



CHAPTER 1 STATE, SOCIETY AND NATION IN A CHANGING AUSTRALIA

'A vital society preserves 'difference' and conformism kills society'.
-Thomas Merton (1996)

From an Unmixed to a Mixed Nation

Far reaching socio economic and demographic changes in the last few decades have put extreme pressure on Australian social and political institutions to manage subsequent changes in the philosophy of settlement from the early days of colonization in the 19th century to post federation in the 20th century. The resultant changes are mainly those associated with the policies of recruitment and settlement and relate to the evolution of Australian immigration policy over time. In this regard one of the most notable achievements of Australia society has been a transition from a relatively 'unmixed' up to the middle of the 20th century to an increasingly 'mixed' nation over the last few decades. This transition was due mainly to an influx of non British European settlers in the post-war waves of migration which included large numbers of non Caucasian settlers of Asian, Middle Eastern, and African origin.

What is distinctive of this rapidly changing Australia is the skillful manner in which the state-sponsored model of migrant settlement known as 'multiculturalism' since the 1980s that enabled the successful incorporation of many new settlers drawn from diverse cultural backgrounds into the fabric of Australian society with least social disruption. In recounting this narrative of social change, followed by a brief account of the development of Australian attitudes and policies on immigration, this chapter concludes by arguing that the challenge for the



future is to develop a new rationale for the ideology of multiculturalism that has evolved over the past few decades. A prime consideration in this regard is to reframe the ideology of multiculturalism from a *cultural* to a *democratic* pluralism in order to enable minority groups participate in the public domain. The philosophy and ideology of a radical citizenship may provide a useful basis for evolving a new model of *civic multiculturalism*.

Until the advent of multiculturalism in the 1970s the pattern and code of racial and ethnic relations was cast within the philosophy of settlement which prevailed in the early days of settlement as a colony of white settlers—a largely British outpost in a highly diverse and culturally different region. Traditionally Australian attitudes to immigrant settlement and inter-group relations have been dominated by the ethos of Australia as an ‘anglo fragment’ society. By this it is meant that Australian society, throughout waves of migration, has been governed in many respects by British cultural and political attitudes manifest in the early British colonial settlers. These Anglo-Celtic influences have helped to delineate the context within which settler-indigenous and host society-newcomer relations have been fashioned. This cultural and structural hegemony has, despite minor setbacks, continued over time and become firmly ingrained in the fabric of Australian society. Questions relating to state, nation and diversity have therefore to be understood and examined within this historical, socio-political context.

From the days of first settlement through to the recent past Australia was seen as a ‘segmented’ society, i.e., one composed of mutually exclusive social groups, whites and non-whites’ (Barker 1972). Up to about 1850s, the landed gentry of mostly Protestant origin constituted the dominant migrant groups prescribed the criteria of ‘inclusion’ and ‘exclusion’ for other groups such as the Irish Catholics, Aborigines and Asian settlers. The norms which were established during this early period stressed the imperatives of Anglicisation or ‘anglo-conformity’, in particular, the strong need to preserve and maintain a racially and culturally homogeneous monocultural

society. In this model of total assimilation the dominance of the English language played an important role as an ‘unproblematic medium of communication’.¹ This has remained the most secure and non-controversial aspect of Australian policy in this area. The centrality of immigration and settlement philosophy in the fashioning and evolution of Australian nationalism was first evident in the 1850s in the policy towards the importation of indentured labour to work in the cane fields of Queensland and the gold mines in Victoria and New South Wales. The racism of this formative period of Australian history, as shown later in this chapter, culminated in the enactment of racial exclusion legislation (*Immigration Restriction Act of 1901*; hereinafter referred to as IR Act 1901) when Australia became a federation in 1901 (see Appendix B). It is no mere coincidence that the first and most notable enactment of the newly established Commonwealth of Australia was the IR Act 1901. This was undoubtedly a convincing manifestation of the growing sense of Australian nationalism. Henceforth, what was generally known as the White Australia policy became the symbol of Australian nationalism and imperial sentiment. The requirement of racial homogeneity and monoculturalism was considered to be a necessary condition of nation building (Walker 2003).

In defending the White Australia policy, a fundamental reason for this exclusionist policy was the ‘preservation of British Australian nationality’ (Willard 1967). This vividly demonstrates the extent to which race and colour are historically linked with a sense of Australian national identity. Race and nation became indistinguishable in that they overlapped in determining the criteria of membership of the emergent nation state. No wonder then that Australia was described as ‘an almost completely formed nation state with no irredentists or internal ethnic frictions to raise its ethnic as distinct from its political identity to the level of consciousness’ [and wished that] ‘neither external nor internal complications may arise to disturb it from this ideal condition’ (Azkin 1964: 102). Nonetheless, over the next quarter of a century this expectation has been shattered.

Assimilationism to Multiculturalism

The orthodoxy linking the nation-state with ethnic and cultural homogeneity has been challenged by the profound social and political changes that occurred in Australian society over the latter half of the last century due to the waves of migration and a rapidly growing economy. In this context as in most other parts of the world, the return of 'an unmixed nation' remains a dream. Mass migration in the 1950s and 1960s was guided by the prevailing ideology of a monocultural assimilationism. However, with the influx of non Anglo-Celtic European migrants in the 1950s and 1960s, the official attitudes towards migrant settlement based on an ideology of a monocultural assimilationism were relaxed and modified. Based on the liberal and pragmatic characteristic of Australian public life, social attitudes to migrants and related public policies of settlement were changed to accommodate within the existing institutional framework the social and cultural diversity.

Considering that the experience of the new groups of settlers, drawn mainly from Eastern and Southern European countries, was discordant with the thinking and discourse of the dominant group in Australia, it was readily acknowledged that the conventional anglo-assimilationism was in need of some modification to enable the incorporation of new settlers into the structures of Australian society. These modifications led to a softer version of assimilationism, which however, was abruptly and somewhat dramatically swept aside by the Whitlam government of the Labor government gave that came to power in 1972. The Whitlam government gave high priority to immigration policy reform, in particular, by rescinding the IR Act 1901 and the introduction of a non-discriminatory policy of migrant recruitment. Concurrently, it also discarded the orthodoxy of assimilationist thinking in settlement philosophy in favour of a new policy of multiculturalism or *cultural pluralism*.

The term 'multiculturalism', which was borrowed from Canada, describes a situation where 'variant cultures can

flourish peacefully side by side' (Wirth 1945) provided there is an acceptance of the commonalities of society embodied in the political and legal system. Multiculturalism is legitimated, as a state sponsored ideology, by a common acceptance of the prevailing social order. By imposing limits on the degree of acceptable differences, this 'conditional multiculturalism' created a paradox in that pluralism cannot flourish without some degree of structural differentiation. The tension created by competition between the new structures and mainstream institutions (e.g. in the areas of the media, education, sport and religion) remains a critical and unresolved issue politically and legally (Jayasuriya 1984b).²

From the outset, multiculturalism sought to represent the demographic diversity and social differentiation evident in Australian society with the key notions of 'ethnic groups' and 'ethnicity' (see e.g., Bottomley 1988; de Lepervanche 1984; and Jakubowicz 1981). Thus, ethnicity and its cognate notion of culture and identity became central elements in the language of public discourse relating to multiculturalism. And ethnicity, evident in initiatives in the media and communications. This policy gave pride of place to language which became the core of the ethnic/identity model of multiculturalism that evolved in Australia, and continues to prevail. Thus multicultural education was equated with multilingual education and the provision of ethnic TV and radio was given high priority (Jayasuriya 1989a). Nowhere was this policy orientation more apparent than in the Galbally Report (1975) evolved in the Fraser era and which laid the institutional foundations for promoting and legitimising this version of 'culturalist multiculturalism' (Lippmann 1975). Despite cosmetic changes, it is this model which continues to survive, though it is increasingly under strain and scrutiny (see Table A outlining the changes in the philosophy of migrant settlement in the context of ongoing social changes).

**Table A: The Australian Multicultural Experiment 1947-2007
Multicultural Policies and Social Changes**

<i>SOCIAL CHANGES</i>	<i>MULTICULTURAL POLICIES</i>
1947-1964: Assimilationism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Post-war reconstruction ◆ building up of economic infrastructure and manufacturing industries ◆ Menzies era ◆ full employment and growing affluence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Immigration program begins ◆ first from Britain, northern and eastern Europe ◆ then from Southern Europe; ◆ strict assimilationist policies and attitudes
1964-1972: Integration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ slowing down of growth in manufacturing industries ◆ shift of employment to service industries and community services ◆ growth of professional/white collar employment; married women enter the labour force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ changes to immigration policy with Harold Holt extends to Middle-Eastern countries ◆ English for NESB children - basis for integration ◆ ethnic community organisations become more active
1972-1975 Egalitarian Multiculturalism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Election of Labor (Whitlam) government ◆ focus on social welfare and political participation ◆ free tertiary education and health insurance ◆ growth of the new middle class ◆ oil crisis; and rise of unemployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Immigration slow-down focus on settlement process ◆ Al Grassby's concept of 'the family of the nation'; beginnings of multiculturalism ◆ 'ethnic' radio introduced ◆ Equality and Ethnic rights e.g., Racial Discrimination Act
1975-1983 Liberal Multiculturalism	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Conservative Liberal-NCP Coalition (Fraser) Government ◆ economic slowdown; decline of manufacturing industries ◆ changes in social policy towards privatisation ◆ reduction of public sector activities ◆ further rise of unemployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Galbally Report: multiculturalism as cultural pluralism ◆ identity politics; 'ethnic' television ◆ multicultural education as multilingual education ◆ Asian immigration including boat people

1983-1996 Managerial Multiculturalism Stage I

- ◆ Labor (Hawke-Keating) governments
- ◆ recession 1989-1990, and economic recovery, market deregulation
- ◆ economic rationalism; industry restructuring
- ◆ further growth of service and community industries; employment of women
- ◆ policy focus on Asia
- ◆ Reappraisal of multiculturalism
- ◆ ROMAMPAS report;
- ◆ NMAC 1989; move to 'access and equity'
- ◆ conservative attack on immigration and multiculturalism - Hansonism

1996-2007 Managerial Multiculturalism Stage II

- ◆ Return of Liberal Coalition (Howard) government
- ◆ growth despite economic crisis
- ◆ GST; mutual obligation policies
- ◆ increased skilled labour and migration
- ◆ border protection and security
- ◆ *Way forward*-NMAC 1999; Productive Diversity
- ◆ Principles: civic duties, cultural respect and social equity
- ◆ use of 'm' word by Howard to signify Australian multiculturalism as credo of the nation based on core values

Source: Jayasuriya (2001)

The Legacy of Cultural Pluralism

Culturalist multiculturalism was not simply a form of *identity politics* (Rex and Tomlinson 1967) but as elsewhere, for example, in the United States, it was a manifestation of the liberal-individualist thinking of the 1960s. Australian multiculturalism, framed as a form of cultural pluralism, being unequivocally individualistic, fitted well with the philosophy of individualism, voluntarism and self-help characteristic of the Fraser government (1975-82). A key component of liberalism—that each individual's 'good' is as valid as any other individual's—was simply extended to individuals as members of collective entities such as ethnic groups. Therefore, it was argued that liberalism was consistent with the pursuit of different 'goods' by a variety of groups

As in the United States, the accommodation afforded ethnic minorities through cultural pluralism was within a framework

of conventional liberalism (Kymlicka 1989). Accordingly policy makers interpreted the problems of migrants—their structural disadvantages and inequalities—as individual problems, largely in terms of cultural factors such as language deficits. As a result, migrant problems were perceived as those relating to cultural and communication difficulties and the remedial strategies devised included multiculturalist social policies such as those dealing with language and media. By identifying ethnic minority groups as essentially cultural, the potential for social conflict and disharmony was avoided. As well, the strategy focused on the *private* rather than the *public* domain which would require an emphasis on these new groups as actors in the political process with the right to make claims on the state. By contrast the emphasis placed by a policy strategy framed in terms of cultural pluralism on the private domain had the desired effect of de-politicising ethnicity (Walzer 1980).

Despite the attraction of cultural pluralism as a means of generating greater tolerance and acceptance of ‘difference’, the difficulties inherent in the approach were well recognised by policy-makers (Lippmann 1975). These were of two sorts. First, there were types of difficulties that relate to the characterisation of the notions of culture, ethnicity and identity and, in particular, the problem of polarisation around the *expressive* and *instrumental* dimensions of ethnicity. The expressive dimension emphasises the subjective and affective aspects of ethnic group membership rather than the material aspects which emphasise the struggle for scarce resources, involving competition, conflict and power relations between groups. The second difficulty concerns the degree of differentiation (in schools, sporting clubs, churches and voluntary ethnic associations, etc.) that is permissible without damaging social cohesion or the integrity and moral order of society (Martin 1978; Bullivant 1983; Encel 1986).

The contradictions and tensions inherent in cultural pluralism stem from the problematic nature of the concepts of ethnicity and identity. This is evident in continuing debates about immigration and settlement policy and how public policy was able to respond to issues related to the contested nature of

the concepts of ethnicity and identity. Needless to say, the ethnic identity model of multiculturalism promoted by the state has proved eminently functional for newcomers, the first generation settlers, as well as for the dominant groups. This was clearly an effective settlement policy strategy facilitating the adaptation of newcomers by providing much needed social support, self-respect and dignity for the culturally different. But, as left-oriented critics of the ideology and practice of multiculturalism have observed, this orthodox model was also a strategy for incorporation of ethnic groups into the dominant culture (Jakubowicz 1981; Castles et al. 1988). In restricting the strivings of these new groups to the private rather than the public domain, multicultural policies proved an effective means of regulating and controlling minority groups.

The Crisis of Multiculturalism

The conservative critics from the right,³ while applauding the increased tolerance and egalitarianism associated with multiculturalism, were nevertheless lukewarm, if not antagonistic, towards a continuation of public policies such as support cultural maintenance arising from this model of multiculturalism. The objections of these anti multiculturalists such as Blainey (1984) and Pauline Hanson's *One Nation* Movement was chiefly on the grounds that, by institutionalising differences and reifying ethnic group membership, multiculturalism promotes conflict and divisiveness; In short, the fear was that such a national policy threatens social cohesion and endangers national unity. But, perhaps the most disquieting feature of this conservative backlash was the emergence of a new ideology of racism, couched in a language and terminology sharply different from that of 'old' racism,⁴ espousing a doctrine of racial superiority on biological groups.

Racism and nationalism are inextricably interwoven in this new language of racism founded on the concept of a 'nation'.⁵ The use of the concept of the nation as a basis for demarcating the boundaries of group membership is exemplified in the recently expressed conservative ideology of *One Australia*. This

reflects in quieter tones the sentiments of strident nationalism, and seeks to provide a moral justification for the exclusion of those identified as not belonging to the nation. Nationalism is no longer a matter of racial superiority, but one of cultural distinctiveness, and even uniqueness.

New racism distinguishes between 'insiders' and 'outsiders', 'in-groups' and 'out-groups', on a variety of grounds such as those of social acceptability and desirable cultural characteristics. Difference is not constructed in racial or biological terms, but in terms of group norms and attitudes. It is the way in which the 'other' is constituted that distinguishes the old racism from the new. The plea for social harmony, increasingly voiced by critics of multiculturalism (e.g., Blainey 1984), is in effect a means of affirming traditional values about the nation state as expressed by the dominant groups. It is equally an expression of the need for aliens and newcomers to conform to the values, ethos and social norms of the 'nation'. Viewed in these terms, antagonism against 'Asians' derives largely from perceptions that they are acting contrary to Australian values and norms such as egalitarianism, for example, in that they work too hard and seek rapid advancement.

The racist argument is now stated primarily, though not exclusively, in terms of 'social cohesion' and 'national unity', and becomes linked with a xenophobic nationalism. As Parekh (1987) has noted, in almost all European countries, and Australia is no exception—'racism' has entered a new phase. It has taken:

the form of a plea for the identity and respect for the rights of the majority [where] ethnic minorities are no longer viewed as being inferior; rather that their presence poses a threat to the cultural integrity of the indigenous community. (1987: 99)

The new racism seeks to exploit to its own advantage, the liberal attitude towards cultural difference espoused by multiculturalism, by exaggerating the intrinsic worth of these differences.

But more central to this new ideology is the concept of the 'imagined community' (Anderson 1986). The nation, as the 'imagined community', characterised by group norms, group

attitudes and the core values of the dominant groups, becomes the means of demarcating the boundaries of acceptance and rejection of group membership and of defining the bases for inclusion and exclusion. Indeed, 'nationalism comes before nations' . . . [seen as] 'a vested interest of the less examination passing classes' (Hobsbawm 1990) and is particularly appealing to the petit-bourgeoisie. Today cultural hegemony has come to mean Australian and not a British hegemony. One version of this Australian nationalism, manifest in a range of cultural and social forms, has come to mean a process through which the nation is defined by implicitly excluding groups as not belonging to the nation as they do not conform to the dominant sets of norms which are said to constitute the 'nation'. This of course, amounts to the very denial of pluralism, and of the reality of the immigrant experience.

This conflation of *race, nation and culture* is, in short, central to the crisis of Australian multiculturalism. In this context Stockley (1986) rightly comments on the possibility that Australian studies courses, which were promoted in the 1980s as an educational ideal, could reverse the growth of pluralism reflected in multicultural education policies. As with most kinds of nationalism, the 'Australian studies' type of development has the potential to lead to a narrow xenophobic Australian nationalism reaffirming the cultural hegemony of the dominant groups.

Australian multiculturalism evolved in a relatively controlled and moderate manner but without gaining much public legitimacy. Generally multiculturalism was seen as the pursuit of a social ideal and therefore was perceived as relatively unthreatening. However, a changing social reality has placed a heavy strain on the utility and relevance of the multiculturalism that evolved in the 1970s and 1980s. Two features dominate this emerging reality: one is the problem associated with economic growth and restructuring, especially in a climate of severe recession and mounting unemployment; and the other is the changing social demography, particularly the new waves of Asian migrants, and the growing presence of second and third generations of ethnic origin. The ongoing controversy about immigration and

multiculturalism raises questions about the ability of the cultural pluralism paradigm to respond meaningfully to this new reality.

Towards a Democratic Pluralism

In rethinking the logic and rationale of Australian multiculturalism, a prime consideration must be to give formal recognition to the stark reality of a pluralistic community. As Jean Martin (1978) acknowledged over three decades ago the existence of concentrations of particular ethnic groups in the urban ecology and in certain occupations testifies to the growth of a 'genuinely pluralist society'. Contemporary Australia exhibits two features which, among other considerations, highlight the complex nature of this pluralism. One is the presence in significant numbers of migrants of non Caucasian origin (Asian, Middle Eastern, African); the other is the blurring of ethnic group boundaries due to the increasing incidence of inter-ethnic marriage among second and third generations.

It is abundantly clear that, ethnic boundaries have become more fluid and permeable, and the earlier expressive sense of ethnicity has given way to a symbolic and instrumental ethnicity where ethnic groups are seen more clearly as minority groups. This pluralism in society, implying an acceptance of difference which is racial and ethnic, cannot be sustained without some degree of visible and formal representation in the institutions of civil and political society (e.g. by accepting the right to representation of these groups on various bodies, and by provision of a greater degree of access to power structures). However defined, ethnic groups, as relatively permanent collectivities, are now established minority interest groups, which compete with others in the public domain to satisfy their material needs and aspirations.

Hence, the challenge for the future must be to accommodate the genuine political aspirations of these groups in the public domain through appropriate political and institutional changes such as the legislative safeguard of minority rights. What is evolving is a model of interest group politics based on 'ethnicity' operating in the public domain. In policy terms, this means the

recognition of ethnic minority groups as political actors with legitimate interests and a stake in the political process, rather than in the symbolic aspects of ethnicity.

Furthermore, after several decades of multiculturalist social policies, issues of equality and social rights have become more acute in a period of increasing inequalization following a boom in Australian economy (Collins 1975; Jayasuriya 1987). This growing inequality is compounded by the increased presence of new waves of predominantly non-Caucasian migrants in the labour market. There is mounting evidence that the adverse social effects of structural adjustment of the economy (such as restricted access to housing, declining standards of health, and high levels of youth unemployment) are more pronounced in some ethnic groups. In these circumstances the economic and social well-being of these groups became a critical public policy issue.

Faced with this changing social reality the earlier settlement policy strategies developed under the rubric of 'multiculturalism' such as those in the Hawke-Keating era (the *National Agenda* (OMA 1989) and the Howard version of 'Australian Multiculturalism' (NMAC 1999) had a declining relevance for affected groups. This was mainly because the position of these disadvantaged groups was made critical by public sector abrogation (increased privatisation of welfare by the market or reliance on kin networks) and cut-backs of migrant welfare programs such as ESL, community grants, and grant-in-aid workers. Multicultural policies were confronted with the need to address more directly the rights and entitlements of these minority groups who are clearly a markedly differentiated segment of society. Accepting 'difference' implies that policies need to be designed and delivered in a way that takes into account this difference.

Clearly the orthodox multiculturalism framed as 'cultural pluralism' and espousing a 'culturalist multiculturalism', was in need of adjusting to the emerging instrumental needs and aspirations of minority groups (e.g. equality and justice for refugees, and the demands of new waves of migrants, ethnic women and youth) and recognizing the integrative potential of multiculturalism. Increasingly, pluralism requires the statement of a set of commonly accepted principles against which it is

possible to evaluate the claims of interests groups in a democratic society.

Following the work of the English social theorist, Raymond Plant (1988) and others, it is suggested that there is a need for a benchmark defining the general good which might serve as a reference point for interest groups. In this context the philosophy and ideology of citizenship may provide a valuable reference point for reframing Australian multiculturalism within the framework of the concept of citizenship, specifying 'a set of needs, rights, resources and opportunities which individuals must have [in order] to pursue any goals at all' (Plant 1988: 3). In short citizenship theorizing provides an attractive and powerful basis for reformulating multiculturalism in a democratic and pluralistic society (Jayasuriya 1994). The purpose of the envisaged reforms is the achievement of equality and social justice, and the attachment to a process of integrative nation-building.

Multiculturalism and Citizenship Theorizing

To this end the concept of citizenship has to go beyond a liberal individualist model based on civil and political rights, and narrowly conceived of as 'universal citizenship'.⁶ Citizenship implies not only that individuals are a part of a community, but also that within this community 'differences' are explicitly recognised in matters of public policy. This re-conceptualisation of citizenship enables us to move away from *identity politics* and a narrow cultural pluralism towards a *politics of identity* and a more democratic form of pluralism built around minority rights which enhances the status of citizenship and enables one to exercise one's rights. As T. H. Marshall (1973) observed in his classic statement on the idea of citizenship,

citizenship rights are essentially concerned with the notion of social participation of persons within the community as fully recognized legal members. (Marshall quoted in Turner 1988: 134)

According to Marshall, the exercise of power derived from *political* citizenship is essential to achieving other rights, in

particular, economic security and social well-being. For this reason, much of the discussion about participation must necessarily be around the achievement of political participation. But multiculturalism, which has been seen in some quarters as a precondition for increased participation in citizenship, has instead encouraged a form of *identity politics* rather in moving toward the *politics of identity*. This shift demands a more democratic form of pluralism to achieve a greater degree of political participation, and a guarantee of what Parsons terms the 'rights enabling participation in citizenship' (Parsons 1965).

The shift from a 'cultural pluralism' to a 'democratic pluralism' is contingent upon renegotiating the concept of citizenship and entails going beyond an understanding of citizenship merely as a *legal status* embodying rights—civil, political and social. Rather, *citizenship* has to be understood normatively as conferring a distinctive sense of identity of belonging and enjoying rights full and equal membership status in a pluralistic community. The principles and ideals of a *democratic pluralism* extend the meaning and understanding of a 'common citizenship' to recognize the full participation of the 'different'. This new thinking about citizenship is evident in the logic and rationale of the Charter of Multiculturalism proposed by the West Australian government.⁷ This Charter reframes Australian Multiculturalism by espousing four key principles of a democratic pluralism: *Civic Ideals or Virtues, Fairness, Equality and Participation* which are built around three key pillars or key notions: *participation, recognition, and representation* (Jayasuriya 2008). Participation alongside the politics of recognition leads importantly to questions of representation that is of *who* represents *what*, which inevitably leads to questions of reordering the political foundations of Australian society linked to a radical citizenship.

Put simply, by reframing citizenship in this manner we acknowledge that when a society is socially differentiated, citizenship must equally be so. The notion of a democratic pluralism posits a political and enabling multiculturalism within a framework of citizenship that 'treats all members as equal and also recognizes their separate identities' (Taylor et al. 1992).

Premised on the existence of a 'shared political culture', this allows a '*differentiated citizenship*' (or a multicultural citizenship) which is socially integrative and acknowledges the reality of a society differentiated by gender, class, and ethnicity. Hence differences between individual citizens or group of citizens need to be recognized and taken account of in catering to citizens' needs. All citizens, by virtue of their shared common citizenship, enjoy a sense of shared belonging by their membership of the political community based on public virtues such as a democratic spirit of tolerance, the rule of law, respect for liberty, and so on.

In short, it is this *civic culture* arising from a liberal political order that binds the nation and integrates varied segments of society. To quote Habermas (1994), a leading political theorist:

. . . the political culture must serve as the common denominator for a constitutional patriotism which simultaneously sharpens awareness of the multiplicity and integrity of the different forms of life which exist in the multicultural society. (1994: 198-9)

What is therefore crucial for social solidarity in a pluralistic society committed to a liberal political culture is the homogeneity of the nation conceived of as a 'self-governing' *political* and *moral* community, and not a culturally conceived nation derived from core culture values of single unifying ethnic core of the dominant groups in society, that is an ethnic nationalism. The contrast, therefore is between an 'ethnic nationalism' one based on core Anglo-Celtic values and a 'civic nationalism' (Ignatieff 1993) embodying a civic culture linked to democratic political values and social institutions.

Stated differently, instead of a nation-state based on a culturally defined community, what we are likely to see is the emergence of a nation-state as an essentially political concept. The political/cultural differentiation harks back to Meinecke's classic distinction between a 'cultural nation' and a 'political nation' (Alter 1985).⁸ In the former, the emphasis is on the 'spirit of the community' founded on such characteristics as common heritage and language, distinct area of origin and settlement, religious customs and history. These, incidentally, are often the defining characteristics of 'ethnicity'.

But by contrast the concept of a *political nation* offers a more objective concept: one where the state and nation are synonymous in the sense that the nation is ‘a community of politically aware citizens equal before the law irrespective of their social and economic status, ethnic origin and religious beliefs’ (Alter 1985: 12). To quote Walzer (1980):

politics must create the (natural) unit it was once thought merely to mirror . . . and it must create unity without denying or repressing multiplicity. (1980: 12)

Here, nationalism and nation-building, within the liberal-rationalist paradigm, goes hand in hand with liberty, reason and progress; and to remain a force it must gain its substance and meaning from the processes of state formation. Hence what matters is the *political* nation, and *not* the *cultural* nation (Jayasuriya 2004).

It is in this context that an Australian constitutional document, embodying the aspiration of ‘we the people’ as a pluralistic society acquires crucial significance in forging social solidarity and construing our identity as a nation, as a truly multicultural society (Jayasuriya 2003). The constitutional document is what is most likely to give legitimacy and credibility to a sense of Australian identity, as a distinct nation in a pluralistic society; and at the same time, it is a document that binds citizens in a common belonging through the principles and values enshrined in the constitution. Clearly, the unity and cohesion of society rests in the political consensus and the common possession of rights and entitlements associated with full and equal membership of the political community.

There is a strong case to be made, as a matter of priority for there to be an ‘Australian conversation’ in order to restructure the political foundations of Australia as a pluralistic society, governed by a rights-based democracy and committed to liberal values. This hopefully will serve to articulate a new philosophy for Australian multiculturalism as a ‘civic multiculturalism’ in a ‘plural society . . . held together and legitimated by a common understanding of a citizenship (Miller 1995). There is, indeed, a compelling case for devising constitutional ways and means for

incorporating the rights element in the Australian political culture as a means of safeguarding and protecting the rights and freedoms of minorities (Charlesworth 2002). This needs to be strengthened by giving political legitimacy to a pluralistic citizenship and inscribing it in a statutory form via a *Bill of Rights* or an Australian Charter of Rights (Jayasuriya 2004). Such an Act will help to include both indigenous and non-indigenous groups in the multicultural discourse, and facilitate the separate, but linked development of an Aboriginal and multiculturalism consciousness.

Conclusion

From the foregoing it is clear that, if the Australian multicultural discourse is to be regarded as an integral and defining aspect of the Australian nation, it needs to inscribe a radical new ideal of in a radical new ideal of a 'pluralistic citizenship' formally in a legislative statute. As the late Jean Martin (1971) concluded from her path finding research many decades ago, if Australian pluralism is to be a reality it has to be acknowledged as a potential political force with some kind of responsibility to make their experience forcefully relevant at the level of political decision making.

It is critical therefore to articulate a normative concept of citizenship referring to full and equal community participation perhaps the most valuable dimension for a new form of Australian multiculturalism. Thus for, Dahrendorf: 'citizenship is not mainly about where people stand, but about what they do. It is about participating' (1975: 440). Likewise, Held (1989) maintains that the post-Marshallian debate about citizenship is one that invites:

the struggle for membership and participation in the community . . . for different groups, classes and movements [who] struggle to gain degrees of autonomy and control over their lives in the face of various forms of stratification, hierarchy, and political oppression. (1989: 199)

A prime object of democratic pluralism would be to move

from:

the defensive enclave logic of cultural maintenance to a much more active sense of empowerment of minority groups in the public sphere. (Mercer 1989: 12)

For this to occur, the language of public discourse will need to change from that of *identity politics* (the private domain) to *minority rights* (the public domain). Furthermore, by allowing minority groups to participate fully and exercise their rights in the broad public domain, citizenship facilitates social integration by encouraging a 'civic religion'. By strengthening the bond of citizenship located in a common material culture, individuals are cemented into a socio-cultural whole. It is by enhancing the conditions of effective citizenship that one can achieve social integration and facilitate the processes of nation building through a shared sense of a common destiny without denying the right of new groups in society to pursue their cultural interests. This requires that the multicultural discourse reconceptualise the *public-private* distinction, to depoliticise ethnicity and confine it to the 'private' realm, has sought to depoliticise ethnicity and confine it to the 'private' realm.

In conclusion, the task of formulating a new meaningful multicultural discourse, one attuned to the needs of a dynamic and fast changing Australian society in this new millennium has to be informed and infused by a *democratic pluralism* framed within a radical citizenship theorizing. This will ensure strengthening social bonds and identifications essential for nation building. But to achieve these ends, the social and political landscape will need to incorporate a range of new and different social forms, images and styles of conduct. In such a context, there will be new social identifications and political legitimacy with a focus on the politics of state formation. Clearly, as Australia moves towards a new political order in the knowledge based economy of the Asian century 'only a pluralistic conception of citizenship can take account of the current proliferation of new political aspirations . . . and accommodate the

specificity and multiplicity of democratic demands' (Mouffe 1988: 37).

Endnotes

¹For a similar trend in Canada, see Taylor 1985.

²Unlike Canadian multiculturalism, which some writers see as a move towards 'corporate pluralism' because of the formal recognition given to 'groups' as racial and ethnic collectivities. Australian multiculturalism was decidedly 'individualistic' as these groups were not given any formal standing in the national policy. See also Lambert and Taylor 1990.

³For example Hirst (1990) sanctifies Australia as a place 'expert in the modes of toleration'. Sadly, this ignores and distorts both the Aboriginal and immigrant experience of neglect, exploitation and discrimination, see also Foster and Stockley 1988.

⁴For an extended discussion of the shift from old to new racism, see Jayasuriya 2008.

⁵For a discussion of the concept of a nation as in Australian nationalism, see Pitty and Leach (2004) who clarify the distinction between *civic* and *ethno-cultural* nationalism

⁶Anne Phillips identifies three distinct meanings of 'universal citizenship': citizenship for everyone, universal and common, and guaranteeing equal treatment. She challenges the latter and argues that 'when a socially is differentiated, then citizenship must be equally so' (Phillips 1991: 83).

⁷For details of the WA Charter of Multicultural Interests, see OMI 2004.

⁸Alter quotes the German historian Fredrich Meinecke as making 'one of the most famous contributions to enquiries into the nation' (Alter 1985: 12) by his illuminating distinction between cultural and political nation. Alter notes that this is closely related to Hans Kohn's subjective and objective concepts of nations.