

## Modes of 'un-Australianness' and 'un-Germanness': Contemporary Debates on Cultural Diversity in Germany and Australia

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Between 22 January and 10 February 2002, a number of articles in Australia's major broadsheet newspapers<sup>1</sup> dealt with what came to be remembered as the 'Woomera crisis'. One letter to the editor enquired whether violence was the only thing the current detainees knew and asked whether they could ever:

learn to live in our peaceful, easy-going country, which is built on the strength and tolerance of the people who have made it a place where we can all live in peace? They only extend their waiting time with their un-Australian activities.<sup>2</sup>

The then Federal Minister for Immigration Phillip Ruddock was quoted saying that 'lip-sewing is a practice that is unknown in our culture ... It is something that offends, I think, the sensitivities of Australians'.<sup>3</sup> Prime Minister John Howard similarly condemned the protests, labelling them as 'un-Australian'.

While a number of Australians, including the government, clearly saw 'un-Australian behaviour on the refugees' side, a number of articles nevertheless made a different judgement. One author maintained that there are 'plenty of Australians who think that the policy of detention at present is un-Australian', while another decried the 'shameful treatment of the detainees' and urged the prime minister and the minister for immigration to 'allow the detainees to be assimilated into our already rich multicultural society'.<sup>4</sup> At another level of the dispute, Australians themselves were branded 'un-Australian'. Several commentators suggested John Howard 'should be called "un-Australian" of the Year for his handling of the refugee issue'.<sup>5</sup> The prime minister, on the other hand, blamed critics of the detention policies for 'an un-Australian lack of concern for sovereignty and security'.<sup>6</sup> The then Federal Workplace Relations Minister Tony Abbott branded activists rallying for the improvement of conditions in the camps 'un-Australian', alongside supporters of reconciliation and the republic.

This rash of 'un-Australianness' might at first glance not appear to convey any deeper logic. The following quotation from another letter to the editor nevertheless provides some insight into the issues that were at stake in this particular political dispute: 'The recent debates ... show evidence of a political game Australians are playing: the game of redefining them and us. At the heart of this game is identity and the questions, "Who are we?" and "Do I belong?"' The author goes on to argue that the government's marking of the asylum seekers' protests as 'un-Australian' exposes itself as the effort 'to reveal them as being so unlike you or me that treating them differently should not bother us'.<sup>7</sup>

This article investigates the struggle for the definition of 'them' and 'us' in contemporary public debates in Germany and Australia. The augmented employment of terms such as 'un-Australian' and its German counterpart

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*Leitkultur* (leading or core culture) are in this context understood as indicative of 'discursive events', those contested fields of debate that deal with questions fundamental to society's self-image.<sup>8</sup> In Foucault's words, these debates could be qualified as discourses that 'give rise to a certain number of new speech acts which take them up, transform them or speak of them'.<sup>9</sup> Discursive events are moments of diagnostic value that allow for a cross-sectional insight into society's contested positions toward the issues addressed in such debates, as well as for their internal relations. In this context, 'un-Australian' and *Leitkultur*, the indicators of those discursive events that are the subject of this article, should not be taken to convey a singular meaning. Rather, I show how these terms are themselves subject to contestation as certain socio-political groups attempt to impose their interpretation in order to obtain discursive hegemony over the notions of national identity communicated through them.

Literature concerned with concepts of national identity habitually regards Germany and Australia as representative of two opposing camps in their conception of nationhood. Citizenship ceremonies on Australia Day are performative displays of the nation's openness to new members. While Australia actively encourages recent migrants to join the nation,<sup>10</sup> Germany's citizenship laws have traditionally been based on the concept of *ius sanguinis* (law of blood), with implications of primarily racial categories. Comparative work concerning the German and Australian approach to cultural diversity often refers to this distinction as the basis for considerable differences in both nations' 'imagined community',<sup>11</sup> as well as their respective understanding of multiculturalism.<sup>12</sup> While in Australia 'multiculturalism is the philosophy underlying Government policy and programs',<sup>13</sup> and the term is thus part of a state sanctioned vocabulary, it is a contested concept of varying, mostly negative, connotations in German debates on cultural diversity.

What these differences in nomenclature tend to veil is the genuinely heterogeneous make-up of both countries' populations, which stimulates fierce debates over the nature of national identity on either side of the globe. This perspective ignores at least two points: the recent changes in German citizenship laws and a more general debate on the country's immigration legislation<sup>14</sup> on the one hand; and the fact that — despite of decades of multicultural politics — Australian identity continues to be imagined as predominantly Anglo-Celtic on the other.<sup>15</sup> The augmented employment of 'un-Australian' and *Leitkultur* indicates striking similarities in contemporary debates on cultural diversity in both nations. These are particularly obvious in the manner in which certain so-called elites determine the discursive symbolism of national identity. The content of such debates is of less importance than the performative gestures that constitute them.

The structural rather than 'substantial' character of these debates explains much about the vehemence with which they have been contested. The dominant role played by 'Un-Australian' and *Leitkultur* in public discourse has been remarked upon with surprise. In the German context it was argued again and again that the word must have 'hit a nerve', verbalising 'a problem felt by a large number of citizens, [until now] ignored or avoided by politicians, but which can no longer be subdued'.<sup>16</sup> From an analytical perspective this notion of a neglected social problem finally obtaining public recognition appears somewhat naïve. The

recurring judgement of *Leitkultur* and 'un-Australian' as 'empty', 'superfluous' 'imprecise', 'artificial' and 'phantomlike',<sup>17</sup> as well as repeated demands to clarify the terms,<sup>18</sup> already contradict this interpretation. Critiques of the terms' 'emptiness' also miss an important point: it is their very emptiness that qualifies *Leitkultur* and 'un-Australian' for their prominent role in public discourse.

Critical discourse analysis understands public debates not as objective and neutral exchanges of opinion but as processes of domination and marginalisation, in which participants will try to enforce their interpretation of certain concepts such as 'un-Australianness' and German *Leitkultur* as correct or even natural. This dominance over discursive keywords is of importance because it is through discourse that ideologies are produced and reinforced. In this context Pierre Bourdieu observed that 'Political discourses have a sort of structural duplicity. They seem to be directly addressed to the mandators, but in reality they are aimed at competitors within the field'.<sup>19</sup> With a slightly different focus, Ghassan Hage detects structural duplicity in Australian debates on immigration, stating that they should be understood as 'rituals of White empowerment — seasonal festivals where White Australians renew the belief in the possession of power to talk and make decisions about Third-World-Looking-Australians'.<sup>20</sup> I argue that uses of 'Un-Australian' and *Leitkultur* do not only, and maybe not even primarily, concern themselves with the issues they appear to address. Rather, they have to be understood in terms of a struggle within both societies' core groups over the domination of the discursive symbolism of national identity.

### Un-Australian

Despite the fact that the term 'un-Australian' only emerged into common Australian usage in the late 1990s, it has a history extending into the early decades of the twentieth century. Richard White even traces its use back to the time of federation when patriotism served to obscure the prevailing and increasing social differences in Australia and 'class loyalties were condemned as divisive and un-Australian'.<sup>21</sup> Philip Smith and Tim Phillips, who provide a short overview over the term's history, contend that it historically belonged to a broader set of expressions used by conservatives fearing subversion and anti-loyalist activity in the years after world war one in order to decry non-whites and communists, such as the 'yellow peril' or 'fifth columnists'.<sup>22</sup> Although Smith and Phillips find no instances of the term's use during the second world war and the anti-communist discourse of the Menzies era, they do argue that its usage is strongly implied in the greater context of these referent discourses.<sup>23</sup> They conclude that 'un-Australian' in these years functioned mainly as a discursive device limited to the political arena, where it was employed by the political right in order to erect certain borders around the national self-image. It served to make allegations of subversion and disloyalty about political opponents on the left, as well as keeping out undesirable foreigners. Smith and Phillips find no evidence of its use in the following decades until the re-emergence of 'un-Australian' in the public debates of the 1990s, where its usage is no longer limited to the political right but extends into a variety of contexts.

In an *Age* article in June 1998, Craig McGregor offers an explanation for the increase in the term's employment:

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The term 'un-Australian' has been used a lot recently, about everything from the goons and guard dogs used during the waterfront dispute to the threat of a national strike, and by everyone from John Howard to Pauline Hanson to the veteran green bans campaigner Jack Munday ... It's a sign, perhaps, of the deepening divisions in our society that it is used, and by people from all parts of the political and social spectrum. When a nation's social cohesion is threatened, the calls for some sort of national unity grow stronger.<sup>24</sup>

McGregor's judgement links the use of 'un-Australian' to changes in the social composition of Australia. He cites Pauline Hanson, who argues that 'The thought of what is un-Australian is interesting because in many ways an examination of this makes it a little easier to grasp who Australians are'.<sup>25</sup> These analyses of the term's employment offer a fruitful way of investigating what Gregory Melleuish and others conceive of as a 'culture war'<sup>26</sup> raging in Australia, and which Jon Stratton has described as being 'about how Australia can be thought of as a nation'.<sup>27</sup> 'Un-Australian' from this perspective becomes visible as a discursive tool employed with the desire to dominate discourse on national identity. In order to analyse the term's use I will look at one of the major debates in which 'un-Australian' has been employed recently in depth in order to identify the values and images promoted as Australian through its employment, as well as the socio-political groups involved in the debate.<sup>28</sup>

In September 2000, the World Economic Forum at Melbourne's Crown Casino attracted a large number of protesters, who were met by an equally strong police force. These protesters successfully prevented two hundred of the eight hundred delegates from arriving at the venue, among them Western Australian Premier Richard Court, who was trapped in his car for over half an hour, leaving the vehicle spray-painted and its tyres slashed. In the course of the increasingly violent protests, five police officers and around one hundred protestors were injured.

After managing to enter Crown Casino, Victorian Premier Steve Bracks apologised to the forum's national and international participants: 'Could I say that I condemn outright some of the protesters for the action they have taken. It is not Australian — it's very un-Australian'.<sup>29</sup> Court, once freed from his car, declared it was a 'sad day for the nation's history', also rejecting the protesters' violent behaviour as 'un-Australian', for 'In this country we have a history of having peaceful demonstrations'.<sup>30</sup> John Howard, who was able to slip into the conference venue by boat from the Yarra River, similarly attacked the events as 'hooliganism, unacceptable and un-Australian'.<sup>31</sup> As in the case of the 'Woomera crisis', other parties involved in the conflict also employed the term 'un-Australian'; in the subsequent days a number of complaints were made against police violence: 'The most 'un-Australian' thing arising from the S11 action at the WEF's Crown Casino assembly, has been the adoption of the brutal police tactics used by former South African pro-apartheid regimes'.<sup>32</sup> The local government received its share of criticism and a letter to the editor nominated Victorian Premier Steve Bracks for 'Un-Australian of the Year'.<sup>33</sup>

What notions of identity do all these statements on 'un-Australianness' convey? Both politicians and their critics rejected the high level of violence of the preceding days as 'un-Australian' and, consequently, advocated an understanding

of the Australian nation as peaceful and fundamentally harmonious. A closer look at these statements however shows that both sides addressed further issues. It was not only the use of violence but also the protesters' ability to resist state power that informed government deployment of the label 'un-Australian', thus turning their own discursive position as representatives of the state into the definition of Australian identity. As the World Economic Forum was an international event with guests such as Bill Gates, it also becomes evident that the protesters' 'un-Australianness' was caused by apprehension at the prospect of such images being transmitted to the world. Citizens are expected to support the good international standing of their nation, and it was at this fear of damage to Australia's reputation that the protesters' chant 'The whole world's watching'<sup>34</sup> was aimed.

From the perspective of the government's critics, another set of contributions to the debate is particularly interesting. Letters to the editor vehemently rejected Brack's, Court's and Howard's negative characterisation of the protests by relating them to essential myths in Australia's nation-building:

It used to be that we revered the rebellious larrikin and viewed authority with suspicion. Our heroes were not politicians, police or the Packers of the world, but the swagman of Waltzing Matilda fame who shoved a stolen sheep in his tuckerbag, the bushranger Ned Kelly and the brave miners who took on the military and police during the 1854 Eureka Stockade.<sup>35</sup>

Our heritage includes agitation to end convict transportation, the Eureka Stockade, Vietnam War protests and the fight to save the Franklin River.<sup>36</sup>

In opposition to the image of Australia as a peaceful and unified nation, these commentators called upon historical figures such as Ned Kelly and the gold diggers of the Eureka stockade as icons of Australia's national identity representing the Australian values of anti-authoritarianism and larrikinism. Ironically, however, many of the statements refer to these values as belonging to a lost or, at least, threatened heritage. The conception of Australia's identity these contributors defend in their use of the term 'un-Australian' is conceived of as threatened by 'powerful corporations' and the impact of economic globalisation upon the nation:

The Prime Minister derides the Melbourne protests as un-Australian (like the Eureka stockade?) and says they threaten the lawful business of democratically elected leaders. Since when are CEOs of multinational companies democratically elected? Meanwhile, Treasurer Costello admits that the dollar and fuel (and presumably, therefore, the economy) are beyond the Government's control, being run by international events. This would suggest globalisation has achieved one of its aims - making national governments (and democratic rule) irrelevant. The irony is that successive Australian governments have assisted this process in every way they could. Now that should be un-Australian!<sup>37</sup>

Before the role of the effects of globalisation on the debate on Australia's national identity — and similarly, German identity — can be analysed, however, some thought has to be given to the socio-political background of the speakers who employ the term.

The above responses to the 'Woomera crisis' and the 'Battle of Melbourne' suggest that all kinds of social groupings employ 'un-Australian' in order to

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denounce their political opponents, as a number of positions in these debates are marked by the use of the term. However, a close analysis reveals a set of preliminary conditions for the employment of the term, which limit the group of its employers to the elites of Australia's discourse on national identity.

Firstly, one has to be a certain kind of Australian in order to speak of 'un-Australianness'. Already the fact that the majority of those from a non-English-speaking background refrain from calling themselves Australian<sup>38</sup> makes it very unlikely that this group would engage in using the term 'un-Australian' in order to disqualify people, values and behaviours not in accord with their notion of Australianness. Indeed, of all articles analysed for this study, the term's employment was only once attributed to someone from a non-English-speaking background. In September 2001, the head of the Islamic Society of Victoria, Sheik Fehmi El-Imam, called on the prime minister to take a stronger leadership role to stop the abuse Muslim Australians had to suffer after the terrorist attacks in the United States. El-Iman urged Howard 'to be firmer ... and say that this sort of thing is un-Australian, inhuman, unethical and not to be done here'.<sup>39</sup> Ghassan Hage's distinction between different levels of 'national belonging' is helpful in this context for an analysis of the differences between citizens in their relationship to the 'un-Australian'. Relating to Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital, Hage argues that 'practical nationality', a mode of belonging to the nation with a cumulative nature, is unequally distributed amongst citizens. Consequently:

there are nationals who, on the basis of their class or gender or ethnicity, for example, practically feel and are made to feel to be more or less nationals than others, without having to be denied the right to be nationals as such.<sup>40</sup>

Only those citizens possessing a high number of desired national traits such as accent, tastes, cultural preferences and physical characteristics can obtain a 'governmental belonging' to the nation. This expresses itself amongst other things in 'managerial statements' typical of the employment of 'un-Australian' and, as will be shown below, *Leitkultur*. It is through these statements that the national aristocracy voices its understanding of a 'national order', as well as its expectations of other national subjects.<sup>41</sup>

Secondly, except during the Woomera crisis, refugees and so-called ethnics were very seldom addressed as 'un-Australian'. It appears that one not only has to possess a certain amount of national capital in order to employ the term but also in order to qualify as 'un-Australian'. Taking these two observations into consideration and examining the notions of Australianness found in the analysis of the term's employment, it becomes obvious that although they do represent a broad spectrum of values and images, this diversity only veils the fact that they are expressions of an Anglo-Australian national belonging. Although the term itself cannot be reduced to a single or fixed meaning, simply using it in order to criticise the behaviour of others constitutes the speaker's own position as the normative definition of Australianness.<sup>42</sup> As the following analysis of the employment of *Leitkultur* in the German debate on immigration will show, this positioning as the nation's aristocracy assumed by employers of 'un-Australian', as well as their claims to a 'national order', offer a point of comparison between German and Australian discourses on national identity and cultural diversity.

### *Leitkultur*

The *Leitkultur* debate was an integral part of the broader context of changes in the conception of German citizenship and immigration in past years. The dispute over the term, which dominated Germany's public life for three months in late 2000, was triggered by Friedrich Merz, then chairman of the conservative Christlich Demokratische Union/Christlich Soziale Union (CDU/CSU) delegation to the German parliament. In a reaction to the government's intended changes to immigration laws, he had insisted on 'obligation of migrants to adapt to a German "Leitkultur"'. Subsequently, the CDU/CSU not only had to defend this statement against the allegations of racism it was said to convey but also to struggle to define German *Leitkultur* in a feasible way. Nevertheless, in spite of the public outcry the term had caused, the party ultimately insisted on its use and included it in their concept paper on immigration presented in early November 2000.

Next to its discourse-strategic function of dominating the political vocabulary on immigration, *Leitkultur* became associated with specific contents in the course of the debate. One of them was its opposition to so-called 'parallel societies' in which, as argued by Premier of Bavaria Edmund Stoiber, 'no efforts were made for integration but only ghetto building'.<sup>43</sup> In line with Stoiber, local politician Johannes Singhammer referred to *Leitkultur* when he condemned the :

uncontrolled immigration in Munich which assisted the development of 'parallel societies' and which had already resulted in school classes where 80% of the students came from a non-German speaking background.<sup>44</sup>

There is more to these statements than merely the hidden racism that opponents of *Leitkultur* repeatedly excoriated. Like Ghassan Hage, who conceives of statements of this type as expressions of 'nationalist practices',<sup>45</sup> I do not want to play down the racist character of these statements, but I do want to argue that the nature of their racism has to be understood differently. It is through the antagonism of *Leitkultur* toward 'parallel societies' that these speakers are able to communicate a longing for social cohesion and unity, as well as their fear of the loss of this unity, as apparent in Singhammer's anxious statement that 'Munich is drifting apart'. Friedrich Merz asserts that Germany's national unity is at stake because 'Germany cannot deal with parallel societies',<sup>46</sup> which is why he and others demand that migrants adjust to German codes of conduct, abide by German laws, learn German and show respect for German traditions.

In contrast to the portrayal of migrants as living within 'parallel societies', for most migrants living in Germany these demands do not pose a threat, as they have reasonable knowledge of the German language and, as statistics have shown, are more law-abiding than the average German citizen. So why is it that advocates of *Leitkultur* nevertheless reiterate the request that migrants should 'adapt more' to the German culture?<sup>47</sup> In this context, Jörg Schönbohm's first use of *Leitkultur* in 1998 gives some insight into the type of unity desired by its employers. As Berlin's senator of the interior he had argued that when driving through Berlin he encountered areas that were of a nature 'that one could say: You're not in Germany here'.<sup>48</sup> Given that it was already enough for Schönbohm to drive through Berlin to make him feel uneasy, it becomes clear that in spite of divergent statements from supporters of *Leitkultur*, migrants' adherence to laws and acceptance of the

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constitution would not suffice in order to make conservative speakers feel at home in Germany again. Rather, as German historian Claus Leggewie has pointed out, the debate on *Leitkultur* was concerned with the symbolism of public space.<sup>49</sup> Migrants who speak their own language and dress or even look different from the ‘national order’<sup>50</sup> imagined by people like Schönbohm question this order symbolically. Thus the hijab worn by Muslim women, although only a manifestation of private religious belief, can become a threat to Germany’s unity. This also explains why, although claiming to be concerned with immigration in general, *Leitkultur* constitutes a clearly perceptible stance against the ‘tendency of certain groups [read: those that question the national order; read: Muslims] to form parallel societies’.<sup>51</sup>

The concern for Germany’s national unity communicated in the above quotes points toward a parallel in the political agendas of ‘un-Australian’ and *Leitkultur*. The German fear of ‘parallel societies’ mirrors the call for peaceful protests that would not jeopardise Australia’s unity, as during the ‘Battle of Melbourne’. The connection between ‘un-Australian’ and the desire for social concord was most obvious in the course of the debate over the republic. Many articles and letters to the editor employing the term at the time did not argue for either side of the dispute. Rather, its users were voicing complaints against the style of the campaigns run by supporters and opponents of the referendum, which were said to be ‘dividing the community’.<sup>52</sup> ‘Regardless of the outcome of the referendum this issue will remain divisive. Such is the depth of feeling that families, friends and colleagues have been split’.<sup>53</sup> Obviously, it is not any kind of social unity that employers of ‘un-Australian’ or *Leitkultur* have in mind but, as already stated above, it has to be understood rather in terms of a desire for control over the ‘national order’. In the case of ‘un-Australian’, the symbolism of public space seems to be of central importance for this order. When the protestors blocked the World Economic Forum in 2000, it was not simply their protest that made them ‘un-Australian’ but also their ability to intervene and change the order of a public space Australian politicians thought of as their own.<sup>54</sup> The deeper structural correspondence between the employment of both terms reveals itself in the notion of Germanness to which *Leitkultur* claims to allude. It is also here that the agenda behind its employment is most obvious.

One of the constants in the dispute over *Leitkultur* was the debate over the notion of Germanness it supposedly conveyed and to which migrants were expected to adapt. When asked to define *Leitkultur*, most supporters of the term named German laws, the constitution and the German language, as well as — although to a lesser extent — Western-European values.<sup>55</sup> The banal emptiness of this definition has already been commented upon. One aspect of the term *Leitkultur*, however, allows for a deeper analysis of the Germanness that is intended by its employers. The German prefix ‘leit’ translates as ‘leading’ or ‘guiding’. Thus a *Leiter* is the person in charge of, for instance, a project or a company. The prefix conveys the notion of a person or principle that establishes the norm according to which others will be judged, while the former holds a superior position. Put in relation to Hage’s concept of the ‘national order’ the nature of statements about a German *Leitkultur* becomes clear. Despite their struggle to define Germanness in ways differing from, for instance, the values

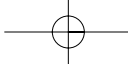
embodied in the left's concept of 'constitutional patriotism', the conservative employers of the term constantly make statements about German identity. Moreover, they not only make claims to Germanness but also assume a hegemonic position in this discourse, which then entitles them to allocate others according to their understanding of the 'national order'. In spite of the fact that the use of *Leitkultur* remained restricted to debates on immigration, the term fulfils very similar functions to those of its Australian counterpart. By assuming a superior position with regard to judgements about other citizens' Germanness, the term's employers can turn their very own identity (in this case predominately male, over forty-five, conservative and of German ethnic descent) into the definition of Germanness.

### Conclusion

Why do these struggles over the definition of national identity take place virtually simultaneously, in two societies so far apart? A possible explanation for this phenomenon was provided by some of the comments on the 'Battle for Melbourne'; that is, their rejection of globalisation as diametrically opposed to Australia's heritage. Smith and Phillips come to a similar conclusion in their investigation of popular understandings of 'un-Australian'. Their data suggests that 'the forces of globalisation lurk behind the majority of the things "UnAustralian" identified by our participants'.<sup>56</sup> It has repeatedly been argued that the ability to profit from the effects of globalisation depends to a great extent on social standing. While some groups are in the position to enjoy an increased diversity of lifestyles, tastes and behaviours, others, for socio-economic reasons, cannot do the same. These latter groups fear marginalisation in a society they nevertheless perceive as their own. The augmented employment of 'un-Australian' and *Leitkultur* by these socio-political groups and their representatives can therefore be read as an expression of anxiety, as well as their speaker's desperate attempt to regain discursive hegemony in a society that is increasingly dominated by global 'cosmo-multiculturalist' values.<sup>57</sup>

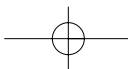
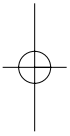
From this perspective, the hidden agenda behind a peculiarity in the Australian usage of the term 'un-Australian' becomes understandable. Occasionally, speakers easily identified as 'cosmo-multiculturalists' label themselves as 'proudly un-Australian'.<sup>58</sup> As suggested above, I would argue that one actually has to be very Australian in terms of the possession of sufficient Australian 'national characteristics' in order to be 'proudly un-Australian'. By exhibiting their pride in a supposed 'un-Australianness', these speakers can turn their rejection of traditional Australian values into a matter of distinction from conservative groups and their reading of Australian identity. This aim is particularly obvious in a statement from Melbourne writer and artist Christos Tsiolkas who labels himself 'so un-Australian that one of my pet hates is the battler. Petty, ignorant and cowardly, the battler is the archetypal ugly Australian'.<sup>59</sup>

After analysis of the role of certain key terms in the discourse on national identity, one issue remains open. While the employment or rejection of 'un-Australian' and *Leitkultur*, can be employed to mark a number of discursive positions in the debate over national identity in both countries, the terms also exclude a large number of people from these debates. In the case of the Woomera



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crisis, these were the voices of refugees wishing to become a part of the Australian nation. The pressing question thus remains of how the limits of discourse can be shifted so as to incorporate these voices and to allow for a discussion of Australianness or Germanness from the borders and margins of society.



*Notes to pp 203–211*

**Modes of ‘un-Australian-’ and ‘un-Germanness’: Contemporary Debates on Cultural Diversity in Germany and Australia**

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- 1 This article draws upon an analysis of around 1,600 articles from Australian and German newspapers from January 1996 to December 2003 in which the terms ‘un-Australian’ and *Leitkultur* featured. In Australia, the main focus was on articles published in the *Age*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Australian*, whereas the German texts come from *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ), *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), *Frankfurter Rundschau* (FR) and *Die Zeit*.
- 2 Letter to the editor by M Rowlands, *Age*, 10 February 2002.
- 3 Quoted on the BBC’s website <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/1769835.stm>.
- 4 Letter to the editor by P C L Wells, *Advertiser*, 30 January 2002.
- 5 ‘Australian in the ear’, *Australian*, 29 January 2002.
- 6 Letter to the editor by H Stretton, *Australian*, 09 February 2002.
- 7 Letter to the editor by L Quay, *Age*, 23 January 2002.

- 8 See Michael Schwab-Trapp, *Kriegsdiskurse. Die politische Kultur des Krieges im Wandel 1991–1999*, Leske+Budrich, Opladen, 2002.
- 9 Michel Foucault, 'The Order of Discourse', in Robert Young (ed), *Untyping the text: A poststructuralist reader*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, Boston, 1981, pp 51–78, here p 58.
- 10 'There's never been a better time to become an Australian citizen'. Quotation on the Australian Citizen website [www.citizenship.gov.au](http://www.citizenship.gov.au).
- 11 See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, 1983.
- 12 See, for instance, Stephen Castles, *Challenges to national identity and citizenship: a comparative study of immigration and society in Germany, France and Australia*, University of Wollongong, Wollongong, 1999.
- 13 Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs [www.immi.gov.au/multicultural/australian/index.htm](http://www.immi.gov.au/multicultural/australian/index.htm).
- 14 The change of government in the 1998 elections rendered a fundamental change in Germany's discourse on migration, as well as national identity possible. A new citizenship law was consequently passed in 1999, and in 2000, the time of the *Leitkultur* debate, the 'Committee on Immigration' began drafting a new immigration law.
- 15 A recent survey conducted for the SBS confirmed 'the often-made observation by commentators that "Australianness" is still generally defined as 'white' in the national imagination'. Ien Ang et al., *Living Diversity. Australia's multicultural future*, Special Broadcasting Service Corporation, Artarmon NSW 2002, p 7.
- 16 Lothar Roos, 'Brauchen wir eine Leitkultur', *Kirche und Gesellschaft*, vol 278, 2001, pp 3–16, here p 3. The translation of this and the subsequent quotes from the debate are my own.
- 17 See Joachim Sartorius, 'Leitkultur, Light-Kultur und Leitkultur', *FR*, 21 November 2000.
- 18 'In sheer exasperation, I ask: what the hell does 'un-Australian' mean?' Letter to the editor by J Stryker, *Age*, 1 November 2002.
- 19 Pierre Bourdieu, 'The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups', *Theory and Society*, vol 14, no 6, November 1985, pp 723–44, here p 738.
- 20 Ghassan Hage, *White Nation. Fantasies of White supremacy in a multicultural society*, Pluto Press, Annandale NSW 1998, p 241.
- 21 Richard White, *Inventing Australia. Images and Identity 1688–1980*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards NSW, 1981, p 114.
- 22 Philip Smith and Tim Phillips, 'Popular understandings of "UnAustralian": an investigation of the un-national', *Journal of Sociology: The Australian Sociological Association*, vol 37, no 4, 2001, pp 323–39, here p 324–25.
- 23 Geoffrey Blainey makes a similar point when he declares that 'the sharp words of disapproval "it's un-Australian" were heard more in the 1940s than in the 1990s'. Geoffrey Blainey quoted in Craig McGregor, 'Who's true blue?', *Age*, 20 June 1998.
- 24 McGregor, op. cit.
- 25 Pauline Hanson, quoted in *ibid*.
- 26 Gregory Melleuish, *The Packaging of Australia. Politics and Culture Wars*, UNSW Press, Sydney, 1998.
- 27 Jon Stratton, *Race Daze — Australia in identity crisis*, Pluto Press, Annandale NSW, 1998, p 18.
- 28 Next to the 'Woomera Crisis' and the 'Battle of Melbourne' analysed in this essay highlights for the employment of 'un-Australian' have been among others the violent protests against One Nation (July 1997), the maritime strike (3 April 1998) and the debate on the republic (10 November 1999).
- 29 'At the forum', *Age*, 12 September 2000.
- 30 'Premier trapped in car', *Advertiser*, 12 September 2000.
- 31 Andrew Rule et al., 'Battle of Melbourne', *Age*, 12 September 2000.
- 32 Letter to the editor by G Bickley, *Australian*, 15 September 2000.
- 33 Letter to the editor by J Kympton, *Australian*, 21 September 2000.
- 34 See 'Premier trapped in car', op. cit.
- 35 Jill Singer 'Once we championed underdogs: now we kowtow to top dogs', *Herald Sun*, 15 September 2000.
- 36 Letter to the editor by R Evans, *Herald Sun*, 13 September 2000.
- 37 Letter to the editor by C J Anderson, *Australian*, 14 September 2000.

*Notes to pp 215–221*

- 38 While an average 60 per cent of Australian residents call themselves Australian, only 8 per cent of those from an NESB background do. See Ang, *op.cit.*, p 7.
- 39 David Wroe, 'PM Urged To Get Tough Over Attacks On Muslims, Sikhs', *Age*, 19 September 2001.
- 40 Hage, *op. cit.*, p 52.
- 41 *ibid.*, p 50. Judging from Sheik Fehmi El-Imam's respected social position as the spokesperson for the Islamic Society of Victoria, it appears he could criticise these actions as 'un-Australian' for having accumulated the national capital necessary in order to be sanctioned to employ the term. Moreover, Sheik Fehmi El-Imam does not employ the term directly to criticise the racist attacks as 'un-Australian', but rather calls upon Prime Minister John Howard to make that judgement from his position as Prime Minister.
- 42 In this context, Prime Minister John Howard's frequent use of the word is interesting. By characterising values and behaviours contradicting the position of his own government as 'un-Australian' he aims to transform the governmental position into the definition of Australianness itself.
- 43 Quoted in Matthias Arning and Iris Hilberth, 'Union macht sich selbst als ärgsten Feind aus', *FR*, 18 November 2000.
- 44 Berthold Neff, 'München driftet auseinander', *SZ*, 30 December 2000.
- 45 See Hage, *op. cit.*, chapter 1, pp 27–47.
- 46 Reinhard Voss, 'Merz schlägt mit scharfer Axt und erntet warmen Applaus', *FR*, 21 October 2000.
- 47 See Marianne Heuwagen, 'Koalition will Zuwanderung noch vor der Wahl regeln', *SZ*, 30 October 2000.
- 48 Marc Siemons, 'Stil macht den Mann. Jörg Schönbohms Kampf um eine neue Hauptstadt-Ästhetik', *FAZ*, 29 July 1998.
- 49 Claus Leggewie, 'Politik im Merz-Bau', *FR*, 2 November 2000.
- 50 See Hage, *op. cit.*, p 113.
- 51 Excerpt from the CSU policy paper on immigration in Günther Beckstein, 'Deutschland darf kein klassisches Einwanderungsland werden', *FR*, 16 November 2000.
- 52 Letter to the editor by R Martyn, *Australian*, 6 November 1999.
- 53 Letter to the editor by T Clune, *Australian*, 5 November 1999.
- 54 Could it be that the current treatment of those asylum seekers that arrive unauthorised on Australian territory is also linked to this desire of control over the nation space?
- 55 See, for instance, Michael Stiller, 'CSU will Grundrecht auf Asyl abschaffen', *SZ*, 14 November 2000 and 'CDU-Spitze stimmt Zuwanderungspapier zu', *SZ*, 7 November 2000.
- 56 Smith and Phillips, *op. cit.*, pp 337–8.
- 57 See Ghassan Hage, 'Anglo-Celtics today: cosmo-multiculturalism and the phase of the fading phallus', *An Inquiry into the state of Anglo-Saxonness within the nation. Communal/plural*, Issue 4, 1994, pp 41-77.
- 58 See for instance, Barclay Crawford, 'I'm not a spoiled rich girl: Elisabeth O'Shea is "un-Australian and proud of it"', *Australian*, 2 November 2002.
- 59 Christos Tsiolkas quoted in McGregor, *op. cit.*