Reinventing Australian Identity

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Geo-strategically located in Asia-pacific region and emotionally and culturally attached to the West, Australian identity has taken several turns and twists over a period of hundred years. No doubt, the Australian identity started with a Pure White British Man but over a period of time inclusion of Eastern and Western Europeans resulted in a shift in identity from Pure White to White. After the WW II, the demographic composition further changed and from White it turned into coloured,characterized by multiculturalism. However, the first decade of the 21stCentury evidenced a swift change from Multiculturalism to Australianism based on a certain value system. The follow up of thecore value system established an Australian identity.

It appears the current invention of the Australian identity has completed a full circle and takes precedence above all segregational cleavages and constitutes the core value system of the society. An attempt is made in this paper to trace the formative stage of the Australian population policy since the advent of British arrival,identify the circumstances and trace antecedents that resulted in a multicultural policy in the early 1970s and analyse the shift in the Australian values and their impacton the broader society in the 21st Century.

Evolution of Australian Identity

Starting with the British settlement in Australia in 1788, the flow of migrants and settlers continuedat varying paces as per the economic and political circumstances both in Australia and the Europe. The Gold Rush in 1850s added a new impetus to migration which in addition to White British category added the Chinese category, though for a short duration. A consistentpolicy for migration intake was developed in 1901 with the formation of the Federation. The White Australia Policy or the Immigration Restriction Bill based on the dictation test was introduced to retain "the noble idea of a White Australia- a snow whiteAustralia if you will. Let it be pure and spotless".[1]The first Prime Minister Edmund Barton endorsed the policy which was aimed at "controlling the leakage of colored immigration".

Geographically placed in the Asia Pacific region and culturally attached to Europe, Australia was quagmired between the emotional attachment and geographical reality. Against this backdrop, to evolve a policy to regulate the migration intake,guard security and assert dominion mono-culture posed a daunting challenge to the policy makers. Firstly, to maintain the Britishness and Whiteness; and secondly, to face the geographical and strategic challenges posed by the surrounding Asian countries. To overcome the above challenges, the new settlement of white people charted out the core values for the future development of the society that included"democratic and egalitarian, predominantly Christian, capitalist but maintaining a healthy balance between capital and labour, and high standards of living".[2] A major emphasis was put on the egalitarian nature of the society to maintain coherency and peaceful coexistence in the societyand to avoid domination of one section over the other.[3]

This policy continued successfully until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Between 1905 and 1914 some 390000 new settlers arrived, mainly from the British Isles. After the war, though majority of migrants continued from UK and Ireland but people from Italy, Greece and Yugoslavia also joined. The migration intake was further diversified by accepting refugees before the Second World War from Germany. This was a major sway from Britishness.

After the end of the Second World War several factors contributed in re-thinking about nature of the population policy in Australia. In the backdrop of the heavy Australian causalities during the Second World War, Japanese advances towards Australian mainland,vulnerability of Australia to a rising Japanese power, joining the allies against Hitler's racist policies, depleting source of migration from Europeand defending the Australian mainland, all these issuesattracted attention of the political leadership and intellectuals of the country alike.

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ArturCalwell, the first Minister for Immigration after the end of the Second World War, highlighting the predicament in which Australia was placed in the context of defense emphasized on "Populate or Perish" policy. He expressed the program's philosophy in a speech to the House of Representatives in November 1946: "The call to all Australians is to realize that, without adequate numbers, this wide brown landmay not be held in another clash of arms, and to give their maximum assistance to every effort to expand its economy and assimilate more and more people who will come from overseas to link their fate with our destiny".[4]At the same time, conscious of the migration intake, he suggested "maximum effective absorption capacity in any expanding country is usually two per cent of its numbers".[5]The aftermath of the Second World War proved a benchmark in Australian thought process about migration intake. Major changes included a diversion from mono-culturalism to multiculturalism, Whiteness, Britishness to acceptance of previously feared Asians. This was witnessed when an influx of large number of Asian refugees was accepted in Australia in the wake of Japanese invasion.Though the refugees were given space to settle but with an understanding that they would return after the War ended. Witnessing the depleting source of migration from Europe, lack of labour supply, unwillingness of Asians to return (association with Australia) and moralist and liberal education all contributed in considering the Asian people for settlement.

From 1947 onwards, the Australian Government relaxed many of the rigid restrictions on non-European settlement that had existed since the Immigration Restriction Act 1901. For the first time it involved attracting non-English speaking immigrants. Substantial numbers were recruited from refugee and displacement camps across the Europe. As a result, a wide area was focused that ranged from Britain to Southern Europe (Italy, Greece).

With the new government of Robert Menzies in office in 1949, there were not many alternatives left except for accepting people from throughout the Europe and Asian continent; howeverMenzies believed that Australia was emotionally and sentimentally linked to Britain. In his words: "Australian and Englishmen and South Africans and Canadians and the New Zealanders…are one people, with one ancestry…who met on the footing of an ancient alliance…an ancient brotherhood…created out of roots, that go deep into the history of our race".[6]Witnessing the multi-racial nature of the Australian immigrant population several opinions were expressed in 1960s for multi-cultural nature of the society but the concept of multi-culturalism was taken as alien.Billy Snedden,Minister of Immigration, spoke of 'multi-culture' in 1969, but only to reject the idea in favour of 'monoculture'.

Transition to Multiculturalism

The word Multiculturalism has its origin from two Latin words, 'Multus' meaning many and 'Cultura' meaning cultivation. So Multiculturalism can mean many different racial groups with their own culture mixing into one nation. Astatement from the federal Office of Multicultural Affairs defined multiculturalism as "the character of relationships existing between groups within the Australian community".[7]The concept of multiculturalism imported from Canada was blended in the Australian framework by Al Grassby during the Gough Whitlam government from 1972-1975. In a statement entitled A Multicultural Society for the Future, Al Grassby outlined and elaborated on ethnic heterogeneity and cultural pluralism in Australian context in 1973. He emphasized that without a multicultural society, NES (Non-English Speaking) migrants would become 'non-people'. He further asserted that the concept of "the family of the nation" was necessary to recognize and accept the culture that migrants carried with them rather than dismissing their distinctiveness. Based on Al Grassby's assertion, the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council (AEAC) developed three principles for a multicultural society, that is, social cohesion, cultural identity, and equality of opportunity and access.

Within a period of five years, Australian Council on Population and Ethnic Affairs (ACPEA), AEAC, and Australian Population and Immigration Council (APIC); agreed that multiculturalism was "the most suitable model for relation between all ethnic groups in Australia and as the preferred basis for government ethnic affairs policies". The ACPEA added the fourth principle to Multiculturalism, that is, equal responsibility for, commitment to and participation in society.[8]To make the environment conducive to implement multiculturalism, the Gough Whitlam government removed all the vestiges of the White Australia policy and declared the policy as "dead and buried".[9]Witnessing the high return rate of the migrants, in 1977, Zubrsyeky argued that one of the causes of the high departure rate of migrants was the lack of equality of opportunity for migrants in Australia.[10] However, the policy of multiculturalism was extensively implemented for the first time by Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser's Liberal National Country Party coalition government of 1976-1983.

Though it is a subject of debate why the multicultural policy was implemented by a Liberal government, however,Fraser had three main objectives in adopting the multicultural policy; one- to fold the migrant voters into his vote bank; two-feeling the tremors in the social cohesion, directthe society towards inclusiveness;three- de-shelve the government financial burden of managing ethnic affairs to the communities themselves.[11]At the same time, there are scholars who argue that Australia had reached a precipice stage where it was no more able to afford to neglect the migrants so the multiculturalism was a force to reckon with and had a natural evolution:"Australia's transformation into a multiracial (and not just multicultural) society was an unintended consequence of developments beyond the nation's own control; it was not something actively willed by the Australian community itself".[12]

Impetus to the multiculturalism was given by the Fraser Government by creating a special category for Lebanese and Vietnamese immigrants in 1970s. Taking a step forward in 1981, Bob Hawke government added new vistas to the immigration policy by providing special status to Soviet Jews, Chileans, Sri Lankans and others. This indicated a global nature of the immigration intake. A caveat in the migration law was created to cover this wide geographical intake under Global Humanitarian Programme.[13]Finally, a Special Assistance Programmewas introduced in 1991 to reunite the people fleeing Yugoslavia with their family members and relatives in Australia. However, this programme was abolished by the Howard Government in 1996.

Taking a serious note of the opposition Hawke faced from different sectors of Australian society about multiculturalism, in May 1984 in a major statement to the Parliament on immigration policy while affirming that Australia wassusceptible to fracture the stability and social fabric, he indicated that there were mechanisms in vogue to assess and analyse the size and composition of intake and provisions to integrate and promote racial tolerance.[14]Though skeptical in 1984 but by 1987 he firmly believed that multiculturalism was the future of the country. Re-confirming his commitment and outlining the advantages of multiculturalism, Hawkeemphasized in 1987 that his government was totally committed to the concept of Australia as a truly multicultural society. He said, Australia "has been immeasurably enriched by the contribution of immigration to our national life and by the success of the immigration program. It is one of our nation's greatest achievements that people have been accepted from a wide and diverse range of backgrounds, race, religion and culture".[15]
Notwithstanding Hawke's strong support for multiculturalism and underlining multi-benefits of multiculturalism, John Howard and Geoffrey Blaineyin Opposition Party endorsed caution about Asian immigration in 1984. In otherwords: "Howard has always felt uncomfortable about multiculturalism- an idea he only accepts reluctantly, as if it were an inevitability or a necessary nuisance".[16]

Howard frequently described himself as the most conservative Prime Minister in Australian history. Perhaps taking a que from the conservatives in the United States, he took multiculturalism affront. In an article entitled Multiculturalism: A Strategic Threat to International and National Security, Samuel P. Huntington is quoted as stating that multiculturalism was instrumental in "erosion of American national interests".Huntington further stressed that "diaspora interests are increasingly triumphing over American and Western national strategic security interests…. Media driven self-appointed and unelected ethnic lobbyists are positioned to subvert the democratic process".[17]Impetus to this idea was added by a group of journalists, supporting Howard, who aired the opinion that "multiculturalism denied Australian culture, the British inheritance and social cohesion."[18]Even John Howard had reservations in endorsing the word multiculturalism, he "refused to use the word 'multiculturalism' in public until 1999 and replaced the term 'Non-English-speaking background' (NESB) with 'culturally and linguistically diverse' (CALD)".After winning the election in 1996, his government not only abolished the Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research, and merged its remnants into the Immigration Department in mid-1996 and emphasized on the need for "ensuring that cultural diversity is a unifying force".[19]It forewarned that diversity and unity were two different issues and the latter may be achieved even at the cost of diversity. Perhaps an anti-thesis of the core values of multiculturalism.In 1996 Howard government abolished the Office of Multicultural Affairs and in its place constituted a Council for Multicultural Australia three years later.

Multiculturalism Challenged

The 1996 federal election appeared to be different than previous elections in the sense that Pauline Hanson, an Independent from Oxley, put forward a new agenda before the electorate. The newness in the agenda included an elaborate list of what Australia should do and not do.

Some of the major issues included: challenge from Asians, multiculturalism and liberal multiracial society be abolished, no privileges or reconciliation for the aborigines, repudiation of international obligations, free trade and economic rationalism, cease foreign aid—all aimed at building Australia as 'One Nation'.[20]

Pauline Hanson clarified her fear as: "If we were to have too many of one race coming in that weren't assimilating and becoming Australians, it would take over our culture, our own way of life and our own identity, and that's what I'm protecting."[21] To avert the damage that the ongoing influx of Asians was causing under the cloak of multiculturalism, Hanson focused on the assimilation process. Moreover, she strongly emphasized on the need for controlled migration: "Of course, I will be called racist but, if I can invite whom I want into my home, then I should have the right to have a say in who comes to my country".[22]

Hanson'swarning that the time was running out and only 10-15 years were left, perhaps she hinted at consequences of Asian migration toAustralia. The Asian migrants settling in the cities and developing their ethnic groups mushroomed in isolated colonies. In a policy document she stressed that immigrants (Asian) "will lead to the bizarre situation of largely Asian cities on our coast which will be culturally and racially different from the traditional Australian nature of the rest of the country."[23]However, the 2001 Census indicated that the composition of the Asians in Australian population constituted only 12 percent, whereas UK and Ireland constituted 26 percent, Europe 26 per cent, North Africa and Middle East 12 per cent, Oceania 11 per cent, the Americas 4 per cent and Sub Saharan Africa 3.5 per cent. Aborigines constituted 2.2 per cent. At a later stage Pauline stated more than ones that she was not against Asians *per se* but only against their forming of ghettos (segregational clusters). As of the 2001 Census the Australian population consisted of18,769,074people.Ofthis population: 23 per cent were born overseas, 43 percentwere either born overseas or had at least one parent born overseas.The top religions indicated constitute Christianity 12,763,880; Buddhism 357,814; Islam 281,586; Hinduism 95,448; Judaism 83,990. Perhaps a major concern for Pauline was the 23 per cent of Australians born outside the country, more than in any other nation apart from Israel;however the debate about how far Australia should bend to accommodate the values of new arrivals, or how far they should assimilate to Australian values, was not new.

Hanson a common person with the common person's issues tapped the pulse which was probably difficult to side track. As Ann Curthoys and Carol Johnson have remarked: "Hansonite politics, in one form or another, whether or not it revolves around Pauline Hanson herself, or around One Nation specifically, is a form of politics of the future not the past…. It is a politics that is here to stay at least as a significant minority factor in Australian political life".[24]

Pauline Hanson opened a Pandora box that was not only difficult for the Labour Party to respond but more so for the Liberal (coalition) ruling party of John Howard. Moreover, Hanson phenomenon took the Australian society a step back by opening an open debate on racism which was taken by the political parties and political elite groups as an 'untouchable' issue, mainly since 1970s. It was imperative for the ruling party to respond to One Nation agenda. John Howard while criticizing the racism issue, responded to Pauline Hanson: "I defend to the death your right to say it because a lot of voters agree with you".[25]This gave a chance to the ruling party to encourage public debate on the issue of racism, without being labeled as racist. Keeping the other issues aside (such as political, social and economic) raised by Hanson, John Howard pursued vigorously on the issue of migration and multiculturalism.

In 2001 to avoid the undesirable boat people, Howard introduced the "border protection bill aimed at having absolute control over who should be allowed to enter. This was evidenced when the *Tampa* people were not allowed to touch the Australian soil. Even Howard boasted in 2001 election campaign: "We determine who comes into this country and the circumstances under which they enter!", a statement very close to that of Hanson.[26]Even in June 2002 the government further tightened up theborder protection policy by excising all small islands off Australia's northern mainland from its migration zone to stop boat people off shore.This appeared as 'Pacific Solution' to avert boat people reaching the Australian mainland or its peripheral islands. The boat people were given three years Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) and subject to extension depending on the home country situation.As a result, the Howard government instead of considering refugees under the Refugee Convention and providing shelter without any discrimination or how they reached the country, were considered only for the Temporary Protection Visa for three years, subject to extensionbased on home country situation of the applicant. Against this backdrop, the Kosovars were sent back to their homeland.

Since 1954 with the signing of 1951 United Nations Convention by Australia, more than 599,000 people have arrived in Australia under humanitarian programs, initially as displaced persons and more recently as refugees but the policy under the Howard government changed direction in the sense that instead of general intake of the refugees, it was government's prerogative to choose from overseas refugees waiting in the queue, rather than accepting the refugees who fled their home countries and reached Australian waters or land. In addition, the people on TPV had no provision for family reunion or welfare services.In this case the refugees from Iraq and Afghanistan were the worst hit.

Facing the criticism nationally and internationally,only after entering into refugee return agreements with China, Vietnam and Iran, and in the wake of Federal election in 2004, the then Immigration Minister Amanda Vanstone adopted a flexible approach to grant TPV holders, who had been already considered as refugees, a chance to apply for permanent residency. Commenting on the people detained in the Baxter and Woomera Detention Centresfor years,a leading expert on immigration compared the detention with Second World War situation: "Not since the Second World War had any Australian government had so many people locked up without charge and without any crime being committed which would stand up in the court".[27]In the subsequent years, with increase in people from the Middle East and Asian countries,   their organized efforts resulted in some sort of lobbying and managed a major chunk of the family reunion intake. Parents and spouses with limited or no English and minimal professional skills had an easy entry in Australia. As a consequence, instead of mixing in the society at large, they formed their own groups. This was further highlighted by the Fitzgerald Inquiry in its report: Immigration-A Commitment to Australia. The report highlighted that the quality of immigration to Australia was declining and that multicultural policy was causing concern.[28]

Immigration Minister,Phillip Ruddock in order to improve upon the existing lacunae made strenuous efforts to get immigration policy 'back on track'. The 'back on track' appeared as an important improvement upon Whitlam, Hawke, Keating and Fraser's policies "especially multiculturalism and generous humanitarian and family reunion programs".[29]The policy shift was witnessed in the form of emphasis on points testing (educational qualifications; skills and experience; age and English language compatibility), encouraging overseas students to apply for permanent residency visa onshore, initiating working holiday visa programme, expansion of temporary entry for short term employees. Overall, the points test enabledonly the qualified people to migrate to Australia to overcome the shortage in skills. In this case, international students had an added advantage in the sense that during a period of two years as students they acclimatized and acquainted with the culture and society better with Australian academic qualifications.Yet the temporary visa holders and working holiday visitors were an added advantage in the sense that they visited Australia and contributed in the work force without government liabilities. These measures indicated giving impetus to the economy of the country. Though this programme has been quite successful but having focus on the skills test and boost to the economy there may be long term repercussions. A leading expert on Australian immigration and multicultural affairs has questioned the viability of this programme in long terms:

> It also limited other avenues into Australia such as family reunion or seeking asylum. The potential of immigrants was thus judged by their visa eligibility, rather than their overall potential. This denied the experience of history, which is that human cannot always be predicted by measures which are currently relevant, but may be outdated in a few years. Many have prospered from unpromising beginnings while others, however well endowed, have fallen by the wayside.[30]

This policy fitted very close to Hanson's fear of emerging ghettos of Asian hordes. In addition, some of the other issues raised by Hanson such as special status and treatment awarded to the Aborigines and measures initiated for reconciliation were also meted when the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission was dissolved in 2004 and so was the fate of reconciliation issue.Hanson outrightly opposed the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) as it constituted one of the majorpillars of multiculturalism. Subsequently the powers and jurisdiction of HREOC were curtailed, even issues like detention of children in Baxter and Woomeradetention centers went unheard for a long time. According to a critic, what the Howard government has achieved is not something innovative but has put a sweet coat on Hanson agenda:

> Indeed, one could say that one of Howard's…achievements has been to make Hanson's crude white populism respectable by translating it into mainstream common sense- a mainstream unwilling to seriously address reconciliation with Indigenous Australia and deeply suspicious of immigration and multiculturalism, especially when it is seen as a threat to 'Australian way of life'.[31]

In a similar vein, Hanson while justifying publication of her book Untamed & Unashamed - The Autobiography,she expressed her pain and anguish loud and clear and questioned about branding her as a racist by the Howard government. She further argued: "Another reason why I wrote this book was the frustration of being castigated as a racist by the media and major political parties after my inaugural speech. Yet the very same policies I advocated back then are now almost populist policy, being advocated today by the federal government".[32]

Reinventing Australian Identity

Australia's Centenary of Federation in 2001 celebrated with great fanfare projecteda number of achievements during a period of last hundred years. One of the biggest achievements projected was the multicultural aspect of the society. During last one century, Australia grew into a big "melting pot", mainly since it abandoned the White Australia policy in the 1960s and 70s and accepted multiculturalism. With a quarter of its population born Overseas, made it the country with the second highest such proportion in the world, and second only to Israel. Around the same time,the National Multicultural Advisory Council in its report entitled Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness submitted its report. The Council in its recommendations highly appreciated the vibrant multi-culture of Australia:

> Australian culture is dynamic. It starts with and retains its links to our total heritage, but is not a fossilised entity…it is a living, changing and interacting set of life patterns. It has been modified and enhanced by the arrival of many migrant groups. It continues to be developed by the evolution of ideas and customs within Australia and by global influences.[33]

Further emphasising on the inclusive nature of Australian multiculturalism it stated: "Multiculturalism is about and for all Australians….our original inhabitants, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as all other Australians, whether born here or overseas and whether of English- or non-English-speaking origin". The Council recommended that "future multicultural policies and strategies give high priority to outreach strategies that build bridges of understanding and mutual interest among individuals and groups of different cultural backgrounds, including between groups whose members are drawn from specific ethnic and indigenous cultures and more general community bodies".[34]

However the Council's recommendations for future policies proved short lived. Sending the Afghan and Iraqi refugees to Nauru and Manus (so called Pacific Solution) and finally urging them to return home, national political campaign highlighting terrorism as Islam oriented and support to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq created a tense environment mainly in the Muslim community in Australia.Moreover after 11 September 2001 and Bali Bombings, massive psychological pressure was put on the Muslim community.This situation turned into: "A state of unease, fed by images in the media and political sub-texts, now permeates Australian society. Equally, Australian Muslims are worried that they have become the 'other' who is being unfairly labeled and targeted".[35]The furry of Muslim community was further enraged in a December 2005 incident when a mob of white Australian youths, incensed by what they saw as offensive behavior by Lebanese youths, gathered on Cronulla, a south Sydney beach, and went on a rampage, beating up anyone they could find of Middle Eastern appearance. The riots and claims by the local youths that Cronulla was their ancestral place and outsiders were subject to entry restrictions left deep scars on the multicultural fabric of the society in general and Muslim community in particular. In response, the Islamic religious leadership not only reacted sharp and hard but challenged the British legacy and claims on Australian soil. Sheikh El Hilaly went to the extreme of accusing British ancestry by stating:

> They are the biggest liars and the most unjust, the Western people, especially the English people.
> The Anglo-Saxons arrived in shackles in Australia, while we paid for our tickets from our own
> pockets and we went there free. So we are more entitled to Australia than them. Australia is not
> Anglo-Saxon. Islam is deep rooted in the soil and it preceded the English arrival there.[36]

In addition, in another incident in a YouTube video made by Lebanese Muslim youngsters in Sydney while glorifying notorious gang rapist Bilal Skaf predicted that Australia would one day be a Muslim country.[37]This resulted in counter attacks from the ruling party. Even senior leadership was no exception. The Age published several statements that came in the wake of Hilaly's claims on Australian land. Treasurer Peter Costello warned that people thinking of coming to Australia who did not like Australian values and preferred a society that practiced Sharia Law should go elsewhere.

In a similar vein, the Education Minister Brendan Nelson bluntly warned (Islamists): "We want them to understand our history and our culture, the extent to which we believe in mateship and giving another person a hand up and a fair go. And basically, if people don't want to be Australians and they don't want to live by Australian values and understand them, well basically they can clear off".[38]

According to Acting Race Discrimination Commissioner Dr William Jones, Australians who appeared as Arab or Muslim by their dress, language, name or appearance were: "abused, threatened, spat upon, assailed with eggs, bottles, cans and rocks, punched and evenbeaten….People reported being fired from their jobs or refused employment or promotion because of their race or religion. Children have been bullied in schoolyards. Women have been stalked, abused and assaulted in shopping centres. Private homes, places of worship and schools were vandalized and burned. 'terrorist', 'dirty Arab', 'murdrer', 'bloody Muslim', 'raghead', 'Bin –Laden', 'illegal immigrant', 'black c..t' are just some of the labels and profanities that we were told have been used against Arabs and Muslims in public places".[39]Branding of Muslims as 'other' in a multicultural society like Australian "it leaves a lasting impression that contributes to a sense of alienation, distrust and fear of future discrimination and attacks". [40]

Australia proud of its multiculturalism that allowed its residents/citizens to celebrate both their heritage and the Australian culture for over three decades sent the nerve feeling deep down in the society. Against the evolving debate on who has better claims on Australia, the Howard government took tangible steps that were witnessed on 23 January 2007 Cabinet reshuffle. The name of the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) was changed to Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). Moreover, the government also revised immigration regulations that extended the waiting period before applying for citizenship from the existing two-year period to four years and a tough new citizenship test to assess proficiency in English, knowledge of Australian history and the applicant's grasp of civic responsibilities. The renaming of DIMA to DIAC represented a much deeper change in government policy: a shift of emphasis from celebrating the cultural diversity of its immigrant population to promoting an Australian cultural unity.In addition, the government supported that Australia and Australians must have commitment to core Australian values that include: liberal democracy, rule of law, sexual and racial equality, and a common language, English.The declaration of Australian Values appeared a justifiable measure to overcome the debate about who had what claims on the country. Howard indicated that the path for new settlers would be "you come to this country, you embrace its customs, its values, its language, you become a citizen".[41]

Conclusion

The issue of Australian Values is taking place against the backdrop of intense debate about how these values will shape the future of the Australian society. A school of thought headed by intellectuals like James Jupp believes that the change in name from DIMA to DIAC conveys a significant message to the society: "The new message is that this is a liberal, democratic, English-speaking society which has been well established and it is up to people who come from other cultures to adjust their behavior accordingly".[42]

Other school of thoughtthat supports immigrants'perspective stresses that Australian Values are exclusive in nature and promote racism. According to Keyser Trad, head of the Islamic Friendship Association of Australia: "I love these values, but when he [John Howard] talks about them, they are little more than clichés; they tend to be exclusive….They are encouraging racism through national pride. It's a recipe for a highly polarized society".In his attempts to highlight on the implications of the Australian Values, Trad added: "There's an attitude that if you are not white, you are somehow less equal".[43]In a similar vein,the Greens warned of a slide back to White Australia policy in parliament and labeled the current changes aimed at colour-blind immigration policy. Greens leader Bob Brown argued: "It's going to be harder to come to Australia if you don't have an Anglo background".[44]

Yet another school of thought that supports statuesque finds no faults with multiculturalism and recognizes that even if some issues appear, these instances alert the society about the contradictions in multiculturalism, and as forward-looking multiculturalists, Australia need to address them instead of back-pedaling. According to a freelance journalist: "It seems to me that this paranoid nationalism is a reaction to some choice words emitted by one or two members of our Muslim community, yet there is little evidence that our country is about to be swamped by extremist Muslim values".[45]

More precisely, TS Eliot commenting on the multicultural nature of the society supported that the *"country which receives culture from abroad without having anything to give in return, and the country which aims to impose its culture on another, without accepting anything in return, will both suffer from this lack of reciprocity".*[46]

Though Australia politically a vibrant and stable democracy, economically buoyant economy endowed with ample resources and socially a melting pot, admixture of peoplefrom over 200 countries, has a strong and straight forward trajectory of overcoming contentious and conflicting issues. The Australian Values though landmark in nature and scope, and a major deviation from the concept of multiculturalism attracted a healthy intellectual debate in media.Except the Islamic religious leadership, the response remained quite reticent and yet it is not clear how the society as such will react to the Australian Values in the long term. Moreover, in a globalized world, dominated by Western values the current Australian values appear to be fitting but in the Asian Century with increasing Asian influence how the Australian values will be perceived by the neighbouring Asian countries need to be seen.

End Notes

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[4]*Australia and Immigration 1788 to 1988* (Canberra: Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, 1988), p. 27.

[5] Arthur Calwell stated in August 1945, Ibid, p. 29.

[6] Quoted in Meg Gurry, "Identifying Australia's 'Region': From Evatt to Evans", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 49, no. 1, May 1995, p. 119.

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[8] For details seehttp://www4.gu.edu.au./ext/civics/cv02/mod03/cv02m03t02.htm

[9] Gough Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government, 1972-1975*(Ringwood: Viking, 1985), p. 501.

[10] For details see www.petra.ac.id/asc/people/multiculturalism/historical/theory.html-4k-

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[13] For details see *Australia and Immigration 1788 to 1988*(Canberra: Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs, 1988), pp. 62-72.

[14]Ibid, p. 78.

[15]Ibid, p. 89.

[16]Ang, n. 12, p. 65.

[17] National Observer (Melbourne), Summer 2002, Issue 51, p.7.

[18] Betts Quoted in James Jupp, "Immigration and Multiculturalism" in eds, Chris Aulich and Roger Wettenhall, *Howard's Second and Third Governments*(Sydney: UNSW Press, 2005), p.175.

[19] For details see Ibid, p.178 and also see Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness (Canberra: AGPS, 1999).

[20] For details see http://www.paulinehanson.com.au/pauline-maiden-speech.pdf

[21] Sydney Morning Herald, 23 July 1998.

[22] Pauline Hanson Maiden Speech, p.8.

[23] Pauline Hanson, One Nation, Immigration, Population and Social Cohesion Policy Document, 1998, p. 11.

[24] Ann Curthoys and Carol Johnson, "Articulating the Future and the Past: Gender, Race and Globalisation in One Nation Discourse", *Hecate*, vol 24, no 2, 1998, p.97.

[25] John Howard quoted in Jupp, n. 18, p.180.

[26] www.safecom.org.au/orwellian.htm - 45k-

[27] Jupp, n 18, p.185.

[28] For details see Fitzgerald, S, *Immigration- A commitment to Australia* (Canberra: AGPS, 1988).

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[30] Ibid, p.175.

[31] Ang, n. 12, p. 65.

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