

# Social Change

<http://sch.sagepub.com/>

---

## Multiculturalism in America, Australia and India

D. Ramakrishna

*Social Change* 2013 43: 99

DOI: 10.1177/0049085713475729

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://sch.sagepub.com/content/43/1/99>

---

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

On behalf of:



[Council for Social Development](#)

**Additional services and information for *Social Change* can be found at:**

**Email Alerts:** <http://sch.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

**Subscriptions:** <http://sch.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

**Reprints:** <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

**Permissions:** <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

**Citations:** <http://sch.sagepub.com/content/43/1/99.refs.html>

>> [Version of Record](#) - Apr 5, 2013

[What is This?](#)

# Multiculturalism in America, Australia and India

Social Change  
43(1) 99–110  
© CSD 2013  
SAGE Publications  
Los Angeles, London,  
New Delhi, Singapore,  
Washington DC  
DOI: 10.1177/0049085713475729  
<http://socialchange.sagepub.com>



## D. Ramakrishna

Former Professor and Head,  
Department of English,  
Kakatiya University, Warangal, Andhra Pradesh  
[d.ramakl@gmail.com](mailto:d.ramakl@gmail.com)

### Abstract

Originally associated with the Left as academic reform and curriculum change, multiculturalism subsequently came to be accepted as study of the philosophy, literature and art of cultures. It got the status of official policy at all levels in the US and other democratic countries. It has been successful in the three democracies, America, Australia and India. India, as the most ancient of the three multicultural societies, has several cultures merging over the centuries, new cultures evolving, and several others co-existing today. There is a Hindu majority despite foreign incursions, Hinduism being the most tolerant religion that does not resort to conversions. America and Australia have Christian majority. The multiple ethnic groups in America and Australia are allowed to practise their individual religions. The occasional ethnic conflicts notwithstanding, the three multicultural societies are advancing as modern nations, interacting with each other.

### Keywords

Multiculturalism, indigenous, migrant, democracy, civic humanism

Multiculturalism, the complex term signifying cultural identities, evolved out of the social and political movements of the 1960s. In academia, it was associated with the Left as part of a cultural reform movement in America. It was not a study of different cultures but one integrating in the curriculum the issues of race, gender and the growing cultural diversity. Originally associated with academic reform and curriculum change, multiculturalism subsequently came to be accepted as study of the philosophy, literature and art of cultures. It got the status of official policy at all levels in the US and other democratic countries. It will be interesting to see how multiculturalism has been successful in the three democracies, America, Australia and India. While America evolved in the seventeenth century and Australia in the nineteenth, India has been the most ancient of the three

multicultural societies going back to 2000 B.C. The three are flourishing as modern nations consisting of multiple ethnic groups.

## Multiculturalism: Towards a Definition

Multiculturalism is said to be concerned with the representation of difference. However, it should be the representation, not of difference as such, but of cultural identities finding tolerant ways of peaceful coexistence in a democratic society. As Hazel Carby says: 'The paradigm of multiculturalism actually excludes the concept of dominant and subordinate cultures—either indigenous or migrant' (Carby, 1980). Although Whites were the earliest settlers subduing the indigenous people in America and Australia, multiculturalism does not give precedence to the dominant or subordinate culture in the nations. John Brenkman tries to connect multiculturalism and democracy: 'Democracy also requires citizens who are fluent enough in one another's vocabularies and histories to share the forums of political deliberation and decision on an equal footing' (Brenkman, 1993: 89). The tensions between multiculturalism and democracy could be resolved by 'civic humanism' proposed by Brenkman. However, he concedes: 'Civic humanism also always assumed the homogeneity of those who enjoyed citizenship' (Brenkman, 1993: 95). While maintaining their individual ethnic cultures, citizens in America, Australia and India have achieved a certain degree of homogeneity for peaceful coexistence.

In the coming together of cultures in a multicultural society, the question of identity arises. Henry Louis Gates, Jr, wonders whether 'multiculturalism—often depicted as a slippery slope to anarchy and tribal war—would support the sort of civil society one might want' (Gates, 1993: 6–11). Despite the possibility of the constituent groups asserting themselves, such assertion should be within the bounds of harmonious living.

## Multiculturalism in America

Large groups of British settlers came to the New World in ships under Christopher Newport in 1607. English Calvinists called 'Pilgrim Fathers' also came to Massachusetts in a ship called *Mayflower* in 1620 escaping persecution by the King. They had a tough time settling in the wilderness.

In the seventeenth century the Negro slaves were brought by the White settlers mainly from the west coast of Africa. By the end of the century, when the monopoly of the Royal African Company ended, the trade was controlled by several firms and individuals both American and British (Nevins and Commager, 1968: 46). In course of time the Negroes attained freedom and became naturalised citizens. But tensions between the Black Americans and Whites and other races exist even today.

The wars of White settlers with Native Americans resulted in the killing of large numbers of the natives. The Whites, the frontiersmen, constantly encroached on Indian lands resulting in wars. As Allan Nevins and Henry Steele Commager say:

...the inexorable westward thrust of the whites was the principal cause of the many conflicts. The most bloodcurdling wars were with the Creeks in the South, where Andrew Jackson won a bloody victory; with the Seminoles in the Florida Swamps and thickets; and with Tecumseh's followers in Indiana. (Nevins and Commager, 1968: 206)

As centuries passed, unlike the aggressive Blacks, the American Indians have remained submissive and they are smaller in numbers.

The Frenchman Hector St. Crevecoeur initiated the concept of 'Melting Pot,' looking at America as a society with a new culture produced by the amalgamation of people of multiple nations like the English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, German and Swedes. The concept was popularised by Israel Zangwill.

The statute passed by the first Congress in 1790 and subsequently revised in 1802 authorised uniform naturalisation procedure to assimilate the foreign-born. Allan Nevins and Henry Steele Commager tell us that in the times of early settlement in America, many English and continental craftsmen paid for their passage by giving bond service. Some escaped from the Fleet Prison in London by assisted emigration. Convicts were often transported for trivial offences as it happened in the case of Australia later. In hard times some Britons would commit small crimes to get sent to America (Nevins and Commager, 1968: 45).

It was clear by the beginning of World War-I that assimilation would not be possible. Alarmed by the situation, the older Americans started the Americanisation movement resulting in the Immigration Act of 1924 which virtually stopped all immigration. It subdued the agitation against foreigners by the natives. In the 1960s, powerful movements challenged the concept of 'Melting Pot' and maintained that America was a mosaic or salad of diverse people. The new immigrants developed social and cultural pride without the need for abandoning their language and native customs. Nevertheless, due to prolonged stay in the American society they would develop the accent, mannerisms and work culture of the White Americans.

The immigration law passed by the US Congress in 1965 admitted newcomers on the basis of their skills and to reunite families. After the repeal of the national origins plan, many immigrants have been identified as both Americans and members of an ethnic group. Each ethnic group is shaped by place of origin, area of settlement, time, circumstances and in relations to others. In order to become naturalised citizens the immigrants need not give up their religions, languages, and customs. As Arthur Mann says, 'The process of acculturation, therefore, left room for different antecedents and ethnic affiliations while upholding the values of a common civic culture (Mann, 1987: 79).' The several ethnic groups settled in America were recreated as something new but still identifiable groups. As Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan maintain, 'The assimilating power of American

society and culture operated on immigrant groups in different ways, to make them, it is true, something they had not been, but still something distinct and identifiable (Glazer and Moynihan, 1963: 12). Both the native culture and the culture of the country of settlement would be present in the immigrant even beyond the first generation in view of the family traditions and customs practised at home.

Before World War I, there were around 60 different ethnic groups in the US. In the twenty-first century, there are over a hundred groups. While the earlier migrations were largely from Europe, in the 1960s, there were more from Asia and Latin America. In the next decade, the arrivals from Asia and Latin America outnumbered those from the Old World four to one. The multiculturalist movement began in the 1970s to replace America's mainstream Anglo Protestant culture with other cultures linked mainly to racial groups. In the 1980s and early 1990s the new movement achieved preeminence.

As Samuel F. Huntington says, 'Religiosity distinguishes America from most other Western societies. Americans are also overwhelmingly Christian, which distinguishes them from most non-Western peoples' (Huntington, 2004: 365). Nevertheless, on account of religious tolerance, the ethnic groups are free to practise their individual religions. Drawn by religion, political and economic forces, people of diverse races came to the US in search of a permanent home. The massive waves of migration added 37 million foreign-born to the population of America from the 1820s to the 1920s. In the subsequent decades there were large numbers of Latin Americans and refugees from Southeast Asia. The 1980 Census showed that out of the total national population of 226.5 million, there were 11.7 per cent Blacks, 6.4 per cent Hispanics, 0.6 per cent Native Americans, and 1.5 per cent Asian Americans including Indians. By the twenty-first Century, America has become multiracial, with 70 per cent Whites, 12 per cent Hispanics, 12 per cent Blacks, 4 per cent Asians and Pacific Islanders and 3 per cent others. Also 63 per cent are Protestant, 23 per cent Catholic, 8 per cent other religions. Whites in America are concerned about their declining numbers in recent years. By 2010 Asians are said to be around 43 per cent, the Chinese and Indians are increasing in population. As Samuel P. Huntington says, 'Race and ethnicity are now largely eliminated: Americans see their country as a multiethnic, multiracial society' (Huntington, 2004: x). Despite religious tolerance, on account of the Christian majority, the Anglo-Protestant culture persists in the United States. The 'American Creed,' initially formulated by Thomas Jefferson, was popularised by Gunnar Myrdal in *The American Dilemma* (1944). Referring to the racial, religious, ethnic, regional and economic homogeneity of the United States, he argued that Americans had 'something in common, a social ethos, a political creed.' The Creed was the product of the distinct Anglo-Protestant culture which has been central to American identity for over three hundred years. The principles of equality and individualism too are central to the American Creed.

In a multicultural situation in America or Australia, when there are ethnic groups with long historical ancestry, like the Indians and Chinese, others of less

historical backgrounds can find new identities as citizens of the country of their settlement. In the second generation of the ethnic groups and more in the third generation, the distinctive language, customs and culture are generally lost. However, nostalgia for the land of their ancestors may persist. When cultures fuse after generations of settlement, as it happened in India since the ancient times, new cultures may evolve in new nations.

## **Multiculturalism in Australia**

As Bob Hodge and Vijay Mishra say, 'Australia was founded on a double gate: the dispossession of the Aboriginal people and the excessive punishment of large numbers of British and Irish people mainly from the poorer classes, for crimes against the property of the ruling class' (Hodge and Mishra, 1990: 116). While several convicts were massacred in Tasmania, several others escaped to the mainland. They were used by the White British and European settlers as labour to build Australia. In course of time many convicts acquired respectability as new citizens, rearing future families. With waves of new migrants from all over the world joining after discovery of gold at Ballarat and Bendigo, Australia has evolved into a modern nation on democratic principles, although without being a Republic, still owing allegiance to the British Crown.

After arrival of the British and European migrants to the new continent in the nineteenth century, there was mass destruction of the Native Aborigines like the destruction of native Americans in America. Now the Aboriginal people constitute only a small proportion of the Australian population. But in art and literature, the Aboriginal creativity is being recognised in recent times as a significant aspect of Australian cultural production. In fact, the indigenous Australian Culture is unique. All other things are borrowed from foreign cultures.

The Irish refugees were among the earliest migrants coming to Australia from 1841. The Irish Catholics were not allowed by the English settlers into the schools, churches and other institutions established by them. But the Scottish and Welsh Protestants fleeing from trouble at home could feel more at home in the new continent as settlers.

The Irish were followed by migrants from other parts of the world around 1851 during the gold rush. The Victorian gold fields at Bendigo and Ballarat, particularly the latter, were the richest in Australia perhaps more than the gold fields in California in America. More than half a million people from Italy, France, Poland, Germany, America, China and the British Isles came to Melbourne city.

There were anti-Chinese riots when the Chinese came to the gold fields, but there was large scale Chinese immigration. State and national laws were enacted to keep Chinese out and discourage non-Anglo European migrants. In the second half of the twentieth century, the Irish heritage resulted in multiculturalism taking roots.

The White Australian policy suffered a serious set-back in 1959. Although the non-White ban on immigration was lifted, Europeans were preferred with a points system. However, the European migration slowed down in the 1970s due to the advent of the European Union since Europeans could migrate to any European country.

More than 6,000 Asian migrants a year came to Australia by the 1960s. The new migrants established their own social and cultural organisations. By the 1970s waves of migrants came from other parts of the world due to international conflicts and civil wars in Lebanon, Cyprus and Chile. The arrival of Vietnamese refugees by boats started in 1977. Subsequently refugees from Malaysia and Sri Lanka too came. Middle-class professionals from South Asian countries like India and Sri Lanka started coming in the 1980s under skilled migration programmes. Since 2000, the Chinese and Indian migrants outnumbered those from Britain. Now China and India are treated by the Government of Australia as important market for its products.

As new waves of migrants came and Australia evolved into a modern nation, multiculturalism has been declared as its official policy. Like America, Australia also is a salad bowl of cultures with Christianity as majority religion and English as the official language. One in every ten Australians is said to be a White Supremacist.

The Australia Multicultural Policy has been stated in the official website of the Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs. The Multicultural Policy embraces the

Australian-grown customs and heritage of indigenous Australians, early settlers, and the diverse range of migrants now coming to Australia. It supports the right of Australians to maintain and celebrate, within the law, their culture, language or religion. All Australians are expected to have an overriding loyalty to Australia and its people, and to respect the basic structures and principles underwriting our democratic society. These are the Constitution, Parliamentary democracy, freedom of speech and religion, English as the national language, the rule of law, acceptance and equality.<sup>1</sup>

The Policy emphasises 'civic duty', 'respect for each person', 'recognition of difference with tolerance', 'social equity', 'benefits for all from productive diversity.'

Nationalism is a geographical conglomeration of ethnic groups living together and having an identity different from their home countries. Ethnicity derives from the common history and traditions of a specific group. The Australian 'National identity' will be achieved if there is common interest among the ethnic groups while preserving their own individual cultural traditions. In fact, the migrants are happy to spend their lives mixing their family traditions with novel rituals, barbecues, footy matches and Australian Idol live shows.

Although there is no coercive assimilation, a certain degree of homogeneity takes place among citizens in terms of living style, communication in English language and work place culture as generations pass. The Australian



multiculturalism is complex, balancing separateness of the ethnic groups and cohesion of the society as a whole. Compared with the other advanced Western industrial countries, Australia is different in the relatively large volume of immigration and settlement. But the people of British descent are still a majority. Despite the presence of multiple religions of ethnic groups, the majority of over 20 million strong population are Christian. The new arrivals of settlers encouraged by multiculturalism extend beyond the country's borders to the migrants' countries of origin. Such links would contribute to the development of strong political and economic relations. Almost one in four Australians was born overseas, one in five has an overseas parent and one in twenty is of Asian origin. And Australia is inhabited by people who speak more than 300 languages while the official language is English.

As Fiske, Hodge and Turner maintain, culture grows out of the divisions of society, not its unity. 'It has no work to construct any unity that it has, rather than simply celebrate an achieved or natural harmony' (Fiske, Hodge and Turner, 1987: xvi). In this sense multicultural societies like America, Australia and India are embattled constructions of unity in any historical moment. As Bob Hodge and Vijay Mishra assert, multiculturalism is 'a kind of cultural map which acknowledges diversity without losing sight of the specific histories of the multicultural project' (Hodge and Mishra, 1990: 181). The individual ethnic groups not only remain cohesive within an overarching society, but keep up their native cultures. They act as bridges between the countries of their origin and the country of their settlement. According to John Frow, multiculturalism in Australia is not primarily a cultural phenomenon but framed 'by a set of strategies of nation formation and by the politics of Asian regionalism' (Frow, 1998: 149–154). He argues that unlike the US, New Zealand and Canada, 'Australia has substantial racial, linguistic or cultural unity (Frow, 1998: 150).' Despite 'Cultural Asianness', Australia's own largely European cultural traditions continue to be present today. Ghasan Hage examines White reactions to one of the most diverse immigration programmes the world has seen. He concedes that subsequent to the emergence of multiculturalism in the mid-1970s, 'Australia was a nation where various cultural groups coexisted in one big "family"' (Hage, 1998: 83). In the present times cultural attitude is prevalent at the level of the people, belonging to various ethnic groups in terms of English as the language of communication, living style and interaction among them in day-to-day life.

## **Multiculturalism in India**

According to A.L. Basham, the primitive men drifting into the Indian subcontinent since the old Stone Age were the ancestors of one of India's three main racial types—the Proto-Australoids, so called because of the resemblance to the Australian Aborigines (Basham, 1975).<sup>2</sup> Subsequently the Paleo-Mediterranean are said to have come to South Asia from the West. The Aryans, the speakers of



Indo-European language which was related to those of classical Europe came in waves. The earlier arrivals were round-headed (Brachycephalic) people of the type called Alpine or Armenoid. Later came the long-headed Caucasoids, similar to northern Europeans.

The majority of the earliest races that settled in India were the Proto-Astroloid, the Paleo-Mediterranean and the caucasoids or Indo-Europeans. In fact, every race of Central Asia came to India. Turks came long before the Muslims. The Mongolians came to India over the Himalayan and north-eastern passes. The African slaves brought by Muslims merged with the general population. Some Persian and Arab traders settled among the west coast and married Indian women. Their descendants indistinguishably merged with the rest of the population. The Parsi fugitives who were expelled from Persia by Muslim invaders settled in India. Zoroastrianism, Islam and Christianity becoming native to the Indian soil are deeply influenced by the tolerance of Hinduism. Muslim conquerors from about 1000 A.D. affected Hindu life and thought.

The Indus Valley Culture prevailed during 3250 B.C. to 2000 B.C. As S. Abid Hussain says, the religious beliefs and practices of the ancient inhabitants of the Indus Valley:

are to some extent reflected in Hinduism. The figures shown on the seals provide ample evidence that they worshipped Shakti the mother goddess and sacrificed goats and other animals to her. There is no doubt that the Hindus inherited both these practices from them. Some seals have been found with representations of a god resembling Shiva. (Hussain, 1978: 25)

Use of the swastika and wheel as symbols of the sun is said to date from the period of Indus Valley Civilisation. The traditions of the period also influenced belief in spirits and magic in *Yajur Veda* and *Atharva Veda* which is not in keeping with the teachings of the *Rig Veda*. As Sir John Marshall asserts, as a result of the excavations in Harappa and Mohanjo Daro, we have evidence of the presence in India of a highly developed culture that 'must have had a long antecedent history on the soil of India, taking us back to an age that can only be dimly surmised. (Marshall, 1931: 106). Many cultures merged indistinguishably into Hindu culture since the times of the Indus people and the Vedic Aryans. During the second millennium B.C., Aryan tribes with pastoral backgrounds came to the subcontinent from the north west and settled in the middle Ganges River Valley. In spite of attacks by Greeks, Muslims, Europeans and others, Hindu culture has maintained its tradition unbroken to the present day. Referring to Marshall's assertion, A.C. Bouquet says that the civilisation of the Indus Valley was 'a highly developed civilisation which must have taken a very long period' (Bouquet, 1949: 21).

Dravidian culture was flourishing in South India when Indus Valley Civilisation was being destroyed in north-west India by wild invaders around 2000 B.C. According to S. Radhakrishnan, we cannot say 'whether the Dravidians were natives of the soil or came from outside.' (Radhakrishnan, 1975: 61). Dravidians

came to India from the west by sea by the second half of the 1st millennium B.C. In prehistoric times there were cultural exchanges between the Indus Valley and South India. An important feature of the Indus Valley Civilisation is its continuity, not as a political power but as a cultural influence. The religion of the Indus people is hardly distinguishable, according to Sir John Marshall, from 'that aspect of Hinduism which is bound up with animism and the cults of Shiva and Mother Goddess' (Marshall, 1931: viii). The religion, as per the earliest literary records, is that of the Aryans, though it was much influenced by the Indus people, the Dravidians and the Aborigines.

Among the Harappans, some were long-headed and narrow-nosed. They were slender Mediterranean type found in the ancient Middle East and Egypt. They constituted an important feature of the Indian population today. The modern South Indian is said to be a blend of Mediterranean and Proto-Australoid, the two chief ethnic factors in the Harappa culture. The Harappa religion seems to show many similarities with those elements of Hinduism which are specially popular in the Dravidian country (Basham, 1975: 24–25). The Australian Aborigine and Negro elements were referred to by A.C. Bouquet also. As he says, 'India is the home of many physical types, and much of the oldest surviving stratum of the population bears a not inconsiderable resemblance to the Australian black fellow. The very earliest inhabitants are now thought to have been Negritos of the Andaman Island type' (Bouquet, 1949: 20). According to M.N. Srinivas, 'The population of India is racially diverse, containing elements from six main racial types: the Negrito, the Proto-Australoid, the Mongoloid, the Mediterranean, the Western Brachycephals and the Nordic' (Srinivas, 1986: 1).

With its origins in Hinduism of the pre-Vedic times, Indian culture has been most tolerant, welcoming and absorbing diverse foreign cultures. Despite diversity in regional and subregional cultures, languages and religions, there is a certain degree of homogeneity among Indians over the centuries. With a population around 1.5 billion, India consists of multiple cultures constantly reshaping due to interaction. In India there are over 33 languages, but only 15 of them got political recognition. As per the official reports of 2005, the population consists of 72 per cent Hindus, 12.26 per cent Muslims, 6.8 per cent Christian, 1.87 per cent Sikhs, 0.67 per cent Buddhist, 0.51 per cent Jains, 0.02 per cent Parsis and the rest other non-religious groups. Indian tradition is determined largely by religion shaping social behaviour of the citizens. The majority of over 72 per cent practise Hinduism. Within this majority, there are different belief systems and caste divisions. Hinduism has no specific founder and no specific 'holy book' as a basic scriptural guide. The *Vedas*, *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita* are all sacred texts for the Hindus. Hindus are free to worship Vishnu, Siva and other gods and goddesses. As believers in the Supreme Spirit pervading the Universe and present within each individual, they may worship Divinity in any form. Hinduism is tolerant and does not resort to conversions from other religions. Despite the attempts of foreign invaders to destroy it over the centuries or resort to conversions of Hindus, the ancient religion of Hinduism is flourishing today. As

S. Radhakrishnan says, 'Hinduism represents a development from the beliefs and practices of the Indus Valley Civilisation to the complex of changing aspirations and habits, speculations and forms which are in vogue today' (Radhakrishnan, 1975: 61). It is no superstition or abstraction but empirical, relevant to practical realities of life even in modern times.

All the major religions of the world converged in India. In addition to the multiplicity of religions and languages, there are multiple castes. As M.N. Srinivas says, 'The essence of caste is the arrangement of hereditary groups in a hierarchy. The popular impression of the hierarchy is a clear-cut one, derived from the idea of *Varna*, with Brahmins at the top and Harijans at the bottom' (Srinivas, 1986: 5). Caste is generally associated with an occupation. Different castes are said to prevail among not only Hindus but also Muslims, Christians, Jews, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains in India. Parsis are descendants of a group of Zoroastrian Persians who fled to India during the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. They are part of the Indian society now, like the Jews spread over the country. In recent years, large numbers of Bhutanese settled in India, their spiritual head taking refuge in Dharmasala.

Since the Islamic invasions and Mughal rule, Muslim population in India gradually increased. Conversions from Hinduism added to the numbers. In pre-Independence days, there was conflict between separatist Muslim political leaders and organisations and the Indian National Congress. There were Hindu-Muslim riots. These conflicts are taking place sporadically even in the twenty-first century in sensitive areas in some of the major cities. But generally there is Hindu-Muslim amity.

By 1981 there was a tribal population of more than 50 million people with hundreds of groups. Many tribal groups rebelled. As David Brown says referring to South East Asia. 'Intrinsic to ethnicity is its ideological character' (Brown, 1996: 305). Some rebellions with economic grievances were class-based, supported by Marxist political organisations. These tribal rebellions have been continuous in both the Northern and Southern regions of the country. Within each linguistic region, there are local castes and large caste clusters. Regional conflicts among different ethnic and linguistic groups are common. Migration of individuals or groups from one state to another and sometimes even from one region to another within the same linguistic state has been common in India. But sometimes such migrations result in conflicts. As Paul Brass says, 'Conflicts between language, religious and ethnic groups tend to center around issues of jobs, educational opportunities, and local political power' (Brass, 1996).

## Conclusion

It is interesting to see the three multicultural societies together despite their inherent differences. India as the most ancient of the three has several cultures assimilated over the centuries and several others coexisting today. There is Hindu

majority despite foreign incursions, Hinduism being the most tolerant religion that does not resort to conversions. America and Australia have Christian majority. The ethnic groups in these democratic nations are allowed to practice their individual religions. The occasional ethnic conflicts notwithstanding, the three multicultural societies are advancing as modern societies. Assimilation of cultures is inevitable in course of time. It is more in the case of India since ancient times.

Indian migrants are playing an increasing role in the development of the economics of America and Australia. As Grasan Hage says, the migrant cultures are 'enriching cultures' (Hage, 1998: 121).

India is maintaining good trade relations with the other two nations. Australia is giving priority to Asia in trade relations and to the United States in terms of geopolitical alliances. The effect of American popular culture is perceptible in India and Australia.

## Notes

1. [www.immi.gov.au](http://www.immi.gov.au)
2. See Introduction.

## References

- Basham, A. L. (Ed.) (1975). *A cultural history of India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bouquet, A.C. (1949). *Hinduism*. London: Hutchinson University Library.
- Brass, Paul (1996). The politics of ethnicity in India. In John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Ed.), *Ethnicity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brenkman, John (1993). Multiculturalism and criticism. In Susan Gubar and Jonathan Kamholtz (Ed.), *English inside and out* (p. 89). New York: Routledge.
- Brown, David (1996). Ethnicity, nationalism and democracy in South-East Asia.
- Carby, Hazel (1980). Multi-culture. *Screen*, 34: 62–70.
- Fiske, J., Hodge, B. and Turner, G. (1987). *Myths of Oz: Reading Australian popular culture*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- Frow, John (1998). Multiculturalism: The cultural diversity, *Poetica*, 50.
- Gates, Jr. Henry Louis (1993). Beyond the culture wars: Identities in dialogue, *Profession*, 1993, 6–11.
- Glazer, Nathan, & Moynihan, Daniel P. (1963). *Beyond the melting pot*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Hage, Ghasan (1998). *White nation: Fantasies of white supremacy in a multicultural society*. Sydney: Pluto Press.
- Hodge, Bob, & Mishra, Vijay (1990). *Dark side of the dream: Australian literature and the postcolonial mind*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- Huntington, Samuel P. (2004). *Who are we?: America's great debate*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India Pvt. Ltd.
- Hussain, S. Abid (1978). *The national culture of India*. New Delhi: National Book Trust.

- Mann, Arthur (1987). From immigration to acculturation. In Luther S. Luedke (Ed.), *Making America: The society and culture of the United States*. Washington, DC: US Information Agency.
- Marshall, Sir John (1931). Mohenjo-Daro and the Indus civilization. In A.L. Basham (Ed.), *A cultural history of India* (p. 61), Vol I. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nevins, Allan, & Commager, Henry Steele (1968). *A short history of the United States*. New York: Alfred A. Knapt.
- Radhakrishnan, S. (1975). Hinduism. In A. L. Basham (Ed.), *A cultural history of India* (p. 61). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Srinivas, M.N. (1969). *India: Social structure*. Delhi: Hindustan Publishing Corporation.