

“I’m Not Australian, I’m Not Greek, I’m Not Anything”: Identity and the Multicultural Nation in Christos Tsiolkas’s *Loaded*

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Developing out of the changing demographic composition of countries in the twentieth century, policies of multiculturalism embody an attempt by the state to encourage and celebrate ethno-cultural difference within national boundaries. It is, in the terms of Benedict Anderson’s influential model, a different way of “imagining” community, one that requires a rethinking of sameness and ethnic otherness so as to conceive of the nation as simultaneously fragmented and unified. Justified as a pluralism that promotes integration, it has been explicated by Charles Taylor as a “politics of recognition,” where individual dignity comes not just from a discourse of equality (that we are all the same, and deserving of the same protections), but also from a recognition of difference as fundamental to that dignity. In this model, multiculturalism is a natural continuation of rights-based liberalism, adding to, but not disrupting, the ideological assertions of the nation. Yet, as critics such as Smaro Kamboureli have pointed out, this reading is problematic precisely because its “naturalness” remains unquestioned. In Taylor’s formulation, multiculturalism never challenges the assumptions of the liberal democratic state, it only reinforces them. A similar critique can be made of multiculturalism’s official manifestations: in their codification and application by government agencies, these policies function as a form of difference management, containing diversity in the service of the nation without becoming disruptive of it. In effect, official multicultural policy promotes a form of cultural heritage that is ossified and stagnant, fixing difference through the emblem of community.

However, belonging to such an immutable community seems impossible for the queer subject of Christos Tsiolkas's *Loaded*. The protagonist, Ari, is the nineteen-year-old son of Greek-Australian migrants, and the novel follows his movements across Melbourne over the period of a day. Fuelled by drugs, dance and sex, Ari actively resists the values of his parents and the community that they represent: work, marriage and family. And yet his anger and sense of alienation are not the simple products of a generational defiance, but seem more fundamentally tied to a deeply troubled self-conception. Ari rejects delimiting identity categories, including those of ethnicity and sexuality—"I don't like definitions" (Tsiolkas 115)—in a way that mirrors the very problems of reductiveness that Kamboureli has noted in official discourses of multiculturalism. At the same time, Ari is himself unable to reconceive of his own subjectivity apart from a paradigmatically Greek-Australian identity that ties sexuality to an aggressively hetero-normative masculinity. Thus his sense of self, like the city through which he roams, is characterized not by strength in diversity, but rather a geography of unremitting division that nonetheless underscores the limits of his anger and nihilism. *Loaded* is consequently a nuanced work, one that recognises the origins of Ari's alienation, while suggesting at least the potential for a more productive alternative.

The supposedly multicultural Australian society Ari is responding to is the result of a series of social and cultural projects that began in the 1970s. Following a national history of assimilationist and racist immigration regulation (exemplified in the White Australia Policy), the development of official multiculturalism in Australia can be traced to the 1972–1975 Labor government. In 1973 the then Minister for Immigration, Al Grassby, argued in Parliament that multiculturalism had become a national reality and noted that "the increasing diversity of Australian society has rendered untenable any prospect there might have been twenty years ago of fully assimilating newcomers to the Australian way of life" (Grassby, qtd. in Huggan 129). The consequence was the beginning of multiculturalism as an official Commonwealth policy, manifest through government agencies and regulations, and aimed towards the preservation and promotion of cultural difference. It developed, albeit more cautiously, under the subsequent Liberal Government, and continues to be a part of federal political discussion thirty years later.

The present Liberal-Coalition Government has set out its multicultural policy in the December 1999 document *A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia*. In keeping with the Government's conservative approach to social issues, this document frames multiculturalism cautiously, repeatedly stating that "it is about and for all Australians; it is not concerned mainly with immigration and minority ethnic communities," and that "Australian culture includes Indigenous Australians, our British and Irish heritage, our Australian-grown customs, and those of our more

recently arrived migrant groups as part of a dynamic and interacting set of life patterns" (7). The presumption here is that while multiculturalism is an Australian reality, there remains an *inherited* culture that structures the nation and with whose basic principles all other cultures must comply. Australian multiculturalism, at least insofar as it is espoused in *A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia*, is a process of integrative exchange wherein certain aspects of the dominant culture are immutable:

the democratic foundations of our society contain a balance of rights and obligations. The freedom of all Australians in practice is dependent on their abiding by mutual civic obligations. Thus, all Australians are expected to have an overriding commitment to Australia and the basic structures and principles common to Australian society. These are the Constitution, Parliamentary democracy, freedom of speech and religion, English as the national language, the rule of law, tolerance, and equality—including equality of the sexes.

Within this broad framework, each individual and group is welcome to make a contribution to *the common good* [emphasis added]. We do not seek to impose a sameness on all our people. Nor do we seek to discourage the further evolution of the Australian culture which already includes the heritage of Indigenous Australians, our British and Irish settlers, our Australian-grown customs, and those of our more recently-arrived migrant groups. We are, in reality as well as by definition, a multicultural nation. (6)

In one reading, *A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia* thus depicts the established Anglo-Celtic culture's "active power to tolerate" whereby "minorities can only be at the receiving end of tolerance" (Ang 40). Multiculturalism must comply with pre-existing discourses, becoming part of a paradoxical evolution into something that we already are. Thus, while *A New Agenda for Multicultural Australia* might not describe a policy of assimilation, the form of multiculturalism detailed in it, and its reiteration of extant political structures, also suggests that it may not necessarily function as a policy of social change.

Official multiculturalism has prompted discussion by critics of all political persuasions. Freda Hawkins, for example, has described it as "an artificial creation taking the form of a government supported and financed interest group or coalition of ethnic communities (the financing making it much easier to control) and not a movement which is, to any substantial extent, self-generated and spontaneous, or which has strong roots in the community in a collective sense" (77). Still others have suggested that its basic premises are inconsistent: "On the one hand, barriers to cultural integration and linguistic assimilation were to be removed. On the other, the government was committing to assist 'cultural' groups to pre-

serve their differences” (Hudson 64). However, the critiques that I will focus on here are those that suggest multiculturalism functions to manage or contain difference, ultimately generating little change within the dominant culture. In doing so I will draw on the work of Smaro Kamboureli, whose description of Canadian multiculturalism as a “sedative politics” can be, despite acknowledged differences between the two countries, legitimately made of Australia’s system as well.

Kamboureli notes that while multicultural discourses refute the idea of an authorized culture, this is problematic because the nation still maintains an official language, and the attempt to keep language and culture distinct is “self-contradictory, if not impossible” (98). It is a point worth stressing: Australian multiculturalism operates with English as the national language and in accordance with dominant English-Australian “structures and principles.” Language, in its most complete sense, is more than just a method of communication, and is not ideologically neutral. That ethno-cultural minorities need to be able to express themselves in an official language to be recognised necessarily problematises the presumed equality of all cultures within the multicultural nation. Moreover, if language is seen as central to self-definition and identity—as multicultural rhetoric states that it is—then it is somewhat naïve to suggest that the promotion of official languages does not trouble this, for, as Taylor notes, words constitute the means by which an individual “knows” herself, as well as how the nation itself is imagined.

Further, this linguistic concern emphasises how official constructions of multiculturalism, despite their stated celebration of difference, also act to “manage” it. The repeated references to integration in the discourse of multiculturalism assert that nation is a collective identity to which all must ascribe, even while space is allocated within this for diversity. Official multiculturalism thus seeks to reinforce a binary conception of national identity between the dominant culture and all others (including indigenous cultures). Doing so, Kamboureli argues, establishes “a sedative politics, a politics that attempts to recognise ethnic differences, but only in a contained fashion, in order to manage them” (82). Thus multiculturalism constructs difference through an ethnic Other whose self-perception is the product of this management, so that “when the ethnic subject speaks of and through herself, she does so by interpreting how she has already been constructed, thus speaking back to, or together with, what defines and delimits her as ethnic” (94).

Such delimitation is reliant on what Scott McFarlane terms an “anthropological model of culture,” premised on the assumption “that individuals and communities emerge from discrete cultural origins and possess both a recognisable history

and autonomous set of cultural practices" (20). This "compartmentalisation of cultures through the selection of certain traits" to define and identify "disavows the multiplicity of cultural and power relations characterising the selection process in the present" (20). As McFarlane reads it, official multiculturalism in Canada functions ahistorically, obscuring past inequalities (and, indeed, current ones) in favour of a contemporary construction of celebratory ethnicity. Australian multiculturalism has been subject to similar criticism, being described, for example, as "a government policy for managing difference, which continues a tradition of government intervention in immigration and settlement that goes back to colonial times" (Castles and Davidson 165). Further, Graham Huggan notes that, particularly under the Fraser government:

a series of picturesque metaphors (e.g., "salad-bowl" multiculturalism) were deployed to mystify unequal relations of power; to disguise continuing, economically motivated manifestations of xenophobia and racial prejudice; and to distract attention away from the numerous, frequently conspicuous social disadvantages being experienced by Australia's latest minority workforce in an increasingly competitive urban-industrial society. (129)

The product of multiculturalism in such a system is thus a "fictional" ethnicity, produced for consumption by the cultural majority but with little reality beyond that.

In "Culture's in Between," Homi Bhabha remarks that multiculturalism has become something of a "floating signifier," "a portmanteau term for anything from minority discourse to postcolonial critique, from gay and lesbian studies to chicano/a fiction" (31). While Bhabha is somewhat critical of this move, there remains a productive potential in considering discourses of multiculturalism and sexuality alongside one another, not because there are any inherent similarities between ethno-cultural groups and sexual minorities, but because the "denaturalising impulse" of queer studies represents a useful means of interrogating the presumptions made of both within the space of the modern nation (Jagose 99). As Samir Dayal notes, "a queer perspective constitutes an interrogation, implicitly at least, of the way in which all subjects, not only GLBT [Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender] subjects, are interpellated as gendered bodies within a given social space" (305). This "queer perspective" might then read ethnicity, as well as sexuality, as "an effect of identification with and against others: being ongoing, and always incomplete, it is a process rather than a property" (Jagose 79). It is in this, perhaps, that multiculturalism might begin to move away from a sedative politics to one that could achieve "a new kind of justice to the fractal intricacies of language, skin, migration, state" (Sedgwick 9). However, doing so would require a fundamental change in how official multiculturalism, with its emphasis on sameness as the marker of otherness, articu-

lates subjectivity. For, as becomes apparent in *Loaded*, the failures in both multiculturalism and Australian culture more generally to acknowledge diverse subjectivities have not led to a “new kind of justice,” but to a paralysing alienation.

Loaded has four sections, each equating to a point of the compass, and Ari’s movement across Melbourne serves to map its cultural geography and his own identifications. The novel begins in the “East,” “[t]he whitest part of my city,” characterized by wealth and the trappings of capitalism—shopping malls and suburbs with the generic sameness of an idealised America (41). It is also where “the brick-veneer fortresses of the wogs with money” deny any similarity to the “losers . . . [and] deviants” like Ari (41, 43). From here the text moves “North,” to that part of Melbourne that “isn’t Melbourne, isn’t Australia,” but is rather “a little village in the mountains of the Mediterranean transported to the bottom of the southern hemisphere. . . . [a] sore on the map of my city . . . where the wog is supposed to end up” (81–82). In Ari’s eyes it fails both as a utopia of multiculturalism and as a replication of “old ways,” because “there isn’t a home anymore” (82): the North is simply a trap. Yet, even as Ari resists the North because he is supposed to “end up” there, he eroticises it as the location of “the skin that will ease the strain on my groin” through the possibility of sex with Greek- and Arab-Australian men (83). Thus the North comes to signify Ari’s conflicted sense of belonging: unable to believe in the “fragmented unity” of multiculturalism, his disgust is paradoxically inflected by his desire for the “skin” that serves as the marker of that difference.

Melbourne’s “West” is “a dumping ground; a sewer of refugees, the migrants, the poor, the insane, the unskilled and the uneducated” (143–44). West is also where Ari suggests that the promise of solidarity in Australia, exemplified in mateship and the egalitarianism of the union movement, have proven to be an “urban myth” incapable of crossing the divisions of ethnicity:

The myth goes something like this; we may be poor, may be treated like scum, but we stick together, we are a community. The arrival of the ethnics put paid to that myth in Australia. In the working-class suburbs of the West where communal solidarity is meant to flourish, the skip sticks with the skip, the wog with the wog, the gook with the gook, and the abo with the abo. Solidarity, like love, is a crock of shit. (142)

In the face of the capitalism which drives Australian culture and which, Tsiolkas suggests, privileges individual gain at the expense of solidarity, community becomes incomprehensible because “[i]t is impossible to feel camaraderie if the dominant wish is to get money, enough possessions to rise above the community you are in” (143).

Rejecting what he sees as the restrictive expectations of a community with which he has no connection, it is perhaps unsurprising that the only home Ari can find in “his” city is “South,” the location of the societal abject:

the wogs who have been shunted out of their communities. Artists and junkies and faggots and whores, the sons and daughters no longer talked about, no longer admitted into the arms of family. In the South, . . . are all the wog rejects from the North, the East, the West. Flushed out towards the sea. (132)

Ari, unable to keep still and accept what community would prescribe for him, is instead a “sailor,” given strength by a sea that “draws me to the whores and faggots and junkies” who have found a home, however tenuous, in the South (133).

Multicultural Melbourne is thus neither an integrated community nor a harmonious cultural plurality. It is instead marked by chasms that divide it, as they do cities “[f]rom Singapore to Beijing, from Rio to Johannesburg” (144). Melbourne becomes a microcosm of those ethnic antipathies that are played out across a world where “[e]veryone hates everyone else, a web of hatred connects the planet” (64). And yet ethnicity itself offers no solidarity, for it has become “a scam, a bullshit, a piece of crock. The fortresses of the rich wogs on the hill are there not to keep the *Australezo* out, but to refuse entry to the uneducated-long-haired-bleached-blonde-no-money wog” (43). Even within family “the divide is too big, too deep,” producing “a series of small explosions; consistent, passionate, pathetic. Cruel words, crude threats” (51, 75). Not only the nation, then, but *all* communities are “a sham,” and the individual is ultimately “alone in this world” (69).

Thus, unlike traditional formulations of cultural diversity, which suggest that the reinforcement of a community identification can lead to greater harmony, Ari seems to find in multiculturalism the roots of an ongoing violence and alienation. Concomitant to this is his rejection of community through any ideal of a shared history. After a Turkish-Australian taxi driver tells Ari he should care about the struggles of Greek students at the Polytechnic, his reaction is to refuse identification not only with that past, but with any past:

The Polytechnic is history. Vietnam is history. Auschwitz is history. Hippies are history. Punks are history. God is history. Hollywood is history. The Soviet Union is history. My parents are history. My friend Joe is becoming history. I will become history. This fucking shithole planet will become history. Take more drugs. (87)

And just as history has become nothing other than an irrelevant past, so too have the communal mechanisms of politics become meaningless ideologies, circulating in the absence of any real alternative. For Ari, the only response is to focus on the self and to individuate the communal: “I sing fuck politics, let’s dance” (62).

But the text itself is more ambivalent towards the relevance of community and history than Ari's nihilism might suggest. While his protagonist is unfocused, saying, "I'm angry and I don't know what I'm angry about" (63), Tsiolkas seems centrally concerned with the societal circumstances that would produce someone as bereft of hope as Ari. The loss of solidarity within and between communities seems at least partly to blame. Ian Syson describes Ari's existence as "an alienated life in a society in which the long promise of egalitarianism and a fair go for all has been exposed as a cover-up for the massively unequal distribution of the country's wealth" (22). Ari's alienation is thus a consequence of yet another failed promise of Australian society: the equality of the "fair go." But the critique through Ari of this loss is also a critique *of* Ari in the directionless nature of his anger and his inability to conceive of an alternative. For even in his rejection of societal norms, Ari is still caught up in their discourses. This is most evident in the text's consideration of the structures of identity, and the attempt to name, and therefore define, a sexual and cultural self. Ari is intensely aware of how others identify him, and to some extent refigures this as a means to "lay claim to the power to name oneself and determine the conditions under which that name is used" (Butler 227). Yet, he is also caught by these terms, primarily through a hyper-masculine form of Greek-Australian identity, and his apparent inability to reformulate this manifests in a deeply troubled subjectivity.

Loaded's construction of identity is complex and contingent, inflected not only by cultural influence, but also by the apparent arbitrariness of language. As Beth Spencer notes, Tsiolkas's technique involves "taking certain key words or ideas and replaying and reworking them through a series of montaged scenes. . . . Each scene undercuts or alters the way the phrase was used in the previous scene or the meaning set up by the previous scene. Everything is provisional" (2). Ari acknowledges and uses this lack of specificity. He is constantly being asked questions: "Are you studying?" (60); "Where have you been you animal?" (11); "Do your parents know . . . that you are gay?" (141); "[W]hat are you?" (94). His refusal to answer, or to answer "truthfully," indicates the ways in which words might be used as a shield to protect the self. "The truth is yours," Ari suggests; "it doesn't belong to no one else," and to refuse the truth to others is a means of protection because "truth they can use against you" (129).

Thus, in *Loaded*, words and naming have the potential to refuse the violence of categorisation where they are used—as both Judith Butler and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick have suggested with the term queer—to "signify only *when attached to the first person*" (Sedgwick 9). Denying others linguistic control can thus undermine the normative power of language, just as queer has been reclaimed as a term of self-definition. Nonetheless, the "guts" that the words have still depends on

who uses them: when a drunk white woman calls Ari's friend Johnny a "fucking faggot," her words have power because they reference an accepted, abjected meaning within Australian culture:

Fucking faggot rings in my ear. Faggot I don't mind. I like the word. I like queer, I like the Greek word *pousti*. I hate the word gay. Hate the word homosexual. I like the word wog, can't stand dago, ethnic or Greek-Australian. . . . It's not that I can't decide; I don't like definitions . . . Wog, nigger, gook. Cocksucker. Use them right, the words have guts.

Her words, fucking faggot, they ring in my ear. (114–15)

So while Ari can interrogate her attack, deconstructing it to expose the guts he finds in appropriating such terms, his response remains an internalized mediation while the woman "nestles under her boyfriend's arm," her complacency the consequence of the hegemonic discourse she utilises (114). This is the tenuous space such a challenge to interpretation holds in *Loaded*, for even as words can be deployed resistantly, they remain subject to their pejorative meanings. As was noted in the context of multiculturalism, language is essential to self-understanding, and all of its multiple interpretations have an influence on the subject.

Equally ambivalent is Ari's identification with abjection through a positioning of himself as the "wog boy as nightmare" (82). At times he actively resists the "constraints placed on me by my family" through "a debasement that allows me to run along dark paths and silent alleyways forbidden to most of my peers," and a claim that his father's insults, "words meant for a woman . . . have formed me, they have nourished me" (132). Emasculating insults, it seems, are not the sole purview of the dominant Australian culture: they serve equally to other within ethnic communities. Ari's reaction to this othering is complex. At times he embraces it in an act of defiance fuelled by desire, a "sluttishness" that transgresses the "suffocating obligations of family and loyalty" (132). But it is also resisted, as in one of his "five commandments of freedom": "Thou can have a man and be a man" (100, 101). Ari's perception of his own identity is inextricably tied up with the Melbourne Greek community and a construction of masculinity that can only conceive of male same-sex desire through an abjected "passive" position: "Fucking with Greek men is half sex, half a fight to see who is going to end up on top" (57). Because of the erotic power that "being on top" holds, the signification of maleness has itself become fetishised. Like the sedative politics of multiculturalism, erotic value vests in the markers of identity, and the desire to "have a man and be a man"—a rearticulation of Freud's hetero-normative construction of identification—manifests in a stylized performance. Ari claims to "get off on real men, masculinity is what causes my cock to get hard, makes me feel the sweet frenzy and danger of sex," but maintains that "faggots . . . always disappoint me. The

desperate attempt to hide his effeminacy always betrays him” (91, 92). And this eroticisation of a masculinity informed by ethnicity is one that Ari himself perpetuates, even as he says that he is “not interested in taking part in some multicultural orgy” (120):

Faggots love sleeping with me, they think they’ve scored a real man. Being a wog is a plus as well. I hate the Greek macho shit, . . . but the truth is that the faggot scene is a meat market and the tougher the meat the bigger the sale. It’s vanity. I know it’s nothing more, but I get a buzz out of faggots thinking I’m straight. The pleasure is not all mine. (92)

However, because it is so focused on the representative signs of a particular mode of gender, sex for Ari proves to be the repeated failure of idealized desires: masculinity has become a set of postures; signifiers without a sign, an unattainable desire.

Ari only wants real men but if they find him desirable he loses interest because “fucking them ‘feminises them’ in his mind” (Spencer 3). So after sex inevitably there is disappointment: “I look over at him. He no longer seems quite the masculine Greek man I met a short while ago. His voice sounds an octave higher, he is waving his arms around. Fucking him has feminised him in mind” (107). It seems, then, that anonymous sex is the only way in which Ari can “have a man” who remains a man, because these brief encounters begin and end with the sexual act, and the “faggot” has no opportunity to “betray” his effeminacy afterwards. In seeking this out, Ari returns to the North that he despises, engaging in “[a] defiant dance,” for, he says, “I am a wog myself, and I have to force myself to my knees before another wog. I have to force my desire to take precedence over my honour” (83). But while Ari claims that it is the struggle and the danger that this pursuit presents that “guarantee[s] . . . that I am not forsaking my masculinity,” he nonetheless remains subject to the same discourse of effeminacy he has read onto others, doing little to subvert it (132). Like the power of words with guts, the meaning of Ari’s self-abjecting debasement is subject to reinterpretation, and his uncritical reiteration of masculinity does little to suggest how it might prove resistant.

What *Loaded* never makes clear is whether or not the forms of masculinity that Ari eroticises will lead him to anything other than an apparently passive and debilitating alienation. Ari ends the novel by describing himself as “a runner,” “[r]unning away from a thousand and one things people say you have to be or should want to be” (149), and his dedication to running is perhaps the reason he is alone at the novel’s end, staring at the ceiling. For in running from others’ attempts to define him, he also runs from the possibility of change. His friend Johnny, for example, encourages him to move out, to break from his parents, describing his nihilistic anger as both empty and “gutless” (146). More profoundly, there is the possibil-

ity of love with George, a friend of his brother's, and the positive act of self-assertion in acknowledging this: "I fantasize that when I get home, I'll yell at Mum and Dad that I am leaving, that I've found a man and I'm going to move in with him. I can feel myself smiling in the open street, dreaming of a little house by the sea with George and me in it" (146). But the chemicals that have provided Ari with an escape also prevent him from making any real change: "I smell solvents and the fantasy evaporates under the hot sun's glare. I'm so slow from the come-down that I couldn't say a word to my parents. I couldn't make a sound" (146). Nor can he bring himself to risk the dissolution of his masculinity by telling another man: "I love you. I want to say the words, but they are an obscenity I can't bring myself to mouth. I've never said those words. I'm never going to say those words" (131). Despite Ari's attempts to articulate himself throughout the novel, he ultimately lacks the courage to say at least some of the words that have guts. To do so could, in Foucauldian terms, constitute a productive transgression that dissolves discourses of subjectivity through a potentially unending crossing between self and other, a movement that Ari is as yet unable to make.

While the multicultural nation might conceive of itself as a unified plurality, official manifestations of this ideal in Australia have tended to define and manage ethnic otherness in a manner that has little effect on the composition of the dominant culture. What *Loaded* suggests is that there is an additional tension between this idealized notion and its capacity to fully account for individual experience within the state. In the case of the subject further marginalized through sexual minority, alienation and exclusion are compounded by the nation's inability to imagine an unmanaged and queer difference within its borders. This is not to suggest that multiculturalism as a policy has been without merit, particularly where it is used to promote social and economic equality and to attempt to address acts of discrimination. However, the limits of such multiculturalism become apparent in the expression of individual subjectivities that cannot be adequately described through a homogenous conception of culture. Thus in many ways ethnicity within the multicultural nation becomes a mirror of the eroticisation of both gender and ethnic otherness that occurs in *Loaded*, desired in an unchanging form, attributed with meaning, and enamoured of what *signifies* difference.

What works like Tsiolkas's suggest in the alternative is a rejection of these notions of identity and community in favour of renegotiated subjectivities and contingent belongings, something government policies have so far seemed incapable of articulating. The recognition of difference thus becomes more intensely personal, more fluid, and also potentially more engaged. *Loaded's* ambivalence towards Ari's anger suggests that while his self-conscious resistance to definition is a political move of some merit, his concomitant assertion that "solidarity, like love, is a crock

of shit”—and the two are very much connected in *Loaded*—is limited and limiting. Tsiolkas does not suggest a return to old modes of community that history has shown to be inert, nor an adoption of its current forms, including the representations of culture favoured by the Australian multicultural state. Rather, it seems that the connection between solidarity and love must be reconstructed, and in doing so community and subjectivity rethought of as something other than an empty reiteration of signs.

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