

DANCING UNDER THE SOUTHERN SKIES

A HISTORY OF BALLET IN AUSTRALIA

Valerie Lawson

With its vivid narrative, Valerie Lawson's *Dancing Under the Southern Skies* goes far beyond what audiences see on stage to reveal what has been behind the red velvet curtain. The lives of the dancers who toured to Australia, among them Anna Pavlova and Margot Fonteyn, and of those who stayed and of those who created companies in Australia are presented in a fascinating mosaic of interviews, letters and personal stories from dancers, directors, producers, impresarios and critics. She also paints portraits of those who influenced Australian culture over nine decades, among them Laurence Olivier, Edouard Borovansky, Peggy van Praagh, Paul Keating and Graeme Murphy, and tells how the nation escaped from cultural dependence on Britain, fell in love with ballet troupes from the Soviet Union, and then watched the birth of the Australian Ballet, the Sydney Dance Company, Bangarra Dance Theatre and many other dance companies. Sumptuously illustrated

PB 210 x 240mm 376 Pages Released: 4 July
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Far Left
 Spessivtseva at
 Sydney Fox Studios, 1934

Left
 Felicia Palanca and Sarah Peace
 in Jiří Kylián's *Bella Figura*, the
 Australian Ballet, 2002



Left

Pavlova photographed by Spencer Shier, Melbourne, 1926

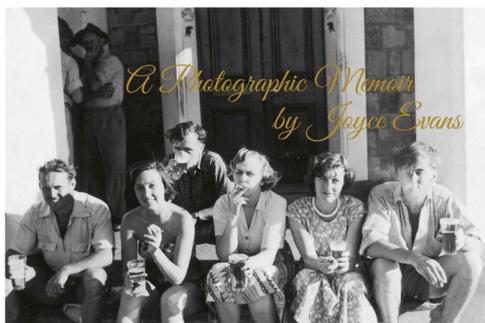
Below

Hélène Kirsova arriving in Sydney, December 1936



The Australian Ballet and Bangarra Dance Theatre in *Rites*, Paris, 2008

WE HAD SUCH HIGH HOPES



STUDENT ACTIVISM AND THE PEACE MOVEMENT 1949–1952

WE HAD SUCH HIGH HOPES

STUDENT ACTIVISM AND THE
PEACE MOVEMENT 1949–1952

A Photographic Memoir by
Joyce Evans

Some think it all happened in the 1960s but Joyce Evans, acclaimed photographer of Australia's land and its people, goes back to her youth and memories of her many adventures as a student activist. In 1949, aged 19, she set sail for Soviet-occupied Budapest to join the post-war demonstrations at 'The World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace'. It was a time when young Australians dreamed of change and travelled to war-torn Europe in the hope of peace becoming the new reality. Among them were many who would later become important figures in Australia's government, legal profession, diplomatic corps and academia. People like Frank Hardy, John Bluthal, Faith Bandler, Clyde Holding, Irving Saulwick and Richard Woolcott appear in Joyce Evans' photographs of these events.

This story, with its cast of endearing and passionate characters, records voyages across battle-scarred Europe, clashes with draconian authorities, daring escapes, betrayals, lost idealism and a wealth of unlikely friendships. It describes the adventures of a youthful cohort who felt empowered and believed it could fulfil its dream of world-wide peace. Joyce says: 'If such a dream existed then, such high hopes can be reclaimed by the youth of today!'



Above

Protesting against the ban on the Australian Communist Party: (left to right) Don Phillips, Stella McKenzie, and George Lea during a protest in 1951. It was at the height of campaigning against Menzies' referendum to ban the Communist Party. I recall that leaders of every major political group at the University – including his own Young Liberals – opposed Menzies on what was considered a gross abuse of power and an infringement on our rights. Melbourne, 1951. The proposal was defeated by referendum

Right

The Australian delegation march at the World Festival's opening parade for the Youth Olympics. Thousands of people converged on the city from all around the world. Holding the Southern Cross banner is my companion, Ian Wilcocks. Right front is David Levine, who may have been the only Rolls-Royce owner among the Communist delegates. Their number also included the author, Frank Hardy and the stage and screen actor Johnny Bluthal. Budapest, 1949

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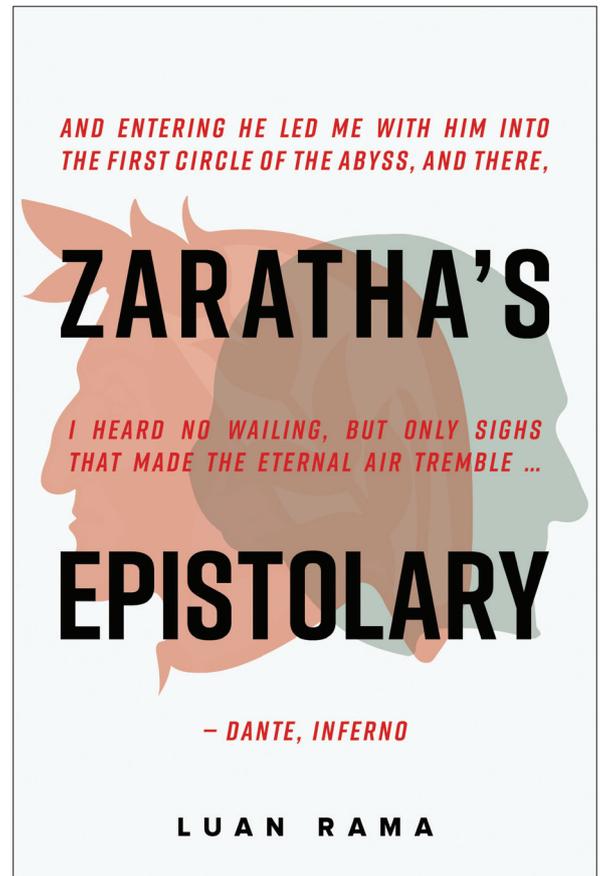
ZARATHA'S EPISTOLARY

Luan Rama

Translated by Miranda Xhilaga

Frederik Çoba, an Albanian intellectual, a Latinist who dreams of a modern, democratic Albania, is arrested and convicted for his political views and imprisoned on an isolated island off the Adriatic coast. While there among others denied freedom and facing an abyss of violence, he decides to translate the 'Inferno', the first section of Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*. In his letters to his wife, he paints a heart-wrenching picture of the life as a political prisoner and speaks of his passion in translating 'Hell'. It takes his wife a year to get permission to visit him, but the regime's henchmen have been there first. What happened to Dante's translator?

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THE THIRD LETTER

'Look where thou walkest! and see that with thy feet thou tramplest not the heads of us two wretched, weary brothers!'

(Dante, *Inferno* XXXII)

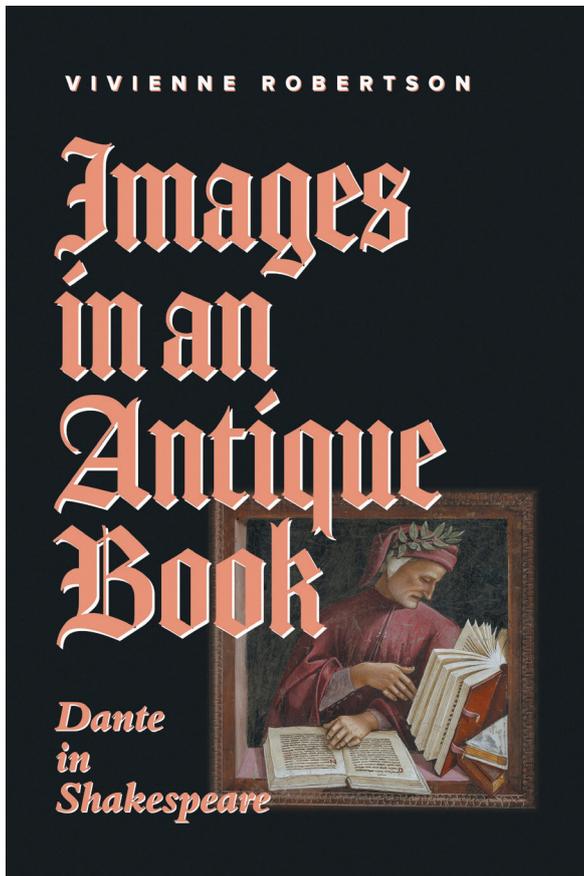
3 July

Bruna, my darling wife, tell me why I started translating Dante at *Paradise*? Why? Is it maybe because I dreamed of a better life, a happier life with you? I dared to dream a lovers' life, a life that would allow us to build our sacred family, with our children. I never told you that the translation of *Paradise* was brought up in court. The prosecutor was waving the manuscript in my face, shouting, 'What is this rubbish?' 'What is this good for, what kind of paradise are you talking about? What good does this do us? Don't you know that the real –

the one and only – paradise is the one that this government is building for its people, the Proletariat's Dictature state? He spoke on and on, but finally I said to him: 'It is Dante's *Paradise* ... it speaks to all humankind about the creation of a better and more humane society'. I had to protect my beloved Dante, Bruna. Dante would never have known that, someday, he would be put on trial in a small country on the other side of the Adriatic ... Later, one of the members of the jury, who apparently had read Dante, signalled for an end to that conversation, because there would be university graduates present who had studied Dante in France and Italy, and it would be embarrassing for the court if it discussed the work like that ... However, keep my handwritten translation, darling, together with my other notes; we will need Dante later ...

What do you think of the work I have done so far? Please show it to Lazer – he knows Dante really well and has read him in Latin, just like me. Ask him what he thinks about the last two sentences of the seventh song.

Oh, what am I saying really ... better leave it. I no longer think of *Paradise*, the bit I have translated, I constantly think of *Inferno*. I have just started translating the first song. It is without a doubt one of the most beautiful things ever written by human hand. Give it, give it to Lazer, give him these few additional bits ...



IMAGES IN AN ANTIQUE BOOK

DANTE IN SHAKESPEARE

Vivienne Robertson

Readers of Dante and Shakespeare have commented the last two centuries on the parallels between the two writers, but English literary experts have never allowed the claim that Shakespeare may have read Dante. Their reason was always that Dante was not translated in Shakespeare's time and Shakespeare could not read Italian.

Couldn't he? What about all the other Italian plays he used as sources – often untranslated?

He hadn't been to Italy either.

Hadn't he? What about his detailed knowledge of Italian cities and towns?

And had he read Dante?

Vivienne Robertson takes us on a forensic journey which leads to a startling conclusion.

Robertson's comparisons of *The Divine Comedy* and Shakespeare's plays make for intriguing reading.

– Stephen Romei,
Weekend Australian, 15–16 June 2019

The purpose of this book is to argue that Shakespeare had read Dante's *Divina Commedia* in the original Italian—at least in part—and had used ideas and images from it in his own writing. The idea is indeed 'haunting', as Joseph Satin claimed, but it is certainly not 'inexplicable'. In conjunction with this, it must be shown that the knowledge of Dante's work demonstrated by Shakespeare could not have been acquired via another person of his acquaintance, or via the work of another writer. By investigating the knowledge of Dante's work revealed in the work of other English writers, it can be established whether this is sufficient to explain the 'borrowings' that I believe are to be found in Shakespeare's work.

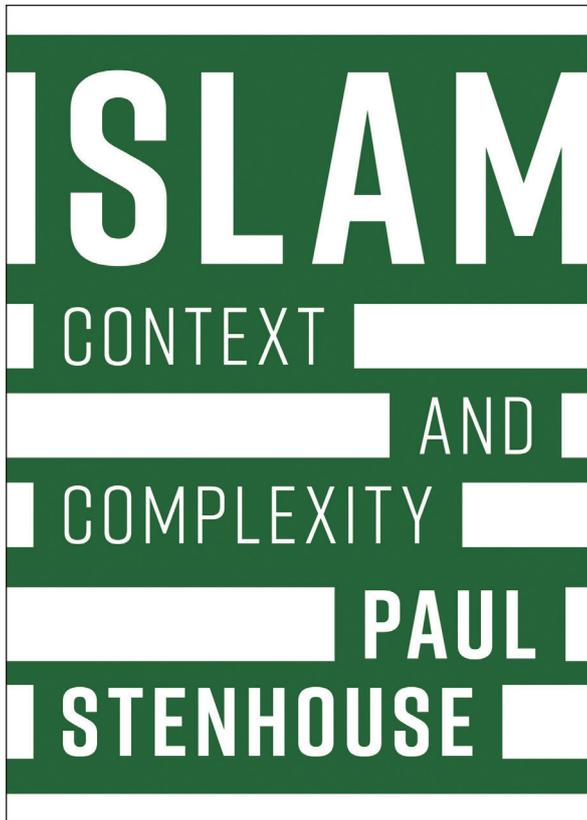
As other writers have commented, a close parallel between several passages in the work of these two great writers is not proof of any direct connection. But a large number of such parallels is rather more convincing, particularly if the parallels are more than verbal. Given Shakespeare's voracious appetite for new material for his plays, his demonstrated interest in

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Italian sources and his wide reading list established by a large number of researchers in this field, it would be astonishing if Shakespeare had *not* read Dante.

Perhaps the most striking and compelling parallels appear in characterisations. Dante presents a vast kaleidoscope of characters—from life, from literature, from history and from mythology—he seems not to differentiate. They are sketched with skill, colour and economy, and allocated whichever place God (or Dante) has deemed just, according to their performance measured against Dante's complex system of moral philosophy. Like Shakespeare's characters, they are presented dramatically, telling their own story, rationalising their behaviour, performing the actions which constitute their punishment or reward. Unlike Shakespeare's characters, they cannot develop, as they have already passed beyond this life.

Shakespeare, too, has myriad characters, and sometimes in one of them, there suddenly appears a striking similarity to one of Dante's personages in the *Divina Commedia*. Initially, there may seem to be just a similar word or phrase—but then, on investigation, the similarity extends to the context in which the character appears, or the details of his life ...



ISLAM

CONTEXT AND COMPLEXITY

Paul Stenhouse

Islam is not homogeneous. Its complexity, however, is bewildering for non-Muslims, most of whom know little or nothing of Islam, and generally – like Pope Francis – see it as a peace-loving religion. Others find this claim difficult to accept in the light of the violence and cruelty perpetrated in the name of Allah by Muslim fighters against innocent fellow citizens who are not Muslims, and also against many fellow Muslims. Paul Stenhouse's deep scholarly interest in Samaritan history and traditions has taken him on intellectual and literary paths 'continually crisscrossed by Islam and its Qur'an, Islamic Law and Islamic history'. Here, he seeks to offer some light on the background to tragic events unfolding throughout the Middle East, Africa, Pakistan, and Central and Southeast Asia, as well as in the USA, Europe, the UK and Oceania.

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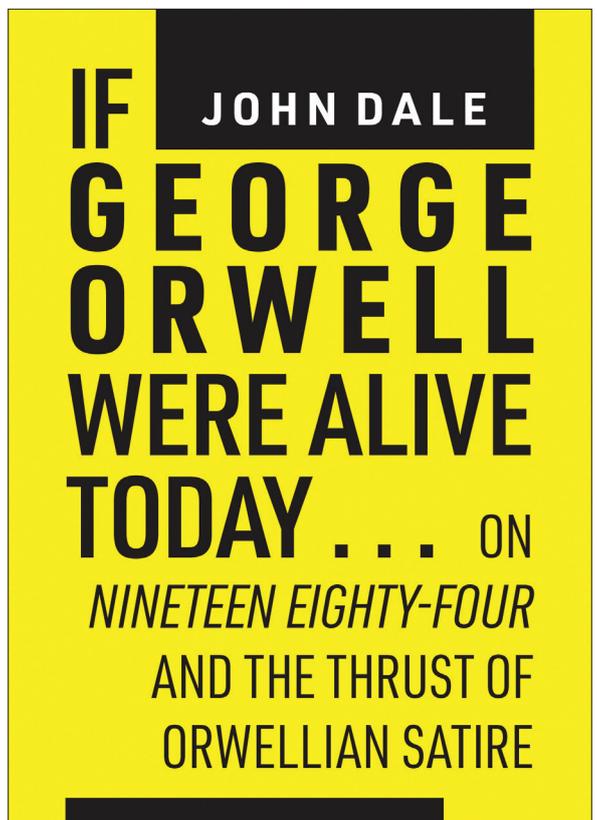
IF GEORGE ORWELL WERE ALIVE TODAY...

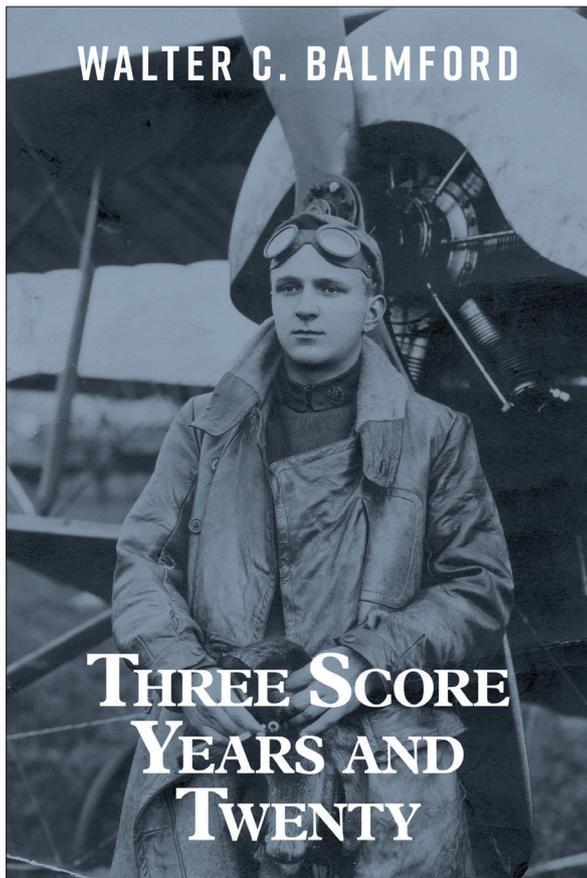
ON 1984 AND THE THRUST OF ORWELLIAN SATIRE

John Dale

Great writers engage with the changing times and by using their imaginations transform their ideas and environments into fiction. More than any other writer of the 20th century, George Orwell responded to a period of historical change by imagining his dystopian future of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, perhaps the most influential political novel ever written. At the same time *Nineteen Eighty-Four* was very much a product of post-war England with its rations and shortages. Orwell, in fact, remained a socialist until his death in January 1950, but the far more intriguing question is what *Nineteen Eighty-Four* would be like if it were written today, in an age of Islamist terror, fake news and post-truth politics.

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THREE SCORE YEARS AND TWENTY

Walter C. Balmford

A Red Baron squadron member shot down Walter Balmford's plane over German-occupied northern France in 1917. With a bullet hole in his windscreen, the plane's joystick useless, and his gunner Corporal Elliott badly wounded, Walter managed to fly the plane back across the front lines and land it safely.

After the war, Walter became an actuary and migrated with his wife and two sons to Australia. He became the Commonwealth Actuary — a position now known as the Australian Government Actuary — working closely with the Treasurer (later Prime Minister) J.B. Chifley: the two became friends. Well told and previously unpublished.

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ISBN: 978-1-925801-77-4 Price: \$29.95

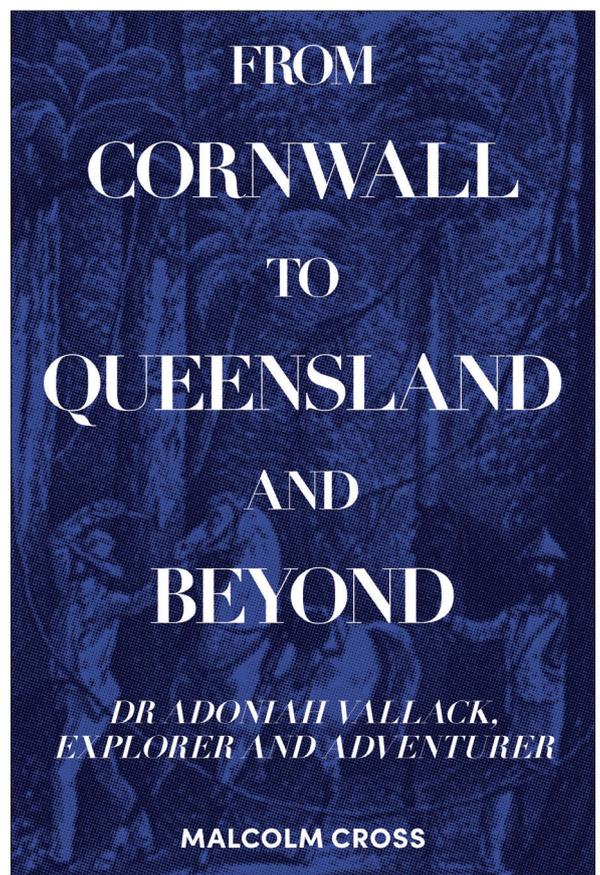
FROM CORNWALL TO QUEENSLAND AND BEYOND

DR ADONIAH VALLACK, EXPLORER AND ADVENTURER

Malcolm Cross

Dr Adoniah Vallack was well known in Australia, especially in Sydney, in 1848–49. He had played a vital part in the aftermath of Edmund Kennedy's ill-fated expedition to explore the coast of Queensland up to Cape York. Recruited as the expedition's doctor, Vallack had arranged to join the 13 others at Port Albany. In this he was fortunate since only Galmarra, the Aboriginal tracker, made it that far. Vallack led the rescue of the two other survivors and reported Galmarra's extraordinary story.

Format: Paperback Released: 4 July
ISBN: 978-1-925801-86-6 Price: \$39.95



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