CHRISTIANITY AND CULTURE IN COLONIAL AUSTRALIA:
SELECTED CATHOLIC, ANGLICAN, WESLEYAN AND
ADVENTIST PERSPECTIVES,
1891-1900

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I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

(Signed)
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SYNOPSIS

The adherents of an ideology usually possess common ideas and values, and tend to cluster together as a subculture. Consequently they often experience difficulty in relating to the wider society which exists in the same time and place. Early in its history, Christianity encountered relational problems with Jews and pagans; controversies also developed amongst rival Christian groups. The persistence of this conflict caused H. Richard Niebuhr to call it ‘the enduring problem’; he also identified a range of typical responses, particularly in Western civilisation. On the two extremes are those Christians who withdraw and accommodate; occupying the middle ground are dualists, synthesists and conversionists. These solutions may be held in their pure form or in a variety of combinations. They may be influenced by a range of ideas about salvation, the church, eschatology, the relations of church and state, Christian history and patterns of thought in society.

The Christianity which was transplanted into colonial Australia was derived from Northern Hemisphere denominations, and experienced the persistent effects of distance, dependence and sectarianism. Divided by national and religious loyalties and antipathies, and challenged by a desacralised society, the churches tended to develop a conservative ethos which failed to address crucial religious and social questions. Denominational attitudes toward educational, economic and political issues may be used to identify the various stances which were present in New South Wales near the end of the colonial period. Selected Roman Catholic, Church of England, Wesleyan Methodist and Seventh-day Adventists perspectives are explored in the light of Niebuhr’s typologies.

The solutions favoured by these denominations were based on the range of factors indicated above. For instance, the uniqueness of Catholicism as the one ‘true’ church was strongly presented by Cardinal Patrick Francis Moran; the inclusive strength of Anglicanism as a ‘comprehensive’ church was fostered by Archbishop William
Saumarez Smith; and the idea that their church was 'chosen' to preach the gospel and engage in a war with evil was nurtured by the Wesleyan weekly newspaper. Nominally, these three denominations included eight out of every ten people in New South Wales. In order to illustrate the determinative role which eschatological thought may assume in a religious group, Adventist ideas as expressed by Ellen Gould White are examined in relation to her idea of a 'remnant' church.

Each denomination was strongly persuaded by the merits of its own stance, and unconvinced by the strengths of the other religious options. Thus, Christianity tended to remain institutionalised and divided; it was, therefore, often unattractive to secular Australians. It seemed more appropriate for each subculture of Christians to maintain its boundaries rather than to search for and promote a coherent religion directed toward meeting the evident human needs in colonial society. The experience of Christianity in nineteenth-century Australia illustrates the power of ideas to motivate and restrain believers; it also demonstrates the continuing usefulness of Niebuhr's analyses and the necessity for a constant reappraisal of 'the enduring problem'. 
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Macquarie Dictionary claims to be the first comprehensive documentation of Australia's language. This thesis follows the spelling of its revised edition (1985) for Australian terms. The Macquarie also defines an 'acknowledgement' as an act of admitting or an act of appreciation. These pages are both.

I admit my indebtedness to many fellow human beings. Roy Branson, now an ethicist in the Kennedy Institute of Georgetown University, caused me to read the writings of H. Richard Niebuhr. Don Hansen's undergraduate lectures infused me with some of his enthusiasm for Australian history. Miriam Dixson encouraged me, during a qualifying MLitt course in 1982-3 at the University of New England, to explore the relations between religion and society. Greg McMinn vetted my first attempts to map the territory of this thesis from mid-1984 until 1987. Since late 1987, Don Wright has gone far beyond the call of duty as my supervisor in the Department of History at the University of Newcastle.

James Cox, Bryan Ball and Geoffrey Madigan, principals of Avondale College, authorised this course of study, and the Avondale College Board of Governors enabled me to engage in full-time research and writing during 1989. Before and after that, Tim Gorle and other colleagues were accommodating as I tried to meet the demands of work and study. Joan, my wife, has noticed the amount of time I have spent with books and an Apple computer, but she has given me unfailing support nevertheless.

Many librarians and archivists gave me access to their resources. Some institutions must be acknowledged by name: the State Library of New South Wales, especially its Mitchell Library; the Veech Library of the Catholic Institute of Sydney/St Patrick's College, Manly; the library of Moore Theological College, Newtown; the library of Avondale College, Cooranbong; the Auchmuty Library of the University of Newcastle. The churches' archival institutions were invaluable: the Catholic Archdiocesan Archives in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney; the Australiana collection at Moore College; Eskdale, the Uniting Church archive at North Parramatta where Methodist and other sources are held; the Ellen G. White/Seventh-day Adventist Research Centre, Avondale College.

I have a long list of librarians/archivists who were helpful, including in particular Hans Arns and Pam Fitzpatrick, Manly; John Cummins and Chantal Celjan, St Mary's; Kim Robinson, Moore; Eric Clancy, Eskdale; Eleanor Scale, Avondale; Jim Cleary, Newcastle.

Three people merit thanks for technical assistance. Len Hokin, who spends his days and too much of his nights with the computer system at Avondale College, gave helpful advice. Maurice Ashton transferred the content of my Apple discs to the college system, not without difficulty. Colleen Pinchin painstakingly reformatted the text, and incorporated some of the corrections and additions.
This thesis has borrowed elements of style from J.A. La Nauze, *Presentation of Historical Theses: Notes for University Students* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1966); Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, fourth ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973); Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff, *The Modern Researcher*, fourth ed. (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985); *Style Manual for Authors, Editors and Printers*, fourth ed. (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1988). No one of these sources solved all the problems which I encountered. La Nauze seemed the most inclusive guide to a recognised Australian form. The Government's manual was the most up-to-date, but some of its recommendations are not yet in common use. An eclectic form, therefore, seemed most appropriate.

At one stage I had an extensive list of abbreviations drawn from a wide range of sources or created to meet the needs which emerged. This list became bewildering due to the variety of sources and the range of subject matter. Thus abbreviations are usually avoided; those which are used are standard ones, or else they are limited to a specific chapter and explained at the first occurrence. The full name of a journal or newspaper is given at the point where it first appears in the text, and again in the bibliography. Elsewhere a shortened form may be employed. Thus *The Journal of Religious History* becomes *Journal of Religious History*, *The Bible Echo* and *Signs of the Times* becomes simply *Echo*, etc.

I began research toward this thesis with the intention of making H. Richard Niebuhr's typology its controlling idea. In the second half of 1989 I faltered in that purpose. This revised edition employs Niebuhr's typology as its organising principle.

I have conferred with many people representing different communions and various academic disciplines. Some of these have helped me with constructive criticism: Anthony Cahill, John Cox, Brian Dickey, Don Hansen, Peter Kuch, Bill Lawton, Robert McIver, Barry Oliver, Robyn Priestley, Steven Thompson, Alan Ward and Norman Young. Certain analyses I have made are not present in the literature I have cited, and are contested by some of the critics I value most.

The people mentioned above are in no way responsible for the flaws in this work. The fact that the problem I have addressed is neither solved nor solvable is a healthy incentive to persist with the search for interim solutions. I trust that the sense of partnership I have shared with people of diverse backgrounds and different academic interests will be enhanced in the ongoing quest.

Arthur Patrick,
1 October 1991.