

Religion, Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia

A Partnership under the Australian Government's *Living In Harmony* initiative

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and AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURAL FOUNDATION
in association with the WORLD CONFERENCE OF RELIGIONS FOR PEACE,
RMIT UNIVERSITY and MONASH UNIVERSITY

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This report aims to map the interrelationship between religion and cultural diversity in the context of Australia's social cohesion and internal security, especially in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 upon New York and Washington and in the broader context of the relationships between religion and the state, on the one hand, and between religion and globalisation on the other. Data collection occurred after those attacks, but the report itself has been written in the shadow of the bombing in Bali of October 12th., 2002 when 88 Australians, mostly young, were killed. After September 11th, we can never again gaze upwards at skyscrapers in the same way as before - those steel and concrete cathedrals, those tall minarets reaching upwards to the sky, are now symbols of the risk and unpredictability of the future. And for Australia, both internally and externally, there are implications for its political and social leaders, which need to be reflected upon, in safeguarding Australia. For more than a decade, theorists have been writing of a backlash against the West; they have written about the link between risk, responsibility and trust, and of 'organized irresponsibility' and the 'limited controllability' of the dangers to be faced, the dangers from disorganized or corrupt commercial operations, from a polluted environment, from fanatical terrorist groups or from the destruction of tradition, scholarship and wisdom (Beck 1999).

After October 12th, it has been said that Australia's multicultural innocence was lost at Kuta Beach on the island paradise of Bali. Australians can no longer wander around tourist resorts in thongs and shorts with quite the same relaxed, carefree Aussie spirit. It was a Hindu island paradise carefully chosen by the extremist Islamic terrorists to show their white-hot hatred not just for Hindus allegedly persecuting their co-religionists in India but more specifically against Westerners, particularly Americans and including Australians. Speaking through the Al-Jazeera TV network, Osama bin Laden explicitly referred to Australia, "Australia was warned about its participation in Afghanistan and its ignoble contribution to the separation of East Timor. It ignored this warning until it was awakened by the echoes of explosions in Bali. As you assassinate, so will you be assassinated; and as you bomb, so will you be bombed". Australia's response to these chilling words and to safeguarding itself against terrorist extremism cannot merely be in military and security terms, important though these be, but must encompass cultural, commercial and educational realities in a global world. This includes religion and faith communities playing their role in safeguarding Australia against ethnic and religious terrorism and against religion perverted by those with political objectives.

Religion in a Globalising World

The events of September 11th were symptomatic of and brought to the surface long-term trends that can be neatly summed up in two very complex words, 'religion' and 'globalisation'. The terrorist attacks also brought home to us that religion, whether transcendent religion or religion corrupted for political or economic purposes, is at the centre of world stage. The anti-religion ideologies of Communism and Nazism have been consigned to the dustbin of history though Marx himself retains his attraction, including his notion that "religion is the opiate of the masses"; however, it is very apparent, certainly for the several decades ahead, that religion and faith are not going to drift away into a privatised world as many atheists and agnostics had predicted. In fact, one of the major features of twentieth century history was the enduring stability of religion and its institutions - 86 per cent of the world's population claim a religious faith (2 billion are Christian, 1.2 billion are Muslim and .8 billion are Hindu) and in Australia, the comparable figure is about 75 percent.

Australia thus exists in a very religious world even though Australia itself is a strongly secular nation.

However, as we shall see, secularism is only one aspect of Australian society, albeit important. The recent Pew Global Attitudes Project (Pew Research Center 2002) in a survey of 44 countries late in 2002, not including Australia, measured the importance of religion in people's lives. In Africa, no fewer than eight-in-ten in any country saw religion as very important personally. Majorities in every Latin American country also subscribe to the same view with the exception of Argentina (only 39%). In Muslim countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, Mali and Senegal, more than nine-in-ten also consider religion as very important in their lives though less so in Turkey (65%) and particularly Uzbekistan (35%). In Europe, religion is not considered very important with the lowest scores of 11 per cent in the Czech Republic and France. In the United Kingdom, 39 per cent considered religion as very important, just behind the European leaders (Poland 39% and the Ukraine 35%). Religion is very important in all Asian countries surveyed (Indonesia 95%, India 92%, the Philippines 88% and Bangladesh 88%) with the exception of Korea (25%), Viet Nam (24%) and Japan (12%). Thus, secularism is present in all the wealthy countries with one very major exception - the United States of America where 59 per cent of the population consider that religion is very important in their lives.

It is now less possible to speak of "Christendom" or "the Islamic world" as religious diasporas continue

to be extended across the world through the movements of peoples. In this generation we have come to understand that secularity does not necessarily mean unspiritual or even irreligious, but that a society's religious life is no longer dominated by churches, synagogues and temples. Since World War II, Christianity has moved in its population base from the countries of the rich North to the countries of the poor South, and this trend will never be reversed. The next Pope will most likely come from a country in the South. In the Anglican Communion, the majority of active believers are now black (Kaye 2002). In London, each Sunday, the majority of church-goers are black, not white (Bartchy 2002). Both Islam and Hinduism perceive in Europe a great spiritual vacuum which they have longterm designs to fill. Religion could well be replacing ideology in a world without boundaries as more people in a less predictable world seek stability in faith in God or the Great Beyond; citizens in functioning democracies such as India and Turkey place their future in faith-based political parties, while secular Arab nationalism has failed to be replaced by either a moderate or extremist Islam. Part of the success of Christian pentecostalism and evangelical groups has been due to the negative effects of globalisation - the response of many believers to economic globalisation has been to rely on their religious faith to reinforce a defensive, "circle-the-wagons" mentality, increasing their fear of those perceived to be 'other' (Bartchy 2002).

Religiosity and religious organizations, and ultimately the spiritualities that underpin the great global and local religious traditions, are interacting with globalisation which can be understood both as the intensification of global consciousness and the compression of space and time through the revolutions in transportation and the information technologies. Its major features include (1) the triumph of global capitalism which talks up the notions of free trade, convertible currencies as the engines of growth and ignores the plight of impoverished countries and their monstrous debt burdens, (2) the rise of the global city as nodes in the world-wide network where most of the inter-religious encounters are taking place in the neighbourhoods and the schools, the factories and the shops, (3) the formation of global ethnic and religious diasporas as a result of the movements of people and networked across time and space (4) the emergence of a complex linguistic *pasticchio* dominated by several variants of global English but layered underneath by other world languages such as Arabic and Spanish and by national and local languages (5) the rise of the so-called politics of identity, the politics of memory and the politics of retribution resulting in many more localised conflicts as well as the emergence of local and international warlords and (6) the rise in risk and the need for new forms of regional and global governance.

This report is written in the context that the future is not one of increasing secularism, and there will be increasing competition and conflict between the major religions (Bartchy 2002; Bouma 2003). There will also be increasing co-operation though this is not necessarily automatic. The varying kinds of interrelationships between religion, culture and nationalism imply that the emerging new order or disorder may bring greater levels of ethnic and religious conflict. Whilst the experience of inter-faith and intercultural contact may generate warm, fuzzy and altruistic feelings, we need to warn against the naivete that is often found in the inter-ethnic and inter-faith area which is full of hidden complexities, subtleties and vexed historical legacies. The aftermath events of the USA and Bali tragedies have highlighted this point. Religious extremism is increasingly seen in the major religious groupings where the religious framework is aligned with a Biblical, Qu'ranic or other fundamentalism or revivalism or with an introverted nationalism which does not accept the universalism that is at the authentic core of all major world religions. It may align itself with a highly politicized, corrupted faith that is prepared to go beyond the previous limits of violence - the antidote is not more secularism of the 1960s and 1970s type against which the extremists are usually reacting but rather a strengthening of religious moderation.

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In Australia, typifying all these developments, as measured by this report through the consultations with religious leaders and through our public consultation with the Australian people conducted electronically, there has been a rise in the feeling, even amongst faith-committed people, that, firstly, recent overseas conflicts such as in the Gulf, the Balkans, Sri Lanka and Central Asia have put Australia's social harmony at serious risk and, secondly, that religious extremism has the potential to destroy the fabric of Australia's civil, pluralist and democratic society. Both these concerns, as expressed through the data, reflect the feeling that perhaps Australia's diversity has become too extended for the common good of an aspiring civil society, and that ethnic and ethnoreligious leaders, especially Muslim leaders and probably all religious leaders, need to be called to greater accountability and scrutiny.

Whilst it is commonplace to think, sometimes rightly, that religion is a negative and divisive force, not least among some ethnic community leaders who suffer from a unhealthy dose of anti-clericalism or think that religion is either irrelevant or even dangerous, some sociologists have come to the conclusion that faith builds community (Appleby 2001); the psychologists and psychiatrists, aware of the occasionally destructive nature of religious phobias and scruples, have realised that, other things being equal, faith is more related to emotional stability than to instability. In China after 50 years of official atheism, there is a profound spiritual thirst. In the West, the youth suicide and youth drug addiction studies suggest that young people need not just a stable family life unmessed by divorce and separation but a belief in something beyond themselves instead of the gnawing, superficial nihilism of pop culture with its fattening fast food, decibel music, and drugged-up pop stars.

Religious traditions have an inherent tendency to be handcuffed to the past and to tradition even if they are also fundamentally oriented to a this-world or beyond-world future. In the creation of civil societies, religion cannot be left to one side. There cannot be peace and harmony unless there is peace and harmony between the religions. They may be handcuffed to an imagined, if not imaginary, past that is often based on poor history. As Flaubert remarked, “our ignorance of history makes us slander our own times”. There is ‘good’ religion, there is ‘bad’ religion; there are extremes in each religious tradition that become locked into their enclosed world-view. Every religion has its cancers and potential cancers; “what our world needs is men and women whose religious commitments are both clear and ambiguous, rooted and adaptive, particular and pluralistic, yet this would not be sufficient: in addition, we must probe our traditions so that we can identify and eradicate the pathologies that have contributed to inquisitions, holy wars, obscurantisms and exclusivisms” (Boys, Lee & Bass 1995: 256).

The report is written from a religiously pluralist perspective that aims to ensure peaceful co-existence and avoids any evangelical and forced missionisation but allowing conversion and reciprocity. Ninian Smart (1996) has developed the twin notions of “soft non-relativism” and “infederated complementarity” to inform a religious pluralist view based on the three propositions (a) no religious or philosophic world-view or revelation is susceptible of proof, so certitude is not possible - even an atheist cannot be absolutely certain of his position (b) not all world-views teach compatible theses so there exists a rivalry even if there is considerable overlap; given the uncertainty, the only possible stance is soft non-relativism and (c) a multicultural stance implies a positive stance towards the different religions and world-views which complement each other and have something to teach each other whilst they co-exist in a world-wide federation. But the report is not written from a religiously neutral perspective because the state may need to take action against any faith community that has allowed itself to be perverted by supporting or encouraging terrorist violence, extreme ethnocentrism or whose structures, programs or dogmas encourage serious sexual misdemeanours or misguided family formation.

Religion and Social Capital

Religion can remind us that life can be more than sitting in front of a computer screen, sitting in front of a poker machine or hushly around a black-jack table. As our computers become more and more clogged up with emails, religion reminds us that print is not necessarily communication, information is not necessarily wisdom, and lack of noise is not necessarily monastic silence. Religion also reminds us that transcendent values are at the core of national integrity, and central to Australia’s current situation is a crisis over values.

This research project was based on the notion of social capital. Social capital which is built around bonds, bridges, links and acceptance of the other refers to the processes that facilitate individual and social well-being and positive communal and societal outcomes within a nation or a group. A nation’s social capital is built on an accurate understanding of its past through, firstly, solid but flexible social institutions that are resistant to corruption, fanaticism and zealotry, are able to manage conflict and deeply felt value clash and are able to deal constructively with the multilayered national and international flows of ideas, finances, peoples, technologies and media images.

... social capital “is not displayed in almanacs, stock market reports or tourist advertisements; its presence has to be discovered through intuition or diligent rationalism.

Secondly, it is further constructed through facilitative modes of communication and association between and across individuals, organizations and collective institutions, all underpinned by (I) positive psychosocial characteristics such as openness to new challenges and ambiguities, the tendency to modernity and long-sightedness, the propensity for care, nurturance and honesty and the readiness to trust people and institutions and (II) positive cultural and religious values, norms and behaviours that produce success in economic, political, military, recreational and other endeavours (Inkeles 2001).

As John Montgomery has commented, social capital “is not displayed in almanacs, stock market reports or tourist advertisements; its presence has to be discovered through intuition or diligent rationalism. Yet it is ubiquitous; it is so often invoked to enhance desired behaviour in the present or to bring about purposeful change for the future” (Montgomery 2001: 1). It is reflected in the stability and solidity of institutions; it highlights trust and its maximization in public life; it underpins and influences the flows of communicating and associating between individuals and collective entities like religious communities and ethnic groups and between nations; it gives nations competitive advantages in the international economic race or in responding to international crises and national disasters; it can help to achieve social

justice by improving distributive justice; it can foster and facilitate grassroots change and initiatives. At its best, religion can facilitate the creation of social capital. But like the two-edged sword, religion can, at its worst, destroy all these things. Religious leaders, like educational and all other community leaders, can enlarge the stock of social capital and help choreograph social and ethnic cohesion in complex societies and across the world. However, in our consultations with religious leaders across Australia, the research team found that religious leaders had difficulty grappling with the notion of social capital, focussing instead on the schools, hospitals, welfare agencies etc. rather than the underlying values and processes that allow these institutions to come into being and flourish down the decades.

Aim and Objectives of the Project

Religious faith has been at the core or close to the core of Australian social and political life since the arrival of the Europeans (Carey 1996; Thompson 2002). Even before that, during the Aboriginal phase of the history of the peopling of the Australian continent, spirituality was at the core of the traditional lifestyle before it was changed with the arrival of the Europeans. They are now in need of Government support for their physical infrastructure needs and their needs in health and education. Reconciliation remains a contested challenge. Faith traditions with their focus on the ultimate and the absolute as well as the local and the universal have been key elements in the formation of Australia's culturally diverse society. Religious groupings have been formative of core social and moral Australian values and of public service, welfare and philanthropic traditions. With their localised presence, their community ethic and their universalist outlook, most religious groups have made positive contributions to the construction of a multicultural society in Australia that is now recognized world-wide as a model and exemplar notwithstanding the various issues and problems that periodically arise with changing national and global circumstances, most recently and most emphatically, following the attacks in the USA, in Bali and elsewhere.

This is one of the living-in-harmony projects funded by the Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. Under the auspices of the Council for Multicultural Australia, it was planned before the terrorist attacks. It was felt that the multi-faith element of multiculturalism had been neglected despite its importance. This neglect may have stemmed from the controversial nature of religion itself and from academic reluctance to research faith communities, either because of a personal animus against any religious ideology or because of a feeling that a privatised faith had largely become an irrelevance in a secular world. Within ethnic communities themselves, the idea that religion was close to the core of culture was hotly contested and resisted, particularly by secularists who were busy fighting for cultural and linguistic maintenance, but only on the condition that it did not include religious maintenance.

In the revised 2001 landmark encyclopedia on *The Australian People* to mark the Centenary of Federation, Professor James Jupp included in his select bibliography only 46 entries under the heading of 'religion'. They were mainly historical studies of the 19th century or conventional studies of the history of particular churches. However, some important work had been done, initially by Hans Mol followed by Frank Lewins' doctoral study of migrants and the Roman Catholic Church, in which he concluded that "culture unites, religion divides" and Adrian Pittarello's 1980 attempt to move Australian Catholicism away from a heavily assimilationist stance and help it understand the world of popular religion of the Italian migrant, pietistic and often superstitious, but deeply felt and held. This has been recently augmented by several well-documented accounts, available only in Italian, Stefano Girola's *I Tre Santi: Fede, Storia, Tradizione; Dalla Sicilia al Queensland* (2000) and Anthony Paganoni and Desmond O'Connor's *Se La Processione Va Bene... Religiosita Popolare Italiana nel Sud Australia* (1999).

An important early contribution was David Cox's important 1982 study on religion and welfare and Abe Ata, in a unique contribution, edited three milestone volumes on religion and ethnicity at the end of the 1980s. At the same time, Croucher published his history of Australian Buddhism in 1989, followed in the same year by Bilimoria's monograph on Australian Hinduism. The flourish at the end of the 1980s was augmented by specific articles in Jupp's first edition in 1988 of *The Australian People*. The 1990s saw the emergence of the work of Gary Bouma, and the volume edited by Norm Habel (1992). The Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research at the behest of Dr. Trevor Batrouney published its Religious Community Profile series edited by Philip Hughes - these small monographs basing themselves on an analysis of the 1991 census data not only drew attention to the smaller faith communities other than Christian such as the Hindu and the Sikh but showed how the mainstream churches were becoming more culturally diverse. However, all these articles and monographs have tended to be particularised rather than taking a more integrated approach to religion, spirituality and cultural diversity (see Bouma 2003).

This project on religion and cultural diversity included and was supplemented by two other projects, namely, the preparation of educational materials on Islam, the Islamic diaspora and the history, role and contribution of Muslim Australians by Associate Professor Abdullah Saeed from the University of Melbourne, and a kit to assist inter-faith interaction and co-operation in the Australian context prepared by Professor Desmond Cahill of RMIT University and Dr Michael Leahy of Deakin University. The research team was also helped by an academic RMIT-UCLA colloquium on religion and globalisation held in Melbourne in September, 2002 which brought together Australian and USA scholars.

This report has aimed to examine the place and function of faith traditions and religious groups in an increasingly multicultural Australia operating in a world that is also increasingly globalised. It aims to identify current and emerging issues as a basis for policy recommendations to government, and provide a basis for informed debate and concrete action in different sectors of the Australian community. It will also indicate areas for further research and exploration.

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The aims of the project were:

- » *to profile the current religious diversity context in Australia within a brief historical framework, and map the extent of inter-faith dialogue and co-operation*
- » *to examine the contribution that religious frameworks and religious groups are currently making and can make to the development of the four civic values of civic duty, cultural respect, social equity and productive diversity*
- » *to identify current and emerging issues, challenges and possibilities regarding the interface of religious groups with Australian society and each other, including areas for further research and exploration*
- » *to document and analyse recent occurrences of racist and bigoted attacks, both verbal and physical, on faith communities and their members, including post-September 11th*
- » *to suggest policy and program initiatives that foster a healthy, interactive religious diversity and that utilizes religion as an asset and resource for Australia's social, political and economic well-being in a globalising world*
- » *to investigate the feasibility of Australian inter-faith bodies and structures to advise the Council for Multicultural Australia and other government and non-government bodies*
- » *to investigate data sources for the construction of an electronic network for the transmission of information to religious groups at local, regional and national levels*

Project Strategy

The project strategy involved five elements:

- 1 Consultations with religious leaders.
- 2 Consultations with government officials and appropriate NGOs.
- 3 Two commissioned papers.
- 4 Research studies of faith communities at local levels.
- 5 Public consultation with the Australian people conducted electronically.

1 A series of consultations with religious leaders in each capital city

Consultations were held with religious leaders in each State and Territory through the co-operation of bodies such as the World Conference of Religions for Peace, state Councils of Churches and Heads of Faith Committees. For the consultations, the State/Territory leaders of the twenty-eight largest religious communities, as defined by the census, having 10,000 adherents across Australia, were approached. The groups were the Catholic, Anglican, Uniting Church of Australia, Presbyterian, Greek Orthodox, Baptist, Lutheran, Buddhist, Islamic, Jewish, Hindu, Jehovah's Witnesses, Australian Christian Church, Salvation Army, Church of Christ, Assembly of God, Macedonian Orthodox, Seventh-Day Adventist, Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints, Serbian Orthodox, Christian Brethren, Russian Orthodox, Coptic Orthodox, Sikh, Christian Outreach, Christadelphians, the Reformed and Baha'i faith communities. Collectively, this represents over 97 per cent of those in Australia who have a religious affiliation.

In the smaller states and the two territories, many of these faith communities are very small, or barely existent, hence they were not able to be represented at the consultations. In other cases, communities wanted only to be represented nationally, and

hence were represented only in one or two locations. In several cases, there was a reluctance to participate or a suspicion of government objectives. The number of states and territories at which each faith community was represented is as follows:

Table 1

| Faith Community | Number of states/territories |
|---|------------------------------|
| Catholic | 6 |
| Anglican | 4 |
| Uniting Church of Australia | 6 |
| Presbyterian | 1 |
| Greek Orthodox | 3 |
| Baptist | 4 |
| Lutheran | 3 |
| Buddhist | 5 |
| Islamic | 5 |
| Jewish | 5 |
| Hindu | 3 |
| Jehovah's Witnesses | 2 |
| Australian Christian Churches | 1 |
| Salvation Army | 4 |
| Church of Christ | 4 |
| Macedonian Orthodox | 0 |
| Seventh-Day Adventists | 2 |
| Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints | 5 |
| Serbian Orthodox | 1 |
| Christian Brethren | 0 |
| Russian Orthodox | 0 |
| Coptic Orthodox | 1 |
| Sikh | 4 |
| Christian Outreach | 0 |
| Christadelphians | 0 |
| Reformed Christian | 0 |
| Baha'i | 2 |

The consultations were conducted over a two-hour period, using a discussion brief specially developed for the exercise (Appendix One). The size of the discussion groups varied from 3 to 10. Discussion was always cordial, led by one of the research team, and, for most participants, it became a genuine learning experience as they shared views with leaders they had never previously met.

2 A series of consultations with relevant Australian Government departments in Canberra and other key agencies

Consultations were held with relevant government departments such as the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Department of Health and Community Services and the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs and agencies such as the Human Rights Commission. In every State and Territory, consultations were conducted with their government multicultural or community relations commissions, ethnic communities' councils and with the members of the Council for a Multicultural Australia chaired by Mr. Benjamin Chow.

3 Commissioned papers prepared by experts in selected aspects

A paper on the demographic analysis of Australia's religious groups was commissioned. During the life of the project, the 2001 census material became available and it was analysed by Professor Gary Bouma for inclusion into the final report. It has been incorporated into chapter three. An Information Kit on Muslims in Australia was commissioned, and these materials were prepared by Associate Professor Abdullah Saeed of the University of Melbourne.

It was hoped that a paper on the role of religion in trade and commerce across the world and in relation to Australia could be commissioned. While much is known about a few selected aspects e.g. the live sheep trade to the Middle East, the area needs to be researched in much more depth than was possible given the constraints on this project.

4 Research studies of local faith or groups of religious personnel

This element of the research focussed on the local level, and on the 20 religious groups with at least 20,000 members across Australia as identified by the 1996 census. Fourteen religious communities were selected on the mixed criteria of (1) religious grouping, both mainstream and ethnoreligious (2) suburban/rural location, including satellite areas (3) state of the Commonwealth and (4) types of immigrant communities in the local area. Pseudonyms have been given to disguise their locations and details have been deliberately left vague to maintain the anonymity of the community. The studies were as follows:

Bendall Plains

The research in Bendall Plains focussed on a recently-built Hindu temple and its community located on the periphery of a large metropolis.

Meringle

The research in Meringle focussed on a well-established Serbian Orthodox Church which served its community drawn from a large part of the metropolitan area.

Braddock

The research in Braddock focussed on the Lutheran community in a sizeable provincial city, especially on its parish church located near the centre of the city and on the Lutheran primary school.

Bunreba

Bunreba is a poor, long-established, now heavily Asian area located in an outer-suburban area. This research focussed on a Baptist church which operated as three linguistic faith communities, namely, a multicultural, English-speaking community together with Lao and Vietnamese Baptist communities. The research also describes the work of two other Christian churches, located in the same street opposite a park, the Uniting Church and the Roman Catholic, serving a multitude of immigrant and refugee communities. The work of the primary Catholic school was also researched.

Glenara

The research in Glenara focussed on an inner-suburban Anglican with a small Anglo-Australian community that was struggling to survive.

The parish also hosted two Maori congregations which raised the issue of transnational jurisdiction. Input was also gained from the Roman Catholic priest whose community was the only other Christian faith group still operating in the area.

Heptonstall

This research focussed on an Orthodox Jewish community located in a middle-class area of a major metropolis, together with two adjacent Jewish communities, all three with their own synagogue; it also contains input from local Christian leaders.

Green Valley

Green Valley is a proud and prosperous provincial city far distant from any major city. Its focus is on a small Presbyterian community operating in a strongly Anglo-Australian environment. The study also contains input from the local Anglican vicar.

Jackaranda

Jackaranda is a small, remote provincial town, holding its own in its struggle for survival and containing sizeable Aboriginal and Muslim populations. The focus was upon the local Uniting Church community and a Wesleyan Methodist Church community, but data were collected on most of the Christian churches as well as on the Muslim community worshipping in their mosque on the periphery of town.

Marbeline

This research focussed on one Islamic mosque located in an Australian capital city; it examines its community dynamics as well as its relationships with other religious communities in its locality.

Midmet

The focus of this research element was upon Catholic migrant chaplains serving their immigrant communities in a large metropolitan city. It aimed to ascertain the contribution the Catholic Church, as Australia's largest religious grouping, has made through its migrant chaplaincy strategy to facilitate the settlement of Catholic immigrants and create a harmonious society. In particular, it explored the impact of imported hatreds and overseas conflicts on immigrant communities and the role of religion in exacerbating or defusing these impacts.

Salamander

Salamander is located in a major metropolis, and focusses on a Jehovah's Witness Hall serving English-, Greek- and Spanish-speaking communities in a huge medium- to high-migrant density area that contains both middle-class and working class pockets. It also contains details about Salvation Army and Mormon communities located nearby.

Shelbourne

Shelbourne focussed on the presence and work of several Assemblies of God congregations in a provincial city with the spotlight on a community located in a very low migrant density area and served by married couples as pastors.

Tamarena

The research centred on a Greek Orthodox church serving its community in a middle-class to upper middle-class area in a major metropolis.

Wattleton

In Wattleton, the research centred on a Chinese Buddhist temple whose grounds also contain a large Taoist shrine. However its focus was broadened to examine a remarkable square mile of multi-faith Australia which included another three Buddhist temples, all recently built, namely Cambodian, Laotian and Vietnamese, this becoming a study of four ethnic strands of Buddhism in Australia. The study also includes a description of the work of the local Catholic parish and its primary school, an Anglican Church which also hosted an evangelical Vietnamese community, a multicultural Baptist community and a Chinese Presbyterian Church as well as a Turkish mosque.

The research strategy was to focus on the initially selected faith community, and then, after an initial reconnaissance, was developed further to include other locally based communities. In this sense, it was opportunistic. The research team used traditional ethnographic techniques utilizing case study methodology which since the late 1970s has been accorded considerable respectability. The research team drew heavily on the methodologies described by Stake and Easley (1978), Hamilton et al. (1977) and House (1980), and later by Miles and Huberman (1984), Guba and Lincoln (1989) and Yin (1990). These localised studies rely heavily on qualitative data gathered on site by interview and observation but also incorporate appropriate population and historical data when necessary. Because of the wide disparity in the types of faith communities studied and the considerable constraints on resources, the research approach was the only feasible method in gathering data and drawing conclusions. The chief researcher had successfully on two previous occasions used the methodology when reviewing for the Australian Government the response by primary and secondary schools, both public and private, to the presence of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Cahill 1984, 1996).

In gathering research data, anthropological or ethnographic procedures and journalistic devices can prove effective in gathering and recording evidence. These ‘naturalistic’ methodologies may lead to more sensitive, relevant and easily communicable understandings about faith communities, their religious framework, their activities and their outreach programs. The findings are best presented as ‘relatively informal narrative, often employing quotes, illustrations, allusion and metaphor’. This places considerable demands on the sensitivity, observation and writing skills of the researcher. It requires the researcher to use his or her initiative in utilising all the presented opportunities when gathering data. Direct dialogue in the interviews provided the bulk of the data. It is important to realise in localised studies of religious communities that ‘such qualitative research enterprise depends on the researcher’s ability to make himself a sensitive research instrument’ (Stake & Easley 1978: 25).

This part of the overall research strategy was conducted in five mainland states, and the research team is confident that they represent a reasonably accurate snapshot of multi-faith Australia in the Year 2002 and, thus, are an important social document. During the course of these studies of faith communities in many different parts of Australia, 64 interviews and meetings were conducted. Altogether, over 100 people participated in these interviews and meetings, and thousands of the faithful would have been observed in their attendance at religious liturgies, prayer services or personal devotions to their Gods. The interviews were with individual pastors or community leaders or religious school principals while the meetings were with vestry members, church regional boards, synagogue boards of management or with groups of pastors.

There were, as well, five in all, meetings with a police superintendent, shire president and secretary and local government social and community development officers. One attempted meeting with a business leader failed. The religious affiliations of these interviewees or groups of interviewees were Catholic (11), Anglican (8), Baptist (5), Uniting Church (4), Lutheran (4), Islam (4), Buddhist (4), Jewish (4), Presbyterian (3), Greek Orthodox (2), Jehovah’s Witness (2), Hindu (2), Assemblies of God (2), Serbian Orthodox (1), Churches of Christ (1), Wesley Methodist (1), and Aboriginal Christian (1). Faith communities whose services were observed but where no interview took place were the Salvation Army, the Foursquare church and the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints.

5 A public consultation conducted electronically with the Australian people

On February 8th 2002 very early in the life of the project, in the mainstream quality press in all states, an advertisement asked for electronic or hard copy submissions in response to a structured questionnaire. Ninety submissions were received, including from New South Wales (17), Victoria (20), Queensland (9), Western Australia (9), South Australia (24), Tasmania (2), Northern Territory (2) and the Australian Capital Territory (7). The instrument is contained in Appendix Two.

Table 1.1: Issues of serious concern (111 responses)

| Issue | Percentage (%) |
|---|----------------|
| Religious education in mainstream public and private schools | 12.6 |
| The definition of religion in a multi-faith context | 9.9 |
| Aboriginal reconciliation | 9.9 |
| The education of faith community leaders | 9.0 |
| Employment practices and religious expression, including religious holidays | 8.1 |
| Religion and the role of women | 7.2 |
| The place of Aboriginal spiritualities in a multi-faith context | 7.2 |
| The media and the reporting of faith community activities | 5.4 |
| Inter-faith marriages and their religious implications for families | 4.5 |
| Success or failure in inter-faith initiatives | 4.5 |
| Job discrimination and religious affiliation | 4.5 |
| Other | 4.5 |
| The religious dimensions of emergency situations | 3.6 |
| The construction and management of special sacred and religious sites | 2.7 |
| Faith, religious liberty and legal issues | 1.8 |
| Religion and the Australian identity | 1.8 |
| Multi-faith chaplaincy in the Australian armed forces | 0.9 |
| Full-time and part-time religious and ethnoreligious schools | 0.9 |
| Religion and environmental protection | 0.9 |
| Representativity of faith communities in local, state and national forums | 0.0 |
| Tourism and the visitation of religious sites | 0.0 |
| The state and confessional universities | 0.0 |
| TOTAL | 100.0 |

As part of this consultation, respondents were given a list of 21 issues through which they were asked to nominate those of most serious concern (Table 1.1). The issue giving most serious concern was religious education in mainstream public and private schools (12.6%), followed by Aboriginal reconciliation (9.9%) and the definition of religion in a multi-faith context (9.9%), followed closely by the issue of educating faith community leaders (9.0%) and employment practices and religious expression (8.1%). The role of women in religion also rated fairly highly (7.2%) and the place of Aboriginal spiritualities in a multi-faith context (7.2%). Issues which elicited no concern were faith community representativity, tourism and the visitation of religious sites and confessional universities.

*As part of this consultation,
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21 issues through which they
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most serious concern...*

CHAPTER TWO

Historical Perspectives: Till World War II

The Beginnings of Aboriginal Spirituality

An integrated history of religion in the Australian multi-faith context that takes account of ethnic diversification and the recent rise of the spirituality movements is yet to be written though the work of Ian Breward (1993), Hilary Carey (1996) and Roger Thompson (2002) is to be noted. Much of the following account draws on the conventional ethnic and religious group histories as well as articles from Jupp's encyclopedia, mainly the 2001 edition. Such a history begins in the mists of time with the Aborigines and their various spiritualities which were centred on the land, the waters and the sky. Aboriginal oral traditions are permeated by the belief they have lived here since the act of creation in the infinite past of the Dreamtime though there are other versions which suggest it resulted from migration, presumably from Asia (Flood 2001) during the time of Sahul or Greater Australia before the end of the Last Ice Age.

All their rich mythologies were expressed in their ceremonial life and the artistic traditions have recorded and continue to record their spiritual beliefs. In the so-called 'original affluent society', Indigenous Australians had much time for their artistic and ceremonial activities, and were not pressured by the demands of time and over-work.

In creation time, the creation ancestors entered Australia as a partly formed landscape (Isaacs 1980, 1984). Some such as the giant serpents came from beneath the ground while others came from and returned to the blue sky. Some came from across the seas but all fashioned and moulded the landscape; they changed the seasons, the wet and the dry, the hot and the cold, and they brought the wetness of the rains and the flash of the thunderous lightning. The creation ancestors such as the Rainbow Serpent began their journeys across the land, clashing with each other, sculptoring the earth into valleys and mountains, ridges and plains, rivers and lakes. Men and women metamorphosed themselves into stone or rock formations (Isaacs 1984).

Each clan and family belonged to the land which was theirs by derivation through descent from the creation ancestors. "Certain people had the duty of guarding sacred sites, visiting and retouching art, conducting ceremonies at special places or clearing unwanted vegetation from sacred rocks and trees. Intellectual life revolved around recalling complex and extensive genealogies and ceremonial songs. The ceremonies enacted the song cycles that described the travels, movements and actions of the ancestral beings at different places, and recalling genealogical information enabled all Aboriginal people to trace their relationship with sometimes distant tribes" (Isaacs 1984: 10).

Like all authentic religions, Aboriginal spirituality has a strong sense of place and of time. Central was the re-enactment of the constant connecting of the life of the people with the Dreaming, and this religious process was expressed in music, ceremonial dance, bodily decoration and ornament and paintings on rock and bark. The common theme in Aboriginal spiritualities is their varying relationships as hunter-gatherers to the land and each other, and to the oneness of the universe; they reject the taming and destruction of the Creator's handiwork. In other words, everything is sacred in a non-hierarchical whole.

Just as there are many world spiritualities, there are many Aboriginal spiritualities that continue to resonate and develop in the minds of Aborigines. Aboriginal theologians and philosophers need to develop these further and, as much as they are able, to share them with other Australians. They are a key part of Australia's multi-faith mosaic.

Initial Muslim Contact

With the coming of the Europeans, Christianity was introduced to the Australian continent though it is likely Islam was practised for at least some decades, if not longer, before Governor Arthur Phillips' First Fleet arrived. Extensive trade was already occurring between China and Arabia when Muhammed (pbuh) died in 632 CE. His uncle, Abu Waqqas, had fled to Ethiopia during the persecution, and then to Guangzhou in China in about 616 CE. According to Chinese Muslim annals, after going back to Arabia, he returned to Guangzhou in 637 CE, bringing with him a copy of the Quran. He founded the Mosque of Remembrance and was eventually buried in the Muslim cemetery in Guangzhou (Cleland 2002).

Historians are not agreed when Islam arrived in South East Asia, and further research remains to be done. A small Muslim trade colony had appeared on Sumatra by 674 CE. Gradually but slowly, the area was Islamicized, certainly by the end of the twelfth century. It would seem that Islamic navigators had explored the coastline of northern Australia. "The map of the Sea of Java of Muhammed ibn Musa al- Khwarizmi 820 CE shows Cape Yorke Peninsula, a "V" shaped Gulf of Carpentaria and a curved Arnhem Land.

A later map, that of Abu-Farisi Istakhari 934 CE, also includes an outline of the northern coast of Australia" (Cleland 2002: 4). Christianity had reached southern India in the first century in the figure of Thomas the Apostle but it was to be many centuries before Marco Polo and, later on, Francis Xavier reached beyond India. Portuguese and Spanish navigators later reached the area and, as colonizers, settled in places such as Macau, Timor and the Philippines. In the meantime, trading camps had been established on Australia's northern coasts, perhaps as long ago as 800 years (see Macknight 1976) by Macassan fishermen such as Pobasso seeking trepang which they caught, cooked and dried for transportation back home. However, Macknight accepts that the trade could not, with historical certainty, be earlier than about 1650 though he prefers the period 1751 - 1754 as the best documented (Macknight 1976; Cleland 2002). Whatever the date, the Macassans, according to the oral traditions of the Aborigines of Arnhem Land (Isaacs 1980), practised their Islamic prayer rituals during their 3 - 4 months' stay in Australia each year. Here, we have the likely first inter-faith contact on the Australian continent but, given the intermittancy and localization of the contact, Aboriginal religious culture was not impacted as would be the case with the arrival of the British Fleet in 1788.

The Australian Foundations of Christianity

With the exception of Manning Clark who developed his view of Australian history somewhat narrowly around the twin poles of the Enlightenment and Catholicism, religion has not been a central feature in Australian historical accounts. The Anglican historian, Bruce Kaye, comments that “Australian historiography has been assiduous in ignoring religion, and Anglicanism in particular, as a recurrent factor in Australian life” (Kaye 2002: xv). The history of religion in Australia revolves around the themes of (1) the transplanting of the faith from the source countries and the initial difficulties implanting it on Australian soil (2) the positioning and repositioning of the relationship between religion and state (3) the establishment of organizational and leadership structures (4) the continuance of transnational links with the religious source centres overseas (5) the inter-religious tensions and squabbles (6) the interface of the faith communities with the Aboriginal population (7) faith communities and the impact of migration and (8) religiosity and popular religion. The complete and total separation of religion and state may have always been a secularist aspiration. But it has always been a myth as the different phases of Australian history have seen a succession of repositionings.

The first Christian leader to work in Australia was Richard Johnston who acted as chaplain to Phillip’s First Fleet until his return to England in 1800 together with Samuel Marsden, “the flogging parson”, who arrived in 1794. For each and every faith community, the process of transplantation would be, and remains even today, challenging and difficult for the recently arrived communities trying to establish themselves (Bouma 1995, 1997a). Johnston and Marsden began transplanting an Evangelical Anglicanism from a United Kingdom where the base of the Church of England had been strongly rural and sedentary. The Church had achieved little penetration into the mining and urban areas - there were relatively few Anglicans who lived in London at the end of the eighteenth century (Jupp 2001). In Australia during the chaplaincy period from 1788 up until the 1830s, the Church of England, like Roman Catholicism a little later, had its origins in the British penal system, and yet at the same time was part of the broader process of religious globalisation (Fletcher 2002a) which had started with the Roman Catholic Church and the influence of the Salamanca school of theology upon Spanish and Portuguese colonization (Strenski 2002).

Christianity in Australia was brought into being by an act of the British state with the formal appointment of Johnston as chaplain to the penal colony. It was assumed that religion and civil order went in unison, and that religion had the capability to rid convicts of their criminal tendencies and inculcate in them the traits necessary for becoming founding citizens of this new, faraway colony. It did not occur to the British authorities that Anglican convicts were very much a minority as convicts were drawn more from the urban than the rural areas. All colonial governors were expected to be Anglican worshippers though their practice varied. It took five years to build the first wooden church, but as the number of convicts grew, so did the number of churches. Sunday attendance was obligatory, and the unresponsive convicts identified the parsons with the civil authorities. Religion in colonial Australia did not have an auspicious start.

In Australia, the temptation for Anglicanism to be aligned with the administrative and financial elite was overwhelming but the alliance in fact was not to be intense or prolonged as might have been anticipated (Kaye 2002). All the early Anglican chaplains were Evangelicals which was very useful in developing good relations with their Nonconformist counterparts later on, but it resulted in an Anglicanism infused with a far more democratic spirit than its English parent. It developed a more collaborative model of leadership which in later decades would be resisted by more authoritarian bishops. It was the first Anglican Church in the world to develop synods in each diocese, resulting in a less centralized structure with 'a loose confederation of dioceses' (Kaye 2002).

Historians have been in some agreement that the chaplains were ineffectual in their work with the unresponsive convicts though there are dissenters to this historical view. In any case, in their subsequent quest for respectability as emancipées, the released convicts often became staunch church members and members of the emerging middle class (Fletcher 2002a). But "the early Anglican chaplains were products of the Evangelical revival. They differed in personality but were united by a strong sense of mission and an inner strength that made them determined to succeed. This was particularly true of Richard Johnston, first in a line of dedicated men...such men may have come to despair of making much impact upon on the convicts. Yet, they persevered, partly from a sense of duty, partly because they retained a residual hope of achieving good" (Fletcher 2002a: 12). However, the early alliance between the governors and the Anglican chaplains could not endure because other denominational groups were always represented amongst the convicts and free settlers.

From the beginning, it had been presumed that the Anglican Church was the established church, but the arrival of convicts from Ireland in 1791, the large increase in Scottish Presbyterian settlement in the 1820s and in Cornish settlement in the 1830s challenged this presumed ascendancy situation in a way that would have been impossible in the mother country. Prohibition against the entry of Roman Catholic chaplains was rigorously policed because it was feared they might foment discontent and rebellion among the Irish convicts. However, in the lead-up to the emancipation of Catholics in Great Britain in 1832, Roman Catholic chaplains were officially allowed in after 1820 though some priests had spent short periods in Australia before that. Very quickly Rome appointed William Ullathorne as vicar-general in 1832, and two years later, John Bede Polding was appointed as the first bishop, beginning the tradition that Rome has always till this point in time appointed its bishops and making the Australian Catholic Church the most externally controlled of all the Australian faith communities, both past and present.

A Methodist minister arrived in 1815 immediately setting up a house church in the Rocks area of Sydney; the first Presbyterian minister, Dr. John Dunmore Lang, disembarked in 1824 and in 1834 the first Baptist minister arrived. Like their Roman Catholic counterparts, none received any government help with stipend subsidy or financial assistance in building churches. Historians disagree on the fact of 'Establishment', some suggesting the status of the Church of England as being 'official', but not 'established'. Establishment, according to the Act of Settlement of 1701 in the United Kingdom, implies that all those holding public offices, including the monarchy, are to be Anglican communicants, that church appointments and legislation must be approved by the British government, bishops can sit in the House of Lords, that church property gained from the Roman Catholics during the Reformation was bequeathed in perpetuity to the Church of England and that private property was to be tithed by a church tax (Jupp 2001). In Australia, the situation was very different, and the alliance was unsustainable.

During the 1820s, as the colonial press freed up, scrutiny of the Church of England became more intense in the belief, strongly propounded alike by the liberals and the Nonconformists, that all churches should be equal in status and treated accordingly. Archbishop Broughton, brought up in an Irish Anglican gentry family and who had arrived in 1829 soon to become in 1836 the

first and only Anglican bishop of Australia, argued for the retention of Anglican privileges (Fletcher 2002a) against the other churches in the first of many inter-denominational squabbles that would last up until the late 1950s. The Anglican ascendancy was already in decline, and in the important Church Act of 1832 enacted by the New South Wales Legislative Council, financial aid was made available to the Anglicans, Catholics, Scottish Presbyterians and, later on, to the Methodists and Baptists. The Congregationalists refused such aid because of their belief in the separation of church and state.

The *Church Act* allowed for the recruitment of clergy from overseas, assistance in the payment of clergy stipends and the building of churches up to a cost of £1,000. This ended any Anglican attempt at Establishment status, and was interpreted as an expression of the state's religious neutrality (Curthoys 2002). Roman Catholics were determined about achieving these developments because they did not want Australia to be a replica of England. But the Anglicans were upset because, in their view, aid should be given to the only 'true' church. Broughton also objected to Polding's title as bishop of Sydney. The introduction of government aid facilitated the growth of all churches, especially in urban and closely settled areas, in a religious climate that fostered conflict, competition and co-operation in a multi-layered process of interaction (Curthoys 2002).

The educational needs of the 36 children on the First Fleet were not initially met, but soon there were schools for the children of military officers and schools for the children of convicts, beginning a tradition that the children of the rich and powerful would be educated in one type of school, and the children of the poor and disadvantaged in another type of school that largely endures to the present day with the emergence of government residual schools in poorer, suburban areas (Cahill 1996). The Anglican Church soon began organizing schools. By 1829, it had sponsored 25 'free schools' as well as schools for male and female orphans (Fletcher 2002a). A consequence of the *Church Act* was, within a short time, a smorgasbord of small denominational schools. On cost grounds, Governor Gipps proposed in geographic areas only one school for the Protestants, and one for the Roman Catholics. The Protestant opposition was so trenchant that the proposal was withdrawn but financial allocations were so reduced that soon half the colony's children were not receiving a proper education. Eventually non-church national schools, the forerunners of today's government schools, were established though church opposition was overcome only by allowing religious instruction to occur in them - they were never meant to be secular or areligious schools.

The Catholic Church and Australian Fermentation

There is the temptation to identify Irishness and Catholicism. In fact, Australian Catholicism had other tributaries - one quarter of Irish immigrants were not Catholic and one quarter of Catholics were not from Ireland (Fitzpatrick 2001). However, as O'Farrell (1987) has emphasised, the Irish in Australia came from very different Irelands, namely the Gaelic Catholic, the Anglo-Irish and the Ulster Protestants, a situation made more complicated by the fact that some of the Irish-born or those of Irish descent did not consider themselves Irish. The Protestant Irish considered their Irishness as a dimension of Britishness, and they were militant about, firstly, the virtues of British imperialism, the English crown and the Protestant religion. But they were even shriller in their opposition to and denunciation of the Catholic Irish (O'Farrell 1987).

Once in Australia, the Catholic Irish were not prepared to reject their identity or their religion. "losing the faith" was seen as a betrayal. For them, as underdogs and outcasts, Ireland was both an inspiration and a warning that Australia must not become 'the little Britain of the South'. And they would not accept subordination, however nicely delivered, nor exclusion. In O'Farrell's view, the Irish were the galvanising force at the centre of Australian history until quite recent times. And the battle was as much political as religious. There would be much cultural and religious conflict, but essentially it would be a situation of cultural fermentation in which core Australian values would be forged rather than be a maelstrom of religious conflict. And he explicitly rejected other historical paradigms, "The real history of Australia, monstrously neglected, is the history of the gradual growth and development, through confrontation and compromise, of a people of distinctive quality and character, derived and produced by cultures - majority and minority - in conflict. The story is not a narrow one of man versus the land or nature, or of class versus class, or the solitary individual against flaws and limitations in the self; no, the broad outlines in which all these things are contained, their context, is that of culture conflict, interaction, ferment. The basic premise of this view of Australian history is that it is not substantially derived from and supported by the outside" (O'Farrell 1987: 10).

The Irish Catholic movement to Australia was essentially triggered by the social and political conditions of Ireland. As members of an English dominion, if not colony, Catholics in Ireland were excluded from wealth, power and education, from public office and from land ownership as were Irish Presbyterians though the constraints were far less rigorously applied than to the Catholics. "In general, Irish Catholicism was synonymous with Irish poverty, which was both widespread and severe even by the standards of the 1770s" (Macdonagh 2001: 443). After some policy modifications, the period in Ireland from 1795 to 1829 was to essentially preserve Protestant supremacy in Ireland which led to increasing Irish ethnoreligious nationalism and resentment of British rule. According to Macdonagh (2001), the second major transformation of the Irish condition was a prodigious growth in population, and the situation was exacerbated by Britain's undercutting of Irish manufacturers. All this resulted in a tremendous jump in the number of landless agricultural labourers. After 1830, there was a rapid and dangerous decline in living standards, leading gradually and inexorably to the Great Potato Famine in the late 1840s, a symptom of the underlying factors of policy mismanagement as much as a cause. Crop failures occurred over seven successive seasons from potato blight. Approximately one million died, and one million emigrated, though only a few came to Australia.

Allied with this in light of subsequent events in Australia was a slow increase in Ireland throughout the first half of the nineteenth century in popular education with the development of hedge schools alongside the Protestant schools. Gradually, especially after 1850, Catholic educational schools emerged sponsored by religious orders. The State, particularly after 1831, set up national schools which were condemned as a godless form of education by both Catholic and Church of England bishops who, in turn, established their own schools. These accomplished much but even by 1851 illiteracy was at 45 per cent, and much higher in the younger age groups (Macdonagh 2001). No Irish culture or history was taught in their own schools, and nor was it to be taught in Australian Catholic schools. The faith was more important. However, this limited British educational antidote could not stem the anti-British sentiments infecting home and parish in Ireland. But they did learn about British values regarding justice and democracy even if they were not practised on the Catholic Irish. And it did lead in the U.K. to the 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act whose impact was arguably quicker and stronger in Australia.

The first wave of Irish emigrants were, of course, the almost 50,000 Irish convicts, about a quarter of the overall total. Among their number were three priests transported as political prisoners for their part in the 1798 rebellion (Reece 2001). For a long period until the 1820s, the Catholic laity took care of themselves. The first permanent Catholic school was opened in 1820, and from that time, Catholic priests, led by Fr. Therry, were allowed in. Both Ullathorne and Polding, as the initial Catholic leaders were English Benedictine monks, the Vatican doubtlessly thinking it more politic to appoint Englishmen rather than Irishmen. From the beginning, Catholics leaders took a socially activist stance begun by Ullathorne in his campaign against convict transportation (Kiernan 2001).

As the second major migration wave, free emigration from Ireland began in the 1850s and peaked in the 1860s though continuing in a major way until the end of the century. It originated from the less distressed areas because emigration to Australia, more so than to the Americas, was a more thoughtful and organized affair because the ship journey was so much longer (O'Farrell 1987; Macdonagh 2001).

To the Irish faithful, English Benedictines were not fully acceptable. From 1859, Irish bishops were appointed, "the bishops came from the Ireland of Cardinal Cullen and were determined to ensure the triumph of Irishness in the Australian Catholic Church" (Kiernan 2001: 461). They were determined to engender a strong sense of Catholic identity that mitigated against out-marriage and conversion to other denominations. They would lead or support Irish Australians in the divisive and long-running issues: the debate over immigration from the 1830s, the role of religion in politics beginning in the 1840s, the sectarian battle between Protestants, Catholics and secularists, freer access to land, the conscription issue much later and, of course, the longest and most divisive issue of all, that of Catholic schools (O'Farrell 1987).

Catholic leadership was incarnated in the figures of Polding and Vaughan in Sydney and Gould and Carr in Melbourne until the two great leaders of Australian Catholicism took over, Moran in Sydney and, later on, Mannix in Melbourne together with his compatriot, Duhig in Brisbane. Whilst opposed to socialism and radicalism of any kind, Moran, the first Australian cardinal, created links with the Labor party in its formative years during the Great Depression of the early 1890s. He followed a strongly integrationist policy and supported Federation. Mannix in his long tenure as archbishop from 1917 to 1963 to die at the age of 99, followed a more ethnic separatist, if not ghettoish, line but always within an Australian framework. “If Cardinal Moran represented the church triumphant, Mannix stood for the church militant. It was he who led the successful campaign for State funding of private schools. Mannix recognized that State funding could only be achieved politically, and he encouraged Catholics to take political action” (Kiernan 2001: 463). But it was not till after Mannix’s death in 1963 that Robert Menzies was able to convince his Cabinet to again begin giving government funding to private schools, not least because it was cheaper to prop up the private schools than to build and staff new state schools.

Irish dominance of the Australian Catholic Church did not go unchallenged. Cecilia (1985) and Bosi (1989) have documented how Italian religious worked alongside their Irish male and female religious and religious from many other parts of Europe such as France, Spain and Germany to lay the foundations for a Church that was always multicultural. Cecilia records how some Italian priests were so unable to cope with the stress, the isolation and the autocratic rule of some Irish bishops that they quickly departed Australian shores, never to return. Part of the Italian legacy was the work of the little-known Blessed Giovanni Mazzucconi, known in Italy as ‘the martyr of Oceania’, who worked in 1855 in Sydney as a priest whilst recuperating before returning to a New Guinea island where he was immediately killed upon arriving back. Two Italians were appointed bishops in the latter part of the nineteenth century to the consternation of the Irish clergy who felt that Rome was hatching a plot against them. There were not only Italians but Catholics from other parts of the world, including Germany (Harmstorf & Cigler 1985), France (Stuer 1982), Poland (Kaluski 1985), Czechoslovakia (Cigler 1985), Hungary (Kunz 1985) and the Lebanon (Batrouney & Batrouney 1985). Also neglected in the history of Australian Catholicism is the influence of religious orders from France, Germany and Spain.

The Nonconformist Presence in Australia

The Nonconformists had their origins in the United Kingdom in various groups such as the Congregationalists and Baptists that arose in the 17th century and to be greatly strengthened by the rise of Methodism whose adherents emigrated in the desire of the British working-classes for a more prosperous future (Mol 2001). They were always more participatory in their leadership structures. Early on in colonial Australia, their numbers were comparatively small, and the groups were occasionally ministered to by “young, hard-pressed, poorly-paid ordained missionaries’ from the mother country. However, the numbers of Methodists, in particular, grew from the 1840s as a result of troubles in the mining industry in Cornwall, and they were attracted to mining districts in NSW and to the Victorian goldfields. They were especially attracted to South Australia because the Anglican Church received no special privileges there (Mol 2001). As staunch members of the working class, they were stereotyped, not unsympathetically, as ‘workaday people’, ‘skilled tradesmen’ and ‘thrifty shopkeepers’. They were also avid church-goers, and an 1881 census in Victoria showed that 79 per cent of Methodists were church-goers, compared to 59 per cent for the Presbyterians, 34 per cent for Catholics and 16 per cent for Anglicans (Mol 2001).

In the U.K., many splits had occurred with the formation of breakaway groups such as the Primitive Methodists, the Bible Christians and the Wesleyan Methodists. These were partly, and only partly, reflected in Australia but it took until the turn of the century for Methodism in Australia to be united. It was in 1904 that the first General Conference took place. As time passed, its well-schooled members graduated into higher social echelons. But Methodism with its social activism always remained. Also it pushed for inter-denominational unity after 1904 but nothing would be achieved until 1977 when the Uniting Church was formed (Mol 2001).

The Congregationalists had led the Nonconformist spearhead back in England, and so too into NSW as early as 1798. This presence was, however, shortlived before its permanent establishment later in the early 1830s. After a small peak in the 1870s, they gradually dwindled in numbers though their influence was always significant. They formed less than 0.5 per cent of the population when they became incorporated into the Uniting Church in 1977 (Mol 2001).

Like the Congregationalists, the Baptists place emphasis on the local community of believers, eschewing episcopal governance. Their differentiating characteristic has been the practice of adult baptism. The Baptists began arriving in sizeable numbers only in the 1830s, and the convict element is not part of their history. They arrived from Scotland in the main but there were also some from Gloucestershire, Sussex and Cambridgeshire. Their settlement focus was Victoria and South Australia, and, as other churches learned similarly to their cost, they became suspicious of British-trained ministers who had been unsuccessful prior to embarking to Australia. The Australian Baptists have never had the success of their USA counterparts. Like the other Nonconformist churches, they have always been heavily Anglo-Australian in demographic profile, though this has changed very significantly in the last decades of the twentieth century (Mol 2001).

Whilst there were always some Welsh from the earliest days of European settlement, the Welsh began to arrive from the 1840s and 1850s onwards as did many other groups when gold fever gripped Australia and news spread across the world.

The Welsh settled, initially in the copper mining areas of South Australia and then especially in clusters in Victoria close to the goldfields, bringing with them their Nonconformism. Whilst initially many of the Welsh churches were interdenominational, they soon divided into Calvinistic Methodist, Congregationalist and Baptist though the Welsh quickly merged with the mainstream Baptist churches. The same happened eventually to the other denominations. There were also some Welsh Anglicans and Catholics (Hughes 2001). The Welsh story, however, as happened also with the Lutherans and other groups, highlighted the tensions between language, *eisteddfods* and religion in an English-speaking society. The Welsh settlement dispersion and their small numbers always made language maintenance difficult but it was what held the early Welsh congregations together. Gradually, language shift occurred during the latter part of the 19th. century when most Welsh congregations had introduced English into their services with sermons alternating in either language. In the clash between language maintenance and faith retention, faith would inevitably win because there were eternal realities at stake. Hughes concludes, “of the many Welsh churches that flourished in the nineteenth century, few remain. The Welsh church in La Trobe Street, Melbourne and the Welsh Presbyterian church in Chalmers Street are two that still offer periodic services in the Welsh language” (Hughes 2001: 743).

The Lutherans in Australia

Similar issues were at stake in the history of the Lutheran churches in Australia though their historical fate would be different. Prior to the Second World War, the German group were the largest non-English group in Australia, and their settlement was focussed on South Australia and certain select areas in the three eastern mainland states. The first Lutherans to arrive were Old Lutherans who refused to vary their liturgical practices which Frederick William III was endeavouring to enforce in an attempt to unify Lutherans. Fleeing this religious totalitarianism, an Old Lutheran pastor, Augustus Kavel, arranged for his village congregation to settle in 1836 in South Australia through the help of a Baptist philanthropist, George Angas, who was also motivated by the need for cheaper, reliable labour as part of the Wakefield Land Settlement project. They settled in Klemzig, Hahndorf and, a little later, the Barossa Valley (Harmstorf 2001). With the gold rushes and their aftermath, German settlements were established in different parts of Australia.

But, as more Germans arrived, Lutheran unity could not be maintained. "In 1846 the Old Lutherans in Australia split into two groups, one led by Pastor August Kavel and the other by Pastor Daniel Fritzsche. The Kavel group was known as the United Evangelical Lutheran Church and was to look mainly to Germany for spiritual inspiration and sustenance. The Fritzsche group were known as the Evangelical Lutheran Church and later looked mainly to the Missouri synod in the United States. The Fritzsche group tended to be more evangelical and conservative in their approach. Both groups spawned further breakaway synods none of which however reached the size of the power of the two original synods" (Harmstorf 2001: 362). The former group believed that 'language saves the faith', whereas by the 1890s as more English-speaking pastors arrived, their church language became English - saving young people from eternal perdition was more important than the German language. However, wherever it occurred, language preservation meant that the German Lutheran communities kept to themselves which, during the First World War, resulted in their coming under intense suspicion and hostility as did their many schools which taught in German in the morning and in English in the afternoon (Clyne 1982; Cahill 1988).

Opening up Australia for various agricultural and other primary industries to flourish was never an easy task. The bush and the outback are always full of challenges. Harmstorf draws our attention to the power of faith in the case of the Lutheran farmers, but could be applied to other faith-filled pioneer farmers. "The Germans had no experience of the Australian heat or the droughts and floods that periodically ravaged the land. Unlike the British settlers, they were strangers in a strange land, often cut off from mainstream society by language and religion. However, they were strengthened in their determination to continue by two beliefs: first, that the land was given to them in trust from God and it was theirs to use only insofar as it was nurtured and loved and passed down from father to son; and second, that like the children of Israel they had been led by God to the promised land in South Australia, where they had freedom of worship" (Harmstorf 2001: 362).

A group of Moravian missionaries under the auspices of Rev. Dunmore Lang whose motives were often to withstand Catholic penetration of the new colonies settled around the shores of Moreton Bay in 1938, making several failed attempts to Christianise the local Aborigines. In 1854, German settlers moved into the Darling Downs region with the establishment of Lutheran churches and some German Baptist churches (Corkhill 2001).

The First World War and the inter-war aftermath were difficult times for the German Lutheran churches. The pastors, because of their home country experience, had for decades followed an apolitical strategy although many German Australians became involved in politics. In any case, the Lutheran factions were preoccupied with their own disputes on dogmatic and administrative issues. But government reports accused the German communities of being closed and exclusionist. "In an anti-German climate, these strategies found expression in the deportation of German nationals and other 'undesired elements', the refusal to grant entry permits, the restriction of immigration, trade barriers, the prohibition of the German language in public meetings and in schools, the surveillance of the German churches and the intention to discourage the congregation of aliens in self-enclosed communities" (Kwiet 2001: 372). The recommendation to disperse the communities was, however, not implemented, but many were interned during World War I.

The suppression of the German language continued and the German Lutheran schools were closed. Some continued to hold services in German but this led to an exodus, often to the Anglican Church. On the other hand, Lutheran numbers were partly boosted, as an offset, by Anglo-Australians and Scandinavian Australians. Danish settlement had initially focussed on Victoria and its gold rushes with the emigration of young Danes, mostly males, following the disbanding of the Danish army in Schleswing-Holstein after the war of 1849 - 1851 and the loss of the two duchies to Prussia in 1864. In Melbourne, a Danish preacher, Henrik Hansen, led a joint Danish-German Lutheran community, using each language on alternate Sundays. "However, the bitterness aroused among the Danes by the war of 1864 meant co-operation was virtually impossible" (Martin 2001a: 253). Later on, the Queensland and Tasmanian governments canvassed for migrants in Denmark and Sweden. By 1880, six congregations had been formed in Queensland. Attempts at a united German and Scandinavian synod failed because of a lack of co-operation between the different groups. Tasmania gave rise to Pastor Carl George Bjelke-Petersen who worked for the Lutheran Church in Australia - his own son much later became a long-serving Queensland Premier.

Martin concludes, "Nevertheless, the tendency throughout Australia has been for Danish settlers to associate with Protestant churches of British origin and not Australian Lutheran congregations, which many Danes regard as being German. However, both in Denmark and later in Australia, many Danes were not regular church-goers" (Martin 2001a: 253).

The slightly smaller Swedish and much smaller Norwegian groups of migrants followed similar settlement and religiosity patterns (Martin 2001b; Martin 2001c). They tended to join Scandinavian organizations; the first Scandinavian Lutheran service was held at Heathcote in Victoria in 1856 by a Church of Sweden minister. The Scandinavian immigrants became widely dispersed but a united Scandinavian congregation was later formed in Melbourne. In 1896 the appointment of a Swedish minister who alienated the Norwegians resulted in the congregation becoming Swedish, especially after the dissolution of the union between the two countries in 1905. The Swedish church, now in Toorak, continues its work, having been served by various Swedish and Norwegian pastors, and both in Melbourne and Sydney Norwegian and Swedish congregations did much valuable work for their seafarers until recent times (Martin 2001b; Martin 2001c).

As in so many communities, the formation and functioning of a congregation depended on the personal attributes, community skills and religious attitudes of the pastor. Martin relates how in 1887 the United Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Church “obtained the services of a dynamic and puritanical preacher from Christiana, Pastor Soren Pedersen. He polarised the Scandinavian community in Melbourne and decimated the Scandinavian social clubs. To guard his flock against the perils of worldly Melbourne, he set up a network of organizations which could satisfy all the family and social needs of the Scandinavian community. Pedersen was forced to return to Norway because the community could not afford his modest stipend” (Martin 2001c: 608 - 609).

The Orthodox Churches in Australia

The entry of the Orthodox churches and the Eastern-rite Catholic churches can be dated back to the arrival in small numbers of both Lebanese and Greek immigrants. Lebanese emigration which pushed the envelope of interpretation of the White Australian policy (Yarwood & Knowling 1982) was caused by economic hardship triggered by the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 which altered traditional trade routes, by the inflow of imported European goods and by a land shortage. The early Lebanese immigrants were predominantly Christian who had suffered under Ottoman domination (McKay & Batrouney 2001). The migration flow began in the late 1880s, mostly illiterate peasants, who were more bound to their village and religious affiliation than to country. In Australia, half went to rural areas while the remaining half remained in the cities, especially Sydney. Many became hawkers. There were internal differences which divided the three Christian groups (Maronite Catholics, Melkite Catholics and Antiochian Orthodox); there were few factors to promote religious and ethnic solidarity, and many were absorbed by the Latin-rite Catholic and Protestant churches.

A Melkite church was opened in Waterloo in Sydney in 1895, and, two years later, a Maronite church was opened in Redfern. It was not till 1921 that an Antiochian church was built also in Redfern and, in 1931, in East Melbourne. Yet the differences remained and there were few intermarriages though this would later change. “Despite the fact that both the Melkites and Maronites are in communion with Rome, they too have maintained considerable social distance from each other because of theological differences. All three churches were continually beset by factional struggles between people from different villages and even between different families from the same hamlet. At the official level, relations among the three sects ranged from cordiality to suspicion, often as a result of the different personalities and dogmatic beliefs of the respective priests and church elders. Although open conflict was rare and there were occasions of genuine co-operation between and within communities, religion did more to divide the Lebanese than to unite them” (McKay & Batrouney 2001: 556).

It was not till the end of the nineteenth century that the third great strand of Christianity became implanted in Australia though culturally, historically and theologically Orthodoxy differs from Roman Catholicism and Protestantism even if the doctrinal differences with Roman Catholicism relate mostly to the Petrine office.

Eastern Orthodoxy, gathered together under the primacy of honour of the Ecumenical Patriarch in modern-day Istanbul where he must have Turkish citizenship, did not develop a legalistic spirit (Kokosalakis 1993). Orthodoxy was also not directly impacted by the three great intellectual and artistic movements of the Renaissance, the Reformation or the Enlightenment. Of course, Orthodox countries were indirectly or obliquely affected, but the differences with the Western churches were further compounded by the tardy arrival of industrialization. In fact, the founder of sociology, Max Weber, in proposing the Protestant ethic as the incubator of the spirit of capitalism, argued that the Orthodox Churches were too mystically oriented and too other-worldly to motivate pursuit of capitalist enterprises (see Buss 1989). Orthodoxy has thus always had an ambivalence to Western rationalism and modernity generally. But this has allowed it to be more flexible in the co-option of popular religious practices, and the individual does not have to fully participate in the organized church to be fully Orthodox. In Greece, as an example, the church practice of the *rites de passage* are continued on an almost 100 per cent basis.

Within Orthodoxy, there is a strong sense of universalism in its tradition though currently mitigated by the political and religious strictures of its centration in Istanbul. Religion and ethnicity have always been closely aligned (Vrcan 1993).

In the contemporary world where the politics of identity has again emerged, “the ethnic input of religion can harden and absolutise boundaries of ethnic identities sometimes with disastrous consequences” (Kokosalakis 1993: 127), and Orthodoxy operates largely within its own ethnic world.

The Orthodox Church does not see itself as a missionising church (Godley & Hughes 1996), and resents, especially in the post-Cold War era, any efforts by other religious groups to seek converts in Orthodox countries. Nor is it participatory in its decision-making processes. These and other factors were to affect the entry into and the development of the Greek Orthodox Church in Australia and the split which still exists today, probably the most serious split in any faith community in Australia. Greek Australian Orthodox history is a contested entity, not least in the articles in Jupp’s encyclopedia. Greeks have been in Australia in sizeable numbers since the 1870s though Church leadership initially took little notice of developments in far-off Australia. At the end of the nineteenth century, there was a close relationship with the Syrian Orthodox community with whom it shared two resident Greek priests in Melbourne and Sydney sent, not by the Church in Greece nor the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but by the Patriarch of Jerusalem. Soon, churches in Sydney (1898) and in Melbourne (1902) were opened (Gilchrist 2001).

The Melbourne community shed its Arabic-speaking membership and in 1903 controversially approached the Archbishop of Athens for a priest, thus recognizing him as their principal authority though normally jurisdictional matters in non-Orthodox countries belong to the Ecumenical Patriarchate (Gilchrist 2001). Ethnic and linguistic differentiation had over-ridden unity of faith. In 1908, this arrangement was approved by Constantinople, probably with much reluctance.

Chrysavgis (2001) suggests the two pioneer Greek priests served the needs of the Greek, Lebanese, Syrian, Russian and other Orthodox groups in that very early period. In 1924, jurisdictional responsibility for the Church in Australia was taken over by the Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople with the appointment of the first Orthodox bishop, Christopher Knitis, in 1926, and immediately a church-community split developed. The nub of the dispute focussed on ownership and control, not only of the churches but of the part-time Greek ethnic schools. The Church with its self-perception as the protector and defender of Greek culture came into a context where many Greek immigrants had developed a different view on church-state relationships in contrast to a theocratic view which viewed the Archbishop as the automatic community leader (Kringas 2001).

The dispute reached new heights in the post-WWII period, and Anagnostou suggests that the Greek Orthodox Community in South Australia (GOCSA) led 'the world-wide rebellion' against the 'autocratic rule' by the Constantinople-headed archdiocese. A new bishop was appointed in 1959 and, as in other parts of Australia, he insisted GOCSA hand over the ownership titles of its substantial property portfolio to him and that the archdiocese take over the building of new churches. GOCSA resisted, and its churches joined in communion with the breakaway Autocephalic Greek Orthodox Church of America and Australia. Both groups established parallel institutions with churches, after-hours schools and aged care facilities (Anagnostou 2001). A final split, still unresolved, occurred in 1974 between the archdiocesan churches and the community churches. Archdiocesan pressure was to whittle down the number of community churches because of the serious implications - the priests were regarded as uncanonical and marriages in these churches are regarded as illegal by the Greek government which, in turn, has an impact for their children in regard to inheritance (Kringas 2001). The dispute affected Sydney more than Melbourne, and it impacted very much on welfare service delivery to arriving immigrants and on the credibility of Sydney's Greek community as government officials did not understand the bitter conflict nor know to which group to allocate funds (Mistilis 2001).

Regarding other Eastern Orthodox churches, the first Orthodox service in Australia had been conducted by the chaplain of a Russian ship in 1820 off Kirribilli Point. The community grew with the arrival in Australia of the defeated White Russians which peaked in 1925. But significant numbers of Russians only began arriving both before and after the 1917 revolution, including after the Russian-Japanese war of 1908. A Russian priest from the United States ministered for a short time in 1916, but the first permanent Russian Orthodox priest did not arrive till 1922 (Godley & Hughes 1996). The first church was built in Brisbane in 1935 (Christa 2001). Like the Greeks, the Russians also had jurisdictional problems because of a split between the Russian Synod Abroad and the Patriarchate of Moscow - most Russian Orthodox churches in Australia belong to the former jurisdiction (Godley & Hughes 1996; Christa 2001).

Other World Faiths in Colonial and Federated Australia

Judaism

Except for the commuting Chinese, adherents of faiths other than Christianity were not numerous in colonial Australia except that the influence and status of the Jewish community belied their smallness as a community. There were possibly 14 Jews on Phillip's First Fleet (Rubenstein 1995) - after 1790, impoverished Jews had fled to England from the ghettos and restrictions of the continental European countries; many, including their children and grandchildren, were unsuccessful, resorting to petty criminality. Once in Australia, while some again resorted to criminal activities, most successfully reformed themselves. "Most of the Jewish convicts were young illiterate, English-born London paupers who would not have been connected with the synagogue life in England. It is unlikely that they would have possessed Jewish prayer books or other religious objects. Also, all convicts were compelled to attend the services of the established church, facing punishment if they failed to do so" (Rutland 2001a). It would be several decades before the synagogues became the focal point of Australian Jewry. As was to happen in the other colonies, the first form of Jewish organization was the formation of a Jewish burial society in Sydney in 1817.

In 1830, Rabbi Aaron Levi arrived for a short visit to finalise a Jewish divorce. He unified a community divided between the emancipated convicts and free settlers, and brought the first Sepher Torah (Scrolls of the Torah) and Hebrew prayer books. A congregation was soon formalized and eventually the first synagogue was constructed in 1844 in York St., Sydney (Rutland 2001a) though there were difficulties caused by the lack of properly qualified religious leaders. In the same decades, Jewish congregations were formed in Hobart (1842), Melbourne (1842), Launceston (1846), Adelaide (1848) and, much later, in Brisbane (1865).

From the very beginning, “in each colony Australian Jews enjoyed full civic and political rights, held government offices, voted at elections and received grants of Crown land for cemeteries and synagogues” (Rutland 2001a: 526) though the last benefice, together with payment for their religious personnel, was something they had to struggle for in extending the statutes of the 1832 Church Act to themselves as non-Christians. Religious pluralism thus enjoyed a further victory. Religious observance was not particularly high, and strictly orthodox practice was not adhered to. The gold rush brought in Jews of German background, and they quickly made Melbourne the centre of Australian Jewry with religious communities also in Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong though the issue of proselytism soon divided the Melbourne community.

An attempt was made in the 1880s to set up a reform, liberal congregation but this failed, and one would not be established until the 1930s (Rutland 2001a).

The latter part of the nineteenth century saw an influx of Eastern European Jews following the assassination of Tsar Alexander II and the promulgation of anti-Semitic laws. The well-integrated Anglo-Jewish community perceived the newly-arrived devotees as fanatical and uncouth while the latter were critical of the former for their lax and liberal ways. The former were entrenched in the Great Synagogue of Sydney, consecrated in 1878, and the Eastern Europeans developed congregations at Newtown, Bankstown and Surry Hills, promoting a Yiddish culture. Similarly, some went to Melbourne, settling mainly around Carlton and promoting Yiddish even more strongly (Rutland 2001b).

This wave of Jewry also brought the secular movements of Zionism to create a Jewish state and the Bundism movement to develop socialism through the medium of Yiddish. Australian rabbinical leaders were strongly opposed to secular Zionism, “they believed that Jews were held together by religious and ethical ties, and were concerned that Zionism might be seen as compromising their allegiance to their country of residence” (Rutland 2001b: 529). Behind this was a desire of non-distinctiveness as a strategy to deal with anti-Semitic sentiments that were always lurking in colonial Australia’s psyche though Australian Jews were well-accepted and highly regarded. Many became parliamentarians and the intermarriage rate was high even to the extent of endangering a separate Jewish identity. Religious leaders, as always, remained concerned about intermarriage. Jewish schools had been established in the 1850s and 1860s but had closed for lack of support - Jewish education would remain the weak link until Jewish life was transformed beginning in the late 1930s (Rutland 2001b).

The Holocaust still casts its long and evil shadow over Australian Jewry. In the late 1930s, German Jewish refugees in the aftermath of *Kristallnacht* were allowed to enter Australia by the Australian Government, albeit grudgingly. As Australia's representative at the 1938 Evian refugee conference said, "Australia does not have a racial problem and is not desirous of importing one". Anti-Semitism has always been an undercurrent in Australia, and remains so even though its level is probably lower than in most other countries (Rubenstein 2001). The Jewish community put in place a highly efficient reception and welfare system, and this was underpinned by a more communal, democratic leadership structure. Political maze games were played in the late 1940s to restrict the number of Jewish refugees, but by the time of the Hungarian revolution in 1956, all such restrictions had been lifted.

The arrival of many thousands of Jews led to the establishment of many synagogues across Melbourne and Sydney, together with Jewish schools, all representing the different strands of Jewish religious and linguistic diversity, namely, secular, orthodox, liberal, Hasidic, Yiddish and Hebrew. Now there are 18 schools (Rutland 2001c). The introduction of liberal synagogues in the 1930s led to still smouldering tensions with Orthodox rabbis over such issues as the observance of dietary rules and Sabbath laws, the introduction of women rabbis and the segregation of men and women in synagogues. Language has always been an issue, even now when Yiddish is in terminal decline.

The community was renewed by the Soviet wave from the early 1970s when the Soviet government in Moscow changed its containment policy. Goldlust (2001) estimates between 18 – 20,000 arrived but, of this group, he comments, "there is a strong residue of areligious and even anti-religious feeling that many have absorbed through their socialization within the aggressively secular Soviet system" (Goldlust 2001: 544) – similar attitudes have been found amongst other groups fleeing atheist communist regimes. Glezer (2001) suggests that secular Jewishness is on the wane, and some Soviet Jews have become religious. Between 1996 and 2001, the total Jewish population in Australia, as defined by religion, increased by approximately 5 per cent from 79,805 in 1996. Growth is thus steady, and throughout the 1990s, the exogamy rate was about 14 – 15 per cent, much lower than the USA rate (Rutland 2001c). The question, "who is a Jew?" remains unresolved both in Israel itself and throughout the diaspora. Glezer summarizes, "The shift towards more traditional forms of Jewish expression has led to a narrowing of previously accepted conceptions of Jewishness, a constriction that has been more evident in the Australian community than elsewhere. In part, it appears that the decline in the cultural distinctiveness of the Australian-born has been counter-balanced by an intensified form of religious commitment" (Glezer 2001: 541).

The Religions of the Chinese

The largest non-European group to come to Australia in the 19th century were, of course, the Chinese who were sometimes called 'celestials', an ancient name for China, the heavenly dynasty, in recognition of the belief that heaven covered only the land under the control of the emperor (Rolls 1992). They were also to be known as 'coolies' from either a Gujurat or Tamil word (Rolls 1992). The religious aspect of their early presence remains to be fully researched. The movement began in the late 1840s when they arrived as indentured labourers just as convict labour began drying up. This was followed by the huge numbers who came during the various gold rushes to the New Gold Mountain in the 1850s and subsequently, arriving almost wholly from the thirteen counties in the two southern provinces of Guangdong and Fujian (Choi 1975; Rolls 1992). It was a commuter-type migration, made with no intention of permanent settlement, and thus was almost wholly male. The sentiment was, "Come home with honour and wealth" (Rolls 1992) - some did, many did not. The rapidity of their arrival in very significant numbers generated great fear and antipathy, triggering the 'yellow peril' fear that lies still well-entrenched in the Australian psyche.

The strangeness of their clothing and customs and public reaction to visible and audible differences were also motivating factors for the legislative acts that were enacted, beginning with the Victorian government in 1852, restricting the entry of Chinese (Choi 1975). The other issues were cost of labour, wage undercutting and job protection. The anti-Chinese sentiment is expressed in the ditty chanted by the European miners as they wrecked the Chinese camp at Lambing Flat in 1860 (Rolls 1992):

Rule, Britannia
Britannia rules the waves.
No more Chinese
In New South Wales.

The Chinese were not accustomed nor attracted to organized religion (Yuan 2001). But wherever they went, they constructed their Chinese temples in order to receive the blessing of the Gods not just in the finding of gold but in their passionate pursuit of gambling. Nineteen, in fact, were to be built around Australia and they were dedicated to Taoist Gods such as Guan Di, Cai Shen, Guan Yin, Tian Hou and to their deceased family members (Wang 2001).

The Chinese coolie labourers and gold seekers arrived with their Sinitic amalgam of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism but their temples or joss houses ('joss' being a corruption of the Portuguese word, 'deos', meaning God) bore few traces of Buddhism (Croucher 1989). The history of Buddhism in Australia probably begins with the first Singhalese and Japanese immigrant workers in such areas as Broome, Darwin, Thursday Island and on the Queensland sugar-cane plantations. But few of these three groups remained and hence Buddhism made little impression on Australian life (Croucher 1989; Bucknell 1992). Small numbers of British colonists and Anglo-Australians were attracted to Buddhism, particularly its Theravada variety, because of their contact with it in British colonies, especially Burma and Sri Lanka, and because it was felt that Theravada ('the Great Vehicle') Buddhism best preserved the original teaching of Gautama Siddhartha. Bucknell suggests that non-Asians were attracted because it is perceived as "an essentially atheistic doctrine of self-help with a strongly psychological concern which focussed squarely on the problem of attaining individual enlightenment and liberation from the practices of morality, concentration and insight meditation" (Bucknell 1992: 217). Their approach was much more rationalistic, and as a consequence they had little in common with its Asian devotees when they began arriving in the 1970s.

Almost from the beginning, Christian groups showed an interest in the Chinese. The Methodists were the first, beginning in Castlemaine. The number of conversions was small, and one of the first was James Moy Ling, one of the first Chinese preachers who later helped build the Chinese Church which still remains in Melbourne's Little Bourke Street (Wang 2001). The Presbyterians have also had a long association with Chinese immigrants that remains up until the present day. They were operating special missions in Ballarat and at Turon River in 1860, and the son of one of the first converts eventually was ordained in 1888 for the Church of England in Melbourne. Rev. William Young, a Eurasian of Scots-Chinese Malay background, worked in Ballarat, and, like so many clergyman after him, acted as an interpreter and translator. In Sydney, nothing happened until the 1880s when two Chinese Presbyterian churches were built in the inner area. However, it was the Church of England who were the most successful, especially after they ordained in 1886 a Chinese Christian from San Francisco, Rev. George Soo Hoo Tan (Wang 2001). After Federation, these Chinese Christian communities continued slowly to build their congregations amongst the small number that were able to remain after the implementation of the White Australia policy, born on the gold fields and continued with the infamous dictation test of 1901 (Yuan 2001).

Islam

After the initial Macassan contacts, there were very few Muslims in Australia until the arrival of the Afghan and Indian cameleers beginning with the two cameleers, Dost Mahomet and Esan Khan, with the ill-fated Burke and Wills expedition which departed from Melbourne in 1860 (Cleland 2002). These cameleers are the real founders of Islam in Australia. They arrived in Australia up until 1910 when the use of the camel was at its peak as a beast of burden in outback Australia for cartage and transport, especially for the construction of the overland telegraph in 1871 - 1873. They were from the north-west frontier, and were generally Durrani, Ghilzai, Afridi and Pashtuns. The camels were generally shipped to Karachi, and gradually so-called 'Ghan' towns developed near railway heads deep in the interior or at isolated ports (Stevens 1989). Maree, then known as Hergott Springs, and Coolgardie were important as were Oodnadatta, Cloncurry and Broken Hill. Most cameleers returned home because essentially they were commuters like the Chinese, particularly after their industry was destroyed by the arrival of the truck. They came without women, but some married women in Australia, including Aboriginal, and these women, who usually converted to Islam, became marginalized, if not despised (Stevens 1989).

The cameleers were always outsiders, and were seen as part of the colour problem. The present evidence suggests the first Muslim settlement and the first mosque was developed at Beltana station in the Flinders Ranges (Stevens 1989) though nothing remains today except for six Afghani graves. The Ghan towns were very simple, consisting of small, corrugated iron huts and bush mosques which were nothing more than four poles and a thatched grass roof. In Broken Hill, built in 1891, the mosque was of corrugated iron. A substantial mosque had been constructed in Adelaide in 1888 and then in Perth in 1905. The isolated Muslim communities were serviced by itinerant Islamic preachers rather than permanent imams (Cleland 2002) though documentation is very sparse. The other pioneering Muslim group were the Malaysian and Indonesian pearl divers specially recruited for this dangerous work until it was taken over by the Japanese. It was very much centred on Broome though it would not be until 1930 that a mosque was built at Broome. Hence, unlike any other faith group, Australian Islam was born in the interior before it moved into the cities although its existence would be precarious until well after the Second World War.

Unlike the Irish, the Muslims have had the facilitating policy of multiculturalism to assist in their inclusion and participation, but this project of integration will take several decades of the 21st century to achieve.

By 1921, there were fewer than 3000 Muslims in Australia, and the community was in decline, victims of Australia's history of racial and religious intolerance. However, a resurgence occurred with the coming of the Albanians in the 1920s and 1930s to settle in far north Queensland on sugar cane and tobacco farms and on fruit blocks around Shepparton. A mosque was built at Shepparton in 1960, and the first permanent mosque in Melbourne in Victoria was built much later in 1969 by the Albanians in Carlton. In the post-WWII period, beginning with the Turkish Cypriots, the Muslim presence has greatly increased and

diversified so much so that Saeed and Akbarzedah (2001) refuse to speak of a single Muslim community, entitling their book, *Muslim Communities in Australia*, because of the wide range of ethnicities. As an impoverished, struggling and maligned community, there are many similarities between the Muslim community at the turn of the 21st century and the Irish Catholic community in the latter part of the 19th century. But there is an important difference. Even within the one ethnic community, there can be much diversity e.g. within the Turkish community, there are not only the mosques staffed by imams sponsored by the Turkish government but other mosques whose allegiance to Islam

is mediated through figures such as Saidi Nursi, Suleyman Tarikat and Fethullah Gulen. Saeed and Akbarzedah (2001) also defer on the issue of identity, "it may be premature to talk of an Australian Muslim identity as the exact contours of this identity are still evolving. The ethnic diversity of Muslims is a detracting factor in terms of the development of a unified Islamic grouping (Australian or otherwise)" (Saeed & Akbarzedah 2001: 5). Unlike the Irish, the Muslims have had the facilitating policy of multiculturalism to assist in their inclusion and participation, but this project of integration will take several decades of the 21st century to achieve.

Hinduism

Small numbers of Indians, including Anglo-Indian Christians, arrived in Australia, probably on the first fleets, and throughout the 19th. century into an atmosphere of hostility. They gained work as agricultural labourers and hawkers. They tended to be Sikhs and Muslims rather than Hindus. The White Australia policy had its negative impact upon their numbers and the 1911 census identified 3,698 'Hindoos' (an archaic term for all Indian nationals, Hindu and otherwise), and this subsequently decreased (Bilimoria 1989). Bilimoria suggests that 'in a rather diffused way' Hinduism arrived in the form of vague and Eastern-inspired movements with both universalist and occultist strains such as theosophy and spiritualism. The first Hindu religious leader to visit, Keshub Chunder Sen, was invited by the Unitarian Church in 1876 followed by Anne Besant in 1884, a theosophist from India, who enchanted followers with her lectures on karma, reincarnation and the communications from the masters. In 1925 to great public acclaim, Jiddhu Krishnamurti arrived in the first of a longish line of Indian teachers to visit Australia. But because their dispersed settlement generated no community cohesion nor commonly felt identity, Hinduism made virtually no impression upon Australia up until quite recent times, and the first traditional Hindu temple did not open until 1985 in Sydney (Bilimoria & Voigt-Graf 2001). Hinduism is now in its major growth phase.

Sikhism

Sikhism, derived from the Sanskrit word, *shisya*, meaning disciple, was founded by Guru Nanak (1469 - 1539) in the northern Indian state of Punjab. Its followers arrived in the very late 1800s to form small settlements near the Murray River and especially at Woolgoolga and Coffs Harbour, working as unskilled labourers in the banana, sugar and other fruit cultivation. However, it would not be until 1968 at Woolgoolga on the NSW north coast that the first gurudwara or temple was built - there are now 12 across Australia serving the 12,000 Sikhs living in Australia (Dhani 2001).

Religious diversity, even if originating from the British Isles, has always been a feature of Australian history and, until recent times, would be dominated by the hostile competitiveness between the Protestants and the Catholics. Catholicism would be the most ethnically diverse, but also dominated by the Irish in terms of adherents and by the Italianised Vatican in terms of jurisdiction. Protestant ascendancy would remain as the dominant religious influence until the 1960s but be essentially formative in association with Enlightenment thinking of the majority of Australia's core values that underpin its institutional structure. Neither Protestants nor Catholics stoutly resisted the racism of the White Australia policy until quite late in its life, and the policy led to the decline of the other world faiths except for Judaism. Its demise finally in the early 1970s over the past three decades has allowed for the rejuvenation of the other world faiths over the past three decades.

CHAPTER THREE

Post-war historical and demographic profile of religious Australia

Australia has the best-kept statistics of any nation regarding religious affiliation, dating back to 1851. The focus of this chapter will be to examine the changing religious profile since 1947 within the broader cultural diversity context. It is partly based on the paper prepared by Professor Gary Bouma entitled *The Implications for Harmony of Globalisation and Recent Changes in the Demography of Australian Religious Groups 1947 – 2001*. In the past two decades across the world, the religious profiles of many countries have undergone major transformations as the global movements of people, ideas, the new technologies and media images have reshaped their religious and spiritual profiles. Harvard's Diane Eck, with census findings unavailable to her since it is prevented by an interpretation of the USA Constitution, suggests that the USA is the most religiously diverse country in the world. Muslims, numbered to be between 3 – 6 million, outnumber both Presbyterians and Episcopalians combined, and Los Angeles is the most complex Buddhist city in the world (Kimball 2002). A similar diversity is no less true of Australia (Bouma 1995, 1997b, 2002, 2003c). The census data allow us to focus on small geographic units such as local government areas, and to conclude that nowhere in Australia is there anything closely resembling a religious ghetto though there are zones of ethnic and religious concentrations.

Religious identification or affiliation tells us very little about a person's actual religious belief or their religious practice though religious identification has been shown to correlate with many other variables (Bouma and Dixon 1986; Bouma 1992). Religious identification does provide an indication of the religio-moral culture of a person and perhaps of a geographic area.

In 1947, Australia embarked upon its immigration program to the sound of the 'populate or perish' drum. It was done for security reasons after the Japanese incursions into the islands to the north of Australia and the bomb attacks upon Darwin. This threat recently reappeared with the concept of Greater Indonesia advanced by its religious extremists who have included northern Australia into their designs though this aspiration holds no truck with mainstream Indonesia. The associated fear, born on the goldfields, was that Australia needed to populate its empty spaces to offset envious Asian eyes. A third reason was that the Australian birthrate had fallen during the depression years of the 1930s, and by the late 1940s those leaving the labour force was greater than those entering as Australia embarked on its aim to populate empty rural space and develop secondary manufacturing. The Labor government had the confidence in its own administrative abilities to maintain full employment and a migration program.

From the 1860s to 1947, the religious profile of Australia had remained relatively stable, and the Anglicans, Presbyterians and Methodists, together comprising just over 60 per cent of the population, dominated this period of Australian religious life. In the same year of 1947, Roman Catholics comprised 20.7 per cent of the population at 1.57 million compared to 2.96 million Anglicans and 1.68 million belonging to the Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational and Reformed Churches. Buddhists, Muslims and Hindus did not rate on the demographic map though in that year there were 32,000 followers of the Judaic faith.

By the latter decades of the nineteenth century after the population explosion from the gold rushes, the religious profile of the Australian colonies had settled. As the major church with its intellectual and psychological base still firmly in the UK, the Church of England in Australia helped generate the sentiment of Australian nationalism that would underpin the formation of a federated commonwealth in 1901 and that Australia would be a nation within the family of the British Empire, committed to Great Britain and its welfare. “Anglicanism still purported to be the spiritual cement of the British Empire that needed to be protected against the allegedly disruptive creeds and claims of other denominations” (Frame 2002: 5). For far too long it was tied to its English parent with no authority to act independently; it was not until 1962 that a constitution for the Anglican Church came into operation, and it was not until 1981 that it began calling itself the Anglican Church of Australia. The other net effect up until 1947 was a profoundly English Protestant establishment characterised by rational teaching and preaching-focussed worship laced with occasional revival activities. Catholics were a substantial minority but less respected for being Irish and accused of being irrational and superstitious with their focus on the seven sacraments and their greater use of visual imagery as perceived by the dry rationalist English Protestant elite.

The period from the 1920s to the late 1940s were the periods of least migration in Australia’s European history, and these were the formative years of Australian leaders in the two decades following WWII when assimilationism was at its height.

The original intention was for the immigration program to be 90 per cent British and to be rurally oriented – on both accounts, it was a spectacular failure, beginning with the arrival of the 160,000 displaced persons, the so-called DPs with its high Jewish component. As the years have gone by, the immigration program has increasingly diversified as the British component has gradually declined. The late 1960s, the high point of intakes, saw diversification shift beyond the eastern, northern and southern European groups to the Balkans and the choice of Turkey in preference to Mexico as the next sources of immigrants (Keceli 1998). The White Australia policy had begun breaking down by the mid-1960s; after its dissolution in 1973, the diversification in immigrant intake has been extremely broad as it has become partly Asianised. These changes have reflected themselves in Australia’s religious profile since 1947.

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Table 3.1: The size and proportion of selected Australian religious groups in the 1947, 1991, 1996 and 2001 Censuses

| | 1947 | | 1991 | | 1996 | | 2001 | |
|--------------------------|-------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|
| Religious Identification | '000s | % | '000s | % | '000s | % | '000s | % |
| CHRISTIAN | | | | | | | | |
| Anglican | 2,957 | 39 | 3,953 | 31 | 3,903 | 22 | 3,881 | 20.7 |
| Baptist | 114 | 1.5 | 176 | 1.4 | 295 | 1.7 | 309 | 1.7 |
| Catholic | 1,570 | 20.7 | 3,443 | 27 | 4,799 | 27 | 5,002 | 26.7 |
| Lutheran | 67 | 0.9 | 197 | 1.5 | 250 | 1.4 | 250 | 1.3 |
| MPCRU* | 1,678 | 22.1 | 2,199 | 17.2 | 2,011 | 11.3 | 1,887 | 10.1 |
| Orthodox | 17 | 0.2 | 339 | 2.7 | 497 | 2.8 | 529 | 2.8 |
| Pentecostal | -- | -- | -- | -- | 175 | 1 | 195 | 1 |
| Other Christian | 270 | 3.8 | 683 | 5.4 | 653 | 4.4 | 711 | 3.7 |
| Total Christian | 6,673 | 88 | 10,990 | 86.2 | 12,583 | 70.6 | 12,764 | 68 |
| BUDDHISTS | -- | | -- | -- | 200 | 1.1 | 358 | 1.9 |
| HINDUS | -- | | -- | -- | 67 | 0.4 | 95 | 0.5 |
| JEWS | 32 | 0.4 | 62 | 0.5 | 80 | 0.5 | 84 | 0.4 |
| MUSLIMS | -- | -- | 22 | 0.2 | 201 | 1.1 | 282 | 1.5 |
| OTHER | 4 | 0.1 | 14 | 0.1 | 69 | 0.4 | 92 | 0.5 |
| Sub-total | 36 | 0.5 | 99 | 0.8 | 617 | 3.5 | 911 | 4.8 |
| NOT ADEQUATELY DESCRIBED | 19 | 0.2 | 29 | 0.2 | 54 | 0.3 | 352 | 1.9 |
| NO RELIGION | 26 | 0.3 | 856 | 6.7 | 2,949 | 16.5 | 2,905 | 15.5 |
| NOT STATED | 825 | 10.9 | 781 | 6.1 | 1,551 | 8.7 | 1,836 | 9.8 |
| Total Population | 7,579 | | 12,756 | | 17,753 | | 18,769 | |

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

*note: MPCRU combines the data for the Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational and Uniting Churches. The Uniting Church was formed in 1977 in a merger of Congregational, Methodist and about half of the Presbyterians. Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics. For further analyses see Bouma (1995, 1997b).

Table 3.1 presents the demographic data, showing how the profile has changed in selected censuses from 1947 to 2001. It illustrates the rise in religious diversity and the decline in the hegemonic power of English Protestantism. Since 1996, there has been a significant increase towards multi-faith diversity. As of 2001, there are more Scientologists than Quakers, more Muslims (1.5%) than Lutherans (1.33%), more Buddhists (1.9%) than Baptists (1.7%), more Hindus (0.5%) than Salvationists (0.4%), and more witches (0.05%) than Reformed (0.05%). There are about the same number of Jehovah's Witnesses as Jews and about the same number of Mormons as Seventh Day Adventists. Atheism also grew, rising from 7,469 in 1996 to 24,464 in 2001, representing a growth rate of 228 per cent.

The diversification of mainstream Australia Christianity is illustrated by the Uniting Church of Australia. Given its Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational origins, it is perhaps surprising to learn that in 2002 this Church had 117 ethno-specific congregations, 23 ethnic fellowship groups and two faith communities. The largest number were Korean (33 congregations, fellowships and communities), followed by Tongan (29), Fijian (11), Indonesian (12), Samoan (8), Tamil (7), Hindi (5), Cook Islander (5), Chinese (4), Sudanese (4), Dutch (3), Vietnamese (3), Nieuuan (3), International (2), Pacific Islander (2), Rotuman (2), Filipino (2), Armenian (1), Cambodian (1), Farsi (1), Taiwanese (1), Macedonian (1), Melanesian (1), Nauran (1) and Tokelauan (1).

Moving Away from Protestant Australia

Since 1947, three primary factors have changed Australia's religious profile. The first is the decline in the Protestant denominations in proportional terms by essentially 50 per cent to their present situation where they constitute 33 per cent. This is part of a global shift away from a rational and verbal form of Christianity to a more experiential and feeling-oriented form (Bouma 2003b). It also results from the global impact of secularisation in the developed world. Whilst actual Protestant numbers have increased from 4.716 million to 6.327 million at a time when Australia's population has increased by almost 250 per cent, the proportional decline in mainstream Protestantism is greater than it first appears. In 2001, Anglicans were much more sacramentally oriented and less 'protestant' than they were in 1947. Moreover, those who have retained a 'protestant' orientation do not express it in the ways commonly found back in 1947 but in ways that are often well-laced with charismatic influences. Moreover, many Australians who once would have written 'C of E' or some other Protestant group on their census form now tick the 'no religion' box, resulting in a rise in this response category from 0.3 per cent in 1947 to over 16.5 per cent in 1996. This decline has been attributed to the rise of secularisation since the 1960s though this is more complex as we shall see. Also contributing to the

decline of the English Protestant hegemony has been the rise of Pentecostal Christians from virtual non-existence in 1947 to over one per cent in 2001. This growth represents in part a backlash against the dry rationality characteristic of mid-20th century English Protestant Christianity and the growing demand for experiential spiritualities and religious expression. Thus, the global rise of secularism, on the one hand, and of the demand for experiential forms of religious life have undermined the former hegemony and appeal of the Presbyterian, Methodist, Uniting and Anglican churches.

The religious climate changed in the three decades following WWII after the stable maintenance period for the first half of the twentieth century. Thompson sums up that in those decades, "Australia was transformed into a post-Christian society. Protestant churches lost their previous political power, and in many cases the will which had imposed the quiet Sunday on cities such as Melbourne and Adelaide into the 1960s; which also until that decade banned pictures of naked bodies on film screens and kept hotels closed after 6 o'clock and on Sundays. The Catholic Church completed its divorce with the Labor party. A majority of Australians had ceased entering churches. Many weddings were being conducted outside church buildings by secular marriage celebrants. Even funerals were deserting churches for crematorium chapels, although, usually, for this

older Australian generation, clergy officiated. Religion was no longer part of the political rhetoric as in the Menzies era. Politicians, particularly of the New Right, were appealing to the cult of selfishness. The collapse of the religious moral order was observable in rising crime rates and declining standards of business and public probity” (Thompson 2002: 137 – 138).

The second factor changing Australia’s religious profile has been the global movement of religious groups to Australia through migration with the effect of reducing the English hegemony and increasing religious diversity. The initial waves of post-WWII migration with their high British component fed growth in the English Protestant groups as well as strengthening Catholic representation and bringing groups to Australia not previously present in substantial numbers such as the Orthodox. The growth in English Protestant groups due to migration had peaked by 1960 from which time, following some fluctuation in numbers, their proportion of the Australian population declined as their growth rates fell below that of the population. Since then, they have very gradually declined in absolute numbers. The major losses from those who might have been expected to identify with an English Protestant group was to those declaring ‘no religion’ – a group which displays a similar ethnic profile but more youthful.

The Movement to Multi-Faith Australia

Other religious groups have increased in strength, including some of which have grown substantially. The immediate post-WWII migration saw an increase in the numbers of Jews and the arrival of the Dutch some of whom strengthened and diversified Catholic parishes while others founded the Reformed Churches in Australia. In the 1950s and 1960s, Greek immigrants massively expanded the presence of Orthodox churches together with other migrants who consolidated or established their ethnic Orthodox or Oriental Churches. Carey notes, “although all churches experienced difficulties in adjusting to the needs of post-war society, the Orthodox seem to have faced a more intensive challenge in creating an Australian rather than a purely ethnic identity. Unlike Islam or Judaism, most Orthodox churches were created in response to national rather than international needs. An autocephalous Australian Orthodox church seems a long way off” (Carey 1996: 160).

The Greeks, Macedonians and Serbs were followed by the Turks, Egyptians and Lebanese who began the significant expansion of Islam in Australia. From the late 1970s, the Vietnamese arrived to begin building their Buddhist temples. In fact, these religious groups were comprised of a much wider range of immigrants. Between 1996 and 2001, there was a 79 per cent increase in the number of Buddhists who now are the largest non-Christian religion in Australia with 358,000 followers, representing nearly 2 per cent of the population. Clearly, recent migration from Asia was a major factor but this enormous rise may have been due to the Dalai Lama who made a highly publicized visit to Australia immediately before the 2001 census was taken. It was also the first census to provide a tick box on the census form for Buddhists and Muslims, and this may partly explain the rise, especially for those from Confucian heritage countries where in their religion amalgam people are not too sure whether they adhere to Buddhism, Confucianism or Taoism.

Table 3.2: Changes in Australia's Religious Profile 1996-2001

| Religious Identification* | 1996 000s | 1996 % | 2001 000s | 2001 % | 96-01 growth rate |
|--|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------|
| CHRISTIAN | | | | | |
| Anglican | 3,903 | 21.99 | 3,881 | 20.68 | -0.57 |
| Baptist | 295 | 1.66 | 309 | 1.65 | 4.75 |
| Brethren | 22 | 0.12 | 19 | 0.10 | -12.28 |
| Catholic | 4,799 | 27.03 | 5,002 | 26.65 | 4.22 |
| Churches of Christ | 75 | 0.42 | 61 | 0.33 | -18.25 |
| Jehovah's Witnesses | 83 | 0.47 | 81 | 0.43 | -2.81 |
| Latter Day Saints | 45 | 0.25 | 50 | 0.27 | 10.65 |
| Lutheran | 250 | 1.41 | 250 | 1.33 | 0.15 |
| Oriental Christian | 31 | 0.18 | 36 | 0.19 | 15.90 |
| Orthodox | 497 | 2.80 | 529 | 2.82 | 6.52 |
| Pentecostal | 175 | 0.98 | 195 | 1.04 | 11.37 |
| Presbyterian/Reformed | 676 | 3.81 | 638 | 3.40 | -5.57 |
| Salvation Army | 74 | 0.42 | 71 | 0.38 | -3.67 |
| Seventh Day Adventist | 53 | 0.30 | 54 | 0.29 | 2.26 |
| Uniting | 1,335 | 7.52 | 1,249 | 6.65 | -6.46 |
| Other Christian | 253 | 1.43 | 324 | 1.72 | 27.95 |
| Total | 12,583 | 70.55 | 12,764 | 68.00 | 1.44 |
| BUDDHISTS | 200 | 1.13 | 358 | 1.91 | 79.07 |
| HINDUS | 67 | 0.38 | 95 | 0.51 | 41.91 |
| JEWS | 80 | 0.45 | 84 | 0.45 | 5.25 |
| MUSLIMS | 201 | 1.13 | 282 | 1.50 | 40.17 |
| OTHER | 69 | 0.39 | 92 | 0.50 | 33.33 |
| NO RELIGION | 2,949 | 16.48 | 2,905 | 15.48 | -1.5 |
| NOT STATED | 1,551 | 8.67 | 1,836 | 9.78 | 18.4 |
| INADEQUATE DESCRIPTION (JEDI) | 54 | 0.31 | 352 (71) | 1.88 (0.4) | 551.9 |
| National Population | 17,753 | | 18,769 | | 5.7 |

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

The Buddhist community is multi-ethnic and young, the largest non-Christian group in Australia. It is drawn from a wide range of countries with the Australian-born as the largest group representing 26 per cent of the total Buddhist population, followed by Viet Nam (25.3%) as the two largest birthplace groups constituting half of the total group. Other birthplace groups are China (7.8%), Malaysia (5.6%), Cambodia (5.0%), Thailand (4.9%), Taiwan (2.7%), Japan (2.1%), Hong Kong (2.1%), Indonesia (1.6%) and the United Kingdom (1.5%). Bucknell (1992) comments that Buddhism in Australia has exhibited 'a haphazard historical development' after the earlier pre-WWII made little permanent impression. As well as the Anglo-Australian converts, the Lao and Cambodian followed the Theravada form of Buddhism which did not mesh with the Mahayana Vietnamese. Another group to form, inspired by the regular visits of the Dalai Lama, were the Tibetan Buddhists who follow a Vajrajana form of Buddhism. The entry of the different forms of ethnic Buddhism has made unity difficult, and Bucknell concludes that "there is little likelihood of any strong move towards genuine unity among the various types of Buddhist groups" ((Bucknell 1992: 222).

Saeed (2003) has documented the diversity of Australia's 281,572 Muslims who now come from over 70 countries. The major birthplace group of Australia's Muslims is Australia (with 102,566 representing 36.4 per cent of the total Muslim

population), reflecting the high birthrate within this community and its youthful profile with 50 per cent under the age of 24. Other countries are Lebanon (29,321; 10.4%), Turkey (23,479; 8.3%), Afghanistan (9,923; 3.5%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (9,892; 3.5%), Pakistan (9,238; 3.3%), Indonesia (8,087; 2.9%), Iraq (7,749; 2.8%), Bangladesh (7,596; 2.7%), Iran (6,353; 2.3%), Fiji (5,772; 2.0%) and Cyprus (3,708; 1.3%). The Muslim figures also highlight another trend that applies beyond the Muslim communities, namely, the lack of even a close congruence between a country's religious profile and its community's profile in Australia. This is most obvious in the case of countries such as Lebanon (where 41.1% of the birthplace group in Australia are Muslim), Indonesia (17.2%), Iraq (31.2%), Iran (33.8%), Egypt (9.2%), Malaysia (3.8%) and India (3.0%). 53 per cent of Australia's Muslims are male, and the majority are working class. The overwhelming majority lives in Sydney in particular and in Melbourne. In Sydney, their zones of concentration are Auburn, Greenacre, Bankstown, Lakemba and Punchbowl while in Melbourne they are living in Meadow Heights, Reservoir, Dallas, Noble Park and Coburg (Saeed 2003).

Some live in provincial and rural areas such as Shepparton and Cobram in Victoria, Young in New South Wales, and Broome and Katanning in Western Australia.

The Hindu community is much more focussed on particular birthplace groups with the Indian-born

representing 33.4 per cent of the total Hindu population, followed by Fiji (20.7%), the Australian-born (17.3%), Sri Lanka (10.7%), South Africa (2.4%), Malaysia (2.3%), Singapore (1.4%), the U.K. (1.3%) and New Zealand (1.1%). It is, thus, a more recently arrived group. Bilimoria, writing in 1989, has provided a useful profile of Hinduism in Australia. After the initial small waves during the 19th century, the second wave in the 1960s and 1970s has been associated with the neo-Hindu movement which was, like the earlier wave, universalist in spirit with gurus, yogis, babas, swamis and tantric practitioners who moved from city to city dispensing their spiritual wisdom and seeking converts. This led to the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda (Vedanta) Mission and Order beginning in 1964 and at much the same time the Transcendental Meditation movement. In 1969, the Hare Krsna (Krishna), sponsored from the United States, arrived which with its street missionisation became very familiar to ordinary Australians, and followed a year later by the more introverted Siddha Yoga movement which established ashrams around Australia and by the Divine Light Mission started by a teenage guru.

Since then, there have been other gurus in Australia as well as the Divine Life Society and the Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga group run by some female gurus. Since the late 1970s there have been arriving swamis in the classical Vedanta tradition. On the fringe have been near cultish sects with various esoteric doctrines, including the

Ananda Marga, the Rajneeshis and the guru Da Free-John, leader of the Laughing Man Institute with his doctrine of free love as the path to enlightenment. Bilimoria concludes that “neo-Hinduism (along with the other Eastern wave presently in vogue, neo-Buddhism) has become a respectable part of a diffused community that seeks to provide an alternative to the favourite image of the ‘macho’, more usually masculine hero from ‘Downunder’. The alternative, spiritually grounded image cultivates the characteristics of quietitude, disciplinarianism, possibly anti-intellectualism and orderliness in dress and performance” (Bilimoria 1989: 38).

The migration of Indians over the past two decades constitutes the third wave together with those from other countries as the statistics suggest. It has been this group which has given a more organized expression to Hinduism. The construction of temples has been central as till this point in time Hindus had worshipped in the privacy of their home shrines supported by volunteer priests. The first temple was in an old church in Auburn in Sydney in 1979, and at the same time the University of NSW had made a small room available for a granite image of Ganesha. But the Nyagrodhan or banyan tree of Hinduism did not take real root in Australia until the opening of the first authentic Hindu temple at Helensburgh south of Sydney in 1985 (Bilimoria 1989; Lahiri 1992).

The Rise of the Pentecostal, Charismatic and New Age Movements

The third factor transforming Australia’s religious and spiritual profile has been the emergence of new religious groups and spiritualities, largely through conversion or through the adoption of teachings and practices brought to Australia, not through immigration, but through the globalisation of religious and spiritual practices. These changes can be clearly seen in Table Two.

One of the most influential of these conversion-based changes has been the growth of pentecostal and charismatic movements within Christianity. Not only have they risen to be just over one per cent of the population but they also figure in the rapidly growing category of ‘other Christian’, which grew by a very significant 28 per cent in the five years from 1996 to 2001, attracting the identification of 1.72 per cent of Australians. Moreover, no Christian denomination has been untouched by this experiential, enthusiastic and musically energetic force which has been adopted wholeheartedly by some, resisted by others but which has exerted an influence on all.

In addition to the rise of Pentecostal Christianity, the adoption by Australians of other largely imported religious teachings and practices has led to the rise of New Age, Earth-based religious groups such as Gaia, Goddess religions and Witchcraft. Those affiliating with Paganism have once again grown vigorously from 1996 to 2001. The numbers identifying with Wicca/ Witchcraft grew from 1,829 to 8,755, representing a growth rate of 374 per cent while Paganism showed a growth rate of 144 per cent from 4,353 to 10,632. Spiritualism increased from 8,141 to 9,279. If the New Age cluster of religious groups is added together, a total of over 40,000 (or 0.22%) is reached. While the growth of these groups has been impressive, they still remain small minorities but their power to attract interest can be seen in the religion section of mainstream bookstores.

This pattern is further attested by other census facts. The rapid expansion of Buddhism cannot be accounted for by migration and birthrate alone, and the number declaring that they have no religion has decreased, both in absolute numbers and as a population percentage, for the first time in Australian history. There has been a rise in responses not readily categorized but which are reported under the category of ‘inadequately described. These facts constitute important evidence that Australia remains a spiritual society, but that Australian spirituality is less likely to find its expression in formally organized Christian groups (Tacey 2003). Indeed, the appearance of 71,000 Australians indicating that their religious identification is Jedi – from the series of Star Wars movies featuring an epic struggle between good and evil in which ‘The Force’ sustains the Jedi warriors fighting for good – suggests not so much that people do not take the census seriously as that they are responding in some way to the category of religious identification.

Perhaps it was an anti-religious joke propagated by a shock-jock or two. Jedists are now nearly as numerous as those who identify with the Churches of Christ. All this resonates with the understanding that a secular, postmodern society is not anti-religious or even irreligious (Fenn 2000), but one where the religious and the spiritual are less under the control of religious organizations. This reflects the postmodern sentiment, “I believe but do not belong” (Davie 1994).

In analysing the census data, it is important to note that it is incorrect to combine those who declare that they have no religion (15.48%) with those who, in exercising their freedom to privacy on this issue, do not respond (9.78%). Doing so gives a false reading of 25 per cent with no religious affiliation. Other studies indicate that many of those who will not answer the question have higher than average participation in religious and spiritual activities. They are simply not saying what they are.

In conclusion, responses to the religion question in the 2001 Australian census provide further evidence of the continued decline in English Protestant groups and further increases in Australia's religious diversification with the growth to well over one per cent for both Buddhists and Muslims along with significant increases in the number of Hindus. Moreover, the enormous increase in the numbers offering a wide range of responses that indicate some form of spirituality as a personal orientation to the numinous, the environment, the inner being or some other form of transempirical power is precisely in keeping with what would be expected in a postmodern society as part of the broader transformation of Australian from a Christian to a paradoxically secular and multi-faith society. These changes indicate clearly that the management of religious diversity will continue to be a serious policy issue for Australia at Federal, State and local levels.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Religious practice at local level across multi-faith Australia

In this chapter, we wish to present an overview of faith community practice across multi-faith Australia at the beginning of the 21st century. Local religious community sites were chosen according to selected scientific criteria with a skewing towards faith communities that reflect the realities of Australia's population diversity. As such, the research is a snapshot at a particular point in time of local faith communities. Our conclusions are therefore indicative but provide a sufficiently solid data base for policy and program recommendations. The research team, all highly experienced researchers and longtime observers of the Australian religious and/or migration scene, are confident that the snapshot is a reasonably accurate picture of multi-faith Australia in 2002.

The focus was upon local faith communities rather than personal spiritualities, and upon faith communities with more than 10,000 adherents across Australia though, in the construction of the research, we did observe the activities of smaller churches such as the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Foursquare Gospel Church.

Some faith communities with more than 10,000 adherents did not come within our purview (e.g. Seventh Day Adventist, Sikhism, some ethnic Orthodox Churches, the Christadelphians), but, given our methodology and the bewildering variety of Australia's faith life, this was always inevitable. Also inevitable was the fact that the research may be perceived as having been written from an overly Christian perspective. Whilst one member of the research team (Dellal) has a Turkish Cypriot Muslim affiliation, the three researchers who collected most of the data have practising Christian backgrounds (Catholic (Cahill, Leahy) and ex-Presbyterian, now Anglican (Bouma)). This is acknowledged, and the reader needs to be aware of these affiliations in the interests of objective and critical appraisal. However, the research team has attempted to collect data as social scientists with specialist knowledge of the area of religion and cultural diversity. They endeavoured to make themselves sensitive research instruments. All are well-versed in multi-faith issues; except for those of Dellal, the perceptions are mainstream Christianity and this is reflected in some of the accounts as when they endeavoured to document the beliefs and practices of the smaller Christian and other faith communities.

From the data collected, six overall themes emerged around which our findings and observations can be gathered. Where appropriate, data from other elements of the research study have been drawn into this narrative to enlarge and elucidate. The six themes are:

1. The Increasing Diversification of Religious Australia.
2. From Mainstream Christianity to Immigrant, Evangelical and Pentecostal Religiosity.
3. Building and Repositioning Faith: the Precarious Nature of Local Faith Communities.
4. Local Religious Leadership and Provision of Religious Personnel.
5. Faith Communities and Social Capital.

A separate chapter will be given to the sixth theme of racism, bigotry and inter-faith relationships, especially in the aftermath of September 11th.

1. The Increasing Diversification of Religious Australia

Multicultural Diversity

In the early 1950s, Australia's religious landscape contained mainly Christian churches from a variety of theological and doctrinal traditions, together with well-supported Jewish synagogues in capital cities, a few mosques scattered across Australia whose communities were in decline and some Chinese temples, or 'joss houses' as they were known, which were often more tourist sites than places of worship. Up until the early 1980s, this picture changed only somewhat as the number of Christian, especially Catholic, communities grew when the population expanded through the post-War baby boom and through immigration. There was an increase in the numbers of Orthodox churches, sometimes taking over former Protestant churches, and of Kingdom Halls of the Jehovah's Witnesses and other such smallish religious communities as they laid down their religious roots more securely. Many faith communities such as the Lutheran were renewed.

However, with the cessation of the White Australia policy by the early 1970s and the subsequent far greater diversification in the immigrant intake away from the European to the Middle Eastern and Asian source countries, new ways of being religious have been introduced into Australia as well as new ways of exercising religious leadership. The sight of Buddhist temple roofs soaring uneasily amongst a clump of tall gum trees has become less incongruous. Australia has become a microcosm of the global market place of religious ideas and practices. Religious faiths are heavily, though subtly, into competition with each other. Because of the new faiths, new ways of measuring religiosity will have to be developed since weekly religious service attendance, as an example, does not fit with Taoist, Hindu or Buddhist practice. Accordingly, Australia is significantly more religious than it has been if the growth of temples and mosques is included in a new measuring index. It is true that secularism as measured by those without any denominational adherence but who place their faith in an aggressive atheism or a clear or confused agnosticism has increased as we have seen.

But not all those who tick the "no religion" box on the census form are atheists or aggressive secularists – only a small but increasing percentage declare themselves to be atheists. Hence, since the 1970s, we have seen the emergence of a multi-faith Australia - Australia is now, paradoxically, a secular and a multi-faith society with a far greater range of religious offerings.

Migrants, as in previous decades of the nineteenth century, whether they were Welsh or Irish or German, found spiritual consolation in their credal beliefs which generated the need to build their own religious edifices. And so history is repeating itself. Studies of the local faith communities included those of the Buddhist, Confucian, Hindu, Islamic, Jewish and Taoist faiths. In Bendall Plains, a Hindu community had purchased land on the outskirts of a major metropolitan city. The Hindu society of this State had been formed for the primary purpose of building a temple. The Society now included Hindus of many national and ethnic origins not only from India but from Sri Lanka, Fiji and so on.

Its aspiration was:

*To all of you wanting to
harmonise the Earth,
Searching for wisdom in your
life;*

*Be open to the truth of all
teachings*

Be on your own path.

*May you find balance and
harmony in your life.*

Harmony and balance would be found by the Hindu community in a temple on Australian soil where they could reflect and meditate upon life's mysteries and vagaries. Initially a temporary temple had been used but more recently an ornate temple with altars honouring beautifully carved statues of Hindu Gods and Goddesses had been completed. It had become a site of local tourism. And there were well-advanced plans to construct a cultural and educational complex to enable the temple community to provide education in Hindu culture, including Hindu philosophy and the Sanskrit language.

But it was in Wattleton, a new dormitory suburb close to the periphery of a metropolitan area, that multi-faith Australia was best represented. Aligned right beside each other in a short street of 100 metres was a Vietnamese monastery and temple, a Turkish mosque catering also for Muslims from China, Pakistan, India and Indonesia, and, right next door, a new Chinese Presbyterian Church. Within a stone's throw were a multicultural Baptist centre, a Lao Buddhist temple and a Khmer Buddhist temple. And within a remarkable square kilometre was a huge Chinese Buddhist complex with not only a major temple dedicated to the Buddha but other temples dedicated to Lao Tse and other Gods. More conventionally, in the same area was an Anglican church which also hosted an evangelical Vietnamese Christian community and a large multicultural Roman Catholic parish. Whilst the concentration of so many religious places of worship in one small area of suburbia is unusual, the trend is not. Not in areas where there are significant numbers of recently arrived immigrants and refugees. Even in Jackaranda, a small town in remote Australia, the local Muslim community had constructed a mosque right on the town perimeter.

Building these communal centres and places of worship had required the sustained effort of the faith community. Originally, religious worship had begun in house temples and house mosques and, then, after a massive fund-raising campaign, the temple or mosque had been constructed, often in the last decade. Whilst mainstream churches, certainly during the 19th century and the early 20th century, were generally built in or close to the centres of cities, suburbs and towns, this is no longer possible. Cost and the availability of land are the key constraining factors. In the consultations, leaders of faith, especially those other than Christian, reported that council applications to construct their places of worship invariably were opposed by resident groups. Almost invariably, the appeal process was won but at very significant cost for communities already struggling for funds. The trend is that places of worship are constructed in former factories and former churches but usually only as a temporary measure; otherwise they are being constructed on industrial parks where the land is cheaper for the provision of a large religious edifice and large car parks, especially for festival days, and in greenfields, semi-rural areas right on the periphery of metropolitan areas.

The following description is based upon the research in Wattleton, and it also highlights the role of key women in Buddhist projects and the role of religious experience in the achievement of key religious projects. In front of the temple designed by an architect from Cambodia who worked alongside an Australian builder supplemented by much voluntary labour were two lions and a Buddha Tree of Enlightenment. On the banisters of the stairs up to the temple door were five-headed dragons in green. Inside, a golden Buddha statue disseminated peace and contentment with a disciple on each side and a small black Buddha which was said to represent the Buddha prior to his enlightenment. The building of the complex was driven by a middle-aged successful business woman whose petiteness masked a determination to succeed and an iron will.

The temple was born, and a Buddhist society was formed. In building an initial temple followed by the present ornate pagoda, several million dollars had been raised by this relatively small community. For the official opening, fifty monks had come from different parts of the world. A small monastic community had been formed, residing in a normal suburban house beside the pagoda. It was believed that the monks bring peacefulness and educate the people in right living – where there are monks, the people will come; where there are no monks, the people will not come.

In the construction of temples and mosques, one significant issue emerged. The issue must be understood in the context that most religious buildings constructed in suburban and rural Australia are built with small to large amounts of volunteer labour as was the case in the building of a Jehovah's Witness complex in Salamander. Architects and religious artisans are often brought from overseas. At a Chinese Buddhist temple, religious artisans were being awaited from China to construct the huge temple gate. One Buddhist community who wanted to bring in some religious artisans to paint the inside of their temple in the appropriately religious manner could not afford to pay the award rate of approximately \$34,000 per year, wishing only to pay a religious stipend.

However, not only has there been the increasing diversification across faiths, equally important has been the increasing diversity within faith communities. The previous section has detailed how the Chinese, Khmer, Lao and Vietnamese communities have constructed their own temples. To the outsider, there is an element of competition amongst the ethnic Buddhists in building the grandest temple complex, reminiscent of the competitiveness that existed amongst rival Christian churches in their church-building efforts up until the Second World War.

Ethnic and linguistic diversification is occurring in most Christian churches with the exception of the ethnic Orthodox churches for whom the issue is whether there should be a shift to English-language liturgies. Many, but not all, Anglo-Australian pentecostal and charismatic churches are becoming more diversified. The research at Midmet examined how the Catholic Church in one metropolis has responded in the church most impacted by diversity. Thirty migrant communities across this diocese were identified as having chaplains celebrating 130+ Masses each Sunday. Several (e.g. Czech) had the whole of Australia as their pastorate, requiring much interstate travel. Several migrant Catholic communities were identified as not having a chaplain (e.g. Latvian and Lithuanian) where people from these communities will most probably die and be buried without the religious ministrations of a Catholic priest speaking the language - in fact, Latvian Catholics had begun to use the services of a Latvian Lutheran pastor for their funerals. Glenara demonstrated the difficulties the Anglican church was having with its Maori congregations.

More than 80 per cent of Anglicans are Australian-born with another 12 per cent born in the U.K. but it has significant minorities born in New Zealand, South Africa, India, Germany, Northern Ireland, Malaysia, Canada, Papua New Guinea, the Netherlands, Singapore, Hong Kong, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Tanzania, Pakistan, Burma and Mauritius; Scandinavian countries and north-eastern European countries also have significant percentages who give their religious affiliation as Anglican, perhaps because they cannot find a suitable Lutheran church in their locality; in fact, urban Anglican congregations are now drawn from an array of countries.

Other groups having to deal with cultural diversity include the Jehovah's Witnesses who have 770 congregations across Australia of which just over 100 are ethnically based using a language other than English such as Italian, Greek and Spanish. The last decades have also seen a diversification in Baptist congregations. In the Bunreba congregation, the English-speaking Baptist congregation included Chinese, Chileans, Indians, Malaysians and Ukrainians together with two self-contained language communities, namely the Vietnamese and the Laotians, who operated out of the same church. Further up the road was the Uniting Church which had a Vietnamese minister who was serving a young congregation of some Anglo-Australians but they were mainly Vietnamese and Pacific Islanders.

Decisions of Affiliation and Change of Affiliation

Upon arrival in Australia, many individuals and at times, whole faith communities are required to make a decision as to which religious group to join. In a small isolated town, a group of South African professionals with a Dutch Reformed background had to decide which church to join - some joined the Baptists, others the Wesleyan Methodist community. Another example is of the Korean Presbyterians - upon arrival they had to make a decision whether to join the Australian Presbyterian Church or to join the Uniting Church. The decision was to opt for the latter, and, within several years, the Uniting Church was having to cope with a large new branch. One of its responses has been to establish a national directorate of cross-cultural ministry located in Canberra. Cook Islanders, who belonged previously to the Congregationalist church at home, have tended to join Presbyterian groups in Australia.

Conversion or the switching of religious affiliation is a sensitive and challenging topic though it did not emerge as a major issue except in regard to assertive evangelical Christian attempts to make Jewish converts. There was criticism by some consultees of the targeting of migrant hostels and migrant flats by some religious groups. Missionisation was of particular concern to Pentecostal Christians and religious groups such as the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints whose strategies revolve around door-knocking in a house-to-house ministry.

The practice of religious door-knocking has never been legally challenged in Australia on privacy or other grounds. In June 2002, the USA Supreme Court addressed a case from Ohio where a local ordinance had been instituted regarding uninvited peddling and solicitation upon private property. It required anyone wishing to engage in door-to-door activity to obtain municipal permission. Two lower courts upheld the constitutionality of the ordinance. The Court was asked to decide, "are religious ministers engaged in a Scripturally based centuries-old practice of communicating their religious beliefs from door to door constitutionally equivalent to peddlers of merchandise, subject to the prior restraint of obtaining municipal permission to speak about the Bible or offer Bible-based literature at no cost?" In an 8 - 1 decision, the Court decided in the negative on the basis that "this form of religious activity occupies the same high estate under the First Amendment as do worship in the churches and preaching from the pulpits. It has the same claim to protection as the more orthodox and conventional exercises of religion". The Decision went on to say that the ordinance "is offensive - not only to the values protected by the First Amendment, but to the very notion of a free society - that in the context of everyday public discourse a citizen must first inform the government of her desire to speak to her neighbours and then obtain a permit to do so...

A law requiring a permit to engage in such speech constitutes a dramatic departure from our national heritage and constitutional tradition".

Conversion occasionally draws press attention though it is rarely analysed. The only systematic study of immigrants changing their religious affiliation showed that, in the mid-1970s, about ten per cent of Latin American immigrants had changed their religious affiliation away from Roman Catholicism within the first two years of arrival (Cahill 1986). This study has highlighted the point that many immigrants affiliate with faith groups not associated with their home countries, especially evangelical and pentecostal groups. It is clear that significant numbers of Anglo-Australians have been attracted to Buddhism in the last two decades, and there is a very small stream of converts to Islam that seems not to be reciprocated in the opposite direction. All this is part of the broader quest for new and engaging spiritualities. This observation meshes with the empirical evidence of both Croucher (1989) and Adam (1991) that ex-Catholics are very much over-represented in Buddhist communities. Adam's research (quoted in Bucknell 1992) found the reasons for conversion were a failure to provide adequate answers to life questions, the Catholic dogmatic attitude which discourages individual thinking together with its hierarchical structure and internal divisions. Croucher (1989) has noted an affinity between Buddhism and Roman Catholicism that was

greater than between Buddhism and Protestantism some of whose more extreme members were in the vanguard of opposing the building of temples.

Trends from this study can only be indicative but there were several instances of ex-Catholics taking leadership roles in other churches e.g. the man in charge of Jesus' Tent of Miracles in a large provincial town offering healing and spiritual comfort, and the young, intense Chinese man preparing for the Anglican ministry who had been a Catholic. Some of the AoG pastors had previously been Baptists, one preferring the Assemblies of God because of their stress on angels. The Jehovah's Witnesses had converts from most faiths, but especially Greek Orthodox and Catholic communities. In overall terms, the study suggested that switching religious allegiance is occurring more commonly than is realised though not amongst all groups.

2. From Mainstream Christianity to Immigrant and Evangelical and Pentecostal Religiosity

From across Australia, there were many and consistent signs that mainstream Christianity is struggling and in trouble. Successive surveys have indicated this. The signs were that mainstream Anglo-Australian Christianity is in retreat, and that the main growth signs were in the immigrant populations, whether as followers of Christianity or of other faiths. Religious growth was occurring in the other world faiths, especially Buddhism, Islam and Hinduism as the census data have shown.

In the research in suburbs and towns across Australia, the trend becomes clear:

- » In Bendall Plains, on the outskirts of a metropolis area, the Uniting Church was withdrawing from the area, and the Roman Catholic Church had not begun to construct its normal parish plant with church, school and presbytery because of its lack of personnel. The Hindu community was flourishing with ambitious expansion plans based on a solid funding base.
- » In Meringle, the Serbian Orthodox church, attracting both young and old, was in maintenance, encapsulated mode.

- » In Braddock, a large provincial city, the Lutherans had slightly declining numbers, most with grey hair but with a good sprinkling of young people, while, across the road, the Catholic congregation, while still having healthy numbers, had more grey hair than the Lutheran.
- » In the very high migrant density suburb of Bunreba, all the Christian churches were in good shape as immigrants, both recently arrived and long established, filled the pews - each of the three churches (Baptist, Catholic, Uniting Church) were following successful ethno-specific strategies with religious services in a variety of languages led by native-speaking ministers and priests - perhaps, unique to suburban Australia, the Catholic parish had an extraordinary ten Masses in five languages every Saturday evening and all day Sunday.
- » In inner-suburban, affluent Glenara, the local Uniting Church had become extinct, leaving, it was said, the ceremonies of the *rites de passage* to the Anglicans and the Catholics; the Catholic parish, still very viable, had survived only because three parishes had been collapsed into one and the Anglican parish had survived because it had incorporated the Maori sub-communities into its operation and because the priests volunteered their services as non-stipendiary clergy.

- » In Heptonstall, a middle-ring, middle-class suburban area, the Orthodox Jewish community was in a healthy state of maintenance though a nearby more liberal synagogue in a more upper-class area was struggling. The nearby Anglican parish with a surfeit of clergy was in good shape while the Church of Christ was in better shape, able to attract more than 300 members to its Sunday service.
- » In Green Valley, a flourishing provincial town, both the Uniting and Anglican Churches were in maintenance mode though the Presbyterian community had had to regenerate itself from virtually nothing after the formation of the Uniting Church and was slowly growing.
- » In Jackaranda, a small provincial town just holding its head above water because of its dependence on one industry, the Anglicans were in dire straits while all the other churches were in maintenance mode, if not contracting, except for the dynamic Baptists who, with strong leadership and very sound finances, were the religious power-house of the town. The Uniting Church community had lost the younger half of its community to the Wesleyans.
- » In Marbleline, a small Muslim community has established itself in a capital city, and it had now sponsored its own full-time school. It was in maintenance mode, and its growth depended on more immigrant networks.
- » In Midmet, the many Catholic chaplains had worked tirelessly in this metropolis, usually for many years; they covered a wide range of cultural and language groups belonging to the Catholic Church, retaining the link between culture and religion and working, over the long term, to integrate the immigrants into the mainstream.
- » In Salamander, a lower-class suburban area, the Jehovah's Witnesses were in slow growth mode as they followed a multicultural strategy for those able to understand English and an ethno-specific strategy for its Greek and Spanish speakers; the Salvation Army had its loyal congregation, while the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints was integrating a large group of Samoan immigrant families into their Australian structures.
- » In Shelbourne, the Assemblies of God exemplified the success of the biblical churches that believe in the literal inerrancy of the Bible - they had strong core congregations, were reaching out into the life of the city and had sufficient confidence to begin planning a multifunction religious centre costing several million dollars.
- » Tamarena, an upper-class, expensive piece of recent suburbia, was notable for its lack of church buildings. But the Greek Orthodox community had bought into the area many decades ago; it was a living congregation, composed of both young and old. It was in maintenance mode but its life would extend well beyond the first generation of Greek immigrants.

» Lastly, in Wattleton, a new, high migrant density, dormitory suburb almost on the perimeter of a metropolis, the Buddhists had divided into their ethnic strands to construct, at great risk and much cost, their own national temples; the Turkish mosque attracted more than 100 men for its Friday service while all the Christian churches were flourishing except that each of the three Christian churches had personnel problems: the Chinese Presbyterian Church was being serviced by trainee Anglican ministers; the Anglican church was not yet a parish and was being cared for by a minister in training, and the huge Catholic parish with 2,000 families had just lost its second curate.

Accordingly, in terms of religious organizational life, the results from our research and from the census suggest that the future of the mainstream Churches with their futures dependent as much upon their culturally and linguistically diverse members as upon their traditional Anglo-Australian support base. The evangelical and pentecostal Churches are making progress with a less rationalistic, more populist style of religious practice that may not appeal to the purists and which seems to lack the mystery and mystique of other traditions. Younger Anglicans and Catholics may have attended their own church schools but they rarely attend their parish churches and seem no longer to care whether their Churches become extinct or not. Some Churches have committed themselves to social justice and welfare work but this recipe does not necessarily result in larger congregations. The Salvation Army through its welfare and emergency support agencies has had an enviable reputation but it has not increased the number of Salvationists.

3. Positioning and Repositioning Faith Communities: the Precarious Nature of Faith and Community

Historical evidence suggests the many difficulties that face a faith community in establishing themselves in a country such as Australia, and institutionalising themselves in terms of buildings, personnel, structures etc.. The separation of religion and state implies there will be no help from the Australian government for building and maintaining worship facilities, nor for paying the salaries and stipends of religious personnel. Some overseas governments and agencies have helped and continue to help. In 1974, the Saudi Arabian government gave \$1.2million for the construction of mosques and Islamic centres and schools (Cleland 2002), while the Turkish government pays for the expenses of its Australian imams and their families. There is a long tradition of Catholic religious orders bringing in overseas funds for establishment purposes before they achieve self-sufficiency.

However, whatever the circumstances, establishing a faith community in any locality remains difficult and arduous, yet it continues to happen all over Australia as new faith communities are set up. Localizing themselves depends upon a leader or a leadership group and a core group of committed people who are prepared to donate time and money.

In most cases, there is much voluntary labour in establishing and maintaining a community. In Salamander, the new Jehovah's Witness building had been accomplished by volunteers from other congregations across the city. Much voluntary labour had gone into the building of the four Buddhist temples in Wattleton. In the case of the Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic centres, the communities had wanted, first of all, a place where their traditional spiritual needs could be met, where their faith traditions could be passed on to the coming generations and where they could project to greater Australia the richness of their theological, philosophical and artistic traditions as manifested through the architecture of the building and its sacred artefacts, the classrooms, schools and libraries and through the various religious rituals and liturgies practised within their holy spaces. They have constructed their own sacred sites on Australian soil just as generations of other immigrant groups have done so previously. And the Australian architectural landscape has been changed forever. Muslims would have wanted to have had the call to prayer broadcast across the rooftops of suburbia, but had been prevented by local noise limitations. The same limitations have prevented some Christian churches from ringing their church bells to call people to their spiritual obligations.

In contemporary, multi-faith Australia, thousands upon thousands of vicars and priests and ministers and rabbis and monks and imams are financially supported by local communities. Most are well, if not highly, educated, and they are remunerated well below their educational level. A rough financial estimate suggested that, on a per capita churchgoer basis, the most generous givers were from the evangelical and pentecostal churches, the Catholics the least generous. For example, in Jackaranda, the Baptist community had an annual income six times that of the local Catholic community. The Assemblies of God community in Shelbourne could support several pastor couples as well as a range of welfare services.

However, local communities are always dependent on their leadership for the continuance and regeneration of faith communities. In Shelbourne, an assembly close to extinction had been 'repioneered' by a minister who had remained there for close on two decades. In Green Valley, the Presbyterian church had been almost destroyed by the wholesale movement of the community across to the Uniting Church. Since that time, the local Presbyterian Church had grown into a substantial, thriving worshipping community.

Among the biggest and most successful congregations were the Baptist congregation in the small country town of Jackaranda, the large multicultural Catholic parish of Wattleton and the Assembly of God congregation in Shelbourne. Let us look at each specific case, looking at why they had achieved relative pastoral success.

Anglo-Australian Baptist congregation in Jackaranda:

The Baptists had been long established in this struggling town. The number of Sunday attendees at the different churches were Anglican (16 churchgoers), Baptist (117), Foursquare Gospel (32), Lutheran (42), One in Christ (Aboriginal) Family (20), Roman Catholic (80), Salvation Army (10) and Wesleyan Methodist (48) for a total of 355 - there were another two churches in town, another Aboriginal and a Seventh Day Adventist congregation. The research showed that the best attended and the most vibrant faith community in town was the Baptist with a popular religion mix of preaching and devotional hymns of the variety, "Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus". The 10:00am service was attended by a broad mix of young and old with many families having four or five young children; they sat on moveable chairs and it was led by the youth minister, a strong, young man in his mid-twenties who communicated easily and informally, if not in a well-polished manner, with the large congregation which filled the simple, unadorned chapel of the former girls' college. After the service, this minister met all the high school students because it was clear that because school had restarted after the summer vacation the theme of the previous week has focussed on transitions in life.

The atmosphere was very friendly and casual built around hymns that stressed a simple attachment to Jesus. A band comprised of organ, piano, drums and violin provided the music with two gospellers leading the singing. Members of the congregation all knew each other, and there existed a real esprit de corps as most remained afterwards for a cup of tea. The service finished off with a sermon by the faith community leader reflecting on chapter six of the Book of Joshua which tells of the fall of Jericho. He began by asking a question: "What is the most recognized symbol in the world?" It was not the cross, and, after some answers from the congregation, he declared the Coca Cola and McDonalds logos were the best known, more or less on level pegging. This led to the central theme of obedience to God, which was easily interpretable as blind obedience. He told the story of General Patton telling a group of soldiers to go and dig a hole behind the barracks for no useful purpose as a way of testing their obedience and leadership.

The Baptists had been present in the town since its beginnings, and its annual turnover was easily more than double any other congregation. Their facilities were opened and used by the community for playgroups, young mothers, craft groups and youth activities. There was also a seniors program and a parenting program. The principal event was a youth music festival where participation went beyond the Baptist circle.

The Baptists were successful because of their emphasis on youth and their longterm presence in the area.

Multicultural Catholic parish of Wattleton:

Wattleton, a new working-class/lower middle class but upwardly mobile dormitory suburb, is a unique part of multifaith Australia which included the Catholic parish of St. Brendan's. This parish was said to be one of the largest in the archdiocese, serving 15,000 Catholics and standing as an example of the Church's latest strategy of dealing with the shortage of celibate clergy by building fewer, larger and more dispersed parish churches in the newer areas of suburbia.

This was a successful multicultural parish built in an area in which there had been located Italian farms and market gardens in the several decades after WWII. The church itself, completed in 1991, was very large, shaped like a rhombus and replacing an older but still quite modern one completed in 1961 which now served as the parish hall. Next door was the parish primary school which was educating 840 Catholic children; just over half the school population were from Anglo-Australian families and of the rest, the biggest group were second and third generation Italian Australians, the next biggest group were the Vietnamese, followed by the Filipinos, Croatians and Spaniards. Altogether there were 33 nationalities in the school. Even though the school received many enquiries from non-Catholic parents, it could not at this point in time take their children because there was simply no room. School education was at the centre of this parish's response for in the parish there was a very large Catholic secondary college with 1,500 students, including many students from other faiths. As well, there were large numbers of Catholic students in the local government schools and the parish had in place a highly developed organization of catechists, numbering about 50 – 60, to provide religious education to these students.

If this local faith community was built on education and ethnic diversity, its other plank was welfare. Nearby was a very large St. Vincent de Paul Centre which served not just this parish but beyond. The need was demonstrated in the statistic that a large percentage of the families were single parent families and about 10 per cent of the families in the school could not afford to pay school fees.

The pastoral strategies were built around the Mass - every Saturday evening and Sunday, there were six Masses, attended by about 2,000 people, four English Masses, one Italian Mass and a recently introduced Vietnamese Mass at 4:00pm on Sunday afternoon. The two priests were supported by two Italian priests able to speak both Italian and Spanish, who worked across many parishes and by a group of Vietnamese chaplains who likewise operated as a team ministry across a very large region. Even so, the priests needed the support of their laypeople, and, in this parish, the parish priest had garnered his migrant flock to assist him. This was exemplified on the day the researchers visited when the parish was in the midst of a three-week, so-called 'sacrificial giving' campaign based around the three themes of time, talent and treasure. In the Italian Mass, a layman, coached by the priest, appealed to the congregation of 150 to contribute their talents as well as their money to the parish's extensive activities. The 10:30am service was the major liturgical event of the week with almost 500 worshippers in attendance, led by the parish priest with four young altar-servers (2 boys, 2 girls) and a teenage all-Asian choir. This clearly was an alive parish with a family audience, and it was very multicultural with lots of teenagers.

Instead of the sermon, a Chinese Filipino woman gave an outstanding virtuoso performance in asking for financial pledges. She spoke without notes, wandering across the altar, telling small jokes and arguing that 'our priests need all the support they can get'. She was rightly applauded. Later on, three young people were prayed over – they were on the road to becoming baptised Catholics at Easter. They symbolized the fact that this parish had a secure future in an area characterised by a supermarket of faiths.

Anglo-Australian Assembly of God congregation in Shelbourne:

The various Assemblies of God of Shelbourne, a large provincial city, had aggressive and imaginative programs of Christian ministry, and the Piper's Lane community was one of several AoGs in this prosperous part of Australia. The central church had recently purchased a larger complex because the community had outgrown its current 400-seat facility. The project, perceived as 'an amazing miracle', is to convert the complex into a worship centre with a much larger auditorium with Sunday school facilities to cater for many children, a spacious creche, a lounge/counselling area, a café, corporate offices for the growing ministries and facilities for large scale religious productions.

Much emphasis was placed on the AoG's increased practice of pastor couples because there was a real 'wholeness' in ministering together spiritually and pastorally as husband-and-wife, often both employed full-time on one salary.

The Piper's Lane community, drawing on a large body of volunteers, had formed a welfare organization with a van at its disposal, and it had developed a food bank for people in need. They had a drug and alcohol referral service as well as a half-way house as part of their Christian care ministry. They worked closely with the local government high school, including organizing one day a week a 'brekky' club for students not having had breakfast before coming to school. One target was the local business community where the strategy revolved around regular prayer meetings together with grander occasions in a local luxury hotel.

Its beliefs were focussed around the infallibility of the Bible. The service consisted of hymns and a long 45 minute address on the goodness of God delivered in a polished style by a visiting pastor who roved across the whole platform. The congregation was of all age groups except for university age students - there was a Sunday evening service for them. The four piece band with its light teenage sound led the hymns together with the associate pastor who crooned into the microphone, his pop star style more than emphasized by his marine, almost Mohawk-like hair style. It seemed to be the Anglo-Australian version of popular religion, and there was no doubting its success. The Assembly of God had been successful in attracting followers for the following reasons:

- » the church was very committed to being contemporary and relevant to its members as seen in the style of upbeat music that was used in the church
- » the church was determined in its preaching to address real-world issues such as marriage, hope and depression rather than dogmatic or exegetical presentations
- » the senior pastors had a strong commitment to leadership and team ministry, including married couple ministry.

The importance of relevant preaching was underlined by the successful minister of the multicultural Baptist church in Wattleton who was confident of his preaching talents. A former Catholic, he had a vision of many nationalities worshipping together though there was a strong assimilarism to his strategies. His followers came from many different churches because it was felt mainline churches and their preaching were no longer relevant. He was completing studies in counselling so as the practical advice contained in his sermons would be based on best practice. Pastoral success was related very much to quality grassroots leadership and the provision of religious personnel.

Another key element in maintaining and regenerating communities is faith education, especially for younger members. The Catholic communities had their schools as did the Assemblies of God in Shelbourne with a large and well-regarded secondary college and the Lutheran community with its primary school in the city of Braddock - the research team was made aware that Lutheran schools have recently been built in other communities across Australia, and in Braddock there was a vague plan to build a Lutheran secondary college. In its primary school, about 30 per cent of the students were Lutheran and the school was frequented by children from other faiths and by the unchurched - the attitude of these parents was, "we didn't send them to church but we send them to a Christian school".

The Muslim community in Marbleline had established a school, and in provincial Green Valley, some of the Presbyterians sent their children to the local Lutheran primary school. In Green Valley, a separate religious school was seen as 'a key to the future', and the Anglicans, Lutherans and Presbyterians had plans to open a joint Christian secondary school in addition to the city's Catholic secondary college. The strong moves to construct their own schools by the non-Catholic Christian groups and the Muslim communities are now widespread across Australia, generated in part by the antipathetic attitude of government schools towards faith education and the reluctance to provide prayer rooms in the case of Muslim students though the universities have provided such rooms for their international Muslim students. But this proliferation raises practical issues about the atomisation of local school populations and, perhaps, the cost factor. However, less Government funds, when Australian Government and State sources are combined, are required to educate a student in a private school.

The Buddhist committees of management showed no inclination to establish schools - their religious instruction methods are different as manifested in the case of the Laotians who expressed concern to the research team that government school teachers seemed not to take responsibility for the children's moral education. *Dharma* classes were regularly taught by the monks, and during the previous school holidays, some boys, aged between 7 and 15, decided to become temporary novices for seven days of intense training in inner maturity at the temple, living the life of the monks. The word, 'ordination', was used to describe the process. The program was led by the abbot, the heads of the boys were shaved and they wore the traditional saffron robes. They arose at 5:00am for their chanting sessions followed by breakfast, and then lunch at 11:00am after which they did not eat for the rest of the day. The aim was for the young boys to learn, firstly, self-respect and then respect for others as well as the five precepts (no stealing, no lying, no killing, no illicit sexual activities and no intoxicating drink) and the other teachings of the Buddha.

Every local faith community is in a continuing cycle of generation and regeneration, seemingly dependent on strong and committed local religious leadership. Faith and community are, by their nature, precarious, and this point highlights the importance of quality leadership.

4. Local Religious Leadership and Provision of Religious Personnel

Religious leadership at all levels has become a more complex and challenging task because, firstly, the local leaders must deal with a situation where people are less likely to be overtly religious with a general denigration of religion across society, especially in the media, and, secondly, they are now required, in many cases, to deal with cultural diversity requiring the selection of appropriate pastoral models. The research highlighted leadership capability, interpersonal strengths, vision and strength of purpose and innovation. However, leadership roles are conceptualised differently from faith to faith, and this is a reality in the new multi-faith society. In Hinduism and Buddhism, the monks are concerned solely with the spiritual, moral and ritual realities whereas their lay leaders have responsibility for the mundane realities of building and maintaining facilities and raising funds. In Hinduism, the priests are required to be married because he is required to be 'complete', and completeness requires the female as seen in the different gods who combine male and female forms.

The Vedic scriptures give equal importance to male and female. Caring for the needy, counselling and other such pastoral and administrative work was not normally done by a Hindu priest, but by other community members. In Buddhism, the celibate monk sacralizes the temple, thereby attracting the people. As a Buddhist lay community leader expressed it, 'when there are many monks, people come to the temple; without the monks, people will not come. The monk represents peacefulness and right living. They teach the people to train themselves'. The Buddhist Chinese lay leader expressed it similarly, 'with the monk, the people feel safe'. In contrast, in Christianity, whilst the religious leader may be helped by lay leaders, he or she has ultimate responsibility for all matters, both material and spiritual - this is more so, the more hierarchical the particular church.

Provision of religious personnel was a problem for all faith communities, not least the non-Christian communities without training facilities within Australia. The mainstream churches seemed stretched in providing personnel, and months might go by before a departing minister was replaced, particularly in less attractive parishes. The Catholics seemed very stretched though it still had most areas covered, however thinly, constructing huge parishes in recently-built suburbia on the perimeters of metropolitan areas, amalgamating two, or even three, inner suburban parishes, closing down or decreasing services in small rural churches and not having priests able to speak the language for some of the long-established immigrant communities. The research showed to some extent, the shortage of parish personnel had been offset, but only partially, by the arrival of priests from overseas. Vietnamese Catholic priests now represent approximately 3 - 4 per cent of active Catholic clergy. The Uniting Church had completely withdrawn from several areas, both urban and rural; the evangelical and pentecostal churches seemed not to lack personnel, according to our data, and it was instructive that in Shelbourne there were more than 100 taking part in training programs. The scenario in the coming years is that in some parts of Australia Christianity will die out for all intents and purposes unless there is a regeneration by the mainstream churches. A positive sign was the emergence of women pastors and the emergence of pastor couples

as seen in the Anglican church in Glenara and the Assemblies of God in Shelbourne. These conclusions have been recently supported by the Christian Research Association (Hughes 2003) in a study of Christian clergy numbers. It was found that the Catholic priest ratio to numbers of those identifying as Catholics was one priest per 2,986 parishioners, the highest for any group. The equivalent figures for the other main churches were Anglican (1,606), Uniting Church (792), Baptist (203) and for the Pentecostal Churches, a very low ratio of 89 church members for every church pastor.

Whilst the monks from the faiths other than Christian had entered fulltime religious service as young men, what was also striking about the Christian leaders, apart from the Catholic and the Orthodox, was that they had had previous occupations or had retained their occupations, at least on a part-time basis, including as a secondary teacher, carpenter, sales manager and a company executive. One Anglican priest had been a salesman before his conversion to Christianity. In Jackaranda, the Uniting Church lay minister had experienced his call to the lay pastorate as a religious experience after working in finance.

The underlying question raised by the study with regard to religious personnel was the following: what are the required attributes for religious personnel called to give spiritual and/or pastoral leadership in ministering in a multi-faith society with all its complexities and sensitivities? The question is heightened when the religious leader has been educated and trained overseas in a country very different from Australia where there may be a very different positioning of religion and state and where there may not be a democratic system of government and where there may be much animosity between faith communities. Within the Australian immigration categories, there has been and continues to be a category for the entry of religious personnel, whether on a temporary or permanent basis. Whilst the granting of visas always takes time, the Australian immigration department has always been generous in allowing faith communities to bring in their religious leaders. Some instances were drawn to the attention of the research team where faith communities had demonstrated some fickleness in accepting a leader e.g. not able to speak the required dialect, personality clashes with some committee members, different ethnocultural group etc. Also, most, when in Australia, are given upon application the statutory power by the Australian Government to celebrate marriages, even if resident on a temporary visa for 2 or 3 years and even if they do not speak English.

The level of English language proficiency of many recently arrived and some not so recently arrived religious personnel was poor, if not negligible. These personnel often step immediately into religious leadership positions, giving sermons and homilies and addresses on topics that require a deep knowledge of the surrounding society and/or giving advice in spiritual direction or counselling sessions that may require knowledge of how a pluralist society operates on matters pertaining to marriage and divorce, inheritance matters, abuse and assault matters, gender equality etc. or in writing articles for their community magazines or bulletins. Some faith leaders, though reasonably proficient in English, would have struggled in a media interview or a panel discussion. Others needed an interpreter for anything beyond very simple English. On the other hand, it was brought to the attention of the research team that many faith groups went to considerable expense to ensure their personnel were fluent in English. As well, the lack of English fluency was causing problems in communicating with the second-generation faith groups who were more fluent in English than their family heritage language.

5. Faith Communities and Social Capital

The unifying idea of this study has been the interrelationship between faith communities and the construction of social capital within Australian society. The contribution of Christianity and other world faiths to the cultural capital of humankind does not need to be documented here. Australia has been much influenced by the Christian patrimony in areas such as art and music with the lofty sublimity of Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Handel's *Hallelujah* chorus, Holman Hunt's *Light of the World* and Michelangelo's *Pieta*. Nor do we need to document the contribution of cathedrals and other worship sites to cityscapes and town and ruralscapes. Cultural capital is related to social capital. What has been and continues to be the contribution of local and national faith communities to national social capital?

The conventional histories of religion published in Australia since the early 1990s (Breward (1993); Carey (1996); Thompson (2002)) have included the relationship between religion and society in their purviews, yet the lack of a unifying concept such as social capital have partially hindered their attempts to explore fully the contribution that religion has made to the construction of an Australian civil society. In their own various ways, faiths have contributed to such construction but it has been insufficiently operationalised in current academic and general thinking.

It is widely accepted and undeniable that Christianity has been a central and defining strand in Australian society since 1788, yet there remains the failure to fully operationalise this contribution in relation to:

- » The building and maintenance of the national character, its identity and spirit and to an understanding, interpretation and re-interpretation of the national past.
- » The construction of the nation's governance structures and processes, and to its basic institutions.
- » The communicative links and professional and social lubricants that enable complex societies to function effectively.
- » The capacity to react positively and creatively to national and international processes and events.

- » The underlying values, norms and ethical behaviours that are difficult to identify yet remain critical in challenging disvalues encompassed in corruption, cronyism, nepotism, patronage, fanaticism, promiscuity etc.
- » The associated psychosocial characteristics that help a nation on its journey into the future such as respect for the dignity of the individual, mateship collectiveness, nurturance of the young, care of the old and disadvantaged, commitment to the family unit, the spirit of volunteerism, the preparedness for risk, hospitality and friendliness towards the other and the stranger, love for the beach and the outdoors etc.

Documenting fully this contribution is beyond the scope of this study, yet indications from the literature and from our own data provide a platform to a conclusion that, on balance, religion in all its diversity has been and remains a constructive force. Religion makes a contribution that is core and continuing. As one major example, the Protestant ascendancy inculcated a Protestant ethic of thrift, hard work and individual discipline, encouraging its followers to accumulate wealth and invest capital all of which can be compared to the social and economic performance of other longtime settler societies such as in Latin America. In fact, a Seventh Day Adventist consultee argued for a retention of 'Protestant culture' since it had a proven record for the delivery of the good life.

In evaluating Anglicanism, Fletcher (2000b) has made a notable attempt to link Anglicanism's contribution to the nation's social capital. Noting the advantage of the aura of establishment and the sense that the British have been bestowed by God with divinely-ordained responsibilities, Australian Anglicans from the beginning saw themselves as possessors and transmitters of a glorious inheritance which needed implanting in colonial society. Their aim was to Christianise colonial society, including the Aborigines (Harris 2002) away from their perceived paganism. They were well-connected and influential in elite colonial circles. They were protective of the sanctity of Sunday and the need for recreational repose. They ensured attachment to Britain and its Empire which was seen to embody Christian values and, of course, they instilled veneration for the monarch and the need for a symbolic centralizing authority. Building on John Locke's philosophy (Yarwood & Knowling 1982), they generated affection for the land and its cultivation amongst Australia's bush farmers in imitation of the 'sturdy English farmer'. The contribution of Anglicanism and of other faith communities to rural and provincial communities where traditional values are stronger is insufficiently recognized and studied except for the Royal Flying Doctor Service and the work of Reverend John Flynn.

Whilst the decision-making structures of Anglicanism excluded women and the poor, they were relatively open, modelling a democratic process at a time when other, more authoritarian Churches during the 1850s and 1860s were condemning such participatory structures. In fact, the lay voice was crucial, and the Australian Anglican Church was well ahead of its English parent in its appreciation of liberal democracy even if it continued for far too long to appoint English bishops. Anglicanism wished to act as a moral leaven in society, especially through support of the family as the main pillar of society and marriage as an unbreakable contract. In fact, all faith communities have been solicitous and committed to the well-being of the family. Research would probably show an historical correlation down the decades between religiosity and family stability. The churches have pioneered the area of pre-marriage education which is increasingly recognized, through empirical research, as assisting marriage stability and is now government-supported. Anglicans and their Nonconformist colleagues have waged at various times and with varying intensities campaigns against such 'social evils' as gambling and drug abuse whilst the Catholics have focussed more on abortion and euthanasia, generating much hostility from the broader society, even though all major world religions to varying degrees are opposed to all four activities.

Fletcher (2002b) notes that, unlike their Roman Catholic rivals, Anglicans did not provide an Australia-wide Anglican education system though they have been supportive of government schools through chaplains and religious education teachers. They sponsored schools for the more well-to-do families with the covert aim 'to produce a colonial leadership imbued with Anglican values' as well as university colleges. Australian leadership is a huge topic in itself, but the overwhelming majority of Australian political and social leaders have been religiously influenced, if not religiously motivated and faith committed.

In Fletcher's view, Anglicanism's role during World War I was especially important in encouraging army enrolment; in fact, 75 priests actually enlisted together with the 175 Anglican chaplains. The Church insisted the enemy was not the German people, but Prussian militarism, and was concerned about the rights of Australian citizens of German origin. The introduction of Anzac Day was very much the work of Canon David Garland in seeing all war as both a glory and a defeat. It supported the White Australia policy but not a Protestant Australian policy even though it was always suspicious of Catholicism's claims to papal infallibility and absolute truth up until the ecumenical movement emerged in the 1960s at the grassroots level. Sectarianism is implicitly conflictual but it produced a more competitive environment through much 'inter-denominational cross-fertilization'.

Whilst its strength was in the middle and upper classes, the poor were not neglected and welfare work has always featured in Anglican pastoral care though diminished in recent decades by the emergence of the welfare state, the professionalisation of social work and the introduction of government agencies (Fletcher 2002b) – with the partial demolition of the welfare state, governments are again becoming reliant on churches.

In 2001 to commemorate the Centenary of Federation, the Melbourne Catholic archdiocese, the nation's largest, produced a small document, *The Catholic Contribution to Australia* (Hart 2001), the Great South Land of the Holy Spirit, recalling the Spanish naming of Australia in 1606 by Captain Pedro Fernandez de Quiros as 'Austrialia dell Espiritu Sanctu' (Grassby 1983). It drew attention to the Church's educational contribution, especially for the 100 year period from the 1870s to the 1970s when no government funds were received for Catholic schools which were maintained by the Catholic community with 'heroic personal sacrifice' – whilst now receding into the distant past, this government failure is still perceived as a grave injustice. During this period and even today since it costs the government significantly less to educate students in a private than a government school, the Church has saved the government and the Australian people many billions of dollars.

The same document highlighted the Church's contribution to the building of a multicultural nation through its welcoming and integrating of Catholic immigrants as well as its defence of marriage, motherhood and family life against those who reduce life to the level of a commodity and demean the value of each individual life from the moment of conception. It drew attention to Catholic leadership in public life, James Scullin, Joe Lyons, Ben Chifley and Paul Keating as Prime Ministers, Tim Fischer as Deputy Prime Minister, Sir William Dean as Governor-General and Sir James Gobbo, Lenéan Forde and Dame Roma Mitchell as state Governors among many others in politics and the professions, and not least B.A. Santamaria who led the fight against Communist infiltration. Attention was also drawn to the innovative leadership of women religious in the areas of teaching, nursing and social work, led by Blessed Mary McKillop. Catholic hospitals have led the way in care, welcoming all members of the community while the St. Vincent de Paul Society, unlike any other welfare organization, has people on the ground in every part of Australia, to help the homeless and the poor.

Centrecare plays a different welfare role through its counselling work while other organizations sponsored by the religious orders such as the McKillop Family Services undertake work among distressed families and disadvantaged youth. In social policy, the Catholic Church has insisted on the centrality of social justice in addressing the inequalities between rich and poor, and, as other authors have pointed out, it had a special role to play in the formation of the Australian Labour Party.

Coming into the contemporary scene, our data suggest that the contribution of local and national faith communities to national social capital is substantial. We have already seen how religious personnel have assisted immigrants and refugees to settle, especially in their early years, and we will see how leaders have defused ancient and less ancient hatreds and animosities. The sense of the spiritual, the transcendent and the moral remains necessary in all societies to counter the corrupting and debilitating influences of materialism, hedonism and selfishness. Despite all its faults, limitations and outdated religious discourse, religion has this capacity. As the hymn at the English service in the Chinese Presbyterian Church said, "Lord, I come to your awesome presence".

Religion, as has been seen in this study, aims at personal transformation and conversion for, as one preacher put it, "God wants to give us a new engine"; it aims as well to produce inner calmness of spirit, for example, the soothing presence of faith to heal psychic wounds. Across Australia, there are thousands of religious houses, monasteries, places of worship, chapels, mosques, temples, synagogues, presbyteries, vicarages and manses where the mundane meets the absolute, where the spiritual challenges the material and the prophetic challenges the superficial, and where the devotee challenges the consumer. Religion brings reconciliation and forgiveness for, as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, has said, "the future is reconciliation". The research showed cases of local religious leaders, formerly refugees, whose torture was so horrific that it had at one stage reduced them to despair and who were working for reconciliation in their own communities with their former enemies and torturers.

Across the data, the evidence is scattered randomly, yet cumulatively, aside from the various religious education programs to inculcate altruistic values, it adds to an impressive total as can be seen in the research:

1. In Bendall Plains the Anglican Church had built a village for poor and disadvantaged families, while the Hindu priests had provided for the spiritual settlement of their people.
2. In Meringle, the Serbian Orthodox priest, whilst his community retain a very Serbian view of recent events in the Balkans, was helping to create a sense of belonging to Australia.
3. In provincial Braddock, the Lutheran community had established its own school attended by Lutherans and non-Lutherans alike, and its social contribution to the whole area had been extensive since the beginning of European settlement.
4. In disadvantaged Bunreba, all the Christian faith communities were working to assist in the settlement of poorer, disadvantaged immigrant communities and creating and cementing their sense of belonging to Australia while the multicultural Catholic primary school was catering for these children from struggling migrant backgrounds. Some of the local councillors had been drawn from the Christian communities.
5. In Glenara, the Anglican Church was hosting Maori congregations, assisting them to settle into and identify with Australia, while, together with the Catholics, retaining a sense of a religious presence in an area vacated by the other faith communities as well as sponsoring their local primary school; the Anglicans were catering for young people with jazz celebrations and were hosting a community serving people with intellectual disabilities.
6. In Heptonstall, the Jewish synagogues had provided a sense of solidarity and security as well as a sense of social space to community members recovering from the trauma of the Holocaust; the Anglicans had a child exercise program while the Church of Christ had a pre-school mothers group and a youth group while offering public seminars on topics such as grief management and diabetes.
7. In Green Valley, the Presbyterian Church was providing service not only in this provincial town but to four small rural communities scattered across bush Australia, and this community's focus was very much on family support, including family life education.
8. In Jackaranda, the shire president was a religiously committed person as had been her predecessors while the Baptist community brought economic capital into the town to help keep it afloat as well as sponsoring an annual drug-free, sex-free youth festival. The Baptists also provided playgroups for mothers, craft groups and youth activities as well as a parenting program. The churches had worked together to provide crisis accommodation and they also encouraged a tolerant attitude to the Muslim and Aboriginal communities even if fundamental issues were avoided. A Pentecostal Church provided a focal stable point of reference for the local Aboriginal Christians in a town that was not accepting of them.
9. In Marbleline, the Muslim community in its own small enclave was assisting its members to integrate, helping them to construct their identities as Muslims and as members of a distinctive religious community and, with its school, it was reinforcing the historic presence of Islam in Australia as well as educating its children in accordance with normal curriculum requirements.

10. In Midmet, the Catholic migrant chaplains were assisting their immigrant communities to adjust as well as defusing past hatreds and animosities; the Chaldean chaplain stressed his community's philosophy as 'faith, family, work'; the chaplains helped to bridge the communication and social gaps between their own community and both the broader Church and the wider society.
11. In Salamander, a middle-ring suburb, the Jehovah's Witness preacher focussed on the danger of spiritual complacency which was likened to a spiritual sleep; the community had raised funds for disaster relief but involved itself in no other social activity. The nearby Salvation Army congregation expressed its commitment to the poor and the disadvantaged, including overseas.

12. In the city of Shelbourne, the Assemblies of God leader wanted his community to work towards 'reconstructing our city for Christ', and this took the form of a child care centre, breakfast program at a government high school, their own high school, youth camps, four houses for reforming drug addicts, a welfare group and a foodbank.
13. In upper middle class Tamarena, the Greek Orthodox lay people spoke of how religion was a solace in troubled times, lessening stress. The women had formed a benevolent society to help the poor, the disabled and the aged.
14. In outer suburban Wattleton, the Christian, Buddhist and Muslim communities worked in a new, lower middle class area; the only group with a fulltime school were the Catholics who also had a large St. Vincent de Paul centre to serve the needs of the poor; the Lao abbot not only initiated the young boys into Buddhist teaching but he also taught them regard and care for old people amongst other Buddhist core values.

In much of the research, reference was made to trained religious personnel being involved in crisis and grief counselling, pre-marriage education and marriage counselling as well as general welfare such as answering knocks at the door by the destitute. In the consultations with leaders and the electronic public consultation, it was found that religious leaders had some difficulty grappling with the notion of their faith's contribution to the nation's social capital. Among the themes that emerged:

- » Christian communities had built schools and other special educational institutions such as kindergartens, schools for the disabled and impaired and university colleges to educate millions of Australian students down the ages.
- » Many hospitals, aged care facilities and welfare agencies, including the delivery of innovative programs, had been initiated by the major Christian denominations in all parts of Australia, and they were involved in the delivery of innovative programs as well as acting as lightning rods for emerging social problems because of their grassroots network.

- » In the words of a Jewish leader, religion is the backbone and support of the value of altruism and of altruistic behaviour. As one submission put it, “throughout history, religion has been one of the most powerful sources of vision, values and social progress. The faith communities which collectively represent the majority of Australians share in common the eternal spiritual principles of love, justice and hope.
- » Religiosity helped to develop moral character, including integrity, and provided an antidote to criminal, unethical and self-destructive behaviour.
- » Faith communities, more than other institutions, emphasized the ethic of care within the philosophy of ‘good works’, and the erosion of religiosity would lead to a decline in the ethic of care and longterm commitment to the disadvantaged.
- » Faith communities emphasized the dignity of the individual person, including the young and the aged, the useless and the disturbed, as well as highlighting family cohesion and a sense of justice.
- » Volunteering, as ‘the sacrifice of self’ for the common good, was the basis of religious communities, and its example flowed right across society in the form of civic duty and national responsibility.

- » Religious education encouraged the observance of the law and respect for the other, as well as social equity.
- » Life’s *rites de passage*, basic to individual and family growth, were celebrated or mourned solemnly in religious rituals that link the past with the future, and, in the cases of dying, death and tragedy, religious ritual and faith allow victims or relatives to cope with the unpredictability of life and with psychological scars.
- » Faith provides a purpose for living a committed life and gives reasons as to ‘why we are here’.
- » The business notion of the triple bottom line with its emphasis on social justice and wealth distribution had been promoted with the help of religious groups.
- » Faith communities with their global networks can provide information to Australian leaders about other societies.
- » The capacity to lobby and pressure the three levels of government on key national and local issues as well as global matters.
- » Faith communities have been very supportive, if not formative, of international aid agencies.

It was acknowledged that not all faith communities do all these things in equal measure, and that some are encapsulated within their community cocoon, even being opposed to the state, which is their right in terms of religious freedom. Comments showed that social capital could be destroyed by:

- » A continued emphasis on one religion being superior or the correct one as holders of the total truth.
- » The refusal to co-operate or interact with other faith communities.
- » The upsurge of religious and ethnic extremism, and the encouragement of religious sectarianism.
- » The demeaning of women as not in practice equal to men in family life or in organizational structures despite the official rhetoric of gender equality.
- » The anti-Islamic views of some extremist Christians.

Practising and transmitting the faith are the core activities of faith communities, and from this flows any contribution to national social capital. A Uniting Church leader said there were many publicly untold stories in promoting social cohesion and in contributing to social capital through education. Whatever their faults, limitations and inconsistent or even scandalous behaviour, faith communities make an enormous contribution to social capital. They have evolved into solid and flexible institutions even if, at times, they may remain handcuffed to the past and slow to respond. As has been demonstrated throughout this chapter, faith communities have made and continue to make enormous contributions to Australian diversity and to social well-being. At the same time, with their high priest-member ratios, the largest Christian faith communities are finding it increasingly difficult to continue to contribute to the nation's social capital. Yet, much work needs to be done in bringing the faiths together to act more cohesively as we shall see in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER FIVE

Racist and religious violence, ancient hatreds, intercommunal relationships and September 11th

A major aim of the project was to assess the impact of the September 11th terrorist attacks on inter-faith and inter-ethnic relationships and, on a broader scale, to assess the role of faith communities and their leaders with respect to intercommunal hostilities, past and present, in Australia or overseas. For this report, 'ecumenical' will be used in reference to inter-church relationships within the Christian sector, whereas 'inter-faith' will refer to the relationships between Christian faith groups and faith groups other than Christian. Data were available from the research and from the consultations. In Midmet, the focus was on the role of Catholic migrant chaplains in defusing past hatreds.

Inter-Faith Relationships: The Local Level

The data collected from the studies of local religious communities, showed a very mixed pattern; it needs to be presented in some detail before drawing several conclusions:

» In Bendall Plains several faith communities existed independently of each other with no contact. None of the Christian churches or their leaders had any formal or informal relationships with the Hindu temple whose leaders, however, had been careful to invite the local church leaders to attend their major functions. The Christian leaders did not attend. The local Christian leaders had informal contacts with each other which sometimes led to a joint activity such as a combined Christmas Carol service. However, there was a very active municipal inter-faith committee in which the Hindu community leaders participated. The Hindu community reported no problems with vandalism or racism of any kind.

» In Meringle, the Serbian Orthodox priest had no formal or informal contacts with other local faith communities, Christian or non-Christian. The image of a famous Serbian general adorned the church property. The researchers felt that some in the community believed that the war in Yugoslavia was a war against Orthodoxy and the 'New World Order', and there was a general feeling in the community that alleged war criminals were, in fact, national heroes. In Australia, the community's relationships with other Balkans communities were good if only because they had no contact with each other. Conflict had been left behind in the Balkans. After September 11th, in an adjacent suburban area, there had been a combined liturgical service but it had been Christian. The Anglican priest had endeavoured to come to terms with the theological implications, focussing on the notion of Muslim martyrdom as a likely explanation of 9/11.

» In the provincial city of Braddock where a Lutheran community had deep historical roots, ecumenical relationships between the Christian churches were very strong and longstanding with co-operation on public events to market the true meaning of Christianity, inter-church services, co-operation on social justice issues, and weekly columns in the city's newspaper written by the local clergy and local church members on a rotational basis. The Lutherans co-operated in all this though they were not at the forefront of activity, their reticence perhaps a result of the memory of wartime internment though the elders had surprisingly little knowledge of German internment during both World Wars. Lutherans also had mistaken impressions of key Roman Catholic beliefs. They were, however, very aware of formal dialogue at the global and national levels between their own Church and the Catholic, Anglican and Uniting Churches. With regard to other faiths, Lutherans realised they were constrained by their beliefs in the infallibility of Scripture. Their answers about the eternal salvation of those not Christian wavered uneasily between theological negativity and multicultural tolerance based on the Christian command 'to love thy neighbour'.

The Lutheran national magazine had published several articles on Islam to increase understanding and that their Australian leader had attended a post-9/11, multi-faith ceremony.

» In Bunreba churches juxtaposed alongside each other on the same street on the edge of an Asian-like shopping centre. The three churches had reached out to their Asian communities and offered services in Vietnamese and Lao. The churches had very intermittent relationships and it was claimed there had been ecumenical services during Christian Unity Week though the Baptists did not participate. One long-resident priest suggested that inter-church and inter-faith relationships were at the level of peaceful coexistence rather than active co-operation. The major preoccupation of each of the faith communities was maintenance of their own operations and they simply did not have the time or resources to devote to other activities including interfaith meetings. The local council did bring the faith leaders together for community pageants and multicultural festivals. The September 11th events had caused no negative events in the area though the Muslim presence in this highly migrant area was significant but swamped by the Buddhist and Catholic presences.

The Catholic school said it had been proactive, assembling the students the following morning to pray for the dead in the USA, their families and for the perpetrators. A letter had been sent to parents, warning against creating 'goodies' and 'baddies' on the terrorist issue. There had been one small incident against an Arab Christian girl but the insult had been defused. There was a general feeling in the area that diversity is Bunreba's lifeblood.

» In inner-suburban Glenara, the focus was on an Anglican parish. Except for the Anglicans, the nearby Catholics and Buddhist centre which none of the Christians knew anything about, the area was bereft of active religious congregations. The small Anglo-Australian Anglican community was too engaged in its own survival to be bothered about ecumenical and inter-faith activities. The Anglican pastor couple had endeavoured to mount several ecumenical initiatives but there was a lack of response from other faith groups. This was confirmed by the Catholic priest who maintained his parishioners were too elderly to be concerned, and he was too busy as the priest in charge of three former parishes collapsed into one.

» The focus of Heptonstall an upmarket suburban area, was on two Orthodox Jewish congregations and a progressive Jewish congregation together with ministers from an evangelical Anglican Church and a progressive Church of Christ. In terms of intercommunal relationships, the Jewish communities felt decidedly comfortable though the Orthodox community was losing families to other, more densely populated Jewish areas. The Orthodox rabbis were vigorously opposed to religiously mixed marriages, and this demonstrated their closeness as a community. There was no interaction with other faith groups but Orthodox rabbis were always happy to participate in religious discussions so as people were not ignorant about Judaism. The liberal Jewish community had a more positive, if still wary, attitude to intermarriage and its members were keener to foster links with other groups such as the Council for Christians and Jews. Before September 11th, the community had had discussions with Muslims in the spirit of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which made Jews and Muslims members of the same monotheist family. The Anglicans cited real practical and theological difficulties in reaching out beyond Christians given that they have not accepted all Christians.

» The nearby Church of Christ minister participated regularly in ecumenical activities. The Anglican community was not very involved in ecumenical activities which were led by the Catholics and the Uniting Church. In this local government area, the Council had taken a very proactive role in multicultural issues since 1997. September 11th had generated very little racist activity though after the Bali attack of October 12th, 2002 the one mosque had been attacked, but not seriously. The City had previously had an Interchurch Council but the USA terrorist attacks had so moved one councillor that, with the strong support of the Uniting Church minister, a “Multi-Faith Gathering” had been conducted. To have called it a ‘service’ would have precluded the participation of some Christians because the word implies some commonality of faith. The mourning for the victims and the expression of sorrow and compassion had been held, and the following groups participated: Aboriginal, Baha’i, Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Sathya Sai and Zoroastrian. In consequence, the Council officers had begun forming a multi-faith network but it was too early to form an Inter-Faith Council - more groundwork needed to be done.

» In the provincial city of Green Valley, organized inter-faith activities simply did not exist because the members belonging to the world faiths other than Christian were less than one per cent - inter-faith interaction has little relevance in most of provincial and rural Australia but with some exceptions. Relationships between the mainstream churches in Green Valley were cordial and the ministers’ fraternal was active, promoting various annual events and each group participates to the level their ideology allows them. The Presbyterians and the Lutherans seemed to work very well together, including a plan to build a conservative Protestant Christian secondary college.

» Jackaranda in remote Australia, had both a Muslim and an Aboriginal community. The Muslim community was accepted because they were very law-abiding, even if a closed and mysterious community. The young imam knew how to keep a low profile but the channels of communication with town leaders were open. After September 11th, there were two small incidents at the government high school where, according to the imam, the Muslim children were well-treated. Jackaranda contrasted with another town about 150 kilometres away where there had been trouble between the locals and the Muslim population which seemed to have its origins over the Muslims taking the seasonal work of others, particularly backpackers, and it was alleged that Muslims had spat on 'scantly clothed young women'. The Ministers' Fraternal operated efficiently in Jackaranda, meeting once a month. As well, some of the local Christian leaders met weekly for a prayer breakfast. There had been tensions about the admission of the Wesleyan Church minister who had broken away from the Uniting Church over the issue of same sex unions, but the main division was with the Aboriginal Christian communities, who were scathing in their assessment of the town's attitudes to Aborigines and of the Ministers' Fraternal which they claimed was not prepared to have them.

In Jackaranda the anti-minority undertones were profoundly worrying, not in an overt way as much as a covert way. It was peopled by good, often altruistic, folk, who, however, could not appropriately address the two major intercultural issues confronting the town: the integration of their Muslim neighbours into the town's mainstream and the full recognition of the historic injustices against the local Aboriginal people. The Muslims were tolerated, if only because they were law-abiding while the Aborigines were positively spurned, even by most of the ministers who understood all too well that, notwithstanding the Christian theology of reconciliation, their congregations could not address the issue of Aboriginal reconciliation.

» In suburban Marbleline, the Islamic facilities had been firebombed after one overseas terrorist attack, exactly one month after the USA attacks. The target was not the prayer hall, but another building containing classrooms, offices and a kitchen. Immediately afterwards, a Christian couple, probably Anglican, had brought a bunch of flowers which had deeply touched the Muslims. Many supportive phone and mail messages had been received as had some vilifying ones. Overall, the reaction had been more positive than negative. Aside from this there had been break-ins which could be overcome with a resident caretaker but Council had disallowed this proposal. There was continuous harassment on noise levels, including when the facilities were being used between 12:00pm and 5:00am. Some locals patrolled the mosque property checking on noise levels and, when the mosque asked the council to vary the noise regulations, a local protest movement, led by a Christian clergyman, had gathered 250 signatures. The mosque was quite isolated, not having any relationship with the Christian churches - in fact, the mosque officials could not even name the local churches or their denomination.

» In Midmet, the hard-working migrant chaplains endeavoured to serve the spiritual and pastoral needs of their many communities, and in some cases, this involved healing divisions within their own Catholic community. The head Croatian chaplain had been in Australia for many years as spiritual head of a community that had worked hard notwithstanding a period of vilification when the community was divided between the pro- and anti-Tito forces. During the 1990s, the community had been renewed with the influx of Croatians from Croatia itself and from Bosnia-Herzegovina. Despite the stigmatisation, no graffiti had ever been placed on his church, a former Congregational church. Some in the community felt sorry for the Orthodox church because of its manipulation by the politicians and its lack of response to Catholic overtures though some change was now occurring in ecumenical relations in the former Yugoslav nations. It was admitted that a few Croats and Serbs had returned from Australia to fight in the various stages of the 1990s Balkans conflict but they stayed there even though they were admired by the people. Inevitably the conflict had impacted upon the local Balkans communities in Australia but the Croatians had behaved sensibly and with dignity. A religious community leader said to his people that there was a place for everyone in Australia and to be

sensible in a difficult situation. Some in the community were opposed to the church because it did not talk sufficiently about politics and the extremists were usually not associated with the Catholic centre as they tended not to be church-goers. One faith leader had never met a Serbian Orthodox priest in his many years in Australia, nor any of the imams from the Balkans. The research found that in Australia the Croatian and Serb communities ignore each other. It was felt that this is the best solution for the moment, and rarely do they talk to each other. Here, the Serbs are a small group, but it was felt they are very pushy in getting onto committees and councils, and some are using an English surname. Some in the community added, “any kind of reconciliation is not possible at the moment. The wounds are very fresh”. One Catholic chaplain explained how there had been historic tensions between Buddhists and Catholics as a result of 300 years of persecution. However, during the Viet Nam war, both had been united in their unsuccessful opposition to the Communists. In Australia, the situation differed from the one in Viet Nam - the Catholics had tended to arrive before the majority of the Buddhists and, in Australia, Catholics made up a larger proportion of the community than they had in the home country. In Midmet, relations between both groups

were described as ‘friendly and co-operative’ since they both wanted to live in peace and harmony. There were inter-faith services four times a year between the two communities to mark occasions such as the Vietnamese New Year and to pray for freedom in Viet Nam. Joint functions had also been held to raise funds for bushfire victims in Victoria and New South Wales. The researcher’s were told that the community’s hatred for the regime was such that groups had been formed to fight communism though no details on their methods were given except to say that the preferred method was to work with the Australian government to use diplomatic pressure to liberate those still persecuted in Viet Nam like priests and democrats. International students from Viet Nam were well-accepted and welcomed in Australia. About other religious groups in Australia, knowledge seems to have been limited but the policy was to co-operate with them ‘to develop in hope, love and joy’ and to participate in all ecumenical and inter-faith activities supported by the archdiocese.

The Indonesian chaplain was new to his position after having come from a smaller city. He claimed there were about 7,000 Indonesian Catholics in Australia, including international students, and acknowledged the antipathies his community had brought with them. Researchers were told of the difficulties faced by Christian groups in Indonesia where the government gave preference to Muslim groups and created difficulties for Christian groups, especially in regard to building churches. The situation in Indonesia was very complex because there were many inter-faith initiatives and yet, in the view of some community members, there were also some radical Muslims who were leading the uneducated masses towards religious intolerance. In Australia, it was found that the attitude of Indonesian Christians towards Australian Muslim co-nationals was the Christian one of forgiveness. The chaplain intended to initiate a dialogue process though he believed that Muslim immigrants from Indonesia were committed to peace and non-violence. The events of September 11th had had no repercussions within the Indonesian community.

The researchers also detected misgivings among the communities about admitting Muslims as immigrants and refugees. Such misgivings were shared by the community of the

senior priest in charge of his Eastern-rite Church who felt that Australia was making a mistake in admitting Muslims. It was clear that this community held very negative attitudes towards Islam. In Australia, relations with Muslims were non-existent except on an informal basis. This was because this Eastern-rite group had fled Iraq to escape Muslim persecution. The community's knowledge of Arabic allowed them to monitor Muslim activities. In an attempt to support these allegations, reference was made to Arabic programs on SBS TV and ethnic radio; these, in the view of the community, had indirectly supported Osama Bin Laden by criticising the United States' response in the 'War on Terrorism', their presence in 'Holy' Saudi Arabia and their policy on Israel. The community's attitude to Muslims in Australia, it was explained, was to tolerate them and co-exist with them. This was not easy because, first of all, since September 11th there had been attacks on Christian churches which, according to rumours, were perpetrated by Muslims. It was also claimed that Christian asylum seekers in the city's detention centre were being harassed by Muslim inmates. Evidence of this harassment, in the community's view, was the defacing of notices placed on noticeboards by Christians with slogans like "you would be better off if you would convert to

Islam", "Christians are polytheists because they believe in the Trinity". Moreover, in the view of the community Muslims in the detention centres protested at the erection of Christian symbols like the Christmas tree at Christmas, and they had succeeded in having the crucifix removed from the centre's prayer room because it allegedly offended Muslims.

- » In Salamander, the Jehovah's Witnesses had a multicultural English-speaking community as well as Greek- and Spanish-speaking communities who all seemed to merge harmoniously without difficulty. Their attitude to non-believers was basically negative inasmuch as only believers can be saved and, as theirs is the true religion, all other religions are false. The same set of attitudes was reflected in ecumenical and inter-faith activities in which Witnesses could not participate since it would mean consorting with false religions. Contrariwise, it was suggested that other religious leaders are antipathetic to the Witnesses.

» The Assemblies of God were very active in Shelbourne, with their successful spiritual and pastoral welfare ministries. The senior pastor maintained his church had until very recently been fairly insular though the previous lack of engagement had partly resulted from the mainline churches keeping the Assemblies at arm's length. Their success had given them more confidence, and there was now greater participation in ecumenical affairs. However, this outreach did not extend to non-Christians who, in theological terms, were damned.

» Greek and Cypriot immigrants and their families formed the Greek Orthodox parish of Tamarena. where the key word was 'tolerance', rather than 'acceptance', though this tolerance did not extend to Jehovah's Witnesses who were criticized for their door-knocking missionisation. An increasing number of inter-church and inter-faith marriages were occurring though the Orthodox strategy was not to encourage them. The impression given was that the Greeks and Turks ignored each other's presence in Australia despite the historical legacy. On relationships with other churches, it was mentioned about the many Greek children who had attended Catholic schools over the years and this had generated respect for the Catholics. Attention was drawn to the fact that the Greek bishops had not initially been keen on the visit of the Pope, and the committee was in agreement with this strange contradiction that it was acceptable for Greek Orthodox to practise in Australia, but less than acceptable for Catholics to practise their faith in Greece.

» In suburban, multi-faith Wattleton, the various faith communities (Buddhist, Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Chinese Presbyterian, Turkish Muslim and Vietnamese Christian Evangelical) basically ignored each other though the Buddhist leaders had limited contact with each other and there was some practical co-operation between several groups on carpark matters during high peak festival times. But even if they ignored each other, there was no hint of disharmony or hostility. All the communities had taken September 11th in their stride, the Buddhist monks praying for peace and calmness in world society, though it was reported that the non-English-speaking Laotian monks were afraid to go out onto the streets in their saffron robes because they were often teased and verbally abused. The Baptist pastor was totally enthused by multiculturalism, though, paradoxically, he discouraged his multicultural congregation from speaking their own languages. The Catholic Church down the road under the guidance of its pastor was much more multicultural, and it made allowances for lack of English language proficiency by having Italian and Vietnamese Masses each Sunday. While each of the Buddhist communities were ensconced in their own linguistic and national cocoon, each had a typically Buddhist openness and laissez-faire inclusivity though one wondered about their knowledge of other religious communities.

The research data was supplemented with data from the electronic consultations where respondents were asked about their attitudes using a Likert scale. An overwhelming majority (78%) agreed (43%) or strongly agreed (35%) that 'religious extremism has the potential to destroy the fabric of Australia's civil, pluralist and democratic society'. As well, a majority, though less strong (61%) agreed (45%) or strongly agreed (16%) that 'recent overseas conflicts in areas such as the Gulf, the Balkans, Sri Lanka and Central Asia have put Australia's social harmony at serious risk'. One respondent wrote, "as a Christian, I am sometimes alarmed at the anti-Islamic views promoted by some extreme Christians, and fear they may lead to direct verbal attacks and ultimately give legitimacy to physical attacks". Before drawing conclusions, let us examine the data on inter-faith co-operation.

Inter-Faith Relationships: Views of Australia's Religious Leaders

The consultations across Australia with religious leaders stressed the level of harmony that existed between their faith communities and that had been achieved, particularly since the 1960s, with the rise of the ecumenical movement to unite the Christian churches though the movement did not incorporate those churches which do not accept belief in the Trinitarian God. In the consultations, particular grievances were aired. In intercommunal and inter-religious interaction and co-operation, stress was placed by the consultees on the following factors:

- » the importance of change in inter-faith relationships at the local level where issues are best dealt with by overcoming prejudice, misconceptions and stereotypes and in demystifying other faiths, their personnel and their religious practices
- » the importance of longterm contact and friendships between religious leaders at all levels of society
- » the achievement of inter-religious co-operation can best happen through joint community projects and regular multi-faith services or pageants
- » the need for cross-cultural and inter-faith education for all religious personnel, whether trained in Australia or overseas
- » the responsibility of the media, especially the tabloids and the talkback commentators, to adopt a more proactive and facilitative approach when addressing religious and inter-faith issues
- » the need for governments to take the lead in times of crisis through the development of quick response strategies
- » the need for the faiths to work together for religious education to be offered by government schools

According to the consultees, the events of September 11th had triggered an Australia-wide spate of abuse, physical assaults on persons and property and hate mail. The most serious incidents were the burning down of a Brisbane mosque and the burning of mosque facilities in Adelaide - this was, of course, not unprecedented as Lutheran churches had been burned down during the First World War. There was a significant increase in vandal attacks on Islamic mosques and schools, and one Islamic school decided to erect a barbed wire fence as protection. The number of attacks should not be exaggerated though it seems to have been larger than has so far been publicly recognized. In the two weeks after S11, the Victorian Equal Opportunity Commission received just over fifty accounts of reportable incidents such as a Muslim person being driven at by a car, women's *hijabs* being ripped off and Muslims being refused service in banks. A Muslim children's bus was vandalised. Muslims were, however, not the only targets. There was an increased number of attacks on Jewish synagogues and other facilities, justifying yet again the considerable security expenses that the Jewish community has had to take upon itself for more than half a century. Sikhs and their temples, probably in cases of mistaken identity, were also targeted e.g. a pig's head soaked in alcohol was thrown into the grounds of a Sikh temple. Several Christian buildings were also targeted.

It is impossible to ascertain to what extent these attacks were directly triggered by S11 or were merely vandalism attacks that are made regularly upon religious edifices.

Particular targets were veiled Muslim women, many of whom were afraid to venture out onto the streets or into public for several weeks in the major cities. This also occurred after October 12th though negative reactions and serious incidents seem to have been less according to the police evidence from across Australia. It may indicate the greater level of readiness and higher level of know-how amongst the police. However, it would seem numerous minor incidents have gone unreported and Muslim organizations have received much hate mail. The Muslim community was particularly concerned about police raids on Muslim family homes in the Bali aftermath, and there was a growing feeling of covert hostility that impacted in such matters as gaining employment and winning promotion.

State governments, notably the NSW, South Australian, Victorian and ACT governments, were quick to react to the September 11th attacks, having built up expertise throughout the 1990s in dealing with overseas conflict. For example, in NSW, a service was held in Martin Place, attended by 5,000 people, and the Premier brought the religious leaders together in a Unity-in-Adversity forum at Government House. In Victoria, the government made a public statement that not all Muslims are terrorists and that all Muslims have the same rights as every citizen. A ground-breaking event was the multi-faith service held at Melbourne Park in the presence of 10,000 people.

In the consultations, more longstanding grievances included:

- » aggressive and allegedly deceitful attempts by evangelical Anglicans to convert Jews to Christianity through the use of names such as Rachel and Aaron
- » regular vilification of Christianity on Arabic and Islamic programs on SBS Radio and community radio
- » difficulties between Jews and Muslims in New South Wales, including provocative anti-Semitic content on Muslim Australian websites
- » the isolationism of particular groups, including the Orthodox churches and the Sikhs
- » the publication in Uniting Church publications of allegedly anti-Semitic letters and
- » anti-Muslim material produced in hard copy or on websites by Hindu and evangelical Christian groups

However, equally importantly and much more positively, on the other side of the ledger, the September 11th attacks have catalysed a series of inter-faith initiatives in many parts of Australia. There has been a proliferation of initiatives and organizations, though starting from a very low base. From the consultees, it is clear that there has occurred an engagement with Muslims across Australia who themselves have realised they cannot remain in any spiritual or community enclave. Followers of Islam needed to educate Australians about themselves and their faith as an antidote to the extremists who with their perverted faith gain international and Australia media attention. A level of antipathy and misunderstanding against Islam is now a reality in Australia. At the same time, there is a growing realization amongst Muslim leaders that their own imams need to be educated about exercising moderate leadership in a multi-faith society and that there needs to be established an Islamic educational institution to train Islamic religious and civic leaders for the Australian context. These suggestions may well apply to other faiths new to Australia.

Inter-Faith Co-Operation and its Limitations

As part of the project, the research team was asked to map the extent of inter-faith interaction and networking. Many individual examples of inter-faith co-operation were brought to the attention of the team:

- » faith-for-peace walk where people walked from church to church and to the mosque
- » a washing-of-the-feet ceremony done jointly in a Uniting Church service by the minister and an imam
- » an address given by a Buddhist monk in an Anglican cathedral
- » an address given by a Catholic archbishop at a major mosque
- » Catholics and Muslims working together to provide halal meals in a meals-on-wheels project
- » multi-faith services on Australia Day to pray for the well-being of the nation
- » many efforts by members of the Bahai faith to bring faith communities together with exhibitions and other activities

However, the infrastructure for such inter-faith co-operation and networking is weak. In contrast, the mechanisms for ecumenical co-operation through the Australian Council of Churches and its State counterparts are well-established, financially supported by the mainstream churches which have often established ecumenical commissions and agencies. This work dovetails with many official dialogue projects between the Churches at an international level in breaking down the doctrinal and historical barriers between the churches. At the local level, over the past forty years there has grown up the Ministers' Associations which are usually informal groupings of religious personnel in a local area. However, as seen in the research, these do not exist in many areas or they have fallen by the wayside; a certain lethargy has crept into these fraternities, except, perhaps, in rural towns and provincial cities. This would seem to be occurring because of the disappointing progress that is being made in inter-church union, the greater pressure on fewer religious personnel and decreased lay support, especially amongst younger age cohorts, and the lack of commitment to and interest in the ecumenical ideal by evangelical and pentecostal churches, the fastest-growing churches in Australia.

However, a very different picture emerges in regard to inter-faith activity which is poorly supported. An exception to this are the various Councils for Christian-Jewish Relations which have worked for many years in places such as Melbourne and Sydney. Murdoch University has played a particular role in facilitating such relationships, and in Melbourne, the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion have strongly supported Christian-Jewish understanding as part of their religious charism. Another Catholic religious order, the Columban Fathers, have established a centre in Sydney to support Christian-Muslim relationships and have worked closely with the Turkish-based Australian Intercultural Society in recent years mounting conferences with international and Australian speakers. The major inter-faith organization is the Australian chapter of the World Conference of Religions for Peace, centred in Melbourne and with an executive committee drawn from three States and with branches in Sydney and Hobart and, more recently, in Brisbane and Canberra. It is linked into a world-wide network with headquarters in New York which has strong connections with the United Nations, and is a member of the Asian Conference of Religion and Peace which has its secretariat in Seoul.

It has worked with the Australian Government in presenting the religious pageant in Melbourne's Exhibition Buildings as part of the celebrations for the Centenary of Federation. In South Australia, there is an active Inter-Faith Council which works closely with the state multicultural and ethnic affairs commission, and the religious centre at Flinders University regularly sponsors multi-faith meetings.

Another factor that has required the different faiths to come together has been the planning of religious studies for the final two years of high school, and the providing of chaplains and religious education into government schools. Inter-faith organizations have begun to appear, especially in Melbourne though less so in Sydney on the basis of the evidence from the consultations with religious leaders and the electronic consultation with the Australian people. The religious climate in Australia's two major cities is distinctively different. The Baha'i community has been very active in bringing faith communities together. In Melbourne, the Cities of Dandenong and Moreland have led the way in moves to form inter-faith councils for their municipalities, and now there are similar organizations in the Cities of Geelong, Hume and Kingston.

The Victorian Council of Churches has an inter-faith sub-committee, and the Unity-in-Diversity and Ganesha Temple of Healing in Templestowe has sponsored inter-religious dialogue. In many municipalities, there may be committees formed that include religious leaders along with other local community leaders or may include only the Christian leaders. Another pioneering initiative in inter-faith co-operation has been at Dandenong hospital where a multi-faith religious space has been created, able to be adapted for use by all the major faiths.

In Queensland, an inter-faith multicultural forum has been in existence for some time through the interest of the state office of ethnic affairs, and on the Gold Coast there is an inter-faith dialogue group. However, the most important initiative has been the development of Griffith University's Multi-Faith Centre which is developing high-level academic expertise in inter-faith matters. Monash University has long had a multi-faith worship centre and other universities are considering similar proposals, especially if they have substantial intakes of international students.

Muslim prayer rooms have proliferated on Australian campuses which has, in turn, raised questions about provision for other religious faiths, especially if there are no longstanding Christian halls of residence and divinity colleges attached to the university. RMIT University recently took over the prison chapel of the Old Melbourne gaol, calling it "RMIT's sacred space", to be used by staff and students for quiet meditation and reflection as well as for religious services. The issue of chaplaincy in Australia's universities needs further study.

Across Australia, the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001 were handled at all levels with maturity and alacrity though some political and religious leaders in some States could have reacted more quickly.

As the mainstream churches are forced to withdraw their personnel from areas such as inner suburbia or to spread their resources more thinly in poorer, outer-suburban areas, ecumenical activity has become more problematical.

In Sydney, the inter-religious climate, according to consultees, has been more problematic with the Christian churches divided between two umbrella organizations, making co-operation difficult. Some Christian groups were reluctant or simply refused to participate in the post-S11 service in Martin Place. There seem not to be many Ministers' Fraternals and inter-church councils are few, only in such places as Dee Why, Mosman-Neutral Bay, Kuringai and Roseville-Lindfield. At the inter-faith level, the Sydney branch of the WCRP has operated for many years, and informally linked to it has been a women's inter-faith network in which individual women from a variety of traditions speak of their faith journeys.

Another women's dialogue network has been sponsored out of the Christian-Muslim relations centre established by a Roman Catholic congregation, the Columbans, which has done valuable work. In Auburn, valuable work at a local level has also been done by the Australian Islamic Cultural Centre. Since September 11th, several initiatives have taken place though they are hampered by divisions within the Muslim communities and by the refusal of low-church evangelical and Pentecostal groups to fully commit themselves to inter-faith co-operation, especially in inter-faith religious services.

An Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Jews and Muslims has recently commenced through the participation of the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and the National Council of Churches of Australia. As well, MCAT (Muslim-Christian Action Team) has been formed involving Affinity, a Turkish Muslim group, the Uniting Church of Australia, the Columban centre and the Catholic Commission for Ecumenical and Inter-Faith Relations. The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia has initiated a dialogue with Islamic organizations. At a national level, the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA) has established a special committee to address inter-faith issues, holding its first meeting in April, 2003.

However, it needs to be acknowledged that, whilst there is a natural theological and historical impetus to ecumenical activity between the Christian communities, this is less true of inter-faith activity between the world's major religious groups. As one long-experienced Jewish leader put it, inter-faith activity is 'a hard slog'. The data showed considerable resistance to many forms of such activity, in particular, multi-faith religious services. Christian faith communities who base their faith on the inerrancy and literal infallibility of the Bible such as low-church Anglicans, Presbyterians, evangelicals and pentecostals are resistant to such religious services. The strength of this resistance will vary depending on the circumstances, but it may be based on the allegation that the different faiths have different conceptions of God. Since every other conception of God is false, particular faith communities will only participate in services where everyone holds the same conception of God. The most successful multi-faith religious services are those where each faith has a small segment in which a prayer or a reflection is drawn from each's spiritual heritage. The services are, thus, multi-faith rather than inter-faith. Perhaps the best example of this was the Melbourne multi-faith service held after September 11th and the following is a resume of each tradition's contribution as the seven communities prayed for, with and over the assembled 10,000 people in drawing on their spiritual heritages to reflect on terrorist attacks.

- » The Buddhist community, to the deep-throated gong of a bell sounding the passing of life, asked those present to close their eyes and become bodies of light, praying for this disaster not to worsen and for all to be enlightened that the enemy and those who harm can be our best teachers and that everyone consider the Karmic causes and origins of the hatred that drove the terrorists.
- » To the sound of the ram's horn, the oldest known musical instrument, in the year 5762 of its calendar, the Jewish community asked all to reflect on the Talmudic saying, "Those who share in the grief of the community will share in its redemption" to which they invited everyone present to respond with "Amen".
- » The Hindus focussed on the aphorism that 'experience is not what happens to you; it is what you do with what happens to you', lighting the candle of love for peace and prosperity for the world and for the departed souls, and praying "may there be peace in the heavenly regions" in line with the great Hindu principle of ahimsa, non injury, that "it is the principle of the pure of heart never to injure others, even when they themselves have been fatefully injured" and with the advice that "an eye for an eye, and soon everyone will be blind".
- » The Sikhs were consumed by the horror of it all, and in despair they cried out, "O God, the world is going up in flames; save it; by whatever means, deliver it. O God, who can save it?"
- » The Muslim imam, focussing on "the convulsion of the days", in sending their community's condolences to the people of the USA, prayed for peace and harmony in the whole world and reminded us, "O all mankind, fear your Lord".
- » The Bahais prayed, "O my God, O my God, unite the hearts of thy servants; help them to serve thee; leave them not to themselves", enjoining all that "the thought of hatred must be destroyed by the more powerful thought of love"
- » and lastly, the Christian singer sang of "beautiful brokenness", the beautiful brokenness of the cross followed by the resurrectional transformation, and the reader recited the Beatitudes, "Blessed are they who mourn; they shall be comforted; blessed are the merciful; they shall have mercy shown them", imploring through the voice of the carpenter, "we want justice, not vengeance".

In organising such services, there are other sensitivities in need of negotiation: the use of symbols such as candles and icons for God and other spiritual figures, and the use of music which, for example, is never used in the Islamic tradition.

Conclusions

In reviewing the evidence concerning racial and religious violence and inter-faith relationships from the different data sources, the following areas of concern have emerged:

1. Australia and September 11th

Across Australia, the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001 were handled at all levels with maturity and alacrity though some political and religious leaders in some States could have reacted more quickly. The most concrete signs of this response were religious services conducted in the capital cities. However, right across Australia there were serious and less serious physical attacks on Muslim, Jewish, Sikh and a few Christian buildings summed up in one slogan, “kill the Arabs”. There were also attacks, mostly verbal but some physical which usually meant the ripping off of women’s hijabs, upon Muslims and Sikhs, particularly Muslim women whose fears of going out into public space has considerably increased, including after the Bali attack. Since most of our data was collected before this attack, we cannot make any definitive conclusions except that the police evidence made available to us through the Australasian Police Multicultural Advisory Bureau suggests serious incidents were less numerous after October 12th. But there were many minor incidents which went unreported. However, the terrorist attacks have generated, firstly, a desire by the Muslim community to be more engaged with other religious groups and the broader community than previously, and, secondly, there commenced a series of inter-faith initiatives at various levels, which remain fragmented and unco-ordinated.

2. Ecumenical and Inter-Faith Co-Operation

The ecumenical aim to bring the Christian churches together in the pursuit of Christian unity is organizationally supported by most churches through the National Council of Churches in Australia and its umbrella State counterparts. There remains much enthusiasm, underpinned by high level scholarship, at the state and national levels. But, while ecumenical relationships in some areas is thriving and productive of many initiatives, this is combined with a widespread feeling of tiredness at local level and with the reluctance by low-church evangelical and Pentecostal groups to be involved in such activity. As the mainstream churches are forced to withdraw their personnel from areas such as inner suburbia or to spread their resources more thinly in poorer, outer-suburban areas, ecumenical activity has become more problematical. Inter-faith activity is more sporadic and random at local level though many areas of Australia have so few persons of a non-Christian background that such activity lacks relevance. But such activity is even more problematic exemplified by the fact that the research team could identify only one salaried person working full-time in this sensitive area. It relies on volunteers. Whilst the Federal and State multicultural bodies would claim that the inter-faith area might come under their aegis as part of inter-ethnic relationships, none has any specialist expertise in the

area. Nonetheless, there has been a welcomed spate of activity since September 11th. However, unlike the ecumenical movement, its aim can never be inter-faith unity and it lacks a rationale except for the key one of inter-faith understanding and unity.

3. High-Level Dialogue and Awareness

Internationally and across Australia, there are many instances of interaction, dialogue and co-operation between Australian and international religious leaders. As one example in Australia, there has been longstanding formal contact between Christian and Jewish leaders. However, the research suggested that the content and results of these high-level conversations are not disseminated to many, if not most, religious communities. Often, they may be communicated through religious newspapers, which are read by a minority of religious followers. It would seem that the results need to be filtered down more systematically from the pulpit.

4. Religious Leadership and Hostility Defusion

The evidence suggested that religious leaders generally play a positive role in defusing hatreds and hostilities brought to Australia by particular individuals and whole immigrant, usually refugee, communities. Australia has an enviable record in defusing ancient and less ancient hatreds. To use the typology of Kunz (1973, 1981) the most numerous in refugee communities are the “passive hurt” who, after the traumas of social chaos, war, torture etc., the dangers of the escape, the uncertainties of their future destinations and the dangers of the refugee camp, wish to retreat into peacefulness and to gain both internal and external security as they mourn for their lost homeland, worry and feel guilty about their relatives and friends left behind, come to terms that they have been the losers and settle into Australia. They are led by “integration-seeking realists”, including religious leaders, and “eager assimilationists”, who wish to put the past behind them and adapt, if not assimilate, into their host society.

Their task is rendered difficult by the “revolutionary activists” whose thoughts are focussed on their home country and their major aim is to overthrow the current regime. Much energy is given in trying to whip up the refugee community to give money to any resistance movement, to participate in demonstrations and other forms of collective resistance and perhaps to encourage young male community members to return to take up arms. At the same time, the community is engaged in the process of cultural, linguistic and religious maintenance.

Local faith leaders such as migrant chaplains and Buddhist monks fit uneasily into this scenario. Generally, with their universalist message of love and reconciliation and their realist message that former enemy groups, now living in Australia, ought to be left alone in the interests of multicultural Australia and community image and in accord with the religious ethic of loving your enemy, they play a positive role. Nonetheless, the evidence indicated that, in many cases, their thinking is locked into the past, and they have no contact with each other, Catholic with Orthodox, Muslim with Christian, even after many years in Australia. At crisis times, Federal and State authorities do often bring together community leaders, including religious.

As one said, “the wounds are too fresh”, and it is a matter of considered judgement if and when it is appropriate to bring previously opposed groups together. Religious leaders implied that, in negating inter-ethnic and inter-faith hostility brought from overseas, they often walk a communal tight-rope inasmuch as they must retain the confidence of their congregation upon whom they rely financially for their livelihood. The attention of the research team was brought to the efforts of academics and community leaders from the La Trobe Group who had brought together sections of the Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities in Melbourne through confidence-building measures such as concerts, soccer matches and raising funds for a sick child. The evidence further suggested that, whilst playing a positive role, some ethnoreligious leaders remain locked into past stereotyped and sociopolitical attitudes, especially amongst those from the Middle East.

5. The Special Situation of the Australian Muslim Communities

There was agreement, though not unanimous, that, in the wake of overseas events, Muslim communities needed special support at this dangerous time. There was much evidence to suggest that many Christian leaders had reached out after New York and Bali, and that the Muslim communities had, in turn, begun a more fruitful dialogue with the broader community. Various Catholic groups and the Uniting Church of Australia through its financial support of the LaTrobe group to support Christian-Muslim dialogue in Melbourne had led the way. Islam in Australia is a multi-faceted reality (Cleland 2002; Saeed 2003).

Several Muslim consultees claimed there was only one authentic Islam with little variation in interpretation whereas the historical evidence suggests otherwise (Armstrong 2000; Saeed 2003). There are many Islamic voices, and it is difficult to know which are the authoritative ones – the same situation exists in other religions. Several Muslim consultees spoke of ‘ethnic fiefdoms and imams self-appointing themselves to various positions’. Of course, similar circumstances occur in other faith groups.

Points and suggestions made in the various consultations were:

- » Assistance in their public relations to combat biased opinions expressed in newspapers and talk-back radio.
- » Need to build a Muslim educational institution staffed by international scholars for educating their own imams and other community leaders for the Australian context.
- » Need to continue developing contacts between its 29 schools across Australia and other schools through exchange visits, debating contests, sporting contests etc.
- » Need to better educate the Australian community on Islamic attitudes to gender equality, monogamy and polygamy and female genital mutilation.
- » Need to further develop mosques not just as prayer halls, but as local social and recreational centres in accordance with the centuries-long tradition of Islamic architecture.
- » Professional development programs for imams and other Islamic leaders to assist them in their leadership in a multi-faith society.

Despite the difficulties that have arisen, triggered more by overseas events than internal to Australia, Australia has done well in accommodating its Muslim communities with many mosques

now freely operating across the country (Bouma and Singleton 2004). Governments have funded Islamic schools, unlike the United Kingdom which refused to fund such schools until recent years. Nor has Australia imitated the French government which has disallowed the wearing of the *hijab* in French schools. However, the reality is that fear and rejection of Islam exists in Australia. In a study of 5056 people in NSW and Queensland interviewed by telephone in October–November 2002, Dunn (2003) found that when asked which groups did not fit into Australia, one quarter responded either ‘Muslim’ or ‘Arab’, compared to 14.75 per cent in respect to Asians. Islam, like the term, ‘the West’, is not a unitary entity. Halliday, an eminent student of international politics writes, “The core simplification involves these very terms themselves: ‘the West’ is not a valid aggregation of the modern world and lends itself far too easily to monist, conspiratorial presentations of political and social interaction. But nor is the term ‘Islam’ a valid shorthand for summarizing how a billion Muslims, divided into over fifty states, and into myriad ethnicities and social groups, relate to the contemporary world, to each other or to the non-Muslim world. To get away from such simplifications is, however, virtually impossible, since both those opposed to ‘Islam’ and those invoking it adhere to such labels” (Halliday 1999: 893).

6. Knowledge about and Attitudes towards Other Faiths

The research evidence suggested that the knowledge levels of faith members towards other faiths were far from accurate – some informants thought the Hindus and Buddhists worship stone statues and other views of Catholic theology on key points were mistaken; still others had inadequate ideas of Islamic martyrdom and others alleged Christians were polytheists. It can be suggested that, because most faith communities are fundamentally in competition with each other for adherents and converts, it is in the interests of faith communities that their followers have negative, misconceived ideas of other faiths or that skewed versions of other faiths are presented. Yet, it would seem that accuracy ought to be an essential prescription for how religious communities operate in multi-faith Australia. Competition ought to be fair and honourable.

Underlying the skewed knowledge issue was another serious and contentious issue, namely, theological frameworks towards other faiths. In the research, it emerged on four separate occasions where Christian evangelical or Pentecostal groups expressed views such as ‘other religions are the work of Satan’.

The religious base of Australian racism is a subject little studied though Yarwood and Knowing (1982) drew attention to one element of the British colonial baggage. They suggested that the Biblical injunction to tame or subdue the earth and make it fruitful like ‘the sturdy English farmer’ had provided ample justification for robbing Australian Aborigines of their lands. This idea was intrinsically linked to the Christian thinking of the philosopher, John Locke, and the economist, Adam Smith, in his treatise on how nations generate wealth. They further noted that the Christian symbolism, also found in Shakespeare’s plays, of blackness and night to represent sin and evil cauterised any possible positive attitude to Australia’s first peoples though the other injunction to love your neighbour, and even your enemy, would have played a mitigating role.

The thinking that there is no eternal salvation without explicit union with the infinite God is alive and well in contemporary Australia according to this study which also showed there is genuine confusion on the topic. The question has to be asked: is this theological belief a possible religious base for racism and religious prejudice? The history of whether there is salvation outside Christianity, expressed in the Latin phrase, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside the church there is no salvation), is long

and torturous, extending back 2000 years to apostolic times. Mainstream Christianity has seemingly reached agreement that salvation outside the Church is possible with theories about the anonymous Christian or about conscientious belief or about the intrinsic worth of authentic religions other than Christianity. Despite the tragic history of Muslim-Christian relations and the current situation in the Middle East, Muslims have positive attitudes to the Peoples of the Book, but it may not be clear what is their attitude to other faiths. It would seem that all faith communities need, as a matter of urgency, to develop their theologies of “The Other” and of other faiths so as to disseminate them at grassroots level in order to avoid the charge of religious racism. To be noted is that preparatory training for all religious personnel needs to include subjects on this and associated topics before taking on their spiritual and pastoral work in a religiously pluralist society. The last point is that these anti-cohesion attitudes seem more entrenched in Sydney than elsewhere.

The study also found, again within evangelical and Catholic communities, deeply entrenched and negative attitudes towards homosexuals. In one country town conflict over this issue caused a split in a congregation, and a major city was the setting for diatribes on the issue from the pulpit of a suburban church.

7. Reluctance for Inter-Faith and Social Participation

Another issue to emerge concerned participation. The evidence revealed on the part of some faith communities and their leaders a reluctance to participate in inter-faith events, especially inter-faith services. There was some reluctance to engage with people from other faiths and even of people of the same faith but different denominations. In some cases, this failure was theologically justified as explained in the previous section or it was a matter of time, priorities and strategies. Often, it was concomitant with a stress on individual conversion and salvation with a lukewarm attitude to the creation of social capital.

Social participation through speaking out on selected issues, handling the press, knowing how to network and lobby etc. were found to be not highly developed in some of the newer religious groups, forfeiting their ability to participate in and contribute to social debate. This was partially linked to the issue of English language proficiency of religious leaders, canvassed in the previous chapter.

8. Inter-Faith Marriages

Intermarriage has been said to be an important barometer of social cohesion and inter-ethnic and inter-faith relationships. Whenever and however it occurs, it usually is an emotional topic, and its incidence is clearly on the rise in Australia. It implies the crossing of ethnic, religious, linguistic, racial or national boundaries by a woman and a man in life's most intimate union. The decision to marry outside one's own group often generates considerable intellectual and emotional turmoil. There are two fundamental paradigms. The stunting approach emphasizes the problems generated: intermarriage inevitably ruptures group boundaries, is often associated with female exploitation, leads to a higher incidence of family breakdown and generates identity problems for both the partners and especially for the children. To quote a Chinese saying, "a chicken does not marry a duck". The alternative liberating approach accentuates the positive: it highlights the intercultural communicative aspect of intermarriages which leads to the rupturing of monolithic groups based on ethnicity, religion or culture. It facilitates broader intercultural interaction between various groupings or societies which is the basis for inter-group co-operation.

It ultimately is personally maturative for the two partners who in the intimacy of their marital relationship and in their day-to-day contact with their own families of origin may have to deal with the complex intricacies of cross-cultural communication and miscommunication.

In Australia, there has been a series of studies on Filipino brides, including that of Cahill (1990) who, in a study of Filipina women married to Australian, Japanese and Swiss men, found that those in Australia were the happiest and most satisfied even though there were significant problems. Penny and Khoo (1992) took a positive approach to the topic, and highlighted the success of these marriages in Australia. The Australian researcher, Abe Ata has investigated marriages between Christian and Muslim partners living on the West Bank. The overwhelming pattern was that the males were Muslims and their female partners Christian. The religious communities, as well as relatives and friends, perceived these marriages "as a threat to the fine balance and cohesion which have shaped the community for centuries" (Ata 2000: 96). This negativity impacted on the couples, causing stress and emotional strain. There was also a lack of professional and community support for their children.

The Christian spouse was much more likely to give the children the choice of their own religion than their Muslim partner. On the West Bank, mixed marriages bring mixed outcomes, and Ata concludes, "clearly, without major adjustment by the community at large to this newly-emerged paradigm of partnership, Christian-Muslim marriages are doomed to failure" (Ata 2000: 101).

For religious leaders, intermarriage is a vexed and difficult issue. In this study, inter-church and inter-faith marriages emerged as an issue though not a dominant one. Whilst the former has been adequately dealt with over past decades, the latter is more problematic. Leaders fear them because they are perceived as leading to an inevitable loss of faith commitment and a dwindling in membership numbers. In reaching a pastoral accommodation, religious leaders can vary enormously in their reaction ranging from outright condemnation to quiet antipathy to genuine ambivalence to perhaps resigned acceptance of the inevitable. In the consultations, it was not a subject leaders were comfortable with and there was some consensus that, at this point in time with its incidence still low, it should be left to the individual policy of the faith community and the couple themselves.

CHAPTER SIX

Religion, cultural diversity and social cohesion: National and international perspectives

In a global world characterised by ideoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes, ethnoscapescapes and technoscapes, the role of the nation state has changed because it is inescapably influenced, if not actually vulnerable to, global processes (Appadurai 1996). Despite the claim of some theorists that the nation state is increasingly ‘a nostalgic fiction’, nation states will survive and thrive though each will need to reposition itself internally as well as in relation to the fractal global neighbourhood. This re-alignment may include a re-examination of the faith-state relationship, which can be expressed in the total separation of religion and state, leaving religious practice to be a matter for the private forum, or in the opposite extreme of a close configuration between religion and state in theocratic societies. Australian society tends to the former end of this spectrum rather than the latter, but nor is it at its extreme end.

As our historical overview has suggested, the Australian colonies and the subsequent Australian nation-state, notwithstanding the denominational tensions and the various negativities religious bodies have generated, have viewed religion as an asset and a resource. Society’s need to define the social and political space for faith communities to practise their faith with due regard to their civic and multi-faith contexts is a delicate art. The task requires faith communities to accomplish their task in building up cultural, social and spiritual capital that contributes to the broader nation-building and world citizenship agenda. But it also requires a civil society to allow religion to be counter-cultural in critiquing society for its corruption and for its social and spiritual ills.

Religious freedom is a paramount right enshrined in the 1948 *Declaration of Human Rights*, reiterated in several other international conventions and covenants, including, after 19 years of debate, the 1981 *Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief*, the so-called *Religion Declaration*, which is to protect individuals and religious groups from undue intervention by the state in religious matters. Section 116 of the Australian Constitution states “The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of religion, and no religious test shall

be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth”. Subsequently, in 1981, in the unsuccessful challenge to government funding of religious schools, the High Court clarified the meaning of the word ‘establishing’ – it meant recognition of any religion ‘as a national institution’ of the state (*Attorney-General (vic); Ex rel Black v. Commonwealth* (1981) 146 CLR 559 at 612 per Mason J. at 653 per Wilson J.). Accordingly, the state cannot make Anglicanism or any other faith the established religion of the Australian state (Sheen 1996; Bouma 1999).

The extensive consultation with the nation’s national and state faith leaders was designed to elicit their thoughts on the evolving religion-state relationship and on their place in the evolving Australian society.

The present era is seeing the coalescing of three historic shifts in Australia, and it is appropriate that the issues raised be grouped around these three trends which are:

1. The shift from a Christian to a paradoxically both multi-faith and secular society
2. The repositioning of the relationship between religion and state
3. The international dimension: interface between the formation of religious and linguistic diaspora and the new technologies

1. Shift from a Christian to a Paradoxically Multi-faith and Secular Society

Previous chapters have documented the transformation to the multi-faith and secular profile of Australia's civil society. The consultations revealed disagreements about the place of religion in contemporary Australia. A Jewish consultee argued that Australia is a profoundly Christian country because of its underlying value system with its work week based around the Christian Sunday as a rest day and its major holidays are Christmas and Easter. This was not recognized as such by Christian leaders who see Australia as profoundly secular with agnosticism and atheism rampant, dominating public debate and unduly influential, and it is felt that the introduction of some laws are not reflective of mainstream Christian positions. They see themselves and their faith groups in a beleaguered situation with religion either ignored or ridiculed or under relentless attack. Immigrant faith leaders are often surprised by the strength of the secularist putsch. In the view of the leaders, religion is constantly in conflict with the secularist forces who fail to recognize the worthwhile nature of religion and its implicit altruism. Everything has been reduced to the lowest common denominators set by the secularists.

It was suggested religion had been almost written out of Australian history, and the prevailing attitude amongst opinion-makers is 'all religion is wrong, and all faiths are equally right', no matter how outlandish or extreme they may be. The fact that 68 per cent of Australia's population were Christian according to the 2001 census was being ignored, and could be even more ignored in the move to a multi-faith society if Christianity was to be recognized as only one of the world's major faiths when the other faiths represented only 4.8 per cent of the population. Leaders of smaller faith communities generally felt ignored without any capacity to influence public life.

Three sets of issues emerged in the context of this overall shift:

- a. Signs, symbols and sacred places
- b. Education in and for a multi-faith society
- c. Faith communities and the media

a. Signs, Symbols and Sacred Places

God is recognized in the Australian constitution though, if Australia were to move to a republic, the designers of any revised constitution would need to address the inclusion of God in any preamble. The European Union is currently struggling with the same issue – the draft first 15 articles make no reference to God to the consternation of Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox leaders, led by the Pope, who have argued there needs to be a reference to Europe's Christian heritage and that a reference to God is necessary to show that the claims of public power are not absolute, that certain rights inhere by virtue of God-given dignity and that religious freedom ought be recognized in its individual as well as its institutional dimensions. A group of Christian M.P.s has suggested the phrasing, *The Union values include the values of those who believe in God as the source of truth, justice, good and beauty as well as of those who do not share such a belief but respect these universal values arising from other sources* but this was rejected as divisive and offensive (Bruton 2003). Among the developed countries, the USA offers a very different scenario with the strong recognition of God in the constitution and in public life though paradoxically its strong division between religion and state ensures the state cannot publicly fund religious institutions such as schools.

Accordingly, the example of other countries offers contrasting models and each nation must make its own choices.

The consultations in Australia focussed on other, equally pertinent issues:

Use of the Christian Cross

The use of the Christian symbol of the cross for public events or on public insignia was raised. Some consultees pointed out that the cross had been used at a public ceremony held at Gallipoli on Anzac Day in the presence of the Prime Minister when it was known that, amongst the fallen buried there, at least four are Jewish Australians; that the cross had been placed on the casket of the Unknown Soldier when it is possible he may have been of another faith. The opposing view argues that it is appropriate since Australia's religious heritage is mainly Christian and the majority of Australians are Christian, even if many are only nominally so. A middle view suggests that a new, composite sign be developed and negotiated by the faith groups. The solution to use no symbol is rejected because it is felt the secular minority is imposing its view on the religious majority and as taking the lowest common denominator approach.

Use of Christian Churches

The use of Christian churches in times of national celebration and of national and international tragedies and their subsequent commemorations was considered inappropriate. Examples were given of the Centenary of Federation celebratory service held in St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral in London, and of the occasional use of St. Christopher's Catholic Cathedral as Canberra's largest church for commemorative services such as the S11 anniversary. Australia's national capital lacks a holy site or a sacred place, large enough to accommodate crowds or adaptable enough to accommodate different faith traditions, where the nation can come together to celebrate or to mourn or to reflect on its journey into the future. As well, there is no burial place such as Arlington Cemetery in Washington where illustrious or exemplary or heroic Australians can be buried and whose graves can be visited by subsequent generations though this raises the issue of the expressions of the national spirit and nationalism which are little debated in public life except for the incessant debate on the Australian identity.

Use of the Our Father

The use of the exemplary Christian prayer, the Our Father, to commence each parliamentary day was raised though some Christian leaders considered it ought to be acceptable to all faiths since the name of Jesus is never mentioned. The suggestion that the Our Father be replaced by a series of prayers and readings selected by each of the major faith communities on a rotational basis with, perhaps, the Our Father, in deference to the Christian majority, being recited to close each parliamentary day was received by religious leaders as a more preferred and worthwhile compromise. It is suggested that the rotation also include a reading chosen by rationalist or atheist organizations in deference to those whose world view is not embedded in a theist framework. It is suggested that the rotational system include those faith groups which have at least 0.333 per cent of the total population – in 2001, this would have included the following 16 groups (in order): Catholic, Anglican, No Religion (atheist/rationalist), Uniting Church, Presbyterian, Orthodox, Buddhist, Baptist, Muslim, Lutheran, Pentecostal, Hindu, Jewish, Jehovah's Witness, Salvation Army and Church of Christ. Local inter-faith groups such as Hume in Melbourne have utilized a similar system successfully. Such a solution would show to the world Australia as a lighthouse of multi-faith co-operation.

Oaths and Public Affirmations

The use of oaths and public affirmations was raised as an issue by the Victoria police who, in their submission, saw religion as a powerful reinforcer of social norms and values and a promoter of social solidarity. In their swearing-in ceremony at police graduation, currently in use is an affirmation with a non-denominational Christian format which, as police from Asian and Middle Eastern backgrounds were more incorporated into the force, was becoming inappropriate. This issue would seem to be present in other police and military settings and in legal and paralegal settings with the use of the Bible or the affirmation when a religious person may prefer to take an oath in other ways. The issue needs further research to discover current legal practice in other countries.

Construction and Use of Places of Worship

The construction of places of worship, especially by groups other than Christian, was signalled as a significant issue as was their use, particularly during the night for evening, night and pre-dawn prayer or liturgical services. Local government authorities and residents' groups placed barriers or constraining restrictions and, whilst, when the faith groups took the planning permit issue to higher tribunals or courts, they usually (but not always) won, it was at considerable financial cost to struggling groups. This had forced faith groups, usually not Christian, to erect their places of worship in industrial or semi-industrial areas. The consultations suggest the problem is Australia-wide. Examples were given of sites previously occupied by churches where the faith group could not obtain permission because the temple or mosque did not fit in with the local residential building culture and of Christian-led residential groups leading campaigns to stop construction.

Related to this is use. Faith groups reported difficulty with local government authorities on the use of bells in the case of churches (e.g. to sound the time of the *Angelus*, a very common practice in European churches) or the use of the call to prayer or the gathering for prayer at unusual times in the case of Muslims. Invariably, objection came from local residents, some motivated by religious competition, and permission was not granted on the basis of noise restrictions even though it could be argued that such restrictions are an infringement of religious freedom.

b. Education in and for a Multi-Faith Society

Educational issues were a constant theme in the consultations. In the public consultation, the most cited issue of serious concern was religious education in mainstream public and private schools. In fourth place was the education of faith community leaders, addressed in the previous chapter. There were very few concerned about the existence of full-time and part-time religious and ethnoreligious schools. There was general agreement that Australians had become less literate in religious matters and that this was a less than favourable development, given not merely that Australia itself was moving towards being a multi-faith society but that for trade, commercial, diplomatic and recreational (inc. sporting) activities, empathy for and understanding of religious faiths in other countries, not least in Asia and the Middle East, was an essential component of global literacy.

Religion in Government Schools

Criticism focussed on the failure of government schools in particular to address the issue of religious faith. Their general self-perception was of secular schools, agnostic, if not antagonistic to faith matters, rather than of schools in and for an Australian and global civil society. Some parents were also aggressive in not wanting religion to play any part in the life of a government school. There were doubts about the efficacy of casual, perhaps poorly trained, religious personnel entering schools for short weekly periods on behalf of their own denominational groups. There was also feedback that religious subjects in the final years of secondary schooling, accredited by the Year 12 authorities, needed to be revisited as an issue, perhaps to incorporate a greater inter-faith dimension. However, there is strong anecdotal evidence that because of schooling and family factors the majority of Australian government school students are religiously illiterate. This study could not have religion in government schools and in schools generally as a major focus, and the issue needs further research. Three schools (2 Catholic, 1 Lutheran) were included as minor elements in the research, and they were shown to be creating social capital in accomplishing their missions.

Full-time Ethnic and Ethnoreligious Schools

As a result of the monumental policy change in the early 1970s, initially through the McMahon and then the Whitlam governments, to give funding to private schools for construction and running costs, a smorgasbord of schools has arisen which includes not only Christian Biblical schools run by evangelical and Pentecostal groups but also by ethnic and ethnoreligious groups. There was a small minority dissenting view representing either secularists or religionists who argue for a complete separation of religion and state that “all such schools should not gain my taxes to teach their religious and particular sectarian nonsense”.

Part of this development has been the growth especially of Lutheran schools, whilst other mainstream churches such as the Anglican and Uniting churches have begun building schools in newer suburban schools. However, there has been little growth in ecumenical schools that cross the Catholic-Protestant divide – there had been much talk during the 1970s for such ventures with one actually being mounted at Maryborough in Victoria but little has occurred since. A proliferation of full-time schools sponsored by ethnic and religious communities has occurred in the past two decades, some inspired by religious faith motivations, other by concerns for cultural and linguistic maintenance. Most are in New South Wales and Victoria. In New South Wales, there are Greek, Armenian, Jewish, Maronite Catholic, Turkish Muslim

and Arabic schools; in Victoria, there are Coptic Orthodox, Greek, Islamic, Jewish and Turkish schools. In his research, Cahill (1996) noted suggestions that their growth had been spurred by the failure of the government system to provide cultural maintenance and religious education programs though no empirical research has investigated this as an issue.

Their proliferation has been questioned and debated a little in academic circles (Bullivant 1982; Lewins 1982), but only occasionally in public. The questioning has been in terms of social cohesion and the potential divisiveness and of educational pathways. Our consultations revealed a similar disquiet at the highest levels of the public service, not concerning their existence which is accepted as government policy, but about their social contribution. Bullivant who labelled these schools as “ethnic dual curriculum schools”, asked whether the historical framework is focused on the past rather than the present: “an extreme example would be for Greek children to learn only about Greek culture as it existed in ancient Greece, but neglect the modern period that has evolved since the collapse of the military dictatorship in July 1974” (Bullivant 1982: 19). An opposing view considers the schools to be legitimate expressions of ethnic and religious pluralism and in accordance with the principles of parental choice. Bullivant also asked whether the schools, insofar as they focus on a passing lifestyle, are not ultimately detrimental to the students’ life chances.

In his study, Cahill (1996) found there was concern over overcrowding and poor physical facilities of many ethnic and ethnoreligious schools; significant industrial problems; unhealthy and sometimes bitter competitiveness between schools drawing students from the same ethnic community; lack of funded ESL programs; the ‘pervading ethnocentricity’ of the leadership group; lack of contact with other types of Australian students; historically dubious curriculum materials emanating from the source country and lack of knowledge by principals and teachers about educational policy and curriculum statements. He also found that, in two separate studies (1984, 1996) mainstream Australian teachers remain firmly and overwhelmingly opposed to these schools.

Begum (1985) in a study of the Victorian Muslim community questioned the existence of Muslim schools because of an alleged incompatibility between multicultural theory and Islam itself and the lack of an appropriate educational model. However, in a more focused study Donoghue-Clyne (2000) gave a much more upbeat and positive evaluation, outlining the various options available to Muslim parents and their communities (see also Donoghue Clyne 2001). Cahill (1996) noted that detailed knowledge of full-time ethnic schools remains a serious gap in the literature and among mainstream educational administrators who have overall responsibility under the various educational legislative acts for the quality of schooling. There has been some improvement in this over the past decade, but this consultation brought forth the following issue: what do Islamic schools teach about Judaism? What do Catholic schools teach about Buddhism? To what extent do these schools incorporate inter-faith modules in their religious education program? Anecdotal evidence suggests there is some but limited interaction between these types of schools, including between Jewish and Islamic schools, but no systematic study has examined the situation which is a fundamental one in terms of Australian social cohesion.

Part-time Ethnic and Religious Schools

The existence of part-time ethnic schools dates back to the 1830s though it was not till Tsounis' work that they were brought to public attention. They received considerable attention in the literature up until the mid-1980s (Tsounis 1974; Kringas & Lewins 1981; Eckstein 1982; Lewins 1982; Norst 1984), and some attention since then (Cahill 1996; Arvinitis 2000). Cahill found that mainstream teachers had become more accepting of these schools, and there had been increased interface with the full-time system.

In her study of part-time Greek schools sponsored by the church, the community and private entrepreneurs, Arvinitis (2000) found the schools had been reasonably successful in teaching the Greek language. In curriculum and pedagogical terms, the church schools were the least successful. Overall, religious instruction in the three types of schools was not viewed as that important. Among many community leaders and some parents, faith was no longer perceived as a core component; it was important but less important than language, cultural awareness and self-identification as a Greek. She concluded, "the Orthodox's slow response to an increasingly changing world and to perceiving the implications of globalisation and the necessities of an ecumenical and inter-faith perspective to Orthodox faith education within a religiously diverse society became apparent

in the school curriculum content. Parochialism and religio-centrism prevailed in the religious education, particularly in church-schools. Religious education is at the core of the church-schools' function together with language and culture forming a separate subject, although generally Greek schools focussed more on culture and language and less on religion. Despite the focus on religious formation, students' knowledge of Greek Orthodoxy could only be described as poor and stereotypical. A mono-religious approach was employed failing to address the broader issues of identity formation and inter-religious education. Orthodoxy was never presented in an ecumenical context nor in a universal context which stands at the core of an authentic Orthodoxy". Arvinitis concluded, "Greek Orthodoxy in Australia is still tied to its traditional alliance with a certain ethnocentrism" (Arvinitis 2000: 333).

Both Australian and some State Governments have given small amounts of per capita funding to part-time ethnic schools but little is known of their functioning, especially amongst the more-recently arrived groups.

c. Faith Communities and the Media

At the time of data collection, religion had been very much in the news with the controversy of the appointment of the governor-general still reverberating, the continuing clerical sex abuse scandals, mainly within the Catholic Church, the rape cases in suburban Sydney, the hunt for Islamic terrorists and the controversy over the Iraq war. Both sets of consultations revealed a deep concern about and distrust of the media. One religious leader likened it to 'a wild beast'. The electronic consultees listed it as an issue of serious concern at number 7, the mid-level range. Among the more concerned faith leaders, there was a pervasive feeling that the media was biased against all forms of religion, promoting a secularist agenda rather than reflecting a civil view of society to which faith communities made significant contributions. The media emphasis was said to be almost continually on the negative. Or else religion was sidelined, treated superficially and caricatured or mocked. It was further felt that journalists and media reporters were disproportionately anti-religious or areligious. Religious leaders were now dealing with reporters who approached faith communities with minimal knowledge.

Young reporters were not sure of ecclesiastical titles, and, while this was a minor issue, it was symptomatic of a deeper ignorance, particularly when religious complexity had become the norm in Australia and across the world. The media played a critical role in educating and mis-educating the community, and it was felt that reporters and columnists accepted too readily religion as the cause of internecine violence when in fact a more nuanced account would show religion was only a triggering factor or it masked underlying economic and political factors.

Some consultees felt sensationalist or biased or less-tempered reporting, especially in the case of Islam, may have actually triggered religious and racist violence. Others felt that the media over-focused on Christian liturgical holidays whereas other religious holy days usually went unreported. Specialist religious reporters were now less common, which had only magnified the problem.

On the other hand, it was acknowledged that the media has the potential to play a constructive role in increasing inter-faith understanding. The ABC in particular through programs such as Compass were commended for their focus though its religious affairs unit needed additional funding. The largest faith communities had the resources to fund media units whereas for smaller ones this was impossible – it was noted that the main Islamic organizations had been overwhelmed by the array of issues that they needed to comment upon, leaving them feeling disarmed in the media battle and in the struggle to present a moderate image of Islam in Australia. Journalists needed to be better prepared in their university preparation, and religious groups also needed to be more proactive in briefing and educating them.

2. The Repositioning of the Relationship between Religion and State

The second longterm trend evident over the past three decades has been a repositioning in Australia of the relationship between religion and state in the nation's journey away from Protestant ascendance and in the rise and subsequent movement away from the welfare state. It is often argued that religion has been privatised and whilst on one level of social reality this may be true, religion and state have become more intertwined though each has been careful to maintain its boundaries. The signs of this repositioning have been:

- » Probably most importantly, the government funding of full-time religious schools, beginning in the 1960s with grants for libraries and laboratories, in the 1970s with funds for capital and running costs and increasing in the 1990s as part of the movement of the privatisation of government services generally, since it is less expensive for governments, Australian and State, to educate a child in a private school.
- » The funding of part-time ethnoreligious schools beginning in 1979 as part of the Australian Government's multicultural policy to maintain and develop cultural diversity.
- » The funding of confessional universities such as the Australian Catholic University through the normal university grants program.
- » The appointment of religious personnel as State governors (in South Australia and Victoria) and for the whole of Australia.
- » Whilst the government has always funded religiously-sponsored hospitals, the funding of health care agencies has increased with religious organizations playing an increasing role in areas such as aged care facilities and programs.
- » The government funding of religiously-sponsored welfare agencies, now increased with the run-down of the welfare state and de-institutionalisation resulting in greater government reliance on organizations such as the St. Vincent de Paul organization and the Salvation Army with their ability to give total grassroots coverage on an almost 24-hour basis to care for society's needy, disadvantaged and social derelicts who keep knocking on vicarage and presbytery doors.
- » The inclusion of religious discrimination within the legal ambit of racial discrimination acts.
- » The listing of historic places of worship on the various heritage registers, making them subject to possible application to heritage legislation, particularly in making changes to the place of worship.
- » The utilization of religious leaders in civic services of celebration and at moments of tragedy to assist the grieving process and give spiritual comfort to bereaved Australians.
- » The government utilizes, on an honorary basis, religious personnel to act as functionaries of the state in celebrating marriages and has recently increased its expectations of them by their providing for pre-marriage preparation.
- » The government has always used and continues to use, on a paid basis, chaplains for the armed forces.
- » As the most important development of the past decade, the successful tendering by religious groups, notably the Salvation Army and the Catholic Church, for the delivery of employment services as part of the privatisation of the services formerly offered by the Commonwealth Employment Service.

In this interrelationship, faith communities are cultural in the sense of creating social capital for the social and economic well-being of Australia as part of their commitment to the present and future of the nation and in the sense of maintaining and developing their faith community's cultural, linguistic and spiritual heritage down the generations and maintaining and developing its religious patrimony. In debating and heralding moral values, faith communities are also counter-cultural in pointing to and highlighting the wrong, misguided actions and false values both of governments and its institutions and of individuals, irrespective of their rank or status, in their lust for power, money, sex or whatever god. This is usually referred to as the prophetic voice of faith in challenging corruption, hypocrisy and mistaken directions. This has been seen recently in the churches' opposition to gambling. In culturally diverse societies, faith communities ought be cross-cultural, that is, an outward orientation that is part of the universalism that is an authentic core of all religions.

Because of the right to religious freedom, religion and state are not subservient to each other but their relationship needs to be renegotiated in the light of changing realities. The state remains neutral in regard to the religious claims of faith communities but it is not indifferent to religion because of the possibility of the emergence of corrupted or perverted religion e.g. a religion sect advocating

terrorist or treasonous activity or sexual abuse or mutilation behaviour or gender inequality. The line between transcendent and perverted religion is fine and grey, and the arrival on the world stage of the Al-Qaeda movement has highlighted that theologians and social theorists need to work on this task. The issue also relates to the definition of religion.

In the public consultation, the definition of religion in a multi-faith society was listed in third place as an issue of serious concern. The 1983 High Court case regarding the Church of the New Faith (Scientology) affirmed 'freedom of religion, the paradigm freedom, is of the essence of a free society'. In deciding the case, religion was defined in terms of two criteria: *First, belief in a supernatural Being, Thing or Principle; and second, the acceptance of canons of conduct in order to give effect to that belief, though canons which offend against the ordinary laws are outside any immunity, privilege or right conferred on the grounds of religion* (Church of the New Faith v Commissioner of Pay-roll Tax (Vic) (1983) 154 CLR 120 at 130 (per Mason and Brennan JJ)). It may well be that this decision may need revisiting in light of the new religions that have been introduced into Australia in recent times.

In overall terms, religious leaders expressed satisfaction with the current religion-state relationship. There were concerns about individual matters such as the extension of laws prohibiting female genital mutilation to male circumcision, the added difficulties Sikhs were facing following September 11th concerning the wearing of turbans and the carrying of the *kirpan* and tax relief for groups wrongly declaring themselves to be religious. In the context of this project, the central issues that emerged concerning the religion-state interrelationship were:

- a. Organizational ethos and employment practices.
- b. Marriage celebrants for a multi-faith society.
- c. Advisability of an inter-faith advisory council.
- d. Construction of an electronic network.

There were claims of Jewish employees being pressured to attend a Catholic Mass.

a. Organizational ethos and employment practices

Probably the most contentious issue of the consultations related to the employment practices of religious agencies delivering human services such as education, health and welfare, and employment practices. It is probably the area generating most tension in the religion-state relationship. The entry of some Christian churches into the employment field has given a new edge to this issue, and a Salvation Army consultee mentioned that his church as a result of its successful tendering was said to be now in the top 200 companies in Australia. Some consultees, in particular, expressed concern that their followers, perhaps well-credentialed and highly experienced, might not be able to gain employment on religious grounds because they are unable to help create ‘a Christian ethos’, to use a phrase often used in the advertising material. There were claims of Jewish employees being pressured to attend a Catholic Mass. Perhaps, it was summed up in another way where a major church-

school organization argued that “although we are financed by public funds, we are not a public agency”, implying that it did not necessarily need to follow regulations related to public agencies. The issue has gained currency in several states, notably New South Wales and Tasmania. In New South Wales, its Law Reform Commission recommended that the anti-discrimination act be amended to remove exemptions to religious bodies. The argument focuses around the point that once religious bodies have moved beyond their “core” activities, normal anti-discrimination provisions ought apply.

The most forceful expression of the opposed view is the NSW/ACT Catholic Bishops’ 2001 *Statement on Religious Freedom* which argued that the core/non-core distinction represents a narrowing of religious practice and a contravention of religious freedom. In (f) 2, the bishops argue that *any claim by non-religious agencies to make decisions about the nature of religious bodies and about the relationship between religious beliefs and practices is inappropriate.*

A civil authority moves beyond its area of competence when it attempts to judge what is or is not relevant to the practice of religion. Religious freedom means nothing if secular bodies are able to determine what does and does not constitute religious practice. The Church fears that the distinction allows the state to define individual or communal faith and to define so much of what is essential to the faith as non-core, adding that all those who choose to work in a religious organization have a significant responsibility to maintain the religious integrity of the organization. It is a reality that individuals have an impact on the culture of their organizations and also represent the organization and the Church to the wider community in a variety of ways (par. (f) 6). This is the ethos argument, very understandable perhaps in a school context though less so in an employment agency as was strongly suggested in the consultations. A Catholic school is carrying out a religious activity when it cares for a disadvantaged student as much as when it engages in morning prayer. Likewise, when resources are applied to palliative care in a Catholic hospital, it engages in an activity as validly religious as the pastoral care offered by its chaplain. (par. (f) 4).

It was beyond the aims of this project to examine the issue in depth except to flag it, and to suggest it needs a more imaginative solution than presently in practice in the various states. The nature and parameters of “ethos” need to be defined in qualitative and quantitative terms as it is presently vague and does not draw on social science studies of social environments. Perhaps part of the answer is to be found in delineating, again in qualitative and quantitative terms, the nature and extent of scandal generated by a staff member who acts in a manner organizationally disloyal or even subversive, or against the major tenets of a faith.

b. Marriage Celebrants for a Multi-Faith Society

The last thirty years has seen marked changes in the national register of marriage celebrants with the introduction of civil celebrants in 1973 and the diversification in faith communities. In its 1991 brief on multiculturalism and the law, the Australian Law Reform Commission considered the proposal to take the power of civil celebration away from religious celebrants so as to separate the civil and religious elements. The Commission found no support for the proposal as the system was then working well. This would seem to remain the case.

It needs to be recognized, however, that it is a Judaeo-Christian concept that a priest or a minister or a vicar should perform marriages. It is a belief among some non-Christian groups that a monk or a priest does not perform marriages – in fact, in one strand of Buddhism, monks are forbidden to perform marriages. In these cases, customarily a civil celebrant or a lay person from the community, approved by the Marriage Celebrant Unit within the Attorney-General’s department as ‘a fit and worthy person’ performs the marriage, often in the home. This implies a small undercounting of the number of religious marriages.

In 2001, the number of marriages celebrated by a civil celebrant equalled that of religiously celebrated marriages whereas in 1973 the proportion of religious marriages was approximately 84 per cent with the rest done in the registrar’s office. The percentage of registry marriages has gradually declined to be now less than 10 per cent, and 53 per cent of marriages are now non-religious.

In Australia, there are over 20,000 religious celebrants from the 106 faith communities currently recognized as such by the Governor-General in Council. They celebrate an average of less than two marriages per year though some celebrate more than a hundred. Once recognized, faith communities appoint registrars at local, regional or national level who nominate their celebrants to the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in each State. This is a self-regulatory process outside the functional ambit of the Attorney-General’s Department. To be recognized as a faith community, it is the accepted benchmark that it have a minimum of 12 places of worship though this benchmark is exercised with some discretion. The community must have been established in Australia for a minimum of three years.

However, there are approximately 1,700 celebrants from non-recognized religious communities who come within the ambit of Section 32 (2) of the Marriage Act covering civil celebrants. These religious celebrants, like all civil celebrants, come under the aegis of the Attorney-General's Department. Their communities are usually not recognized because the community cannot agree on a registering system, usually because there are divisions within the community. With the 2001 reforms to the Marriage Act which places greater emphasis that the concept of marriage be promoted and the promotion of marriage education and upon professionalism and professional development, all civil celebrants are now required to undertake inservice training according to a points system. ANTA (Australian National Training Authority) has developed a course for Section 39 (2) celebrants. These professional development requirements have not been made mandatory for religious celebrants.

Consultations brought to light the following points:

- » English proficiency is required so as the requirements of the Act are understood – however, in practice, some leniency is applied if there is a support person available.
- » Religious celebrant status is given to religious personnel who are in Australia on a longterm temporary visa.
- » Failure by marriage celebrants from a recently arrived group to submit the marriage papers on time, waiting for weeks to see if the marriage was successful, and in cases where the marriage had broken up, destroying the official papers.
- » Failure by marriage celebrants from recently arrived groups to understand the process of pre-marriage education and failure by these religious groups to establish on a systematic basis pre-marriage education programs.
- » Failure by marriage celebrants to distinguish adequately between Australian law and religious law, whether church canon law or Sharia law.

c. Advisability of an Inter-Faith Advisory Council

The research team was asked to advise on the feasibility and advisability of an inter-faith advisory council to advise government on religious and inter-faith matters. In the public consultation, 84 per cent agreed (39%) or strongly agreed (45%) that “an inter-faith council ought to be established to advise the Australian Government on faith and inter-faith issues” with only six per cent not in agreement. Opposition came from some Christian evangelical groups whose social policy, based on their interpretation of the Gospel, is for a complete separation of religion and state – “the original separation of Church and State has been corrupted” and who will not participate, as a matter of church policy, in inter-faith activity.

Consultations with the religious leaders showed they were strongly in favour though more cautious in their responses since demonic forces are in the detail! Several senior Catholic leaders were both cautious and ambivalent, concerned that it should deal ‘only with broad issues’. The most trenchant opposition came from several senior government departmental and agency officials, both Australian and State, though the majority, particularly the State multicultural commissions, were generally in favour. Some remained to be convinced.

Negative views were that “the government should stay away from religion” and, as the most trenchant, “it’s a preposterous proposal. The existing multicultural councils should see it as part of their job. Not to do so is an abdication of their responsibility”.

A sample of the positive comments is as follows in verbatim:

- » “it would provide a public face of our multi-faith society”
- » “a profound symbol that multi-faith issues be taken seriously”
- » “it would provide for inclusion of non-Christian groups”
- » “it would mitigate against sectarian agendas”
- » “send out the right messages in breaking down barriers”
- » “yes, because at local level it has proved valuable”
- » “we need channels to the heart of parliament”
- » “an exercise in inter-faith co-operation”
- » “would defuse extremism and fundamentalism”.

Caveats were also expressed in various ways. These were:

- » its representation be as inclusive as possible, including the small faith groups
- » its representation include the 'no religion' category to reflect the views of agnostics and atheists
- » it might be seen as the religious voice to government and prevent or mitigate direct approaches to government
- » it would need to clearly differentiate between religious and cultural issues
- » it could not presume to speak out publicly on issues on behalf of the faith communities
- » it could be used to denigrate religion if it opposed the government of the day
- » it should report to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet rather than the immigration department.

The feedback suggested that, to prevent it from providing political space only for an extended talkfest, it needed to relate to a small, suitably funded secretariat, strategically located within government structures, to which faith communities could relate. It could be supported by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, but not within it in order to maintain the commitment to the separation of religion and state. Or it could be supported jointly by DIMIA and DFAT to reflect the internal and external interfaces of faith communities.

The Council needed to be separate from the Council for a Multicultural Australia, and nor could it form its sub-committee since no senior Australian religious leader would take it seriously. As well, religion and culture are not co-terminous, especially now that in the post-S11 world religion is a transnational phenomenon.

Membership of the Council could be decided on the basis of two options or a combination. It could be based upon an eminent persons model in which the Australian Government could select eminent religious leaders and laypersons who would not represent any faith community but chosen for their knowledge and capacity to contribute. It could be based on a representative model in which authority bodies such as the Australian Catholic episcopal conference or umbrella bodies such as the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils could nominate their representative. The latter option would thus have a genuinely authoritative voice, but there were several drawbacks. Firstly, many of the small religious communities would not be represented though their needs could be addressed through a small faiths sub-committee. There had to be a limitation to the size of the council. Secondly, some umbrella bodies do not provide full coverage of their local faith communities. Thirdly, if based on representation, it is likely that the council might not contain a female member or very few unless a certain number of places were allocated to eminent religious women.

Religion and the role of women did not emerge as an issue of serious concern in the consultation with religious leaders, but it did emerge as a significant issue in the public consultation – many saw it as an issue of serious concern (see Table 1.1). As one respondent said, “The role of women is crucial. The Christian faith has still not resolved in practical ways how women are fully equal with men and until this is done, it is difficult to know how the appropriate respect can be given”. A Baha’i respondent telegraphed electronically, “Establishing the full equality of women and men in all fields of human endeavour is an essential pre-requisite for peace in the world. The Baha’i teachings place great emphasis on this”. A Roman Catholic wrote, “The Catholic Church has so marginalised women. I feel the institution of the Church ought to feel great shame”. But there were a few dissenters, “This issue is an example of how modern feminism has infiltrated the teaching of the church and is dictating to church leaders who is meant to be selected for ministerial candidacy. In the Christian scriptures, it is clear that a woman is not to have authority”.

d. Construction of an Electronic Network

The research team were also asked to examine the feasibility of an electronic network. Across Australia, there was general agreement that the construction of an electronic network would be a positive initiative to allow government to disseminate information quickly and efficiently to faith communities. Some faith leaders in the ACT saw it “as a positive resource” and “a good educational and communicational tool for progressing multi-faith understanding”. In the Northern Territory, it was considered “a good idea” “because one of the major problems is lack of communication” and “information can get around more effectively”. No consultation in any state or territory, including the biggest ones, opposed the establishment of the network, and no individual consultee expressed direct opposition to the idea. However, there was opposition to any suggestion that the government site should be official sites or be linked into information sites for particular faiths - as one Jewish leader expressed it, “we do not want an official government Jewish site”.

Some consultees were keen to broaden the functions beyond information dissemination to include provision for the government to consult faith communities on issues of policy and program development in matters such as health (e.g. death and dying issues) or welfare and education. Others saw it as a way of increasing inter-faith understanding and interaction as part of a multi-channel means of communication. However, the following issues were raised:

- » many local faith communities do not currently have email access
- » need for a protocol of use and to avoid misuse
- » access and the format of a doorkeeping function by government and the individual religious authority
- » problems of updating information such as names and addresses
- » multilingual facility for religious leaders and marriage celebrants who do not read English
- » security of the system and the need for an unsubscribe button
- » constraints of the privacy act
- » danger from hackers and electronic viruses.

The construction of an electronic network partly expresses the relationship between religion and state in which there are always sensitivities. Because of the history of persecution in other countries, faith communities do not want to be under any semblance of control by the state. Although the following two functions will vary considerably from community to community, the role of faith communities is not merely to be culturally supportive in building up a nation's social capital in terms of authentic values and behaviours and in building and managing their institutions such as schools and hospitals. Their other function is to be counter-cultural in challenging the state and its leaders on particular actions or policies or on directions its leaders may be taking the nation. One key question to emerge from the exercise is: *in the process of a government's dissemination of information to faith communities, should their leadership have discretionary control over the process as to whether the information ought be passed onto their religious personnel at local grassroots level?*

The management of the relationship between religion and state is a delicate art, as already mentioned, and it seems appropriate that religious leadership ought have such control in cases where there is ambiguous or unambiguous conflict between government action and religious beliefs as in giving details about the establishment of abortion clinics, provision for blood transfusions or safe drinking guidelines.

3. The International Dimension: Interface with the Formation of Religious and Linguistic Diaspora and the New Technologies

With the exception of the Indigenous faiths of the Aborigines and the Torres Strait Islanders, all other faith traditions have their origins outside Australia, usually Asia or the Middle East. The Uniting Church, formed in 1977 from the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregationalist Churches, is a unique Australian venture in church unity. The Australian Christian Churches, initiated in February 2000, is a different type of unity venture – it is a federation or alliance of contemporary churches committed to communicating Christianity through ‘vibrant church services, relevant preaching and practical community care’. It includes the Abundant Life Fellowship International, the Apostolic Churches Australia, the Assemblies of God, Bethesda Ministries International, the Christian Churches in Australia, the Christian Churches Network and Christian Life Churches International as well as many large and successful independent congregations such as the Riverview Church in Perth and the Waverley Christian Fellowship in Melbourne.

In a globalising world, Australian faith communities are interfacing with their counterpart communities outside Australia, including with the assistance of the new technologies. Even before the internet, because many faith leaders, national and local, have worked or studied overseas, they have had detailed knowledge of other countries through their grassroots links and through their funding initiatives for overseas missionising and for overseas relief, welfare and advocacy work. Christian communities, in particular, have been supportive of overseas aid organizations. Several consultees mentioned that this overseas knowledge and linkages were insufficiently utilized by governments. It was further indicated that within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, faiths and their worldwide network of communities were insufficiently understood.

With their altruistic sentiments. Australian faith groups had always, even in less globalised times, encouraged and facilitated congregational interest in countries and places overseas, including through pilgrimage to holy sites such as Jerusalem, Mecca, Rome, Lourdes, Assisi, Canterbury, Mt. Athos and the Ganges. Australia does not have such holy sites except perhaps for the tomb of Blessed Mary McKillop in North Sydney, and for the Aboriginal sacred sites scattered across Australia's landscape and seascape.

Religious communities have generally been strong advocates for the United Nations in particular and global governance generally. Their lobbying for human rights and religious freedom is well-known.

From the data, two sets of issues emerged:

- a. authority, jurisdiction and representativity
- b. websites and web links.

a. Authority, Jurisdiction and Representativity

All world faiths are riven with divisions and splits as their histories attest as seen in Karen Armstrong's 2000 study of Christian, Islamic and Jewish fundamentalisms. Christianity, as the major world religion in Australia, retains its historical legacies. Whilst much progress has been made through dialogue on doctrinal and other matters, little progress has been made on actual unity. For example, the two largest faith communities in Australia, Catholic and Anglican, have had ongoing international dialogue for over three decades and much has been achieved in mutual understanding through key joint statements yet key issues remain such as Anglican orders, intercommunion, the Petrine office, papal infallibility and the prohibition against the British monarch being a Catholic while the Anglican commitment to the ordination of women and the homosexuality issue has further widened the breach.

This divisiveness is likewise reflected in Australia in a situation that does little to enhance the image of religion as the repository of peace and harmony. The research of local communities uncovered two situations where a community had recently split: the breakaway by a schismatic UCA community to form a branch of the Wesley Methodist Church on the moral issue of same sex unions, while the Anglican Maori community was shown to be fractured and one of the issues was whether jurisdictional authority lay nationally or transnationally. But there were other indications of the centrality of the issues of authority, jurisdiction and representativity:

- » In one consultation with faith leaders, it was made very clear to the research team that this group of Muslim leaders represented the 'true Islam', and other claimants were not to be taken notice of.
- » Several consultees commented that during the stem cell research controversy, the Prime Minister had recourse to advice only from the Anglican and Catholic archbishops of Sydney, and in the end took no notice of their joint advice.

- » One Catholic migrant chaplain, whilst his faculties to operate as a priest had been approved by the Australian bishop, answered primarily neither to him nor to the Australian head of his religious order, but to the superior back in the source country.
- » The Eastern-rite priest who saw himself as accountable to his patriarch did not see his role as being a migrant chaplain even though he was, to all intents and purposes, functioning as a migrant chaplain, as his aim was to establish a national church of the Eastern rite within the Catholic Church.

Whilst much of the earlier evidence on multicultural faith communities largely suggests it to be otherwise, there was some evidence to suggest some kernel of truth in the axiom that 'religion divides, culture unites' (see Lewins 1978). Certainly, it is not the function of government to concern itself with religious arguments and the emergence of new religious groupings. But it can impact upon government in terms of consultation and representativity, and whether government should fund small, breakaway religious groups to establish schools or welfare agencies, atomising the schooling or welfare system. There is currently no Australian umbrella Buddhist organization; the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils is not accepted by many Muslim communities and nor is there an Australian Board of Imams though there are several State

bodies. Orthodoxy, especially the overwhelming majority who are in communion with the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, struggles to overcome its ethnic divisions and rivalries in Australia. In the case of Roman Catholics, from a government perspective, it is not totally apparent whether it should consult the head of the Australian Episcopal conference, the Cardinal archbishop of Sydney or to consult the Archbishop of Melbourne, head of the largest Catholic diocese in Australia. The lack of a fully accepted umbrella organization has caused problems for the Australian Government in the matter of the approval of marriage celebrants. All faith communities, the smaller much more than the larger, struggle to have an effective national organization – often, it is a lack of funds; sometimes, it is concerned with differences in doctrine or practice; sometimes, it is due to ethnic animosities; otherwise, it is due to personal rivalries.

b. Websites and Web Links

Cyberspace has allowed faith communities much more scope to interconnect the global and the local. They have been quick and adept in adopting the new technologies to create their own presence in cyberspace, to articulate their message more clearly, to advertise their services and other activities and to canvass for new members. However, in the consultations, Jewish leaders complained strongly about the anti-Semitic contents of some Muslim websites such as the links to *Mein Kampf* and the forged *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The research in particular raised the issue of web links. The website of one faith organisation linked into an overseas website which was very anti-Muslim and which also contained on its first page a heading ‘The Islamicisation of Australia’ though without any content. As Lal (2002) has indicated, the internet has given faith communities or schismatic remnants the capacity to invent and disseminate new, revised histories.

These, often very skewed, versions of history are not overseen by reputable scholars, and they feed the prejudices of religious followers. In one instance during the data collection process, the religious leaders failed to understand the gravity of the issue when it was raised by the research team though the web link was subsequently removed. The incident illustrates the point that, in the continuing construction of a multi-faith, cybernetic society, the monitoring of Australian-based religious websites by religious leaders themselves and by government authorities charged with administering legislative acts concerning racial and religious discrimination has become a priority.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Safeguarding a multi-faith Australia: Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Living in religious and ethnic harmony has historically been and remains an Australian challenge and will remain so for the foreseeable future. Standing behind every religious leader and his or her faith community lies an ineffable reality to which faith points. Faith points out that there is more in life than meets the eye (Obenchain 2002). Professor John Haldane, a philosopher (Haldane 2003), has recently written that a lack of interest in religion, characteristic of academics and public officials, is no longer possible, and perhaps betrays a fear that, in fact, there may be a God!

Both initiating and maintaining religious organizations have always been problematic projects in colonial and federated Australia, dependent on volunteer commitment and voluntary financial contributions. But without the accompanying cultural and religious fermentation that has occurred, Australia would be a less rich society. Religious extremism in the form of fanaticism and cultism, and certainly in the form of terrorism, has never been a major issue in Australia, principally because the underpinning economic and social conditions have never been allowed to develop on any widespread scale. But social cohesion and internal security remain continuously on the Australian agenda.

Safeguarding Australia from religious extremism has become more problematic with the stretching of social, political, economic, military and religious activities across national borders such that events, decisions and activities in one part of the world impact upon individuals and communities in other parts of the world (Held et al. 1999). Biblical, Qur'anic and all other fundamentalisms need to be monitored and the state cannot be religiously neutral in the face of corrupted religion. Solutions need to be focussed around religious moderation and its support. This project on religion and cultural diversity was designed to assess the impact of globalising forces, especially world population movements such as permanent migration and the advent of the cybernetic world, upon Australia, and summed up in the events of September 11th 2001 followed by the Bali attack of October 12th 2002, upon Australia's faith communities and upon the relationship between religion and state. Faith communities are now encountering each other across Australia and across the world in multi-layered patterns.

The major findings or conclusions of this study have been:

- » Australia, both in its changing religious profile, the repositioning of the religion-state relationship and the evolving interface between the global ecumene and the cybernetic world, has been impacted by these globalising forces which require a response at all levels of government and by the faith communities themselves.
- » Across the world, religiosity and faith commitment are not in retreat and both the actuality and the potential for inter-religious conflict has increased – as a consequence, all Australians, whether from faith or secularist backgrounds, need to engage with the world's religious ecumene just as Australia has had to engage with the world's new political and technological realities following the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the invention of the jetliner and the internet.

- » Notwithstanding Australia's historical legacy of religious rivalries, hostilities and mistakes, faith communities have lived and continue to live in peaceful co-existence, and the response by Australia as a whole to the provocations of September 11th and its aftermath has been relatively productive though significant difficulties were created for the Muslim communities and some other faith groups through the firebombing of facilities, physical and verbal attacks, hate mail etc.
- » Some Australian religious leaders and committed followers expressed the feeling that religiously legitimated extremes pose a threat to Australia, and that its religious and cultural diversification may have become too broad for its own good.
- » Over the past fifty years Australia has moved from a Christian, previously Protestant dominated, to a paradoxically secular and multi-faith society, and, whilst Christianity retains the formal, if mostly uncommitted, allegiance of two-thirds of Australia's population, this trend will not be reversed as a consequence of the continuing decline in Australia's mainstream Churches.
- » The national project of continuing to build a secular and multi-faith society will need to address issues such as national signs, symbols and sacred places as well as appropriate ceremonies and functions at times of national celebration, commemorations and tragedies.
- » The decline in religious identification seems now to have plateaued though new measuring indices are required, and religious revivalism can be now seen in the growth of evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity with their particular variety of Australian popular religion, in the continuing identification of most immigrants with their religious traditions and in the rise of the New Age spiritualities.
- » Religious organizations, underpinned by individual faith commitment, have always been and remain powerful and diverse producers of social capital not merely through institutions such as schools, colleges, hospitals, aged care facilities, welfare agencies and research centres. It has also manifested itself through value and behavioural formation such as in personal discipline, moral integrity and honesty, support for the family unit, the centrality of good livelihood and work toil, avoidance of self-destructive behaviour, the thirst for justice and a fair go for all, conflict mitigation and diffusion of hate through love of enemy, solicitude for the poor and disadvantaged, the altruism of volunteering and bystander aid, welcome of and hospitality for the stranger, encouragement of and commitment to the evolving national vision, monitoring of core national structures and institutions, and democratic challenge to actions of the state and its agencies as well as solemn and respectful observances of life's *rites de passage*.

- » The ecumenical movement has reduced inter-church hostility amongst the Christian Churches even though it remains constrained by lack of significant progress and a certain lethargy. However, inter-faith initiatives remain sporadic and unsupported though since September 11th 2001, there has been a renewed commitment to such initiatives.
- » Barriers to inter-faith harmony and co-operation and possible religious bases for racism and bigoted behaviour were identified in the form of religious superiority, exclusivist theologies of other world religions and unwillingness to participate in inter-faith initiatives.
- » In the granting of public funds to private religious agencies, such as schools and employment organizations, the tension between the creation of a particularist religious ethos and the generalist values of employment justice and universal access remain unresolved, and more creative solutions for different types of organizations need to be found based on further study.
- » Religious leadership, both at a national and local level, has generally been of high quality in creating and maintaining a multicultural society but, in some quarters, this is hampered by some Christian and other faith leaders, often newly arrived and overseas trained, who have inadequate levels of English and an uninformed appreciation of the functioning of a religiously diverse civil society.
- » The level of knowledge of Australia's faith adherents about other faiths is questionable and often negative – religious trainees need better preparation about other faiths, and each religious group should develop and fully disclose its theology of world religions, enunciating in a public statement their relationships with and beliefs about other world faiths.
- » Education in all sectors emerged as a multi-dimensional area of concern even though it was not a central focus of the study. Further studies need to be completed on information provided to school students about world faiths in their geographic, geopolitical and multicultural dimensions within government schools as well as the availability of religious education as well as religious formation in religious schools and their attitudes to other world faiths.
- » Many religious leaders continue to perceive many media outlets to have a negative, if not mocking, attitude to religion, over-representing the views of secularists in Australia's civil society; there is also the perception that younger media representatives are less religiously literate than their older colleagues, and concern was expressed about the content of some ethnic community radio programs.
- » Overwhelming support was expressed for the construction of an electronic network for information dissemination with appropriate safeguards to protect the individual freedom of faith communities and for a multi-faith advisory council to advise the Australian Government.
- » An emerging issue accompanying the growth of the internet is the content of religious websites and weblinks, usually sourced from overseas, containing hate propaganda targeting other faith communities.

Recommendations

» Formation of an Advisory Council

In the brief, the research team was asked ‘to investigate the feasibility of Australian inter-faith bodies and structures to advise the Council for Multicultural Australia and other government and non-government bodies’. Many countries such as India have such bodies, and they have played important roles, including in resolving conflict. As we have seen, it was the overwhelming opinion that an inter-faith advisory body or mechanism be established, working closely with and alongside the Council for Multicultural Australia and government departments and agencies. It was also suggested that it must be supported by secretariat facilities, located either in Canberra as the nation’s capital or in Sydney or Melbourne as Australia’s most religiously diverse cities. In the consultations, it was pointed out that the national needed to be balanced by the local, and that the necessary separation between religion and state be maintained. The consultations further showed that the Council for Multicultural Australia had, on its own acknowledgement, failed to address appropriately the issue of multi-faith Australia and the linkages between culture, language and religion.

It is thus recommended that:

- a. *The Council for Multicultural Australia should consider including within its ambit multi-faith Australia, and that this be reflected in its membership and its terms of references as outlined below.*
- b. *An Annual Australian Multi-Faith Advisory Forum should be sponsored by the Council for Multicultural Australia to advise the Australian Government and its departments and agencies on inter-faith and associated inter-communal affairs.*
- c. *The Council of Multicultural Australia, through its members and staff from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and Indigenous Affairs should conduct on an annual basis consultations with local faith community leaders at state, territory and, as appropriate, regional levels on inter-faith and associated inter-communal affairs.*
- d. *These consultative mechanisms should be provisionally reviewed after two years of operation and be fully reviewed after five years of operation.*

It is suggested that the Council for Multicultural Australia would incorporate the following terms of reference into its ambit of responsibility:

1. to advise the Australian Government on all matters pertaining to faith communities and inter-faith harmony and co-operation for the social and economic well-being of Australia and to safeguarding it from extremism of all kinds
2. to provide informed advice, based on consultation with faith community leaders and their communities, on policies and programs relevant to inter-faith harmony and co-operation and to monitor and evaluate them
3. to design, in association with heads of faith communities, ceremonies, services and pageants at times of national and international celebration, remembrances and tragedies that reflect the unity of Australia’s multi-faith society
4. to provide informed advice to government on policy and practice related to the entry into Australia of religious personnel on a permanent and temporary basis
5. to oversee and monitor appropriate orientation and inservice programs for religious personnel newly arrived in Australia, for religious marriage celebrants and for religious personnel generally

6. to disseminate to faith communities and their leaders material on government policies and programs, including through the electronic network of faith leaders and their communities
7. to support and work with local government authorities in establishing and maintaining local multi-faith networks
8. to work with the community, including the media, in educating the public about the role and function of faith traditions in local, national and international affairs
9. to promote, in liaison with DFAT, nationally and internationally Australia's image and reputation as a model of inter-faith harmony
10. to monitor the websites of Australia's ethnic and faith communities for material or links damaging to Australia's social cohesion
11. to work for, in liaison with State and Australian educational authorities, interaction and co-operation between Australia's government and religious schools and for the design of appropriate curricula
12. to develop a resource centre for appropriate government and community use.

The Australian Multi-Faith Advisory Forum would be conducted annually. It is suggested that membership of the Advisory Forum be based on representation from faith communities with a following of more than 0.333 per cent of Australia's total population, currently 62,000 according to the 2001 census, including representation from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

This would comprise the following faith communities (in order of size) who would be asked to nominate a religious, not lay, leader:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Spirituality representative

Roman Catholic Church (inc. its Eastern rites)

Anglican Church of Australia

Uniting Church of Australia

Presbyterian Church of Australia

Orthodox Churches of Australia (in communion with the Ecumenical Patriarch)

Buddhists in Australia

Baptist Union of Australia

Lutheran Church of Australia

Australian Christian Churches

Australian Federation of Islamic Councils

Hindu Council of Australia

Executive Council of Australian Jewry

Jehovah's Witnesses

Salvation Army

Churches of Christ

Additional would be one person nominated by the Government to represent the viewpoint of those who belong to the 'no religion' category. As well, the Government would appoint two further persons to represent Australia's small religious communities with followers numbering less than 0.333 per cent of the population. It is further suggested that the Forum include at least five women and, in the case of this requirement not being met through the nomination process, the Australian Government would subsequently appoint eminent religious women. Chairship of the Forum would belong to the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs or his or her nominee. This would make for a consultative forum of 19 members with a maximum of 24 members. Because of the need to link into Government departments, it is suggested that the following departments have observer status at the annual forum: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Department of Health and Community Services, Department of Education, Science and Technology and the Attorney-General's Department.

» Establishing an Electronic Network

Faith communities are only now coming to grips with the new technologies though some are well advanced in utilizing them for missionization or for advertising themselves and their religious activities. However, as previously suggested, whilst many grassroots faith communities have their own websites, many do not even have email. This lack is likely to diminish in coming years but it is a current reality. For example, the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne which is the largest religious administrative unit in the country, is only now in the process of developing a network for all its 239 geographical parishes and it does not, as yet, have plans to include religious houses, convents, monasteries etc. on its network though it does have for them a hardcopy address list. It has access to an electronic mail system for its parish schools. It seems at this point in time neither feasible nor desirable for the Australian Government to endeavour to construct a network involving every religious address in the country. It would be very costly to maintain, and would never be up-to-date.

In the construction of an electronic network, the Australian Government already has a basic system that seems appropriate, namely, that devised for marriage celebrants. Currently, as we have seen, there are more than 20,000 marriage celebrants belonging to 'recognized denominations' together with another 1,700 religious celebrants who belong to 'unaligned religious organizations'. The marriage celebrant unit within the Australian Attorney-General's Department which administers the marriage celebrant section of the Marriage Act does not have nor does it have any intention of constructing an electronic network amongst all these marriage celebrants. But it has been constructing an electronic network amongst "the nominating authorities" of the 106 recognized denominations gazetted and proclaimed by the Australian Government as having the power, without interference by the government, to nominate persons able to act as marriage celebrants. The nominating authorities of a recognized denomination can be a religious authority at a national or state or regional level. At a regional level, it might be a diocese or a synod. These 247 nominating authorities are those closest to the grassroots communities, and would have the most up-to-date information for their own administrative purposes. As well, there are no privacy issues because the Marriage Act requires that the list of official marriage celebrants be published each year.

The nominating authority could thus be the electronic conduit for information to be disseminated by the Australian Government, including for those without email facilities. To include the 1,700 celebrants not belonging to an aligned denomination, it would be necessary for the Australian Government to gain their emails, which is already partly happening. Other agencies such as inter-faith organizations might need to be included but these are relatively few in number.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

If an electronic network is constructed the Australian Government should consider using, as the base, the currently forming network of nominating authorities for marriage celebrants to disseminate information about legislation and policy and program initiatives and evaluations, and that it be known as the Australian Religious Celebrants' Electronic Network.

In some very few communities, religious leaders are not permitted by virtue of their religious law or tradition to be marriage celebrants, and it is suggested that the Australian Government make special provision in these cases to be included on the network. It seems difficult to develop a multilingual facility though information, which has already been translated, could be transmitted through the network.

The advantage of this recommendation is that the nominated religious authority will have control as to whether the government's information is to be passed on to his or her faith communities. As well, levels and sectors of dissemination will have to be developed as part of a protocol for appropriate use e.g. avoidance of dissemination of party political information. Appropriate levels might be: (1) national level (2) national, state and regional levels (3) national, state, regional and local levels and (4) all religious house, agencies and institutions. The protocol might also cover whether the network can be used by state government agencies. It also ought to cover frequency of usage because it would be easy to overload the system with material of marginal usefulness to religious personnel.

It is recommended

A protocol of usage of the electronic networks should be developed in consultation with the nominating authorities.

An alternative or additional network to reach local faith communities is the lists compiled by local government authorities. These are usually accurate in terms of address though not necessarily in terms of personnel. These communities are listed on the websites and can be easily downloaded. For example, the City of Ryde, under its heading of 'religion and philosophies', whilst containing some health clubs, contains 1466 entries for local faith communities, including religious houses. It is estimated that there are probably about 20,000 – 23,000 local faith communities across Australia.

It is recommended

As an alternative mechanism a list of local faith communities should be constructed based on the lists held on the websites of local governments

» **Quality Religious Leadership: Orientation and Preparation of Religious Personnel**

One set of key questions that has arisen out of this study is as follows: *how do Australia's ethnic and religious leaders respond to the concerns about religious terrorism, and how do they exercise quality leadership in developing an harmonious multi-faith society in a world that is a far riskier place with an increasing number of overseas ethnoreligious conflicts?* Connected with this is the role of government: *how does government ensure quality religious leadership in changing world circumstances and maintain separation between religion and state?*

The provision of religious leadership and community management is built around, firstly, diagnosis of one's own current situation and appropriate interrogation of one's own religious tradition; secondly, it can be constructed around adaptation and strategy selection to achieve tolerance and harmony between the religious and ethnic groupings. In some cases, the diagnosis will be to live in peaceful co-existence, ignoring one's past enemies. Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a set of common goals. It needs to keep a balance between concern for results and concern for the people involved.

Many ethnic community organizations have been wrecked or damaged by authoritarian, personality-driven leadership styles whereas a more democratic, collaborative leadership will be based around:

- » a principled, integrity-based leadership style
- » clear, engaging directions, goal-setting and appropriate strategy selection
- » competent, engaged community members
- » a clear perception of the reality of the community's situation
- » a unified commitment to advance community and society
- » a collaborative climate amongst members
- » articulated ideals and standards of excellence
- » external support and recognition.

The capacity of newly-arrived religious personnel to function effectively in a multi-faith society emerged as a significant issue, and it is relevant to most faith groups, Christian and non-Christian. Failure to speak adequate English, even after many years in Australia, implies they cannot communicate adequately with second- and third-generation members of their immigrant and refugee communities. Equally importantly, it implies that such leaders cannot act as cultural and religious bridges or as mediators between their own community and the wider community. Australia is a community of communities. The capacity to build linkages between the communities is a key component of social capital.

As well, newly arrived religious personnel need to receive an in-depth orientation program offered through a designated TAFE college under the aegis of the government's multi-faith secretariat, designed to assist them to work effectively in a multi-faith society and to work alongside colleagues from other faith communities. The module ought include a visit to each other's places of worship.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

All arriving religious personnel, whether applying for permanent residency or a long term temporary visa, be given provisional visas for six months until they have achieved vocational proficiency in English and have undergone an orientation process together with arriving religious personnel from other faith communities.

As part of the process of constructing an harmonious multi-faith society, faith communities need to develop theologies of world faiths that address issues such as the nature of civil society, attitude to the other and the stranger, conversion and intermarriage. These theologies need to be available for public scrutiny, though it is not the task of government to evaluate such theologies as this would be an illegitimate trespass of religious freedom. The sets of issues addressed by this report and summarized within the community's theology of other world faiths needs to be incorporated into the basic training of religious personnel preparing to work in Australia.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

All faith leaders encourage their communities, as a matter of urgency, to include in their Australian training courses a subject or module on religious ministry in a culturally diverse, multi-faith Australia.

» **Constructing a Multi-Faith Australia**

The central finding of this study is that Australia's changing religious profile requires some changes as part of the process of constructing a multi-faith Australia. The use of the Our Father to commence each parliamentary day is largely a symbolic issue, yet its importance is undeniable in acknowledging that religiosity of the majority of Australians. The suggestion of a rotational system of prayers and readings by each of the major faith communities was received by religious leaders in the consultations as an acceptable way forward. It is suggested that the readings be selected in turn by the seventeen faith communities represented on the Advisory Council, including the 'no religion' group. It is further suggested that each parliamentary day conclude with the *Our Father* in deference to the central role of Christianity in Australia's development as a nation.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

Both Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament consider the proposal that each parliamentary day commence with a prayer or reading selected by Australia's faith communities on a rotational basis and that it conclude each day with the Our Father.

The complex set of issues concerning signs, symbols and sacred places was continually raised during data collection as outlined in chapter six. Addressing issues such as the use of the Christian cross, the nature of public oaths and affirmations and the appropriateness of selected physical locations for multi-faith services of celebration, mourning and remembrance will require complex and inclusive solutions adaptable to many types of circumstances, including when Australia's head of state who is also head of the Church of England is present. It is of note that almost half of the respondents in the public consultation (47%) strongly disagreed with the proposition, 'Christian rather than multi-faith services should be held on occasions of national celebration and national and international tragedy'. Only 4 per cent strongly agreed. Appropriate protocols reflecting Australia's religious unity-in-diversity need to be further developed in a process of collaboration between the Government and Australia's religious leaders when consulted during the annual forum. As well, the possibility of developing a national sacred space in Canberra needs to be placed on the national agenda in the medium to longer term.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

The Commonwealth Parliament should consider developing appropriate protocol for multi-faith services and pageants for times of celebration, remembrance and tragedy that takes account of Australia's multi-faith and secular society, and examines the feasibility of developing a sacred space in Canberra for such occasions.

The study uncovered legitimate concerns about the material of several websites of faith communities, particularly their links to racist websites offshore. At this stage, it is appropriate that a process of self-regulation remain in place but the issue needs to be monitored by the Council for Multicultural Australia.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

All faith communities be encouraged to put in place mechanisms for a continual monitoring of their websites for materials or links whose content might damage the harmony of Australia's multi-faith society.

A theme that remained in the background of the research but whose potential was ever-present concerns the role of local government in generating multi-faith harmony and inter-faith interaction. The audit of inter-faith initiatives highlighted this point. Some local government authorities have established inter-faith consultative networks for local religious leaders. Criterion for membership should be based on the places of worship physically located within the physical boundaries of the LGA though some flexibility may need to be exercised. It is suggested that the network of local religious leaders come together with local government social development officers under the chairship of a nominated councillor, not for inter-faith dialogue, but to work on community projects, campaigns and festivals for local community betterment as part of building up the local social capital.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

The Council for Multicultural Australia, in association with Australia's religious leaders, encourage all local government bodies to sponsor and establish a network of local religious leaders with places of worship located within their boundaries and it is suggested the network meets at least twice a year.

The tension between the creation of the ethos of a publicly-funded religious agency and employment justice remains a problematic issue, brought into focus during the consultation with open differences between the nation's religious leaders. The attitude that religious agencies, even though they receive public funds partly or wholly for their educational, welfare, occupational and other activities, are not publicly accountable beyond a financial audit, as was argued to the research team, remains problematic to government and other religious leaders. At the same time, creation of a proper religious ethos comes within the right to religious freedom, which, however, is not an absolute right. Discussion is currently held back by a failure to operationalise and particularize the concept of 'religious organizational ethos', including its creation and maintenance, and the failure to differentiate different types of agencies (e.g. the religious ethos in a school is different from the religious ethos in an employment agency).

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

The Council for Multicultural Australia should consider commissioning papers and research to examine the issue of employment practice within religious agencies with a view to producing a publicly acceptable protocol for the different types of religious agencies.

» Educating in and for a Multi-Faith Australia

Consultees continually emphasized the centrality of education, as well as the role of the media in recognizing religion as an asset and a resource, and in constructing a multi-faith society built around its Christian core.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

The Commonwealth Minister for Education should consider inviting all universities offering media and journalism courses to include a subject on Australia's culturally diverse, multi-faith society and that all such universities respond within twelve months.

Education was not a central focus of this study, and more research needs to be done in both the schooling and tertiary education sectors. Recent press coverage has focused unfairly on Muslim schools and their teaching content whereas all schools, whether government or private, religious or non-denominational, need to be asked about their treatment of religious issues in their curricula, and in the case of religious schools, about their treatment of other world faiths. Within the tertiary sector, issues in need of research include religion and university legislation, the link between universities and colleges of divinity, chaplaincy and the provision for students, provision of sacred spaces for Australian and international students and, lastly, course content, particularly in the arts and social science areas.

Education was not a central focus of this study, and more research needs to be done in both the schooling and tertiary education sectors.

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

The Commonwealth Minister for Education should consider sponsoring a research program on the teaching about other world faiths in religious schools, and the Minister invite his State counterparts to report on the teaching on the world's faiths in their schools' curriculum in preparation for Australian students to live and work in a multi-faith society within and beyond Australia.

The Commonwealth Minister for Education should consider sponsoring a research program to examine the place of religion in universities and TAFE Colleges.

In Conclusion

God, globalisation and social cohesion are all major topics, especially in a world where there is a new kairos, a new moment of history when new dangers and new opportunities lie before Australia. The new approach to international order and to the safeguarding of Australia includes to take seriously the resurgence of religion in all its diversity (Thomas 2002). Martyrdom, whether self or inflicted, occurs at the extremist of terrorist times. Self-martyrdom in particular is an act of despair, an act that hopelessly hopes the world will take notice of their motivations and their grievances. Memories of oppression, abuse and hatred will always come back to haunt us, even destroy us, if they are not dealt with constructively and with hope. And with vision. In the face of immense provocation, especially of Bali, we as Australians must be rigorous in our thinking and be imaginative in our solutions.

The four current challenges for all religious traditions, besides the central one of dealing with cultural pluralism and religious extremism, are these: (1) the development of an ecological consciousness that recognizes the sacredness of the universe and the dangers of the exploitation of the world's non-renewable resources (2) the doctrinal and inpractice commitment to the equality of male and female in and beyond their religious structures and the development of a feminist sensitivity that is not about power but about distributive justice, about care and nurturance and the importance of civility and human relatedness (3) commitment to the spiritual and the mystical, not being too distracted by their social and political lobbying activities and their welfare and educational initiatives and (4) the commitment to social justice that recognizes all men and women have an inherent human dignity.

No one religion is without sin or fault and, as Archbishop Tutu has said, there can be no future without forgiveness. As Hans Kung, one of the driving forces behind the Parliament of the World's Religions, says, what is needed is "religiosity with a foundation but without fundamentalism; religiosity with religious identity, but without exclusivity; religiosity with certainty of truth, but without fanaticism", a new religious cosmopolitanism. All the great religious figures of history have been teachers - and education is at the core of the multi-faith agenda. Extremists are highly selective from the faith traditions they embrace. Over the past fifty years, in a bipartisan way, Australia has become a multicultural and multi-faith lighthouse; despite the issues documented in this report, it remains so despite the provocations of New York and Bali. Australia needs to have, firstly, co-operative leadership between our ethnic and religious communities and secondly, co-operation between its civic and religious leaders as Australia moves from being a Christian to a multi-faith society. Imagination is at the core of globalisation.

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APPENDIX ONE

Consultations with religious, government and community leaders

Discussion Brief

Background: The Commonwealth Government through the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs has commissioned the Australian Multicultural Foundation in association with the World Conference of Religions for Peace (Australian chapter) and RMIT and Monash Universities to conduct a series of consultations with religious, government and community organizations. It is part of a broader study in religion, cultural diversity and social cohesion in contemporary Australia - details of the study are attached with the aims, background and methodological details.

The brief is broad and wide-ranging. Consultees are free to focus on whatever aspects concern them - they are free to raise any issue directly related to the topic and need not feel constrained by the following framework.

The fundamental approach of the project is to place the role and activities of religion and faith communities within the context of the creation of social and moral capital, and to relate them to citizenship in a multicultural democracy built around the four principles of (1) civic duty (2) cultural respect (3) social equity and (4) productive diversity as outlined in the 1999 report of the National Multicultural Advisory Council, *Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness*. However, given the broadness of the brief, it is essentially a mapping exercise.

Research Personnel

The project is being conducted by three researchers:

Professor Desmond Cahill, Professor of Intercultural Studies, is head of RMIT's undergraduate international and cross-cultural programs. He has conducted numerous consultancies for the Commonwealth government, especially in immigrant and refugee education and ethnic minority youth. He is Chairperson of the Australian chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace.

Professor Gary Bouma, Professor of Sociology, is the associate dean (research) at Monash University's Faculty of Arts. He is a leading religious sociologist, and is widely published in the area of religion and cultural diversity. He is Deputy Chairperson of the Australian chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace.

Mr Hass Dellal, O.A.M has been since 1989 executive director of the Australian Multicultural Foundation currently chaired by The Hon Sir James Gobbo AC CVO. Hass has extensive experience within Australia and internationally in multicultural affairs. He is currently Special Adviser to the National Police Ethnic Advisory Bureau, a Trustee of the European Multicultural Foundation and a former commissioner of the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

Discussion Procedure

Consultations are being held with the heads of faith in every state, and invitations have been issued to the heads of 25 faith communities identified by the Australian census at having more than 10,000 adherents. This implies that the consultations will cover religious traditions followed by 98.3 per cent of the Australian population identifying with a religious group. Consultations are also being conducted with appropriate Commonwealth and State agencies and with relevant NGOs.

In most states, the heads of faith consultees will be given the choice of two consultation sessions. The consultations are to be conducted within the normal bounds of anonymity and confidentiality - this implies that statements made in the consultations will be treated confidentially according to the ethical standards for research of RMIT and Monash Universities. If there are any concerns about this, you are asked to refer your concerns to Professor Gary Bouma (Gary.Bouma@arts.monash.edu.au) or Professor Des Cahill (des.cahill@rmit.edu.au) or to the Secretary, Human Ethics Committee at either university.

1. The Relationship between Religion/Faith and State in a Culturally Diverse Nation

The relationship between religion and state is continually shifting, and it may need to be repositioned and reformulated in face of shifts in national governance and the changing role of the nation state in global affairs.

Does Australia's cultural, linguistic and religious diversity imply a repositioning of faith and state? what implications for the definition of religion? religion and the role of the Head of State (both monarch and the governor-general)? what are the limits of religious expression in a civil, pluralist society? the place of Christianity vis-a-vis other faiths? religion and secularism in multi-faith, democratic societies? religious traditions and democracy?

Is it desirable to have an inter-faith advisory council to advise the Commonwealth government? the representativity of faith communities at national, state and local level? the advisability and format of multi-faith services for occasions of national celebration and national/international tragedy?

Religion and the delivery of government services, especially in education, health and employment? chaplaincy and government agencies, especially the armed forces? government and the marriage celebrant network?

Faith, religious liberty and the law? religion in a multi-faith context and the resolution of complex ethical issues? conversions, inc. mandatory conversions, and their implications?

2. The Relationship between Faith Communities at Local and National Levels

As a result of population movements into and within Australia, inter-faith encounters and new expressions of spirituality are now taking place in local suburbia and, increasingly, in rural and remote Australia.

Religious and racial hatred and violence, its growth, importation and expression in Australian society? its antidote and the role of civic and religious leaders? physical and verbal assaults on persons because of religious or ethnic affiliation? job discrimination and religious affiliation? employment practices and religious expression, inc. religious holidays?

Inter-faith relations in the local neighbourhood? the education and preparation of local faith community leaders for leadership in multi-faith neighbourhoods and for a multi-faith nation? intercultural and inter-faith marriages, family formation and religious duties and celebrations?

Construction of religious buildings in local neighbourhoods? the construction, operation and management of local religious sites and of other sacred sites and buildings? formal and informal shrines? expressions of popular religious festivals? inter-faith religious services at local government level?

3. Religion, Faith Communities and the Construction of Social Capital

The well-being of nations is said to depend on the construction of social and moral capital to which religion can be a significant contributor and also a significant destroyer.

Religion, the national common good, its underpinning values and the four principles of civic duty, cultural respect, social equity and productive diversity? religion and its historical and contemporary contribution to Australia's social and economic capital?

Religion and its current and possible future role in the construction of

a civil, pluralist and democratic society? in integrating immigrant communities into the Australian social fabric? faith communities and their attitudes towards minority groups? Other faith communities? religion and the formation of the Australian identity and identities?

The inter-faith education of the Australian community? religion and the construction of the knowledge

economy? Inter-religious education in mainstream public schools and private schools? inter-faith education in confessional and ethnic schools - enclosure and curriculum issues? confessional universities in multi-faith societies?

The attitudes of media and academe towards religion and faith communities? their religious background knowledge? religion and its use of the media? and of the internet?

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and moral capital
to which religion can be
a significant contributor and
also a significant destroyer.*

4. Australia, Faith Communities and their Interface with the International Arena

Religion is or can be a core element in Australia's trade and diplomatic relationships and in overseas conflicts. After 9/11, religion is now at the centre of world stage; faith communities are inter-connected across the world through their religious diasporas in an increasingly networked world. This can impact upon social cohesion in Australia or even affect the conflict overseas.

The role of religion and religious understanding in Australia's diplomatic relationships? in its trade and commercial relationships? in increasing the nation's economic wealth?

Religion and intranational and international tourism in Australia? prayer rooms at international airports? tourists and visitation of religious sites? pastoral needs of international students in Australia?

The impact of overseas conflict on inter-faith and inter-ethnic relationships in Australia? imported religious hatred and its

expression in Australian society? diasporic faith communities and religiously/ethnically-based conflict and terrorism? the impact of visiting religious leaders on such relationships in Australia?

The incidence of imported religious fundamentalism in Australia and its impact on social cohesion? the building of peace and transforming conflict in Australia and overseas?

5. Construction of an Electronic Network

The Commonwealth Government has asked the research team to investigate data sources for the construction of an electronic network for the transmission of information to religious groups at local, regional and national levels.

Advisability of such an electronic network? its purposes and uses? coverage? advice on its construction? use of marriage celebrant list? Lists of the Christian Research Association? electronic transport of e-lists of details of local, regional and national bodies and their leaders to government data site? updating of list?

APPENDIX TWO

Public Consultation: Religion, Diversity and Social Cohesion in Contemporary Australia

Discussion Brief

Due to limited funds and resources, this public consultation is being conducted in English. However if you are experiencing language difficulties and wish to participate, please contact and AMF via Fax (03) 9347 2218 or email (info@amf.net.au) to see if we can assist in any way.

All submissions must be received by 8 April 2002.

Background

As part of the “Living in Harmony” projects, the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs has commissioned the Australian Multicultural Foundation in association with the World Conference in Religion and Peace (Australian Chapter) and RMIT and Monash Universities to conduct and electronic consultation with religious, government and community organizations.

It is part of a broader study in religion, cultural diversity and social cohesion in contemporary Australia which will involve consultations with heads of faith, government departments and selected community organizations together with micro case studies of local faith communities. The project also involves the production of educational materials about Islam and a kit for interfaith dialogue and co-operation.

Aims of the Project

- i. To profile the current religious diversity context in Australia within a brief historical framework, and map the extent of interfaith dialogue and co-operation.
- ii. To examine the current contribution that religious frameworks and religious groups are currently making and can make to the development of the four civic values of civic duty, cultural respect, social equity and productive diversity.
- iii. To identify current and emerging issues, challenges and possibilities regarding the interface of religious groups with Australian society and each other, including areas for further research and exploration.
- iv. To suggest policy and program initiatives that foster a healthy, interactive religious diversity and that utilizes religion as an asset and resource for Australia’s social, political and economic well-being in a globalizing world.

- v. To develop material for in information kit to facilitate and encourage dialogue, interaction and co-operation between Australia's faith communities at local, state and national level.
- vi. To investigate the feasibility of Australian interfaith bodies and structures to advise the Council for Multicultural Australia and other government and non-government bodies.
- vii. To investigate data sources for the construction of an electronic network for the transmission of information to religious groups at local, regional and national levels.

The fundamental approach of the project is to place the role and activities of religion and faith communities within the social context of the creation of social and moral capital, and to relate them to citizenship in a multicultural democracy built around the four principles of: (1) civic duty (2) cultural respect (3) social equity and (4) productive diversity as outlined in the 1999 New Agenda for a Multicultural Australia (www.immi.gov.au/multicultural/agenda.doc). However, given the broadness of the brief, it is essentially a mapping exercise.

Research Personnel

The project is being conducted by three researchers:

Professor Desmond Cahill, Professor of Intercultural Studies, is head of RMIT's undergraduate international and cross-cultural programs. He has conducted numerous consultancies for the Commonwealth government, especially in immigrant and refugee education and ethnic minority youth. He is Chairperson of the Australian chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace.

Professor Gary Bouma, Professor of Sociology, is the associate dean (research) Monash University's Faculty of Arts. He is a leading religious sociologist, and is widely published in the area of religion and cultural diversity. He is Deputy Chairperson of the Australian chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace.

Mr. Hass Dellal, OAM has been since 1989 executive director of the Australian Multicultural Foundation currently chaired by The Honorable Sir James Gobbo AC CVO. Mr. Dellal has extensive experience in Australia and internationally in multicultural affairs. He is currently a special advisor to the National Police Ethnic Advisory Bureau, a trustee of the European Multicultural Foundation and a former commissioner of the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

Anonymity

Anonymous submissions will not be considered. The consultation is being carried out according to the ethical standards for research of RMIT and Monash Universities. If you have any complaints they are to be referred to the Ethics Committees of either university.

Under the confidentiality procedures, all submissions will be considered anonymous, and if quoted in the final report, will be quoted in such a manner as to hide their anonymity unless the waiver of confidentiality at the end is given.

Submission

Print this pdf form, when the form is complete, send to the:

*Australian Multicultural Foundation
PO Box 538 Carlton South, Vic 3053.*

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Religion, Diversity and Social Cohesion in Contemporary Australia

Submission Form

Please fill out all the sections that apply to you. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are compulsory, you must fill them in for the consultation to be complete.

Final submission deadline is 8 April 2002.

Title:

Given Names:

*Surname:

*Postal Address:

*Suburb or town:

*Postcode:

*Telephone:

Fax:

*Email:

Mark here if this is a group submission:

☐

Organisation Name:

Organisation Address:

Suburb or town:

Postcode:

If this is a group submission, briefly describe the objectives and activities of your organization:

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

How many members are there in your organization?

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

What is your religion?

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic | <input type="checkbox"/> Anglican | <input type="checkbox"/> Uniting Church | <input type="checkbox"/> Presbyterian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greek Orthodox | <input type="checkbox"/> Baptist | <input type="checkbox"/> Lutheran | <input type="checkbox"/> Islam |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist | <input type="checkbox"/> No Religion | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

Are you a member of any inter-faith organization (e.g. World Conference on Religion and Peace)?

If so, specify which:

| |
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| |
|--|

Have you participate in any inter-faith service or activity during 2000 or 2001? If so give details:

| |
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|--|

Is there an inter-faith body in your area, local or regional? Give name and location:

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

The following six questions are for individual submissions only:

Please tick one response only for each question.

1. Christian rather than multi-faith services should be held on occasions of national celebration and national/international tragedy:

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

2. An inter-faith council ought to be established to advise the Commonwealth Government on faith and inter-faith issues:

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

3. Religious intermarriages are to be anticipated in multi-faith society, and they promote intercultural understanding and cooperation:

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

4. Recent overseas conflicts in areas such as the Gulf, the Balkans, Sri Lanka and Central Asia have put Australia's social harmony at risk:

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

5. Religious extremism has the potential to destroy the fabric of Australia's civil, pluralist and democratic society:

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

6. Leaders of faith communities at national and local level ought to be educated about the role of religion in Australia's civil, pluralistic and democratic society:

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

The following questions are for all submissions. Please use dot-points and concrete examples whenever possible

1. Areas of Serious Concern

Nominate without explanation the three areas that concern you or your organization most in the areas of religion, cultural diversity and social cohesion in contemporary Australia:

1.

2.

3.

2. Religion and Social Cohesion

How do the faith communities of Australia contribute to national well-being and the nation's social and moral capability, especially in regard to civic duty, cultural respect, social equity and productive diversity?

How do faith communities hinder or prevent the creation of social and moral capital, especially in regard to civic duty, cultural respect, social equity and productive diversity?

Suggest ways in which faith communities could further contribute to the creation of social and moral capital:

Are there particular ethnic and religious communities or other organizations about whom you have concerns as initiators or as victims of verbal attacks or physical assaults?

3. Religion and the State in a Culturally Diverse Nation

How should the relationship between religion and state be positioned in the current context, including the delivery of government services?

If Australia were to become a republic, what are the implications from a religious perspective?

Do changes to the law need to be made in the changing context of religion, cultural diversity and social cohesion?

Do the limits of religious expression and the management of religious sites and services need to be re-negotiated in the current climate?

4. Relationship between Faith Communities at Local and National Levels

How serious is the problem of religious and racial hatred in Australia and what are its antidotes?

What suggestions do you have for inter-church and inter-faith co-operation and activity at the grassroots level?

How should government and faith communities themselves deal with religious extremism that conflicts with Australian and cultural practices?

5. Faith Communities and their Interface with the International Arena

What role do religion and faith communities have in Australia's offshore trading and commercial activities?

How can religious groups respond better to the needs of international tourists?

How should Australia handle religious hatred and extremism, both home-grown and imported?

How should Australia handle the impact of overseas conflicts on its own ethnic and religious communities?

6. Specific Issues

Please select up to four issues only from the following list that are most relevant to you and provide comments. Make sure you use concrete examples.

The definition of religion in a multi-faith context

The place of Aboriginal spiritualities in a multi-faith context

Aboriginal reconciliation

Success or failure in inter-faith initiatives

The religious dimensions of emergency situations

Job discrimination and religious affiliation

Employment practices and religious expression, including religious holidays

The education of faith community leaders

Religious education in mainstream public and private schools

Inter-faith marriages and their religious implications for families

The construction and management of special sacred and religious sites

Multi-faith chaplaincy in the Australian armed forces

Religion and the role of women

Full-time and part-time religious and ethnoreligious schools

Representativity of faith communities in local, state and national forums

Tourism and the visitation of religious sites

Faith, religious liberty and legal issues

The media and the reporting of faith community activities

Religion and the Australian identity

The state and confessional universities

Religion and environmental protection

| |
|----------|
| Issue 1: |
| |

Issue 2:

Issue 3:

Issue 4:

Would you like notification of how to receive the final report from this consultation? ☐ Yes ☐ No

*I agree that my name or the name of my organization can be cited in the final report if quotations are to be made. ☐ Yes ☐ No

Final submission deadline: 8 April 2002



Australian Government

**Department of Immigration and
Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs**



Australian Multicultural Foundation

**YOU
ME
AUSTRALIAN**

living in harmony