

# Citizenship, Nationality and Ethnicity in the Context of Globalization: Situating Australia

Conceptualisation and theory-building are often done to understand the specific situations of Particular polities and/or historical periods. This is also true of the present theme -- the relationship between citizenship, nationality and ethnicity. Broadly speaking there are three modes of conceptualising the relationship between citizen and state (Worsley 1984) and three ways of linking nationality and citizenship (Greenfeld and Chirot 1994: 79-130).

## State and Citizen

In culturally and racially plural empires and feudal states the hegemonic type of citizen-state relationship obtained. The state recognised only the identity-- racial, religious or linguistic -- of the mainstream community. The smaller, weaker or minority communities were coerced or advised to assimilate, if possible, or accept a subordinate social position if necessary. Being authoritarian polities the possibility of protest was absent or very limited in these systems. Thus the hegemonic type of state-citizen relationship necessarily implied a hierarchy of citizens. The classic cases of hegemonic types were: (1) the Greek city-state wherein the patricians, plebeians and slaves were differentiated; (2) the feudal system of Europe which categorised the population into lords, vassals and serfs; (3) the traditional Indian caste system which legitimized a hierarchy based on ritual purity and pollution, and (4) the apartheid polity of South Africa which differentiated the state population based in race and colour. While in all these cases identities of dominant and dominated groups were recognised, equality did not figure as a feature.

With the onset of modernisation brought about by industrial urbanization equality became a central feature of European societies. The era of nation-state with its thrust on homogenisation heralded the **uniformity** pattern in state-citizen relationship. But equality was possible among citizens in their relationship with the state because they were of the same background-- religion, race and language. Where the state population was multi-cultural the mainstream tended to dominate. However, modernization did provide the required social opportunity in establishing equality among citizens. But, what was necessary and possible in the West was not applicable to the non-West in western perception.

The 'primitives' of Africa, 'orientals' of Asia, 'aboriginals' of and immigrants to the New World did not deserve equality. The doctrine of national self-determination could not be applied to primitives and aboriginals as they were not nations; they were peoples without history. As for

Orientalists, they lacked the concept of individualism an assumed prerequisite for self-rule. Therefore, they all should remain as subjects under Western colonialism till they were civilised. And, even after two centuries of colonialism the subjects were not capable of becoming citizens of their own states in western perception. It is the anti-colonial national liberation movements which changed this perception. The point to be noted here is that the uniformity pattern of state-citizen relationship was not appropriate outside Western Europe because homogeneity within nation-states was missing. And yet, precisely this principle was applied to and enforced by the colonial powers creating confusion among and conflicts between tribes in Africa and religious communities in South Asia. As for the New World, the dominant populations being mainly immigrants the notion of national self determination was replaced by individual human rights. Finally, in the case of Africa and Asia modernisation perpetuated and often accelerated the existing inequalities.

It is against this background the appropriateness of the third type of state-citizen relationship namely the **pluralist** pattern is to be viewed. The pluralist pattern recognises several primordial identities those of the dominant and dominated- in state-citizen relationship. Thus the dominated religious, caste, racial, and linguistic collectivities are recognised for special citizenship entitlements, what Marshall designated as social rights (1965), which are actually economic entitlements. These rights are encapsulated under the **rubric of the policy of protective discrimination**. Generally speaking, equal political rights (as exemplified in universal adult franchise) was already universally accepted and equality before law was formally conceded in most of the contemporary democratic polities. But legal and political equality were not matched by economic equality. In turn even as equality of opportunity was accepted in principle and prevailed in practice, distributive justice was often a far cry. The extreme economic disparity between different segments of population prompted the policy of protective discrimination.

If the economically deprived belonged to particular social categories-- race, religion, and language - with a territorial base these collectivises aspired either for a separate sovereign state or a certain amount of political autonomy within the federal setup. If the dissenting collectivises have adequate striking power (with or without external help) and the central state authority is weak and/or lack adequate legitimacy, secession may follow. But more often than not the pluralist pattern accommodated primordial identities as the bases of creating political units within the federal set-up. Broadly speaking the pluralist pattern of state-citizen relationship has come to be accepted in most of the multi-racial and multi-cultural societies. However, the ambiguity regarding citizenship-nationality linkage still persists to the discussion of which I shall turn now.

## Citizenship and Nationality

Three models of citizenship-nationality relationship crystallised based on the empirical experiences and need of West European nation-states. The English idea of nation was **individualistic-civic** according to which the nation was conceived as a collective of sovereign individuals. In this rendition citizenship and nationality were conceptually differentiated. Given the fact that United Kingdom was constituted by several nations- England, Scotland, Wales -- or part there of (Ireland) it was necessary to provide for a concept of citizenship which encapsulated different nationalities which were accorded their distinct cultural identities but were denied their political sovereignty. Understandably, individuals and hence citizens were recognised as the basic units of polity. Here multiple nationalities and single citizenship coexists within the polity.

In contrast to this, nation was conceived as a distinct people, a collective individual and a sovereign collectivity in the German, Russian and Italian cases. This gave birth to the **collectivistic-ethnic** idea of nation and nationality. If the collective individual is the nation, fusion of citizenship and nationality is the logical corollary. This mode of conceptualising the relationship between citizenship and nationality assumes cultural homogeneity of the nation and denies political autonomy and voluntarism to the citizen. Citizenship is bestowed on the individual by virtue of her membership in the nation and hence the two cannot be bifurcated. It is this mode of conceptualisation, which can, and it did, lead to Nazism and Fascism as is illustrated by German and Italian cases.

The fusion of citizenship and nationality would necessarily mean that the nonnationals would be treated as non-citizens. It can thus lead to situation wherein even secondclass citizenship will be denied to nonnationals in the polity, a possibility which obtained under the hegemonic pattern of state-citizen relationship. It may be noted that enormous population transfers took place during the Cold War era thanks to the process of modernisation. And due to the ongoing process of globalisation interstate and inter-continental migrations continue unabated, the legal restrictions imposed by states notwithstanding. That is, there is a deep lack of fit between the prevailing empirical situation and the conceptualisation which attempts to fuse citizenship and nationality.

One way out of this impasse is to opt for **civic-collectivistic** pattern of nation and nationalism, the French model. According to this model an individual can acquire nationality, that is, citizenship through a process of assimilation. In the French case this means learning French and acquiring French culture irrespective of race, religion or ethnic identity. But this model fuses **the elements** of hegemonic and uniformity pattern of state-citizen relationship. To the extent civic-

collectivistic model prescribes cultural assimilation as a prerequisite for acquiring citizenship it proximates the uniformity pattern although the route to achieve uniformity is different. In effect this model de-recognizes and de-legitimises the cultural identities of lesser, weaker and minority collectivities. On the other hand, these latter collectivities are coerced to merge into the mainstream which smacks of hegemonic tendency. The merit of this model, however, is that nationality is at least in principle open and voluntaristic, it can be acquired. But in practice the mainstream remains the dominant nation. In the French case it is the White Catholic-French speaking nation distributed into different states -- France, Belgium, Switzerland, Canada, Algeria with Paris as the epi-centre. Here multiple citizenship and single nationality can coexist.

While both the British and the French models could fit into the pluralistic pattern of state-citizen relations, both have limitations. In the British model the individual sovereigns are privileged, relegating national cultural identity to the background. The persistence of Irish nationalism and the enlivening of Scottish and Welsh nationalisms in recent decades seem to be posing a threat to the integrity of the British state and the dominant English nation. Therefore, the need to recognise the collective cultural identity of non-English nations within the British state becomes clear.

In the French model the nationals' are drawn from different states, it is basically a cultural unity. But to the extent the citizens who come to constitute the French nation' are drawn from different states, there are no common legal entitlements for them. This can and does create a wedge among the nationals drawn from different states. Further, cultural hegemonisation liquidates the cultural identities of the non-French who are prompted to get assimilated as exemplified in the cases of Brittany, Occitanians, Albigenses etc. in France. That is, none of the European conceptualisations fit the empirical situations of contemporary world. It does not fit even the changing scenario in Europe -- the challenge posed by the emerging European Union. This calls for a new conceptualisation, the task to which we will turn now.

### **Avoiding Conflations and Subsumptions**

In the light of my analysis so far, I want to suggest that it is necessary and fruitful to view the three concepts--citizenship, nationality and ethnicity--together in order to understand the empirical processes at work (see Oommen 1997). It is also useful to insist on avoiding conflations between the twin concepts of citizenship\nationality and nationality\ethnicity. Finally, it is imperative to avoid the tendency to subsume race into ethnicity. These conflations and subsumption have created considerable confusion and avoidable ambiguity in contemporary social science.

To view the three concepts as a trio is to situate them processually and to understand their connectivity. In other words, this device recognizes the possibility of collectivities and individuals being subjected to changes in their status of either citizens, nationals or ethnics. For example, persons who are citizens of a particular state may cease to be its citizens or those who were non-citizens hitherto may overnight become its citizens due to changes in the territorial boundaries of that state. Similarly, nations may become ethnics and ethnics may become nations concomitant to the shifting moral attachments of collectivities to the national territory. Hence situating these concepts processually means acknowledging the processes of ethnification, nationalisation and citizenization which are continually taking place in contemporary polities due to the rise and fall of states and the consequent reallocation of territories and also due to immigration, modernisation and globalisation.

To appreciate the trajectory of the above processes in different polities one must understand how they are constituted and how their populations are incorporated. The tripartite division of the world into the First, Second and the Third is singularly unsuited to understand the processes at work, as such a division does not take into account the ontological status of territory which is crucial to define state\citizenship, nation\nationality and ethnics\ethnicity. On the other hand, the division of the world into two --the old and new--does help one to understand the processes of ethnification, nationalisation and citizenization. This, however, would call for a radical departure from the prevailing mode of conceptualising these notions.

Pursuantly, nationality may be defined as the collective cultural identity of a people who have (a) moral attachment to a territory and (b) a common language. The territory and the language could be ancestral or adopted. Nation then should be viewed as a product of fusion between territory and culture. Admittedly, nationness itself could be put on a continuum for a given population. Where both territory and language are ancestral one may discern the highest intensity of nationness and where both are adopted its intensity would be the least. But the moment territory is dissociated from the nation, the nationals become an ethnic; the national identity gives way to ethnic identity. That is, ethnicity is a product of attenuation between territory and culture.

Ideally, citizenship entails political participation and entitlements to welfare benefits irrespective of the nature of one's identity--national or ethnic. Thus there are three possible status-identity combinations--national citizens, ethnic citizens and ethnic non-citizens--in contemporary polities. The fourth possibility of national non-citizens is by and large vacuous in that it applies to those nationals who renounce the citizenship of a particular nationstate and yet continue to live in the territory of that nationstate.

Isomorphism between state and nation gives birth to a nationstate and the status-identity of national citizenship prevails in such polities. It is not true that all nations aspire for their exclusive state; some nations even in West Europe have renounced having a state and have instead availed of other advantages in lieu of that. There are only a few instances of nationstates in the contemporary world and most of them are drawn from the Old World--Europe, Asia and Africa. While the majority of the individuals in the Old World belong to the status-identity set of national citizens thanks to the ongoing processes of modernisation and globalisation almost all polities in the Old World have now some ethnic citizens as well as ethnic non-citizens. These three status-identities constitute a hierarchy and are a perennial source of tension and conflict. The problem is rendered vexatious because generally speaking those who belong to the lowest status ladder, the non-citizen ethnics, are also drawn from a different physical type (race) and/or religion. The citizenization of this category would provide partial succour to its underprivileged and outsider status.

In the Old World, prior to the geographical explorations and the colonisation which followed it, there was a rough coterminality between national identity, racial type and religious faith. This coincidence has often been construed as a historical inevitability and a socio-cultural virtue. The ideology of homogenism is advocated on that basis in West Europe. But the emergence of the New World with people drawn from a multiplicity of races, religions and language groups irreversibly destroyed the assumption behind the ideology of homogenism. That is, deterritorialization of race and religion coupled with the rejection of the doctrine of racial superiority and the proclivity to proselytize on the part of some of the religions rendered both race and religion irrelevant in nation formation in the contemporary world.

Just as conflation of state and nation and nation and ethnic create conceptual confusions and thwart our understanding of empirical situations, the subsumption of race into ethnicity ignores the specificity of both and consequently camouflages the oppression characteristic of racism and ethnicism. On the other hand, the possibility of racial identity being transformed into ethnic identity through miscegenation is to be recognised particularly when racial mixture is upheld as a positive value. This process also facilitates the transformation of these ethnics into nations as the association between race and territory gradually disappears and the newly evolving physical categories become insiders, that is, they begin to define themselves and to get accepted by others as nationals.

It is necessary to insist that neither nation nor nationalism can be a rudderless entity or phenomenon, nation is not an imagined community as Anderson (1983) avers and nationalism

cannot be conceived without a territorial base. Which is to say that two factors--territory and language--conjointly constitute the critical minimum markers of a nation. And the wedge between a territory and its accredited inhabitants marks the beginning of the process of ethnification.

It is useful to recall here that the sociological importance of territory has been relegated to the background by two concepts--community and class. The ill-advised juxtaposition between community and society and, in its wake, that of tradition and modernity has led to the devaluation of territory and consequently of nation. The traditionists lament the eclipse of community, which they perceive as a moral entity, and the advent of 'impersonal' society and 'mindless' modernity. Modernists celebrate the emergence of 'society' which according to them marks the beginning of rationality, secularisation, efficiency and mobility and which relegates the importance of territory to the background. But in spite of the geographical dispersal of national populations sentimental attachment to their homeland invariably persists. This has been viewed as irrational primordialism by the modernists and they hope that modernisation will eventually exorcise such pathological tendencies.

Primordialists take recourse to a psychological explanation to understand the persistence of nationalism despite the spatial dispersal of national population. Some of them even pronounce that nationalism defies objective definition (see for an example Connor 1994). This provides a veneer of justification, even if unintended, by this lineage of primordialists of perverse nationalisms such as Nazism, Fascism and right wing extremism. To grapple with this malady we need to define nation as an objective entity and nationalism as a cultural identity-seeking movement. The assumptions that each nation strives to have its own state and that a national culture would be safe only within its own state are unsustainable when viewed in a historical and comparative perspective.

The concept of class has also relegated territory and nation to the sociological backwaters. Since class is conceptualised as a territory-transcending phenomenon in the context of capitalism, both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are assumed to be crossnational social categories. But available evidence points to the fact that both these categories maintain their national orientations and that classes are effective buildingblocks of social structure only within nations, races and ethnic groups. The hope that nationalism will take a backseat and classes will wither away in socialist polities with the abolition of private property in productive resources too has come to naught. Today, not classes but polities which were believed to be 'classless' stand demolished.

## **The Two Worlds -- Old and New**

The difference between the two worlds is also reflected in the notion of citizenship prevalent among them. Within the Old World the mononational states (e.g. Germany) or those who have subjected their weaker/smaller nations to intense homogenisation (e.g. France) uphold a 'communitarian' view of citizenship. In contrast, multinational states such as the United Kingdom have an 'individualistic' conception of citizenship. But even the first 'nation' of the world, the U.K. has a communitarian orientation of citizenship as compared with the U. S. whose concept of citizenship is highly individualistic. Thus, generally speaking, the notion of citizenship in Europe was strongly anchored to membership in the nation as the two identities of citizenship and nationality got fused. Others were outsiders, that is ethnics, and hence not entitled to the privileges of citizenship. Is this orientation sustainable ?

The emergence of the European Common Market which became the European Community and then the European Union (EU) however unfolded the lack of fit between the old conceptualisation and the new reality. The notion of European citizenship necessitates the bifurcation of the concepts of citizenship and nationality. The population of the EU is drawn from a multiplicity of nations but belongs to a common polity. When a European citizen moves out of his/her national territory s/he becomes an ethnic, although the migrant remains within the territory of the Union. Of course, the EU would have both national citizens and ethnic citizens. And, the non-citizen residents of the EU would necessarily be ethnics.

What has happened since 1989 in Eastern Europe, particularly in the erstwhile multi-national states such as the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia is exactly the reverse of what happened in the EU. The peoples who had common citizenship but were drawn from a multiplicity of nations became citizen-nationals of the newly emerged 'nation-states' wherein the two identities became co-terminus. And in the new 'nation-states' of East Europe the non-nationals tend to remain either non-citizens or at best 'second class' citizens. In the non-European Old World, that is, in new states such as India or Nigeria the citizenship-nationality relationship is comparable to that in the EU. Generally speaking, in the Old World polities, the pattern of citizenship-nationality-ethnicity linkage is similar. This is due to the strong moral affinity the people have to their ancestral territories--that is, their nations.

The scenario in the New World is different for two reasons. First, the attachment to territory as moral entity is weak, if not non-existent. Second, the citizens are an aggregate of individuals drawn from diverse backgrounds--race, religion language. For these reasons, citizen entitlements are defined in terms of 'merits' of the individuals and not on the basis of cultural identity. In the polities of the New World what we have are fellow citizens and not fellow-nationals. The accent is on dissociating national/ethnic/racial identities from citizenship

entitlements. The point is that the prevailing conceptualisations of citizenship, nationality and ethnicity cannot come to grips with the existing empirical reality; they cannot come to terms with the momentous transformations occasioned by the formation of the European Union, the dismantling of the multi-national socialist states, the building of multinational states in Asia and Africa, the crystallization of poly-ethnic states in the New World, and above all the on-going process of globalisation.

Globalization calls for a conceptualisation which has the potential to facilitate harmonious co-existence of people with a multiplicity of identities-national, ethnic, racial and religious within the same polity as fellow citizens. The dignified coexistence of diverse groups within the same polity may be conceptualised as pluralism. To be meaningful pluralism and intergroup equality should co-exist. Generally speaking there is a consensus that equality of rewards is an impossibility. While a minority of scholars do not accept even equality of opportunity as a value, most others endorse it. But there is disagreement even among those who accept equality of opportunity as a value. Some argue that equality of opportunity should be available to all irrespective of their background including membership in polities. Such a view gives birth to the notion of 'international' or 'global' citizenship. Is this view admissible ?

### **Global Citizenship ?**

Global citizenship presupposes the existence of a global state; since the latter is non-existent the former is a conceptual nullity. That is, the notion of citizenship can be meaningfully applied only to those who have membership in a polity; to be realistic citizenship entitlements ought to be the privilege of those who have membership in the relevant state. Entitlements of non-citizens should fall into the purview of human rights, a concern of interstate organisations and civil society.

The issues then are the bases and the content of citizenship entitlements within the polity. The bases of citizenship is not an issue in those polities in which contemporaneity between citizenship and nationality exists, that is, in nation-states. The traditional view that citizenship entitlements should be the preserve of property-owning adult males is no more advocated or endorsed, although of course, praxiological gaps between the ideal and the actual exists even in democratic polities. That is to say, the persisting conceptual wedge in citizenship entitlements is confined to those polities wherein ethnics (that is, those who are defined/perceived as outsiders to the polity) exist. Several attributes of collectivities-race, religion, language -- are invoked independently or in combination to deny citizenship entitlements to some sections of the population within contemporary polities. Thus national/ethnic, racial and religious identities are

used as instruments of exclusion in multinational, poly-ethnic, multi-racial and multi-religious polities. It may be suggested that citizenship should be defined and used as an instrument of inclusion and equality. To do this, nationality itself should be conceptualised inclusively so as to envelop all those who identify themselves with the territory of the nation, be it their ancestral or adopted land.

There is no consensus about the content of citizenship particularly in regard to economic entitlements. Further, some emphasize duties and others rights of citizens. Those who prescribe obligations for making citizenship effective perceive the 'parasitical' free riders created by the socialist and welfare states as the problem. Those who emphasize citizen rights view the guarantee of minimum needs by the state as an imperative given the rapacity of the market mechanism. The issue is rendered further vexatious because the free riders are often the 'victims' of the market and they are drawn predominantly from the category of ethnic-citizens and non-citizens. While the issue of cultural identity cannot be tackled through conferring citizenship rights the latter can provide partial succour to moderate the harshness of the market. This calls for the provision of citizenship entitlements on a group basis the rationale behind affirmative action.

Thus conceived citizenship goes beyond the space to which its current conceptualisation is applicable in that it takes into account not only inequality among individuals within identity groups but also inequality between identity groups within a polity. This mode of conceptualisation goes a long way towards reconciling the competing demands of identity (of groups) and of equality (of citizens) in contemporary polities. Such an approach becomes particularly pertinent due to the ongoing process of globalisation.

### **The Australian Situation\***

In terms of the conceptualisation proposed above the Australian population could be divided into five categories. First, those for whom Australia is their ancestral homeland (the aborigines) who are entitled to citizenship by birth and heritage—the *indigenous national citizens*. Although Australian citizenship was automatically extended to the aborigines at the commencement of the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948, they remained citizens without rights until recently (see, Chesterman 1997). Second, the settler colonizers who adopted Australia as their homeland and transplanted their language, culture and lifestyle into Australia -- *the settler national citizens* The Anglo-Celts who have been automatically transformed from subjecthood to citizenship belong to this category (see Davidson 1997).

Third, the immigrants who came eventually and settled down after acquiring citizenship but are still in the process of re-locating their attachment to Australia from their ancestral homeland -- *the sojourner national citizens*. Most of the non-Anglo-Celtic Europeans are of this category. Fourth, those who came in search of better economic prospects, succeeded in acquiring citizenship for its instrumental payoffs but have not yet adopted or do not even intend to adopt Australia as their homeland -- *the ethnic citizens*. Quite a few of those with Asian background answers this description. Categories three and four are aliens who transformed their status into citizenship (cf. Jordens 1997). Finally, the immigrants who are not yet Australian citizens either because they did not seek it (e.g. permanent residents) or because they have not yet been successful in acquiring citizenship-- *the ethnic non-citizens*. Most of the persons in this category **may be** drawn from non-Anglo-Celtic Europeans and Asians.

It may be noted here that the categorisation unfolds the following: (a) the historicity and the mode of incorporation of different categories; (b) that the collectivities are placed on a continuum from the first to the fifth-- it is a dynamic and not a static schema; (c) that the first four categories being citizens are formally equal before law but the fifth category being non-citizens is not eligible for certain rights and entitlements; (d) the degree of nationness vary across the categories but it is not construed as a basis of discrimination by the state but that of conscious choice by the individuals and groups in question; (e) the definition of nationality takes into account only two elements -- territorial attachment and cultural competence (e.g. knowledge of English language). By implication nationality remains an option to be exercised by individuals; one can opt out of it and remain an ethnic-citizen. The advantage of this categorization is that the state can keep aside primordial attributes in the conferment of citizenship avoiding discrimination.

Given Australia's multi-racial composition and announced commitment to multiculturalism the state-citizen relationship will have to be pluralist in orientation and citizenship-nationality relationship ought to be individualistic-civic in nature according to which citizenship and nationality are conceptually differentiated. Further, the distinction between race (physical types) and ethnicity (cultural varieties) is important in that cultural differences exist *within* racial categories. The polar points of racial continuum in Australia are constituted by the aborigines (full-bloods) and the Europeans; the half-bloods and the Asians falling in between. Cultural differences exist within all these categories. A multi-racial and multi-cultural democratic society should formally recognise not only the inequality between its individual citizens but also the identity of its different collectivities as well as inequality among them.

For any conceptual schema to be authentic, it should be empirically rooted. Keeping this in mind it is useful to understand the changing 'ethnic' composition of the Australian population (see

table 1).

**Table 1 The changing Ethnic composition of Australia**

Category	1787	1846	1861	1891	1947	1988
Aboriginal	100	41.5	13.3		3.4	0.8
Anglo-Celt	-	57.2	78.1	86.8	89.7	74.6
Other European	-	1.1	5.4	7.2	8.6	19.3
Asian	-	0.2	3.1	2.3	0.8	4.5
Other	-	-	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

*Source: Government of Australia, 1989.*

It is clear from table 1 that within two centuries, beginning 1787 there has been a reversal of the ethnic composition of the Australian population, the aboriginals are reduced to a mere one percent, the Europeans became the dominant majority with 94 percent and the Asians emerging as a significant minority; although as of now only around five percent. In spite of the fact that there are internal variations among them, the three 'racial-cultural' collectivities remain the main players in the theatre of citizenship in Australia. The issue is whether equality of citizenship promised in Australian law is accessible to all in actual practice.

For most whites the history of Australia started only 200 years ago but the bicentennial celebrations in 1987 brought out the awareness that it started some 30,000 years ago with the arrival of Aboriginals (Hasluck 1988). In turn this awareness emboldened the Aboriginals to challenge the doctrine of *terra nulls* (land belonging to no-one) at the time of European settlement which meant that the settlers were free to occupy Australia and the native population had no entitlement to Australian land. Further, the initial settlers held the view that the gradual disappearance of the aboriginal people was the law of nature and one is only obliged to protect them till their extinction is complete; extermination and 'protection' were the two sides of the same coin. In turn, protection meant the physical and cultural isolation of aborigines. During this period the distinct inferior identity of the indigenous populations was recognized but equality was not conceded to them.

In spite of isolation, due to inadequate number of white women, the sexual and domestic services of aboriginal women were utilized by white men (Broome 1982:5258). Gradually, the mixed-bloods -- the products of miscegenation between white men and native women -- have emerged. The New Deal for the aborigines came to be proposed by the 1930's leading to the advocacy of assimilation. The assumption behind the new approach was that the full-bloods will vanish, being a dying race, and the half-castes should assimilate with the white population without any distinct identity. The official policy of assimilation was articulated at the 1961 Native Welfare Conference thus:

The policy of Assimilation means that all Aborigines are expected eventually to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian Community enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs as other Australians (Quoted in Heppel 1979: 8).

This view was reinforced by a few. For example, Rowse held that irrespective of the injustice done in the past on the Aboriginal people, Australia is now one nation with one community of people (1986: 65). However, not only that the expected assimilation did not come through, the aboriginals were keen on re-inventing their exclusive identity and insisted on equality (see Elkin 1944). This marked the phase of integration, that is the dignified coexistence of aborigines along with European settlers and other migrants. To recall the pregnant words of Stanner, '... the aborigines having been "out" of history for a century and a half are now coming back "into" history with a vengeance' (1968: 17). That is in spite of the 1948 Citizenship and Nationality Act, Australian Aboriginals were not equals. This is the historical background against which citizenship advocacy for Australian aboriginals have been put forward by missionaries, administrators and liberal politicians.

In a statement on Aboriginal Affairs, Australian Democrats agreed in July 1988 that the Aboriginal peoples have never surrendered their land to the British colonisers and their successors, and that they (the Aboriginal peoples) still assert their sovereignty and hence the Australian government should restore to all the Aboriginal peoples legally and irrevocably, their tribal land and reserves as well as areas they claim as sacred and significant sites. They insisted that this principle should be enshrined in the Australian constitution so that future governments cannot repeal the legislation without holding a referendum. And on 3 June 1992, the High Court of Australia in *Mabo vs Queensland* held that the common law of Australia recognizes native title to land. Thus a firm foundation for equality of citizens before law and ensuring the collective identity of aboriginals have been laid by now in Australia. This should logically lead to self-determination

and self-management by aboriginals as already indicated by Bryant, the first Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, on 11th July 1973.

The government is determined to restore original self-determination, their autonomy in the matters which concern them both as individuals and as groups and communities. Again, equality is not enough or perhaps real equality is only achieved when Aborigines feel that they are in control of their future, and are not pawns in some game played by non-Aboriginal Australians (Quoted in Heppell 1979: 19)

It has been argued by some that aboriginality is a colonial creation in that before 1788 and even much later the native peoples of Australia did not think of themselves as Aborigines. In fact, each of them thought of itself as a distinct group and other Aborigines as enemies or at best as strangers (see Atwood 1989). However, the present state policy is one of bestowing a collective identity on Aborigines (Beckett 1985:724) which mutilates the identity of particular tribal groups. On the other hand, aboriginal ethonogenesis, that is unity, is not a given and as a process it is **going** to be extremely difficult because of the tremendous variety (ibid). Therefore, it may be prudent to promote cultural pluralism and celebrate diversity.

While the required assurances are given to Aboriginals as a whole to preserve their identity there is precious little that has been done to ensure the identities of other groups in Australia. There are three anchorages around which identities crystalline in Australia as in some other New World societies -- race, religion and language. As noted above, the three basic racial-cultural collectivities in Australia are aboriginals, Europeans and Asians. But each of these categories contain several cultural identity groups and in spite of **the policy of multiculturalism** the sustenance of these identities is not facilitated.

In the case of Europeans the salient elements of cultural diversity are religion and language. All of them are Christians of which 26% are Catholics and 24% are Anglicans, all other denominations are less than one per cent each. There is no evidence to suggest that the denominational diversity among Christians pose problems. On the other hand, as English is the only recognized official language of Australia and since a certain level of competence in the language is a prescribed qualification for citizenship, the linguistic minorities are likely to experience some discrimination. The breakup of mother tongues other than English is as follows: Italian 20.6%, Greek 13.6%, Chinese 6.7%, German 5.6% and Arabic/Lebanese 5.4% (Government of Australia 1989:6). It is clear that the minority linguistic groups together constitute the majority of Australian population. And yet there is no vigorous policy of promoting multiculturalism in that context and this is likely to result in the cultural liquidation of these linguistic groups.

AU the non-Christian religious groups constitute less than one per cent each of Australian population; the major groups being Muslims 0.7%, Buddhists 0.5% and Jews 0.4%. As it stands only the Muslims pose 'problems' as per the information I could gather in 1993. The Gulf War, Iranian militancy, the use of petro-dollar for proselytization and construction of fabulous Mosques are the factors which contributed to the negative attitude towards Muslims in Australia. The anti-Asian attitude is essentially anti-Chinese, the biggest category in the Asian group. Thus in spite of the declared policy of multiculturalism since 1973 there is little evidence to show that it is vigorously pursued with reference to linguistic and religious minorities. This may exacerbate group-based inequality adversely affecting the quality of citizenship in Australia.

### REFERENCES

- Anderson, B. 1983 *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Bombay: New Left
- Attwood, B 1989 *The Making of Aborigines*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Australian Citizenship Council 1999 *Contemporary Australian Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs*. Canberra: Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.
- Beckett, J. 1985 'Colonialism in a Welfare State: The Case of the Australian Aborigines', in Carmel Schrire and Robert Gordon (eds.), *The Future of Former Foragers in Australia and South Africa*, Cambridge: Cultural Survival, Inc., pp. 724.
- Broome R. 1982 *Aboriginal Australians: Black Response to White Dominance, 1788-1980*, Sydney: George Allen and Unwin.
- Chesterman J 1997 *Citizens Without Rights*  
Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- : *Aborigines and Australian Citizenship*,
- Connor. W. 1994 *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*, Princeton: Princeton University press.

Davidson, A. 1997 *From Subject to Citizen: Australian Citizenship in the 20th Century*,  
Melbourne: Oxford University press.

Elkin, A.P. 1944 *Citizenship for Aborigines: A national Aboriginal Policy*, Sydney NSW  
Australian Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd.

Greenfield L. 1994 'Nationalism and Aggression' *Theory and Society*, 23(1), 79-130. and Chirot D.

Government of 1989 National Agenda for Multicultural Australia, Department of the P. M and Australia

Cabinet office of Multicultural Affairs, Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Hasluck, P. 1988 *Shades of Darkness*, Aboriginal Affairs, 1925-1965, Melbourne Melbourne University press.

Heppell, M. 1979 *A Black Reality: Aboriginal Camps and Housing in Remote Australia*, Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

Jordens, Alien to Citizen: Settling Migrants in Australia 1945-75, Sydney: Allen Ann-Mari 1997 and Unwin, Australian Archives.

Marshall T.H. 1965 *Class, Citizenship and Social Development*, New York: Anchor Books.

Oommen T.K. 1997 *Citizenship, Nationality and Ethnicity: Reconciling Competing Identities*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Rowse T. 1986 Land Rights, Mining and Settler Democracy', *Meanjin* 45(1), 58-68.

Stanner, W.E.H. 1968 *After the Dreaming*, The Boyer Lectures 1968, Sydney: The Australian Broadcasting Commission (Sixth printing).

Worsley P. 1984 *The Three Worlds: Culture and World Development*, Chicago: Chicago University Press.

\*This section is based on the research I have done in December 1983 as Visiting Fellow at the Research School of Social Science, Australian National University, Canberra. The invitation by ANU is gratefully acknowledged.

Prof.T.K.Oommen

Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi