at the Hiogo Hotel. For his courtesy towards these human horses, his hostess took him to task in English in front of them. These were the men who were so strong they could pull the jinrickshaw behind them for forty miles while running at a speed of forty miles, stopping only three times on route for a half-hour break. This was the equivalent of a Victorian dragging a buggy from Melbourne to Kyneton. Hingston once more availed himself of the opportunity this incident presented to instruct his Australian readers about how not to behave when they visited the Orient:

All through the East – in Ceylon, India, Egypt, Syria, Japan, and China – the natives are accustomed to such rough language and overbearing treatment from the English as I have narrated in this little matter. Bounce and bluster, and abuse all through.

Hingston concludes his description of the jinrikshaw men in his Argus article of with an Orientalism that seemingly overrides any Occidental belief that Orientals were inferior:

Our prejudices and predilections are all accidents of birth. Our thoughts, beliefs, and tastes, are of education.

It can be argued, however, that Hingston reserved his courtesy for the Japanese, for when it came to other Oriental races Hingston could be vituperative. The Japanese, after all, were reminders of the inhabitants of ‘Merrie England’. To their West, from Cambodia down, were races he and Pearson referred to as ‘Malays’. As far as
Hingston was concerned, unlike the ‘Centaurs’, he did not wish to talk to any of them. The Malay had no gratitude, no energy, no industry, no manners; was forever begging and never said thanks; and when not extending hand for something more, was stealing or lying. Hingston did not want his boots cleaned by a Malay. The Malay’s idea of this task would be to steal the laces, rub the boots with a rag and then hold out his hand for money. The Malay’s nature was to be ‘nasty’, and thus ‘You acquire a dislike to the Malays more than to any other coloured race, and you can’t help it.’ Of course, wherever the kindly English had been in the Straits and Singapore, they were slightly better and not so quarrelsome, because unlike the Dutch, the English did not enslave them for moneymaking purposes. Luckily for Hingston in Singapore, he saw neither carriage chairs nor palanquins as he had in Japan. It was just as well that the Malay would not become a beast of burden like Hindus, Chinese and Japanese, he thought, for the Malay was unpleasant: ‘I suppose it is that the fiery sun that turns his wholesome blood to gall. It strokes his hair the wrong way.’ In Singapore he wrapped copper coins instead of silver in bits of white paper, then threw them into the water so that the Malays could dive for them. As he expected the ungrateful Malays, thinking themselves swindled, were not satisfied: ‘[What] a thankless unpleasant folk they are,’ he commented, because in Singapore nobody should be paid for the pleasure of diving; in fact, any European looking on would have paid for the opportunity of swimming: ‘A Malay always wants more money, and is never satisfied. A Japanese is worth a dozen such, as a good and easily satisfied fellow.’ The ‘Nasty nature’ of the Malay culminates in his ‘running a-muck’, like a mad dog, because of the Delirium tremens brought upon by unrestrained rage and passion. It was, said Hingston,
allowable to shoot them when they were like this.\textsuperscript{108} Even as far down as ‘Netherlands India’ they were the same ‘morose, thankless, greedy, and treacherous’ Malays.\textsuperscript{109}

Thus the Australian James Hingston, except in Japan, was no different from those other English-speakers in the Orient: ‘Bounce and bluster and abuse all through.’

Not all of Hingston’s contemporaries were quite so effusive when it came to the Japanese. The artist Arthur Collingridge thought they were ‘harmless little folks’ living in paper boxes or rabbit hutches, and producing nothing but shoddy goods.\textsuperscript{110} We recall that Morrison regarded the Japanese woman as a ‘misshapen cackling little dot with black teeth’ shambling along the pavement, and the Japanese man had a disregard for accuracy that was characteristic of all Orientals.\textsuperscript{111} An American, just arrived in Japan, was kinder about the women than the Australians:

Her neck is powdered. Her laugh displays a row of superb white teeth, and her jet-black hair is rolled in maidenly style. The fairest sight in Japan are Japan’s fair daughters.\textsuperscript{112}

For all the complimentary opinions of these Australians, there still remained the nagging problem of a race whose ways were really Oriental, despite the glimpses of ‘Merrie England’. This was a race of people whose favourite mode of suicide was ‘hari-kiri’ or disembowelling. The object of this ritual, as far as Hingston could ascertain, was to cause remorse to somebody else. Hingston, trying to fit this into his mental landscape of Japan compared to that of England, could only say that Oliver Goldsmith expressed a similar notion of revenge in the lines

\begin{quote}
The only art her guilt to cover,  
To hide her shame from every eye  
To give repentance to her lover,  
And wring his bosom – is to die.\textsuperscript{113}
\end{quote}
The painful ritual of disembowelling, however, spoke of a different mindset than that of Goldsmith, an Oriental mindset that worried Australians. Thus in July 1895, during the debate about Asiatic immigration, and the consequent necessity for Federation to compel Britain to accept Australia’s legislation excluding the Japanese, Mr Ewing could speak of ‘the great cloud … rising up which may wipe our civilisation out of existence.’114 The defeat of Russia shifted the balance of power in Australia’s region, and despite earlier enthusiasm for all things Japanese, soon set alarm bells ringing.

In China, George Morrison in letter after letter had vigorously supported the Japanese cause. In 1897, he was even afraid that Japan would not pluck up enough courage to defy Russia, if that country attempted to occupy Port Arthur.115 He worked ceaselessly in his effort to obtain European support for Japan in the event of war, remarking that if Japan ‘does not go to war then I personally will repine that my whole work in the Far East has been a failure.’116 It was not that Morrison was a great lover and admirer of Japan. The reason for his vociferous support was the fear that Russia would continue a drive into British territory, and that she had to be stopped by any means possible. The only power capable of doing so was Japan, and he therefore looked ‘with equanimity upon the result of the inevitable war in the Far East.’117 His position vis-à-vis Russia and Japan was transparent:

That war will come is certain. Japan cannot wait til [sic] the power of Russia in Manchuria is consolidated.118

In similar vein, he wrote to the Manager of The Times, C. F. Moberly Bell, that ‘If war should break out, which I hope and pray it will, the preparedness of the Japanese will astonish you.’119 When war eventually did break out, bringing with it a
Japanese victory, Morrison could not have been more delighted, as were the Japanese themselves for his support. Marshal Yamagata informed a Japanese correspondent that the Japanese were ‘much indebted to Dr Morrison, for he counselled us to go to war against Russia never doubting the result.’ In his turn, Morrison was equally fulsome in his praise, when he heard from Matsui Keishiro, a Japanese diplomat, of Japan’s success.

Had the victory been won by my own people I could not have rejoiced more sincerely at the news you have sent me today. The defence of Port Arthur was undoubtedly a brave one but the attack was ten times more brave. I believe that in all history no more heroic episode has ever been recorded than the capture of this fortress, which all the best experts in the world believed to be impregnable. I heartily congratulate you. The action of your Emperor is one that does honour to his nation. It will be applauded by the whole world.

When necessary, the Victorian Education Department could change its tune according to the prevailing sentiment about Japan. Whereas it had denigrated the Japanese customs in 1900, it was a different story in 1902. Pupils in classes V and VI were informed that Japan was Britain’s new ally in the East. There can be no doubt of the sentiments being conveyed to these primary school pupils, for the first two sentences are declamatory: ‘Japan! What a wonderful country it is!’

The anonymous writer described Japan as a land blessed with a beautiful climate, beautiful scenery, beautiful flowers and forests. Japan was now a mighty nation visited by ships from all over the world, and this because Commodore Perry had visited Yokohama in 1854.

Before that time, the Japanese would not have anything to do with foreigners. There are now telegraph wires running through its main streets, and electric and steam railways connecting it with other parts of the country.
This was similar to the enthusiasm generated by the visits of the Japanese Fleets. David Walker details the considerable enthusiasm generated by the arrival of the Training Japanese Squadron in 1903, but he also writes that this was the first chance for Australians to see ‘significant numbers of the remarkable Japanese at close quarters’. Although the visit generated the enthusiasm of which he writes, it was by no means the first occasion for either enthusiasm or close contact. Between 1878 and 1887, for example, the IJN Training Ships ‘Tsukuba’ and ‘Ryūjō’ had made seven voyages to Australia. The training ships visited Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart, Newcastle and Adelaide. Fireworks and kendō displays were held on the ships. Balls were given, both aboard the ships and ashore, cadets and officers joining in the dancing. Judo exhibitions were held in the Athenæum Hall, Melbourne, and at the Upper Cricket Ground, Hobart, in 1902. Between 3,000 and 4,000 spectators watched the latter. There were also visits to the colonial parliaments in 1878 and 1882. In 1900, the Bulletin commented on the 1900 visit of a ship to Melbourne. As might be expected from the Bulletin, the Japanese were seen very unfavourably:

The little mahogany Japs. of the visiting warship clustered close together beside the dais, at the Homœopathic Hospital ball, on Monday night, and shyly watched the whirlers. All the Naiace girls in the vicinity gazed seriously at them in turn, and vainly sought for distinguishing features. One might as well look for individuality in a bunch of grapes.

Fortunately, Ruby Madden fell into conversation with the dapper little brownies. Miss Lorna Price followed suit, and the Japs. made merry... The Bulletin did not let it rest there. The ‘celestials’ had to be shown as little more than perverts.

The little brown Japs off the visiting warship showed themselves to be extremely inquisitive. They invaded the Melbourne shops in troops, fingerling all the goods, and jabbering over items...
of interest like a school of cockatoos. Five of them strayed into the “ladies department” of a
city drapery, where a staff of nice girls was in charge, and, not comprehending the protestations
their conduct provoked, answered only with celestial smiles, and began pulling the stock about,
and investigating the displayed lingerie. When the show-women fled the place, squealing, the
proprietor and male assistants armed themselves with yardsticks and routed the Japs, who were
cackling amazedly over the mysterious garments. One of their number, for the enlightenment
of his brethren, had drawn on over his arms a sample article of apparel that is not worn a bit
like that. This is put down to Jap innocence, but with the experience the little brown men have
had they really ought to have known better.\textsuperscript{130}

As Sissons has documented, during the last decades of the nineteenth century
there was a general disbelief in Australia that there was in any danger from any naval
invasion, which can help explain the enthusiastic welcomes. From 1877, the British
navy had the capacity to defend Australia against ‘a squadron consisting of three or
four cruisers of which one or two might be armoured’. The Australian Government
accepted the view of the Colonial Defence Committee (London) in 1901 that not only
would Australia be protected, but ‘the rest of the world will be kept free from
sustained interruption.’\textsuperscript{131} Nevertheless, there were notes of caution in the press during
the 1903 and later visits, including the \textit{Sydney Mail}’s acknowledgment of Japan’s
growing naval power.\textsuperscript{132} In 1904, the anti-Japanese views of Dr William Maloney, a
Victorian parliamentarian with strong anti-Asian views, were published in his
\textit{Flashlights on Japan and the Far East}. Maloney, international socialist and
republican, wanted Australia and India to join forces against a militarily-expansionist
Japan.\textsuperscript{133} It is noteworthy that here India was not seen as part of Asia.

It is difficult to gauge exactly the depth of the alarm. In the political and
military spheres, the majority of the Labor Party and the General Officer Commanding
the Military Forces were concerned that Japan, because of its success against Russia
had its eyes on Australia.\textsuperscript{134} Perhaps the most significant indicator of mounting disquiet
was the formation of the Australian National Defence League (N. S. W.) in August 1905. In *The Call*, the League reported the inaugural address of the N.S.W. president, which included the 'sudden and recent uprising of Japan to the forefront of military and naval power'. Nevertheless the 1906 visit was still a resounding success, so much so that the United States of America determined to counteract it with a visit of their own, because they considered that the Japanese had succeeded in promoting a modern, civilised Japan. Not all Australians agreed with the American Consul, Orlando Baker, who had reported this to his superiors. Senator Dawson (Labor) refused an invitation by the Japanese Admiral:

> I must decline to accept, because it would be pure hypocrisy on my part to greet you with a smile, give you a friendly handshake, spread my legs under your hospitable table, eat your viands, drink your liquors, and smoke your cigars, while at the same time, though admiring you as a brainy, brave, and progressive people, I do not trust you. I think the day will dawn when Australia will rue the day it showered so much “gush” on you. I may be adversely criticising you later on in a responsible capacity. This is candid, and not meant in any way personal to you, but to you as a people. Whether I am right or wrong history will prove.  

Sissons remarks that this refusal was atypical of the prevailing attitude. Certainly the rolling Shakespearean phrases were obviously modelled on those of Shylock’s refusing Bassanio’s dinner invitation. Rather than reflecting the prevailing attitude of his party, this pretentious posturing is that of a politician drawing attention to himself, which supports Sisson’s argument.

This new Japan was the outcome of something that Hingston had observed nearly three decades previously. He looked at a nation industriously engaged in the acquisition of modern technologies, such as railways, steam vessels and weaponry. Hingston forecast that the future Japan would turn its artistic energies away from the fanciful and towards the practical:
England is starting schools of design for the teaching of all that the Japanese has known and delighted in for all the ages, and which, in the “regeneration” that Japan is now so strangely undergoing, he will for the future neglect for those arts which have advanced Europe and America, if advanced they are, while he has been dozing and dreaming – learning only how to be contented and happy.  

Other Australians were fearful of the potential consequences of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, but also they feared the military might that had been used by Japan in its victory in Sino-Japanese war in 1893-95 and the 1905 defeat of Russia at Shiminoseki.  

The Australian reception of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was at first favourable, because it seemed to contain the threat posed by Japan.  

The fleets of both Britain and Japan were now co-operating, so that it was even conceivable that the latter’s might protect Australia. With Japan as its protector, Australia could pursue friendly relations without the threat of that country’s ‘teeming millions’.  

During the 1902 and 1905 Alliance negotiations of both, Japan had requested Britain to retain her Far East fleet.  

As the Brisbane Courier pointed out, Australia had two choices. It could either reject British foreign policy or it had to ‘accept Japan as a friend and ally.’  

James Murdoch, who progressed from novelist of Japanese life to professional historian, illustrated the changing view of Japan. He published two novels set in Japan in 1892: From Australia and Japan and Ayame-san, A Japanese Romance of the 23rd Year of Meiji. The plot of the former was concerned with the taller Australians besting their smaller Japanese rivals, whereas the latter, published in Yokohama, dealt with the love between an American man and a Japanese woman. It was illustrated with photographs of Japan taken by taken by Professor W. K. Burton of the Imperial University of Japan.  

Subsequently, James Murdoch wrote a three-volume history of
Japan. The history debunked the notion that the Japanese were ‘picturesque and exceedingly polite barbarians’ and in its place argued that they were brilliant enough to master Western technology and ideas during the course of two generations. The first volume, *History of Japan During the Century of Early Foreign Intercourse (1543-1651)*, co-written by Isoh Yamagata, was reviewed as a ‘great work’, the result of scholarly ‘years of research and critical comparison of native and foreign authorities.’ In 1917, Murdoch was appointed the foundation lecturer in Japanese at the Royal Military College, Duntroon. The lectureship was upgraded to a chair. His history of Japan is still in print.

One of the most obvious manifestations of Australian unease with the Alliance was the visit of the American Fleet in 1908. Popularly known as ‘The Great White Fleet’, the ships came to Australia in a response to the previous visits of the Japanese squadrons.

When the Great White Fleet arrived, the tide of support for the Japanese had well and truly turned. The largest crowds had ever been seen in Australia greeted the Americans. Charles S. Sperry, Admiral of the Atlantic Fleet, heard that his American ships, and not those of Britain, were preventing Japan’s ‘career of adventure’ in the Pacific, and he noted that his sailors received more attention than the ‘the imperial English’. Why this was so can be seen in what Sissons refers to as ‘fantastic’ suggestions that Britain was being manipulated by Japan in order to leave Australia defenceless. Such terminology fails to take into account how Australians, knowing the distance and the consequent steaming time necessary for British warships to come to their aid, might justifiably have felt at the British decision. Their suspicions were
further strengthened by the apparent curiosity in Australian maps, year books, machinery, technology, and plans for harbours that the Japanese were exhibiting during their 1907 and 1912 squadron visits.\textsuperscript{152} By 1912, any expected protection by British naval units in Pacific waters had not come about, and it seemed to anxious Australians that every Japanese in Australia was a spy, and also that Japan was poised to invade and conquer with the help of the Chinese.\textsuperscript{153}

The Alliance was now seen as worthless, because Australia was defenceless without naval support. Both the Australians and the Americans were quite sure that Japan was now the dominant Pacific power.\textsuperscript{154} According to Viscount Grey, the British Cabinet was also feeling ‘some embarrassment and even anxiety’ about the Alliance.\textsuperscript{155} In Australia, some suspected Japan might become the enemy rather than an ally of Britain and Australia. This was because Japan might want a political and military empire. Such Australians, argues Werner Levi, had no doubts that Japanese imperialism in Pacific had begun. The only way that Australia could remain secure was by federation.\textsuperscript{156} Australian fears may have been groundless, but not fantastic.

The Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin, used the visit to promote the idea of an Australian navy, and while his support grew, that for the Governor-General, Lord Northcliffe, lessened. Northcliffe had not wavered in his advocacy for the Alliance.\textsuperscript{157} Deakin had already alluded to the necessity of an Australian fleet in 1905, although curiously enough, he had included the growth of the American fleet alongside that of those of Germany and Japan. The Japanese fleet was the major concern. With the defeat of the Russian navy, there was one fleet that was twice as strong as the two opposing fleets previously sailing the China seas.\textsuperscript{158}
George Morrison added his voice to those becoming wary of this powerful Oriental friend. He had resolutely promoted Japan’s cause, but even then he was aware that this was not going to be an easy task. He hinted at his frustration in a letter to Moberly Bell.

It is impossible to get anything out of the Japanese. They have not the art of making themselves popular, and it is already noticeable how much more liked are the Russians who were hearty and friendly and jovial with everyone.\textsuperscript{159}

Following the defeat of Russia, he gradually came to the conclusion that Russia was the lesser of the two evils, because Japan seemed to be pursuing its own ends, ends which conflicted with those of the British Empire. Paradoxically, Japan was able to do this, because it presumed on its favour as an ally of Britain.\textsuperscript{160} His earlier frustration had thus borne an unexpected fruit: Japanese presumption had lost them Morrison’s favour. British interests in China, he thought, were in danger while Russia and Japan remained at odds with one another. Morrison broached the idea with Victor Chirol that the enemy nations should resume friendly relations. Morrison very quickly changed his tune when it came to defending British interests in the Orient. No longer were the Chinese corrupt.

\[ \text{...} \] China looks to us to restrain Japan in Southern Manchuria. A \textit{rapprochement} with Russia will greatly increase our influence here for China can then no longer play Russia off against England.\textsuperscript{161}

A month later, he threw aside any remaining reservations he might have had. He attacked the Japanese with the same ferocity as that which he had used in his previous promotion of their cause. According to him, everybody in Manchuria, including the foreign community as well as the native Chinese, detested and distrusted the Japanese. He attributed all manner of evils to Japan, from the importation of
imitation foreign goods with fraudulent labels and trademarks to swindling, gambling and prostitution. The Japanese prostitutes were swarming on the streets and soliciting the Chinese. The unfortunate Chinese in Manchuria had no hope of finding any justice, because a Japanese offender was always right. He wrote that ‘the Japanese are hated with a fervour you can hardly imagine,’ as if Chirol were incapable of gleaning it from the Morrison’s own vituperation.\textsuperscript{162} In the light of such comments as these, it is not surprising that whereas previously he had had little good to say about Russia, by 1906 his relations with the Russians were ‘very pleasant’\textsuperscript{163}

Morrison obviously felt it necessary to explain such a volte-face, so in November 1906 he wrote once more to Chirol that ‘as regards the Japanese … I have always believed in the military prowess of the Japanese and have always enthusiastically supported them but I have never trusted their commercial honour and I am certain we have much to fear from their commercial rivalry.’\textsuperscript{164}

This castigation continued without let-up, and before long Chirol learnt from Morrison that ‘from Manchuria to the Yangtsze and from the Yangtsze to Canton the Japanese are giving many opportunities for hostile criticism … Everyone tells me the same story of Japanese crookedness and deceit.’\textsuperscript{165} So intent was Morrison in now decrying those whose virtues he had once trumpeted that he even complained to Goto Shimpei, a Japanese politician, about the unpleasant treatment he claimed had been meted out to him and his fellow European passengers by Japanese soldiers on the railway from Kwanchengtzu to Mukden. ‘The railway is being conducted as if war were still in progress,’ he wrote.\textsuperscript{166} Such a denunciation is in marked contrast with his
praise of the Japanese soldiers defending Chinese Christians during the Siege of the Legations not so many years before.  

In his efforts to make other Britons aware of what he saw was an increasing Japanese menace to British imperial interests, self-justification for his diametrical change of view came easily to Morrison in a letter to Ethel Bell, the wife of the Manager of *The Times*.

None supported Japan more strongly than I did during the war, and it is distressing to find how completely she has broken her pledges, how really disloyal she is to her alliance, how easily she violates her assurances. ‘The open door’ as far as Japan can do so, will soon be banged, barred and bolted.  

This self-justification continued, perhaps in response to criticism, and Morrison claimed quite unself-consciously that he could see no evidence in his correspondence of any volte-face. In fact, he claimed, it was exactly the opposite, because he denied that he entertained any hostility to Japan, ‘a country to which we are allied for the next seven years by the most serious and solemn of Treaties.’ He claimed that he always discussed a report with the Japanese before sending it to London, and that furthermore, the Japanese regarded him as a true friend. Whether this was the case or not, or whether he actually listened to what his Japanese friends actually said and then altered his reports accordingly, Morrison claimed to be absolutely objective when it came to reporting the attitude he believed now prevailed in 1908: ‘I always spoke quite academically having only a feeling of regret that Japan should have since the war pursued a policy in regard to China … which has converted multitudes of her admirers into adverse critics or open opponents.'
When a Japanese newspaper criticised his reports in 1909, Morrison took umbrage, expressing his outrage in a letter to a fellow journalist, J. O. P. Bland. ‘You cannot judge the Japanese press by any ordinary standard of veracity,’ he wrote in response to a story by a ‘low class Jap’ who had published a paper ‘attributing to me by name an attack upon Japan’s trampling upon China in Manchuria.’¹⁷²

By 1910, Morrison had slipped into his colonial Australian skin once more and was able to claim, with some measure of truth, that the Anglo-Japanese alliance was ‘extremely unpopular in Australia, in Canada, and in South Africa.’¹⁷³ Certainly many Australians were coming to the conclusion that Japan was a potential enemy, and these views could be found in such publications as *The Bulletin* which pointedly inquired, ‘If it becomes a question of risking war both inside and outside the Empire to keep Australia white, or arousing war inside the Empire in order to make Australia brown or black, which side will Britain take?’¹⁷⁴

The unease about Japan’s Pacific ambitions that Australians were openly showing had been expressed by Charles Pearson in 1893. He had put it in a somewhat different way, but nevertheless the same message was there. Pearson had looked to the Orient and had seen Japan’s population, which vastly outnumbered that of Australia. He noted that there was no way of ridding the world of such a number, unless it was by means of uncivilised warfare, such as practised by the Chinese.¹⁷⁵ The connotations here of the Oriental world as a hotbed of barbarous and dangerous fecundity were not forgotten. If Japan could not be exterminated, to use Pearson’s language, then barriers had to be erected against the ‘Yellow Peril’.
In distinct contrast with the visits of the Japanese squadrons, Australian newspapers now carried few reports about Japan. Typical of such reports was one in the *Argus* about Japanese immigration to Canada. Under ‘Japan's Dignified Attitude’, the report commented that despite the 1892 Treaty allowing unrestricted entry into Canada, Japan had promised ‘to promote the growth and stability of cordial relations between the two countries.’ It was as if by focussing attention elsewhere, the Japanese threat to Australia might disappear.

One journal, however, kept its sights firmly to the north. The *Bulletin*, which proclaimed itself in each issue to be ‘The National Australian Newspaper’ supporting ‘Australia for the White Man’, became more strident as time passed. The *Bulletin expressed* its anti-Japanese attitude in words and cartoons. At the end of 1908, for example, a cartoon entitled ‘Compulsory Military Training: As it may be if we don’t train ourselves’, clearly exhibited the Australian fears of a military take-over by Japan. Under the flag of the Rising Sun, Japanese soldiers, dressed in Australian military uniforms with their unmistakable slouch hats, were being drilled by Japanese officers. In a lengthy article two months later, the *Bulletin* explicitly attacked the 1905 Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The attack opened by quoting Northcote, the ex-Governor-General that the amount of aid that Australia could expect from the Motherland was necessarily limited, and that Australia’s defences were largely up to herself. The *Bulletin* pointed out that the ‘Anglo-Jap alliance’ had only another six years to run, and that it was unlikely to be renewed. In what was to come true, the *Bulletin* prophesied that by 1915 Germany would be so strong that it was possible that ‘JOHN BULL’ would be even less able to come to Australia’s aid. Japan was ‘already
doing things which suggest a clearing of the way for action.' The things Japan was
doing included keeping France, Russia and the United States quiet by making treaties
with them, so that it could 'assure them that there is no need to maintain sea
armaments in the Pacific, which is becoming more and more a Jap lake.' The Bulletin
told Australians that their country might need its own resources very soon, and that
Australia's 'state of somnolence' was 'almost unbelievable.' Anglo-Jap alliance'
and 'Jap lake' portrayed the alliance as useless, the Pacific as now fraught with danger,
and the Japanese as a scheming race not worthy of any respect.

This lack of respect and the message that Australians should fear the Japanese
was further emphasised in a page of mostly anti-Japanese cartoons a few weeks later.
The page was entitled 'Nursery Rhymes (Australian 1909 Edition)', and it took as its
raison d'être, a report from Victoria that there had been a discussion at the summer
school for State school teachers of the desirability for having Australian rhymes in the
school papers. 'It was agreed,' wrote the Bulletin 'that the children should be subjected
to patriotic influences from the very cradle.' The first of the cartoons depicted a
Japanese naval officer looking through his telescope

Sally over the waters with vessels spick and span,
Aye, Sally! Aye, Sally! For the cute Jap-an!
He from the East is eyeing the West, he will choose South for he loves her the best!

The next cartoon showed why the Japanese would choose the South. A Japanese man,
atthed in a kimono and holding a fan, was pointing to a picture of Australia with a
plum in its middle.

Little Yak Hor Ner
Sits in his corner,
Cocking his almond eye;
He points with his thumb
And says, "That's the plumb
I'll eat it all up by-and-bye!"

The manner of eating up Australia was made clear in a third picture of a Japanese woman, sack on her back full of Japanese children, standing next to a cannon.

There was an old woman who lived in Nipoo,
She had so many children she didn't know what to do;
“Here! Take up your cannon and load them with lead,
And go to Australia and live there instead!”

Thus, if the *Bulletin* had its way, the picture presented to primary school students in the 1900 *School Paper* of the harmless Japanese who did things back to front to sensible Australians would be changed from one of gentle mockery to one of hatred and fear.

*Was Japan then really Hingston’s ‘Merrie England’?* Of all the Orients visited by Australians, Japan presented the most contradictions, and in so doing forced some Australians to question their own identity. Japan had kept its own identity, while speeding into Occidental modernity. At the same time, it appeared to exhibit those theoretical English qualities that Anglo-Australians would have liked to see in their own society. Drawn by its culture, many Australians soon settled in Japan, but as time went by yet others became less admiring and even fearful. Although this fear had much to do with the growing industrial and military power of Japan, perhaps we can also read into it early signs of Australian cultural cringe. If Japan was so successful in its efforts to remain distinctly Japanese while adapting itself to the modern world in such a short time, then could the same be said of Australians? Or were Australians simply second-rate Britons on the far side of the world? What better way to establish as sense of identification with the Motherland than to mock the appearance of the
Japanese in European clothes? But mockery was not enough: Alfred Deakin wanted to exclude Japanese immigration, ‘because they most nearly approach us’. Soon the Japanese were no longer the hard-working, sober, little brown men, ‘the least of many evils’ that H. Emmerton had spoken of to “Lauderdale” in 1904. Japan was definitely ‘other’, a part of the yellow Orient that found many Australians doors firmly shut in its face. Even the fan, that had been so attractive in Japonisme, was now seen as another Oriental mask to disguise aggression. Japan was definitely ‘other’, a part of the yellow Orient that found many Australians doors firmly shut in its face.

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CHAPTER 8.

CHINA: THE FLOWERY LAND

In our traditional imagery, the Chinese culture is the most meticulous, the most rigidly
ordered, the one most deaf to contemporary events, most attached to the pure delineation of
space; we think of it as a civilization of dikes and dams beneath the eternal face of the sky;
we see it, spread and frozen, over the entire surface of a continent surrounded by walls.¹

Broinowski argues that Australians accepted China as a land remote from
them, thereby perpetuating Europe’s Orientalist view of the ‘Far East’.² Her claim,
however, is too convenient an explanation of Australian reactions to the troubling
civilisation to their north. In Australia's China: Changing Perceptions from the
1930s to the 1990s, Lachlan Strahan remarks that Australians frequently imagined
China in the exotic guise of ‘Old Cathay, with its China dolls, Great Wall and
willow-pattern designs’. It was a land in which its inhabitants were ‘typecast
variously as too clannish and conformist or as too individualistic, even anarchical’.³
This appears to support Broinowski, but Strachan adds a significant modification.
While his research primarily deals with a period later than this present thesis, he
notes that ‘China’s sprawling, raw presence constantly challenged Australians, and
stimulated strong responses’.⁴ It is this combination of imagination and strong
responses during the earlier period that this chapter examines, thereby suggesting
that Strahan’s view is the more accurate of the two.

As it had in India, imaginary Oriental culture was the first path into the attraction
that was China. Chinoiserie had come and gone, bringing with it such an everyday
familiarity as the willow pattern plate. This pattern was a product of the Occidental
imagination, but in Victorian State Primary Schools the pupils in classes V and VI
could read, as if it were a genuine Chinese design, ‘The Story of the Willow Pattern Plate’ in their School Paper.⁵

Australians had, however, experienced actual Chinese artistry, because since the 1850s there had been regular visits of Chinese theatre and opera, as well as acrobatic troupes and musicians.⁶ There had also been substantial Chinese immigration. Even the Howqua River, Howqua Station, and the municipality of Howqua take their names from that of the nineteenth-century imperial family in China. ‘Howqua’ tea was a favourite drink in the bush, and in the pastoral era, the term ‘Howqua’ became almost synonymous for China.⁷

The educated Anglo-Australian social élite produced in George Morrison a man who would earn the sobriquet ‘Chinese Morrison’. Morrison was the son of the Principal of ‘The Geelong College,’ a prestigious school that attracted the Scottish Presbyterian citizens of Geelong and the Western District of Victoria. In many ways, he can be taken as the representative figure for the attitudes of this class of Australian society who considered themselves to be very little different from the upper classes in Britain. ‘Home’ was on the other side of the world. It was imported into their lifestyles by such things as the books they read, the displaying of family crests, the cultivation of manners and speech, their education in schools modelled on the English public school, their attendance at either Cambridge or Oxford Universities where possible, and being presented at Court. Thus their social pursuits and opinions were often modelled on those of Britain. In short, they could be snobs. Thus, years later when he was the Peking (Beijing) correspondent for The Times, Morrison would note his opinions of people: ‘Tower ... chuckleheaded ass who talks but never listens smells like a sewer and always falls asleep over his
dinner.\textsuperscript{18} That same year he spent his birthday 'mainly by myself. Damnable dull

...\textsuperscript{19} This was not surprising, given his views of others.

Lunch singularly and appallingly dull. Admiral Bruce a nervous little man with a big head flattened out as if some one had sat on it when it was soft and eyes that wobble about the country... a poor nervous little man like a cat on hot bricks. ... Lady Bruce an interesting monument.\textsuperscript{10}

He continued in this vein about every guest.

In 1893, the young George Morrison on his walking tour saw much to admire in China, while at the same time noting that which was so obviously different from Australia. His account of this tour, \textit{An Australian in China: Being the Narrative of a Quiet Journey Across China to British Burma}, was well received. In 1895, the \textit{Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review} wrote that 'the well-written story of his daily progress, with its ever-changing details and its humorous incidents, makes Dr. Morrison's book as pleasant to read as a good novel.'\textsuperscript{11} In this land of great beauty, he was much taken with the courtesy and friendliness extended to him. At an inn in the village of Ganshai in Western China, everybody moved to give him a room to himself, although they were more tired than he. 'They may be perishing heathen, I thought, but the average deacon or elder in our enlightened country could scarcely be more courteous.'\textsuperscript{12} The Chinese were 'undeniably friendly'; but springing as it did from a life of misery, death and poverty, 'Chinese laughter seems to be moved by different springs than ours.' Despite their appearance, 'Of all the people I have ever met, the Chinese are, I think, the politest.'\textsuperscript{13} Just how many races Morrison had met he does not tell us, but he wanted to see the Chinese in the best possible light. As well as being extraordinarily polite, they had a livelier sense of gratitude than any other people, even if the missionaries were not prepared to admit it. He quoted the Rev. A. H.
Smith, the first medical missionary in China, who said that Chinese gratitude was all inside, like a tooth that had been swallowed by a dumb man who could not speak about it.¹⁴ Morrison wrote that despite this, the Chinese were an emotional people, who felt the same passions as Australians, even if Australians mocked the image of a Chinaman in love. The many love stories in Chinese poetry was proof of this.¹⁵ Perhaps the ‘inexpressibly charming’ smiles he noted earlier had something to do with this.¹⁶

In no other country, Morrison observed, were children treated with more affection and kindness. As a corollary to this, ‘The Sacred Edict says, “Parents are like heaven...”’¹⁷ According to Morrison, the Edict was so highly regarded that in the Chinese family the mother held extreme power over her sons.¹⁸ The bachelor Hingston had observed more wryly that he thought in China the object was for a woman to trap a man into marriage. ‘There is amongst them a joy over the captured husband similar to what there must be, I think, among the angels in Heaven over the sinner that repenteth.’¹⁹

Morrison noticed with admiration more than once the great respect the Chinese held for old age, the joy of which was the highest of the five measures or grades of felicity.²⁰ Not without a humorous aside at his fellow countrymen, wherever the young Australian medico journeyed, he saw triumphal arches honouring ‘those who have attained the patriarchal age which among us seems only to be assured to those who partake in sufficient quantities of certain fruit-salts and pills.’²¹ At least here, Morrison was completely at one with Hingston, who was astounded at the fondness for children; at the respect given to parents; and at the veneration given to ancestors in China. The Chinese were ahead, Hingston wrote, ‘in those matters of mankind.’²²
On his journey, Morrison was prepared to overlook the debilitating effects of opium-smoking, which he felt had been greatly exaggerated by the missionaries, who were putting their noses in where they did not belong, and whose efforts were entirely ineffective. Given this, Morrison showed considerable independence for a young man in his remarks about the clergy in China. He claimed to have met large numbers of missionaries, all of whom were satisfied with the result of their endeavours. He did not believe them. Scornfully, he called their converts “Rice Christians” ...[who were] converted in turn by all the missions from the Augustins to the Quakers. He was, however, prepared to acknowledge the work that had been done by the Jesuits. Their early work, he wrote, was the foundation of all knowledge about China, and whose maps drawn up while the Emperor Kangxi (1663-1723) employed them formed the basis of all future maps. He quoted Voltaire’s description of the achievements of the Jesuit missionaries as the ‘productions of the most intelligent travellers that have extended and embellished the fields of science and philosophy’; but Morrison also noted that the Protestants had been warned by a great missionary that ‘Jesuit schemes must be checked.’ About his comments on opium and missionaries the Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review wrote that ‘Dr. Morrison speaks as a sensible man’.

Anglo-Australians were not the only Australians to conjure up idealised visions of China. Before the turn of the century, the Victorian Education Department gave young Class III pupils this idealised description:

A few sentences about it may not be out of place, as recent troubles in the “Flowery Kingdom” lend an interest to everything concerning it.

1. Flow-er-y Land. This name is used by the Chinese themselves for their country. It well deserves its name, because it is very fertile, and the flowers and the shrubs are in places very rich and beautiful.
The article - which said nothing about the 'recent troubles' - was repeated with slight variations in 1900. Class IV pupils in 1900 were presented with a portrayal of China as a bizarre Oriental land. There lived fishing families, who spent their whole lives on their boats. Even their Oriental fishing technique was different from that employed in Australia, because they used strange nets fastened to a moveable seesaw platform. This description was accompanied by an illustration. To add to this picture of Oriental exoticism, the children read about how the fishermen also used cormorants to catch their fish.

Two years later, these same children practised their reading skills on a reprint of an article by the American writer, Bret Harte. They learnt that the Chinese were a serious people who probably never laughed, and who had a delicate pliability of expression and taste. They were 'generally honest, faithful, simple, and painstaking' and they easily adapted to the wearing of American clothes. Just what the pupils were to make of the American clothes is a little puzzling, unless the Education Department was trying to counter some of the anti-Chinese immigration feeling then prevalent in many parts of Australia. The students were probably too young to have read about the Chinese smiles in Morrison's book, so at least that confusion was not there, providing that they had not read or had read to them Kipling's comparisons of China and Japan. Kipling, the English writer whom Australians much admired, could not understand why Japan was better than China. Chinese civilisation was much older, and one might have expected, therefore, that the Chinese would be a superior people. Obviously this was not the case, but the Japanese were not exactly civilised either: 'the Chinaman's a native ... but the Jap isn't a native, and he isn't a sahib either.'
Trade also figured highly on the good side of the ledger with China, and had done so since the early days of settlement in New South Wales. The settlers had entertained every hope that trade in sealskins, trepang and sandalwood it would be very profitable, but they were reliant on the East Indiamen calling at Port Jackson to carry the goods to China. The East India Company, in sending so few ships, and wishing to preserve its monopoly of the China trade, cut off the rich trade envisaged by Matra and Young.\textsuperscript{33} Despite the bright future predicted for the trepang trade, the same East India Company's China monopoly also prevented the traders in New South Wales from engaging in it, and as China was really the only market for this product, the trade was virtually still-born. However, the income from the sandalwood trade was so great that much of the trade was illegal, including the ventures by Macarthur.\textsuperscript{34} When in 1813 the Charter of East India Company was altered to allow free trade with India, the Company made sure that the New South Wales sandalwood trade came to an end until the Act of 1833. When in 1813 the Charter of East India Company was altered to allow free trade with India, the Company made sure that the New South Wales sandalwood trade came to an end until the Act of 1833 abolishing the monopoly of the East India Company.\textsuperscript{35}

As India had been seen as a source of the silk worm, so China was seen as a possible source of sheep. In his 1862 Acclimatisation lecture in Sydney, Dr George Bennett suggested this. Recently Mr. Henry Moore had introduced into the Colony, some Shanghai animals with

\begin{quote}
wool perfectly white. They possess great reproductive powers, and breed twice in a year, and produce four and five at birth, the three ewes in the Zoological Gardens of London having in the spring produced thirteen lambs.\textsuperscript{36}
\end{quote}

Tongue-in-cheek, in 1863 the \textit{Argus} reported the success of this endeavour:
It seems that the Chinese sheep recently imported into the colony are the most maligned or the most sensitive muttons in Queensland. It is only a few days since they were, by high authority, pronounced to be nearly worthless, and now we have to record the *accouchement* of an interesting ewe, the property of Mr. Hockings, which has, with praiseworthy fecundity, given birth to three lambs.\(^{37}\)

Despite the early trade links with China being less than satisfactory, some Australians still harboured an idealised picture of that land, even if the portrait was not to remain in pristine colours. George Morrison retained his belief that all could be redeemed there if Britain were prepared to help, because he saw in the Chinese civilisation what he thought were remnants of the same ideals that still inspired Britain.\(^{38}\) This was the same image that Hingston had seen in Japan.\(^{39}\) Thus although relations between the two countries sometimes looked like foundering, Morrison expressed the idea in various ways in his letters over the years to Valentine Chirol, an English author and journalist with the *Times*, that England should be involved with China. From Peking in 1906, for example, he wrote that ‘I firmly believe in the future of England in China.’ The following year he added a note of caution:

... as regards England. Our relations are somewhat apt to be obscured by the prominence given to our various concessions some of which we cannot regard with much pride.\(^{40}\)

In these thoughts we can discern that aspect of Australian society that could not bring itself to the realisation that Australians were Australians, rather than English men and women transplanted to the Antipodes. Morrison was the official Peking Correspondent for *The Times*, and it is clear from his despatches and his letters that for him there was no distinction between England and Australia. ‘Our relations’ are English relations and *ipso facto* Australian relations. Also by extension the British concessions, therefore, could be taken as Australian concessions.
The obverse face of the Chinese coin was darker. ‘The Chinese are an enigma,’ Morrison wrote in 1905 to Chirol.\textsuperscript{41} At first glance, this appears to be nothing more than the stereotype of the inscrutable Chinese, whose faces gave away nothing. This stereotype was used by the \textit{Argus} to describe the lack of news as ‘a dark enigma’.\textsuperscript{42} Doubtless many Australians formed such a picture of Chinese inscrutability in their imagination, but we need to examine Morrison’s remark in more depth to come to a real understanding of what he meant. It was nothing to do with the remark he had earlier made during his report of the ‘Siege of the Legations’ in which he was deliberately using the stereotype. Instead, this was a reflection of his own failure to understand the country in which he had spent so much time, and whose language he could not even speak. He was puzzled that the Chinese would not automatically and gratefully follow the advice given to them by the West. By 1909, Morrison had concluded that the Chinese would never willingly ask for advice from a foreigner, and if there was the slightest suspicion that the adviser might learn something, then he was to be kept in ‘complete ignorance on any subject upon which he might proffer advice.’\textsuperscript{43}

It is possible, therefore, to extrapolate from remarks by Morrison and others like him that many Australians did not actually want to see the Chinese as human beings equal to themselves. It suited their purposes to portray them as ‘other’. This could be done in various ways, including picturing them as figures of fun, or barbaric, or dangerous. At home, Australians imagined the Chinese to be coolies, eunuchs, gnomes, and dwarfs.\textsuperscript{44} Abroad, the funniest spectacle Herbert Syme ever beheld was that of

5 Chinamen in native costume riding on their bicycles. What a joyous sight this would have been here for the larrikin of Collingwood Flat. He certainly would not have resisted the desire to try the effect of road metal on them.\textsuperscript{45}
*The School Paper* mocked the Chinese in an article for Class IV students. The article, with its connotations of backward Chinese behaviour, was about the supposed Chinese view of ‘barbarian’ Europeans.

They jump around and kick balls as if they were paid to do it … [they] have no sense of dignity, for they may be seen walking with women. They even sit down at the same table with women, and the latter are served first.46

Two months later, Chinese ‘otherness’ was reinforced to the same pupils, with the salutary underlying message that they should give thanks; firstly, that they were not attending school in China; and secondly, that it was better to be a student in Victoria, even if they should be seen and not heard. In China,

[the] teachers punish with the greatest rigour. Failure to learn by heart a certain task in the allotted time is sometimes punished to the extent of hundreds of blows.47

Chinese students had to shout while they learned, because ‘Every Chinese regards this shouting as a necessary part of the child’s education.’ 48 This methodology is similar to that in Morrison’s observation of how the Chinese obtained success by the training of their memories. Originality counted for nothing when success was sought. Morrison believed that the Chinese had prodigious memories that had been developed above all other faculties from time immemorial. That such training was required could even be seen in relatively humble occupations. At Yunan, for example, the telegraph clerk had to learn by heart the 10,000 numbers and their corresponding characters in the code-book.49 At another stage in his journey, though, Morrison made the sweeping accusation that what he saw as the Chinese and Japanese disregard of accuracy was characteristic of all Orientals.50 If the clerk could be accurate with 10,000 numbers, then Morrison’s remark demonstrates quite clearly that at times even so inquisitive a young Australian still allowed cultural misunderstanding, deliberate or otherwise, to cloud his vision.
When considering Morrison’s remarks about the physical and mental make-up of the Chinese, it is worth bearing in mind that he was not an uneducated young man, but a medical practitioner. With this training, he should have been able to bring a certain amount of scientific detachment to his observations; but there was a side to his character that by today’s standards is utterly abhorrent and this was shown on a walking tour of Victoria he had made in 1879. To satisfy his curiosity, with the help of a friend he set about digging up the body of Bryant, a newly-deceased Aborigine. Putting aside the bark gunyah over the grave, they dug a hole six feet long, two feet broad and four feet deep before finding the body under a bark covering.

To make a long story short we were entirely successful and bore off in triumph the complete skeleton enclosed in a black mass of corruption. I carried the skull over 750 miles and it is now leaching on the sands of the Murray mouth.51

Were this the typical racial callousness of white Australians of the time, it is still unsettling to read Morrison’s later ‘scientific’ observations of the Chinese nervous system.

No people are more cruel in their punishments than the Chinese, and obviously the reason is that the sensory nervous system of a Chinaman is either blunted or of arrested development. Can anyone doubt this who witnesses the stoicism with which a Chinaman can endure physical pain when sustaining a surgical operation without chloroform, the comfort with which he can thrive amid foul and penetrating smells, the calmness with which he can sleep amid the noise of gunfire and crackers, drums and tomtoms, and the indifference with which he contemplates the sufferings of lower animals, and the infliction of torture on higher?52

There is no consideration given here to what may have been a matter of necessity, or even a different worldview. The nervous system is ‘either blunted or of arrested development.’ The nervous system was a measure of development. The less highly evolved animals, according to Descartes, had no soul. Therefore their nervous system was one that operated largely by reflex action.53 Morrison was
therefore suggesting that the Chinese were little above animals. Another possible way of interpreting Morrison’s comments reflects the growing apprehension in Australia that the Chinese could endure anything. Thus the Chinese could colonise any environment, including Australia.

Yet another explanation for this type of prejudice can be found in nineteenth-century Oriental paintings. Radical art critics argue that these paintings depict archetypes of Oriental tyranny and cruelty, as well as fatalism and cultural decadence. In this way, the Oriental ‘Otherness’ is vividly seen, and this in turn is a justification of European rule and reform. Where Australians were concerned, this paradigm of Oriental cruelty and fatalism exhibited itself, not just in China but throughout Oriental lands. As discussed elsewhere, the Indian Mutiny revealed demonstrably that Indians were cruel by nature; and the miserable existence of the ryots could be attributed to the fatalism brought about by their religion. In an Oriental land further to the west, James Hingston lumped together his descriptions of the Egyptian serfs with the mutilated boys and enslaved girls he saw in the slave market in Cairo. In addition, he noted that his visit to Egypt ‘showed another phase of existing Eastern despotism – the land groaning under the oppression of the Turk.’ The Turks were almost universally seen as a menace. According to Charles Pearson, the Turks were barbarians who had driven out or depressed all higher races they had come across.

Pearson, although regarding the Chinese as belonging to the lower races, thought them to be more civilised than the Indians conquered by Cortez and Pizarro. This Orientalism was all a matter of degrees and geography. China for Australians could be a perplexing concoction of social Darwinism and admiration. To add to the confusion, Professor Pearson had pronounced that since historical
times, most of the world had been peopled by races very little above the level of brutes. Among these brutes, the Chinese were ‘of such secondary intelligence as to have added nothing permanent to our stock of ideas.’ All this did not quite square up with Morrison’s observation that the Chinese women were more capable of intellectual development than those of Japan. Neither did it equate with the idea of the ‘inventive Chinese’. Knowledge of Chinese technology, such as papermaking and perhaps gunpowder, had reached the West by way of re-translations of Arabic and Latin books from the mid-tenth to the mid-thirteenth centuries. By the end of the 18th century, however, there was a lack of respect for China in the West, because although China had invented printing, there was no apparent intellectual and cultural explosion as there had been in Europe.

There were other troubling images for Australians. There were the mass executions discussed in ‘Dirt and Erotica’. They also beheld men being used where animals would perform the same task back in Australia. ‘Of all the vehicles I have seen in the world, these appeared to be the meanest,’ wrote Hingston. He was referring to the palanquins that he saw in China. He thought these were rather like wheelbarrows. Australian reactions to these conveyances encapsulate the conflicting sides of Australian Orientalism. Hingston was to come upon these vehicles in the other Oriental lands of India and Japan, but when he did so, he altered his description according to his Orientalism. In India, as in China, the sight was not palatable to Australian eyes.

To a European it is at first not a nice sight to see men doing the work elsewhere done by animals. To parody Byron, one may say that after seeing it once or twice, the eye becomes more Indian and less nice.

In Japan, although it was still not a pleasing sight to European eyes, because of a lack of horses the ingenious Japanese, after seeing an American buggy had
invented the jinrickshaw. Hingston explained away the darker side here with humour. There was no need to fear ‘that one’s steed may be vicious or badly broken to harness.’ The men that pulled the jinrickshaws were not the degraded animals of India or China, but ‘centaurs’.\(^65\) The American, Morse, agreed with Hingston, after first thinking that it was humiliating to be so transported, but then finding that he could ‘really travel at a good speed, your horse never runs away, and when he stops he guards your property’.\(^66\)

In Australia, the journalist-cum-traveller “Vagabond” (John Stanley James) knew the answer to the problems of the ‘larrikins [who] will assault any unoffending Chinaman, and will howl down any speaker who attempts to say a word in their favour’ in Sydney and Melbourne. He would introduce the Chinese ‘jin-ric-shas’ to these cities, and utilise the larrikins in their shafts.\(^67\)

Another aspect of the darker side to China was the use of opium. Hingston reckoned that if three Chinese were together at a street corner, ‘one will smoke opium for amusement, the second will gamble, and the third will sleep.’\(^68\) Opium-smoking, he thought, was the first among Chinese amusements, ‘more common than snuff-taking is with Europeans at present.’\(^69\) Hingston described in detail a Chinese opium den and admitted to having tried opium once for himself, and he had found the experience to be somewhat pleasant. Despite his pleasure, he was quick in his condemnation of this Chinese evil. Hingston noted disapprovingly that, unlike tobacco chewing and snuff-taking in Britain, which was disappearing rapidly, opium-smoking was still a sad vice in China.\(^70\) He believed that the Chinese did not want the 4275 tons of opium that had been imported from India in 1893, not because the Chinese disapproved of opium, but rather that they simply did not want the competition with their own crops.\(^71\) Wherever Morrison looked in
Yunan, he saw opium poppies growing on every available piece of land. The Chinese authorities employed neither ‘chairen’ (policeman) nor soldier to suppress the evil, and in fact, every chairen or soldier accompanying Morrison smoked the substance.72 Disarmingly, almost approvingly, he recorded that opium was used almost exclusively for suicide, because the integrity of body must not be disturbed.73 Later, as a Correspondent for the Times, he was more critical, but this criticism had little to do with the harmful effects of smoking opium. On 20 September 1906 an Imperial Edict was issued restricting the cultivation of the opium poppy and decreeing that opium was not to be used after ten years from that time. Two days later, the Times commented

The Edict is satisfactory as a preliminary measure though it is not unlike edicts issued in the past. The regulations will be awaited with much interest.74

Chirol suspected that Morrison would not be pleased with this response, so he wrote to Morrison that he was ‘afraid you will be rather disappointed that we have not waxed so exuberantly enthusiastic as you have over the anti-opium edicts.’75 In an effort to excuse the Times’ lukewarm view, Chirol continued

I suppose they wore a different aspect seen through the atmosphere in Peking, but here they struck one as being almost grotesquely overdone. Imagine an attempt being made in this country to suppress all public houses and all consumption of spirituous liquors within ten years – even with our relatively high standards of administrative integrity.76

He then went on to describe the way ‘all our sentimentalists’ liked the idea because the cost did not fall on them, but on the Indians: ‘In the present state of Indian feeling we cannot afford to increase the taxation or diminish the resources of India to relieve our consciences.’77 In this, Chirol was echoing a common English viewpoint. In 1898, for example, some forty-six years after the Opium War, a noted English writer and China hand, Archibald Colquhoun, in China in Transformation, could still write ‘As regards opium, the most marked feature and the one which
concerns us most, for it involves the loss of a large income to England, is the decrease in the import of the Indian article.\textsuperscript{78} This was very different from Alfred Deakin’s understanding that the good moral sense of the English would stamp out the trade from India.\textsuperscript{79}

Before Morrison received Chirol’s letter, he had already written to Chirol that he thought that opium was becoming unfashionable, and that all opium dens would be closed.\textsuperscript{80} At first glance, it appears that Morrison would object strongly to the London newspaper’s comment, but he was first and foremost an Australian with a strong Imperial outlook on world affairs. Thus he replied to Chirol that he sympathised with what he thought was the fair attitude of the \textit{Times}. He could not restrain himself, however, from commenting that he believed that as evidence of the strength of the anti-opium movement in China increased, the majority would support the suppression of the drug.

The use of opium is becoming unfashionable and the growth of that feeling is extraordinary. In this province the change is very great. No opium is permitted in the restaurants, or brothels, where before it was universal. Beginning from next Friday all opium dens will be closed.\textsuperscript{81}

Here yet again was the assertion about opium becoming unfashionable; a curious comment, for ‘unfashionable’ might just as well apply to a mode of dress. It is not loaded with any real condemnation of the use of the drug or the surroundings in which it was taken. Indeed, restaurants and brothels are placed together, almost as if Morrison visited both on a regular basis and could therefore comment on the universality of opium smoking. It is more likely, given Morrison’s position as the Peking Correspondent for the \textit{Times}, that he was reporting what was considered common knowledge in that city. This aside, he did write that he had
seen great changes in many other provinces. Such a comment has a more substantial ring of truth about it.

The use of opium or its derivative, morphia, did not decline so rapidly as either the Chinese authorities or Morrison had expected. Morrison sought for explanations. At first he was inclined to put the blame on Chinese smugglers bringing great quantities of morphia into the country from the Federated Malay Straits, Siam and Borneo. But he was either too admiring of the Chinese, or perhaps honest to leave it simply at that.

Many if not all foreign employés [sic] of the big drug stores in China deal in morphia … Early this year a seizure of morphia was made in Kuala Lumpur in the Federated Malay States. It came from the Glasgow chemists MacKenzie and Co. and the amount seized was not a few ounces or a pound or two but four hundredweight.

While there is still no unambiguous message here that Morrison was against opium per se, plainly he was disgusted with the behavior of European merchants. His illustration of the Scottish chemists illustrates his particular indignation that Britons should be involved in the nefarious trade against the wishes of the Chinese authorities.

Where British involvement in the trade was concerned, Morrison was at one with other Englishmen. George Wingrove Cooke, a Correspondent for the Times during 1857-8, had reported that the Chinese more delicately knew the opium trade as ‘the foreign medicine trade’. In describing the nature of the Chinese, however, Cooke’s Orientalism differed from that of his fellow Australian Correspondent. According to Cooke, ‘John Chinaman’ had no option, for he detested beer and wine but craved opium. Cooke’s views were similar to those of William Lane, who had immigrated to Australia by way of America. The antidotes to Opium-smoking, according to Lane, were the vices of the virile Europeans: alcohol; tobacco; and
betting on horses.\textsuperscript{87} Cooke also doubted whether the Chinese authorities ever fought against the trade.\textsuperscript{88}

One of the problems with such a ready Orientalist classification of the nature of racial types is the simplicity of such a classification. Detesting alcohol but craving opium is a neat categorisation, but in reality, such a categorisation does not always stand up to the facts. This craving is filled with Orientalist connotations and moralisation, depending on the experience of the readers, and their desire to imagine an ‘Otherness’ about the Oriental addict. De Quincey and Coleridge had seen opium as part of a desirable hedonism, but others saw a China that from the 1870s was in the grip of the drug, with millions of addicts. In Canton, more than five hundred shops sold opium, and children could be seen smoking it in the streets.\textsuperscript{89}

Accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Russell, a Church of England missionary priest, and the Rev. Mr. Edkins, of the London Mission at Shanghai, Clarke visited the opium dens of Ningpo city. As with Hingston, what he actually found was not the ‘emaciated forms and trembling limbs’ he had seen in the ‘opium-eaters of Constantinople and Smyrna, and the hashish-smokers of Constantine.’\textsuperscript{90} Here were no dens of vice. In their place were ordinary Chinese cottages, inside which he saw a twelve-foot square room with a bed, a table, and a sofa. The room contained an opium pipe and a lamp, as well as a small porcelain jar of ‘treclicy-looking opium’. The smokers, far from being wretches, were convivial, good-humoured and communicative, and belonged to ‘that class of urban population which is just above the lowest.’\textsuperscript{91} Thus although Cooke on the one hand was prepared to write about ‘John Chinaman’ craving for opium, he was also prepared to confront more openly the truth of what he saw. Here he is close to the views of George Morrison, because
he does not distort the picture to fit some preconceived notion, and thereby, like
Morrison, he does not moralise about the evils of the drug.

But there were further similarities to be found in the views of the Australian
and the Englishman. Firstly, Cooke was scathing about English involvement in the
opium trade, even if he believed that there was nothing that could actually prevent
the Chinese from smoking it.

... but if the people in England are earnest in wishing to stop the English trade in it,
nothing is easier than to do so by far less of self-sacrifice than the opium-smoker would be
obliged to exercise. Let the old ladies give up tea and this young ladies give up silk, and
the thing is done. If the Chinese had again to pay for opium in silver they would soon grow
it all at home, and look sharp after the foreign smuggler. At present the trade is as open as
the sale of hot-cross buns on Good Friday in the streets of London.92

Secondly, there was agreement that the Chinese authorities were not really
prepared to stamp out the use of opium, despite the Edict. Some years later,
Morrison waxed enthusiastically about the progress these authorities were making
in bringing China into the modern world, although this had come with the mixed
blessing of freedom from restraint and the demand for individual liberty. He could
see progress, for example education, in every direction. The only exception was in
the growth of the poppy.93 Here again, Morrison was ready to shift some of the
blame onto others, rather than onto the Chinese, as was the case with the Japanese.
Although he had supported the Japanese in their war against Russia, he later
changed his support to condemnation at every possible opportunity, and this
included what he perceived to be drug-dealing.

... it is interesting for us to remember that the restriction of opium in Formosa is not a
reality. Japanese are forbidden to use opium themselves but the habit is spreading among
the Chinese there and the Japanese are getting the profit.94
Apart from the opium trade, there was supposedly another dark side to the Chinese character that admitted a feeling of the moral superiority of the ‘Self’ of Anglo-Australians over the ‘Other’ of the Chinese. This was the view that the Chinese lacked discipline and honesty. Morrison was quite prepared to condemn the whole population of China. In a letter to Chirol about the necessity of China having an army, he wrote that in ‘viewing the hopeless corruption of the people the army must be foreign drilled and foreign officered’. It did not seem possible in his eyes that such a nation could meet military standards without the superior discipline of the West. So indignant was he about this supposed nature of the Chinese, that when he wrote about it to John Bland, an author and journalist, his sentences ran into one another without regard to punctuation.

It is quite true that the official classes are corrupt but so are the people from the very lowest to the very highest they are all corrupt. Even more chillingly and more derisory, in 1902 he wrote to Chirol that China was ‘a rotten country – rotten to the core.’

Such Orientalism poses the question of whether such a corrupt race threatened Australia. If Broinowski is correct in arguing that China was consigned to the remote ‘Far East’, then Australia was safe. Because it was in the ‘Far East’, China might have been a land of fantasy in the European imagination, but given the number of European concessions there, and given the so-called ‘Boxer Uprising’ and the subsequent involvement of European troops, even this idea itself is fanciful. The debate at the time suggests a more complex response, one which included both a fear of the Chinese themselves and also the fear that Russia might use China as a staging post in its own expansion. The debate thus justified British commercial inroads into China on the grounds that this would help protect the West, and thereby Australia.
Charles Pearson saw an emergent China whose military power might sweep down to conquer all in its path. The first half of *National Life and Character* is mainly an exposition of the danger to the Occident from what he described as the ‘Yellow Belt’. Differing sharply from what it thought was the opinion in Britain, the *Age* agreed with Pearson about the growing menace of China:

No one dreams, for instance, that China can be occupied by European colonists, but it is possible for Chinese immigrants to swarm into Australia in such prodigious numbers as to swamp our colonies with a single year’s surplus population. Englishmen at home, who have no experience of the difficulty besetting us, attribute our fear of the Chinese to petty motives; but really it is the instinct of self-preservation, quickened by a recognition of the fact that “we are guarding the last part of the world in which the higher races can live and increase freely for the higher civilisation.”  

Pearson looked with alarm at what the West was doing in China, and he feared the worst. The West had compelled China to come into the ‘fellowship of nations’, and as a result China had adopted Western technology in the form of steamers, artillery and army organisation, as well as the telegraph. It was about to start building a railway system, and all these changes had been done with the aid of foreign credit. Pearson was deeply worried by these changes, for they meant that now China had the potential military power to threaten the West, and this by implication included Australia. China was part of the black and yellow belt, which with Western assistance would become so powerful, both militarily and economically, that it would encircle the globe and become an ever-present danger to the Occident.

Far away from the protection of the British navy, Australians thus looked nervously towards their northern neighbour with its huge population. Well they might for this apprehension was not shared by all outside Australia.
On the other side of the world, Curzon disagreed sharply with Pearson’s pessimistic outlook that China would be found in the salons of Paris and the clubs of Pall Mall. In this, the Englishman’s view was much the same as the imperialist bias of Morrison, the quasi-Englishman. While Morrison thought nothing would change the ways of China’s antiquated Government, Curzon saw nothing but stasis in the national character of Chinese officialdom, which according to him, Pearson had overlooked, because the lessons of history were written in ‘characters so large that he who runs may read.’ Morrison had complained often about the corruption to be found in both the Government and the people of China. Curzon made the same point in his criticism of National Life and Character. Pearson had omitted the corruption of Chinese government and the temper of a people ‘content to stagnate,’ and there was nothing that the Chinese could do which would ‘turn that which is stationary, if not a receding, into a dynamic and aggressive force.’ Even though the China might ‘cross the ocean and knock at new and unexpected portals,’ Curzon declared that ‘in this movement I detect no seed of empire, and I foresee no ultimate peril for the White Race.’

In his review of Pearson’s work, the American Theodore Roosevelt dismissed the arguments that China would become a military power and displace Pearson’s ‘higher’ races. If by some chance China did grow into an industrial and military power, ‘We should then simply be dealing with another civilised nation of non-aryan blood.’ Such growth would lead to the arrest of English expansion, and thereby the transformation of the higher race into a stationary position, in which it might be ‘assimilated to the moral and mental depression of the lower.’

At least one wealthy Anglo-Australian, however, was comforted by the past glory of British arms in China. Captain J. P. Chirnside, who had for some time
maintained his own private army at Werribee, Victoria, showed “Lauderdale” one of his prize possessions, a gun

presented to me by Captain Tickell and the officers and men of the Naval Brigade on their return from China. There is an inscription on it in Chinese, which I have not yet had translated. It was taken from the gates of Pekin, and found mounted side by side with a modern Krupp gun.107

Thus, while nineteenth-century Australians could admire China, the ‘Flowery Land’ of the ‘Celestials’ was also perceived as a threat, both from invasion and immigration. They merely had to look around them. By 1901 the number of Chinese living in Australia was probably in the neighbourhood of 30,000.108 However, this figure must be balanced against the percentage of the total Australian population. During the gold rushes the Chinese population of Australia it was about 4%, but then it rapidly declined to about 1% by 1910.109 Whatever the real figure, the noticeable presence of the Chinese in Australia meant that China was not just the fantasy land of silk and porcelain; nor were the settler-Australians simply accepting Europe’s Orientalist constructs as substitutes for knowledge, as Hugh Honour asserts in Chinoiserie. The Vision of Cathay.110 China was a close, real and ever-present neighbour, even if for some like Christopher Brennan it was much more foreign in its thoughts than was Europe: ‘As far as national traits go, my poetry might as well have been written in China,’ he once commented obliquely. 111

If China threatened, then one way of diminishing this threat was to increase the Western concessions on the pretence that these would actually help China. Morrison’s correspondence, even when it appeared that Morrison was being completely altruistic, as if he regarded the Chinese as masters of their own destiny, reveals his support of British commercial inroads into China. In a letter to Huang
Chung-kuei, a Chinese Imperial Official, he wrote that the ‘possibilities of development in China are simply infinite. Mines, railways, roads, waterways, all are practically unexploited.’ This letter was a condemnation of a scheme to introduce a gigantic lottery to raise revenue. Instead of the lottery, Morrison suggested the introduction of currency to replace the use of silver, and also the removal of the restriction on the export of grain. If this were the only letter that Morrison had written about commercial activity in China, then we could accept it at its face value. The letter, however, has to be read in the context of others he wrote, and while these too at first glance may seem altruistic, together they contain the idea that the West should be heavily involved in such activity. ‘China badly needs all the assistance she can get,’ he wrote to William Rockhill, the United States’ Minister to China (1905-9). The letter to R. S. Grundy, referred to earlier, urged Britain to learn more about China and become part of its development. It is also apparent from this letter just how thoroughly Morrison identified himself as an Anglo-Australian in his use of the word ‘home’. A letter to Chirol uncovers his underlying intentions: ‘I firmly believe in the future of England in China.’ This reading enlarges Lo Hui-Min’s suggestion that Morrison’s letters demonstrate that he is arguing that England provided the standards and habits against which China could be judged; therefore, China was neither a country going its own way nor a source of an original civilisation with a message and future of its own. Lo Hui-Min’s interpretation ignores the commercial activities that Morrison was encouraging.

As part of his enthusiasm for the inroads of British imperialism, Morrison was delighted with the spread of Western education and the English language. Many thousands right across the Empire could read and understand English, he
claimed. Now that China was opening to the English language, capital and expertise, Morrison believed the country was improving. By 1906, he was able to write to Chirol that ‘however much we may have to condemn and threaten and bully this antiquated government,’ the Chinese people were so caught up in the reformation; no matter how cruelly this might have been conceived, there was little fear for the future. Again, the use of ‘we’ suggests that Morrison not only completely identified himself with British Imperialism, but that he also fully supported the idea that it was proper and necessary for Britain to steer the course of government in China. Morrison was confident of the outcome, and soon he could write that China’s foreign relations were as satisfactory as those of any other nation.

Morrison’s imperialist viewpoint was very like that of the Englishman, Archibald Colquhoun, who had written earlier on the subject:

Now is the time to press on China a comprehensive policy of opening the country ... No surer method of supporting China can be devised than the introduction of the capital of Britain, the United States and Germany, the chief commercial nations of the world. Railways must connect our land-base, Burma, and our sea-base, Hong Kong, with the Upper Yangtse; for such a connection is necessary for the safety of China and India. The waterways must be opened by steam in every direction. The mines of central and southern China must be exploited. Capitalists, manufacturers, and merchants must be alert, and should be supported by their governments in every possible manner. The interest of our colonies in this question should by no means be overlooked. It is right that they should cooperate in the question of colonial defence, but in all Imperial concerns it is the mother-country that must lead. Should she not recognise her duty, it may be safely predicted that Australians and Canadians will yet bitterly resent the neglect of their obvious interests ... Our colonial kinsmen rightly look to us to see that the vast trading regions of China and Japan are kept open.

Colquhoun went on to argue that the real purpose behind all this was to stop Russian penetration. He told Australians to study Russia’s Far Eastern movements.
Russia is conquering by modern methods the kingdom of Genghiz; and the Russian Tsar, once Emperor of China, will take the place of the Tartar conquerors who carried fire and sword throughout Europe and Eastern, Western, and Southern Asia. Colquhoun warned that when Russia had conquered Asia, unless Britain was prepared to be ‘but true to herself, and draw the Anglo-Teutonic races to her side,’ Slav power would soon subjugate the whole world. 

The Australian press supported this fear, even during the Boxer Uprising. ‘Outpost’ saw Germany and Russia acting in collusion, and attacked the Kaiser’s China policy of backing ‘Russian pretensions in China’ in return for a Russian guarantee of Germany’s European possessions. Such reports, relying on telegraphed information from England, did not question the truth of such information. The Australian and the British stances were thus in agreement. A typical report read

*Dr. Morrison*, the "Times" correspondent at Pekin, reports that Russia, in pursuance of her policy of posturing as "China's only friend," has restored to the Tsung-li-yamen the Chinese Imperial standard taken at Pekin. 

The *Age* did not feel any further commentary about the report was required. A few weeks later the same newspaper printed an article from the *African Review*, which accused Russia of attempting to extend the Russian Empire over the whole of Asia. 

The odds were thus with Pearson, rather than with Curzon and Morrison. In the late 1880s, William Lane was preaching that British policy in China would lead to the overrunning of Australia, and in the first decade of the Twentieth Century Alfred Deakin would take up the cudgels as the architect of the 'White Australia' policy and legislation against the Chinese. It was a case of a European Orientalist view that the East was exhausted and static versus a new Australian Orientalism. Australian Orientalism included the stasis, as could be seen in Morrison’s remarks
about the Chinese nervous system, the ever-present corruption of the people, and
the unchanging face of government. But China also presented a dynamic face to
Australians, one that questioned the whole nature of civilisation. China showed
them that Oriental civilisations could learn from the West, even if their dynamism
remained enigmatic. China’s new dynamism threatened Western civilisation
planted in Australia.

To conclude, of all the worlds of the Orient that Australians encountered
during the period under examination, the ‘Flowery Land’ was the tantalus that
perhaps contained most clearly the intoxicating spirits of attraction and
apprehension. Anglo-Australians in particular exhibited a combination of idealism
and disillusion. Their Australian-English duality helps explain the conflicting
responses that China awoke in those of George Morrison’s social class. Displayed
were both similarities and dissimilarities to those of conventional European
Orientalism. The brighter side to China included culture and trade. The darker side
saw the Chinese as enigmatic, barbaric and dangerous, which allowed Anglo-
Australians to assert the moral superiority of their ‘Self’ over the corrupt ‘Other’ of
the Chinese. This corrupt and emergent China might either invade Australia, or at
the very least allow Russia to gain a foothold in its own grab for power. On
strategic grounds it was therefore necessary for the metropole to contain China.
Thus Australian interests, as in India, could not finally be separated from British
interests. The continent that for Europeans was ‘surrounded by walls’ and ‘spread
and frozen’ now gave every sign to Australians that it was awake and about to burst
through the breaches in an Oriental march southwards.
NOTES


8 G. E. Morrison, Diary, 1899-1901, 6 March 1901, State Library of New South Wales, ML MSS 312/9-10.

9 Ibid, 4 February 1901.

10 Ibid, 1 April 1901.


14 Ibid, p.28.


17 Ibid, p.113.

18 Ibid.


21 Ibid, p.198.


In his PhD thesis, about the contribution of Australian missionaries in China, Phillip Brotchie argues that considerable success was achieved by the missionaries where opium was concerned. During the 'cure' in an 'opium refuge' the addicts were assisted medically while being constantly subjected to preaching:

The association of Christianity with a cure for opium addiction moved many Chinese, perhaps in gratitude, to embrace the foreign religion; it also appears to have helped them stay off the opium once they had given it up. Opium thus provided a two-edged sword to the CIM [China Inland Mission] – when people were under the influence of the drug they could not be reached by evangelism, but when they had the earnest desire to break the habit, this situation proved an absolute boon to the spread of Christianity.


Brotchie points to school of thought 'which questions the validity of using statistics at all to judge the missionary effort ... because if uncertainties about whether like is being compared with like, for example, whether males are harder to convert than females. There is also the argument that conversions are of God, and therefore cannot be attributed to particular men or women.' Brotchie takes the view 'that as missionaries used such figures themselves as some sort of a gauge of progress, it is not unreasonable to measure their progress by similar means. The same sorts of measurements have also been employed from earlier times by sceptics like G. E. Morrison.'


34 Ibid, p.135.
37 'Chinese Sheep', *Argus*, 23 March 1863.
48 Ibid.
50 Ibid, p.98.
58 Ibid, p.33.
64 Ibid, p.264.
69 Ibid, p.60.
72 Ibid, p.190.
73 Ibid, p.111.
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid.
82 Ibid, p.409.
84 Ibid.
86 Ibid, pp.171-3.
91 Ibid, pp.177-8.
92 Ibid, p.179.
98 'Dr. Pearson on National Life and Character', Age, 25 February 1893.
100 Ibid, pp.84-5.
102 Ibid.
103 Ibid.
120 Ibid, p.368.
121 Ibid, p.379.
123 Outpost, Age, 27 September 1905
124 Russia's Policy: China's Only Friend', Age, 11 October 1900.
125 'Imperial Aspect of the Chinese Question', Geelong Advertiser, 20 October 1900.
CHAPTER 9.

THE SIEGE: LUCKNOW AND BEYOND

What is really interesting to me is seeing these historical places, where the Maharatta chiefs licked the Musulmans and were in turn licked by the British.¹ The invasion narrative, David Walker argues, was a discourse of vulnerability in a world where European rivalries were intensifying and British power seemed to be declining.² Robert Dixon points out that this was the fiction reflecting the crises following one another during the Edwardian period, its writers confident of the future of neither Britain nor its empire.³ There is yet another reason for the popularity of the invasion narrative: that of an Australian siege mentality. This chapter will employ the trope of the siege to explore some of the complexity that was Australian Orientalism.

The Australian siege mentality was demonstrated in the hold in the imagination of Lucknow and Cawnpore; in the adulation of General Gordon after his death at Khartoum; in the lengthy accounts of the Siege of the Legations during the Boxer Uprising; and in the enormous festivities that greeted the relief of Mafeking.

The fury of the sieges during the Indian Mutiny of 1857-8 demonstrated the bravery of the English when confronted by the sepoys under their treacherous leader, Nana Sahib. The graves at Lucknow and Cawnpore were tragic witnesses to Oriental barbarity in the reports of travellers such as James Hingston and Alfred Deakin. Additionally, the books of A. W. Jose and W. H. Fitchett at the close of the nineteenth century used these sieges to bring tears to the eyes of Australians. The Victorian School Paper pursued a similar course.
When the followers of the Mahdi besieged Khartoum in 1885, the hero Gordon died, supposedly deserted by his treacherous government at home. The Australian press railed against the Gladstone Government, implying that Australia was experiencing the same treachery.

In Peking, the Boxers attacked the European Legations in 1900. True or not, George Morrison's account of that siege castigated Boxer treachery and lauded British courage.

Robert Baden-Powell's defence of Mafeking against the Boers for 216 days was yet another example of British courage. Although not in the Orient, the siege was in the same year as that of the Siege of the Legations, thus providing a parallel comparison. A glance at the format of the reporting reveals the relative importance given by the Australian press to the events in South Africa and China.

At first the reports were often short paragraphs compiled from Reuter's telegrams. Generally these were placed side by side under headings such as 'The Boer War' and 'The Situation In China' (Geelong Advertiser), 'The Boers' and 'The China Crisis' (Age), 'Affairs In China' and 'Boer War' (Argus), and 'China' and 'The Transvaal' (Sydney Morning Herald). As the China situation became more desperate, so the columns became larger than those reporting the South African War. Articles, such as 'Notes on the Situation' (Argus) or 'Outpost' (Age) accompanied them. Editorials also commented on the situation. The tone of the headlines also changed. For example, after 21 October the Argus headlines often read 'China and The Powers' or 'Affairs in China'. By the end of the year, as Federation became more important and the China situation was being resolved, the columns were often once again reduced to a few paragraphs.
George Morrison's 'Siege of the Legations' appeared in the London Times. On 13 October 1900, The Times opened its editorial: 'It rarely falls to the lot of a newspaper to publish a narrative of such intense dramatic interest as the history we give to-day, from the pen of our well-known Correspondent, of the events that led up to the terrible struggle for life of the Legations in Peking.' The editorial summarised the report, published in two instalments; firstly, in the same issue; and secondly, on 15 October 1900. Each instalment covered several pages, the first including a large map of the Legations. The reports were also published in Berlin and Paris. Germans read long extracts almost daily; for them these were the first detailed accounts of the siege.

The Paris Correspondent reported that 'In this able Correspondent of a great journal opinion here has recognized with admiration an eye-witness who disdained to let himself be influenced by any sort of bias unworthy of his mission.'

Morrison's account was not the first to be seen in Australia. On 9 October 1900, the Melbourne Argus printed 'The Siege of Peking', a two-column account 'telegraphed from Thursday Island' by an 'English Tourist' who had been present at the siege. A few days after Morrison's account appeared in London, the Sydney Morning Herald on 20 October 1900 carried a report, 'Defence of Peking, A Lady's Account.' The report was written by 'the wife of a leading official of the Customs' department, under Sir Robert Hart' who had been present during the two months' siege. Including a large map of the defended area and an almost identical layout as that Morrison's, the report filled almost a full page. Perhaps the Sydney Morning Herald copied Morrison's in an attempt to appear original. On 22 October 1900, the paper published a further account, 'Defence of Peking, by a Participator (Told to our Special Correspondent)', which had been written in Shanghai on 12
September. This report again occupied nearly a whole page. That same day the *Argus* carried the identical article, also ‘Told to our Special Correspondent’, with the addition of a map and the headline ‘Defence Of Peking: Its Complete History’.

Why, then, this Australian interest in the sieges? The British Navy – the nominal protector of Australia - was often on the other side of the world, just as the British Army had seemed far away during the sieges. Surrounded by water and potential enemies, Australia took on the appearance of a fortress more and more dependent on its own resources. Fortresses fall into enemy hands through treachery, and this notion is very clear in the Australian reactions to the various sieges. Australians read about Oriental treachery in both the Indian Mutiny and the Siege of the Legations.

The Mutiny was firmly fixed in the British-Australian consciousness of the Orient. At Cawnpore, James Hingston summoned up from the dead the massacres of 1857. He looked carefully at the sculptured memorial, and took great care to take an exact note of the inscription on the pedestal:

Sacred to the perpetual memory of a great company of Christian people, chiefly women and children, who near this spot were cruelly massacred by the followers if the rebel Nana Dhoodopval, of Bithoor, and cast, the dying with the dead, into the well below, on the 15th July, 1857.  

Here was a savagery that was truly ‘Oriental’ in its barbarity. The inscription told Hingston about the nature of Nana Dhoodopval and his followers. Their savagery was very different to the innocence of the Christian English, whom they had killed in their hundreds and thrown into the well. All the British feelings about the massacre reveal themselves in Hingston’s despair at the sight: ‘When thought is given to whom this monument is raised, how blamelessly they suffered,
and how dreadful such sufferings were, the hope that I have endeavoured to express will be shared by every pitying spirit." He copied inscriptions verbatim of "how the innocent suffered through the savagery of Asiatic nature, running riot "[where] it is seemingly fit should grow only the cypress and mournful yew, and that rue which Ophelia tells us is for remembrance." Elsewhere he saw graves "where men murdered men, and not women and children"; and once more he copied the inscriptions, and with Macbeth felt inclined to say,

What! will the list stretch out to the crack of doom?
Another and another yet? – I'll see no more!"

But he did, visiting the Memorial Church of Cawnpore "which is but a great collection of gravestones, set in tablet fashion on the walls". He could only bring himself to copy one.

In memory of Colonel Berkely; Captains Mansfield, Stevens, Moore, and Power; and Lieutenants Case (eight others mentioned); also 448 non-commissioned officers; also Mrs. Moore, Miss Wainwright, Mrs. Hill, 43 soldiers’ wives, and 55 children of the 32nd Regiment Light Infantry, killed A.D. 1857.

"What a record!" he remarked, and then compared it to the list of passengers on a ship. The point of this woeful record of butchery was to summon up once more the ‘otherness’ of the Oriental. Conveniently forgotten was any memory of Occidental savagery, either in the Orient or elsewhere. The Cawnpore massacre, however, did not fit neatly into Hingston’s description of the Indian’s meek acceptance of either foreign domination or the giving up life without a struggle. Nor does it sit comfortably with an earlier remark he had made that the final thing that brought about the Mutiny was the action of the East India Company in dethroning the King of Oudh and the annexation of his territory. Patient subservience played no role here. These Indians were no different from those presented to the Sydney children at the time of the uprising:
... cruel pagans tried to murder
All the Christians in the land ...
Yes, if you had been in India
Perhaps they would have murdered you.14

Rana Kabbani argues in *Europe's myths of Orient: devise and rule*, that European Orientalism consigned all of Asia to an 'illicit space', in which civilised norms were not to be found, and where they could be ignored.15 In *The Yellow Lady: Australian impressions of Asia*, Alison Broinowski carries this argument further by concluding that while Europeans saw this space as combining allure, repugnance and Western superiority, they could ignore it as something either of the imagination or of a far-distant place. For Australians, therefore, it was very different in that it was real, close at hand, and it would not go away.16 When the Sydney children read about the murderous Indians, and when Hingston looked at the memorials at Cawnpore, the 'illicit space', both of the European and the Australian Orients became real. Fact and imagination were as one, just as Mackenzie argues in *Orientalism: history, theory, and the arts* that in Orientalist art we can see a profound interweaving of East/West relationships and stereotypes, along with fears about the stability of Imperialism.17 The Indian Mutiny shook the foundations of the British Empire, and it did so because the conquered Oriental subjects did not behave according to the supposed norms of civilised behavior. These native subjects were the stereotypical Oriental barbarians, not the abject subjects Hingston found throughout the sub-continent.

Almost by definition, Orientals were untrustworthy. In his account of the Indian Mutiny, Fitchett assured his readers that the British officers were civilised Christian warriors, who did not lose their nerve under any circumstances, even unto
death, whereas the Indians were treacherous and cunning. For example, a Highlander at Lucknow said,

“I would like to try my bayonet on the hide of that painted scoundrel, sir; he looks like a murderer.” “Don’t touch him,” answered the staff-officer, “he is a harmless mendicant; it is the Mohammedans who are to blame for the horrors of the Mutiny.” Scarcely had he spoken the words when this Hindu stopped counting his beads, slipped his hands under the mat on which he sat, and, with a single movement, drew out a short bell-mouthed blunderbuss and fired into the unfortunate staff-officer’s breast, killing him instantly, and himself dying a moment afterwards, under the reddened bayonets of half-a-dozen furious Highlanders. 18

But the trope of the siege blurred the image by throwing this notion of untrustworthiness onto the Gladstone Government. Between the Indian Mutiny and the Boxer Uprising, Khartoum and Gordon’s death came at an opportune moment for Australians. Just as he had betrayed General Gordon, Australians felt Gladstone had betrayed them over the control of New Guinea. Gladstone and the ‘people of England’ were ‘strangely out of unison with their fellow countrymen in the colonies if a day of reckoning is not near at hand. 19

In an editorial, the Argus asked, ‘Which is more guilty - the foe who killed GORDON or the friend who abandoned him...’ 20 An ‘Australian Native’ wrote to the Argus,

So Gordon is dead. The rage and bitterness which such news creates is intensified by the fact that we are powerless to do more than grind our teeth and mentally hurl anathema on those who shamefully deserted him. 21

The Geelong Advertiser, speaking ‘for nearly all of Australia’, attacked the Gladstone Government for allowing ‘what should be Australian territory to pass into the possession of Germany’. It should leave office for this and its neglect of Khartoum to ‘make way for a more patriotic and capable administration’. 22

This treachery, however, was not a quality that could be applied to all the English as it could be applied as a general characteristic of Orientals. Gladstone
and his Government were individuals, not representatives of a racial type. In his ‘Siege of the Legations’, Morrison depicted the Chinese as little more than treacherous Oriental barbarians, as was made clear in *The Times*’ editorial.

This connected narrative sets in the clearest light the premeditated treachery of the Chinese Government, and completely disposes of the fictions by which efforts are made in some quarters to represent that Government as unwillingly compelled by an uncontrollable rebellion to be the helpless spectator of crimes forbidden by the code of every civilization, whether Eastern or European.23

In his attempt of vilification, any feelings of sympathy that Morrison had displayed in his account of his travels as a young man across China were now conspicuously absent in his condemnation:

It is difficult to write with calmness of the treachery with which the Chinese were now acting ... At 4 p.m. precisely to the minute, by preconcerted signal, they opened fire upon the Austrian and French outposts. A French marine fell shot dead through the forehead. An Austrian was wounded. The siege had begun.24

In such reporting, Australian and European Orientalism came together, painting Oriental enemies as barbarians. According to Fitchett, Nana Sahib was the epitome of Oriental duplicity. More than once in *The Tale of the Great Mutiny*, Nana concealed his true nature behind a smiling mask of courtesy and hospitality.25 The mask covered a ‘gorgon-like visage of murder’, as this bestial villain ‘consented to all arrangements for the “comfort” of his victims’.26 How different he was from the athletic Lieutenant Sewell, who ‘bagged his men as a good sportsman might bag pheasants in a crowded cover’.27 Perhaps Australians were consciously fulfilling an expectation that in India a Nana Sahib would always be lurking. ‘The Brahmin priest at Parvahti informed me that St. Mary was a male saint of superior sanctity,’ wrote Herbert Strong. ‘He knew nothing about Buddhism! He is supposed to be first cousin to Nana Sahib, though he denied this when my brother taxed him with it.’28
The Boxer Uprising revealed a facet of Australian Orientalism that accorded with Said’s position that in European eyes the Orient was barbaric and therefore European domination was justified. Positioning himself as a major player in the siege, early in his report Morrison described in vivid detail the murder of the Japanese Secretary. The Secretary was dragged from his cart and a Chinese crowd watched his struggles

with unpitying interest and unconcealed satisfaction ... The heart was cut out and, there is every reason to believe, was sent as a trophy to the savage General Tung-fu-siang himself. No attempt was ever made to recover the body, and the following morning my servant, sent by me to inquire, found his mutilated body roughly covered with earth at the place where it had been murdered. One leg was exposed and children, to the amusement of their elders, were poking at it with sticks.

The Sydney Morning Herald and the Argus reinforced this picture.

The Japanese Chancellor ... was seized by the soldiers by order of their leader, Tung Fu Siang, dragged out of his cart, and his head was cut off. The poor fellow was left lying there within the gate for some time.

The Boxers showed no bravery in their attacks, particularly on the missionaries and their converts. Morrison wrote that ‘women and children were hacked to pieces, men trussed like fowls, with noses and ears cut off and eyes gouged out.’ Some Boxers were discovered executing Chinese Christians who had taken refuge in a temple.

Their fiendish murderers were at their incantations burning incense before their gods, offering Christians in sacrifice to their angered deities ... Retribution was swift; every man was shot to death without mercy.

A similar description appeared in Australian newspapers, the ‘Lady’ repeating the story of the marines finding fifty Boxers in the temple going through their rites after murdering native Christians:

The firing I had heard was the sound of justice being dealt out to the murderers. Not one was left to tell the tale, and my friend held in his hand a Boxer sword red with the blood of a native Christian recently slain.
Lancelot Giles, a young English Student Interpreter in the British Consular Service, recorded the incident in his diary on 16 June, but without the colour required to influence others.

To-day twenty British marines, ten Americans and five Japanese went out eastwards and a temple was surrounded, and burst into. Some fifty Boxers were found there. Every one was killed almost without resistance.\(^{35}\)

Australian newspapers repeated Morrison’s claims of barbarity. The *Geelong Advertiser* reported that ‘The “Times” Peking correspondent states that the evidence recently taken at Paoting-fu showed that, prior to being executed, an American lady was led naked through the streets with her breasts cut off.’\(^{36}\)

Although not citing Morrison, The *Argus* cited a London report that an American lady missionary was put to death by being slowly dismembered. Her hands and feet were first cut off, and she was then gradually cut to pieces.\(^{37}\)

The *Geelong Advertiser* disclosed that four women and two children were ‘decapitated in the streets’ and that news had been received of the ‘massacre’ of a missionary, who had been bayoneted by Chinese soldiers.\(^{38}\) There is a double standard here, for ‘massacre’ is not used when British bayonets were employed.

Earlier in July, the *Argus* headlined ‘Many Victims Roasted To Death’,\(^{39}\) followed a week later by a gruesome description of Boxer barbarity.

[The Boxers] stripped women in the streets, hacked them with their swords, and hewed their limbs from their bodies. The soldiers impaled the bodies of little children on their spearheads and carried them through the streets, their comrades firing at the bodies as they were held aloft.\(^{40}\)

In November, the *Geelong Advertiser* editorialised, ‘to-day we have another shocking account of a lady having her hands and feet cut off, prior to being otherwise dismembered.’ The editorial also included the punishment awarded two members of Tsung-li Yamen for suggesting legations should be protected. It was
'worst Chinese method of punishment'. The men were 'not beheaded but cut in two.'

On 17 November, under the headline 'Fiendish Torture', the Age wrote,

Dr. Morrison reports that evidence has now been discovered showing that in one instance the Chinese burnt out the eyes of an English missionary by thrusting joss incense sticks into the sockets, lighting them, and thus gradually burning out the eyes. The missionary, having been thus cruelly blinded, was led through a number of villages to delight the populace with the sight of his prolonged agonies. He suffered for 36 hrs before death released him from his tortures.

Almost identical articles with headlines emphasising Chinese barbarity, but with no reference to Morrison, appeared in both the Argus and the Geelong Advertiser of that same day.

Another example of Chinese barbarity in the Australian press was a report about the desecration of the foreign cemetery in Peking during the siege of the Legations.

When Morrison described an attack on the French legation, 'devilish cries of hordes of Chinese, shrieking like spirits in hell' could be heard. Another version of outlandish shrieking was reported in the Australian newspapers. One night some Boxers were surprised and killed going through their incantations. That night the howling of the Chinese mob was ghastly in the extreme, and the fires that blazed all over the city the next night made one think oneself in the infernal regions.

The 'Participator' disregarded Boxer yells. 'We could have kept a million Boxers at bay, frenzied and frantic as they were, for they were practically unarmed, and their waving and shouting and gesticulating were not deadly.'
On 25 June, Morrison described this noisy behaviour as 'a truly Oriental method of weakening our defence'. Magically, silence fell as a Chinese official fixed a notice in Chinese characters on a bridge near the British Legation:

Imperial command to protect Ministers and stop firing. A despatch will be handed at the Imperial Canal Bridge.  

The treacherous Chinese did not allow a Chinese clerk to approach them with a placard, 'Despatch will be received.' When the expected attack came at midnight, 'No harm was done though the noise was terrific.  

According to the 'Participator', a Chinese flag of truce and peace proposals was 'a sink of wholesale lying and trickery — trickery so simple often as to be almost childish.'  

Morrison also abused the Chinese as cultural barbarians prepared to set fire to their own Han Lin Library. No attention was given to the fact that the Boxers were mainly illiterate peasants, for whom the library - the highest place of learning in the Chinese Empire and the prototype of European academies founded after French missionaries in the eighteenth century had described it - would mean little. 'What can be thought of a nation,' wrote Morrison, 'which destroys its own most sacred edifice, the pride and glory of its learned men through centuries, in order to wreak vengeance upon the foreigner?'  

This was very different to the civilised Englishman, MacDonald, who requested that Chinese officials remove any volumes that could be rescued. Silence greeted his 'courteous communication.' Instead, the Legations and Customs buildings were fired upon, the European soldiers 'dropping off one by one, and already we were accustomed to the sight of the stretcher and the funeral.'
The ‘Lady’ agreed with Morrison: ‘The Chinese had set fire to the Hanlin (on our north side), that greatest monument of Chinese literature, revered by every Chinaman with a feeling akin to awe, until they became possessed with a lust for blood!’

But other versions of the burning of the Han Lin library do not support these assertions. Captain Poole reported that he and his men had flushed out 250 unlettered Chinese Muslim troops, who started a fire in revenge. Poole and his soldiers brought the fire under control within thirty minutes.

While not suggesting that the Boxers started the fire, ‘Participator’ stated that the beleaguered Europeans completed it in order to safeguard their strategic position. The library was close to the principal Legation building, which seemed to be in great danger from the conflagration; however, the wind changed and only half the building was burnt: ‘Such was the regrettable fate of the famous Peking library.’

An American missionary, Arthur H. Smith, took part in trying to control the fire. He described what happened:

The principal literary monument of the most ancient people in the world was obliterated in an afternoon, and the wooden stereotype plates of the most valuable works became prey to the flames, or were used in building barricades, or as kindling by the British marines … Out of twenty or twenty-five halls, but two remained and a few months later [after the siege] every trace of these had been removed from the Hanlin premises, which are now part of the British Legation grounds.

Unlike the Chinese, Morrison would have his readers believe that the British were not incendiaries. Even though they could have set fire to a temple themselves ‘to safeguard the lives of the beleaguered women and children’ during an attack, they refused to do so in order not to wound the sensibilities of the Chinese Government. Morrison implied that the Chinese were so barbaric, that it
would have made no impression on them: ‘So little do the oldest of us understand the Chinese.’ Here he was re-enforcing the Orientalist view of the Chinese as enigmatic Orientals.

Before noting that within ‘the next few days we completed the work begun by the Chinese and razed the Hanlin to the ground’, Giles reported he had looted some of the library material.50

When they reported looting, the Australian newspapers exhibited an Orientalism smacking of double standards. Eight Boxer looters were executed by the Allied forces, reported the Age.61 Whereas it might have been justifiable to use ‘looted Chinese materials … among them costly Chinese embroidered robes … [to fill] sandbags for our protection’, European looting was little different than that of the Boxers.62 After the siege, the Allies and the legationers looted Peking of everything of value.63 Morrison himself was not above pillaging the palace: ‘I succeeded in looting a beautiful piece of Jade splashed with gold and carved in the form of a citron, the emblem of the fingers of Buddha.’64 Quite unashamedly two months later, he noted,

I had a visit from Chi the young proprietor of the house which I sacked in the Russian quarter. He looked round him and appeared to recognise a friendly look in the furniture.65

But Morrison disapproved of Oriental looting. He angrily noted in his diary that Tuesday, 4 September was a ‘very interesting day’, because he was moving 110 coolie loads of his furniture when a Sikh tried snatch ‘my boy’s satchel’.66

Australian newspapers also disparaged looting by soldiers other than those of Britain, Australia and America. In one account, there had been general looting ‘on a grand scale’ by the Japanese, and the Russians. The British and American troops had been forbidden to loot, but in two days the British officers, seeing that
all the wealth of Peking was going to the French, the Russians and the Japanese, organised an official looting.\textsuperscript{67} Such looting was justified, because £11,600 British share of the ‘plunder taken at Pao-ting fu’ was to be ‘expended in the relief of Chinese reduced to starvation by the war’.\textsuperscript{68} Earlier the Special Correspondent of the Argus had written a lengthy report about Australian looting, the tone of which supported such behaviour: ‘This little war has been remarkable for the amount of loot obtained.’ It was especially done by private soldiers, mostly dozens of Sikhs and Indians, who were selling it back to the Chinese. ‘Smart men are making little fortunes,’ he wrote. ‘We hear on fairly good authority that it has been resolved out of compliment to the contingent to present the officers with a share of the already captured loot lying at Tientsin, and which includes 150 tons of silver.’\textsuperscript{69}

In contrast to Oriental barbarity and treachery, the siege demonstrated qualities of Stoic heroism with which Australians wished to identify. The Argus alluded to these after the relief of the Peking Legations, when ‘the little band of Europeans mourned as lost … return to the world, as it were, after the tomb had closed upon them.’\textsuperscript{70}

This same heroism had been seen earlier in 1885 at the siege of Khartoum. After news of General Gordon’s death, Australians shared in Britain’s grief.

The Melbourne Age reported the reactions round the colonies. In Adelaide it was suggested that the military authorities hold church parades in his honour. In Ballarat, flags flew at half-mast, and the Ballarat Branch of the Australian Natives Association adjourned its ordinary meeting in a token of respect. Flags were also flying at ‘half mast’ on ships in Brisbane and at all the business houses in Geelong. In Melbourne, ‘Profound grief was expressed throughout the town when it became known this evening that General Gordon was dead.’\textsuperscript{71}
In a letter to the Melbourne *Argus*, ‘One of His Playmates at Woolwich’ suggested that ‘there be a spontaneous tribute paid to his memory - without any hesitation - by all good citizens of both sexes, and let it be signified by the wearing of a black band round the left arm for a week from Saturday next, the 14th inst…’

The *Argus* proposed the purchase of a ‘portrait of the hero’ for the National Gallery or that Melburnians should enrich their streets with a Gordon statue. Gordon’s death was the topic of sermons preached at most denominations.

Even the *Bulletin* contributed respectfully with a poem accompanied by two illustrations: ‘Chinese Gordon, from a photograph taken at the conclusion of the Taiping rebellion’ and ‘Gordon Pasha when Governor of the Soudan’. The poem concluded:

> So lie, while round the world the requiems roll,  
> By the dark Nile, and be thy monument  
> The record of a life of high intent,  
> Whereon men’s love will shed an aureole.

Australians were identifying with the soldier-saint Gordon,

> brave as a paladin of old. He was as unselfish and pure as the KING ARTHUR whom the Poet Laureate has portrayed…

The *Argus* also compared him to Sir Galahad:

> “O just and faithful knight of God,  
> Ride on; the prize is near.”

The Rev. H. F. Tucker, Christ Church, South Yarra, preached ‘of the martyr resolve to stay and die’ and the failure of the British to relieve Khartoum as ‘another blot upon English history which ages of heroism can never wipe out.’

Gordon had become immortal. In England, too, he was seen as the Stainless Knight of the century. Queen Victoria wrote to his sister, ‘Would you express to
your other sisters and your elder Brother my true sympathy and what I do so keenly feel, the stain left upon England, for your dear Brother’s cruel, but heroic fate!"80

This adulation was for a man, who wanting to die for the sins of the world had repeated a death wish constantly during his life and had a horror of living to an extreme old age.81 Perhaps a repressed homosexual, he was a complete misfit, who whenever possible avoided English society by Foreign Service under a foreign flag.82 Nevertheless, his heroism was a shining example of British courage for Australians to emulate.

Florid expression was a mark of siege writing. Throughout The Tale of the Great Mutiny, Fitchett drew on the religious prejudice and the jingoistic British feelings of his Australian readership. One of the heroes was Brigadier-General John Nicholson, whose ‘rough but sincere piety … did not weaken his soldiership – it rather gave a new loftiness to its ideals and a steadier pulse to its courage’.83 His piety was so great, that a brotherhood of Fakirs renounced all other creeds and took up the worship of “Nikkul-Seyn”. This good Christian attempted ‘to cure their inconvenient piety by a vigorous application of the whip, and flogged them soundly at every opportunity’. It was all to no avail, ending after the news of Nicholson’s death reached Delhi. Then the last of the Fakirs dug his own grave and died in it, while the remainder of the sect underwent a sudden conversion to Christianity.84 Thou shalt not worship false gods seems to be Fitchett’s message to his readers; but if you do, it is best that you take an English soldier as your deity rather than a pagan Hindu or Islamic one.

In Jose’s account of the Indian Mutiny, the Indians were not only brutal in their treatment of the women and children at Cawnpore, but imprisoned them ‘for a worse fate.’85 Here the stereotype of the indecent sexual nature of the Oriental was
perpetuated. The description of Cawnpore was also overlaid with sexuality when the English troops ‘found no English women alive in prison, but only gashed and tortured bodies thrown hurriedly into a deep well’.86

Fitchett also perpetuated the sex-crazed Oriental: ‘Long locks of hair were strewn about, severed, but not with scissors’.87 No Australian reader could blame Sir Henry Havelock, who ‘had no time for pity’, and Sir Hugh Rose, who ‘flashing like a thunderbolt from fortress to fortress, destroyed throughout that rugged country the last vestiges of resistance’.88 To drive his message home to God-fearing, upright Australians, Fitchett juxtaposed prostitutes urging the men in the bazaars to mutiny with the Sabbath bells calling the English to worship.89 The palace at Delhi was ‘a moral plague spot’ occupied by a king enjoying ‘a lazy, sensual, opium-soaked life’.90 English women were even carried off to the harems of Nana’s generals.91

If British India could be so rocked by these Oriental barbarians the implications for Australians loomed large, even though ‘the breed has not failed’.92 Pearson hoped that the Raj would obliterise all the religious and racial differences, so that the wholesale devastations would never happen again.93 Australians could not be certain that this was the case. As if to drive the message home, Fitchett revelled in describing his horror of the rebellious sepoys. It did not matter if all the details were fiction. Australians had to be warned of their possible fate at Oriental hands.

The wife of a captain, according to one story current at the time – and perhaps not true – was literally boiled alive in ghee, or melted butter. Children were tossed on bayonets, men roasted in the flames of their own bungalows; women were mutilated and dismembered.94

It is not surprising, with his seeming delight in the minutiae of cruelty, that this man of the cloth was dubbed ‘Bleeds Fitchett’ by the Bulletin.95 In his bloody
description of the Indian Mutiny, however, Fitchett was not alone. Jose wrote, ‘The East breeds tigers as well as elephants: the Mutiny was the tiger's last fierce leap at his hunters, when his claws strike deep in the howdah that carries them.’

We should remember that this was an age when blood-sports were the norm. Hunting big game was favoured by Australian ‘sportsmen’ such as Herbert Strong. He was ‘very disappointed’ that the shooting was ‘almost nil’ in India.

In terms of blood, Jose also employed righteous anger to excuse the excesses of the British troops:

The ghastliness of the Mutiny drove men blood-mad; and against the fiends who surrounded Nana Sahib no measures seemed too brutal: and no one who did not see Cawnpore and its victims has a right to condemn the avengers of Cawnpore.

When we consider just how some of the mutineers were punished, we might ask ourselves whether there really was much difference between the savagery of the Orientals and their English conquerors. More than once, the mutineers were strapped to the mouths of cannon and then blown apart. Even some forty years after the event, the Fitchett could excuse such behaviour.

This was stern, uncanny occupation for a humane-minded British officer! But the times were stern, the crisis supreme.

An explanation might be found in the prevailing Orientalist attitudes concerning race. It was apparently acceptable if the brave British soldiers carried out barbarous acts in the defence of the Raj. Even as late as September 1900, classes V and VI in Victorian State Primary Schools learnt about such brave deeds when they saw in their School Paper how Lord Roberts had won the Victoria Cross during the Mutiny. As with Fitchett’s account of the fighting, this was a bloody affair. The young students read in an early paragraph that Roberts ‘cut him down
with his sword’, and in a later paragraph, ‘with one cut of his sword, killed him on
the spot’. 101

If these same pupils read the _Argus_, then after the siege of Mafeking in
1900 they would have come across a description of the British commander in that
town, a man who later would become the founder of the Scouting movement. The
portrait echoed British behaviour in the Indian Mutiny.

> War to him is a fascinating, absorbing pastime, as witness his remarks upon one special
branch of it in his latest book, “Aids to Scouting.” “Scouting,” he exclaims, “is like a game
of football. Football is a good game, but better than it, better than any other game is that of
man-hunting.” 102

Another mark of the siege accounts was the stereotype. The Australian
press employed it in their descriptions of the Dowager Empress of China to justify
Occidental interfering in the internal affairs of China in order to restore civilised
behaviour. The _Argus_ leader compared Queen Victoria - that ‘venerable figure,
lonely, grey-haired, [and] revered’ - with the ‘almond-eyed virago, the Dowager-
Empress, with the unpronounceable name of Tze-his […] whose] withered hands are
red with blood’. Either ‘mad or sane’, the Empress was ‘an enemy with whom the
powers can hold no parley.’ 103 In another _Argus_ editorial, she was also accused of
‘fanning the flames of fanaticism’. 104

Immediacy was yet another mark of Australian reporting of the Oriental
sieges. At this distance, it is hard for us to grasp the hold the Indian Mutiny still
had on Australians half a century after it was over; but so powerful was India, that
the fear was that if British rule fell there, Australia might be vulnerable to foreign
attack. Patrick Brantlinger has observed that British Victorian accounts of the
Mutiny are told in racist extremes, expressed ‘in terms of an absolute polarization
of good and evil, innocence and guilt, justice and injustice, moral restraint and
sexual depravity, civilization and barbarism." There is a remarkable similarity with Australian accounts. Thus in The Tale of the Great Mutiny, Fitchett took great pains to make the uprising as terrible as he possibly could. The opening chapter, ‘Mungul Pandy’ begins in the present tense:

The scene is Barrackpore, the date March 29, 1857. It is a Sunday afternoon; but on the dusty floor of the parade-ground a drama is being enacted which is suggestive of anything but a Sabbath peace.106

The immediacy of the drama thus set the stage, but Fitchett was also appealing to another emotion. The reference to the Sabbath aroused hostility to Indian blasphemy. That this latter was a deliberate ploy does not seem unlikely, for Fitchett was a Methodist minister, as well as being the Principal of the Methodist Ladies’ College in Melbourne.

Having aroused his audience in the opening paragraphs of the first chapter, Fitchett then used the more conventional narrative technique of the past tense; but this not before ‘There is a flash of red pistol-flame, a puff of white smoke, a gleam of whirling sword-blade’; and not before Mughal Pandy, -‘who cannot look on and see his English officer slain – least of all by a cow-worshipping Hindu!’ - catches the uplifted wrist of the Mungal rebel.107 Fitchett employed the present tense only once more, when he related the final, stirring minutes of the blowing up of the Delhi magazine.108 Elsewhere the liberal use of the exclamation mark or the horrendous spilling of blood and the ripping of flesh conjured up immediacy:

The same ball slew the husband, shattered both elbows of the wife, and tore asunder the body of one of the little twins. General Wheeler’s son was lying wounded. His mother and two sisters were busy tending him, his father looking on, when a cannon-ball tore through the wall of the room and smashed the wounded lad’s head literally to fragments.109

George Morrison’s readers found themselves in the thick of the action at Peking, including such gory details as European teachers being hacked to pieces
and their bodies thrown into the river.\textsuperscript{110} Placed alongside reports of the South African War, the report of ‘The Siege of the Legations’ was the equivalent of modern television reporting from the actual battlefield. The first two sentences opened dramatically:

One of the ancient sages of China foretold that “China shall be destroyed by a woman.”
The prophecy is approaching fulfilment.\textsuperscript{111}

Somewhat less inspiring was Morrison’s self-promotion. A few paragraphs later, he positioned himself as an eyewitness to the storm that was about to break, but also by implication as an eyewitness who foresaw the troubles ahead, which is in direct contradiction to the reality he later admitted.\textsuperscript{112}

Morrison’s account of the Siege of the Legations was not the only one of that emphasised immediate details. All the others did the same, particularly when it came to the whistling bullets. ‘Participator’ talked about ‘millions of bullets’, with a disparaging remark about the poor marksmanship of the Chinese.\textsuperscript{113} The ‘English Tourist’ not only repeated the millions; he added a description of the better European shooting. Ironically, the ‘other’ of the Chinese is reflected in the narrator, for he tells us that he was not ordinarily bloodthirsty, and would not shoot humans with the same glee as he would a lion or tiger, ‘but the development of sanguinary tastes during a siege is remarkable.’ He was in no doubt that he had shot at least six Chinese. ‘How the beggars yelled when a bullet caught them, and how we bloodthirstily prayed that it might have been a Boxer!’\textsuperscript{114}

The Boxers fired back, as Morrison recorded in his diary. One day he found the student quarters pitted with bullets.\textsuperscript{115} The danger was very real.

Many remarkable escapes are recorded such as must occur where a small body of people are shelled and fired upon from close range… A sergeant while stropping a razor had his razor carried out of his hand. Colonel Shiba had a bullet through his coat. Stronto [?] was grazed in the neck by a bullet fired at close range.\textsuperscript{116}
The stereotypical prose, used to denigrate Oriental enemies, was also used to elevate British courage and civilised behaviour in the face of overwhelming, barbaric odds. Even defenceless women and children faced privation, danger, and possible death with nobility. The European women showed their mettle: ‘... it was quite wonderful how soon we became hardened to the bullets that flew overhead and around, and even to the shells, that were becoming more frequent,’ reported the ‘Lady’. ‘It was wonderful how soon we became comparatively callous to the rifle firing and the bullets that flew around the compound.’

She had many narrow escapes, but ‘it was no use to try and avoid them – one could not shut oneself up.’ In an appeal to her feminine readers, she added, and if the worst came I for one would have certainly taken my life, or made my husband do so, rather than fall into Chinese clutches, and others I think felt the same. And we women always held the belief that our countrymen could never really desert us! Surely we should not be left to die ... 117

In publishing such an account, the Sydney Morning Herald thus combined the barbarity of the Chinese Oriental ‘other’ with the notion that the Australian and the English ‘self’ was the same. This was further amplified by reports of how the men were going to deliver their families from destruction at the hands of the cruel Chinese. As with so much of this kind of reportage, it was difficult to separate rumour from fact, but the story suited the public mood at the time, and much credence was given to it before it was finally laid to rest.

Typical of such reports was one appearing in the Argus during July. Europeans formed themselves into a hollow square, women and children in the centre.

As soon as Tung-fu-hsiang had made a breach in the walls with his artillery, the Europeans with their revolvers shot all the women and children to prevent them from falling alive into the hands of the Chinese. 118
Given such writers as ‘Bleeds’ Fitchett had kept alive the memory of the massacres of the Indian Mutiny in the Australian psyche, the picture thus presented could easily summon up British courage in the face of Oriental barbarity. To remove any doubt, the ‘Notes on the Situation’ of the same day amplified the report.

It was here that the massacre took place. It was also here that husband drew upon wife, brother upon sister, father upon daughter - to die at the hands of relatives and friends was to escape a fate worse than death. While everything connected with the massacre is terrible, it is the picture of the hollow square, with the women and children in the centre, falling to the bullets fired by those they held dearest in the world, that will never be forgotten.119

The message was driven home by ‘A shudder of horror will run through the civilised world.’ The supposed veracity of the square was helped by a later account.

My mind was made up. I carried night and day a revolver, and a bullet through the brain would have been my salvation had the brutes ever got in. I think all the men kept revolvers in readiness for the dread contingency, and I know some married men intended their wives to have the benefit of a friendly bullet. They had confided the duty to friends if they themselves went under too early.120

This report cannot be taken at its face value. Just as Morrison had put himself in the centre of his account, so too had the ‘English Tourist’. The report given by ‘Participator’, although still taking nothing away from British bravery, gives the lie to the massacre.

We are told you had a thrilling account of our forming into a hollow square, with the women and children in the centre, sending them to their death without dishonour and cruelty, by a pistol shot, and then throwing ourselves despairingly on the bayonets and spears of our enemies. We might have done it if the crisis had arisen; but we never seriously discussed such a procedure, thank God, and the necessity did not arise.121

Many writers summoned up the emotional impact of British deaths. After being shot by an expanding bullet, Captain Strout, the senior British officer, who was ‘always cool and self-reliant,’ had died in hospital to the grief of the entire
community, while a British student had been ‘another victim to Chinese treachery.’

It was, wrote Morrison,

a mournful gathering that followed them to the grave, officers and soldiers of many nationalities, Ministers and their staffs, missionaries and brave ladies who have shared the discomforts of this unhappy siege. While the shells were bursting in the trees, and amid the crack of rifle bullets, the brave young fellow to whose gallant defence we all owed so much was laid to rest beside the student for whom a career of brilliant promise was just opening.122

This is the same imperial identification that was apparent to Australians visiting the British graves at Cawnpore.

The ‘Lady’ described the impossibility of telling the dead from the wounded, and how there were so many dead from the other Legations they had to be buried in ‘our own extempore burying-ground’. As with Morrison’s, her report of the burial of a friend was calculated to make Australian readers identify closely with the British.

In the afternoon we went to bury him, and there found him laid out, sewn up in a cloth; no coffin, of course, and two more men, perished since he had, one with the military boots still on, lying on old bits of door as shutters. We carried our friend to the hastily-dug grave, rough and shallow, but the best we could do, and buried him, a French priest hastily reading the Catholic burial service over him, while the bullets shrieked a ghastly requiem around, so incessant to be almost deafening. In that same grave were put the other victims, and our thoughts turned to what might soon be our fate! We might soon follow, and perhaps, not be granted the favour of even a decent burial!123

If according to the French, Morrison had kept bias out of his writing, a closer reading reveals quite clearly where his real interests lay, and these were mainly with the British, the Japanese, and himself, both as a correspondent dealing with the excitement of battle and his views of China, and as an Australian within the folds of Empire. Whenever he wrote about the British, either as soldiers or civilians, they were shown to be steadfast and unflappable, and with a sense of humour remaining even in the most trying of circumstances. On one occasion,
when the British officer of the watch thought that a French sentry was guarding an
opening of the wall at southern extremity of British Legation, he stopped.

“Sentinelle,” he said in his best Sandhurst French. There was no reply. Pursing his mouth
to convey the correct accent, he raised his voice and repeated “Sentinelle,” when a scared
voice from the darkness replied, “Begorra! and what the h-s that?”

Even when the Legations’ ‘isolation was now complete, and the enemy’s
cordon was constantly drawing closer,’ the British soldier could be relied upon to
look lightly at danger.

The capt’n, ’e sez, ’garn boys, garn, chawge boys, chawge,’ against a bloomin’ ’ouse wall,
’e waves ’is bloomin’ arms in the air and then ’e sets fire to the ’ouse be’ind us!

The British leader could weld even a force of fifty gentlemen of many
nationalities, into one which was ‘formidable alike to friend and foe.’

[these] were known, from the gentleman who enrolled them, as “Thornhill’s Roughs,” and
they bore themselves as the legitimate successors on foot of Roosevelt’s Roughriders. …
Armed with a variety of weapons, from an elephant rifle to the fusil de chase with a picture
of the Grand Prix, to all of which carving knives had been lashed as bayonets, they were
known as the “Carving Knife Brigade.”

The ‘Lady’ also mentioned them:

All men who could (and some who could not) use firearms became volunteers, and had
their posts and duties assigned to them. Some who had no bayonets tied carving knives to
the guns in an excess of zeal.

Bayonets, symbolising the martial strength of the British character
compared to that of the cowardly Boxers, played a large part in the various
descriptions of the siege. ‘Participator’ told Australians,

at the sight of the cold steel the Chinamen ran. Remember, a Chinese leader does not lead.
He scarcely even follows. He orders the advance, but remains behind the barricade to
watch his men obey.

He further noted that ‘We shot straight, and they wavered, and springing over,
bayonets fixed, we drove them back like sheep.’ Giles also mentioned the
bayonet on 14 June: ‘One fanatic was hit by a rifle bullet, and had a bayonet stuck
into him, and was still advancing when the marine holding the bayonet pulled the trigger of his rifle and brought him down!!"\textsuperscript{130}

On a more serious note, Morrison recounted an incident when the Austrian Commander, assumed command after wrongly hearing that the American Legation had been abandoned. Captain Thomann, panicking, had ordered all legations east of Canal Street to retreat to the British Legation. The English watched ‘amazed’ as Italians, Austrians, French ran down Legation-street, followed by the Japanese, Germans, Russians and Americans: ‘It was a veritable stampede - a panic that might have been fraught with the gravest disaster.’\textsuperscript{131} The British were made of sterner stuff. Sir Claude MacDonald ‘at the urgent instance of the French and the Russian Ministers ... assumed the chief command’ and the Germans and the French reoccupied their own Legations. Fortunately, ‘One German only was killed and the position was saved, but the blunder might have been disastrous.’\textsuperscript{132} In his diary, 22 June, Giles was less dramatic.

At 8.45 a.m. an Austrian under-officer ordered a general retreat on to our Legation. This was only to be done in a case of extreme danger, and as a last move ... It was a gross mistake; and they were all ordered to re-take their positions. This was successfully accomplished. Sir Claude took over the supreme command.\textsuperscript{133}

Later during the siege, Morrison continued his denigration of the non-British Europeans. Captain Paolini devised an improperly explained plan of attack in which he would lead a sortie to capture a Krupp gun. The attack was disastrous, the wildly-cheering men following the Italian into a death trap. The small garrison was ‘reduced by three men killed, one officer and four men and one volunteer killed.’ Others had fought ‘like wild beasts to burst their way through,’ but five young [English]men acted like veterans. Bristow showed conspicuous coolness, for in his dash across he picked up a Lee-Metford rifle which a marine had let fall.\textsuperscript{134}
Giles threw a different light on the behaviour of one of the British officers. He wrote in his diary on 29 June that a British, German, French, Russian, Italian force led by Captain Wray was to proceed to Mongol Market and seize the enemy guns.

Here I had better give the words of the marine who related the tale to me. 'Cap'en Wray shouted out “Charge, men, charge! Courage, men, courage!” But did he show us the way? Not 'e, 'e stood be'ind an 'ouse!' Having heard the story from several men independently, I am forced to believe on this occasion the Captain did not show the reckless courage which is thought to be an attribute of the British officer.135

The language of the siege often manipulated the facts to suit the intentions of the writers. Australian newspapers hammered home the message of British courage. Apart from the ‘cold steel’ and the acceptance of bullets and shells, there were many other examples. The least of these was how the men and women endured near starvation without complaint. In Peking, ‘Our chief diet from the beginning was pony,’ reported the ‘Lady’. Horseflesh was tough, and sometimes one wondered if the harness had not got into the pot by mistake. Mule was preferable to horse, both in texture and taste.136

Eggs were mostly bad, but the British were still able to smile: ‘We called them the ‘Lays of Ancient Peking.’”137 The ‘English Tourist’ described the mule meat. ‘It was not dainty exactly, though with red currant jelly you might almost persuade yourself you were eating venison.’ He also added that from the more than ninety ponies and mules at beginning of the siege, nearly eighty had gone by end.138 The ‘Participator’ drew attention to the main worry, the lack of milk. ‘Ask the mothers, whose memories linger sadly round the plots in the Legation garden, and they will tell you that milk would have saved the lives of the infants.’139 Not only did such a comment reveal British fortitude, it also reflected badly on the enemy. Even when Chinese threw melons over the walls of the Legation, the reports did not credit the Chinese with any human feelings. It was ‘mysterious’ at best.140
If the above reports were to be believed, compared with the Europeans in Mafeking, those in Peking were on short rations. This was not always so. There were thousands of cases of champagne. Morrison and his friends ate tinned Californian fruit, corned beef and other foodstuffs. Every night, forty people in dinner attire consumed good meals in Lady MacDonald’s dining room. It was really only the poorer Europeans, such as the missionaries, who could not afford much to eat.\textsuperscript{141} The two thousand Chinese converts starved while the Europeans reserved the two hundred and fifty tons of wheat, rice and corn for themselves. The Chinese subsisted on what they could strip from the trees, and even dirt.\textsuperscript{142}

At Mafeking, however, there had been some European grumbling, so Baden-Powell contributed ‘The Colonel on Grousing’ to the \textit{Mafeking Mail}.

There are, by the way, two hints I should like to give for making small rations go further - hints derived from personal experience of previous hungry times – and these are:

1. To lump your rations together as much as possible for cooking, and not every man to have his little amount cooked separately.

2. To make the whole into a big thick stew, from which, even three quarter lbs. of ingredients per man, three good meals can be got per day.

It is just possible that we may have to take 2 ozs. off the bread stuffs, but otherwise our supplies will last well over the period indicated.\textsuperscript{143}

We are still very busy with the food matter. It is proposed to erect a place in the stadt where soup will be cooked for the benefit of the poor. It is soup made of oatmeal and horseflesh …\textsuperscript{144}

As in Peking, the native Baralong population almost starved. Despite representations from some Europeans, the military authorities did nothing, thus adding to the rumours that Baden-Powell caused unnecessary hardship by wishing to prolong the siege.\textsuperscript{145} Consequently, the Europeans found it difficult to keep their pet dogs and cats. Even the pet cemetery was raided. On 19 March 1900, an African was executed for stealing a horse.\textsuperscript{146} On Friday 2 March 1900, Sol Plaatje,
a young black South African court interpreter present during the siege, recorded in
his diary the measures taken by Africans to help themselves:

It is proposed to erect a place in the stad where soup will be cooked for the benefit of the
poor. It is soup made of oatmeal and horseflesh ... 147

Another blatant manipulation of the truth in order to justify the British was
the reporting of the relief of Peking. Morrison concluded with the excitement as
the British army marched into Peking.

Luncheon, the hard luncheon of horseflesh, came on, and we had just finished when the cry
rang through the Legation “The British are coming,” and there was a rush to the entrance
and up Canal-street towards the Water Gate. The stalwart form of the general and his staff
were entering by the Water Gate, followed by the 1st Regiment of Sikhs and the 7th
Rajputs. They passed down Canal-street, and amid a scene of indescribable emotion
marched to the British Legation. The siege had been raised.148

The account of the ‘English Tourist’ confirmed that of Morrison.

I could scarcely credit my own eyes when I saw the black faces of the Indian soldiers on
the lawn. At last we realised that we were reserved for a better fate than the Chinese
tortures we had dreamed of all those weary weeks.149

The ‘Lady’ also agreed: ‘[at] about 2 a.m., a new sound brought our hearts to our
mouths in sheer exultation – for it was as the music of the spheres – the Maxims or
the allied troops outside!’ She continued her description of the how the women
wrapped themselves up and went out to listen. She herself ran ‘gaspng’ in time to
join cheering as Sikhs ‘ran headlong across the lawn.’

General Gaselee’s voice gave me confidence as I heard him give the order to “clear the
Mongol market.” Those fiendish Chinese were soon silenced by a sortie of black warriors,
whose advent must have astonished them considerably.150

There was also a report in the Age about how ‘some of the besieged were startled to
see a Sikh standing in the middle of the tennis court surrounded by men, women
and children shaking his hands.’151

The ‘black faces’ and ‘black warriors’; the ‘Chinese tortures’; ‘General
Gaselee’s voice’; the ‘Mongol market’; and the ‘fiendish Chinese’ of these two
accounts encapsulate imperialist Orientalism - only partially relieved by the shaking of hands - summoned up by the siege.

Some accounts reveal that although British troops were first into their Legation, other troops had also arrived. 'Participator', who had 'worked like a nigger night and day,' said that 'shortly before 3 o’clock that afternoon two British officers, a Sikh officer and four Sikh privates burst into our Legation garden.' He then amplified this with details of the slow advance of the relieving British, American, Japanese, and Russian forces. The Americans, scaling the city walls and meeting strong resistance, entered Peking two hours before the British. 'To be first over the city wall and miss being the actual relieving party was hard luck.'\textsuperscript{152} The \textit{Age} also corrected the story that British troops were first to enter.\textsuperscript{153} Morrison was at the East Gate of the Palace to receive the victorious troops.\textsuperscript{154} A few days later he wrote in his diary:

Difficulty about going to the Palace tomorrow to witness triumphant entry of Russia into the Palace. I protested against being classed with the other correspondents.\textsuperscript{155}

Nevertheless he went early in the morning to witness the 'triumphal entry through the palace.' It was a 'Splendid Russian pageant'.\textsuperscript{156} Two days later, he wrote in his diary:

Russians still continue pouring in. Yesterday and last night says Baron von Rahden 2800 came. There are now or there will soon be 12000 here with artillery etc. And they are preparing to stay. All other powers are anxious to leave. Russia is determined to remain.\textsuperscript{157}

None of this should detract from the genuine feelings of those relieved. They had been through a terrible experience, even if this was to be overshadowed by the wars to come. The exclamation marks in Giles' diary entry of 14 August 1900 speak as much as the words themselves.

At 2.30. a.m. we heard the distant firing and the rattle of Maxims in the distance. Grand indeed!!!!!! ... At 3 p.m., amidst shouts and howls, a few of the 7th Rajputs entered the
Legation, quickly followed by Gaselee and his staff, and we were actually relieved at last!!!!! ... It was the moment of a lifetime, and can be better imagined than described. Shakings of hands galore! Women in tears! Sikhs patted on the back. Grimy gunners hugged!158

Further in that same entry, his words sum up British and Australian sentiments: 'It was magnificent that the British should be the first to relieve us!'159

The relief of Mafeking received much wider newspaper coverage in Australia than either that of the fall of Khartoum or that of the relief of the Legations. Riding with the British troops, the Queensland Mounted Infantry formed part of Lieut-Colonel Herbert Plumer's relief column, which could help explain the joy felt in Australia, The Argus reported:

It proves to the world once more how unreservedly British we are. The flag that still flies over Mafeking is the flag of Australasia’s fortunes, and will keep flying over these territories at any cost of heroic sacrifice and endurance.160

According to the Age, the rejoicings in London were 'unparalleled since the celebrations in honour of the relief of Lucknow in 1858.'161 In Australia, the same was also true.

Hats and umbrellas were thrown into the air, men shook each other by the hand, although perfect strangers; others yelled, and stopped to join the National Anthem, and then started to yell again until exhausted.162

As day wore on, people adorned themselves with flags and the 'children at last caught the contagion, and eagerly possessed themselves of bannerettes, toy trumpets and other deadly instruments, and joined in the carnival.'163 At the theatres, tableaux of Britannia started the evening, followed by patriotic songs sung by both performers and the audience.164 A speech by Mr. Justice Hobbs at the Town Hall was received with noisy acclamation.165 In Geelong social distinctions 'were forgotten in the transports of delight, to which people abandoned themselves, and,
as Britons, everybody shared equally in the glory of the flag that Baden-Powell and his gallant band kept flying over Mafeking.¹⁶⁶

This report was followed by a poem written for the occasion by “C”, the teacher-poet, James Lister Cuthbertson, of the Geelong Church of England Grammar School. The final line expressed how the siege had drawn the Empire together:

'Twas for the Queen we fought.¹⁶⁷

The Geelong Advertiser also printed in their entirety, sermons by the Rev. Canon Goodman and the Rev. Allan Webb. The latter compared the lifting of the siege to the delivery of the Israelites from Babylon. Identifying Australia with Britain, he told his congregation that God was on the British side.¹⁶⁸

The Sydney Morning Herald reporting that ‘hundreds of thousands of people here who are proud to be classed as citizens of the same Empire as Mafeking’s defenders’ were ready ‘to foregather, hop and skip, and sing any of the numerous national and patriotic themes which any presenter in the throng might choose for them.’¹⁶⁹ The newspaper reserved its most serious comments for its editorial on the 22nd of May. The demonstrations testified that ‘the seven-months siege, borne with splendid cheerfulness and unfaltering courage, had laid hold of the very heart of our people, and they saw reflected in its long duration and its happy end those qualities which make for the greatness of a race.’¹⁷⁰ The paper compared the rejoicings in London with those after the relief of Lucknow. The shared feelings in Australia and Britain meant that a people ‘which divided by so many seas yet remains constant to so many ideals and traditions in common must surely be ordained to union and not to separation in the fullness of the years.’¹⁷¹
Only the *Bulletin* looked askance at the outburst of public enthusiasm. A series of cartoons depicted an Australian sleeping off his alcoholic consumption or being fed Seidlitz Powder by a nurse to cure a hangover.\textsuperscript{172} The *Bulletin* commented on a strident group so fired by Gordon’s death at Khartoum that they were crying out for revenge. The article accused as warmongers those wanting to send a New South Wales Contingent, as if it were a sporting game to go and kill a few Arabs:

\ldots no Banshee shriek would be louder than the wail of lamentation which the horror-stricken ghost would utter … “Forgive them, for they know not what they do!”\textsuperscript{173}

Gordon’s death thus became an occasion for the *Bulletin* to argue that although Australians were Britons, in this new country they were also civilised Australians. As such, they should recognise that an enemy was not necessarily uncivilised. Given the *Bulletin*’s general stance towards Orientals, its arguments on this occasion suggest that it was far less anti-Arab than it was anti-Chinese: ‘If it is noble and elevating for Britons in Australia to offer their lives and their fortunes (nobody has yet done the latter) for their mother country’s sake, is it not noble and elevating also for the Arabs of the Soudan to lay down their lives and fortunes for the love of their mother country?’\textsuperscript{174} It was also derisory of Baden-Powell.\textsuperscript{175} Although lionised for years for his defence of Mafeking, the *Bulletin*’s comments accord with those of a later critic, Brian Gardiner. Gardiner argues that Baden-Powell had a siege mentality, which led him to a passive rather than an active defence of Mafeking, followed by his later defence of Rustenburg. There Baden-Powell sat out another siege, despite having been ordered by his commander, Lord Roberts, to leave the town and thereby avoid drawing off relief troops that could have been used to great effect elsewhere.\textsuperscript{176} When the First World War broke out,
Baden-Powell volunteered for active service, but Kitchener told him that he was more useful to the nation leading Boy Scouts.177

The story of Australian involvement in various sieges outside its borders has therefore suggested that this was more than simply supporting the British metropole in its overseas military excursions. This is no denying the accepted view that Australians, particularly those such as George Morrison of the Anglo-Australian stratum, were ready to participate or share in the triumphs and failures of Britain. That they did so is clear from contemporary newspaper and other accounts, as well as the repetition of the massacres at Lucknow and Cawnpore many years after the Indian Mutiny. Australians marched actually and metaphorically to the sieges. In addition, historians such as David Walker and Robert Dixon have identified the popularity of the invasion novel, relating this with Australian vulnerability in the face of declining British protection. We have seen in the sieges discussed in this chapter, however, something more than this. Australians did not suddenly develop this vulnerability coinciding with the retreat of the British navy to the Northern Hemisphere. On the contrary, from as early as the Indian Mutiny, Australian Orientalism was constructing a fortress Australia and adopting a siege mentality, a mentality about Asian invasion that was to last many years into the twentieth century.

NOTES
5 Editorial, *The Times*, 17 October 1900.
6 Ibid, p.3.
7 Ibid
11 Ibid, p.296.
12 Ibid, p.296.
13 Ibid, p.66.
22 Editorial, *Geelong Advertiser*, 17 February 1885.
26 Ibid, p.110.
28 strong to Charles Pearson, op. cit.
33 Ibid.
36 'Horrible Chinese Brutality', *Geelong Advertiser*, 6 November 1900.
37 'Chinese Atrocities: An American Lady Cut To Pieces', *Argus*, 8 November 1900.
38 'Women and Children Decapitated in the Streets', *Geelong Advertiser*, 9 August 1900.
39 'Awful Scenes at Peking', *Argus*, 17 July 1900.
40 'The Peking Atrocities: Act of Massacre; An Alleged Eye-witness; Shocking Barbarities', *Argus*, 23 July 1900.
41 Editorial, *Geelong Advertiser*, 8 November 1900.
42 'Fiendish Torture', *Age*, 17 November 1900.
43 Editorial, 'Argus', 30 June 1900; *Geelong Advertiser*, 17 November 1900.
47 'Defence of Peking, by a Participant', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 October 1900.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
58 A. H Smith, *China in Convulsion*, Edinburgh, Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1901, quoted
61 'Boxer Looters Executed', *Age*, 5 November 1900.
65 Ibid, 16 October 1900.
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69 Special Correspondent, ' Loot in China: Australians to Share', *Argus*, 22 November 1900.
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73 'The Death of General Gordon: Services in the Churches', *Argus*, 16 February 1885
74 Ibid.
75 'Gordon', *Bulletin*, 14 February 1885.
77 'Gordon: The Inner Man', *Argus*, 14 February 1885.
79 Lawrence Hanson and Elizabth, *Gordon: The Story of a Hero*, London, Peter Davies, 1953,
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80 Queen Victoria to Miss Augusta Gordon, 17 February 1885, quoted in H. E. Wortham, *Gordon:
84 Ibid, p.296.
85 A. W. Jose, *The Growth of Empire: A Handbook to the History of Greater Britain*, Sydney, 1897,
90 Ibid, p.35.
91 Ibid, p.140.
97 Strong to Charles Pearson, op. cit.
100 Ibid, p.194.
101 How Lord Roberts and his son won their Victoria Crosses', *The School Paper for Classes V and
102 Mafeking Relieved At Last', *Argus*, 21 May 1900.
105 Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness, British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914*, Ithica and
107 Ibid, p.3.
108 Ibid, p.44.
111 Ibid
125 Ibid.
126 Ibid.
127 'The working notes include an 'elephant gun'. Morrison, Diary, Op. Cit., 3 July 1900.
132 Thomann did not survive the siege. On 8 July, Morrison wrote in his diary that he was enjoying a glass of wine at the German Legation when Graf Soder came in laughing, because his men had just shot a Chinese mandarin through the hilt of his sword. 'Graf Soder went out and came back suddenly. They have killed the Austrian Commandant von Thomann. He ran across and found it was true.' Morrison also notes that the previous evening MacDonald had offered von Thomann command of the wall at the American barricade. 'He declined curtly. ''The command was too small for him for an [word covered by ink blot] officer of his seniority.'
137 Ibid
140 Ibid.
Ibid, 27 August 1900.
Ibid.
Ibid, 29 August 1900.
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'Australasia Rejoices', *Argus*, 21 May 1900.
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CHAPTER 10.

INVASION

We are guarding the last part of the world, in which the higher races can live and increase freely, for the higher civilisation.¹

The threat of invasion from the Orient was ever present, either as uncontrolled immigration, or as a military onslaught. Australian fears of Oriental immigration resulted in the White Australia Policy, and the fear of military invasion climaxed many decades later, when the Japanese bombed Darwin during the Second World War. In these fears, contradictions abounded, yet the Oriental ‘invasion’ that succeeded was neither of the above. Not perceived as threatening, the ‘cultural invasion’ was welcomed, at least by the Anglo-Australian élite. Thus the greatest contradiction to Australian fears was an ‘invasion’ or ‘cultural borrowing’ that had nothing to do with economic or military security.

As discussed in earlier chapters, the Indian Mutiny, and the huge populations of China, India and Japan had worked on Australian misgivings, including those of two politicians important to this thesis, Charles Pearson and Alfred Deakin. Pearson warned that the populations of India and Japan were so great that they could not be exterminated by anything other than uncivilised wars in the Chinese fashion, and that China was certain to grow and spill over its borders.²

In Washington, Theodore Roosevelt disagreed, and wrote to Pearson that

… where you speak of the comparative mercifulness of modern warfare as being one reason why the inferior races will not be exterminated or dispossessed bodily by the superior, don’t you think that this mercifulness would disappear instantly if the inferior races began to encroach on the limits of the superior? What occurs in our own Southern States at the least sign of a race war between the blacks and the whites seems to me to
foreshadow what would occur on a much larger scale if any black or yellow people should really menace the whites.  

Australians were not convinced. Deakin wrote that unless a federated Australia was prepared to resist invasion, the gap between itself and Asia might be bridgeable. Australia had to prepare for war in the interests of peace.  

Although without weapons or opposition, an infiltration had already started by the time of these pronouncements. Chinoiserie had come to Australia through designs on English ceramics and household items such as furniture and glassware, and sometimes by way of genuine Cantonese silverware and ceramics. Even puppetry included *ombres chinoises*. At trade exhibitions in Europe and Australia, little distinction was made between Chinese and Japanese designs. Clothing was also part of Europe and Australia’s fascination with the Orient. As far back as the eighteenth century, chinoiserie was evident in the painted silks of robes of the *chemise à la reine* style. The layering and wrapping of the Japanese kimono inspired designers of the stratified and swaddled styles of the 1910s. The Australian artists, John Longstaff and Rupert Bunny, painted their wives and other women posed either in kimonos or on balconies after the style of Kitagawa Utamaro. Bunny explained why he did this.

It gives a man a sort of luxurious feel of being an Oriental Pasha, as he lies in his chair, smoking ... to see himself surrounded by graceful houris clad in gauze and gorgeous draperies, shimmering ...  

In 1888, Tom Roberts decorated his studio with a Japanese fan, a paper lantern, an Oriental cane chair, and screens. An acquaintance, the artist John Peter Russell, wrote to Roberts that ‘Jap artisan art’ should be seen alongside that of the Italian Renaissance. Both Roberts and Russell had painted in Europe, where Orientalist paintings were resurfing after critical attack in the 1870s.
According to James Thompson, this nineteenth century artistic Orientalism allowed Europeans to imagine, to experience and to remember the East.\textsuperscript{13} It also allowed Australians to do the same.

For those who could not afford to buy paintings, The National Gallery of Victoria gave them the opportunity to view Oriental arts and crafts. The ‘Rough Minutes’ of the Gallery record purchases of such material. Although these purchases are few and far between, this does not necessarily indicate a lack of interest by the Gallery. During the period 1885-1910, the Rough Minutes show that the Gallery was prepared to accept gifts. More often than not, The Trustees declined the offers of sale. The Rough Minutes also show a similar parsimony when it came to European and Australian arts and crafts. Funding cutbacks had been instituted in 1896, leaving only enough money to pay for current periodicals and existing orders voted by Parliament.\textsuperscript{14} Between 1885-1910, the Trustees declined over 40 offers of sale and accepted less than ten. Despite this, a selection of examples of the offers and observations illustrates that the cultivated middle-class Australians were interested in Oriental art and craft.

Perhaps the most curious item, offered to and declined by the Trustees after an inspection, was a carved brick from Pagahu, Burma.\textsuperscript{15} Indian artefacts and paintings included an offer by Sir William Clare to lend Nicholas Chevalier’s, ‘The Parting of Gaudama’, which they accepted with thanks.\textsuperscript{16} They were later given the original sketch of N. Chevalier’s painting entitled, ‘The Indian Shepherd’.\textsuperscript{17} The Trustees purchased a suit of Pathan armour.\textsuperscript{18} The Revenue and Agricultural Department, Simla, sold the Gallery a set of casts representing decorative architecture at Fatehpur-Sikri for 150 Rupees (£15). At the same time, the Trustees haggled with Mr. A. Simpson over the purchase price of a hand-worked Indian silk
shawl. They were prepared to pay £20 instead of the requested £26.\textsuperscript{19} They declined the offer from Mr Scott, submitted through Adelaide Art Gallery, to paint a view of Mount Kinchingunga, India, at a cost of £500.\textsuperscript{20} They noted that the Agent-General had forwarded a collection of Indian and Persian Art Objects and presentation arms by Mr. Purdon Clark.\textsuperscript{21} He also forwarded the miniature paintings on ivory of the Mogul Emperors presented by His Highness the Rajah Kumah Nawab Thyama Kuma Tagore.\textsuperscript{22}

Middle Eastern works on offer included a collection of various Arab weapons.\textsuperscript{23} There were also early Egyptian decorated dresses, a bronze Egyptian antique for £3.3.0., two Persian tobacco pipes, and sets of ancient Persian armour.\textsuperscript{24} The Felton Bequest Committee approved the purchase of a Persian Tray, a Persian Rice box & a pair of buffalo horn tips (recommended by the Trustees).\textsuperscript{25}

Among the Chinese works purchased was a carved panel from a temple of the Chinese Empress. The Director reported that the Gallery had paid £2, rather than the asking price of £7.\textsuperscript{26} There were also specimens of Chinese porcelain.\textsuperscript{27}

Japanese art and crafts were well represented in the offers. These included a cloisonné vase, pottery, three saké cups in red lacquer, a Japanese musical instrument, and Japanese woodcuts.\textsuperscript{28}

Before finding out that they were not entitled to do so, the Trustees and Felton Bequests’ Committee authorised the purchase of pictures up to a given sum, including ‘Aliens at Prayer’ by W. Rothenstein and ‘The Japanese Gown’ by P. W. Steer. They also requested Mons. J. J. Marquet de Vasselot, of the Louvre, Paris, to select works to the value of £1000. Amongst these was a seventeenth-century Japanese screen in six leaves by Sotatsou, which did not arrive until 1907.\textsuperscript{29} In 1909, under the Felton Bequest, the Gallery acquired a collection of Japanese
colour prints. At the end off that year, the Director reported that the prints had been withdrawn for the present, as the screens in which they were exhibited were required for the exhibition of Student work.

Exhibitions were an important part of the Gallery’s service, although after much debate the Trustees declined to send any contributions to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, London 1886. In 1902, the Librarian reported the return of three pictures lent to the Bendigo Exhibition, one of which, ‘Arab Sheikh entering Cairo’, had been damaged slightly. In 1908, when the Colac Free Library requested a loan of two pictures, amongst those offered by the Trustees was ‘Arab Prisoners’.

Melburnians were not the only Australians to enjoy Oriental art. In Sydney, Sir Charles Nicholson, Vice-Provost (1851-1854), and Provost (1854-1862) of the University of Sydney, donated his collection of antiquities to it. His gift, including 400 Egyptian antiquities, was the foundation collection of the Nicholson Museum.

Australian artists were involved in Orientalism, despite MacKenzie’s claim that ‘of British imperial possessions throughout the world, of which those of Australia and the Pacific, India, and even South Africa are perhaps best known, none of these areas has a tradition of painting attached to it of the ‘Orientalist’ sort’. Mackenzie justifies his position by calling the artists either ‘lesser figures’ or ‘amateurs’. It is difficult to understand this claim, for Russell and Menpes, for example, spent time in Japan. Broinowski correctly points out that Streton and Roberts spent time painting in Egypt for the London market. Streton’s paintings of mosques, bazaars and Egyptian street life were models that other Australian artists working later in North Africa. As discussed in the India chapter, in his painting Purple Noon’s Transparent Might Streton employed the same haze that
Deakin had observed in India. Ursula Prunster argues that the aesthetic of Australian landscape painting, such as seen in this painting, arose through a response to the hot climate of the Orient.39 MacKenzie’s claim about the lack of Australian tradition in Orientalist paintings can therefore only be true insofar that these painters were not painting from the imagination. MacKenzie’s comments, however, are applicable to Australian artists, when he refers to how they reversed northern values in their employment of colour and shadow.40 These same values are evident in their Australian landscapes. One such painting, Purple Noon’s Transparent Might, was the only Australian painting bought that year by the National Gallery of Victoria after the funding cutbacks.41 The Gallery bought the painting after making one offer of £150, followed by another of £126 the next day. Streeton held them to the first offer.42

Japonisme influenced Australian art, and this influence is nowhere more obvious than in the 9x5 Impressions Exhibition held in Brixton’s Gallery, Swanston Street, Melbourne, 1889. The cover of the exhibition catalogue, designed by Conder, included cherry blossom, and the exhibition rooms were filled with Japanese flowers, screens and fans.43 Aside from the cherry blossom, there was yet another reference to Orientalism in the catalogue. It was the opening quotation from the French Orientalist artist, Gérôme: ‘When you draw, form is the most important thing; but in painting the first thing to look for is the general impression of colour.’44 A Trustee of the National Gallery, James Smith of the Argus, was not impressed by the exhibition, despite the fact that the pictures sold well: ‘The modern impressionist asks you to see pictures in splashes of colour, in slap-dash brushwork, and in sleight-of-hand methods of execution leading to the proposition
of pictorial conundrums, which would baffle solution if there were no label or catalogue.\textsuperscript{44}

This exhibition reflected how Japonisme had reached into middle-class Australian homes before the turn of the century. A profusion of fans, woodblock prints, cloisonné vases, and other japanalia filled the rooms.\textsuperscript{46} Australians could read about Japanese household products in books available in Australia, such as Alcock's \textit{Art and Industries of Japan} and \textit{The Keramic Art of Japan}.\textsuperscript{47} The craze continued for many years. In 1904, at the St Kilda Mayoral Ball, poppies arranged in long ropes alternated with ribbons caught to a large Japanese lantern, ‘over which hung a Jap umbrella’.\textsuperscript{48} An indication of the strength of Japonisme is that its more sophisticated effects continued well beyond the time frame of this thesis in the prints of Margaret Preston, which until the 1940s were stylistic reminders of Hokusai.

The interest in Chinoiserie and Japonisme was further kindled in other arts such as theatre, music and architecture. The first ballet performed in Australia was \textit{The Indian Maid} in 1835.\textsuperscript{49} Australian audiences regularly saw Chinese theatre, encompassing opera, musicians and acrobats, from the 1850s. The number and size of these visits can be appreciated in the fact that just in Victoria fourteen performing licences were granted between 1858-1870, and in 1894 an acrobatic troupe was so large a whole train was required to take it from Palmerston to Pine Creek.\textsuperscript{50}

Artistic merit alone was not enough to draw audiences. When the Po An Toy company performed at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Melbourne, in November 1860, the advertisements included ‘CHINESE LADIES with small feet, who will perform for the first time in the colony’.\textsuperscript{51}
Australian artists found subjects in Japanese theatrical visits. When Japanese performers were in Melbourne in 1873, Nicholas Chevalier painted them from life. Between 1886-87, Phil May, Arthur Collingridge and Constance Roth drew them in Sydney.\textsuperscript{52}

While Australian audiences saw these genuine Oriental performers, they were also treated to Western operatic Orientalism. These operas included *Les Pêcheurs de Perles* (Bizet 1863, "Ancient Ceylon"), *Aida* (Verdi 1871, Pharonic Egypt), *Lakme* (Delibes 1883, mid nineteenth-century India), and *Madame Butterfly* Puccini 1904, (early twentieth-century Nagasaki). Lenore Manderson points out that all of these operas are fantasies of political intrigue and sexual mores.\textsuperscript{53} The question arises, therefore, whether this was part of a genuine European Orientalism that saw the Orient as a hot-bed of such intrigue and sexual practices, or whether it was a chance for European audiences to hold a mirror to their own society. *The Mikado*, by Gilbert and Sullivan suggests it was the latter.

Algernon Mitford, who had been employed in the British Embassy in Tokyo, gave Arthur Sullivan some fragments of Japanese music, which Sullivan used in *The Mikado*.\textsuperscript{54} Japanese performers in Hyde Park also provided first-hand material.\textsuperscript{55}

*The Mikado* was the most successful of the Savoy operas in its opening run of 672 performances, but the English audiences knew it was a satire on their own politics and society rather than a drama about Japan.\textsuperscript{56} In the words of G. K. Chesterton,

There is not, the whole length of *The Mikado*, a single joke that is a joke against Japan. They are all ... jokes against England. ... *The Mikado* is not a picture of Japan; but it is a Japanese picture.\textsuperscript{57}
Nevertheless, the production made use of authentic Japanese costumes, some of which were over 200 years old, and the Japanese village in Knightsbridge offered every possible assistance. Most of the reviews were enthusiastic: ‘we are all being more or less Japanned’ wrote the Daily Telegraph.

In Sydney, The Mikado met with equal success, again with every attempt to provide authenticity, when it opened in 1885. When it moved to Melbourne, it opened the reconstructed Princess Theatre at 8 pm on 18 December 1886. Sir Henry Brougham Loch, the Governor of Victoria was in the Vice-Regal box, and the orchestra was conducted by the composer Alfred Cellier. Before the audience could enjoy the opera, Cellier conducted the overture to The Merry Wives of Windsor, during which time the ceiling opened to reveal the night sky, and the panels on either side of the proscenium arch were raised, revealing ferneries, grottoes and waterfalls.

Australian audiences did not necessarily recognise the satirical implications of the opera, but it is possible that the élite did so. The élite referred to Britain as ‘Home’, and generally identified with many of the manners of the metropole. The colonial gentry, who had assumed the position of an hereditary ruling élite, combined aristocratic wealth, education and leisure modelled on England. They were joined later by others, who although lacking wealth, gained entry through their birth, education, and personal prestige. These families were educated in private schools. John Rickard argues that these schools, in their imitation of ‘English public schools, with imperial pro-consuls, headmasters and Anglican bishops’, led to a quasi-British Australian middle-class, in which social institutions and invented traditions met one another. Eric Hobsbawm has shown that rituals and organisations of middle-class society, including amateur sport, were
developing in Britain and Europe at the same time. The processes were similar in Australia. “Lauderdale” aimed to give some idea of Representative men “in their habits as they live”. His interview with Capt. J. P. Chirnsdie illustrates that he held similar conservative views as his contemporaries in Britain.

I am what you might call a liberal conservative, and not what a number give me credit for. I am not a rank Tory. As for female suffrage, I may tell you I am point blank opposed to it, as I believe nearly every true woman is, who considers, as I do, her proper sphere in life.

In Men of Yesterday, Margaret Kiddle applauds the comparison between the life of the Western District of Victoria and English country life in the eighteenth century. This country life was not confined to these Victorian plains. In 1873, Edwin Carton Booth described the Bontherambo homestead near Pechelba as having as “pleasant an appearance as could be found in any out-of-the-way corner of the Old World.” After describing the garden, he was moved to further admiration.

It has terraces and corridors, magnificent entrance-hall and handsome rooms. Plate-glass glistens in the windows, whilst London and Paris-made furniture garnish the rooms.

Booth added that mansions like Bontherambo are to be met with in every direction in the colony of Victoria. At intervals of a score of miles or so, they dot the wide plains of the West, they nestle under the shadow of mountains, and are to be found on all sorts if out-of-the-way bends and banks of the river.

Authentic or not, the opera inspired Australians into what has been called a Mikado-land dream. Fans, umbrellas and Mikado parties figured largely in this dream.

Not all was smooth sailing. Although it was known that the Japanese felt the opera ridiculed their emperor, Dr. Price, the Melbourne City organist, mistakenly played some of the music in place of the Japanese national anthem during the 1913 visit of the Japanese fleet. Except for one midshipman, all the Japanese officers remained standing in order not to embarrass their hosts.
Architecture also shared the Mikado fantasy. William Pitt, M. L. C., lived in
a large house he had named “Mikado” at Abbotsford in grounds large enough in
which to teach his gun dog about shooting.\textsuperscript{74} The composer, Percy Grainger, and his
mother lived in a house named “Mandalay”. There they gave a successful garden
party, according to the social notes.\textsuperscript{75} Less fanciful were the attempts using
Japanese principles to build houses. At New Farm, one such house for Judge G. W.
Paul of the Brisbane District Court impressed the \textit{Boomerang} with its artistry, even
if at the same time it was not suitable for Australian families and their ‘refractory
children’\textsuperscript{76} In 1909, another house was thought to be ‘eminently suitable for the
Brisbane climate but quite impractical for the Australian way of living’\textsuperscript{77}

This house was neither a complete aberration nor completely impractical.
Australian houses had developed from early colonial Georgian buildings, which
gave no protection from the hot sun, into more suitable dwellings shaded by
verandas. The veranda, introduced from India, had accustomed Australians at least
to a small part of Oriental architecture. It became synonymous with Australian
architecture. In 1887, John Sulman, in the first reference to ‘An Australian Style’,
described the veranda as ‘a slight and flimsy structure stuck on outside a building,
of which it forms an integral part – nothing more.’\textsuperscript{78} But even before this
formalisation of style, the English writer, Edwin Carton Booth, had been struck by
the importance of the veranda in Australian life. It had become so much part of
Australian life, that in 1873, he advised visitors ‘to pass by on the other side’ of a
Melbourne street to avoid “the Veranda”. There the stock, or sharebrokers of the
city, met there with ‘spirits too buoyant, and imaginations too vivid’\textsuperscript{79} He was
disparaging an informal gathering of city businessmen, but to Australians the
veranda was their living and working space, whether it was the board of the
shearing shed, the Collins Street office, the worker’s cottage, the city mansion or
the rural farmhouse. As Philip Drew writes, the veranda had become a metaphor for
Australian culture. Australians were ‘the people of the veranda’.  

The veranda was not the only Oriental architectural import. On a fanciful
note in 1841, Thomas Adolphus Perry had given the name ‘Bendemeer’ to his
station on the MacDonald River in New England. Perry’s father had been a friend
of Thomas More, who had written *Lalla Rookh: An Oriental Romance* in 1832, in
which a nightingale sings all the day long round a bower of roses by Bendemeer’s
stream.  

Striking a more practical note, by 1853, colonists had imported some
16,000 prefabricated houses from India, China and Singapore. This figure is a
measure of the magnitude of the quiet Oriental invasion. The influence of the
Anglo-Indian bungalow began after 1820. ‘Bungalow’ was a corruption of the
Hindustani adjective *bangala,* ‘of Bengal’.  

Early Australian buildings still extant
evidence their Indian antecedents. The Lancer Barracks, Parramatta, (1822-24) had
both side and front verandas. In 1824, John Macarthur’s Hambledon cottage, also
at Parramatta, (1824), incorporated a wide eastern verandah.  

A clear example of
Indian influence can be seen in Horsley, at Horsely Park, Fairfield, (1832), built by
Captain George Weston, a former Calcutta merchant captain. Here, behind the
recessed veranda with bedrooms at each end, is a central space after the Anglo-
Indian bungalow style. The ‘French’ doors and the teak adjustable louvres or
‘jhilmils’ over the windows were imported from India.  

Not all buildings that Australians saw on their Oriental travels met with their
approval. The indefatigable James Hingston commented on native buildings, large
and small, wherever he travelled. The palaces of Lucknow were certainly stunning
in their visions of the “Arabian Nights” and “Lalla Rookh”. The houses, of many
storeys, and coloured blue, white or yellow in the ‘chouk’ or native quarter of Bombay, attracted him; but those in Calcutta were ‘black or brown, with dirt, smoke and age’.

Further to the East, Cambodia was ‘a dirty place of Malay huts and dirty dens…’ China was no better. There he resisted all the attempts of his guide, Ah Kum, to entice him into

shabby old buildings, that had only been tolerable at their best, where the grandees of the city lived. The vice-regal residence, or what was equivalent to it, looked a very tawdry affair, not to say somewhat dirty. Like the Japanese, the Chinese do not excel in palaces and temples.

He also found the Japanese dwelling not to his liking. In the place of doors or windows were sliding sashes glazed with paper, resulting in a house that was ‘full of draughts and emptiness, and is wholly destitute of fireside comforts.’ This should not surprise us. Photographs show Victorian and Edwardian houses cluttered with furniture and decorations. The clutter was not entirely western in origin. As discussed earlier, Japanese fans were part of the decoration, but Indian and Chinese objects could also be found. A 1904 photograph of Sir John Madden seated at his pianola shows a large lacquer cabinet of Chinese or Japanese origin, and an octagonal inlaid stool of probably Indian origin.

In 1902, The School Paper, after informing the Class IV pupils about the new alliance forged between Britain and Japan, instructed them about the type of house they would see if they visited Japan. Unlike Hingston, the anonymous writer of the article was restrained in his description of the interiors, but he paid much attention to the bathroom facilities: the Japanese were a very clean people.

If the above Oriental inroads had been welcomed by middle-class Australians, what was it that so alarmed many others? There was certainly the fear of uncontrolled Chinese immigration, although by 1900 legislation had seen the
numbers fallen to below 30,000. This fear was mainly to do with the notion that the Chinese would deprive white Australians of their work. It was also to do with the fear that the Anglo-Australians, with their conception of China as part of the ‘Far East’ rather than as a place close at hand, could not be trusted.

The fear had commenced when the Chinese arrived on the goldfields in 1854. Before that, many had been employed as cooks and shepherds on the outback stations of New South Wales. On his visit to Australia in the 1870s, Trollope saw a shearers’ cook on a New South Wales’ station. This Chinese employee earned 25s. a week and his rations. For this, the shearers kept him busy, and he was generally seen chopping onions outside his hut door. By comparison, the shearers earned on average 7s. 6d a day, but paid that amount each week for their own food. The shearers, therefore, earned considerably more than their cook. In the early days of shearing, Chinese were employed as shearers. They were slow workers, but the care they took meant that they were so highly valued they were also employed as instructors for white shearers. So successful were the Chinese that in 1890 the Queensland Shearers’ Union adopted rule 53:

(a) no member of this union shall deal with Chinese. (b) no member of this union shall patronise any person who deals with or employs Chinese. (c) no member of this union shall work for any one who employs Chinese in any capacity. (d) these recommendations to be enforced after 1st March 1891.

On the goldfields, Booth reported that the Chinese had been driven with ‘tyrannic cruelty’ from one goldfield to another. To support themselves, they had become market gardeners, and as a result

the reign of “mutton and damper,” with, in the cynically jocular language of the shepherd and digger, “damper and mutton for a change,” was over; cabbage and lettuce, potatoes, turnips, and carrots, then bunches of grapes, and baskets of tomatoes, fruits, and flowers in
plenty, and at cheap rates, became teachers of the people; and the lessons taught were comfort and content.\textsuperscript{100}

The ironic result of this persecution was that the lessons of comfort and content led to white Australians themselves taking up land clearing with 'British pluck and spirit' so that 'the land laughed with a rich harvest.'\textsuperscript{101} The harvest was other than that of vegetables. Rolls claims that about three-quarters of all the vegetables grown in Australia during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century were cultivated by the Chinese.\textsuperscript{102} This may or may not be true, given Rolls' penchant for estimating figures that seem to support his views. Nevertheless, the Chinese market gardener was certainly a well-known figure in towns and cities.

This contribution to the welfare of white Australians did not stop the persecution of the Chinese. The larrikins that "Vagabond" had wanted to put between the shafts of jinrickshaws viciously attacked Chinese hawkers in the streets of Sydney and Melbourne from about 1860 onwards. Some of the hawkers were killed and the larrikins tried for murder.\textsuperscript{103}

Despite their persecution, the Chinese found that market gardens were so economically viable, that they were prepared to pay huge amounts for lease of the necessary land. At Kangaroo Flat, the annual rent was equivalent to the freehold value of land, and at Palmerston three times the freehold value. Purchase was seldom outright, because the hostility of the white population.\textsuperscript{104} The inference of Rolls' argument here is that the miners themselves were to blame for the hostility, which might be supported by Carton Booth's remarks above. However, in 1882, "Vagabond" differed markedly. He wrote that no working miner 'ever had the animosity against the Chinese that was displayed by the larrikins of the town'. The Chinese and the miners worked side by side in amity. In the Cook district, only
four policemen were on duty. Inspector Clohesy said to him, "If they were
Irishmen here I should want an army of police to keep them quiet."105

The explanation for this divergence in views might lie in the geographical
locations, given that the Queensland climate was often thought to be too enervating
for white labour. Deakin considered that the future of northern Australia might
depend upon coloured labour, and he suggested that the cheapest could be found in
Madras and Calcutta.106 A decade later, another of his élite Victorian
contemporaries, H. Emmerton, held similar views about the necessity of importing
Oriental labour, this time from a different source.

I feel sure that our legislators will soon awaken to the necessity of modifying the restraints
against Japanese in the Northern Territory ... I should think myself that of all the races we
could establish in the North there are none more suitable than the Japanese. The little
brown man has always proved himself a good worker, and those we have amongst us have
not, generally speaking, proved bad citizens. They are certainly energetic, sober,
industrious people, and, I think, are the least of many evils.107

Carton Booth observed that the Cooktown of 1876, because of the diggings,
was 'as busy and prosperous a place any on the Australian continent'.108 He noted
that the 'Celestials' had mustered in Cooktown, and had paid the highest prices for
land on which to build stores and hotels. What then followed in his narrative
illuminates both the attitude of the miners towards the Chinese and what might
happen because of the sub-tropical climate.

The white man, the gold-digger especially, resents this intrusion, and taxes the almond-
eyed ones pretty heavily; but in a country so well adapted to his nature he is sure to
prosper, and prosperity has a powerful attraction for him. It will be interesting to watch the
progress of Cooktown and its surrounding district, if only because of the peculiarity
attending its settlement in the admixture of races.109

It is this veiled threat of miscegenation that was to be taken up in force by
what Walker refers to as Australian invasion narratives, novels that told of bloody
struggles between white, Australian defenders and the yellow hordes.110 That aside,
Carton Booth’s observations of the miners’ hostility to the Chinese are consistent wherever he went, north or south. There is little reason to doubt that they reflect what this English visitor saw. Conversely, “Vagabond’s” remarks cannot be ignored, for they appeared firstly in the Argus and the Australasian, before being published in book form. Presumably enough of his Australian readers thought along the same lines to warrant this publication. This does not mean that “Vagabond” was reflecting a general view, but his observations are an acute summary of why the Chinese became so feared. The Chinese were to the fore when skilled labour was required. In addition to possessing wonderful organising powers, they were sober and industrious. This all meant for “Vagabond” that it was not their vices that Australians feared, but their virtues.111 “Vagabond” had earlier observed that the ‘bigoted anti-Chinese cry in Australia has always arisen in the large towns, where the Australian “Bill Nye”, the loafer who won’t work, cries out, “We are ruined by Chinese cheap labour.”’112 The truth of this may be gauged by the Queensland Shearers’ Union’s banning of the Chinese shearers.

The state of the furniture trade in Victoria was another example. To support his argument about the undesirable effects of Chinese competition, Charles Pearson referred to trade in that colony.

See the evidence upon Technical Education in Victoria taken before a Commission in 1888. Mr. Svenson, a cabinetmaker, was asked, “You think that the Chinese competition has interfered with you.” “Yes; very much. I hardly know one of what I may call my mates in the cabinet-making line. They have all gone to other occupations.” Mr. Harwood, a cabinetmaker, said, “The lower branches of the trade are monopolised by the Chinese.” - Blue Book, pp. 37 and 46, published 1889.113

Pearson shared his views of Chinese labour monopoly with the Englishman, Archibald Coquhuoun, although the latter’s Orientalism went a step further in what could happen to Western industry.
The Chinaman fulfils in the highest degree the ideal of an intelligent human machine. It is evident that in many important industries use will be made of this still latent activity, and that the seat of many industries will therefore be transplanted to Chinese ground.\textsuperscript{114}

The furniture trade is a good example of the confusion that could occur about the effects of Chinese labour on that of white Australian workers. Although there were complaints by white unionists against the inroads of the Chinese, the numbers of Chinese factories and workers do not fully support their arguments. Victoria certainly had the majority of Chinese factories, some of which were to be found in regional centres such as Geelong, Echuca and Castlemaine, but the most were in central Melbourne. In 1889, ninety European factories employed 1526 hands, while thirty Chinese employed 410. Even these figures can be misleading, for in 1880 Ah Yet employed seventeen European Australians in his Melbourne factory. 1894 was the only year in which Chinese tradesmen were in the majority, but even then there were only 425 Chinese in 45 factories to 346 Europeans in 46.\textsuperscript{115} Despite this, H.A. Harwood of the United Furniture Trade Society of Victoria, moved a resolution at the 1885 second trade union congress in Sydney, to the effect that the Chinese, naturalised or not, should remove their pigtails, dress and act like Europeans, and be penalised by a poll tax of £30. Mr Trenworth of the Victorian Operative Bootmakers moved an amendment. The clause about cutting off the pigtails should be removed, because ‘they ought not to resort to so cruel a process.’\textsuperscript{116} Rolls comments that this amendment demonstrates that some unionists were reasonable.\textsuperscript{117} What it really shows, by not challenging the other parts of the resolution, is that the depth of unionist anti-Chinese feeling was so strong that the unionists were prepared to discriminate against Australians of a different colour than their own.
By 1896, lobbying of the Victorian Legislative Council had seen the amendment of the Factories and Workshops Act. A single Chinese working for himself had to register as a factory. Work was prohibited between 5.30 p.m. and 7.30 a.m. during the week, after 2 p.m. on Saturdays, and completely on Sundays. The new regulations about work hours interfered with opium smoking, because the Chinese normally commenced work in the afternoon, finishing at midnight before smoking and sleeping.\textsuperscript{118} Although the new hours could be interpreted as protecting both European and Chinese workers from exploitation, there is another interpretation. As the regulations did not simply specify a maximum number of hours, but instead the specified hours interfered with the known life-style of the Chinese workers, the amendment was specifically aimed at the Chinese in order to make their lives difficult. That this interpretation is likely can be found in the lingering discrimination to be found in a 1934 poster that had to be displayed on the walls of furniture factories. Here the Chinese working week is considerably shorter than that of their white counterparts.

In any factory where any Chinese works, and in any other factory where any person is employed in preparing, manufacturing, or assembling articles of furniture, no person shall perform or employ, allow, permit or authorise any person whomsoever to perform any work of any nature whether connected with the business of any such factory or not:

(a) In the case of Chinese on any day before forty-five minutes after seven o'clock in the morning or after half-past five o'clock in the evening, Monday to Friday, inclusive, or on Saturday, or on Sunday, or a public holiday at any time whatever. (b) In the case of persons other than Chinese, on any day before half-past seven o'clock in the morning or after six o'clock in the evening, Monday to Friday, inclusive, or on Saturday after one o'clock in the afternoon, or on Sunday at any time whatever.\textsuperscript{119}

This poster is in a continuum of the racist Orientalism shown by the young George Morrison, who abandoned any pretence of impartiality when he contemplated the thought of Chinese immigration. He claimed that the Chinese had driven white Australians out of the Northern Territory. Unrestricted entry into other
colonies must be prevented ‘at all hazards’, because white Australians could not compete, and should not intermix or marry. The Chinese were ‘aliens in language, thought and customs … working animals of low grade but great vitality… temperate, frugal, hard-working and law-evading, if not law-abiding,’ and they could ‘outwork an Englishman, and starve him out of the country.’

This Orientalism also reveals a side of Morrison that he would later exhibit more vociferously in his reports of the Siege of Peking. It is his identification of himself as an Englishman, despite the fact that his parents came from Scotland. This is the type of Anglo-Australian identification with England as ‘Home’, which Trollope had noted. The Tasmanians were almost ‘English-mad’, and in the rest of Australia a British mode of thinking prevailed in education, politics and social position. As Levi points out, ‘Home news’ was ‘English news’. Despite this, Levi differs from the thrust of this thesis in his assertion that Australian élites between 1850 and 1890 found it difficult to convince themselves that ‘Far East’ was in fact anything but far away.

The Chinese were not the only Orientals to be singled out. In earlier chapters, it has been argued that Australians who visited the lands of the Orient developed a multi-faceted Orientalism. Australians who remained at home, however, did not always show such a preparedness to accept new ideas. This was particularly the case where they employed Oriental labour.

‘Kanaka’ labour had been imported to the ‘empty north’. As already mentioned, the empty north had given rise to invasion scare novels; but there was more than this in the Australian attitude to the coloured labour. Trollope discussed the use of South Sea Islander labour in the sugar cane fields. He doubted that without imported labour any Queensland sugar could be grown, and he noted that
should these islanders should be expelled, it was possible that Chinese or Indian coolies might take their place.125 It is unlikely that Trollope was expressing a view uniquely his own. It is more likely to have been a view that he had often heard in Australia.

The Orientalism displayed here is one that has grown from Pearson’s argument that Europeans could not flourish under Tropical conditions, and that Europeans would not work with the hand where an ‘inferior’ race worked.126 Pearson also claimed that among the ‘higher’ races was the white aryan race, which would ‘govern and direct in virtue of a higher intelligence and more resolute will.’127 This was the view more likely to be adopted by those Australians who did not actually venture into the Orient. It did not hold only in Queensland. A striking example of Australian ignorance about India labour can be found in Victoria in 1883.

Indian ‘coolies’ had been imported to work on the Tooram Estate. There had been no consideration given to any possible ethnic or cultural differences, their employer, a Mr Thomas Mcleod Palmer, apparently assuming that there were none. Tooram at the time, reported the Warrnambool Standard, was ‘the greatest dairy farm in Victoria, if not in Australia’.128 To avoid the expense of hiring the European labour necessary to husband and milk the 600 cows, Palmer contracted James Howard de Rinzy, a Melbourne importer/merchant, to engage 25 Indian labourers, who arrived at the end of December 1882.129 Among these labourers were eight Muslim Afghans. Except for Gomez, a Christian from Portuguese Goa, the others were Hindus from northern India. Gomez was the only English speaker, which meant that only through him could Palmer be in contact with the others, who never accepted Gomez. As well as appointing Gomez as his butler, Palmer also appointed
Hassah as overseer. It is at this stage that Palmer’s ignorance about his coolie workforce became apparent, for he did not seem to understand the tensions that could arise from the religious differences. This lack of understanding led to the death of one of his workers. The first that the citizens of the district heard of this was in their local newspaper.

Intelligence of the gravest character reached town on Saturday night, causing for some time the greatest sensation amongst the inhabitants. The news spread like wild-fire that the coolies employed on Mr. T. M. L. Palmer’s estate had mutinied, and that he had taken repressive measures, during which he had been severely handled himself.  

Palmer had accused his workers of stealing a watch. When it was returned to him by the overseer, Hassah, arguments broke out between the Sunnis and the Shiahs, which in turn led to Palmer himself feeling threatened when they advanced in his direction. He stopped them all by firing shots over their heads, except for Sirdar Khan, who ran at him with a fork. Palmer shot Khan three times, and then contacted the local police. Despite medical attention, Khan died of his wounds, and following the inquest, Palmer stood trial for manslaughter.  

The report of Palmer’s trial and acquittal reveals the attitudes of the Australians of the district.

The trial of T. M. L. Palmer, for the manslaughter of Sirdar Khan, an Afghan, at Tooram, on 17th March last, was concluded on Thursday and resulted in the acquittal of the accused. The result was received in Court with great applause. His Honour, Judge Holroyd, appeared to be much annoyed at the outburst, and ordering the doors of the Court to be closed, he lectured the assemblage on the unseemliness of this behaviour. The result has given much satisfaction, Mr. Palmer being well liked in the district.

The editorial of the same day leaves no doubt.

The applause which greeted this announcement in Court, though very unseemly in a hall of justice, was, we feel sure, re-echoed through the length and breadth of this district.

It might be assumed that it was simply the case of Palmer’s popularity with his neighbours that gave rise to such satisfaction, but it is unlikely that this was the
case. The editor of the *Warrnambool Standard* moralised about ‘coorie’ labour, and manifest in his words is all the Orientalism of bigotry, fear and misunderstanding that led up to the introduction of White Australia.

From this affair some good will come. The public will have gained the knowledge that the introduction of coolie labour into Victoria is an error. A gross, palpable, flagrant error which it is a pity the Government could not have averted, or cannot now avert. The Asiatic in free, democratic, enlightened Victoria is a fraud, a black blot which will cause a lot of trouble to erase if it is allowed to spread. We take Mr. Molesworth as announcing the intentions of Mr. Palmer, when he said the coolies would be got rid of by him as soon as possible. We hope they will, and that is the last we shall hear of them in this district at all events. They are not good labourers. They sulk at their work, are continually quarrelling amongst themselves, are peculiar in their habits, and are always liable to be misunderstood. A failure as labourers, they are still a greater failure as members of our white communities, for the reason that they will not mix except in the most undesirable manner. They cannot contribute anything to the revenue of the State, and when the term of their engagement has expired they will likely roam over the country, to fill our gaols and hospitals with black criminals and mendicants. We hope the introduction of coolie labour into Victoria has now reached its quietus.  

If Pearson was right, skin colour was one of the important marks of race. The lower races were yellow or black, and these ‘inferior’ races threatened the security of Australia. As early as the 1850s, the Australian public was being warned that Australia was in danger of being invaded by a Chinese navy. As the years passed, theatre productions and silent film joined invasion novels. Chinese, Japanese and Kanaka invaders were the stage villains, and when the Boxer Uprising took place, cinema audiences saw Australian troops departing to assist the Mother Country put down the rebels. The *Bulletin* was particularly racist. From 1905 to 1961 the masthead read ‘Australia for the White Man’. Its pages were filled with cartoons and articles showing Asians as evil creatures less than human. The octopus, for example, was the symbol for China in Phil May’s 1888 cartoon, ‘The Mongolian Octopus – His Grip on Australia’. The cartoon occupied two full pages to illustrate article entitled ‘The Chinese In Australia , Their Vices and Their
Victims’. Appropriately labelled ‘cheap labour’, ‘Pak Ah Pu’, ‘Immorality’, ‘Smallpox Typhoid’, ‘Opium’, ‘Bribery’, ‘Fan Tan’ and ‘Customs Robbery’, the tentacles grasped a chest-of-drawers with the cabinet maker and his daughter, two white women, children, an opium smoker, a policeman clutching a bag of money, and a gambler. A thieving tentacle snaked into a doorway.\textsuperscript{137}

Articles by writers such as Francis Adams and William Lane in the \textit{Boomerang} were similar in their warnings of Asian invasion.\textsuperscript{138} If these were strident voices appealing to a minority, then perhaps D’Cruz’ central argument about the effect in Australia of the Indian Mutiny suggests otherwise. Because of the intense depth of anti-Chinese hatred in Australia, D’Cruz argues that the Indian Mutiny was an excuse, particularly in New South Wales, to use the Australian Chinese as scapegoats.\textsuperscript{139} According to D’Cruz, the Indian Mutiny was used to incite fear of Oriental barbarism, particularly through the language in newspaper accounts.

\ldots the details of those awful scenes can never be fully known. Nature shrinks from the trial: the brain refuses to conceive, the imagination to paint, the tongue cannot frame to utter them.\textsuperscript{140}

An Indian Mutiny Relief Fund was launched, its Committee formed by the Governor-General, Mayor, and other Colony dignitaries.\textsuperscript{141} Women and children were also appealed to in the emotional tide.\textsuperscript{142}

In order to make his case, D’Cruz argues that because of the comparatively few Chinese in New South Wales, the public was looking for an outside influence to excuse their anti-Chinese behaviour.\textsuperscript{143}

If the Mutiny demonstrated Oriental barbarity, then this barbarity must also be present in the Chinese. The Indian Mutiny was discussed in the New South Wales Parliament, starting at the opening session 1858. In response to petitions, a
Bill to restrict immigration was introduced NSW Legislative Assembly, and a Select Committee Report, tabled 16 September 1858, ignored evidence and reached conclusions that bolstered popular prejudices. The Report spoke of the ‘filthy and dirty habits’ of the Chinese, and concluded that ‘the breaking forth of disease ... is a matter of dreaded expectancy.’

D'Cruz argues that this was no coincidence, because in New South Wales an explicit principle was evoked that whites were superior to coloured, and that Orientals were inherently immoral and barbaric. The few Chinese in New South Wales, therefore, became a microcosm of the Oriental enemy to be found in India, and action could be taken against them. In this manner, the tensions awoken by the Indian Mutiny could be released. It is inconceivable, argues D'Cruz, that the Indian Mutiny and the anti-Chinese actions were simply maintain parallel developments that did not influence each other.

In the preface to The Asian Image in Australia: Episodes in Australian History, A. A. Phillips, the Associate Editor Meanjin, validates D'Cruz's hypothesis that the Indian Mutiny was used to restrict Chinese migration on the basis that historians cannot use experimental tests, but can only observe how well the accrued details fit the hypothesis. D'Cruz is justified, because he points to the many re-occurrences of terms such as 'yellow hordes', 'mass influx', 'oriental tidal-wave' used at the time.

If as Phillips suggests, D'Cruz is correct in his hypothesis, then it may be reasonably safe to conclude that Adams and Lane were speaking for a great many Australians. Phillips has alluded, however, to the inherent flaw in D'Cruz's methodology. Parallel events do not necessarily point to cause and effect. Thus Beverley Kingston paints a different picture of the awareness of the Indian Mutiny
amongst the public of New South Wales. While the State Parliament of Victoria voted to contribute to a Relief Fund, and a subscription was raised in Hobart, New South Wales was comparatively slow to react.  

The *Sydney Morning Herald* commented on this tardiness: ‘the first city of the Australian group should occupy its proper place and fulfil the task imposed alike by humanity and patriotism’. If this reluctance in itself were not enough, there was also the problem that anti-Chinese feeling was strong well before the Indian Mutiny, even imported by Britain during the Opium Wars. In effect, D'Cruz’s hypothesis is not very convincing.

There is a third possibility, in that both D'Cruz and Kingston are correct when they point to the depth of anti-Chinese feeling in Australia. It is therefore possible, despite the apparent reluctance shown in New South Wales, that the reports of the Indian Mutiny deepened the hostility towards the Chinese, even if the Immigration Act was not the direct result of the Mutiny. If this is so, then the ferocity of the attacks in publications like *The Boomerang* and the *Bulletin* reflected a very wide public hostility.

Aside from the question of Chinese immigration, the Indian Mutiny had other effects in Australia. Over-riding everything was a heightened perception of the vulnerability of British interests in the Orient. The British Government realised that communications had to be improved, if its security and administration in India was to be safeguarded. This led to the installation of new telegraph technology between London and Bombay. Using a new submarine cable link via Singapore to Indian relay stations, the Australian Colonies took advantage of the improvements, establishing telecommunications between Melbourne, Sydney, and London on 22 October 1872.  

This spin-off, was celebrated at a banquet in Sydney, Henry
Parkes lauding the achievement as a ‘magical business … uniting us hand in hand as it were with the parent land’.

The ‘magical business’ was truly that, for although the new telegraphy might have been inspired by the fears rising from an Oriental mutiny, it brought with it new opportunities for Australian commercial enterprise. Primary products in particular benefited from the new cable link. Australian producers now knew within 24 hours what their goods were worth on the London market. Conversely, it was no longer necessary to hold huge stocks of imported goods. These could now be ordered when required. Banking transactions were also more flexible as a result of the quick international communications.

The pride in this technological achievement was not only felt in Sydney. In South Australia, the *South Australian Register* told its readers the communications link was

by far the most memorable event that has occurred in the history of news-catering in the colony. Our readers will, over their breakfast tables today, be in a position to discuss events happening on the other side of the globe only a few hours ago.

For Alfred Deakin, the Indian Mutiny had another importance that had little to do with Australian commerce. It was the understanding of India that the Mutiny brought to him. He told Australians that if they were to comprehend the mutiny, they had to ‘realize modern India.’ This was complex, for modern India was also British India, and to comprehend that, Australians also had to comprehend the Mutiny. This Australian Orientalism saw past an imagined India of fables and princes into a complex reality of competing tensions; into an India that was driven by both the past and the present. Deakin understood the mutineers believed they had to ‘throw off a galling political yoke’ and ‘secure salvation by expelling an impious creed.’ In these words lie the feelings of the Australian-born democrat
vis-a-vis the English metropole, but Deakin was also tugged by more conventional strings.

Although on the one hand Deakin believed Indians and Australians had much to teach one another, when it came to consideration of the Mutiny he allowed an Orientalism that taught that the Orient was barbarous to surface. This Orientalism demonstrates just how powerfully, despite the intervening years and the evidence of his own eyes, the Mutiny played on the Australian imagination and feeling of insecurity. ‘Subtle and treacherous [Hindus] by inheritance … met their European masters with the grave, placid, impenetrable face of innocence and submission,’ he wrote. Rather than possessing the intellects he had seen displayed in the Sixth Congress, Deakin now beheld a ‘credulous Oriental mind fermented with prophecies and omens, mysterious warnings and insensate libels of rancorous malice, until at last it blazed up into the fires of open rebellion.’

Australian newspapers reports of the time of the Mutiny and those of later writers like Deakin, Jose and Fitchett dwelt on the horror. Today these disturbing accounts tell us more about the Australians who wrote them than they do about the mutineers themselves. The obsessive emotional lingering on imagined events bespeak inner repressions allowed to surface through Orientalism.

... in every instance their revolts were accompanied by the butchery of their officers ... the murder of unoffending civilians, of mothers in whose households they had lived, and of children whom they had nursed and fondled ... the unhappy maidens and matrons who fell into their hands were only permitted to die after having suffered the last outrages from the ruffians of the rebel camp.

They are also expressions of European solidarity in the face of isolation. The contemporary accounts described in ‘The Siege’ parallel those of the Mutiny accounts. In each, the native Orientals are cowardly and the British heroic. Deakin’s writing is no exception: ‘gallant Englishmen who fell leading them
[Hindu soldiers] into action were found to have been shot from behind. Perhaps from an Orientalism such as this it is possible to extrapolate the idea that a White Australia Policy might protect Australians from the treachery of coloured citizens: not even British bravery could give protection from the cowardly shot in the back.

Deakin was also aware that inside the British lurked dark forces that could be awoken by the cruelty of Oriental treachery: bodies swung from trees in retribution, while the British soldiers carried mementos of their losses: ‘A tress of a child’s hair has had its hecatomb of victims; a lady’s glove or trinkets has steeled hearts against mercy.’

In India, the Mutiny meant that the Anglo-Indian community had lost their sense of security, because British control depended on the native forces. One of the most important lessons, therefore, for Deakin was the necessity for the maintenance of military might. Any serious reversal to British arms would see an immediate recurrence of the Mutiny. If the British maintained their armed vigilance, then India would be safe from Russian invasion. Unstated but implied is that this extended to Australia.

In India, the Anglo-Indian community feared the Russians, who might make use of the discontent among the Indians and start another mutiny. In Lahore, The Civil and Military Gazette was of the opinion that Russian subversion could be ‘the spark to set the gunpowder alight’. The Mutiny, therefore, developed a sense of exile in the Anglo-Indian community, who now felt themselves isolated amongst the ‘others’; that is, the native population. This sense of post-Mutiny isolation from the metropole was reflected in the works of their greatest writer, Rudyard Kipling, who considered that the British had lost interest in the community: ‘the inhabitants of that country never looked further than
their annual seaside resorts." This sense of exile is clearly evident in his poem ‘Christmas in India’.

O the Heimweh, ceaseless, aching! O the black dividing Sea and alien Plain!

In this line, Heimweh, the German for ‘homesickness’ emphasises the sense of isolation, where even the mother-tongue is inadequate to express such emotion. The ‘black dividing Sea’ illustrates yet another tension, for Hindus seldom crossed the water separating India from other countries. To cross the ‘black waters’ meant the losing of caste. Thus in effect, the Anglo-Indians were no longer British or Indian. As argued elsewhere in this thesis, similar feelings were emerging in Australia; a sense that despite the developments in telegraphy, Britain was still on the other side of the world. It seemed she was growing more and more determined to leave the defence of Australia to others like the Japanese.

In the mid 1880s, Hingston had warned that the Russian Cossacks were the ‘latterday-Tarters’ following in the footsteps of the ‘Mongol Tamerlane’. He thought the Russians were advancing daily towards the gates of Afghanistan. They might stop there, but the ‘object of all that they have been doing does not seem to lie in what they have yet done in that direction.’ It was also plain for Deakin that the struggle was not far off, and that Australia would become involved, if not directly, then indirectly by contributing Australian horses and general supplies. Furthermore, if India did become a Russian base, then Australia would be directly threatened by Russian control of India’s deepwater ports. For Australia’s survival, the British Raj had to survive. It was this Russian threat that led Deakin to a conclusion echoed more than a century later in Australian politics. Australian survival depended on Australians thinking they were part of ‘Southern Asia’.
This was European Orientalism turned on its head. Even if Deakin and others did not seriously believe that they were Orientals themselves, by very definition their Orientalism had made them so. Again in this, we can see the same internal struggle with the sense of belonging that was apparent in the Anglo-Indian community.

The spectre of a Russian invasion of India took different shape with the views of Dr Richard Arthur. According to his scenario, it would be the result of a conspiracy that would allow China and Japan to invade Australia. This alarmist view, coming as it did after the introduction of the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1901, the ‘White Australia Policy,’ was a reminder that the real danger to Australia was not from Russia but the ‘Yellow Peril’. Even if in the 1880s Hingston had told Australians that China was not to be feared, because the Chinese were ‘the weakest of warriors, and incapable of aggression’, he had warned that this nation, weak as a ‘milch cow’, would start exporting millions of its inhabitants. These immigrants, the most dangerous of competitors, would flood the labour markets. He attacked the Chinese with a mixture of admiration and condemnation. He had seen for himself their patient industry and great organising power in Australia, and he had been informed by Americans that without cheap, efficient Chinese labour the Great Pacific Railway could not have been built. But the floodgates of migration having been opened, the Chinaman were now the Jew money-changer, trader and trafficker in Java. The Chinaman was ‘a practical man, the most practical of men – a mudfish that rises to no fancy flies’. Because ‘One hundred work as one’, there would be no stopping his assault: ‘As the Goths and Huns overran the Old World, so it seems probable that the hundreds of millions of Chinese will flood the present one, and that at no distant date.’
Hingston found an echo in Morrison, who claimed that to compete, a white labourer or artisan would be degraded into 'mechanical beast of labour' unable to support his wife or his family.¹⁷⁵

_The School Paper_ drove home the anti-Chinese message in 1900.

The Chinaman is not an ideal colonist. Many of his habits are unsavoury. He will work for a wage upon which white men could scarcely exist; and his one aim is to secure a competence with which to return to the "Flowery Land." The appearance of the Chinese in considerable number in any part of the world, in competition with white labour, has become known as the "Yellow Peril."¹⁷⁶

The 'Yellow Peril' was not exclusively Chinese. Japan changed from being 'Merrie England' into a militaristic, expansionist aggressor waiting to pounce. Even though Hingston found little to dislike in Japan, he had warned that it had been acquiring weapons. But this was not a strident caveat about the imminent danger of invasion. Coupled as it was with observations that Japan was acquiring railways and steam vessels, it was was by way of illustration that Japan, now concentrating less on the arts and the gaining of happiness and more on its industrialisation into modernity, might forge ahead at the expense of the West.¹⁷⁷ It was not until Japan's military success against Russia, and the signing of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in 1902, that Australians took a decidedly less optimistic view of their northern neighbour. This volte-face can be clearly seen in the opinions of George Morrison, as discussed elsewhere in the thesis.¹⁷⁸ Writers such as Louis Esson, who believed Australia's white race and civilisation was in danger from this new Asiatic menace, took up the cause.¹⁷⁹

According to Levi, such regional threats and the consequent defence of Australia were the 'preserve of a minority composed of officials, military professionals, and a few amateur strategists.'¹⁸⁰ Levi argues that most Australians were pleased with the Japanese victory over Russia, because of the benefits that
accrued to British interests. Levi further argues that a much smaller group suspected that Japan, desiring a political and military empire, would change its course from being Britain and Australia’s ally into their enemy. This minority was convinced Japanese imperialism in Pacific had begun.¹⁸¹

Levi’s argument is tenuous. Although large crowds had welcomed the visits of the Japanese squadrons in 1903 and 1906, the welcome given to the American ‘Great White Fleet’ in 1908 signified that a great many Australians by then felt the menace of the ‘Yellow Peril’. The size of this welcome indicates this to be more than that of an élite minority or the readership of such magazines as the *Bulletin* and *Lone Hand*. But as Robert Dixon has pointed out, it is not certain whether the *Lone Hand* was responding to or reflecting public opinion. What is certain is that many of its articles were written by or reflected the views of those, such as Alfred Deakin and the founding editor, Frank Fox, who believed they were leaders of public opinion.¹⁸² Titles included a series in 1907-8 by Louis Esson, ‘The Asiatic Menace’, and one by J. C. Watson, who had briefly been Prime Minister in 1904, ‘Our Empty North: an Unguarded Gate’. Esson concentrated on warning Australians about Japan and China. Japan had ‘ulterior motives’. Her real policy could ‘be summed up in one word - Expansion’. As a consequence of this, ‘there will be many dangers for the white race in the Pacific.’¹⁸³ China was the great unknown: ‘Asia is threatened with many war-clouds, and when they burst, the long-sleeping Dragon may startle the sceptic world by blowing from his mouth and nostrils smoke and brimstone.’¹⁸⁴ Watson’s article dealt with the fear of the ‘myriads of Asia, threatening ever to swarm across to the rich fields of a land, attractive in all respects to a frugal, industrious people, condemned at present to exist in a much poorer country.’ Watson therefore argued that Australia must
therefore develop its own military capability. In so doing, he exhibited a side of the
debate that is easily overlooked by those who condemn the legislators of the White
Australia Policy. They were not necessarily racist. Watson wrote sympathetically:
‘The Australian policy of excluding Asiatic races as immiscible with our blood -
essential as it is to our national welfare - necessarily leaves soreness in the minds of
those adversely affected, and must eventually depend for its maintenance upon
actual or potential military power.’ Alf Vincent, a Bulletin staff artist called
upon to illustrate the Lone Hand, wrote and illustrated ‘Vagabonding in Asia’ in
1907. In one of the series, a full page cartoon showed tourist couple looking at
Timor native carrying spear and dressed in loincloth:

SHE: “How Disgusting! And are these natives always like this?”
HE: “Oh dear no. I understand they dress for dinner.”

According to Vincent, in Asia ‘you have to suspect the cooking always, and
where, perforce, when you take a rickshaw, you occupy yourself speculating
whether the Asiatic gentleman who used it before you had leprosy, or only
something mild in the way of disease.’ Later in the series, Vincent told his
readers that the Chinese ‘constitutional dishonesty (in which respect he is surpassed
by the Jap alone) stands him in valuable stead’. A humorous short story by ‘C. L.
S.’ told of a Prime Minister’s nightmare in which the Chinese had demanded his
poll tax before he entered the House. Worse was to follow:

[The] Speaker of the House of Representatives and the Leader of the Opposition, with their
clothes off, were hard at work ironing shirts, and the Prime Minister realised, with a queer
catch in his throat, that many of the higher officials among the Chinese had adopted the
ordinary dress of Europeans.
As he looked through the window he saw the Leader of the Opposition fill his mouth with
water, and carefully spray it over the shirt that he was ironing in the recognised manner of
the Chinese laundryman.

The Prime Minister cursed himself for
his folly in having refused to accept an amendment moved by a prominent supporter during the Aliens Exclusion Bill. The amendment proposed to deport every Asiatic from the Commonwealth without notice.

On awakening, he went to Parliament to advocate a Bill for compulsory military service for every Australian male. ‘His speech in introducing the measure will long be remembered as the most powerful and convincing address ever delivered within the precincts of the Australian Parliament.’

Another indication of wider unease can be discerned in that a considerable time before the Americans had reached Australia, British distrust of Australia’s intentions was showing. Valentine Chirol wrote to George Morrison complaining about the ‘demonstrative invitation to the American Fleet to visit Australia, at a time when the voyage ... was being described all over the States a “warning” to Japan.’ Chirol compared Australia’s attitude unfavourably with that of the Japanese, who with ‘extraordinary self-restraint ... took the sting out of the American demonstration by inviting the ‘great Armada’ to include Japan in its cruise.’ He coupled this with a reference to Australia as ‘one of our other great Colonies’, a remark unlikely to impress Morrison, as Australia had been granted Dominion status the previous year. In Australia, the Melbourne Argus quietly reported both the American and Japanese reactions to the proposed visit of the American fleet to Japan. In Japan, there was gratification everywhere at America’s acceptance of the Japanese invitation. The latter part of the report, citing the St Petersburg Bourse Gazette, supported Chirol’s comments. The Japanese invitation did honour to Japanese diplomacy, and also raised Japan’s prestige. Yet another indication of the unease felt by Australians can be read as late as 1911 in J. J. Malone’s, The Purple East. His comments, first printed in the magazine, Austral Light, were intended for Catholic readers, many of whom were of Irish stock, so
they must be weighed against Anglo-Australian feelings. Nevertheless, they indicate the lingering suspicions held by a large proportion of the Australian population. On leaving the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, he had this to say:

Gone is the spirit of Christian chivalry; extinguished is the fire of the Crusader. In the chair of St. Louis of France sits the infidel President of an atheistical Republic, and where Richard the Lion-Hearted ruled, men ally with the dangerous Jap., and dream only of naval supremacy.\textsuperscript{192}

The visit of the Fleet came just before the 1909 election, in which colour played a prominent role. The American exclusion acts showed Australians that the Americans, like themselves, also feared the ‘yellow race’.\textsuperscript{193} In a letter to J. M. V. J. ffrench, Morrison expressed his view that Chirol and \textit{The Times} were far too pro-Japanese and did not understand that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was not all-embracing.\textsuperscript{194} The popularity of invasion fiction further weakens Levi’s argument.

Thus the Australian view of Asia had been transmuted from one of pure gold into the ‘Yellow Peril’. Travellers like Hingston in the 1880s had seen an Orient where lazy attitudes, dreamy states of minds and dozy muscles prevailed.\textsuperscript{195} But James Hingston had also seen things that convinced him that there was ‘more in heaven and earth to understand than he thinks for who sits in the seat of the scorners,’ and he understood that Australians, unless vigilant, could fall into the same indolent Eastern attitudes.\textsuperscript{196} Alfred Deakin feared that East West relations might become the Armageddon of twentieth century.\textsuperscript{197} Douglas Sladen observed that the ‘wonderful brain-power’ of the Japanese had been recognised after their military defeat of Russia.\textsuperscript{198} In an address on the toast of “The Navy and the Army” as the Mayor’s Banquet, Adelaide, on 25 March 1911, W. J. Sowden, Chief President of the Australian Natives’ Association sounded this warning:
It is, indeed, a case of “money or your life” so far as national defence is concerned. Port Darwin and its surrounding territory could be taken to-night by a boatload of Japanese armed with popguns. We must not close our eyes to the facts that Java, with its 31,000,000 inhabitants, only three days’ steaming distance from the Northern Territory, is the most densely crowded country on the face of the earth – 600 to the square mile – and that many thousands of China’s vast population of 400,000,000 are now dying for want of food which can be easily obtained within ten days’ steaming distance at Port Darwin. 199

Although there were other possible prototypes, Paul Depasquale and Robert Dixon have argued that Guy Boothby’s Dr Nikola was the prototype for Sax Rohmer’s evil Dr Fu Manchu. 200 Writers and cartoonists gave little heed to any thought that if the Chinese or Japanese had thought about invading Australia, they might have done so before the English arrived. 201 They not only reflected the raucous debates surrounding the White Australia Policy, they also mirrored the more sober views of Charles Pearson, who believed that Australia was guarding the last part of the world left to the higher civilisation. Keeping Asians out was simply a matter of self-preservation. 202 Pearson prophesied that the day was soon at hand when the yellow races would girdle the world. They would mix freely in European society, even inter-marry. These previously servile peoples would elbow, hustle and thrust aside the Aryan race. 203

The solitary consolation will be, that the changes have been inevitable. It has been our work to organise and create, to carry peace and law and order over the world, that others may enter in and enjoy. Yet in some of us the feeling of caste is so strong that we are not sorry to think we shall have passed away before that day arrives. 204

By the time of Federation and the passing of the Commonwealth Immigration Act, Pearson was dead. His gloomy prediction had come true, not entirely as he had expected but rather in the shape of the ‘cultural invasion’ discussed earlier in this chapter. Besant had described India as a nation set apart until her lofty thoughts, her intellectual treasures and her people could be subjugated for the enlightenment of the world. 205 Australia, that country Pearson
had endeavoured to set apart, in its turn had been infiltrated peacefully by the Orient. While touring in 1910, Peter Dawson, the great Australian baritone and singer of the Empire, visited Seymour. The town, decorated with bunting and flags of all kinds, was crowded with soldiers in honour of Kitchener. To his surprise, Dawson found that Lee Yet, a ‘Chinaman’, was in charge of organising his concert. Dawson’s diary entry is a fitting comment on the surprising success of the peaceful ‘cultural invasion’.

He speaks the English of the English, and is very popular. It’s quite surprising the polished style of his conversation, and his ‘really “exquisite” manners’, as Amy Castles puts it. I decided to ask him where he learnt to speak such good English. “Well, you see, Mr. Dawson, I was educated at Harrow and Oxford.”

NOTES
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3 Roosevelt to Pearson, Washington, 11 May 1894, op. cit.
6 Ibid, p.16.
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15 The National Gallery Committee, Rough Minutes, Vol. 54, Melbourne, MSF 12855, State Library of Victoria, 18 December 1899.
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17 Ibid, 24 February 1891.
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30 Ibid, p.11.
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70 Ibid, p.61.
84 Ibid, p.7.
85 Ibid, p.46.
86 Ibid.
89 Ibid, pp.329, 266.
90 Ibid, p.83.
91 Ibid, p.74.
92 Ibid, p.38.
99 Ibid, p.140.
101 Ibid, p.32.
103 Ibid, p.76.
104 Ibid, p.77.
112 Ibid, p.63.
117 Ibid.
118 Ibid, p.115.
121 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
127 Ibid, p.31.
128 'Coming of the Allans', *Warrnambool Standard*, 1 May 1926, cited Van Bakel, June, Rob Lee, and Phillip McNaughton, 'Western District Attitudes to Coolie Labour During the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century', unpublished paper, Deakin University, Warrnambool, 197-?, p.4.
130 Ibid.
131 Van Bakel, Lee, and McNaughton, 'Western District Attitudes to Coolie Labour During the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century', Op. Cit., p.5.
Ibid.
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South Australian Register, 23 October 1872; quoted Inglis, 'The Imperial Connection ', Op. Cit., p.28.
Ibid, p.132.
Ibid, p.139.
See 'The Siege: Lucknow and Beyond' and 'Japan: Merrie England?'.
196 Ibid, pp.268, 467.
203 Ibid, pp.84-5.
204 Ibid, p.85.
CONCLUSION

This thesis has discussed how Australians between 1880 and 1910 attempted to shape their awareness of the geographical extent of the Orient, and when they had established some sense of that, how this affected them, both as British citizens and Australians. The examination of Australian Orientalism, therefore, poses the question of whether Australian contacts with the Orient were essential to the development of the Australian nation-state.

The question is not without its problems, for there is no absolute and clear-cut answer. We have noted that at the time of the earliest British settlement, Australia - seen as a link between the Orient and Europe - was identified as ‘Austral-Asia’ by proponents such as James Mario Matra, Sir George Young and Alexander Dalrymple. Other early proponents, Edward Gibbon Wakefield and Cardinal Moran, saw civilisation radiating out from Australia into the Orient. Already we can draw various conclusions, for there is a difference between Australia as a bridge to the Orient and Australia as the centre point of a civilisation reaching out to the Orient. The bridge seems to presuppose that Australia was in some way an inherent part of the Orient; the centre point that Australia was to be a depository of some higher Occidental civilisation that could somehow transform, reform, and enrich the Orient.

But as Ang and Stretton have pointed out, the combination of nomenclature and geography is never absolute. If therefore either ‘Austral-Asia’ or ‘Australia’ signifies a place or nation, the signification may well mean different things to different people. For example, after noting that ‘austral’ means ‘south’ the Macquarie Dictionary defines ‘Australasia’ as Australia, New Zealand, and the neighbouring islands of the South Pacific. Here there is no hint of the Orient.
Even Asia seems to be ignored. Conversely, ‘Austral-Asia’ - the words separated by a hyphen - appears to make a clear connection between the Australian continent and the lands to its northwest. It is also not unreasonable to suggest that for many, this nomenclature includes neither New Zealand nor the islands of the South Pacific. It is further reasonable to conclude that for many Australians any of the various names would summon up more than simple geographic boundaries. If this is so, then yet another problem of identity arises. Is there a distinction between the notion of what it means to be an Australian and the notion of the ‘Other’? Put another way, did Australians then, and do Australians now, really believe that beneath the different skin tones and features to be found in the Orient, wherever that might be, was a common and equal humanity? Or was it, and is it, as Annette Hamilton has argued, that cross-cultural relationships with Asia embody the transgression of the racial and identity boundary? Her argument restates the conventional European Orientalist idea of sexual lure in terms of Australians cohabiting with ‘natives’, and by their so doing, thus acquiring access to the ‘mystical’ through the violation of perceived Occidental morality.²

While Hamilton is referring to modern Australia and Asia, we have seen that Australian males of the past have been fascinated by the lure of ‘houris’ and ‘nautch’ girls, this perhaps a subliminal reconstruction of the sexual fantasy of tales such as The Arabian Nights. But we have also noted that the actuality belied the fantasy, despite the fact that so many Australian men referred to The Arabian Nights when trying to summon up their feelings about a part of the Orient. James Hingston, for one, was bored by the nautch girls dancing for him in Java; Alfred Deakin, for another, wrote that the Indian women were modestly dressed; and yet another, Herbert Syme, was reduced to retitling as ‘Nautch Girl’ a dull commercial
photograph imprinted ‘Dancing girl’. In this manner we are seeing that Australian Orientalism was a complexity of initial fantasy dispelled by first-hand experience. This is not, however, to argue that when Australians discovered that Oriental women did not fit the storybook picture, that they therefore accepted them as being no different from Australian women. The Oriental women still remained ‘Other’, as could be seen, for example, in their clothing and jewellery or their bound feet.

Despite this, Australians during the period – at least the males of the species – also seemed to be drawn by the dirt and disease to be found on their travels in the Orient. What they found they used as a metaphor for a dubious Oriental morality, a way of seeing Oriental civilisations as ‘Other’, lacking the spiritual purity of their own British-Australian civilisation. In this, they were little different from their cousins from Europe. It has also been noted that this obsession with dirt and disease paralleled the rise of female nursing in hospitals in Australia and the growth of the Purity Campaign in Britain. The rapid establishment of the Boy Scout Movement also meant an increased emphasis on moral purity and duty at home. If the home front was increasingly expounding this purity, the lessening opportunities for pleasure would have done nothing to lessen thoughts of what perhaps could be found in the hot climates to the northwest. In fact, so keen were Australian men to be repelled by the insanitary that they were even disparaging about Oriental religious cleanliness when they found it. In this regard, we recall the comments of Herbert Syme when he had to remove his shoes before entering the Sikh Golden Temple at Murribar. It is curious that really only in Japan, an Oriental land which emphasised cleanliness, could be a model be found of what it might have been like in England some five hundred years before.
The nomenclature ‘Orient’ is equally as broad as ‘Australia’, both in geographical and metaphysical terms. For Edward Said, the Orient was an homogeneous, imaginary construct employed by Europeans to obtain and maintain hegemony. Thus Said could postulate that the British and the French justified their possession of North Africa, Middle East and India – and by extension, the remainder of the Orient – because these lands were populated by peoples in need of the benefits of the more advanced Western civilisation:

... my argument is quite simple, that the growth of imperialism parallels, is paralleled by the growth of Orientalism, and that there is a particular aspect of knowledge which is coercive, manipulative, and designed not only for pure knowledge, I mean there is a certain amount of that, of course, but also for the control of populations that were being acquired, or were being traded with, but were above all secondary to the Westerner let’s say in India or Egypt or the Sudan, who needed to know about these populations in order to rule them.5

For Australians, however, the Orient was existent and heterogeneous. Travel rather than imperial governance was the gateway to the Orient. Indeed, one of the shipping lines suggested in its very name – ‘Peninsular and Orient’ - that its passengers were being transported thither. Even here, the boundaries of the Orient were difficult to establish. For some Australians, the Orient was what they saw on their way ‘Home’ to Britain via Ceylon, India and the Suez Canal. This Orient was thus inclusive of the ‘Middle East’ and ‘North Africa’. Then for the more adventurous tourist there was the ‘Far East’.

Even today these boundaries remain fluid. Some Australians may see the Orient as the same as that area discussed in this thesis. Others distinguish between ‘Asia’ and ‘South-East Asia’. Yet others see Australia as being part of Asia. If this last is the case, then clearly Australia itself is one of the branches of the Orient, rather than as a departure point for an Orient that in James Hingston’s terminology was on some of the branches from the main routes round the world.
The examination has also considered the Orient from the perspective of
Australia as an outlying part of the British Empire. White Australians considered
themselves to be ‘settlers’ in the Antipodes, and with their settlement bringing not
only British civilisation to Australia, but also the benefits of a higher Aryan race to
their new land. This was their justification - in itself little different from the
Orientalism postulated by Edward Said - for their invasion of Aboriginal territory.
Once having successfully invaded, they were then faced with what they perceived
to be the growing likelihood of themselves being invaded by lower races from the
Orient. In this changing awareness of the Orient, these Australians of all classes
and backgrounds grew closer in their views in the lead-up to the White Australia
Policy. Thus the Orient – or at least the Orient of Charles Pearson’s ‘Yellow Belt’ -
helped unite Australians. Pearson’s warnings and the growing power of Japan drew
them together, no matter whether they were Protestant Anglo-Australians with
strong sentimental links to the Crown or Roman Catholic Irish-Australians seeking
some form of independence.

Yet in this speculation, we run the risk of gross simplification. Such
reduction to simple essentialism presupposes commonalities. To assume such
commonalities would be to fall into the same as error as that of Edward Said’s
assumption that the Orient is imaginary and homogeneous. Although it was easy to
accuse them, clearly not all Roman Catholic Australians of Irish descent, despite
the sectarian bigotry of the period, sought independence from the Crown. Sir John
Madden, K.C.M.G., LL.D., Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Justice of Victoria, and
father of Ruby Madden, is a case in point. He was born in Cork in 1844, before
moving with his parents to Melbourne in 1857. Nonetheless, when five Victorian
parliamentarians of Irish birth signed a letter in support of Irish Home Rule in
1882, Pearson and Deakin called them traitors. Other Australians of non-Irish descent also yearned for independence. William Lane, for example, thought that Britain was only interested in Australia insofar as she could reap a commercial profit. His invasion narrative, *White or Yellow? A Story of the Race War of A.D. 1908*, serialised in the *Boomerang* in 1888, depicted Britain as betraying Australia by overturning the Colonial anti-Chinese legislation. The only help Australia received came from the United States Navy. In the course of the narrative, Australia became a republic.

The Australians whose writings have been discussed during the course of this thesis, if they had any commonality, certainly viewed the Orient as a place that would benefit from the advantages that Imperialism had brought or could bring to it. George Morrison certainly promoted this idea after the Siege of the Legations. But while this Imperialism is a thread running throughout Hingston’s *The Australian Abroad*, his book provides a paradigm for another aspect of how many other Australians brought to the Orient something more than this. What they brought is a sense of respect, not only for its very antiquity, but also for its traditions and culture. Thus when Australians like Hingston visited the Orient, their travels were more than mere sightseeing. They set out with a sense of enquiry, a sense that they could be enriched by what they saw and learned. As Hingston observed, they were ‘wiser and gladder’ on their return. In this manner, their journeys of self-discovery changed them from Australians as British settlers into an awareness of another part of their identity. That is, what it meant to be Australians in their own right.

Such awareness took many forms, ranging from their admiration of how Britain – and thereby themselves as British subjects - had stood up to the perils of
Eastern rebellion to a sense of how they as Australians might be abandoned by the Motherland to the fragile protection of the Japanese. The militant Japanese were believed to be looking enviously at what they saw as a rich land waiting to be seized. Hence Australians learnt from the Orient that simply being British was not enough. In the face of a threatening Orient, Australians had to develop their own nation into a new, strong and independent people, while at the same time retaining the links with the Motherland. The Orient, or at least that part in their geographical neighbourhood, had passed from being either evanescent as Pearson had described it, or static according to Englishmen like Curzon. It had changed into an Orient that was energetic and quite prepared to adapt itself to the Occident wherever it thought it could benefit.

Australians also saw an Orient that had survived conquest at the expense of the conquerors. The Mughals, for example had come and gone in India; so yet might the British Empire fade away. Was there any connection here with the white Australian response to the Aborigines? Is there still today some underlying fear that the white Australian hold on this continent is equally as tenuous as that of the conquerors of the Orient? This thesis, therefore, suggests that future research on Australian nationhood should also include this aspect of the Orient.

The story of humankind is punctuated with the tragedies that have been the consequences of simplification. According to Edward Said, Orientalist thinking led to European nations justifying their occupation in terms of replacing a stationary Eastern barbarism with a higher civilization. In Australia, Darwinian notions allowed Pearson to argue that the lower Aboriginal race was bringing about its own decay just as much through failure to wash their clothing as the ‘diseases of European origin that scourge immorality’. Pearson also argued that the Aryan
‘higher races’ would govern and direct because of their ‘higher intelligence and more resolute will’. This was a convenient, pseudo-scientific justification for territorial aggrandisement, in particular the European occupation of Australia at the expense of its indigenous inhabitants.

There is a causal inevitability about such simplification that the examination of the Orient in this thesis has shown to be doubtful. When Australians visited the Orient, the monumental structures that they encountered far surpassed anything they had expected. Who could doubt that the Taj Mahal was anything but the product of fine minds, even if George Russell looked for signs of fakery in the veneers? James Hingston marvelled at the ‘Boer Buddha’ and the scale of human endeavour in its construction. So great was his awe that he could only explain it by using the Christian symbolism of resurrection. In the same manner, he was much impressed by the civilisation he saw in Japan. Apart from humorous asides such as the difficulty of eating in the Japanese style, he had nothing but praise. Traditional Japanese society, like that of ‘Merrie England’ was obviously the product of high intelligence and resolute will. Even the men who had to work like horses between the shafts of the jinrickshaws were ‘centaurs’.

Nevertheless, to conclude that all Australians viewed the Orient in the same way is doubtful. Depending on their background, time and place, Australians held manifold opinions. George Morrison, for example, was prepared to change his views as the situation presented itself. He identified himself with the British metropole during the period of his position as the Peking Correspondent for The Times, yet he also had thoughts of himself as a future participant of political life in Australia. Before the defeat of Russia by Japan, he regarded the Japanese as admirable allies. We have seen that he did his best to promote war between Japan
and Russia. He had probably done this since he was a young man, for Angus
McDonald reports that he found two pages handwritten notes by Morrison at the
back of An Australian in China, written McDonald believes before the publication
of the book. The first of the seventeen numbered aims was the hope that the book
would be a great success. The final aim was ‘That I may be instrumental in
bringing about war over the Far East and be famous the world over.’ His constant
praise of Colonel Shiba in his report of the Siege of the Legations is testimony to
his liking for the Japanese. Later he would regard with suspicion the military power
of Japan and would do his best to denigrate the Japanese.

In Australia itself, the reception given to the visiting Japanese naval
squadrons over the years was very enthusiastic, until Australians began to fear that
the Japanese navy might be used for a more sinister purpose. Then these same hosts
lavished their enthusiasm on the Great White Fleet of the United States of America.
Even at the height of the Australian welcome to the Japanese, however, there were
still the discordant voices of such journals as the Bulletin and The Worker. Their
warnings distinctly echoed Pearson’s belief that the yellow races were inferior to
the higher Aryans.

At this point we must therefore ask ourselves just whose voices we are
hearing about the Orient. Obviously we are not listening to one single voice, as
reductive essentialism might suggest. Just as in Morrison there were multiple
voices, so there were multiple voices in the Australia community. For example, in
1901 Australia was proclaimed a Federation rather than a land of separate colonies.
This is not the place to detail the struggles towards Federation, but what can be
noted as pertinent, however, is that Federation did not mean a single political
colonial voice. There were still the voices of individual states rather than the
voices of individual colonies. All the states had their separate parliaments, still competing one with another. As if to reinforce their independence, the states even maintained the different gauges of their railway tracks.

With the support of the Labor party, the Australian-born Alfred Deakin was elected Prime Minister of this new Federation. Here was an Australian who refused imperial honours, and who was prepared to look at the Indian corner of the British Empire with some misgiving. Deakin was able to see some of the benefits that British imperialism had brought with it, but he could also see the less desirable things. Thus he could praise the marvels of irrigation but despair of the results flowing from its channels. On the one hand, he was sympathetic with the Indians, expressing this in the story of the passengers on the railway train; on the other hand there was his distrust lingering from the Indian Mutiny. He admired the way the members of Congress spoke English, but he condemned their Brahmanic religion as little more than superstition. He spoke with admiration of their ancient monuments, yet at the same time he condemned the builders as barbarians. Overlaying all this was his belief that Indians had much to teach Australians, for India was worthy of both the Arabian Nights and the modern world. Other voices, like those of Ruby Madden and Herbert Syme, uttered nothing but praise of Imperial rule in India. For them, the India outside the comforts of British accommodation was distinctly ‘Other’ and often unpleasant. Ruby Madden hardly noticed it was there, apart from the dirt, and the occasional glittering maharajahs she met at the balls and receptions. For her, India was little more than a round of elegant social engagements in a hot and sticky climate, which made dressing difficult and unflattering. For Syme, India was a fascinating tourist destination
spoiled by the Indians and the Anglo-Indians. And as it had with so many other
Australians, the shadow of Cawnpore darkened his imagination.

In this way, the Orient was transmogrified into a metaphor for the
geographical isolation that Australians felt. While they recognised that not all
Indians were barbarous Nana Sahibs in disguise, as a whole Indians were not to be
trusted. Only the outward show of force kept them in check. Thus when Australians
looked about them, they began to believe that the Orient was a threatening place.
The Chinese were waiting in their millions for the leader to mobilise them into
action. The Japanese were looking enviously at Australia’s empty north. More and
more, Australia was beginning to feel like the besieged enclaves of Cawnpore,
Khartoum and Peking. Just as had happened with those sieges, help seemed far
away. And had not the Chinese already taken over industries like that of the
furniture trade in Victoria?

Obviously not all Australians felt this way. The voices we tend to hear are
often those who are either male, in public office, or both. In this regard, there
remains much research to be undertaken about the awareness of Australian women.
Surely not all were so frivolous as Ruby Madden?

The loudest voices tend to be heard first. Nobody could rightly accuse the
Bulletin of quietude when it came to the Orient. The journal, which prided itself in
its radicalism, took every opportunity to belittle the Japanese and Chinese. At the
same time, it also railed against the powerful Anglo-Australian élite, whom it felt
were holding too tightly to power and the apron strings of Britain. Politicians,
including Alfred Deakin, in their turn, and across all spectrums of the political
stage, took up the scaremongering. It was left to the quieter voices to assess the
situation more carefully. As Sissons has shown, amongst these was that of the military, which was not unduly alarmed.

Other Australians readily embraced Oriental culture, either in the form of spiritual beliefs or in artistic influences. Theosophy attracted adherents. The decorative arts, architecture and theatre enriched the lives of the wealthier classes. Thus at one and the same time the Orient could be a region, wherever that might be, of fantasy and reality. It would not be long before *Chu Chin Chow* would fill the theatres, just as the *Mikado* had done. But whereas these musicals were no more than pleasurable entertainments, the sinister Dr Fu Manchu would also step from the pages of fiction in the same way that the treacherous and ugly Orientals filled the invasion narratives.

It would be all too easy, therefore, to write that Australians saw the Orient as a collection of simple clichés. To do so would denigrate as ignorant the thousands who read these narratives and enjoyed the theatrical performances. Just as some may have believed the simplicities presented to them, so others would have simply enjoyed the tales for what they were, no more than divertissements. Much work needs to be done to come to any satisfactory conclusions about how Australians really felt about these stories.

A clue can be found in the popularity of Kipling’s Indian stories in Australia. These are not simply the tales of the British in India. The stories of Mowgli in *The Jungle Books* do not present a boy who is essentially different from Australian boys. True, he lives in exotic surroundings with exotic animal companions, but there is a ready identification with Mowgli, because he shares essentially the same feelings of boys everywhere. The eponymous Kim is a European boy disguised as an Indian boy, thereby suggesting again that boys are
boys everywhere, no matter what colour their skin may be. His adventures on the
Grand Trunk Road are filled with Indians with the same characteristics as
Occidentals. Even more telling, as discussed previously, Kipling’s poems and
stories of the Anglo-Indian community suggest a powerful empathy with how
Australians felt so far away from the British metropole. As much as both these
communities might have felt they were British to the proverbial bootstraps of the
period, the metropole was often seemingly indifferent. The Heimweh of the
community in India was also the Heimweh of Anglo-Australians. Thus at least the
Orient of India was somehow spiritually closer than the ‘Home’ of Britain.

What is certain is that Australians found separate lands and cultures
wherever they ventured into the Orient. Sometimes, as in the case of the Holy
Land, this was a place viewed entirely through preconception. The Holy Land had
to be seen through Biblical eyes. There the Australians were pilgrims travelling in
the footsteps of their Saviour. It was possible, however, to look at other lands such
as India in a more complex combination of fantasy and reality. China was different
yet again. Here was a land, obviously ancient, often inscrutable, barbarous in its
treatment of prisoners, perhaps threatening to Australia’s safety, yet despite its
different culture very civilised in its respect for the elderly, its filial piety and its
love of children. South of China could be found lands of ancient cultures, whose
inhabitants, like the Indians, were not to be trusted. It was safer to label them all
Malays. Finally there was Japan, different yet again in so many ways. It had
retained many of its old traditions but was rapidly developing into a modern state
along Western lines. So much so, that Charles Pearson’s prediction that China was
a potential military power that no European power could disregard paled when
compared to it. Instead, there was now the real threat of another of his predictions
coming true, even it had to be adapted to fit the Japanese rather than the Chinese. Orientals would be taken up into ‘the social relations of the white races’, would ‘throng the English turf, or the salons of Paris,’ and would ‘be admitted to intermarriage’.9

In the face of this, even that seeker of truth and spirituality, Alfred Deakin, bowed to public pressure and supported the introduction of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901. Earlier he had posed a question about irrigation in India: Cui bono? Now he and other Australians might well have asked the same about their attitude towards their Oriental neighbours. James Hingston some twenty years before had supplied a possible answer for them:

This Eastern world, the cradle of the human race, will yet likely be the home of the last of those who will tread the earth, when its course shall, like ours, be run, and it finishes as the burnt out, cooled cinder which all worlds must become.10

NOTES
6 Pearson, National Life and Character, op. cit., p.32.
7 Pearson, National Life and Character, op. cit., p.31.
9 Pearson, National Life and Character, op. cit., p.84.
10 Hingston, op. cit., p.483.
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