SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE: FACTORS INFLUENCING PATTERNS OF ETHNICITY

BY

SISIRA KUMARA PINNAWALA

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Australian National University, Canberra.

Submitted May, 1984
This study examines ethnic relations among Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne. It argues that though ethnicity is an ideology, the relationship between ethnic phenomena and social structural relations is not a deterministic one. There is an interdependency between the two so ethnic phenomena must be explained by examining the interaction between ideology and social structure. This interactive relationship is explained by examining patterns of ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne.

Two patterns of ethnicities among Sri Lankans are examined in the study. They are the home country ethnic identifications and the new 'Sri Lankan' identity that is being formed in the Australian context. This study explains these two by examining the influence of factors related to both home society and host society on Sri Lankans in Melbourne.
DECLARATION

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere, except where due reference is made in the thesis, and is not and has not been used for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university, nor has it been written in collaboration with any other person.

(Sisira Kumara Pinnawala)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Of those who helped me in this study either directly or indirectly, certain individuals deserve special mention. I am indebted to Dr Frank Lewins for his interest and encouragement throughout the study. This study on the whole is a result of countless discussions I had with him during the past four years as one of his students in the Department of Sociology.

I am also grateful to Dr Owen Dent for tolerating my frequent interruptions to his busy schedule during the initial stages of data analysis. Thanks must go also to Mrs Shirley Halton for helping me in computer work and Mrs Ettie Oakman who did an excellent job in typing this in a very short period of time.

During field work in Melbourne I was helped by a number of Sri Lankans. Though it is not possible to acknowledge all of them, Messrs Victor Melder, Prasanna Mendis and H.L.D. Mahindapala deserve a special mention here.

Finally, I must acknowledge the encouragement of Carslisle and the special contribution of Charnis, my wife, whose encouragement, interest and most of all criticisms were indispensable.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE OF CONTENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER I</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale of the Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of Data and Field Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation of the Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER II</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE NEED FOR AN INTERACTIONAL FRAMEWORK TO UNDERSTAND ETHNIC PHENOMENA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Developments in the Study of Ethnic Differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. The Primordialist Ethnic Tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The Situationalist Ethnic Tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situationality, Primordial Sentiments and Ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity, Ideology and Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER III</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETHNIC RELATIONS IN SRI LANKAN SOCIETY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Divisions in Sri Lankan Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Sinhalese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Tamils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Burghers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Moors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Other Ethnic Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Boundaries and Ethnic Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Emergence of the Present Ethnic Relations Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. The Role of Colonial Occupation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. The Post Independent Ethnic Conflict</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont.)

## CHAPTER IV

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF SRI LANKANS IN AUSTRALIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan Immigration to Australia</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Pre-World War II Immigrants</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Post-World War II Immigrants</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Characteristics of Sri Lankans in Australia</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Examination of Sri Lankans in Australia with Emphasis on Sri Lankans in Melbourne</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER V

PATTERNS OF ETHNICITY AMONG SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Ethnicity Among Immigrants</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Sociological Types Among Sri Lankans in Melbourne</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Ethnic Assimilationists</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Ethnic Integrationists</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Ethnic Traditionalns</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Patterns of Social Interaction of Sri Lankans</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Country Ethnic Identifications</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Sinhalese Identity</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Burgher Identity</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Tamil Identity</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan Ethnic Identity</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes of Ethnicity in Relation to Sri Lanka</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER VI

FACTORS INFLUENCING PATTERNS OF ETHNICITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideology and Structure in the Explanation of Ethnicity Among Immigrants</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ideology and Structure in the Explanation of Ethnicity Among Immigrants</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont.)

CHAPTER VI (Cont.)
Factors Influencing Home Country Ethnicity 143
   A. Factors Influencing Burgher Identity 144
   B. Factors Influencing Sinhalese and Tamil Identities 148
Sri Lankan Identity and Group Formation 154
Sri Lankans in Australia and the Ethnic Process 165

CHAPTER VII
CONCLUSION 171
   Theoretical Contributions of the Study 173
   Policy Implications of the Study 182
   Suggestions for Further Research 184

APPENDIX I 187
   Outline of Information Sought in Interviews 188
   Field Work in Melbourne 190

APPENDIX II 192
   Ethnic Breakdown of the Interviewees 193
   Religious Breakdown of the Interviewees 193
   Educational Qualifications of the Interviewees 194
   Occupations of the Interviewees 194
   Time of Arrival of the Interviewees 195
   Ethnicity of the Marriage Partner and the Interviewees 195
   Experience of Discrimination of the Interviewees 196
   Interviewees and Permanent Friendship Networks with Australians 196
   Summary Table of Occupational Distribution Compared with that of Sri Lankans in the Sample 197
   Study Sample Compared with the Distribution of Sri Lankans in Melbourne 198
## TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPENDIX III</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Occupational Distribution of Sri Lankans in Melbourne</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Data of Sri Lankans in Melbourne</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankans in Melbourne by Age and Sex</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankans in Melbourne and Australian Citizenship</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status of Sri Lankans in Melbourne</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usage of English Among Sri Lankans in Australia and Victoria by Age</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income by Income Unity Type Among Sri Lankans in Victoria and Australia</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of Residence and Occupational Distribution of Sri Lankans in Melbourne</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period of Residence and Occupational Distribution of Sri Lankans: Australian Total</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of Sri Lankans by States</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of Sri Lankans in Local Government Areas in Melbourne (1976)</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADDENDUM</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

230
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Ethnic Composition of the Population of Sri Lanka</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Religious Composition of the Population of Sri Lanka</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Percentage of Employed Sri Lankan Tamils in 1956 and 1965 in Selected Occupational Categories</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>People of Sri Lankan Origin in Australia from 1901 to 1947</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Statewide Distribution of Sri Lankans in Australia in the Early 20th Century</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Long Term and Permanent Settler Arrival from Sri Lanka from 1955 to 1965</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Long Term and Permanent Settler Arrival from Sri Lanka from 1967-1978</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Proportion of Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne of Part European origin and Sri Lankan Origin</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Estimated Ethnic Composition Among Sri Lankan Immigrants Compared with the Ethnic Composition of Sri Lankan Society (%)</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Proportion of Followers of Different Religions in Sri Lanka and Among Sri Lankans in Australia (%)</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Language Usage of Sri Lankans in Australia (%)</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Sri Lankans in Victoria as a Percentage of the Total Sri Lankan Population in Australia</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>Statewide Distribution of Sri Lankans in Comparison to that of Total Overseas Born Population and Total Population (%)</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>Comparison of Sri Lankans, Total Overseas Born Population and Total Population in Relation to Unemployment, Household Income and Tertiary Education</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Members of 'Australian' Clubs Among the Interviewees</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Reasons for Immigration of Interviewees</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Ethnicity as a Historical Process</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Categorisation of Sri Lankan Immigrants on the Basis of Their Time of Arrival</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Different Expressions of Ethnicity According to McKay and Lewins</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Different Expressions of Ethnicity Incorporating Ethnic Networks</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>Sociological Types Among Sri Lankans in Melbourne</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>Expanding and Non-Expanding Networks</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>Membership of Sri Lankan Associations Among Sri Lankans in Melbourne in Terms of Sub-Ethnic Background and Sociological Types</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>The Relationship Between Sociological Categories, Identities and Ethnic Group Formation Among Sri Lankans in Melbourne</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>Changes in Home Country Ethnicity</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>Sri Lankan Identity and Sri Lankan Ethnic Group in Australia</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Ideological and Structural Variables in Host and Home Societies</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Factors Influencing Burgher Identity in Australia</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>Factors Influencing the Continuity of Sinhalese and Tamil Ethnicities</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>Relationship Between Urban Middle Class Socio-Cultural Sub-Systems and Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher Communities in Sri Lanka</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>The Urban Middle Class Socio-Cultural Sub-System in the Australian Context</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Factors Influencing Sri Lankan Ethnic Identity Formation</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>Different Ways the Ethnic Expressions Among Sri Lankans in Melbourne are Related to Sri Lankan Society</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>Ethnicity Among Sri Lankans in Melbourne as a Historical Process</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF FIGURES (Cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Different Instances of Host Society/Immigrant Relationships According to Schermerhorn</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>The Way Ethnic Assimilationists and Ethnic Integrationists are Related to Australian Society</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne is a complex phenomenon. There are two patterns of ethnic identification which regulate their ethnic behaviour and expression of ethnicity. First, some Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne still use their home country ethnic identifications in the Australian context. So home country ethnicities, that is, 'Sinhalese', 'Tamil' and 'Burgher' identities are still important among some Sri Lankans in Melbourne. Second, is the formation of an ethnic group based on a re-emerging Sri Lankan identity among the rest who are the majority. I want to explain the existence of these two patterns of ethnic identification among Sri Lankans in Melbourne as the result of the interaction between ideology and structure. I shall argue here that the existence of home country ethnicity is a result of what I call the continuation of lingering ethnicity (Chapter II) promoted by host society factors. 'Sri Lankan' identity, on the other hand, despite the lack of such lingering ethnic identification, is also influenced by home society ideologies.

The present study argues that to explain ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne it is necessary to understand the interactive relationship between ideology and social structural variables. Though ethnicity is an ideology (Kohn 1981; de Lepervanche 1980: 25; Lewins 1981) it does not always depend on socio-structural variables for its existence (de Vos 1975; Uchendu 1975; McKay 1980). Ethnic ideology itself influences the course of ethnicity either independently (Lewins 1978a; McKay 1980) or in conjunction with socio-structural factors (McKay 1980). Or, as in the case
of new ethnic identity formation, socio-structural factors alone, without the influence of pre-established ethnic ideologies, can result in ethnic situations (Lewins 1978a). Even there pre-existing ideologies like ethnic stereotypes influence the ethnic process (Lewins 1978a). So the influence of socio-structural factors in ethnic formation needs to be understood more as one of causal priority rather than one way relationship where structural relations determine ethnicity. It is argued here that, because of this interactive relationship between ideology and social structural relations, ethnicity should be understood as a historical process.

This line of argument when applied to ethnicity among Sri Lankans requires us to examine ethnicity in relation to both host country and home country related variables. Home country variables are important because only they can explain ideologies continued into the host society context, that is those which are brought in by immigrants. Immigrants are 'social persons' not just individuals free of values and culture so when they migrate they carry their social values with them (Cronin 1970). These pre-immigration ideologies like home country ethnic allegiances that are brought into host society context cannot be expected to disappear overnight. Not only are these ideologies retained in the host society context but they also can influence the ethnicity of immigrants. I shall explain this process in detail in the next chapter by looking at the capacity of ideology to 'influence over time and in the direction which is different from that involved in its origin' (Lewins 1981). Suffice it to say here that in immigrant contexts the pre-emigration ideologies continue on their own right or are promoted by situational variables, i.e. host society factors. In either case to understand immigrant ethnicity we need to look at both host society and home society factors. So in examining factors affecting patterns of ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne I shall focus my attention on both host and home society factors.
Rationale of the Study

Though Asian immigration has generated a lively debate in Australian society both among the general public (see Lippmann 1979; White and White 1982) and in academic circles (Rivett 1960, 1975; Yarwood 1964, 1972; London 1970; Price 1974; Mackie 1977), a debate largely disproportionate to the number of people from the Asian region living in this country (White and White 1982), Asian immigrants still remain the most understudied section of Australian immigrants. A quick perusal of published work on Asian immigrants would reveal that the major interest of scholars so far has been the 'Asian immigration issue' rather than Asian immigrants themselves. Of the works cited in the latest issue of *Australian Immigration: A Bibliography and Digest* (Price 1979) only two can be considered as comprehensive works on Asian immigrants living in this country (Burrage 1975; de Lepervanche 1978). The rest that concern Asian immigrants deal with issues concerning 'Asian immigration'. The situation before 1979 was even worse (see Price 1966, 1970; Price and Martin 1975). In those issues of *Australian Immigration: A Bibliography and Digest*, the authors thought it was not necessary even to devote a section to Asian immigrants because of lack of studies. Instead, they cited studies on Asian immigration under the topic of 'restrictive immigration' and 'white Australia policy' which are, of course, synonyms for Asian immigration issues. This shows clearly that, though Asians have aroused both academic and public interest, Asian immigrants living in this country are still a much neglected area.

This lack of studies on Asian immigrants in this country has had two repercussions. One relates to the growth of Australian social history which needs to be enriched by the addition of socio-historical studies of Asian immigrants. Australian social history would not be complete without
Asian immigrants and their life in this country. Second, the lack of studies of Asian immigrants has hindered the development of a healthy and constructive debate of the Asian immigration issue itself which is given such prominence in this country. The present popular and academic debate of the issue is mainly based on pre-conceptions of Asians rather than on empirical data. One cannot debate this issue constructively, though it is being debated, if there is not sufficient knowledge of Asians in Australia. The contemporary debate on Asian immigration is based on pre-conceptions from the past century rather than on the situation of Asians in contemporary Australian society.

This study is the first attempt to examine ethnic relations among Sri Lankan immigrants in this country. Though there are a few earlier works on Sri Lankans, three to be exact, none of them can be taken as treating either Sri Lankan immigration or ethnicity among Sri Lankans in this country in any detail. Cox (1975) looks at Sri Lankan immigrants and their welfare needs in a short discussion that looks at both Chinese and Sri Lankan immigrants together. The other two works also are limited in scope and content. Swan (1981) looks at early Sri Lankan, mainly Sinhalese, immigration to Australia, which is basically a historical account of 19th Century coolie immigration. As we shall see later, the majority of Sri Lankans in this country today have migrated since the 1950s. Further, only a few of the 19th Century arrivals remain in the country today. The other study, (Endagama 1981) is limited to an examination of material culture of Sri Lankans in North East Queensland. This study is not only limited to an examination of material culture but also a small section of Sri Lankans who were descendants of early coolie arrivals.

The present study looks at the Sri Lankan immigration since World War II. It examines Sri Lankans in this country in relation to their ethnic behaviour. Though this study focuses on Sri Lankans in Melbourne, which
has about 60 per cent of Sri Lankans in this country, it also attempts whenever possible to provide a complete account of Sri Lankans in this country. Especially, I have tried here to include a detailed account of Sri Lankan immigration to this country which includes 19th Century coolie immigration and an examination of socio-demographic characteristics of Sri Lankans in general. It is only in relation to the examination of ethnic behaviour of Sri Lankans that the Melbourne Sri Lankan population is given special focus. This is because of research limitations and the fact that there is a concentration of Sri Lankans in that area.

Sources of Data and Field Work

This study looks at two different social contexts in explaining ethnic phenomena among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. These contexts are Sri Lankan society and Australian society. The Sri Lankan part of the study primarily looks at the different ethnic communities and the ethnic boundaries among them and the development of the contemporary ethnic relations structure. The discussion on these topics is based on existing literature and my own experience of being a Sri Lankan. The Australian part of the study, in addition to an examination of ethnic behaviour of Sri Lankans in Melbourne, which is the primary focus of the study, looks at the history of Sri Lankan immigration and socio-demographic characteristics of Sri Lankans in general. The data for the discussion on the history of immigration and the socio-demographic characteristics were obtained from the official statistics of the Australian Bureau of Statistics and those of the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. A field study was conducted in Melbourne to collect data on ethnic behaviour.

In formulating a strategy to carry out field work in Melbourne two problems had to be considered. The first concerned the nature of data...

*See addendum page 231
required for the study. As it was necessary to understand patterns of ethnic identifications, including new developments, in the Australian context the field study had to collect mainly qualitative data relating to degree of ethnic identification and level of structuration of ethnic activities. The first concern, therefore, was to formulate a research strategy to collect qualitative data.

The second concern was the nature of the field itself. The bulk of Sri Lankans in Melbourne can be broadly categorised as belonging to the middle class (see Chapter IV). Their middle class social position makes them a geographically scattered population. This residential distribution posed problems in formulating observation techniques which are essential in collection of indepth qualitative data. In other words, the lack of a geographically defined community, a neighbourhood community for example, made it difficult to employ traditional observation techniques such as 'live in', participant observation. So in formulating the field work a compromise strategy had to be arrived at that would enable collection of qualitative data in a scattered population.

To suit this situation it was decided to employ three data collecting techniques. First was a series of indepth interviews using an unstructured questionnaire (Appendix I). Instead of 'live in' observation among the immigrants, which was not possible, it was decided to observe selected activities on a short term basis. The third data collecting technique was to use existing records within the Sri Lankan population. This consisted of going through newspaper items and newsletters of different ethnic associations.

Field work in Melbourne was done on three separate occasions. The combined duration of field work was about 2\(\frac{1}{2}\) months. A detailed account of each field work visit to Melbourne and its duration is given in Appendix II. During the field work 100 selected immigrants were interviewed.
and several social activities organised by different Sri Lankan associations and informal social functions organised by different individuals, like birthday parties and informal gathering of friends, were observed. Further discussions were held with officials of different organisations and with community leaders.

The interviews were mainly aimed at getting data on immigrants' experience in this country and their ethnic behaviour, especially social networks and group formation on the basis of ethnicity. The questionnaire used for the interviews is given in Appendix I. As data were not used in hypothesis testing of any form it was decided there was no need for using any form of random sampling techniques in selecting respondents. Instead, a form of 'duplicating existing social networks' was used to choose people for interviews. This was done by choosing a few immigrants from different sub-ethnic divisions of the community, that is, Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher, and contacting others by following network associations. It was assumed that such duplication of existing social networks would add further to the data obtained through interviews. Interview visits normally ranged from one to two hours, depending on the situation. In addition to recording of interviews, notes were taken of informal discussion after the interviews. This was done on arriving back 'home' after interviews. As only around two interviews were carried out in a day, it was not difficult to remember most of the information revealed during informal discussions and record it afterwards.

As mentioned above, the activities observed on short term basis can be divided broadly into two categories. First there were formal activities such as official functions organised by different associations among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. Second, there were informal gatherings of people in Sri Lankan restaurants and parties given by some interviewees who were kind enough to invite me (Appendix II). These observations, especially
informal activities, were mainly used to obtain an indepth understanding of personal networks and ethnic network formation and supplemented data collected from indepth interviews. As I was also a participant in these situations it was possible to get a wider view and a better understanding of behaviour which would not normally be derived from interviews, which, however informal, are limited in the sort of data they yield.

The records that were used in obtaining data also fall into two categories. First there were newsletters and minutes of different associations among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. Here the newsletter of the Australian Ceylon Fellowship (ACF) was the most extensively used source. It has appeared continuously since 1971 and has records of every activity conducted by the Australian Ceylon Fellowship. Further, recently it has been used by Sri Lankans in Melbourne as a forum for debate concerning the Sri Lankan community in general. This newsletter, which is available in the National Library in Canberra, was studied in detail. In addition to the ACF, other associations also publish newsletters but less regularly. They also were studied when available. The second type of records were the newspaper items in Melbourne. Here my research was greatly facilitated by the fact I could use the personal library of a Sri Lankan who has an extensive collection of paper cuttings of items regarding the Sri Lankan community.

The data collection in Melbourne was not without its problems. As mentioned above, the scattered nature of the Sri Lankan population required a compromise strategy for collection of qualitative data. Further, this scattered nature of the population made contacting interviewees a difficult task as I had to rely on public transport. The time pressure was added to by the fact that most interviews were arranged either after hours or on weekends as employment prevented them being interviewed during the day. In addition to the above problems there was another important
one that needs mentioning here. It was previously assumed that my being a Sri Lankan would be an added advantage in interview situations. But that was not to be on some occasions. Being Sri Lankan made me a member of a particular ethnic community which is Sinhalese. This was sometimes found to be a handicap in interviewing Tamil immigrants who were in most cases reluctant to express their ideas freely before a Sinhalese.

Organisation of the Study

This study consists of seven chapters including the introduction. In Chapter II, I examine the existing literature focusing on the situationalist and primordialist ethnic tradition in order to establish a theoretical departure for the study. Chapter III contains a detailed discussion of ethnic relations in Sri Lanka, where I look at different ethnic divisions and their patterns of relations and their historical developments. Chapter IV looks at Sri Lankan immigration to Australia and their socio-demographic characteristics. Chapters V and VI examine the patterns of ethnicities among Sri Lankans in Melbourne and the factors influencing these ethnicities. Finally, in Chapter VII, I have recorded the findings of the study, their implication for policy making and theory, and the areas requiring further investigation.
Notes

1. I do not mean here that spatial distribution is determined by economic position of immigrants alone. But it can be safely assumed that neighbourhood communities that carve their own niche in metropolitan environments, for example communities like 'Little Italias' (Whyte 1943; Gans 1962) or 'China towns' (Yuan 1970) are basically a feature related to low income, low status immigrants. But as Brettel (1982) says in any situation a geographically defined ethnic community is not an inevitable phenomena.

2. In Appendix II I have compared sample characteristics with basic demographic features of Melbourne Sri Lankan population. Main characteristic emphasised in the comparison shows that the sample though a purposive one is representative of Sri Lankans in Melbourne.
CHAPTER II

THE NEED FOR AN INTERACTIONAL FRAMEWORK TO UNDERSTAND ETHNIC PHENOMENA

The main characteristic of the sociology of ethnic relations today is the attempt to explain ethnic phenomena using two polar types of concepts called primordial ethnicity and situational ethnicity (Glazer and Moynihan 1974, 1975; McKay 1980). Scholars who consider ethnicity as a primordial sentiment argue that ethnicity is a given fact of human existence (Geertz 1963:109; Isaacs 1975:38-39; Gordon 1978:73) that can be used to explain social reality. Accordingly, the existence of primordial ethnic sentiments should be understood in relation to 'ethnic traits' (Shils 1957; Geertz 1963; Isajiw 1974; Keys 1976). Those who see ethnicity as a situational phenomenon on the other hand say that ethnicity, being a social construct (Hechter 1963; Glazer and Moynihan 1975) is devoid of primordial ties (Vincent 1974; Patterson 1975; Bonacich 1980). They argue that the basic characteristic of ethnic phenomena today is interest based ethnic action (Glazer and Moynihan 1974, 1975; Patterson 1975) that is directed towards gaining access to political and economic resources (Despres 1975; vanden Berghe 1975). For the latter, ethnic phenomena is something that needs to be explained using socio-structural variables such as class relationships and the political power structure of society.

Both primordial and situational approaches have come under critical examination of scholars in recent years (Lewins 1978a, 1981; McKay 1980). It has become increasingly evident from recent ethnic studies that it is not possible to understand ethnic phenomena using existing polar types of concepts and the two analytical frameworks based on them. In place of
The present belief that ethnicity is either situational or primordial (Glazer and Moynihan 1974, 1975) evidence is emerging that it is both (Das Gupta 1975; Uchendu 1975; Aronson 1976; Esman 1977; McKay 1980).

The co-existence of primordial ethnic interests and socio-political interests together in contemporary ethnic mobilisation (McKay 1980) points to the fact that the relationship between ethnicity and material conditions, i.e. socio-structural relations like class and power structure, is not a simple one-way relationship as the situationalists' argument would have us believe. The relationship between ethnic interests and socio-economic interests should be interpreted through a continuum of interests (McKay 1980) that extend from primordial interests to situational interests. There are suggestions that co-existence of primordial interests and situational interests needs to be explained in terms of an interactive relationship framework which include both ideological and structural variables (Lewins 1981). The latter claims, following arguments put forward by Weber in his study of Protestant religions and the development of capitalism in Europe (Weber 1968), that ethnicity is a product of the interaction between ideology and structure. The question here is that how does this interaction take place? Or, in specific terms, how can we explain the interaction between ideology and structure in relation to ethnic phenomena? The following examination of literature is aimed at identifying a possible theoretical departure for this purpose.

The discussion in this chapter is divided into three parts. First, I shall discuss the theoretical developments in the study of ethnicity with special emphasis on primordialist and situationalist ethnic traditions and recent attempts by scholars to find a compromise framework of analysis to study ethnicity. In the second section I shall look at the existence of primordial and situationalist elements in ethnic phenomena and will attempt to show that the two approaches are complementary rather than
contradictory to each other. In the final part of this discussion a new framework that looks at ethnic phenomena from a historical point of view is suggested to understand the interactive relationship between ideology and structural relations.

Theoretical Developments in the Study of Ethnic Differences

Historically speaking the study of ethnic differences was brought into prominence only in the past decade (Hersberg 1973; Glazer and Moynihan 1974, 1975; Dorman 1979, 1981; Smith 1981; Sollors 1981). During this period we have seen a rapid increase of interest in ethnic phenomena not only among scholars but also among others such as politicians and policy makers. This interest in ethnicity and especially the new directions in the study of ethnic relations during this period, for example, the emergence of the situationalist approach, could be seen in relation to developments on two fronts. They are namely, the attempts by scholars to examine ethnic phenomena independent of racial typologies (Frazier 1947; Park 1950) and, later, independent of culture (Barth 1970; Haaland 1970; Knutsson 1970) and the resurgence of ethnically inspired activities, mainly political, in the United States (Gordon 1964; Glazer and Moynihan 1970, 1975; Novak 1973) and proliferation of ethnically determined political struggles in the other parts of the world (Shils 1957; Connor 1972, 1973; Lijphart 1975). In this section I shall first examine the contribution of the above two developments to the theoretical refinement of ethnic analysis. Secondly I shall examine the two major conceptual frameworks, i.e. primordial approach and situational approach in detail.

Early race relations studies assumed that differences among peoples were caused by natural divisions of mankind into different races (Nott and Glidden 1871; Farrar 1867). This idea which was later developed
into an evolutionary theory of race relations by the incorporation of Darwinist theory of the evolution of species (Darwin 1979) was subsequently challenged by a new school of thought headed by Park (1950) and Frazier (1947), which argued that the basis of racial differences is found in social consciousness and not in natural divisions. The following excerpt from Park shows the basic argument put forward by this new school of thought.

Race relations ... are the relations existing between peoples distinguished by marks of racial descent, particularly when the racial differences enter into the consciousness of individuals and groups so distinguished. (Park 1950:81, emphasis mine)

As this excerpt shows, for the proponents of the new school of thought racial differences are largely a social consciousness not a natural division. In this sense race is a sentiment, a line of thought somewhat similar to the primordial explanation of ethnic phenomena.¹

This change of emphasis from natural racial characteristics to socially determined race sentiments is the first step towards the development of ethnic studies as we know them today. This new argument points to the major claim that racial differences are not natural biological differences, so the genetic approach to race relations cannot explain race differences. This in a way paved the way for alternative explanations to enter into the realm of racial studies. It particularly opened the way for cultural explanations to become part of race relations studies.

The study of cultural distinctions among peoples was already popular among social scientists, especially among social anthropologists who studied newly discovered colonial societies in Asia and Africa (e.g. Malinowski 1922, 1929; Radcliffe-Brown 1922; Fortes 1945; Firth 1956;
Evans-Pritchard 1968). In the new world American sociologists were also looking at similar cultural distinctions that became prominent there as a consequence of rapid immigration influxes in the 19th Century (Thomas and Znaniecki 1918; Park and Miller 1925; Fairchild 1926; Wirth 1928). For both social anthropologists, who studied tribes in colonial societies, and for sociologists, who did their work among immigrants, the study of cultural differences was synonymous with the study of human differences. But they did not become part of race relations studies of the day as established race relations framework at that time was more atuned towards biology and genetics. Park's (1950) and Frazier's (1947) arguments on race relations mentioned before changed the biological bias of existing race relations studies and that allowed cultural studies to become part of race relations analysis at that time.

So this lead to the assumption that there are ethnic differences and ethnic groups that divide people into different categories. This idea of ethnic groups based on cultural distinctions was dominant in sociological circles during the early 20th Century. In the mid 20th Century this was challenged by the social anthropologists whose studies (Barth 1970; Haaland 1970) helped to free the study of ethnic relations from its dependence on culture.

Barth's (1970) work on ethnic analysis is considered as forming a landmark in ethnic relations studies (Despres 1975:189). His argument that ethnic boundary maintenance is the basis of ethnic analysis provided a strong intellectual foundation to the emerging idea that ethnic group study should look at social relations not cultural differences (Morris 1970). Barth (1970) and his followers (Haaland 1970; Knutsson 1970) argued that ethnic groups should be understood in terms of ethnic boundary maintenance, which helps the continuity of ethnic groups, and not their cultural
content that may change despite such group continuity. By doing so they 'freed' ethnicity from culture and directed the attention of ethnic studies to ethnic identity and ethnic interaction. The influence of this separation of ethnicity from culture should be examined in relation to another development, that is, increasing ethnically oriented activities in the 1970s.

The increase of ethnically determined activities in the last two decades should be examined in relation to developments in two areas. First, the ethnic activities among immigrants and the black minority in the United States increased considerably during this period (Hersberg 1973; Sollors 1981). It was beginning to be evident that neither early cultural pluralism nor a melting pot could explain the direction ethnic activities in the United States were taking (Glazer and Moynihan 1970; Novak 1973). Second, in Europe and in the new states of Asia and in Africa ethnic separatist movements were gaining momentum (Melson and Wolpe 1970; Wolpe 1974; Ottite 1975; Ottenberg 1976; Fenwick 1981; Horowitz 1981). This situation made scholars re-examine the idea that ethnic distinctions would disappear with modernisation.

Until the last two decades scholars, both radical and conservative alike, were espousing the assumption that ethnic and other 'irrational' elements of society would disappear with increasing modernisation. The Marxist expectation of the arrival of the conflict free society, i.e. communist society without class divisions (Lenin 1920; Marx and Engels 1967; see also Nairn 1975) and arguments of conservative scholars like Tonnies (1974:185-213) and Durkheim (1949) are examples of the dominant assumption of the day. This view of modernisation, later dubbed a liberal expectation (Gordon 1964), was questioned by scholars with the emerging ethnicity in the 1970s. Their view of society, or radical expectation as Galzer and Moynihan call it (Glazer and Moynihan 1975), expected ethnic
divisions to increase with increasing modernisation. Primordial and situational approaches, though agreed that ethnicity is increasing in importance, tried to interpret the developments differently. The primordial approach sees ethnic revival as a result of primordial sentiments becoming prominent as a result of modernisation so there are tendencies to retribalise in the modern society (Isaacs 1975a, 1975b). The situational approach on the other hand sees ethnicity today as a consequence of wider social structural forces like class divisions and economic exploitation.

A. The Primordialist Ethnic Tradition

The importance of primordial sentiments to understand group formation among peoples was originally put forward by Shils (1957) who argued that primordial attachments to kin, territory and religion were characterised by a state of intense and comprehensive solidarity. Since then the idea of primordial sentiments has become an important concept used in analysing ethnicity and ethnic groups (Geertz 1963; Isaacs 1975a, 1975b; Gordon 1978). The following description of primordial sentiments by Geertz summarises the main theme of primordialist approach.

By a primordial attachment is meant one that stems from the 'givens' - or more precisely, as culture is inevitably involved in social matters, the 'assumed' givens of social existence: immediate contiguity and kin connections mainly, but beyond them the giveness that stems from being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language, or even a dialect of language, and following particular social patterns. These congruities of blood, speech, custom and so on, are seen to have inaffable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves. One is bound to one's kinsman, one's neighbour, one's fellow believer, ipso facto, as a result not merely of one's personal affection, practical necessity, common interest, or incurred obligations, but at least in great part by the virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to
the very tie itself. The general strength of such primordial bonds, and the types of them that are important, differ from person to person, from society to society and from time to time. But for virtually every person, in every society, at almost all times, such attachments seem to flow more from a sense of natural - some would say spiritual - affinity than from social interaction. (Geertz 1963:109-110)

As the above description shows there are two main characteristics of the primordialist argument. First, it accepts the existence of 'givens' in society that give rise to primordial attachments. Second, primordial attachments are universal features in society. Ideas similar to the above are discussed by Isaacs (1975a, 1975b) and Gordon (1978) who, in addition to the above characteristics, look at the everlasting influence of primordial sentiments in individual's personality. Gordon, for example, says that because of the strong relationship between self and primordial sentiments, they cannot be shed by social mobility (Gordon 1978:73). So despite modernisation, primordialist sentiments remain and the global resurgence of ethnicity today is largely due to individuals' primordial needs to belong (Greeley 1974; Isaacs 1975a, 1975b; Connor 1978).

As the existence of primordial attachments is a result of the existence of givens in society (Geertz 1963:109-110) which are mainly cultural characteristics, culture plays a significant role in primordial ethnic tradition. So proponents of primordial ethnicity in the early days and to some extent even today, continued the previous practice of early sociologists and social anthropologists by taking culture and ethnicity as similar realities. Despite the influence of Barth's work and ethnic studies in general, there are still attempts by some scholars who consider ethnicity as primordial to use culture and other objective characteristics as the basis of ethnicity (Isajiw 1974; Keys 1976).
According to the primordial approach, ethnic divisions are given social phenomena. In other words, ethnicity has an independent existence free of wider socio-structural relations. Related to this idea is the involuntary and fixed nature of ethnicity, so people born into an ethnic group cannot change their ethnicity. This means that the primordial approach sees ethnicity not as a possible form of identification in a given context but as the cardinal orientation (McKay 1980).

Attempts by the primordialist ethnic tradition to account for the existence of ethnic phenomena in terms of primordial attachments and ethnic traits, which are givens in society, is questioned by the situationalist ethnic tradition, especially the argument of the primordialist tradition that says the present mobilisation of ethnicity can be explained by individuals' need to belong (Greeley 1974; Isaacs 1975a, 1975b). The latter was open to question by scholars who consider that ethnicity needs to be explained because it is influenced by socio-structural relations. According to these critics, the primordial approach attempts to explain the existence of ethnic differences using the differences themselves. As Kohn (1981) says, if we use the primordial approach to explain tribal conflicts we should have to say that two tribes fight with each other because they are different. The inadequacy of the primordialist ethnic tradition to explain ethnicity thus resulted in scholars looking at alternative explanations for ethnicity. The alternative to the primordialist ethnic tradition is the situationalist ethnic tradition.

B. The Situationalist Ethnic Tradition

Proponents of the situationalist ethnic tradition argue that while ethnicity may appear to be a primordial attachment it, in fact, indicates
a deeper social reality. Accordingly, wider socio-structural relations such as class relations and the power structure should be looked at in order to understand ethnic phenomena. How do these wider socio-structural relations combine with ethnicity? The situationalist ethnic tradition argues that the relationship between socio-structural variables, that is, the more structured, material conditions in society, are related to each other through interest based ethnic activities. That, in other words, means that ethnicity and ethnic mobilisation are caused by pursuit of interests by members of ethnic categories who occupy a particular position in the social structure. For example, blacks in the United States are economically and politically disadvantaged and that position gives rise to a certain set of interests. Their attempt to redress their situation gives rise to black ethnicity. In this way the basis of ethnicity is the wider socio-economic relations which are the driving force behind ethnicity.

In this sense the situationalist argument sees that ethnicity is a consequence of material conditions of society because ethnic activities are interest activities. Vincent explains this interest factor and its relationship with ethnicity in the following manner.

Unlike cultural minorities, ethnic groups are purposive groups: the main thing they have in common in all societies is that they are arbitrarily created and sustained for their practical utility ... Ethnic ties are not primordial ties - the assumed givens of a society and their actual realised organisation in any situation have to be demonstrated. (Vincent 1974:377)

Glazer and Moynihan put the same argument more succinctly when they say that:

One of the striking characteristics of the present situation is indeed the extent to which we find ethnic groups defined
in terms of interests, as an interest group. Thus where as in the past a religious conflict, such as that which is tearing Northern Ireland apart, was based on such issues as free and public practice of religion, today it is based on the issues of which group shall gain benefits or hold power of a wholly secular sort. (Glazer and Moynihan 1975:7)

This is the consensual argument of all situationalists (see also Patterson 1975) who consider ethnic groups as interest groups. That is to say, consensus is involved in that all situationalists accept the primary importance of socio-economic interest phenomena. These interests can range from political interests that lead individuals to strive for power and social position as Glazer and Moynihan say (1975:7) above, or competition for scarce economic resources (van den Berghe 1975; Despres 1975). Whatever the form of the interests that provide the basis the ultimate result is the same. All produce ethnic mobilisation in situations which correlate with ethnic divisions.

Ethnic mobilisation and interest based ethnic action, which is called 'new ethnicity' (Duran 1974; Bell 1975; Skinner 1975; Parsons 1975; Glazer and Moynihan 1975; Despres 1975), is only one aspect of the situationalist ethnic tradition. Not all scholars who consider ethnicity as variable in nature see 'ethnic' in terms of ethnic mobilisation which is the basic feature of new ethnicity. According to many scholars, mainly social anthropologists whose interests are in developing countries, specific ethnic situations though related to interests, is not always related to mass scale ethnic mobilisation. Individual situational selection between multiple identities (Handelman 1977; Salamone and Swanson 1979) fall into this type of situationality. Okamura (1981) attempts to separate this type of micro-level 'situational choice' from macro-level ethnic situationality that is, ethnic mobilisation by putting the former into social contexts he calls social 'situations' and the latter into social
22

'settin g s'.

Nagata (1974) and Strauch (1981), looking at Malay Chinese

ethnicity and the oscillation of Malay Chinese between Malay and Chinese
ethnicities as individuals, discuss such non-mobi1isationist situationality.
Still these situational choices are based on interest factors.
The situationalist tradition

ana

successful in directing the

attention to ethnic variability /ethnic mobi 1isation* F u r t h e r ,

i t showed us

the need to look at the relationship between ethnic phenomena and the
» i.f

material conditions in society, that is, class relations and political power.
But '

i t , as McKay says, f a i l s to e x p l a i n ‘ a^ ethnic phenomena

(McKay 1980:11).

Attention only on socio-economic interests, as the

case is among ethnic situ a tio n a lis ts, poses several problems.

By defining

ethnicity only in terms of socio-political interests, the situational
argument neglects non-socio-political interests (McKay 1980) and value
consensus/conflict (Aronson 1976) that are in society.

As we know,

people in general and ethnic groups in particular do not always pursue
rational interests.

There are ethnic groups which persist despite

political disadvantages of such ethnic identifications (De Vos 1975,
Uchendu 1975).

As the situationali s t ethnic argument does not look beyond

socio-political interests i t fails to provide an adequate explanation
for such situations.

The reason for this is the narrow definition of

interests by the situational is t approach.

According to this approach

interests are socio-economic interests only and they do not take others
such as ethnic interests into account (McKay 1980).
Attention on socio-economic interests as the focus of ethnicity leads
to analytical problems as well.

McKay (1980:8) in criticising the one-sided

nature of the primordialist ethnic tradition focusses on its consideration
of ethnicity as th e cardinal orientation .

The attention

of the situationalist tradition on socio-economic interests as the o n ly
b a s is of ethnicity (Vincent 1974; Patterson 1975; Glazer and Moynihan 1975)


leads to similar weakness. This in other words means that the situationalist definition of ethnicity in terms of socio-economic interests obliterates the very important distinction between ethnicity and socio-economic interests. If we can define ethnic groups as interest groups why call them ethnic groups? If there is something more than interests that make ethnic groups *ethnic* what role does it perform? If we do not accept that there is something *ethnic* that makes ethnic groups different from other interest groups, there is no real meaning in treating ethnicity as a distinct phenomenon. Thus the situationalist argument in its proper sense makes ethnicity all clothes and no emperor.

So what we need to look at is not only ethnic mobilisation and socio-economic interests that lead to ethnicity but also to find an explanation to the problem what makes ethnicity ethnic and not something else. When we look at the problems faced, or raised, by some scholars in answering this question, we see the tricky nature of the question of what ethnicity is? For example, Glazer and Moynihan (1975) say that ethnicity has strategic efficacy which makes it different from other allegiances. But the problem is what gives 'strategic edge' to ethnic phenomena over other social affiliations such as class affiliation. Glazer and Moynihan do not answer that. Bell (1975:169) on the other hand says that ethnicity has the ability to combine an interest with an effective tie. But still the question remains unanswered. Why ethnicity has that ability and what gives ethnicity such qualities? Why cannot class do the same? These are the questions we need to answer if we are to understand ethnicity as a distinct social reality. When we look at these questions it becomes evident that the interest factor alone cannot explain ethnic phenomena. It fails to answer the question why ethnicity? In the following section I shall look at the possible ways we can find a satisfactory answer to these questions.
In the previous discussion we saw that both primordialist and situationalist approaches fail to explain ethnic phenomena adequately. The primordialist approach, by saying that ethnicity is a primordial attachment (Geertz 1963; Greeley 1974; Gordon 1978; Isaacs 1975a, 1975b) fails to recognise the importance of the relationship between ethnicity and the wider society. The situationalist approach, on the other hand, because of its over-emphasis on socio-economic interest factors (Connor 1972; Epstein 1978; McKay 1980) not only fails to explain the existence of primordial interests (Williams 1975; McKay 1980) but also confuses the relationship between ethnicity and socio-economic interests. So analytically it is not possible to distinguish between ethnic groups and interest groups accept the situationalist argument. Further, by saying that ethnicity is invariably related to socio-economic interests, the situationalist approach makes ethnicity an arbitrary phenomena (Keys 1976:203).

One cannot deny the role socio-economic interest plays in shaping ethnic phenomena in contemporary society. It is not surprising that socio-economic disadvantages faced by immigrant ethnics (Zubrzycki 1960, 1976; Storer 1975; Martin 1975; O'Malley 1978) and other minorities (Bonacich 1973; Cohen 1974; Hechter 1976; Coulon and Morin 1979; Fenwick 1981) could lead to interest based ethnic action. For example, communal conflicts and ethnic separatist movements (Melson and Wolpe 1970; Wolpe 1974; Ottite 1975; Ottenberg 1976; Fenwick 1981; Horowitz 1981) worldwide, the black ethnic activities in the United States (Morgan 1981) and increasing ethnic activities among various immigrant groups (Glazer and Moynihan 1970; Novak 1973; Lewins 1976, 1978a, 1978b; Parkin 1977) clearly illustrate the important relationship between ethnicity and socio-economic interests. But, as Cohen says, socio-economic variables are not the only relevant factor in ethnicity.
One needs not to be a Marxist in order to recognise the fact that the earning of livelihood, the struggle for a larger share of income from the economic system, including the struggle for housing, for higher education, and for other benefits, and similar issues constitute an important variable significantly related to ethnicity. Admittedly it is not the only relevant variable. (Cohen 1974:xv)

The above acceptance of the existence of non-socio-economic elements even in interest based ethnicities show that ethnicity cannot be seen only as a socio-economic interest based phenomena. As we saw before similar ideas have been suggested by others who reject the narrow definition of ethnicity in terms of socio-economic interests (Deshen 1974; Esman 1977). McKay (1980) in addition says that that primordial ethnic interests can even promote ethnic mobilisation independent of other socio-economic variables. Even staunch situationalists like Glazer and Moynihan accept the possibility of the existence of such elements when they say:

One should not make the distinction too sharp: certainly the prestige of one's religion and language is involved (emphasis mine) in conflicts where one advocates the right of public use of religion and language and where one advocates the right to economic and political advantages of the individual adherents of a religion or users of a language. But nevertheless it is clear the weight of these kinds of conflicts has shifted: from an emphasis on culture, language, religion as such, (emphasis in the original) it shifts to an emphasis on the interests broadly defined of the members of the group. (Glazer and Moynihan 1975:7-8)

What does this say? When we look at these arguments we can see that even the situationalist argument accepts some kind of primordiality. First, there is some form of non-situational factors, prestige as Glazer and Moynihan say here, that exist even in contemporary interest based ethnicity. Second, in the past ethnicity was not related to socio-economic
factors as it is today. So, as Glazer and Moynihan say above, the emphasis has shifted. Others like Esman (1977), Deshen (1974), Uchendu (1975) and De Vos (1975), as we saw before, show this second form of ethnicity, which according to Glazer and Moynihan was present only in the past, (Glazer and Moynihan 1975:7-8) to exist even today. McKay (1980: 244-253), driving the point further, argues that primordial ethnic sentiments not only exist but they also can lead to ethnic mobilisation either independent of socio-economic variables or in conjunction with them.

So, examination of primordial interests and sentiments in addition to situationalist variables become very important in ethnic explanation. Do we accept the separation of the two as Glazer and Moynihan (1974, 1975) do, by saying that contemporary ethnicity is a new reality (see also Burgess 1978) or is it possible to demonstrate that both 'old primordial' conflicts and contemporary ethnic mobilisation, that is new ethnicity, are only two dimensions of the same reality? The basic argument of staunch situationalists like Glazer and Moynihan simply put is that the primordial attachments to language, religion and culture and the like in the past did not result in ethnicity as ethnicity is defined today. They were only primordial attachments and there were no socio-economic interest factors involved. The weakness of this argument is twofold. First, we cannot substantiate it with historical data. How can one be so sure, for example, that the Holy Wars (crusades) of the middle ages were the result of just primordial attachments to one's faith and there were no socio-economic interests involved? It is only an assumption and is no more plausible than the argument of primordialists who consider that primordial attachments 'stem from givens or assumed givens' of society (Geertz 1963:109). Second, a weakness which is related to the first is that such distinction is artificial. We cannot establish beyond doubt
that ethnicity can be divided into two polar types as primordial and situational ethnicity. This in other words means that ethnicity is not either primordial or situational but primordial and situational. The two characteristics not only co-exist (McKay 1980) but also are invariably related and interdependent. The sense of common peoplehood which characterises ethnic attachments (Morris 1970; Schermerhorn 1970:12, 1976:5) is the result of both primordiality and situationality.

When we argue that ethnicity is both primordial and situational, that leads to another interesting question. That is, how can one explain the origin of ethnicity? Did it first start from some unknown primordial attachments that are not verifiable or did it start as a result of situational variables? It is argued here that to understand this we need to look at the causal primacy of socio-structural variables and the interactive relationship between ideology and structure put forward by Weber (1968). It is argued here that ethnicity should be understood as a historical process and that what we call primordial attachments are actual social constructs of the past whose situationality is lost in history. By saying this I am not suggesting that there is no possibility at all for some form of 'pure primordial' ethnic attachments to exist. The 'resentment' of people who are not similar to one's own kind and the opinion of them as 'inferior' is possibly endemic to man and inexplicable. For example, when we think of beings from outer space with whom we have had no contact at all, which means there are certainly no socio-economic interests involved, we tend to think of them, albeit in the abstract, as inferior in one way or another. Either they are 'deformed' or 'evil' from our point of view. Virtually all science fiction that look at alien beings shares this ethnocentric view. Even the early social anthropologists who studied colonial societies in Asia and in Africa had similar ideas. But for all practical purposes such
extreme views are not of any value in explaining ethnic divisions. So I am not looking at this aspect in this discussion.

Attempts to explain primordial attachments as social constructs of the past is not new. Park (1950) who is responsible for changing the emphasis of race relations studies from the biological notion of race to social characteristics was one of the first to suggest that race consciousness is a social product. Das Gupta (1975) looking at linguistic and tribal conflicts in South Asia suggested that primordiality in reference to its origin is basically historical. This close relationship between historical process and ethnic sentiments/attachments can be further elaborated if we look at the most elementary characteristic that bind members of ethnic groups together, which is the sense of common peoplehood based on shared historical past (Schermerhorn 1970:12, 1976:5).

It cannot be denied that a notion of some form of shared past exists whenever and wherever ethnic sentiments exist. Even the critics of ethnicity and its importance in social analysis accept the existence of such sentiments based on common origins. As de Lepervanche says,

(Th)ere is, of course, the very definite existence in the real world of groups and individuals who stress their origins and their differences and who use these in cultural and political contexts. I do not doubt this; nor do I wish to deny the experiences and perceptions of those who feel strongly about, on account of, their origins. (1980:25)

By saying that sentiments of shared common origin/past is a universal feature of ethnicity I am not denying the importance of the socio-economic interest factor. Socio-economic interests are important to understand ethnicity but they should not be the definitional characteristic. The reason is that socio-economic interests are not present in all ethnic situations (McKay 1980), unless of course if we deliberately use interests
to define ethnicity as Glazer and Moynihan (1975) do, while the sense of shared historical past is. Such ideas of shared past must be understood as part of a cultural system as a whole. I think that Deshen (1976:293) is correct in pointing out that 'ethnic action is also a cultural derivation of the symbolic system that obtained in any given society prior to contact between given disparate groups'.

If we accept that the above 'shared common past/origin', which is part of a cultural system, as an indispensable component of ethnicity we can separate ethnic groups from other interest groups. Such sentiments may or may not result in ethnicity in their own terms. But they prevent ethnic groups becoming class like structures. For example, it functions as a buffer preventing two ethnic groups/categories who face similar social disadvantages joining together as one people. It compartmentalises socio-economic interests and prevents them becoming common interests. What we have to be cautious about is that the notions of common experience and shared historical past do not make socio-economic interests interests of ethnic groups, but only provide a sound basis for such a development by providing a pre-determined system of cultural/ideological classification, a symbolic estate as some scholars prefer to call it (Deshen 1976; Padgett 1980). But these cultural/ideological classifications themselves are not independent of the influence of socio-structural variables. They, as I said before, are most probably creations of situational variables of the past (Holden Jr. 1965; Das Gupta 1975).

Further, socio-economic interests do not always accentuate these as in new ethnicity and ethnic mobilisation. In situations of new ethnic identity formation, for example, the importance of some of these shared notions are played down (Fisher 1978; Lewins 1978a). To understand this we need to examine the relative strength of ideologies and structural relations that are present in a given context. In this sense ethnicity is not an event
in a given point of time as situationalists see it, but a *historical process*, the dynamic of which is the interaction between ideology and structure. In the next section I shall examine this process in detail.

**Ethnicity, Ideology and Structure**

I mentioned in the previous section that ethnicity needs to be explained as a historical process if we are to see the relationship between so called primordial and situational ethnicities. Consistent with this view, primordial attachments in all real situations can be seen as social constructs whose situational aspects have been lost in history. I want to demonstrate here that such a historical approach to ethnicity would enable us to understand not only the interactive relationship between primordial and situational ethnicities, which in other words means ethnicity is a single reality and not two separate phenomena as we see it today, but also would help to eliminate the unnecessary confusion associated with the role of ethnicity and class (Lewins 1981). In this section I shall elaborate on this argument by drawing on the sociology of Max Weber.

Compared to voluminous work on areas such as religion and social action, Weber did little detailed work on the subject of ethnic relations. In *Economy and Society* Weber (1973) looks at ethnic groups and says that ethnicity is a subjective belief that facilitates group formation (see also Burgess 1978 and Cross 1978). Further, he acknowledges the role of situational factors by saying that ethnic membership is inspired by wider social forces, specifically the 'political community' (Burgess 1978:271n). In this sense Weber's idea of ethnicity is somewhat similar to that of the situationalist ethnic tradition as he accepts the role of social structural factors in ethnicity in a given context. But it is not his work on ethnicity we need to look at here but his thesis on the
interaction between ideology and structure as presented in the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (Weber 1968).

Weber's critical examination of the Marxian idea of economic determinism in the above work (Weber 1968) triggered off a new debate among social scientists as to the role of ideology in the study of social phenomena (Robertson 1935; Trevor-Roper 1967; Skinner 1969; Hill 1973). But a close examination of this debate reveals that the majority of scholars who contributed to this tend to look only at religion as their focus of examination (Green 1959; Stone 1974; Turner 1974). This somewhat limited approach to Weber's argument has hindered us from seeing the full analytical implications of Weber's thesis. As Turner (1974:231) correctly shows, the relationship between religious values and capitalist development was only one of several theses presented by Weber (1968). In addition, Weber was interested in explaining his general paradigm of the interactive relationship between ideology and structure (Turner 1974:231). It is this particular Weber thesis we need to look at when examining ethnicity as a historical process.

By saying that religious ideas influence structural relations, in this case the capitalist formation in Western Europe, Weber did not outrightly reject the Marxian argument of historical materialism. Weber accepted the causal primacy of structure over ideology. In other words he did not reject the claim that ideas have their origins in the wider socio-economic environment. He claimed, in his examination of Protestant ascetic values, that it is necessary to investigate how ascetic values, which are ideology, are shaped by the totality of social conditions, especially economic (Weber 1968; see also Giddens 1977:194). What he rejected was the 'popular interpretation' of historical materialism, such as 'one sided' economic determinism (Weber 1968:75; Lewins 1981:9). In place of that he suggested an interactive role between ideas and social
conditions (Weber 1968:27, see also Bendix 1973; Rex 1970).

When we examine the interactive relationship between ideology and structure there is another important question we need to look into. That is how do we distinguish between ideology and structure. Here I take structure to include those patterns such as social class which are common to both Weber and Marx, and affinities such as economic and other material interests in a social system. They, in other words, are the basis of constituents of social relations that give rise to specific socio-economic interests. Ideology, on the other hand, is a pattern or system of beliefs and values discussed in the Marxian notion of superstructure. Ethnicity, in this sense, is only a part of culture and is only a part of the totality of ideologies. Once we distinguish between ideology and my limited sense of the term structure, the next step is to see how ideologies interact with the latter. Here we need to look at Weber again.

In presenting his argument in the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Weber (1968) says that religious ideas have the ability to influence over time and in a direction which is different from that involved in their origins. In other words, ideologies have a relative autonomy over structure (Hall 1978:17). Even Marxist scholars seem to be in agreement with this. Illustrative of this point Lenin (1920; see also Claudin-Urondo 1977), discussing the role of state in socialist society, hints at the continuity of ideas despite the destruction of material conditions when he says that the dictatorship of the proletariat is necessary to protect the achievements of the revolution. It is this capacity of ideas to continue to exist without their material basis that is important in understanding the interactive role of ideology. Existing ideologies provide meaning for social action. Action is meaningfully
related to the ideological realm. Ethnicity like other ideologies, such as religious ideas, provides meaning to social action.

Ethnicity is an ideology because it is a part of system of beliefs in a given society. Further, these beliefs have their origin in socio-economic structure. No one can deny that the sense of shared origin or the historical sense of peoplehood is a part of a belief system. This sense of ethnicity must be separated from contemporary ethnic mobilisation. The former is only an idea while the latter is the interaction between ideas and structure. The first I shall call 'lingering ethnicity', the second I shall call 'new ethnicity'. Figure 2.1 illustrates the interaction between lingering ethnicity and socio-economic conditions in the ethnic process and the way it gives rise to new ethnicity.

FIGURE 2.1 : ETHNICITY AS A HISTORICAL PROCESS

\[ E_1 = \text{Ethnic sentiments and new identity formation} \]

\[ E_{n1} \text{ and } E_{n2} = \text{Instances of 'new Ethnicity'} \]

\[ C_1, C_2 \text{ and } C_3 = \text{Instances of Culture} \]

\[ M_{c1}, M_{c2} \text{ and } M_{c3} = \text{Different instances of material conditions/social structure} \]

\[ \downarrow \text{Continuity of ideology} \]

\[ \downarrow \text{Influence of structure} \]

\[ \downarrow \text{Ethnic formation} \]
The above figure shows that ethnicity can be explained as a process in time and a consequence of the interaction of ideology and material conditions. The first situation shows the origin of ethnic sentiments \(E_1\) as a result of the interaction between culture \((C_1)\) and social structure \((M_{c1})\). Here persistence of certain socio-structural and cultural conditions together can result in certain forms of common ethnic identification, i.e. sense of peoplehood. The idea of a cultural division of labour and ethnic divisions (Hechter 1976) in a broad perspective is similar to this situation. The recent studies by Lewins (1978a) among Italians in Australia which pinpoint new Italian identity formation and Fisher's (1978) examination of Indian identity formation among Asian Indians in New York are two examples of the interactive relationship between material conditions and culture leading to new ethnicity. That is, there is not only interest based group formation but new ethnic identity formation as well.

The second and third situations \((E_{n1} \text{ and } E_{n2})\) are different from the first because there is the added influence of lingering ethnicity \(E_1\). This situation is illustrated by the 'new ethnicity' and ethnic mobilisation we see today. Here ethnic formation is influenced by existing ethnic sentiments. For example, the notion of a chosen people among Jews is such a lingering ethnic sentiment that is capable of influencing group sentiments and actions even today. Such sentiments give meaningfulness to interest based ethnic action. But it is important to note that they were at a given point of time in the past. Simply ethnic sentiments \(E_1\) originating from social structure. Later they became part of culture as lingering ethnic sentiments. It is the kind of interaction between lingering ethnicity (ideology) and material interests that make ethnicity a historical process. In examining ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne I shall further elaborate all this in relation
to ethnic dynamics among different sections among the Sri Lankan community.
NOTES

1. There is no agreement on the distinction between race and ethnicity among scholars. Many scholars consider race as a special case of ethnicity (Shermerhorn 1970; Adam 1971; de Vos 1975; Skinner 1975; Francis 1976). Others like Banton (1982) go even further when they say that ethnic groups are inclusive categories of race. But as Burgess (1978:282n) says it is reasonable to assume both have much in common (see also Rex 1970, 1980; Despres 1975; Murphree 1975).

2. Sense of peoplehood based on 'shared past/origin' is the main characteristic that separates ethnicity from purely interest based forms of identifications such as class identity. When situationalists explain ethnic phenomena (Vincent 1974; Glazer and Moynihan 1974, 1975; Patterson 1975) they only look at mobilisation as the focus of their explanation not the sense of peoplehood which makes such mobilisations ethnic mobilisation. This is where contemporary ethnic analysis has gone wrong. Voluntary expression of ethnicity in non-mobilisationist situations in relation to immigrants (Simon 1979; Gans 1979; Buchignani 1980; Padget 1980) and in relation to non-immigrant situations (Bovin 1974; Nagata 1974; Pillsbury 1976) shows that ethnic mobilisation is only one aspect of ethnicity. So ethnicity can and does exist without interest mobilisation, but the latter cannot exist without some form of sense of 'shared past'. If a population does not have such 'sense of peoplehood' when mobilising socio-economic interest as an ethnic group they create it. The best example of this is in the emphasis on African heritage by Afro-Americans in mobilising 'Black ethnicity'. 
3. By suggesting that the interaction between ideology and structure should be the focus I am trying to address only the problems created by excessive use of materialist and primordialist explanations in ethnic analysis. I am aware that the debate between structuralism and voluntarism is a complex issue in sociological theory and my theoretical position is largely related to that. But as my attention is limited to ethnicity primordialism and situational analysis I do not address the wider issues of the structuralist-voluntarist debate. Detailed critique of these issues can be found in Archer's (1982) discussion that emphasises the need to find a balance between 'society' and 'human component' and in Gidden's (1979) examination of the interdependence of action and structure.

4. Marx himself admits that ideology can regulate social action when he says that religion is the opium of the masses that blinds them so that they cannot see that they are exploited. But this influence according to him is temporary in nature because such ideologies can and need to be abolished (Marx 1963:43-44).
There are several important reasons which make a detailed examination of home country ethnic relations an important component of the study of immigrant ethnicity. First, such an examination provides us with a basis to explain immigrant ethnicity comparatively, which is essential in understanding changes which have taken place in the process of immigration, specifically immigrants' exposure to socio-economic conditions in the host society. This enables us to see whether immigrant ethnicity is a continuity of home country ethnic sentiments as in some cases (Lewins 1978a) or a new ethnic phenomenon/new ethnic identification which has emerged in the host society (Lewins 1978a; Fisher 1978). Second, as argued in the previous chapter, even new ethnic revivals cannot always be explained solely in terms of host country socio-economic relations. In most cases lingering ethnicity is involved, which, in the case of immigrants, is closely related to the home country ethnicity, i.e. ethnic sub-culture as some scholars prefer to call it (Lewins 1978a). It is not possible to understand the influence of lingering ethnic sentiments if we do not have an understanding of the home society ethnic situation of immigrants. Last but not least, as we shall see later, there is a form of interactive relationship between immigrants, especially the first generation, and the home society they left behind. So in this chapter I shall examine ethnic relations in Sri Lanka as a background to what we shall discuss in the following chapters.

The discussion in this chapter is divided into three major sections. In the first section I shall focus on the major ethnic divisions in Sri Lankan society. In addition, attention also will be on sub-divisions
of major ethnic categories in terms of religion, caste and regional identifications. The second part examines the process of ethnic identity and boundary maintenance in inter and intra ethnic interactions. The third section will focus on the changes of ethnic relations in Sri Lanka as a result of colonial rule. This is particularly important as the colonial rule of the country, especially the British period, can be seen as the most important period in the development of ethnic relations in Sri Lankan society. Further, in this section I shall also focus on the present political conflict in Sri Lanka and the way politics is dominated by ethnic conflicts.

Ethnic Divisions in Sri Lankan Society

Sri Lanka is an island republic covering some 25,000 square miles. The country is occupied by a varied mixture of peoples who are different from each other not only in ethnic identification but also in language usage, cultural practices, religious affiliations and caste divisions. According to the Census Department of Sri Lanka, there are seven different ethnic communities in the country. The following table (Table 3.1) gives the number of people belonging to each community according to the 1981 census.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Community</th>
<th>Population ('000)</th>
<th>Percent of Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinhalese</td>
<td>10,986</td>
<td>74.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan Tamils</td>
<td>1,872</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Tamils</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian/Sri Lankan Moors</td>
<td>1,057</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burghers</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malays</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14,850</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1981 Census Report, Department of Census and Statistics, Colombo, Sri Lanka
In addition to the above seven official ethnic communities there are a few others including a small community of Chinese and a small aboriginal population called 'Veddas'.

It was mentioned above that to understand ethnic divisions in Sri Lankan society we need to look at language usage, cultural practices, religious affiliations and caste divisions. Of these, language and religion are particularly important as they are specially significant in understanding ethnic conflicts in the political context. Sinhalese and Tamils, who are the two major components in the present ethnic conflict, speak two different languages, a factor that is very important in explaining the present communal struggle (Kearney 1967, 1978). Further, religious identity has a close association with ethnic identity. For example, all Buddhists in Sri Lanka are Sinhalese while all Hindus are Tamils. The following table (Table 3.2) shows the religious composition of the population of Sri Lanka according to the 1981 census.

TABLE 3.2 : RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION OF SRI LANKA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Population ('000)</th>
<th>Percent of Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buddhists</td>
<td>10,292</td>
<td>69.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>2,295</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>1,111</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>1,134</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14,847</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1981 Census Report, Department of Census and Statistics, Colombo, Sri Lanka
As the above table (Table 3.2) shows, the majority of Sri Lankans are Buddhists followed by Hindus who constitute about 17 per cent of the population. To understand the implications of this we need to look at this in relation to ethnic identification. As noted before, virtually all Buddhists are Sinhalese while all Hindus are Tamils (Fernando and Kearney 1979:12). Though there are Christians among both Tamils and Sinhalese they constitute only 10 per cent of each community. This makes Sinhalese Buddhists the clear numerical majority in Sri Lankan society who are in conflict with mainly Hindu Tamils. The implications of this in explaining ethnic divisions and ethnic behaviour and particularly ethnic conflict I shall discuss in the rest of this chapter. First it is important to examine the basic ethnic divisions in detail.

A. Sinhalese

Sinhalese who believe themselves to be the first colonists of Sri Lanka are basically an ethno-linguistic category (Fernando and Kearney 1979). The language they speak is Sinhalese, which is a part of the Indo-European language group (Fernando and Kearney 1979). These people are believed to be descendants of an Indo-Aryan group of settlers who arrived in the island around 5th Century B.C. (Wijesekara Rev. 1951; Arasaratnam 1964; de Silva 1977). Some scholars believe that original Sinhalese settlers came to the island from Gujarat in Western India (Basham 1951; Arasaratnam 1964). Because of this belief of Indo-Aryan origin, which is very strong among Sinhalese, they consider themselves superior to other ethnic communities, especially to Tamils, in the country (Langton 1979:64). Sinhalese are the majority of Sri Lanka (Table 3.1) and are the majority of the population in all parts of Sri Lanka except in the North and Eastern provinces (Nyrop 1971; Planning 1980).
As mentioned before, Sinhalese are predominantly Buddhists but there is also a small minority of Sinhalese Christians. Christianity among Sinhalese is the result of colonial occupation of the country which extended for about 450 years in one form or another since the arrival of the Portuguese in 1505. Most Sinhalese who are Christians live in coastal areas and in town centres. There are neither Hindus nor followers of Islam among Sinhalese. The association between Buddhism and Sinhalese identity, as I mentioned above, is very important in understanding Sinhalese ethnicity. Because Buddhism does not extend beyond the boundaries of Sinhalese identity and Buddhists are the clear majority of Sri Lanka (Table 3.2) there is a strong Buddhist Sinhalese identity in Sri Lankan society. According to Sinhalese Buddhists, the Sinhalese 'nation' and Buddhist religion are two inseparable phenomena (Obeyesekere 1975; Smith 1979). This identification was particularly important during the initial period of the second wave of nationalism (Farmer 1965; Roberts 1978a) or, as some scholars call it, during the period of the Sinhalese Buddhist revival (Wriggins 1960). During that period there was a clear separation of Sinhalese Buddhist and Sinhalese Christian identities. But with recent political developments that have polarised Sinhalese and Tamils, this situation seems to have changed. This will be discussed in a later section.

Like religious sub-divisions, regional identifications are also important among Sinhalese. Sinhalese are divided as up country and low country Sinhalese, a traditional distinction of regional origin (Fernando and Kearney 1979:5). The up country Sinhalese or Kandyans, as they are referred to commonly, are descendants of inhabitants of the interior highlands and north-central dry zone that once formed the Kandyan Kingdom. Ancestors of low country Sinhalese populated the coastal areas of the west and south of the country. Because of this historical reference
to the origins in identifying Kandyans (up country Sinhalese) and low country Sinhalese, the place of residence today is not an important trait. During the colonial period there was a significant movement of people from low country to up country (Roberts 1973) in the form of migration of artisans and traders but they still are not considered Kandyans. Despite recent population movements, the majority of people who belong to these two sub-ethnic identities still live in their respective regions in the country.

In addition to regional identifications and religious divisions, Sinhalese are divided also along caste lines. The caste system among Sinhalese is different from both the Indian caste system and that among Tamils in Sri Lanka (Denham 1912; Gilbert 1952; Ryan 1953). First, the Sinhalese caste system does not have a religious basis as both Buddhism and Christianity do not accept caste ideology. Though there are no detailed data it is believed that there are about 20 different castes among Sinhalese (Gilbert 1952; Ryan 1953).

Though caste, regional and religious identities are seen among the Sinhalese, being Sinhalese remains the most dominant form of identification among them. The Sinhalese ethnic identity is particularly important in political mobilisation of the Sinhalese community. The present ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka is evidence of the importance of Sinhalese identity in the political arena. The other identities are mainly useful in regulating day to day individual interaction, who to keep company with or in choosing marriage partners, and are not often invoked in political activities. This does not mean that these identities are not mobilised by Sinhalese. Occasionally, especially during elections, we see these sub-identities assuming importance in pressure group activities in deciding internal power politics of the Sinhalese community (Wriggins 1960; Singer 1964, 1965; Samaraweera 1981). But today we do not see Sinhalese placing great importance on their sub-identities in political context.
as they did in the past, especially during the pre-independence period (Roberts 1978a). This is mainly because of the increasing importance of the Sinhalese-Tamil conflict which has gained the centre stage of Sri Lankan politics since the mid 1970s (Siriweera 1980; Kodikara 1981).

B. Tamils

Tamils, like Sinhalese, also have a long history in the country. First reference to the presence of Tamils in Sri Lanka dates back to 2nd Century B.C. (Wijesekera 1951; Arasaratnam 1964) when Tamils from south India came as either invaders or traders. In addition to these early Tamil settlers, who are now referred to as Sri Lankan Tamils, there was another influx of Tamil migrants during the British rule. These Indian Tamils were initially brought in by the British to work in tea plantations in central Sri Lanka (Naguleswaran 1951; de Silva 1961; Jayaraman 1967).

Tamils are also a linguistic category (Fernando and Kearney 1979). Both Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils speak a Dravidian language called Tamil. This language, which is considered to have its roots in the Finno-Ugryan language family, is widely spoken in south India, the source area of Sri Lanka's Tamil population. Besides the usage of a common language, the two Tamil communities in Sri Lanka are also close to each other in religious affiliation. Both Tamil communities are predominantly Hindus with about 10 per cent Christian (Chehabi 1980). Despite these similarities there is no common identification or group formation among them.

Sri Lankan Tamils are demographically predominant in the North and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka and about 60 per cent of Sri Lankan Tamils live in these two provinces (Nyrop 1971). In Jaffna peninsula in the North province of Sri Lanka, more than 95 per cent of the population are Sri Lankan Tamils (Nyrop 1971). But in the Eastern province, which is also
considered by Tamils as part of their traditional homeland, Sri Lankan Tamils constitute only about 40 per cent of the population (Nyrop 1971). In addition, until recently Colombo also used to have a significant Sri Lankan Tamil population but this has changed as they are moving into traditional Tamil areas with increasing ethnic disturbances. So it is reasonable to say that currently the demographic situation of Tamils in Sri Lanka is in a state of flux. Indian Tamils, on the other hand, live in isolation in central Sri Lanka on tea plantations. About 50 per cent live in Central province which has most tea plantations in the country. About another 40 per cent live in adjoining areas while the remaining Indian Tamils live in Colombo and other major town centres and work as scavenging labourers.

Similar to the Sinhalese, there is a form of regional identification which divides the Sri Lankan Tamil community. The major regional divisions are Jaffna Tamils, Batticaloa Tamils and Colombo Tamils. These divisions which are also a result of historical references to regional origins, are not as strong as those among Sinhalese.

Caste identification is also an important aspect in understanding divisions among Tamils. Both Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils have a strong caste stratification system but the two are independent of each other. Both systems are very similar to that found in south India and have been shaped by religious values of the Hindu religion (Banks 1957; Jayaraman 1964, 1967). This similarity is not surprising as the two communities, as mentioned before, still retain their cultural and other ties with South India (Banks 1957).

Though both Indian and Sri Lankan Tamils show several common characteristics for example religion, language and caste structure based on the Hindu religion, they cannot be considered as one ethnic group. Tamil identity is basically a social identity given by the Sinhalese
majority. Both Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils are conscious of their own ethnic identifications and consider themselves as two different communities. There is virtually no inter ethnic social interaction between the two communities. This is largely because of the superior feelings of Sri Lankan Tamils who look at their poor cousins in plantation areas as low caste people. Though there have been several attempts to unite the two communities on a common political platform none of them were successful.

C. Burghers

The term Burgher is used commonly to refer to all Sri Lankans of mixed European descent. In this sense the Burgher community of the country consists of people of Portuguese Dutch or English descent. At present the Burgher population of the country is about 0.3 per cent of the total population (see Table 3.1). Burghers on the whole are an urban ethnic community though some of them, those who live in Eastern province mainly, live in villages and engage in agriculture (Peiris 1953:13; McGilvray 1982). According to available figures, the majority of Burghers, about 70 per cent of the Burgher population of the country, live in Colombo and its suburbs (Nyrop 1971). The other area with a significant Burgher population is the Eastern province, particularly the Batticaloa area.

Though the historical origins of Sri Lankan Burghers are diverse, that is Dutch, Portuguese and English intermarried with locals or sometimes with each other, English has become their mother tongue. Both Portuguese and Dutch Burghers adopted English during British rule (Fernando 1972). Before that creole Portuguese had been the means of communication among both Dutch and Portuguese Burghers (McGilvray 1982:241). Today, in addition to English, the majority of Burghers speak either Tamil or Sinhalese.
Like the two communities discussed so far, Burghers also do not constitute a uniform community. They are also divided along religious lines and on their perceived origins, that is the nature of their European ancestry and the local ethnic community they are mixed with. Most of the Burghers with either Dutch or English ancestry are non-Catholics while almost all Portuguese Burghers are Catholics. The important division among Burghers though, is based on their perceived ancestry. On the basis of this they are first divided as Dutch Burghers, Portuguese Burghers and Eurasians. There is another sub-division among Portuguese Burghers made on the basis of the local community they have mixed with. Portuguese Burghers, who are mixed with Tamils, are considered by other Burghers as a different people and called Batticaloa Burghers because they mainly live in Tamil dominated Batticaloa area in the Eastern province.

Out of these divisions the Dutch Burgher identification is based on the belief that they have an unbroken European ancestry, which means they are not mixed. Some of them even believe that they are purely Dutch people and have not even mixed with other Burghers. But this claim is a dubious one. Fernando (1972) says that it is certain the Dutch Burghers who mixed with Portuguese Burghers and Eurasians were given Dutch Burgher status. There are other reports of non-Dutch Burghers been given Dutch Burgher status during the Dutch period (Johnston Mss 1957; Grenier 1958). Eurasians are, on the other hand, the people of mixed English descent. Eurasian identity to some extent carries a social stigma among the Burgher community as it is believed that most are descendants of people born out of wedlock as there was a strict rule among British citizens working in Sri Lanka not to marry locals. Portuguese Burghers, who are the largest Burgher community in Sri Lanka, are mixed with both Sinhalese and Tamils. Portuguese Burghers in Batticaloa area mainly mixed with Tamils.
These sub-divisions among Burghers can be seen as forming a loose hierarchical order with Dutch Burghers at the top and Portuguese Burghers, mainly those who live in Batticaloa area, at the bottom. The reason for this is, on the one hand, the presumed unbroken European ancestry of Dutch Burghers, and the low social and economic status of Portuguese Burghers. Portuguese Burghers who are darker in complexion compared to Dutch Burghers, normally engage in low paid, low status occupations (McGilvray 1982). Even locals consider the Portuguese as an inferior social category. In colloquial Sinhalese speech there is a distinction made by calling Dutch Burghers 'lansi' from hollandsche and the Portuguese Burghers 'tuppahi' from Indo-Portuguese topass (McGilvray 1982). The latter is emphasised by the fact that in colloquial terms 'tuppahi' also means social outcasts.

Today these distinctions among Burghers seem to be slowly disappearing. There are several reasons for this. First, as happened among other mixed European populations in Asian countries (van der Kroef 1953), with the arrival of independence Burghers started leaving Sri Lanka. Dutch Burghers were the most anxious to leave because of their strong European identification. Because of this the Dutch Burgher power base has disintegrated in the Sri Lankan Burgher community. Second, other social and cultural differences that separated also gradually started disappearing. So it is reasonable to consider the Burgher community in Sri Lanka as one ethnic community at present.

D. Moors

Moors, who are popularly known as Muslims by the Sinhalese and Marakkalu by the Tamils, amount to about 7 per cent of Sri Lanka's population (Table 3.1). They are found almost everywhere on the island
but a significant concentration can be seen along the east coast, particularly in the south eastern coastal area around Batticaloa and in the Western and Central provinces (Nyrop 1971). In the Central province the concentration of Moors is mainly in and around the regional capital Kandy, which has about 10 per cent of the Moor population of the country (Nyrop 1971). Apart from these, concentrations are in the Puttalam area in the West Coast.

To understand this omnipresence of Moors we need to look at their occupational structure. Moors are traditionally considered as a trading community (Samaraweera 1978:446) whose commercial activities range from petty trading at village levels to major business ventures. The latter form of occupations are mainly the domain of recently arrived Indian Moor businessmen (Mauroof 1972). Still the gem business of Sri Lanka is largely in the hands of Moor businessmen (Mauroof 1972; Phadnis 1979a). This does not mean that Moors do not engage in agricultural activities. They do, but only a relatively small section of the community. Moors who engage in agriculture come mainly from the eastern coast of the country (Phadnis 1979a).

The Moor population of Sri Lanka is divided into two sub-groups as Sri Lankan Moors and Indian Moors. The Sri Lankan Moors originally came from the west coast of India (Arasaratnam 1964) which has a significant Muslim population. Indian Moors on the other hand are recent arrivals, mainly during the colonial period, from India. This sub-division of Indian and Sri Lankan Moors is the only one that divides the Moor community. There are no caste or other similar social divisions among Moors (Gilbert 1952:296). But, according to McGilvray (1973), among east coast Moors who mainly live in villages there is a social division somewhat similar to the caste system with a loosely organised hierarchical ordering.
All Moors belong to the Islamic faith which is referred to as the Muslim religion by the Sinhalese, hence the Sinhalese name 'Muslims' for Moors. Because of this relationship between the Islamic faith and the Moor community some scholars consider Moors as an ethno-religious community (Fernando and Kearney 1979). The majority of Moors who live in Sinhalese areas speak Sinhalese though they are commonly considered as a Tamil speaking community (Arasaratnam 1964; Mauroof 1972). Because of their presumed Arabic origins and of their connection to Arabic religion, the Arabic language also plays a very important role in their social life. It is very common for Moor parents to teach their children Arabic because of this (Samaraweera 1978).

Though the mother tongue of Moors is Tamil they do not like to be identified as Tamils. Tamils on their part always try to establish the similarity between Tamils and Moors (Ramanathan 1888). Moors strongly deny that such similarities exist (Samaraweera 1978). Further, they strongly resent the idea that they physically resemble Tamils (Samaraweera 1978). The reason behind this may be the strong notion in Sri Lankan society that Tamils are dark people. In Sri Lanka, both Sinhalese and Moors consider that Tamils are darker than they. Very often Tamils are referred to as black people. So it is not surprising the Moors resent the attempts by Tamils to establish the common origins of the two communities and see them as one people.

E. Other Ethnic Communities

Besides the major ethnic communities discussed so far there are others such as Malays, Chinese and an aboriginal community called Veddhas. Of them, Malays are the most numerous (see Table 3.1). Originally Malays were brought into the country by Dutch rulers from Java, Sumatra and Malacca to work in the army (Phadnis 1979a). Those who opted to stay
after the Dutch left the country in 1796 are the ancestors of Sri Lanka's Malay community. Malays, like Burghers, are an urban community. Most of them live in either Colombo or in Kandy, the regional capital of the hill country. Their traditional language is one derived from Javanese (Phadnis 1979a) but most today use English as their mother tongue. Apart from a few Christians, the majority of Malays belong to the Islamic faith.

The number of Chinese in the country amount to only a few hundred. Though exact origins are not clear, the majority are considered as descendants of Chinese who fled from South East Asia during the Japanese occupation during the Second World War (Lasker 1954:83). Chinese, like Burghers and Malays, live in urban areas. The aboriginal community called Veddas are even smaller. They still live as hunters in jungle areas of the dry zone of the country or in small villages (village Veddas). Sinhalese consider the Veddas as the first inhabitants of the country. According to popular belief among Sinhalese, Veddas are either their equals or even their superiors.7

Ethnic Boundaries and Ethnic Interaction

When examining ethnic boundary maintenance and ethnic interaction, both intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic, we need to look at not only major ethnic identifications like Sinhalese, Tamil, Burgher and Moor but also sub-divisions caused by other factors as well. As we saw before, every major ethnic community in Sri Lanka is sub-divided in one form or other. Some of these sub-divisions like caste identification found among Sinhalese and Tamils, though theoretically not considered as ethnic sub-divisions, are also important to understand social interaction patterns of individuals belonging to different ethnic categories. In fact most social activities within both Sinhalese and Tamil communities are
regulated by these sub-divisions. Major ethnic identification becomes prominent mainly in the political arena in relation to mobilisation of ethnicity. In this section I shall attempt to explain the nature of these boundaries and ethnic and other forms of interactions of ethnic categories in Sri Lankan society.

As mentioned above, social interaction of Sri Lankans does not take place on the basis of individual's major ethnic identification. The reason is that there is no need for it. About 80 per cent of Sri Lankans live in rural areas (Statistical Pocket Book 1983:21) and most rural villages are, except for the presence of occasional Tamil or Moor petty traders, ethnically homogeneous. The ethnic homogeneity of village life is broken only in a few areas like the Eastern province where Tamils, Sinhalese and Moor people live in adjoining villages or in some areas in Kandy and in southern Sri Lanka where Moors and Sinhalese live in adjoining villages. This ethnic homogeneity is broken also in urban centres where different ethnic communities live together.

This does not mean that Sri Lankans are neither conscious of their ethnicity nor that there is inter ethnic interaction. People in Sri Lanka are very conscious of their ethnicity. This can be illustrated if we look at the existence of ethnic prejudices and stereotypes and restrictions of certain activities like marriages across ethnic boundaries. These are very strongly expressed in relation to major ethnic divisions. For example, it is very rare for a Sinhalese to marry a Tamil or a Moor or vice versa, but the same strong feelings cannot be found in relation to sub-divisions within major categories. Nevertheless, some restrictions of social activities across sub-ethnic boundaries, for example, restriction or disapproval of marriages between up country and low country Sinhalese, do exist.
Though people in Sri Lanka tend to choose from their 'own ethnic community', even in forming friendship networks there are no socially determined rules or sanctions as such to regulate these activities. The main reasons for the lack of inter ethnic interaction are the territorial separation, language barriers and cultural incompatibilities. For example, Sinhalese and Tamils speak two different languages and only a few are bilingual. Some overcome this by using English as the link language but only a small minority of the locals are fluent in English (Kearney 1967:17-19). As mentioned before there are other cultural incompatibilities as well. Sinhalese do not like the Tamil practice of application of gingelly oil and holy ash, which is part of Tamil culture and Hindu religion, on their bodies. One cannot marry a Moor without becoming a Muslim and that also prevents others having marriage relations with Moors.

Despite all this there is inter ethnic interaction among a section of Sri Lankan community. They are the urban upper middle class Sri Lankan who are English educated. This section of the Sri Lankan community consists of Sinhalese and Tamils who have been educated in the English medium in urban colleges in Sri Lanka. This section of Sri Lankan society, which is a product of generations of the British colonial education system, were the national elite during the early part of the 20th Century (Nyrop 1971:111). Being Westernised in cultural values and language, caste, ethnic, and religious divisions are not very important for them. Among them inter ethnic interaction is the rule. They sometimes even intermarry with each other across ethnic boundaries. The locals who belong to this section are mainly Christians. I shall discuss the importance of this section in understanding ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Australia in the next two chapters.

In addition to everyday interaction where ethnic identity plays the role of the 'ultimate boundary' in regulating social activities for
most Sri Lankans, ethnicity plays a very important role in political arena as well. This is very important for Sinhalese, Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils and Moors. In the political arena each community mobilises their ethnicity to promote their socio-economic interests (Jupp 1974). The present minority-majority relationship and ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka to a large extent is based on the socio-economic interests of different ethnic communities. I shall discuss this in the next section in detail.

When we look at both political mobilisation of ethnicity and boundary maintenance we can clearly see that in Sri Lankan society, Sinhalese, Sri Lankan Tamils, Indian Tamils, Burghers, Moors and Malays form ethnic groups. They are not only conscious of their identity but they also, except Malays and Burghers who are numerically very small, mobilise their ethnicity in the political arena. Sub-ethnic identities and caste identities, though important, do not override the importance of major ethnic identification.

The Emergence of the Present Ethnic Relations Structure

So far I have discussed only the basic characteristics of different ethnic communities in Sri Lankan society and the way ethnic boundaries are maintained. In this section I want to look at the formation of contemporary ethnic relations structure in detail. I want to argue that present ethnic relations in Sri Lankan society need to be examined in light of both socio-economic relations today and developments in the colonial era, especially during the British period. The interaction between the above and the ethnic and cultural divisions that existed prior to that, that is, lingering ethnicity, has paved the way for the emergence of new ethnic interests and ethnic mobilisation in contemporary Sri Lanka. I shall examine this distinctly separated but related process in two stages.
In the first stage, that is during the colonial period, we see new social relations which emerged and paved the way for developments since independence. The post-independence stage carried these developments further towards ethnic mobilisation based on minority-majority relations.

The exact nature of ethnic relations in Sri Lanka before the colonial period is not clear. Group identification among Sinhalese was based on lineage divisions in those early stages (Gunawardena 1979). Tamils, on the other hand, also cannot be considered as a distinct ethnic group at the same time, as the country received different waves of South Indian peoples either as invaders or immigrants (de Silva 1977:37-39). It took some time before any form of distinct Sinhalese or Tamil identity emerged. Gunawardena (1979), examining the development of Sinhalese identity, says that the ideological basis of early Sinhalese identity may have emerged around the 6th Century. De Silva (1977) sees the emergence of Tamil identity in ancient Sri Lanka as being related to the emergence of militant Hindu states in South India.

Still there is no evidence to suggest that there was any form of ethnic conflict in pre-colonial Sri Lanka. Though the two communities were in constant conflict according to historical chronicles, it is reasonable to assume that those conflicts were conflicts between rulers of different kingdoms that were composed of different communities. There is historical evidence for such an inference as there are citations of Sinhalese serving for Tamil kings, even as army officers and vice versa, which means that loyalty to one's king was more important for ancient Sri Lankans than ethnic allegiance in conflict situations. So whatever the late interpretations of history by popular historians (sometimes chauvinistic), who wrote historical chronicles, it is not possible to argue that Sinhalese and Tamils were engaged in ethnic conflict before the colonial period.
A. The Role of Colonial Occupation

When Portuguese first arrived in Sri Lanka in 1505 there were three ethnic communities living in the country. Tamils were concentrated in northern Sri Lanka in the kingdom of Jaffna. Sinhalese, who were living in the rest of the island, were divided into two kingdoms, one in the upcountry and the other in the low country, or the Kandyan kingdom and the kingdom of Kotte respectively (de Silva 1977). The other ethnic community was the Moors. They were present in all three kingdoms and were engaged in commercial and trading activities. Colonial occupation of the country was instrumental in changing the social fabric completely. First, colonial powers added new ethnic communities to Sri Lankan society, for example, mixed Europeans, Malays and Indian Tamils. But the most important development during this period came from another direction. The colonial occupation, particularly the British period, resulted in the breakdown of feudal Sri Lankan society. In place of it a form of capitalist economic structure based on plantation crops emerged (de Silva 1941; Roberts 1973). With this other institutional developments, such as expansion of education, reforms of administrative and judicial structure, followed. In addition, the British rule unified the country both politically and administratively and brought the two major ethnic communities, who so far had an independent existence, together. These developments greatly affected the existing social groupings, that is, ethnic caste and religion and their inter-relationships (Roberts 1973, 1978a, 1978b; Samaraweera 1981). The social repercussions of these developments on the ethnic relations of Sri Lankan society can be illustrated by looking at the uneven distribution of resources along ethnic lines and the emergence of a Westernised urban middle class during the colonial period (Pieris 1962; Fernando 1968, 1973a, 1973b; Roberts 1973).
Emergence of the above elite category was a development during the British period. Before the British who managed to capture the whole country in 1815, the Portuguese and the Dutch controlled only the coastal areas of Sri Lanka. Further, they preferred not to disturb the social structure of the country more than was necessary to keep their hold on the commercial role. So they preferred the existing social institutions to continue and sometimes for their benefit they even encouraged their continuity (Goonaratna 1970; de Silva 1977). The only major development that occurred during this period was the emergence of a new aristocratic group among low country Sinhalese (Goonaratna 1968, 1970) who managed to break away from the existing patronage system and establish themselves as a new upper social stratum by opting to give their loyalty to the colonials and receiving favours in return. By contrast, the impact of the British rule was far more extensive. As already mentioned, it opened up new opportunities for locals and the result, as we shall see below, was the emergence of a new social category called Westernised urban elites.

The British occupation in this manner opened up new avenues for the locals to move up in the social hierarchy by changing the social structure radically. First, with the emergence of plantations, economic opportunities were opened for locals to join the system as middlemen (Roberts 1973). Second, with the expansion of a plantation economy and land developments a local land owners class emerged (Roberts 1973; Samaraweera 1981). These new rich people were not only concerned about making money but also conscious of making their children obtain the benefits of the expanding education system. Burghers, whose mother tongue was English, were also one section of the community to obtain benefits from expanding education. Those who did not get an opportunity in the developments of the plantation economy, for example, the Tamils as the north and east were not suitable for planting (Matthews 1979), did not miss out on education as there were
extensive missionary workers in Jaffna that used education to convert people to Christianity. In fact, Tamils benefited most from colonial education reforms (de Silva 1976). These educated Sri Lankans who first entered government jobs formed the urban local elites of the colonial society.

This elite category consisted of Sinhalese, mainly from low country, Sri Lankan Tamils and Burghers. All were not only educated in English but were highly Westernised in their values (Vittachi 1962; Fernando 1968, 1973a, 1973b). Though there were considerable numbers of Buddhists and Hindus, a high proportion of the new elites were Christians. Further, because of their high degree of Westernisation there was a vast gap separating them from the rest of Sri Lankan society (Samaraweera 1981). But the most important characteristic with relation to ethnicity was the relatively low importance of traditional ethnic bonds and their strong allegiance to a form of 'Ceylonese' identity (Singer 1964; Roberts 1978a).

To understand this Ceylonese identity among the elites we need to look at two areas. First, as we saw before, because of Westernised values that formed the basis of their culture, the traditional divisions like castes and old ethnic allegiances were not important. I do not mean here that they completely rejected the importance of these old divisions. They did not. But those old allegiances did not cause them to separate along communal lines. Because of this some scholars seem to prefer to use broader terms like sectional patriotism (Roberts 1978a, 1978b) referring to this. Further, the education in the English medium enabled them to interact across traditional ethnic boundaries. In ancient Sri Lanka this was one problem faced by Sinhalese and Tamils as they spoke two different languages. This newly achieved means for inter ethnic interaction, that is, the English language, also helped the development of a Ceylonese identity. Second, British rule itself helped
the formation of this new identity by its discriminatory attitude towards the local elites (Jennings 1953; Singer 1964, 1965). Though the British considered Burghers as a social category somewhat above the locals, they were not given equal status with British (Fernando 1972). So the Ceylonese identity among the elites to some extent was a 'we' feeling created against 'they' the British (Singer 1965).

In addition to the formation of a Ceylonese identity and the elite, the other important development during the British period was the uneven distribution of resources along ethnic lines. As mentioned before, Tamils, low country Sinhalese and Burghers were mainly Christians and benefited more than others such as up country Sinhalese and Buddhists. Tamils especially secured a greater proportion of government jobs (de Silva 1976; Chehabi 1980). The situation was similar among Burghers as well (Fernando 1972). During the British period, thus Tamils, Burghers and low country Sinhalese, all in all Christians, were the communities who benefitted most in Sri Lanka. Sinhalese Buddhists on the other hand were the most disadvantaged.

This uneven distribution of resources did not affect ethnic relations in Sri Lankan society during the British period. First, the majority of the country were not directly affected by these developments and did not benefit in any way. So they were not bothered about happenings among the elites or in the political arena. Second, for the elite themselves there were adequate opportunities as only a few were educated enough to get into government and professional occupations. At that time their major problem was not uneven distribution of resources but the presence of the British. Local elites saw this as a problem for their promotion and future prospects in the occupational sphere (Jennings 1953; Singer 1965; Fernando 1970). This does not mean that all elites were in complete harmony, for there was discontentment. Both Sinhalese
and Tamil elites were not in complete agreement with the Burghers, especially in the political arena (Fernando 1972; McGilvray 1982). There were also conflicts among Sinhalese and Tamils and among the Sinhalese as well (Roberts 1978a, 1978b; Samaraweera 1981). But still there was a coexistence among the elite during this period. This situation started disintegrating after independence that heralded a new era of ethnic relations in Sri Lanka. I shall examine this in the next section.

B. The Post-Independent Ethnic Conflict

Ethnic relations in Sri Lankan society since independence are characterised by increasing emphasis by both Sinhalese and Sri Lankan Tamils on mobilising their respective ethnicities. As mentioned in the preceding section, the ground work for this was laid during the colonial period. Since independence the factors that kept different ethnic communities in the country together started disintegrating. First, the Westernised urban elites who played the leadership role in the political process gradually started losing their power to a communal minded, rural based, Sinhalese Buddhist elite (Wriggins 1960, 1961; Singer 1965; Chehabi 1980). Second, the stagnating economy resulted in elevating resource competition along ethnic lines and onto the centre stage of Sri Lankan society. To understand these developments it is necessary to return to the uneven distribution of resources along ethnic lines during the British period.

As we saw before, the uneven distribution of resources along ethnic lines was not a problem for the urban elites who were Sri Lanka's power brokers. At that time the major issue for them was the presence of the British in the country, which restricted the prospects of the local elites (Fernando 1970). But the elevation of Sinhalese Buddhist elites
with the support of rural masses in the mid 1950s changed this situation. The aspirations of the Buddhist masses, which was the power base of the new power brokers, had to be satisfied and that inevitably was directed towards the non-Buddhist, non-Sinhalese section of Sri Lankan society. But before long we see that Tamils, as having to bear the brunt of the Buddhist revival, and other segments of the society that experienced the same treatment became less and less important in the process. Why did Tamils, especially Sri Lankan Tamils, become the centre of attention of the Buddhist revival which was initially meant to be against all non-Sinhalese elements of the society? To understand this we need to look at both ideological and structural variables that shaped the ideology of Sinhalese nationalism in the mid 1950s.

In relation to structural variables, such as economic and political power, Sinhalese Buddhists saw Sri Lankan Tamils as the most formidable threat to their existence, as Tamils were over-represented in the employment sector. This, as we saw before, is a legacy of the colonial rule. As the following table shows, even almost two decades after independence Sri Lankan Tamils were the most highly over-represented ethnic community in the most rewarded levels of the employment sector (Table 3.3).

**TABLE 3.3 : PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYED SRI LANKAN TAMILS IN 1956 AND 1965 IN SELECTED OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Category</th>
<th>1956</th>
<th>1965</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Administrative occupation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Clerical</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Professional</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Armed Forces</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Labourers</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Phadnis 1979b.
As Sri Lankan Tamils were only 12 per cent of the total population of the country it is not surprising that this kind of distribution of resources caused agitation among the majority Sinhalese. But, as we have seen, Tamils were not the only people who benefited from British rule. Then why were the Sri Lankan Tamils isolated by Sinhalese Buddhists? Why was there not the same response to Tamils among Sinhalese Christians? At the beginning of the Buddhist Sinhalese revival, Sinhalese Christians were also affected but later the situation changed and the conflict centered about Sinhalese and Tamils.

The reason for this conflict cannot be understood if we do not look at factors which played an important role in forming Sinhalese ideology since independence. Sinhalese as a whole, no matter their sub-divisions, broadly see themselves as a single community because they speak the same language. Further, their identity is influenced by the way they see their position in the south Asian region. In the eyes of the Sinhalese, they see themselves as a small minority in the region while Tamils are not. Tamils are a minority only in Sri Lankan society but in South India, which is only 22 miles away, they are the majority and Sinhalese are outnumbered in this sense. The historical experiences of Tamil invaders from South India is very strong in the consciousness of the Sinhalese. This minority complex (Wriggins 1960; Farmer 1965) is very important in understanding the way Sinhalese see Tamils in Sri Lankan society. It is not an exaggeration to say that the easiest way to unite Sinhalese is to raise the spectre of Indian dominance of the country. It is this fear that has led to the drawing of different sections of the Sinhalese community together against Tamils. So, since independence we see Sinhalese Christians moving closer to Buddhist Sinhalese who were once 'enemies'. As de Silva (1976) points out, since the mid 1970s Sinhalese Christians have been even ready to accept the special place of the Buddhist religion
in Sri Lankan society, something they vehemently opposed a relatively short time ago.

The polarisation of Sri Lankan ethnic politics on the basis of Sinhalese and Sri Lankan Tamil communal ideologies is the main feature of ethnic mobilisation in Sri Lankan society. But strangely enough, Tamil ethnic mobilisation is still limited to Sri Lankan Tamils. Indian Tamils in Sri Lanka, though politically highly organised (Jupp 1978), do not support Sri Lankan Tamils in the political arena (Kodikara 1981; Siriweera 1980). There are several reasons for this. First, their socio-economic positions are different hence different interests are involved in the political process. Second, there is a feeling of superiority of Sri Lankan Tamils, who have never considered Indian Tamils as equals. Even with the increasing communal conflicts between Sinhalese and Tamils, which have greatly affected Indian Tamils, the latter have not formed alliances with the Sri Lankan Tamils in mobilising common Tamil ethnicity. The fact that during the latest communal riots in 1983 the leaders of the Indian Tamils preferred to go to India to get away from the troubles rather than going to the Tamil dominated north and north east is evidence of the absence of a common ideology united Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils.

The other major ethnic community - the Moors - have a unique position in relation to the majority-minority conflict in Sri Lanka. Though Moors are largely a Tamil speaking community, hence they are also affected by some policies of the majority government that favours Sinhalese, they have not supported Sri Lankan Tamils. Unlike Sri Lankan Tamils, who have always preferred separatist politics since independence, Moors have kept their role in national politics (Phadnis 1979a). In fact, Moors have always aligned with Sinhalese in the political process, there being no attempts at ethnic separatism among them. Their ethnic activities in the
political arena have been limited to bargaining with the Sinhalese. They do not support Tamils because they fear that if the separatist Tamil movement succeeds the Moors will be a mini-minority in the Tamil dominated country (Phadnis 1979a). Further, Tamil separatism has given more benefits to Moors by aligning with Sinhalese rather than with the Tamils. First, the movement of Tamils from Sinhalese areas with increasing ethnic conflict resulted in removing Tamil business people who were in competition with the Moors, who are traditionally business people. Second, increasing alienation of Tamils from national politics has given more bargaining power to Moors as the Sinhalese dominated government needs some kind of minority support to maintain its credibility in the international arena. So Moors have preferred to keep their ethnic activities in a low key as it has benefited them handsomely.

What we see today in Sri Lanka is two communal ideologies dominating ethnic relations. Of the two, Sinhalese communalism has managed to establish itself as the nationalist ideology of the country because Sinhalese are the overall numerical majority in the country. So they have managed to establish their dominance through democratic means (Chehabi 1980). Whether such dominance is morally fair or not is another question. But it must be mentioned here that though Sri Lankan Tamils advocate separatism, Tamils have won more rights than most linguistic and cultural minorities including those in Western Europe (Chehabi 1980:63). But in the contemporary ethnic context in Sri Lankan society, minority rights, that is the rights of Sri Lankan Tamils in this case, seem to go beyond socio-economic interests. There are lingering ethnicities that transcend straightforward socio-economic interests. They have been interwoven into the structure of ethnic relations through historical developments so present events do not completely explain the current situation. There are ideological variables which influence ethnic
developments in contemporary Sri Lankan society. In other words, the roots of the present conflict lie in both the distant and immediate past. They have been carried to the present by a historical process I shall call 'ethnic process'. The important feature of this is that some aspects of this process also moved into the Australian context. I shall discuss this aspect of ethnic process in a later section.
Notes

1. Not everyone agrees that colonial rule has contributed to the formation of ethnic divisions in newly independent societies in Asia and Africa. Scholars like Kahn (1981) argue that colonial social changes should not be given primary importance in analysing ethnicity in new states. For detailed discussions of the role of colonial occupation see also Leys (1975) and Mamdami (1976), who argue that colonialism is the main reason for ethnic revival in newly independent countries.

2. The Indo-Aryan origin of Sinhalese is questioned by some scholars, for example, Livingston (1971). Gunawardena (1979) on the other hand says that the intensification of Indo-Aryan identity among Sinhalese is a recent phenomena.

3. This does not mean that there is no caste sentiments among Buddhists and Christians. Though Buddhist teaching rejects caste ideology, even Buddhist religious organisation, for example, sects, are divided along caste lines. Christianity among Sinhalese, on the other hand, is mainly present only among several castes in the coastal region.

4. Refering to this superior feeling of Sri Lankan Tamils over Indian Tamils, Langton (1979) says that Dr S. Arasaratnam himself a Sri Lankan Tamil who wrote about communities in Sri Lanka (Arasaratnam 1964), did not even mention Indian Tamils in his work.

5. One of my informants in Melbourne, who himself is a Sri Lankan of British and Sinhalese descent, mentioned this stigmatic feeling of Eurasians. See also Fernando (1972:67).
6. Colour consciousness and preference for lighter colours exist even among so called 'black people'. For example, Tamils, who are considered by Sinhalese as darker in complexion than they, consider that lighter skin pigmentation is better (Banks 1957).

7. According to Sinhalese mythology, Veddas are descendants of 'Vijaya', the Aryan prince who founded the Sinhalese nation, and his first marriage to an aborigine (Princess). This marriage was later abandoned and Vijaya was married to a princess from India. This Vijaya connection may be the reason why Sinhalese consider that Veddas are equals.

8. Sinhalese chronicles though they talk about the origin of the Sinhalese and put their origin in pre-Christian era, were written only in the 6th Century A.D. They documented legends, and Aryan origin, and anti-Tamil feelings may have first emerged from them to promote an emerging Sinhalese ideology.

9. According to Gunawardena (1979), the term 'Sinhalese' was first used to describe the ruling class of the country.

10. Westernisation is the acceptance of European values. As only the urban people of colonial countries were able to benefit from these developments, there is a close relationship between Westernisation and urbanisation in these countries. For a detailed discussion of this process of Westernisation see Sinai (1964).

11. Though there was a cultural gap between masses and the elites, there was a form of common identity as well. Compared to the colonial rulers both local elites and the masses saw their similarity (Singer 1964).
12. Some scholars consider that uneven distribution of resources in these countries is a result of a deliberate policy of the colonial rules to divide and rule (see Leys 1975).

13. In the late 19th Century Burghers drew away from the local elites in their struggle for independence (McGilvray 1982).

14. The conflict between up country and low country Sinhalese elites during this period cannot be considered as a communal conflict. It is reasonable to consider it as a competition between the same 'community' for the legitimate leadership role.

15. Many scholars seem to see Tamil communalism as a result of Sinhalese chauvinism (e.g. Wriggins 1960) but it must be mentioned here that the first cry to separation came from the Tamils. For example, it was the Tamils who first aroused Sinhalese fears by raising the equal representation issue in parliament by suggesting that Tamils be given more representation disproportionate to their population.
Sri Lankan immigration to Australia is a relatively new phenomenon. Though there are references to a few hundred Sri Lankan immigrants living in this country during the late 19th Century and early 20th Century (Swan 1981), significant Sri Lankan immigration to Australia did not start until World War II. Post-war immigration started with a small and intermittent inflow of Dutch Burghers in the early 1950s, who were allowed into Australia because they were considered to be full Europeans.¹ Since then the basic nature of Sri Lankan immigration has undergone several changes with subsequent liberalisation of Australian immigration policies in respect of non-European immigration. With these policy changes Sri Lankan immigration has, more recently, developed into a steady, though small, inflow of professional and skilled workers (Green Paper 1977:47). According to the 1981 Australian Census data about 17,000 Sri Lankan-born people are living in Australia at present. This number is growing on average of about 400 immigrants a year (Immigration 1979). Of this population nearly 55 per cent live in the Melbourne metropolitan area (Australian Census 1981). Though it is not possible to get accurate figures, the total population of those of Sri Lankan origin, which includes both Sri Lankan-born and their Australian-born descendants was estimated to be around 23,000 in 1978 (Price 1979:A95).

My intention in this chapter is twofold. First, I want to look at the immigration of Sri Lankans to Australia in general. Here I shall be looking at the history of Sri Lankan immigration and the changes in the demographic picture of Sri Lankan population in this country since the start of post World War II immigration. Two particular features of the
demographic changes since World War II are the changes in ethnic composition of Sri Lankan population through the addition of native Sri Lankans in later years to a hitherto predominantly part-European Sri Lankan immigrant population and their concentration in the Melbourne metropolitan area. Second, I shall be looking at the Sri Lankan population in comparative perspective. Here the focus is on the socio-economic position of Sri Lankans in general and those in Melbourne in particular in relation to that of the total overseas-born population and the total Australian population.

Sri Lankan Immigration to Australia

Sri Lankan immigration to Australia, as mentioned above, is basically a post World War II phenomenon. But the pre-war immigrants, though only a handful, cannot be disregarded in an examination of Sri Lankans in this country. So in this section I shall first examine the pre-World War II immigration. The attention here will be on the people who were brought into Australia in the late 19th Century to work in the plantations in Northern Queensland as indentured labourers. My primary attention nevertheless is on post World War II immigration, the history of which spans a little over a quarter of a century. Post World War II immigration of Sri Lankans in its part can be divided into three time periods that saw the arrival of three different categories of immigrants. First, in the period up to 1964 the Sri Lankan immigration to Australia was basically an immigration of Dutch Burghers. Since the mid-1960s, as a result of relaxation of Australian immigration policies on part-European entry, non-Dutch Burgher Sri Lankans and through them native Sri Lankans, i.e. Sinhalese and Tamils as their husbands or wives were allowed to enter as immigrants. In 1973 the regulations were further relaxed which allowed native Sri Lankans to migrate to this country on their own. These three time periods correspond with the arrival of three distinct types of
immigrants from Sri Lanka which we shall examine in a later section of this discussion in detail. But before that let us look at early Sri Lankan immigration to Australia.

A. Pre-World War II Immigrants

Pre-World War II Sri Lankan immigration to Australia dates back to the 19th Century movement to get indentured labour from Asia to work in the plantations in tropical Australia. Price in his examination of the White Australia policy refers to inquiries made by Colonel T. Arnold, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, in 1873 with regard to the possibility of getting Asian labour from Ceylon, Singapore and the East Indies (Price 1974:152). Arnold visited Sri Lanka and a few other Asian countries in 1873 (South Australia 1873(3):no.55) and recommended in favour of Malay and Javanese labour. In relation to workers from Sri Lanka he seemed to have mixed feelings. But in an obvious reference to Tamil plantation workers he noted that 'Kamil' labour was the most used in the country (South Australia 1873(3):no.55). Again in 1874 the colonial government contacted Colombo to get more information about Ceylonese labour (South Australia 1875(3):no.61). The Acting Colonial Secretary's letter to the Chief Secretary of South Australia in response to this request noted that Ceylonese labour was suitable for gold mining and for work in the plantations, but it is clear that what was meant by Ceylonese labour actually was Tamil coolies (South Australia 1875(3):no.61). After this incident there were no other government attempts to get Ceylonese labour but that does not mean that attempts to obtain contractual labour from Sri Lanka ended there.

Reports about Sri Lankans in Australia during the 19th Century are numerous. Kotalawala (1890) tells a story of meeting Sri Lankan workers in gold mining areas of New South Wales. These people may have come to
Australia in the 19th Century before the Immigration Restriction Act was promulgated in 1901. Further to that Idries (1950) in his account on pearling in Broom refers to a popular Sinhalese pearler called Elies. But according to existing records the biggest 19th Century immigration from Sri Lanka was directed to Northern Queensland (Ferguson 1887:335; Caulfield 1937; Docker 1970:164-166; Swan 1981).³

There are no exact records to say how many Sri Lankans immigrated to this country during the 19th Century. According to Swan (1981), between 500 to 1,000 Sri Lankans entered Australia during that period. Both Ferguson (1887) and Docker (1970) talk about a contingent of 500 Sri Lankan coolies entering Northern Queensland in the late 19th Century. Docker (1970:164) claims they were recruited by Mr Fredrick Nott who worked as the agent of Australian planters. In this venture Nott was helped by Henry Caulfield who was working in Sri Lanka at that time (Caulfield 1937:60). This contingent of Sri Lankan workers set sail from Colombo to Australia on board the 'S.S. Devonshire' on 14th November 1882 and landed in McKay in North Queensland on 13th December 1882 (Kamaldeen 1978). Though the recruiters hoped to get Tamil labour they had to be satisfied with Sinhalese workers (Kamaldeen 1978).

The importation of contractual labour from Sri Lanka was not a success. There are no references to more labour arrivals from Sri Lanka since the 'S.S. Devonshire' contingent. The failure of the programme can be attributed to two factors. First, there was internal opposition from European labourers to importation of cheap Asian labour because they feared that their own jobs would be threatened if the movement continued (Docker 1970). Even the first contingent of Sri Lankan labour was met with opposition from the anti-Coolie Leaguers. According to a letter sent to Colombo by the doctor of 'S.S. Devonshire', Dr Dharmaratna, a Sinhalese, there were demonstrations both in McKay and Bundaberg (de Jong n.d.). Swan (1981:57)
refers to a confrontation between anti-Coolie Leaguers and Sinhalese in Bundaberg. The second factor for the failure of the programme was the quality of Sinhalese labour. Recruiters could not get Tamil labour because even planters in Sri Lanka could not get enough Tamil workers as there was a labour shortage in Sri Lanka. The Sinhalese labour obtained by the recruiters did not have any agricultural skills (Docker 1970).

Furthermore, the members of the Devonshire contingent themselves, who took up the opportunity to flee from the depression facing the Sri Lankan economy at that time (Docker 1970), did not have any intention of honouring their contracts (Swan 1981:57). They, for their part, could not get any other work because of existing opposition to Asian labour, so most of them drifted into towns (Swan 1981). There are only a few references to Sinhalese labour working in Queensland plantations (Bolton 1970:230).

The first federation census of 1901 gives the Sri Lankan population in Australia as 627 people. As we see in the following table this figure remained more or less the same for the next thirty years, that is, the time of the last census before World War II (Table 4.1). As the Immigration Restriction Act was enforced with the establishment of the federation, the above stagnation of Sri Lankan population in this country is not surprising. But at the same time it is not correct to think that people of Sri Lankan origin did not arrive in Australia after the enactment of the Immigration Restriction Act. The 1948 census records that the number of native Sri Lankans in Australia numbered 150. This census figure does not include the total number of people of Sri Lankan origin separately. Later estimates (Price and Martin 1975) put this figure to be about 700 in 1947. As the table shows, in addition to full blooded Sinhalese there were part Sinhalese and non-Sinhalese in Australia during the first half of the 20th Century. It is not reasonable to assume that all part Sinhalese are offsprings of unions between Sinhalese who arrived in the 19th Century and
native Australians. As we do not have any information on non-Sinhalese arrivals in the 19th Century it is reasonable to assume that those who are referred to as part Sinhalese, or at least some of them, are Burghers who entered Australia in the 20th Century. This means that there had been a non-Sinhalese immigration to this country before pre-World War II years.

**TABLE 4.1 : PEOPLE OF SRI LANKAN ORIGIN IN AUSTRALIA FROM 1901 TO 1947**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Sri Lankan Born</th>
<th>Full Sinhalese</th>
<th>Part Sinhalese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
<td>n.d.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>700*</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source : Census Reports, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra. Price and Martin (1975).*

n.d. = no data
* = estimate by Price and Martin (1975)

Today it is difficult to get much information about the descendants of those early immigrants. There is virtually no information as to what happened to those non-Sinhalese immigrants except for some unrecorded stories about a few Burgher families in Queensland. It is certain that most of the 19th Century Sinhalese workers stayed in Australia even after the 'White Australia' policy (Table 4.1). As we can see below there seems to have been some internal migration of Sri Lankans since the establishment of the federation in 1901 (Table 4.2).

However, the distribution below may not be due to internal migration alone. There may well have been direct arrivals to other States as well. As we saw, there could have been Burghers who arrived even after the
TABLE 4.2 : STATEWIDE DISTRIBUTION OF SRI LANKANS IN AUSTRALIA IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>VIC</th>
<th>QLD</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>637</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Reports, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra

restriction of immigration in 1901. They may have arrived in other States. So internal migration could only partly have influenced the above distribution of Sri Lankans during the early 20th Century. Apart from moving to other areas some of the Sri Lankans who came to Queensland went to the Cocos Island and some to Sri Lanka (Kamaldeen 1978; Swan 1981) but the majority stayed behind. Those who stayed behind, except for a very few, were lost to sight in the cultures that surrounded them (Swan 1981:58). The few descendants of the Sinhalese who managed to preserve their cultural heritage and identity still live in Queensland (Swan 1981; Endagama 1981).

B. Post World War II Immigrants

The first census after World War II provides us with little information on Sri Lankans in Australia as it groups them with Indians. The only information available about Sri Lankans in this census, as we saw before, is the number of native Sri Lankans, that is, Sinhalese and Tamils, in this country. The first reference to Sri Lankans as a separate category in post World War II years is given in the 1954 census, which gives the number as 1,961, a 300 per cent increase since the 1933 census. Since then we see that the Sri Lankan population has grown steadily, an average of about 400 immigrants a year. This situation as we see in the following table did not change until 1965 (Table 4.3).
TABLE 4.3 : LONG TERM AND PERMANENT SETTLER ARRIVALS FROM SRI LANKA FROM 1955 TO 1965

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Arrival</th>
<th>Number of People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955-56</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956-57</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957-58</td>
<td>423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958-59</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959-60</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-61</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-62</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962-63</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-64</td>
<td>569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964-65</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Australian Immigration Consolidated Statistics No. 10/1978, Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Canberra.

As the above table shows there is a gradual increase since the 1955-56 period which shows 268 people of Sri Lankan origin entering Australia (Table 4.3). Those who came during this period were Dutch Burghers as they were the only Sri Lankans who could get entry permits as settlers.

This situation changed somewhat in the mid-1960s with the liberalisation of Australian immigration policies, first in relation to part-European entry in 1964 and subsequently in 1966 in relation to qualified non-European entry. In 1973, the then Labour Government officially removed the European bias of immigration policy. Those changes are reflected in Sri Lankan arrivals since 1965, as seen from the table below (Table 4.4). As this table shows, there was a marked increase of Sri Lankan arrivals after 1967 which further increased in the 1972-73 period. These two increases coincide with the mid-1960s liberalisation of non-European immigrant entry and policy changes in the 1970s. In the mid-1970s again
TABLE 4.4 : LONG TERM AND PERMANENT SETTLER ARRIVALS FROM SRI LANKA FROM 1967 TO 1978

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Arrival</th>
<th>Number of People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967-68</td>
<td>663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968-69</td>
<td>919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>1506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>2118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>1012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-77</td>
<td>684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-78</td>
<td>666</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Australian Immigration Consolidated Statistics No. 10/1978, Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Canberra.

the Labour Government had to restrict visa issuing procedures (Price 1975) to stop abuse and consequently we see a corresponding reduction of Sri Lankan arrivals.

Though there is a close relationship between Sri Lankan arrivals in this country and liberalisation of immigration policies it does not mean post War Sri Lankan immigration to this country can be understood solely in terms of Australian factors. Such an assumption would be an oversimplification of a complex process. When looking at the Sri Lankan immigration during this period we have to look at Sri Lankan variables, that is, the worsening unemployment situation in Sri Lanka (Endagama 1981) and to some extent political variables.

To understand home country situations which influenced Sri Lankans to immigrate to this country we need to look at the immigration process from
Sri Lanka from a historical point of view. Those who left Sri Lanka before the mid-1960s, who were predominantly Dutch Burghers, did so because they did not want to adjust to the changing socio-political situation after independence in 1948. The Sinhalese Buddhist revival in the late 1950s and its crusade against non-Buddhists in subsequent years (Wriggins 1960) seems to have been the primary reason behind Sri Lankan migration since then up to the 1970s. Today the Sri Lankan immigration to this country is basically a result of increasing unemployment in the country among the educated professionals and skilled workers.

From a historical point of view Sri Lankans who arrived in this country since post World War II can be divided into three broad types of immigrants (Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1 : Categorisation of Sri Lankan Immigrants on the Basis of their Time of Arrival**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Arrival</th>
<th>Major Ethnic Category Arrived</th>
<th>Type of Immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to mid-1960s</td>
<td>Dutch Burghers</td>
<td>Anglophile Culture 'European Identity'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-1960s to early 1970s</td>
<td>Non-Dutch Burghers Sinhalese/Tamil Christians</td>
<td>Westernised Culture with local flavour i.e. Burghers are bilingual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Since 1970s</td>
<td>Sinhalese Buddhists Tamil Hindus</td>
<td>Indigenous Culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the above figure shows, the early immigrants from Sri Lanka were Anglophiles who never considered themselves as part of Sri Lankan society. They not only spoke English but also saw themselves as part of Western culture. This identity of being 'European' is one reason that influenced their immigration once the political power of Sri Lanka was handed over to the 'locals'. In the mid-1960s another category was added to Sri Lankans
in this country. They could be referred to as a Westernised culture type which included Burghers, mainly non-Dutch people, and Sinhalese and Tamil Christians. Culturally, though Westernised in terms of use of the English language in the home context, religious affiliations that is, Christianity, and social values, they could not be seen as extreme Anglophiles like their predecessors. For example, even the Burghers who came during this period thought themselves as part of Sri Lankan society. Most of them intermarried with either Sinhalese or Tamils. Further, they could speak one of the local languages. Finally, the third type includes the majority of recent arrivals who are Sinhalese Buddhists and Tamil Hindus. They do not have the same Westernised values of their predecessors and are a part of the indigenous cultures of Sri Lanka.

Thus post World War II immigrants from Sri Lanka are a complex entity which needs to be understood in relation to both structural and cultural factors in their home country. It is not possible to understand fully their divisions only in terms of basic ethnic allegiances in the home society that is, Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher. As we shall see further in the following chapter, their interaction reflects the above mentioned cultural divisions. Before turning to the problem of ethnic interaction patterns among Sri Lankans and the way they are related to the above three types, there are other demographic and socio-economic characteristics we have to examine in detail.

Demographic Characteristics of Sri Lankans in Australia

At present the total Sri Lankan born population in this country is about 17,000 people. Out of this population just over 55 per cent live in the Melbourne metropolitan area. In this section I shall examine two problems related to demographic distribution of Sri Lankan immigrants in
this country. First, I shall look at the ethnic and religious composition of the Sri Lankan community in Australia which, as we shall see later, is different from that in the home society. Second, I shall examine the concentration of Sri Lankan immigrants in the Melbourne metropolitan area.

The majority of Sri Lankan immigrants in this country belong to three ethnic categories. They are namely Sinhalese, Tamils and Burghers. In addition there is a small minority of Muslims who are either Moors or Malays. They only comprise 130 people according to the 1981 Census. Out of the three major ethnic categories, Burghers are the biggest community. The following table (Table 4.5), which gives the proportion of people of European and Sri Lankan origin among Sri Lankan immigrants, illustrates this clearly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Origin</th>
<th>Number of People</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European origin*</td>
<td>8546</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Burgher)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan origin</td>
<td>5759</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others and Not Stated</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>14866</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See addendum page 232
But it is possible to come to a reasonable estimate of that if we distribute people of Sri Lankan origin (Table 4.5) on the basis of their proportion in Sri Lankan society. The following table (Table 4.6) compares the ethnic composition of Sri Lankan immigrants in this country with that of Sri Lankan society.

**TABLE 4.6 : ESTIMATED ETHNIC COMPOSITION AMONG SRI LANKAN IMMIGRANTS COMPARED WITH ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF SRI LANKAN SOCIETY (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Origin</th>
<th>Sri Lankans in Australia</th>
<th>Sri Lankans in Sri Lanka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burghers</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinhalese</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamils</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others and Not-Stated</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


b) 1971 Census Data, Department of Census and Statistics, Colombo.

The above table (Table 4.6) illustrates the difference between ethnic composition of Sri Lankan society and that among Sri Lankans in this country. It shows that the proportions of the ethnic categories have drastically changed as a result of immigration. The biggest change is in relation to Burghers who, only 0.3 per cent of the population in Sri Lanka, have become the clear majority here among Sri Lankans. The numerical strength of Sinhalese, who are the majority of Sri Lanka, and Tamils also have changed significantly.
Apart from the above changes of ethnic composition the religious composition also has changed significantly as a result of immigration. The following table (Table 4.7) compares the proportion of followers of different religions in Sri Lanka and among Sri Lankan immigrants in this country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Affiliation</th>
<th>Sri Lankans/Australia</th>
<th>Sri Lankans/Sri Lanka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Sri Lankans</td>
<td>Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhists</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others/Not Stated</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


b) 1971 Census Report, Department of Census and Statistics, Colombo.

The above table shows that the majority of Sri Lankans in this country are Christians. In Sri Lanka Christians are only a small minority. Further, the Christian population among Sri Lankans in Victoria is proportionately higher than that among the total Sri Lankan population in this country.

Changes in ethnic and religious composition are accompanied by another characteristic that needs mentioning here. That is the usage of English
language as the medium of communication at home by Sri Lankans in this country. The following table shows the languages used by Sri Lankans in Australia (Table 4.8).

**TABLE 4.8 : LANGUAGE USAGE OF SRI LANKANS IN AUSTRALIA (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Australia</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English only</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>86.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English and one other</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Sinhalese or Tamil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Stated</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Like ethnic composition and religious composition, the language usage among Sri Lankans shows that they are a different category of people from average Sri Lankans. Unlike in Sri Lanka, where only the educated few use English as the second language and even among those even fewer use it in home situations, the majority of Sri Lankans use only English as the medium of communication. This shows that Sri Lankan immigrants in this country are drawn from upper, more affluent strata of urban Sri Lanka, a fact I shall be looking at in detail in the next chapter.

The above characteristics I have discussed so far show that Sri Lankan immigrants in this country basically represent one particular section of Sri Lankan society. They are, as mentioned above, urban upper middle class people which includes Burghers, Sinhalese and Tamil Christians (Tables 4.6 and 4.7). These changes of ethnic and religious composition are important
in understanding the ethnic behaviour pattern as it has changed the balance of power among the Sri Lankan community here. Unlike that in Sri Lanka, where Buddhist Sinhalese are the power holders, in Australia Christian Sinhalese/Tamils and Burghers, who are English speaking, have become the politically powerful. Importance of these changes will be further examined in Chapters V and VI in relation to changing ethnic identification among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. Before that we need to look at another important demographic characteristic among Sri Lankans in this country. That is the concentration of Sri Lankans in Victoria.

According to the 1981 Census, 57 per cent of Sri Lankans in this country live in the State of Victoria. Of them more than 95 per cent live in the Melbourne metropolitan area. The following table gives the Sri Lankan population in Victoria since 1921 (Table 4.9). As it shows that the concentration of Sri Lankans in Victoria is a post World War II phenomenon. During the pre-World War II period the few Sri Lankans living in this country were distributed more or less equally Statewise (Table 4.2). With the increase of post World War II immigrants from Sri Lanka we can see a concentration taking place in Victoria which peaked during the 1976 Census period (Table 4.9).

**TABLE 4.9 : SRI LANKANS IN VICTORIA AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL SRI LANKAN POPULATION IN AUSTRALIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Victorian Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source : Census Reports, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.*
As the above table shows, there seems to be a recent decrease in the proportion of Sri Lankans in Melbourne but it is not possible to say whether this is a start of a new trend that would eventually result in a more even distribution of the Sri Lankan population in this country.

It is difficult to explain this concentration of Sri Lankan immigrants in the State of Victoria. Such concentrations are not typical among immigrants in this country. Of all countries with significant numbers of immigrants in Australia, only Chinese and Lebanese and to some extent Italians show somewhat similar characteristics. Of the Italian immigrants, for example, about 45 per cent live in Victoria while more than 50 per cent of Lebanese and Chinese immigrants live in New South Wales (Immigration 1979 No.11). Apart from those few exceptions the Statewide distribution of immigrants in Australia follows a pattern similar to the Statewide distribution of the total Australian population (Table 4.10).

**TABLE 4.10 : STATEWIDE DISTRIBUTION OF SRI LANKANS IN COMPARISON TO THAT OF TOTAL OVERSEAS BORN POPULATION AND TOTAL POPULATION (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Immigrants</th>
<th>NSW</th>
<th>VIC</th>
<th>QLD</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>TAS</th>
<th>NT</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>98.6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Overseas born people</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>99.8*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* = discrepancies are caused by omitting not stated category.

As the concentration of Sri Lankans in Melbourne is not typical of immigrants living in this country, it is not possible to explain it in terms of Australian factors. The only possible explanation is that this
must have been caused by chain migration that attracted family members and close friends to Melbourne. To elaborate on this further we need to look at the fact that the majority of Sri Lankans in this country are either mixed Europeans that is, Burghers or Sinhalese/Tamil Christians who, in most cases, are intermarried with Burghers. The first post World War II immigrants from Sri Lanka for one reason or another are directed to Victoria and since then chain migration of relatives and friends has swollen the number of Sri Lankans in that State. With that we have to consider that, as Asians, Sri Lankans were not entitled to most of the benefits other immigrants received in their early stages of arrival. So it is not surprising for Sri Lankan immigrants who migrated during that period to choose Victoria as it was the location of their relations and friends. This situation changed with the changes of immigration policies in 1973 and the consequent removal of any need for chain migration. This may have influenced the recent drop in the proportion of Sri Lankans living in Victoria (Table 4.9).

Comparative Examination of Sri Lankans in Australia with Emphasis on Sri Lankans in Melbourne

In this section I want to look at the Sri Lankan population in Australia in general and those in Melbourne in particular, in relation to the total overseas born population and the total Australian population. The attention on Melbourne is because Melbourne is the focus of this study and where most Sri Lankan immigrants live. The comparison here is at three levels. At the first level Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne are compared with the total Sri Lankan population in this country. At the second level Sri Lankans in Melbourne are compared with the total overseas born people living in Melbourne and the total population of Melbourne. At
this level when there are no relevant data available for the Melbourne metropolitan area data for Victoria are substituted. Finally, the Sri Lankan population in Australia is examined comparatively in relation to the total overseas born population in this country and the total population. The socio-economic characteristics used for comparison are occupational characteristics, levels of household income, the rate of unemployment and the level of education.

The following table (Table 4.11) looks at occupational structure, household income, the rate of unemployment and the level of education as the basis of comparison. For the sake of simplicity, only income above 15,000 dollars or more is used in this table. Similar simplifications have been made in relation to level of education and the occupational structure. In relation to education, only tertiary education is considered here. Only four occupational categories given in the Census classifications are used. This is mainly because they are the main areas of occupation relevant to Sri Lankan immigrants.

The first important characteristic we see in the following table (Table 4.11) is the concentration of Sri Lankan immigrants in four employment categories. Of the Sri Lankans in this country, 75 per cent are employed in those four employment categories. Of that 75 per cent, about half are in clerical occupations which is by far the highest among any immigrant community in this country. According to the 1981 Census, only Indian immigrants have a somewhat similar concentration. The reason for this may be seen in relation to the ethnic composition of Sri Lankan immigrants in this country, of whom the majority are Burghers. As we saw in Chapter III, the Burghers are traditionally clerical and related workers in Sri Lanka. In addition to the high percentage of clerical workers, the Sri Lankans are well represented in professional occupations. But when we consider that the early days Asian immigration was restricted to professionals
**TABLE 4.11**: COMPARISON OF SRI LANKANS, TOTAL OVERSEAS BORN POPULATION AND TOTAL POPULATION IN RELATION TO UNEMPLOYMENT, HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND TERTIARY EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UNEMPLOYMENT</th>
<th>ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME</th>
<th>TERTIARY EDUCATION</th>
<th>OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Over $15,000</td>
<td>Over $18,000</td>
<td>Over $22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MELBOURNE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>37.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Overseas Born</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUSTRALIA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>55.8</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Overseas Born</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*a* = cumulative total.
and other highly qualified people, such a high percentage in professional occupations is not surprising.

The second characteristic the preceding table reveals is the lower level of unemployment among Sri Lankan immigrants. As the Table 4.11 shows, the level of unemployment is higher among overseas born people as a whole than that among the total Australian population. But Sri Lankans are different in this respect. The rate of unemployment among Sri Lankans is lower than that of both total overseas born populations and the total Australian population. Further, the same rate among Sri Lankans in Melbourne is even lower. It is not easy to understand the reasons for the lower rate of unemployment among Sri Lankans. It is not correct to say that lower unemployment is a result of low aspiration levels. My work among Sri Lankans did not reveal such a tendency. Even if we accept that such a tendency is there that would not explain the discrepancy between Sri Lankans and other immigrants. Does that mean that Sri Lankans have the lowest aspiration level among immigrants living in this country? I do not think so. The main reason for the lower level of unemployment among Sri Lankans is their higher level of education.

The higher level of education which I mentioned as the major factor in their lower unemployment rate is the third socio-economic characteristic revealed by the preceding table (Table 4.11). As it shows, the percentage of people with tertiary educational qualifications is very high compared to that among both overseas born people and the total Australian population. The main reason for this could be the selective immigration process pursued by the Australian government until the early 1970s.

Finally, the comparison of household income follows a similar pattern that distinguishes Sri Lankan immigrants from the rest of the population. As Table 4.11 shows, the number of Sri Lankans earning more than 15,000 dollars a year is far greater than that among the rest of the population.
At the highest income bracket, that is, an annual income of 26,000 dollars or more, the difference between Sri Lankans and the rest of the population is almost two to one. In relation to the higher income levels two explanations could be given. First, as we saw in the above section, the level of education among Sri Lankans is much higher than that among the rest of the population. This leads to lower unemployment rates which means more people in the family earning wages compared to other immigrant communities and the total Australian population. Second, the dependant population among Sri Lankans is lower than that among both other overseas born and the total Australian population.

When we look at the Sri Lankans in Australia we see two main features that make them an interesting immigrant population. First, Sri Lankans in Australia are different from the majority of Sri Lankans in Sri Lankan society. The Sri Lankans in this country have been drawn mainly from the urban, middle class social strata of Sri Lankan society. Second, as immigrants Sri Lankans are different from other immigrants in their socio-economic characteristics. In the next chapter I shall examine ethnicity among Sri Lankans focusing on those who are in Melbourne.
Notes

1. To evaluate unbroken European ancestry, birth certificates and Baptism certificates were used by the Australian authorities. It was the responsibility of an applicant to prove his/her eligibility beyond doubt to satisfy authorities. According to the News Letter of the Australian Ceylon Fellowship (News Letter 1972 August : 6) an informal delegation of Burghers came to Australia in the early 1950s to urge the Australian authorities to accept Sri Lankan Burghers as immigrants. The point of view they wanted to put to Australian authorities was that Sri Lankan Burghers, that is Dutch Burghers in this instance, were 'full blood Europeans' so they should be permitted entry under existing immigration policies which restricted people of non-European origin settling in Australia.

2. This does not mean that non-Dutch Burghers did not come during this period. As the criterion for deciding whether one was 'full blood European' or not was one's certificate of Baptism or birth certificate, some Portuguese Burghers also managed to come during this period. Further, some of my informants revealed that there were other 'exceptional circumstances' by which non-Dutch Burghers managed to come during this period, that is, through falsification of evidence and favours from authorities at the right places.

3. Kamaldeen (1978) gives us another reference to Sri Lankans in this country in the 19th Century. He mentions a place called 'Badagini' (Sinhalese word for hunger) in Western Australia. According to him the place is so called because there a group of Sinhalese workers were left stranded without food. But Place Names of Australia (Reed 1973) tells us a different story. According to Reed 'Baddaginie' (cf spelling)
is in Victoria and was named by J.G. Wilmotte, an engineer who had worked in India before coming here. Reed (1973) does not say whether there were Sinhalese workers involved. According to Reed (1973) the same engineer named the Victorian town 'Dimboola', the name of a fruit found in the dry zone of Sri Lanka.

4. One of my informants, Victor Melder, who is a Burgher in Melbourne, mentioned to me about several Burgher families who came to Queensland during the early 20th Century.

5. Scholars who talk about Westernisation of countries occupied by western powers (Frazier 1956; Van Niel 1960; Worsely 1964) do not see the need to distinguish between the Anglophile and Westernised sections. I think the Westernised vs indigenous culture dichotomy is inadequate to explain socio-cultural divisions in post colonial countries during the period immediately after the independence. There is a section of population which is rapidly diminishing in number, through either emigration or 'assimilation', who are not only Western in cultural terms but also in identity. There was a substantial number of those people in Sri Lanka in the early 1950s. They are the people I call Anglophiles here. Westernised people, on the other hand, are those who display Western values but see themselves as part of local society.

6. Though there are no reports of Indian Tamil plantation workers coming to Australia as immigrants, in estimating the proportion of Tamils among Sri Lankans in this country the proportion of combined Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils were taken. It is assumed that this would not exaggerate the proportion of Tamils among Sri Lankans as Tamils, because of problems of finding employment etc., tend to leave Sri Lanka more than Sinhalese.
7. It is commonly believed that aspiration levels of immigrants are different from and normally lower than those of the native born population. Young (1980) looking at Turkish and Lebanese says there is no significant difference in this respect. For a detailed examination see also Young's work in Young *et.al.* 1982.
CHAPTER V

PATTERNS OF ETHNICITY AMONG SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE

This chapter is a detailed examination of ethnicity and ethnic relations among Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne. Two patterns of ethnic identification are examined to explain the above phenomena. They are the home country ethnic identification of Sri Lankans, that is, Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher identities and the Sri Lankan ethnic group, which is a phenomenon seen only in the Australian context. Though a few Moor and Malay immigrants from Sri Lanka are in Melbourne (Chapter IV), my attention here is only on Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher people. Not all Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne express the above two patterns of ethnic identification in a uniform manner. The expression of home country ethnic identification and the Sri Lankan ethnic identity vary with the sub-ethnic community, that is, Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher, involved and with the context of interaction. This discussion looks at the different ways the above two patterns of ethnic identification are expressed in different contexts by different members of the Sri Lankan immigrant community in Melbourne. Data for this discussion come primarily from indepth interviews and observations conducted in Melbourne between mid-1980 and 1982 (Appendix I and II).

The discussion in this chapter is divided into five parts. In the first section I shall be looking at the problems involved in the understanding of ethnicity among immigrants in general. The lack of a proper analytical strategy to explain ethnic variability among immigrants and the need to examine ethnicity among immigrants in comparative perspective in relation to the society they left behind are examined here.
In the second section my attention is on three basic types of Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne, a distinction that is important to explain the variations of ethnicity, that is, the degree of ethnic identification and the level of structuration of ethnic activities. The third and fourth sections discuss the two patterns of ethnic identification mentioned before by looking at the ways they influence the formation of ethnic networks and ethnic groups. The last section examines the changes that have occurred in ethnicity in relation to the situation in Sri Lanka.

Understanding Ethnicity Among Immigrants

Until the past decade studies among immigrants paid attention to cultures of immigrant communities. Accordingly analytical strategies were formulated to study changes of cultural patterns and behaviour of immigrants in relation to their home country. For example, the bulk of the field studies on immigrants up to the 1970s (e.g. Embree 1941; Child 1943; Caudil 1952; Borrie 1954, 1959; Eisenstadt 1954) tried to examine immigrants in host countries with the help of theories of cultural change. This changed with the emergence of the situational approach to explaining immigrant behaviour. Today the study of immigrants mainly focuses its attention on structural problems in immigrant communities and the way they influence ethnic mobilisation (Glazer and Moynihan 1970, 1975; Lewins 1978a; Fisher 1978).

Although the situationalist argument relates ethnic phenomena to wider socio-structural variables, such as class position and political power, its effectiveness as a means of understanding ethnicity is limited by analytical problems related to the idea of ethnic mobilisation, the key concept behind the situationalist argument. First, by conceptualising ethnicity in terms of ethnic mobilisation it neglects other aspects of ethnicity such as inter-personal, ethnic interactions (Nagata 1974;
Handelman 1977; Salamone and Swanson 1979). In this manner, ethnic mobilisation and the idea of 'new ethnicity', whether they are used to examine ethnicity either among immigrants or indigenous communities, restricts the concept of ethnicity to one aspect of ethnic expression. Second, the concept of ethnic mobilisation has been given different interpretations ranging from mass political mobilisation of ethnicity aimed at achieving rational goals like emancipation from economic exploitation or achieving a better social position (Glazer and Moynihan 1974, 1975; Vincent 1974; Patterson 1975; Fisher 1978) to more non-political mobilisation within community situations (Baskauskas 1977; Lewins 1978a) and to ethnic mobilisation based on 'non-rational' ethnic interests (Esman 1977:251-286; McKay 1980). Because of the above problems, a uniform and comprehensive analytical strategy to identify the whole spectrum of ethnic expressions has not emerged as yet.

The lack of such a strategy would not be a problem as long as we study one particular aspect of ethnicity among a given community in a given social context. For example, one who studies 'ethnic mobilisation' which is perceived to be prevalent in immigrant community 'X' does not need to look at other forms of ethnicity like interpersonal network formation etc. in detail. Most of the contemporary ethnic studies among immigrants fall into this category. Even those studies that supposedly examine 'ethnicity' in a general sense tend to look only at the dominant ethnic expression, which is ethnic mobilisation, and do not normally pay attention to other non-mobilisationist ethnic expressions. But once we start looking at ethnic mobilisation in comparative perspective, either in relation to other immigrants or to the society immigrants left behind, we need to look at different expressions of ethnicity as ethnicity is contextual. In addition, studies of ethnicity 'in general', even among one particular community, need sometimes to look at different ethnic expressions as different
immigrants from the same country may sometimes display different ethnic characteristics (Baskauskas 1977; McKay 1980). This necessitates our finding a general paradigm that could help to identify different expressions of ethnicity when we examine patterns of ethnicity among immigrants in general.

The need to look at different expressions of ethnicity in understanding ethnic phenomena is discussed by several scholars. As we saw before, Nagata (1974) raises the problem by arguing that ethnic interaction is not limited to ethnic mobilisation but also includes interpersonal ethnic interaction, where people form networks as individuals. Others like Salamone and Swanson (1979) and Handelman (1977) discuss the situationality of ethnic phenomena in terms of interpersonal ethnic action and role play but without making the distinction between ethnic mobilisation and individual inter-ethnic action such as network activities. Implying a similar multifaceted approach, Strauch (1981) notes that 'ethnic groups' should be seen as separate from 'ethnic categories' on the basis of the level of ethnic activities involved. A similar distinction is implied by Okamura (1981) when he says that ethnic situationality should be understood at two levels, that is, as related to social setting and social situation. A comprehensive examination of the variable nature of ethnic phenomena can be seen in the study of McKay and Lewins (1978) who examine the various meanings of ethnicity in the literature and argue that ethnic expression can be seen at four different levels (Figure 5.1).

McKay and Lewins (1978), by looking at the different ways the concept of ethnicity has been used in scholarly literature claim that expression of ethnicity varies with context in terms of the level of structuration of ethnic activities (ethnic category and ethnic group) and in terms of the intensity of ethnic identification (awareness and consciousness). The following diagram gives the four different expressions of ethnicity they discuss (Figure 5.1).
Levels of Structuration of Ethnic Activities

As the above diagram illustrates, there are four possibilities of relating levels of identity and structuration of activities. This means that ethnicity is better understood in a continuum of increasing ethnicity from awareness categories to conscious groups.

Though this model puts ethnic variability in proper perspective, there is one problem in using it to identify various patterns of ethnicity in a given situation. It does not acknowledge the personal level of interactions mentioned before. While the authors were looking at the current forms of the use of ethnicity in the literature, this model needs to be modified for a more complete understanding of ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. The modified model that includes interpersonal
ethnic interaction, that is, ethnic networks, is given below (Figure 5.2).

**FIGURE 5.2 : DIFFERENT EXPRESSIONS OF ETHNICITY INCORPORATING ETHNIC NETWORKS**

As the above diagram shows, structuration of ethnic activities can be seen at three levels. As it illustrates, the existence of ethnically determined activities does not necessarily result in ethnic group formation. People may express their ethnicity by forming social networks based on ethnic identification which would not develop into ethnic groups or ethnic mobilisation. So the 'continuum of ethnic structuration' needs to be understood as forming three distinct analytical situations as ethnic categories, ethnic networks and ethnic groups.
The different instances of ethnic expressions explained in the above model should not be considered as 'mutually exclusive', for they are not so in ascending order. For example, if we take the distinction between ethnic categories, ethnic networks and ethnic groups, ethnic groups encompass the preceding two situations. Existence of ethnic groups means that there are both ethnic categories and ethnic networks. But ethnic groups are more than mere ethnic categories and ethnic networks. This is one distinction I want to show in presenting this model. At the same time it must be noted that in descending order these instances are mutually exclusive. For example, the existence of ethnic categories or ethnic networks does not necessarily mean that there are ethnic groups. The relationship between ethnic awareness and ethnic consciousness also should be understood similarly. In attitudinal terms, ethnic consciousness is of higher order than awareness (McKay and Lewins 1978) where the former includes the latter but not vice versa.

Further, I do not want to suggest that the same model is exhaustive. It only attempts to show an analytical distinction that would help explain different expressions of ethnicity in different contexts. By saying this I accept that different ethnic expressions, though analytically distinct, are interrelated in empirical situations. So I would not claim that in real life all ethnic situations would strictly fall into one of the six instances given in the model. Such attempts to categorise ethnicity schematically would be futile and would be tried only with the risk of falling into situations of over simplifications.

Still a model of this nature which could enable us to distinguish between different instances of ethnicity is of extreme importance in ethnic analysis. The main reason is the dynamic and 'complex nature' of ethnic phenomena which can be expressed in different ways in different situations. It is possible to elaborate further on the importance of this model, by drawing from different experiences of ethnic behaviour observed during field work in Melbourne. A typical comment of Sinhalese in Melbourne, who are seen as forming ethnic networks, was:
I do not like what Tamils are doing over here. If they do not like the Government (Sri Lankan Government) they must go back and fight ... Still I do not think Sinhalese should form an association to counter Tamils ... After all I do not have time to do these things.

Similar comments found during field work show that strong ethnic sentiments do not always lead towards ethnic mobilisation so ethnicity cannot be understood in terms of one form of structuration of activities, that is ethnic groups and mobilisation. But lack of ethnic group formation does not mean that such situations can be explained in terms of existence of mere ethnic categories, that is ethnic situations devoid of any significant ethnic interaction.

This argument can further be extended if we go back to situations in Melbourne again. The same Sri Lankan who said that he would not favour forming an association to counter Tamil activities in Australia noted:

You should not completely forget your past. If I know someone is a Sri Lankan (Sinhalese) I would make a point to go and talk to him ... Not that you must stick together always ... You should not reject them either.

This means that he would prefer social networks with Sinhalese. In similar cases ethnic consciousness has not provided more than ethnic networks. This model, which takes into account degrees of ethnic identification and levels of structuration of social interaction, enables us to understand different expressions of ethnicity.

In presenting this model which is an extension of McKay and Lewins' (1978) model of ethnic variability, I emphasised the variable nature of two main components of ethnic phenomena. The variability of ethnicity must be considered only as that of degree which means that it needs to be seen on a continuum, a fact that I have already emphasised by saying that different ethnic expressions are mutually inclusive in ascending order. So any attempt to use this model must keep this in mind.
This new expanded model enables us to understand non-mobilisationist, but still ethnically determined, activities such as formation of ethnic networks that are seen among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. I shall be using this model to examine different expressions of ethnicity and to explain changes in ethnic identification and ethnic activities in relation to the society Sri Lankans left behind. To understand these changes and variations we need to look not only at sub-ethnic divisions among Sri Lankans but also sociological divisions among the Sri Lankan community in Melbourne. On the basis of socio-cultural background in Sri Lanka and on the attitudes towards Australian society, Sri Lankan immigrants in this country can be divided into three sociological categories. These three sociological categories that transcend sub-ethnic differences are important in understanding expressions of Sri Lankan ethnicity. In the next section I shall introduce these three sociological categories among Sri Lankans in Melbourne.

Three Sociological Types Among Sri Lankans in Melbourne

In Chapter III I mentioned that Sri Lankans who have arrived in this country since the 1950s (post World War II Sri Lankans) can broadly be divided into three categories on the basis of their socio-cultural background in Sri Lanka. They are the Anglophile, Westernised and Indigenous culture types. My work in Melbourne revealed that a corresponding division is also evident among Sri Lankans in the wider Australian context. The immigrants who belong to the above three cultural types display different characteristics in terms of their attitudes towards Australian society, their role in this society as immigrants, which I shall call immigrant ideology, their expression of ethnicity and in their patterns of social interaction. So to understand ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne we need to look at these three sociological types in detail.
The following diagram summarises the basic characteristics that distinguish these three types of immigrants from each other (Figure 5.3). It shows that though original home country ethnic identities roughly correspond with these divisions there are other socio-cultural variables that operate, especially in relation to Type II (Figure 5.3).

**FIGURE 5.3 : SOCIOLOGICAL TYPES AMONG SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Immigrants</th>
<th>Type I</th>
<th>Type II</th>
<th>Type III</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of Immigrants:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural background</td>
<td>Anglophile Culture Type</td>
<td>Westernised Culture Type</td>
<td>Indigenous Culture Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Composition</td>
<td>Mainly Dutch Burghers</td>
<td>Mainly non-Dutch Burghers plus Sinhalese and Tamil Christians</td>
<td>Mainly Sinhalese Buddhists or Tamil Hindus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for Immigration</td>
<td>Fear of local domination &amp; loss of status</td>
<td>Dissatisfaction with Sinhalese Buddhist revival</td>
<td>Economic reasons for Sinhalese &amp; for Tamils' dissatisfaction of Sinhalese led political system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant Ideology</td>
<td>Assimilationist</td>
<td>Integrationist</td>
<td>No clear cut ideological stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Critical of Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Sentimental and favourable</td>
<td>Sinhalese strongly favourable towards Sri Lanka while Tamils critical of political system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Interaction</td>
<td>Own sub-ethnic</td>
<td>Cross sub-ethnic</td>
<td>Own sub-ethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant Ethnic Identification in Australia</td>
<td>Burgher</td>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>Sinhalese or Tamil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the above diagram shows Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne can be divided into three sociological categories. As we shall see later the ethnic identification patterns among Sri Lankans in Melbourne correspond more with these divisions than with the original home country ethnic identification, that is, Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher. I shall call these three categories, respectively, 'ethnic assimilationists', 'ethnic integrationists' and 'ethnic traditionals' in this discussion. In the rest of this discussion I shall look at these three types of immigrants and the nature of their social interaction in detail.

A. Ethnic Assimilationists

Assimilation of immigrants in the receiving society is a much debated topic (Gordon 1964; Sklare 1965; Schermerhorn 1970; Martin 1972; Lewins 1976) but still the confusion as to what assimilation really means or actually entails remains. Schermerhorn (1970) sees assimilation as one aspect of the integration process where immigrants are better satisfied by assimilation or absorption, that is, moving to a situation of homogeneity in relation to host society. Here he points to the fact of immigrants' willingness to be absorbed into a variety of facets of institutional life. Ethnic assimilationists among Sri Lankans in Melbourne are similar to picture as they themselves strive for absorption in Australian society.

This attempt by assimilationists among Sri Lankans must be treated with caution here. It does not mean that they have already disappeared in Australian society though it could eventually happen in the next few generations. Such an assumption would be contradictory with the main theme of the study as ethnic assimilationists are also treated here as displaying their Burgher identity. What I want to argue here is that they consciously promote the notion that, despite their Asian birth, they are
part of mainstream Australian society which is European. In this sense, that is, their attempt to be part of the European segment of Australian immigrant population, they are assimilationists. By being Burgher or 'living Burgher life' in Australia they reject the label 'Asian' which is attributed to them for having come from the Asian region.

This situation can be further illustrated by looking at their attitudes and social interaction pattern which will be examined later. There we shall see they have a strong European identity and they prefer to avoid interaction with non-Burgher Sri Lankans, and even some Burghers, who do not fit with their perception of Burgher. On the other hand, it is true that they also do not have many close and permanent network relations with other Australians, a fact that will be examined later in relation to Burgher identity promotion (Chapter VI). Suffice it to say here that identity, is contributory for the preservation of Burgher-only networks, which in turn result in the promotion of Burgher identity in the Australian context.

Ethnic assimilationists are basically Dutch Burghers (Figure 5.3) who arrived before liberalisation of Australian immigration policies in the late 1960s. But being of Dutch origin and arrival before the late 1960s are not to be treated as strict criteria in identifying ethnic assimilationists. There are many Burghers of Dutch origin who came before the 1960s who do not consider themselves as Europeans. It is the identity they had before migration that is important in identifying ethnic assimilationists. As we saw in Chapter III, even in Sri Lanka a section of Burghers perceived themselves as superior to others including other Burghers because of their presumed unbroken European ancestry (McGilvray 1982:242-248). These Dutch Burghers are the ethnic assimilationists in Australia. It could be said that Dutch Burghers who fall into this category saw themselves as more Dutch than Burghers in Sri Lanka. In Australia the situation is the same. So when I refer to ethnic assimilationists as Dutch Burghers I am referring
only to those who emphasise the Dutch part of their identity and not to all Burghers of Dutch origin.

Further, ethnic assimilationists not only had a strong European identity in Sri Lanka but also are white in complexion. So they do not find it difficult to pass as whites. I was told by several informants of incidents where Dutch Burghers have written to Sri Lanka asking their relations who are darker in complexion not to visit them in Australia because that would be a problem if the neighbours were to find out about them. The following observation by a Dutch Burgher, which appeared in an ACF News Letter, clearly illustrates the attitude of these people and their perception of themselves. In explaining the 'scientific basis' of the Australian Ceylon Fellowship it says,

The basis is, Ceylonese are Caucasians with Indo-European centrosomes; so are most Australians; this is the basis of Australian Ceylon Fellowship - the scientific basis of their altruism (News Letter October 1978:6)

My work in Melbourne revealed that most Dutch Burghers who came during the early period share a similar attitude in relation to the similarity between themselves and white Australians. This assimilationist attitude is further helped by their physical features, which help them to pass as whites in most circumstances. While such moves are not always welcome by Australians, the above tendency is sufficient reason to view assimilationists as a distinct sociological category among Sri Lankans in Melbourne.

These people are commonly referred to as the 'old generation immigrants' by other Sri Lankans. Because of Dutch Burghers' attempts to emphasise their Europeanness ethnic traditionals, both Sinhalese and Tamil, do not have favourable attitudes towards them. By contrast, ethnic integrationists have a more amicable relationship with ethnic assimilationists. According
to ethnic integrationists, though attempts to emphasise Burgher identity by ethnic assimilationists are wrong, as it means a rejection of the country of origin, ethnic assimilationists still have a role to play in the activities among the Sri Lankan community. Because of this and despite their Burgher identity, ethnic assimilationists have a close relationship with ethnic integrationists.

B. Ethnic Integrationists

According to Schermerhorn (1970) integration is related to cultural pluralism where both host society and immigrants recognise the necessity of the latter to maintain their identity. The majority of Sri Lankans in Australia, looked at from this angle, profess an integrationist ideology. These Sri Lankan immigrants who fall into ethnic integrationist category are non-Dutch Burghers and Sinhalese and Tamil Christians. The majority of these people have arrived in Australia between the mid-1960s and early 1970s. As we saw in Chapter IV the Sri Lankans who migrated to Australia during this period belong to a Westernised culture type which makes them different from the Sri Lankans who arrived before the mid-1960s who belong to an Anglophile culture type and those who arrived after the early 1970s who belong to an Indigenous culture type (Figure 4.1). So to understand the ethnic integrationist type we need to look at their ideological orientation in Australia, which is an integrationist ideology, and their pre-emigration experience.

In the next chapter I shall examine the pre-emigration experience of this sociological type in detail. But in order to show the distinction between ethnic integrationists and the other two sociological types I shall here look at one important characteristic briefly. That is their pattern of social interaction in the home society context. When we look at
the pre-emigration social interaction of ethnic integrationists we see that, unlike the other two sociological types, they used to freely interact across ethnic boundaries when they were in Sri Lanka. This pre-emigration experience is not only important to understand the ethnic integrationists among Sri Lankans in the Australian context but also, as we shall see later, to explain the formation of Sri Lankan identity. But before that let us examine the ideological orientation of ethnic integrationists in detail.

The important characteristic that distinguishes between ethnic integrationists and the other two sociological types in the Australian context is the ideological orientation (Figure 5.3). The following excerpt from the address delivered by Professor Weeramantri, who himself is a Sinhalese Christian in Melbourne, at the 'Queen's Birthday Dinner' held on June 21, 1974 clearly illustrates the ideology of ethnic integrationists.

But most important of all in Australia's future role is its emergence as a leader of the nations in this part of the globe ... In this particular international role the Ceylonese community can make the most vital contribution. On every front then, Ceylonese are, while still devoted to the interests of their land of origin, helping every way to advance Australia fair. (News Letter August 1974:8 emphasis mine)

As the above excerpts illustrates ethnic integrationists still relate to their land of origin which makes them different from ethnic assimilationists who want to break away from it. Further, they are different from ethnic traditionals as ethnic integrationists relate themselves to the land of origin not the home country ethnic communities like the latter. So the relationship is expressed in terms of a wider Sri Lankan identity (cf. Ceylonese community above) not as members of particular ethnic communities, that is Sinhalese, Tamil or Burgher.
As mentioned the basis of ethnic identification among integrationists is the land of origin which is Sri Lanka. Hence they do not lay much emphasis on home country ethnic divisions other than being aware of them. The emphasis on the land of origin as the basis of ethnic identity by westernised Sinhalese as against other Sinhalese who are cultural traditionals can be illustrated by looking at the formers' pre-emigration experience compared with that of the latter. This will be done in detail in the next chapter. Here I would only try to illustrate their attachment to land of origin as the basis of ethnicity by presenting a few typical comments of ethnic integrationists. As one ethnic integrationist said:

I really did not want to leave my country. But things were not good at that time you know ... . Now I do not think I can go back even if I want to ... . We have burned our boats.

Or referring to the well being of children:

I came for the sake of my children. They were finding it difficult to get jobs because of Sinhalese only policy. I myself am a Sinhalese but unfortunately we were educated in English.

Further unlike either ethnic assimilationists who would invariably remark that they were kicked out of the country by 'Sinhalese Buddhist mobs who were out to get them' or a Tamil ethnic traditional who would say that 'Tamils are being persecuted in Sri Lanka so we had to get out to escape that', ethnic integrationists did not blame Sri Lanka for their fate. Their typical comment was:

It was all sudden. We did not expect the government to change over night to Sinhala only policy. They at least could have done it gradually ... . I do not blame the people ... . They were taken for a ride by opportunists among the politicians.

During the interviews it was clearly shown that whatever the feeling they had during the time of arrival, ethnic integrationists no longer espouse those feelings. They feel they are Sri Lankans and should be proud of their
origin s. It is this situation I want to explain in the next chapter by looking at the revival of an old Sri Lankan identity that was formed during the colonial period (Chapter III). This revival has led to the formation of a Sri Lankan ethnic group which is a new development in the Australian context, among ethnic integrationists.

As mentioned, the ethnic integrationist category includes a large section of Burghers and all westernised Sinhalese. The rationale behind putting westernised Sinhalese together with the majority of Burghers and calling them ethnic integrationists and then making a distinction between them and ethnic assimilationists needs to be understood in relation to culture and identity. In cultural terms, westernised Sinhalese are similar to Burghers and not to other Sinhalese who are called ethnic traditionals here. Both Burghers and Sinhalese were educated in English medium in Sri Lanka and come from basically similar social backgrounds. Westernised Sinhalese like Burghers use English in home situations which means that an official mother tongue of westernised Sinhalese is English. Further, almost all westernised Sinhalese are Christians.

But these cultural similarities do not mean that westernised Sinhalese and all Burghers can be put together in a single sociological category. The reason is that among Burghers there is a section who are different from the rest of the community. This distinction is not made on the basis of culture but in terms of meaningful identity. The people who are called ethnic assimilationists previously discussed, though Burghers, must be seen as a distinct category on the basis of their European identity. Because of this, though westernised Sinhalese and Burghers are similar in cultural terms, they cannot be considered a single sociological category. This is one reason for introducing the ethnic integrationist category.
C. Ethnic Traditionals

Ethnic traditionals are the third sociological type seen among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. Unlike the two types previously discussed, these Sri Lankans do not have a clearcut ideology as to their role in Australian society. The reason for this is found in their unique process of immigration. Unlike that of the other two sociological categories, the immigration of ethnic traditionals is a process in which the decision to stay in Australia is determined by circumstances after arrival rather than by a definite decision taken prior to arrival. So Sri Lankans who belong to this category, though physically living in Australia, still have a social existence in a Sri Lankan society. In other words, these people though immigrants in technical sense have not left Sri Lanka completely in terms of their aspiration to return and their sense of 'temporary residence' in Australia.

The majority of ethnic traditionals are either Sinhalese Buddhists or Tamil Hindus, though a few Sinhalese and Tamil Christians who came here after 1970 fall into this category. In terms of their socio-cultural background in Sri Lanka they can be called an indigenous culture type. Though they are seen as a single sociological type for analytical purposes, there is no interaction between Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic traditionalists. But on the basis of their unique form of immigration and a lack of a clearcut immigrant ideology as to their role in Australian society, they form a distinct sociological category.

I mentioned that the immigration of ethnic traditionals is a process in which the decision to stay in this country is determined by local circumstances rather than by a definite decision made before arrival. Because of family bonds and other obligations in Sri Lanka they always nurture a dream of returning home one day. But as they themselves agree this dream would never become a reality. New commitments in Australia like
grown up children accustomed to the Australian way of life will eventually force the parents to stay behind. But because of their intention of returning home these people do not make a conscious effort to integrate into Australian society.2

Because of the above reasons, the three sociological types/categories we have discussed among Sri Lankans are important to understand ethnic behaviour among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. What we have to note here is that these three categories are only sociological categories constructed for analytical purposes. They are not social categories Sri Lankans consciously use in their interaction. For example, Tamils and Sinhalese who belong to the ethnic traditional category do not see themselves as similar nor do they engage in inter-sub-ethnic interaction on that basis. Still there is an awareness among Sri Lankans in Melbourne of the existence of such a division. For example, referring to a Dutch Burgher (assimilationist), a member of the ethnic integrationist category would comment: 'he is from the old school who wants to be an Australian'. Similarly, an ethnic traditional would be referred to as 'one who wants to bring problems in Sri Lanka (that is, Tamil-Sinhalese conflict for example) to Australia'. Apart from this awareness of differences Sri Lankans do not use the above categorisation to identify themselves.

D. The Patterns of Social Interaction of Sri Lankans

To understand the social interaction among Sri Lankans it is necessary to look at the different ways the members of the above three categories interact in the Australian context. For this purpose I shall examine here the different patterns of social interaction among Sri Lankans and Sri Lankans with other Australians. The social interaction among Sri Lankans is examined in relation to two areas. First, there is social interaction of Sri Lankans with other Sri Lankans as individuals, that is, social
networks. Second, there are organised forms of social activities that range from organisation of cultural and recreational activities to ethnic mobilisation. First let us look at the social networks.

Presenting the basic characteristics of the three sociological categories I mentioned that people belonging to each category have different patterns of interaction. Whatever their activities, both ethnic traditionalists and ethnic assimilationists tend to restrict their social interaction to members of their own sub-ethnic category/group (Figure 5.3). On the other hand the social activities of ethnic integrationists cross sub-ethnic boundaries. Here I have not mentioned the inter-sub-ethnic interaction of ethnic traditionalists and ethnic assimilationists and the interaction between Sri Lankans and Australians. This does not mean that those two situations do not exist. They do, but they basically take the form of interest based social interaction such as being work mates or people sharing similar recreational interests. To explain this further, I shall examine two distinct forms of social interaction among Sri Lankans which I call expanding social networks and non-expanding social networks.

As the terms themselves show, the above two forms of networks seen among Sri Lankans in Melbourne differ from each other in their ability to grow and expand in time. By growth and expansion I mean the addition of new members to existing networks through common membership. The following diagram of hypothetical network situation illustrates the basic features that distinguish these two network forms (Figure 5.4). The following figure illustrates a simple network situation where three people are in interaction. The existing relationships are shown by straight lines while dotted lines show the possibilities for new relationships to develop (potential relationships). In what I call an expanding network situation the network below would expand by the development of new relationships connecting so far unrelated individuals, in this instance, connecting 'A', 'C' and 'D' with
each other. In a non-expanding network situation the network below would not expand beyond existing relationships.

FIGURE 5.4 : EXPANDING AND NON-EXPANDING NETWORKS

The distinction between expanding and non-expanding networks is not limited to their ability, or inability in the case of the latter, to grow in time. They are distinguished by the kinds of relationships that connect individuals with each other. This can be further explained if we look at Barth's (1978) examination of networks in urban situations. Barth (1978) in examining networks in urban Western societies argues that social networks are characterised by two kinds of relationships. First, there are single-strand relationships that connect individuals on the basis of one task. Second, there are relationships that consist of more than one task called multi-strand or multi-plex relationships. According to him single-strand relationships may diversify in time making them multi-plex relationships and very important kind of relationships, such as 'friendships' can be built only this way (Barth 1978:169). Further, he says that networks
expansion takes place, except for in exceptional circumstances only if multi-plex relationships are present. The two types of networks I discussed here can be distinguished on the basis of the presence of above two types of relationships as well. Non-expanding networks are founded upon single-strand relationships while expanding networks are based on multi-plex relationships.

The importance of expanding and non-expanding networks to understand ethnic interaction among Sri Lankans can be illustrated in relation to three areas. First, the interaction between Sri Lankans and Australians is based on non-expanding network situations. Even social networks of ethnic assimilationists who believe in 'absorption' in the host society are characterised by conspicuous absence of expanding networks with Australians. Second, the inter-sub-ethnic interaction of people belonging to ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditional types is also characterised by non-expanding networks. Finally, intra-sub-ethnic interaction of all Sri Lankans and inter-sub-ethnic interaction of ethnic integrationists display characteristics of expanding networks. The importance of these network situations will be further examined in the next chapter. Before that let us examine organised social activities and the way they are related to expression of ethnicity.

In addition to individual interaction based on network activities, organised social activities also need to be examined to understand the patterns of interaction among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. At the moment there are several different associations and clubs among them. They bring people belonging to different sub-ethnic communities and social backgrounds together. On the basis of ethnic composition of membership and aims of these associations they can be broadly divided into three categories.

In the first category are those associations that cater for the needs of one particular sub-ethnic category/group. The membership of these
associations is limited to one particular sub-ethnic community. There are two such associations among Sri Lankans in Melbourne at present. They are, the Ceylon Tamil Association and the Burgher Association. Of the two, the Ceylon Tamil Association is the more active and its role in the mobilisation of Tamil ethnicity in the Australian context will be discussed in the next chapter. The Burgher Association, on the other hand, is now almost inactive.

Associations that consist of members of all three sub-ethnic categories are the second category. The oldest and the strongest, in terms of membership and recognition by Sri Lankans in Melbourne, is the Australia Ceylon Fellowship which was started in 1957 (News Letter April 1971:5). In the beginning its membership was exclusively Burghers. There were two reasons for this at that time. First, there were, except for a handful, no non-Burghers in Australia in the 1950s. Second, there was an attempt by Dutch Burghers, who were up to the 1960s the majority of Sri Lankan immigrants in this country, to separate themselves from non-Burghers. But with the arrival of non-Burghers and non-Dutch Burghers since the late 1960s the situation has changed and today the ACF is the most powerful association among Sri Lankans with a multi-sub-ethnic membership. In addition to the ACF there are other ethnic associations open to all sub-ethnic communities. They are the Sri Lanka Club of Victoria (SLCV), Australia Sri Lanka Friendship Association (ASLFA), Ceylon Welfare Guild (CWG) and Ceylon Welfare Association (CWA). Further, there is an administrative committee called the Council of Australia Sri Lanka Organisations (COASLO) which was formed in 1981 to coordinate activities of Sri Lankan associations in Melbourne.

Apart from the above ethnically oriented clubs and associations there are other associations which draw their membership from all sub-ethnic communities. Unlike the two categories of associations so far discussed,
these associations do not use the idea of common peoplehood, either sub-ethnic allegiance or land of origin to attract members. This makes them different from the other associations discussed so far. These non-ethnic associations, as they are called here, are the old boys and old girls associations founded by Sri Lankans who attended leading colleges in Sri Lanka. At the moment there are about eight such associations in Melbourne.

As we saw, except for those associations that are open only to specific sub-ethnic communities, that is, the Ceylon Tamil Association and the Burgher Association, all the other associations among Sri Lankans in Melbourne consist of members of all sub-ethnic communities. But a closer look at their composition reveals that ethnicity is not the only variable that determines who becomes members of which association. As the following figure shows, even the associations that are open to all sub-ethnic communities tend to be tilted to one sub-ethnic group's category's control. Further, it shows that their membership could not be understood without referring to the three sociological types we discussed at the beginning (Figure 5.5).

As Figure 5.5 illustrates, the control of both multi-sub-ethnic and non-ethnic associations is in the hands of ethnic integrationists. But still there are ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditionals who are members of these associations. This situation provides for a dialogue between Sri Lankans belonging to three sociological types. As we shall see later in the next chapter, this has contributed to the emergence of Sri Lankan ethnicity in Australia. Before going into this let us examine the relationship between patterns of identity and the emergence of organisations among Sri Lankans in Melbourne.
FIGURE 5.5: MEMBERSHIP OF SRI LANKAN ASSOCIATIONS AMONG SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE IN TERMS OF SUB-ETHNIC BACKGROUND AND SOCIOLOGICAL TYPES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPES OF ASSOCIATIONS</th>
<th>ETHNIC BACKGROUND OF THE MEMBERSHIP</th>
<th>SOCIOLOGICAL TYPE OF THE MEMBERSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Associations promoting sub-ethnic interests</td>
<td>A. Ceylon Tamil Association</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Burgher Association</td>
<td>Dutch-Burgher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Associations promoting 'Sri Lankan' interests</td>
<td>A. Australian Ceylon Fellowship</td>
<td>Burgher, Sinhalese and Tamil (majority are Burghers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Australia Sri Lanka Friendship Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Ceylon Welfare Guild</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Ceylon Welfare Association</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Sri Lanka Club of Victoria</td>
<td>Burgher, Sinhalese and Tamil (majority are Sinhalese)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F. Council of Australia Sri Lanka Organisations</td>
<td>Administrative body controlled by ethnic Integrationists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Non-ethnic Associations</td>
<td>A. Old Boys Associations</td>
<td>Burgher, Sinhalese and Tamil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Old Girls Associations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As seen from the preceding discussion, there is a close relationship between ethnic identities, analytical typologies and organised social activities among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. One question that needs to be examined in this regard is why does such a relationship exist? Is it because ethnic allegiances determine the nature of organised social interaction or are there any other variables that contribute to this situation. It is important to understand this situation because a Sri Lankan identity does not carry any strong lingering ethnic sentiments that could influence ethnic behavior in its own right especially when compared to Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic sentiments. I must also admit here it is futile to attempt an exhaustive explanation of the abovementioned interrelationship, but it is possible to throw some light on this by examining different factors that contribute to this situation.

In broad terms two factors can be pointed out as contributing to this situation. I shall call the first as ethnically determined and the second as socio-cultural and recreationally influenced. As we shall see later these two are also interrelated. For example, an association founded on the basis of ethnic allegiance and hence dominated by one ethnic community caters for socio-cultural and recreational needs of the members of that community. On the other hand, an association formed with the initial goal of providing some level of cultural services may later help promote ethnicity by bringing people together. Let us look at these processes in detail to explain the close relationship between ethnic identities, sociological categories and organised social interaction among Sri Lankans (Figure 5.5)

Ethnically determined factors are important in explaining the formation of ethnic organisations among Tamils in Melbourne. The Ceylon Tamil Association in Melbourne was founded with this aim in mind, though officials are reluctant to admit to it openly. As one official commented:
We do not agree that we help promote terrorism back in that country ... It is true members are involved, to some extent ... Well you can't stop that. Our aim is cultural advancement.

But it cannot be denied The Ceylon Tamil Association is involved with the political situation in Sri Lanka more than the officials dare to admit. The following typical comment by a Tamil ethnic traditional is an example of their strong ethnic sentiments and the way such sentiments lead to organisation of activities along ethnic lines.

They (Sinhaleese) do not like us over there. Our people cannot find jobs ... We left there because we did not feel safe in Colombo. Why should not we get organised to help them (Tamils in Sri Lanka).

It is this sentiment that has led to the formation of The Ceylon Tamil Association in Melbourne. Though this is the common sentiment among Tamil ethnic traditionals there are others who would not be so straight forward in expressing their anger. They have become members of The Ceylon Tamil Association for social and recreational services, for example, dinner dances, cultural festivities, that are provided. Such activities, though important in explaining the formation of The Ceylon Tamil Association, are not the main reason. It is clear that ethnic sentiments have given the initial push which, combined with the need to satisfy some social cultural and recreational needs, gave rise to the above association among Tamils. I shall examine these social/cultural and recreational needs in what follows in relation to the emergence of other associations that can be seen as founded primarily on that basis.

The primary reason that led to the formation of different ethnic associations among the rest of Sri Lankans is explained in relation to socio-cultural and recreational activities. This is explained by the fact that peoples of different ethnic backgrounds get together as members of these associations (Figure 5.5, association belonging to type 2 and 3). Here Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher Integrationists and even ethnic
assimilationists are seen getting together at least for the occasion of celebrations. To explain this we need to look at another important area, that is the nature of social and recreational activities among Sri Lankan immigrants.

From the field work in Melbourne it was revealed that Sri Lankans in general were not actively involved in institutionalised forms of organisations such as community clubs that cater for individuals' social and recreational needs. Many immigrants who used to frequent such activities back home have become either occasional visitors or do not visit such facilities at all (see Table 5.1).

**TABLE 5.1: MEMBERS OF 'AUSTRALIAN' CLUBS AMONG THE INTERVIEWEES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Involvement</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Members</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members/Occasional Visits</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Membership</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the above table shows, Sri Lankans cannot be said to be active members of community clubs in the wider community. It must further be said here that most of the members (14 to be exact) could be classified as ethnic assimilationists. This lack of involvement in the wider community could be taken as an important reason for emergence of associations among Sri Lankans who do not organise under strong home country ethnic sentiments like those which are found among Tamil ethnic traditionalists.
In examining this situation one important factor came to the fore. Inquiries revealed that the majority of Sri Lankans who are conscious of stereotyping and other sensitivities towards Asian immigrants, who are also easily identifiable because of their colour, in Australian society are reluctant to be actively involved in situations where they can be subjected to ridicule. The sensitivity of the clear majority of Sri Lankans to such situations was expressed in several forms during interviews. I was always advised by them 'not to travel by train during nights, especially on days footy matches are on' so I could avoid remarks by unruly passengers. Or, answering my questions as to why they did not go to clubs and other such community associations they would generally respond, as one put it:

*I do not feel comfortable. May be I am sensitive. I feel I am the odd one out in these situations. Sometimes you hear 'Indian' or something and it can hurt.*

Though they express this as their personal opinion such opinions were common to most Sri Lankans except for ethnic assimilationists. This situation is important to understand why there are ethnic associations even among Sri Lankans who do not promote their home country ethnicity like Tamils.

When we explain that social recreational factors promote the formation of associations among a section of Sri Lankans that leads us to two important questions. First, why do ethnic assimilationists become members of such associations? After all they look more like Australians in appearance than the rest of Sri Lankans and their identity is European, a fact that I have already discussed. This can be partly explained by the fact that their involvement in these associations are basically 'sporadic in nature'. It is a form of 'spectator participation' rather than real involvement. They are not the driving force behind these associations except for the Burgher Association which is now almost inactive. That inactivity of Burgher Association also reinforces my point that ethnic
FIGURE 5.6: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIOLOGICAL CATEGORIES, IDENTITIES AND ETHNIC GROUP FORMATION AMONG SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AN ETHNIC GROUP</td>
<td>MEANINGFUL IDENTITY</td>
<td>ANALYST'S TYPOLOGY</td>
<td>IDENTITY OF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Burgher</td>
<td>I Assimilationists (DBU)</td>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES (and a new</td>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>II Integrationists (BST)</td>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Sinhala</td>
<td>IIIa Traditional : Sinhala</td>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YES (old)</td>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>IIIb Traditional : Tamil</td>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
assimilationists, though conscious of their identity, do not form an ethnic group as such. The second question is why do not all Sri Lankans belong to one major association in organising cultural and recreational activities. Here strong home ethnic sentiments of Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic traditionals come as important divisive factors. Because of that they neither want to get together in social activities nor do they want to associate with ethnic integrationists who do not support their parochial tendencies.

So far I have attempted to examine the relationship between ethnic divisions and formation of ethnic associations among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. Here my attempt has been to examine the reasons for emergence of different associations and not to give causal explanations to ethnic dynamics. This will be done in the next chapter. Before that, let us look at the relationship between different identities discussed so far and the three sociological categories constructed for analytical purposes (see Figure 5.6).

As Figure 5.6 shows the existence of meaningful ethnic identifications does not mean existence of ethnic groups. For example, there are no ethnic groups present among Burghers who are assimilationists and Sinhalese who are ethnic traditionals. As noted before, sociological categories in their part are only analytical distinctions and should not be mistaken for ethnic divisions. For example, traditionals are divided as Sinhalese and Tamils while integrationists include Tamils (only a minority), Sinhalese and Burghers. Further, there is identity of convenience which is not meaningful in ethnic terms (Figure 5.6). This form of identification and the factors affecting patterns of ethnicity will be covered in the next chapter.

In Figure 5.6 I make two important distinctions. They are namely, the distinction between ethnic groups and analytical typologies (see A and C). Throughout this discussion I emphasised this distinction by saying that such typologies are my own constructions. The distinction between meaningful identity and identity of convenience will be examined later in relation to Sri Lankan identity. At this point it is sufficient to say that identity of convenience is only an awareness of existence of a social category.
Home Country Ethnic Identifications

As mentioned before (Figure 5.3) the home country ethnic identifications are salient only among ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditionals. Both ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditionals are conscious of their home country ethnic identifications though the structuration of ethnic interaction (Figures 5.1 and 5.2) varies with their respective home country ethnic identity. Both ethnic assimilationists and Sinhalese ethnic traditionals express their home country ethnic identity in terms of ethnic networks while among Tamil ethnic traditionals there is ethnic group formation. By contrast, among ethnic integrationists home country ethnicity is only an awareness of an identity. There are no ethnic activities on the basis of home country ethnicity. So in this section my attention is on ethnic traditionals (Sinhalese and Tamil) and ethnic assimilationists.

A. Sinhalese Identity

Sinhalese identity is still strong among Sinhalese immigrants who belong to the ethnic traditionals sociological type. Among them it is a conscious identification on which ethnic networks are formed. Lasting and regular networks consist only of Sinhalese who are either ethnic traditionals or ethnic integrationists. Since Sri Lankans are a dispersed immigrant population in Melbourne, sometimes we see ethnic traditionalist Sinhalese traveling long distances to meet with other Sinhalese. Apart from regular visits, telephone contacts are also important to keep these communications alive. As these networks are based only on ethnicity, that is, Sinhalese identity in this case, it is common place to see people of different socio-economic backgrounds becoming network members.
Though ethnic networks are the main feature among Sinhalese ethnic traditionals there is occasional group formation as well. These groups last only the duration of the occasion that gives rise to such group formation. For example, Sinhalese ethnic traditionals get together once a year in mid-April to celebrate their new year. In addition, important Buddhist religious occasions are celebrated by Sinhalese ethnic traditionals at the Buddhist Temple in Richmond. These ceremonies are attended by not only Sinhalese Buddhists, who are the core group of Sinhalese ethnic traditionals, but also by the few Sinhalese Christians who belong to the ethnic traditionalist category. This fact itself is evidence to the strong Sinhalese identity of ethnic traditionals.

There have been several attempts in the past to organise Sinhalese traditionals into a more structured group by organising a Sinhalese club in Melbourne. All those attempts have failed. While it is true that the majority of Sinhalese belong to the Sri Lanka Club of Victoria (Figure 5.5), and its activities have a Sinhalese orientation, this club has Burgher and Muslim members as well. Further, the force behind that association are the ethnic integrationists. So there is no clearly evident attempt to mobilise Sinhalese ethnicity. One of the recent attempts to mobilise Sinhalese ethnicity was in 1978 after the formation of the Ceylon Tamil Association. A section of the Sinhalese traditionals wanted to react to that by forming a Sinhalese association but the attempt failed because of lack of support and opposition from ethnic integrationist Sinhalese. Ironically, the recent ethnic riots in Sri Lanka in 1983 did not revive this attempt. These incidents clearly show the unwillingness of Sinhalese ethnic traditionalists to go beyond ethnic networks and form groups to mobilise their home country ethnicity.
B. Burgher Identity

Ethnic assimilationists, the majority of whom are Dutch Burghers, display a strong Burgher identity. Similar to ethnic traditionalist Sinhalese, among ethnic assimilationists the home country ethnic identification of Burghers plays a major role in ethnic network formation. Lasting and regular networks among these people consists of only Burghers. The Burgher identity seen among ethnic assimilationists is more or less a continuation of 'European identity' that was evident even in Sri Lanka. As we saw before, the Dutch Burghers in Sri Lanka emphasised their superiority, compared to both non-Dutch Burghers and the natives, by maintaining the distinction between unbroken European ancestry (Dutch Burgher) and mixed European ancestry (non-Dutch Burghers). In the Australian context the Burgher identity seen among ethnic assimilationists is in reality based on the notion that Burghers are a 'European people'.

As I explained before, the ethnic assimilationists think that they should assimilate in Australian society. Despite this assimilationist ideology (Figure 5.3) there is ethnic network formation among them. As I mentioned, there is conspicuous absence of Australians in the lasting and regular networks of ethnic assimilationists. This is an interesting situation which seems to contradict with their assimilationist ideology. But as we shall see later this situation is not a contradiction. I shall discuss this in Chapter VI in detail.

In addition to ethnic networks there are organised ethnic activities seen among ethnic assimilationists. In the late 1970s an ethnic association was formed by a section of Burghers, the Burgher Association which was mentioned above, to promote the welfare activities among Sri Lankan Burghers in Melbourne. Though this association did not survive long in active form there are occasional get-togethers and other forms of group formation seen among these people several times a year. More importantly,
they are a strong pressure group in the membership of the ACF. The Queen's Birthday Dinner Dance, organised annually by the ACT and attended almost exclusively by ethnic assimilationists, is a good example of the solidarity of these people and their influence. The celebration of the Queen's Birthday Dinner is one way for Dutch Burghers to express their European identity. Despite several attempts by some members of the ACF to remove the above event from the ACF's annual calendar of events, ethnic assimilationists have managed to keep it intact.

Thus as we see here ethnic assimilationists still express their ethnicity in the Australian context as Dutch Burghers, which was their sub-ethnic identity in Sri Lanka (Chapter III). Among them there is network formation on the basis of Dutch-Burgher identity. Though they avoid Sri Lankans of non-Burgher origin in forming social networks they interact with ethnic integrationists at organisational levels. As we shall see later this interaction between ethnic assimilationists and ethnic integrationists at organisational levels is basically an 'interest' based one so it has not resulted in lessening the strong Burgher cum European identification of ethnic assimilationists. The nature of the above interactive relationship and the 'interests' involved in will be discussed in Chapter VI in detail.

C. Tamil Identity

Tamil identity is salient among ethnic traditional Tamils. They are the most active among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. They are not only conscious of their home country ethnicity but also are a highly politicised ethnic community. Though social networks based on home country ethnicity have been a basic feature among Tamil ethnic traditionals in Melbourne the political mobilisation of Tamil ethnicity started only after the late
129

1970s. As we saw before, the first move to unite Tamil immigrants from Sri Lanka began in the late 1970s after ethnic riots in Sri Lanka in 1977. Today Tamil (ethnic traditionals) in Melbourne not only engage in organised ethnic activities but also actively participate in promoting in the Australian context the political cause of Tamils of Sri Lanka. Most Tamil ethnic traditionals in Melbourne are not only members of the Ceylon Tamil Association but also members of the Sri Lanka Tamil Association of Australasia, which co-ordinates Sri Lankan Tamil political activities in this country.

In the early 1970s Tamil ethnic traditionals, though they always preferred to maintain ethnic networks, used to get together with Sinhalese ethnic traditionals in organising social and cultural activities. At that time the distinction between the traditional culture type as a whole, that is, Sinhalese Buddhists and Tamil Hindus, (see Figures 4.1 and 5.3 and succeeding discussions) and the Westernised Sri Lankans in this country, that is, Burghers and Sinhalese and Tamil Christians, was the most important division among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. At that time, ethnic integrationists were only beginning to become a force in the Sri Lankan community. The then power holders of the Sri Lankan community, the ethnic assimilationists, did not welcome both Sinhalese Buddhists and Tamil Hindus into their social circles. Because of this there was a unity among Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic traditionals which was broken with the worsening ethnic situation in Sri Lanka (see Chapter III).

The first serious rift between Tamils and Sinhalese in Melbourne began during the ethnic riots in Sri Lanka in 1977. Tamil members of the Australian Sri Lankan community expected that the Sri Lankan community in Melbourne could strongly condemn the incidents as well as the Sri Lankan Government's handling of the situation. Neither the Sri Lanka Club of Victoria, of which most Tamils in Melbourne were members at that time,
nor the ACF, though it expressed its concern, initiated any action condemning the situation in Sri Lanka. For the Sinhalese community in Melbourne a strong condemnation of activities in Sri Lanka would have been a condemnation of the Sinhalese community itself, as the Sri Lankan Government is dominated by Sinhalese. Burghers also were indifferent to the situation. It must be remembered that during the youth insurrection in Sri Lanka in 1970, the ACF not only passed a resolution expressing regrets but also sent an official letter to the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in Canberra (News Letter June 1971:1). The dissatisfaction and ill feeling of Tamils because of the events were further aggravated by another incident during the same period that involved sending financial help to victims of a cyclone which hit the Tamil dominated Northern province of Sri Lanka. So the conflict that started between Tamils and the rest of the Sri Lankan community, especially Sinhalese, resulted in the formation of the Ceylon Tamil Association in 1979.

Tamil ethnic traditionals see that they have a part to play in promoting their culture and the Tamil political cause in Australia. In the area of fostering their culture they started an ethnic school in 1980. At the beginning it was informally organised with the help of an Indian Tamil teacher, who taught language, and a wife of a Sri Lankan Tamil student of Monash University, who used to teach traditional Tamil dancing. During the time of my work in Melbourne funds had been tentatively approved by the Victorian Department of Education for a similar school.

In addition to an ethnic school, Tamils in Melbourne have their own ethnic radio programme, which was started in 1982. Before that there was one radio programme among Melbourne Sri Lankans associated with 3EA which had a Tamil segment of 15 minutes. But with the rift between Tamils and other Sri Lankans widening it was no longer possible for Tamils to work with the same programme. Tamil ethnic traditionalists who are the
driving force behind ethnic mobilisation of Tamil identity started blaming the organisers of the Sri Lankan radio programme because of their bias towards Sinhalese. The original Sri Lankan ethnic radio programme was 45 minutes in duration but as noted the Tamil segment was only 15 minutes. Tamil leaders of the community saw this as a favouring of Sinhalese by the organisers. The result was the establishment of a separate Tamil ethnic radio programme by Sri Lankan Tamils which now runs on 3EA immediately following the original Sri Lankan radio programme. The latter is now called the Sinhalese programme after the separation of the Tamil segment.

The other important feature that needs to be mentioned here is the close relationship between ethnic traditionalist Sri Lankan Tamils and Tamil immigrants from India living in Melbourne. It is very common to find Indian Tamils in networks of ethnic traditionalist, Sri Lankan Tamils. Further, there is a very close liaison between the two communities at associational levels. Sri Lankan Tamils attend cultural and social activities organised by Indian Tamils and vice versa. The CTA even organise functions to entertain Indian Tamil dignitaries and to talk to Sri Lankan Tamils. It is true that the close relationship between Indian and Sri Lankan Tamils is mainly because of cultural compatibility and the use of the same language, but the recent increase of close liaison, especially since the 1977 ethnic riots in Sri Lanka, shows that other political factors are also involved.

The above examination of home country ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne shows that people belonging to different sub-ethnic categories/groups express home country ethnicity differently. For ethnic assimilationists and Sinhalese ethnic traditionalists home country ethnic identities are important in ethnic networks, and occasionally, in group formation. By contrast, Tamil ethnic traditionalists mobilise their home country
ethnic identity around a strong political element. In the next chapter I shall examine the causes for these developments. Before that we need to examine the second pattern of ethnic identification seen among Sri Lankans which is the 'Sri Lankan' ethnic identification.

Sri Lankan Ethnic Identity

Sri Lankan ethnic identity is the primary focus of identification among ethnic integrationists. Ethnic integrationists among Sri Lankans in Melbourne are not only conscious of their Sri Lankan identification but also form an ethnic group as they regulate their social activities on that basis. The 'Sri Lankan' ethnic identity seen among ethnic integrationists needs to be distinguished from another form of Sri Lankan identity, which I call 'Sri Lankan' social identity. The latter is common to all Sri Lankans including those who do not belong to the Sri Lankan ethnic group, that is ethnic traditionalists and ethnic assimilationists. Both ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditionalists, though not belonging to the Sri Lankan ethnic group, are aware of their social identity of being Sri Lankans in the Australian context and use their Sri Lankan social identity in their interaction with non-Sri Lankans. It is the Sri Lankan ethnic identity and ethnic group formation I am looking at here in this discussion. But before turning to that we need to examine the distinction between social identification and ethnic identification.

A form of social identification on the basis of a social distinction most known and meaningful to the members of host society is bestowed on all immigrants. So we refer to 'Greeks', 'Italians', 'Jews' and the like as distinct categories on the basis of these social or given identities. Immigrants also, for their part, tend to use these identities when they interact with members outside their own community as social identity is
the known form of social distinction. But this does not mean that there is always a meaningful identification with these identities among immigrants. So in most cases they become identities of convenience that facilitate interaction between immigrants and host society. Sometimes they may even influence the formation of ethnic identities as in the case of Italians in Australia (Lewins 1978). But it is not always correct to take social identity as an ethnic identity because it may not have any meaningful relationship among the immigrant community concerned.

Among Sri Lankans in Melbourne these two Sri Lankan identifications, that is, Sri Lankan social identity and Sri Lankan ethnic identity, should be seen as two different phenomena. Though there is a congruence of both the social identification of being Sri Lankan and Sri Lankan ethnic identity among ethnic integrationists, among ethnic traditionalists and ethnic assimilationists there is no such relationship. Among the latter the primary focus of identification is their respective home country identities.

To understand Sri Lankan ethnic identity among ethnic integrationists we need to look at the formation of Sri Lankan ethnicity over time. Historically, the basis for the emergence of Sri Lankan ethnic identity was laid in the late 1960s and early 1970s with the arrival of non-Dutch Burghers and Sinhalese/Tamil Christians. Since then we have seen ethnic activities among Sri Lankans changing. Instead of attempting to 'disappear' in Australian society, like ethnic assimilationists, ethnic integrationists started promoting their own identity based on Sri Lankan-ness. The attempts by ethnic assimilationists to see themselves as different because of their European origin were rejected by the ethnic integrationists. One of the most important changes in the direction was the change of ethnic composition of the Australian Ceylon Fellowship which was, until the 1970s, the bastion of ethnic assimilationists. Because of the
influence of ethnic integrationists, it had to abandon its early assimilationist ideology. Today its secretary is a Sinhalese, an ethnic integrationist, something that was not possible in the early days because 'natives' were not welcome.

The cultural activities organised by ethnic integrationists also help us to understand the nature of Sri Lankan ethnic identity. Ethnic traditionals express their ethnicity by organising indigenous cultural activities and promoting them in the Australian context. For example, Sinhalese ethnic traditionalists celebrate their Buddhist festivals and Tamils their Hindus religious occasions regularly. As we saw before, ethnic assimilationists pay attention to occasions like the Queen's Birthday Dinner Dance and similar Anglo-Australian activities. Sri Lankan identity, on the other hand, is expressed in terms of 'compromised' cultural activities which suit Tamils, Sinhalese and Burghers alike. For them, the most important occasions are New Year, Christmas, Sri Lankan Independence Day and similar occasions. The reasons for this could be understood by looking at the social background of ethnic integrationists. Even in Sri Lanka they did not identify with indigenous cultural activities. This will be discussed in detail in the next chapter in relation to the formation of Sri Lankan identity.

Though there is no strong political mobilisation of Sri Lankan identity in Australia, compared to Tamil identity, for example, the members of the Sri Lankan ethnic group are active in promoting their identity. As we saw before, they recently formed a co-ordinating committee to regulate the activities of Sri Lankan associations in Melbourne. They are active in the community in the organisation of social welfare and recreational activities. The ethnic radio programme mentioned previously and various organised gatherings are evidence of this. Recently they have begun to focus their attention on working as an ethnic pressure group in the
Australian context to promote the needs of Sri Lankans in Sri Lanka. One example of their activities in this area is their request made to the Australian Cricket Board to help Sri Lanka in its bid to enter the International Cricket Conference. Since the establishment of the co-ordinating committee (COASLO) of Sri Lankan associations, such activities are becoming more and more important in the mobilisation of Sri Lankan ethnicity.

Changes of Ethnicity in Relation to Sri Lanka

In the preceding section we saw that patterns of ethnic identifications among Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne are a complex phenomena that needs to be understood in terms of both home country ethnicity and new Sri Lankan ethnicity. This situation is considerably different from the situation in Sri Lankan society. In Sri Lanka, Sinhalese, Tamils and Burghers can be seen as distinct ethnic groups (Chapter III). Further, among Sinhalese and Tamils, home country ethnicity is closely associated with political mobilisation of ethnic phenomena. On the other hand, Sri Lankan identity is not important in relation to Sri Lanka other than for administrative purposes. As we saw in Chapter III there is no strong national identity that unifies different ethnic groups.

In the Australian context it is not possible to see three similar ethnic groups among Sri Lankans. Only Tamil ethnic traditionals can be called an ethnic group in the Australian context, that is with the exception of 'Sri Lankan' ethnic group. Among Tamils there is ethnic group formation as well as political mobilisation of ethnicity. Among Sinhalese traditionals there is neither group formation nor ethnic mobilisation. Among them home country ethnicity is limited to the formation of ethnic networks. Similarly ethnic assimilationists, who are mainly Dutch Burghers, also are not an ethnic group in the Australian context. Though they are
conscious of their home country ethnicity there is only network formation among them. The following diagram illustrates the changes of home country ethnicity in relation to Sri Lanka and Australia (Figure 5.7).

**FIGURE 5.7 : CHANGES IN HOME COUNTRY ETHNICITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Structuration of Ethnic Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Assimilationists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinhalese Ethnic Traditionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Integrationists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the above diagram shows, ethnic groups in Sri Lankan society have been reformulated in the Australian context. Except for Tamils there are no corresponding ethnic groups among both Sinhalese and Burghers. The majority of Sri Lankans are either only aware of their home country ethnicity or form ethnic networks. Because of this there is no ethnic group formation among both Sinhalese and Burghers. In other words both Burgher and Sinhalese ethnic groups have disappeared in the Australian context. So the presence of both Sinhalese and Burgher ethnicities in Australia can be understood only in terms of ethnic networks.

In addition to the reformulation of home country ethnic groups in the Australian context, the other major change is the emergence of Sri Lankan
identification. In the Australian context, a Sri Lankan ethnic group has been formed among ethnic integrationists (Figure 5.8).

FIGURE 5.8 : SRI LANKAN IDENTITY AND SRI LANKAN ETHNIC GROUP IN AUSTRALIA

Levels of Structuration of Ethnic Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Category</th>
<th>Ethnic Networks</th>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Integrationists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Assimilationists and Traditionals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All People in Sri Lanka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the above diagram shows, there is *ethnic group* formation as Sri Lankans among ethnic integrationists. Such an *ethnic group* is not present in Sri Lanka (Figure 5.6). For the others, that is ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditionalists, Sri Lankan identity remains only an awareness. For them there is no change in ethnic identification. This shows that ethnic phenomena among Sri Lankans in Melbourne cannot be understood only in terms of home country ethnicity. There is a new ethnic group formation as well. In the next chapter I shall address these two problems in detail, that is, reformulation of old home country ethnicities and the revival of an old Sri Lankan identity and a formation of a new ethnic group.
As the above discussion shows my attention in this study has been the changes of ethnicities among Sri Lankans in relation to Sri Lanka. It has shown that different sections of Sri Lankan immigrants are affected differently as a result of the immigration process. I would not suggest that as a result of immigration the ethnic relations among Sri Lankans have been completely changed. Particularly the new ethnic development, that is, formation of Sri Lankan ethnic group, does not mean that Sri Lankan identity among ethnic integrationists is a new development that has occurred in Australia. Sri Lankan identity or Ceylonese identity as it is normally called was formed during the colonial period. But I would argue that there was no 'Sri Lankan ethnic group' formation in Sri Lanka such as that which has emerged in the Australian context.
Notes

1. There is a movement by ethnic integrationists to remove events like the Queen's Birthday Dinner from the calendar of events of the ACF. But still the majority believe that holding such events is necessary to relate to the Australian context as the head of Australia is the British Monarch. So an ethnic integrationist being the guest speaker here is not surprising.

2. Even the Tamil community espouses this idea though they say that in Sri Lanka Tamils are being discriminated against. The reason for this may be the strong family roots they have in Sri Lanka.

3. Except for the Sri Lanka Club of Victoria, which has a significant number of Sinhalese ethnic traditional members, the members of these associations are members of ACF as well.
In the previous chapter I explained that it is necessary to look at two patterns of ethnic identification to understand ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. First, the home country ethnic allegiances and groupings, which have undergone considerable change in the Australian context. There are no ethnic groups among both Sinhalese and Burghers in Australia but a significant number of each community that is ethnic traditionals and ethnic assimilationists respectively, are conscious of their home country ethnic identities and form ethnic networks on that basis. A section of the Tamil community still strongly display their home country ethnicity both in ethnic group formation and mobilisation of Tamil identity with strong political connotations. Second, there is a 'Sri Lankan' ethnic group formation among the majority of Sri Lankans in Melbourne whom I call ethnic integrationists. What are the reasons behind these different expressions of ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne? Can we explain this variable nature of ethnic expression solely in terms of situational, that is host country, variables or do we need to look at the home country influence as well? I shall try to answer these questions in this chapter.

The discussion in this chapter is divided into four sections. In the first section attention is on the problem of separating ideological and structural variables in relation to home and host societies. The second and third sections, respectively, attempt to give causal explanations for the two developments, that is, reformulation of home
country ethnicities and the formation of the Sri Lankan ethnic group discussed in the previous chapter. In the last section I shall re-examine the theoretical frameworks put forward in Chapter II in the light of the causal relationships between different ethnic expressions and home and host country variables.

**Ideology and Structure in the Explanation of Ethnicity Among Immigrants**

In presenting a new theoretical framework for ethnic analysis in Chapter II, I suggested that ethnicity should be understood in terms of the interactive relationship between ideology and structure. By doing that I did not reject the situationalist nature of ethnicity, that is, its processual and changing nature in a given context. Rather, the argument was that ethnic situationality could not be properly understood without seeing it as an interaction between ideological and situational variables. This, in other words, means an expansion of the situationalist argument to include ideological variables in addition to structural variables such as class position and political power relations. So, a given situation consists of two sets of analytically distinct, though interacting, variables which are called ideological and structural variables.

In a given situation it is not difficult to distinguish between ideology and structure. In broad terms, structural variables are the socio-economic relationships that determine class position and power relationships in a given situation. Ideologies on the other hand are the ideational level which include ethnic allegiances themselves. But in an immigrant situation this division of ideology and structure becomes complicated with the inclusion of home society factors in the explanation in that it adds more variables to the ideological sphere. So to understand the interaction between ideology and structure in relation to immigrant
ethnicity we need to know what these variables are and the way they relate to host and home societies.

The situationalist explanation of ethnicity sees socio-economic variables as the cause of the salience of ethnicity among immigrants. Such attempts limit ethnic explanation among immigrants to structural variables. Does this mean that there are no ideologies in the host society that influence ethnic dynamics among immigrants? As Lewins (1978a) rightly points out in his examination of Italians in Australia ethnic prejudices, ethnic stereotypes and social identifications of the host country are also important in understanding immigrant ethnicity. So, in examination of interaction between ideology and structure, we first need to look at ideologies and structural relations in the host society and their influence on the ethnic dynamics among immigrants.

The host society variables can be divided into two as ideological and structural. But ideologies that influence ethnic formation among immigrants are not limited to the host society. They need to be examined in relation to the home country as well. As we saw in the introductory chapter, ethnicity needs to be understood historically as ideologies are not always determined by the contemporary social structural relations. Influence of such past ideologies, that is, the influence of home society ideological relations, have been discussed by several scholars like Schooler (1976) and Jonston and Yoel (1976) who look at the influence of socialisation of immigrants in the host country in their present condition. Lewins (1978a), looking at Ukrainians in Australia, says that ethnic sub-culture, that is, pre-emigration experience and home country ethnic allegiances are important in understanding ethnicity among Ukrainians in Australia. Even scholars who consider structural factors as the basis of ethnicity do not completely deny the relevance of home country factors altogether (Yancey and Erikson 1977:740).
Thus we see that the interactive relationship between ideology and structural relations cannot be understood without referring to both host country structural relations and ideologies and home country ideologies. The following figure illustrates the various ideological and structural variables that are important in explaining immigrant ethnicity and their relationship with home and host societies (Figure 6.1).

FIGURE 6.1 : IDEOLOGICAL AND STRUCTURAL VARIABLES IN HOST AND HOME SOCIETIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Home Society</th>
<th>Host Society</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ethnic sub-culture of home society</td>
<td>2. Ethnic stereotypes, prejudices and social identity in host society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Economic relations and distribution of political power in host society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the above figure shows, though all structural variables that influence ethnicity among immigrants are host society variables all host society variables are not structural variables. For example, ethnic stereotypes etc. are part of host society but they belong to ideological sphere. In examining immigrant ethnicity we need to look at the relative role of each in a given situation. My examination of ethnic dynamics among Sri Lankans in Melbourne in what follows looks at the role of each phenomenon, that is, ideology and structure in shaping different ethnic expressions.

Factors Influencing Home Country Ethnicity

In the previous chapter I discussed the different ways the home country ethnic allegiances are expressed by Sri Lankans in Melbourne. As
we saw, except among ethnic integrationists, home country ethnicities still play a significant role in regulating social interaction. For example, among ethnic assimilationists and Sinhalese ethnic traditionals there are ethnic network formations based on home country ethnicity while Tamil ethnic traditionals mobilise their home country ethnicity. How can we explain these phenomena? Why do only some Sri Lankans and not others display allegiance to home country ethnicities? I shall try here to answer these questions by looking at factors influencing home country ethnicities among Sri Lankans in Melbourne.

The two sections of Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne whom we call ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditionals, maintained strict ethnic boundaries even when they were in Sri Lanka. There was hardly any inter-ethnic interaction among them prior to immigration (Chapter III). Further, in Sri Lanka, Tamil and Sinhalese identities were mobilised by Hindu Tamils and Sinhalese Buddhists respectively. As we saw in the previous chapter, above are the majority of ethnic traditionals. Does this mean that the importance of home country ethnicities in the Australian context can be explained by pre-emigration factors such as primary socialisation and collective experience? I want to argue here that the pre-emigration situation in conjunction with some situational variables are responsible for the salience of home country ethnicities among ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditionals. In other words, home country ethnicities among these people can be explained as a continuation of ideology, that is, lingering ethnicity, supported by situational variables.

A. Factors Influencing Burgher Identity

A strong Burgher identification is present among ethnic assimilationists. As we saw previously, these people had a strong European identification
even in Sri Lanka, based on their presumed unbroken European ancestry. Hence, they maintained their separation from both 'natives' and so called 'mixed Burghers' (McGilvray 1982). Their immigration to Australia when the White Australia Policy was still in full force seems to have strengthened this identity. I found this deeply entrenched in the minds of ethnic assimilationists. When they discuss their immigration to this country they invariably point to the fact that they came here when the 'White Australia Policy' was still in force or they have relations who came here during that period. In other words they wanted to emphasise that they were considered 'Whites' by the Australians. This strong European identity, which was so strengthened, was further supported by socio-cultural interests and by the presence of large numbers of family members, which directly helped formation of networks consisting of their 'own people'. The following figure illustrates this (Figure 6.2).

FIGURE 6.2 : FACTORS INFLUENCING BURGER IDENTITY IN AUSTRALIA

(A) Burgher cum European identity in Sri Lanka among Dutch Burghers

(B) Ethnic assimilationists in Australia

(C) Australian society, ethnic prejudices, etc.

(D) Burgher identity and networks

♦ direction of influence.
As the above diagram shows, those Sri Lankans who are called ethnic assimilationists in this study, emphasised on maintaining their European identity when they were in Sri Lanka (A). By doing so they separated themselves from both non-Europeans, that is, Sinhalese Tamils and Moors and part Europeans, that is, so called non-Dutch Burghers. This European identification based on their belief that they have unbroken European ancestry could be considered as the basis of primary socialisation of ethnic assimilationists in the Sri Lankan context. This European identity, as I mentioned before, was further strengthened by the fact that ethnic assimilationists were allowed to migrate to Australia when the 'White Australia Policy' was still in force. This explains the reasons for the presence of ethnic assimilationists (B) in the Australia context. But it does not explain why their salience of Burgher ethnicity among these Sri Lankans. To understand that we need to look at another area, that is the influence of Australian society (C).

To explain the role of the Australian society we need to look at ethnic prejudices and stereotypes in relation to Asian immigrants. The unfavourable attitude of Australian society at large towards Asians (Yarwood 1964; Lippman 1979; White and White 1982) seems to have significantly influenced the promotion of Burgher identity among ethnic assimilationists. Burgher ethnicity among them is a means to avoid the 'Asian label' that is given to immigrants from the Asian region. Promotion of Burgher identity enables the ethnic assimilationists to overcome the unfavourable 'Asian label' as Burghers are non-Asians.

This attempt to avoid the 'Asian label' by ethnic assimilationists needs to be examined in detail. Previously I argued that ethnic assimilationists
have a strong European identity which existed even when they were in Sri Lanka. Moving into Australian society has definitely strengthened this identification. As I explained, referring to a quotation, they consider that they are Caucasians. This clearly shows that they see themselves as different from Asians who do not belong to that classification. Further, as mentioned before, in physical appearance also ethnic assimilationists are similar to white Australians. This means simply living as Burghers, thereby distancing themselves from their Asian origin, would further help them to promote their European identify.

Here one might perhaps ask the question why some one who looks like a European wants to avoid an identity given to people who do not look like him. Here one has to address the problems in personal networks. In personal networks birth place of origin could become the focus of identification. From discussion with ethnic assimilationists, I found that they sometimes have to make an effort to show that they are not Asians despite their Sri Lankan birth. A typical comments of an ethnic traditionalist would be:

_Australians do not know that Sri Lanka has different communities. We sometimes have to tell them we are part of colonial legacy_ (here he would invariably lower his voice, may be thinking it might offend me as I was a Sinhalese).

These and similar comments that carry the same message show that ethnic assimilationists promote European identity in personal network situations with other Australians. One ethnic assimilationist during an interview noted:
We did not come here as refugees. My family migrated in 1953. That was long before they allowed others to come in here. That happened after 1960.

Here by saying that he came in 1953 he was trying to show that he is different from others. By specific mention of 1960, the time part Europeans were allowed in, it is clear that his reference to others was that he was allowed to migrate in 1953. This is the basis of meaningful identity of ethnic assimilationists.

Thus the Burgher identity among ethnic assimilationist in one sense is a promotion of European identity with the aim of gaining access to the mainstream Australian community. At the same time it is a continuation of a pre-emigration ethnic identity ('A' in Figure 6.2). This lingering ethnic sentiment has been strengthened by Australian factors ('C' in Figure 6.2). Australian variables, that is, ethnic prejudices etc. do not isolate ethnic assimilationists, rather ethnic assimilationists react to them by rejecting their Asian origin and projecting 'Europeans'. It is a situation where 'human factors' (Archer 1982) such as needs of individuals, become important over societal influences. This situation will be further examined in relation to its influence on contemporary debate on integration of immigrants in the host society in Chapter VII.

B. Factors Influencing Sinhalese and Tamil identities

The home country ethnicities among Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic traditionalists also need to be understood in relation to the situation which
existed in Sri Lanka. The pre-emigration experience of these people was not only that of ethnic separation but also strong mobilisation of their respective ethnicities in the Sri Lankan context. In addition to these pre-emigration variables there seems to be another factor that supports the continuity of Sinhalese and Tamil identities in the Australian context. To explain this variable we need to look at the strong relationship of these people with the Sri Lankan society they left behind. The following figure (Figure 6.3) shows how these two factors influence the continuity of Sinhalese and Tamil ethnicities in the Australian context.

**FIGURE 6.3 : FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CONTINUITY OF SINHALESE AND TAMIL ETHNICITIES**

(A) Ethnic Sub-Culture

- (A1) Primary socialisation
- (A2) Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka

(B) Tamil and Sinhalese ethnic Traditionals in Australia

(C) Tamil identity mobilisation/group formation and formation of ethnic networks among Sinhalese

direction of influence
As the above figure shows (Figure 6.3), ethnic separation which existed in Sri Lanka between the two communities continues in Australia shaping the Tamil and Sinhalese self identities. For example, the primary socialisation (A1) in Sri Lanka results in the existence of Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic traditionals in the Australian context (B). But this would not have led to the salience of Tamil and Sinhalese identities among ethnic traditionals without the additional variable that affects both Tamil and Sinhalese ethnic traditionals. This variable is the ethnic conflict between Tamils and Sinhalese (A2). This makes the separation of Tamil and Sinhalese ethnic traditionals one of conflict relationships. This in turn leads to Tamil ethnic mobilisation/group formation and ethnic network formation among Sinhalese (C). What brings the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka to the Australian context? To explain this we need to look at the unique immigration process of ethnic traditionalists I mentioned earlier.

As discussed before, as a result of their unique immigration process, ethnic traditionals have not yet severed their connections with Sri Lankan society. They are a form of transitory immigrants who still live in two societies though technically they live in Australia. Because of their part existence in Sri Lankan society, what happens in Sri Lanka still carries the same meaning it used to for these people. So their most important problem, that is, the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, affects both Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic traditionals. The result of this is the salience of Tamil and Sinhalese ethnicities. But there is one more question here. Why does this situation in Sri Lanka affect Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic traditionals differently? As we saw before, only Tamils mobilise their home country ethnicity in Australia. To answer this question we need to look at the different ways Tamils and Sinhalese are affected by the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka.
For Tamil ethnic traditionals ethnic conflict is a personal experience. It was a significant aspect of their lives in Sri Lanka and most see their immigration to Australia a result of this abiding situation in Sri Lanka. For example, in Sri Lanka they were disadvantaged in obtaining government employment and education, the two main grievances of the Tamils. Further, the continuity of ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka is especially significant for them as they know that it involves their family members who have remained behind.

The situation of the Sinhalese ethnic traditionals is somewhat different here. They are not affected in the same way as Tamils. They do not have the belligerent mentality of the Tamil ethnic traditionals. While Tamils see that they must be part of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka by supporting the cause in whatever way they can, such as organising political activities in Australia to support the Tamil cause, Sinhalese on their part do not organise such activities as they do not think that there is a need to do such things. However, among Sinhalese there is a continuity of resentment of Tamils as a result of their activities in both Sri Lanka and Australia, which help promote continuity of strong Sinhalese sentiments.

The influence of this Sri Lankan situation on Tamil traditionals can be further elaborated by looking at interview data (Table 6.1).

**TABLE 6.1 : REASONS FOR IMMIGRATION OF INTERVIEWEES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Category</th>
<th>Discrimination</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burghers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinhalese</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamils</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>84</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table gives a fairly good picture of feelings of Sri Lankan immigrants about the reasons that contributed towards their leaving Sri Lanka. It further shows that Tamils overwhelmingly see discrimination as the main factor. Previously mentioned quotations by Tamil traditionalists also can be taken here as supporting the argument that Tamils (mainly ethnic traditionalists) feel that their people are persecuted in Sri Lanka. This belligerent mentality and the feeling that they should do whatever they can to remedy the situation has contributed to strong ethnic mobilisation among Tamil ethnic traditionalists.

The belligerent mentality of Tamils needs further elaboration if we are to understand Tamil ethnicity in Australia. Tamils not only feel that they are discriminated against by the majority Sinhalese but also they seem to promote the picture that the very existence of Tamil culture and heritage in Sri Lanka is facing extinction by political conflict in Sri Lanka. One Tamil quite emphatically remarked during an interview:

We have a long history ... Even longer than Sinhalese (history) ... Not a single university is equipped to do work on Tamil culture. But Sinhalese and Buddhist research in Sri Lanka. They can get any amount (of money).

So the conflict in Sri Lanka is not simply a pre-emigration experience for Tamils. It is not only that they feel that the political situation in Sri Lanka affected them personally but that some of their family members are still facing such situations; but also they seem to think that their very existence in that country is threatened. Sinhalese or maybe even a Burgher may dismiss this as 'utter rubbish' or 'propaganda'. It must be accepted that there is propaganda element here, for it was revealed in interviews that Tamils tend to exaggerate the political conflict in Sri Lanka in areas of army excesses etc. But still there is no doubt that Tamils feel strongly about the political conflict in Sri Lanka and organise themselves in this country on that basis.
This situation has distanced Tamils and Sinhalese. It is not rhetorical to say that Tamil-Sinhalese conflict has in fact been imported into Australia. Further it has alienated Tamils from the Sri Lankan community in general. Tamils complain that others do not understand the problem and criticise their insensitivity or indifference. But other Sri Lankans see the situation differently. They, especially ethnic integrationists, think Tamils are responsible for disharmony in the Sri Lankan community. One said in attacking Tamils:

*It was alright until this man came ... He is a Marxist with connection to some British Communist organisation. He started organising rallies with lunatics in the Australian Left.*

But it must be said that not everyone sees the activities of Tamils as the responsibility of Marxists. For many the cause is more widespread and all Tamils are responsible. All agree that the situation in Sri Lanka should not be imported here. So not only Tamils distance from other Sri Lankans but also other Sri Lankans distance themselves from Tamils, and that their existence in that country has been threatened. They feel that Sinhalese are 'out to get them'. But, as noted before, this situation must be understood with some qualifications. It is difficult to know how much they say is for propaganda purposes and how many Tamils personally feel threatened by the situation in Sri Lanka. Giving allowance to this, still the number of Tamils who openly express the feeling of being threatened is significant. It is this research that prompts me to conclude the belligerent mentality of Tamils is important to understand ethnic dynamics among them in Melbourne.
This situation has distanced Tamils and Sinhalese. Further it also has helped in distancing Tamils from the rest of the Sri Lankan community in general. Tamil ethnic traditionals always complain that despite their liberal attitudes Burghers and Westernised Sinhalese do not bother to understand the problems in Sri Lanka. This resentment towards other Sri Lankans has alienated the Tamil community further in Melbourne. The previously mentioned breakaway of Tamils from the Sri Lankan radio programme complaining that it was biased towards Sinhalese, and the closer association of Sri Lankan Tamils with Indian associations, especially Indian Tamil associations, are examples of this development.

Sri Lankan Ethnic Identity and Group Formation

So far we have discussed the way lingering ethnicities are being influenced in the Australian context by factors relating to both home and host societies. Despite being present in Sri Lankan society among the westernised elites Sri Lankan identity cannot be regarded as a lingering ethnicity. But it also needs to be examined in relation to home society variables. I want to show that Sri Lankan ethnicity in Australia is the result of a revival of a socio-cultural sub-system and self-identification. That is, factors relating to the process of immigration and host society variables have helped revive a Sri Lankan
socio-cultural sub-system in the Australian context, but before going into this we need to examine the basic nature of this socio-cultural sub-system and why it did not result in Sri Lankan identity in Sri Lanka.

As discussed in Chapter III ethnic relations in Sri Lanka are characterised by visible ethnic groups in the context of minority-majority power relationships that mobilise Tamil and Sinhalese ethnicities. People in Sri Lanka are conscious of their major ethnic identifications, that is, Sinhalese, Tamil, Burgher and Moor, for example, and membership of these groups is characterised by strong boundary maintenance and in activities in the political arena. But as already mentioned, a minority of Sri Lankans, inspite of their allegiance to their respective ethnic groups engage in frequent social interaction across ethnic boundaries. They are the middle class, non-Dutch Burghers and English speaking, urban middle class Sinhalese and Tamils, who are largely a residual of the colonial society's local elites. After independence they lost their elite status along with their loss of political power and saw the emergence of a rural based, communally divided new nationist elite. As noted earlier, the ethnic integrationists among Sri Lankans in Melbourne come from the above residual of the colonial elites.

The above category of people in Sri Lanka formed a socio-cultural sub-system in the Sri Lankan context that cut across Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher communities. The following diagram illustrates the above socio-cultural sub-system and the way sections of Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher communities are related to it (Figure 6.4) prior to migration. As the following diagram shows, in Sri Lanka those who belong to the 'urban middle class socio-cultural sub-system were only a minority of each ethnic community. Although among Burghers the non-Dutch Burghers were the majority, not all non-Dutch Burghers belong to the middle class (McGilvray 1982). As these people were only a minority of each community,
they were only a small minority of the overall Sri Lankan population. Burghers who belonged to this sub-system were distinct from other Burghers on the basis of their middle class social position (that makes them distinct from lower class, less affluent non-Dutch Burghers) and their non-Dutch origins. Sinhalese and Tamils who belong here are English speaking and Westernised.

**FIGURE 6.4**: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN URBAN MIDDLE CLASS SOCIO-CULTURAL SUB-SYSTEM AND SINHALESE, TAMIL AND BURGHER COMMUNITIES IN SRI LANKA

It is not correct to consider the above mentioned socio-cultural sub-system that covers English speaking, Westernised Sinhalese and Tamils and middle class non-Dutch Burghers, as forming a separate ethnic group/category in Sri Lanka for several reasons. First, there was no strong sense of common *peoplehood* among members of this sub-system. They did not
see themselves as 'one people'. Second, despite their interaction across ethnic boundaries, they were conscious of their respective ethnic identifications, that is, Sinhalese, Tamil or Burgher. There are two reasons for the strong sense of ethnic identity, that is, either Sinhalese, Tamil or Burgher, of these people and their affiliation with respective ethnic groups. First, they cannot escape their social identity as Burghers, Sinhalese or Tamils. Second, among them ethnic prejudices still exist. They interacted with people of different ethnic identification within the sub-system described above, not because they were free of ethnic prejudices but for reasons that enable them to get around their ethnic prejudices. They see the urban middle class socio-cultural sub-system as different from main stream ethnic group members of Sri Lankan society. But that existed only in relation to opposite group members not in relation to themselves. For example, an urban middle class Sinhalese who sees himself as a member of the Sinhalese ethnic group and is conscious of it sees urban middle class Tamils and Burghers who are in the sub-system as different from other Tamils and other Burghers. But they are still Tamils and Burghers. Both Burghers and Tamils see the situation similarly.

The migration of Sri Lankans to Australia has changed this situation completely. The majority of Sri Lankans in Melbourne are from the above mentioned urban middle class socio-cultural sub-system (Figure 6.5). As the following diagram shows, not only have Sinhalese become the minority in the Australian context but the overall majority of Sri Lankans in Melbourne are from the Sri Lankan urban middle class. Not only are they the overall majority but they are the majority of each ethnic category they belong to. This reversal of power relations, that is, a minority becoming a majority, can be seen as providing the basis for the emergence of Sri Lankan ethnicity through the revival of an urban middle class, socio-cultural system in the Australian context (Figure 6.6).
The following diagram illustrates that Sri Lankan identity formation in Melbourne is influenced by both host and home society variables. First, the social interaction pattern that existed prior to emigration (A) is still present among ethnic integrationists in Melbourne (B). Second, there are ethnic prejudices (C) in host society such as resentment of Asian immigrants (Yarwood 1964) that operate as situational variables. In the following discussion I shall attempt to show how these factors influence the formation of Sri Lankan identity. As we shall see the Sri Lankan identity is the result of continuation of the middle class socio-cultural sub-system in Australia (A) and formation of an integrationist ideology which is a result of Australian society factors. Let us first look at the continuation of the socio-cultural sub-system in the Australian context.

As we shall see, the category of Sri Lankans who we call ethnic integrationists in the Australian context, did engage in interaction across
Ethnic integrationists in Australia → Sri Lankan identity

Australian Society, ethnic prejudices etc.

direction of influence.

Ethnic boundaries when they were in Sri Lanka. But that inter-ethnic interaction was limited to members of the above mentioned urban middle class socio-cultural sub-system (A). Why did this pattern of interaction continue in the Australian context? To understand reasons for this we need to look at the Australian society. Though ethnic integrationists are keen to interact across ethnic boundaries, that is, across the boundary between Australians and Sri Lankans, there is a push from the Australian society that prevents such development. The result of this is the
continuation of the interactional pattern that existed in Sri Lanka. This can be illustrated if we look at the non-expanding networks we discussed in the preceding chapter.

As we saw before, the interaction between Sri Lankans and Australians can be seen in terms of a unique form of networks we call non-expanding ethnic networks. This contributes to the continuation of the social interaction pattern, that is, the tendency of ethnic integrationists to associate only with each other in the Australian context. This is not because ethnic integrationists want to separate from Australians voluntarily. There seems to be a push from Australians as well. As one Sri Lankan observed this situation:

*The Australian has his own view of 'Australian', deciding it over colour, appearance and accent. Therefore taking up citizenship acquiring the local accent or jargon helps little ... If you invite an Australian home ... you are most likely to meet with resolute resistance and excuses. In the end he will not come. Neither will he walk on the street with you, invite you to his club or his social group* (quoted in Lippmann 1979:39 emphasis mine).

This situation, which can be a result of Australians' unwillingness to accept immigrants, especially because they are Asian immigrants (Yarwood 1964, 1972) has pushed ethnic integrationists towards maintaining their pre-emigration networks whenever possible. This in turn helps the continuation of the urban middle class socio-cultural sub-system in the Australian context.

It was revealed during the interviews that Sri Lankans belonging to all sociological categories perceive this in varying degrees. It is not just something only seen among ethnic integrationists though it may be said
that they are the most affected. The most common comment in explaining the situation shows that there is a sense of desperation:

*I cannot simply understand this. They claim ethnics tend to get together. Look at Australians ... . They prefer their own people. Don't they?*

A similar sounding remark was:

*When I came I believed that immigrants should not stick to (their) own people. One should not make friends with someone just because he is one of you .... Tell me what is the alternative?*

Tamil ethnic traditionals though see the situation and interpret it differently. One Tamil commented:

*True, Australians do not like immigrants ... . Asians more than others. So what? They (Sinhalese) do not like Tamils in Sri Lanka. As long as you keep to your own people you are all right here.*

The only Sri Lankans who do not say this were ethnic assimilationists. Then why should one take this as important in explaining ethnic dynamics among ethnic integrationists. I want to show that this situation affects most Sri Lankans. But among most of them I am talking about existing ethnicities i.e. home identity. Among ethnic integrationists the effect is on formation of a new ethnic group that happens through the preservation of an urban middle-class socio-cultural system in the Australian context as explained previously (Figures 6.4 and 6.5 and discussion following them).

The influence of the above situation, that is the unwillingness of Australians to accept Sri Lankans into their social circles, was not limited in causing the continuation of the pattern of social interaction that existed among ethnic integrationists when they were in Sri Lanka. Further to that the above mentioned unwillingness of Australians to accept
Sri Lankans has restricted the participation of Sri Lankans as a whole in wider Australian society. My work in Melbourne revealed a lack of involvement of Sri Lankans in Australian society mainly in the areas of social and recreational activities. For example, none of the Sri Lankans interviewed were active members of local clubs or any other recreational organisation. Only twelve of them had visited such places at least once during the previous twelve months. I want to argue here that this situation has influenced the formation of Sri Lankan identity among ethnic integrationists. But this raises another problem. That is why did not the same situation result in Sri Lankan identity among ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditionals? After all they are also affected by the unwillingness of Australians to accept Sri Lankans into their social circles. To explain this we need to look at the integrationist ideology of ethnic integrationists that separate them from other Sri Lankans, that is, ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditionals.

As we saw before, both ethnic assimilationists and ethnic integrationists have migrated to Australia with the definite idea of making this country their home. Unlike that the immigration of ethnic traditionals is a process and the decision to stay in Australia permanently is caused by circumstances such as grown up children and not by a definite decision making prior to their departure from Sri Lanka. Because of that they still have a part existence in the home country and are affected by home country situations. So for them the situation discussed above does not affect in a significant way. It does not affect them at all in the area of organisation of ethnic activities. Their ethnic behaviour is still greatly influenced by home society factors. So what we discussed above has no positive influence on ethnic traditionals in the formation of any form of Sri Lankan identity.
Unlike that both ethnic assimilationists and ethnic integrationists are affected by the above situation. But here only ethnic integrationists are seen to be moving towards Sri Lankan identity not ethnic assimilationists. The reasons for this is the basic identity difference of these two sociological types. Ethnic assimilationists as we saw before had a strong European identity even when they were in Sri Lanka. So the rejection of Asians by Australians are countered by them by projecting a European identity (see Figure 6.2). As they are white in complexion such process is possible for them. Unlike that ethnic integrationists cannot promote such identity. Even the Burghers among ethnic integrationists are darker in complexion. Further to that, as we saw before, they do not have a European self identity similar to that of ethnic assimilationists.

Thus ethnic integrationists are in a unique position in the Australian context compared to both ethnic assimilationists and ethnic traditionals. Being similar to mainstream Australians, i.e. White Australians, ethnic assimilationists have no difficulty in 'passing' in the Australian society. They can become invisible in the Australian context as long as they down play their Asian origin, the only 'visible' trace of which is their accent. Ethnic traditionals on the other hand do have a definite ideology as to what they should do in Australia (Figure 5.3). Further, ethnic integrationists, though they want to become part of Australian society and participate in it as 'Australians' they cannot avoid their Asian-ness. They are different from mainstream Australians in their physical appearance. In their appearance they are Asians and they have to accept it despite their attempt to become part of Australian society. The result of this is the integrationist ideology.

This unavoidable Asian-ness and their desire to become Australians needs to be investigated to understand the formation of integrationist ideology among ethnic integrationists and their Sri Lankan identity. As
Asians, which cannot be avoided, they are subject to ethnic prejudices in the Australian context. In the previous figure (Figure 6.6) this is shown by the influence on ethnic integrationists (B) by Australian society (C). Because of this they turn towards other Sri Lankans who are similar to them and that in turn promotes the continuity of urban middle class socio-cultural sub-system in Australia (A). The result of this is the strengthening of this sub-system in the Australian context and development of it into an ethnic group like structure (D) resulting in Sri Lankan ethnicity and Sri Lankan ethnic group.

Thus ethnic integrationists see themselves as a community who keep their distinctiveness in the Australian society unlike ethnic assimilationists who want to be absorbed. Unlike ethnic traditionals, who still regulate their activities in terms of what is happening in Sri Lanka ethnic integrationists see their distinctiveness in terms of a Sri Lankan identity. The absence of lingering ethnicity prevents them from relating to Sinhalese and Tamil identities that are closely connected to the Sri Lankan situation. Ethnic integrationists see the activities of Sinhalese and Tamil traditionals as parochial. They do not have that parochial mentality and reject ethnic assimilationists because of their assimilationist attitudes. Ethnic integrationists cannot approve them because they cannot assimilate. They are too different from the model characteristics of the Australian society for that, so they express their distinctiveness, which is forced upon them to some extent, in terms of the only viable form of identification which is Sri Lankan identity (E).

In explaining ethnic dynamics among Sri Lankans I argued that both home and Australian factors are important in understanding them. It is necessary to mention here that one aspect of Australian society, its European character, which was considered as having significant influence on
ethnic dynamics among Sri Lankans, needs to be treated cautiously. So I shall attempt to elaborate on this by referring to the Asian origin of Sri Lankans and their relationship with the wider Australian society which is prejudiced towards Asians.

As clearly evident from data given in Appendix III, the majority of Sri Lankans in Melbourne live in middle-class suburbs and Sri Lankans being professional and educated immigrants belong to upper middle and middle income groups (see Table 4.11). This shows that Sri Lankans are not shut out of Australian society in the economic or social sense. Still the Asianness of Sri Lankans and the accompanying negative stereotyping are significant in understanding ethnic dynamics among Sri Lankans.

I examined this situation to explain Burgher identity. There I argued that some Burghers promote Burgher identity in order to be accepted into mainstream Australian society. Here the process needs to be seen in terms of an intensive relationship. Burghers (ethnic assimilationists) get out of an unfavourable situation, the possibility of being rejected as Asians, by emphasising their Europeanness. This will be further elaborated in Chapter VII (see Figure 7.2 and the following discussion) in relation to its significance on ethnic relation theory.

So it must be noted here that I did not try to paint a picture of Sri Lankans being totally isolated in Australian society. In other words they do not live 'in social' ghettos. In spite of the existence of Sri Lankan-only ethnic networks in the majority of situations, Sri Lankans are not shut out of Australian society. But Asian origin and negative stereotyping that are carried with it 'affect' the relationship between Sri Lankans and Australians as examined before. It restricts the social interaction between Australians and Sri Lankans.

Sri Lankans in Australia and the Ethnic Process

In Chapter III, I argued that ethnicity needs to be explained as an interaction between ideology and structure. If we look at ethnicity as a situational phenomenon alone we have to accept ethnicity only as an event
at a given point in time. That would not help us to explain the processual nature of ethnicity. If we take ethnicity as a historical process it would, as we saw before, help us to explain the presence of ethnicity. In this section I shall try to examine what I have discussed so far in relation to Sri Lankans and see how that can be seen as an ethnic process. In here my attempt is twofold. First, I want to see how we can explain what we have discussed as a process. Second, I want to examine the nature of this process from the beginning, that is, in relation to its historical origins.

To answer the question whether ethnic expressions among Sri Lankans in Melbourne can be considered as a part of a historical process we need to look at the way events in the Australian context are related to the Sri Lankan context. As we saw before, ethnic expressions among Sri Lankans in Melbourne are causally related to the Sri Lankan context in several ways. First, Tamils, Sinhalese and Burgher identities are related to the Sri Lankan context because they are lingering ethnicities to some extent. Second, Tamil and Sinhalese ethnicities are also, to some extent, still promoted by Sri Lankan factors. Lingering ethnicity similar to that is not seen in relation to Sri Lankan identity. There we see only a continuation of pre-emigration experiences, for example, the continuation of socio-cultural sub-system as the basis of Sri Lankan ethnicity. Because of these relationships, ethnic expressions among Sri Lankan immigrants in Australia can be seen as a part of a process that goes beyond host country boundaries. The following diagram further explains the relationships we discussed above (Figure 6.7).

As the following diagram shows, the home ethnicities among Sri Lankans are strongly influenced by factors pertaining to the home country. There it is a continuity of home ethnicity as lingering ethnicity provides the basis for home country ethnic salience in the Australian context (see in
Figure 6.7 (A) the influence of $E_1$ which is home country ethnicity, that is lingering ethnicity on ethnicity in the Australian context, $E_2$). As we saw previously, Burgher, Sinhalese and Tamil ethnicities are influenced by lingering ethnic sentiments.

**FIGURE 6.7 : DIFFERENT WAYS ETHNIC EXPRESSIONS AMONG SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE ARE RELATED TO SRI LANKAN SOCIETY**

(A) Home Ethnicities

(B) Sri Lankan Ethnicity

$E_1 = \text{Ethnicity in Sri Lankan society}$

$E_2 = \text{Ethnicity in Australian society}$

$C_1 = \text{Culture in Sri Lankan society}$

$C_2 = \text{Culture in Australian society}$

$MC_1 = \text{Material conditions (structure) in Sri Lankan society}$

$MC_2 = \text{Material conditions (structure) in Australian society}$

In relation to Sri Lankan ethnicity (Figure 6.7 (B)) such lingering ethnicities are not present. But still Sri Lankan ethnicity is also related
to home country through culture, that is the continuation of the urban middle class socio-cultural sub-system that provided the basis for Sri Lankan ethnicity ($C_1$). As these relationships with Sri Lankan society are clearly evident among Sri Lankans in Australia it is valid to consider ethnic expressions among Sri Lankans in Australia as part of a historical process that originated before they migrated to Australia. This can be further illustrated if we look at the nature of this process itself (Figure 6.8).

**FIGURE 6.8 : ETHNICITY AMONG SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE AS A HISTORICAL PROCESS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRE-COLONIAL SRI LANKA</th>
<th>COLONIAL SRI LANKA</th>
<th>POST COLONIAL SITUATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinhalese</td>
<td>Colonial elite</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>(Westernised Sri Lankans including Burghers)</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moors</td>
<td>Masses (Non-westernised Sri Lankans)</td>
<td>Minority-majority Tamil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above diagram shows that the colonial ethnic relations are founded upon pre-colonial social divisions. Basically, the elite class in colonial society was drawn from Sinhalese and Tamils and the newly introduced community of Burghers. There was a form of Ceylonese identity among them at that time. In the above diagram this is illustrated by the division of...
Westernised elites and rural masses in colonial Sri Lanka. As we saw in Chapter III, communal issues did not prevent elite cooperation during the colonial period. Urban upper middle class socio-cultural sub-system is a residual of this society. As we know Sri Lankan identity in Australia is influenced by the above socio-cultural sub-system. This, in other words, means Sri Lankan identity is historically related to developments during the colonial period.

The situation changed after independence as we discussed previously (Chapter III). Political power balance changed after independence and the new leadership emerged from the 'masses of the colonial society', that is, non-westernised Sri Lankans. In the above diagram this is shown in the post colonial situation in Sri Lanka. There we see the colonial masses becoming the dominant political force in the post colonial period. As we saw in Chapter III the communal conflict in Sri Lanka became prominent only after these developments. Thus the masses of colonial society who did not benefit from it, are the dominant force today in ethnic relations in Sri Lankan society, where ethnic behaviour is largely influenced by the developments which occurred during the colonial period. The most important variable here is the distribution of resources along ethnic lines which existed in pre-colonial society (Chapter III). This situation in turn still affects ethnic relations among Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne. As we saw Sinhalese and Tamil ethnicities in Australia are still influenced by the majority-minority relation in Sri Lanka.

The same influence cannot be seen in relation to Sri Lankan and Burgher identities in the Australian context. But still Sri Lankan identity is the continuation of a middle class, urban socio-cultural sub-system which originated in the colonial society. Likewise, the strong European identity among ethnic assimilationists also formed during the colonial period which preferred Europeans over locals. That caused Dutch Burghers to
promote European identity in Sri Lanka and that can be seen as lingering ethnicity among them in the Australian context. This means that what we see in Australian context is not just a situational expression of ethnicity but a continuation of a historical process supported by situation variables.
In explaining factors influencing patterns of ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne I showed that they need to be understood in relation to both home and host societies. The influence of home society on ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne demonstrates the importance of ideological factors in explaining ethnic phenomena and the processual nature of ethnicity. In Chapter II, I argued that ethnicity is neither a primordial sentiment nor a situational phenomenon. Instead it needs to be understood as an ideology and ethnic phenomena should be analysed by looking at the interaction between ideology and social structure. This interaction between ideology and structure can be demonstrated effectively only if we see ethnicity as a historical process. My examination of patterns of ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne attempts to demonstrate the usefulness of such an approach over the existing polar typical approaches that consider ethnic phenomena as either primordial or situational.

Thus an approach assumes the existence of ideologies that are not products of the contemporary social structure. In concrete terms that means the existence of ideological variables like ethnic allegiances and cultural practices that cannot be explained in situational terms. Some of these are related to the home society context of the immigrants. To explain these variables I looked at the ethnic relations in Sri Lanka in Chapter III. There I discussed ethnic divisions in Sri Lanka, their historical origins and the contemporary socio-political struggle between Sinhalese majority and Tamil minority. The influence of above factors on Sri Lankans in the Australian context was examined in Chapters V and VI.
Chapter V of the thesis examined patterns of ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne by looking at different patterns of identifications and the way ethnic activities are structured. As I explained there, Sri Lankans do not display a uniform pattern of ethnicity in the Australian context. Some Sri Lankans still emphasise their home country ethnic divisions in the Australian context while among others there is a formation of a new 'Sri Lankan' identity. The complex nature of ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne required me to examine both home society and host society related factors that influence ethnic dynamics among them. This was done in Chapter VI of the study.

Chapter VI examined the factors influencing patterns of ethnicity among Sri Lankans. There it was explained that the salience of home country ethnicity needs to be understood in terms of *lingering ethnicities*. The Sri Lankan identity on the other hand, being a new development in the Australian context, is a different phenomenon. But it does not mean Sri Lankan identity formation could be explained by host society variables alone. It was argued in Chapter VI that Sri Lankan ethnicity also is related to home society through pre-emigration experiences of ethnic integrationists among whom the Sri Lankan ethnic identity is salient.

The discussions in Chapters V and VI examined two issues that are important to understand immigrants in general and immigrant ethnicity in particular. First, the discussions illustrated that Sri Lankans in Melbourne are not a monolithic entity in a sociological sense. Sri Lankans need to be understood in terms of different patterns of ethnicities that divide them. So the commonsense categorisation of immigrants from Sri Lanka into a single monolithic entity called *Sri Lankans* does not correspond to reality. The second problem the discussions bring into light is the fact that ethnicity among Sri Lankans is a complex phenomena that needs to be understood in terms of both ideological and structural variables.
The situational explanation of ethnicity cannot adequately explain ethnic phenomena among Sri Lankan immigrants in Melbourne. Ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne needs to be seen as a historical process and be explained in terms of both home and host society factors.

Theoretical Contributions of the Study

In Chapter II of this study by going through the existing literature on ethnic phenomena I addressed the problems in explaining ethnicity and argued that ethnicity can be explained adequately only if we consider it in terms of interaction between ideology and structure. Later in Chapters V and VI in examining the ethnic dynamics among Sri Lankans in Melbourne I attempted empirically to illustrate the interactive relationship between ideological factors and socio-structural, that is situational, factors in ethnic formation by looking at the role of home society and host society variables. To explain the theoretical contribution of this study we need to look at both these aspects of the study, that is, the theoretical discussion and the empirical examination of Sri Lankans in Melbourne. In what follows I shall do this in relation to three areas, namely study of ethnicity among immigrants, theoretical development of the study of ethnicity and wider sociological theory. First, let us look at the contribution of this study in the explanation of ethnicity among immigrants.

One contribution of this study in the explanation of immigrant ethnicity can be illustrated by looking at the examination of the interactive relationship between cultural variables and socio-economic interest factors in ethnic formation. A quick perusal through contemporary studies of and arguments relating to ethnic differences among immigrants reveals that scholars still do not see the need to examine the interactive
relationship between culture and socio-economic variables in ethnic formation. Instead they tend to see immigrant ethnicity as either a result of home society culture that is slow in changing in host society context (e.g. Cronin 1970) or as determined by host society related interest factors (e.g. Fisher 1978). So immigrant ethnicity is considered, depending on one’s theoretical orientation, as either home society related, that is, caused by pre-existing cultural divisions, or host society based, that is, determined solely by socio-economic interest factors. But the reality, as we saw in relation to Sri Lankans in Melbourne, is that the two are related and are in interaction. This study, by pointing to the interaction between ideology and social structure, shows that it is not only necessary but also possible to combine ideology and social structure in explaining immigrant ethnicity.

Thus this study not only examines factors relating to both home and host societies and shows how they influence patterns of ethnicity among Sri Lankans, but also by doing so illustrates the interactive relationship between ideology and structure in ethnic formation. So examination of home society factors influencing immigrant ethnicity has been given a theoretical basis by including them in an interactive framework of ideology and social structure. To explain ethnicity we need to understand ideologies that influence it. We cannot fully understand ideologies influencing immigrant ethnicity without referring to the home society of immigrants which forms a part of the ideological realm. Thus the present study not only analyses the complex process of ethnicity among immigrants in relation to both home and host societies but also provides a theoretical basis for such analysis.

Another contribution of this study can be explained in relation to arguments relating to assimilation/integration of immigrants in the host society. As I mentioned in Chapter V in explaining the three sociological
types among Sri Lankans, assimilation is a much debated topic among sociologists (see Gordon 1964; Sklare 1965; Schermerhorn 1970; Martin 1972; Lewins (1976). Today most scholars agree that complete assimilation in its traditional sense, that is absorption of immigrants, is an unusual event. It is now generally accepted that some form of pluralism does exist despite attempts to absorb immigrants into the host society (Gordon 1964:11; Martin 1972:5). Schermerhorn argues that integration and absorption are different but related issues and they should be understood in terms of the different ways immigrants are related to host society (see also Lewins 1976). He discusses four different ways immigrant/host society relations are organised and says assimilation and integration are to be seen in terms of the different ways centrifugal and centripetal aims of dominant and minority groups are related. The following figure (Figure 7.1) illustrates the different ways minority-majority ideologies are related according to Schermerhorn (1970).

**FIGURE 7.1 : DIFFERENT INSTANCES OF HOST SOCIETY/IMMIGRANT RELATIONSHIPS ACCORDING TO SCHERMERHORN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Superordinates</strong></td>
<td><strong>Subordinates</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cp</td>
<td>Cp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tending towards integration

Assimilation
Incorporation

Cultural pluralism
and Autonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Superordinates</strong></td>
<td><strong>Subordinates</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cf</td>
<td>Cp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tending towards conflict

Forced segregation with resistance

Forced assimilation with resistance

Cp = centrifugal forces
Cf = centripetal forces
As the above diagram shows, of the four ways host society and immigrants are related, two tend toward integration (A and B) while two tend towards conflict (C and D). But the present study shows that disagreement between centrifugal and centripetal forces of superordinates and subordinates do not always tend towards conflict as Schermerhorn says. This can be illustrated if we look at ethnic assimilationists and ethnic integrationists in Melbourne (Chapter V).

As we discussed in Chapter V both ethnic assimilationists and ethnic integrationists accept values common with the host society. They are English speaking, mainly Christian and further, come from the urban, Westernised social sub-stratum of Sri Lankan society. But they do not participate in Australian groups or associations. This, as I explained, is a result of an attitude in Australian society towards immigrants in general and Asians in particular. Being Asians Sri Lankans are a section of immigrants who can never become fully absorbed into mainstream Australian society which is white Anglo-Saxon. So there are centrifugal tendencies from the part of Australian society. They are in conflict with centripetal tendencies of both integrationists and assimilationists. According to Schermerhorn (1970), this situation ideally should lead to conflict not integration. But as we saw this is not the case among both ethnic integrationists and ethnic assimilationists. The following diagram illustrates this further (Figure 7.2). This diagram shows that though there is conflict of modal forces of immigrants and host society in relation to both ethnic integrationists and ethnic assimilationists, it has not led to conflict. Subordinates here have avoided conflict by redefining the situation and have moved towards integration. Ethnic assimilationists do this by emphasising their European-ness by promoting their Burgher identity. Ethnic integrationists on the other hand move towards integration by changing their centripetal tendencies to centrifugal ones and becoming Sri Lankans.
This is illustrated by arrows in the diagram (Figure 7.2).

**FIGURE 7.2 : THE WAY ETHNIC ASSIMILATIONISTS AND ETHNIC INTEGRATIONISTS ARE RELATED TO AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY**

\[\begin{array}{c}
\text{Superordinates} \\
\text{Cp} \\
\text{Subordinates} \\
\text{Cp} \\
\end{array}\] 

Assimilation
Incorporation

\[\begin{array}{c}
\text{Superordinates} \\
\text{Cf} \\
\text{Subordinates} \\
\text{Cp} \\
\end{array}\] 

Cultural pluralism
Autonomy

**C**

Forced segregation
with resistance

**D**

Forced assimilation
with resistance

\[\text{Cf} = \text{centrifugal forces} \]
\[\text{Cp} = \text{centripetal forces} \]

These findings do not mean that Schermerhorn's (1970) four dimensional integration model is not useful in explaining immigrant/host society relations. Rather they show that there is a need to reconsider some aspects of Schermerhorn's model. The main consideration here is that existence
of conflicting forces does not necessarily lead to conflict. Immigrants solve problems by redefining the situation, thus there is a form of tension management we need to examine in relation to Schermerhorn's (1970) four dimensional model. For this purpose we need to look at not only the existence of modal forces, that is centrifugal and centripetal ones, but also the way immigrants react to them. This study shows that such reaction exists and that can lead to readjustment of modal tendencies resulting in avoidance of conflict.

Thirdly, this study shows the need to understand ethnic diversity among immigrants separating ethnic identification from social identity. At present ethnic studies among immigrants are founded on two premises. Firstly, it is normally considered that immigrants from a particular source, commonly from a country or a geographical region, are a single or at least similar entity. Hence in Australia we see not only the general public but also scholars talking about 'Greeks', 'Italians' and sometimes even 'Asians'. Secondly, related to the above is that observed ethnic instances in a given context can be generalised to all people from the same source. This study shows that both above premises are wrong. The country of origin or similar observable traits are not always meaningful for immigrants who are outwardly seen as similar. As we saw in relation to Sri Lankans in Melbourne, ethnicity is independent of social identity and that must be considered in explaining immigrant ethnicity.

The distinction between social identity needs to be further elaborated. I am not suggesting that social identities based on most known forms of distinctions are not important. Rather the argument is that they may be, depending on the context, but one must not consider ethnic identity and social identity as the same in the analysis of ethnicity among immigrants. As I showed before there are instances that social identity based on country of origin become either the meaningful ethnic
identification (Fisher 1978) or influence the formation of a common identity (Lewins 1978a). Further, as we saw in Chapter VI, immigrants also use such identities as *identities of convenience* without meaningfully relating to them. So in most cases social identities similar to that of country of origin are of limited value in explaining immigrant ethnicity as they may not be the *primary focus* of identification of immigrants. The study shows the need to distinguish between social identity and ethnic identity and in turn helps to avoid the common practice of over-emphasising less important forms of identifications.

Theoretical implications of this study need to be explained also in relation to its contribution to the theoretical developments of the study of ethnicity in general. In this area I want to discuss two important contributions of this study. First, there is the problem of conceptual independence of ethnic phenomena. Second, the problem of study of ethnic change.

To explain the contribution of this study to the conceptual independence of ethnic phenomena we need to return to the contemporary debate on ethnicity and its existence, discussed in Chapter II. The present debate on the issue is basically divided along two lines of thought, namely the one that rejects the existence of ethnicity and its importance in explaining social reality (e.g. Primov 1980; de Lepervanche 1980) and the one that argues that ethnicity is important in explaining social dynamics in contemporary society. The second line of argument is again, as we discussed in Chapter II, divided into two. There are scholars who argue that ethnicity is primordial, needs no explanation (Geertz 1953; Isaacs 1975a, 1975b; Keys 1976) but rather can explain social phenomena, and those who believe ethnicity needs to be explained in relation to wider social structural relations (Glazer and Moynihan 1974, 1975; Patterson 1975; Lewins 1981). Of the above different arguments the first one outrightly
rejects the importance of ethnicity by saying that ethnicity is an epiphenomena of social structural relations such as class relations (Primov 1980; de Lepervanche 1980). Of those who accept the existence of ethnicity, primordialists (Geertz 1964; Isaacs 1975a, 1975b; Keys 1976) conceptualise ethnicity as independent of social structure as they believe it is a given phenomenon (Geertz 1964). Situationalists, on the other hand, though accepting the relationship between social structure and ethnicity, fail to conceptualise the distinction between socio-economic interests and ethnicity (see Epstein 1978; McKay 1980). This study shows that by explaining ethnicity as an interaction between ideology and social structure, the conceptual independence of ethnicity can be established.

The argument of conceptual independence of ethnicity is based on the premise that ethnicity is an interaction between ideology and structural relations. Hence it is neither an epiphenomena of class relations nor a given social reality. Further, ethnicity cannot be understood solely in terms of socio-economic interest factors as situationalists believe. The interactive nature of ethnic phenomena was illustrated in this study by first theorising that the interaction between ideology and social structural relations is a historical process (see Figure 2.1 and subsequent discussion) and second, empirically showing in relation to Sri Lankans in Melbourne that historical explanation of ethnicity, particularly the influence of lingering ethnicity, is important to explain ethnic phenomena.

The second contribution of this study in the development of theory of ethnicity can be illustrated in relation to ethnic change. The theoretical arguments relating to ethnicity and its ability to change can be divided into two. First, there is the primordialist argument that considers ethnicity as static and unchanging in nature. Second, the situational argument, though accepting ethnic variability, sees it in
relation to a given context. That is ethnicity can change with the change of contextual (see Patterson 1975) variables involved. None of these arguments attempts to explain the variable nature of ethnicity in terms of time or, in other words, in historical terms. They do not explain the nature of long term ethnic change. In this sense the situationalist argument also fails to explain ethnic change. It explains only ethnic variability, that is, dynamic nature of an event at a given time. This study shows that ethnicity and ethnic change need to be seen in relation to historical terms as well. As I showed in relation to Sri Lankans in Melbourne, ethnicity continues in time (cf. continuity of ideology) which means ethnic change cannot be fully understood in terms of contextual variables in a given time. Related to this is the different directions that ethnic change can take. This study, based on McKay and Lewins (1978) illustrates that ethnic change can take two directions, that is, changes in ethnic identification and changes in structuration of ethnic activities.

To understand the theoretical implications of this study on sociological theory in general we need to return to Weberian sociology we discussed previously in Chapter II. There I argued that in presenting his argument in The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Weber (1968) did not attempt merely to see the influence of religious values on the emergence of capitalism in Western Europe (see also Turner 1974; Lewins 1981). His argument was that the relationship between ideology and structure should be understood as an interactive one rather than a dependency. An examination of later studies on the Weber thesis reveals (Green 1959; Stone 1974; Turner 1974) that the attention of scholars has overwhelmingly been on the role of religion. It is evident that there is a strong need to examine the Weber thesis in its wider perspective, that is, in relation to other social phenomena that have been neglected by this limited application.
This study shows that Weber's argument has its wider application in other areas. So this study needs to be seen as an attempt to free the Weberian thesis (Weber 1968) from its limited application and directing it to other areas where it can be used effectively.

Further to the attempt to show the usefulness of Weber's thesis in an area other than religion, this study shows the usefulness of another argument of Weber's sociology. Weber (1949) in presenting his arguments on the methods of social sciences distinguishes between historical and sociological causality (see also Coser 1971) as two distinct but related explanations of social phenomena. Presently ethnic explanation is based on explaining contemporary causes, that is sociological causality, as situational ethnicity looks only at socio-structural relations in a given situation. This study shows that such explanation is not adequate to explain ethnic phenomena and takes historical causality as an important part of ethnic explanation. It points to the importance of Weber's arguments that say explanation of social phenomena must be supplemented by historical explanation (see Weber 1949).

Policy Implications of the Study

To explain the policy implications of this study I shall look at the three issues highlighted in the 'Green Paper' (1977) on 'Immigration Planning and Australia's Population'. They are namely, social cohesion, equality and cultural identity and, according to the Green Paper (1977) are the three main problems concerning contemporary Australian society. I want to show here that this study can contribute to the present debate being developed around the above three issues (see also Lewins 1982) which could be helpful in future policy making.

I selected those issues as the theme of this discussion not because I contemplate starting a detailed critique of multi-culturalism here.
Such an attempt is beyond the scope of this study. But some of the findings on Sri Lankans in Melbourne previously discussed have direct bearings on the basis of multi-culturalism and the way it is seen in the context of Australian immigrants and their assimilation/integration. These are the means/ends problem relating to cultural identity promotion and the nature of relationship between immigrants and native Australians. Let us examine them in detail here.

In discussing the individual interaction between Sri Lankans and Australians I explained that it needs to be seen in terms of non-expanding networks. As we saw there the result of this is Sri Lankans turning towards their own people not only in forming networks but also in organising social and recreational activities. This in other words means such situations limit the effective participation of immigrants in Australian society and their effective use of resources. Here use of resources need not be seen in its limited sense restricting it to situations such as getting a job or renting a house as discussed in the Green Paper (1977, see also Australia 1978). Participation in social circles to satisfy social and recreational needs is also one way of using existing resources. This does not happen when individual interaction is restricted. This in other words means social cohesion and equality cannot be promoted by promoting this form of multi-culturalism caused by isolation. The promotion of such multi-culturalism can result in promoting an unnecessary gap which in turn could further separate immigrants from Australians. Future policy making should look into eliminating this situation and avoid promotion of multi-culturalism of this kind.

Second, this study showed that cultural identity promotion is not the 'end' but only a 'means' for immigrants in ethnic process (see also Lewins 1982). But the present thinking that looks at cultural identity and multi-cultural development of Australian society sees it differently
(Green Paper 1977). They see multi-culturalism as mainly an end. As we saw in relation to Tamil identity there are even political connotations that are not related to the Australian context. So promotion of cultural identity is not always an end in itself. It should be carefully examined that whether encouragement of such cultural identity promotion through multi-culturalism would serve the development of Australian multi-cultural society.

Finally, not related to multi-culturalism, is the present tendency by policy makers and social scientists to consider immigrants from a particular country as a uniform social entity. Hence we see policy planners talking about, for example, welfare needs of Sri Lankans or Chinese (Cox 1975) and the like. But as we saw in this study immigrants from a particular country are not a uniform entity. There are divisions among them and an understanding of immigrants thus needs to be based on these distinctions. Studies aimed at policy decisions also need to consider this fact as important.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study shows that both home and host country factors are important in understanding ethnicity among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. In the study my attention was only on the first generation of Sri Lankans in this country. It is not surprising that the first generation of Sri Lankan immigrants are affected by factors related to home country including lingering ethnicity. This is one reason for my attention on the pre-emigration experience of Sri Lankans. In addition it was shown that the influence of pre-emigration was further strengthened by ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, a situation predominantly evident among Tamils. I want to suggest that some of these aspects be studied in a future study in relation to second generation.

I did not pay much attention to the influence of this situation on the second generation in this study. The main reason for this was that Sri
Lankans, being a comparatively new ethnic community in Australia, do not have a big second generation population. Of the second generation, which is about 3,000 at present Australia wide, the majority belong to Burghers who came in the 1950s or early 1960s. Australian born children of other Sri Lankans are at early school age or pre-school age.

In studying the second generation I would also suggest that particular attention be given to the influence of ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka and its effect on children of Tamil immigrants. Whether it has the same importance to them as it does to their parents and the way it influences their ethnic identity needs to be carefully studied. This is particularly important as there are other immigrant communities such as Croatians who promote their nationalism (see Martin 1972; Lewins 1976) under circumstances similar to that of Tamils. Further, a study of Tamil second generation would throw light onto the general question of 'internationalisation of ethnic conflict' as a result of immigration process.

Another area that could be explored in a future study as a part of a general examination of social interaction between Sri Lankans and Australians is the nature of the relationship between the Sri Lankan second generation and wider Australian society. It was revealed during field work that though the majority of Sri Lankans would prefer their children to marry with their own kind, in the case of ethnic assimilationists with Burghers and in the case of ethnic traditionals with Tamils or Sinhalese, they do not go out of their way to prevent inter ethnic marriages. Especially ethnic assimilationists would not prevent their children marrying Australians. Moreover, there is the socialisation process involving school peers and the media which make the second generation closer to Australians in terms of attitudes and values than their parents. How these factors affect the relationship between the second generation and wider Australian community should be an important part of a future study.
One important feature that would be useful in planning a study in this area was revealed during field work in Melbourne. It was found that members of Sri Lankan second generation who marry out do not function as a bridge between communities thus increasing interaction between respective families of immigrants and Australians. It was shown that, instead, bride and bridegroom both got away from their families and made their own social niche or they joined one 'camp'. This was normally the family of the Sri Lankan who 'married out'. It is suggested that in planning a comprehensive study of second generation, this also be given particular attention.
APPENDIX I
OUTLINE OF INFORMATION SOUGHT IN INTERVIEWS

Personal

i) Home country ethnic category/group to which interviewee belonged including sub-ethnic divisions.

ii) Religious affiliation.

iii) Marital status.

iv) Number of children.

v) Education qualifications.

vi) Present occupation.

Pre-emigration Experience

i) Occupation in Sri Lanka prior to immigration.

ii) Name of the college respondent attended in Sri Lanka.

iii) Social interaction pattern in Sri Lanka:

a) whether friendship network was intra-ethnic or inter-ethnic;

b) whether there were inter-ethnic marriages in the family;

c) membership of clubs and associations in Sri Lanka and their names (if a Burgher ask whether he/she or any other members of their family were members of the Dutch Burgher Association in the past).

Immigration Process

i) Reasons for migration.

ii) Time of arrival.

iii) Whether an Australian citizen, if not does the respondent have any idea to return and why.
The Australian Context

i) Occupational history in Australia in detail and also whether it was difficult to get the first job.

ii) Did the respondent undertake studies after coming here?

iii) His/her assessments of social acceptance of immigrants in Australian society and what he/she thinks about racial prejudices and if they have ever come across such situations.

iv) What does he/she think about children's future in this country?

v) Social interaction pattern in Australia:
   a) whether friendship network inter-sub-ethnic, intra-sub-ethnic or inter-ethnic, i.e. including Australians;
   b) membership of clubs and associations including Australian ones.
1. Field Trips and Time Spent in the Field

i) July 24, 1980 to August 1, 1980 for a short feasibility study.

ii) January 16, 1981 to February 2, 1981 first batch of indepth interviews and observations in the field.


iv) January 25, 1982 to February 11, 1982 third batch of interviews and field observations.

2. Social Activities Attended

INFORMAL GATHERINGS:

i) Gathering of friends and family of a Burgher resident.
   Invited as an interview appointment January 16, 1981, dinner.

ii) Informal gathering of friend to work in the back garden of a Sinhalese family. I was invited by the head of the household who knew the nature of my research, all day January 21, 1981.

iii) Gathering of friends at a flat occupied by two youths, one Sinhalese and one Tamil. Invitation came after I interviewed them the previous day, dinner May 20, 1981.

iv) First wedding anniversary of a Sinhalese couple. Invited by the household who knew about my work among Sri Lankans, dinner May 22, 1981.
v) Gathering of friends and family members of a Tamil resident. I was invited to this by the household head who was known to me, dinner May 23, 1981.

ORGANISED SOCIAL ACTIVITIES:

i) Vesak ceremony (the day Lord Buddha was born, attained enlightenment and passed away) at the Buddhist temple in Richmond. All day May 17, 1981.

ii) Picnic at Jalles Park organised by Australia Ceylon Welfare Association. All day February 7, 1982.

OTHER:


ii) Palm Court Reception in Blackburn owned by a Sri Lankan and frequented by Sri Lankans in Melbourne.Courtesy of the owner, May 19 and 25, 1981.

APPENDIX II
TABLE 1: ETHNIC BREAKDOWN OF THE INTERVIEWEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinhalese</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgher</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 2: RELIGIOUS BREAKDOWN OF THE INTERVIEWEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Affiliation</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3: EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF THE INTERVIEWEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher Degree</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors Degree</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades/Technical</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Secondary</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 4: OCCUPATIONS OF THE INTERVIEWEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Category</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional/Academic</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative/Managerial</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical including sales</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades and Technical</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Classifiable</td>
<td>1*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Buddhist priest
### TABLE 5: TIME OF ARRIVAL OF THE INTERVIEWEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Arrival</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1948-1965</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-1971</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-1981</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No data</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 6: ETHNICITY OF THE MARRIAGE PARTNER AND THE INTERVIEWEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETHNIC CATEGORY OF HUSBAND</th>
<th>Sinhalese</th>
<th>Tamils</th>
<th>Burgher</th>
<th>Australian</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinhalese</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgher</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 7: EXPERIENCE OF DISCRIMINATION OF THE INTERVIEWEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Category</th>
<th>Experience of Discrimination</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinhalese</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgher</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 8: INTERVIEWEES AND PERMANENT FRIENDSHIP NETWORKS WITH AUSTRALIANS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Category</th>
<th>Number of Australians in Networks</th>
<th>1-2</th>
<th>3-4</th>
<th>Over 4</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sinhalese</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgher</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 9: SUMMARY TABLE OF OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION COMPARED WITH THAT OF SRI LANKANS IN THE SAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Category</th>
<th>Sri Lankans in Melbourne</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Managerial</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>2268</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades</td>
<td>1262</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>4741</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 10: STUDY SAMPLE COMPARED WITH THE DISTRIBUTION OF SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. WEST OF YARRA RIVER</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadmeadows</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coburg</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preston</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keilor</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essendon</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>1352</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **B. EAST OF YARRA RIVER** |            |        |
| Heidelberg             | 203        | 1      |
| Doncaster              | 117        | 1      |
| Camberwell             | 315        | 11     |
| Prahran                | 172        | -      |
| Malvern                | 231        | -      |
| Box Hill               | 300        | 1      |
| Nunnawading            | 411        | -      |
| **TOTAL**              | 1749       | 14     |

| **C. SOUTH EAST OF YARRA RIVER** |            |        |
| Waverley               | 651        | 14     |
| Chelsea                | 143        | -      |
| Knox                   | 129        | -      |
| Caulfield              | 814        | 16     |
| St Kilda               | 178        | -      |
| Moorabbin              | 874        | 20     |
| Oakleigh               | 382        | 3      |
| Springvale             | 808        | 17     |
| Frankston              | 135        | -      |
| Dandenong              | 364        | 6      |
| **TOTAL**              | 4478       | 76     |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX III
# TABLE 1: OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Category</th>
<th>Professional/Technical</th>
<th>Administrative/Managerial</th>
<th>Clerical</th>
<th>Sales</th>
<th>Farmers/Fishermen</th>
<th>Miners/Quarrymen</th>
<th>Transport/Communication</th>
<th>Prod/Process Workers</th>
<th>Sports/Rec.</th>
<th>Armed Service</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEX</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>1092</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1176</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Employment Data of Sri Lankans in Melbourne

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>3077</td>
<td>2199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Labour Force</td>
<td>3156</td>
<td>2323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in Labour Force</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>1468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 3: SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE BY AGE AND SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td></td>
<td>226</td>
<td>277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td></td>
<td>332</td>
<td>376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td></td>
<td>382</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td></td>
<td>919</td>
<td>1012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td></td>
<td>921</td>
<td>797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td></td>
<td>641</td>
<td>632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td></td>
<td>450</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td></td>
<td>425</td>
<td>501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>4356</td>
<td>4496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Census Reports, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizenship</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>3438</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>3436</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>999</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka and Other</td>
<td>915</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4435</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>4353</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4435</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 5: MARITAL STATUS OF SRI LANKANS IN MELBOURNE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never Married</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>2319</td>
<td>1580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>3049</td>
<td>2199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** 1976 Census Report, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Speak only English</th>
<th>Total Sri Lankans</th>
<th>Speak only English</th>
<th>Total Sri Lankans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>1234</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>1237</td>
<td>1481</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>1446</td>
<td>1791</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>1059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>1668</td>
<td>2097</td>
<td>1002</td>
<td>1209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>1444</td>
<td>1849</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>1053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>1128</td>
<td>1420</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>759</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>1206</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>1137</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>869</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 +</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>13,989</td>
<td>16,749</td>
<td>8,194</td>
<td>9,498</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Income Dollars | None | <1000 | 1001-2000 | 2001-3000 | 3001-4000 | 4001-5000 | 6001-8000 | 8001-10000 | 10001-12000 | 12001-15000 | 15001-18000 | 18001-22000 | 22001-26000 | 26001+ |
|---------------|------|-------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|---------|
|               | 30   | 1     | 3          | 2         | 3         | 118        | 65        | 48         | 72         | 99         | 60        | 110        | 214       | 269      |
|               | 2    | 2     | 2          | 1         | -         | 11         | 16        | 43         | 96         | 191        | 169       | 280        | 367       | 500      |
|               | 8    | 7     | -          | 8         | 11        | 38         | 22        | 14         | 29         | 36         | 16        | 5          | 3         | 4        |
|               | 30   | 6     | 13         | 38        | 38        | 32         | 67        | 103        | 140        | 66         | 26        | 12         | 9         |         |
|               | 1094 | 1680  | 201        | 711       |           |            |           |            |            |            |           |            |            |          |

**Source:** 1981 Census Reports. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>&lt;1</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5-9</th>
<th>10-14</th>
<th>15-21</th>
<th>22-29</th>
<th>29 &gt;</th>
<th>Not Stated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional/Technical</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial/Administrative</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishermen/Farmers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miners/Quarrymen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport/Communicator</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades /Production Workers</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service/Sports/Recreation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Service</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Stated</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>272</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>53</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>2135</td>
<td>1681</td>
<td>1030</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>6155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>&lt;1</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5-9</th>
<th>10-14</th>
<th>15-21</th>
<th>22-29</th>
<th>29&gt;</th>
<th>Not Stated</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional/Technical</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial/Administration</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1284</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisherman/Farmers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miners/Quarrymen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport/Communicator</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades/Production Workers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services/Sports/Recreation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Services</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Stated</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>376</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**                        | 126| 156| 187| 275| 356| 3523| 2700  | 1783  | 750   | 662| 100        | 10623 |

MAP 1: DISTRIBUTION OF SRI LANKANS BY STATES


* ACT population (251) is included in New South Wales.
MAP 2: DISTRIBUTION OF SRI LANKANS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS IN MELBOURNE (1976).
BIBLIOGRAPHY

ADAM, H.

ARASARTNAM, S.
1964 Ceylon, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

ARCHER, M.S.

ARONSON, D.

AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN CENSUS

BANKS, M.

BANTON, M.

BARTH, F.


BASHAM, A.L.

BASKAUSKAS, L.

BELL, D.
BENDIX, R.

BOLTON, G.C.

BONACICH, E.
1980 'Class Approaches to Ethnicity and Race', The Insurgent Sociologist, 10(2): 9-23 pp.

BORRIE, W.D.

BORRIE, W.E. et al.
1959 The Cultural Integration of Immigrants. Paris: UNESCO.

BOVIN, M.

BRETTEL, C.B.

BUCHIGNANI, N.

BURGESS, M.E.

BURRAGE, V.S.

CLAUDILL, W.

CAULFIELD, H.

CHEHABI, H.E.
CHILD, I.  
1943  Italian or American? New Haven: Yale University Press.

CLAUDIN-URENDO, C.  

COHEN, A.  

CONNOR, W.  
1978  'A Nation is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group, is a ...', Ethnic and Racial Studies, 1(4): 377-400 pp.

COSER, L.A.  

COULON, C. and MORIN, F.  
1979  'Occitan Ethnicity and Politics', Critique of Anthropology, 4(13-14):

COX, D.  

CRONIN, C.  

CROSS, M.  

DARWIN, C.  

DAS GUPTA, J.  

DE JONG, K.  
DE LEPERVANCHE, M.

DENHAM, E.B.

DESHEN, S.

DE SILVA, C.R.
1941 Ceylon Under the British Occupation 1795-1833, its Political, Administrative and Economic Development. Colombo: Apothecaries Ltd.

DE SILVA, K.M.

DESPRES, L.A.

DE VOS, G.

DOCKER, E.W.

DORMAN, J.H.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Journal/Book Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DURKHEIM, E.</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>The Division of Labour in Society</td>
<td>Illinois: The Free Press, Glencoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMBREE, J.</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Acculturation among Japanese of Kona, Hawaii</td>
<td>American Anthropological Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENDAGAMA, P.</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>Sri Lankan Material Culture in North-East Queensland</td>
<td>Unpublished Graduate Diploma Dissertation, James Cook University, Queensland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPSTEIN, A.</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Ethos and Identity</td>
<td>London: Tavistock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FARRAR, Rev. F.W.</td>
<td>1867</td>
<td>The Aptitude of Races</td>
<td>Transaction of Ethnological Society of London no.5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FERGUSON, J.
1887  Ceylon in the Jubilee Year. London.

FERNANDO, P.T.M.


FERNANDO, T. and KEARNEY, R.N.

FIRTH, R.

FISHER, M.P.

FORTES, M.
1945  The Dynamics of Clanship among Tallensi. London: Oxford University Press.

FRANCIS, E.K.

FRAZIER, E.F.

GANS, H.J.  

GEERTZ, C.  

GIDDENS, A.  

GILBERT, Jr. W.H.  

GLAZER, N. and MOYNIHAN, D.P.  

GOONERATNE, Y.  

GORDON, M.  

GREELEY, A.  

GREEN PAPER  

GREEN, R.W. (ed.)  
GRENIER, G.V.

GUNAWARDANA, R.A.L.H.

HAALAND, G.

HALL, S.

HANDELMAN, D.

HECHTER, M.

HERSBERG, T.

HILL, M.

HOLDEN, Jr. M.

HOROWITZ, D.L.

IDRIES, I.L.

IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS, Department of Consolidated Statistics. Canberra.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title and Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
KAHN, J.S.  

KNUTSSON, K.E.  

KODIKARA, S.U.  

KOTALAWALA, J.  
1890 'A Trip to Australia by a Young Sinhalese', Ceylon Literary Review 4(41): 326 p.

LANGTON, P.J.  

LASKER, B.  

LENIN, V.I.  

LEWINS, F.  


LEYS, C.  

LIJPHART, A.  
LIPPMANN, L.

LIVINGSTONE, S.

LONDON, H.I.

MACKIE, J.A.C.

MALINOWSKI, B.

MAMDAMI, M.

MARTIN, J.I.

MARX, K.

MARX, K. and ENGELS, F.

MATTHEWS, B.

MAUROOF, M.
McGILVRAY, D.  


McKAY, J. and LEWIN, F.  

McKAY, J.  

MELSON, R. and WOLPE, H.  

MORGAN, G.  

MORRIS, H.S.  

MURPHREE, M.  

NAGATA, J.A.  

NAGULESWARAN, P.  

NAIRN, T.  

NEWSLETTER  
Newsletter of the Australia Ceylon Fellowship. Melbourne: Australia Ceylon Fellowship.

NOTT, J.C. and GLIDDON, G.R.  
1871  Types of Mankind. London: Trubner.
NOVAK, M.  

NYROP, R.F. et al.  

OBEYESEKERE, G.  

OKAMURA, J.Y.  

O'MALLEY, P.  

OTITE, O.  

OTTENBERG, S.  

PADGETT, D.  

PARK, R.E. and MILLER, H.A.  

PARK, R.E.  

PARKIN, A.  

PARSONS, T.  
PATTERSON, O.  

PEIRIS, Rt. Rev. E.  

PHADNIS, U.  


PIERIS, R.  

PILLSBURY, B.L.  

PLANNING, Department of  

PRICE, C.A.  


PRICE, C.A. and MARTIN, J.E.  

PRIMOV, G.  

RADCLIFFE-BROWN, A.R.  

RAMANATHAN, P.  
REED, A.W.  
1973  
Place Names of Australia. Sydney: A.H. and A.W. Reed.

REX, J.  
1970  

1980  

RIVETT, K. (ed.)  
1960  
Immigration Control or Colour Bar: The Background to 'White Australia' and Prospect for Change. Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

1975  

ROBERTS, M.  
1973  

1978a  

1978b  

ROBERTSON, H.M.  
1935  

RYAN, B.  
1953  

SALAMONE, F.A. and SWANSON, C.H.  
1979  

SAMARAWEERA, V.  
1978  

1981  
SCHERMERHORN, R.A.


SCHOOLER, C.

SHILS, E.
1957 'Primordial, Personal, Sacred and Civil Ties', British Journal of Sociology, 8: 130-145 pp.

SIMON, A.J.

SINAI, I.R.

SINGER, M.


SIRIWEERA, W.I.

SKINNER, E.P.

SKINNER, Q.
1969 'The History of Ideas', History and Theory, 8: 3-53 pp.

SKLARE, M.

SMITH, A.
SMITH, D.L.  

SOLLORS, W.  

SOUTH AUSTRALIA  


SRI LANKAN CENSUS  

STATISTICAL POCKET BOOK  

STONE, R.A.  

STORER, D.  

STRAUCH, J.  

SWAN, B.  

THOMAS, W. and ZNANIECKI, F.  

TONNIES, F.  

TREVOR ROPER, H.R.  
TURNER, B.S.  
1974  

UCHENDU, V.  
1975  

van den BERGHE, P.  
1975  

van der KROEF, J.M.  
1953  

van NIEL, R.  
1960  
The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite. The Hague: W. van Hoeve.

VINCENT, J.  
1974  

VITTACHI, V.T.  
1962  

WEBER, M.  
1949  

1968  

1973  

WHITE, P.B. and WHITE, N.R.  
1982  

WIJESEKERA, N.  
1951  

WIJESEKERA, REV. O.H.de A.  
1951  
WILLIAMS, R.

WIRTH, L.
1928 The Ghetto, Chicago: Chicago University Press.

WOLPE, H.

WORSLEY, P.M.

WRRIGGINS, H.

WHYTE, W.F.

YANCEY, W.L. and ERIKSEN, E.P.

YARWOOD, A.T.

YOUNG, C. et al.

YOUNG, C.
1982 'Experience in the Workforce', Chapter 6, in C. Young et al. (ed.), Greek and Italian Employment Study, Canberra.

YUAN, D.

ZUBRZYCKI, J.
1960 Immigrants in Australia, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
ADDENDUM
Sample of the Study

I accept that the sample of the study has its limitations. First, the sample is only about 2% of Sri Lankan population in Melbourne and only slightly more than 1% of Sri Lankans in Australia. Second, in selecting the sample, random sampling techniques were not employed as it was thought that a purposive sample would be more suitable for a study of this nature. I do not claim that this sample is sufficient to arrive at generalisations about the situation among Sri Lankans in either Australia or Melbourne. It also must be mentioned here that such attempts are not made in the study.

Rather than making generalisations about Sri Lankan immigrants the study focuses on constructing typologies, using sample information, to explain different patterns of ethnic identifications among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. I would not claim that even these typologies are exhaustive as such a claim would indirectly amount to making generalisations. But I would certainly argue that the typologies constructed and patterns identified using sample information provide a valid conceptual scheme to explain ethnic phenomena among Sri Lankans in Melbourne. As the study does not go beyond the above objective I do not believe either the size of the sample or the manner in which it was chosen would weaken the analysis presented in this study.
Europeans and Part Europeans

The part Europeans included in the table 4.5 are all Burghers. I have included Dutch Burghers also in this category though they consider themselves as having unbroken European ancestry. Apart from these part Europeans and the locals i.e. Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims, there is another group of people who migrated to Australia from Sri Lanka. This group consists almost exclusively of British people who had taken up residency in Sri Lanka during the colonial period having come as public servants, military personnel, planters and the like.

It is not possible to get much information on people belonging to this category. According to my estimates there were about 2400 people belonging to this category in 1976. This figure was obtained in the following manner. First, from statistics compiled by the Department of Immigration and ethnic affairs the number of immigrants whose last country of residence was Sri Lanka was obtained. This figure in 1976 was 17268 (Immigration and Ethnic Affairs 1978). Second, from 1976 census reports the number of Sri Lankans in Australia i.e. People who had been Sri Lankan citizens prior to migration, was obtained. This figure for 1976 was 14866. There is a difference of 2402 between the two figures which we can reasonably assume as the number of Europeans. In constructing both tables 4.5 and 4.6 these people were not taken into account. The basis for both tables is the number of Sri Lankans in Australia which is only 14866. So the percentage 57.5 in both these tables refers only to people of part European origin i.e. Burghers.

The category of Europeans are not included in the study
as they are not considered Sri Lankans. First, they were not Sri Lankan citizens though they had been residents of Sri Lanka prior to their migration to Australia. Though they were in Sri Lanka physically, socially they were living in Britain. So Sri Lanka cannot be considered more than a transit point for them on their way to Australia. The only difference being that this transit stay has been considerably longer than an ordinary one. Second, in the Australian context also they do not seem to have any connection with the Sri Lankan community. I could not find a single person belonging to this category having close contacts with the Sri Lankan community. Both these reasons I believe are sufficient for the exclusion of these people from the study.