

BECOMING AN AFRICAN DIASPORA IN AUSTRALIA

Language, Culture, Identity

Finex Ndhlovu



Becoming an African Diaspora in Australia

Also by Finex Ndhlovu

NATIONALISM AND NATIONAL PROJECTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA:
New Critical Reflections (*co-editor*)

THE POLITICS OF LANGUAGE AND NATION BUILDING IN ZIMBABWE

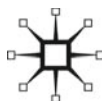
Becoming an African Diaspora in Australia

Language, Culture, Identity

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*To the memory of my father and hero, James Mabhuku
Ndhlovu-Mhaso. Although you missed out on the opportunity
to receive a modern education, you nevertheless understood the
transformative power of education and the promises it holds
for a better society*

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Preface

The first decade of the 21st century witnessed the resurgence of nationalist discourses on topics such as national sovereignty and national interest across the globe. This trend seems to be intensifying, albeit in the midst of an unprecedented increase in a complex and intricately connected linguistic, cultural, religious and transnational diversity that defies traditional identity imaginings of the nation-state. The Australian Liberal Government of Prime Minister Tony Abbott that was elected on 7 September 2013 launched its business with a military-style border protection policy dubbed Operation Sovereign Borders. This policy, essentially aimed at ‘protecting Australia’ against perceived ‘invasion’ by asylum seekers arriving by boat on the country’s shores, takes its cue from former Liberal Prime Minister John Howard, who once declared: ‘we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come’ (Liberal Party of Australia, 2013: 4). Back in 2011 the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron, defended his country’s decision not to join the European Union single currency zone, arguing that such a move would hurt Britain’s economic and ‘national interests’. He declared that he wanted ‘to make sure we get a good deal for Britain [and that] Britain would never join the euro’ unless there were ‘proper protections for key British interests’ (David Cameron, 2011). At the level of the United Nations (UN), the long-standing debates and differences over climate change policy have consistently been stalled by self (national) interests that have tipped the balance against collective global action on this topical issue. Arguments in defence of national (economic and political) interests, as opposed to the interests of the totality of humanity and the environment, have often prevailed in guiding member states on whether to ratify major UN statutes such as the Kyoto Protocol.

All the above are clear examples of how narrow state-centric and inward-looking nationalism seems to be influencing current identitarian discourses in a manner that is anachronistic to the realities of transnational diversity that are visible at both local and translocal scales. Australia’s Operation Sovereign Borders policy is a clear statement of national sovereignty emphasizing the need for the country to control its borders, which are imagined in spatial terms – as constituting a

completed and closed horizontality. Such a view of Australia and the underlying meaning of being and becoming an Australian contradict the dynamic and open-ended nature of current global cultural and political identities. It misses the real substance of the matter; that is, the crucial point about present conditions of unprecedented voluntary and forced transnational movements of human populations, goods and services, which are aided by the incipient rise in information communication technologies. These have meant that national borders are now social and transient virtual spaces that are constantly under construction. Unlike what they used to look like when they were invented in the late 18th century, national boundaries and their associated cultural and political identities are constantly in the process of being (re)made and (re)negotiated; they are never finished and are never closed. However, in spite of the overwhelming evidence of cultural, linguistic, religious and political pluralities across the globe, nation-state-centric forms of cultural and political insularity are still being pursued and vigorously defended by the governing authorities of individual countries – all in the name of safeguarding national interest. Australia in particular is still trying to wiggle out of the trappings of its racist past that produced a racialised and stereotyped national identity construct, which privileged Anglo-Celtic cultural and linguistic norms over those of indigenous Australians and non-European groups of immigrants. While this observation abounds in previous studies on Australian history, migration and politics, the conversations have unfortunately remained locked in tired and reductionist understandings of race, racism and the associated cultural and linguistic discourses about what it means to be an Australian. Much of the previous body of literature is replete with discourses of denial and mythologies of political correctness that do not capture those everyday experiential dimensions of belonging that play out in micro-social settings way out of the gaze of official master-narratives on Australian identity.

Becoming an African Diaspora in Australia contributes some groundbreaking conceptual and empirical ideas to extend in new directions the debate on identity, culture and notions of race and racism in Australia and internationally. It highlights discourses on indigeneity, nativism, migrant assimilation and integration, and discursive/symbolic forms of exclusion, as key identity categories that require a fresh look from a nuanced and progressive conceptual perspective. The book presents recent empirical evidence to develop the new language nesting model of diaspora identity and calls attention to the limitations of current cultural frames of identity representation, which have so far failed to

capture the complexities of contemporary transnational identities. It also attempts to de-naturalize the often taken-for-granted everyday assumptions and imaginings about the cultures and identities of African diaspora communities. To this end, the book invites us to revisit and rethink the vocabulary that we use to look at popular conceptual categories of identity – race, culture, language, ethnicity, nationality and citizenship, among others – in the context of a critical transnationality that recognizes the need to contain the hegemonic and universalising cultural theories of the past millennium.

Acknowledgements

While my doctoral and previous academic work already had a strong focus on several aspects of African studies, including language policy and politics, language and nation building and language and everyday forms of exclusion, the aspect on African diasporas was peripheral and less prominent. My interest in the broad field of African diaspora cultures and identities grew out of my postdoctoral work, started in 2008. My first postdoctoral research fellowship project, which investigated the role of English language proficiency skills in determining the outcomes of the Australian values test for citizenship applicants from African refugee backgrounds, was to be the genesis of my now well-established interest in African-Australian diaspora studies. For this reason, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Victoria University postdoctoral research fellowship scheme that enabled me to develop and consolidate my experience and expertise in the field of African diaspora studies. Three of the chapters in this book are greatly revised versions of my journal articles that were published out of the data collected as part of my postdoctoral research fellowship work. I am, therefore, thankful to Taylor and Francis for permission to use the following chapters: Chapter 3 'Language and Nationality: Prime Markers of Diaspora Identities?' (a revised version of Ndhlovu, 2009); Chapter 4 'Belonging and Attitudes Towards Migrant Heritage Languages' (a revised version of Ndhlovu, 2010); and Chapter 6 'Being and Becoming Australian' (a revised version of Ndhlovu, 2011). Chapter 7 'Language Practices in Regional Settings – The Language Nesting Model' is a reproduced version of Ndhlovu (2013), also with permission from Taylor and Francis.

I am also greatly indebted to the University of New England (UNE) for the Research Seed Grants funding scheme (Round 1, 2012), which enabled me to collect and analyse the data that culminated in some of the chapters in this book. In particular, the language nesting model presented in Chapter 7 was developed from the analyses of oral interview data on the language practices of emerging African communities in regional New South Wales. The model, which is among the most significant contributions of this book, is a product of collective effort between myself and my daughter, Thandi Thandaza Ndhlovu. I say thank you to Thandi for her valuable contribution. I would also like to thank all

members of the African community who participated in oral interviews and focus group discussions for their generosity with their time and information. To Tonkoh Kamara, Frank Jarfoi and Kassimiro Yanga I say thank you very much for facilitating the interviews and focus groups in Newcastle, Wagga Wagga and Coffs Harbour, respectively.

To all my colleagues in the School of Behavioural Cognitive and Social Sciences at UNE I say thank you so much for providing the much needed collegial environment and academic support. Finally, to my academic mentor, Professor Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni, thank you for your continued guidance and critique of my work, which has seen me grow and develop into the senior academic I am today. Finally, to Libby Forrest and the editorial and production teams at Palgrave Macmillan I say thank you for a job well done.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACCESS	Australian Assessment of English Communicative Skills
ACALAN	African Academy of Languages
AU	African Union
ACPEA	Australian Council on Ethnic and Population Affairs
AMES	Adult Migrant English Services
Cth	Commonwealth
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
DIEA	Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ELICOS	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
ESB	English Speaking Background
ESL	English as a Second Language
IRA	Immigration Restriction Act
NESB	Non-English Speaking Background
NSW	New South Wales
ORE	Occupation Requiring English
PRC	People's Republic of China
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
STEP	Special Test for English Proficiency
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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Introduction and Conceptual Issues

General introduction

This book is a transdisciplinary study that straddles the fields of sociolinguistics, migration studies, historical studies, intercultural studies and race and ethnic studies. It draws on data from five years of field work with African communities in regional and metropolitan Australia to provide new empirical and theoretical insights into how transnational identities and interests of small migrant populations can be pushed to the forefront of global identitarian debates. The book tells previously untold stories about the complex cultural, linguistic and political identities of African migrants in Australia and calls for a fresh look into the changing meanings of culture and identity in diasporic contexts. The number of people of African origin in Australia has grown extremely rapidly over the last two decades from a very small base. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) census data indicate that the number of people born in Africa rose from about 250,000 in 2006 to around 338,000 in 2011, representing an increase of 35.2 per cent within a period of five years (ABS, 2007, 2012). Most African immigrants come from multilingual communities and bring with them a rich repertoire of both homeland languages and ones acquired in transit. This means people of African descent living in Australia are an extremely diverse group, reflecting the linguistic, cultural, ethnic and political diversity of their continent of origin, and also their different immigration trajectories, histories and life journeys as migrants and as refugees. Their cultures, identities and linguistic repertoires, therefore, eschew any easy generalizations and are far more complex than is suggested by reified single-strand descriptions found in Australian and international policy debates and public media discourses.

Although there is abundant statistical and research evidence on the complex nature of the cultural and linguistic attributes of African diasporas (Ndhlovu, 2009a, 2010, 2011; Borland and Mphande, 2006, 2009; Bradshaw, Deumert and Burridge, 2008), very little is known (beyond a range of stereotypes) about what these people do in everyday life with their multiple language resources. Like most emerging migrant communities in Australia, African diasporas are often described using strand-based and deficit-led approaches, which emphasize the lack of (or having limited) English language proficiency skills and how this supposedly diminishes social networking opportunities within and across communities. Such a view overlooks the different cultural, linguistic and experiential capabilities of African diaspora communities that enable them to get by and make sense of their lives in the new immigrant environments. The prior linguistic experiences and capabilities of migrant communities are rarely considered from a strength-based perspective, focusing on how multiple language resources are deployed as social capital in identity formation processes and in creating social spaces leading to positive settlement experiences in Australia.

In this chapter I introduce the book, outlining its theoretical and empirical contributions. The chapter starts by laying out the unique conceptual and methodological approaches of the book with emphasis on how its approach to languages, language ideologies, culture and diaspora identities sets it apart from similar previous studies. Also discussed in this chapter are two theoretical frameworks that have informed previous and current perspectives on migration and diaspora identities, namely, the multiculturalism paradigm and the superdiversity approach. Multiculturalism was at the forefront of social policy agendas and guided the philosophy of identitarian debates from the 1960s to the late 1990s. This part of the chapter traces the surge in the mainstreaming of multiculturalism as the underpinning definitional trope in cultural narratives and identity discourses. It also shows how, by the late 1990s and early 2000s, a turn in discourses against multiculturalism began to emerge, giving rise to incipient calls for the need to rethink the usefulness of its principles in addressing fundamental questions of identity, culture, social justice and equality in a world that has become increasingly more complex. After discussing the limitations of multiculturalism the chapter turns to a critique of superdiversity and the claims made for its relevance to our understanding of migration-driven diversity, diaspora cultures and identities. Unlike multiculturalism, superdiversity is a more recent theoretical approach developed by Steven Vertovec in 2006 to describe the complexity of issues relating

to migration in the 21st century, particularly in Britain and across the European Union. While superdiversity was devised as a framework that would lead to a better understanding of the complex nature of cultural and linguistic diversity, surpassing the traditional strand-based multiculturalism approaches, the critique in this section exposes some of the limitations of this approach.

As the book searches for alternative ways to understand diaspora identities in a manner that is sensitive to unique individual and group experiences, this chapter also provides a critical appraisal of decoloniality as an alternative epistemological approach. The key contours of decoloniality are fleshed out with particular emphasis on how this framework from the Global South promises to shed some positive theoretical and empirical insights relevant to our engagement with diaspora cultures and identities. This critique is followed by a detailed discussion on the genealogy of diaspora identities. The chapter closes with a section outlining the organizational framework of the entire book and giving brief descriptions of what is covered in each of the subsequent chapters.

Aims, focus and scope of the book

The focus of this book is on the salient everyday forms of interactional identities and newly emergent modes of diversity that do not fit into the bureaucratic categories of identity as they are hidden from bald census data. It posits that the cultural and identity complexities of our current transnational moment cannot be adequately comprehended by the reifying conceptual logics of multicultural recognition. From this angle, the book argues for the need to sharpen our analysis and to think harder and differently about cultural representations and identities, and also challenges the relevance and usefulness of single-strand homogenizing identity markers such as country of origin/nationality, ethnicity, ethnic/heritage language, mother tongue and so on. A major cross-cutting theme of the book is that everything about African migrants in Australia – their languages, cultures, identities, life journeys and migration histories – both confirm and challenge theoretical and empirical postulations of previous and current conceptual frameworks, mainly multiculturalism and superdiversity. The book seeks to broaden how we look at diversity by rethinking the politics of identity in multiple ways that consider carefully the interaction of linguistic issues, situated discourse and ideology in the formation and (re)negotiation of diaspora cultural identities. With this focus, the book makes three significant theoretical and empirical contributions to the study of migrant and diaspora cultural identities.

First, the book raises the issue of informal social networks and interactions between groups, neighbours and friends as important components in understanding identity formation processes in diaspora communities. This contribution is set against the backdrop of failures of multicultural policies in Australia and internationally that seem to have overlooked the potential benefits of immigrants' prior multilingual practices as social capital for building individual and group identities within and across different communities. The book, therefore, addresses an issue of international significance as it explores various options for the recognition of multiple language practices as foundational blocks for identity formation processes among migrant and refugee communities.

Second, the book draws on data from on-site observable language practices of African diasporas to introduce the new theory of language nesting that advances the scholarly knowledge base in social science research on migration and identity in Australia and internationally. The book, thus, contributes to both basic research (by generating new information of intrinsic sociolinguistic interest) and applied research (by seeking to understand and inform issues of diaspora cultural identities and how they can be incorporated into national and international policy frameworks). Although there are numerous brilliant studies on migrant and diaspora community languages and identities in Australia (see for example, Clyne, 1982, 1991, 2005; Fernandez, Pauwels and Clyne, 1995; Kipp, Clyne and Pauwels, 1995), none of them has considered the sociolinguistic phenomenon of language nesting developed in this book and its potential contribution to a more nuanced understanding of individual and group identities among diaspora communities. The empirical chapters of this book mark a major advance in our knowledge of the discursive practices, identity narratives and sensibilities as well as the symbolic language behaviours of African diaspora communities. Overall, the book provides compelling evidence to support the argument that the convergences of local and global identitarian discourses are implicated in the dynamic nature of migrant cultures around the world.

Third, at a theoretical level, this book enriches theories of migration and diaspora studies with new inter-disciplinary insights leading to a refined understanding of how local social networking processes, mediated by multiple linguistic usage, interact with migrants' meanings and ideas about being and becoming transnational citizens. Such a focus is significant in that it extends the applied interests of the discipline of linguistics to illuminate the coping mechanisms and identity (re)negotiation strategies of diaspora communities both in regional

and metropolitan settings. These theoretical contributions promise to inform national and international social policy development and public debate in regard to the well-being of diaspora communities. Therefore, although there are some recent studies on discourses and debates around cultural identities in diasporic contexts (for example, Jaramani, 2012 and Block, 2008), they lack the conceptual and empirical innovations of this book, namely, the new language nesting model and how this framework constitutes an additional explanatory paradigm for a more nuanced understanding of linkages between temporal linguistic/cultural experiences and diaspora identity formation processes. The unique advantage of this book is that it surpasses single-strand approaches to the analysis and description of diaspora identities. From this perspective, the book hopes to be a pioneering and ground breaking study in this area by providing a combination of strong new theorization and empirical interventions on the subject of cultural identities in contemporary societies.

On the rise and fall of multiculturalism

The period from the 1960s to the mid-1990s witnessed a surge in the adoption of multiculturalism policies by many Western liberal democracies as a measure for increased recognition and accommodation of immigrant and minority cultural identities. Multiculturalism was considered part of a larger human-rights revolution motivated by the desire to overturn a range of pre-World War II illiberal and undemocratic relationships of hierarchy, which had been justified by racist ideologies that explicitly propounded the cultural superiority of some people over others (Bissoondath, 1994; Kymlicka, 2012). The foundational logic of multiculturalism was, therefore, to challenge the legacies of earlier ideologies of ethnic, cultural and racial hierarchization and replace them with democratic values of equality, diversity and the respect and recognition of cultural difference. In a 2012 report for the Migration Policy Institute, Will Kymlicka developed an eight point Multicultural Policy Index that attempted to capture the evolution of multicultural policies, particularly in Western democracies, and also to tease out the substance of multiculturalism in relation to immigrant populations¹.

Notwithstanding their positive intentions, multiculturalism policies also have a darker side in the persistence of racial hierarchies, inequalities and the social stigmatization of indigenous and immigrant minorities. Multiculturalism has failed to address the underlying sources of these issues, which are still alive and kicking under its watchful eye. Indeed, as Bryn Turner and Habibul Khondker point out in their recent book

Globalization: East West, 'multiculturalism as an idea of political cultural accommodation or as a policy option remains embroiled in complex controversies' (Turner and Khondker, 2010: 175). Multiculturalism and its associated policy ideals have, in fact, been criticized for unintentionally contributing to the further isolation, negative stereotyping and marginalization of immigrants and other ethnic minorities (Kymlicka, 2012). These limits of the ideological assumptions of multiculturalism, coupled with its blind spots, have led to incipient calls for alternative paradigms. Such calls have been inspired further by the increasingly multi-formed, multi-dimensional and convoluted nature of identities that require us to rethink our understandings of cultural and identity politics.

The critique of multiculturalism undertaken in this section, therefore, aims to address two theoretical and empirical questions that have been raised by other scholars of race, migration and identity studies: (a) Is the logic of multiculturalism celebrated among many Western liberal democracies sufficiently able to articulate those transnational frames needed to comprehend the cultural identities of diasporas? (b) In what ways do discourses of multiculturalism in nations of the Global North (that pride themselves on being multicultural democracies) end up being alibis for exceptionalism in relation to migrant cultural identities from the Global South? In addition to these questions, there are five strands of criticism that have been levelled against multiculturalism, both as a policy agenda and as a philosophy for understanding identitarian discourses. First, some critics and commentators in academia, politics and the media have pointed to the ways in which multiculturalism contributes to the marginalization of minorities by keeping them off serious policy agendas (Vertovec, 2010). The logic of multiculturalism is thus seen as being used to reinforce the neo-liberal modes of government in which the values of minorities are imprisoned and sacrificed at the altar of the hegemonic ambitions of the nation-state with its unfettered desire to govern and control. Second, others have suggested multiculturalism comprises a divide and rule strategy of governments in relation to indigenous and immigrant ethnic minorities, wrought by ethnic minority associations' competition for funding or political influence. Third, multicultural ideology has been criticized for being loaded with a misleading, tokenist and reifying view of communities as never-changing, socially bounded entities. The fourth criticism is of multiculturalism's overemphasis on the maintenance of culture while paying less policy attention to socio-economic imperatives and other non-cultural aspirations of groups and individuals. Fifth, multiculturalism has been criticized for often being

an official and institutional tool producing inequality instead of functioning as a framework for inclusion (Vertovec, 2010; Shome, 2012). This criticism stems from the realization that multiculturalism seems to have facilitated the cultural and linguistic profiling of different groups of people leading to the emergence of social hierarchies, which are often easily justified on grounds of cultural difference. The consequence of the reification of these social structures, sustained by the rosy promises of multiculturalism, is to inadvertently provide fodder for many forms of inequality; including the entrenchment of bigotry, discrimination and colour blind racism (Please refer to Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion on the key components of colour blind racism).

These failures and the apparently disingenuous nature of multiculturalism are summed up in Stuart Hall's (2001: 3) poignant criticism:

Over the years the term 'multiculturalism' has come to reference a diffuse, indeed maddeningly spongy and imprecise, discursive field: a terrain of false trails and misleading universals. Its references are wild variety of political strategies. Thus conservative multiculturalism assimilates difference into the customs of the majority. Liberal multiculturalism subordinates difference to the claims of a universal citizenship. Pluralist multiculturalism corrals difference within a communally segmented social order. Commercial multiculturalism exploits and consumes difference in the spectacle of the exotic 'other'. Corporate multiculturalism manages difference in the interests of the centre.

A number of other political theorists (for example, Brubaker, 2001; Jopkke, 2004; Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010) have added their voices to this rebuttal, questioning in particular both the basic premises and assumptions and claims about the perceived alliance between multiculturalism and liberalism. For Raka Shome (2012: 145) the biggest downside of multiculturalism lies in conceptual logics that 'often remain situated within a nation-centred ethos of citizenship, justice, rights, and identity, and also in West-centric assumptions about "freedom", "belonging", and "democracy"'. Shome further argues that, in a transnationally connected world, categories of culture collide in messy and criss-crossing ways that defy any sense of neat or organized patterns. In particular, the globalization of media, capital, culture and the assertion of multiple non-Western modernities have given rise to new and complex identities and identity narratives that collide and collude in unprecedented ways. Echoing the words of Scott (1999) and Hall (1996), Shome

posits that the 'problem space' of culture requires new significance in a world of connected and colliding modernities where what happens 'elsewhere' impacts the 'here' and where the 'elsewhere' and 'here' are not always geographically where we think they are (Shome, 2012: 145). These are complex issues, which insular and reifying multiculturalism perspectives have failed to capture adequately. The theoretical concepts and logics of multiculturalism have not been able to speak to what Hage (2010: 235) has typified as the 'ungovernable intercultural and transnational relations that interrupt nation-based multicultural governmentality'. Therefore, in order for us to fully grasp the logic of cultural tensions and dynamics in shifting landscapes, such as those occupied by African diaspora communities in Australia, we need to re-examine the tendencies and conceptual frameworks through which we theorize the experiences of these people and the issues besetting them.

These reservations about the usefulness of multiculturalism are particularly prompted by the persistence of discrimination and racism against ethnic and immigrant minorities in countries such as Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, Germany and in most of the European Union where multiculturalism policies have previously been embraced and successfully brought into the mainstream of the public sphere. The theory and practice of multiculturalism have recently come under intense scrutiny from political leaders of leading Western liberal democracies, particularly in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States of America, the Bali bombings of 2002 and the July 2005 bombings in London. For example, in 2010 German Chancellor Angela Merkel declared that multiculturalism had been an 'utter failure'. Similarly, British Prime Minister David Cameron bemoaned the failure of multiculturalism, which he suggested was fostering extremism. David Cameron pointed specifically to what he described as immigrants living 'parallel lives' when the expectation is for them to integrate into the values of the British 'national culture'. Along the same lines, in February 2011 then French President Nicolas Sarkozy suggested the concept of multiculturalism was a 'failure', declaring that: 'We have been too concerned about the identity of the person who was arriving [in France] and not enough about the identity of the country that was receiving him.' (*The Telegraph*, 11 February 2011) In a televised interview in which he singled out Muslim immigrants, Sarkozy went further, declaring that 'we don't want a society where communities coexist side by side', which suggests multiculturalism has failed to achieve the neo-liberal ideals of a somewhat seamless and cohesive French society.

As argued in the discussion that follows, what multicultural policies have succeeded in doing is to produce multiple monoculturalisms, multiple monolingualisms and multiple monolithic identities that exist side by side in a shared geo-political space known as the nation-state. Arguably that the real problem is not the immigrants but the unreasonable, if not unrealistic, expectation that in its current iteration the theory and logic of multiculturalism would have achieved the onerous task of producing and promoting singular unitary social and cultural groups. It is inevitable that its policies will result in multiple communities co-existing in a non-seamless way as there is nothing that binds them together other than shared geographical space. There is certainly no problem with this type of a society. The only thing that makes such a social arrangement somewhat untenable is the overarching multicultural conceptual framework that is locked in the nation-state-centric view of cultural identity, which fails to step up to the reality of transnationality – including multiple competing and contending relations of modernities that traverse the ever-shifting frontiers of belonging and identity narratives.

In Australia, in particular, multiculturalism policies introduced in the 1970s by Malcom Fraser's Liberal Government have always been seen as a positive move that paved the way for a more open, tolerant and welcoming Australian society against the backdrop of previous White Australia policies that were overtly discriminatory (see Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion on the genesis of multicultural policies in Australia). Australian multicultural policies sought to achieve a number of things including: cultural maintenance and institutionalizing ethnic difference; addressing the negative consequences of Australia's old identity as 'white' and 'British'; and providing an identity option for an Anglo-Saxon settler society without its own founding myth (Joppke, 2004). Three policy documents shaped the form and content of the Australian multiculturalism discourse: the Galbally Report of 1978; the Australian Council on Ethnic and Population Affairs (ACPEA) document titled *Multiculturalism for all Australians: Our Developing Nationhood* (1982); and the *National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia* (Australian Government, 1999). This last was the key government statement on multiculturalism that was to shape national discourse in this area to the end of the last millennium. However, it is important to note that the *National Agenda for Multicultural Australia* could not avoid falling back into the trappings of resurgent and supremacist White Australia policy since it stated: 'Our British heritage is extremely important to us. It helps to define us as Australian... It is a large part of what makes Australia attractive to immigrants and visitors.'