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Preventing Harm or Fortifying the Borders?: Political discourse on polygamy and Islam in Australia

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This article interrogates and historicises the positioning of polygamy in current Australian politico-legal discourse, using the example of the two federal government inquiries into the 2009 and 2012 'marriage equality' bills. It problematises the political and cultural presumption that polygamy is inherently immoral by arguing that this presumption is premised on the racialisation of polygamy as an (oppressive) Islamic practice. I will argue that this practice of racialisation can be utilised in the process of border maintenance—preventing the entry of undesirable (i.e. non-Western) immigrants. I will first situate polygamy in a historical context by drawing on the history of the legal status of polygamy in Australian law, which is largely based on British legal precedent. This Australian context will then be compared with the development of the law in Canada, which followed a different trajectory from its similarly British common law beginnings. Finally, I will demonstrate how recent events such as 'the War on Terror' have led to increased border maintenance in Australia, which in turn has shifted the political characterisation of polygamy closer to the Canadian approach.

Keywords: polygamy, Islam, Australia, Canada, marriage equality

Introduction

In 2009 and 2012, two federal government inquiries considered marriage amendment bills that sought to legalise same-sex marriage. In both inquiries, opponents of the bills used the spectre of polygamy very successfully to make a 'slippery slope' argument (i.e. if same-sex marriage is legalised, polygamy will follow shortly after) and to raise the idea that some forms of discrimination are justified. This latter argument was based on the apparent harm caused by

polygamy, particularly to women. Interestingly, the opponents did not offer any substantive evidence to support this claim and nor did the supporters of the bills question it. This begs the question, why is polygamy deemed so harmful that it can be used as a scaremongering device in the marriage equality debates? This article addresses this question by historicising the status of polygamy under Australian law. My purpose is to show how the treatment of polygamy is not, and has never been, uniform. I argue that polygamy is not inherently harmful but rather becomes characterised as such through a process of racialisation and Othering. The ultimate governmental purpose of this process is border maintenance. That is, preventing the entry of undesirable (non-Western) immigrants.

This article begins with an historical inquiry into how polygamy has been dealt with under Anglo-Australian law. It then compares this legal treatment with the development of laws pertaining to polygamy in Canada, which have followed a vastly different trajectory from their British common law beginnings due to a particular historical and religious context. Specifically, the fear of fundamentalist Mormon migration in the late nineteenth century led to the increased racialisation and politicisation of polygamy and the subsequent introduction of wider reaching criminal sanctions against it. Finally, I examine how recent events such as 'the War on Terror' have led to increased border maintenance in Australia, which in turn has shifted the political characterisation of polygamy closer to the Canadian approach.

Throughout this article I utilise both the terms 'Western' and 'white'. Arguably, these terms are not strictly synonymous. Alastair Bonnett (2005, p. 9) suggests that "whilst 'westerner' can and does operate as a substitute term for 'white', it may also reflect new landscapes of discrimination that have new and more fragile relationships to the increasingly widely repudiated language of race". Nonetheless, for the purposes of this article I will utilise the terms largely interchangeably. This is because many of the so-called 'Western values' that are relevant to a discussion on polygamy, particularly gender equality, can also be described in the Australian context as Anglo-Australian (i.e. 'white Australian') values.

Historicising Polygamy in Anglo-Australian Law

To examine the historical status of polygamy in Australia, it is necessary to draw on British legal precedent which forms the basis of Australian common law. When the British invaded and colonised Australia, British common law became the foundation of the Australian legal system so that old British cases that have not been specifically overruled still form part of Australian common law. The British approach to polygamy, which was inherited into the Australian legal system, was far from morally absolute. Rather than condemning it as an immoral or irrefutably harmful practice, a far more ambivalent approach was adopted.

This ambivalent approach is demonstrated in the well known case of *Hyde v Hyde and Woodmansee* (1866) LR 1 P&D 130 (*Hyde*), which is often held up as

confirming the non-recognition of polygamous marriages under British law. It concerned a Mormon marriage contracted in Utah. Although the marriage was technically monogamous, it was potentially polygamous in the sense that Utah law at that time permitted the husband to contract further marriages with other women. The question before Lord Penzance, sitting in the British Court of Probate and Divorce, was whether a potentially polygamous marriage could be considered a 'marriage' under the relevant British law. Lord Penzance defined marriage as "the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman, to the exclusion of all others" (*Hyde* at 133).¹ He further found that this understanding of marriage, which is rooted in Christendom, is "wholly inapplicable to polygamy" (*Hyde* at 135) and therefore could not be used to draw conclusions about the rights and obligations of parties to a polygamous marriage.

This conclusion is significant because it shows that Lord Penzance did not refuse to recognise polygamy for reasons of public policy or considerations of social and moral harm, but rather because he did not have an applicable legal tradition. Nevertheless, he did make some comments in respect of the morality of the practice. He suggested that a Christian "wife" receives better treatment than women in "infidel nations" (*Hyde* at 133-4). According to Lord Penzance, the Christian "wife" stands "upon the same level with the man under whose protection they live" (*Hyde* at 134)—which today appears to be somewhat paradoxical considering the status of women at the time of the *Hyde* decision. Nevertheless, it is significant that a specifically Christian ideal of marriage was at the centre of Lord Penzance's approach to polygamy and that this ideal was incommensurable with a polygamous marriage, which therefore could not be recognised as marriage under British law.

This non-recognition of polygamous marriage as marriage becomes even more significant when the crime of bigamy is taken into account. This offence takes place where a person who is already married purports to marry another. Under British law at the time of *Hyde*, the person who is already married is liable for up to seven years imprisonment (*Offences Against the Person Act 1861* [UK], s 57). Thus, the non-recognition of the potentially polygamous marriage in *Hyde* actually prevented the parties to the marriage from being liable for bigamy, had one of them entered into a second marriage in Britain. This approach of selective non-recognition of polygamous marriages was inherited into the Australian legal system, where it still operates with respect to Aboriginal polygamy.

British Legal Tradition in the Australian Context: Aboriginal Polygamy

Although declining, polygamy continues to be practiced in some Aboriginal communities in Australia (Australian Law Reform Commission [ALRC], 1986, [228]; New South Wales Law Reform Commission [NSWLRC], 2007, [14.13]). Both the Northern Territory and South Australia have specific legislative provisions that provide for a person leaving more than one 'spouse' upon death

¹ This definition subsequently formed the basis of the Australian marriage definition: *Marriage Act 1961* (Cth) ss 5, 46; *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) s 43(a).

(NSWLRC, 2007, [14.14]): "the spouse's entitlement ... [is] divided equally among the spouses." However, only one spouse is considered a legal 'wife' due to the prohibition of polygamy through the crime of bigamy.² To protect polygamous Aboriginal customary marriages from criminal sanction, the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC)'s (1986, [258]) approach is "to recognise the consequences of [customary] marriage for particular purposes" only. The ALRC (1986, [259]) argues that this approach "is supported by other social and legal developments in Australia" because the Family Court already "has jurisdiction with respect to void Australian marriages, including marriages void as polygamous." Indeed, Australian courts already deal with matters involving "former and subsequent or de facto wives ... and, arguably, between several de facto wives" (ALRC, 1986, [259]). This makes the continued prohibition and criminalisation of polygamy even more anomalous: if polygamous customary marriages are already occurring and being managed in the legal system, why not recognise them for what they are? On the one hand the ALRC (1986, [260]) "concludes that the continuation of polygyny³ is a matter for Aborigines [sic] themselves to decide", and yet on the other it refuses to call such relationships "marriage" despite acknowledging that "Aborigines [sic] themselves unhesitatingly describe their traditional unions as marriages, and distinguish between marriage and other (i.e. de facto) unions" (ALRC, 1986, [236]). Thus, the government can purport to fulfil the "Commonwealth responsibility for Aboriginal people" (ALRC, 1986, [257]) while simultaneously refusing to extend or diversify the meaning of marriage.

The anomalous status of Aboriginal polygamy in Australia, coupled with the British historical example, demonstrates that the legal approach to polygamy has been far from uniform. While bigamy has long been a criminal act, there has been a distinct reluctance to prosecute parties involved in polygamous unions that were entered into under different legal customs, such as Aboriginal customary law. While the practice has been condemned as un-Christian (or, in modern parlance, non-Western), it was not characterised as so morally repugnant that it must be actively criminalised. Indeed, the practice maintained a very low profile in Australia at large, with little media or academic coverage outside of a small number of anthropological studies.

I submit that this historically ambivalent attitude towards polygamy was a result of the fact that the groups who practiced it were not deemed to be a threat to the maintenance of 'White Australia'. That is, it was restricted to some Aboriginal communities and considered to be a declining practice. The situation in Canada, another British colony with a common law tradition, was fundamentally different and demonstrates how the characterisation of polygamy shifts depending on how big a threat the groups who practice it appear to pose. Where this threat is perceived to be greater, the process of racialisation is more extreme so as to position the practice as so 'Other' that it is morally offensive to white society.

² In Australia, bigamy is an offence under section 94 of the *Marriage Act 1961* (Cth).

³ The term 'polygyny' specifically refers to the polygamist practice whereby a man has more than one wife (*Australian Pocket Oxford Dictionary*, 1996, p. 828)). This is the most common form of polygamy.

Polygamy in Canada

At first glance, it may appear strange to describe polygamy as having been racialised in the Canadian context. This is because the people most associated with the practice, the fundamentalist Mormons, also appear to be white. However, as mentioned above, the term 'white' encapsulates far more than physical signifiers. Ghassan Hage (1998, p. 232) sees whiteness operating "as a symbolic field of accumulation where many attributes such as looks, accent, 'cosmopolitanism' or 'Christianity' can be accumulated and converted into Whiteness." Thus, while the Mormons in Canada certainly had white looks and likely a white accent, their religio-cultural attributes saw them excluded from the Canadian category of whiteness.

Like Australia, Canada has a British colonial history, with British common law also forming the basis of the Canadian legal system.⁴ However, the development of Canadian law with respect to polygamy differed from Australia due to its proximity to the United States and the Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints, whose followers are known as Mormons. This religion originated in North America in the 1830s under the leadership of the prophet Joseph Smith Jr. While not originally part of the Mormon religious doctrine, the practice of polygamy became established in the 1850s (White & White, 2005, p. 166-7). The reaction within mainstream political and legal discourse in the United States was aggressive and in 1862 the *Morrill Anti-Bigamy Act* was passed, making polygamy illegal. This was followed by increasingly harsh anti-polygamy measures, which included penalties such as revoking the right of polygamists to vote or hold office and the seizure of Church assets (Zeitzen, 2008, p. 91). These measures took their toll on Mormon communities and in 1890 the president of the Church responded by releasing a Manifesto proclaiming the end of Mormon polygamy (White & White, 2005, p. 168; Sigman, 2006, p. 131). Since then, the Mormon Church has become hostile towards practicing polygamists (Sigman, 2006, p. 135). Nevertheless, Mormon fundamentalists continued the practice and several fled to Canada to escape persecution from both the authorities and the Mormon Church, where they established polygamous communities such as Bountiful in British Columbia (Berkowitz, 2006-2007, p. 619).

Significantly, few steps had been taken to combat the existence of polygamy among First Nations people prior to this Mormon migration (*Reference re: Section 293 of the Criminal Code of Canada*, 2011 BCSC 1588 ('*Polygamy Reference*') at [346], [360]). However, with the influx of fundamentalist Mormons, Canadian authorities were concerned about the influence these polygamous Mormon groups would have on First Nations people and vice versa (*Polygamy Reference* at [361]). Their migration raised concerns that "Mormon missionary activities would further encourage the practice among First Nations ... [and] Mormons would see Aboriginal polygamy as evidence that ... the practice

⁴ It should be noted that the legal system in the province of Quebec is partly based on the French civil law tradition and therefore differs from the rest of Canada.

was accepted in Canada" (*Polygamy Reference* at [361]). The racialisation of polygamy in the Canadian media was also becoming more extreme as efforts were made to characterise polygamy as something wholly outside the boundaries of a white Christian Canada. For example, in the Canadian publication *The Physical Life of Women: Advice to the Maiden, Wife and Mother* (cited in *Polygamy Reference* at [352]), the practice was described as leading to "physical degradation" and it was declared that "[t]he Mormons of Utah would soon sink into a state of Asiatic effeminacy were they left to themselves." The Lieutenant Governor of the Northwest Territories in 1889 described the existence of polygamy as "a danger and a shame to every Christian people" (in the *Polygamy Reference* at [355]). Thus, the subsequent criminalisation of polygamy was viewed as vital to maintaining the moral borders of Canada against the migration of these undesirable immigrants.

Canada's prohibition of polygamy is contained in section 293 of the *Canadian Criminal Code*. This section makes any person who agrees or consents to enter into any form of polygamy liable for up to five years imprisonment. Justice Bauman in the recent Supreme Court of British Columbia case of *Reference re: Section 293 of the Criminal Code of Canada*, 2011 BCSC 1588 (*'Polygamy Reference'*) explained the difference between the offence of bigamy and the prohibition of polygamy:

The offence of bigamy focuses on attempts to enter into multiple marriages by means of the civil marriage process. Its commission involves perpetuating a fraud against the state in that the state's marriage requirements are employed for a marriage that is a nullity. (*Polygamy Reference* at [142])

Thus, the polygamy offence is broader in scope than bigamy in that it extends to circumstances where a person enters into multiple marriages but does not solemnise them through the civil marriage process (*Polygamy Reference* at [144]).

In the *Polygamy Reference*, Justice Bauman was concerned with the constitutionality of the polygamy offence. The case took place in the context of heightened public attention around the practice due to a 2004 police investigation into allegations of exploitation, child abuse and forced marriage in the polygamous community of Bountiful (Chan, 2011, p. 18). The question at issue in the case was whether the polygamy offence was consistent with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* ('the Charter'), particularly section 2(a) which upholds "freedom of conscience and religion." The argument was raised that the prohibition was unconstitutional because polygamy is a central part of the fundamentalist Mormon belief system (Hennigar, 2007, p. 89). In response, the Attorney General of British Columbia argued that the prohibition was justified on the basis of the harm caused by polygamy, particularly to women (*Polygamy Reference* at [2]). Ultimately, this latter argument proved successful.

Justice Bauman concluded that although the prohibition does offend the freedom of religion provision, it is nevertheless "demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society" (*Polygamy Reference* at [15]). It is notable that the terms

“free” and “democratic” are arguably the discursive hallmarks of white Western society (see Perera, 2007, p. 13). Justice Bauman’s conclusion was based on a connection drawn between polygamy and harms to women, children, men and society in general (*Polygamy Reference* at [230]-[233]). In particular, he found that the practice “institutionalizes gender inequality” (*Polygamy Reference* at [13]). Thus, the purpose of the prohibition against polygamy “was, and indeed still is, intended to address [these] harms” (*Polygamy Reference* at [881]). However, Justice Bauman’s decision went beyond a consideration of these harms. A portion of Justice Bauman’s judgment was dedicated to migration issues that may arise should polygamy be legalised in Canada. He considered that many of the polygamous families in the US would be “inclined to move north” as well as “polygamous families from Africa and the Middle East” (*Polygamy Reference* at [555]). He commented that, should these potential migrant polygamous communities become established in Canada, “their populations would expand comparatively rapidly” (*Polygamy Reference* at [560]). The inclusion of this discussion on potential migration suggests a preoccupation with border policing and Canadian national identity. It is also significant due to the historical role that the concern for women’s rights has played with respect to such border maintenance.

In “Aussie Luck”: The Border Politics of Citizenship Post Cronulla Beach’, Suvendrini Perera (2007, p. 5) highlights the role of “citizenship and border controls as mechanisms for differentiating spatially and racially among the population.” She also discusses how “the protection of women” is an “indispensable thematic of colonial and racist discourse” (2007, p. 9), which Leila Ahmed (1992, p. 151) has described as “colonial feminism”. Referring to the nineteenth century colonial era, Ahmed (1992, p. 151) has written:

Even as the Victorian male establishment devised theories to contest the claims of feminism ... it captured the language of feminism and redirected it, in the service of colonialism, toward Other men and the cultures of Other men ... to render morally justifiable its project of undermining or eradicating the cultures of colonized peoples.

This same process of justification can be seen in the emancipatory discourse of the War on Terror, which positioned “[t]he fight against terrorism” as “a fight for the rights and dignity of women” (US Government document in Abu-Lughod, 2002, p. 784). Such rhetoric is apparent in Justice Bauman’s decision. His focus on preventing harm to women on the one hand, and preventing the immigration of presumably Muslim and Mormon polygamous families on the other, is suggestive of colonial feminism being utilised for the purpose of border policing. Adopting Perera’s language, the prohibition of polygamy is seemingly utilised as a tool of border control to differentiate racially (as well as morally) among potential migrants in terms of who is more desirable for the nation. These themes are also reflected in contemporary Australian politico-legal discourse surrounding the practice of polygamy.

Contemporary Australia: ‘Clash of Civilisations’ Politics

As mentioned above, it was not until the end of the twentieth century that polygamy began to achieve a wider profile in Australia. Before then, polygamy warranted very little attention and was even partially accommodated in terms of Aboriginal polygamy. However, since the 1990s the practice has become positioned as a specifically Muslim practice and the fact that Aboriginal communities also engaged in it was sidelined. For example, in the ALRC's (1992, p. 93-5) report considering whether polygamy should be recognised in Australia, only the Muslim community was mentioned explicitly. The conflation of Islam with polygamy also occurred throughout the federal government inquiries into the Marriage Equality Amendment Bills of 2009 and 2012 (Gerber in Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee, 2009, p. 6; see also Elliott in Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee, 2009, p. 46; Rochow in Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, 2012, p. 20; Stone in Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, 2012, p. 21, 43). More anecdotally, when polygamy was raised at Sydney's 2009 *Festival of Dangerous Ideas*, the discussion was titled 'Polygamy and Other Islamic Values are Good for Australia' (Heywood, 2009).

It is not a coincidence that the greater media and academic coverage of polygamy and its racialisation as an Islamic practice occurred at a time when 'Islamophobia' was on the rise. Islamophobia refers to "the marginalisation and exclusion of Muslims based on their cultural and religious difference" (Aslan, 2009, p. 5). It is a form of cultural racism that has increased substantially in Australia due to significant incidents of the past two decades that have brought heightened attention to Islam as a religious system supposedly in 'conflict' with the 'Western' world, starting with the Gulf War (Aslan, 2009, p. 48) and ballooning following the September 11 and Bali bombings, after which Muslims began to be perceived as "a kind of terrorist fifth column" (in Aslan, 2009, p. 80). Consequently, the penetrability of national borders became a matter of great anxiety and a new 'clash of civilisations' worldview gained traction in which the Islamic and Western civilisations were in conflict with one another (see Huntington, 1996, p. 312; Aly, 2007, p. xiii-xiv; Aslan, 2009, p. 16-17; Rees, 2005, p. 356). Former Prime Minister John Howard (in AAP, 2006) gave support to the view that the Muslim population is morally and culturally different to the rest of Australia when he said that "[t]here is within some sections of the Islamic community an attitude towards women which is out of line with mainstream Australian society." Moreover, he argued that this gender problem was 'unique' to Muslims (in AAP, 2006). It is in this highly politicised context that polygamy moved from being a peripheral practice engaged in by some Aboriginal communities to an Islamic practice representative of the divide between the 'egalitarian West' and 'oppressive Islam' (Ho, 2007, p. 290).

The discursive power of polygamy in this racialised context is readily apparent in the federal government inquiries into the 2009 and 2012 marriage amendment bills. The purpose of both the Marriage Equality Amendment Bill 2009 ('the 2009 Bill') and the 2012 Bill of the same name ('the 2012 Bill') was to "remove all discrimination from the *Marriage Act 1961* on the basis of sexuality and gender identity" (Explanatory Memorandum, 2009; Explanatory Memorandum, 2012). However, despite this liberal language, the Bills were specifically aimed at

recognising same-sex marriage. Thus, particularly in the 2009 inquiry (Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee, 2009), those appearing as witnesses were ill-prepared to deal with questions regarding other marriage practices, such as polygamy. However, the subject of polygamy was raised several times in both inquiries, particularly by Senator Barnett in the 2009 inquiry.⁵ The Senator as well as opponents to the Bill managed to utilise the spectre of polygamy very successfully to make a 'slippery slope' argument whereby if same-sex marriage was legalised, polygamy would surely follow (Barnett in Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee, 2009, p. 19, 71; Phillips in Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee, 2009, p. 41, 42; Rochow in Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, 2012, p. 15, 20; Brohier in Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, 2012, p. 21; Stone in Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, 2012, p. 43). None of the witnesses questioned the logic upon which this argument was based: that polygamy is unequivocally wrong and therefore should not be legalised in a Western society that upholds gender equality.⁶ This leads me to draw the conclusion that there was general agreement as to the moral and cultural wrongfulness of polygamy.

This conclusion is supported by a report by the Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) which positioned polygamy as contrary to gender equality (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1998, p. 43). Notably, no substantive evidence was put forward to support this contention. The views of AHRC are particularly relevant as they were referred to by one witness in the 2009 inquiry (Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee, 2009, p. 57) and an AHRC representative appeared as a witness in the 2012 inquiry. Thus, the discourse surrounding polygamy in these inquiries more strongly echoes the Canadian politico-legal position than the historically ambivalent Anglo-Australian position and recalls Leila Ahmed's "colonial feminism", wherein opposition to polygamy is putatively premised on concern for Muslim women.

There is no law against de facto polygamy, i.e. entering into multiple unions without a formal marriage ceremony. Thus, it seems anomalous that the government only becomes concerned about the harm of a multi-party relationship once it is formalised utilising Australian marriage law. It becomes even more so in light of the legislative provisions that accommodate Aboriginal polygamy. Indeed, these legislative provisions could suggest that the government believes that Aboriginal women do not need the same paternalistic protection that other Australian women appear to require, or worse, that they do not warrant it. These apparently anomalous approaches to marriage and

⁵ Senator Barnett raised the issue of polygamy because the 2009 Bill removed the words "to the exclusion of all others" from the marriage definition. However, it still defined marriage as a "union of two people". In the House of Representatives inquiry into the 2012 Bill, Dr Stone MP suggested the polygamy would be a "logical extension" of the legalisation of same-sex marriage (in Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, 2012, p. 43; see also Rochow in Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs, 2012, p. 21).

⁶ Note that Argent (in Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee, 2009, p. 45) took a more tempered approach to polygamy, describing it as a "non-issue".

polygamy are all suggestive of the conclusion that the prevalent characterisation of polygamy as an inherently wrong practice, as demonstrated in the inquiries into the 2009 and 2012 Bills, is not based on substantive evidence but rather a process of racialisation whereby the practice becomes conflated with Islam, which is in turn positioned in opposition to the free and liberal West. I submit that, as with the Canadian example, underlying this characterisation is a preoccupation with border maintenance and preventing the migration of undesirable (i.e. non-Western) immigrants.

Conclusion

An understanding of the common law and colonial history of the West's engagement with polygamy is vital to historicising the current perception of polygamy as a harmful and specifically Islamic practice in Australian politico-legal discourse. This history demonstrates that the Australian law's apparent aversion to and perception of polygamy is not uniform and has changed over time. Today's politico-legal environment is a product of this history but also represents a new form of engagement with the practice in Australia as a result of 'clash' politics: no longer is polygamy perceived as a declining practice taking place outside of mainstream (i.e. non-Aboriginal) Australian society but rather one that represents a threat to Australia's Western values, resulting in a heightened need for border maintenance around the kinds of familial and cultural identities permitted in Australia. My aim in this article is to contribute to an understanding of the influence of politics and race on the positioning of polygamy in Australia and problematise the prevalent assumption that polygamy is inherently wrong. I have attempted to uncover some of the historical roots of the assumptions made about the practice and highlight the ideological work taking place in the current politico-legal positioning of polygamy. Such an interrogation is important in light of the rising occurrence of polygamy throughout 'Western' countries (Zeitzen, 2008, p. 169) and is particularly important in the Australian context, where polygamy continues to be practiced seemingly without controversy within some Aboriginal communities.

Author Note

Micaela Ash has a Bachelor of Arts (Hons I) in Gender and Cultural Studies and a Bachelor of Laws (Hons I) from Sydney University. This article is drawn from the first chapter of her Arts Honours thesis.

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Talking about 'Australian Values' in the Australian Parliament: How Politicians Contest Culturalist Racism

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In the last decade, mainstream political definitions and the language used in debates about cultural integration have shifted in such a way that it has become more difficult to talk explicitly about racism. Since racist attitudes are increasingly disguised under proxies of differences in culture, lifestyle, or values, recognising and contesting racism becomes a complex task. This article uses critical discourse analysis to investigate the Australian Labor Party's response to Coalition Government rhetoric about the necessity of migrants adopting 'Australian values' in proposals for new citizenship laws. Focusing on speeches about the Australian Citizenship Bill 2005 that sought to implement stricter requirements for naturalisation, this article identifies strategies that opposition politicians used to challenge the government's usage of 'Australian values' in a new citizenship regime. Argumentation schemes the speakers used included the framing of migrants as already adhering to 'Australian values', pointing out the hypocrisy of a government which does not abide by its own values, and critiquing the content of the government's 'Australian values'. Although the speakers depicted immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds in an overwhelmingly positive light to try to counteract culturally essentialist claims, there was a failure to question the hegemonic discourses of 'Australian values' that define certain migrant groups as unwilling to integrate or contribute to Australian society.

Keywords: Racism, culturalist racism, Australian values, migrants, critical discourse analysis

Introduction

Over the past few decades, expressions of racist attitudes have changed in shape and form in Australia and other Western liberal-democratic countries.

Contemporary social norms have meant that overtly racist talk and actions have largely become social taboos (Augoustinos & Every, 2007). This, however, has not meant that racism itself has now been eliminated. Fears that ethnic 'Others' transgress traditional values and beliefs in the superiority of one's own culture, rather than race, still abound (see Jafri, 2012). The way in which these fears and beliefs are expressed in dominant political and social discourse has shifted from a racial to cultural lexicon. The change in the expression of racist attitudes has led to the rise of 'culturalist racism',¹ a form of racism that emphasises cultural differences among people rather than biological hierarchies (Barker, 1982; Sears, 1988; Stolcke, 1995; Taguieff, 1990; Wieviorka, 1997).

Recent debates in Australia on immigration and citizenship have centred on the notion of 'Australian values' as an indicator of 'Australianness' and belonging (Cheng, 2009). In proposals to implement a national citizenship test in Australia during the rule of the Howard Government,² proponents of the test often focused on the importance of 'Australian values' as something to which immigrants must adhere when becoming Australian citizens. Notions of cultural—rather than biological—superiority are evident in these discourses. 'Australian values' only make sense if they refer to "*white* Australian values", given the diversity of values present in Australia (Due & Riggs, 2008). Yet, non-Anglo histories have remained largely invisible in the master narrative of Australian history (Perera, 2005). Indeed John Howard's conception of national identity has continuously privileged an Anglo-Celtic heritage (Johnson, 2007). For Howard, these core white values need to be constantly reaffirmed and enhanced (Moreton-Robinson, 2005). Furthermore, 'Australian values' are re-constructions of an imagined, ethnically homogenous Australia. While it may be argued that one can ultimately learn to adopt Anglo-Celtic values and be like 'us', 'Australian values' are part of the 'moral imagination' wherein such values are expressed with the appearance of openness while simultaneously enabling exclusion (Harris & Williams, 2003). The exclusion of 'Others' is a simple matter of shifting the parameters of 'Australian values' so that 'undesirable' migrants are always shut out.

One problem with discourses of cultural superiority is that it is difficult to point out the racist elements embedded in them. By focusing on the 'different'—and often 'inferior'—culture and values of the 'Other', it is possible to deny that these discourses contain any racist elements. Yet, notions of cultural superiority and inferiority rely on the same essentialist beliefs as racism, in which certain people are reduced to a lower political position by virtue of socially constructed attributes. How then is it possible to critique and contest the usage of Australian values to exclude the 'Other'? This paper identifies how politicians in the Australian parliament contested and challenged the imposition of 'Australian values' on migrants in speeches on the Australian Citizenship Bill 2005. The debates surrounding the Bill present a conducive site in which to capture instances of culturalist racism due to the speakers' emphasis on migrants adopting Australian values in amendments to citizenship legislation that would

¹ 'Culturalist' racism rather than 'cultural' is a more apt term for this phenomenon because 'culturalist' specifically names the "ideologising orientation" towards culture (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001, p. 9).

² The Howard Government was in power from 1996 to 2007.

double the residential requirement for naturalisation from two to four years. The way politicians contested the arguments advocating Australian values provides insight into how it is possible to challenge culturalist racism that masks racist attitudes behind talk of 'culture' and 'values'. Politicians belong to what van Dijk (2000, p. 16) calls "'symbolic' elites" who have a special role in formulating and spreading public opinion. They also have the power to make and change legislation and make a significant impact on society. Thus the way politicians perceive and contest exclusionary discourses has important consequences for the fight against culturalist racism.

Racism and Culturalist Racism

There is a growing body of literature which argues that discrimination and prejudice based on discourses of cultural difference are forms of racism. There are, however, differences between the authors' conception of the relationship between biology and culture. Schinkel (2008, p. 18) argues that "culturalism" is a "discourse of alterity" that is *equivalent* to racism and based on supposed cultural distinctions, as opposed to biologically natural ones as in the case of racism. In an empirical study on how white New Zealanders talk about Maoris, Wetherell and Potter (1992, p. 137) found that culture took on some of the same tasks as race in participants' explanations of inequality and exclusion. In white New Zealanders' accounts of Maori peoples, culture became a naturally-occurring difference and self-sufficient form of explanation for the 'fatal flaws' of Maori people, which were thought to lie in their traditional practices, attitudes and values rather than their genes. Conversely, Reisigl and Wodak (2001, p.10) assert that it is a *combination* of biological features and cultural traits and traditions that represent 'race' in hegemonic social and political discourse around 'difference' that reiterates an almost "invariable pseudo-causal connection" between biology and culture.

This shift towards framing prejudice through the language of culture is arguably related to the achievements of anti-racist activism and the establishment of anti-racist social and political norms in recent decades. Increasing social taboos in the last 50 years against making openly racist comments have thus lead to "discursive strategies that present negative views of out-groups as reasonable and justified while protecting the speaker from charges of racism and prejudice" (Augoustinos & Every, 2010, p. 251). In this way, culture is utilised, either fully or partially, to express prejudice as logical and commonsense (Blackledge, 2006). However, since anti-racists can only speak in response to racism, they may have difficulties doing so outside of the frames already set up by the originally prejudiced statements. If the original argument was based on such things as culture, language and customs, those who wish to point to their racist underpinnings as a mode of contesting exclusion have very little space to do so. For example, if someone argues that migrants must learn 'our' language before becoming citizens, it is difficult for an anti-racist to assert that having to learn the national language is racist, since that shifts the frame of discourse from the culturalism in the original statement to the more widely understood biological-based racism. However, demands for migrants to learn the national language

invariably invoke hierarchical constructions of superiority and inferiority in which the privileging of one group over another is justifiable.

Anti-racists must also deal with the further taboo against making direct accusations of racism. To accuse someone of racism, especially when it has been expressed indirectly, could potentially lead to counteraccusations "of being overly sensitive, and of 'seeing racism where there is none'" (van Dijk, 1997, p. 90) or, more problematically, of exercising 'reverse racism' towards the cultural majority. Anti-racists therefore have to navigate around the complexity of both anti-racist and anti-anti-racist social discourse to attempt to contest racism.

The use of culture or values to replace race or racialised concepts in exclusionary talk about immigrants in Western parliamentary and political discourse is well documented. Topoi of culture based on the alleged inferior culture, lifestyle and values of immigrants were observed in parliamentary debates on immigration in Germany (Faist, 1994), on ethnic issues in Austria (Sedlak, 2000), immigration and nationality in France (van der Valk, 2003), and immigration and integration in the Netherlands (Roggeband & Vliegthart, 2007). Similar cultural framing was identified in talk about asylum seekers in Australia (Hansen-Easey & Augoustinos, 2010) and the United Kingdom (Goodman, 2010). According to such arguments, immigrants' 'inferior culture' have made it difficult, if not impossible, to achieve integration and social harmony. For example, Islamic culture was presented as incompatible with Western cultural values and therefore posed a threat to the host society in the Netherlands during the post-9/11 period (Roggeband & Vliegthart, 2007). In Germany, party members from the centre-right Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union³ and the right-wing populist *Republikaner* used cultural differences to distinguish between 'civilisations' and justify exclusion of immigrant 'intruders' (Faist, 1994). Culture was also the reason former Australian Immigration Minister Kevin Andrews gave for significantly reducing the humanitarian intake of Sudanese refugees for the years 2007-2008 (Hansen-Easy & Augoustinos, 2010). Andrews used 'cultural difference' to account for the supposed integration problems of Sudanese Australians.⁴ Goodman (2010) found the same argumentation scheme deployed in political attempts to restrict asylum in the UK wherein 'culture' was a purportedly non-prejudicial reason to oppose asylum.

Proposals for such policies as language and citizenship tests or reductions in humanitarian intakes are inevitably dubbed 'not racist' by their advocates, not least because they do not mention genetic inferiority or differences. Despite these non-prejudicial assertions, culturalist racism still has negative consequences for minority groups who are discriminated against or vilified due to their perceived 'Otherness'. This creates many challenges for those willing to contest racist forms of legal, political and social exclusion. If culturalist racism is unacknowledged or dismissed as 'not racism', this means that those who try to

³ The Christian Social Union is the name of the Christian Democratic Union party in the state of the Bavaria.

⁴ For an in-depth analysis of how Andrews' statements affected Sudanese migrants in Australia at this time see Ndhlovu this issue.

contest racism have difficulties even pointing out racism in the first place, let alone trying to confront or eradicate it.

In comparison to racist discourses, little is known about how discourses of culturalist racism are challenged and contested. Analytical discourse studies on anti-racist arguments in parliaments have been a neglected area of study in contrast to work on racist discourses in parliaments. Existing literature has mostly analysed general anti-racist strategies used by left-wing pro-immigrant groups in Europe (van Dijk, 1993; Jones, 2000; Sedlak, 2000; ter Wal, 2000) and identified the slippery and complex nature of making accusations of racism and developing anti-racist rhetoric in the Australian parliament (Every & Augoustinos, 2007). The main anti-racist strategy identified in this literature was the positive portrayal of the 'Other' inverse to a negative self-presentation. This simply reverses a common racist strategy. More complex strategies were highlighted by Every and Augoustinos (2007) who found that anti-racist challenges to negative talk about asylum seekers drew upon understandings of racism as a negative categorical generalisation of asylum seekers, which therefore resulted in unequal treatment. Other than this, there is very little known about what strategies anti-racist politicians use to argue against racist legislation and bills masked by culturalist racism.

Historical and Political Context

The data for this paper comes from the Australian *Hansard* speeches on the Australian Citizenship Bill 2005 and the Australian Citizenship (Transitionals and Consequentials)⁵ Bill 2005, which were introduced by the ruling Coalition parties.⁶ These bills were significant because they replaced the *Australian Citizenship Act* (Cth) for the first time since it came into force in 1949. The bills were introduced on 9 November 2005 in response to the London bombings in July of the same year (Ellis, 2006, p. 221) and debated between 31 October 2006 and 30 November 2006. Two of the important changes to the *Australian Citizenship Act* would be the prohibition of applicants from citizenship eligibility if they were deemed to pose a security risk to Australia and increasing the residential requirement for naturalisation from two to three years so that there would be more time to conduct security checks on applicants. The following year, before the bill was debated, the government extended this to four years without any explanation.⁷ Furthermore, many of the speakers discussing this bill also spoke about the potential introduction of a citizenship test, as the government

⁵ The Transitionals and Consequentials part of bills deals with temporary clauses that only apply until the new legislation can be fully implemented.

⁶ The Coalition consists of an alliance of centre-right parties: the Liberal Party of Australia, the National Party of Australia, and in some cases their state equivalents. The Coalition was in power from 1996 to 2007 and again from 2013. The main opposition is the centre-left Australian Labor Party.

⁷ Many members of the then Labor opposition expressed their bemusement at this change and stated that they had originally agreed to the proposed three year requirement but were opposed to new four year requirement.

had released a discussion paper about the merits of a citizenship test in the interim on 17 September 2006.⁸

The increase in the residential requirement for citizenship signifies a reversal in the slow political and historical progression to an inclusive definition of Australian citizenship. Starting from 1973 when the last vestiges of the 'White Australia Policy'⁹ were officially removed by the then Labor Government, the residential requirement was reduced from five to three years and then to two years in 1984. Furthermore, dual citizenship for people migrating to Australia was permitted, and this was extended to Australian citizens taking up the citizenship of another country in 2002.

The introduction of restrictive residential and naturalisation measures by the Australian government was a part of a broader Western trend in implementing tougher requirements for obtaining citizenship starting from around 2005. For example, in the United Kingdom a citizenship test was implemented in 2005, in the Netherlands a 'civic integration' exam for residence permits was introduced in 2007, and in Germany a national citizenship test was implemented in 2008. Furthermore, in Canada, the existing citizenship test was revamped to make it more difficult to pass in 2010 (Jafri, 2012). The debates surrounding migration and citizenship stemmed from concerns over global terrorism, particularly after the 'home-grown'¹⁰ terrorist attacks in London, the alleged 'failures' of multiculturalism, and the lack of integration and existence of 'parallel societies' in Western countries with culturally diverse populations (Gillborn, 2006; Blackledge, 2009). The idea that social cohesion is threatened by ethnic variety is not new, but has recently been reinforced by the threat of terrorism (Jupp, 2007). These arguments became salient in Australia after the Cronulla Riots¹¹ in December 2005, especially with the backdrop of post-9/11 border security and the 2001 federal election's 'children overboard' incident (Marr & Wilkinson, 2003). This incident involved the Howard Government wrongly claiming that asylum seekers had deliberately thrown their children into the ocean to force Australian naval

⁸ While the bill for a citizenship test was not introduced into parliament until 2007, the speakers debating the changes to the *Citizenship Act* responded to the idea and content of a potential citizenship test in the context of discussions around Australian values and citizenship.

⁹ Officially known as the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, the act sought to exclude non-White peoples from immigrating to Australia due to fears that they would accept a lower standard of living and work for lower wages (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009) as well as an explicitly racist desire to keep Australia 'white'. The exclusion was enacted through a dictation test in which the immigration officer could choose any European language for the test to ensure that undesirable applicants would fail.

¹⁰ The creation of legislation intended to curb and surveil 'foreign' migrants is interesting in light of three of the four bombers being British-born sons of Pakistani immigrants. The fourth bomber had moved to the UK from Jamaica at age five.

¹¹ The riots occurred at Cronulla Beach in Sydney a week after an apparently violent altercation between four young Lebanese background men and two Anglo-Australian lifeguards at the beach. The riots started ostensibly as a protest against harassment of locals by so-called 'Middle-Eastern men' from the outer Western suburbs of Sydney but escalated into violence against all people perceived to be non-white as people were attacked at the beach, in their cars, on the street and on public transport.

personnel to rescue them and hence facilitate their arrival in Australia to claim asylum.¹² The prevailing conservative discourse on citizenship was that it had hitherto been granted too easily and applicants needed to prove they were 'deserving' of citizenship before they could become naturalised.¹³ This 'proof' could be in the form of passing a citizenship test, a test in the national language, extended waiting periods, or any combination of these three.

In Australia, the arguments for tougher citizenship requirements were based around being 'Australian' and having prerequisite knowledge of 'Australian values' and the 'Australian way of life'. The reasons the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, John Cobb (2005, p. 9), gave for increasing the residential requirement from two to three and then to four years was to "allow more time for new arrivals to become familiar with the Australian way of life and the values to which they will need to commit as citizens" and to "strengthen the integrity of the citizenship process by giving more time for the identification of people who may represent a risk to Australia's security". Member of Parliament Andrew Robb (2006, p. 127), the parliamentary secretary to the Minister, emphasised the former in justifying the doubling of the residential requirement. 'Being Australian' appeared to be a prophylaxis against social conflict, disharmony, and terrorism in the Liberal party discourse. Further legislation proposals in 2006 aimed to allow former Australian citizens who had lost their Australian citizenship unintentionally to reclaim it. This legislation was mainly aimed at the children of Maltese migrants who moved from Australia back to Malta while still children and were forced to relinquish their Australian citizenship upon claiming Maltese citizenship. It is interesting to note that their 'Australianness' was not called into question, even though they may have only lived in Australia for a short time as a child. However, this makes sense if one considers that the Maltese are European and Christian and therefore one of 'us'. Combined with the 2005 bill to extend the residential requirement, these changes signified a binary 'us and them' mentality towards citizenship: welcoming back lost members of the 'Australian family' (Betts & Birrel, 2007) while increasing suspicion of outsiders.

These policies were of course not justified on the basis of race, but were explained with cultural arguments about the 'different' values and lifestyles of certain groups of immigrants, implicitly positioned as non-European, non-Christian, and non-English speaking immigrants. However, within recent Australian discourses about immigrant minorities it does not appear that culture is considered an immutable and 'natural' difference as such, as one would consider biological features. Rather, the main discourse of those who demand the integration of immigrants is based on the view that out-groups can learn to adapt and integrate if only they are willing to do so (Cheng, 2012). This appears

¹² Australian refugee policy is now focused on preventing asylum seekers arriving by boat to Australia from ever reaching Australian territory in order to prevent asylum seeker claims.

¹³ The discussion paper on the merits of introducing a formal citizenship test was entitled "More than just a ceremony" (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006), and Andrew Robb, the Minister for Citizenship at that time, declared that "If we give [citizenship] away like confetti it is not valued" (AAP, 2006).

to be a phenomenon that is not restricted to the Australian case. Bonnett (1993), for example, points out that new right-wing definitions of 'Britishness' in Britain de-emphasise 'whiteness' in favour of citizenship characteristics such as 'law-abiding' and 'individualism' which minorities can learn or be taught to emulate. Thus people from a non-Western cultural background have the possibility to demonstrate their commitment to the nation by tolerating and deferring to the obstacles placed on the path to citizenship—in this case, spending four instead of two years familiarising themselves with Australian culture and having to 'prove' their knowledge about this culture in a test. Once successful, they could be granted Australian citizenship. Placing the responsibility and ability to 'integrate' solely in the hands of those who wish to migrate is a common marker of discriminatory discourses (Farrell, 2010). Indeed Labor politicians who opposed this legislation indicated that the placing of more and tougher obstacles in the way of obtaining Australian citizenship had discriminatory qualities in that particular types of people were targeted. This paper investigates what strategies they employed in opposing culturally restrictive citizenship measures.

Data and Method

All parliamentary debates on the Australian Citizenship Bill 2005 and the Australian Citizenship (Transitional and Consequential) Bill 2005 were collected. They were sourced from the website of the Parliament of Australia.¹⁴ Out of these speeches, all those which critiqued the proposed legislation in some way were selected and analysed. These all came from the then opposition Labor Party. The legislation was proposed by the Liberal and National Coalition Party and none of their members spoke against it, possibly due to party discipline.

To establish how politicians disputed the proposed legislation on the grounds of culturalist racism, since the presumption is that openly racist statements would not occur, it is important firstly to establish what they perceived this culturalist racism to be. The first speech on the bill, given by John Cobb on 9 November 2005 in the House of Representatives, justified the increased residential requirement by declaring that it would "allow more time for new arrivals to become familiar with the *Australian way of life* and the values to which they will need to commit as citizens" (Cobb, 2005, p. 9, emphasis added). Therefore, all the speeches that used one of the key terms '(Australian) way of life' or '(Australian) values' were selected as a first step. The second stage of analysis involved choosing those particular speeches, first, which questioned or disputed the usage of 'way of life' and 'values', the implied definitions of these terms, or the terms themselves and, second, spoke around the themes of values and way of life and directly or indirectly questioned the implicit inferiority of non-white immigrants and non-white cultural values in the government's rhetoric and framing of the bills.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with its focus on critique, ideology and power, was used to analyse the speeches. However, while traditional CDA aims to

¹⁴ Available at: www.aph.gov.au.

critique the ways in which language maintains unequal power relations, this study attempts to investigate how and to what extent political elites themselves try to defend immigrants and question culturalist discourses of inequality. In this sense there are two main power relations that come into play in the speeches contesting dominant understandings of 'Australian' values and citizenship. Firstly, the power relations between the Labor politicians and immigrant groups, and secondly, the power relations between the Labor politicians and the members of government whose policies they are opposing. In addition, the critique here also does not function in the same way as it does in racist discourses, since this study attempts to offer both a critique of the ideological construction of national identity and culture as well as an analysis of the same critique made by the objects of this study (that is, the political speeches) in the context of challenging exclusive notion of citizenship. However, this does not make this study any less of a CDA study. CDA is an approach that does not have one specific methodology and allows for continuous debate and innovation (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Analysis

Since the speakers rarely talked critically about the concept of the 'Australian way of life', my analysis focuses solely on instances where the speakers critiqued the concept of Australian values. They used a number of argumentation strategies to contest Australian values as a prerequisite for naturalising an Australian citizen. However, the complex nature of contesting racism that has been disguised or repackaged by culturalism is revealed by the ambiguous way in which politicians countered what they perceived to be racist or discriminatory elements in the proposed legislation. In challenging preconceived notions of Australian values and the superiority of Anglo-Australian culture, Labor politicians had rhetorical difficulties in not subscribing to the very ideals that they sought to contest. In this sense, many speeches simultaneously defended the out-group and supported the underlying arguments of their opponents.

The most significant argumentation strategies were:

- Topos of Contribution: migrants already adopt Australian values and contribute to Australia
- Topos of Hypocrisy: the government's treatment of migrants is contrary to the values it espouses
- Topos of Self-critique: 'We' are not any better than the 'Other'

Topos of Contribution: migrants already adopt Australian values and contribute to Australia

The main strategy the politicians used to challenge the framing of citizenship laws via Australian values was to argue that migrants already contribute to Australia and adopt and appreciate Australian values so it is not necessary to ask them to do so in the new citizenship legislation. The argumentation strategy here is that if immigrants contribute to Australia and adhere to Australian values, they are Australian. The politicians spoke positively about non-English speaking

migrants and their contribution to Australia to counter the assumption that non-native English speakers are inherently not Australian. They discursively elevated migrant groups from non-English speaking backgrounds above migrants from English-speaking countries and emphasised how well they had settled in Australia and contributed to Australian society. Migrants overall were depicted as grateful, willing to contribute to Australia and adopt Australian values.

In this excerpt, Labor MP Martin Ferguson emphasises the contribution non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants have made to Australia while simultaneously criticising those from the United Kingdom and New Zealand:

Migrants, be they Greek, Italian, Vietnamese or Somalian [sic], have made Australia the open, vibrant society that exists today. Migrants offer us a range of important experiences, values and traditions ... I think it is not an insignificant decision to take out Australian citizenship, to actually make that public declaration of support for Australia as a nation ... I encourage others who have not taken up the opportunity to become Australian citizens to do so in the foreseeable future. It is interesting to note that the records show that those who fail to take up that opportunity tend to predominantly come from the United Kingdom and New Zealand. Others value it and grab it at the first opportunity ... it is not just migrants who need to understand and appreciate Australian values, culture and traditions but all Australians. (2006, p. 141)

Ferguson cites non-English speaking immigrants who have in the past been considered to be detrimental to Australian society due to their 'foreignness': Greeks and Italians (post-War period), Vietnamese (late 1970s and early 1980s) and Somalis (2000s). He indirectly disputes the idea that these groups have had a negative impact on Australian society by arguing that they have made a valuable contribution to the nation. This topos of contribution also appears in other anti-discriminatory counter-discourse as a way of framing migrants in positive light and challenging arguments that (non-desirable) migrants are detrimental to the host society (see Sedlak, 2000). Furthermore, Ferguson argues that such migrants who publicly declare their support for Australia as soon as possible, by taking up Australian citizenship, highlight their commitment to the nation. This is contrasted with those from the United Kingdom and New Zealand—countries whose culture is not considered to deviate much from the dominant Australian culture. Migrants from these countries are generally considered synonymous with the white, English-speaking Anglo-Saxon populations that are not targeted by assimilationist appeals to Australian values because it is presumed they already embody them. Yet Ferguson questions their commitment to Australia by stating that they "fail to take up that opportunity" whilst non-Anglo migrants readily demonstrate a commitment to the country through citizenship.

This extract clearly shows the paradoxical nature of contesting discriminatory discourses. On one hand, Ferguson attempts to portray non-English speaking migrants positively, emphasising their contribution to Australia and their eagerness to become Australian citizens. In addition, he criticises those from other Anglo-Saxon countries for failing to take the opportunity to become Australian citizens, indicating they are not as committed to being Australian. On

the other hand, he subscribes to the dichotomy of cultures he tries to dispel. By saying "Migrants offer *us* ..." it is clear that migrants are positioned differently to the 'us' of Australia. Highlighting their difference from citizens of the United Kingdom and New Zealand further compounds this dichotomy. People from these countries are not dubbed 'migrants' by Ferguson. While he does not say so, it is implicit in this argument that Britons and New Zealanders are culturally more like us. Essentially, Ferguson does not contest the culturally inflected imposition of Australian values on new citizens, but rather points out that non-Anglo-Saxon migrants are good and enthusiastic Australians already.

There is a hint that migrants can indeed expand our repertoire of what we understand to be Australian values when he says, "Migrants offer us a range of important experiences, values and traditions." However, he does not elaborate on this point and what exactly these experiences, values and traditions might be. That he further argues *all* Australians need to learn Australian values, culture and traditions again confirms the contradictory nature of this kind of counter-argument: whilst he includes migrants under the umbrella of "all Australians", the dominant cultural concept of "Australian values, culture and traditions" is taken for granted and not questioned.

A similar argument can be found in another extract by the MP Roger Price. Price strongly praises Filipino migrants to Australia and their contribution to the local community. In attempting to dispute negative discourse on migrants' adoption of Australian values, he argues that they do not show any reluctance in adopting such values.

Filipinos now constitute the largest non-English-speaking group or migrant group in my electorate. They are just fabulous people ... When the Filipinos come here, they are so proud and grateful to be here. They wait their two years, as is the law at the moment, and then they are in there wanting to become Australian citizens ... They make great citizens of Blacktown and they make great Australian citizens. They certainly recognise that this is a country of great opportunity ... Are they adopting Australian values? I think so. I cannot detect amongst them, or amongst any group for that matter, any reluctance. (2006, p. 155)

The topos of contribution is evident here with Filipinos depicted as "great" citizens both in the local and national community. However, the difficulty in using such an argumentation scheme is also apparent. By saying they are "grateful" to be "here", Price is implicitly positioning Australia as not really their country. Because he can declare them "grateful" and "great", Price is able to exercise his prerogative as already a 'true' Australian. Hage (1998) argues that in nationalist discourses of 'home', the 'Other' becomes an object to be managed by the empowered Self. For example, when Howard declared at the Hellenic Club in 2006 that "The Greeks are a wonderful example of how you ... integrate fully" (ABC News, 2006) he was asserting his right to decide which "outsiders" and "immigrants" have successfully "integrated" (Giannacopoulos, 2007). Although Price seeks to defend the Filipinos in his electorate against assumptions that migrants are not grateful and do not adopt Australian values and portrays them in positive light, he does so by making his own privileged position as a culturally dominant Australian obvious in the process.

Furthermore, while his argument that Filipinos have in fact adopted Australian values can be seen as an attempt to defend Filipinos against criticism around their supposed non-assimilation, again as with the above extract, he still expects new migrants to adopt Australian values unquestioningly. Thus he does not critique the underlying culturalist arguments of his opponents but rather buys into them and argues within the original framework of cultural dominance set up by his opponents.

Topos of Hypocrisy: the government's treatment of migrants is contrary to the values it espouses

Another strategy used to challenge the government's rhetoric of Australian values was to point out that the government itself does not act in accordance with the values it espouses. The speakers highlighted the double standards of expecting others to abide by these values while the government does not. However, again, the concept of Australian values is not questioned, only the government's behaviour in relation to them.

Labor MP Gavan O'Connor points out the contradictory stance of the government in relation to Australian values:

The honourable member for Hotham is incisive in his analysis, as usual, and his contribution to this debate is most valued because the stupidity of the Prime Minister in harping on about values is that he has none himself. If he valued truth, he would not have been up to his ears in deceit about Iraq. I ask yet again: where are the weapons of mass destruction?

What about the good Australian value of compassion? We sure showed that with the *Tampa* and our immigration policy. What about a respect for democratic values? That is a good one for the government to adopt. If you are a minister in the Howard Government you have to be charged by the AFP [Australian Federal Police] to be thrown out. This is a government without any ministerial standards and it abuses the democratic processes of this parliament day in and day out. Maybe a commitment to democratic values by the Prime Minister and members of the government ought to be the order of the day. (2006, p. 201)

O'Connor believes the government and former Prime Minister Howard do not abide by their own Australian values in their foreign and domestic policy. The argument is that they should. In this sense, Australian values contain a strong normative flavour: everyone should act according to so-called 'Australian' values such as honesty, compassion and democracy. O'Connor attempts to make what he views as the hypocrisy of the government's actions clear, especially in the sarcastic statement "we sure showed that with the *Tampa* and our immigration policy."¹⁵ The premise of the argumentation strategy is that if the government

¹⁵ The *MV Tampa* was a Norwegian freighter that rescued 438 Afghan refugees from a sinking fishing vessel in international waters between Indonesia and Australia. The Afghans sought to land on the Australian territory of Christmas Island but the Australian Government refused the *Tampa's* entry into Australian waters. The Afghans were subsequently taken to detention camps on the small island nation of Nauru to have their

adopted Australian values themselves, asylum seekers and migrants would be treated fairly and compassionately. However, this argument creates a cyclical contradiction: one of the reasons refugees and asylum seekers are so heavily demonised by the government, media and members of the public is because they are not seen to embody 'our' values or have anything in common with 'us'. Instead they are represented as illegal, deviant and threatening (Maddox, 2005; O'Doherty & Augoustinos, 2008; Pickering, 2001; Saxton, 2003). Thus calling for a stronger adoption of Australian values as a marker of normative behaviour is problematic because of its exclusionary character.

In another extract from a speech by Labor MP Graham Edwards, some subtle elements of 'negative self-presentation' are evident when he debates the requirement to adhere to Australian values. However, as with O'Connor's argument, the problem for Edwards is simply that there are not enough citizens adhering to Australian values.

I always say at our citizenship ceremonies that, if Australia stands for one thing, it is for the thing that I was brought up to believe in most about our nation—that is, a fair go. I was always taught as a young bloke that you never ask for a fair go unless you are prepared to give a fair go. That is the important thing about being Australian. Unfortunately, the ethos and the importance of a fair go seems to have been lost in today's Australia and in today's society. If we could get back that whole approach to a fair go—giving a fair go and asking for a fair go—we would be much richer and much better off as a nation. (2006, p. 124)

Here, Edwards is suggesting that Australians demand a fair go from new migrants without reciprocating it. As with the other speeches, his line of argument still draws on the concept of Australian values without critiquing the underlying cultural normativity of this rhetoric. Indeed, the concept of a fair go was frequently championed by Howard who declared that being Australian involved sharing that "common, overriding commitment" to the "values that unite us as Australians—tolerance, justice and a fair go for all" (cited in Harris & Williams, 2003, p. 215). Harris and Williams (2003) argue that the very values that had the potential to widen national identity and social inclusion, such as tolerance and justice, were mobilised to create a more narrow conception of being 'Australian' by Howard. In this sense, Edwards' argument in relation to a fair go is paradoxical: while he advocates giving migrants a fair go by not implementing more restrictive naturalisation laws, the concept of a fair go as a key Australian value has been mobilised in exclusive ways by the very government he critiques. Essentially, his argument is that migrants still need to abide by Australian values if they wish to be included in the social and political life of the nation.

Topos of Self-critique: 'We' are not any better than the 'Other'

claims processed. The incident marked a turning point in Australia's refugee policy, as the government aimed to severely restrict 'unauthorised arrivals' by boat thereafter. The repercussions of the Tampa affair still manifest themselves today in the Australian Government's hardline policies towards refugees and asylum seekers attempting arrival to Australian territory by boat.

The argumentation strategy I analyse as 'topos of self-critique' involved an element of self-critique and self-reflection, either from the speaker personally or about the concept of Australian values. This strategy came the closest to actually critiquing the cultural normativity of Australian values. However, the criticism was based more on the content of what is espoused as Australian values, rather than the challenging the necessity of comparing migrants to a set of pre-defined values.

Labor MP Jill Hall offers a form of self-critique by noting that she would not know all the information potentially included in the proposed citizenship test:

The citizenship pledge is:
I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people,
Whose democratic beliefs I share,
Whose rights and liberties I respect,
And whose laws I will uphold and obey.

What could better encapsulate the values Australians should have? I think that says it all. If people asked me what Donald Bradman's¹⁶ average was, I would have to scratch my head. I would probably fail. Maybe I should not be an Australian citizen, because I am not up to speed on Donald Bradman's average. Don't look at me in horror, please!

[Interjection from Labor MP Bernie Ripoll] You're not an Australian!

I will be deported, yes. That it is very arbitrary and I think that the values that will be placed on people seeking to come to Australia will reflect the values of those people who are writing them as opposed to the values that we all hold dear—and what should you value more? Be loyal to your country, be committed to democracy, value people's rights and liberties and agree to uphold the law. (2006, p. 234)

Here, Hall actively challenges the definition of Australian values proffered by the Howard Government. She states sarcastically "I will be deported" for not knowing Donald Bradman's batting average¹⁷ as a way of questioning what constitutes Australian values. By using the example of Bradman's batting average, she attempts to point out not only the ridiculousness of the kind of Australian values the government was attempting to impose on migrants, but also that these values are subjective and culturally-laden with Anglo-Saxon overtones. Cricket, as a sport, is strongly rooted in the British colonial empire (Bateman, 2009) and Anglo-Australians' success at the sport in the late nineteenth-century was used to justify the alleged superiority of the English 'race' (Bradley, 1995). Hall, an Australian-born Caucasian woman (Hall, 2010),

¹⁶ Donald Bradman was an Australian cricket player who received a knighthood for his services to cricket in 1949. He is considered to be the world's greatest Test cricket batsman, with a batting average more than twice that of the nearest Test batsman.

¹⁷ The issue of Bradman's batting average appeared in the proposals for a citizenship test at that time and did indeed initially become implemented as a question in the test in 2007. The question is often used as an example of the superfluosity and impracticality of questions asked in the Australian citizenship test.

uses her own ignorance of cricket to highlight the disparity of what appears to be an important Australian cultural 'fact' and her own background as a white Australian.

But she also relies on her status as a 'real' Australian, by virtue of her ethnicity, which is ultimately secure and unquestionable and forms the basis of her jocular suggestion that she will be deported. Her privileged position, where possible deportation is a rhetorical joke, is especially heightened because potential deportation is a harsh reality for refugees and asylum seekers who are represented as legal, political and social threats by politicians and the mainstream media, both to cultural norms and to Australian borders (Hansen-Easey & Augoustinos, 2010). Hall is arguing that if people were going to be excluded from the nation based on subjective Australian values, even someone such as herself—an Anglo-Australian—would be vulnerable to exclusion. She receives further confirmation from her own party member, Labor MP Bernie Ripoll, who also sarcastically confirms that she is not 'Australian' for not knowing Bradman's average.

The sarcasm from MPs Hall and Ripoll appears to be an attempt to break the dichotomy between Anglo-Australians, who supposedly know everything about Australian culture and values, and migrants from non-Anglo backgrounds, who are considered deficient in this knowledge. However, while Hall critiques the content of Australian values and rejects the privileging of British-based definitions of Australian culture, she accepts the normative concept of Australian values and believes they are already embodied in the citizenship pledge. Thus Australian values can still be used to exclude, the difference is that the citizenship pledge appears to be neutral and culturally unbiased in MP Hall's eyes. In this strategy, the speaker attempts to question Anglo-Saxon dominance or superiority. There are some attempts to break down the barrier between what are supposedly 'real' Australians (framed in the citizenship test proposals as Anglo-Australian) and people from other backgrounds. However, inevitably, this strategy also necessitates a reinforcement of who is Australian and who is not.

Labor MP Ann Corcoran also criticises the idea of a unique set of Australian values. She concludes her speech by saying,

I want to finish on the matter of values. All of a sudden we are talking about Australian values as though there is no tomorrow. The discussion taking place in some quarters is very insulting and offensive. I have heard people in this place talk about our unique values, as though no-one else shares our values or has similar values. If we are asked what our values are we get answers like decency, tolerance, respect for others and even the dreaded word 'mateship'. I heard Dame Edna¹⁸ say, just this week, that as far as she was concerned we need only one value: niceness. She is probably right. None of these values is unique to Australia or Australians. We do not have a monopoly on values. It is offensive to other cultures and to other countries to think or say that we do, or to act as though we do. (2006, p. 225)

¹⁸ Dame Edna is actually a fictional character created and performed by the Australian comedian Barry Humphries to satirise everyday Australian life, including celebrities and political leaders.

Corcoran questions the notion that there is such a thing as unique Australian values to which everyone in Australia must subscribe. She argues that these so-called Australian values are in fact universal and not specifically Australian at all. While trying to be inclusive by suggesting our values are universal and apply to all cultures and countries, she also simultaneously supports the idea of having values as something all cultures should subscribe to. In other words, while she critiques the actual values that are considered Australian, she does not question the act of promoting certain values as the norm. The value of "niceness" is also one that it is difficult to argue against and Corcoran appears to promote it as a 'neutral' and acceptable value in contrast to "mateship", which is laden with gendered, Anglo-Saxon overtones. However, quoting Dame Edna, a fictional white Australian character, as a voice of authority is a reinforcement of the importance of (Anglo-)Australian culture in defining how we treat the 'Other'. Ultimately, while being critical of the idea that Australian values are unique, Corcoran reiterates another possible set of values that portrays the Australian nation and body-politic in a 'nice', positive light.

Discussion and Conclusion

The Australian Citizenship (Transitionals and Consequentials) Bill 2006¹⁹ was passed on 28 February 2007 and the Australian Citizenship Bill 2006 on 1 March 2007. They both received the Royal Assent on 15 March 2007. Both of the most prominent changes to the *Australian Citizenship Act* were retained: the security clause preventing anyone directly or indirectly posing a security risk to Australia from acquiring citizenship and the increased residential requirement from two to four years for naturalisation.

Some of the politicians who opposed the bill attempted to argue that the imposition of Australian values on the citizenship regime was unnecessary or inappropriate. This was because: they believed that migrants already adopted Australian values, they felt the government itself did not embody these values or they disagreed with the content of the government's version of Australian values. Such argumentation strategies created discourses that were simultaneously inclusive and exclusive: while attempting to be inclusive and contest culturalist racism, the politicians nevertheless retained the rhetorical framework set up by the original discriminatory discourse, namely that having Australian values is inherently positive.

No politician questioned the existing Anglo-cultural hierarchy that created the unequal treatment of different groups of people in Australia. They did not question the role of values in creating social and community cohesion. Nor did they delve into the historical and political reasons behind the negative representations of non-English speaking migrants versus the positive presentation Anglo-Saxon migrants, but rather, one speaker simply attempted to

¹⁹ Due to the time it took to debate the bill and pass it, the bill was renamed from Australian Citizenship (Transitionals and Consequentials) Bill 2005.

reverse these representations. Similar to the way they talked about values, the politicians did not question the dichotomy of the two groups being presented, those who embody and those who do not embody Australian values, but rather subscribed to it. Their strategy was to declare that non-English speaking migrants *are* committed to Australia and contribute to Australian society but the speakers do not ask why these groups are portrayed in media and political discourse as uncommitted and unwilling to contribute. The speakers contesting the culturalist racism in the bill did not call into question the underlying prejudice, discrimination and discursive practices that created this image of migrants in the first place.

The problem of confronting racial discrimination veiled by arguments about cultural differences has broader implications than the attempt to block the full implementation of the Australian Citizenship Bill 2006. Governments in Western countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany and the Netherlands now often use culturalist claims about the lifestyles and values of migrants to justify implementing stricter entry requirements or tougher policies for gaining permanent residency and citizenship. Disputing such claims, since they are attached to and frame problematic laws, requires more than rhetorically taking on the culturalist framework and declaring that migrants do try hard to integrate and make a contribution to the host society. Questioning the origins of the culturalist claims, the value of values, and the position of non-white and non-English speaking migrants in Australia may contribute to a deeper and more critical debate about inclusion and exclusion, and racism and culturalism in contemporary Australian society.

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GENERAL ISSUE

Temporary Migration, Corporeality and Conditional Multiculturalism: Body Odours, Stereotyping and Shame

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In early 2012, Australian politician Teresa Gambaro claimed that temporary migrants on 457 work visas needed to be taught Australian values including hygiene practices to overcome issues of body odour in public spaces. Gambaro's comments highlight the corporeal and embodied practices and issues in migration and migration debates in terms of the conditionality of multicultural tolerance. They point to the fact that expanding the conditions by which non-white temporary migrant others are to be tolerated is, in the longer-term ineffective in combating racist stereotyping—the task at hand is to develop ethical means by which the other, regardless of temporary migration status or differential and diverse body odours, is welcomed unconditionally. This paper examines the Gambaro case by opening questions about migrants on temporary worker visas, cultural difference and the performativity of bodies in terms of perceptions of hygiene (how the body emits differently and how this works in terms of claims of tolerance). It examines how Gambaro's comments fit within a history of concern over the odours of migrant food and bodies, how stereotyping temporary migrants operates to attribute abject otherness to migrant bodies, and how this produces unethical shaming of temporary migrants. The paper ends by discussing some of the ways in which ethics of cohabitation can be deployed in a context of welcoming diverse bodies that do things (and smell) in diverse ways.

Keywords: temporary migrants, bodies, odours, food, stereotypes, population

Persons in Australia who are co-habiting the continent as temporary workers on 457 visas came under criticism in early 2012 by Coalition Member of Parliament and Liberal Party spokesperson for citizenship, Teresa Gambaro. Gambaro, whose parents were immigrants from Sicily, stated in an interview with the

Herald Sun that new temporary workers in Australia need to be taught about Australian customs, including the wearing of deodorant and how to wait patiently in a queue. She argued that mandatory "cultural awareness training" should be provided by employers who are bringing in immigrants under the 457 program, and that Australia was failing in a perceived obligation "to teach them how to fit into Australian culture on issues such as health, hygiene and lifestyle" (Karvelas, 2012). As Gambaro put it: "Without trying to be offensive, we are talking about hygiene and what is an acceptable norm in this country when you are working closely with other co-workers" (Karvelas, 2012). Subsequent to publication of the piece, Gambaro unreservedly apologised for her statement that migrants should "receive hygiene lessons including advice on wearing deodorant" (Packham & Karvelas, 2012), although she did also defend her comments on ABC radio by stating that such hygiene training is "just as important as job training and it should be part of the induction process when somebody comes in this country to work" (Packham & Karvelas, 2012). Gambaro noted that Australians too "were sometimes guilty of not wearing deodorant on public transport" (AAP, 2012), but her overall concern was the question as to whether or not migrants on work visas were "integrating into the community" in terms of cultural practices of health, hygiene and lifestyle (Nancarrow, 2012).

This paper examines the Gambaro case by opening questions about migrants on temporary worker visas, cultural difference and the performativity of bodies in terms of perceptions of hygiene (how the body emits differently and how this works in terms of claims of tolerance). Where Gambaro's criticism of temporary workers as being unhygienic and, indeed, smelly, was an act of stereotyping and a glib criticism of the Rudd and Gillard Government immigration programmes and their related support services, her comments allow us to re-consider the role of the body in migration in the context of temporary work visas. The tolerance framework of contemporary multiculturalism, as the default model by which multiculturalism is problematically expressed through integration and social cohesion, dominates perceptions of temporary migrants working in Australia. Rather than expanding the conditions by which non-white temporary migrant others are to be tolerated, the task at hand is to develop mechanisms for an ethical hospitality by which the other, regardless of temporary migration status or differential and diverse body odours, is welcomed unconditionally.

This paper discusses some of the ways in which the corporeality of migration and multicultural tolerance has been highlighted by the debate on temporary immigration begun by Teresa Gambaro, particularly in terms of the historical context to discussions of the 'smells' of foreignness and immigrant corporeality. I discuss some of the ways in which Gambaro's stereotyping of temporary migrants as having poor hygiene operates to present them as unwelcome through processes that synecdochically totalise migrant subjectivity as abject. This is followed by a discussion on the effects of such othering practices as forms of shaming that produce the temporary migrant body as non-normative. I will then make some remarks about co-habitation as the liveable form of ethical hospitality and welcome as it might come to be seen not only for those who are given refuge or who migrate to live in Australia permanently, but also those who arrive and inhabit the Australian space as temporary working bodies in sensual

proximity to other bodies. The core argument here is that the tolerance framework which governs the deployment of the contemporary Australian brand of multiculturalism forecloses on the possibility of performing a genuine welcome or acceptance of migrants as embodied—if displaced, even temporarily—living subjects. Gambaro's comments effectively highlight the way in which particular discourses come into play to ensure that tolerance of bodies 'mixing in' with the population in this co-habited space remains *conditional* around a number of factors, including how bodies smell. These factors tend to be subsumed under the policy push for 'social cohesion' which can be understood as a resignified form of compulsory assimilation.

Bodies and Odours—The Corporeal Conditions of Tolerance

As temporary migrants, 457 visa holders are in a complex relationship with the concept of Australian population and identity. They are not permanent residents in Australia, but transitory visitors. However, as workers, they are arguably less temporary than tourists and recreational visitors. They are people who establish a home, send children to school and participate in communities of workplace, residency and sociality. They are in a strong position to become permanent residents or, eventually, Australian citizens if the correct conditions are in place. They are thus migrants in a particular process of immigration that may lead to permanency in Australia but who, as persons co-habiting in Australia albeit temporarily, are part of the population whereby population comes to stand for not only the populousness of the land or the people but public space defined through the citizenship and history of white settler society. Temporary migrants on work visas sit uneasily with prevailing concepts of multiculturalism—most particularly with the formation of multiculturalism which has emerged since the conservative Howard Government (1996-2007) emphasised social cohesion and integration as the central tenet of multiculturalism—for there are few conceptual frameworks for the cultural integration of groups of immigrants who are considered temporary. At the same time, they have recently been 'othered' through the deployment of the mode of multiculturalism that is governed by a 'tolerance framework' as the governing form of relationality with those who are perceived or positioned as other. Ghassan Hage (2000) has been critical of the way in which tolerance limits the scope of multiculturalism by effectively disguising power relationships and reproducing domination and symbolic violence. Tolerance permits a limited form of liveability of the other if certain conditions are met; it does not and cannot extend unconditional hospitality. Such othering has occurred through the conditionality of multiculturalism as intolerant of particular embodied and corporeal cultural practices.

The core point of contention in the early 2012 debate sparked by Teresa Gambaro was about body odour. Although her claim that temporary migrants suffer from poor hygiene and body odour problems has been given without reflection or genuine research (Bhatia, 2012), her main claim was that temporary 457 visa holders needed to be taught cultural awareness in order to fit in with Australian culture, and central to this was learning about body hygiene practices. Responses to the comments (Nancarrow, 2012; Maley, 2012; Aly,

2012) suggested that this was an unfortunate act of stereotyping of 457 visa holders, and that such stereotypes build on older cultural representations to marginalise other immigrants and recent arrivals more broadly. However, one element that did not arise in the debates was the question as to where the body sits within the context of an Australian multiculturalism built on tolerance and conditionality. Commentators addressing Gambaro's statements (Maley, 2012; Bhatia, 2012; Aly, 2012) noted that depicting the type of body and type or extent of odours it emits was considered beyond the normative conditions of multicultural tolerance. However, such counter-arguments did not seek to argue against tolerance, suggesting only that bodies per se should not be made objects of its conditionality. This, then, opens up a number of questions as to how and why the body is obscured in the conditions of tolerance—how is the body that speaks, the body that practices certain 'traditional' cultures, and the body that performatively articulates forms of relationality and belonging to be understood in the context of the distinction between tolerance and an ethics of hospitality?

Bodies, indeed, are relatively absent in multicultural policies. For example, the Rudd and Gillard Government multicultural policies articulate belonging through rights and responsibilities around citizenship as the hub of social participation. What is multicultural is that no one should be excluded on basis of background from participation through residency and citizenship: "These rights and liberties include Australians of all backgrounds being entitled to celebrate, practise and maintain their cultural heritage, traditions and language within the law and free from discrimination" (Australian Government, 2011, p. 6). Inflecting the earlier Howard Government position of "mutual obligation" between Australian institutions and new, authorised arrivals, the language used here is of conditional belonging and participation but avoids articulating the fact that citizenship, residency and movement through and within Australia and in the form of relational habitation is an embodied performative practice.

However, there have been instances in which the corporeal element of migration has been highlighted, although these usually disappear very quickly from public discourse or have been utilised as a counter to multiculturalism. For example, in 2010, former Prime Minister John Howard argued for migration policies that favour "multi-racialism" over multiculturalism (Salusinszky, 2010). This can be understood as an approach to migration and multiculturalism that separates the body from cultural practices, whereby racially different bodies of new migrants are tolerable but expected to adopt fully an Australian cultural identity. Here, bodies are separated from culture rather than materialised within diverse cultural practices—it is the migrant body that can be tolerated within the conditionality that the body practices Australian values and ways-of-being. While there was significant coverage of Howard's views as expressed in his autobiography *Lazarus Rising* (2010), the terminology of multi-racialism did not take hold, either as a means of criticising multiculturalism or as a method by which to foreground the corporeal aspect of migration.

Bodies, however, are indeed central to the practice of migration: the bodies that practice everyday life, the bodies that eat, the bodies that emit odours, the bodies that have migrated across borders, the bodies that exercise different

forms of proximity (from country of origin, with new peoples, in new homes, in new work roles and employment positions, and so on). This unwillingness to embody the migrant—whether temporary or permanent—in the discourse of migration, tolerance and multiculturalism is very much counter to the corporeal turn that has informed so much cultural scholarship since the mid-1990s which sought to investigate how Western philosophy and culture had been premised on a profound separation or disregard of the role of the body in lived experience and thought (Grosz, 1994, p. 5). Subsequent to this scholarship, it has been important in cultural studies to understand that the body is not simply a biological machine or a neutral or natural object separate from culture, language and social discourse, but absolutely and dynamically tied up with culture and cultural practices. Migration must thus be understood not only through the matter and form of bodies in relationality, bodies depicted as foreign in encounters with bodies depicted as domestic and—here—domesticated, but as Elizabeth Grosz (1995, p. 84) puts it, in the context of their environment and spatio-temporal location. When thought through the complexity of bodies-in-space, migration and the tolerance or welcome of the migrant body must be understood through processes of movement, co-habitation, relocation and the performativity of bodies through investigating how those bodies are depicted as doing things different—in this case, that might include the emission of odours that occurs differentially and diversely.

The embodied aspect of migration does, however, emerge in complex and sometimes conflicting ways. On the one hand, the bodies of asylum seekers, for example, are not necessarily often knowingly encountered by existing members of the Australian population, but are encountered and understood through mediated public discourse, predominantly news and televisual images (Saxton, 2003, p. 109). That is, the embodied experience of being a forced migrant is one which is encountered not in the everyday sphere of public spaces but through media imagery of boats, boat danger, framed and misleading images of children thrown overboard and visual representation of detention centres. On the other hand, the various scenes and sites of migration are over-determined by bodiliness: the physical crossing of borders, the corporeal risks and embodied precarity of travelling and arriving by boat to seek refuge, the searchable body at the point of a border crossing, the bodily health determinants and conditions for gaining a visa, among others (Salter, 2006, p. 176). This indicates, as Mark Salter (2006, p. 184) puts it, the fact that migration and movement across borders involves an interfacing between the body and the body politic which can be re-coded here as an interfacing between corporeality and belonging within population. The body of the temporary or permanent migrant is performative and, in Butler's (1993, p. 4, 15) terms, materialised into particular ways of being bodily. It is a body which is constituted in the conditionality of tolerance, positioned variously along distributional curves of normativity (Foucault, 2007, p. 63) in terms of what that body does (that is, how it smells, in Gambaro's view) and thus in various conditions of belonging and not-belonging within Australian population.

Deploying the concept of smell as a signifier of the performative corporeality of migrant bodies within the Australian population did not, in fact, emerge only with

Gambaro's comments but builds on a much older connection between foreignness and odour utilised to argue against government migration policies that encouraged movement to Australia from particular countries of origin. Historically, much of the concern around smell has related to the uneasy relationship between multiculturalism and the consumption of food which, as Alan Han (2007, p. 361) has pointed out, is part of a significant discourse of racial construction in Australia. In his *All for Australia* (1984), Geoffrey Blainey argued that multicultural tolerance was opposed to the national interest, particularly in terms of the rate of immigration from East Asia. He drew specifically on examples of food and cooking odours to address the ways in which, in his view, non-European migrants sat uneasily or improperly within the Australian population. Here, he refers to letter writers to newspapers concerned about the smell of migrant neighbour' cooking: "Can I tell you what we have to put up with? ... They cook on their verandahs, so the sky here is filled with greasy smoke and the smell of goat's meat ... At one stage they were even drying noodles on the clothesline in the backyards" (p. 132). He argues that these performances of non-Australianness within traditional neighbourhoods can leave an Australian subject "feeling like a stranger in her own home" (Edwards, Occhipinti, & Ryan, 2000, p. 303). For Blainey (1984, p. 134), the presence of smells which are perceived to be foreign dispossess existing Australian citizens. His perspective here argues not only that there are certain smells that relate to non-Australian foreignness, race or nationality, but that they are invasive. The new smells override the familiar smells generated by the everyday practices of existing members of the population who are, thereby, constructed as legitimate members of the population on the basis of conforming to normative formations of cooking and food production odours. Familiarity here is equated with normativity.

In the public imaginary, multiculturalism is often related to food and food odours. As Sneja Gunew (2000, p. 227) has pointed out, multiculturalism is often equated with food and frequently reduced to being *only* about food—that is, accommodating national difference comes with the benign and banal idea that a multicultural Australia means the availability of a broader range of recipes, restaurants and flavours. Indeed, it is possible to equate the range of foods that can be tolerated by an 'Australian' stomach and palate with conditional tolerance for the range of peoples that arrive or temporarily work in Australia. For Fiona McAllan (2011, p. 18), the assimilation of cultural or racial difference to flavour fails to challenge the "essential tenets of the dominant culture," meaning that the destabilisation of the dominant institutional, racial and cultural framework for conceiving of the Australianness of the Australian population through a perception of Anglo-Europeanism does not occur through a tolerance that tolerates the other only in terms of food. At the same time, however, the arguments against multiculturalism based on the smell of food are, on the one hand, benign—because they are meaningless (Turner, 2003, p. 414) or represent a "safe multiculturalism" (Edwards et al., 2000, p. 298)—and on the other, the object of more extreme forms of racism and the conditionality of tolerance. Where the majority of Australians will, in fact, embrace a broad range of available foods and their concomitant smells, it is the extremism of those who complain of the smells that reinforces limited and conditional multicultural

tolerance as the standard framework for ethical belonging by allowing tolerance to appear 'progressive'.

The smell generated by the preparation of food extends in a continuum to the odours that emit from the human body, often related to the consumption of particular foods. Body odour is generated by the excretion from skin glands, and bacterial activity resulting from variances in hygiene, bodily activity and clothing types can generate further odours. All bodies emit odours of varying kinds, although it can be argued that—as with other smells—those which are most familiar to us are rarely smelt, notable or remarkable. Those which are new or 'foreign' are noticeable and draw our attention, not necessarily negatively, but certainly resulting in various reactions with are socially and culturally constituted. There is some evidence of a genetic and racial basis for different types and rates of body odour, with certain body types having fewer sweat glands by heritage, meaning they are less prone to certain body odours (Stoddart, 1990, p. 60-61). In contemporary western culture, the late capitalist emphasis on the marketing of products which reduce the emission of bodily odours such as antiperspirants, deodorants, perfumes and other scents has arguably become increasingly (and problematically) central to the normativities by which othernesses are discussed in ethnic, gender, age and class demarcations. Without attempting to reduce all bodies into a problematic *sameness* by pointing out that all bodies do emit odours to varying degrees, it remains that the emission of odours resulting from food consumption and subsequent sweat in the context of the bacteria-ridden earthly environment is part of the condition of being human (or, indeed, animal). From this perspective, it might be noted that what Gambaro's conditionality demands is not only conformity to an 'Australian-ised' smell, but simultaneously a disciplined conformity within the neo-liberal marketing of products designed to reduce smell. By corollary, this suggests that not only is the conditionality of tolerance a form of 'whitening' the temporary migrant, but a means of drawing a signifiatory link between whiteness and 'proper consumption'.

Gambaro's attitude towards diverse or different or unfamiliar body odours is not dissimilar from Blainey's extremism, particularly given the fact that she relates it to the way in which temporary migrants smell in public spaces. Like the commonality of the neighbourhoods to which Blainey refers, these public spaces are depicted as *Australian space*, the space of collective subjectivity—such spaces are in her view destabilised by the presence of smells which are coded as 'migrant', meaning foreigner, invader, non-normative. For Gambaro, more so than for Blainey, multiculturalism can be tolerated, but only on the condition that bodies smell in particular ways. What is important here is the way in which Gambaro assimilates body odour to the migrant per se: much as whiteness has traditionally been invisibilised by being positioned as the norm against a racialised otherness, body odours (which *everyone* has, no matter how often one showers or how thorough one's hygiene) are blanked out for white persons against racialised smells that emerge through differences in diet. Like food odours, however, the presence of body odours that are deemed non-normative is seen to be a contamination. Where, for Edwards and colleagues (2000, p. 301), complaints over the smell of food represent concerns over the contamination "by a polluted Other," the body that emits non-normative odours is thus understood

as the embodiment of pollution or contamination. This linkage works to establish a narrative of home as a space which is pure and uncontaminated by otherness (Ahmed, 1999, p. 340). One which would be made impure by the presence of otherness which can be detected by the foreign smell of that body's otherness. The invisibilisation of the body odours that are familiar to us is, in this context, the necessary element in maintaining a problematic myth of the purity of the *familiar population* before 'contamination' by the foreign other.

Bodies and Stereotypes through Attribution

By depicting the body of the temporary worker as smelly and unhygienic, Gambaro is, of course, circulating stereotypes of migrants. Stereotypes operate through attribution: they reductively link a cultural category of identity with a set of features (Rosello, 1998) which, in this case, includes particular ways of smelling. This, as a number of commentators have pointed out, was not only reductive but an attribution of unwanted smell to a group of persons already marginalised within the contemporary Australian depiction of population and belonging (Bhatia, 2012; Maley, 2012; Needham, 2012). Stereotypes relating to smell and cooking smells were frequently applied to Arab immigrants in the years after the September 11th 2001 attacks (Hage, 2004, p. x), working to create the conditions for *intolerance* through the proximity of an attribute of (non-normative) bodily practices with an identifiable and categorised group of persons (Ahmed, 2011, p. 126). By re-circulating older stereotypes of the foreigner as unhygienic and as emitting unwanted body odours, Gambaro reinforced a statement of unwantedness or non-belonging by articulating a register of the types of bodies that are tolerable among the Australian population and attributing the unwanted bodies to 457 visa holders broadly and indiscriminately.

More than this, however, such stereotyping links the migrant body with the abject, given the association of bodily odours with sites that undo the mythical sense of the body as hermetically-sealed and having a clear distinction between an inner and an outer corporeality. Body odours, when apparent, are reminders of the abject, and can include that which emits from a wound with blood and pus or the smell of sweat (Kristeva, 1982, p. 3). When the abject comes into the field of senses—in this case through smell, although it might just be through the reminder of particular smells, sites or orifices—it unsettles the subjective *I* and must be disavowed through forcible expulsion in order that the mythical wholeness of the *I* can be restored. Such expulsion can occur, as Probyn (2000, p. 131) reminds us, through expressions of disgust which can "turn on proximity, sight, and the closeness of smell and touch: the overwhelming horror that the disgusting object will engulf us, has been too close to things of which we prefer not to speak." What Gambaro expresses, then, is disgust at the smell of the temporary 457 visa holder, the other who must either be sanitised through adopting an imagined set of rituals of hygiene or expelled from the population. This is the condition of tolerance expressed in the context of corporeality and otherness. The scents and smells of familiarity, of whiteness, of Gambaro's imagined sense of Australian population do not undo subjectivity to the extent of the other (they do not require expulsion or sanitation) only because they are

sanitised through *familiarity* to become unrecognisable as body odours—much as whiteness is un-seen (Szorenyi, 2009, p. 104-105), so too is the body odour of the 'belonging' or 'tolerated' population un-smelled. At the same time, then, the body odours hidden by deodorant or other consumer products are whitened while the evidence of body odour becomes that which is foreign, other and abject—the signifiers of non-belonging.

In her work on abjection, Kristeva notes the relationship between hygiene and the law of borders:

It is thus not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite. The traitor, the liar, the criminal with a good conscience, the shameless rapist, the killer who claims he is a savior ... they heighten the display of such fragility. (1982, p. 4)

Thus, the 457 visa holder, even more unclear and amorphous than the notion of the permanent immigrant expected to 'assimilate away' the foods and smells of otherness, upsets the subjective *I* and the borders which sanitise population through the myth of a stable group. For Gambaro, pointing to the smell of the temporary visa holder through articulating a stereotype that attributes that smell to that identity group is her way of restoring the border. That smell, that otherness must be on the other side of the border for it is already on the wrong side of the law. As Edwards et al. point out by returning to the question of multiculturalism, food and odour, the trope of *indigestion* comes into play in cases of unwanted migrants and recent arrivals—as that which cannot be digested into the population because it reminds us of the already-present normlessness among the population (2000, p. 302-303). Similarly, for Han, it is the representation of the normative electorate which not only rejects multicultural tolerance but "vomits multiculturalism" and thereby seeks to vomit the migrant out of Australia (2007, p. 368). Social cohesion through tolerance, in this perspective, requires that the body politic of the Australian population vomit the contaminated other if it is unpalatable, if it causes disgust, if the smell is intolerable (according, of course, to an arbitrary rate of smell), because otherwise it carries the reminder of the fragility of norms, cultural practices, tolerance, borders and selves, all of which remain predicated, in the tolerance framework of contemporary multiculturalism, on the depiction of the other that must be excluded.

The circulation of Gambaro's stereotyping of the temporary migrant as unhygienic and malodorous other, as abject, pronounces the temporary migrant—and the broad population of temporary 457 visa holders, as abject in totality, as a contaminant which must be removed from public space, Australian space, from Australian population. Gambaro's rhetoric provides an ontological coherence for temporary migrants who are otherwise in an amorphous state of *being* vis-à-vis Australian population (are they migrants, are they visitors?) but only through a reductive perception of an abject which must be "radically excluded" (Kristeva, 1982, p. 2), regardless of how beneficial Gambaro or her political colleagues might feel the bodies of 457 visa holders are to labour and manufacturing in Australia and *for* the Australian population. This is to violently

reduce the complexity of the temporary migrant through a narrow categorisation as abject. As Butler has put it:

To prescribe an exclusive identification for a multiply constituted subject, as every subject is, is to enforce a reduction and a paralysis ... When the articulation of coherent identity becomes its own policy, then the policing of identity takes the place of a politics in which identity works dynamically in the service of a broader cultural struggle toward the rearticulation and empowerment of groups that seek to overcome the dynamic of repudiation and exclusion by which 'coherent subjects' are constituted. (1993, p. 116-117)

To totalise a subject or group of subjects as being in-and-of-themselves the representation of abjection is to make, as Foucault (1990, p. 43) put it, a discursive-produced element of otherness appear to be consubstantial with the subject, insidiously always present and affecting that subject's total composition. It is, in part, a result of what Diana Fuss (1989, p. 116) identifies as the "synecdochical tendency to see only one part of a subject's identity (usually the most visible part) and to make that part stand for the whole." In this case, it is not the part that is visual but the part that is identifiable through olfactory senses. The result of Gambaro's stereotyping here is that even when the temporary migrant does not have a perceptible body odour, it is always present, lurking, waiting to be emitted. At the same time, the fact that stereotypes operate through attribution develops the 'risk' that any person expressing body odour might be a temporary migrant, other, abject and thus not belonging within the Australian population.

Shaming the Body: Out-of-Placedness and the Odour of Otherness

Gambaro's articulation of a conditional tolerance for temporary migrants based on an inaccurate perception that they are improperly meeting Australian norms of bodily hygiene enacts a secondary form of unethical violence—the production of a shaming effect. That is, Gambaro induces shame as a problematic affect through figuring bodies that are out-of-alignment with her perception of normative, Australian space. These are the spaces of community relationality—she particularly draws attention to public spaces in which members of the Australian population routinely gather: in queues and on public transport (AAP, 2012). Although it is easy to respond to Gambaro's comments by arguing that such views are based on—and problematically reinforce—stereotypes of the foreign body as malodorous, they also work to position the temporary migrant's body as non-normative in connection with a perception that body odours are abject, thereby representing them as inherently shameful, as figures of shame. Shame is constituted through non-normativity and, simultaneously, constitutive of the non-normative subject. By arguing that particular migrant bodies fall outside of the conditions that are to be deemed tolerable and normative in Australia, is to induce shame by figuring particular bodies as not belonging and, simultaneously, by depicting belonging as not universally available.

A number of theorists whose work has often been noted for drawing the corporeal into the cultural have begun to interrogate the notion of shame,

particularly doing so from a Foucauldian perspective which understands shame not through the more-common frameworks of psychology and psychoanalysis, but as a discursively and culturally-produced effect that can be understood as productive, culturally-specific, and which circulates through relations between subjects (Probyn, 2004; Ahmed, 2004; Munt, 2007). Much of this important work has sought to develop some way in which shame can play a significant role in fostering an ethical human society. For example, exploring the ways in which feeling shame over one's improper or unethical behaviour towards another is figured as having the potential to transform not only an unethical relationality but also the perpetrating subject himself or herself. Shame can thus be characterised as that which, in some contexts, can generate abasement, abjection, despair, inward destructiveness or extroverted contempt of others (Munt, 2007, p. 216, 203), but in other contexts is creative and restorative, capable of mobilising "the self and communities into acts of defiant presence, in cycles of disattachment and reconnection" (p. 216). As a relevant example, the shame that might be 'placed upon' those who stereotype subjects who ought to be welcomed ethically can be productive in changing cultural perceptions of otherness. At the same time, by focusing on common instances of shame and shaming, marginalised persons who share that shame can recognise it in each other or in shared experiences and articulate an alternative discourse that repudiates the cultural norms which enact that shame (Moon, 2009, p. 359). However, this does not mean, for some subjects, being shamed does not have a highly debilitating effect as a mechanism which is deployed to actively exclude the other from a sense of belonging or welcome.

Shame is produced through being depicted as *other* in the context of a group, community or social institution grounded on normativity. The shame that is predicated on the body and how it might smell 'otherwise' in normative space is a formation which infuses all elements in the constitution of self-identity through being socially positioned as other, regardless of the actual reactions or behaviours of others. Normativity is, as Foucault tells us, an effect of power. He points to the power of normalisation which established itself after the eighteenth century (in Europe) not through any singular institution but through the interactions between different institutions (2004, p. 26) from medical and legal opinion (p. 42) to education and the family (1994, p. 53-54). "The norm consequently lays claim to power. The norm is not simply and not even a principle of intelligibility; it is an element on the basis of which a certain exercise of power is founded and legitimized" (2004, p. 45). A critical approach to shame can help us to see that it is something which is not only produced through norms but actively produces particular kinds of subjectivities in violent, exclusionary ways. To shame the temporary migrant on the basis of a claim that his or her smell is non-normative and out-of-place is not only to stereotype but to deny that person belonging through proximity and habitation in the Australian space—that is, a denial of community and belonging within the Australian population.

Shame here is produced not through the stigma of being the 'wrong' category (a body that smells wrong as opposed to a body that smells okay) but in terms of the *relative distance* from that which is considered the normative (the impossible body that doesn't smell). The sense of shame that one has for being on the

wrong end of a distributional curve of normativities is about 'place': to be out of the norm is to be out of place, but at the same time the shame of being out of place is that which simultaneously occurs through the place of the body in spatial and geographic terms with regard to the construction of normativity. This occurs when attention is drawn to non-normative identity, making the subject feel the shame experienced, as Probyn (2004, p. 334) has put it, "when a body knows it does not belong within a certain space." To be 'out of place' through being unable to articulate oneself and one's body's bodily emissions within the norm is potentially—for those without the cultural skills or resilience to produce a new form of subjective citizenship that mitigates against marginalisation—a debilitating shame. The experience of shame as affect is bodily: the blush, the lowering of the head and eyes. Shame can be produced by the body being or feeling out-of-place (Halperin & Traub, 2009, p. 9). As Sara Ahmed (2004, p. 103) argues, affective shame produces a desire for concealment, turning away the body and attempting in some manner to hide: "An ashamed person can hardly endure to meet the gaze of those present." The intensification of the bodily surface results from the perception of being out-of-place as both a familial outsider and a person of non-normative identity that infuses his subjectivity with shame.

In that sense, we can think about the shame that a temporary migrant is expected to experience for having a body that smells, as Gambaro has it, in non-normative ways, as being about an exposure of the self, a rendering exposed and available for scrutiny by those bodies and olfactory senses around it. It is to be depicted as having one's body rendered non-normative, often through a range of senses but in the case of Gambaro's statements through the sense of smell. The temporary migrant, for Gambaro, smells 'wrong' and is thus exposed to a sense of being 'out of place' for the way in which the subject's body emits odours deemed to be not only different from the bodies of white subjects, but intolerable to white subjects represented here as the majority, the norm and the Australian population. As Foucault (2004, p. 50) points out, the norm's function is not to exclude or reject, rather it is a "technique of intervention and transformation" which exceeds any single institution or goal (p. 26). An act which unwittingly draws attention to the non-normativity of another is one which discursively seeks to transform the subject: not from migrant other to normative subject, but a disempowerment by removal of the capacity to move through public spaces without scrutiny, objection, abjection.

Shame renders the temporary migrant or the body that emits odours differentially from those of the normative white majority as non-normative in contemporary culture by the very simple fact of being positioned on the biopolitical social scale of normativity as *less common*. When the norm that is the law which, in Gambaro's understanding, prescribes body odour normativity and non-normativity by distance from an arbitrary, stable norm, the disempowering interpellation of a subject as a non-normative subject becomes cause for shame which is experienced as affect. The embodied nature of shame, then, is exacerbated by the fact that it is not only an accusatory othering but that the evidence is in the body and its emissions as a form of 'proof' of that otherness, that non-belonging, that temporariness within the Australian

population, that contamination of the population—proof of that which must not become, even temporarily, part of it.

Cohabitation and Mutuality as Corporealised Ethics of Belonging

If stereotyping and shaming migrants (temporary or otherwise) is unethical, and if contemporary multiculturalism fails to articulate an ethical alternative due to its foundation in tolerance and conditionality, then what possibilities are available for an ethics that does not foreclose on or exclude the migrant body that smells otherwise? I would like to end this article by thinking through some of the possibilities for how ethics might emerge around the question of how to accept the temporary migrant as belonging to the Australian population in the context of bodies, relationality and space. This means more than simply disavowing the stereotypical representation of 457 visa holders as having body odour or poor hygiene (or the erroneous assumption that white folk do not), as well as moving beyond the idea that body odour should never be a condition of tolerance. Rather, it is a matter of advocating an ethics of hospitality that accepts the temporary migrant beyond normativity and its shaming effects. In this context, the tolerance framework of contemporary Australian multiculturalism is ineffective, as it is built on the conditionality of migrant bodies in terms of being tolerable through proximity to a norm, rather than proximity between bodies. What is required instead is a new framework of multiculturalism that is more than a rhetorical “sanitised racist discourse” (Saxton, 2003, p. 118) that persistently trumps diversity with assimilation. This, then, is a demand for a “new way of conceptualizing a mode, or more correctly a process, of national belonging that is fundamentally inclusive” (Turner, 2003, p. 416). The demand is to operate against the conditionality of tolerance that, as I have shown, operates to stereotype temporary migrants and attribute them with shame, violently if tacitly articulating them as out-of-place. A new framework of multiculturalism needs to do the following: firstly, examine the ways in which temporary migrants can be considered—and consider themselves—part of the Australian population as persons co-habiting the space; secondly, acknowledge the diversity of bodies as corporeal entities that emit odours differentially without reducing them to an ineffective human sameness that eradicates diversity. Gambaro’s statements on the problematic odours of temporary migrants are one site in which the call for ethics can be developed by considering the relationship between smell as sensation, temporariness that is common not just to 457 visa holders but to all subjects in the flux and transformation of population, and the relationship between bodies-in-space and habitation.

Sara Ahmed points to the relationship between temporariness, smell and movement through different spaces and countries experienced as migration:

The experience of moving often to a new home is most felt through the surprises in sensation: different smells, different sounds at night, more or less dust. When we came to Australia, what I first remember (or at least what I remember remembering) is all the dust, and how it made me sneeze and my eyes itch. When I returned to England, I felt the cold pinching my skin. The intrusion of an unexpected space into the body suggest that the experience of a new home

involves a partial shedding of the skin, a process which is uncomfortable and well described as the irritation of an itch. (1999, p. 342)

Important here is that Ahmed (p. 341) presents the body not as invasive of space, but figures migration through conceiving of spaces as intruding into the body. Home, here, is not the place of origin, but is also the "sensory world of everyday experience." This calls on us to look at temporary migrants not as the bringers of foreign smells, but as those who are mutually experiencing new smells and odours, including the unfamiliar body odours of those who have inhabited Australia for longer. Smell, in that sense, is reciprocal. Ahmed here shows how migration is closely linked with lived embodiment and the ways in which the body is affected by the spaces in which it is constituted. Further, it can be argued, the ways in which bodies mutually constitute space and the sensory movement of smell can be understood as always in transformation—the form of transformation of the existing perceptions of corporeal belonging that are necessary if a truly ethical hospitality is to be offered to those who join the Australian population temporarily for work.

Judith Butler has recently expanded on her ethics of non-violence by foregrounding the notion of cohabitation. For Butler (2011a, p. 83), cohabitation begins by acknowledging the heterogeneity of the earth's population "as an irreversible condition of social and political life itself." Such heterogeneity can include the diverse ways in which persons from across the world emit body odours differentially, and in ways which may never be recognisable, but the diversity of bodily habitations in and of themselves calls for a recognition of the right to cohabit the Earth. Cohabitation means that

we not only live with those we never chose, and to whom we may feel no social sense of belonging, but we are also obligated to preserve those lives and the plurality of which they form a part. In this sense, concrete political norms and ethical prescriptions emerge from the unchosen character of these modes of cohabitation. To cohabit the earth is prior to any possible community or nation or neighborhood. We might choose where to live, and who to live by, but we cannot choose with whom to cohabit the earth. (p. 84)

Butler is not suggesting here that we cohabit the earth and therefore must live in peace in a way that locates those we do not wish to live by in places other than 'here'. Rather, this is to argue that the primacy of the nation, the sovereign border and—by extension—the definition of a particular population cannot be built on the idea that the other can be asked not to inhabit the world (our world, our space) without eradication of that other. An ethics built on a call for cohabitation does not demand that we seek sameness among the bodies of others, even though it can be scientifically argued that all bodies emit odours in different ways. Rather, it is about recognising, responding to, welcoming and living alongside alterity and that includes bodies which smell otherwise. If difference is intelligible through bodies that smell in unfamiliar ways, then an ethics built on cohabitation asks not only that we accept the diversity of bodies and odours, but that we are transformed to the extent that the odours which are familiar—what we might call Australian odours, white odours—are made knowable.

As a framework for moving beyond conditional, liberal multicultural tolerance as the anticipated antidote to Gambaro's reductive concerns over the body odours of temporary migrants, then, there is the capacity to argue that we are ethically-bound to acknowledge that space (including, particularly, the *public space* of workplaces and public transport for which Gambaro was so concerned) is the site through which the heterogeneity of bodies comes into proximity in the persistent movement of persons who cannot be ethically dispossessed from those spaces. Subjectivity is constituted always on a thrownness into spaces one did not fully chose for oneself—"the general predicament of unwilling proximity to others, of a formation in dependency" (Butler, 2011b, p. 384). Proximity to other bodies, as a necessary condition of liveable lives includes, then, the proximity that becomes knowable to us through a range of senses, including the sense of smell—the bodies that are encountered but not only visually or audibly, the bodies of others and of otherness with whom space must ethically be open to cohabitation, whether through temporary or permanent migration, through the movement of others and ourselves through different spaces and through spaces that are always in a process of transformation. The smell of difference, foreignness, otherness is the smell that calls for recognition of a right to cohabit space beyond the distinctions of nationality and ethnicity and beyond the sovereignty of borders and migratory regimes. Acknowledging the corporeality of migration and population and instilling a reflectiveness on it in the context of our dependence on co-habitation as forms of subjectivity and relationality that cannot be chosen is an important and necessary initial step in overcoming the disgust that one might feel at the odour of the other and, by corollary, the disgust one might feel at the migratory other in order to understand them as always already belonging to the population.

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GENERAL ISSUE

Biopower, whiteness and the Stolen Generations: The arbitrary power of racial classification

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The purpose of this paper is to analyse whiteness as an arbitrary construct applied by white political and academic elites to implement a policy of biological and cultural assimilation of Australia's Aboriginal population from the late 19th century to the early 1980s. This was achieved by transforming whiteness from a static identity marker to a fluid and flexible racial categorisation. The product of a sociological experiment, the Stolen Generations exemplify what Michel Foucault defined as biopolitics, the regulation and control of the life and social order of a population through an authoritative body of the state. As racial absorption of mixed 'half-caste' children into mainstream society was promoted and enforced, Australian whiteness became more flexible but also arbitrary, as the concept of whiteness was now understood as a power mechanism and normative political goal pursued by policymakers, governors, and anthropologists. 'Half-caste' children were randomly selected and removed from their Aboriginal familial and cultural environment to be educated and trained according to white moral standards. Through this performative act of declaring who could be assimilated and who could not, a privileged and exclusively white elite attempted to define the identities of 'mixed children' for a desired future integration into mainstream society. In spite of changing the biological-eugenic intent of Stolen Generations policies to a cultural programme of integration, whiteness proved to be an unreachable fantasy because white Australians had no interest in sacrificing their position of privilege and the racial discourse of Aboriginal Otherness that had been maintained and institutionalised over two hundred years of colonisation.

Keywords: Stolen Generations, biopower, discourse, assimilation, 'half-caste'

Introduction

In this article, I analyse how whiteness—a formerly static and unquestioned marker of identity and a discursive territory exclusively accessible to the European colonists of Australia—was transformed by political elites aspiring to realise their own normative ideals of a 'white' Australian society. With a strict ethnic separation of 'black Aborigines' from 'white Europeans', whiteness was promoted as naturally given marker of national identity, which made it a static concept. By the 1930s, whiteness in Australia became a more mouldable, flexible, and fluid scientific construct (Howard-Wagner, 2006, p. 3). With the institutionalisation of forced biological ('outbreeding' of Aboriginal blackness) and cultural assimilation of Aboriginal 'half-castes', whiteness was utilised as an instrument of power for a male-dominated academic and political elite. This transformation of the notion of whiteness took place as geographical and ethnic boundaries were crossed by the settlers. This boundary crossing occurred when the settlers expanded their dominion, colonising Australia's tropical north and the interior of the continent, and when settlers began to have regular sexual intercourse with the non-white indigenous population. At the turn of the twentieth century, the number of so-called mixed 'half-caste' children, with indigenous and European and other cultural backgrounds had increased, in particular in urban agglomerations along the Australian east coast.

Australian whiteness became visible in public domains such as schools, churches and working places, as it was now used to identify racial difference and to focus on the apparent lack of purity, diligence and morale which these 'half-castes' embodied. Generating a discourse of fear about the danger of rebellious, immoral and disobedient 'half-castes' with the help of national media propaganda, policymakers at the time intended to justify their arbitrary labelling of whiteness to include the disdained 'mixed breeds' as they were now considered to be 'Caucasian' as well (Anderson, 2003, p. 193). At the same time, whiteness remained no longer just a classificatory exclusive norm, but it became procedural—something to desire for non-white immigrants and so-called 'mixed blood' children, but still something never to be fully achieved (Elder, 1999, p. 31). Indeed, it is this association of whiteness with desirability—the desire of an elite that wants the Other to become white, to transform and redefine their identity—that explains why policymakers like A. O. Neville invested so much effort in trying to change and reshape the demography of a society which he wanted to be white and devoid of unwanted 'half-castes'.

As conceptualised in this paper, the type of arbitrary whiteness used by white policymakers of Aboriginal affairs in the twentieth century can be understood as an instrument of power in biopolitical terms, as per Michel Foucault (2003, p. 247). Whiteness was a constructed and, as we shall see, frequently modified tool within a regulatory regime. In Foucault's eyes, the consequence of applied biopower is what he called a society of 'normalization' in which all subjects are measured according to an established norm, which, in this particular case, was racial (1990, p. 162). The arbitrary deployment of whiteness as a regulative racial classificatory tool is evident when we look at the historical shift in race policy with regards to Australia's 'Stolen Generation'. This term was used by Aboriginal people affected by the Australian assimilation policy, governmental and non-governmental institutions, and academics to describe the countless

number of Aboriginal children removed from their families from the early twentieth century until the early 1980s by way of a policy of biological and cultural assimilation. While assimilation until the Second World War was primarily understood and applied as a biological, eugenic concept with the aim of modifying demography and sustaining the image of a snow-white Australia, this discourse changed with the establishment of the United Nations and the universal condemnation of the Holocaust after World War Two. Under Paul Hasluck as Commonwealth Minister for Territories, the concept of cultural assimilation replaced biological absorption—a strategy favoured by Governor A. O. Neville to 'outbreed half-castes' by forcing them to marry white Europeans and prohibiting them from having sexual intercourse with non-whites—from 1951 onwards (see Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [AIATSIS], 2008). However, practices of separating fair-skinned indigenous children from their parents under the pretext of social welfare did not change.

Another essential component of the deployment of arbitrary whiteness was the reliance on performance as part of the assimilationist project. By promoting a medical, an academic, a socio-cultural, and a socio-political discourse on whiteness, an assimilatory model of racialised citizenship gradually became incorporated in national laws. The shift from the former exclusion of every non-white person of the population under the White Australia Policy of the Protection Era to a sudden inclusion of the marginalised and alienated Aboriginal population into mainstream white society occurred suddenly and unexpectedly. Former removed children, members of the Stolen Generations, have narrated their traumatic experience in detail to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), who published a report with their interviews in 1997. From their accounts it becomes evident that the way fair-skinned children were selected to be separated from their families was not founded on a set of standardised scientific procedures. Governors and police officers randomly chose a certain number of children of varying age and gender whom they took to welfare homes for training and education. These children became not only wards of the state that was/is ruled by a white elite, but also the intellectual property of missionaries, nurses, trainers, caretakers, white foster families, and employers.

In this context, whiteness must be seen as an arbitrary and performative act of authority, or, as Howard-Wagner (2009, p. 2) puts it, part of "a position of privilege", a privilege that the white authorities enjoyed and abused in many ways. The arbitrary deployment of whiteness allowed white political elites to consolidate their hierarchic rule and to (try to) eliminate undesirable elements of the population, even as the fortification of ethnic boundaries is what enables racial and colonial forms of authority. As we shall see in this article, biopower was applied to Aboriginal people's lives for more than half a century. Only its legitimation changed, as it was first used by white elites to counter the 'half-caste' threat by eugenic measures and then continued under the pretext of serving the removed child's best interest.

Impacts of early anthropological paradigms of whiteness

In her very detailed monograph *The History of White People* (2010), African-American historian Nell Irvin Painter describes eighteenth century Europe as the place from which the first scientific discourses on racial differences between human beings emerged. While the Swedish doctor and botanist Carl Linnaeus insisted on four categories of human species (the Negroid, the Mongoloid, the European, and the Lapp), German anthropologist Johann Friedrich Blumenbach added the Malay as a fifth category (Painter, 2010, p. 78). Charles Darwin is often credited with theories of racial evolution, however the ideas of the French scientist George Louis Leclerc de Buffon, who mentioned six 'human varieties' (Lapp, Tatar, South Asian, European, American, and Ethiopian), preceded Darwin's as he already spoke of an evolution of mankind in various stages (Geiss, 1988, p. 149; Haderer, 2008, p. 16). In outlining the historical debates on whiteness and racial classification, Painter points out that the only feature on which these European scientists could agree was the arbitrary character of such classifications and the lack of a clear definition of whiteness itself. The role of the Australian Aboriginal was defined by the newly developing racial paradigms of Social Darwinism and Social Evolutionism.

In my thesis (Haderer, 2008, pp. 14-25), I analysed how both paradigms complemented each other to shape an academic discourse for the implementation of the Australian assimilation programme: Social Evolutionism at the beginning of the twentieth century shifted from a more specific phase to a universal perspective that postulated classical, broad evolutionary stages of human evolution from the earliest step of savagery to the most advanced level of civilisation. Every society either got stuck at or transcended these stages, from 'savagery' to 'barbarism' to 'civilisation', which Western societies purportedly had reached (Barnard, 2000, p. 38). Aboriginals were placed on the lowest of all stages of human evolution, deemed Stone Age men who were unable to progress to 'civilisation'. As historical accounts by prominent scholars of evolutionism indicate, Western supremacy and the apex of civilisation were equalled with whiteness in the mid-nineteenth century. John Lubbock 1st Baron Avebury, a British banker, archaeologist and ethnographer, for example, claimed in his writings from the 1870s that "the white race ... favoured by geographic circumstances, made best use of its progress in many ways" (in Petermann, 2004, p. 467; *translation by author*). Thus, a cultural and a racial barrier was established which emphasised the inequality of mankind and the evolutionary necessity of social hierarchies with the help of the second prevailing socio-biological paradigm.

Developed by British naturalist Charles Darwin in the mid-nineteenth century, Social Darwinism was a theory that aimed to situate the natural and biological features of human evolution and survival into a co-extensive relation with the social and cultural aspects of human society. Characteristics found in the world of animals were directly transferred to human beings. Herbert Spencer, an English philosopher and sociologist, used Darwin's concepts to explain an individual's development by coining the terms 'survival of the fittest' and 'struggle for existence', originally undifferentiated, universalist concepts which, however, were soon applied to racial groups who were classified as not yet reaching the evolutionary level of civilisation (Geiss, 1988, p. 171; Petermann, 2004, p. 504).

In his 15-volume work *Descriptive Society* (published between 1874 and 1934), Spencer equated the evolutionary stage of different societies with a man's ageing process. This association is particularly interesting with regards to the concept of whiteness, as coloured Africans and Australian Aborigines were considered 'child races' in need of training and education by more 'mature' whites—a mode of racial thinking that underpins a policy advocating the removal of 'half-caste' children, in their best interest, to make them wards of a white state (Haderer, 2008, p. 17; Petermann, 2004, p. 505; Wilson & Link-Up, 1997).

Both anthropological paradigms—Social Evolutionism and Social Darwinism helped academic and political elites to promote the idea of human inequality and led to the notion of whiteness being a supreme identity marker. These theoretical biological concepts were also used to demonstrate and consolidate ethnic boundaries between the black Aboriginal population and the white settlers in an Australian context. However, the foremost concern of the British settling in Australia was not the fear of miscegenation or atavism (racial degeneration), which came later, but the fear of venturing into alien territory and facing an unknown environment. Thus, the first boundaries that had to be crossed were geographical and not racial ones. Fears of being confronted with an unknown culture were externalised and projected on material things rather than close inter-bodily contact. The tropical climate and the desert frightened the Europeans more than their interaction with indigenous people on whose knowledge they depended (see Anderson, 2003; Danes, 1910, pp. 416-419).

The fear of white settlers getting 'lost' and 'exposed to' an inimical environment becomes evident in many white narratives like the so-called 'lost-in-the-bush' myths, "socially constructed and politically instrumental" (Tilley, 2011, p. 1) discourses about white children, women, or explorers disappearing in the bush. According to Elspeth Tilley, these texts flirt with 'going native' anxieties whilst also serving to delineate 'racialised whiteness'. In the process of vanishing, the ideal whiteness of those disappearing and sometimes reappearing is not only endangered, but it is soon imagined as tainted and contaminated by exposure to an 'uncivilised' environment, which "signals and enacts a politics of separation and boundary management" (p. 7). It was not a long before the fear of racial degeneration prevailed among the settlers and was no longer projected on environmental factors but on the Aboriginal population.

When the white settlers set foot on Australia's 'alien' and 'hostile' territory, health and physical fitness were initially associated with external factors like a different climate, quickly changing temperatures and extreme living circumstances into which whiteness was gradually differentiated. Whenever whiteness was mentioned by doctors, anthropologists or geographers, it was discussed in the context of racial degeneration, that is, as something on the way of becoming incomplete and partial. The common belief was that moving into an alien environment would endanger the white body and, in the end, lead to a lack of whiteness—the concept of racial incompleteness would become relevant again in the assimilation debate a few decades later. American-Australian historian Warwick Anderson, who has researched Australia's history of whiteness, remarks in his book *The Cultivation of Whiteness*:

It was commonly believed that each race had a distinctive constitutional character or temperament that was best suited, whether through providential or evolutionary mechanisms, to its ancestral environment. Any disruption to this nexus through emigration would threaten bodily integrity. (2003, p. 14)

This focus on environmental factors should not imply that the notion of biological degeneration through external factors, such as the climatic impact on physical fitness and skin colour, was not based on images and myths of racial superiority and inferiority. For British contemporary writers and academics, the new continent was associated with something hostile that could cause severe harm to the white Anglo-Saxon race. Fears of degeneration were expressed by scholars in both anxious and deprecating tones. According to the accounts of many doctors from Great Britain, who set up practice in Australia, the hot winds, for example, were believed to weaken the European body or even make it more effeminate (Anderson, 2003, p. 32). The widely read book *National Life and Character: A Forecast* (1894), written by historian and politician Charles H. Pearson, who taught at the University of Melbourne, had a major impact on the white Australia policy that was promoted until the 1930s. Although his warnings of the spread of the 'Black and Yellow races' (Pearson, 1894, p. 68) bolstered the growing movement of all those in favour of an exclusively white Australia, Pearson also "suggested that climatic barriers would soon hinder the global expansion of the superior white races" (in Anderson, 2003, p. 106; see also Haderer, 2008, p. 27). As Pearson and many of his contemporaries understood whiteness, it was something biologically limited that could only be preserved in a closed geographical space, isolated from different climates, alien environments, and bodily contact with foreign ethnic groups.

However, after the geographical obstacle of settling in a wild, unknown environment had been crossed, many settlers were more optimistic about their future and doctors recommended Australia's southern climate to patients suffering from phthisis and similar diseases. The image of a hostile environment eventually became more positively transformed as British migration to Australia was promoted to cure ailments and illnesses (Anderson, 2003, p. 30). Nevertheless, however, the fear of the unknown, which was first associated with external environmental factors, such as solar heat and a lack of humidity, persisted. The question remains at which point this fear was projected onto racial difference and thereby became an issue of securing whiteness through the expulsion and assimilation of non-white Others.

At the turn of the twentieth century, many governors and academics called for a 'snow-white Australia' policy advocating an entirely white repopulation of the continent as well as the establishment of British rule over races that were considered inferior because of their apparent evolutionary backwardness and their non-industrialised lifestyle. While the indigenous population of Aboriginals were already targeted by the *Aboriginal Protection Act* (1869) and the so-called *Half-Caste Act* (1886), the White Australia Policy soon served as a way of controlling and limiting migration from Asia and the Pacific islands with the establishment of the *Immigration Restriction Act* (1901) (see Fitzgerald, 2007; Haderer, 2013). Besides limiting migration, however, the *Immigration Restriction*

Act must also be seen as “a response to the strong Asian presence *already* in the northern states” (Perera, 2005, p. 35), as inter-regional relations with traders from Southern Asia had always existed in Australia. Through restrictive immigration legislation, non-white Others became both targets and victims of a white ‘mainstream’ society that never ceased to define itself other than in a relational hierarchy to the indigenous population and non-European migrants. As Suvendrini Perera points out:

It is important to note that the definition and measure of Australian whiteness was, from the outset, derived and asserted in relation to its *multiple racial others*, rather than to a single reference point. Spatial as well as racial hierarchies came into play in positioning the subjects of the nation against its asymmetrical non-white others, indigenes and aliens. (2005, p. 31)

The eugenic discourse of racial health and the fear of losing the white purity of the British population became popular through a process of institutionalisation that occurred with the founding of tropical medicine research institutes, which turned out to be a fertile ground for the spread of theories of pathogenesis and for the reproduction of racial stereotypes. The awareness that white settlers had in fact entered a new cultural territory, accompanied by their fear of being killed or racially diminished by alien forces, caused the discursive establishment of a new imaginary boundary: the ethnic and the racial. From then on, whiteness became associated with bodily contact and, with the moral condemnation of racial mixing, also became inflected with sexualised discourses in which Aboriginal women were blamed for giving hereditary traits of immorality and indolence to their children (see Anderson, 2003, p. 229; Beresford & Omaji, 1998, p. 50).

The nation and biopower

When Australia became a federated sovereign state in 1901,¹ the racial boundary between the white ‘Anglo-Saxons’, the Aboriginal, Asian and the Pacific non-white population became substantial. A discourse emerged in which the newly formed nation-state was perceived as an organism. This paradigm largely contributed to the popularity of conceiving of state society as a body politic, as French philosopher Foucault clearly demonstrated in his work. With his term biopolitics, Foucault (2003, p. 243) sought to analyse the regulatory mechanisms pursued by governing elites to control or modify the demography and development of populations in order to foster the health and productive capacity of a people within a territory. As a corollary, unwanted elements in a society needed to be cast out and expelled from a nation in the emerging era of

¹ After their arrival, the British founded the first penal colony New South Wales in 1788. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Van-Diemens-Land/Tasmania (1825), Western Australia (1829), South Australia (1836), Victoria (1851) and Queensland (1859) became British colonies. After all six colonies had agreed on a constitutional draft for a federated Australian state in 1900, the Commonwealth of Australia was proclaimed in Sydney on January 1st, 1901 (see Mückler, Weichart & Edelmayer, 2013, pp. 73-82).

nationalism. Foucault explained the interplay between politics, science, biology and power in one of his lectures at the Parisian *Collège de France* as follows:

What we are dealing with in this new technology of power is not exactly society (or at least not the social body, as defined by the jurists), nor is it the individual-as-body. It is a new body, a multiple body, a body with so many heads that, while they might not be infinite in number, cannot necessarily be counted. Biopolitics deals with the population, with the population as a political problem, as a problem that is once scientific and political, as a biological problem and as power's problem. (2003, p. 245)

In his works, Foucault analysed and highlighted the central role biological racism played for the generation and evolution of nationalist and eugenicist discourse. His genealogy of the development of racism and biopower are useful for understanding how whiteness became an arbitrary marker of biopolitical health in Australia and how the very notion of whiteness came to be used as a tool of power to consolidate the positions of the historically privileged and marginalised. Furthermore, his theory has a strong critical potential to question the generation of truths and "*practices of inclusiveness*" (Howard-Wagner, 2006, p. 8; emphasis in original) around the widely debated question of how to assimilate 'mixed breeds/half-castes' and integrate them into the white mainstream society. As the concept of a boundary—whether real or imagined—is always based on difference and on a mechanism of inclusion/exclusion, previous external differences between white settlers and black natives regarding divergent ways of living, interaction and physical appearance were internalised. Questions of character traits, intelligence and morale became the new focus of attention, however, they were always seen as being in close relation with blood and genetics. This shift from external to internalised differences within the white body politic increased the focus on self-perception, the "*positive ... normalising and normative*" (p. 9) character of whiteness around issues of purity and moral taboos within the settler population. Australian whiteness became based on a dichotomous pattern of racial discourse with which undefinable and hybrid social phenomena like 'half-castes' initially did not seem compatible. Anderson confirms this paradigmatic change of perspective from externalising to internalising racial difference:

As environmental threats appeared to recede, whiteness came to be defined more in terms of this Manichean struggle between opposing natural typologies: white against colored; purity against danger; health against disease. (2003, p. 124)

Theories of pathogenesis had now become useful tools to emphasise and legitimate racial difference, thus establishing apartheid regimes not only in the United States but in many Australian cities like Perth, Sydney and Melbourne (Haderer, 2008, p. 47). Such new modes of regulation and control enabled the white governors to prevent any kind of social or bodily interaction by settlers with Aboriginal natives. The previously mentioned discourse of a 'snow-white Australia' owed much of its popularity to the spread of a new science called eugenics, which—with its focus on racial hygiene and its application as a state model in totalitarian Nazi-Germany—epitomises what Foucault views as state implemented biopolitics. Developed by the Englishman Francis Galton, the

medical paradigm of eugenics influenced doctors and policymakers in Australia in the first decade of the twentieth century. Although the colonists had already started to segregate the white population from Aboriginals by relocating them to more than 200 reservations in the remote hinterland or in separate ghettos and shantytowns far away from the city centres, eugenics became a useful tool of state power to differentiate unwanted societal elements by means of bodily regulation (for example, forced sterilisation to curb reproduction rates) and elimination practices (such as physical torture or the exposure of Aboriginals to epidemics, which decimated their number). As we shall see, the impact eugenic ideas had on Australia's indigenous assimilation policy in its first biological stage as outlined by A. O. Neville were significant (see Beresford & Omaji, 1998, p. 45; Haderer, 2008, p. 27).

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the state authorities realised that their policy of segregation worked only for so-called 'full blood Aboriginals', who were assumed to eventually become an extinct species (Elkin, 1954, p. 326; Neville, 1947, p. 58), but not for children of mixed origin. The imaginary racial boundaries that Chief Protectors of Aborigines, such as A. O. Neville, and other governors had sought to establish appeared more porous. The increasing number of 'half-castes' reminded officials, doctors, and scientists of a moral violation of an officially forbidden intercourse between white men and Aboriginal women or girls (Kidd, 1997, p. 4). Before eugenics was officially recognised and institutionalised in Australia in the 1920s, authorities preferred to remove such 'mixed breeds', who did not fit into the dying full bloods/ living whites dichotomy, from the white settler society by placing them in homes and shelters serving the special purpose of assimilating 'half-castes' and preventing them from any contact with 'full blood' Aborigines.

The undefinable racial hybrid embodied by these children was no longer in line with the policy of racial segregation between black and white populations that white policymakers had been promoting in Australia since the early Protection Era in the mid-nineteenth century (see Haderer, 2013, pp. 162-165). In everyday discourse, 'half-castes' were labelled as something aberrant and abnormal that challenged normative, prevailing notions of whiteness. The *Perth Sunday Times*, for instance, warned the public of the increasing number of a third 'sinister' (because undefinable and uncontrollable) race:

Central Australia's half-caste problem ... must be tackled boldly and immediately. The greatest danger, experts agree, is that three races will develop in Australia—white, black, and the pathetic sinister third race which is neither. (in Bird, 1998, p. 138)

As historic descriptions of 'half-castes' indicate, the lack of white colour, the supposed lack of intelligence and morality that these 'half-castes' embodied was mainly projected onto Aboriginal women or girls. It was men—governors, academics, and doctors—who conceived Australia's assimilation policy, but white female scientists joined in the eugenicist discourse to defend their position of privilege by also blaming native women for their negligent and immoral sexual practices. Anderson quotes Natalie Roberts, a scientist strongly opposing inter-cultural marriages, in 1913 as saying:

The half-castes are intelligent and capable of working, but the mother being the black parent, the moral tendencies lean towards the native on account of pre-natal influences. Also, the child, being brought up among an indolent, lazy people, contracts these habits. (in Anderson, 2003, p. 229)

This discourse which targeted 'coloured women' changed when A. O. Neville, the Chief Protector of Aborigines in Western Australia in 1915 and the Commissioner for Native Affairs in 1936, advocated his policy of biological absorption and assimilation of indigenous peoples of mixed heritage. While 'black women' had been demonised before, they were now given the moral right of marrying white men. In his book *Australia's Coloured Minority*, Neville wrote:

Miscegenation which produced the grandparents and parents of the existing coloured people of Australia has been going on for over a hundred years and this compels us today to seek a means of adjusting some of its distressing results. Our non appropriated full blood women from the earliest days of settlement, and now their coloured female descendants are acquiring our men, not by force, but through the natural process of mating and marriage based largely upon mutual affection. (1947, p. 43)

Neville's argument here was not representative of settler thought at this time but served to support and underline his political programme of promoting inter-marriages between whites and Aborigines with the aim of 'outbreeding mixed bloods'. Albeit disdained and abhorred, the mere existence of 'half-castes' was evidence enough that whiteness could not be sustained as a biologically exclusive category nor as a simple dichotomous differentiation between black and white populations. There were social and ethnic nuances to white settler identity which provided evidence that racial boundaries had indeed been crossed and purportedly diluted. When A. O. Neville and Dr Cecil E. Cook, Chief Protector of Aborigines for the Northern Territory, realised that racial segregation would no longer effectively maintain racially distinct populations in Australia, the racially exclusive understanding of whiteness changed. Political and legal measures had to be implemented to change the former conceptions of a 'snow-white Australia'. These measures would eventually affect the lives and future of thousands of Aboriginal children.

The arbitrary deployment of whiteness

In 1937, the *Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities* took place in Canberra. The imperative of this conference, which was exclusively accessible to white officials and policymakers, was the assumption that

the destiny of the natives of Aboriginal origin, but not of the full blood, lies in their ultimate absorption by the people of the Commonwealth, and it therefore recommends that all efforts be directed to that end. (Commonwealth of Australia as cited in Haderer, 2008, p. 37)

A. O. Neville, who was present at the conference, outlined three key strategies of biological absorption as a solution to the increasing 'half-caste problem' (Beresford & Omaji, 1998, p. 50). The aim of the conference was to make legislation for the implementation of biopolitical measures to end the reproduction 'half-castes' in the next decade. Neville's plan was rejected by some participants for either humanitarian or racist reasons. The three key strategies Neville promoted were the following: First, the removal of 'half-caste' children from their Aboriginal families and their 'native' environment to education and training centres, where they were to be 'civilised' according to Christian standards. Second, the ban on intermarriage between 'half-castes' and 'full blood Aboriginals' and a suggested enforcement of intermarriage between 'half-castes' and whites with the purpose of what was generally referred to as the out-breeding of blackness to prevent atavism (racial degeneration). Soon, however, it became evident that it would be hard, if not impossible, to persuade a 'full white' to marry a 'half-caste'. With regards to the conference in Canberra, *The West Australian* reported the following on April 24, 1937:

To urge his [a male 'half-caste's] marriage with a white woman will raise a storm of opposition that would be most undesirable and do much to defeat the end sought; and in the individual case it would head straight for tragedy owing to the attitude of their white neighbours. There is only one hope for him, and that is to marry him off to a quadroon (that is a quarter-caste) or to an octoroon (that is a one-eighth caste). In that way we are eliminating colour as surely, though not quite so quickly, as if the mating were to a full white. (Medical Correspondent, 1937, p. 26)

In a third step, the previously removed children were to be successfully reintegrated into white mainstream society (Beresford & Omaji, 1998, p. 50). It is worth noting that the methods of implementation for such biological assimilation practices clearly matched the United Nations' definition of genocide as stated in the *Geneva Genocide Convention 1948* (Saul, 2000, p. 529).

Through these policies around the 'half-caste problem' we can see how policymakers adjusted the discourse of whiteness to the political demands of the time. As a consequence, notions of racial difference were transformed and new narratives constructed to justify the sudden change of political attitude towards formerly demonised 'half-castes' and to prepare the white mainstream for prospective intermarriage. A new scientific paradigm was established that claimed a genetic relationship between Caucasians and their Aboriginal ancestors (Anderson, 2003, p. 203). In his book, *Australia's Coloured Minority*, A. O. Neville expressed his new perspective on the modified, transformative character of whiteness:

There is no marked difference between the blood of the native and ours, all human blood being fundamentally alike ... Even if there were some divergence, like the half empty glass the coloured people are already half empty, and more in many cases of aboriginal blood. (1947, p. 55)

Although there was an attempt here to postulate a biological sameness and dissolve racial difference between white Australian and indigenous peoples,

support for assimilation along these lines failed because whiteness as a distinct and exclusive racial category was still being reproduced in state-run training institutions and welfare homes. Even in Neville's book, the author often made references to 'Aboriginal blood' as something particular and distinct from 'human blood' (see Elder, 1999, p. 29). By doing so, Neville consolidated and perpetuated the racial Otherness he sought to eliminate with his programme. As Elder notes,

Australia's Coloured Minority is an ambivalent text which at once repeats a story intended to allay white worries over racial difference, while at the same time producing through a narrative organised around 'raced' classification a sense of difference. (1999, p. 28)

As countless interviews with members of the Stolen Generations (HREOC, 1997) show, the first stage of Neville's racial programme was realised successfully, with thousands of children being randomly selected for removal, training, and re-socialisation. However, the second and third phases, intermarriage and reintegration, were still considered a major challenge to perceptions of the whiteness/Other racial binary that mainstream society did not wish to relinquish. A senior political official's statement quoted in Neville's book clearly illustrates this point: "We of the blood of a Gladstone, a Shakespeare, or a Kitchener should not plant our seed in the womb of a native" (in Beresford & Omaji, 1998, p. 50). Neville's programme failed because, despite ostensible attempts at inclusion via elimination, the exclusivist character of whiteness prevailed.

As implemented, whiteness developed into an arbitrary instrument of power restricted to a limited group of people in charge of defining and selecting which child of which age and gender was appropriate for the racial programme of absorption and assimilation. Many of the 777 submissions in the HREOC Report (1997) describe in detail how policemen and welfare officers arrived unannounced at the Aboriginal Stations in order to pick out children randomly. Many children and their families were not aware of what was going to happen, why their children were being taken away, or if they would ever be returned to their homes or the reservations.² Although in later years, a policy was adopted whereby one parent was forced to sign an *Application for Admission of Child to Board's Control*,³ in which (s)he fully renounced custody rights, the main reason for removal was not negligence, as it was later claimed by welfare officers and their supporters, but skin colour (Aboriginal Welfare Board [AWB] Correspondence Files, 1949-69). Some accounts give evidence that family

² In the nineteenth century, Aboriginal reserves and missionary stations were established throughout Australia to be administered by so-called Chief Protectors, protectors, super-intendants, police officers, and missionaries. While missionary stations served as education and training centres, the reserves soon had the character of "outdoor museums" (Haderer, 2008, p. 42), as scientists believed these spaces were the only places to keep 'full blood Aboriginals' to prevent their total extinction (see AIATSIS, 2008).

³ In 1940, the *Aboriginal Welfare Board* replaced the *Aboriginal Protection Boards*, which had been established in the mid-nineteenth century Protection Era, under the *Aborigines Protection Act* (1940). Until its abolition in 1969, the Welfare Board pursued the cultural assimilation of Aboriginals into white mainstream society.

members, in particular those whose other children had been removed earlier, knew that fair-skinned children were at risk of removal. In her submission (HREOC, 1997, sub. 305), Fiona, a 'half-caste' girl removed in the 1930s, reported, "that when the police came, mothers would try to hide their children and blacken their faces with dust and soil" (Haderer, 2008, p. 51). In other cases, children were instructed by their relatives to deny their Aboriginality in the hope of being spared a cruel fate. One member of the Stolen Generation recalls:

I was told as a child that our family was Maori not Aboriginal. Mum said that the Doctor, the authority, had said that Grandfather was a Maori. We weren't allowed to say that we were Aboriginal, and we weren't allowed to mix with the Aboriginal people in the country town where we lived ... My grandfather was an Aboriginal man of quite dark complexion and grandmother was of Scottish descent. Grandfather wanted us to deny our Aboriginality so that we wouldn't be taken away. (in Wilson & Link-Up, 1997, p. 130)

As emphasised at the *Initial Conference of Commonwealth and State Aboriginal Authorities* (1937) in Canberra, the policy of forced removal and intermarriage only targeted the mixed Aboriginal population. 'Half-castes' were not exclusively half-European, but in many cases they were children of Chinese or Pacific Islander migrant workers used as cheap labour in areas that were considered dangerous for white Anglo-Saxons (see Manne, 1998).

The arbitrary selection of 'half-castes' for removal from the reservations and their indigenous parent was a two-fold procedure. On the one hand, state authorities separated fair-skinned children from their families to take them to gender-segregated missionaries and welfare homes. On the other hand, white families came to homes to select children for adoption using them as cheap (unpaid) labour in households and farms (see AWB Correspondence Files, 1949-69; HREOC, 1997). Children were removed and taken to white institutions until the 1980s, long after the Aboriginal Welfare Board was closed in 1969 due to a legislative change (see HREOC, 1997). Throughout the assimilation process, in which Aboriginal children were transformed by Christianisation, given 'Western' names and forbidden to speak their language or to have any contact with their Aboriginal parent or relatives, the idea of white supremacy had always prevailed. Transferring these children to missionary stations and welfare institutions like the *Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home* (for infants and children younger than five years), the *Cootamundra Domestic Training Home for Aboriginal Girls* and the *Kinchela Aboriginal Boys' Home* was certainly in the interest of the Federal Government, which saw a risk not only in the increasing number of 'half-castes' but in Aboriginal resistance movements and political activism. Transferring the children to these institutions also had a biopolitical function. These institutions served both a biological and a cultural purpose: first, the complete surveillance and control of individual bodies at the level of sexuality and reproduction, since boys and girls were strictly segregated until the age of 21; second, the manipulation of the children's self-awareness and feelings of belonging, since they were taught to behave and to *think* like white people by denying all aspects of their Aboriginality (language, cultural traditions, spirituality) and cutting all ties with former Aboriginal friends and relatives.

For Foucault (2003, p. 252), authoritarian control by physical punishment, surveillance and segregation complements sexual discourses of the body, as "sexuality represents the precise point where the disciplinary and the regulatory, the body and the population, are articulated." With Foucault's "two techniques of power" (p. 249), the disciplinary and the regulatory, the notion of whiteness and its arbitrary implementation can be explained. The disciplinary technique concerns the manipulation of an individual's body, or the power one exercises over oneself based on one's knowledge of how to integrate into a society. The strategy of removing fair-skinned children to 'breed out' their apparent blackness aimed to internalise feelings of 'whiteness' within the children while also altering their perception of other Aboriginals, whom they—after years of seclusion, isolation and punishment in the welfare homes—eventually considered strangers. Aboriginal children were conditioned to see themselves as non-Aboriginal while, paradoxically, they were never given the certainty of being white. As a consequence, these children disciplined themselves based on the permanent surveillance of their behaviour and interaction with others, their ban of any kind of contact with Aboriginal people, and the knowledge they were given by white caretakers, teachers and missionaries. As the children reached maturity, they no longer knew their place in society, experiencing alienation from both their Aboriginal and white backgrounds. One girl who was removed from her Aboriginal family, explained how she finally disciplined herself as a result of years of surveillance and training she had received in welfare institutions,

I can remember being told that if an Aboriginal person comes towards you when you are walking down the street you must cross the road. And I actually did it. I can't believe that I did it, because I was so conditioned towards Aboriginal people as being very dirty and fearsome. (in Beresford & Omaji, 1998, p. 24)

The disciplinary mechanism of power thus relates to what Perera (2005, p. 36) calls the "racialised control and surveillance of the Indigenous population" in that this power mechanism enforced ethnic segregation and alienation and widened the gap between 'half-castes' and the Aboriginal population. Surveillance enabled the white elites to control the social interactions of 'half-castes'. Beyond this, it also aimed at altering the demography with its intent of 'outbreeding colour' and encouraging biological reproduction between desirable Aboriginal subjects.

The regulatory mechanism of power identified by Foucault in one of his most prominent works, *The History of Sexuality* ([1976] 1990), focuses on life and the process of reproduction (2003, p. 249). The population of a territory is divided into dichotomous patterns of life and death, those who are given the right to live and those who are neglected in death. Social Darwinism, with its postulate of the survival of the fittest, encapsulates a regulatory state technique, reaching its fatal peak during National Socialism in Germany. In Australia, Aboriginality was equated with a biological condition of death. Aboriginal people were seen as a 'doomed' race, whereas whiteness was equated with health, life, and prosperity. The stolen children's lives were thus regulated by an elite group of academics like A. P. Elkin, a widely respected anthropologist and fervent supporter of removing 'half-castes' and training them in welfare institutions, and politicians like A. O. Neville—persons who advocated that the state and its institutions

should decide if and under which conditions these 'half-caste' children ought to live and be allowed to reproduce.

Finally, the arbitrary deployment of whiteness needs to be understood as a performative act whose end point was an identity change but not a successful integration or assimilation of 'half-caste' children into white mainstream society. Racial Otherness was reproduced by the white caretakers, missionaries and foster families who were supposed to integrate children into 'white' society and make their Aboriginal wards them 'like them'. The story of Paul, a removed child, demonstrates how the self-perception of Otherness persisted in white spaces and institutions:

When I'd say to my foster family, "why am I a different colour?", they would laugh at me, and would tell me to drink plenty of milk, "and then you will look more like us." The other sons would call me names such as "their little Abo", and tease me. At the time, I didn't know what this meant, but it did really hurt, and I'd run into the bedroom crying. They would threaten to hurt me if I told anyone they said these things. (in HREOC, 1997, sub. 133)

Paul's statement clearly reflects the refusal of many white Australians to view 'half-caste' children as equal, regardless of their upbringing and training in welfare institutions to ostensibly behave, sound and think like a white person. Even in the 1950s and 1960s, possibilities within the labour market continued to be bleak, as employers were unwilling to hire Aboriginal people they could easily replace with migrant workers from Southern Europe and Asia. Many enquiries sent to the *Aboriginal Welfare Office* by former 'wards of the State' asking for assistance in finding a job were rejected by the welfare officers with explanations such as the one sent to a girl asking for support in 1956, "I have not met with a sympathetic employer" (AWB Correspondence Files, 1949-69).

At the 1965 *Native Welfare Conference*, which turned out to be the last official meeting where the destiny of 'half-castes' and their absorption into white society was officially debated, once fervent supporters of the assimilation policy recognised that their strategy of absorbing 'half-castes' into the white mainstream society had clearly failed. Instead of realising that the forced removal of 'half-castes' from their indigenous families had destroyed the lives and future prospects of thousands of children, the policymakers lamented that the children had great difficulty in simply accepting their destiny as children who were to become assimilated "in their best interest" (Wilson & Link-Up, 1997, p. 133).

Conclusion

In this article, I have analysed whiteness as a process and mechanism of power that became arbitrarily installed and embedded in an academic and political discourse with the purpose of carrying out a biological and cultural assimilation policy in Australia. The life stories of each of the more than 100,000 members of the Stolen Generation, who were forcibly removed from their Aboriginal environment to be 'taught' whiteness in training and welfare institutions and

white households, reflects how notions of whiteness were transformed and moulded to justify the disciplinary and regulatory techniques of power that Foucault called biopolitics. At the same time, however, the ethnic boundaries that had been crossed with the unofficial sexual intercourse between whites and the Aboriginal population, leading to an increasing number of 'half-castes', were sustained and racial difference was institutionally and culturally reproduced.

The consequences for the failure to realise the white supremacist biological and cultural assimilation project of the twentieth century have not faded, as the stories from the Stolen Generations prove. In this sense, Dr Wendy Brady, Director of the *Aboriginal Research and Resource Centre* at the University of New South Wales, made a fair and promising, but very challenging claim for a better future: "The colonisers ... must transform their 'whiteness'. They must decolonise their minds and reject a worldview where all those who are not white are *blak*" (in Docker & Fischer, 2000, p. 270). With their programme of forced biological and cultural assimilation of 'half-castes', Australia's political and academic elites deployed a concept of whiteness that was arbitrary, fluid and purportedly transformative at the same time. However, despite all attempts to change the racial demography and society in Australia, these elites finally failed because they had not only reached the financial limits to maintain their assimilation policy in border schools, missionaries and foster homes, but the limits of social acceptance for a policy that harmed the lives of thousands of indigenous children and families.

Author Note

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GENERAL ISSUE

'Too Tall, Too Dark' to be Australian: Racial Perceptions of Post-refugee Africans

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This article discusses the cultural and linguistic identities of Africans of refugee backgrounds (hereafter post-refugees) and how they are perceived by the wider Australian society. Drawing on oral interview data collected from 15 post-refugee Africans originally from Sudan, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo now living in Victoria, Australia, the article provides empirical evidence to support the argument that the everyday politics of race and fear of the 'non-desired Other' have resulted in the construction of stereotyped perceptions about post-refugee Africans. A common view expressed by the majority of participants is that Australian racial attitudes which were prevalent during the heyday of the White Australia Policy still persist and lie hidden behind widely used policy terminology such as 'social inclusion', 'multiculturalism' and 'migrant integration'. The increase in black African migrants in Australia over the past two decades has led to media and policy debate on blackness and the fear of the non-desired Other, which can be understood in relation to existing international discourses on race, racial ideologies and colour blind racism. The empirical observations of this article concerning the racial experiences of post-refugee Africans confirm the subtle forms of exclusion exercised through integration and assimilationist conceptions of Australian citizenship and national identity.

Keywords: post-refugee Africans; Australian national identity; language; citizenship; discrimination; colour blind racism

Introduction

Post-refugee Africans living in Australia have increasingly attracted a significant amount of political, legislative and media attention. In the last decade, the Australian media has been awash with discourses on African migrants and their 'failure to integrate' into mainstream Australian society. The extensive media

coverage of dark skinned Africans (particularly those originally from Sudan), typifying them as a 'problematic' and non-desired 'Other', has generated stereotyped perceptions about all African people. In particular, media and policy discourse on black African immigration to Australia reiterates tropes of race and whiteness which were popular in colonial-era Australia. Politicians, social service providers, government agencies and members of the general public are perceived by participants in this study to have contributed to the ongoing negative stereotyping of black Africans whose physical appearances and cultures are perceived as not fitting within mainstream normative conceptions of Australian identity.

Since the passage of the *Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948* (Cth) the parameters of what it means to be Australian have traditionally been associated with Anglo-Australian cultural norms. While introducing the bill that led to this Act, the first Australian Minister of Immigration, Arthur Calwell stated the intended effect of Australian citizenship: "We shall try to teach the children [of migrants and new citizens] that they are fortunate to be British, and even more fortunate to be Australian" (Klapdor, Coombs & Bohm, 2009, p. 6). In 1973 the Labor Party Government led by Gough Whitlam introduced amendments to the *Australian Citizenship Act 1948* calling for a non-racially based immigration and citizenship policy. However, the amendments did not receive bipartisan support from the conservative side of politics¹ with A. J. Forbes, former Immigration Minister of the Liberal Government, declaring:

What is wrong with treating people who are differently placed? What is wrong with discrimination when there are valid overwhelming reasons to discriminate? People from Britain historically have been treated differently because they integrate more quickly into the Australian community than any other national group. (Klapdor, Coombs & Bohm, 2009, p. 9)

As can be seen from Forbes' statement, there is a strong political philosophy of integration underpinning Australian national identity, whereby new citizens are expected to embrace Anglo-Australian norms and cultural values. When 'new' migrant groups, such as African refugees, become the focus of media and political attention we see an extension of longstanding governmental discourse that frames the behaviours and attitudes of non-white migrants as a 'problem' to be managed by and for the wider Australian society. This article, therefore, signposts the meanings of Australian citizenship and identity expressed in everyday social interactions between newly arrived immigrant minorities and members of the broader Australian community. It aims to problematise social practices of racism in public spaces that cannot be easily configured within the language of 'official' institutional policy around refugees, migration and multiculturalism.

Conceptual Issues—Racial Ideology and Colour Blind Racism

¹ The Australian Labour Party is generally considered a centre-left party while the Liberal Party is generally considered a centre-right wing political party.

The argument of this article and the ensuing analysis is underpinned by Bonilla-Silva's conceptual framework of colour blind racism. Bonilla-Silva typifies previous approaches to race studies as informed by a rather simplistic formulaic framework iterated as: prejudice → attitudes → discrimination. He sees in this a lack of "an analysis of power dynamics: that is, these researchers do not connect racial beliefs to a system of racial domination ... and are essentially wedded to methodological individualism" (Bonilla-Silva, 2010, p. 63). In his framework of colour blind racism, Bonilla-Silva makes a strong case for shifting the focus of examination from actors' racial views within the individualistic framework of the prejudice paradigm to the group-based framework of the racial ideology paradigm. He proposes a conceptual apparatus to explicate how we ought to conceive and study racial ideology. The premise of Bonilla-Silva's framework is that although overt forms of race-based discrimination have long been abolished in contemporary liberal democratic societies such as the United States of America, Australia and Canada, a new form of prejudice has come to prominence.

Colour blind racism explains how contemporary racial inequalities and attitudes are reproduced through practices that are subtle, institutional, and appear non-racial on the surface. Instead of revolving around explicitly racial epithets, colour blind racism is used by those who practice it to reproduce 'Otherness' implicitly, for example, 'these people are human too', and 'they are behind because they do not work hard enough' (Bonilla-Silva, 2006, p. 3). Colour blind racism is essentially racism without racists. In other words, the ideological ensemble of racism is masked behind the supposedly tolerant, non-racist and liberal linguistic usages of those practising it. Racial ideology thus operates as an interpretative repertoire (Wetherell & Potter, 1992) consisting of frames, styles or racetalk, and racial stories. These elements are employed by individual actors "as building blocks for manufacturing versions on actions, self, and social structures in communicative situations" (Bonilla-Silva, 2010, p. 67). Furthermore, the language of colour blind racism is typically slippery, apparently contradictory, and subtle. Bonilla-Silva spells out the stylistic elements of the language of colour blind racism as consisting of avoidance of racist terminology, semantic moves to avoid what has been labelled as racist (racetalk), use of diminutives, projection strategies and rhetorical incoherence.

There are four central frames of colour blind racism. First is *abstract liberalism*, which involves using ideas associated with political liberalism (for example, equal opportunity) and economic liberalism (such as individual choice in a free market economy) in an abstract manner to explain racial matters. The net effect of abstract liberalism on minorities is that it rationalises racially inequitable situations. The second frame is that of *naturalisation of racial phenomena*, which allows those engaging in racism and discrimination to explain away their practices by suggesting they are natural occurrences. For instance, people that revel in racist ideology often claim segregation is natural because people from all backgrounds 'gravitate toward likeness' and that this is just 'the way things are'. Frame number three is the *biologisation of culture or cultural racism*, which relies on culturally biased, stereotyped and subjective arguments such as 'blacks have too many babies' to explain the political standing of minorities in society (Bonilla-

Silva, 2006, p. 28). The fourth frame is *minimisation of racism* and involves downplaying the significance of racism through the use of such rhetorical strategies as, 'It's better now than in past', 'every wave of migrants that came to Australia went through this', and 'there is discrimination but there are plenty of jobs out there'. The consequence of this framework is that the whole ensemble of subtle everyday racist discourses and practices often go unnoticed as they are concealed beneath these linguistic minimisation strategies.

The framework of colour blind racism has many aspects that intersect with Etienne Balibar's (1991) concept of cultural racism, which has been tested and found to be a useful explanatory paradigm in previous research in the field of racism and whiteness studies in Australia. For example, a study by Fiona McAllan (2011) uses the colour blind racism framework as well as some of Balibar's ideas to demonstrate how Australian mainstream institutions and culture have historically been organised around the maintenance of white hegemony. Citing the work of Doane (2003), McAllan concludes that the ideology of colour blindness is essentially used as a stealth project within the semi-conscious settler drive to maintain white dominance. Similarly, another Australian scholar of race and whiteness studies, Margaret Allen productively uses insights from colour blind ideology and cultural racism to analyse Australian migrant family stories on race and racism from a historical perspective. Allen (2011) looks at the histories of some non-white non-Indigenous migrant families to support the argument that the Australian history of racialisation was "always formed in a relationship to notions of whiteness through the driving force of nation building and the role of families in the reproduction of nation" (p. 3).

Using insights from Bonilla-Silva's framework of colour blind racism, the following sections discuss the experiences of post-refugee Africans with racism in Australia and how their experiences reflect the resurgence of the ideology of the White Australia Policy of the 1900s.²

Data, Methods and Procedures

Refugee studies and humanitarian studies in general have been criticised for revealing "a paucity of good social science, rooted in a lack of rigorous conceptualisation and research design, weak methods and general failure to address the ethical problems of researching vulnerable communities" (Jacobsen & Landau, 2003, p. 187). The strong tendency towards advocacy research (where researchers go to the field to prove what they already know) has been singled out as something that risks doing refugees a disservice because there is the potential consequence of widespread acceptance of unsubstantiated facts about refugees and other forced migrants. Furthermore, much of the work on forced migration is said to be weakened by the researcher's failure to reveal key components of the research design and methodology (p. 187). Some of the

² The White Australia Policy was Australia's approach to immigration from federation (1901) until the latter part of the 20th century. It favoured applicants from selected European countries in order to consolidate white 'racial purity' and entrench Anglo-Celtic cultural norms as the foundational 'values' of what it means to be Australian.

crucial information that is rarely revealed includes the following: how many people were interviewed, where the interviews took place, how the subjects were identified and selected and how translation or local security issues were handled. The research ethics of accountability are heavily compromised in the absence of this information.

Jacobsen and Landau (2003) also note the dual imperative faced by social science researchers working in the field of refugee studies to produce work that is both academically sound and policy relevant. I would add a third imperative concerning the co-articulation of research agendas and the needs of refugee background participants. In addition, Mackenzie, McDowell and Pittaway (2007, p. 303) note that while "consent is typically understood in individualistic terms ... in some cultural contexts consent is not just a matter of securing agreement between the researcher and individual research participants but may also involve negotiating an agreement with community bodies or representatives". The body of literature on refugee studies further posit that protracted displacement situations can undermine people's sense of their own identity, their sense of self-worth, as well as their trust in themselves, thereby affecting, at least to some degree, their capacities for self-determination (p. 303). The question is how often do researchers take all these issues into account and what are the ethical (privacy and confidentiality) implications of securing consent through third parties?

In the light of the methodological and ethical limitations noted above, what follows in this article is an attempt to illustrate a set of concerns rather than to make claims about all refugee and post-refugee research in Australia and internationally.

Recruitment of Participants

Participants were recruited through the researcher's personal contacts among members of the African community in Melbourne. These contacts were requested to explain to potential participants the nature of the project and ensure involvement on their part was willing and without pressure. Pre-recruitment information sessions were conducted in the Melbourne suburbs of Footscray, Dandenong, Noble Park and Clayton. A stratified sampling technique based on the parameter of ethnic/linguistic background was used in selecting participants. The ethnicity variable was important in ensuring representativeness in relation to social diversity among post-refugee Africans living in Melbourne. Initially, up to 20 prospective participants were targeted to be interviewed either as individuals or in focus groups. However, in the end, 15 people originally from Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Eritrea volunteered to participate. This number was determined by availability of participants and the principle of theoretic saturation. Nine male and six female participants aged 18 years and above were included in the sample. Two research assistants of African refugee background helped with organisation of participants to be interviewed. A much bigger sample would have been desirable but this was hampered by the fact that most refugee background people are difficult to reach and their irregular work conditions (most of them do casual shift work) saw some prospective

interviewees cancelling appointments at short notice or withdrawing their participation altogether.

Methods of Data Collection

Data was collected through semi-structured and in-depth open-ended interviews. Participants were involved in 20 to 25 minute interviews, which took the form of open-ended discussions. Fourteen participants were interviewed in English since it is one of the languages they could speak well. They were asked to tell their personal stories and experiences with being and becoming Australian citizens. Only one participant preferred being interviewed in Arabic with a bilingual research assistant interpreting. All data was recorded using an Olympus DS-30 digital recorder.

Mackenzie, McDowell and Pittaway (2007) have cautioned against the use of interpreters in research involving vulnerable people such as those from refugee and other humanitarian backgrounds. They argue that reliance on translators can be ethically problematic. Poor translation can hamper the kind of mutual understanding required for ethical researchers, as well as potentially undermining the validity of the research. These concerns are very real as they point to the risk of biased responses resulting from the use of translators or local research assistants. However, in the case of the study being reported here, the possibility of skewed data as a result of the use of interpreters was very slim as only one out of fifteen interviews involved the use of an interpreter.

Techniques of Analysing and Handling Data

All data was handled and analysed manually. In order to ensure that all items of data in one interview were compared with data from other interviews, two approaches were used: constant comparative analysis and content analysis. In constant comparative analysis, some data was transcribed and examined for content immediately after collection, allowing ideas which emerged from earlier interviews to be included in forthcoming interviews. As a result, it became possible to recognise new ideas and themes as they emerged from the collected data. Hypotheses about the relationship between various ideas and themes were tested out leading to the formation of new concepts and understandings using the constant comparative method.

Content analysis was undertaken in order to categorise oral data for the purposes of classification, summarisation and tabulation. There were two levels at which the content was analysed: the manifest level, which entailed a descriptive account of the data stating what was actually said by the participants; and the interpretative level where attention was mainly focused on what was meant by the response, or what was inferred or implied. Content analysis extracts of data that were informative in some way, were identified and important messages hidden in the mass of each interview sorted out. For the purposes of safeguarding the anonymity of participants' identities, name codes were allocated using the overall focus of the research (citizenship testing = CT) followed by a number, 1 up to 15. That is, CT 1, CT 2, CT 3 ... CT 15.

Results and Analysis—Participants' Personal Stories

This section focuses on participants' personal stories and experiences after their official conferral of Australian citizenship. The key questions addressed here are the following: What does being Australian mean for black African migrants? What are the participants' everyday personal experiences and perceptions about being and becoming Australian? How do normative assumptions of Australian national identity intersect or diverge with the participants' perceptions and assumptions about being and becoming Australian?

The sampled participants criticised the one-size-fits-all requirements for admittance into the Australian community through the Australian values and history test (popularly known as the citizenship test) introduced in 2007 by the Howard Government.³ Both the Howard Government version of the citizenship test and the one revised by the Rudd/Gillard Government were also criticised in broader public discourse for the tests' adherence to contested notions of Australian values. The criticisms centred on the Anglo-centric bias betrayed by the requirement that test takers must demonstrate: (a) adequate knowledge of Australian history and 'values' (which centred on Anglo-Australian cultural norms); and (b) adequate English language proficiency skills. One participant, CT 5 observed that "the Australian history and values test is just a smokescreen for the very many things that you are not ... We can't become Australian because we are too tall, we are too dark ... we are always too something to be Australian" (CT 5). It is apparent from this comment that the physical appearances of African migrants as culturally 'different' are overlain with the sense of exclusion that emerges out of the Anglo-centric bias of the values tested for Australian citizenship.

The citizenship test is administered electronically and is ostensibly colour blind. In this way, the tests can avoid charges of overt racism or discrimination based on asocial conceptions of the Internet and electronic media. It is often the case that tests are not used for the sole purpose of measuring knowledge but rather as "a key to some bureaucratic agenda, such as gate-keeping the very people that the bureaucrats wish to exclude. Tests then become the alibi, the legitimate tool for inclusion and exclusion" (Shohamy, 2001, p. 86). A test that measures people's understanding of subjective Australian values and history can be seen as representing abstract liberalism, that frame of colour blind racism in which the exclusion and discrimination of some racial groups is hidden behind institutional processes and policies (such as a citizenship test) that are couched in liberal terms. That is to say, while the liberal idea of availing the citizenship test to all prospective citizens (equal opportunity) may appear reasonable and moral, such an approach to naturalisation simultaneously opposes "almost all practical approaches to deal with de facto racial inequality" (Bonilla-Silva, 2006, p. 28) and marginalisation of black African refugee background people in Australia by

³ See Cheng this issue on the political contestation over 'Australian values' in the citizenship test.

excluding race, and therefore racism, as a significant obstacle to informal citizenship and social acceptance.

In their personal stories about their perceptions of the Australian history and values test and their lived experiences as Australian citizens with a dark skin complexion, most participants noted tensions around competing narratives about being and becoming Australian camouflaged by the citizenship testing regime. They clearly pointed out that whereas formal government policy supposedly confers equality and privileges to all, the social and cultural meanings of membership, access and belonging are determined by colour of skin. Citing the example of negative publicity and stigmatisation of black Africans following an incident of youth street violence in the South Eastern suburbs of Melbourne in August 2007, CT 13 observed:

I think we get a different kind of treatment because of our skin colour. We definitely get a different treatment because we are in a way a visible minority; we really stand out and it's hard to disappear in the group just like that.

In other words, a perception exists among the sampled group that regardless of their new status as formal Australian citizens, they are discriminated against because their physical appearances do not 'look Australian'. Broadly speaking, there were two forms of what participants perceived as 'colour' based discrimination and exclusion: (i) racism implied in supposedly inclusive Australian immigration policies (such as the Australian history and values test); and (ii) everyday social encounters in public spaces. As noted above, these subtle forms of racism can be explained in terms of Bonilla-Silva's notion of abstract liberalism.

The participants' concerns over the unfairness of the citizenship test to refugees from non-Anglo backgrounds were vindicated by the findings of the Australian Citizenship Test Review Committee, which was set up in April 2008. A major finding of the Review Committee was that the test is flawed because of its narrow and subjective framing of what constitutes Australian 'values', it was intimidating to some and discriminatory because its one-size-fits-all approach does not recognise the linguistic and cultural diversity of test takers (Commonwealth of Australia, 2008). These findings were also supported by independent academic reviews of the Australian citizenship test, particularly the work of Kim Rubenstein (2008), Tim McNamara (2009) and Bennett and Tait (2008). All these studies question the validity of whether formal citizenship testing of culturally and linguistically diverse groups is an appropriate mechanism for achieving an inclusive multicultural policy objective. Highlighting a shift by successive Australian governments away from multiculturalism to a rhetoric of integration, Bennett and Tait (2008, p. 80) argue that instead of celebrating diversity, the citizenship test "seeks unity, cohesion and commitment through assimilation into mainstream Australia and a loss or lessening of cultural identity and practices."

Speaking about the racism implied in government policies and practiced by some government agencies, participants expressed scepticism at the sincerity of the supposedly non-racist immigration and citizenship policies of Australia. This was

said to be the case especially during the era of the Howard Government. Former immigration minister Kevin Andrews' 2007 assertion that African immigrants had failed to 'integrate' into mainstream Australian society was repeatedly cited by different participants as one example of how racist discourse is deeply imprinted in the hearts and minds of some senior politicians. Following the fatal bashing of a Sudanese background youth at the Melbourne suburb of Noble Park (which was part of the street violence prominently reported on by the mainstream media during the last days of the Howard government), Andrews made following statement, circulated widely in media and public discourse:

I have been concerned that some groups don't seem to be settling and adjusting into the Australian way of life as quickly as we would hope and therefore it makes sense to put the extra money in to provide extra resources, *but also to slow down the rate of intake from countries such as Sudan.* (in Farouque, Petrie & Miletic, 2007; my emphasis)

The above assertion betrays some of the rather unreasonable expectations that immigrants should be able to adjust to the "Australian way of life" and that failure to do so results in violence and loss of social cohesion. In making a link between assimilation to 'Australian values' and social cohesion, integration as a policy objective and method of migration management is apparent. Expedient cultural change and conformity is expected from immigrants under the assimilation/integration model, which can create unwarranted antagonism and alienation of new immigrants who need resettlement support regardless of their cultural values. In her comments on the unreasonable and insensitive attitudes to refugees and other forced migrants such as the one cited above, Liisa Malkki (1992, p. 33) posits that "sedentarist assumptions about attachment to place lead us to define displacement not as a fact about socio-political context, but rather as an inner, pathological condition of the displaced." Drawing on the metaphorical notion of roots and being rooted in places, Malkki further argues that the plight of refugees is not one-dimensional and that a refugee's roots may be more pliable and dynamic than currently recognised. What is clearly missing in comments such as Andrews' about African refugees is an appreciation of the circumstances of refugees and the complexity of ways in which they "construct, remember, and lay claim to particular places as 'homelands' or 'nations'" (p. 24). Instead, there is only one method of settlement offered that revolves around cultural assimilation.

The participants who cited the above comment by Andrews also argued that instead of sympathising with African background migrants as victims of street violence that need community support in their resettlement efforts, the senior government official was contemplating reducing African refugee intake. In other words, instead of being assured of more protection by the government and the community, African refugees were seen as a problem. Those participants who talked about this incident saw it as evidence of unfair treatment based on race or skin colour that suggested they did not belong in Australia. This further demonstrates the limitations of monocultural Australian conceptions of identity and belonging as outlined by CT 7:

Yes, so I can be a citizen on paper but my skin is not. You remember the incident in Noble Park in which one Sudanese guy was killed by a white guy in 2007! Instead of condemning the white person the immigration minister blamed the Africans for failing to integrate. This is wrong.

These concerns were echoed by participant CT 3 who narrated her personal experience with what she felt was racial prejudice on the part of the police in a case in which her nephew had been badly assaulted by a white teenager. CT 3 said the following revealing statement about the attitude of the police towards black Africans:

But you cannot ignore the fact that some people are racist, especially when it's coming from the police. Mostly they focus on the bad things that the Africans do. You know, my sister's son was hit by another kid with an iron bar and was in hospital for a long time, I don't know how many hours of operation; it wasn't a big deal for the police. But if it was a Sudanese who did that it would be a big deal.

Another participant also gave the following account of her encounter with what she interpreted as racist practices by the police:

I remember I met a policeman who was interrogating this small [African background] kid and I asked if the kid was ok and he replied: "I know in your country you do this but this is Australia, we don't do this in Australia". Now I thought how do you know I am not an Australian citizen? How do you know maybe I was born in Australia? How then if I am an Australian citizen can you tell me that we do not do these things in this country, I know in your country you let kids walk around but in Australia we don't do that? (CT 9)

Here we see the frame of biologisation of culture (cultural racism) in operation in the police officer's interaction with CT 9. To arrive at the conclusion that CT 9 belonged to another country, which is not Australia, the police officer was guided by nothing else but the skin colour of the participant. This perception of belonging betrays a stereotyped view that all black Africans have similar negative and inferior behaviour traits, here inferred as an antagonistic attitude towards law enforcement, by virtue of the colour of their skin.

Based on their encounters with law enforcement agencies, some participants also felt that even if they had passed the Australian history and values test and were subsequently conferred the official status of being an Australian, they will always remain an alien as long as the colour of their skin does not look 'Australian'. CT 9 went on to discuss at length the various ways social inclusion policies constitute another site of endemic discrimination that forces her to feel less Australian and more African. She revealed how subtle forms of exclusion are played out in political rhetoric and government discourse masked behind seemingly inclusive words such as 'social inclusion', 'racial tolerance', and 'multiculturalism'. When asked to talk about her feelings as a recently naturalised Australian citizen, CT 9 gave the following thoughtful response:

To answer your question, I don't think that I feel like an Australian citizen. I think I am second class, third class, or some sixth class citizen somewhere. I definitely

think there is some hierarchy of citizens in Australia; some are more citizen than others. You look at the media, you look at the political rhetoric in debates and you realise you are not Australian, you are not accepted even though. The government that gives you a certificate saying 'Australian citizen' is the same government that institutionally and in a lot of other ways continues to exclude you from the very same identity that they have given you. I don't think people become Australian because of the citizenship certificate. You are always going to have a Sudanese identity more than you are ever going to be an Australian.

CT 9 powerfully explains here the difference between being a formal citizen on paper and the social and cultural practices of citizenship in governmental, media and public discourse. The criticism of this difference raises the following question: When does one cease being an immigrant and become recognised as a full member of Australian society?

The evidence from participants in my study suggests a gloomy picture of the possibility of black African cultural identities being accepted and recognised as an integral part of being Australian. The integration model of Australian national identity further complicates the plight of new citizens in the sense that it seeks to normalise them by ensuring they embrace dominant Anglo-Australian values, linguistic and cultural norms. This is problematic as the normative, monolingual ideal of Australian citizenship is antithetical to a multicultural society with a diverse history of immigration and languages. Becoming a citizen of a new country, feeling like one and being recognised as one is not an event that can be actuated by the conferral of a citizenship certificate at a citizenship ceremony. Rather, the process of naturalisation into a new society and a new national identity is long and arduous. It often involves significant adjustments and changes on the part of both the new citizen and other categories of citizens. For forced migrants such as refugee background people, this process is even much longer and painful because of "the traumatic nature of their refugee experience, cultural dislocation, loss of established social networks, learning a new language and new culture, making new friends, navigating unfamiliar and complex social systems and negotiating individual, family and community expectations" (Refugee Council of Australia, 2009). Challenges such as these have, to a degree, implications for how people of refugee backgrounds perceive themselves (and are perceived by others) in terms of belonging to Australia. The data from this study indicates that experiences of belonging to the nation are inflected with discrimination, which participants perceived to exist from both the state and the wider Australian society.

Another experience of 'colour'-based forms of discrimination was in participants' everyday social interactions with different groups of people in different settings. Micro-social settings such as workplaces, schools, shopping malls, trains and buses featured prominently as public sites where subtle forms of racism and colour-based forms of exclusion were prevalent. Micro-social settings are those local contexts where social interaction occurs at the individual and small group levels, which can cause reverberations throughout an entire nation (Wallace & Wolff, 2006; Potter, 2006). In his examination of social actors' views on racial attitudes and racial ideology in America, Bonilla-Silva (2010, p. 66) cautions:

It is a mistake to interpret whites' racial views as the direct effect of the ideological work of white elites. Poor and middle-class whites are not passive repositories of some 'objective interests' or supra-consciousness that tells them what to believe, say, feel, or do when in the presence of racial minorities. Instead the white masses have some real agency, that is, they participate in the construction, development, and transformation of racial ideology since, after all, it is in their interest to maintain white supremacy.

Narrating their frustrations with trying to secure paid employment, most participants in this study suggested discrimination was more pronounced in everyday activities with ordinary people in public spaces. They felt that the colour of their skin "is a bit daunting because some [employers] may not consider you as Australian" (CT 3). When asked if there was a specific situation in which she felt she did not get a job because of her skin colour, this is what CT 3 had to say:

Yeah, I did apply for a job once. When I applied the lady asked me to come and when I went there they asked me when will you come to work and I said on Friday. But when I went there she pretended she didn't know me and she said "I didn't tell you to come. I said you should wait until I call you". And that is wrong. Maybe she thought because I am African and black I am not capable of doing the job. But it wasn't a hard job, as long as you know A B C D, you can do it. A lot of African background people don't get jobs because when they [employers] see it's black from Africa they won't give you a job, maybe if it's black like African-American, maybe.

CT 3 muses that black African-Americans would most likely receive better treatment than blacks from Africa. For CT 3, discrimination is not just about being 'black' but rather being black from the African continent. This differentiation of blackness suggests that the stigmatisation and negative stereotyping of black African people in Australia is implicitly connected to discourses about 'Africa', the paradigms and politics through which the ideas of Africa and being 'African' have been constructed and consumed, and sometimes condemned (Zeleza, 2006, p. 14) since European colonial imperialism. The African continent and its peoples have historically been labelled as 'backward', 'uncivilised', 'uneducated' and therefore unable to do anything meaningful. This perception appears to have migrated to settler Australia as it came up in a focus group interview with four African migrant youth where one participant made the following comment:

It's amazing how people have confined people that look like us to this socio-economic group, can't do this, can't do that. I get this feeling that being my colour is perceived as being inadequate and not able to comprehend most things that a white person would.

The sentiments expressed in the above interview point to stereotypes about new migrants' abilities that are racialised for black post-refugee Africans. What we see here is the continued racial stratification and the reproduction of inequality that is obscured by ostensibly race neutral policy objectives around citizenship and naturalisation. African migrants are constructed through racial tropes of

African-ness as unable to comprehend and participate in Australia's employment economy and are then blamed for their failure to integrate.

Several examples were also given of non-formal settings in communities where racist statements are noticed in everyday small-talk. One example that featured prominently in participants' discussions was the implicit reminder by Australians with a lighter skin colour that African background people with dark skin colour do not belong in Australia. Participants were reminded of the view that they did not belong in Australia by constantly being asked: 'where are you from?' or 'where do you come from?' Expressing her frustration with assumptions that she belongs somewhere other than Australia, CT 14 said:

Also something that I have seen a lot is "where are you from?" It doesn't matter wherever it is, you can never escape that question. If you say you are from Dandenong [a suburb in South-eastern Melbourne] they say no, where are you from? So in a sense indicating where do you originally come from and when you say I am from Sudan then they say oh, Sudan! That's the answer they are always looking for. That very statement, which I personally have heard a lot of times just makes you realise how much Australian you are not no matter how much you try.

The participant went on to point out that people with a lighter skin colour are rarely asked this question simply because they 'look Australian' and therefore it is taken for granted that they are Australian citizens even if they might be foreigners. The point here is that it is skin colour that speaks to cultural acceptance not formal citizenship status. This line of thinking was further illustrated by another participant who gave a long narration of her encounter with everyday forms of racial abuse in the public transport system in Victoria.

I have got a bus driver over in Ballarat that doesn't stop. He just keeps passing me. He really sometimes becomes very offensive. On this other day he picks this Sudanese boy wearing sagging pants and he really went out and shouted at him: "you black people bring your culture here!", you know, and everybody in the bus kept quiet as if nothing had happened. And he went on and on and on. And then on this other day, we took a bus in Ballarat and we were talking in KiSwahili. The bus driver got very offended and actually another guy seating next to us got really angry and wanted to beat us up because we were speaking in a different language. He said "You should speak in English, this is Australia, you should speak in English! You can't come here and want every right and keep speaking your own language!" He was so visibly angry we thought he was going to beat the hell out of us in the bus. It makes you realise that we live in very different realities. Those people from minority groups live in very different realities from those in the mainstream and sometimes when we talk about these things people tend to think that they are a little bit exaggerated but in fact they are actually true. (CT 12)

The irony in all of this is that the bus driver and the passenger who insisted that migrants should speak English ignore or are ignorant of the fact that English is a migrant language too. The only 'native' Australian language would be Aboriginal languages. This clearly betrays the fallacy of Anglo-centric imaginings of being and becoming Australian. Furthermore, the negative attitudes of both the bus driver and passenger in CT 12's story reflect longstanding international

pathological representations of refugees and other displaced persons. For instance, writing in a post-World War II study, Claudius Kazys Cirtautas (1957, p. 73) characterised the mental and moral attributes of the "typical refugee" as follows:

The refugees' conduct makes it obvious that we are dealing with individuals who are basically amoral, without any sense of personal or social responsibility ... They no longer feel themselves bound by ethical precepts which every honest citizen respects ... They become a menace, dangerous characters who will stop at nothing.

The notion that refugees bring a 'dangerous' culture to Australia is echoed in the bus driver's disdain with the black African refugees when he accuses them of bringing their 'culture' to Australia. Some attributes of migrant minorities that are perceived to be a 'menace' and 'danger' to society include their proficiency in multiple languages and their diverse cultural backgrounds that defy the normative idea that being an English monolingual is what it means to be Australian. However, for most African background people, proficiency in multiple languages other than English is not an exception but a social norm. It was partly for this reason that participant CT 12 was appalled when confronted for speaking KiSwahili with her friends. In another study with African migrants in Melbourne, I have argued that "it is only in a polarized society that we sometimes get people feeling threatened by others' languages" (Ndhlovu, 2010, p. 295). A social compulsion to speak in the host language is not limited to African migrants. In February 2009, newspaper reports about Indian students who had experienced a spate of muggings and random attacks in Melbourne carried advice by one Indian community leader that students should not speak in their native languages. The students were also advised not to speak loudly "as this could be taken as violent behaviour" (Topsfield, 2009).

Overall, what is highlighted by the interview data analysed in this article is that we should not be misled by government policies that seemingly oppose racism or any other forms of discrimination in settlement and citizenship policy. The data I obtained for this study suggests that whereas Australian citizenship is ostensibly open to all who meet set criteria, Australian nationality or national identity is not easily accessible to African migrants whose physical appearances and language practices do not look and sound 'Australian'. This means that while citizenship is largely about the new status conferred by the governing authorities, national belonging comprises much more and is positioned in social and political discourse as normatively Anglo-Celtic. African background people are not easily imagined as embodying an Australian national identity by virtue of their skin colour, socio-cultural backgrounds and language proficiencies.

Summary and Conclusions

This article has discussed the perceptions of African background people regarding race and discrimination in Australia. I have argued that Australian citizenship is underpinned by normative conceptions of Australian national identity as Anglo-Celtic and white that work to exclude non-white citizens from national belonging.

Submissions from the sampled participants suggest that subtle forms of discrimination based on colour of skin and cultural attributes are firmly located in: (a) supposedly inclusive and non-racist Australian immigration and citizenship laws; and (b) in micro-social settings within communities such as schools, work places and in the public transport system.

A worrisome trend was noted regarding the normative assumptions of Australian national identity. There is a tendency in policy and public discourse to conflate citizenship with national identity based on the simplistic assumption that being naturalised into the citizenship of a country means automatic entry into its national identity. The findings of this paper suggest that we need to decouple citizenship and national identity (Soysal, 1994) in order to tease out the beliefs and fallacies underlying the two notions. While it may be fairly easy to take on new citizenship as normatively defined and granted by the governing authorities, it is not that simple to gain entry and be accepted into the national community of that same country. Black African migrants in Australia have attained the right to call themselves Australian citizens but they are still a long way from feeling as though they belong to the national community or considered by others as 'Australian'. Particular kinds of micro-social exclusions, such as being denied employment opportunities, can be exercised by Anglo-citizens because the ideology of colour blind racism enables them to do so with relative ease. The views of participants in this study contest and complicate the national order of identity and belonging, suggesting that the locus of legitimacy and membership of newly conferred Australian citizens should transcend formal government conceptions to encompass awareness and education among mainstream Australian communities regarding issues of identity, belonging, acceptance and accommodation of cultural and linguistic difference. This is precisely because the exercising of citizenship rights (or lack therefore) takes place in local communities.

In the final analysis, the following traits of African of migrants are seen as complicating their easy social acceptance in Australia: they are 'too dark', 'too tall', speak 'too many' languages, they are 'too culturally diverse' and belong to 'too many' places. All of these do not sit well within normative assumptions about what it means to be Australian, which is reproduced in dominant media, political and public discourse as monolingual and singular and associated with Anglo-European-ness. These representations of race, and cycles of the politics of fear and mistrust of the non-desired Other, remain central to conceptions of what it means to be Australian. The findings of the study reported in this article confirm what has been long-held by previous Australian and international research: that the ugly face of discrimination and bigotry did not disappear with the 1970s demise of the White Australia Policy. Focusing our attention on micro-social settings is, therefore, an important way in which the racism that structures everyday life can be exposed and contested.

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