ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WHITENESS & THE HORIZONS OF RACE

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The ACRAWSA Journal is a forum for the growing network of researchers who, as the ACRAWSA website states:

> 'recognise that whiteness operates through institutions, ideology and identity formation to secure political, legal and economic privileges for white people as a collective leaving many Indigenous and other people racialised as 'non white' collectively disadvantaged and dispossessed of material, cultural and intellectual resources'.

This whiteness is the invisible norm that is implicit in constructions of identities, representations, subjectivities nationalisms and legal systems (Allen 1994; Dyer 1997; Frankenberg 1993). The scholarship supported and promoted by ACRAWSA focuses on a number of key elements. These include recognition and respect for the existence and continuing rights derived from indigenous sovereignties in Australia and elsewhere, and the task of critically investigating, exposing and challenging the construction and maintenance of hierarchies of race through the practices of white privilege.

As Aileen Moreton-Robinson has argued so persuasively, the focus of Australian critical race and whiteness studies extends the critical engagement practiced in British and American studies (viii). In America, critical race and whiteness scholarship effectively locates the field primarily in relation to the development and practices of the enslavement of Africans within the American continent and to a lesser extent with immigration o different ethnic groups. The dispossession of Native Americans and the practices of colonisation tend to be uninterrogated. In Britain critical race and whiteness studies are primarily focused on postcolonial migrations to Britain particularly the reaction to, and the framing of, immigration by those from former colonies not usually included within the designation 'white'. In Australia, critical writings engage with migration, Indigenous dispossession and whiteness. The acts of colonisation and dispossession and their traces in the present are a primary focus of the research and scholarship.

The first issue of this journal produced by ACRAWSA in 2005 featured important and well-known contributors to the field of critical race and whiteness studies. The current issue is focused on new and emerging voices in the field of critical race and whiteness studies. The essays are drawn from papers presented at the Whiteness and the Horizons of Race conference in Brisbane in December 2005.

Moreton-Robinson, as convener of the conference, put out a call for papers arguing that

> 'an academic conference on the historical, social, political, cultural, economic and discursive construction of race and whiteness can make an important contribution to broader public debates, providing the opportunity to examine popular understandings of race and whiteness evaluating the ways in which current and historical debates are and have taken shape' (Horizons of Race 2005a).

This call was in the context of her argument that the discourses of Race and Whiteness are:

inextricably connected to the formation and politics of modern nation states and the communities which inhabit their territories shaping identity, representation, subjectivity, nationalism and institutions such as the law.

As Moreton-Robinson and the organising committee, including Fiona Nicoll and myself hoped, the conference was an interdisciplinary project with contributions from sociologists, social anthropologists, political scientists, psychologists, economists, literary scholars, legal scholars, media scholars, philosophers, historians, and scholars from wide ranging fields such as performance, feminist, Indigenous, multicultural, Australian and cultural studies. The keynote speakers were Professor David Roedigger, Dr Wendy Brady, Dr Suvendrini Perera and Professor Marilyn Lake. The numerous panel sessions included explorations of the dynamic relationship between whiteness and the law, the politics of performativity, the boundaries of tolerance, history and historiography, fictional narratives, multiculturalism, the framing of the domestic, terrorism and the war on terror, religion and compassion, the visual and performing arts (Horizons of Race 2005b).

The conference was remarkable for a number of reasons. Not the least of which were the range of disciplines engaged in direct dialogue and exchange. Another remarkable feature of the conference was the supportive and open atmosphere that gave the proceedings a sense of community and freedom that supported social and cultural exchange as well as academic argument and debate. Another striking feature of the conference was the high level of involvement from post-graduate students and early career researchers. In some ways the involvement of such high numbers of new and emerging scholars reflects the increasing intellectual space for research and scholarship in critical

race and whiteness studies being actively created within academia.

The number of publications engaging with whiteness in Australia is growing, led by publications such as Moreton-Robinson's monograph *Talkin' Up to the White Woman* (2000) and her edited collection of essays from a range of academics in the field, *Whitening Race* (2004). Other publications over the last few of years include books such Warwick Anderson's *The Cultivation of Whiteness: science, health and racial destiny in Australia* (MUP, 2005), Tanya Dalziell's *Settler Romances and the Australian Girl* (UWA Press, 2004). There are also multiple examples of essays by Australians engaging in whiteness studies included in international publications such as *Changing Law: rights regulation and reconciliation* (Ashgate, 2005) and *Critics and Writers Speak: revisioning post-colonial studies* (Lexington Books, 2006). Further extending the field are forthcoming books, such as Damien Riggs' *Taking up the Challenge: critical whiteness studies and indigenous Sovereignty*, and Aileen Moreton-Robinson's collection on Indigenous sovereignty. Supporting these there are journals such as the ACRAWSA Journal and *Borderlands*.

Conferences are also playing an important role in developing and supporting the field with published outcomes of conference proceedings such as *Placing Race and Localising Whiteness* (Flinders University, 2004) edited by Susanne Schech and Ben Wadham.

The number of conferences and seminars focused on whiteness studies is increasing. This year there are a number of conferences focusing on the critical framework of whiteness including the *Borderpolitics of Whiteness Conference* to be held in Sydney, December 11-13, and Historicising Whiteness, to be held in

Melbourne, November 22-24. The *Borderpolitics of Whiteness Conference* is an ACRAWSA event. The keynote speakers will include Professor Aileen Moreton-Robinson, Professor of Indigenous Studies at Queensland University of Technology, Professor David Theo Goldberg, Director, University of California Humanities Research Institute, Professor Cheryl Harris, Law, University of California, Los Angeles and Associate Professor Joseph Pugliese, Critical and Cultural Studies, Macquarie University.

Further developing and supporting the growing interest in whiteness studies there are courses at universities that focus on critical race and whiteness studies such as those taught by Damien Riggs at the University of South Australia and Jane Carey at the University of Melbourne.

In 2003 'whiteness' as a study had begun to achieve sufficient profile to the extent that it was acknowledged in the popular press with quotes from academics such as Ghassan Hage under titles such as 'Middle class blanches at white studies growth' (Lane 3). At the same time the all too prevalent misreadings of whiteness studies as propagating a white ethnicity was mocked in the press by journalists who played on the word whiteness and the potential meanings of its critique (Anonymous; Lane). As the war on terror continues to escalate, it is interesting that at present there are no such popular acknowledgements or engagements with critical race and whiteness theory, however negatively.

Within a country deeply implicated in the global war on terror and with internal policies and practices that isolate and vilify 'non-white' refugees and Indigenous Australians, a journal such as the ACRAWSA journal is a potential forum to document and interrogate the implications and premises of practices

that strengthen and maintain whitenesses as a justification for colonising and racist actions. Fiona Nicoll in her editorial of the inaugural issue of the ACRAWSA journal identified a challenge facing Australian critics. She wrote that "we need to register an important shift in the meanings attached to 'whiteness', 'race' and 'racism' under John Howard's prime ministership" (1) This is a challenge with which many of the essays in this issue directly engage. The contributors essays engage with both the broader issues of whiteness historically and the immediate shifts in the recent past whilst focusing on specific expressions and practices of whiteness.

Satoshi Mizutani is an Assistant Professor at the Institute for Language and Culture, Doshisha University (Kyoto, Japan). Mizutani is currently rewriting his doctoral dissertation into a book, provisionally titled *Boundaries of Whiteness: Racial and Class Ambiguities in Late British India, 1858-1930* for Oxford University Press. Drawing on and extending the research for his dissertation and book interrogating whiteness in the practices of late Colonial India, his essay explores the problems posed to the British administration of India by European and Euro-Asian pauperism. Mizutani breaks new ground with this work by examining the hierarchies of whiteness within colonial Indian society and the steps taken to negotiate and camouflage types of whiteness that weaken the imperial myths.

Based on archival research and framed by critical theories of colonialism and whiteness, he demonstrates how a "domiciled" class of working class whites and Europeans with Asian heritage persistently unsettled the ideological work of British colonialism by countering the mythical ideal of bourgeois white masculinity. The visible presence of these people outside the desired stereotype called into question the myths of Euro-

pean "civilisation" and "progress" through which the British justified their presence and rule in India. After investigating laws, institutions and practices developed to manage the "problem" of European pauperism, the paper concludes with reflections on how the history of this minority within British and post-colonial India complicates ahistorical accounts of social and psychological liminality as well as post-colonial theories of hybridity reliant on an analytical distinction between a metropolitan centre and a colonised periphery.

The next essay by Victoria Sentas, a PhD candidate in the Department of Criminology at Monash University, engages with the present in her examination of counter terrorism policing and the ways in which this policing is part of a long term investment in the racial/colonial state. In the process, her article 'Counter Terrorism Policing - Investing in the Racial State' offers an important theoretical and political analysis of current Australian policing strategies in the 'war against terror'.

In 'White Spaces', Kathleen Connellan investigates the colour 'white' within the visual arts and the architecture and design within the built environment. Connellan, a Lecturer in design, craft and art history and theory at the South Australian School of Art at the University of South Australia, explores the 'invisible', unacknowledged prevalence of whiteness in public and private space exposing implications and implicit beliefs.

> White walls, white surfaces and white expanses are designed to place all other colours into sharp contrast. The smoothness of these white surfaces also shows up texture and variation; the sameness of white in design is positioned as a basis for designed interiors. White in this sense becomes the one upright against which all else is peripheral'.

Connellan describes and analyses specific architectural spaces offering insights into how the problematic conflation between whiteness and light and its associated mythologies of goodness and cleanliness is part of the construction and maintenance of white privilege.

In the fourth essay, Rob Garbutt engages with the foundational and always problematic issue in Australia of being local, of belonging. Garbutt is a PhD candidate with the Centre for Cultural Diversity and Social Justice at Southern Cross University in Lismore, New South Wales. In 'White "Autochthony"', Garbutt examines western conceptualisations of autochthony, the classic Greek concept 'of being born of the earth itself'. He argues that this concept is a useful frame for understanding aspects of the settler Australian idea of "being a local". Garbutt persuasively demonstrates the implicit violence both literal and epistemic that is the corollary of unifying myths of autochthony and plots the specific and unusual path of white settlers claiming 'native' status that has been part of Australian colonial history. His discussion and conclusions are particularly important in the context of scenes such as those that surrounded the Cronulla riots with banners and T-shirts proclaiming 'respect locals or piss off'.

In an exploration of the transitions and deployments of different types of masculinity, Katherine Bode interrogates the myths of Anglo-Celtic Australian masculinity from a different perspective in her essay 'Aussie Battler in Crisis? Shifting Constructions of White Australian Masculinity and National Identity'. Katherine Bode completed her PhD in 2005 and will take up the Colin and Margaret Roderick Postdoctoral Research Fellowship at James Cook University in 2007. After documenting 'the manifestation of the 'man in crisis' in current political and

popular debates', Bode considers the ways in which these debates are expressed, affirmed and sometimes transformed within contemporary Australian women's fiction. She argues that in 'the popular and political arenas, the identities of the Aussie battler and the man in crisis currently exist in tension'. However, despite these tensions and the reconfigurings of Australian masculine identities within these tensions, she concludes that 'contemporary Australian women's fictions continue to imagine Australian identity in terms of whiteness'.

Holly Randell-Moon engages specifically with Howard's rhetoric as she argues that "the articulation of whiteness as a moral homogeneity comprising 'common' Judeo-Christian values has contributed to the formation and representation of Australian national identity as unproblematically Anglo-Celtic". Randell-Moon is a Doctoral candidate in Critical and Cultural Studies at Macquarie University, Sydney. In 'Common values': whiteness, Christianity, asylum seekers and the Howard government', Randell-Moon examines the ways in which Howard's repeated framing of a set of so-called Christian values as universal and Australian reproduces and protects white privilege and hegemony while it reproduces the illusion of a racially unmarked subject through the disassociation from the specific context. She examines government responses to media reports of asylum seekers converting to Christianity and demonstrates how the 'discursive association between whiteness and Australianness is produced as a naturalised norm'.

Randell-Moon traces the ways in which by aligning these so called Australian and Christian values with a discourse of secular, Western nations, the Howard Government 'makes invisible a religiously inflected cultural agenda that presents Australian values as 'broad' and inclusive but underpinned by an adherence to a teleology of Australian nationality that is Anglocentric in its outlook'. She provides a revealing analysis of media reports and government commentary, of the ways in which religion is embedded in the purported secular discourse of Australian national identity which further entrenches the racialised nature of 'Australia' as 'white'.

Farid Farid engages with contemporary Australian political rhetoric from a different perspective as he seeks to trace the manner in which whiteness attempts to define 'Arab' and Muslim subjects, and allow or disallow voice and rights to these subjects in the context of the post-September 11 'war against terrorism'. Drawing on Said's call to 'let the Egyptian speak for himself' Farid details the experiences of those of 'Middle Eastern appearance' and how they came to be signified as the latest others along the continuum of cultural and racial demonisations that have been inherent in Australia's racial history'. Farid Farid is a PhD candidate with the Centre for Cultural Research, at the University of Western Sydney. Using Said's critique of orientalism as the point of comparison, Farid argues that the 'discursive and political stratification of racialised others is not a new phenomenon and is certainly not unique in the Australian context of state multiculturalism'.

Events such as the Tampa affair, the 'War on Terror' and the incarceration of Cornelia Rau set the context for Jeanette Krongold's argument that

> a breach of trust has occurred within Australian society between the stakeholders of multiculturalism, whereby the rhetoric and cultural politics of the government of the day have promoted emphasis on a nationalism that is antithetical to the pluralistic dynamics of a multicultural society, and foster intolerance.

Krongold approaches the discourse on Australian multiculturalism at the turn of the twenty-first century as conflicted, and analyses how this conflict might be resolved. In 'A Breach of Trust: The Vitiated Discourse of Multiculturalism at The Turn of the Twenty-First Century', Krongold, a PhD candidate with the Department of History at the University of Melbourne, explores

> the argument between those that adhere to a core/periphery functionally assimilationist definition of multiculturalism (emphasising otherness) and those that urge a re-definition of the term to emphasise notions of alterity (de-emphasising otherness) and hybridity through some recent historical metaphors of cultural racism.

She concludes by suggesting that what is needed is 'public policy with a code of ethics or politics of civility to facilitate a hybridising society'.

These essays interrogate the meanings, implications and histories of discriminatory practices that depend on the normativity of whiteness to maintain their legitimacy. Each voice in this issue is relatively new to the academy but they are already contributing in an important way.

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AUSSIE BATTLER IN CRISIS? SHIFTING CONSTRUCTIONS OF WHITE AUSTRALIAN MASCULINITY AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

KATHERINE BODE

Abstract

In the last decade, the white 'man in crisis' – a prominent figure in American society – has entered the Australian cultural conscious, and now begins to challenge the position of the 'Aussie battler' as the dominant version of Australian masculinity. This paper investigates the implications of this shift for Australian national identity – a construction historically and contemporaneously tied to white male identity – by exploring the manifestation of the 'man in crisis' in current political and popular debates, before moving to consider the ways in which these debates emerge and are affirmed and transformed in contemporary Australian women's fiction.

Specifically, I argue that in the popular and political arenas, the identities of the Aussie battler and the man in crisis currently exist in tension. Some contemporary Australian women's fictions, like Jillian Watkinson's *The Architect*, resolve this conflict by privileging of the man in crisis to the exclusion of the Aussie battler. Although such narratives appear to offer a more sensitive and emotional model of masculinity, closer analysis evinces the sexist, racist and homophobic undertones of this emerging phenomenon within Australian fiction and society. Other contemporary Australian women's fictions, such as Fiona Capp's *Last of the Sane Days* and Sarah Myles's *Transplanted*, depict and engage with both the man in crisis and the Aussie battler to produce a refiguring of Austra-
lian identity in ways that depart from the longstanding affiliation of nationhood with masculinity. Yet despite their reconfiguration of gender, these contemporary Australian women's fictions continue to imagine Australian identity in terms of whiteness.

Introduction

Over the last decade, the white male victim, or the 'man in crisis' – a prominent figure in American society – has entered the Australian cultural conscious, and now begins to challenge the position of the 'Aussie battler' as the hegemonic construction of Australian masculinity. This shift has important implications for national identity, for as R.W. Connell asserts, "It is by now a familiar observation that notions of Australian identity have been almost entirely constructed around images of [white] men" ("Introduction" 9).

This paper investigates this shift, paying particular attention to its manifestation in current political and popular debates, before moving to consider the ways in which these debates emerge and are affirmed and transformed in contemporary Australian women's fiction. Although this conjunction of Australian masculinity, national politics and women's fiction is unusual in many respects, the treatment of masculinity in these arenas is at times remarkably similar, and at others significantly different, and thus offers a useful matrix for gauging and unpacking contemporary gender discourses. The use of

women's fiction as a source in such debates also permits the inclusion of a perspective on white Australian masculinity (and for that matter, on national identity and politics) seldom considered: that of women. For, to expand Connell's statement, in Australia white men have overwhelmingly constituted not only the figures in, but the commentators on, national identity. Concurrently, an analysis of the distinctions and associations between the white male victim within Australian national politics and contemporary women's writing, and between the Australian and North American contexts, challenges a conception of whiteness as monolithic and enables an insight into its various national and international translations and translocations.

By discussing current constructions of white Australian masculinity, especially in relation to the political personas of John Howard and Mark Latham, I will argue that in popular and political debate, the identities of the Aussie battler and the man in crisis currently exist in tension. Some contemporary Australian women's fictions resolve this conflict by privileging of the man in crisis to the exclusion of the Aussie battler. Although such narratives may seem to offer a more sensitive and emotional model of masculinity, an analysis of Jillian Watkinson's *The Architect* evinces the sexist, racist and homophobic undertones of this emerging phenomenon within Australian fiction and society. Other contemporary Australian women's fictions, like Fiona Capp's *Last of the Sane Days* and Sarah Myles's *Transplanted*, depict and engage with both the man in crisis and the Aussie battler to produce a refiguring of Australian identity in ways that depart from the longstanding affiliation of nationhood with masculinity.

Yet despite their reconfiguration of gender, these contemporary Australian women's fictions continue to imagine Australian identity in terms of whiteness. Although they are contradictory in many ways, both the Aussie battler and the man in crisis are regularly evoked in discussions of Australian politics and national identity. In *Ozwords*, the Australian National University's online dictionary of Australian words, Frederick Ludowyk identifies the Aussie battler as the central icon of Australian masculinity in the twentieth-century. Moreover, he insists that, although the term has had different inflections,[1] the Aussie battler at the beginning of the twenty-first century is still the person of Henry Lawson's tradition, a man who "with few natural advantages, works doggedly and with little reward, who struggles hard for a livelihood, and who displays enormous courage in so doing" (7).[2] Ludowyk overlooks one important characteristic of the battler in this definition: his whiteness. Relatedly, Mary O'Dowd asserts that this stereotype of Australian masculinity arose from the construction of Australia itself as "an enemy, a land to be conquered and transformed" (4) – an imaginary that occluded "the real conflict" between settlers and Indigenous people (1).

Accordingly, the origins of the Aussie battler can be located in the familiar narratives and images of explorers, colonists and farmers doing battle with drought, heat and distance. The notion of the land as the primary site of the battler's struggle has continued, despite the fact that relatively few Australians now live in the bush. The perpetuation of this narrative is facilitated by a slight shift in the conception of land and the battle: today, the banks are often a principal adversary, though this occurs because the battler has lost the contest with the environment (or with interest rates) and is threatened with losing his land.

The continuing importance of the Aussie battler to Australian identity is evident in the frequency of references to this figure in public and political debates. Although predominantly used to describe men – particularly working-class men, sporting 'heroes' and farmers – the term is also employed in a number of figurative ways. 'Aussie battler' is used by politicians and political commentators from across the domestic spectrum to demonstrate awareness of the difficulties faced by 'ordinary' Australians, and even to describe Australia's relationship to the international community.[3] The prevalence and variety of references to the Aussie battler in political discourse aptly demonstrates the way in which conceptions of white masculinity continue to organise and define Australian national identity.

While the icon of the battler remains central, the contradictory discourse of a crisis in masculinity is increasingly prominent in public and political debates about the position of men in contemporary society. Two themes dominate such discussions: men no longer have access to, or are unable to fulfil, a masculine role; and men are emotionally disconnected from one another. Consequently, male relationships, particularly those between fathers and sons, are impoverished. Such claims underlie the recent rise in Fathers' Associations and the related perception of the Family Court as a site of male oppression. The notion of a crisis in masculinity was also a significant component of Mark Latham's leadership campaign for the last federal election, specifically his assertions regarding the under-achievement of boys in schools and his association of this trend with a lack of appropriate male role-models. The resonance such ideas attained with the community is evident in the prominence of articles debating the nature and impact of this crisis in masculinity.[4] Although opinion on the

effect (and indeed, the existence) of this crisis has been somewhat divided, the familiarity with which such ideas are employed testifies to their entry into Australian cultural consciousness.

Increasingly, proclamations of a crisis in masculinity are occurring in the context of depictions of white male bodily harm. This is evident, for example, in an article entitled "Mothers must tell the truth," published in the *Australian* March 2005, in which Janet Albrechtsen attacks women who commit "paternity fraud." This occurs when women conceive children with men other than their partners and these partners consequently support children not biologically their own.

According to Albrechtsen, this "dreadful deception" creates "a web that entraps more men … than we may care to believe." Instead of allowing women to "go about their deceit without penalty," she argues that the "victims" of such deceit should receive "recompense for expenses … incurred and for the pain and suffering … endured" (15). Her claims of male victimisation are accompanied by a drawing of a naked white man being constrained by the thorn-covered stem of a rose as he is consumed, head first, by this flower. Male damage is also depicted in the illustration that accompanies a similar article by John Hirst, published two days earlier in the same newspaper. Entitled "Court rule offensive to families," but with the by-line, "No-fault divorce tends to unfairly target perfectly decent fathers," the illustration depicts a "perfectly decent" white father being beaten across the face by the female figure of justice (7).

This man in crisis differs from the traditional icon of the Aussie battler in a fundamental way. In the battler's life of hardship and struggle, only one thing is never in doubt – his masculinity; indeed the more he struggles, the more his

masculinity is affirmed. In contrast, the man in crisis is feminised by the challenges he faces, a feminisation that is particularly evident in illustrations of bodily harm. To put this another way, whereas the battler "refuses to admit defeat in the face of adversity" ("Battler," def. 1), the assertions of victimisation and disempowerment that characterise the discourse of masculinity crisis represent a call for immediate intervention and assistance: they signify a belief, in other words, that white men face imminent disaster and need the support of public policy to overcome it.

In this sense, the emergence of a discourse of masculinity crisis in Australia might be taken as evidence of the positive and politically productive challenge that feminism (and other identity-based liberationist approaches) have posed to traditional enactments of male power; as evidence, in other words, that white male hegemony is finally collapsing. However, this interpretation overlooks the ways in which both identities function to protect white masculinity from criticism. This function is quite clear in relation to the Aussie battler. As well as providing proof of masculinity, the narrative of the battle allows challenges posed to white male hegemony by changing economic conditions, women and racial minorities to be subsumed into the dominant struggle with the land: challenges to white men's cultural and economic priority are therefore constructed as part of the struggle that supports, constitutes and proves white Australian masculinity. Not only do these other battles consequently diminish in importance, they are framed in relation to, and thereby function in support of, the dominant construction of the white Australian man as battler.

To understand how proclamations of a crisis in masculinity do the same, it is useful to note the resemblance between the emerging Australian man in crisis and the established discourse of male victimisation prevalent in American media and culture. Although some commentators have identified this American discourse as evidence of the challenge posed to male power by a focus on masculinity and whiteness as topics of discussion and critique,[5] in many recent analyses the "white male victim" is seen as "an attempt by white men to respond to and regroup in the face of particular social and economic challenges" since the 1960s (Savran 5). Sally Robinson, for instance, argues that the "dominance of … liberationist rhetoric" (*Marked* 7) in contemporary American society means that claims of victimisation and disempowerment have become a recognised strategy for asserting rights.

Significantly, while white men lack recourse to social inequalities when claiming victimisation, "[b]odily wounds have a persuasive power that does not depend on the social; and images of men's bodies at risk work to legitimise a discourse that often veers off into the apolitical and asocial" ("Men's" 208). In other words, representations of wounded men provide proof of white male claims of victimisation and disempowerment, at the same time as this focus on individual bodies in pain conceals the political, social and institutional privileges still accorded such subjects. Thus, Robinson argues that the cultural prominence and visibility of wounded men in American society "functions as a strategy through which white men negotiate the widespread critique of their power and privilege" (*Marked* 6). Similarly, although the idea of a crisis in masculinity has attracted both supporters and detractors in Australia, when presented in this context of male bodily harm, such claims are overwhelmingly informed by a belief in the actuality of such a crisis, and the need for a com-

mensurate defence of white men's entitlements.

However, arguing that the man in crisis and the Aussie battler both function to support male power does not explain the recent emergence of the discourse of masculinity crisis, and its associated claims of male rights and victimisation, in Australia. Periods in both Australian and American history – typically those characterised by changes in labour, gender and racial relations – have been experienced and theorised in terms of a crisis in masculinity.[6] Yet although masculinity has been perceived as threatened during such times, it is only in the current period that white men have been seen as deliberately and maliciously targeted, attacked and disadvantaged. In this sense, and as Robinson argues, the figure of the victimised and disempowered white man signals a new conception of racial and gender relations, one that is at least partly common to Australia and America. Yet at the same time, there is a significant temporal difference in the emergence of this discourse of male disempowerment between the two countries: although prevalent in America since the 1960s, it is only since the mid-1990s that the situation of white Australian men has been consistently understood and presented in this way.

Given that identity-based liberationist movements have had a similar influence on social relations and rhetoric in Australia as in America, this is a curious divergence. Why, then, have claims of male victimisation and disempowerment only recently appeared in Australia? The emergence of such claims could be explained as simply another manifestation of Australia's increasing economic, military, political and cultural turn to America. Accordingly, while the entry of the man in crisis into Australian political and popular debates supports Connell's identification of contemporary masculin-

ity as increasingly globalised and homogenised,[7] it simultaneously suggests a hierarchy within the West: as well as non-Western conceptions of masculinity being subsumed by Western constructs, American discourses of masculinity and nationhood seem to be gaining cultural priority over Australian ones. This account, however, represents too one-side and simplistic a view of how discourses of whiteness and masculinity are translocated and translated from one country to another.

Rather than a notion of the American cultural juggernaut infringing on and overwhelming a traditional (though of course, not a native) Australian construction of white masculinity, I would suggest a leaching of the discourse of masculinity crisis into Australia. This leaching is enabled by a change, and hence, a receptivity in Australia to a new model of white male hegemony. Many recent debates have made the Aussie battler's relationship with the land more difficult to sustain. Native title has been (nominally) awarded and refugees are seen as invading Australian shores. Environmental debates have likewise disrupted the myth of white men's rights over the land. Potentially, the acceptance and support given by Australia's government to the idea that the West is engaged in a war against terror also creates a fertile ground for the idea that white men are in crisis.

Significantly, this notion of terror simultaneously builds upon and intensifies earlier challenges to the battler mythology: like Indigenous Australians and refugees, terrorists are seen as having 'invaded' Australian soil, threatening to destroy our (read white men's) way of life. The image that became definitive of the Cronulla race riots – of the young white man, draped in an Australian flag with the slogan, "We grew here, you flew here," painted on his body (Hudson) –

signifies a particularly blatant symbol of this juxtaposition of whiteness, masculinity, self-proclaimed suffering and nationalism. The credence given to the idea that the rights of white Australian men have been overwhelmed by the claims of women and other races disrupts the dominant battle narrative underlying and enabling hegemonic constructions of white Australian masculinity. In this context, it is possible that the trope of male damage prevalent in American media and culture offers a more reliable way of upholding white male power and privilege. That is to say, white male struggle is more effectively individualised in the current Australian political and public climate by association with bodily pain rather than with the land.

An effective and relevant way of conceptualising this leaching of the man in crisis into contemporary Australia society is in relation to the political identities projected by John Howard and Mark Latham in the lead up to the last federal election. Howard's "improbably successful self-portrayal as a battler, a man who rejoices in the virtues of 'mateship,' a representative of the average Aussie" (Rundle 7), has been widely acknowledged.[8] As Judith Brett notes, Howard has worked hard to identify himself with the popular vernacular nationalism of the Australian legend, appearing prominently at the funerals of various bearers of that legend – Don Bradman, Alec Campbell (the last Gallipoli veteran) and most recently Slim Dusty …. And appearing whenever possible at sporting and military events and commemorations. (5)

This affiliation is often identified as a significant factor in his surprising win in the 1996 federal election, as well as his continuing, and otherwise baffling, popularity with working-class Australians. Yet previous to the last election, Howard's political image was threatened by Latham who, given his background, represents a far more plausible embodiment of the Aussie battler than Howard.

The resulting leadership campaign was characterised by both politicians' engagement with and negotiation of the rhetorical strategies of the Aussie battler, but also of the discourse of masculinity crisis. On the one hand, Latham's general political approach was designed to appeal to the battler mentality.

> Curious in Latham's politics is the focus on power in itself rather than on what power enables one to do. … What [Latham] is against is the concentration of power in itself, not the uses to which concentrated power is put. Wherever power is concentrated in society, he says, we have to be anti-establishment. (Brett 14)

Latham's approach is curious only if considered apart from the tradition of the Aussie battler. At the same time, and as mentioned above, Latham explicitly affiliated himself with the discourse of masculinity crisis. For instance, in a major speech at the National Press Club he claimed that "our boys are suffering from a crisis in masculinity. As blue-collar muscle jobs have declined, their identity and relationships have become blurred and confused" ("Speech" 25). Howard continued to align himself with the Aussie battler, albeit sometimes "scuttling back to the Liberal's more usual terrain of responsible respectability to moralise about men who swing punches" (Brett 7). Nevertheless, Latham's use of the rhetoric of masculinity crisis – particularly his focus on the problems faced by boys – forced Howard simultaneously to engage with this discourse through policy proposals and funding promises.[9]

As the discourses surrounding the 2004 Federal election help demonstrate, the entry of the man in crisis into Australia

political debates manifests a transformation in notions of Australian masculinity – one that is often assumed in public debate to indicate the introduction of a more sensitive, emotionally-aware and -responsive masculine identity. Yet when conceptualised in terms of Howard and Latham, neither the Aussie battler nor the man in crisis emerges as appealing in terms of a move towards equity and equality in Australia's politics and national identity. Howard's longstanding identification with the Aussie battler is mirrored in his policies, which have long demonstrated the disdain for women, Indigenous peoples and the environment that underlies and informs the history and nature of this archetypal model of Australian masculinity. And although Latham might by some have seemed to embody a more progressive and liberal social and economic approach, his recent autobiography suggests the egotism and spite underlying the supposedly emotionally-aware and sensitive man in crisis.

Ultimately, the appeal of the man in crisis seems to be the same in Australian public discourse as in the United States: although suggesting transformation – and thus deflecting, and protecting masculinity from, traditional challenges or attacks – this wounded figure in fact maintains the focus of national identity on images of white men. This, in turn, allows white men to continue to function as the reference point for understandings of citizenship, justice and truth; indeed, figured as wounded, white men are able, explicitly as well as implicitly, to justify their cultural priority. This re-centring of white masculinity, combined with the recuperative strategies enabled by the figure of the damaged white man, warns against seeing this figure as offering a less restrictive – or indicating an irrefutable challenge to – hegemonic notions of Australian masculinity.

The resonance and reach of this discourse of white male victimisation and disempowerment is apparent in its emergence in an entirely different arena: contemporary Australian women's fiction. Especially since the late 1990s, an emerging group of Australian women writers have produced novels that centralise not only male characters, but their damaged bodies, in ways that specifically evoke the notion of a crisis in masculinity circulating in popular and political arenas.[10] Whereas some of these novels portray white masculinity in different ways to the political and popular realm, others reproduce the recuperative strategies associated with the popular portrayal of the man in crisis. This latter outcome is particularly evident in Jillian Watkinson's novel *The Architect*, which consistently depicts its protagonist Jules in ways that manifest the two dominant themes characterising the discourse of masculinity crisis in Australia: namely, he has lost access to an appropriate masculinity role, and he is emotionally disconnected from other men, especially his sons.

The Architect begins with a motorcycle accident in which Jules is severely burnt. As well as horribly scarring his body (excepting his hands and face), these burns result in him losing his right arm and most of the use of his left. The emasculation implied by this amputation is reinforced by Jules's reiterated association of the loss of his arm with the loss of his identity: "the maiming grows bigger and I grow smaller" (32). In accordance with Joel Sanders's description of "the cultural perception that authors of buildings, like the structures they design, embody the very essence of manhood" (11), Jules's emasculation is compounded by his inability to perform adequately in his job as an architect. The resulting suggestion of a crisis in masculinity is compounded by the novel's focus on difficulties with "father and son stuff" (270). Jules has

two damaged sons: the son he brought up, Che Lai, and his surrogate son Marc (the adult child of his lover, Jan). Jules's estrangement from Che Lai is a great source of anguish. Burnt as a child, Che Lai is severely crippled by scars, and has always blamed Jules for his unhappy life; having resorted to drugs to ease his pain, he is dying from AIDS. Marc was also damaged as a child: thrown from a horse he was riding pillion with his father, he is paraplegic. In a way that perpetuates and compounds both the importance and the complexity of difficulties associated with father and son relationships in this novel, problems in Jules and Marc's relationship are associated with problems between Jules and Che Lai, and Marc and his father.

At first glance, the crisis Jules undergoes seems to offer a more positive model of masculinity than that of the traditional Aussie battler: through suffering he reconnects with and learns to express his emotions, heals the relationships with his sons, and gains access to an authentic masculine identity. Upon closer examination, however, Jules's suffering and healing, and the emotional growth he consequently experiences, are presented in ways that manifest the recuperative strategies characterising the American discourse of male victimisation. As a result, this novel offers an insight into the emergence and the function of these strategies in Australia.

As Robinson asserts, the purported disempowerment and disenfranchise-ment of white men in America is frequently represented through images of physical pain. These provide evidence of a crisis in masculinity while occluding the social power white men still exercise. Jules's suffering is emphasised in *The Architect* through repeated descriptions of the operations he endures, the skin infections that plague him, and most of all, his "pain and fear" (217). Frequently, his pain is so extreme that it becomes a separate, personified force:

> Pain flings me back. Phantom fingers are tangled in the shirt-sleeve under my sweater. The ragged ends of nerves set me alight. Hot agony becomes a throbbing; it spreads in waves of reminiscence across the scars and I am caught in that vortex where nightmares and memories are inseparable. (46)

The affective impact of representations of physical pain encourages sympathy for Jules, as do passages which demonstrate his helplessness and vulnerability. A particularly poignant series of images amass around the association of his burns with physical limitation and constraint. His scars "shrink and grow tight as they mature." Soon, he admits, "I will not be able to lift my head to see the sky" (89). Even attempts to allow him more movement – freedom – produce their own constraints. His "utter helplessness" is represented at one point by his confinement within "a moulded body cast," which "imprisons his arm to the wrist and his torso to the waist" (116).

The emotional pain Jules experiences as a result of his injuries is imbued with such pathos that it comes to achieve the status of existential crisis. He feels, for instance, that his identity is obliterated by "the elongated, asymmetrical shadow of my body" that "blots out all the other images I have of Jules van Erp" (40). His inability to perform simple tasks similarly threatens his identity. When his nurse ties his shoelaces, "the kettle in the kitchen began to whistle and it was the sound of my soul screaming" (36). Later, when his shoelaces come undone, Jules laments:

> All the shoelaces ever tied are coming undone. They bind the scaffold that holds the Self. They are unknotting, unravelling, snaking free, and I am watching my own disintegration with a mixture of fear and indifference (42).

Sympathy for Jules's suffering is further encouraged by descriptions which allow him to appropriate and surpass the pain of socially and politically marginalised others – even when he is the cause of that suffering. This process is evident in his relationship with Chloe, a blind woman who is in love with him. Her blindness symbolically disempowers her, and such subjugation is perpetuated by the fact that her love is unreciprocated. Chloe's blindness also allows Jules to deceive her about his body: as she says, "when one can't see, one just assumes there are two hands." This deception remasculinises Jules, but it also compounds Chloe's pain, leaving her having "never, never felt so fucking blind in all my life!" (69). Not only is Jules not blamed for this suffering, it is ascribed to him. Regarding the lies he tells Chloe about his body, Jules muses:

> Always … I have hidden inside the layers of myself and the habit has lent such ease to the practice that I fail to recognise now the difference between the camouflage and the nakedness, between the deception of planned half-truths and the unplanned lies that are self-deception. (70)

In conflating his lies with self-deception – arising from emotional blindness – he not only appropriates her subjugated position and presents his treatment of Chloe as an unintentional response to his own pain, he centralises his own suffering while marginalising hers. At the end of the novel, Jules's appropriation of Chloe's suffering is completed when he constructs his self-deception as far more damaging and hurtful than the lies he told her: "I used her only to deceive myself" (265).

More contentiously, Jules's appropriation of others' sufferings is further enabled because he is not white. Indeed, the novel contains frequently references to his mixed heritage: his Indo-Chinese

mother and childhood in a Vietnamese village; his Swiss father and education in Europe; and his current habitation in and acculturation to Australia. But Jules performs whiteness consummately. Take, for instance, the following description of his demeanour at the opening of an arts centre he designed, a passage indicative of his portrayal throughout the novel:

> He is charming, naturally; boundlessly charismatic, and more – terrifyingly more. He talks politics from art grants to human rights, and it's all done with the evasive but knowledgeable savoir-fair of the professional diplomat. … He is neither artist nor architect; he doesn't live in a satellite suburb. Nothing so ordinary. He is European nobility. He keeps a private yacht …. His charm is that of perfect manners, rote-learned, and polished in greater halls than this; the charisma's a blend of self-control and confidence; and experience. He has everyone feeding from the palm of his hand …. (168)

Jules's equivalent or even super-whiteness is compounded by his construction as "the international person" (264), able to "move between countries as easily as we mortals go for picnics" (74). Yet despite being effectively white, when he first arrives in Australia he is marked as racially and culturally different from the norm. As he recalls,

> People stopped to look two times because I was yet very European in my mannerisms. And I think, also, because I am a big man who is too feminine. In this country big men dig ditches and play football. They are not artists. They do not have the eyes of the cat or the accent of a perfume maker. (32)

Miraculously, Jules is able to overcome such racism by learning "not to be too much one thing or too much the other" (32), and it is because he is able to assume the invisible position of the white male subject that he experiences the

visibility that comes with the amputation of his arm as a profound shock.

The incongruous ease with which Jules is able to occlude his racial and cultural heritage only makes sense if it is read as one of the many strategies through which all suffering is insidiously related to and appropriated by his character. As a result of being marked as racially and cultural different, Jules experiences the effects of racism, and is therefore able to understand and own this form of suffering. In turn, and although he somehow avoids the extreme poverty experienced by the rest of his village, he is associated with the sufferings of the "Montagnard people …. Not Vietnamese, not Chinese. Indigenous … the ones who get the worst deal all round. The innocent bystanders" (260). Subsequent references to the deaths by napalming of the women and children in his village associate his burns with theirs, superimposing and conflating the radically different contexts of their injuries.

The process by which Jules appropriates the sufferings of women and other races actualises Savran's description of the way the white male victim "is not only feminized by a masochistic identification by implicitly blackened as well." As Savran contends, "this slippage between sexual and racial differences" is one of the main reasons why the white male victim "has such enormous psychic power and is able to accomplish such an extraordinary amount of cultural work" (33). Ultimately, although signalling the presence of this discourse of masculinity in Australia, the prominence of the notion of a crisis in masculinity in *The Architect* contains no interrogation or recognition of the socio-historical power relations in which it thereby participates. Rather, the sympathy created for Jules's position, and the pathos imbued in the loss of his masculinity, encourage the reader to long for his return

to a position of power and authority: for a re-empowerment, in other words, of white masculinity. In this context, Jules's newfound ability to express his emotions becomes merely another way in which his suffering – and hence, his subjectivity – are privileged.

Jules's healing is similarly presented in ways that, while seeming to offer a positive model of masculinity, in fact marginalise women, appropriate the knowledge of other cultures and privilege male subjectivity. Although white female characters help Jules to heal by offering him unconditional and undemanding love and support, ultimately it is his surrogate son Marc who heals him. In part, Marc does so by teaching Jules "about getting in touch with his own body" (251), and thereby helping him to "own," "understand" and eventually overcome "his fear of his damaged body" (244). Such lessons construct the male body as a site of authenticity and as the basis of a self-actualised healing enabled through male bonding and, in particular, father-son connection.

At the same time, Marc's ability to heal Jules arises from his extraordinary psychic abilities, which allow him literally to feel, and hence, to empathise with, Jules's pain. For instance, massaging Jules's back Marc senses "pain … strongly coloured by anxiety. … Not sharp pain, but an ache of massive intensity" (243). The origins of such psychic abilities are briefly ascribed to the knowledge and teachings of a woman in Saigon and "an old gypsy" (209). However, the marginalisation of women that occurs through the dominant narrative of male healing is compounded, and racialised, by the fact that these women's psychic powers are appropriated by a man and entirely directed towards healing Jules (an effectively white male character).

Resonating with the idea that contemporary white men can overcome crisis by reconnecting with each other and with their authentic or deep masculine selves, this narrative, as Robinson notes in relation to American texts, resolutely maintains the focus on individual rather than social or political change. And while the text may seem to offer a more positive model of masculinity, Jules's healing and healed relationship with his son, and the access he accordingly gains to an authentic masculinity, in fact privilege male subjectivity and homosociality, and actualise the association between hegemonic constructions of masculinity and whiteness. The reproduction of the rhetoric of masculinity crisis in this and other contemporary Australian women's fictions[11] demonstrates the emergence and resonance of this discourse – and its accompanying figure of the wounded man – within Australia and exposes the implicit danger the rhetoric and strategies of masculinity crisis pose to the creation of a more equitable society.

Other contemporary Australian women's novels also depict damaged men in terms that resonate with the discourse of masculinity crisis. Fiona Capp's *Last of the Sane Days* centres on Rafael's intense abdominal pain. Like Jules, Rafael is forced to abandon a stereotypically masculine career as an Air Force pilot. This has left him feeling frustrated, confused and depressed, emotions the discourse of masculinity crisis claims all men experience due to the erosion of their traditional role in contemporary society. As in *The Architect*, this theme of male suffering is elaborated in the context of father-son distance. Rafael is estranged from his father, Gerald, largely because he decided to join the Air Force instead of following in his father's footsteps by managing the family farm. This farm is now failing due to drought, and Rafael's inability to perform his masculine role is thus mirrored by his father's failure in his similarly masculine profession. When, at the end of the novel, father and son commit suicide – both because they feel abandoned by the women they love – this emphasises their alienation, in general and from each other, while simultaneously presenting the suffering created by a loss of male role, and distance between men, as insurmountable and devastating.

Transplanted, by Sarah Myles, has four main male characters and pivots around a burglary, perpetrated by three of these men (Ross, Ian and Kelvin) at the home of the fourth (Peter). All of these men are damaged. Ian is repeatedly brutalised by and subsequently murders his brother, Ross. Kelvin has been in an horrific truck accident where, among other injuries, his arm was trapped under the sliding truck carriage, his "scapula cracked and ripped at right angles, his face de-gloved" (180). Peter is suffering from severe end-stage heart failure, and there are many descriptions of his damaged and deteriorating body, as well as of the multiple operations he undergoes before he dies. Due to this heart condition – described as a "crisis" (86) – he is "embarrassed that he is not there taking on the role that might be expected of him" (94) of protector and provider. Indeed, he "does not think of the people who have robbed them …. It is his failure to protect that seems the weakness. That he cannot know or predict. That he cannot take control" (83).

In this text, the associated theme of father-son disconnection extends to all of the central male characters: Peter's father died when he was young and Kelvin's father was abusive and neglectful. However, it is particularly prominent in descriptions of the relationship between Ross and Ian and their father, which involve extended passages detailing Ross and Ian's inability to understand what

their father is saying, and his inability to recognise them. As in *The Architect*, a complex relationship between male damage and emotional distance is elaborated.

Yet although these contemporary Australian women's fictions clearly manifest the discourse of masculinity crisis, they employ it in a different manner to texts like *The Architect*. In particular, whereas the figure of the Aussie battler is absent from *The Architect*, entirely replaced by Jules's masculinity crisis, *Last of the Sane Days* and *Transplanted* present encounters between men in crisis and figures representative of the Aussie battler. Although far less programmatic in their depiction of white Australian masculinity than *The Architect*, the hybridised masculinities that subsequent emerge represent identities which enable, but do not constitute, a more positive and politically productive version of Australian identity. For whereas women are marginalised by both the Aussie battler and the man in crisis, these fictions present versions of Australian identity that are underpinned and enabled by equitable relationships between male and female characters. Nevertheless, although there are allusions in *Transplanted* to the Indigenous owners of Australian land, the pre-eminent concern with the identities of the Aussie battler and the man in crisis in both novels leads to a reinscription of whiteness in the resulting portrayals of Australian identity.

In *Last of the Sane Days*, Rafael attempts to overcome his intense physical pain – and his resulting masculinity crisis – by travelling to Europe and following in the footsteps of Nietzsche. Having received no help from western medicine, he believes that Nietzsche's philosophy of self-overcoming will allow him to resume his career as an Air Force pilot. Coincidentally, while in Europe, he encounters Hilary, his godmother and doctor, who becomes for a time his lover. Hilary helps Rafael locate places where Nietzsche stayed, and also conducts her own research on the philosopher. Her more pragmatic and distanced perspective on Nietzsche is contrasted with Rafael's almost religious belief in his philosophy and its powers of healing.

This focus on Nietzsche can be interpreted in terms of a deliberate engagement with white Australian identity and literary history. As Veronica Brady asserts, "it has become a truism that Nietzsche is a crucial figure for the understanding of Australian culture" (87). Describing Nietzsche as Australia's "beneficent grand-uncle" (51), Vincent Buckley identifies influential features of his "metaphysics of Will" to dominant notions of Australian masculinity and nationhood. Primary among these is the centrality of the male leader and "metaphysical hero, even as the chief value, against the universe." Commonly conceptualised as a "metaphysical adventurer who in his journey … asserts the value of his own will, his own integrity, his own exploration" (48), this figure can be taken as an ancestor of the Aussie battler.

Yet in *Last of the Sane Days*, Rafael's adoption of a Nietzschean philosophy – and his consequent affiliation with a battler mentality – do not alleviate his suffering. Instead, he finds respite from his pain in his relationship with Hilary. Moreover, descriptions of their sexual relationship – which repeatedly demonstrate their equality – pose a direct challenge to a conception of masculinity that privileges masculine autonomy and "Will." As a prelude to their sexual relationship, Hilary and Rafael play a game in a hotel foyer where,

> as they created more outlandish histories for the guests who passed by, they were at the same time conjuring up a world of their own in which they were agents in

enemy territory with no one but the other to trust (105).

Instead of a master/leader against the world, Hilary and Rafael create an alternative reality based in mutual trust and reliance. Descriptions of their sexual contact during the train journey they take across the Alps again evoke an equitable other world: "Their world shrank to the size of a cabin, to the size of two bodies in a knotted embrace where nothing else mattered" (113).

Although occurring in the context of a European journey that is repeatedly affiliated with Nietzsche's own travels, this image of their knotted bodies offers an explicit alternative to the philosophy of individuality, autonomy and mastery. *Transplanted* similarly juxtaposes the wounded white man with another ancestor of the Aussie battler, and indeed, of Nietzsche's metaphysical "Wanderer" (Buckley 48): the explorer. Like Nietzsche, the explorer is an accepted archetype of the national identity and literature.[12] Much of the central part of this novel is occupied by Wendy and Kelvin's journey from Melbourne to Perth. During this journey, Wendy reads to Kelvin from a book about Edward Eyre, tracing his journey across the same land and remarking on the hardships he endured. Emphasis is placed on the cruel irony of the fact that,

> Beneath the surface, there are a network of caves, thousands of underground passages which extend to the subterranean caverns, often deep enough to reach the watertable" and create "still, clear lakes(176).

Yet while Eyre's "blind and obsessive purpose" rendered him unable to find these underground lakes, Kelvin can. He takes Wendy there without difficulty, "even when the road was unmarked and almost indistinguishable from the flat desert plain" (178). While this man in

crisis thereby teaches Wendy to see Australia in a different way – a difference seemingly enabled by his distance (both historically and psychologically) from Eyre – Wendy's touch heals Kelvin's physical and emotional wounds. As they stand in this underground pool, her fingers trace his "scar which has not been touched since the hospitalised stitching of silk into anaesthetised skin" (180). This touch causes Kelvin to relive his accident, yet the effect is cathartic: it allows him to mourn for the pain he has experienced, and thus, to begin the recovery process. The description of "water pouring over them as if in some ritualised baptism" (179) reinforces a reading of Wendy's touch in the cave Kelvin finds as offering a new beginning.

This association of Kelvin with vision and Wendy with touch resonates with a certain gendered division of senses: namely, the association of men with vision and women with touch. As Evelyn Keller and Christine R. Grontkowski assert,

> The notion that vision is a peculiarly phallic sense, and touch a woman's sense, is, of course, not new. Indeed, it accords all too well with the belief in vision as a 'higher' and touch as a 'lower' sense (207).

Yet in *Transplanted*, neither vision nor touch is privileged. Rather, they are equivalent, and the way Wendy and Kelvin help the other by helping them move towards the sense they are alienated from suggests both reciprocity and complementarity. Due to such reciprocity, Wendy and Kelvin are able to traverse the landscape – presented as a psychological journey through themselves and Australian identity – with symbiotic ease. Their journey would not have been possible for the suffering Kelvin alone; nor was it possible for Eyre, who longed to conquer rather than understand the country, and "foul[ed]

each sacred waterhole for the price of flour" (164).

In these and other ways, *Last of the Sane Days* and *Transplanted* depict wounded white men in the context of, and contrast them with, archetypes of Australian literature and culture, figures that emerge as recognisable ancestors of the Aussie battler. Whereas both the man in crisis and the Aussie battler in different ways affirm the individualised struggle of the white man over all others, these novels challenge these constructions of masculinity by evoking them in the context of equitable heterosexual relationships. Both novels subsequently show these heterosexual relationships failing, implying that this dream of a new masculinity is impossible in the context of current Australian society and its gendered inequalities. Nevertheless, and in stark contrast to *The Architect*, as well as to the male-dominated renderings of white masculinity and national identity in Australian public and political discourse, this re-inscription of hegemonic models of Australian and American masculinities challenges, and offers an alternative to, the longstanding alliance of national identity with myths of masculinity.

Yet while these novels appear subversive in their refiguring of gender inequalities, their privileging of heterosexual relationships between white men and women concurrently reinscribes Australian identity as white. The journeys that dominate both novels unconsciously expose this process. On the one hand, Wendy and Kelvin's journey across Australia displaces Eyre's previous exploration, and in turn, white men's original invasion of and appropriation of Indigenous land: the act that O'Dowd identifies as the unacknowledged basis of the battler identity. On the other hand, their own journey inscribes another white narrative over the land – one that incorporates women as well as men, but which

has its foundation in a fundamentally white, individualistic romance narrative. This re-inscription of whiteness is even more apparent in *Last of the Sane Days*, in which the imagining of Australian identity occurs through the established trope of a journey to Europe. The occlusion of Australia's Indigenous heritage inherent in this strategy is compounded by the journeys – imaginary and actual – that Hilary takes when she returns to Australia after Rafael's suicide. The first of these occurs in a dream where

> … she was flying with Eva over the outback. … [T]hey came to a small community in the middle of nowhere with just a few houses and an airstrip like a dirty cream bandage on the red, red earth. … Hilary was struck by the feel of the ground, which had the texture of flesh. The bandage of the airstrip was curling at the corners and as she bent down to tease it away, she grew afraid of what she might find. But instead of a weeping wound she uncovered a pearly scar, its edges still slightly inflamed. (253-54)

The flight central to this dream is not incidental to the sense of healing portrayed, but suggests that Hilary is able to fulfil Rafael's dream of a return to the skies, and in doing so, to reclaim his lost identity in a way that again signifies a unity between men and women. Yet while the positioning of this healing of gender inequalities on the Australian land consolidates the novel's engagement with national identity, Hilary's dream overwrites the original wound of Australian nationality: the invasion of Indigenous land. The racism contained in this strategy is consolidated by Hilary's subsequent flight over Rafael's family's farm. Healing is again represented in relation to the land and the airstrip – here, in the way that "the airstrip was overgrown and absorbed into the fabric of the grass." The healing of this wound allows new life to occur, but the form that this new life takes is one that re-enacts the white appropriation of In-

digenous land: "Already subdivision had taken place and a network of bitumen courts and streets had been laid out to create yet another seaside estate" (255).

Transplanted and *Last of the Sane Days* challenge the traditional affiliation of Australian national identity and masculinity. In the contrast thereby established between these texts and public and political debates, as well as novels like *The Architect*, they indicate the extent to which gender divisions continue to underpin Australian identity and culture.

At the same time, and in accordance with the dominant discourse, *Transplanted* and *Last of the Sane Days* privilege whiteness in their constructions of national identity. Indeed, these texts, like *The Architect*, seem entirely unaware of the ambivalence – in terms of sexuality as well as race – of their refiguring of Australian identity in relation to heterosexual relationships between white women and men. In itself, this lack of awareness indicates the continuing dominance and invisibility of whiteness in Australia, a dominance that is presumably perpetuated by the current credence given in this country to images and claims of white male victimisation.

But whereas the discourse of a crisis in masculinity reaffirms the affiliation of masculinity, whiteness and national identity, the privileging of whiteness in these contemporary women's fictions indicates "the complicated axes of power and position, of opposition and complicity occupied by white women in … Australia" (Kossew 7).

In exposing the unconscious complicity of women – and indeed, of women who write self-consciously feminist narratives – in the marginalisation and oppression of the narratives and subjectivities of non-white others, these fictions confirm the continuing need for analyses of Australian identity and culture that are attuned to social power relations in ways that extend beyond the issue of gender.

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Endnotes

[1] Until the 1950s, the term, Aussie battler, was also used to refer to itinerants, men who earned a meagre living at the race tracks, and prostitutes (Ludowyk 3-5).

[2] Ludowyk identifies Henry Lawson's *While the Billy Boils*, published in 1896, as the first literary reference to the Aussie battler (7).

[3] Ludowyk notes that the phrase, "little Aussie battler," has been employed to describe the struggle of the Australian dollar against the mighty Greenback and the success of small Australian businesses in spite of the power and reach of international corporations (10).

[4] During February and March, 2004, literally hundreds of articles on the notion of a crisis in masculinity were published in Australian newspapers. For example, in the *Australian* during February 2004, a prominent series of articles were published all debating the impact of this purported crisis on the well-being of boys and the status of fathers (Bachelard and DiGirolamo; Carr-Gregg; Costello; Editorial; Legge).

[5] Theorists who adopt such a position include Simpson (*Male*), Segal (*Slow*), David Morgan (73-74) and Anthony Rotundo.

[6] In America, crises in masculinity have been identified in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries (Michael Kimmel, Melissa Dabakis) and in the post-World War Two period (Kaja Silverman). For discussions of historical crises in Australian masculinity see Martin Crotty and Richard White.

[7] Connell is one of the foremost theorists of the new globalisation of masculinity (see, for instance, *Men* 46-56, "Masculinities" and "Preface").

[8] James Walter, for instance, describes the battler mythology as Howard's "political imaginary" (7), while Ludowyk asserts, "In a common reading of recent Australian political history, the battlers have switched political allegiance and are now 'Howard's battlers'" (9).

[9] The Howard government responded to Latham's popularity on the issue of an educational crisis for boys with the idea of a Boys' Education Lighthouse Schools scheme – designed to provide funding for schools attempting to address the problem of boys' education – and the Success for Boys program. More contentiously, the Coalition introduced legislation to amend the Sex Discrimination Act so that more male teachers could be recruited to counteract the perceived gender imbalance among teachers (Saulwick and Muller 23-24).

[10] Such novels include Kirsty Machon's *Immortality* (1996), Patti Miller's *Child* (1998), Fiona Capp's *Last of the Sand Days* (1999), Jillian Watkinson's *The Architect* (2000), Georgia Blain's *The Blind Eye* (2001), Vivienne Cleven's *Bitin' Back* (2001), Mireille Juchau's *Machines for Feeling* (2001), Sarah Myles's *Transplanted* (2002) and Wendy Scarfe's *Miranda* (2002).

[11] Georgia Blain's *The Blind Eye* follows many of the same strategies as *The Architect*, presenting the damaged male protagonist in ways that privilege male suffering and subjectivity, marginalise women and present a homosocial solution to masculinity crisis. Indeed, the strangest aspect of *The Architect* – the use of psychic powers to demonstrate understanding, connection and empathy between men – finds its echo in the portrayal of homeopathy in Blain's novel, in which the most important relationship occurs between Silas, the protagonist, and his homeopath Daniel. Like Marc with Jules, Daniel is able to heal Silas's terrible, internal burning because he can literally feel Silas's physical and emotional suffering by touching him (47-8; 206).

[12] Paul Genoni has recently demonstrated the centrality of themes of exploration, mapping and geography to Australian fiction.

WHITE SPACES

KATHLEEN CONNELLAN

Abstract

This paper brings white as a colour in de-signed interiors and whiteness in race together. The 'invisible', unacknow-ledged prevalence of whiteness in race is aligned with the silent yet pervasive ubiquity of white in architectural space. The paper asserts that both are privi-leged, that is the colour of the paint and epidermal whiteness. White walls, white surfaces and white expanses are de-signed to place all other colours into sharp contrast. The smoothness of these white surfaces also shows up texture and variation; the sameness of white in de-sign is positioned as a basis for designed interiors. White in this sense becomes the one upright against which all else is pe-ripheral and as such the paper argues that it has an elite status. This status is more often than not evidence in the all white interiors of expensive architectural spaces. The paper also argues that white as a colour is problematically con-flated with light and its associated my-thologies of goodness and cleanliness. In this way white as a colour is the insignia of white wealth and ostensible superior-ity. Specific architectural spaces are de-scribed and analysed in relation to white race privilege.

Introduction

What is it about this colour white? It per-vades and invades interior spaces, cov-ers and clothes bodies and seeps both into and onto numerous products in in-habited spaces. Have you ever heard or been part of a conversation that goes something like this: Q: 'What colour are you going to use'? A: 'Oh, I am not go-ing to use any colour, I just want to keep it white and simple.'

'I just want to keep it white and simple.' The assertion is that white is not speci-fied, it is there but not there. Having re-searched modernist design over the past decade and located that research within the context of the home, I am continually reminded that not only was modernist design supposedly 'simple' i.e. modular, standardised and geometric without 'unnecessary' embellishment, but it was also predominantly 'white'. Mark Wigley makes this point in his book *White walls, Designer dresses: the fash-ioning of modern architecture*, a text that addresses the silence surrounding white as a ubiquitous choice for exteri-ors, and more specifically interiors, in modernist architectural and design the-ory literature (Wigley 1995: xiv).

My interest now is to pursue the contin-ued dominance of white in a socially designed postmodern world. Postmod-ernity, in design terms, is a celebration of colour and a liberation of the palette in a design era that is ostensibly free from the dogma of totalitarian modernist de-sign orthodoxy. Indeed contemporary design has been posited as a departure from the constraints of the monochrome or the pure primary and the grid. Robert Venturi's scathing criticism of modernist architecture called for a 'messy vitality' over an 'obvious unity' (1994: 53). Given the current rejection of modernist design principles, why is there still so much white in interior architecture and contemp-orary design? Who is responsible for this whiteness and what does it signify? Do the white interiors have any connection with whiteness in race? To put it another

way, is the continued use of white in certain exclusive or 'expensive' interiors an extension of white hegemony in particular societies?

Methodology

The paper will attempt to arrive at possible answers and will begin by providing detailed and objective visual descriptions of photographed and advertised spaces/forms in contemporary Australia. The visual descriptions attempt to recreate the visual space so that the image can be pictured in the mind of the reader and it is hoped that they present as objective data. A formal and contextual analysis of the pictorial examples will follow the descriptions. This analytical design methodology will combine with a hermeneutic approach that incorporates whiteness theories.

Criteria used for selecting the examples is based upon my observation of white spaces in buildings that are designed by architects and which probably hold some sort of prestige, status or position. As a result some of the interiors described below come out of a typical example of an interior architecture magazine and others are taken from my own photographic survey.

Visual descriptions

Example 1.
Six white lights hang from a high ceiling on several thin white cords; all have vertical undulating cylindrical and repetitive curves. From the photograph they look like thin paper or fabric folded in rounded tubular formations. The ceiling above is blurred into a shadowed grey extending down the wall. The room appears spacious and the photographed view shows a large single articulated white leather sofa that has adjustable back rests and other flexible features

that include changing its orientation. The entire piece rests on slim polished steel legs. A dark suited young man stands in shadow on the extreme left with one hand casually in his pocket and a wine glass in the other hand as he talks to a seated young woman in a backless knee-length cocktail dress of sheer pale green and pink and high strapped sandals. She is twisted around to address the young man, thus exposing an expanse of her pale white back to the viewer. On the other end of the sofa another young woman in knee-length cocktail dress and stiletto sandals, sits listening to a standing couple: a man in a dark closed suit and a woman in a thigh length dress and heels. All five people are white and all hold wine glasses. There is a plain rectangular screen some distance behind the sofa that provides a backdrop for the intricate geometric criss-crosses of a round monochrome string floor sculpture. The colours of the photograph are predominantly greys against brilliant whites. The floor gleams with reflections and is contrasted by a red and cream oriental woven carpet in the bottom foreground. Highlights are captured from the hanging lamps upon white leather, white skin and shiny floor. Below the image is a caption printed in narrow grey-blue sans serif capitals. It reads: 'Some saw a cloud ... we saw a light'.

Example 2.
The photograph is taken from a corner of the outside balcony of an apartment and shows the grey granite floor tiles, uninterrupted by outside furniture as they meet the balcony wall of varying white diagonals and horizontals on the right edge of the picture. On the left and taking up most of the picture space is the interior of the lounge room of an inner city apartment as viewed through the large rectangular balcony window. The room reveals a section of a smooth white sofa arrangement that has a wide

extended section the size of a double bed. The back rest and cushions are all white. A white shawl is draped neatly over the double bed section. A pale slab of wood sits on narrow steel legs serving as a coffee table, which is positioned upon a thick piled white rug on the surrounding pale yellow wooden floating floor boards. The ceiling and walls are white expanses that meet each other without the punctuation of cornices. The main wall on view in the photograph is decorated with a single unframed image of a pale yellow sphere, which blurs out if its orbit into a white painted background. The other wall some distance behind the sofa has a ledge or table (also pale wood) with white ceramic vessels displayed upon it. The only things that are not white or pale yellow in the picture include a small green arrangement in a low glass bowl on the coffee table and a large standing mortar. There is also a small sectioned view of a dark brick warehouse-style neighbouring building. The picture is also made up on light reflections from the many long architectural lines. There are no people in the space. A heading printed below the image in yellow slab sans-serif reads: 'Inner-city Metamorphosis'.

Example 3.
Looking down from a high mezzanine or bridge, the image takes in a large area of a school building and yard. The left foreground reaches into the middle and background by way of a long white concrete bridge with vertical grey railings. This flat high white painted concrete expanse is photographed in full sunlight. Tall, repeated pillars of similarly slabbed concrete form a colonnade from the ground level up to the very top. Below on the unshaded hard white tiles, sit and stand informal groups of children. The white of the architecture is contrasted by deep shadows caused by the bright light and hard angles of the archi-

tecture. The top area of the picture is a total contrast to the school because it shows the surrounding cottage street architecture and some of the skyline of the city. The top level of the school has a roof garden that is filled with green foliage in planter pots that are angled into the architecture. Some of the school children are seated up there but they blend into the foliage and background street scene unlike the stark contrast of the dark uniformed shapes in the courtyard below.

Example 4.
A section of a hospital foyer is photographed showing a wide staircase with one banister side support in clear perspex with a steel riveted rail and the other side in sheer white painted concrete, each with a stainless steel rail, steps up to a mezzanine level of white walls that are hung with identically sized paintings in rows. The under section of the staircase as it rises up to the top level is seen from below (the vantage point of the photograph) as a solid white sculptured object suspended in the open well of space from the ground floor foyer up to the top level. The photograph features the staircase with its combination of simple but large forms.

Example 5.
The room is a long rectangle that glasses onto a green garden at the end and side. It is a kitchen and living area in one long sweep. The white ceilings move down without cornices into white walls on the one side and then equally seamlessly the expanse of white moves on to long white floor cabinets that are clear of utensils. The surfaces of the cabinets against the wall have one stainless steel sink that looks pale and white because of the reflected sunlight from the opposite picture window strip. This length of white is continuous except for a short dark section of the stainless steel stove that is flush with the cabinets. In parallel

placement to the wall cabinets is a wide white rectangular island that stretches straight down to the far glassed end, which accommodates neat book-shelves, sofas and a postmodern rendi-tion of Le Corbusier's *chaise longue*.[1] This island has a decorative display of over-sized ostrich egg forms in a rectangular container at the far end but besides this one piece the surface is clear. The pho-tograph has no human inhabitants. Col-ours that contrast or merge out of the white dominance are the pale browns of the floor, wooden window beams and the abundant greens from the out-side garden.

Example 6.
This is a photograph from a series taken by the author of the new Adelaide air-port. The floors, walls and ceilings of the enclosure are all white as one walks away from the check-in counters to-wards the exit. The rows of trolleys offer no contrast to the top to bottom white expanse because they reflect the bright white lighting upon their chrome sur-faces. This large open area designed for crowds and queuing does not have shops or vending machines and ap-pears as a totality of whiteness.

Example 7.
The ground floor of a Melbourne busi-ness' premises in the central business dis-trict was photographed at night with street lights shining upon the huge white three dimensional numbers of 121. The interior foyer is clearly visible through the glass wall frontage, with a deep space of white tiles and chrome.

Example 8.
A white boardroom table and white chairs from the new Kaurna Building of the South Australian School of Art and is an example of furnishings chosen by the architects who designed the building, which was completed in 2005. The large tapering oval table with its twenty com-pletely white matching chairs takes up most of the space in a double glass sided meeting room.

Analysis and Relation to Whiteness Theory

The above examples of a lighting adver-tisement, an apartment lounge room, a school, a hospital foyer, a suburban kitchen/dining/living area, an airport, a business premises and boardroom have other things in common besides the dominance of the colour white. Most give the impression of spaciousness by means of extended parallel architec-tural lines and surfaces. Most also give the impression of luxury with gleaming chrome, steel and large glass window-walls. These elements are without excep-tion represented as uncluttered and free of busy ornamentation. The white sur-faces and forms in the examples are shown to have large dimensions, whether in length, breadth or height. The surfaces conform to a sharp geometric alignment or angularity that also em-phasise space by means of deep linear perspective or a horizontality that stretches out of the picture plane. The colour white is represented in a brilliant hard light thus making all other pale tones even fainter and causing them to blend into the white painted surface and the space of the picture. This ac-centuation of whiteness results in *any* contrast of dark or varied surfaces as being stark and obvious. Sara Ahmed writes:

> *Whiteness is only invisible for those who inhabit it*. For those who don't, it is hard not to see whiteness; it even seems eve-rywhere. Seeing whiteness is about living its effects, as effects that allow white bodies to extend into spaces that have already taken their shape, spaces in which black bodies stand out, stand apart, unless they pass, which means passing through space by passing as white (Ahmed 2004: 1).

Ahmed is referring to black people as showing up in an environment that is not only populated by the physicality of white people but also dominated by white privilege. I am saying that this is exacerbated by the use of the colour white in designs that are associated with status and elitism in a white society that applauds material success. The white people in the white space discussed above blend in by revealing long white limbs and pale dresses in the lighting advertisement, whereas the dark suited men are suffused into shadows. In other examples that contain people such as the school and the airport, the dark shade of the people's clothes contrast against the white expanses of the architecture.

While hospital-white is something that people have come to expect over time on account of the practicalities of showing up dirt so that it can be cleaned, the impracticalities of maintaining such a visage of cleanliness is extended to other interior spaces that do not require sterility. Even in the hospital example, the monumentalisation of the white staircase dominates all other colours and forms in the space. In the other examples the wide expanses of white tiled floors and white counter and table tops all proclaim an obsessive cleanliness. Hygiene and neatness are middle class domestic preoccupations and manifest the struggle to separate the interior from the exterior and perceived chaos of nature. Mary Douglas reaffirms the Victorian belief that 'dirt is matter out of place', a notion that still seems to apply in contemporary design (Douglas 1966: 36). The Melbourne business premises discussed in example seven could equally have been a private hospital foyer in the sense that whiteness takes on the colour of the idealised and sterile corporation.

White as a colour is conflated with angularity, order, cleanliness and simple design, which makes it a more encompassing agent for white superiority. White design needs support to both exert and maintain its impression of strength because it is inherently fragile, impermanent and vulnerable. Wigley asserts that white is only as strong as the thickness of it surface, which is very thin and in constant need of touching up (Wigley 1995). The colour white cannot cope alone, like white authority in society, it needs its henchmen. The painting of white surfaces and the insurance that forms are bold, hard and free of clutter is an effort on the part of (white) society to reveal anything that does not conform. For white paint and white surface then, this support includes the unforgiving nature of geometric design, a design that excludes softness or texturing associated with humanity. Forms and people that are not long, lean and classical attired count as intrusions in the designed spaces. The photographs of actual interiors in the design magazine are devoid of people. This is a device that serves to emphasise spatial dimensions and ensure that surfaces are not interrupted by any untidy design elements. This lack of humanity was one of the main criticisms of modernist design and indeed what brought about its supposed demise, a demise that heralded the mixed colours and textures of postmodern architectural design. But whiteness in design persists, modernism like so many despots, did not die it just went away for a while only to return with another name and wield a disconcertingly similar rule of law.

Then one also has to ask, if white is a colour at all? According to Isaac Newton it is not. White, in Newtonian physics, is white light. The conflation of white and light and the assumption that white is a non colour has been accepted in colour theory. Colour theory, like formalism in

art theory fell out of vogue with the ostensible passing of modernism. However while postmodern art history and theory eschewed the structural and Cartesian aspects of modernist theory, white has somehow remained a non colour into the post-modern era. By remaining in abeyance or supposedly out of mind, white had the opportunity to gain strength because it was not considered a reality. If something is not acknowledged, it is assumed that it does not exist. Denial is destructive in human relationships and this must also be true in environments designed for human beings. How does one oppose, or for that matter work with nothing? How do black people oppose white authority if the people who are in authority do not admit they are white or that it is their whiteness that keeps them in positions of power? With the use of white in design, it is hard to imagine an opposition to *light* because in this guise white seems to position itself beyond scrutiny? The mythology of light is linked to some religions' belief in light as synonymous with goodness. Darkness in this instance is all that is bad, the dichotomy of light and shadow in the examples used for this article serve to accentuate the contrast. In this way white is transfigured into light in design with all of its concomitant codes of purity, which in turn become part of the ideology of whiteness in race.

The privileging of white light in Newtonian physics was contested by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who asserted that the natural world was overlooked as credible and practical proof of colour action (Jackson 1994: 679). As such he considered Newton's mathematical approach as 'artificial' and confined to the intellect. This narrow Newtonian view in Goethe's mind was a denial of 'Truth' because it dismissed the senses (Jackson 1994: 689). The link between white light's relatively undisputed and yet unacknowledged leadership in colour theory is similar to the privileging of the

is similar to the privileging of the white, yet unacknowledged race in social history. Rendering the apparently invisible, visible is a significant aspect of whiteness theory in race as both bell hooks, Richard Dyer and others in their wake have iterated. The supposedly ethereal, insubstantiality of light is taken up by interior designers and interior decorators as they play upon western myths of divinity and vision in a lit interior. In the examples of lighting, kitchen and interior design, the spatial aspects of white as possessing qualities of boundlessness and by extension an agency with infinity is endorsed by the serene inaccessibility in the visual presentation of such designs. The lighting example, which advertises hanging lamps by well known contemporary designers Michele de Lucchi and Gerhard Reichart portrays a group of people in the presence of whiteness. Classic advertising rhetoric builds upon the myth of a divine epiphany by adding the caption: 'Some saw a cloud … we saw a light'.

This is the world of the white cube so beloved of twentieth century modernist architects. In Thomas McEvilly's introduction to Brian O'Doherty's *Inside the White Cube: the ideology of the gallery space*, he writes:

> This specially segregated space is a kind of non-space, ultra-space, or ideal space where the surrounding matrix of space-time is symbolically annulled. … By suggesting eternal ratification of a certain sensibility, the white cube suggests the eternal ratification of the claims of the caste or group sharing that sensibility. … The *Spectator* is the attenuated and bleached-out life of the self from which the Eye goes forth and which, in the meantime, does nothing else. The Eye and the Spectator are all that is left of someone who has 'died' as O'Doherty puts it, by entering the white cube. In return for the glimpse of ersatz eternity that the white cube affords us – and as a token of our solidarity with the special in-

terests of a group – we give up our humanness and become the cardboard Spectator and the disembodied Eye (McEvilly in O'Doherty 1999: 9, 10).

McEvilly's above explanation can be applied to current issues of whiteness in critical race theory. The 'the caste or group' is the white academic, professional elite or if there are black people then it is those who pass as white by conforming to whiteness. That gallery space is the white world displaying its ware and the similarities between the art gallery and the many white interiors in contemporary design is striking. The perpetuation of white as a symbol of authority and status in design in the contemporary postmodern scenario serves to exclude both people and ideologies that favour environmental and social sustainability issues. Simply put, these exclusions are a reiteration of the 'chaos of nature' that the Enlightenment and Victorian era in design were so afraid of. Such exclusions are especially true of urban domestic and inner-city design. Interior design magazine *Indesign* makes the distinction between urban and rural spaces, rendering the one 'sleek' and the other 'charming' (*Indesign* 2004: 162,163). To put it bluntly, white design is an extension of white racism where blackness, colour, variety and ethnic identities in person, dress and choice of interior design, do not have a place.[2] The positioning of white within the paradigms of western hegemony suits the agendas of such a regime. White is not just a colour it is a code of entry. The clamour of white voices is prevalent in consumer marketing and as previously mentioned in the western paranoia with dirt, darkness and mess.[3] White utopias are sold to people in a postmodern era of crowds and busy lives. White is the sought after space that is promised to release individuals from having to cope with anyone besides their own white personas. The term for white that is used in real estate rhetoric is often 'neutral'.

D.J.B. Young uses the heading 'Any colour so long as it's white' in an article on properties for sale in London (2004: 11). Young relates the way in which sellers are encouraged to keep 'a blank canvas' in the interiors so that illusions of light encourage the buyer to enter the space without reservations about previous owners' identities (2004: 9). Roland Marchand compares the confused reflection of the real and the ideal in the history of advertising to the *zerrspiegel* 'a distorting mirror that would enhance certain images' a neat way of presenting the conflict between desire, identity, status and affordability (1985: xvi). Advertising fables of ideal homes and images are fodder for consumption because they represent a utopia that will of necessity never be fulfilled thereby ensuring eternal capitalism as opposed to eternal life.

The reified non-space of the gallery is, as mentioned, a parallel for the spaces shown and discussed in this paper. White is not neutral 'the white wall is precisely not blank' and its inhabitants are invited in only if they comprehend the language, this is the language of a dominant group which is determined to remain unnamed in its masked emptiness (Wigley 1995: xiv). This emptiness is also the visual legacy of 'modern' white western power. Steve Martinot and Jared Sexton put it succinctly when they write:

> White supremacy is nothing more than what we perceive of it; there is nothing beyond it to give it legitimacy, nothing beneath it or outside it to give it justification. The structure of its banality is the surface on which it operates. Whatever mythic content it pretends to claim is *a priori* empty. Its secret is that it has no depth. There is no dark corner that, once brought to the light of reason, will unravel its system (2003: 169).

The supremacy of the white space and white surface, in its physicality, is only skin

deep and is a cosmetic layer at that. White paint like white skin has many shades of pale and none are permanent or constant, in fact white skin is not really white. In order to sustain and maintain their precarious position, white surface and white skin have to subscribe to costly cosmetic applications without admitting it.

Conclusion

The paper has posed a number of questions such as: 'Who is responsible for the whiteness in architectural spaces, why is there still so much white in postmodern interiors and is there a connection between white paint and white race'? What the paper has indicated is that we live in a designed world of surveillance, an environment under lights. It has been argued that there is a direct connection between the painting of white spaces and the maintenance of white racial status. The strong conflation of light and white in colour theory has been carried across into design. Therefore, in the semblance of light, whiteness continues incognito and as such strengthens its power base. In design theory, it does so by pretending to be space, in critical race theory, whiteness strengthens itself by ongoing group denial. The brightening and spatial enhancing qualities of light are used to exaggerate white spaces and white surfaces. In this way white becomes the backdrop for identification of an Other. People who are dark or who contrast against the combination of bright whiteness and neatness cause a ripple in the surface order.

The white designed world has been planned; these are not 'spec' buildings but carefully and usually strategically placed edifices in the urban structure. In the case of domestic interiors, they are published with proclaim in architecture magazines. They are symbols of power and material whiteness, testimonies to a society controlled by a corporation. Those responsible for an extensively white painted environment are those who still believe in the dated notion of 'civilisation', they are not only those architects who subscribe to white elitism but an entire web of associated professionals who live in denial of nature and messy humanity. The interior examples are without exception static, fixed forms. There is no evidence of movement, not only because there are few to no people in the images but primarily because of the hard inflexible architectural lines and shapes in the white spaces represented. White is a death colour, it is the reincarnated ghost of modernism. This whiteness is the corporate control of society and it carries its cold lifelessness into the city scapes of work and life.

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5. Jackson Clements Burrows, Extension of house in Richmond, Melbourne, 2002. *Indesign* 19 (November 2004): 141.

Endnotes

1. Le Corbusier (Charles Eduard Jeanneret) was a high modernist architect who influenced a generation of architects with his white utopian ideologies of space. The reclining sofa was originally designed together with Pierre Jeanneret and Charlotte Perriand in 1928 out of chrome-plated steel and black cowhide with a steel base; the *chaise longue* in this picture has black and white variegated leather upholstery.

2. Whiteness in sartorial style and also in magazine 'representations' of fashion and colour is too much to cover in this paper and will form the content of a forthcoming paper.

3. Darkness, blackness and the immorality of dirt is something that I have located in the pre-Apartheid period of South Africa and can be read in a chapter, which will appear in Damien Riggs' forthcoming book *Taking up the Challenge: critical whiteness studies and indigenous Sovereignty*, Crawford House, Adelaide.

LET THE EGYPTIAN SPEAK FOR HIMSELF: AN AGITATION OF THE CULTURAL INTEGRITY OF WHITENESS IN AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES

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Abstract

The increase of racist incidents towards people of 'Middle Eastern appearances' since 2001 and the sense of discomfort that has been associated with them, problematises the ability of Arab Australians to participate as legitimate citizens in their sociopolitical environment. This paper departs from this epistemic angle explaining how 'patriarchal white sovereignty' (Moreton-Robinson) has created a flawed practice of multiculturalism which has not attempted to decentre this Eurocentric assumption. I argue that the Australian government's policies and practices since September 2001 have been underpinned by a broadly orientalist ideology that assumes an essential difference between Arab and Muslim Australians from other Australian citizens and frames such a difference as a distance from and a lack of Australian whiteness. I suggest that in order to expose and undercut this (re)inscription of otherness on this diverse yet silenced community, an 'agitation' of the intersections of the power asymmetries and cultural hierarchies between those who can and those who cannot 'speak' must be brought forth in this paper.

Introduction

The first part of the title of this paper is derived from Edward Said's description of Lord Balfour's political technique of silencing the Egyptian to ascertain control and mastery over him (2003: 31-38). The name, Balfour, is

> synonymous with the declaration that helped create the state of Israel and with it the untold agony and suffering of the Palestinian people who to this day have yet to recover from one of history's worst political and moral injustices (Rizk, 2000).

Said details how the wholeness of Balfour's colonial fantasy depended on this belligerent essentialist categorization in his speech to the British parliament about the success of the colonial experiment in Egypt. If an Egyptian, like me, seeks to unsettle this fantasy by speaking out, he or she is seen as "the agitator who wishes to raise difficulties than the good native who overlooks the 'difficulties of foreign domination'" (2003:33). As the distinction of minority and majority populations becomes increasingly blurred through transnational migration and technological advancement, scenarios of colonial domination are currently being replayed in the Australian bodypolitic and these will shape the epistemic tone of this essay.

In those terms, this paper will analyse how orientalist representations of the 'Arab' in the Australian government's policies and practices of state multiculturalism especially after the events of September 11th are determined by essentialist and quasi-biological notions that ideologically contain other non-white 'bodies' within the nation's white racial and cultural integrity (Pugliese,

2003). Hence, in this paper I will detail the experiences of those of 'Middle Eastern appearance' and how they came to be signified as the latest others along the continuum of cultural and racial demonisations that have been inherent in Australia's racial history[i] (Poynting et al., 2001). What this paper puts forward is how the discursive and political stratification of racialised others is not a new phenomenon and is certainly not unique in the Australian context of state multiculturalism.

It is precisely this role to 'agitate' the power asymmetries and cultural hierarchies between those who can and those who cannot 'speak' that I wish to bring forth in this paper. I cannot as a post-colonial intellectual in Western academia measure how this discursive intervention through 'speaking' here in the language that colonised my country of origin can effectively contribute towards achieving a sense of justice for my fellow colonised. I am weary that because of my privileges, I am complicit in some way in reproducing the same hegemonic structures of whiteness that I am seeking to dismantle. Yet, this irresolvable paradox borne out of existing power relations can be seen as strategically disabling or enabling. Through my privileged location in the West, I am able to embrace a theoretically self-assertive persona that allows me to become the 'agitator' without the threat of being physically or intellectually repressed (Perera 1999: 195-197). Although the new Australian sedition laws may be proving me wrong! (Williams 2006:11). What I am pointing to here in is not a liberal romanticisation of the processes of 'speech' as simply a subversive liberation of repressed voices from the throes of whiteness. Rather, I am attempting to de-hegemonise the naturalised status of whiteness into the foreground of critical inquiry about Australian multiculturalism. As Haggis et al. argue "those placed outside... 'whiteness' usually can describe whiteness, reflect on it, and recount experiences of it" (1999:169). In a sense, I am grappling with Frantz Fanon's aphorism that "colonialism forces people it dominates to ask themselves the question constantly 'In reality, who am I?'"(1963: 203).

Arabophobia – The Tyranny of 'Non-White' Appearances

In his masterful work *Orientalism*, what Said exposes in the seemingly benign political thinking of Balfour of the 'Orient' and 'Orientals' is symptoms of prejudicial thinking. The very Western study of the East, in Said's view, was bound up in the systematic prejudices about the non-Western world that turned it into a set of tangibly felt political and geographical dominations. The ability to make a discourse suggests that the Orientalist, in this case Balfour, is driven by a need to construct an image of a norm that is able to speak for the silent other which is marked as racially and culturally aberrant. This has been a concern of Said and other post-colonial theorists (Spivak, 1988; Ang; 1994) where the 'Oriental' is not given the opportunity to make statements about his or her people, let alone the 'Occidental', and informs the tone of his writings post *Orientalism* especially about the Palestinian quest for self-determination (1992;1994). Said attributes the authority and the ability to 'speak' to the unacknowledged privileges of ascribing to 'whiteness' (2003:228).

The seamlessly acquired demonised status of the 'Arab' post September 11th echoes the same manner of objectifying the 'Oriental' subject during the eras of British and French colonialism. The September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States, and subsequent terrorist attacks including the Bali bombings, revealed degrees of how Western states

assumed the orientalist role of protecting the West from the perils of the East (Dutton et al. 2004: 5-6). In Australia, a primordial position of defending 'our way of life' has been formulated with a nationally defined cultural core in mind based on Western democratic values. This territorial self-assertion, couched in terms of security jargon, becomes particularly stressed in the political spaces that lie between the Australian nation-state and the indigenous and immigrant minorities in it. This means that the concept of national security, in this instance, becomes stretched to include some groups and exclude others from political processes almost at will (Poynting & Noble 2003: 41-43). The flexibility and inherent ambiguity of this concept enables the state to promote inherently exclusive mental spaces, that of the orientalist division that Said aptly describes, to control political arenas. By this I am following Said in arguing that before there could be a materialization of European colonialism there had to be an *idea* of the 'West' or the notion that there was a social and geographical space sanctimoniously guarded by the ontological boundaries of whiteness that was formulated in contrast to the 'East'.

In other words, this universal practice of designating in one's mind a familiar space which is "ours" and an unfamiliar space beyond "ours" which is "theirs" is a way of making geographical distinctions that can be entirely arbitrary. I use the word "arbitrary" here because *imaginative* geography of the "our land-barbarian land" variety does not require that the barbarians acknowledge this distinction. It is enough for "us" to set up these boundaries in our own minds; "they" become "they" accordingly, and both their territory and their mentality are designated as different from "ours" (Said 2003:54; my emphasis).

This blend of cultural determinism breeds a tacit distinction between an Australian and Western world that is characterized by democratic beliefs and an Arab society that is hampered by undemocratic practices such as terrorism (Turner 2003: 414-417). The discourse of the Australian government in its multicultural policies and practices assumes implicitly that

> on the one hand there are Westerners, and on the other there are Arab-Orientals; the former are...rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion; the latter are none of these things" (Said 2003: 49).

The fact that multiculturalism has been structured as a contest of mainstream and minority relations asserts its embedment in colonial presuppositions and Orientalist practices of othering (Ahmed 2000: 95-113). It has to be duly noted that this polarization is not egalitarian in any sense of the term. The bifurcation that multiculturalism posits is between two unequal cultural spheres – an Anglocentric white one and anything different from it. There is continuity in the assumption that minority groups are essentially static and authentically different from a dominant culture. This essentialist tactic privileges the dominant group, and its pervasive culture, in always treating the other as alien to divert away opposition to social and power inequalities (Ahmed 2000: 97-101). Larbalestier reiterates that in mainstream "representations of multiculturalism, whiteness itself is frequently an unexamined all-encompassing given"(1999:146). Thus, this ideology also serves a system of Orientalist domination that sets up ontological boundaries between different groups along the hierarchy of whiteness in society and divides their members along imaginary, but at the same time real, lines of binary opposition. In this institutional moment of multiculturalism post September 11, the dominant white

culture becomes the sole and overriding mode of 'national' interactions flanked by other minority groups. These racialised groups enter into a colonial game of competing for the colonial gaze of the dominant culture or resisting its imperialist asphyxia or an ambiguous combination of both as exhibited by the minority of Arab Australians.

The Location of the White Self vis-à-vis the Arab Other

When analysing Australian politics most scholars who include 'race' in their study do so when the non-white 'other' is clearly visible in the political landscape (Gunaratnam 2003: 128-129). This form of race politics is rarely perceived as being shaped by the relationship between patriarchal white sovereignty and those who do not ascribe to its phenotypic characteristics (Moreton-Robinson, 2004b). This process, known as racialisation, is understood

> as the way in which complex social phenomena are refracted through and become explained primarily in terms of ethnic and racial categories of social perception (Poynting et al. 2004:14).

Its credibility is sustained through the normalized quiet of an unseen but embodied power of a whiteness

> that is conferred not as an individualistic act, but rather as a performative enabled by an entire discursive apparatus constituted by such institutional bodies as the Australian government, the Department of Immigration and so on (Pugliese 2002:165)

Thus, central to understanding the possessive logic of this racialised thinking is a recognition of the ambiguous positioning of the other in a society where race has been intrinsically used, as an all-purpose marker, in political practices. This entails a further self-reflexive aware-

ness that sees how whiteness in its localised manifestations and global consequences is bound up in a series of vested political interests that bestow those within its contingent discursive and cultural domains (un)acknowledged privileges and power (Gabriel, 1998; Moreton Robinson, 1998; Perera, 1999; Pugliese, 2002).

Within the racial spectrum designed through a hierarchy of "white interests" (Gabriel 1998: 97), Arab bodies are marked with pre-configured meanings in Australia: suspected terrorists, presumed religious and misogynistic fanatics and oppressed women. Arabs exist outside of the ideological scope of 'belonging' within the Australia. Located within a racial paradox, Arab-Australians were once, in Australia's immigration history, simultaneously racialised as white and non-white. Being unable to fit into readily assigned racial and ethnic categories used by Australia, Arabs traditionally were and are still not legally 'raced' and therefore were presumably white before the gang rapes incidents and September 11 (Batrouney 2002: 28-42)[ii]. However, after these events Arab-Australians have become signified as oppositional to Australia's democratic civilization and thus have firmly become placed outside the boundaries of 'whiteness'. Orientalism, based on the othering of the Arab in the Australian context, has now become a sedimented language of everyday socio-political interactions that creates the backdrop for social and national exclusions to take place. Moreover, it can be seen how this discourse easily degenerates into an exercise of stereotypical thinking that involves making generalized and sweeping assumptions about an entire set of individuals and populations (Osuri, 2004). It follows, that these discourses have been integral in the circulation of a 'common' knowledge that is at once dominant as is popular within political circles, because

it inhibits the other from producing his/her own discourses that run counter to accepted discourses. This hegemonic knowledge prevents the other rupturing the ideological grip held by these widely held norms. So in this sense, benign or normal 'everyday' practices of the nation should not be assumed as free from being complicit in imperialist processes of ensuring a skewed normality toward a dominant group (Goldberg 1993: 83-84). Further, it must be noted that the imperialist ambitions of a nation are not simply forgotten with the conquest of territory. The desire to homogenously eliminate differences in the attempt to maintain a unified national identity, specifically adhering to a constructed norm, still informs the political and cultural agendas of many postcolonial states (Hardt & Negri 2000: 128-134).

Sticks and Stones: Broken Arabs and Bones

In the wake of the September 11 attacks on the United States mainland, a whole wave of racist violence and discrimination was directed to Arab and Muslim diasporic communities throughout the West, including Australia (Mason 2004: 233). After September 11 hate crimes increased dramatically. Hate crimes including beatings, arson, attacks on mosques, vehicular assaults and verbal threats were reported. The Australian Arabic Council reported a twenty fold increase in reports of discrimination and vilification of Arab Australians in the ensuing period after September11th (HREOC, 2003). However, these are merely the racial incidents that have been reported through legislative means. Many other factors prevent such incidents from being acknowledged publicly as statistical figures, as already subjugated communities sense a heightening of persecution (Humphrey 2002: 206-223).

The targets of these post-September 11 incidents attest to how the cultural other has been excluded on the basis of a convoluted strategy. Thus, non-Arabs, such as Sikhs and Indians, as well as non-Muslims, including Arab Christians, have been adversely affected (HREOC, 2003). This violence is best understood not as racist incidents but as imperialist practices of white Anglo Saxon fragility that invoke a demarcatory philosophy of discriminating against the non-white other threatening the socio-economic, political and cultural privileges held by this un-raced group (Hage 1998: 28-32). The ironically multicultural target of these incidents is instantiated by identifying others through corporeal and cultural descriptors of the Middle East. Pugliese, in explaining how the power of orientalism touches other non-Middle Easterners, argues that

> everything in this descriptor is predicated on situating the interpellated subject within a geographical location: this descriptor assumes its animating essence precisely through its naming and invocation of a geopolitical place. Yet…this descriptor, when applied to individual bodies, obliterates the specificity of geography as such (2003).

Thus, the articulation of differences are embodied and embedded in encounters with others who fit this orientalist profile. Yet, this paradox is constructed through a distinct process of racialisation. While other ethnic groups are racialised according to phenotype, Arab-Australians have become simultaneously racialised according to religious and pseudo-cultural and biological symbols. Religious racialisation conflates Arabs and Islam, and consequently reduces all Arabs as Muslims. Moreover, it represents Islam as a monolithic religion erasing diversity among Arabs and Muslims; and marks Islam as inherently incompatible with Australian 'democratic' beliefs. This exceptional process of racialisation posi-

tions Arabs in a peculiar location within the Australian racial terrain in which they are not racially legible within the operating racial framework and has thus contributed to Arab-Australian demonic visibility post September 11 (Pugliese, 2003).

It must be noted that these recent incidents were not suddenly brought about in a bout of nationalist fervour following the events of September 11 and later terrorist attacks. The incidents must be situated in a larger trend of 'moral panic' that has linked crime with ethnicity and that has been characterised by the same racialising ideology that Arab-Australian communities are currently reeling from (Batrouney, 2002; Collins et al, 2000; Poynting et al, 2004). As Hage reiterates regarding previous racist acts

> what was more important than any ideology of essentialisation was the more general process whereby one group of 'White' Australians felt *empowered*, and were in a position, to subject another (Arab-Muslim) group of Australians to such harassment (1998:35).

It asserts that Orientalism as employed by Said maintains that an imaginative geography based on misconceptions of the other "puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relations with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand" (2003: 7). Such a description exemplifies how the Australian government since the time of Federation has managed to keep this status quo undisturbed. The cultural primacy accorded to the white Australian male of Anglo Celtic background has created a flawed practice of multiculturalism that has not attempted to decentre this Eurocentric assumption.

What is at issue is not that the Arab-Australian population has firmly personified this other, as the dialectics of orientalism are always present in nationalist equations since the incorporation of race in the formation of the modern nation state(Said 2003: 332). But, that this marginalised population has not ostensibly been associated with being Australian. The first part of this hyphenated identity has become a cultural obstacle towards being nationally recognised as the second part of the hybrid identity. A precariously defined state citizenship that is available in naturalisation ceremonies as part of extending a multicultural good will to others does not capture the intricacies of cultural identity (Kampmark, 2003). Although, the state recognises through its multicultural policies that all those assuming citizenship are willing to commit to the Australian 'way of life', they are still marginalized through the hegemonic formations of white belonging. Citizenship should be understood as more than a document of national standing, it should include a sense of belonging to the nation (Hage 2002: 2-4). This means that democratic political values do not only affect the way the government and its people draw collective boundaries, but it is through the national imaginary that this idea takes place.

With this point in mind, it can be further argued that belonging is not only determined through institutional channels but through daily regimes of social knowledge that are (re)produced and practised daily. Thus, what these racially motivated incidents signify is a sense of national and cultural belonging intertwined with a feeling of securing this belonging. The conflicting sense of being both Arab and Australian is an oxymoron to the white bodypolitic that ensures tentative accommodation of a singular identity based on negating another with all of its complexities. This falls within Harris' argument of whiteness as property whereby the right to exclude the other is seen as normative if the other does not

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possess any of the criteria of whiteness (1993:1721).

The Non-Performativity of State Multiculturalism[iii]

The government's immediate response to the racially motivated episodes in the aftermath of September 11 was of swift condemnation. The Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs at the time, Philip Ruddock, was quick to rebuke all those who engaged in acts of racist conduct (MPS 158, 2001). But the general tenor of this 'anti-racist' rhetoric can be seen as an ideological cover for the strengthening of the hegemony of the government through 'colour-blind' policies that are aimed at ensuring the safety of the state and 'all' its citizens. hooks eloquently summarizes the Minister's view as

> The eagerness with which contemporary society does away with racism, replacing this recognition with evocations of pluralism and diversity that further mask reality, is a response to the terror. It is has also become a way to perpetuate the terror, by providing a cover, a hiding place. (1992: 176).

The common undercurrent in anti-racist and multiculturalist discourses is the idea that the Western democratic socio-political model originating from the history of European Enlightenment is the most advanced of humanity (Goldberg 1993: 14-18). It constructs the West as a zone of uncontested morality. This thesis represents all that is pleasing about human beings, and in its defence those who dishonour its basic tenets are castigated as anti-democratic (Ahmed, 2004). Ruddock describes the attacks against Arab and Muslim communities in Australia as "un-Australian". He goes on to say that "such incidents merely play into the hands of those, like terrorists, who do not share *our* civilised democ-

ratic values" (MPS 158, 2001). The perception of cultural practices of others as inherent and innate to them collapses the myriad of differences between subject peoples. It situates subject communities, in this case Arab and Muslim communities, in a particular relation of inferiority within the discursive regime of whiteness. Moreover, it affirms that terrorism "is held to be a weapon of the weak because the strong also control the doctrinal systems and their terror doesn't count as terror" (Chomsky, 2001). Thus, it is interesting to note how the reach of the term 'un-Australian' goes well beyond certain targeted racialised groups to include racists who do not ascribe to an aestheticised progressive and middle class version of multiculturalism (Hage 1998:182). The targeting of such groups as well as those 'racists' identified by Ruddock, sheds light on the manner in which 'un-Australian' operates as a heterogenous catchword that semantically and politically excludes alternative discourses to that propagated by the government. It typifies a kind of discursive terror, which emanates from the Balfourian technique of silencing the Oriental that suppresses any avenues of critiquing governmental practices that can be interpreted as terrorising to some communities.

What I am pointing to is how the government, in maintaining its hegemony as the *only* legitimate political actor to use violence, creates in an orientalist manner an environment of "moral panic" for its citizens who are seen as un-Australian (Poynting *et al.* 2004: 1–3). In this key document, the moral upper hand resides with "innocent Australians" who "are being wrongfully blamed" or "are being threatened" (UDR 2003: 7). The 'threatening' of the 'Australian' social order has become irrationally linked in orientalist commonsense with "terrorists" who "claim religious sanction for their actions despite there being no religious

or cultural basis for terrorism" (UDR 2003: 7). This falls in line with one of Said's principal themes in *Orientalism*. Said insists on how orientalist language is powerful in its ability to be shrouded in an aura of moral superiority and invisibility that immunes it from any opposing discourses (2003: 227-228). Orientalist discourse embodies and articulates "a certain will or intention" emanating from the discourse producer (2003: 12). The dichotomy of the Australian people and the 'terrorists' is carefully used to relieve the Australian government of any association of terrorism that is not religiously or culturally based. It is also interesting to note how these characteristics have been synonymously assigned to terrorism without taking into account other political, geographical or economic factors. It is strategically not mentioned in this document the Australian Government's involvement in a 'Western' led campaign in the 'war of terror' may have contributed to the rise of terrorist incidents after September 11th (Osuri & Banerjee 2004: 168). Furthermore, the bipartisan support for an Israeli state occupying Palestinian lands is not included as another form of accepting state-sponsored terrorism, as against other political actors' terrorism (Jakubowicz, 2003). It might be argued that the context might not be the most appropriate to list the foreign political interests of the government in a policy document for multiculturalism. And this criticism is voiced by a leading multicultural theorist in Australia, Andrew Jakubowicz, where he recognizes that "the Israeli/Palestinian conflict has become conflated with the politics associated with the US/UK/Australia invasion of Iraq" (2003). Yet in the same spirit he equally argues that the invocation of international crisis, notably terrorism, causally creates a racialised domestic environment that identifies and racialises those who look like 'terrorists' in Australia (Jakubowicz, 2003).

The linguistic asymmetry in this policy document has been based entirely on orientalist bias. Through this language the government's hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated amongst its population, as conceptions of 'truth' and 'reality' become established as norms in political language. As Said succinctly sums up:

> For every Orientalist, quite literally, there is a support system of staggering power, considering the ephemerality of the myths that Orientalism propagates. *The system now culminates into the very institutions of the state*. To write about the Arab Oriental world, therefore, is to write with the *authority of a nation*, and not with the affirmation of a strident ideology but with the unquestioning certainty of absolute truth backed by absolute force. (2003: 307) [My emphasis]

Thus, political rhetoric here has followed in an orientalist trend of 'fixity' and racialised abstractions that are far from empty in their implications (Bhabha 1983: 18). To the Australian government, those who engage or sympathize with terrorist activity whatever the motivation or obligation is, are political outlaws. At the bottom of this view is a stereotype which connotes a semantic rigidity through a label that is emotionally laden in the context of national security (Noble 2005: 109). This colonial stereotype acts as a discursive strategy that 'fixes' the other, be they terrorists or non-Australians, in a position of inferiority vis-à-vis the white rational Australian. Furthermore, this discourse is effectively a *national* self-narrative that demarcates the borders of Australia and its enemy terrorists or the West and East (Lee Koo, 2005). Said makes clear that

> in any instance of at least written language, there is no such thing as a delivered presence, but a *re-presence*, or a representation. The value, efficacy, strength, apparent veracity of a written statement... is a presence to the reader

by virtue of its having excluded, displaced, made supererogatory any such real thing as 'the Orient' (2003: 21).

The ideas of orientalist scholarship can be seen to have evolved as foundations for both ideologies and policies developed by Australia and the West. To legitimise defence against vague enemies that are diametrically positioned as opposed to Australia, this policy uses an orientalist language that is normalised with its appeal to the maintenance of the security of the homeland (Hage 1993: 93-96). What these statements (re)present are simplified schemata of complex cultural and political realities that easily conflate and collapse ethnic categories with undemocratic practices of violence. By identifying with what is associated with Australia (e.g. freedom, human rights, democracy, and tolerance), the public is more willing to accept other policies of the government that might include invasion of other countries (Moreton Robinson 2004a: 78). This is because to voice dissent would mean to identify with the other's 'way of life which is supposedly far removed from an Australian one (Hage 2003: 122). This belief, that has become a cornerstone of governmental policies in the domestic and international fronts, reiterates how "psychologically, Orientalism is a form of paranoia" (Said 2003: 72).

(Un)Australian (In)Securities

In the same document, Minister Ruddock allays the fear of the Australian public in assuring them that

> these [Arabic and Muslim] communities have a demonstrated commitment to Australia and have stated their abhorrence of terrorism just as much as every other section of the Australian community (MPS 158, 2001).

From this standpoint, Ruddock assumes the role of the orientalist by mimetically representing the views of these 'uncivilised' communities to the 'civilised' and concerned Australian public (Said 2003: 39). It is as if the Arabic and Muslim communities are homogenously lumped as separate communities apart from the Australian one and that their presence is one of containment and judgement. This dichotomisation of us and them, firmly situates the 'Arab' in a space that is on "the locus of the non" to frame it in Pugliese's words (2003). What this existentialist term maintains is that in order for the Australian national self-image to be perpetuated as unified against competing discourses of otherness, the constitution of this self is based on the 'de-constitution' of the other through political and discursive measures (Ingram 2001: 163-168).

In this light, the practices of placing mostly Arab and Muslim asylum seekers in detention centres in 2001 is considered as morally and culturally acceptable as it protects the Australian 'way of life' from their otherness. This physical implementation of othering became a simplistic yet effective political strategy, which was used by the Howard government in a time of elections, to exclude others from 'our' Australian society (Perera, 2002). Juxtaposing the racial incidents perpetrated against the Arab and Muslim against communities, the violence committed by the terrorists on white diasporic territory as well as the government's own form of violence (i.e. mandatory detention) reveals a deeply flawed moral system that is only judged from a white perspective of knowledge (Moreton Robinson 2004a: 75-78). All three cases of violence are condemned, but the latter two escape the full scale of condemnation because they are seen as protecting the nation from the threatening others (Hoh, 2002). Thus, while the Australian government's

'anti-terrorist' protective policies can be seen as trying to preserve the sanctity of Australian life from terrorists, it can simultaneously be seen as a departure from the egalitarian rhetoric of multicultural policies through the political racialisation and exclusion of the other (Lee Koo, 2005).

At this point I want to return to the term 'un-Australian' to explain how it can be seen to operate as a metonymic form of 'neo-racism' (to invoke Etienne Balibar's term). This means that the Darwinian form of biological racism that discriminated on the basis of a belief in biologically inferior or superior races along a hierarchy of white features is now being replaced by a belief that groups of people are 'unassimilable' because of particular cultural values and beliefs (Balibar 1990: 17-27). This is the discursive domain where religious antithesis is invoked in popular discourses of the nation to further polarise Arab Australians from white patriarchal sovereignty through an orientalist view of Islam. Through the oppositional construction of Islam to the Judeo-Christian tradition inherent in Australian and Western democracies, Arab Australians, specifically Muslim Arab Australians, are relegated to being anti-democratic and thus anti-Western. The interstitial political space of articulating experiences of discrimination and still being committed to an ethico-political position of justice is becoming increasingly inexistent for such communities (Kerbaj, 2006c). The political option afforded by the government is that once the Arab-Australian community strips itself of its own religious and cultural traits to join a Western condemnation of such acts, the effacement of the negatory prefix in front of 'Australian' is complete. This is exhibited in Ruddock's reassuring tone of the 'good white nationalist' (Hage 1998:78-104), who allows the Arabic and Muslim communities who publicly denounce

non-state terrorism to be part of a narrowly defined narrative of belonging (MPS 158, 2001). This means that the suffering of 'white diasporas' (Osuri & Banerjee 2004: 161- 169) must be valorised by 'non-white' diasporas in Australia to relieve themselves of the "associative logic of racism" (Hage 2002:242) by the government or its concerned citizens.

The formation of the Muslim reference group is a case in point as it illustrates the embrace of a rhetoric of grief and compassion, moderation in religious views and condemnation by Arab and Muslim communities as a politically recognised effort to reject the Arab marginality (Dowling, 2005; Kerbaj, 2006a). The advisory group was formed in late 2005 through a handpicking by the federal government of influential Muslim leaders within their communities that exhibited signs of religious conservatism and political support within their communities (Kerbaj, 2006b). These leaders with their varying views, motivations and their diverse social and political positioning within these racialised communities joined together in the political hope to be accepted as belonging and to be considered 'Australian' by the government and its other 'non-racialised' citizens (Kerbaj, 2006c; Noble & Tabar 2002: 140-144). In essence, this form of 'coercive mimeticism' entails a discursive apologetic by which an already subjugated people are driven to reproduce the characteristics and ideals of a dominant culture in a way that affirms the categorical thinking that locks those colonised in convenient roles of banalised exoticism (Chow 2002: 107). This leads to what Foucault calls the "objectivizing of the subject", where "the subject is either divided inside himself or divided from other. This process objectivizes him." (2003:126). Therefore, the Arab Other who is already subjugated and objectified from a history of orientalist

expansion in the 'Orient' (Said 2003:72), is re-subjugated, re-objectified and re-orientalised and is caught in a struggle of conflicting impulses that defies the egalitarian underpinnings of state multi-culturalism. This is because supposedly all Australians, regardless of their race, culture, religion or gender, are entitled to the same equal treatment from the government (UDR 2003: 6-8).

Yet, in order to 'fit in' the Arab is forced to assimilate to an Australian 'way of life' that homogenizes his/her cultural differences (Noble 2005: 115-119). What these anti-terrorist practices post September 11th by the Australian government germinated out of was a legitimate need to protect 'our way of life' or , as I interpret it, a safeguarding of a privileged white position of political and cultural hegemony. This fear stems from the guilt associated with the foundational moment of colonial invasion and the subsequent glossing over that delicate balance of xenophobic whiteness through policies of exclusion and tentative inclusion of the 'other' (Perera, 2002). Thus, the racialisation of suspicious Arabs or implicitly identified un-Australian communities becomes a fundamental feature of preserving the nationalist and orientalist rhetoric of multiculturalism (Hage 2003: 38-43). It exemplifies "the culmination of Orientalism as a dogma that not only degrades its subject matter but also blinds its practitioner" (Said 2003: 307). Hence, there is an apparent contradiction in the modern liberal ethos of multiculturalism that espouses a shared humanity involving an idea of Australian citizenship and values. This ensures that no individual or group living in Australia seems to be excluded (UDR 2003:6).

In the context of these exclusionary governmental practices, the actual embodied experiences of racial discrimination of Arab Australians post September 11 render multiculturalism as a political façade. What they also denote is a cultural particularism of institutionalising whiteness and its vehement implementation into definitions of Australian nationalist practices (Kampmark 2004: 287-298).

Conclusion: Beyond Saying and Doing

The post September 11th Arab Australian experience of multiculturalism crystallises the sense among those 'of Middle Eastern appearance', and I strategically include myself within this category afforded to me by the government, that they are the current ambivalent 'others' of Australian society (Green 2003: 7-13). The daily incidents of racism and the Australian government's responses towards Arab Australians exhibit several of the orientalist biases identified by Said. These include a belief in the superiority of the West through anti-terrorist rhetoric and legislation, an inability or unwillingness to allow these communities to represent themselves, and an exaggerated fear of defending the homeland that is fortified by a degree of discomforting these communities.

In the Australian context of state multi-culturalism, the discursive economy of representations of 'culturally diverse' others and the hierarchy embodied in these constructions has had significant implications for the unequal distribution of power between the government and its internal 'others'. The most pervasive feature of the orientalist language employed in the multicultural policies and practices of the Australian government is the problematisation of minorities (Schech & Haggis 2001: 143-150). The 'problem' of the examples given in this essay is that cultural differences are being presented in a continuation of the same orientalism, which Said so critically

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wrote about. The idea of a vibrant multiculturalism that celebrates difference is unfortunately still rhetorical rather than practical in its democratic manifestations (Ang 1996: 37-40). The danger of an orientalist multiculturalism is that it creates an illusion of equality where the other is visible and is given a voice to a certain extent. However, this visibility is built on orientalist stereotypes where the other's role easily becomes exhibitionist in performing exotic spectacles or being excluded on the basis of their otherness. The narratives of exoticness and celebrating cultural diversity are undoubtedly preferred to hostile attitudes or even fear of the other, but unfortunately these options are not mutually exclusive. In either case, the Western self is distanced from the other through a series of hierarchical obstructions predicated on exclusivist notions of whiteness and Australianness.

In analysing the internal political dynamics of Australian multiculturalism, in terms of state discourses and practices, I am not putting forward a view of the failure of this cosmopolitical project. What I want to affirm, in this provisional conclusion, is the fact the discursive and political space in which multiculturalism operates in is constricted by the scope of the white bodypolitic of the nation. In a sense, this paper can be seen as 'speaking' to the "undoing of states of racial being and forms of governmentality in their global profusion" (Goldberg 2002: 264). This concluding thought calls for an agonistic and self-reflexive commitment to the manner in which whiteness locates or produces the non-white subject (specifically the Arab Other). Through a reconfiguration and rewriting of cultural grammars and discourses in the Australian interpellation of the 'other' an ethico-political move predicated on a decolonising sense of justice, beyond a whiteness predicated

on orientalist dogmatism, can be realised.

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Endnotes

[i] The Australian Arabic Council in the wake of the increased usage of that derogatory term in popular discourses of the mass media and the government released a press release explaining the orientalist histories and racist underpinnings of such a term. Refer to Australian Arabic Council. (2003). 'Ethnicity & Crime in NSW: Politics, Rhetoric & Ethnic Descriptors'.
(http://www.aac.org.au/media.php?ArtID=24)

[ii] In October 1998, a young boy was stabbed to death in the western suburbs of Sydney. This incident and the subsequent backlash became a sensationalised event that dominated Australian mass media and the NSW government where a link between crime and Middle Eastern ethnicity was bluntly articulated. For an in-depth discussion about the politics of racialisation that elevated those 'of Middle Eastern appearance' to embody demonised others, refer to Collins et al. (2000). *Kebabs, Kids, Cops and Crime: Youth, Ethnicity and Crime*. Sydney, NSW: Pluto Press.

[iii] I adopt this title from Sara Ahmed's paper on exploring the ineffectual politics of anti-racism within a framework of critical whiteness studies (Ahmed, 2004).

WHITE "AUTOCHTHONY"

ROB GARBUTT

Abstract

Western conceptualisations of autochthony — that is, of being born of the earth itself — are a useful frame for understanding aspects of the settler Australian idea of "being a local". The western tradition of autochthony underpins relationships between particular peoples and particular lands, and importantly, the implicit moral virtue of one people's claim to specific territory over that of others. The virtue of being a local, of a local place or of the nation, rests on a false claim of white "autochthony" that to perform its social function must conceal Aboriginal autochthony.

Bringing Australian settler claims of autochthony into the light enables its critical examination, and complements the critical examination of that other fictional people-land relation, *terra nullius*. The usefulness of white "autochthony" as an idea is not simply the deconstruction of its fiction. A critique of white "autochthony" opens local and national spaces to a constellation of ethical considerations. In particular, it institutes an ethics of location.

Introduction

In this paper I propose that Western conceptualisations of autochthony — that is, of being born of the earth itself — are a useful frame for understanding aspects of the settler Australian idea of "being a local". The western tradition of autochthony underpins relationships between particular peoples and particular lands, and importantly, the implicit moral virtue of one people's claim to specific territory over that of others. The virtue of being a local, of a local place or of the nation, rests on a false claim of white "autochthony" that to perform its social function must conceal Aboriginal autochthony.

Bringing Australian settler claims of autochthony into the light enables its critical examination, and complements the critical examination of that other fictional people-land relation, *terra nullius*. The usefulness of white "autochthony" as an idea is not simply the deconstruction of its fiction. A critique of white "autochthony" opens local and national spaces to a constellation of ethical considerations. In particular, it institutes an ethics of location that decouples the necessary connection that claims of white "autochthony" produce between settlers, local places and the nation.

The Standing Ground

This paper is written in Bundjalung kuntri, however, I situate myself within a different imaginary geography: a settler imaginary of the land.[1] I say this not to deny Bundjalung claims to kuntri but to acknowledge the imaginary that informs my first language for this land: the imaginary to which I am habitually bound to return and draw upon — through language to repeat, and in practice to re-enact. These are habits of generations. My project is one that seeks to disrupt the way that return is repeated and re-enacted as everyday Australian settler colonialism. It is a project that is

constrained by the settler clearing in which particular things and ideas are able to appear.

In the first language of my imaginary…
I was born in Lismore on the far north coast of New South Wales. My mother and father were also born in Lismore. Mum grew up in South Lismore, dad in Green Forest. My mother's family, a railway family that followed the construction of railways north, came from somewhere down near Bathurst and from the New South Wales South Coast. At some point, more distant maternal relatives arrived in Australia from Scotland and Leicestershire. These are impressions rather than facts. On my father's side, his parents emigrated from near Helmsley in Yorkshire in the late 1800s. They bought a farm at Green Forest and another at Tuncester 5 miles from Lismore and it was at Tuncester that I spent the first three years of my life, before mum and dad left dairying and floods and headed into town and the hills of East Lismore. Those east Lismore hills and paddocks in which I played explorer and naturalist as a child is now Southern Cross University where I play a cultural studies Ph.D. candidate.

I grew up with a sense that this family story is a monocultural Anglo-Celtic story of rootedness in Lismore. By turning the family tree upside down, however, there is a reverse sense—a sense of branching and dispersal, an international diasporic movement. It is, however, without any sense of diaspora that I grew up as one of the Lismore locals: 'Born and bred,' as they say. Rooted in place, despite the movement that lies not so long ago in the past.

My sense of being a local was disrupted through signing a Sorry Book that eventually led to the question of my current research. This question was not directed towards my personal history of forgetting the movement that brought me into Lismore but instead towards my sense of origins within the local: What ideologies and concepts inform the processes Australian settlers undertake to install themselves as "local" or "original"?[2]

My inquiry into how I came to think of myself as a local of Lismore began with becoming conscious of the physical, social, cultural and imaginary displacements of Aborigines that had occurred in order that being a white local could happen in the first place (see Garbutt 2004). This paper attempts to go some way to answering these issues in terms of an idea I call *white "autochthony"*.

AUTOCHTHONY AND THE LOCALS

Autochthony

The word autochthon is directly borrowed from the Ancient (Classical) Greek word $\alpha \upsilon \tau o \chi \theta o \nu$ [*autochthon*] meaning 'sprung from the land itself' (Delbridge 1991:113) or 'children of the land itself' (Isocrates 1990:33,§24). For the ancient Athenians being an autochthon had the sense of being indigenous to their territory (Walsh 1978:301). This autochthonous relationship between Athenians and their land—Attica—produced 'the "empty space",' Nicole Loraux says, 'where the civic imagination of Athens began to crystallise' (1993:51). Within this space emerged ideas of citizenship, the *polis*, democratic government, public ritual and religion, and the roles of women, slaves and foreigners within the *polis*.[3]

Athens provides an example of the particular effects of the Western autochthonic imaginary. Firstly, the inequalities and violence that accompany the foundation of the state are forgotten through a single unifying myth. There is

'a founding forgetting … of the division unity implies'—a *forgetting of the political as such*' (Loraux (2002:43 and 42 [emphasis in the original]). Secondly, autochthony eliminates the question: 'To whom does, or did, the land belong?' (Saxonhouse 1986:255) Thus autochthony serves to provide a myth of doubly peaceful origins. Thirdly, autochthony legitimises a claim to territory through boundaries dictated by nature and not through a social contract or the arbitrariness of a treaty (Saxonhouse 1986:255). Finally, the status of autochthon automatically marks the citizen from non-citizen and foreigner.

Marcel Detienne, in a comparison of autochthony in ancient Athens, ancient Thebes and present-day France, asserts one should always read autochthony and foundation in partnership. He argues that questions of 'founding, beginning, creating' are inextricably tied to 'ways of being born of the earth' (Detienne 2001:53). 'There are', he concludes, 'ten or twenty ways of founding one's autochthony' (55). Ancient Athens is a site to which a study of western autochthony must return, but it is not the only autochthony: there are numerous autochthonies, each founding its own birth from its soil.

Loraux, Saxonhouse and Detienne alert us to two sets of issues. Detienne alerts us to the fact that western autochthony is found, begun or created—that it comes into being through a process of commencement followed by a legitimising claim. Secondly, Loraux and Saxonhouse alert us to the type of social effects that we might anticipate when claims of belonging are founded on a Western tradition of autochthony.

This paper proposes that claims of being a local are claims of belonging that draw on the legitimacy conferred by autochthony. These autochthonist claims are founded upon the practices of nineteenth century settler colonialism and articulate with contemporary post-colonial settler nationalism to produce ongoing colonising effects.

The locals

The claim of being one of the locals is continually being asserted throughout Australia in everyday conversations and the local media. The Cronulla riot in December 2005 brought the locals to national attention with some in the crowd holding banners proclaiming 'Respect locals or piss off!' (TCN 9 2005). The connection of being local with Anglo-Celtic Australian nationalism was unmistakable in this context. However, despite the pervasive language of being local there is no sustained scholarship on the subject in Australia. There are a number of insightful analyses of being local in works that deal with other Australian issues, however, these analyses do not reference each other as the idea of being a local is not the object of study (see Woolley 2003, Schlunke 2005:43–56 and Kijas 2002:78–93).

My work on the idea of being local is situated in contemporary Lismore and is an attempt to understand the meanings and effects of locals' claims of belonging in contemporary Australia. This work draws from a survey of the use of the word "local" in national and daily newspapers in the two years since December 2003 (Garbutt 2005). My particular focus has been Lismore's only daily newspaper *The Northern Star*. This newspaper is a major New South Wales north coast regional daily with a claimed readership of 70,000 people. I also draw to a lesser extent from *The Sydney Morning Herald* to provide state and national contexts.

In that analysis I have identified a number of characteristics of what it might mean to be a local in Lismore (cf. Hall et

al 1984:204–207). Four of these are particularly relevant in this paper. Firstly, being a local includes a person in a field of relations marked by propinquity and that gives rise to a sense of community, care and belonging. The community of locals has a sense of homogeneity that is distinct from a heterogeneous outside. This homogeneity is understood to have a geographical basis. For locals community arises organically within, and is coextensive with, the local place.

Secondly, being local is connected with a suspicion of mobility. This typically takes the form of creating somewhat arbitrary rules regarding how long it takes to be a local. In Lismore this may take between twenty years and never. This temporal criterion extends across generations creating a local aristocracy of the established and the outsiders (Elias 1994: xv–xvii). A third order of local time is established that marks local history as beginning at a point in time with the coming of "the discoverers" and taking a specific historical form beginning with "the pioneers" or "first settlers". Prior to this time is an undifferentiated expanse of prehistory. The most local of the locals have been in Lismore since time "began" and can trace their lineage to an old pioneering "name" (Garbutt 2004:112–114). History and time are closely articulated with the British 'born and bred' kinship system transported to Australian soil (Edwards 2000:28).

Thirdly, as the local is always experienced as enclosed but with external relations with more powerful larger-than-local geographic scales, the locals also have a tendency to feel under siege from extra-local incursions. There are many variations of how such contests are expressed but they tend to take the form of "locals first". There is also an implicit message from locals of a sense of moral priority over variously constituted outsiders (such as tourists, blow-ins, new-comers, hippies and greenies) when it comes to access to local resources. Local belonging articulates with a British system of absolute and exclusive enjoyment of property as a right of legal or assumed ownership (Rapport 1997).

A fourth characteristic of being local is the focus of this paper and is examined in more detail below (also see Garbutt 2005). This is a racial aspect to being local in Lismore in which the locals represented in the local print media are always white, and Aborigines are never locals. The exception to this rule is in circumstances in which place denotes race (Razak 2002). In Redfern, for example, identified by many if not most settler Australians as an Aboriginal place, Aborigines may be termed locals (Goodsir 2004). The use of local as an identity is expressive of a segregated settler spatio-cultural imaginary.

Overall, the process of becoming a local naturalises the local in the local place. Yet as Pred shows in his model of becoming-places, processes of social reproduction and practices of individual agency simultaneously produce place, individuals and societies (Pred 1984:282). In other words, the local place is always becoming through larger-than-local (for example, social) processes as well as through local processes. The locals are never absolutely or essentially local. Once the natural category of the locals and local culture is exposed as problematic—that is, that the local is produced through processes that cross spatial boundaries—'the only choice,' Amy Shuman says, '… is to study the processes of marking [and] claiming authenticity' (1993:94–5).

Claims Of Being Local As Claims Of Autochthony

Autochthony is a particular claim of authenticity emerging from a 'magical'

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relation between people and soil (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001:239). Walsh (1978:301) asserts that for ancient Athenians autochthony referred to their indigeneity. This meant more than being descendants of the earth-born autochthon, King Erichthonius. It was an Athenian claim that they had never moved from that earth of their founding ancestor's birth.[4] The basis of their claim to territory was that it had always been theirs as first possessors (Harris 1993:1726–1727, n. 68).[5]

It is a leap of logic to argue that Australian locals regard themselves as autochthons in the above sense. Detienne reminds us, however, that there are many ways of founding one's autochthony. While classical Athens is the Western exemplar it represents only one form of autochthony amongst many. In this section I will argue that being a local is a claim of autochthony along two lines. Firstly, I will set my argument in the context of current claims of autochthony in Africa and Europe. This is an argument for the possibility of autochthony — that autochthony is not dead and buried in the ruins of ancient Athens. Secondly, I will draw on empirical language use data to argue that the claim of being local is a form of Australian settler indigenisation. This argument demonstrates that being a local has the discursive and cultural form of an autochthonist claim. My argument does not result in proof but an informed suggestion.

Contemporary Autochthony

Claims of autochthony are double claims with people and place forming a single and particular interpretation of society: a territory belonging to a people and a people belonging to a territory. "We" and "here" is spoken in one breath: there are few things more local.

Autochthony has a continuing and growing significance in the twenty-first century. Some authors speak of 'an upsurge' of autochthony (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh 2000:425, Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005). This upsurge is occurring, I would contend, because of autochthony's usefulness in claims to territory and the concomitant certainties it brings—authenticity, legitimacy and belonging. These benefits—placed beyond question in claims of a unique people and place connection—accrue at the very time they are under threat from hybridising transnational and translocal flows. As Geschiere and Nyamnjoh (2000:425) have argued:

> In such a perspective, cosmo-politanism and autochthony are like conjoined twins: a fascination with globalization's open horizons is accompanied by determined efforts towards boundary-making and closure, expressed in terms of belonging and exclusion.

Twentieth and twenty-first century claims of autochthony are and have been a response to territorial and cultural uncertainties. During the late 1920s and early 1930s Heidegger's mission was to found a German national socialist philosophy in the autochthonous soil of middle-Europe (Bambach 2003:1–5). In the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries African and European peoples in Cameroon, Ivory Coast, the Great Lake Region of Rwanda-Burundi, Flemish Belgium, the Netherlands, and northern Italy have claimed territory and full citizenship rights for autochthons (Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005). In Romania autochthonists and westernisers continue to debate cultural forms (Szilagyi-Gal 2001, Iordachi and Trencsényi 2003).

Most relevant to this discussion, however, is the work of Carlos Alonso. He notes the 'power and its irresistible appeal [of autochthony] as a trope of cultural affirmation' for the settlers of postcolonial states

(1990:10). In particular, he proposes that Spanish American settler culture is structured by a social order he names "cultural autochthony":

> [A] *cultural* state that is interpreted as having generated itself in a *natural* fashion, that is, arising automatically from the midst of the collectivity and in perfect consonance with the surrounding environment (1990:10 [emphasis in original]).

Cultural autochthony underpins a claim of the unique cultural difference of a (post)colonial culture from that of the metropolitan power. The cultural uniqueness springs from the new land itself, a necessary marker for articulating the new nation with statehood. The power and irresistible appeal of 'the autochthonous cultural order' is the 'seeming transcending of the nature/culture dichotomy' that assuages the anxiety of the colonist in exile from the metropolis (Alonso 1990:10).

It is against this background that I propose the claim of being an Australian settler local is a claim of cultural autochthony. I also propose that such claims are produced (and productive of) a cultural state located in specific ways. This location is marked by the dispossession of indigenous peoples by settlers seeking legitimation through a 'founding forgetting' of that dispossession. In claiming autochthony the settlers naturalise themselves to place. They become unmarked: the natives born to the nation, the locals. This particular settler form of cultural autochthony, I name white "autochthony" because its unmarked nature has the unmarked form of whiteness. It is, I propose, a cultural form found in many settler states, including Australia. I also use the term white "autochthony" to separate the settler claim from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Indigeneity. Clearly the settler claim is at variance with the ontological status of Indigenous peoples. That they occupy

similar ground is what makes the settler claim worthy of critical examination in conversations regarding Australian belongings.

Settler Indigenisation and Cultural Autochthony

The analysis of the processes by which Australian settler belonging achieves legitimation and authenticity is rarely made through the idea of autochthony. Deborah Bird Rose's analysis is one exception. Rose (2004) proposes that at the national level settlers have authenticated their belonging to the country by imagining that the mantle of autochthony has been passed from Aborigines to themselves. As 'the ancient autochthon passes away,' she says, '… the settler takes his place as the new (and superior) indigene' (117).

Other scholars have tended, rather, to analyse such processes in terms of settler indigenisation. Literary critic Terry Goldie (1989) provides one of the earliest analyses of indigenisation in settler nation-states in his analysis of representations of indigenes in Canadian, Australian and New Zealand literature. Goldie (1993:unpaginated) defines indigenisation as the process 'through which the "settler" population attempts to become as though indigenous, as though "born" of the land'. Concomitant with this social production of indigenisation is a political production: the land 'as a natural nation' (1993:unpaginated). Processes of indigenisation are attempts to satisfy the 'impossible necessity' 'to become "native," to belong here' (1989:13).

Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffen (2002:135) have also identified indigenisation as one part of the tension in postcolonial settler identity: a tension that arises between 'the backward-looking impotence of exile and the forward-looking

impetus to indigeneity' (135). These tensions, they assert, are part of the process through which settlers come to terms with establishing their lives in new landscapes using imported cultural practices and languages and applying them in often contrary conditions to those in which the practices and languages arose.

Most recently David Pearson (2002) has argued that in Canada, New Zealand and Australia citizenship is 'best conceptualized and described by examining the linked processes of … the aboriginalization (of aboriginal minorities), the ethnification (of immigrant minorities) and the indigenization (of settler majorities)' (990). For Pearson, indigenisation represents a move from a settler to a post-settler position which signifies detachment from the British motherland and identification as a "native" of a new land, a move from 'home there' to 'home here' (1004). Pearson argues that the interlinked processes of Aboriginalisation, ethnification and indigenisation, 'reflecting a tripartite relationship of power between indigenes, settlers and 'others'', became prominent from the 1970s onwards (1004). During this time Britain moved towards the European Union, while Australia, New Zealand and Canada concentrated on involvement in their own regional re-alignments, including increased regional, specifically Asian, migration (1004–5).

The parallels and resonances between the *process* of settler indigenisation and what Alonso calls the cultural *state* of cultural autochthony are clear in these various accounts. It may well be that what Alonso describes as a state is the outcome of the process of settler indigenisation. Both involve transformations of the imaginary of the colonist/settler in terms of cultural and spatial identity. Both occur in the tension arising between exile and belonging, past and

future. Both represent the colonists break with the motherland through "birth" in a new land, despite the obvious continuities in the cultural, economic and political relationship.

My interest in autochthony is in its implication of a relationship with place, especially of human co-existence in place rather than the appropriation of an Indigenous identity. Autochthony implies a necessary connection with a place, and the analysis of settler belonging in terms of white "autochthony" has the potential to disrupt that necessary (and typically exclusive) connection. In doing so a more inclusive politics and ethics of being in place might be possible.

Settler Indigenisation, White "Autochthony" and Settler Discourses of Belonging

Of the scholarship engaging with settler indigenisation in Australia, the most relevant to the arguments in this paper is the work of Pal Ahluwalia (2001), because of his analysis of language. Language is both a social product and productive of social orders and provides an insight into the operation of white "autochthony".

Ahluwalia notes that in Australia the category "aboriginal native" was used to disenfranchise Aborigines from citizenship rights but also prepared a conceptual space for the emergence of the settler as "native" (2001:64). Ahluwalia draws on Chesterman and Galligan's discussion of Australian late-nineteenth century definitions of aboriginal and native. Whereas "native" typically signified indigenous populations throughout the British Empire, in Australia "aboriginal" 'was used to refer to [indigenous populations], often in terms of 'blood'; [while "native" referred] to place of birth' (1997:87). "Aboriginal native" refers, therefore, to an Aborigine. On the other hand 'the word native,' Anthony Trol-

lope observes from his travels in Australia during 1871 and 1872, 'is almost universally applied to white colonists born in Australia' (1967:101). Native, the unmarked form, represents the settler. Aborigines required marking out from the naturalised white natives to the nascent nation as 'aboriginal natives'.

Trollope may well have noted the use of native in the title of the Australian Natives' Association (ANA) formed in 1872. The ANA was an Australian form of the "native societies" that, Terry Goldie observes, 'existed in [Canada, New Zealand and Australia] in the late nineteenth century, societies to which no non-white, no matter how native, need have applied' (1989:13). In Australia, the ANA was a patriotic and friendly society initially formed in 1871 for the protection of the interests of 'Melbourne Natives'. It later expanded to include 'Victorian Natives' and by 1872 had opened membership to Australian natives, calling itself the Australian Natives' Association (Menadue n.d.: 6, 8, 12). Membership was conditional on being male, white and born in Australia—three conditions the ANA imposed in order to be declared 'native-born' (Menadue n.d. 7; Blackton 1958:40).

Pal Ahluwalia concludes:

> The idea that white colonists born in Australia were natives whilst the indigenous population were not was an important one. It was an idea that went to the heart of the manner in which the continent was settled. The myth of *terra nullius* was dependent upon the non-recognition of the local population and the 'indigen-isation' of their white conquerors (2001:64–5).

Proposing an Australian response to Mamdani's postcolonial African question, 'When does a settler become a native?' Ahluwalia asserts 'this occurred when white colonists were locally-born' (Mamdani 1998:251; Ahluwalia 2001:66). The idea of the settler as native or native-born continues to recirculate in Australian discussions of relationships to the land. For example, Peter Read (2000:Ch. 5) explores songs expressive of the non-Indigenous attachment to the land in a chapter of *Belonging* entitled 'Singing the native-born'. Allaine Cerwonka (2004:3) critically examines 'the processes by which [non-Indigenous] people territorialise the nation' in her book entitled *Native to the Nation*.

In my research, I have found a similar language structure to the "aboriginal native"/"native" formation in operation amongst the locally-born at the local level. This local cultural form is made accessible through an analysis of the language of "the local" in Lismore's regional daily newspaper *The Northern Star*.

In grammatical terms the word local is an adjective which is usually accompanied by a noun to form a noun group (Sinclair 1990:2–4). The adjective "local" classifies the noun, typically in terms of pertaining to a place. A local person is therefore a person somehow connected with a place. When we talk about a local or the locals, however, the noun drops from the noun group. This is the substantive form of the adjective where the adjective local, a classifier of nouns, takes on substance and performs the additional work of the noun. That is, the noun-local does the work of referring to a thing and its place in one breath.
"Are you a local?"

This question brings people and place and identity together seamlessly. In the regional town of Lismore that has relied on extractive and rural industries for its wealth, predicated upon dispossession of Bundjalung peoples, it may be no surprise that issues of race become embedded within the definition of the lo-

cals: of who specifically the locals can be.

In the naturalised form, the locals of Lismore are always white. People and place and identity are brought together: a white people in a white place that requires no further explanation. Identity as white need not be specified.

Within the white local place of Lismore it is Aborigines that require particularising and marking. Unlike the locals in general, the noun-locals, Aborigines must be marked and not be included amongst the unmarked. In an invariable practice in *The Northern Star* the substantive noun-local reverts to the adjective when speaking of Aborigines. In the adjectival form "local" is a modifier that relates an object to its physical place. Thus Bundjalung artist Digby Moran is reported as a 'local indigenous artist' who teaches 'local [Goori] kids' about 'their local culture' (Anonymous 2003).[6] This passage is careful not to confuse categories of locals: those marked and those unmarked. Aborigines are always adjective-locals while only settlers can be termed noun-locals.

In a mirror of the national language of the "aboriginal native"/"native", in Lismore the paradox is that the locals are non-Indigenous and the Aborigines are not locals. In effect, settlers have installed themselves as the locals, as white "autochthons". The process of "indigenisation" that Ahluwalia and others have identified is productive at the local and national scales: productive of an autochthonous settler imaginary (Castoriadis 1997:7–8, O'Loughlin 2003:131–132).

Founding White "Autochthony"

White "autochthony" is a type of cultural autochthony that collapses Australian settler culture and nature, people and place into a complex of material and imaginary relations between people, peoples and land. In Australia it takes its particular form by articulating cultural autochthony with practices and social orders transported from England and located within the Australian context.

As Pal Ahluwalia (2001:65) notes, indigenisation is part of the colonial foundation of Australia upon empty land or *terra nullius*. *Terra nullius* grants settlers first possessor status and provides the initial conditions for the emergence of white "autochthony". It is against the autochthonous status of Aborigines that the settler nation legitimates itself by claiming its own "autochthonous" status. Cultural autochthony articulates, then, with a regime of property ownership to legitimate exclusive rights to ownership. The mixing of soil with settler blood through colonial "pioneering" work also legitimated these property rights. As Aileen Moreton-Robinson writes, in Australia the non-Indigenous sense of belonging is 'derived from ownership as understood within the logic of capital; and it mobilizes the legend of the pioneer, 'the battler', in its self-legitimization' (2003:23). Through this work an autochthonous settler identity comes into being along with *terra localis*—the local-land of the settler locals and the nation-country of the settler natives.

Recently Genevieve Lloyd has argued that the philosophy of Kant and Locke 'come together to rationalize European presence as embodying the most fully human way of relating to the land' (2000:34). It was Locke in particular that brought landed property and autonomous identity together through labour. He writes: '...Labour, in the Beginning, *gave a Right of Property* whereever any one was pleased to employ it, upon what was common', thus

'[a]s *much Land* as a Man Tills, Plants, Improves, Cultivates, and can use the Product of, so much is his *Property*. He by his labour does, as it were, inclose it from the Common' (Locke 1988:II§32 and II§45 [emphases in original]).

Echoing Locke in a chapter called 'Singing the Native-Born' of his book *Belonging*, Peter Read makes the link between the production of settler identity and working the land. He says:

My feeling is growing that the once implied and now explicit Aboriginal moral claim to the land perhaps is answered, not by contentious or aggressive assertion, but by a statement of countering values. ...The moral justification is evolving through a three-way relationship between a man, his work and the land' (2000:117).

White "autochthony" provides a reading of this three-way relationship. From the mixing of sweat and soil emerges the autochthonous birth of the pioneer. Through ideological descent subsequent settlers are "born" from the pioneers.[7] This is the ideology of the 'Australian type'—a culturally autochthonous form of whiteness that emerges with the production of the Australian national soil (Ahluwalia 2001:65).

This autochthonous form of belonging both locally and nationally is further strengthened through the articulation of cultural autochthony with 'born and bred' kinship. This English kinship system 'is made up of a code of conduct (what people do and say they do) and ideas of shared substance (symbolized in idioms of blood and increasingly genes)' (Edwards 2000:28): thus "born"—the 'immutable place of birth'—*and* "bred"—' the effects of a variable upbringing' (Edwards 2000:84). In the site of Edwards' research, the town of Bacup near Manchester being born and bred embraces two significant aspects of English kinship.... [I]t is not enough to be born

in Bacup, one also needs to be reared in Bacup. The experience of being *brought up* in the town is said to be influential: it moulds a particular kind of character (2000:84).

White "autochthony" finds its particular form in the articulation of cultural autochthony with exclusive private ownership of property and born and bred kinship. Through these articulations not only is the connection of land and settler considered natural—a necessary connection—but it is made into an exclusive form of autochthony. There is no room for a multi-local sense of place-based belonging—of having one's ties in more than one place, nor is it possible to envisage multiple autochthonies arising in one place—of peoples' coexisting with varying senses of place-based belonging. The ideas of being a local, and of being a native born to the nation, are often expressions of exclusive, white "autochthony". As the locals of Cronulla demanded, 'Respect locals or piss off!' (TCN 9 2005). Or as the famous rock at Byron Bay, 40 kilometers from Lismore, reads: 'LOCALS ONLY'. Locals only: only those who are born (here) and bred (conform to the "Australian type") belong here.

Towards An Ethics Of Location

To conclude I would like to make a few brief comments on how autochthony might open onto an ethics of location for the settler locals.

A number of threads crowd in at this point in somewhat of an interconnected jumble. To begin the unravelling, then, with a list:

- Firstly, to strife and reconciliation. This paper is set against a background of investigating local Australian whiteness, an investigation that began at the end of ten official years of Reconciliation in 2000. It addresses 'a

White problem' not "the Aboriginal problem" (Pearl Gibbs in Fox 1983:41). It is a response to a problem of settler relations with Aborigines. This is the background of my discussion for an ethics of location that unconceals claims of white "autochthony".

- Rather than proposing that settler Australians have a lack of connection to the land as some commentators do, I propose that the opposite is the case. I would argue that all places are constituted through relations and that settler-land relations are in manifest, if problematic abundance. Being a local is part of that abundance, so too, being native-born.

- '*You think that it is the bird who is free. You are deceived; it is the flower.*' (Jabès 1972:115) Might being a local be always inherently violent? Through claims of white "autochthony", I think so. But being a local of itself? I am not so sure. I write this at a time of theory (in cultural studies amongst other locales) that I perceive to value mobility and instantaneity over emplacement and slowness. I find myself reacting against this. A white local's reaction maybe. A reaction directed towards not disregarding the care of the locals for place and each other, but of becoming aware of the limits to that care.

- White "autochthony" serves to commence an analysis and critique of settler belonging; an idea from which to reimagine the 'imagined and [ ] real geography' of the born and bred locals and the born and bred natives to the nation (Entrikin 2002:24). Keeping white "autochthony" in-mind is important as a reminder of what should be rejected in

reformulations of democracy, nation and citizen. White "autochthony" is something to think about and to think against.

And to begin again; this time to begin a narrative. I take note of Entrikin's assertion that democracy has both an 'imagined and a real geography'(Entrikin 2002:24). Imagined geographies are no less real in their effects. White "autochthony", I propose, is part of the imagined geography of Australian settler democracy that requires critical scrutiny when moving towards any ethics of location.

Autochthony, as *bodenständigkeit*, with its association with the German national socialist philosophy of "blood and soil", indicates the perils of an autochthonist cultural discourse (Heidegger 1966:48–49; Bambach 2003). Autochthony can be the basis of cultural forms that exclude in the most brutal and unjust ways. In ancient Athens itself, autochthony as a basis for citizenship, came under question. It was a concept at odds with Athens vision of itself as an open city, as a city of welcome (Saxonhouse 1986:256 and 273). This was particularly the case as it expanded into an Empire that looked towards the sea rather than to the land. Thus in Euripides' *Ion* the relationship between autochthonous citizenship and the non-citizen status of slaves, women and resident strangers in the city is explored.

The most vocal contemporary critics of autochthony, Doreen Massey (2005:189) and Emmanuel Levinas (1998:117–118) for example, call for its abandonment in all cultural forms because of its exclusionary nature. Levinas insists that autochthony is a triumph of ontology over ethical relations with others. For him, home, as a figure for place, must be opened to welcome the stranger (Levinas 1969:168–174).

Derrida takes a similar line, but notes the necessity of a site for roots. For him it is the nature of the site that is the issue. He notes that there is freedom in the site '[p]rovided this Site is not a site, an enclosure, a place of exclusion, a province or a ghetto' (Derrida 1993:66). More than a geographic site, this is a social site as Derrida's language indicates. Freedom in the site of roots is dependent on openness, an openness that includes openness to roots, multiple roots.

An ethics of location, must somehow promote the interruption of notions of white "autochthony", to open the site of the settler clearing and resist the idea of one single taproot into the earth. It would name the way cultural autochthony conceals movements and exclusions of people that occur in the name of being local, of always having been here, of having installed our-settler-selves as 'local' or 'original'. It insists on an opening of the local as a site of welcome.

Interrupting white "autochthony" does not devalue settlers' relations to place, or call for rootlessness. Instead it is directed towards recognising as a settler, autochthonist tendencies in local and national Australian culture that foreclose and exclude how we imagine our co-existence in place with others. I would advocate that being a local is an important aspect of our relations with the world, but I would also call on the settler locals to commence a new work that recognises and dismantles our claims to autochthonist foundations.

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Endnotes

[1] I use the word *kuntri* here to denote the relationships Indigenous Australians have with the land, compared with the 'Western' relationships with the land evoked by the common spelling *country*. My thanks to Glenn Woods at Gnibi, Southern Cross University's College of Indigenous Australian Peoples for this insight.

[2] See Garbutt (2003) for an initial exploration of this questioning.

[3] For an overview of these issues see: Loraux (1993), Loraux (2000), Saxonhouse (1986), and Walsh (1978).

[4] The ancient Athenian myth of autochthony begins with the first king of Athens, Cecrops. Cecrops emerged from the earth itself and bore the form of his unusual birth: 'above the waist he was a man, below a curling snake' (Parker 1986:193). Cecrops' line proved discontinuous and was eventually overthrown by Erichthonius. Autochthonous Erichthonius was born under different circumstances and unlike the semi-serpentine Cecrops, was wholly human and produced a continuing line of kings. Erichthonius, also called Erechtheus, is therefore portrayed as the autochthon of the Athenian *polis*. Erichthonius was a male child born without a mother when Hephaestus, the Olympian blacksmith, lustfully and unsuccessfully pursued grey-eyed

Athena. Just evading rape, she wiped Hephaestus' sperm from her leg on to the ground. Ge, or Gaia, the earth, gave birth to a child she handed to Athena, who acted as mother to Erichthonius. The version of the myth related here comes from Parker 1986. See also: Loraux (1993:39) and Peradotto (1977).

[5] Clearly ancient Athenians were not claiming first possession in the Lockean terms Harris discusses, however, their claim of moral priority as the first possessors is echoed by Locke.

[6] The word *goori* is used throughout the Bundjalung nation for Aboriginal people.

[7] On ideological and genealogical myths of national descent see Smith (2000:1394-1395).

A BREACH OF TRUST: THE VITIATED DISCOURSE OF MULTICULTURALISM AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

JEANETTE KRONGOLD

Abstract

This paper sees the discourse on Australian multiculturalism at the turn of the twenty-first century as conflicted, and tries to analyse how this might be resolved.

A division is noted between the 'static' definition of culture implicit in the structure of ethnicity as a form of micro-management of socio-cultural issues, and the 'dynamic' meaning of culture in a postmodern, globalized world. I explore the argument between those that adhere to a core/periphery functionally assimilationist definition of multiculturalism (emphasising otherness) and those that urge a re-definition of the term to emphasise notions of alterity (de-emphasising otherness) and hybridity through some recent historical metaphors of cultural racism.

Events such as the *Tampa* affair, the 'War on Terror' and the Cornelia Rau matter have tested belief in the civility of our society and mutual respect. I use these sites as metaphors of cultural racism to show how normative multiculturalism has been demeaned in the neo-conservative political climate of Howard's Australia. I argue that a breach of trust has occurred within Australian society between the stakeholders of multiculturalism, whereby the rhetoric and cultural politics of the government of the day have promoted emphasis on a nationalism that is antithetical to the pluralistic dynamics of a multicultural society, and foster intolerance. This has particularly impacted on the Muslim community, the latest arrivals in a country with a history of difficult arrivals.

The latent ambivalence of the Australian multiculturalist model, containing a repressed sense of racialisation, needs to be resolved. It is argued that it is an imperialist project that privileges the core white Anglophone culture over 'subaltern' migrant groups, when what is needed is public policy with a code of ethics or politics of civility to facilitate a hybridising society.

Introduction

The looming approach of the Norwegian cargo vessel *MV Tampa* into Australian waters on the 26th August 2001, carrying 438 potential asylum seekers stowed on deck, caused the Australian government to arguably breach its obligations under the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) and the 1967 Protocol and other instruments of international human rights law by interdicting the vessel and 'warehousing' its passengers (the Pacific Solution). The excision of certain territories from the 'migration zone' further created a legal fiction not recognised at international law (Germov and Motta 2003:37). According to public opinion polls (A.C. Nielsen 2001; Roy Morgan 2001) at the time, this did not bother the Australian public unduly, but it threw the media into a frenzy and ignited a furore amongst the *intelligentsia* which has not subsided.

The issue was not simply one of the rights of asylum seekers—that was quickly sub-

sumed into a larger paradigm, fear of global terrorism, and subsequently sharpened to an even more blatant exercise in racial and cultural vilification by the 'children overboard' affair. Hardly had this been resolved by the Senate Report (2002), *Select Committee on a Certain Maritime Incident*, than the Cornelia Rau matter surfaced, culminating in the Palmer Inquiry (2002) into the culture of the Immigration Department. By now the 'jig' was up! Julian Burnside QC penned a prescient analysis that 'the abuse of one of us exposes what we're doing to them' (Burnside 2005:17). 'Them' or the 'Other' are the asylum seekers who received the same 'careless, cruel indifference' that Rau received at the hands of the Immigration Department. Burnside asked,

> why is it acceptable to treat asylum seekers this way, but shocking when it is done to one of us … why did it take Cornelia Rau's case to provoke widespread public concern about immigration detention?

His answer was that it happened because she looked like a typical Aussie girl — 'she is uncomfortably like us'. Her treatment at the hands of the Immigration Department, Burnside contended, was a reflection of a society that is indifferent to the fate of those perceived as not like us.

A Breach of Trust

Both the *Tampa* incident and the Rau affair are metaphors of prejudice that reflect on the site of the multicultural debate in Australia at the turn of the twenty-first century. The *Tampa* incident represents a publicly sanctioned scapegoating of the unfortunate 'Other' by a government in election mode, whilst the Rau matter encapsulates the phenomenon of a groundswell of public indignation at the subjection of one of 'us' to the dehumanising treatment we reserve for the 'other'. Taken together, these complementary top-down, bottom-up models of implicit racialised prejudice meet at a juncture of signification for the multicultural edifice—that normative multiculturalism has been demeaned in the turn of the twenty-first century political climate. A *breach of trust* has occurred within Australian society between its constituent groups and the proponents of a return to a mythical monoculture. American sociologist Louis Adamovic (1944) observed that it was old-stock Americans who tended to view virtually everyone else as a menace to the 'historic pattern of the country' when in fact diversity itself was the pattern. He believed that only when Americans recognised that Americanness resided precisely in the country's status as a 'nation of nations' that its loftiest ideals could be realised.

My paper outlines the discourse on Australian multiculturalism between its proponent and critical ideologies and argues that either way, the current definition needs changing. A division is noted between 'static' and 'dynamic' definitions of multiculturalism that highlights the problematic—the issue of social micro-management. I contend that the temper of the times, marked by such events as the *Tampa* affair, the 'War on Terror' and the Rau matter, has tested belief in an open civil society and mutual respect and promoted a defensive, fortress mentality. Negative political leadership on multiculturalism has not helped, and there has been a blurring of the distinction between Australian values and Australian history. The latter belongs to the place, in the 'Annalesian' sense (Clark 1999), the former is an indicia of the beliefs of a society which changes in composition over time. It follows therefore that propositions such as an emphasis on mutual responsibility and reciprocity in multicultural interactions are more likely to harmonise society than the propagation of monocultural

iconography as national belief. The latter reinforces cultural ranking and is divisive, notwithstanding that everyone should obey the same law. It is also implicitly racialising. If the aim of multiculturalism is to harmonise diversity rather than ostracise difference, I contend, then alterity is preferable to 'otherness'. Through the epistemology of others, I argue that an ethics of multiculturalism or code of civility should be developed to ameliorate the unwritten code of incivility that has framed the disjuncture within multiculturalism at the turn of the twenty-first century.

For definitional purposes, I refer to the three successive reports on the implementation of prescriptive multiculturalism commissioned by the Fraser, Hawke and Howard governments (the Galbally, Gobbo and Roach reports, so-called after their respective chairmen) as the templates of public policy settings on multiculturalism, relevant to their era, and then proceed to discuss how the various governments finessed them.

Stephen Castles (2001) pointed out that whilst the dominant understanding of Australian muliculturalism could be seen as a model for public policy, designed to ensure the full socio-economic and political participation of all members of an increasingly diverse population, it was also perceived in other ways. It could be viewed as a multi-ethnic society, with a potential for conflictual inter-group relations (like apartheid South Africa), or a negative identity statement, seen as legitimating separatism and cultural relativism and antithetical to nationalism. It is my contention that the perspectives of the Galbally, Gobbo and Roach reports corresponded to the first, second and third of Castles' definitions, respectively—responding to economic and political considerations of the time.

The Galbally report (*Migrant Services and Programs* 1978*)* addressed the issues of access, equity and cultural maintenance in Australia, to ameliorate problem areas of the migrant settlement experience, such as poverty and high rate of return. It noted the growing recognition that a homogeneous society was neither possible nor desirable. The Gobbo report (*National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* 1989) defined multiculturalism as based on a set of rights to cultural identity, social justice and economic efficiency, as well as obligations to national interest, civic structures and reciprocal responsibility regarding freedom of expression and belief. The Roach report (NMAC 1999) stressed the concept of Australian multiculturalism and inclusiveness as a panacea to the objections of the Hansonite constituency to being 'swamped by Asians' and over-catering for the welfare of minority groups. It noted the removal of access to welfare benefits for migrants in the first two years, and, significantly, the Howard government abolished the Office of Multicultural Affairs and the Bureau of Immigration, Multiculturalism and Population Research on coming to office in 1996.

Whilst there has always been bi-partisan support for normative multiculturalism, it is obvious that successive reports have narrowed and qualified its definition and reach, so that its meaning has run the gamut of Castles' definitions in its resonance throughout Australian society. It is my contention that the multicultural discourse has been most vitiated during the neo-conservative Howard Liberal ascendancy, with its emphasis on a white teleology of nationhood and its discursive framing of asylum seekers as the demonised 'Other', so that a question mark hangs over its future direction, if not viability. There has been a journey *from* a point where society reached out to its marginalised migrant groups *to* a point where they grew and prospered,

and appeared threatening to a disaffected sector of the host society, disenfranchised by globalization. A discourse of territoriality and managerial capacity over the national space has ensued, in the words of Ghassan Hage (1998), which has challenged the prescriptive framework of multiculturalism, and calls for a re-definition.

Mark Lopez's revelatory work, *The Origins of Multiculturalism,* demonstrated that the advent of multiculturalism as public policy sprang neither from a grass roots movement nor any political epiphany, but was rather a long and painstaking lobby for the recognition of the migrant's plight and aspirations by a select few activists (Lopez 2000). The uptake of this cause by a number of academic researchers and finally some individual politicians culminated in a social justice policy of access and equity to disadvantaged groups, including a multilingual delivery of services to people of varying migrant group backgrounds. This marked the end of the assimilationist ideal. The ascent of normative and prescriptive multiculturalism occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and Foster and Stockley in *Multiculturalism: The Changing Australian Paradigm* noted the Fraser Liberal government's co-opting of ethnic leaders and tying their interests in with that of the government, when mutually suitable, in a celebration of 'ethnicity' as a form of micro-management of socio-cultural issues (Foster and Stockley 1984:68). Jon Stratton in *Race Daze* observed with a touch of irony some twenty years later that John Howard criticised the Labor Party for doing the same (Stratton 1998:41).

Within a decade of its inception, however, popular perceptions of multiculturalism were beginning to sour. Professor Jerzy Zubrzycki, who along with Jean Martin was one of the academic pro-genitors of Australian multiculturalism (Zubrzycki 1964; Martin 1978), in the late 1980s posited the proposition that normative multiculturalism had been mismanaged or misunderstood, and issues and policies regarding ethnic identity and social cohesion needed to be resolved (Zubrzycki 1987:49). He was referring to perceptions of divisiveness within the Australian social fabric when ethnic lobby groups were seen to pressure politicians and public organizations for self-serving policy outcomes that did not necessarily coincide with mainstream concerns. The implication was that support for migrant group welfare should be interlinked with Australian identity, and not function as a foundation stone for a nation of self-perpetuating migrant tribes, with a potential for conflicts of interest. Similar arguments were made by academics such as psychologist Frank Knopfelmacher (1982), philosopher Lauchlan Chipman (1980), historian Geoffrey Blainey (1982) and one-time member of parliament and leader of the One Nation party, Pauline Hanson (1997).

Jamorzik, Urquhart and Boland's book, *Social Change and Cultural Transformation in Australia* used a core/periphery metaphor to describe Australian multiculturalism as a monocultural core of social institutions surrounded by forms of ethnic and cultural diversity (Jamorzik:1995). Jon Stratton, in *Race Daze,* surmised,

> It is the claim to a core culture which enables conservatives to argue for a return to assimilation. Assimilation, in the Australian case, implies that the core culture remains the same whilst it is the migrant who is transformed (Stratton 1998: 16).

Expanding this argument, Stratton noted that one could find in Hegel's master-slave argument a 'Foucaultian' site of power, where one's position was vali-

dated through the objectifying experience of the other (Stratton 1998:209). Appropriation of the 'other' as a form of knowledge could be likened to the project of nineteenth century imperialism. Thereby, deduced Stratton, the metaphor of the imperialist project could be seen to resonate through the structure of official multiculturalism—it was the core culture which was privileged while the marginal, ethnic cultures were formulated as 'objectified spectacles' for the members of the core culture. Ethical obligation on the part of the objectifier was therefore negated, as objectification was a dehumanising process. In this way, Edward Tyler's nineteenth century anthropological definition of culture as an object of study delimited in space and an unchanging, timeless whole (Tyler 1871)—by means of which official multiculturalism in Australia has been conceptualised (*Migrant Services and Programs* 1987:104)—had 'Othered' the members of those cultures.

This distillation of an objectified multiculturalism as a functionally assimilationist model has been critiqued by protagonists of a more subjectified multicultural philosophy, who highlight the 'subaltern' position of ethnic minorities in Australia. Their agenda proposes replacing the delineated and unchanging definition of 'culture' with an open and evolving acknowledgment that cultures hybridise and transform. For instance, Stratton illustrates, a person's Australian culture is inflected by their background and the migrant history of that background is transformed within Australia. This requires an ethics of reciprocity in human relations which acknowledges difference but denies objectification. It evolves out of the experience of marginalisation, but culminates in an understanding of culture (Stratton 1998:210). It is an ethics of mutual responsibility in the tradition of Levinas (1997) of alterity as opposed to

otherness. Professor Zubrzycki emphasised,

> the culture of a group cannot be seen as a static fossilised entity which remains unchanged from the time a particular group sets foot on Australian soil, but as a living, dynamic, changing and interacting set of life patterns (Zubrzycki 1987:52).

Leader of the Labor Opposition, Mark Latham, speaking at the Global Foundation forum in Sydney on 20th April, 2004, concurred, declaring,

> If we treat multiculturalism as a static concept, as something frozen in time — each of us pigeon-holed into past habits and past identities — then inevitably, it will be a policy based more on difference than diversity (Latham 2004:5).

The question arises, then, as to how, within a democratic, pluralist society, is transitional support for newcomers (providing a sense of community, security, maintained traditions and language environment) reconciled with a core Anglophone culture that objectifies these people? David McKnight, in *Beyond Right and Left: New politics and the culture wars,* rejects mosaic multiculturalism as 'group thinking'—dangerous because it is a form of stereotyping in which generalised judgments are made about particular groups (Aborigines are lazy, Jews are greedy, the English are snobs, Asians are hard-working ...etc.). He makes an important distinction, that, although issues involving competing and antagonistic cultural values are usually settled by reference to Australian law, which favours individual over group rights, the *public* debate over the limits of cultural diversity is not 'settled' so easily (Mcknight 2005:216).

The National Multicultural Advisory Council (NMAC) was commissioned in 1997 to undertake a report 'aimed at ensuring that cultural diversity was a unifying force for Australia', in light of the

upsurge in popularity of the simplistic, anti-cosmopolitan nationalism represented by Pauline Hanson. Its recommendations, contained in *Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century* (the Roach report), outlined a critique of multiculturalism held by a sector of the Australian community. They believed that multiculturalism applied only to migrants from a non-English-speaking background and seemed to deny Australian culture. The report also acknowledged that past practices had focussed on rights rather than obligations and submitted that a new emphasis on inclusiveness and obligation would remedy this. It recommended that terms such as 'Australian multiculturalism' and 'inclusiveness' be focal points to convey: common membership of the Australian community; a shared desire for social harmony; the benefits of diversity; an evolving national character and identity. These sentiments are conducive to the promotion of a hybridised cultural identity which can accommodate both cultural blending and the persistence of diverse cultures, but, argues McKnight, they should occur within the framework of the values of an evolving common culture (McKnight 2005:218). He cites Laksiri Jayasuriya (1990) and Sunder Katwala (2004) as protagonists of hybridity theory, and Ien Ang offered a practical description of it in *On Not Speaking Chinese*. She wrote,

> it is a form of micro-politics of everyday life informed by the pragmatic faith in the capacity for cultural identities to change, not through the imposition of some grandiose vision for the future, but slowly and unsensationally ... In this way, a cosmopolitan ethos can be fostered from below ... (Ang 2001:159).

Presumably, this is what Latham meant when he pronounced that 'multiculturalism lies not so much between individuals as within them—the habit of living one's life through many cultural habits' (Latham 2004:5).

Notwithstanding that the Howard government continued the tradition of implementation of multiculturalism as public policy (albeit in a truncated form of service delivery and academic analysis), it was the *rhetoric* and *cultural politics* of the neo-conservative political ascendancy that, I argue, breached trust amongst the stakeholders of multiculturalism. The paradox of the Howard government and the Roach Report has been that *public* debate has centred on adherence to core Australian values, that is implied assimilation, rather than embracing diversity. The effect has been to divide rather than unite.

Suvendrini Perera has noted that instead of a focus on equal access for all to the institutions of citizenship, Australian 'multiculturalism' in recent years has been confined to exhorting the Anglo majority to display 'tolerance' toward racial and ethnic minorities (Perera 2002:18). Tolerance is a word which carries negative connotations—it means forbearance, putting up with something that you do not necessarily like or agree with. Ghassan Hage, in his deconstruction of tolerance in multicultural Australia contained in *White Nation: fantasies of white supremacy in a multicultural society*, contended that the 'ethnic caging' of boatpeople was an expression of the actuality of the treatment of ethnicity within Australia. Howard, according to Jon Stratton, argued that multiculturalism threatened national identity because he saw that as an expression of the historical experiences of the people rather than a statement of shared values (Stratton 1998:109). In January 1989 he imparted to Gerard Henderson, 'The objection I have to multiculturalism is that multiculturalism is in effect saying that it is impossible to have a common Australian culture' (Henderson 1995:27). He fol-

lowed this, in office, with an implementation of a white teleology of nationhood.

Judith Brett noted that by appropriating the rhetoric and symbolism of radical nationalism, such as 'practical mateship', once left to Labor, Howard thereby promulgated an assertive nationalism (Brett 2003). She identified how his 'conservative populist' style focussed on Labor as captive to minority interests and out of touch with 'mainstream Australia' (Brett 1997). This included multicultural and indigenous groups, which by inference were influencing Paul Keating's espousal of a vision of ties with Asia, Aboriginal reconciliation and a republic (Day 2002)—concerns distant from the lives of ordinary Australians. Howard thus defined his sympathies within the discourse of identity politics as being 'nationalist', alongside those of Geoffrey Blainey and Pauline Hanson. Michelle Grattan opined, 'He lacks that special quality of imaginative empathy that would allow him to enter the minds and souls of those whose experience is totally outside his own' (Grattan 2002:458).

Howard's critics, among them Robert Manne, accused him of creating a divisive agenda on issues such as Australian history, Aboriginal affairs and asylum seekers, through branding opponents as minority 'elites' and claiming his opinion represented that of average and therefore the majority of Australians, thus putatively shutting down debate (Manne 2004). His own view was that he was healing divisions by equating cultural homogeneity with social harmony. In an *Age* interview of 29 February, 2002, titled 'Thoughts of a Bypassed Lazarus', he emphasised,

> We've brought to a respectable conclusion this perpetual seminar on our national identity that went on. We agonised were we too Asian or Asian enough, or too British, too American? We've suddenly realised what we've been all along, we're just 100 per cent Australian.

Brett has further identified Howard's speeches since 1997 as filled with characterisations of what he variously calls the Australian way, Australian values, the Australian identity or the Australian character (Brett 2004:84). The problem was that the founding culture of the 'Australianness' Howard relied on was a white Anglo monoculture, so that every time he addressed an audience that was not wholly part of that foundational culture, it nuanced a feeling of 'otherness' and exclusion from the essentialism of Howard's Australianness. Howard's harking back to the Anzac tradition, mateship, military valour, remembrance, the martial defence of Western values demonstrated a nationalism rooted in the past (Manne 2004). No new nationalist image was produced that included the different strands of political community, binding them in a new exhortation. A report by the Civics Expert Group (1994) on attitudes towards the Constitution, citizenship and civic participation showed many disparate groups excluded from the post-federation settlement (non-whites, indigenous people, women, people of non-Anglo-Celtic background) wanted to be included in a *new* definition of the Australian nation.

In his discourse on hospitality within the nation in *Against Paranoid Nationalism,* Hage argued that when a defensive society lived in paranoid fear of an alien 'other', it suffered from a scarcity of hope, becoming non-nurturing and intolerant (Hage 2003). This was a cultural expression of the political reality that developed under the neo-conservative ascendancy. With a political 'wedge' (Marr and Wilkinson 2003:310) having been driven between ordinary Australians and the intellectual elite over the totemic issues of multiculturalism, Abo-

riginal reconciliation and the republic, this 'cultural rollback', maintained Robert Manne, served the government well. When it came to political divisions to be reopened by 'an extremely tough border protection policy aimed against the ultimate 'Other', the unwanted Muslim asylum seeker', Manne claimed Howard had 'found the issue where he could simultaneously gazump One Nation and destabilise a Labor caught between its conflicting constituencies' (Manne 2004). A discursive framing of asylum seekers and by association their Australian Muslim bretheren as the demonised 'Other' was juxtaposed against the white teleology of nationhood to produce the most explicit attack on multiculturalism since its inception.

The politicisation and militarisation of the *Tampa* incident in the pre-election months of 2001 marked the zenith of the multicultural assault. A signification spiral occurred (Hall *et al.,* 1978) in which discrete events, such as the Sydney rape trials, were ideologically associated and linked to wider discourses of national experience by which a whole community (Australian Muslims) was made to share the burden of blame and carry responsibility (Jones 2001; Devine 2001). Notwithstanding pejorative and legally false terms such as 'queue jumpers' and 'illegal immigrants' (Menadue 2001) being used to vilify mostly Muslim inmates of immigration detention centres who were fleeing totalitarian regimes, the 'dog whistle' in this exercise was that these people were contravening a *moral* order (Poynting *et al* 2004)—queuing and obeying rules are seen as a proper and fair way of acting. Dog whistle politics involves pitching an implied message to a particular group of voters that other voters do not hear (Oakes 2001:8), so by criminalizing boat-people and asylum seekers and inferring that they were committing an immoral act, these people were seen by those

who believed government rhetoric as threatening the social and political order. A *moral panic* driven by government rhetoric conflated the *Tampa* incident, the attack on New York of September 11, 2001, and the 'children overboard' affair of 7th October, 2001, into one issue: terror. Muslim Australians underwent the impugning of their moral and cultural standards by slogans such as, 'we decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come', and John Howard's infamous, 'I don't want people like that in Australia. Genuine refugees don't do that ... They hang on to their children' (*Herald Sun* 2001).

Statistics tell us that over two-thirds of the population believed the government's rhetoric and acquiesced in its cultural politicking. The mendacity of the dehumanising of desperate people for short-term political gain rebounded on its perpetrators with ironical embarrassment. The racialising displayed towards asylum seekers and the Islamic community (the latest arrivals in a country whose history is built on difficult arrivals (Wills 2002)), with inferences of their harbouring a fundamentalist, culturally unaccommodating mentality, was exposed as a projection of the attitude of, firstly, the Australian government itself, and secondly, that of its Immigration Department.

Revelations that the London Underground bombings of July 2005 were carried out by three British-born citizens out of the four perpetrators prompted a re-evaluation in Britain of the culture of the 'ethnic' enclave. *Guardian* columnist Jonathan Freedland commented,

> We could shut out every last asylum seeker, expel every illegal immigrant, and it would make us no safer. This attack came from within (Freedland 2005:9).

Baroness Kishwer Falkner, a Pakistani-born member of the House of Lords asked, 'Do we tolerate segregation in the guise of multiculturalism?' She exhorted a rethink of the multicultural compromise—that Britain spell out more clearly what it was prepared to ask from, as well as give to, its migrants (Freedland 2005:9). The point was not lost on Australia. Suddenly the Prime Minister became receptive to meeting with Muslim civic and clerical leaders, to recognise and embrace their position as stakeholders in Australian society, and to enlist their participation in combating radical agitators (Zwartz 2005:6). There was an about-face recognition that demanding commitment from newcomers required mutual respect, not a position defined by policies that told them their cultures were irrelevant and inferior (Jakubowicz 2005:13). It remains to be stated, therefore, that legitimate avenues to social participation in nationhood do not emanate from a static definition of culture and the importance of privileging the comfort, cohesiveness and exclusiveness of the white Anglo founding culture of Australian statehood. The prospect of a re-badging of the evolving and hybridising nature of Australian society remains one of hope for the future. The neo-conservative legacy of 'tolerant' multiculturalism has been a metaphor for subaltern relegation of migrant groups.

The second point of exposition of the prejudice underlying 'tolerant' multiculturalism concerns the culture of a dysfunctional Immigration Department. For as long as 'Othered' asylum seekers were showing signs of disturbance over the wilful neglect and emotional abuse to which they were subject in mandatory detention, neither the government nor the public were moved or cared much (A.C. Nielsen 2001; Roy Morgan 2001). Health care workers, church groups, journalists, lawyers and a con-cerned *intelligentsia* debated their poor treatment, particularly in reference to traumatised children (HREOC 2004), but it was the graphic revelation of the treatment of a white Australian girl, Cornelia Rau, with all the callousness and indifference meted out to the 'Other' that caught the public's attention and embarrassed the government (Palmer 2005). Political journalist Michelle Grattan, commenting in *The Age* on the Palmer Inquiry into the detention of Rau and Vivian Alvarez Solon, and by inference the racialised assumptions by which the immigration department dehumanised its victims, wrote:

> the department's culture—intolerant and always assuming the worst of detainees or those who have not complied—has been the Government's culture … in taking its uncompromising line, the department was doing what was wanted by a Government that was so ready to insist that asylum seekers had thrown their children overboard. If it had not mistaken a couple of Australians for foreigners, it's quite likely its general bad behaviour would be continuing unquestioned (Grattan 2005:6).

It was only through the prism of racialised whiteness and Australian residency that the public began to comprehend not only that no one with those attributes should be treated the way Rau and Solon were, but also that no one should be treated that way at all. The static prescription that 'Australian' meant a core privileged culture and marginalised stakeholders like migrants and refugees were alien and objectified because of their differences, was exposed for the intolerant, prejudiced mindset that it is—a callous rejection of the Kantian view of human self-worth.

Once it has been recognised that migration tides contribute different attributes to the common good, then the evolving common culture hybridises. Logically, a statement of shared values

should change over time, as does the composition of society. Simpson and his donkey might mean less to Italian, Chinese, Lebanese or Vietnamese immigrants than the descendants of the Anzacs, but does that mean that these migrant groups have made no contribution to society? If they have put their trust in the laws, civic institutions and democratically elected politicians of Australia, then it is a breach of trust to diminish their cultural signifiers.

Perhaps a transformative metaphor can be seen in the Cronulla riots of December 2005. The image of drunken white youths draped in the Australian flag and carrying bottles with which to harass 'Lebs' and/or people of Middle Eastern appearance resonated around the nation and throughout the world media. Historian Marilyn Lake seemingly summed up the Howard era when she wrote, 'Militant nationalism also breeds racism' (Lake 2005:19). More specifically, Milad Bardan, executive officer of the Australian Arabic Council, cautioned:

> There is a thin line between verbal and physical abuse, and the riots in Sydney are but proof of systematic natural progression of years of ethnic hounding, taunting and stereotyping. If Australia is to avoid a repetition of the weekend riots, it is vital that the media and the authorities refrain from using this practice in their quest to provide a safer and more integrated Australian community (Bardan 2005).

It appears that his words were heeded at least by the community, if not the Prime Minister.

Amidst a plethora of spontaneous community initiatives undertaken to condemn violence and mitigate community tensions, the Prime Minister again damned a site of multicultural disjuncture with faint praise. His 'I would never condemn people for being proud of the Australian flag. What I condemn is loutish behaviour, criminal behaviour' (Editorial 2005), was reminiscent of his similar reticence to acknowledge the racial overtones of Pauline Hanson's 1996 parliamentary debut. In response to her xenophobic notions as politics of grievance, Howard had applauded the arrival of a new era of free speech instead of deploring the arrival of a new politics of race (Abbott 1998). Journalist Shaun Carney analysed the Prime Minister's words as 'a positive message about the good nature of the Australian people — not most of us, or the vast majority, but all of us'(Carney 2005:29). By this he meant the white, insular, parochial, anti-multicultural constituency of his power base, the neighbours and mums and dads of the Cronulla rioters, were not being judged, threatened or rebuked. He was inclusively telling his xenophobic voters that they should continue to feel relaxed and comfortable. A former policeman turned academic, Michael Kennedy, after a compelling analysis of ethnic culture and violence, concluded the matter was about politics and implied it required leadership (Sheahan 2005:25). Marilyn Lake and Shaun Carney both demonstrated how negative leadership inflected multiculturalism.

Despite an *Age* readers' poll showing 68 per cent did not agree that multiculturalism was dead in Australia (*The Age* 2005:18) and positive community action implyin-g the same, the politics of multicultural victimisation has vitiated the philosophical and public policy discourse until such time as its propagators are replaced by a different political culture — one that displays positive leadership.

Poynting *et al.* in *Bin Laden in the Suburbs* maintain that the hysteria associated with the attacks on multiculturalism represents the ideological agendas of

conservative politicians and the commercial imperatives of tabloid journalism more than it does popular opinion (Poynting 2004:259). However, they urge a rethink on the nature and direction of multiculturalism and national belonging in Australia in the twenty-first century. In this, they echo the sentiments of Professor Jerzy Zubrzycki (1987). Ien Ang asks for an ethics of multiculturalism. She argues that Australian multiculturalism has always been ambivalent—it claimed to be anti-racist but propagated a repressed sense of race (Ang 2001:104). Unless we interrogate this ambivalence, she urges, we will maintain a multiculturalism that preserves a conservative element of racialisation (Ang 2001:111). This concurs with Jon Stratton's observations in *Race Daze*. Whilst fashioning hybrid lives and intercultural relations that cut across assumptions about ethnic enclaves takes generations, Hogg and Brown (1998:177) argue in *Rethinking Law and Order* that we need a 'politics of civility' which challenges the unwritten social codes of incivility and moves towards greater recognition of shared responsibility.

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HISTORICISING WHITENESS: FROM THE CASE OF LATE COLONIAL INDIA

SATOSHI MIZUTANI

Abstract

It has been a while since critical race and whiteness studies have disseminated the now-familiar notion that whiteness is not a given but a social construct. The idea, however, is yet to be fully explored, with many untouched areas and methodologies of potential importance. This paper is a humble attempt to make a contribution to the field from the perspective of colonial history. Drawing on a historical case study on British Indian society from the late nineteenth century onwards, it firstly focuses on the oft-neglected social world of white colonials of 'respectable' standing, enquiring what defined their whiteness and under what material conditions it was to be acquired. This is to be followed by an examination of how these whites differentiated themselves from, and in turn controlled the lives of, the so-called 'domiciled' population, members of which were of white descent, permanently based in India, often impoverished and frequently (if not always) racially mixed. Such a two-level approach to the people of white descent is to reveal that the colonial invention of whiteness depended *both* on the securing of a 'bourgeois' social milieu for middle-class whites *and* on the vigilant control of the impoverished domiciled. The paper shows the complex ways in which the insidiously unsound nature of such a construction of whiteness repeatedly posed a political challenge to the colonial racial order. The case of colonial India may be taken as a vivid example of how whiteness may come charged with inevitable self-contradictions and ambiguities, and with those counter-measures that seek to contain the socio-political unrest resulting there from.

Introduction

Ruth Frankenberg has influentially argued that, whilst white people's racialisation of their non-white counter-parts has long been subjected to research, the former's own racial identity, or 'whiteness', has often escaped critical examination. It is upon their privileged extra-racial or racially non-problematic status that the hegemonic power of whites rests. In her words, 'whiteness makes itself invisible precisely by asserting its normalcy, its trans-parency, in contrast with the making of others on which its transparency depends' (Frankenberg 1997: 6). What has been lacking is to 'race' the quotidian lives of white individuals or communities, and unfortunately, this concomitant failure in displacing the unmarked status of whiteness has also been a common feature of the scholarship on colonial racism. As Ann Stoler has pointed out, studies of colonialism have long construed white, colonising communities exclusively as abstract agents of the economic and political projects of colonialism. In other words, it is chiefly for what they *did* in the public sphere that white individuals and their communities have been treated: what they *were* or sought to *be*, or their clandestine and yet obsessive preoccupation to construct some indubitable racial prestige at the

domestic as well as public realms, has not attracted due attention (Stoler 1996; Stoler 2002). Drawing on my historical research on colonial Indian society from the late nineteenth century onwards (1858-1930), this paper aims to address the subject of whiteness with a view to stimulating wider debates on race, particularly those in colonial and postcolonial studies. In her study on colonial South Asia, Mrinarini Sinha has graphically carved out the gendered structures of socio-political order, by addressing not just men's subordination of women but also how both British and Indian men constructed *their own* masculine identities through complex processes of colonial politics (Sinha 1995). While this paper primarily concerns itself with race, it will draw on Sinha's methodological insights in order to suggest one meaningful way of studying whites *as white*, thereby historicising their whiteness, in the same way that she seeks to 'give masculinity a history' (Sinha 1999).

It is at two interconnected levels that this essay will engage with the question of whiteness in late British India. First, it will focus on white colonials of 'respectable' standing. What defined the bodily and moral constitutions that made them a 'ruling race'? How were these constitutions to be built not just into themselves but also into their offspring? Secondly, the essay will discuss how these whites differentiated themselves from, and in turn controlled the lives of, the so-called 'domiciled' population, members of which were of white descent, permanently based in India, often impoverished and frequently (if not always) racially mixed. This two-level approach to the people of white descent will be undertaken in ways that will introduce a historiographical argument, derived from my empirical research, that 'to be white' had fundamentally to do with both class origin and place of upbring-

ing, as well as with race itself. On the one hand, while inventing and preserving their own whiteness through clinging (if not always successfully) to the social and cultural milieu of the imperial metropole, the colonials of higher social order never welcomed the existence of their less-privileged domiciled brethren whose lives seemed too irrevocably rooted in the colonial land. Consequently the former excluded the latter from their tightly guarded sphere of status and privilege, despite the (mostly) British origins they had in common[1]. On the other hand, however, this exclusionary attitude had ambiguously been coupled with an inclusionary impulse of peculiar sort: since the colonial authorities feared that the increasingly visible pauperisation of the domiciled might disgrace white racial prestige in the eyes of the native subjects, they sought to control the latter's lives through a politics of welfare and education. Thus the reproduction of whiteness can be said to have depended *both* on the securing of a 'bourgeois' and metropolitan milieu for middle-class whites *and* on the vigilant control of the impoverished domiciled. The paper will describe these historical processes at some length, but its aim is not so much to subject them to elaborate empirical analysis as I have done elsewhere [2], as to relate them to broader issues that may well be relevant to critical race and whiteness studies in general.

White Colonials as Civilising Agents

In order for the British to govern several million subjects of the post-rebellion India, the importance of military dominance was unquestionable, but equally significant, so it was perceived, was to establish and maintain an unequivocal racial identity for white colonials. In the wake of the 1857 Mutiny and of the subsequent transition from Company to

Crown rule the following year, the imperial authorities deemed it necessary to circumscribe the image of a new white community, and this entailed a clarification of criteria for membership. In its Report, the Select Committee on Colonisation and Settlement (appointed in 1858) officially declared that all settlers should originate from the 'respectable' layers of British society and subsequently belong within limited occupational categories of prestigious order. They should form a small cadre of governors and high-ranked civil servants (running what was known as the most prestigious bureaucracy in the world), military officers, capitalists (factory owners, merchants and planters), professionals (scientists, doctors and lawyers), missionaries, and philanthropists. According to the Committee, only these groups would be able to uphold the 'dignity' of British's civilising mission in India. In their respective domains of activity: administration, commerce, science, and spiritual uplifting, these select members of the British nation were to realise its proclaimed imperial mission to modernise and civilise this allegedly 'backward' part of the globe (Mizutani 2005, 24-28).

Such a fashioning of white people as civilising agents was deeply implicated in those structures of social precedence that had been shaped by the ideas of 'race' and 'class' much characteristic of the Victorian and Edwardian eras. First of all, whiteness was to be constructed in ways that went hand in hand with the contemporary notion of racial difference, which increasingly cast the difference between Britain and India in a Social Darwinist contrast of 'civilised' versus 'backward', or 'evolved' versus 'degenerated' (see Metcalf 1995). Thus, being white in India meant, first and foremost, being a member of the conquering, imperial race. Second and no less importantly, the reorganisation of whiteness was also predicated on cer-

tain ideas and practices concerning the ways in which social distinctions had been perceived and articulated *within* white British society. According to Benedict Anderson, it was the feudal and/or early modern iconographies of class, where the obvious dissimilarities between the aristocracy and the common populace were considered to be as absolute as those of heredity, or of 'blood', that informed the development of colonial racisms (Anderson 1991, 150). One offshoot of such a vision, as David Cannadine has shown, was India's British colonials' romanticised self-image as a sort of super-caste, reigning, as it were, at the top of a finely-graded, immobilised structure of pre-modern feudal hierarchy (Cannadine 2001, 41-57).

Attention to these racial and class-based ideas of whiteness is important for our understanding of the chauvinistic ideologies of the British bourgeoisie and their peculiar incarnations in the colonial context, but it alone would not be sufficient for revealing a whole picture of whiteness in colonial India. For white supremacy was to be nurtured not solely through positing certain racial qualities that supposedly made up the colonisers' constitutions: rather, it was to be defended by addressing, if not so proudly, the insidious dangers of white racial degradation. The nineteenth-century idea of race did assert the superiority of whites at the conceptual level, but there still remained, at the practical level, the question of how the supposed bearers of such superiority actually led their lives in the overseas colonies whose natural and social environments often widely differed from that of Britain. Thus, instead of being allowed to behave just as they willed, white colonials found themselves tightly bound by certain social codes and cultural conventions which severely restricted their private as well as public lives. Defining themselves as civilising agents did not mean that

they had been given unrestricted freedom. This tendency towards stricter social self-discipline was not triggered simply by a Puritanical penchant for self-moralising, but also by a penetrating fear that, without sufficient vigilance, the British might easily lose those racial qualities that had made them 'white'. Rather surprising as it might sound by our present standards, only a cursory glimpse into the colonial archive would suffice to show the extent to which middle-class Britons had been ridden by anxieties over an irrevocable 'degeneration' of their own physical and mental constitutions supposedly caused by immersion in the Indian environs. The British did certainly believe in their racial superiority as whites but at the same were convinced that only certain self-imposed limitations and socio-cultural norms would save them from metamorphosing into an impure, weaker, and, therefore, 'non-white' being.

As Mark Harrison has demonstrated, the medico-scientific circles at the time were increasingly hostile to the optimism of the preceding decades and were strongly inclined towards a view that the white race was not so constituted as to 'acclimatise' (e.g., adapt to the tropical environment) (Harrison 1999). Uncontrolled exposure to the Indian surroundings and inhabitants would only incur changes of inimical sort. Such influential scientific authorities as Edward Tilt and Joseph Fayrer generally agreed that, after the third generation, the British racial stock would either go extinct or prolong its existence at the expense of becoming something fundamentally altered (Harrison 1994, 36-59; Mizutani 2005, 30-32). The same scientists also considered 'miscegenation' (e.g. the interbreeding of people regarded as different racial types) as yet another mode of racial degeneration, rather than as a positive measure for creating a part-white hybrid race adapted pur-

posefully to the tropical climate. It is notable that such an anti-miscegenation sentiment was frequently expressed by way of comparing the British model of colonial settlement with its Portuguese counterpart. The supposed failure of Portuguese colonialism was ascribed to what was seen as an endemic prevalence of inter-racial breeding observed in Portugal's South American territories. Furthermore, it was also argued that the same mistake of allowing miscegenation to prevail had been committed by the Portuguese in the Subcontinent as well before the British came to power in the eighteenth century; that the present descendants of Portuguese setters were almost always tinted by native blood, which had made them far from being 'healthy' or 'vigorous', and hence utterly unsuitable for the sacred tasks of colonial ruling and civilising.

Clearly, the British should not follow the Portuguese way. In fact, these reactions against miscegenation served to stigmatise not just 'Luso-Indians' (people of Portuguese origins) but, indirectly, also 'Eurasians', the mixed-descent people of India most of whom actually had British blood on the paternal side. By the mid-nineteenth century, the British lamented that the miscegenation of Britons with natives or with Eurasians was engendering some unretractable traces of hybrid offspring in whom the 'worst points' of both the white and non-white characteristics were frequently combined (Mizutani 2005, 33-39).

These ideas on environmental influence and miscegenation had been closely linked up with certain social practices and cultural conventions. For white males, miscegenation increasingly became a risky business, as the strong stigma attached to it by that period would easily harm their social credibility and career prospects (though, as will be explained later, many men of lower-

class origins did continue to marry into the Eurasian population). Moreover, the mid-century arrival of middle-class women not only made miscegenation much less in demand but served to create a white domestic space that reproduced the strict sexual morality of Victorian Britain (Sinha 1995; Whitehead 1996).

As for environmental influence, residence in European hill stations in Northern India was encouraged as an alternative to the plains, because the physical and social environment of the latter were believed to drag down the white race into the bottomless depths of racial deterioration. Ultimately, a periodical rest for adults (especially white women) and the entire education for children *only in Britain* (and not in any parts of India) were regarded as essential not just for hygienic but also for social reasons.

The hill stations, as Dane Kennedy has shown, did assume a degree of ideological and practical significance as an institution for reproducing, from within India, the whiteness of the British (Kennedy 1996). This did not mean, however, that these idealised white enclaves ('Little England') were to be fully utilised for procreating any substantial white population so that India would have a self-sufficient supply of white blood. This eventual dismissal of the hill stations is shown by the extent to which British parents historically preferred to send their India-born offspring directly to the metropole rather than to the schools the Indian hills harboured. Elizabeth Buettner's recent book tells us how they tended to dismiss 'European schools' in India as a possible substitute for families and schools in Britain lest their own children, especially boys, might end up sharing for the rest of their lives the extremely limited socio-economic prospects that usually awaited lower class whites and mixed-descent Eurasians af-

ter graduation. In fact, the idea of sending off children for a course of upbringing in Britain was articulated not just as a desirable option but as a sacred duty: a duty most parents did actually faithfully discharge, despite the psychological and financial sufferings such parent-child separation could easily impose (Buettner 2004).

Each member of the British nation was supposed to be in India *only as* a self-conscious agent of imperialism or as his dutiful wife, and the reproduction of such agents of colonial rule would always depend on the metropole for its supply of those men and women who embodied the ideals of the bourgeoisie. The construction of whiteness was to be done neither naturally nor in a piecemeal fashion, but required a heavy set of social rules and, above all, the material resources that made it possible to follow them. These rules were demanding for all the men, women and children involved, and even for the wealthier members of the middle class, being white was nothing less than a burdensome business with many hazards to circumvent and fragile constitutions to jealously protect. Their fear of 'going native' was a real one, not least when their offspring were concerned.

Uncivilised Whites

It was in yet another sense, however, that whiteness was seen as caught up in danger. While the aforementioned anxieties concerned the paranoid care of self on the part of the bourgeois, there were other concerns as well, especially concerning the 'non-bourgeois' elements of colonial white society. Despite its official wish to be contrary, British India's white population was not at all homogeneous but was divided in both class and racial lines, and it is on this division that the following section will focus.

5

Among the 150,000 odd Britons in late nineteenth century India, nearly half were those who would be more aptly called as 'poor whites' than civilising agents. Many of these arrived in India as subaltern soldiers or railway workers. They suffered not only from the class prejudice of India's white society but from the crude fact that the colonial economy did not require their labour except in very limited arenas. They often became unemployed after the army or the railways discharged them, and, in the absence of the money that would have brought them back to Britain, got stranded in India. From the perspective of the ruling classes, their mere existence was seen as imminently injurious to white racial prestige. Usually drawn from the working class, these whites were expected to possess neither the hygienic norms nor the culture of self-discipline that their middle-class counterparts cherished in India.

Ever since the era of the East India Company, British authorities had officially been against the colonial presence of any substantial white-working population, and this attitude had been faithfully readopted by the new regime: thus it was only blatantly against the official intentions that a substantial group of impoverished whites made their presence felt in the colonial context. Naturally, as Kenneth Ballhatchet has argued, the visible existence of subordinate whites was perceived as nothing but a problematic source of political disorder (Ballhatchet 1980, 121-2).

Their presence was captured and represented by official and non-official publications alike as a 'danger' to the church and the state, not least because of its poor reflection upon the British and their institutions in the native perception of them. It was at this juncture that the colonial authorities felt compelled to im-

plement measures either to eliminate or put under control the presence of white subalterns. Works by Kenneth Ballhatchet and Douglas Peers on the control of the sexuality of white subaltern soldiers, those on European prostitutes by Philippa Levine and by Harald Fisher-Tiné, all testify to the degree to which the colonial authorities were eager to control the lives of poorer members of white society (Ballhatchet 1980; Peers 1998; Fisher-Tiné 2003; Levine 1994). More generally, David Arnold's study of the European Vagrancy Act (1869, 1871, and 1874), a law which allowed the police to capture and repatriate 'loose whites', demonstrates the colonial state's anxiousness to sweep away the existence of any 'unfit' whites, and thereby to maintain the prestige of the colonising community as a whole (Arnold 1979).

These measures, how-ever, were never good enough for erasing the poor white question. Nor were they successful in stopping these white people from permanently residing in India across generations, making themselves known as 'Domiciled Europeans'. Still less were these measures able to prevent them from merging into the mixed-descent 'Eurasian' population (existing as a group since the early nineteenth century[3], and numbering at least 150,000 by the 1930s) through miscegenation: in the absence of any substantial numbers of working-class white women, a number of poor-white men married Eurasian women. Taking a cue from those studies on impoverished and socially marginalised whites, my own historical research has focused on the colonial attitudes towards those of white descent who became domiciled, if often involuntarily, in India.

Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians were discrete from one another in that the former were of unmixed white de-

scent while the latter were not. However, as Arnold has rightly pointed out, for the governing classes these differences were often inconsequential and the two groups were actually seen as constituting the same problematic (Arnold 1979, 106). The rationale for this curious bracketing was that, in spite of their having British blood, neither of them were regarded as presenting the right kind of whiteness to Indians. Domiciled Europeans were purely white but were seen to be far too indigent and uncivilised to be genuine members of the ruling race. Meanwhile, an overwhelming majority of the Eurasian community were also severely impoverished and illiterate. Both were too unrefined and/or hybrid to be regarded as authentically white, and it was in this context that they were often seen as of one piece and were collectively referred to as 'the domiciled' as opposed to those whites who did live in India but were emphatically *not* domiciled there.

Unlike the middle-class whites who desperately remained in touch with the metropolitan centre, the domiciled were characterised for their immersion in the social and cultural influences of the colonial periphery. Whether one returned Home or made India his / her home was not at all a simple matter of personal preference but much hinged on the (un)availability of money and one's class position that underlined it. Such class origins of domiciliary difference were readily transposed to a racialised image of Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians as 'degenerate', as though their pauperisation was due to some innate predispositions. Despite their white descent, the domiciled were at times seen as a 'race' apart, deprived of their white elements and gone degenerate beyond redemption.

The domiciliary distinction drawn within the white community had its material consequences too: it found itself inscribed not just in racist and classist stereotypes but also in the socio-legal arrangements concerning the allocation of white privilege and status, especially those regarding the recruitment of colonial civil service officers. From the late nineteenth century onwards, the domiciled were excluded from the higher ranks of the colonial civil service (a process which in itself was one of the major causes for their impoverishment) on the grounds that their education was inferior to that imparted by schools found in the metropole. Thus, since 1870, in contrast to the home-educated Britons who were categorised as 'European British subjects', the domiciled were counted just as one of the many 'natives of India'. Such an arrangement effectively made it clear that Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians were expected to be content with a typically Indian standard of living, making their claim to be recognised as 'British' a misguided and illegitimate one.

Such an exclusionary attitude of the bourgeois Britons towards their domiciled kin seems somewhat counterintuitive, given the strong tendency of colonial and postcolonial studies to associate social exclusion solely with the racialisation, or 'othering', of the colonised subjects. Yet it does point us towards one important form of modern social exclusion that at first glance might appear irrelevant to the colonial construction of racial categories: namely the social-evolutionist and (later) eugenicist form of exclusion that 'discovered', in London and other industrial cities of Britain, 'unfit' populations, such as the 'poor', the 'mad', and the 'infirm' (Himmelfarb 1984).

The way in which the very category of the domiciled came into being in colonial India tells us convincingly that such a class-specific mode of exclusion is not irrelevant to the concerns of colonial

studies, and by extension, to those of critical race and whiteness studies at large. It is significant as it presents us with one instance of how the bourgeois anxiety about what were seen as alien or 'dangerous' classes manifested itself, in the altered context of colonisation, as an urgent problem of 'whiteness'. What we may learn from such concern with white identity is the extent to which the making of whiteness was at its roots a highly ambivalent and unstable process, whose self-purifying mechanisms almost necessarily entailing a contradictory effect of producing, and simultaneously excluding, those who were white, 'but not quite'.

'European Pauperism' and the Ambivalence of Imperial Civilising

Exclusion, however, was in some ways always connected with a certain, if equally contradictory, mode of inclusion. To grasp the fuller picture of whiteness in late colonial India, one would have to see how the demand of securing racial order made it necessary for the authorities to come to terms with the excluded, instead of consigning them to oblivion and negligence. Just as the poor in Britain were not simply alienated but were simultaneously made an object of intense reformist interventions, India's domiciled population soon attracted a great deal of attention from the state and private social reformers, with its chronicle pauperism and illiteracy becoming highly publicised and politicised. However, it would be too simplistic to see the colonial focus on the domiciled poor as a mere, unmediated replication of European class attitude. For it was also out of some distinctly colonial concerns that the impoverishment of India's domiciled population was identified as an urgent problem.

Given the almost racist attitude with which middle-class whites regarded Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians, one may naturally wonder whether or not the former ever considered disowning the latter completely, while allowing them to merge into the native masses without trace. Such a view was not entirely absent, with some commentators actually advocating a complete exclusion of some (if not all) sections of the domiciled population. The dominant view, however, was that such was too unpractical an option and that the British had to take seriously the question of the domiciled as one of their own. However, this call to responsibility derived not so much from some kindred sympathy for an impoverished kin, as from a mixed sense of embarrassment and alarm. It was not because they saw the domiciled as their own kind, let alone their equals, that the white ruling classes threw their lot in this struggle to 'rescue' the latter: rather, they had only been forced to realise that the pauperised existence of the domiciled not simply became publicly noticeable but, because of its very visibility, emerged as a menace to colonial white prestige. Impoverished as they might have been, Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians were 'white' by descent (racially white, whether unmixed or mixed), by language (English), and by religion (Christianity). While they were considered not as civilised as home-educated Britons, they were at the same time neither seen as 'Indian' nor regarded themselves as such. Moreover, from the perspective of colonised natives, the domiciled were not their natural allies in their struggle against imperial domination: if anything, they merely appeared as collaborators of colonial rule or as a parasitic community that desperately sucked white privileges without any regard for the interests of colonised natives. Such historical circumstances made it impossible for the non-domiciled Britons to desert their domiciled counterparts. Consequently, what we witness from the end of the

1850s right up to the close of colonialism were numerous social reform measures addressing the problem of so-called 'European pauperism'. These measures did not so much seek to solve as conceal, or make less visible, the pauperisation of Domiciled-European and Eurasian people. What was at stake was the spectacular visibility of such pauperism and its negative political implications. A brief look at some of these counter-measures may be helpful.

Colonial authorities found education as one of the most effective measures to control white pauperism. It was Bishop Cotton in Calcutta who, with the support of the Viceroy Lord Canning, started an almost century-long struggle against the pervasive illiteracy among domiciled children. Cotton's efforts to create schools were continued by successive governments and social reformers, resulting by the turn of the century in a network of 'European schools' and in a code that standardised and regulated their educational and administrative policies.[4]

What is notable is how, in the evolution of this comprehensive edu-cation scheme, more and more attention was paid to the poorest of the poor domiciled children: it was increasingly made explicit that the education these schools provided would be first and foremost supervisory and disciplinary in kind, rather than being academic-oriented. Only the state control of its children would be able to prevent a further pauperisation of the domiciled community. It was out of this belief that both state agents and private philanthropic circles combined their efforts.

It was increasingly obvious, however, that the mere provision of a comprehensive education system did not prove as effective as its enthusiastic promoters had hoped. Not only was it

impossible to integrate all children and thus to make them literate, but it was extremely difficult to find suitable employment even for those who did actually get schooled. By the beginning of the 1890s, it seemed increasingly clear that the British could not solve European pauperism unless they directly and specifically addressed the condition of the poorest section of the domiciled (which increasingly constituted a majority).

Upon this realisation, in 1891, the colonial government appointed the Pauperism Committee to enquire into the extent and nature of the indigence penetrating Calcutta's domiciled population. In the same spirit, about two decades later, a similar committee, the Calcutta Domiciled Community Enquiry Committee (1918) was launched (albeit not by the government this time but by a non-official initiative) to solve such a problem that had appeared almost unsolvable and yet could not be left unattended to.

Characteristic of such urgent attention to pauperism was a typical bourgeois representation of the pauper as both physiologically and psychologically 'un-fit'. In a colonial rendering of such a theory, Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians in Calcutta collectively entertained a 'false' kind of self-image. On the one hand, it was argued, they fallaciously imagined themselves to be essentially one and the same with better-off, home-educated Britons. This allegedly had an effect of making the former too proud to set their hands to manual labour whilst spending recklessly to satisfy their vain need for pretence, even in the midst of life-costing impoverishment. On the other hand, the domiciled were supposedly inclined towards a habit of thinking that they were naturally superior to their native neighbours. This allegedly led the former to employ the latter as domestic servants, not only increasing

their poverty through the expenses involved but making their children as helplessly dependent, spoiled and vain as themselves. All these confusions in terms of class and racial identification combined to cause the pauperisation of the domiciled. What followed from such an observation was a proposal to remedy European pauperism through curing domiciled persons of their 'defects of character'.

The quasi-psychological theory of the domiciled character did indicate certain 'innate' dispositions but also looked to environmental influence. By way of a curious fusion of biological determinism and social constructivism, the family and the community were identified as the sources of mental as well as physical degeneration. In other words, the plight of the domiciled community would not be solved unless its members were relocated from urban centres such as Calcutta, where most of them lived. Moreover, in yet another sense was this idea of collective removal appealing to the colonial ruling classes: even when unable to change the racial constitutions of the domiciled, or to find them employment, it would at least erase the politically undesirable *sight* of European pauperism. It was out of these concerns that, throughout the late colonial period, British philanthropic circles considered several schemes that would not simply discipline Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians, but also, in varying ways and degrees, removed them from their urban residences.

These schemes included the participation of youths in military and marine training; the establishment of agricultural communes in the unpopulated countryside; and emigration to British 'setter colonies' such as Australia and New Zealand. Under these schemes, social isolation and discipline would supplement one another as a means to trans-

form the negative attitude of the domiciled towards manual labour and humble living.

One might add that such efforts found crystallised in St. Andrew's Colonial Homes, whose reputation among the British in India was nothing but phenomenal. Established in 1900 at Kalimpong near the Eastern Himalayas by a Scottish missionary Rev. John Graham[5], this orphanage-like institution provided its 500-600 domiciled inmates with a complete boarding-school education. In this highly acclaimed institution, the everyday lives of domiciled children were strictly supervised and regulated, so that they would take up domestic work by themselves, while simultaneously 'unlearning' their infamous dependence on servants as well as their allegedly characteristic disinclination towards menial labour. In the meanwhile, the Homes offered a curriculum which emphasised industrial and agricultural knowledge for boys and domestic skills for girls, preparing them for such careers as farming, marine piloting, and soldiering. The Homes served not only to conceal the potential perpetrators of European pauperism through their thorough institutionalisation, but also to perfect the process of such politically significant concealment by sending its graduates away from India as emigrant farmers or menial labourers.

To what extent is the example of these measures of control useful for our effort to demystify whiteness? My argument is that, with qualifications, the reformist measures on India's Domiciled-European and Eurasian populations can be discussed in ways that address the broader question of whiteness, and this, particularly in regard to the complex relationship between whiteness and the notion of 'civilising'.

Those various measures directed at India's domiciled population had been strongly influenced by the metropolitan discourses and practices regarding the indigent inhabitants of the British Isles. As we have observed above, such importation was no less than a mere duplication of metropolitan class control but was motivated by colonial demands for racial order. While recognition of this difference is of great significance, the very fact of such cross-continental continuum of philanthropic knowledge and practice is interesting in its own right.

It indicates, for one, that the ensuing question of modern pauperism was not simply confined to the urban areas of the United Kingdom but travelled far overseas, forcing colonial white societies such as the one in India to practice a similar (if not the same) kind of class politics. Careful attention to such a global diffusion of social control measures may contribute to widen the scope of colonial and postcolonial studies, which have thus far tended to restrict themselves to the theme of how the colonisers ruled the colonised, with a relative indifference to the parallel process Othering o_f, and subsequent control of, subordinate populations within European societies (Moor-Gilbert 1997, 129: see also Cooper and Stoler 1997; Stoler 1996; Stoler 2002).

While the idea of 'civilising' did increasingly become perceived as a colonial business of converting native subjects overseas, it never actually ceased to be an enduring domestic concern. Even in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Britain still embraced within itself 'barbaric' populations yet to be 'civilised' (Himmelfarb 1984; McClintock 1995). At a time when colonial India's domiciled population had been discovered as an 'unfit' element of the community, in the metropole too, intellectuals, social reformers and the state au-

thorities were anxious to civilise the indigent classes through social measures including sanitary reform and education in which Social Darwinism was increasingly influential (Davin 1987; Semmel 1960).

At the same time, however, the history of 'European pauperism' in India suggests that the reference to class is not sufficient for explaining such internal civilising. 'British social history' (especially the kind covering the modern age) would be enriched by introducing colonial and postcolonial perspectives: for, in the age of empire, even what seems to be no more than a straightforwardly domestic question of civilising might be connected with colonial social formations. The ways in which the Domiciled-European and Eurasian poor were identified in India as a special social category never simply derived from the bourgeois conception of pauper management alone. Neither were the proposed countermeasures mere emulations of those class politics that had already been practiced in the metropolitan centre. Such discourses as those on the dependence on native servants, the 'false' sense of superiority over natives, and the mesmerising impact of the Indian climate and environment, addressed colonial problems, serving to harden the internal differences of India's white population into racial ones. Accordingly, the civilising of Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians entailed different concerns from that directed at the pauper populations in the United Kingdom. Under imperialism, it was not just class but race that defined the terms on which the internal civilising of 'degenerates' was conducted.

Ultimately, however, even such efforts to compare race and class, and determine which was more important, may turn out to be counterproductive, if not completely futile. After all, as Susan Thorn's

work on British missionary activities has shown, any representation of the 'other' within the missionary discourse of civilising since the late eighteenth century on was to some degree racialised and classed *simultaneously* (Thorn 1997). Stereotypical images of the indigent and of the colonised natives hybridised one another and became mutually interchangeable, creating such contradictory figures as the 'white negro' (referring, for instance, to the impoverished Irish people in London).

Perhaps, the characteristically ambivalent (un)-whiteness of Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians were to be located only within such conflations of class and racial otherness within the vast imperial space penetrating both metropole and colony, and to that extent, the equally characteristic ambiguities of those colonial efforts of civilising the domiciled community may be seen as reflecting a wider context, enabling us to rethink what civilising meant in modernity. Furthermore, this in turn invites us to question who 'whites' were: while they may be readily defined as civilising agents, the notion of civilising itself was in fact an equivocal one, and to this extent, their identity was no less ambiguous, with its historical roots traceable to both bourgeois and imperial cultures.

Concluding Remarks: Historicising Whiteness

It has been a while since critical race and whiteness studies have disseminated the now-familiar notion that whiteness is not a given but a social construct. The idea, however, is yet to be fully explored, with many untouched areas and methodologies of potential importance. This paper has been a humble attempt to make a contribution to the field from the perspective of colonial history. It has shown that the case of colonial Indian society can be taken

as providing a vivid example of how the construction of whiteness may be charged with inevitable contradictions and ambiguities, and with those countermeasures that seek to contain them. Whiteness in such a context is not simply about white skin colour or about cultural norms, but is closely linked with the state's construction of 'populations', involving legislative and social measures for biopolitical intervention. Such measures produce not only normalness but also forms of ambiguous identity against the backdrop of which such normalness is in part constructed.

The ambiguity of mixed-race identity in India has been identified and universalised by some social theorists as representing a certain 'personality' supposedly typical in racially divided societies (Park 1928; Stonequest 1935; Gist and Wright 1973). However, such a-historical abstractions may lead one to overlook, and therefore unintentionally repeat, the past representation of mixed-race people as having a unique psychological disposition. Based on my historical research, my argument is that their identity cannot be fully explicated without referring to their troubled relationship to the colonial construction of whiteness, which effectively attached to them a label of being psychologically abnormal. As Lionel Caplan has rightly argued, India's domiciled community were nothing but 'children of colonialism', with their fates largely determined by how the ruling whites treated them: and even the condition of the 'Anglo-Indians' in post-colonial India would not be fully understood without due reference to the colonial past (Caplan 2001).

In this sense, the problematic category of the domiciled can be construed properly as a subject of postcolonial studies. And yet, while its characteristic ambivalence can be seen as a moment of 'hybridity', so influentially formulated

by the prominent postcolonial theorist, Homi Bhabha (Bhabha 1994), it would be necessary to carefully combine the postmodernist privileging of radical ambivalence with rigid historical contextualisation. To read India's domiciled community as an example of incommensurable 'inbetweenness' may well be applicable where they had actually been given an intermediary socio-economic position, as Laura Bear argues to have been the case in railway employment (Bear 1994; see also Arnold 1983).

However, it was especially as a concrete historical problem that the existence of Domiciled Europeans and Eurasians recurrently presented itself, and not necessarily as a metaphysical otherness that deconstructed colonial categories with its uncategorisable ambivalence. What is crucial to note is that such an urgent politicisation of domiciled identity was triggered by an eminently alarming fact that an increasing majority of the community were not even inbetween but ranked among the most indigent of all social groups in India including the native poor.

The inscription of such indigence in the colonising scene came as a serious blow to the supposedly extraracial status of the British, or to their whiteness, which should have rested precisely on the invisibility, and therefore normalcy, of the white community as a whole. To reconstruct such a process of marking off, and simultaneously civilising, the pauperised populations of white descent may carry us a step forward in our contemporary interventions to demystify whiteness: it is by disclosing such internal struggles involved in its very making that whiteness is to be dragged down from its universalised ascendancy, with its true historical particularities exposed to our eyes.

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Endnotes

[1] Not every member of the domiciled population within the British territories of the Subcontinent was originally of British descent, with some having initially descended from the Portuguese, Dutch or French colonials, merging at a later stage into the British-descent communities.

[2] Much of this essay will draw on the author's doctoral dissertation (Mizutani 2004). Because of its specific focus on the analysis of whiteness as well as for the sake of stylistic simplicity, it will use the empirical findings of the dissertation without referencing them, except for those contained in a published article (Mizutani 2005) which itself is a revised version of one of its chapters. The author has been revising the whole dissertation to publish it as a book. Any comments and enquires will therefore be extremely valuable and welcome (he can be contacted at smizutan@mail.doshisha.ac.jp, or mizutani_s@hotmail.com)

[3] For a history of the formation of the Eurasian community, see (Hawes 1996)

[4] For a historical account of the institutional evolution of these schools, see (D'Souza 1976)

[5] For a biography of Graham, see (Minto 1974)

'COMMON VALUES': WHITENESS, CHRISTIANITY, ASYLUM SEEKERS AND THE HOWARD GOVERNMENT

HOLLY RANDELL-MOON

Abstract

The articulation of whiteness as a moral homogeneity comprising 'common' Judeo-Christian values has contributed to the formation and representation of Australian national identity as unproblematically Anglo-Celtic. The ways in which the Howard Government cites Christianity is reflective of this investment in, and protection of, a white teleology of Australian nationalism. By imputing a universal status to Australian and Christian values through an articulation of a 'common' set of values reflective of a 'broad church', Howard's statements on religion and national culture attempt to reproduce racially unmarked subjects and disassociate this location from the investment in and protection of white hegemony. By examining governmental responses to media reports of asylum seekers converting to Christianity it will be shown how the discursive association between whiteness and Australianness is produced as a naturalised norm. Within the media reports on asylum seekers converting to Christianity, differentiations based on race are subsumed by assumptions of moral difference that locate Christianity with Australianness. By aligning these values with a discourse of secular, Western nations, the Howard Government makes invisible a religiously inflected cultural agenda that presents Australian values as 'broad' and inclusive but underpinned by an adherence to a teleology of Australian nationality that is Anglocentric in its outlook.

Introduction

This essay posits that the ways in which the Howard Government cites Christianity is reflective of an investment in, and protection of, a white teleology of Australian nationalism. By examining governmental responses to media reports of asylum seekers converting to Christianity it will be shown how the discursive association between whiteness and Australianness is produced as a naturalised norm. This examination will include attending to assumptions of secularity where the reproduction of a racialised construction of Christianity (as an abstracted signifier of whiteness) is obscured within a language of national values as 'common values'. Such a connection between religion and state evidences a teleology of nationalism that works to displace Indigenous sovereignty by affirming an Anglocentric identity and heritage as Australian. By suturing this Anglocentric identity to discourses of 'the West,' ethnicity and nationality are conflated into a homogenous whiteness (Moreton-Robinson 2005: 23). In this way, Otherness in the form of asylum seekers and Muslims, are constituted by their difference from the religiously inflected 'common values' that unite Australia with other 'Western' nations such as the United States and Britain. Aileen Moreton-Robinson writes that 'whiteness secures hegemony through discourse by normalising itself as the cultural space of the West' (2004b: 78).

Drawing on this critical insight, it is argued that the ideas embedded in how

Australian values are presented and enacted by the Howard Government draw on racialised discourses of Western culture refracted through a 'Judeo-Christian' value system. After establishing the theoretical grounds of connections between Christianity, whiteness, and Australianness, a discussion will follow of media reports on convert Christian asylum seekers and the use of Christianity in political rhetoric by the Howard Government.

When launching the National Multicultural Advisory Council Report in 1999, Australian Prime Minister John Howard argued that 'what holds a nation together more than anything else are its common values' (Howard 1999). Elsewhere Howard has argued that 'we are a society that respects all religions, but we should respect our own history and our own traditions,' naming specifically 'our' Judeo-Christian foundations (Howard 2004: 119). The ostensibly inclusive 'common values' Howard speaks of in the context of multiculturalism, are associated in another context with one specific set of values, Christianity. National values are universalised on the one hand as 'common', but particularised as Christian on the other, situating non-Christian values as secondary to national interests. Michel Foucault defines different discursive processes as ensuring 'the distribution of speaking subjects into the different types of discourse and the appropriation of discourse to certain categories of subject' (1981: 64). In view of this, the expression of 'common values' raises a series of questions. Through which speaking position is 'Christianity' being accessed here? How is 'Christianity' made appropriate to the subject of nationality? What might be absent in Howard's invocation of 'Judeo-Christian' foundations? Such an invocation requires the erasure of Indigenous sovereignty and the displacement of migrant culture as assimilatory to a 'unified' na-

tional identity (Hage 2003; Standfield 2004; Moreton-Robinson 2005).

Many theorists have written about how discursive productions of Australian nationality are inextricably linked to whiteness through particular sets of colonial and cultural knowledge (Perera & Pugliese 1997; Lake 2003; Moreton-Robinson 2004a; Moreton-Robinson 2004b; Ahmed 2004). Joseph Pugliese argues that 'whiteness is not a racial category that necessarily inscribes or colours the body *en bloc*, as a type of totalising or homogenous thing-in-itself' (2002: 153), but is subject to cultural and political variations that attempt to signify whiteness as 'self-evidently white' (166). Whiteness as a racially signifying category is dispersed as localised and particularised according to different historical formations so that 'different people have been allowed in and forced out of Whiteness over time' (Elder et al. 2004: 209; Supriya 1999: 136). The consolidation of various English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh settler ethnicities including Anglo-Celtic and Anglo-Saxon, into a broad notion of 'Australian' whiteness has significant religious dimensions in Australian political history. An understanding of Judeo-Christian values as signifying Australian whiteness is evident in the current discourses of Christianity utilised by the Howard Government.

Australianness, Whiteness, And Religion

The historicity of whiteness means, that, in Jon Stratton's words, 'we can take the term Anglo-Celtic to describe what is now considered to be the whitest group of Australians' (1999: 163). The embodiment of this form of whiteness is inscribed differently in relation to culturally specific notions of religion. In 'Multiculturalism and the Whitening machine, or how Australians became white' (1999), Stratton maps the ways in which the idea of

culture as deriving from a racial group shifted to the view of culture as implicitly signifying race. Such a discursive repositioning expanded the conception of what constituted 'Australian' whiteness and underscored the adoption of multiculturalism as government policy. After the Second World War there was a substantial intake of migrants from Levant, and Eastern and Southern Europe, which necessitated the broadening of the category white (British) Australian to that of 'European'. Stratton argues that 'this was made possible by the demise of the thinking that allied race with nation, that had allowed for the idea of a 'British race', and the move away from an emphasis on phenotype, 'white', to an emphasis on culture signalled by 'European'' (164). Underlying the Australian Government's broadening of the term 'white' for immigration purposes was a conceptualisation of whiteness as an abstraction of 'European moral assumptions … articulated in terms of acceptable moral difference' (165). In this way, 'the idea of a common morality has usually been tied to the claim of a common religious heritage, a claim that equates 'white' people with Christianity, or a 'Judeo-Christian value system'' (Stratton 1999: 165; Dyer 1997; Dyer 1999: 458; Hall 1992: 289; Asad 2003: 166).

The gradual understanding of cultural variation within whiteness, underpinned by common religious identifications with 'a Judeo-Christian value system,' leads Stratton to propose that the adoption of multiculturalism by the Fraser government in the 1970s was underpinned by a cultural plurality (1999: 165). This policy aimed 'to solve the problem caused by the failure of assimilation' of marginal white groups, from nationalities such as Italy and Greece (Stratton 1999: 170; Lopez 2000, p. 2, 3; Cox 1987, p. 245, 246) through recourse to 'a set of moral and cultural assumptions that would make easy assimilation into the unitary Austra-

lian culture' (Stratton 1999: 178). Where previously there was a differentiation between 'white, northern, Protestant Europeans from the not-so-white eastern and southern, Catholic and Orthodox Europeans' during the operation of the White Australia Policy, this gave way to the 'later identification of the latter as ethnics' during the advent of multiculturalism (165). It was for this reason that the binary opposition between Catholic and Protestants gradually relaxed its power with the de-racialisation of the Irish as ethnics. This is demonstrated by the term 'Anglo-Celtic,' which presumes the primacy of culture underpinned by a moral Christian homogeneity (172). Stratton writes that:

> [B]y the time of multiculturalism, when it was the culture itself that was the ostensibly privileged entity, and when this was located in a more general moral system, white was no longer utilised as a classificatory term. Instead, 'mainstream', 'real Australians' and, most commonly, 'Anglo-Celtic', all terms that evolved their current meaning during the 1980s, were used (172).

The political implications of articulating whiteness in terms of a moral homogeneity means that a residual discourse of Christianity inflects and informs political institutional structures and arrangements in Australia. This is a useful way of understanding the Howard Government's excavations of an Anglo-Christian subjectivity and Howard's cultural agenda for 'mainstream' Australia. Howard's 1996 Federal Election campaign was premised on an aim to re-centre the notion of a unified Australia in comparison to a perceived privileging of diversity under the Keating Government. In an interview for the book *100 Years: The Australian Story* by Paul Kelly, marking the 2001 Centenary of Australian Federation, Howard argued that 'unity and diversity are both important' but 'I want Australia to be distinctive, to have Australian

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characteristics that are different from English or Irish or French or Italian or Chinese–quite different' (Kelly 2001: 251). Ghassan Hage describes Howard's invocation of cultural values as a trans-historical reproduction of an Australian essence, 'these values are Australian in a 'strong' sense: they differentiate Australians from other people in the world. They trace what Howard considers a unique 'Australian way'' (2003: 70).

This cultural agenda for a distinctive but homogenous Australian national identity is religiously inflected through the mobilisation of a pan Anglo-European subjectivity. When launching the magazine and website *The Conservative*, Howard described the Liberal Party as 'a broad church', saying, 'you sometimes have to get the builders in to put in the extra pew on both sides of the aisle to make sure that everybody is accommodated' (2005b). The term 'broad' can be seen to denote an abstract whiteness capable of absorbing cultural diversity, but one that is nevertheless underpinned by a 'church,' by an adherence to a common morality that is religiously transposed to mean 'national values'. For example, in an address marking the ninetieth anniversary of Gallipoli, Howard argued that Anzac Day has an 'eternal place in the Australian soul' due to the sacrifice of 'Australians who have died in war and for peace in our name' (2005a). He went on to say 'they bequeathed Australia a lasting sense of national unity' (2005a). In order to identify as Australian, one requires a subscription to an underlying set of values, a 'democratic temper', 'questioning eye towards authority', 'easy familiarity', 'courage and compassion' (2005a), all of which reproduce a trans-historical Australian essence. The imputation of the Anzac solider into a national subject 'implicitly excludes non-white migrants and Indigenous people from holding such core values' (Moreton-Robinson

2005: 22). As Moreton-Robinson points out, 'the core values which were displayed by diggers on the battle fields are never linked to their colonial origins and the part they played in claiming the nation as a white possession' (22). The pervasive ideal in Howard's 'broad church' is an 'equation ... between whiteness and assimilation' (Stratton 1999: 177). This is expressed in Howard's metaphor by adding 'extra pews' to an already existing moral structure or value system. Stratton argues that the notion of cultural diversity as being unified by a common identification of Australian values produces an opposition between culture and morals that situates moral difference with racial difference (170). The assignation of Judeo-Christian values to Australian nationality by Howard reproduces a cultural homogeneity underpinned by racialised discourses of religion that constructs Australianness as 'white'.

This relationship between 'whiteness' and a 'common morality' informs other areas of government policy and has effects in relation to the operation of the secular and non-secular in political discourse. Judith Brett, for example, has demonstrated how in early twentieth century Australian politics, Protestant conceptions of individualism as liberal and democratic tended to obfuscate Protestantism through the use of secular language. Based on moral and therefore racial difference, this cast non-Protestant forms of Christianity, such as Catholicism, as well as other faiths, as overtly religious and incompatible with government operations (2004: 40, 54). Religious values that privilege specific forms of whiteness can be rendered invisible through the assumption of secularity.

Talal Asad has argued that the secular conceptualisation of religion as outside of politics is specific to a modern West-

ern ideal of government. But rather than simply differentiating religious matters from political ones, secularism has the effect of producing the paradigms through which religion is understood.

> [T]he insistence that religion has an autonomous essence–not to be confused with the essence of science, or of politics, or of common sense–invites us to define religion (like any essence) as a transhistorical and transcultural phenomenon … This definition is at once part of a strategy (for secular liberals) of the confinement, and (for liberal Christians) of the defense of religion (1993: 28).

When the intersection of religion and politics in secular governments is thought to occur in a positive sense, the religion in question is framed as commensurate with democratic principles.

> Only religions that have accepted the assumptions of liberal discourse are being commended, in which tolerance is sought on the basis of a distinctive relation between law and morality (Asad 2003: 183).

It can be further noted that the relation of specific religions to political spaces, even as secularism is upheld, is marked by processes of racial inclusion and exclusion. Moreton-Robinson draws attention to how 'whiteness is constitutive of the epistemology of the West' (2004b: 75). In this way, white relations of power and knowledge are represented as self-evident and normal: 'It is an invisible regime of power that secures hegemony through discourse and has material effects in everyday life' (75). If Judeo-Christian religious values are the foundations of Australia's secular government, as Howard argues, it is because there is a moral compatibility between Christianity and Australianness. National values are asserted religiously whilst a discourse of secularity masks the specificity of these values so they can be presented (like Australian national identity) as a transhistorical essence. In the same way

that Asad highlights how certain religions are made compatible with secular governments through liberal democratic principles, this conflation of culture, morality, and nation is underpinned by a racialised discourse of religion. The discursive positioning of a pan Anglo-European subjectivity as embodying Judeo-Christian values affirms a teleology of Australia as a white, western nation. In the case of convert Christian asylum seekers, their representation in news reports and government commentary is underpinned by perceptions of racial, and therefore moral difference, that supports their location outside of the nation by government policies such as mandatory detention. These strategies of exclusion reiterate an understanding of Australian culture as Anglocentric through a discursive association between whiteness and Christianity.

'Detainees Who Find Christ'

On the 21 March 2005, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that the refugee claims for thirty long-term detainees, predominantly from Iran and Iraq, were being reviewed due to their conversion to Christianity. The cases were reassessed on the basis that the detainees would most likely face religious persecution if deported, particularly under the Iranian theocratic government which reprimands conversions from Islam (Seccombe and Morris 2005). The reviews formed part of the Cabinet's consideration of approximately two hundred long-term detainees on 21 and 22 of March (ABC 2005a; Hurrell 2005a: 23). This story was subsequently picked up by other news outlets and generated debate concerning the legitimacy of the conversions in terms of a possible Christian bias by the Government that may exhort more asylum seekers to convert to gain citizenship; resulting in what an AAP feed described as 'copycat Christian conversions' (AAP 2005a).

The headline for the front page *Sydney Morning Herald* story, 'Detainees who find Christ may be allowed to stay,' conveys the implicit assumption that Christianity is the dominant religion in Australian society, following that those who are not allowed to 'stay', asylum seekers, belong to a religion other than Christianity. This use of a stable and un-shifting Christianity is expressed as an opposition between an imagined Australian 'Us' and an Other asylum seeker 'Them'. Because Christianity is attached to the Australian 'Us', this binary is also overlain with a discursive association of whiteness and Australianness so that racial difference is subsumed by a language of 'values' difference. This demonstrates the ways in which cultural values are racially marked and religiously informed.

A number of points can be made in relation to the discursive framing of religion and Australianness in the news stories about the conversions. When replying to suggestions of Christian bias in the Cabinet reviews, Howard stated 'there's no denominational or religious-specific clause in the administration of our immigration policy' (AAP 2005a). Asylum seekers converting to Christianity make visible a whole series of suppositions about Christianity in Government rhetoric. The possibility, presented by news reports, of religious partiality by the Government in relation to asylum seekers, supposes an already preferential treatment of Christianity by the Howard Government. However, the question of religious priorities, or lack thereof, does not contest the Howard Government's access to a discourse on 'Christianity'. The print media reports reproduce a similar cultural causality between whiteness and Christianity that Howard's 'broad church' draws on. The logic of the headlines 'Detainees who find Christ may be allowed to stay' (Seccombe and Morris 2005), 'Switching religion no

key to asylum' (Hurrell 2005a), and 'No special treatment for Christian converts in detention' (AAP 2005a) makes sense only in the context of an already existing alignment between Australian values and Christianity.

Further, questions of religious bias by the Government with respect to asylum seekers are refracted through the racially informed policy of mandatory detention for 'illegal arrivals'. As Stratton observes, the detention of 'illegal arrivals' who come primarily from South-East Asia (2004: 236), can be contrasted with the non detention of illegal overstayers, the majority of whom are from the United States and the United Kingdom, countries considered ''white' within the definition Australia uses' (223). This points to ways in which 'the Australian border is more likely to be permeable' for those identified as 'white' (Stratton 2004: 223; Tascon 2004; Perera 2005). An assumption of racial and hence moral difference from white Australians informs the stories about convert Christian asylum seekers. This is despite for example, the previous detention of Iranian and Iraqi Christians, as well as Mandeans who share with Christians a reverence for John the Baptist (Mercer 2002), which none of the stories from the headlines mentioned, nor that some asylum seekers are not religious at all but may form ethnic or cultural minorities within their country of origin. Asylum seekers are framed within a naturalised cultural determinism that subsumes overt references to racial difference with moral difference. The Howard Government exploited this naturalised understanding of moral difference in the 2001 Federal Election campaign by characterising asylum seekers 'as 'indecent', unfit to become 'decent' Australians' during the children overboard scandal (Osuri and Banerjee 2004: 161, n.4).

The news reports of asylum seekers converting to Christianity work to support the Howard Government's framing of Australian national identity as 'white' through a racialised discourse of religion that conflates cultural difference with moral difference. Goldie Osuri has theorised that the discursive production of Australian nationality through the media and its relationship to the Australian nation-state is exercised through 'newsmedia governmentality'. That is,

> the interplay between the right of free press in a parliamentary democracy and disciplinary mechanisms of normalization, manifests itself in a concentrated manner on the newsmedia especially as it concerns those who are perceived to be 'other' than a particular norm (2000: 211).

The policy of mandatory detention for asylum seekers is justified by the Howard Government as a security measure to protect Australian borders (Perera 2002). In the reports of convert Christian asylum seekers there is a conflation of national security with the security of Australian values through the questioning of the legitimacy of the conversions.

The then Opposition Immigration spokesman Laurie Ferguson was quoted in several articles urging the Government to assess the authenticity of the conversions saying, 'I would be prepared to put a large amount of money on at the TAB for a significant number of conversions (to Christianity) to occur now' (AAP 2005a; Hurrell 2005a: 23). Ferguson's comments express the idea that refugees cannot genuinely convert to Christianity and Australian values unless it is a 'ruse', which presumes an intrinsic investment in Christianity and Australian values is only called into question for non-white subjects. This anxiety over Australian citizenship recalls what Suvendrini Perera and Joseph Pugliese refer to as

'racial suicide' (1997) where the cultural compatibility of Christianity with Australianness is viewed as vulnerable by the embodiment of seemingly Anglo-Australian religious values by asylum seekers whose corporeal difference signifies a racial difference from whiteness. As Pugliese discusses elsewhere, the

> 'contingent ethnic variations [of whiteness] and its necessarily semiotic status generate the possibility for it to be defined topically–in the context of systems of differential, and often contradictory, relations that may incorporate a singular body' (2002: 153).

This 'historical mobility of whiteness' (165) is precisely why conversions to Christianity by asylum seekers pose a 'threat' to the security of Australian citizenship because they undermine the idea of a stable, essentialised Australian identity. Consequently, for Ferguson, the conversions can only be read pejoratively as an attempt to assimilate to this national identity rather than a reorientation in religious identification.

It is this changeability in religion as extrapolative to issues concerning the unstable nature of Australian citizenship that underpins the newsworthiness of the stories. The mainstream media is complicit in the ways in which Christianity is made appropriate to the subject of national identity through the privileging of those able to access discourses on Christianity. There were no Iranian and Iraqi Christian spokespeople mentioned in these articles. By contrast, those affiliated with mainstream Christian religions and Islam were quoted extensively; the president of the Uniting Church, Reverend Dean Clayton (who supported the some of detainee's religious conversions and applications for citizenship), Sydney Anglican Archbishop Peter Jensen, members from the Family First party (which has links to the Pentecostal As-

semblies of God church) and the president of the Lebanese Muslim Association, Keysar Trad (Seccombe and Morris 2005; AAP 2005a; AAP 2005b; AAP 2005c). That the only non-Christian religion mentioned in the news stories was Islam, demonstrates the racialised ways in which religion is understood to relate culture and morality to nationality along a binary of Christianness-Australianness and Other. This may have been challenged since all the Christians mentioned above stressed their opposition to mandatory detention regardless of a 'fear' of inauthentic conversions. However, the primary newsworthiness of the story was supported by the idea that conversion to Christianity by asylum seekers is unique or out of the ordinary, as well as the Howard Government's views on Christian asylum seekers that makes the speculation of religious bias news.

The ways in which Howard mutes and deploys whiteness and Christianity is not monolithic but contextually shifting. The invocation of a trans-historical Australian essence articulated through an Anglo-Christian self is an ideal used to conceal difference and contradictions. Howard's position that there is no 'specific' religious clause expressing bias in relation to reports on convert Christian detainees is a claim to the secular operation of immigration policy. This externally constituted concept of secularity presumes a divide between religion and government policy that enables the displacement of whiteness and the racially informed practice of mandatory detention through a discourse of 'Australian' values. These 'values' obfuscate the relations of power and knowledge that sustain Howard's cultural agenda. In this way, by answering the possibility of religious bias through a presumption of secularity, Howard's comments perform a double erasure. Firstly, by invisibilising the discursive association between

whiteness and Australianness in government policy, and secondly, that his rhetoric of Australia's 'Judeo-Christian' foundations excludes certain subjects, such as Indigenous peoples, migrants, asylum seekers–those construed as non-Christian, from national identification.

Policy toward asylum seekers is also imbricated within the discourse of the 'war on terror' that is expressed 'via a culturally imagined 'West' versus a culturally constructed Islam' (Osuri and Banerjee 2004: 158). Within this particular context, racial difference is made visible to the extent that supposed differences in 'values' become inflated. The orientalist assumption that constructs the West in opposition to Islam works to homogenise differences within each binary term and link the West and Islam to a corresponding set of essentialised representations (Kabbani 1986; Said 1991; Hall 1992). This dichotomous logic works to privilege an association between a Western and white subjectivity to the extent that difference is reproduced as an Othered subject position (Frankenberg 1993: 193). In this way, the disproportionate media coverage of Islam positions Christianity as a minority within representations of asylum seekers.

The Howard Government's use of Christianity is also situated within a presentation of Australia as a Western nation in a global political context. Goldie Osuri and Subhabrata Bobby Banerjee theorise this representation of nationality as both localised and global within a colonial framework of white diasporas

> where the ownership of Australia as a white, Western country is articulated through its political, cultural and military alliances with the United Kingdom and the United States (2004: 160)

and is 'based on the attempted erasure of Indigenous populations as native'

(159). For example, Howard describes Australian heritage by saying

> we are a nation whose roots are Western, British and other European, we have strong links with North America, both historically and based on our common values and commitments (Kelly 2001: 249).

The presentation of Australianness as ethnically consistent with countries such as Britain and some ('other') parts of Europe affirms an Anglocentric teleology of Australian national identity as Western. Osuri and Banerjee write that

> these relationships may not always be expressed or referred to, but they may be mobilised in specific circumstances where the legacies of colonial histories underpin differentiations based on race or culture (2004: 159).

Similarities in Judeo-Christian religious identifications form an important element to these 'common values'.

The ways in which moral differences between Anglo-Australians and those identified as 'Other' relies on an abstraction of religious identifications, that benefits whiteness, can be extrapolated into the context of the 'war on terror'. The mobilisation of cultural difference can be used to signify an opposition to an imagined 'kinship of whiteness' (152) that situates Western nations as morally homogenous. Preceding the Meeting of Islamic Leaders at Parliament House on the 23 August 2005, Federal Treasurer Peter Costello asserted that fundamentalist Muslim clerics hold values that are not congruent with Australia. He went on to say that Australia:

> [I]s a secular society, with parliamentary law, part of the Western tradition of individual rights … If you are looking for a country that practices theocracy, sharia law–which is anti-Western–there are those countries in the world … you will be happy there. But you won't be happy in Australia (Maiden 2005).

Costello portrays an antithesis between supposedly extreme Islamic values and secular democratic values by reproducing a religious discourse underwritten by a cultural determinism that combines race with moral difference. This discourse has been used to justify equivalences between terrorism and Islam and has had negative effects on the lived experiences of those who identify as Muslim since the September 11 attacks (Akram 2002; Kampmark 2003; Imtoual 2005). The notion of secularism that Costello appeals to represents Islam as undemocratic because religion and government are combined, and forms the basis of critiques of 'fundamentalist' Islamic subjects as over determined by religious principles that undermine liberal individualism. This ignores the various government mechanisms such as the opening of parliament services with the Lord's Prayer and the swearing in of Members and Senators on the Bible present in the current Australian government's operations (Maddox 2001: 109, 115), and in addition, obscures the ways in which Islam and Christianity share a common religious heritage (Said 1991: 103, 104). There is a double movement that allows a reading of Islam to metonymically stand in for an undifferentiated discourse of politics but separates the Christian influences from Australian parliamentary arrangements as apolitical. As Edward Said indicates, 'one would no more think of using … the Bible to understand, say, the House of Commons' (93) as a basis for comprehending all Western systems of government. But the invocation of secularity allows Islam to be misconstrued as overtly religious and makes invisible how Australian cultural values are racially marked and religiously informed.

In addition, Costello's remarks denote a white diasporic colonial relationship with similar Western nations, such as the United Kingdom. He repeats comments made earlier in August by British Prime Minister Tony Blair who argued that 'fire-brand (Islamic) clerics' could be potentially deported as all British citizens have a 'duty ... to share and support the values that sustain the British way of life' (Burchell 2005: 6). Australia's national identity is linked to other 'white' Western countries through a moral distinction to that of Islam whilst discourses of secularism simultaneously exclude how discourses of Christianity are entrenched in the presentation of Australia as 'white'. These ideas pervade news reports of the legitimacy of convert Christian asylum seekers and the potential for religious favourability by the Government. Immigration Minister Amanda Vanstone argued that the reviews of asylum seekers who had converted did not constitute 'a compassion being allocated to Christians as opposed to Muslims' (ABC 2005b). However, the representation of Christian asylum seekers by the news media and governmental commentary on religion complicate Vanstone's statement. The discursive association between Christianity and Australianness depicts convert Christian asylum seekers as 'suspect' in using the possibility for persecution under the theocratic Iranian government as a means to garner citizenship in Australia. On the other hand, secularism renders fundamentalist forms of Islamic law, of the kind practised in Iran, incompatible enough with Australian law that Costello suggests some Muslims should leave the country. Both of these discursive representations form part of the same process that grounds Australianness to an Anglocentric Judeo-Christian heritage that can be masked through an appeal to a Western notion of secularism.

Howard's 'broad church' as representative of government intervention deploys an understanding of the nation 'that in its denial of Indigenous sovereignty is perceived to be a white possession' (Moreton-Robinson 2005: 21). Along these lines there are overlaps in the treatment of both Indigenous peoples and asylum seekers 'surrounding the issue of land' and Australian national identity (Tascon 2004: 239). The 'broad church' attempts to organise the Australian nation into various heterogenous pews with a 'common' set of values. This structure implies that the nodal point for the church, the pulpit, is occupied by the Federal Government of Australia whose sovereignty works to unify and in some sense construct a 'broad' national identity. Given this national identity works to displace Indigenous sovereignty, this 'church' is invested in the association between Australianness and whiteness as culturally commensurate, and is consolidated through government policies. Revelations that the former Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (now renamed the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs) had wrongfully deported at least two Australian citizens, Vivian Solon and Cornelia Rau, prompted the establishment of a non-judicial inquiry headed by former Australian federal police commissioner Mick Palmer (Hurrell 2005b: 5; Marr 2005a: 27; Marr 2005b: 9).

The investigation, known as the Palmer Report, was tabled in Federal Parliament on 14 July 2005. In response, Minister Vanstone argued the Department could cope with criticism and 'cultural' change because the Liberal Party was a 'broad church' (Sunday 2005). Vanstone's use of Howard's metaphor attempts to reaffirm governmental sovereignty as able to accommodate cultural variations and difference. That the deportation of two Australian citizens

does not rupture this 'broad church' demonstrates how it is structured (and which 'extra pews' need to be inserted) according to politically and historically contingent circumstances. This 'broad church' is tied to an Anglocentric national identity where whiteness may not always be located on the body, but can be an imagined investment in a system of values that associates Australianness with whiteness through Christianity.

Conclusion

The reproduction of continuities and moral homogeneity articulated as 'common' Judeo-Christian values has 'helped to preserve the cultural and political power of those identifiable as white Australians' (Stratton 1999: 182). The universalisation of Australian values as Christian values produces racially unmarked subjects and disassociates this location from the investment in and protection of white hegemony. Within the media reports on asylum seekers converting to Christianity, differentiations based on race are subsumed by assumptions of moral difference that locate Christianity with Australianness. The Howard Government's use of religion mobilises this understanding to reproduce a discursive association between whiteness and Christianity. By aligning these values with a discourse of secular, Western nations, the Howard Government makes invisible a religiously inflected cultural agenda that presents Australian values as 'broad' and inclusive but underpinned by an adherence to a teleology of Australian nationality that is Anglocentric in its outlook.

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COUNTER TERRORISM POLICING – INVESTING IN THE RACIAL STATE

VICKI SENTAS

Abstract

This article explores a framework for how racial state power is regenerated in Australia through contemporary counter terrorism policing. Counter terrorism is scripted as a struggle over history, the future and the space of nation to protect against multiple threatening 'enemies'. In particular the function of security policing and the institution of the police in constructing racial subjects are considered.

The counter terrorism policing framework is suggestive of how the social relations of race are practices of state terror which remake white nation. The particular significance of police discretion as always producing social dislocation, stigmatisation and criminalisation is considered. The historical role of the police to racialise Indigenous and multi-ethnic communities is presented as a continuous, albeit heterogenous production of state power through a logic of erasure and denial. In this sense, counter terrorism is conceptualised as a key investment in both white ontological security and a *teleos* of terror.

The dynamics of the containment of perceived threats to white interest has explanatory potential for how neoliberal 'democratic' futures are regenerated. Rather than figuring law and police decision making as a moment of exceptionality, the violence of these relations represent what is fundamental to democracy.

Introduction

That counter terrorism policing is directed against Muslim and migrant communities is clear enough. However there is more at play in this common observation. Britain, the United States, Canada and Australia for example, have intensified the policing of racialised bodies. The technologies of this state repression are expanded with pre-emptive criminal laws and immigration regulations (for example, Cole 2003; Hagopian 2004; Fekete 2002). Community and non-government organisations (NGO's) document communities under siege, targeted by state agencies and made fearful (Ansari 2005; Nguyen 2005; AMCRAN 2005a, 2005b; HREOC 2004). Security capabilities emblematic and constitutive of colonial forms of rule are reprised by liberal democracies with the fervour of war.

In thinking through the significance of this apparent reprisal of the state's repressive capacities, law and policing appear central to understanding the reproductive capabilities of white hegemony and racial power. Counter terrorism both constructs and enacts upon racial subjects. However, at a time when the state looms large, the 'racial state' is absent conceptually. What is the relation of the Australian colonial state to contemporary forms of racial rule? What is counter terrorisms' significance for the nature of racialisation?

Scholarship which examines Australian counter terrorism law and policing in detail predominantly figures the concep-

tual terrain within the erosion of civil and human rights. In particular the deleterious impact of the erosion of the rule of law and liberal democracy features as a key concern (Emerton 2004; Williams 2003; Head 2002; O'Neil et al 2004; Carne 2003; Hocking 2004; Tham 2004; Michaelson 2003). Important accounts examine the impacts of Australian counter terrorism laws and technologies on Muslim and ethnic communities. These include the suppression of the financing of terrorism and pre-emptive criminal justice frameworks (McCulloch et al 2004; McCulloch & Carlton 2006), the relation of human rights to racial profiling (Golder & Williams 2005) and biometric technologies and every day life (Pugliese 2005). Furthermore, analysis of the multiple discursive and constitutive processes of racialisation and the war on terror in Australia provides context for law (for example, Pugliese 2005; Poynting et al 2004; Osuri and Banerjee 2004; Perera 2002; Nasser-Eddine 2002). The specific relation between counter terrorism, the institution of the police and the central role of the state in racial and social formation however, remains under theorised. It is with the conceptual concern of how the racial violence of white supremacy is integral to liberal democracy, that this article begins.

This article explores a framework for how racial power is regenerated in Australia through counter terrorism policing. Drawing on David Goldbergs' theorisation of the 'racial state', counter terrorism is presented as a state investment in the future of white supremacy. Firstly, I argue counter terrorism reconfigures the colonial project to control national space against heterogeneous collectivities. Counter terrorism operates specifically as a 'white' state terror. Following Suvendrini Pereras' concept of 'teleology of nation', counter terrorism policing as state practice organises space and time along racialised lines (Perera 2000:

also see, Osuri & Banjeree 2004). Policing privileges whiteness through practices of terror and the foreclosure of non-white futures. Erased histories of state terror point to the origins of counter terrorism policing in the foundational violence of colonisation.

Secondly, racial power can be understood as a historical process dependent on a series of economic, cultural and political investments. The circulation of terror, through the institutions of 'security policing', is a constitutive practice of the state. That is, state terror consolidates the racial states' re-formation. I demonstrate how counter terrorism policing produces continuous terror, central to both the historical and contemporary racialisation of social control.

Thirdly, drawing on the ideas of Walter Benjamin and Giorgio Agamben, the practice of counter terrorism explains how the violence of white supremacy is integral to liberal democracy. An examination of liberal democracy as founded on the violence of law compels a focus on how this violence is integral to the institution of the police. The final section of this article then outlines how the contemporary legal framework is productive of police discretion to produce sovereign terror. State terror, rather than exceptional, is essential to the function of racial rule and democracy itself. This article concludes that practices of policing as state terror in Australia are dialectically linked to the processes of white nation building.

An Investment in Whiteness – The Racial Security State

'White', 'white supremacy' and 'whiteness' are contested terms with contingent meanings, and their use requires specification. The explanatory potential of 'whiteness' arises in locating the multiple, intersecting processes regenerative

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of cultural political and economic hegemony. The varied ways in which whiteness dehistoricises how it is produced, maintains the illusion of a universal and natural collective identity. and operates as a strategy of power (Perera 2000). I am concerned here with the strategies of power which include and exclude non-white others through formations of nation-state, rather than 'white' identities. Hage's analysis of the 'fantasy of white supremacy' as the governing impulse for a mastery over nation, describes how practices of exclusion are predicated on the control or removal of undesirable Aboriginal or non-white others, as transgressions or intrusions into national space (1998: 47). Racial power in the context of national management of categories of undesirability, is itself conceived within the territorial space of nation in which such categories make commonsense. For Hage, white is a 'dominant mode of self perception' expressed as 'national will', an anxiety targeted at migration as undermining the centrality of white people's decision making (19, 38, 65). White supremacy then, is understood as a triumph over the organisation of space and non-white identities. Specifically, white supremacy is located as a hegemonic strategy of state power.

Situating whiteness in the spatial processes which remake nation, must necessarily identify the historic, geopolitical specificity of the production of racial subjects and domination (Perera 2005; Osuri & Banjeree 2004; Pugliese 2002). Stuart Hall's challenge to situate practices of racism as they arise out of the existing organisation of society, is to look 'to the present unfolding of its economic, political and cultural processes, not simply to its repressed past' (quoted in Gilroy 1990: 265). Yet this 'present unfolding' signals precisely what is at stake in identifying the nature of white power as erased and historically buried.

Whiteness is simultaneously the organisation of territory and time, whereby visions of history and future mobilise the present space of the nation. Perera situates whiteness as both spatial and temporal forms of organisation, 'mapping national space both for past and future' (2000: 10). White power is naturalised, Perera argues, through successive processes and narratives of erasure - the denial of Indigenous genocide and the violence of colonial domination, the continuing denial of Indigenous sovereignty and neoliberal practices which variously value and construct migrants as either within or outside the space of nation (2000: 7).

The functioning of state power in securing itself against racial others is itself obscured through the spatial and temporal organisation of the nation. The way state power is experienced and responded to casts light on the nature of rule. Osuri and Banjeree's incisive analysis of national discourses of security deploys Pereras' concept of teleology of nation to argue whiteness is both discursive and embodied in 'lived realities and visualities' (Osuri & Banjeree: 152, 161). Theorists such as bell hooks highlight the terrorising psyche of whiteness in the black imagination, where in the United States whiteness is associated 'with the terrible, the terrifying and the terrorist', as a direct result of experiences of domination. hooks writes that:

> To name the whiteness in the black imagination is often a representation of terror. One must face written histories that erase and deny, that reinvent the past to make the present vision of racial harmony and pluralism more plausible. To beat the burden of memory, one must willingly journey to places long uninhabited, searching the debris of history for traces of the unforgettable, all knowledge of which has been suppressed.' (hooks 1992: 172)

Counter terrorism policing both sustains and erases the terror of material 'lived realities' while racialising diverse peoples as terrorising and a threat to nation. A focus on the dynamics of state power and its terrorising impact provides a referent against the erasure of history and the foreclosure of contingent futures in a *teleos* of terror.

David Goldbergs' theorisation of the 'racial state' illuminates the enduring foundations on which Europeans established white supremacy. The changing ways in which racialised power is maintained, economically, politically, culturally, legally animates state form. The concept of the racial state does not only refer to the management and re-generation of 'racist exclusion', but also 'how the modern state has always conceived of itself as racially configured' (2002: 2). Hence modern state formation is characterised by its' authorisation and regeneration of processes of exclusion which both 'outlive its colonial expression' and elaborate the colonial project anew (107-109). Whiteness then, is fabricated and naturalised primarily through the political force of state form. While this paper does not explore contested theories of the state and social, economic and racial formation, I preface reliance on the concept of state with three qualifications. Firstly, that the Australian state is neither monolithic nor a coherent entity. Hence state making, and the reproduction of social conditions for racial and racist exclusion and inclusion, is a continuous and contradictory process. Secondly, that social and racial formation demand the interplay of modalities of race, class and gender. The intersection of varied social actors, economic and cultural processes reproduce hegemony. The illusory distinction between state and civil society obscures how institutional racism is naturalised as commonsense. In other words, racial state power is generated through civil society. State authority then is not fixed, but relational and is informed by social relations which do not exist outside of capital (for example see, Gramsci 1971; Negri 1994; James 1996; Goldberg 2002). Thirdly, a key continuity between the co-lonial state and the modern racial state is characterised by the relation between coercion, enclosure and capital accu-mulation in penetrating social life and in shaping subject formation (see Gold-berg 2002: 75, 115). While this article doesn't seek to conceptualise the rela-tion of capital to the formation racial subjects, an analysis of the social con-struction of race without this engage-ment has limitations.

The racial formation of the state is cali-brated by multiple structures, technolo-gies and relationships which might use-fully be thought of as a series of 'invest-ments'. George Lipsitz characterised 'possessive investment' as time spent on a given end, to animate power and un-acknowledged white privilege:

> I use the adjective "possessive" to stress the relationship between whiteness and asset accumulation in our society, to connect attitudes to interests, to demon-strate that white supremacy is usually less a matter of direct referential snarling contempt than a system for protecting the privileges of whites by denying communities of colour opportunities for asset accumulation and upward mobil-ity. (1998: viii)

The racial state's investment in the pro-ject of counter terrorism is significant and multifaceted. At its core, this investment relies on a reconfiguration of law en-forcement, security and immigration apparatus, to function as 'security polic-ing' in the war on terror. Security policing articulates the enmeshing of security and law enforcement capabilities, and the gradual hybridisation of formerly dis-tinct intelligence gathering and coer-cive, interrogative functions (Hocking 2004: 235-6). This hybridisation in turn

contributes to the normalisation of exceptional, militarised, pre-emptive powers (Hocking: 236). Security policing in this article, describes an intersecting matrix of agencies and their powers, comprising the Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), the Australian Federal Police (AFP), state police, the Department of Immigration Multicultural Affairs (DIMA), Centrelink operations and financial institutions (for example, the regulatory role of banks in 'terrorist financing'). Practices of security policing are central in operationalising broadly defined counter terrorism law, in actively racialising Muslims and those 'of middle eastern appearance' as suspect and to criminalise cultural and religious practices and identity. The designation of these agencies within the function of security policing does not seek to homogenise critical operational differences. It does however, point to growing jurisdictional indistinctions and Commonwealth consolidation of law enforcement priorities enhanced in the war on terror. Since 2001 the promulgation of over 29 state and federal laws, together with massive spending on security policing capabilities has expanded security policing powers, jurisdiction and personnel.[1] Moreover, the ideological investment in counter terrorism traverses public fear campaigns such as the *Lets Look out for Australia* campaign and the National Security Hotline, investments which have resulted in many instances of arbitrary state harassment (HREOC 2004; Pugliese 2005).

Perera's theorisation of whiteness as a 'teleology of nation' provides a framework for interrogating counter terrorism as part of a historically contingent and future oriented racial power. The investment, the time spent on a given end, is a *teleos* of terror which obscures the workings of racial state power. What then, is the investment of *whiteness* in counter terrorism policing? Beginning

with Weber's often cited insight that the state holds a monopoly on violence, which it renders legitimate, state terror is masked as counter terrorism. Rather, terror tactics are deployed as 'self-defence' in the national security. Counter terrorism in Australia has been recognised as historically providing the 'major single rhetorical basis' for the expansion and reorganisation of domestic state security operations (Hocking 1993: 16). Counter terrorism is scripted as a struggle over space to protect democratic futures against multiple threatening internal and external 'enemies'. In this sense, counter terrorism as a key investment in the nations' ontological security, is highly successful in Lipsitzs' terms, 'in connecting attitudes to interests' (1998: viii).

Secondly, as will be elaborated below, counter terrorism is an investment in whiteness partly as its' discourse and official history erases the foundational violence of the Australian nation. The multiple, diverse technologies of state terror instrumental in accomplishing colonisation are obscured. The enduring poverty, psycho-social stress and devastation perpetrated onto Indigenous communities today is deflected away from State responsibility. Furthermore, Australian whiteness and state formation explicitly originated and continues to be regenerated against 'multiple ethnic others' (Perera 2005: 31). Colonial relations are continuous with the terror of contemporary security policing in Australia in varied, intersecting ways.

Thirdly counter terrorism fabricates the protection of a 'democratic' national future as explicitly incompatible with non-white futures. Counter terrorism law privileges whiteness through excising Arab-ness or Muslim-ness from national space. By constructing Arabs and Muslims outside of nation, as suspect communities, criminalisation ensures white

identity and strategies of white state power continue to be naturalised. The threat that Arab-ness or Muslim-ness poses to white privilege is perhaps the representation of a future which isn't monopolised by a homogenous white identity. Pugliese argues that the 'lived effects' of racial profiling in the recently introduced *Anti-Terrorism Act 2005*, are that 'Arab and/or Muslim Australians are legislatively precluded from inhabiting the civic spaces of the nation' (2005; 19-20). In the latter half of this article I demonstrate how the particular relation of counter terrorism law to policing privileges whiteness. Law operationalised by police discretion has always produced social dislocation, stigmatisation and criminalisation. The productive power of state terror relies on communities made fearful, surveilled and terrorised. The *future* oriented discretion of security policing however, as elaborated below, intensifies how racial subjects are identified and excised.

Criminalisation and the Law of the Police

The violence of the legal system and attendant processes of criminalisation are one critical historical trajectory of racial and social formation. Crime has long operated as a proxy for race (Hall et al 1978; Davis 1998), while contemporary law is deployed as race neutral and democratic (Haney Lopez 1996). Security policing is central to processes of criminalisation of Indigenous and migrant communities, at the front end of the criminal justice system. Constructions of criminality have been extended in the war on terror to target ethnic and religious practice, culminating in what has been described as the folk devil figure of the 'Arab or Muslim other' (Poynting et al 2004). As the authors acknowledge, in many ways this is not new but a continuation of Australia's previous wars and racialised punishments – the war on

'ethnic gangs', drugs, asylum seekers, and the most enduring legacy of policing, the continuing war on Indigenous people waged since colonisation.

Counter terrorism has its origins in the colonial military doctrine of counter insurgency, or the misnomer of 'low intensity conflict' deployed to ensure western imperial expansion and consequent processes of domination (Hocking 1993). Counter terrorism has been described as 'a domestic peace time adaptation of strategies to deal with the essentially wartime exigencies of a colonial power' (Hocking 1993; 19). Counter insurgency has directly influenced modern day counter terrorism through the following strategies: exceptional legislation which departs from legal norms; mass surveillance and the collection of large amounts of intelligence; the preemptive application of legislation and surveillance; and militarisation of the police and police and military cooperation and close police media cooperation (Hocking 1993: 20-29). Counter insurgency 'experts' such as Kitson and Thompson developed their security strategies in response to the struggles against the colonial power of the British and the French in the 1960's and 1970's in Cyprus, Malaya and Algeria (Hocking 18). Critical analysis of the origins of Australian counter terrorism are grounded in critique of the 'continuum philosophy' of counter-insurgency. This philosophy advocates that violent insurgency is just a short step from political 'subversion' where 'previolent' periods, such as peaceful protest or dissent must be surveilled as potentially terroristic (Hocking 19). As such, critical accounts of the origins of security policing map jurisdictional and operational shifts in domestic policing and intelligence strategies targeting a range of civil society activity such as labour movements and various leftist 'threats' throughout the 20th cen-

tury (McCulloch 2001; Hocking 1993; Cain 1983).

It is well established that the institution of the Australian police originated in the genocide of Indigenous people and continuing practices of dispossession and criminalisation (for example, Cunneen 2001; Finnane 1994). Further, the genealogy of contemporary police militarisation is also located in the colonial policing of dispossession (McCulloch 2001; Cunneen 2001). The deployment of police in a state of war was key to the acquisition and consolidation of land and national authority. Furthermore, systematic paramilitary police terror, such as mass murder and torture, were fundamentally bound up in annihilating resistance and the active disruption of Indigenous family social and cultural life (Cunneen 2001). Cunneen outlines that while indiscriminate police murders had largely ended by the 1930's, the use of police terror remained a key tactic throughout the 20th century to maintain control against individuals and entire communities seen as troublesome (106-127). Hence, while the later role of police as administrators witnessed the intensification of surveillance, regulation and mass incarceration, terror remained constitutive of the 'legitimacy' of racial state violence.

However, the genocidal war against Indigenous people since colonisation has not been explicitly considered as the historical origins of contemporary Australian counter insurgency and counter terrorism. A critique of the cold war periodisation of the geneology of counter terrorism and its relation to frontier conflict is beyond the scope of this article and is being developed in my broader research. Conceptually rethinking counter terrorism policing as an investment in white terror, compels a relation between criminalisation and erasure of culture, space and belonging, history and future.

The systemic destruction by police of Indigenous culture and connection to land since colonisation is central to racial state formation and the teleology of nation. Indigenous political claims upon the nation state are replaced with a devastating criminalisation, and an enduring experience of terror represented as legitimate and legal state action (Cunneen 250-251; Bird 9-10)

It is clear, however that the violent police suppression of Indigenous people has operated in effect as the training ground for paramilitary state police units, whose successors are deployed in contemporary counter terrorism. Cunneens' research demonstrates that soon after their formation, elite paramilitary police unit, the Tactical Response Group (TRG) in New South Wales and Western Australia were deployed specifically to terrorize both rural and urban Indigenous communities in the 1980's and 90's. These operations facilitated the massive growth in these paramilitary units (Cunneen: 98). The use of a large scale pre-dawn raid with 153 TRG officers in Redfern in 1990 on the subtext of 'drug raids' resulted in profound and debilitating psychological trauma for many of the Indigenous households raided (122). The fact that the raids where found on the whole to be based on illegal warrants is indicative of how 'exceptional' state violence in Australia is characterised by techniques of terror and normalised by institutional racism.

The continuous role of police in criminalising Indigenous people and successive migrant populations has a long, differential and often buried history, also characterised by the lived realities of police terror. Investments in police terror are part of a larger whole of racialised punishment, experienced as a terrifying future for poor people of colour and migrants globally who are incarcerated as 'surplus' populations. Angela Davis' im-

portant genealogy of racialised punishment connects 'the links between confinement, punishment and race' to locate the way state power is formed along the axis of economic and racial domination (Davis 1998: 97). Davis' theorisation connects the history of incarceration of peoples of Native American, African, Mexican and Asian descent with the structure and racist logic of the reservations, slavery, the mission and internment camps. Perera's invocation of the 'camp' in Australia articulates how the different forms of continuous incarceration of Indigenous peoples, extends denationalization and removal from nation to non Indigenous populations in the form of immigration internment, detention centres and the prison (Perera 2002). This Australian genealogy of racialised punishment gives an analytic coherency to the end point of the investment of security policing.

Biopolitical Police Power: Delivering the Privilege of Whiteness

The constitutive relation of policing to the racial state, renders an account of policing as merely a discriminatory *technique* of repression analytically insufficient. Rather, security policing through its discretionary power, and social reproductive function, comes to *define* the racial state and as such operates as a key state investment. Policing animates a particularly sovereign function, to be both subject to the law and to be outside it. Theories of biopolitical power help to locate the internal, immanent relation of policing and terror to the racial state. Broadly, Foucault theorised shifts of rule to modernity from sovereignty to governance as characterised by disciplinary power, rather than external domination (Foucault 1995). In the transformation to government, Foucault also located biopolitical power, as distinct from disciplinary power, a power

'whose task is to take charge of life' (Foucault 1978: 144).

Hardt and Negri explain Foucaults identification of biopower as:

> …[a] form of power that regulates social life from its interior, following it, absorbing it and recirculating it. ......Biopower thus refers to a situation in which what is directly at stake in power is the production and reproduction of life itself. (Hardt & Negri 2000: 23-24)

Significant limitations to Foucault's treatment of coercive domination and the nature of state power are evident in his erasure of the punishment of the racial body (for example see, James 1996, Davis 1998, Perera 2000). A reading of the biopolitical which reinstates constructions of race together with the sovereignty of capital in social formation, holds explanatory power for locating policing's role in reproducing the racial state. Agamben's thesis on biopolitics and legal exception and Walter Benjamin's critique of law and violence, locate police practices as expressions of sovereignty. Benjamin's essay *Critique of Violence* written in 1921, describes the unique character of the police in their relation to law and state violence. Benjamin argued that state violence find its legitimacy in either 'law making' or 'law preserving' violence. Law making violence is violence which conflicts with or overthrows existing laws, with the effect of creating new laws, such as colonial conquest which implements the invaders laws. Law preserving violence, on the other hand, enforces existing laws, within the authority of the legal system itself. Benjamin characterises the police as not only engaged in the law preserving violence we commonly associate with law enforcement, but also law making violence, in that the police also function outside of the law. That is, not in the sense of illegal activity, or bad apples acting *ultravires* but rather for legal pur-

poses, 'with the simultaneous authority to decide these ends itself within wide limits (it includes the right of decree)' (Benjamin 1996: 242). The nature of the institution of the police as law making violence is thus extra-legal in practice and ultimately socially reproductive.

Benjamin outlines two critical aspects to the 'law' of the police. Firstly police decision is embodied in situations when the state can't guarantee its desired end through the legal system itself, 'against thinkers, from whom the state is not protected by law' (243). Is this not the exemplified in the war on terror, where liberal democracy does not tolerate explicit racial discrimination in law yet relies on the police to decide to criminalise and racialise multiple non-white others? Secondly, that unlike the determinacy of a 'decision' of a law proper, police power is described by Benjamin as spectral, 'formless' and an 'all pervasive, ghostly presence' (243). This points to the indeterminacy of police discretion and the sovereign power of police decision in action.

Carl Schmitt in 1922 argued that in political crisis the State is characterised by the Sovereigns' declaration of a 'state of exception'. Schmitt characterised this suspension of law as temporary exception as distinguished from the norm. Against Schmitt, Benjamin in his *Eighth Thesis on the Philosophy of History* characterised this state of emergency not as the exception but as the rule – as fundamental to the normal rule of law. (Agamben 2005) Law for Benjamin generates constant violence and crisis as its' normal everyday function. Giorgio Agamben, extending Benjamins' thesis, distinguished between a 'fictitious state of exception' which masks the permanent and effective state of violence fundamental to the rule of law (Agamben 2005).

Hardt and Negri also argue that the state of exception is normalised particularly through police decision. They say 'every civil war is a police action' and that this comes to *define* sovereignty (Hardt & Negri: 39). The exceptionality and violence of law, something that liberal democracy is at pains to deny and conceal, is characteristic of biopolitical rule and underlies the violence of democracy itself. In this sense the 'new' manifestations of counter terrorism policing constitutes the rule and what is key to the policing of race. In other words, how police power historically both enforces and reproduces law and order through its violence, arbitrariness and discretion.

Police action in Australia is characterised by unpredictable, differential discretions that are read against the bodies of multiple racial others. From summary executions to supervising the stealing of Indigenous children, to stop and search powers against youth of 'middle eastern appearance', police decision making to either brutalise or supervise are different forms of biopolitical power (Agamben 1998). Police discretion and terror is central to criminalisation and the reproduction of whiteness as both a future vision of nation and erasure of historical violence. The institutional racism which informs the police discretion to ultimately 'decide' is an exercise of sovereign power, and is consistent with the multiple discretions of the state to exclude or include non-white others from the territory of nation. Paramilitary policing is part of the everyday 'unexceptional' violence experienced by racialised communities, a policing which silently and mundanely delivers the privileges of whiteness to a citizenry defined by what it is not.

As Goldberg points out, the institutional racism and violence of the racial state is always normalised, and doesn't figure as

exceptional (Goldberg 114-115). The police function as decision maker against those it enacts upon, reflects the permanent state of crisis characteristic of the racial state. For example, the effective suspension of rule of law in the colonial massacres of Indigenous people in Australia was normalised. The massacres were not considered as mass murder and did not require declaration of martial law (Cunneen 2001: 60-62). The suspension of legal norms characteristic of counter terrorism law is operationalised through social relations between police and policed. The biopolitics, or internalisation, of the policing of race, masks the violent state of crisis of institutional racism. The sovereignty of security police intensifies criminalisation of communities by deploying a range of pre-emptive intelligence measures independent of the courts and traditional carceral systems, such as home detention, informal questioning and warrantless searches. Moreover the recomposition of communities and the cooperation of civil society in recirculating and internalising homogenising power signals the immanent nature of racial state power. An appeal to the restoration of 'normal' criminal law, denies the teleology of whiteness in criminal justice frameworks.

The productive capabilities of policing acquire renewed importance as a site of racialised state practice. Particularly as globalisation erases boundaries between external and internal wars, and the distinctions between military and police apparatus as law and order is integrated into the task of security and defence (Hardt & Negri 2000; McCulloch & Carlton 2006). The ascendency of neoliberal globalisation, may have brought a de-territorial sovereignty of capital in the liberalisation of money across borders. But it has also consolidated the territory of the nation state through intersecting genealogies of racialised punishment, bolstered by polic-

ing to extend the reach of sovereign power. A detailed analysis of these terrains, while not the subject of this paper, points to the reproductive power of counter terrorism policing as both law making and law preserving violence, in the contemporary racial state.

Terrifying Law – Police as National Managers

Post 9/11 terrorism laws in Australia reproduce racial state power through two related processes. Firstly, the creation of broadly defined pre-emptive offences and new terms of art *to identify multiple racial subjects as potentially suspect*. Secondly, massive reconfigurations of security policing powers to enable removal of non-white others from national space as racialised and criminalised. The laws invest political discipline against multi racial bodies through discretionary terror and expanded police decision making. In the last part of this article I briefly outline key aspects of this framework. The statutory regime since 2001 invests in malleable legal concepts such as 'terrorist act' which at its core criminalises actual or *threatened* political violence anywhere in the world, for any purpose, whether it is against violence originated by oppressive, brutal regimes (Sentas 2006; Emerton 2005). In fact to make out most terrorism offences, there is no need for an actual terrorist act to occur, or for there to be a specific act of violence contemplated (Pettit & Sentas 2005: 283).

The intensification of state violence through police discretion identifies racial subjects in a panoply of new law. For example, under the executive proscription of organisations as 'terrorist', the Attorney General has banned 19 organisations on the recommendation of ASIO.[2] Criminalisation of 'indirect' membership, funding, training (including humanitarian training) and support for the organisa-

tions, are not dependant on intention or engagement in an act of violence, but on association, where even the emotional or political support for or *identification with* liberation struggle in Palestine or Kurdistan, for example, may attract up to 25 years imprisonment (Sentas 2006). Refugees who have been granted asylum in Australia for their actual or imputed affiliations with the now banned Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) could face security police surveillance, deportation and potential prosecution (Sentas 2006: 32-37). Furthermore, a separate regime has listed over 1, 600 individuals and organisations as terrorist, (Chong & Sentas 2006: 36) freezing the assets of those who support diverse insurgencies such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Shinning Path and the People's Liberation Army of the Phillipines (*Charter of the United Nations Act 1945;* see also *Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism Act 2002*).

Suppression of the financing of terrorism laws empower financial institutions to report 'suspicious' financial transactions and thus target ethnic or religious identity. Those who front up to a bank, and look or sound like a 'terrorist', or whose name on paper appears 'connected' to a 'country of concern' and may then be pre-emptively subject to security policing detention regimes (McCulloch & Carlton 2006: 405-407). Security policing interventions are characterised by racial and religious profiling as a substitute for guilt (for discussion of examples of the impact in Australia, see Chong & Sentas 2006; Pugliese 2005; McCulloch & Carlton 2006) Preventative detention and home detention through control orders introduced in the *Anti-Terrorism Act 2005 (Cth),* also punish in anticipation of crime through the inbuilt logic of racial profiling, simultaneously denied by the state and acknowledged by the police as inevitable (Pugliese 2005: 18-20).

Policing both associative and pre-emptive 'guilt' requires mass surveillance and intelligence, increasing discretionary police contact with predominantly non-white multi-ethnic people and those of the Islamic faith. Legislative measures rely on police discretion and amplified powers of surveillance to identify and decide on racial subjects. For example, an initial order for 48 hour preventative detention for those who may not be suspected of any offence, is authorised by a senior officer of the Australian Federal Police, not a court (Chong & Sentas 2006). New stop and search provisions give state and federal police pre-emptive authority based only on what a person 'might' do, if they are within an executively designated 'security zone' (Pettit & Sentas 2005: 284-285). The phenomena of the ASIO raid, now also flanked by a flotilla of Commonwealth and state police, is invested heavily as a zone of spectral, discretionary state violence to dehumanise those raided.

As pre-emption justified the invasion of Iraq so too the logic of pre-emption in the domestic context is manifest in the raids of many Muslim families in 2001 and 2002, who were not charged with any offence and were racially profiled as suspicious. Some raids involved the authorities pointing guns at both adults and children, raids occurred in the middle of the night with no explanation, and passports were revoked with no reason. (Clelland 2002; Poynting 2004; Trad 2001) A woman occupying one of the Sydney homes raided by Police and ASIO in November 2005 conducted as part of 'Operation Pandanus'[3] suffered from a heart attack during the operation (Cubby 2005). After ASIO were granted coercive police-like questioning powers for the first time (*Australian Security Intelligence Organisation Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2003*), ASIO officers were reported to have threatened a person with detention for three days if the per-

son did not cooperate with a raid (Chong & Sentas 47-48).

Muslim community organisations and individuals have reported being fearful about engaging in any political activity, or even social calls to friends for fear of being under surveillance, or fear that they may inadvertently be 'associating' with someone of interest to the authorities (AMCRAN 2005a, 2005b). Such practices bear the hallmarks of colonial counter insurgency strategies. An anonymous Australian authority said of the June 2005 Operation Pandanus raids, that the stated purpose was to 'rattle the cages, to deter them from taking the next step' (Nicholson 2005) The image of 'ethnics in cages' (Hage 1998) invokes at once the threat of incarceration and excision from national space as dangerous and less than human. The statutory presumption against bail for terrorism charges (*Crimes Act* s 15AA) and the consequent incarceration of the accused in maximum security prisons delivered on this threat.

The racial state delivers its' terror through police discretion to transform questions of belonging to those of defending territory, both spatial and economic. For example Liz Fekete describes how the anti-Muslim xeno-racism of the European security state operates to make its 'integration' policies of assimilation an extension of counter terrorism law (Fekete 2004). At the same time by rendering citizenship as a security concern, policies which heighten the socio-economic and gendered exclusion of working class Muslim communities are extended. The arrests between November 2005 and April 2006 of 22 Muslim men for alleged terrorism organisation offences resulted for some in the suspension of Centrelink payments to their wives and the freezing of joint bank accounts as extra judicial punishment.[4]

On June 24 2006, the Attorney General announced his intention to conduct an investigation for 'welfare fraud' of those families who have received charitable assistance from the fundraising efforts of the Islamic and Information Services Network of Australasia (IISNA). While non Islamic leftist groups have also raised funds for the families, IISNA was targeted by media reports as a 'hardline' fundamentalist organisation who raised $50 000 for 'terrorists'. The fundraising efforts of IISNA are represented as inherently suspect within the dominant Islamaphobic framework. Moreover, the families of the accused are vilified by virtue of their alleged receipt of 'combined welfare and legal aid payment of 1 million dollars' (Kerbaj 2006). The accused and their families join the extended category of excluded 'unAustralians' – welfare recipients, Indigenous people, and consecutive categories of 'scheming ethnics'.

The Australian Government's attempts to manage Muslim citizens, through the promotion of 'moderate' versions of Islam, the criminalisation of 'radical' Islam through police discretion and the imposition of core Australian values reflect the organising principles of the racial state. Counter terrorism laws are animated by police powers to invigorate the racialisation of social controls as exclusion. However, the policing of 'inclusion' is just as central in the regeneration of white nation. Strategies such as 'community policing' redefine counter terrorism as a self consciously cooperative 'conversation' with Muslim communities rather than an explicitly paramilitary exercise. Such shifts in state power operate to make mechanisms of command and control appear ever more democratic, involving the policed in their own domination.

As the history of colonial rule and Gramsci's theory of hegemony tell us, rule isn't

ever through coercion but also through consensus (Gramsci 1971). The Australian political order is founded on the promulgation of concepts of democracy and freedom as particularly western identities, and as core values, even as these concepts function unevenly for Indigenous, migrant and other atomised populations. Discretionary policing reveals the fundamental character of liberal democracy as a violently racialised and bordered project. It is no accident that state terror reinforces and generates *democratic* racial power. It is an investment in white supremacy.

Author Note

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Security Legislation Amendment (Terrorism) Act 2002 (Cth)

Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism Act 2002 (Cth)

Endnotes

[1] For a list of legislation see: www.nationalsecurity.gov.au. 2006-2007 Federal Budget spending includes $1.6 billion in additional funding over five years, the majority of funding for security policing capabilities, in the Attorney-General's and Justice and Customs portfolio alone. This includes increases to ASIO, AFP intelligence and surveillance capabilities, the establishment of 'Identity security strike-teams'. See: The Hon Philip Ruddock MP, News Release: Law and Justice Overview, 9 May 2006:

[2] The organisations banned in Australia are: Abu Sayyaf Group, Al Qa'ida, Ansar Al-Islam

Armed Islamic Group, Asbat al-Ansar, Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Hamas's Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Harakat Ul-Mujahideen, Hizballah External Security Organisation, Islamic Army of Aden

Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jaish-i-Mohammed, Jemaah Islamiyah, Kurdistan Workers Party, Lashkar I Jhangvi, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Salafist Group for Call and Combat, Tanzim Qa'idat al-Jihad fi Bilad al-Rafidayn (the al-Zarqawi network)

http://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/agd/www/nationalsecurityhome.nsf/Page/Listing_of_Terrorist_Organisations,

[3] A series of high profile security police raids were made on homes in Sydney and Melbourne, on the 20 June followed by another series of raids and arrests on 8 November. At the time of writing, the 22 men have been charged with membership and financing of an unspecified terrorist organisation, and detained on remand in maximum security units while court proceedings are yet to commence. For the 13 men detained in Victoria's Barwon Prison 'Acacia Unit', the last 8 months have been spent in solitary confinement for between 18 to 23 hours a day. Cells are raided by security and police every few weeks and the men are reported to be malnourished. (Abdou and Kent 2006.)

[4] Personal communication with author, 1 December 2005.

BOOK REVIEW

ALAN HAN

SCHLUNKE, K. M. (2005). *BLUFF ROCK : AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A MASSACRE.* FREMANTLE: FREMANTLE ARTS CENTRE PRESS.

Katrina Schlunke's book *Bluff Rock: autobiography of a massacre* urges non-Indigenous readers to consider "the possibility of an ethical, embodied relationship with the past, not a final story" (Schlunke 2005:14). It examines the history of Bluff Rock in New England, New South Wales in the 1840s when many Indigenous people were shot and/or thrown to their deaths over the Rock by white settlers. Written as an autobiography, Schlunke considers her own white family's entanglement as German settlers in the region with its history of Indigenous massacres. She writes that despite the fact everyone in the town knew about the massacres, she "didn't know about the connections between massacre and stolen land and people. [She] didn't know how to ask how some of their land had become [her family's] farm" (Schlunke 2005:13). It is this search for answers to questions about the past and its connections to present racialised privileges, which forms the central argument of this book.

Through this autobiographical form of writing, this book contests the field of Indigenous histories dominated by the 'Aboriginal history wars' spearheaded with Keith Windschuttle's book *The Fabrication of Aboriginal History* (Windschuttle 2003). A critique of Windschuttle's politics and historical pedagogy has been developed in Bain Attwood's book *Telling the Truth about Aboriginal History* (Attwood 2005) and

Bluff Rock is not a further addition to this historical discourse. Indeed, it challenges the written ethos of these wars by showing readers what is left out of the debate – the embodied whiteness of the male academic historians writing about Indigenous histories.

Schlunke is critical of this disembodiment of whiteness from its writing of Indigenous histories. In its description of the Rock's massacre, the tourist leaflet reads: '[t]he truth of the day remains clouded by many conflicting versions' and '[t]he truth will be forever in the bosom of one of the most impressive landmarks along the New England Highway'. Schlunke interprets these sentences as offering "two poles to move between: the truth of multiple truths and the truth of knowing that no human will ever know the truth" (Schlunke 2005:32). This reminded me of Suvendrini Perera's use of James Baldwin's idea of 'sacred ignorances' (Perera 2005). Perera argues that the power of whiteness is exercised by ignoring Indigenous sovereignties in the past and present. These manoeuvres of sacred ignorances are evident in John Howard's argument that in the 1901 Federation, Indigenous sovereignty had been transferred to the Australian state and would thus invalidate any present entitlement to a treaty (Perera 2005:32). In this argument, Howard ignores the fact that Indigenous people had been excluded from the discussions of federation in the lead up to 1901 (Perera 2005:32). By highlighting the power of white historical ignorance, we can see how occupying the contradictory position of claiming to know and not to know the precise truth of this history,

places the memory of the massacres as part of a "fossilised past, a past that cannot change, a past that *we* cannot change" (Schlunke 2005:35).

In the very act of remembering the massacres at Bluff Rock, the tourist industry immortalises this history as part of the past, so that "we will never remember the cars and the roads and the reservations and the barristers and the cities which made the systematic dispossession and the dispersal of the Aboriginal people possible" (Schlunke 2005:122). Remembering the past of Bluff Rock as non-Indigenous people often means the erasure or ignorance of present racialised privileges as non-Indigenous people. This remembering Schlunke argues, is itself part of a system of the "colonial taking of land [as] a 'practical rearrangement" (Schlunke 2005:120).

It is the way these memories circulate as ways of dispossessing Indigenous peoples from their lands that is one of the book's many strengths. It is not just that remembering are forms of white forgetting of Indigenous massacres that is the central argument of this book, rather memories function also as ways of 'practical dispossession'. This argument is developed through an analysis of letters written between white locals and landowners at the time, such as Thomas Keating and Edward and Leonard Irby. Schlunke shows readers how these written accounts were born out of the silencing of Indigenous resistance through poison (see Heffernan's account in 1857 (Schlunke 2005:112). This book argues that the processes of practical rearrangement of taking land and Indigenous resistance that placed white settlers in "danger of being speared", is silenced through the performance of memory and the poisoning of flour (Schlunke 2005:112). Thus, remembering and the practicalities of dispossession go hand-in-hand in a process that forgets

this systematic dispossession as a system of whiteness as possession. Whiteness becomes isolated, and so not part of a continuing system, but as a remembered past that happened. Schlunke writes: "How useful and 'practical' to believe that *that* is where it all happened" (Schlunke 2005:122).

As a queer Asian male reader of this book my relationship with the history of Bluff Rock is different to that of Schlunke's. Negotiating my multiple subjectivities (Moreton-Robinson 2000) as queer, Asian and male, means that I am often required to slip in and out of whiteness. Remembering this past of white people killing Indigenous peoples historically excludes my racialised presence as Asian. However, I make multiple connections with Schlunke's autobiography through her queerness and whiteness experienced as racialised privileges. Thus, although written Australian history is dominated by a black/white binary, Schlunke reminds us that we ought to think about how this history informs and produces our present racialised privileges as non-Indigenous people. By not engaging with this history as an autobiography, I could not as a queer Asian male reader have made these multiple connections with whiteness and racialised privileges.

This book complicates the impasse of the Aboriginal history wars, which assume and naturalise the process of white knowingness and remembering of Indigenous histories. These contested Indigenous histories, remembered through the professional egos of white male academics, are dominated by notions of 'historical truth'. Schlunke shows us how it is not the 'truth' that matters, but how this *truth* is articulated and remembered in and through the privileges of whiteness. The experience of remembering the past is itself always premised on experiencing the privileges of the pre-

sent. Schlunke questions the whiteness of her own writing:

> Am I writing white? This is the historical threat of whiteness, its all-encompassing power to get me, to give me something I may not even want. I can't see the white except when it is contrasted with its own shadows, but there is often too much light for shadows to occur. I can't believe I *am* white.
> Chorus moans: GET REAL! (Schlunke 2005:227)

This book unsettles us by locating our family histories as intimate connections with ourselves and each other that is also a remembering of the past that simultaneously forgets our racialised privileges of the present. It is an important reminder that as non-Indigenous Australians we must see our possession not only as a dispossession of Indigenous lands, but as a possession of words, emotions, and memories. Non-Indigenous Australians must acknowledge the multiple forms of their racialised privileges in a way that does not remember a past of dispossession that happened, but remembers a past of dispossession that is happening.

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BOOK REVIEW

DAMIEN W. RIGGS

I first began to read this edited collection whilst working on a special issue of the *International Journal of Critical Psychology,* which I was co-editing with Lorraine Johnson-Riordan on the topic of 'White Terror/(Post)Empire'. We both found considerable utility in the approach to understanding Empire as outlined by Lopez in his introductory chapter, where he spends some time interrogating how white hegemony always involves the construction of an 'enemy other' against which dominant group members believe they must defend themselves. In this sense, Lopez highlights how forms of Empire persist in the face of moves towards decolonisation: when seen as a threat to white hegemony, assertions of First Nation sovereignty are positioned within a logic of colonisation whereby colonised people are seen as to blame for colonisation itself. This logic continues to appear within Australian public, academic and political spheres, where Indigenous people (for example) continue to be depicted as in need of 'rescuing' from benevolent whites, or as undeserving of reparation.

Important also for my own work, Lopez and his contributors highlight how forms of whiteness are often taken up by those historically positioned as 'less-white' – those seen to possess less cultural capital than that held by white, middle-class, able-bodied heterosexual men. John Hawley elaborates in his chapter how norms of whiteness may often play out within queer communities of colour.

Hawley questions how norms of femininity (which are implicitly racialised as white) are often unwittingly taken up in moments of cross-cultural drag.

As well as this explicit focus on the intersections of queer and race, many of the chapters in the book evoke a queer reading of whiteness that draws attention not only to the constitutive fears associated with what we may understand as a peculiarly heterosexual white masculinity, but also to the ways in which race is always already sexualised and gendered in multiple ways.

In a chapter reminiscent of William Spurlin's work on the queer iconography of Princess Diana, Diane Roberts examines how it is that the Princess, both before and after her death, projected a paradoxically normative and abject image of heterosexual white femininity that both reinforced the centrality of the nuclear family, whilst also at times directly undermining its supposedly *a priori* status. Roberts calls for an account of white femininity that acknowledges the multiple ways in which it both props up and challenges the binaries of good/bad, male/female and white/black.

Queer readings of whiteness (where queer refers to an injunction to reverse, subvert or otherwise destabilise particular norms) appear in chapters by both Lopez himself, Kelen and Turcotte. In focusing on the 'wolf man' case that is considered central to Freud's elaboration of psychoanalysis, Lopez examines how both the case itself, and Freud's work more broadly, display a consistent denial of the ways in which varying relationships to the norm of

white European masculinity during and between the two world wars were played out within Freud's consulting room. Whilst Lopez' reading of the wolf man case is not perhaps as convincing as it could have been in its elaboration of the racialised nature of the case, and in particular the 'wolf man's' dreams, it nonetheless serves to demonstrate how it is that the therapeutic setting is shaped through a range of norms that, whether spoken of explicitly or not, shape the client/practitioner relationship.

Kelen takes up this 'queer' approach by focusing on the Australian anthem 'Advance Australia Fair', where he questions the contradictions that are formative of the anthem itself. As he states:

> It's the depth of contradiction in the present and official version of 'Advance Australia Fair' (its 'look at me I'm not here' quality) that leaves some of those who sing it [as white people] a little uneasy afterward as to the question of what they've meant. But I think the depth of that contradiction expresses the Australian condition (205).

Here Kelen draws attention to the problems that inhere to giving an account of Australia as a 'fair' nation in the face of ongoing histories of white violence. Kelen thus questions the temporal logic inscribed in the anthem, which remains unclear as to whether it constitutes a declarative statement about the inherent fairness of the white nation (a statement which is patently absurd), or an injunction to *become* a fair nation (or at least one that appears to be more fair). Kelen's argument reads notions of fairness as attempts at masking histories of violence and thus providing an account of white Australian history that creates a coherent, and violent-free, narrative.

In his chapter on the writing of Mudrooroo, Turcotte focuses on the uncanny effects that Mudrooroo's work produces (despite the ongoing questions of authenticity that surround his position as an author). Turcotte highlights how narratives of the present always hold within them narratives of the past, and indeed that the two function simultaneously to produce an account of Australia that strives to overcome the uncanny nature of white belonging. Mudrooroo's work, he suggests, renders visible the workings of the past in the present by creating a narrative of decolonisation that, following Fanon, is less about a reversal of colonial logic, and more about a radical rewriting of colonial spaces.

These, along with other important chapters by Imre, Sterr, Singh and Trimm, provide an account of a certain 'postcolonial whiteness' that is not limited to analyses of those sites typically considered under the remit of 'postcolonial studies', but rather extends postcolonial studies through an engagement with work on Empire and whiteness in order to develop a more intersectional, expansive account of the functions of racialised difference. Whilst my reference to 'queer' may seem arbitrary (and whilst it indeed reflects my own research interests on intersections of 'queer race'), I nevertheless believe it holds out that the chapters in the book significantly queer a range of disciplinary approaches, and thus demonstrate how they may usefully be brought into dialogue with one another. To speak of a 'queer race', much like to speak of a 'postcolonial whiteness', is to refuse a narrow framework for engagement, and is to instead seek a broader set of references for what we consider to constitute 'terror', 'the political' and indeed theoretical interventions themselves.