

Reproduced from *The Life and Times of Gerald de Cruz: A Singaporean of Many Worlds*, by Asad-ul Iqbal Latif (Singapore: ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute, 2015). This version was obtained electronically direct from the publisher on condition that copyright is not infringed. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the prior permission of ISEAS Publishing. Individual chapters are available at <<http://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg>>

The Life and Times of Gerald de Cruz

The **ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute** (formerly Institute of Southeast Asian Studies) was established as an autonomous organization in 1968. It is a regional centre dedicated to the study of socio-political, security and economic trends and developments in Southeast Asia and its wider geostrategic and economic environment. The Institute’s research programmes are the Regional Economic Studies (RES, including ASEAN and APEC), Regional Strategic and Political Studies (RSPS), and Regional Social and Cultural Studies (RSCS).

ISEAS Publishing, an established academic press, has issued more than 2,000 books and journals. It is the largest scholarly publisher of research about Southeast Asia from within the region. ISEAS Publishing works with many other academic and trade publishers and distributors to disseminate important research and analyses from and about Southeast Asia to the rest of the world.

The Life and Times of
Gerald de Cruz

ASAD-UL IQBAL LATIF

ISEAS YUSOF ISHAK
INSTITUTE

First published in Singapore in 2015 by ISEAS Publishing
ISEAS–Yusof Ishak Institute
30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace
Singapore 119614

E-mail: publish@iseas.edu.sg

Website: <http://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg>

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

© 2015 ISEAS Publishing, Singapore

The responsibility for facts and opinions in this publication rests exclusively with the author and his interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views or the policy of the publisher or its supporters.

ISEAS Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

The Life and Times of Gerald de Cruz : a Singaporean of Many Worlds /
edited by Asad-ul Iqbal Latif.

1. De Cruz, Gerald, 1920–1991.
2. Eurasians—Singapore—Biography.
3. Politicians—Singapore—Biography.
4. Nationalists—Singapore—Biography.
5. Communists—Singapore—Biography.
6. Journalists—Singapore—Biography.
- I. Latif, Asad-ul Iqbal.

DS610.63 D29L72 2015

ISBN 978-981-4620-68-0 (soft cover)

ISBN 978-981-4620-69-7 (e-book, PDF)

Typeset by Superskill Graphics Pte Ltd

Printed in Singapore by Mainland Press Pte Ltd

For

Gayathri, Roshini, Vandana, Pavithra and Varad Kailash

*members of a generation of
Singaporeans who are beneficiaries of
the legacy of Gerald de Cruz's life's work
and his vision of a multiracial Singapore*

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>Family Tree: Gerald Evelyn de Cruz</i>	xi
1. Don de Cruz de la Singapura	1
2. Childhood and Youth	9
3. The Japanese Occupation	19
4. The Communist Years	32
5. Going Abroad	77
6. The English Years	86
7. Return to Singapore	98
8. The Political Thinker	116
9. Friend of Labour	167
10. The Columnist	181
11. The Family Man	194
<i>Appendix</i>	203

<i>Index</i>	213
<i>About the Author</i>	224

PREFACE

Gerald de Cruz was an *interstitial* figure in Singapore's history after World War II. As a Eurasian, a nationalist, a communist and then a democratic socialist, as a journalist and a writer, he represents the overlapping energies of these spheres which the politics of the time brought together, often in opposition and conflict. He never rose to high political office, but his commitment to progressive ideas and movements speaks of a man of integrity trying to stay true to the roles that he had chosen for himself. This book seeks to portray his place in time for a younger generation of Singaporeans who might not be aware of how political choices were made at an important juncture of Singapore's history.

This book is based primarily on material drawn from Gerald de Cruz, Oral History Interview, by Foo Kim Leng; the Gerald de Cruz Papers deposited at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore; and his book, *Colliding Worlds: Memoirs of a Singapore Maverick*, a re-issue of *Rojak Rebel: Memoirs of a Singapore Maverick* with four new essays. His books on Malayan independence, nationalism and communism — the latter two based on his numerous talks delivered as a lecturer for the Political Study Centre — have also been consulted extensively.

I would like to record my gratitude to the former Director of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Ambassador K. Kesavapany, who entrusted the writing of the book to me; and the present Director, Ambassador Tan Chin Tiong, under whom I completed it.

I would like to thank Mr Pitt Kuan Wah, Head of the ISEAS Library, and Ms D. Gandhimathy, Senior Manager at the library, for their invaluable assistance with research; Mr Ng Kok Kiong, Head of ISEAS Publishing, for his encouragement; Mr Stephen Logan, Editor – Special Projects, for his close attention to details of fact and nuances of style. This is a much better book than it was as a manuscript because of him.

Gerald de Cruz's family, particularly his daughter, Justice Judith Prakash; his son-in-law, Mr Jaya Prakash; and his son, Ambassador Simon de Cruz, provided invaluable help in fleshing out many aspects of his life. I thank Joshua de Cruz, a doctoral student at the University of London, for sourcing material on Gerald de Cruz's political activities from British archives.

FAMILY TREE

Gerald Evelyn de Cruz

20 February 1920 – 9 December 1991

Parents

Cecil Thomas de Cruz and Evelyn Woodford

Siblings

Dudley Aloysius, Guy Anthony, Hazel

Wives

Coral Alma Phipps, Maimunah Mohammad

Children

Judith Evelyn (m. Jaya Prakash)

Simon Tensing (m. Kwah Poh Choo)

Adam

Grandchildren

Gayathri Prakash Nair, Roshini Prakash Nair

Vandana Prakash Nair, Pavithra Prakash Nair

Great-grandchild

Varad Kailash Karthikeyan