

The Citizen's Other: Australian Political Discourse on 'Australian Values', Migrants and Muslims

Anne Macduff*

1. Introduction

Over the past two decades, governments around the world have been increasingly concerned with national membership (Yuval-Davis, Anthias & Kofman 2005; Goodman 2010; Flynn 2005). Many governments have developed a range of interconnected legal reforms and policies to manage the issue (Baubock 2010). One popular approach has been to place restrictions on access to citizenship status (Joppke 2008; Kvenien 2002; Bosniak 1998).

However, a dilemma accompanies the desire to restrict access to membership. The dilemma is how to restrict access while ensuring that membership is culturally inclusive. This is particularly a dilemma in countries such as the US and Australia, which have been countries of immigration and their national narratives are closely linked to welcoming migrants. Moreover, these modern, democratic countries have a commitment to accommodating cultural diversity. Disenfranchising migrants does not align well with a liberal ethos and

* Senior Lecturer, ANU College of Law, Australian National University.

leaves the governments of these countries exposed to allegations of discrimination from those migrant groups, often on the basis of race, national origin or religion.

In 2007, Australia underwent significant reform to its laws governing access to citizenship status. Key amendments included a longer residential period for migrants,¹ and the introduction of a citizenship test.² The government justified these amendments on the basis that they would help migrants better understand Australian values, and therefore be better able to commit to citizenship.³ This approach appears to navigate the dilemma, restricting access to membership while applying the new citizenship criteria to all migrants regardless of race or ethnic origin.

However, this article argues that much more is going on than the Australian government explicitly acknowledges. Through the introduction of the concept of 'Australian values', politicians narrate citizenship status in racially exclusionary ways. 'Australian' values are imagined in opposition to the migrant Other generally, and the Muslim Other in particular. Evidence for this argument is located in the parliamentary discourse surrounding the citizenship law amendments.

While there are many uses of the term 'discourse' (Wodak & Meyers 2009, 2), the term is broad enough to include a wide range of communicative acts including words, body language, actions, practices and images (Fairclough 1992, 3–4). Also, discourse does not merely reflect the objects in the world already made, discourse constitutes those objects and brings their characteristics and possibilities into being. Discourse is 'a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning' (Fairclough 1992, 64). This article analyses how Australian political discourse reflects and reinforces the meaning of citizenship status in opposition to a racialised Other.

This article focusses on how 'Australian values' and citizenship are narrated in one field of 'elite' public discourse,⁴ political discourse. The discourses are 'elite' in the sense that they emanate from sources of information which are respected, and influence discursive structures and themes adopted by the public and individuals in society (van Dijk 1993, 280). Political discourse is one form of elite discourse because it is a significant and influential (Billig 1995). Van Dijk argues that what

¹ The residential period for permanent residents who wished to acquire 'citizenship by conferral' (or naturalisation) doubled from two years to four years; *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* (Cth) s 22.

² Australian Citizenship (Citizenship Testing) Amendment Act 2007.

³ Explanatory Memorandum, 1; Robb 2006, 127; Hardgrave 2004, 1.

⁴ Critical Discourse Scholars Reisigl and Wodak refer to 'fields' when referring to a 'field of action defined by different functions of discursive practices'. A discourse about a topic can find its starting point within one field of action and proceed through another one. Discourses then 'spread' to different fields and relate to or overlap with other discourses.' Reisigl & Wodak 2009, 87 - 90. Alternatively, Teun van Dijk refers to discourse 'genres' (van Dijk, 1993).

politicians say matters because they set political agendas, make decisions, and have more opportunities to contribute to the content of the news than other individuals in society (van Dijk 1993). The language used in parliamentary debates both reflects and influences the language used by the news media, which in turn can influence the way in which the public debate is framed. The ways in which politicians narrate and explain legislative amendments can also influence how the legislation is applied.⁵

The first section of this article explains the selection of the texts and the method for analysing those texts. It explains the focus on the 2007 parliamentary Hansard debates and why these are significant sources of political discourse about the legal status of Australian citizenship. This section also introduces Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the methodological approach used to analyse the dominant narratives circulating in the selected texts.

The second section explores how Australian politicians explained the 2007 legislative reforms through narratives of protecting and enhancing 'Australian values'. It then identifies how the content of 'Australian values' was articulated. While there was agreement that Australian values included a commitment to democracy and gender equality, this section argues that most politicians struggled to identify these values with any specificity.

The third section critically argues that Australian values were more clearly articulated when politicians were able to describe them as something that migrants lacked. This analysis articulates how the political discourse represented the Muslim Other as particularly incompatible with Australian values, which created and reinforced a culturally exclusionary narrative about the legal status of Australian citizenship.

The Australian experience is a warning to other communities seeking to restrict access to membership through laws which require a commitment to liberal, political values. This article suggests that the language of liberal values does not inoculate legal reforms from complicity with racially exclusionary agendas. The challenge is to identify and render them visible in their specific historical and social context.

2. Political Discourse on Citizenship

This section outlines the rationale behind the selection of materials in this article, and the method used to analyse those materials.

⁵ For the rules governing the interpretation of Commonwealth legislation, see *Acts Interpretation Act 1901* (Cth). The use of an Acts purpose to help identify the meaning of a provision is set out in s15. Relevant provisions include sections 21(h), 21(5), 24 and 25 of the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* (Cth).

2.1. Sources of Political Discourse – Hansard and Second Readings Speeches

This article analyses the Hansard transcript of the parliamentary second reading speeches associated with two bills; the Australian Citizenship Bill 2005 (Cth) ('Citizenship Bill'), and the Australian Citizenship Amendment (Citizenship Testing) Bill 2007 (Cth) ('Testing Bill'). The Hansard transcript represents the range of views that parliamentarians held about the meaning of Australian citizenship.

The second reading speeches were an opportunity for politicians to reflect on the meaning of citizenship as a legal status. In the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia, the Minister usually begins the debate on a new bill by outlining its purpose and key features (Evans 2008, 237; Harris 2005, 355). Other government and opposition members follow and outline their views about the new bill (Harris 2005, 355). Speeches may be made on the same day or at a later date (Harris 2005, 354). In their speeches, parliamentarians may discuss any matter relating to the bill, including principles, objectives, alternatives, recommendations or further arguments supporting why the bill should be adopted or rejected (Evans 2008, 237; Harris 2005, 355). Each parliamentarian may only speak once, and there is a time limit of 30 minutes (Harris 2005, 355). Sometimes, the speech is a spontaneous response to the unfolding debate. Other times, the speech is prepared earlier and then read aloud (Evans 2008, 490; Harris 2005, 355),⁶ particularly when the debate is technical or when the parliamentarian wishes to refer to documents (Evans 2008, 194). Although parliamentarians may discuss the content of previous speeches, direct interaction between parliamentarians is restricted. Interjections and interruptions are regulated according to parliamentary rules (Commonwealth of Australia, Standing Orders). The interjections and interruptions are not generally recorded in the Hansard transcript unless they are referred to by the Speaker. Hansard is the edited transcript of these and other statements made in the House of Representatives and the Senate (Evans 2008, 83; Harris 2005, 210; Commonwealth of Australia 2011, 8).

Although the second reading speeches have a limited public audience, they nonetheless influence and reinforce wider debate. Debate during parliament is open to the public and sessions are broadcast by national radio.⁷ While the record of the speech in Hansard is not circulated widely, within a few days the full text is uploaded into a searchable

⁶ For instance if it is a prepared statement, or the ministerial statement or the Minister's second reading speech. See Evans 2008, 194.

⁷ Speeches are livestreamed through <www.aph.gov.au>, and broadcast through ABC NewsRadio <http://www.abc.net.au/newsradio/parliament/>.

database on the Australian Parliament House website.⁸ Copies of the Parliamentary debates are later printed, bound and made available in public libraries.

Although Hansard is usually only accessed by politicians or lawyers, the views aired by the politicians in these debates are influential (Billig 1995). The speeches reinforce or challenge popular views through their access to the media (Every & Augoustinos 2007, 415; Pickering & Lambert 2002, 66). Parliamentarians are aware of the influence of their speeches on the media. For instance in the citizenship debates, Byrne MP commented 'I see nothing in this [the parliamentary debate]. I see slogans' (Byrne, 2006, 121). Danby MP also stated that 'I will not name the community because that would create a distracting headline' (Danby 2007, 49).

Furthermore, politicians are particularly influential individuals because they claim to represent the general Australian public. For instance, Gash declares that as a politician 'It is not for me to stand here and say 'this is my opinion'. I am simply reflecting what the majority of my constituency says to me and in turn, I am relaying their sentiments to the House' (Gash 2006, 153). Because the role of politicians is to represent the views of their electorate and key interest groups, they legitimately claim to speak on behalf the Australian people and reflect what is understood to be the prevailing 'common sense' view of Australian society.

The second reading speeches of these two bills capture an extensive and representative discussion about the citizenship law reforms, described by Martin Ferguson MP as 'a long debate' (Ferguson 2006, 141). Many parliamentarians made speeches on the bills as they passed through the House of Representatives and the Senate. One third of parliamentarians in the House of Representatives gave a speech about the Citizenship Bill,⁹ and one eighth of the senators.¹⁰ One tenth of all the members of the House of Representatives gave a speech about the Testing Bill, and one eighth of all the senators. The parliamentarians who spoke represented all the major political parties; the Australian Liberal Party, the Australian Labor Party, the National Party, the Greens and the Democrats.¹¹

Despite the extensive discussion, it is surprising that the politicians, by and large, did not debate the specific legal changes introduced by the

⁸ Hansard transcripts are publicly available in written form through the Australian federal government website <www.aph.gov.au>.

⁹ Fifty-seven parliamentarians spoke. In 2006 and 2007, there were 150 members of the House of Representatives, see Commonwealth of Australia 2011, 410.

¹⁰ Nine senators spoke. In 2006, there were 76 members of the Senate in 2006, see Commonwealth of Australia 2011, 209.

¹¹ The other political parties from the 41st Parliament included the Family First Party (1 member), the CLP (2 members), and 3 Independents. None of the Independents or minor parties spoke to any the 3 bills. For a list of parties and their members see Commonwealth of Australia 2011, 409-410.

bills. Indeed, the parliamentarians perceived many of the legal changes to be 'less controversial' (Forshaw 2007, 1). The reforms were largely understood as extending existing provisions and frameworks and therefore 'the principles underlying the existing legislation remain the same' (Barresi 2006, 159). Instead, the politicians used their speeches as opportunities to explain the importance of enhancing Australian citizenship status.

2.2. Methodology – Critical Discourse Analysis

This article applies Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to identify the narratives about Australian citizenship status that were circulating in political discourse surrounding the two Bills.

Although there are a number of different research approaches that can be characterised as CDA (Wodak & Meyer 2009, 5), CDA scholars all seek to do more than merely describe patterns of language. CDA 'aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, constituted, legitimized, and so on, by language use (or in discourse)' (Wodak & Meyer 2009, 20). CDA also recognises that although multiple and contesting discourses operate in society, at particular times certain discourses emerge and dominate our understanding and ways of perceiving the world (Gee 2011, 37). These dominant discourses often support a particular ideology, set of interests or the 'figured worlds' of a particular group (Gee 2011, 185, 205). The particular group whose interests are maintained are usually also those who have control over social resources, either within the group, institution, or social structure (Gee 2011, 185, 205). Although ideology and power are often not visible, CDA argues that the ideological effects can be uncovered through an analysis of the discursive relationships that exist in social practices, language and texts (Fairclough 1992, 40; Wodak & Matouschek 1993, 227). CDA explains how discourses create and shape social relations structures (including institutions) and texts (events or practices), including legal texts such as cases and statutes. However, ideological effects are not simply 'found' in the text. They are also produced and reinforced by the interpretative process undertaken by the analyst. This means that while CDA aims to be critical, it is necessarily also limited and constrained by its own social and historical context. CDA should not for instance, be understood as a tool to determine an alternate 'value free' truth.

This article uses CDA to interpret all of the parliamentary second reading speeches relating to these two bills. These speeches were analysed, and notes were made about the frequently recurring linguistic cues and themes, and the language in which these themes were articulated. Connections between themes were observed and then linked to how they supported common-sense assumptions which appear to

'spring from daily experiences and which reflect dominant institutions' (Chant, Knight & Smith 1989, 387). Themes can be said to be dominant when they proliferate, spread across different spheres and potentially displace other discourses (Lawrence 2012, 23). Gee argues that discourse analysis can show where there is 'convergence, agreement, in linguistics details' (Gee 2011, 123). Articulating how themes are expressed and linked exposes the ideological structures that they convey (Wodak 2008, 57).

In Australia, legal scholars have used CDA to show how the exclusion of asylum seekers is legitimised through the discourse embedded in migration law.¹² There is also an emerging analysis of discourse on Australian citizenship (Dyrenfurth 2005, 89; Fozdar & Low 2015), although it does not specifically examining the role of Australian citizenship as a legal status. This article adds to this interdisciplinary scholarship which uses CDA to critically examine the impact and force of Australian citizenship as a legal status.

3. Migrants and Australian Citizenship

3.1. Citizenship: A Migrant's Commitment

The specific legal reforms to the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* (Cth) were justified, in broad terms, as enhancing Australian citizenship. For instance, many parliamentarians expressed the need to ensure that Australian citizenship is 'not too easy to get' (Georgiou 2007, 29), 'not taken lightly' (Burke 2006, 2), 'not taken for granted' (Gash 2006, 152), or 'handed out like confetti' (Emerson 2007, 62). Cadman MP stated 'the more substantial the citizenship requirements, the more substantial the commitment' (Cadman 2007, 58).

Generally, politicians expressed the clear view that Australian citizenship status would be enhanced through a stronger commitment to shared 'Australian values' (O'Connor 2007b, 12). Australian citizenship has 'combined people into one community based on a common set of values' (Andrews 2007, 42). Citizenship is a 'commitment to Australian values and way of life' (Johnson 2006, 137). Citizenship was conceived of as a 'common bond' (May 2006, 165), or 'glue' that 'holds our family together' (Hardgrave 2007, 49), and builds 'social cohesion' (Vale 2007, 14). 'As Australia has matured [...] citizenship has become a powerful force in the creation of a united and cohesive society' (Cobb 2005, 9). Social cohesion is desirable because it creates a 'stable, secure, prosperous nation' (Danby 2007, 49).

The activities of the migrant were central to statements about a commitment to Australian values. Citizenship is 'a key part of the

¹² For Australian scholarship see; Danielle Every and Martha Augoustinos 2007; Pickering 2001; Pickering, 2004; Pickering and Lambert 2002.

Government's ongoing commitment to help migrants successfully integrate into the Australian community.¹³ Citizenship is the 'glue holding our culturally diverse society together' (Robb 2006, 127), and citizenship is a 'unifying force in an increasingly diverse population' (Sawford 2006, 211). The Australian citizenship program was described as successful because it is a means by which the nation is 'more inclusive of migrants' (Vamvanikou 2006, 196). As one parliamentarian observed 'What is the point of offering citizenship if it does not unify newcomers to Australia?' (Gash 2006, 152).

While the observation that citizenship status primarily concerns migrants may seem obvious, it is only so because it has entered the 'common-sense' assumptions of daily life. The selective and limited nature of this focus is exposed when it is appreciated that the 2007 amendments also changed the criteria for citizenship acquired in ways other than by migration.¹⁴ The legal reforms to the provisions regulating citizenship by adoption, descent and citizenship by resumption were barely mentioned.

The amendments were designed to enhance the importance and value of citizenship status by requiring that migrants do more to demonstrate that they would commit to Australian values. For example, in introducing the Citizenship Bill, Andrew Robb MP stated that the purpose of the extended residency period is to 'enable more time for new arrivals to become familiar with the Australian Way of Life and the values which they need to commit to as Australian citizens' (Robb 2006, 128). The longer residency period gives migrant applicants more time 'to associate themselves deeply with the values that we consider the essence of this country' (Johnson 2006, 137). A longer period also enables migrants to 'feel accepted and welcomed' (Hull 2007, 21), at 'home and comfortable' (Owens 2006, 168).

Similarly, the purpose of citizenship testing was to 'ensure a level of commitment to these values and way of life from all Australians' (Andrews 2007, 4). Dana Vale MP stated that citizenship testing 'will mean that they [migrants] can take their place with us as one people under one flag' (Vale 2007, 14). Indeed, the citizenship test would 'be a mechanism to provide assurances that the applicants for the test understand some common values' (Australian Government 2006, 11) and would be 'reassuring' (Johnston 2007, 132). Ripoll remarked that the citizenship test is 'another hoop to jump through which makes earning it more valuable' (Ripoll 2007, 25).

Only a minority of parliamentarians were concerned that the changes should not make the acquisition of citizenship too difficult (George

¹³ Explanatory Memorandum, Australian Citizenship Amendment (Citizenship Testing Bill) 2007, 1.

¹⁴ Note that this was in contrast to the thrust of other amendments to citizenship by descent and resumption, which eased access. These were largely not discussed by the parliamentarians in the reading speeches.

2007, 45; Georgiou 2007, 49, Hall 2007, 42; Hurley 2007b, 72; Tony Burke 2006, 2; Brendan O'Connor 2007, 34; Gavin O'Connor 2007b, 13). Different aspects of the reforms were identified as potentially problematic. Many in the opposition Labor party were particularly concerned that while an extension of the residency period from two to three years was necessary due to national security concerns, the increase to four years was unreasonable (Tony Burke 2006, 2; Corcoran 2006, 230; Garrett 2006, 182; Webber 2007, 44).

A few parliamentarians also expressed concern about whether the commitment to citizenship could be demonstrated through a test (Bartlett 2007b, 69; Kirk 2007, 61; George 2007, 45; Nettle 2007b, 64, McEwan 2007, 76; Melham 2006, 192; Owens 2006, 168; Roxon 2006, 177). Some felt that the existing requirement that new citizens make a pledge was sufficient evidence of a commitment to Australia (Hall 2006, 234, Melham 2006, 192). Others worried that the citizenship test was an unnecessary English language test (Bartlett 2007b, 69, Broadbent 2007, 37; George 2007, 45; Hall 2007, 52; Allison 2007, 34; Crean 2006, 204, Hall 2006, 234; Irwin 2006, 179; Melham 2006, 192; Plibersek 2006, 216; Price 2006, 155; Quick 2006, 117; Wilkie, 2006, 230).

Despite some concern, only a handful of parliamentarians explicitly concluded that these new requirements were barriers to citizenship (Georgiou 2007, 29; Ellis 2006, 221; Emerson 2006, 161; Hall 2006, 234; Ripoll 2006, 241; Tanner 2006, 188; Vamvanikou 2006, 196). Moreover, these concerns were largely overshadowed by the wider bipartisan support for other aspects of the reforms, and strong consensus that the importance of citizenship should be enhanced. Both amendments were clearly justified on the basis that they helped and supported applicants to be 'fully informed' (Vale 2007, 14) about Australia, 'understand the commitment' to citizenship (Cadman 2007, 58), and allowed migrants to be 'ready to participate' (Lundy 2007, 12). The amendments were understood to be beneficial to both the Australian community and migrants because they required migrants to be more knowledgeable about 'Australian values'.

3.2. Articulating 'Australian Values'

Although it was clear from the political discourse that citizenship status was primarily a migrant's commitment to 'Australian values', many of the speeches failed to clearly identify the content of those 'Australian values'. 'Australian values' were described as 'common values' (Andrews 2007, 42), 'core values' (Ripoll 2007, 25) or just plain 'Australian values' (Webber 2007, 44). Australian values are understood as those values 'that define us as Australians' (May 2006, 165). Parliamentarians use the

term 'Australian values' interchangeably with 'Australian Way of Life' (Robb 2006, 127).¹⁵

In a few speeches, parliamentarians started to elaborate on the various features of 'Australian values'. For instance, a commitment to Australian values includes a commitment to 'fully participate in the opportunities that life in Australia offers,' (May 2006, 165) to 'live here,' (Randall 2006, 158) to 'make Australia home' (Georgiou 2007, 29). There is also a sense of a commitment to 'support [...] Australia, as a nation' (Emerson 2007, 62), to 'pledge loyalty' (David Johnson 2007, 132), to 'Australia and its people' (Andrews 2006, 127). Although there is no official national language of Australia, some parliamentarians stated that a commitment to Australian values requires speaking 'English' (Randall 2006, 158). Australian values also include: 'a fair go' (Hardgrave 2007, 49), 'a shared future' and a 'common destiny' (David Johnston 2007, 132), 'signing up to responsibility' (Hardgrave 2007, 49), to 'make an effort' (Thomson 2006, 180), and 'to share democratic values' (George 2007, 45). Some parliamentarians mentioned the importance of Christian values because Australia is 'a Judeo-Christian country' (Michael Johnson 2006, 137). Beyond these broad claims, there were few clear and consistent statements about the specific content of Australian values.

Only a few parliamentarians rejected the idea of 'Australian values' or an 'Australian way of life' (Irwin 2007, 40; Kirk 2007, 61; Allison 2007, 34; Hoare 2006, 185; Vamvanikou 2006, 196; Gavin O'Connor 2006, 201). Some noted that values such as democracy, egalitarianism and a 'fair go' are more universal values than Australian values (Corcoran 2006, 230; Ripoll 2007, 25; Melham 2006, 192). However, these opinions are in the minority. Even whilst acknowledging that 'Australian values' are difficult to define, many politicians maintained that the concept of Australian values and Australian Way of Life was still useful. '[W]hile it is difficult to read the mind of Australian society, we can look at the behaviours that we want to promote in this country. [...] We can take these manifestations and explore the sentiment that drives these behaviours' (Barresi 2006, 159).

4. Narrating Difference: constructing the Migrant Other

The process of identity formation occurs in defining what is, as well as what is not (Hall 1992, 272). Triandafyllidou argues that the

¹⁵ The 'Australian Way of Life' is a term first used in the 1950s to describe a unique Australian national identity. It is thought to have been coined by Richard Ward in his popular book, 'The Australian Legend'. It captures an understanding of Australians as a people who, although culturally British, are shaped by their unique physical environment and 'Way of Life' to produce traits that reflect an 'Australian type'. This way of life is thought to be captured by life in the bush, and the need for a practical, strong and resourceful individual, typified in the bushman.

construction of migrant groups within a society as the Other helps to define a distinct national identity (Triandafyllidou 2001). This section explores how politicians created narratives about Australian values in opposition to the cultural differences of migrants generally, and the Muslim migrant in particular.

4.1. Migrants and Difference

The reading speeches suggested that migrants are culturally different. This difference is at first represented by describing the migrant's acquisition of citizenship status in terms of physical distance and displacement. For instance, citizenship for a migrant is a 'step' (Cadman 2007, 58), a 'big step' (Hall 2006, 234) a 'very big step' (Livermore 2006, 237), an 'important step' (Slipper 2006, 146) and a 'profound step' (Johnston 2007, 132). Taking this step is described as a 'significant and massive decision' (Ripoll 2007, 25).

However, the notion of difference as distance should be read carefully. In the speeches, parliamentarians described some nations as 'further away' from the Australian nation than others. Migration 'can be a long or a short step' (Byrne 2006, 120). These references are potentially not so much about geographic distance. The language of 'steps' evokes not only the physical journal of migration but the extent of perceived cultural difference. The way that physical distance stands in for cultural distance is captured by the former Minister Andrew Robb who noted explicitly that 'European values are closer to Australian values than others' (Robb 2006, 127). The two Bills are therefore primarily 'to do with new arrivals, especially those from new and emerging communities who nowadays are often from countries far removed from Australian culture' (Robb 2006, 127). The bigger the step, the larger the cultural difference.

There is an assumption that it is migrants who will need to change to become citizens, which reinforces the cultural difference of migrants. First, the speeches made a distinction between the migrant's identity arising from their nation of origin and their adopted Australian identity. This distinction is reflected in comments such as 'The choice to stay as a citizen is electing to say 'I like things the way they are'' (Gash 2006, 152). Moreover, citizenship testing 'will demonstrate that new migrants accept Australia' (Cadman 2007, 58). 'It is not unreasonable that they will embrace our traditions, culture and history, together with our values and respect for Parliamentary democracy' (Vale 2007, 14), and '[we] expect those coming here from other lands accept the values we cherish beyond mere lip-service as a ticket to self-indulgence' (Gash 2006, 152). Other aspects of a migrant's identity are assumed to give way to their allegiance and loyalty to their new Australian national identity.

A further assumption is made that a nation's identity will remain constant and the same. This insistence is expressed in this warning 'In our house, you must follow our rules or else go somewhere else' (Gash 2006, 152). Adding a citizenship test 'sends a message [...] to those who want to subvert or change Australia to their own form of dictatorship - that Australians show solidarity' (Cadman 2007, 58). Comments such as these reinforce the message that migrants should not seek to change Australian society. In this way, the requirement that migrants commit to Australian values communicates to migrants that they commit to assimilation, to becoming 'the same'. Australian academic Stratton notes '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). The language of cultural assimilation, although largely abandoned in Australia in the 1970s, re-emerged in 2007 in the parliamentary debates on citizenship. Many parliamentarians stated that migrants wishing to apply for Australian citizenship must 'integrate' (Ferguson 2007, 66) 'integrate successfully' (Markus 2006, 130), and even 'assimilate' (Gash 2006, 152).

The legal status of citizenship requires a commitment to 'Australian values'. This commitment is one that migrants make to integrate into Australian values, which is understood as a process of transformation and assimilation. Moreover, some migrants require 'more' integration than others.

4.2. The Integration Problem

If the bestowal of Australian citizenship status involves the cultural integration of the migrant, there is a risk that some will not be able to integrate adequately. A consequence of a political discourse that emphasises the cultural difference of migrants is that it enlivens the possibility, indeed the logical eventuality, of an 'integration problem.'

Some speeches articulated what a failure to integrate might involve. These migrants might 'come and not make any effort to fit in' (Thomson 2006, 180), or 'cling to the cultural values of the old country' (Gash 2006, 152). Signs of clinging to cultural values include creating ghettos 'where children are raised physically here but psychologically in a foreign country' (Danby 2007, 49). They might live in the Australian community but separate themselves. One parliamentarian worried that migrants might 'live in enclaves' (Emerson 2007, 62). Other signs of a failure to integrate included 'not speaking English' (Randall 2006, 158). The speeches implied that the failure to integrate is the failure of migrants to sufficiently commit to Australian values and not, for instance, economic reasons, lack of social supports or indeed, structural exclusion from Australian society. Some speeches concluded that the

reason that migrants are unable to integrate is because they are too culturally different.

Parliamentarians conveyed that the failure of migrants to integrate was undesirable because it undermines the meaning and value of Australian citizenship. Parliamentarians expressed concern that without integration, migrants might take up citizenship but not value it appropriately. They might, for instance 'take it for granted' (Gash 2006, 152). They might see the ceremony as a requirement rather than a celebration and once they have their certificate just 'walk out of citizenship ceremonies' (Byrne 2006, 121). Tanner MP expressed this general sense of concern, observing that the citizenship reforms 'were part of a wider debate in the community [...] which gives rise to a considerable concern about where Australia is heading, what the underlying ethos is for the community on which our society is built, and what it is going to be in the future' (Tanner 2006, 188).

Migrants might use Australian citizenship not only for personal economic gain, but they might also change the underlying political and social values of Australian society. The presence in Australia of the unintegrated migrant was understood to threaten the nation because the migrant may 'want to corrupt' or 'subvert or change Australia to their own form of dictatorship' (Cadman 2007, 58). 'We have to make sure that the rules that we have agreed on that make us feel free, remain the dominant rules and laws irrespective of how they are challenged or attacked' (Bishop 2006, 209).

In the face of these worries, some parliamentarians articulated a protective posture over citizenship status, restricting access to citizenship status. 'Australia rightly defends its freedom to choose who enters this land of ours and when and how people enter' (Henry 2006, 172). This protective posture was expressed in different ways, including using the strong rhetoric that citizenship is 'a privilege, not a right' (Campbell 2006, 19). As this statement is not strictly true about citizenship by birth (Rubenstein 2017), it conveys a desire to manage the threat to the nation through the laws relating to citizenship status. There were also assertions that parliamentarians had a special role to play in protecting the Australian nation and its national identity from threats, including cultural threats. '[It is] our responsibility to ensure that this country remains positive, free thinking and tolerant' (Gash 2006, 152).

In these speeches Australian values are racialised through the assumption that migrants are culturally different, and unless they integrate or assimilate, incompatible with Australian values.

4.3. The Muslim Other

Triandafyllidou argues that while migrants are frequently represented as different to the national population, at different times certain migrant

groups are represented as the nation's Other (Triandayllidou 2001). Through the nation's Other, the values of the national community are highlighted. The elements of a nation's identity that emerge as significant are those that enable the nation to claim comparative uniqueness and separateness from other nations (Triandafyllidou 2001).

The building of national identities in opposition to the Muslim migrant is successful in Australia, in part, because of its association with wider narratives. Western nations have a long colonial history of negative tropes about the Muslim Other (Said 1979). These colonial tropes have recently re-emerged in other liberal, democratic nation-states including the UK, Europe and the US.¹⁶ While scholars have argued that the Australian national identity has been constructed predominantly in opposition to the Asian Other, this section argues that Australian values are now constructed in opposition to the Muslim Other.

Othering is a process where an identity is constructed by what it is not. Some parliamentarians demonstrated a reflexive awareness that they were engaged in constructing Australian values through this othering process. Burke MP noted that 'we can often identify Australian values more easily by what they are not' (Burke 2007a, 42). Ripoll MP also acknowledged that 'I think there would be less agreement on defining what it is to be Australian than there would be on defining what it is to be 'unAustralian'' (Ripoll 2006, 242).

Although diverse ethnic groups were identified in the speeches, Muslims were the only group that parliamentarians criticised as holding values that are incompatible with 'Australian values'. For instance, Thompson MP observed that wearing headscarves and following Sharia law is inconsistent with 'Australian values' (Thomson 2006, 180). Johnson criticised an Australian Muslim religious leader because that leader described Australia as a 'Muslim country' (Johnson 2006, 137). Cadman MP denounced the participation of those 'of Middle Eastern appearance' in the 'Cronulla race riots' (Noble 2009). The Cronulla race riots was a day of heightened racial tensions between Lebanese (Muslim) Australians and 'White' Australians, which took place in 2005 in his Sydney electorate. Cadman MP elaborated 'These people failed to understand their commitment and responsibilities and privileges of being Australian' (Cadman 2006, 14). It is noticeable that Cadman MP did not criticise the violent behaviour of the other participants who were involved, those who were not of 'Middle Eastern appearance'. Other characteristics that were identified as incompatible with Australian values include: terrorism, violence, gender inequality and religious fundamentalism. These characteristics have been associated with

¹⁶ For a selection of literature see Morgan & Poynting 2012; Taras 2012; Rothe & Muzzatti 2004; Nayak 2006; Poynting & Mason 2006.

Muslims and Islamic culture, both in the past and more recently in the wake of September 11 (Poynting 2004; Noble 2009).

In addition, only two Australian citizens throughout all the speeches were criticised as unAustralian.¹⁷ These two individuals were both Muslim: Dr Ameer Ali and the controversial religious figure, Sheik al Hilali.¹⁸ Only Johnson's referred to both Dr Ali and the Sheik. Johnson MP criticised Dr Ali as unAustralian for stating that 'Australia is a Muslim country' (Johnson 2006, 137). However, all ten politicians specifically referred to Sheik al Hilali during their speeches.

Sheik al Hilali was an important Islamic leader in Australia. In 2007 he was the only religious leader to hold the title of 'Grand Mufti of Australia', which he held whilst an Imam at the Lakemba Mosque in Sydney. Prior to 2006, he had been publically criticised for holding very conservative Islamic views. In these ten speeches, the behaviour of the Sheik was described as a particularly egregious example of behaviour that did not reflect Australian values. Bishop MP directly stated 'I cannot not comment on the comments of Sheikh al-Hilali when we are talking about the concept of citizenship. There is a person who ought never to have been allowed permanent residency, let alone citizenship, in this country' (Bishop 2006, 209). Ferguson MP described the Sheik as 'unAustralian' (Michael Ferguson 2007, 66). Gash MP was likely referring to the Sheik when she commented that 'publicity has been given to a handful of cases where an individual who identifies as an Australian citizen is then seen to engage in anti-Australian behaviour' (Gash 2006, 152).

These ten parliamentarians identified specific characteristics and behaviours as evidence of the Sheik's failure to commit to the Australian values and Way of Life. The Sheik is 'disloyal to our country and values' (Johnson 2006, 137). Johnson MP stated that 'in recent days the issue of citizenship, loyalty to our country and values in our country has come to the fore with the remarks of a leader in the Muslims community. Of course, I refer to Sheikh al-Hilali' (Johnson 2006, 137). Cadman MP raised as a concern not only the Sheik's loyalty but the Sheik's inability to speak English.

Sheik Taj al-Din al-Hilali, whom I do not know; he became an Australian citizen. [...] Did that man, who does not speak English now, to the media [sic] understand what he was doing when he took the oath? I believe he has transgressed the weak oath that we have at the moment. (Cadman 2006, 14.)

¹⁷ Other individuals are mentioned, although these individuals are upheld as model Australians. Although these individuals come from a range of cultural backgrounds, only twice are Muslim individuals positively described. See parliamentary speeches by Jenkins 2006, 149 and Edwards 2006, 124.

¹⁸ See the reading speeches of Burke, Thompson, Tanner, Bishop, Cadman, Markus, Johnson, Slipper, Gash, Barresi (all speeches in ACA). Note that Sheik's name is spelled different ways.

The Sheik was described as unable to commit to Australian values because he did not believe in democracy, gender equality, and the Australian legal system. Nor was he loyal to Australia's institutions, as demonstrated by an inability to speak English. This inability to commit to Australian values was linked to the Sheik's religious identity. This narrative is successful because of a long, colonial history of negative tropes about the Muslim Other as associated with violence, misogyny and anti-democratic beliefs (Said 1994).

As a religious leader, the Sheik is portrayed as a representative of Muslim culture and beliefs. The ways in which he is understood to be unAustralian is linked to his perceived cultural practices and religious beliefs. So although the Sheik is one individual, he is used in these 10 speeches as an example which works to demonise Muslims more widely. Identifying the Sheik reinforces the wider public narrative that Muslims are incompatible with Australian values and therefore citizenship.

4.4. The Racialisation of Australian Citizenship

The narratives which attribute a particular person's behaviour as being caused by their religious or cultural affiliations, and then generalising this behaviour to all those with the same religion or cultural affiliation, is the process by which 'racialised' identity is produced.¹⁹ This is the process through which a group of people come to be identified and distinguished, and justifies an uneven allocation of social resources such as access to membership. An understanding of the racialisation of Australian citizenship through narratives of Australian values in political discourse can now be situated in its social and historical context.

In these speeches, there are a number of interconnecting assumptions. First, there is a culturally distinct group called Muslims.²⁰ Second, due to their cultural identification, Muslims are unable to commit to Australian values. Therefore, Muslims in Australia are not suitable for Australian citizenship. In this way, although the amendments do not explicitly exclude those identified as Muslims from accessing Australian citizenship, the narratives used by the parliamentarians about Australian values clearly imply this.

¹⁹ Of course, race is a concept that has been scientifically discredited. However, it continues to circulate. In particular, cultural groups are now 'racialised' (Balibar 1991, 17). Although race, culture, ethnicity and religion are different forms of social identity, they sometimes overlap (Reisigl & Wodak, 21). This article has used the concept to 'race' as an inclusive term to capture the diverse ways in which cultural and religious practices are associated with visual and physical traits (Stratton 2009).

²⁰ In Australia, as elsewhere, migrants who identify from Muslims may have originated from very diverse countries such as Indonesia, Pakistan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Iran and the Sudan, each with distinct religious and cultural practices.

The racialised assumptions about Muslims are noted by some parliamentarians. A few challenged the implication that Muslim values are inconsistent with Australian values (Nettle 2007b, 64). Some parliamentarians suggested that the language of Australian values was designed to target specific members of the Australian community, particularly Muslims (Bartlett 2007b, 69, Nettle 2007b, 64; Bartlett 2007a, 20, Anna Burke 2006, 163; Byrne 2006, 121; Edwards 2006, 124; Laurie Ferguson 2006, 132; Garrett 2006, 182; Hayes 2006, 168; Jenkins 2006, 149; Owens 2006, 168; Tanner 2006, 188, Thompson 2006, 180; Vamvanikou 2006, 196). Some noted that integration into Australian values is a coded exclusionary message (Laurence Ferguson 2006, 132), a process of 'singling out Muslims' (Allison 2007, 34), but 'not nam[ing] them' (Danby 2007, 49). The view that Muslim values are inconsistent with Australian values is criticised as emphasising a 'white picket fence' view of Australia' (Nettle 2007a, 25; Allison 2007, 34). Burke outlined the consequences of an exclusionary notion of citizenship and stated 'part of the context of this debate [citizenship testing] was keeping people from becoming citizens, weeding out undesirables, and the fact that some people had become citizens who should not have, and this would be a way to stop them' (Burke 2007a, 42).

These speeches articulated the meaning of citizenship status in opposition to the perceived cultural difference of the Muslim Other. The political discourse both reflects and reinforces the public view that Muslims are generally incompatible with Australian values. This incompatibility is presented as a threat to Australian citizenship. This in turn, helps to identify and represent a clearer sense of what the Australian national identity is, by what it is not.

This is not the first time that the language of Australian values and 'Australian Way of Life' has been used in an exclusionary fashion to bolster a sense of national identity. Australian scholar Richard White observes that the language of Australian values was deployed in the 1950s to articulate threats to the nation posed by migration, communism and the cultural influence of America (White 1979, 534). However, this article provides evidence to support the claim that the archetypal threat to citizenship and the Australian nation is no longer the Asian Other or the communist Other (Markus 1979; see also Ang 2001; Fitzgerald 2007; Walker 1999), but the Muslim Other (Hage 2003; see also Noble 2009; Poynting 2004.). These narratives about Australian values and the nation not only circulate in the reading speeches of politicians, they influence those who make decisions under the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007* (Cth). It also raises fear and suspicion about Muslims, who are already Australian citizens, questioning their commitment to Australian citizenship and placing their actions and activities under intense public scrutiny. In turn, this suspicion may well spur acts of public racist violence and discrimination.

5. Conclusion

This article explained how in 2007, Australian politicians emphasised citizenship as a commitment to 'Australian values'. These Australian values were broadly identified but culturally inclusive, including liberal values of democracy and equality.

Although the Australian government states that it regulates access to citizenship in a culturally inclusive manner, that article argues that the historical and social discursive context suggests otherwise. This article uses CDA to demonstrate how neutral reforms can nonetheless be complicit with racially exclusionary agendas. A critical analysis of the speeches demonstrated how the language of 'Australian values' enabled politicians to express concern about the failure of Muslims to integrate into the Australian community. The speeches also communicated how Muslims values were incompatible with Australian values. This racialised Australian citizenship by representing it in opposition to Muslim Other. In this way, the Australian political discourse on citizenship status perpetuates the racialization of the Australian nation.

The parliamentary speeches reviewed in this article are 'elite' discourse because politicians have privileged access to the media. The narratives of fear and suspicion about the Muslim Other expressed by politicians in these speeches reflect those same narratives in the public sphere, which serves to reinforce and naturalise them. As countries around the world increasingly focus on restricting access to membership through laws and policies, scholars committed to cultural diversity will need to remain attuned to these exclusionary narrative strategies hidden in the racially neutral language of national values.

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