Colonial power either constitutes or haunts the contexts in which this research takes place. This book is written on the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation, lands that are unceded and rightfully owned by Koorie Aboriginal peoples. I am a newcomer to these lands, the first person in my family born in Australia. I was born on Kaurna land and, after moving across the world and back again, I now live on lands owned by Koorie peoples. I acknowledge the Elders, past and present, of this community.

The racist foundations on which contemporary Australia has been constructed, and on which it still operates, overlay the ethnographic work I have undertaken in Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra and Adelaide. I write to the sound of crickets chirping through the dark blue light that is settling in after the sun has set and the sense of a long darkness ahead. Marcia Langton explains the Aboriginal world as having a very different space-time from white worlds:

The idea of ‘Old People’ corresponds to the perception of the stars as being representations of the past. The Old People are encountered in the landscape, just as we see stars when we gaze at the night sky. We know that stars are what can still be seen now of some cataclysmic event in the universe many thousands of light years ago. That is, the light of the explosion emanating through time and visible to our eyes in the present. Likewise, Aboriginal people perceive the spiritual presence of Elders in the landscape as what has emanated through time since the ancestor died. (Langton, 2018: 205)

Time-space matter is configured in particular ways in Aboriginal Australia, and arguably all places have unique space-time assemblages. The role of the white anti-racist ally in such spaces is complex
and often irreconcilable with the views of the white majority. This was one of the first lessons I learnt when studying social anthropology.

False promises of colonisation: Part I

In 1997 I was still living on Kaurna land, studying social anthropology and performing arts at the University of Adelaide. Through some of my social anthropology courses, I was learning about Tarntanya (red kangaroo place – Adelaide) and Karrawirra Pari (red gum forest river – the River Torrens). I would ride my bike to the city early every morning for yoga and stay back late for dance rehearsals. My white American anthropology lecturer used to spit all over me, the nerd, sitting in the front row. His overuse of the phrase ‘rituals of Balinese cockfighting’ spattered little American man droplets all over me. I had five casual waitressing jobs, two cleaning jobs and a cash envelope for each major life expense (rent, electrics, food), which I kept under my mattress.

1997 was the year I started thinking in earnest about the complicated ways that men and patriarchal knowledge systems can tell women that their knowledge does not matter via means that are so persuasive that the rest of the world believes them. I already knew this, and lived in the shadow of this truth. The Ngarrindjeri women of the Coorong had to experience this fact as a vehicle for racism, on a global stage. They had to sacrifice Kumarangk, their fertility lands, because material histories and embodied knowledges can be maligned with words. White ‘land-owners’ and aspiring property developers convinced the white government to give them money to build a bridge out to an island that had been renamed after a white man. The sacred women’s place of Kumarangk was renamed ‘Hindmarsh Island’ (Simons, 2003).

Kumarangk sits at the mouth of the Murray River, facing the Great Australian Bight and with its back to the tiny coastal town of Goolwa, one hour south of Adelaide. A significant area around the island and the Murray estuary was designated as a protected wetland site in 1985. When a plan to build an AU$6 million bridge linking Goolwa with Kumarangk arose in the 1990s, Ngarrindjeri women complained about the desecration that would be caused to their sacred site. The land matter held stories that were part of
who they were, knowledges that were embodied and inherited and enmeshed with place.

The developers complained. The white people knew nothing about this secret site. The white men had never heard of the secret women’s business. There were at least twelve separate aspects to the claim of ‘secret women’s business’ identified during the course of the resulting Hindmarsh Island Bridge Royal Commission. This knowledge was ancient and passed only to a small number of properly initiated women, hence the prior ignorance of anthropologists. The island is a fertility site. Its shape and that of the surrounding wetlands resembles the female reproductive system. The Ngarrindjeri name for the island, Kumarangk, is similar to the word for pregnancy, or woman. The island had to remain separate from the mainland because it would be disastrous if two separate bodily organs were connected together when they were not supposed to be. The proposed bridge would interfere with the ‘meeting of the waters’, the mixing of salt and fresh water in the Goolwa estuary, which is the source of Ngarrindjeri fertility. The waters of the Goolwa channel need uninterrupted views of the sky, particularly the Seven Sisters constellation, which is part of a number of Dreaming stories. Archaeological evidence also suggests that the site was used for ritual burials (Langton, 1996; Simons, 2003).

The Hindmarsh Island Bridge Act 1997 expressly removed Kumarangk and the area surrounding it from the Racial Discrimination Act 1975, which outlawed racial discrimination (Simons, 2003). I watched this racist debate about the impossibility of material knowledges happen across the local newspapers and in the conversations between white anthropologists (see Bell, 1998). It was a giant and crippling version of the racist and sexist ‘knowledge politics’ we have to live every day. The Hindmarsh Island Bridge Act 1997 exemplifies one of the biggest lessons I learnt while at university, a lesson that still shapes the ways academic institutions operate: white, patriarchal knowledge systems do not have the capacity to respect embodied and material knowledge, particularly women’s knowledge and knowledges from non-white cultures. At the time, newspapers and white men made jokes about ‘secret women’s business’. At times, they still do.

In 2019, I was running a multi-sited ethnography across six cities and two countries. My head was mainly full of other people’s
stories, feelings and expressions. Any spare space was full of logistics: what needed to be brought where and when. I was collecting community stories told through art for this research. When I came home from communities, I would go to bed and lie there, trying to quieten my mind and remember myself. Sometimes, if I was going away again soon, I would not unpack my bags until the next trip. They were ready to go. I wanted to use embodied knowledge – memories, feelings, movement patterns, associations we make when watching bodies move – as a key knowledge source and a way of understanding orientations to faith. Two white academics wrote to me and told me I was racist. They were the only white Australians allowed to talk to Muslims because they belonged to the Critical Race Studies group and I did not. A female Muslim academic wrote to me and told me I was racist because I was not Muslim. I am quite good friends with many of the Muslim women in my research. From all my participants, the overwhelming majority of whom are not white, no one asked to withdraw, no one disputed my account of events or even vaguely insinuated I am racist. Muslim mothers brought me food and stayed to chat. We wanted to get to know each other. Some Muslim women spoke to the Australian national broadcaster, the ABC, with me and we had a feature published on their experiences of racism (Hanifie, 2019). I am warmly welcomed back into the communities with whom I have worked since 2016. And I am not a race scholar; and this is not a critical race studies book. I am an arts-based anthropologist who thinks critically, through feminist new materialism. But that does not make me racist. My whiteness does not mean I cannot hear. It means I am the site for other people’s anger, and an ally who first and foremost works in and with diverse communities.

Long histories in both Australia and England of colonial trauma, multi-religious relationships and multicultural, superdiverse success and failure inform the contexts in which my fieldwork takes place. Both Australia and England are colonial places. Australia is a constitutional monarchy built on colonialism and England still proudly positions itself as the heart of Britain: a geographic and legal assemblage composed of the spoils of colonial bloodshed. Scotland, Wales and Ireland were, of course, independent countries before England attacked and invaded them. The colonial histories of both places frame my research, as well as bringing with them the continuation
of a need for long-standing redress of issues surrounding imperialist cultural norms and the normalisation of white power. These cultural and political aspects of local research sites and countries are difficult to change, as while on one level they are constitutional, legal, institutionalised and normalised, on other levels they are unconscious and affective, articulated through pleasure, desire, taste and style. Following is another example of the affective and often unconscious normalisation of white privilege, this time from England.

Black panics: objects of fear

In my 2013 book, *Youth, Arts and Education*, I characterised the ‘black panics’ about Aboriginal youth and Sudanese refugee boys that were sweeping across the Australian media. These panics continue in relatively unchanged forms. Drawing on Cohen’s (1972) classic theory of media moral panics and the creation of projected and internalised deviancy, I argued that ‘Media moral panics suggest Aboriginal and Sudanese people living in Australia are a disadvantage: they are a threat to peaceful forms of social cohesion and do not have value’ (Hickey-Moody, 2013: 52). Similar arguments can be made in relation to Muslim, Chinese and, to a lesser extent, Hindu communities in Australia and the UK.

During fieldwork between 2016 and 2019, experiences of racism were clearly articulated by many research participants, although, strikingly, this was the case more than twice as often in Australia as in England. Communities in Australia and England both live with the wounds of colonial power and the ghosts of empire, as institutionalised and lived continuations of empire constitute social and cultural contexts in enduringly problematic ways. In Australia, discourses of Islamophobia and racism have become part of everyday life in many places. In both Australia and England, civilians are repeatedly reminded to beware of potential terrorists, or of bombs ‘disguised’ as unattended baggage on public transport. Public announcements repeatedly remind commuters to look out for ‘anything suspicious’ and to report such unspecified suspiciousness immediately. Everything from a forgotten bag of shopping to a religious woman in a burqa reading a book, and an imagined vast terrain of inanimate objects in between, may potentially put one’s life at risk. Quite an anxiety-inducing proposition indeed.
In 2016, in the Parliament of Australia – whose proceedings are screened on national television – far-right senator Pauline Hanson warned white Australians that they were at ‘risk’ of being ‘taken over’ by Muslims. In 2010, just a few years before this declaration of a plague of ‘Muslim people’, Hanson told the Australian public they were at risk of being swamped by Asian people. The linking concern here is contagion: fear of bodies that are not white and therefore represent an imagined threat. Human rights are violated daily in Australian offshore detention centres in Nauru and Papua New Guinea, sending a message to asylum seekers to ‘stay out’ of Australia (Human Rights Law Centre, 2015). Media discourses of Islamophobia and racism are accompanied by more institutionalised strategies for governance. Even proposals for ostensibly progressive policy, such as the document produced by the Counter Terrorism Policy Centre at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) think tank, *Strategy: 18 Years and Counting* (Kfir, 2019), can be seen as legitimising punitive forms of governance and feeding the culture of fear and xenophobia accepted as part of Australian public culture. However, the policy recommendation in the ASPI report does specifically note that there should be a move away from discussions of ‘radicalisation’, stating:

> It’s important to move away from the castigation of Salafi-jihadism as a radical ideology and focus on it as an extremist ideology that wants to overthrow the established order through non-democratic means – violence. The need for the distinction stems from the basic fact that ‘radicalism’ is a relative concept and that, historically, being a radical wasn’t necessarily a bad thing, as many early radicals fought for positive social, political and economic change. (Kfir, 2019: 20)

The broad frame of radicalisation might be thought of as reinforcing the stereotypical construction of radical Islam I have so fervently argued against (Hickey-Moody, 2018). A comparable form of institutionalised racism can be found in the fact that the UK Government spends forty million pounds every year on the Prevent strategy. This is one strand of the UK Government’s counterterrorism policy, which has four strands – designed to Pursue, Protect, Prepare and Prevent terrorism (UK Home Office, 2015). This is a very particular way of trying to bridge different cultural beliefs, and one that has been rightly criticised based on racial profiling (Awan, 2012; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Sian, 2017). Nonetheless, this substantial...
financial investment made by the UK Government illustrates the urgency with which these issues need to be attended.

Aislinn O’Donnell (2016, 2018) has written on the educational implications of the Prevent agenda in the UK. She focuses on what she characterises as the associated deployments of epidemiological logics of contagion, infection, risk and bodily threat. O’Donnell contends that such narrow social imaginaries, and the prohibitions that they legitimise, shape and limit forms of community engagement. This needs to change, because a community in which young people from different cultural backgrounds thrive together cannot be founded on xenophobia. O’Donnell shows how the concept of ‘radicalisation’, which is mobilised as a rationale for Prevent, is inherently problematic. There remains an enduring lack of clarity concerning what exactly ‘radicalisation’ is, and numerous methodological problems associated with ideas of how people might become radical. Rhetorics of Islamophobia, fears of cultural contagion, and xenophobia remain the dominant discourses through which the politicisation of refugees and asylum seekers is justified.

**Circulating meanings of terrorism and memorialisation**

Dominant media discourses repeatedly rehearse connections between terrorism and religion (Kabir, 2006). As I noted earlier, this is incredibly problematic for numerous reasons, not least of which is because many very religious people are seriously persecuted as a result of different interpretations of religion. The embodied cultural affects of this were expressed by one of my research participants, Abiha from inner-east Adelaide:

> After 9/11 happened, I noticed a big difference when I would pull out my ID card, or I pull out my bank card, and it has Ahmed on the end of it. I really noticed. Or I’d be on the phone saying my name, it’s just this pause that wasn’t there before ... It’s not so bad now. There was a period of time after that happened in Australia, where it was just ... And so many people I knew. And speaking about this current merge in Australian identity and whatever, I work with migrants and refugees and I have had a number of times that I’ve had to help students that had been assaulted and harassed [because of racism]. (Inner-east Adelaide focus group, 2018)
Much has been written about the damage that 9/11 caused Islamic communities and the continuing damage caused by popular and mediated conflation of terrorism and religion (Abu-Ras and Suarez, 2009; Lankala, 2006; Tindongan, 2011). The nature of my fieldwork sites mandated an ongoing engagement with circulating discourses of terror and associated practices of memorialisation. As I have noted elsewhere (Hickey-Moody, 2018, 2019), I undertook my first fieldwork in the UK during the time of the Manchester Arena bombing on 22 May 2017, and the subsequent London fieldwork during the London Bridge terrorist attack on 3 June 2017. This led to a pronounced focus in the children’s art on flags and nationalism, as children sought to affirm their place identity.

Place identity, as defined by Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff (1983) is a set of positively and negatively balanced cognitions of physical settings, as the authors emphasise that ‘it is in the home, school, and neighbourhood settings that the child learns some of his/her most significant social roles’ (57). Manchester children repeatedly drew the Mancunian worker bee, which is a symbol of local working-class pride. One of the Manchester schools in which I was working at the time had a diverse multi-faith school group, and the children all possessed a strong awareness of a range of different religious celebrations and figures such as Ganesh, Lakshmi, the Ka’bah, and Muslim, Christian and Jewish symbols – to use the children’s words, they know about: ‘the star and the moon [the Islamic star and crescent]’, ‘the cross’, or the ‘Star of David’. For each of these children, the attack on Manchester Arena was experienced very much as an attack on Manchester. Their symbolic refutation of this act can be seen in their drawings of worker bees, the Union Flag, and in the attention given to the memorialisation of the event. Figures 7.1 and 7.2 are images of worker bees drawn by these children as symbols of ‘what really matters’.

The worker bee became a symbol of Manchester during the Industrial Revolution, a time when the city took a leading role in new forms of mass production (Zeybek, 2020: 65) and became what was cast as a ‘hive’ of activity. Expressing the role of bees in place identity, the University of Manchester’s coat of arms also features three bees. Various other public iterations of the symbol are well known; for example, the Manchester football team wore a bee-inspired kit during their away matches in the 2009–10 season. Since
the Arena bombing, the streetscapes of Manchester have become self-consciously populated by images of worker bees, as murals on walls and decorated light poles affirm a proud sense of place identity (Abbit, 2017). Bee tattoos also gained popularity as a signifier of place attachment (Abbit, 2017).

One of the most obvious ways this fieldwork site spoke back to the experience of terrorism was through practices of memorialisation, and this practice is of particular interest in the ways it shows up the gendered nature of the attack.

A public shrine in Manchester was created to honour those killed in the Manchester Arena bombing. My initial (and enduring) response to the shrine was to marvel at the feminised nature of this collection of objects. It was a sea of pink that stretched on as far as the eye could see. When I first saw it, I thought of a tween girl’s bedroom, but then, the more I thought about it, the more it looked like the morning after a teenage girl’s birthday party. The victims

Figure 7.1 The Manchester Bee 1, drawn by children in Manchester as a symbol of ‘what really matters’ directly after the Manchester Arena bombing in 2017
of this senseless attack were predominantly young women, and the violence was perpetrated by a man in a feminised space (the concert of pop star Ariana Grande, whose very publicised event was the target of the bombing, has a predominantly female-identifying fan base). The subsequent, unrelated attack in London, and the other contemporaneous acts of terror that were perpetrated in Paris, Sydney, Christchurch and many other locations, were, notably, all perpetrated by men. Not all attacks are undertaken as men ‘acting against women’, or against a figure who symbolises femininity, as we see so clearly in the case of the Manchester Arena bombing. What is striking here, though, is that while the figure of the ‘terrorist’ and the spectre of ‘terrorism’ circulates across the spaces in which my research was undertaken, and was discussed by some parents involved in the research in relation to media representations of Muslim communities, the actual acts of terror can be read most clearly in gendered terms. Each was undertaken by a man and each
was a performance of some form of protest masculinity, in which a man expressed extreme anger and garnered attention by undertaking fatal acts of violence. A reading of this as a performative act must surely begin with a gendered lens. Gender is inseparable not just from my data, but from everyday life. The gendered nature of these attacks, among other things, shows the great extent to which moral panics surrounding terrorism are misplaced, and should rather be read as violent performances of protest masculinity.

Miles away, in Melbourne, my introductory discussion of the project again returns to discussions of terrorism:

Field notes, 15 May 2019: Inner-north Melbourne primary school introduction to the project.

The teacher gathered the class in the yoga room adjacent to the arts classroom for the introduction to the work. The children listened attentively, some were talkative and some were reluctant to speak up. One boy, Frankie, contributed loudly, with comments that were at times provoking. It was an attempt to arouse reactions. His comment on what was necessary in a future city was: ‘Terrorists’. The other children seemed used to him and one commented that soldiers were also needed to keep in check the terrorists. ‘Do we really need terrorists, though Frankie?’ I ask him. ‘Or do you just think the future will have terrorists in it?’ He seems unsure.

I asked Frankie why we need terrorists. It seems that, rather than needing them, Frankie thought the future was destined to include terrorists. Discussions of religion are shadowed by discussions of terrorism because of the popular media links that are being made consistently between them. As I argued earlier, discourses of terror should be approached through a focus on gender, by researchers explicitly considering the gendered nature of acts and discourses associated with terrorism. It seems terrorism is a set of practices associated with masculinity, not with religion.

False promises of colonisation: Part II

Ersheen and Rafi didn’t have long; Aadhil, their son, needed to be picked up from childcare before their daughter’s school day was up. South-east London traffic is impossible after half-past three. Rafi
was hoping to get back out in the cab before prayer time at the mosque, too. ‘Why did Asda keep moving their halal meats section? It used to be here,’ they complained to each other as they scoured the long refrigerator.

Ersheen moved to avoid a man with a shaved head wearing a black duffle coat. He mirrored her body, moving back in front of her. ‘Whatcha wearing that for?’ he spat, gesturing angrily up and down her niqab. Ersheen couldn’t understand his hastily blurted words, but she could see he was angry, and his body language made his point for him. She asked Rafi to explain for her, which Rafi did, despite his anxiety about time.

‘A niqab helps women dress modestly’, Rafi explained, continuing: ‘Face veiling is not a requirement of Islam; however, if women choose to, they can cover their faces in public.’

‘Well, you’re not in Iraq anymore, are ya? Dress like a Londoner!’ the white man spat back. Rafi thought about mentioning that they were from Bangladesh, as he put his arm around Ersheen and ushered her past the angry white man, further along the aisle. ‘Let’s go?’ he asked her, heading for the checkout. They could make do with the provisions in the house for dinner tonight, and tomorrow was a new day.

Six months later, Ersheen was sitting with me in her daughter’s school, taking part in a focus group I ran in 2019. The group consisted of parents of the children I had worked with making collaborative art for nearly three years. I had met most of the parents numerous times, but not all of them. There were ten parents, two researchers and an interpreter in the room and we were discussing racism, because one of the questions I asked in focus groups was whether parents have experienced any racism or religious prejudice. Most parents said they had not experienced racism or prejudice, except Ersheen. Wearing her niqab and speaking through an interpreter, she told us the story related above, of how she had been shopping with her husband at Asda. Ersheen brought up this attack in response to my question regarding racism and prejudice. Before I could respond, Sarah, a white working-class mother, who was sitting between two white mothers – the only three white parents in the group – chimed in, ‘But that’s not really assault though, is it? You can’t say that’s assault, can you?’ Up to this point, no one had mentioned assault. I couldn’t understand where the focus on
assault came from. The broader conversation that came before this exchange was as follows:

Sarah: Religion’s always existed … But people have always got along. I think with events around the world, some people ask questions like, ‘What’s going on? Why do people behave like this?’ And some people – intelligent people – they look into it and look for answers, rather than just go with the trend and not fully understand what’s happening around the world. But people have always got along and have been accepted. We look different, we dress different, but we all get along … I think it’s in the way people feel threatened or attacked. I mean, you’ll probably get people that might look at you differently or probably choose not to talk to you or probably just come and ask you a question.

Ersheen: Because there’s quite a large Bengali community everyone gets along. So it’s not a small number. It’s a large number, so everyone kind of integrates and gets on –

Madge: And all the children as well play together as well. They’re not bothered.

Ersheen: I have had one experience of prejudice. There was a man in Asda questioning me, ‘Why do you wear this? Why’d you come here?’

Sarah: That’s not really assault though, is it? You can’t say that’s assault, can you?

Madge: He asked her why she wore it. Yeah. That’s not an assault.

(South-east London focus group, 2019)

Sarah and Madge were white English mothers. The conversation included above did not begin with assault; it began by discussing prejudice. As our conversation continued, I interjected, explaining that it wouldn’t seem right if people in Asda were questioning me for wearing an ‘I love New York’ t-shirt – I suggested we would all be thinking ‘I can wear what I like!’ Sarah, the white mother who was arguing that religious prejudice was only problematic if it was expressed as assault, went bright red after speaking, perhaps experiencing shame, anger, embarrassment or all these feelings. She said little else.

Earlier in the focus group, Sarah had been clear how proud she was of her child, and all the children at the school, for ‘getting along with everyone’, explaining how kids ‘these days’ all learn to accept and get along with each other. Her identification of generational
differences also made it clear that this group of accepting children were schooled in *new ways*, and were different from her generation.

After the discussion of racism and prejudice, I asked the group whether there was a certain meal, place, smell or object that expressed their place belonging and identity. Sarah said that, for her, this is an English Christmas roast dinner. For me, the affective and symbolic communication here is really important. Sarah’s blushing, later on, suggested she felt regret or confusion about her assertion that ‘That’s not really *assault* though, is it?’ The traditional roast Christmas dinner seemed to symbolise the bounty of the Empire, as well as the popular celebration of the Christian religion. Interestingly, during this discussion, Ersheen, the mother who was confronted in Asda about wearing the niqab, made a point of raising, explaining and discussing the relationships between Mary (the Christian Mother of God) and Maryam (the Arabic name for the sister of Moses). The birth of Maryam is narrated in the Qur’an. Maryam’s father is Imran, the equivalent of Joachim, who is Mary’s father in some apocryphal Christian writings. Her mother is Hannah, the equivalent of Christianity’s Saint Anne, who is sometimes referred to as Joachim’s wife and Mary’s mother. This discussion of closeness between Islam and Christianity was unprompted and was clearly a means of showing the relationships not only between the Christian and Muslim religions, but also the people who are associated with, or believe in, these religions. This short excerpt gives some insight into Ersheen’s thinking:

*We believe that Mary is Maryam. Through her we learnt to cover ourselves, dress modestly. So she said, ‘We think it’s quite important.’ So we take that. It’s like Christianity thought ‘we will believe in that’. Then Islam came in. So we know we follow the religion that came before … we’ve taken our religion, our religion came in, so we follow it. Veiling is not just something Islam just invented. We’ve taken on things from Christianity.* (South-east London focus group, 2019)

The earlier exchange between the mothers is complex. At first, I thought it was an expression of Sarah’s racism, but then I wondered if she was actually trying to smooth over what she experienced as a difficult situation. I saw Ersheen make an obvious attempt to appease the perpetrator of racism in her response that linked Christianity and Islam. I was taken aback by the overt nature of the
racist comment, ‘That’s not really assault though, is it?’, and noted that this comment ‘spilt’ out of Sarah, seemingly involuntarily. She appeared to have no way of holding it inside or thinking critically about the sentiments she was expressing. It was a raw feeling.

While I tried to create space for further exchange, I wasn’t convinced that Sarah, the mum who felt that English Christmas lunch symbolised home and belonging had understood, or even heard, the discussion about Mary and Maryam and the similarities between Christianity and Islam. The implied suggestion that ‘putting up’ with racism in Asda should be somehow ‘okay’ stuck with me, very uncomfortably. Ersheen was clearly not implying that Sarah should put up with anything. One of the questions arising from this exchange for me was: can I do anything to change this involuntary response to cultural difference? I also wondered if this response came from fear of difference rather than curiosity. I tried to organise a follow-up interview with Sarah, but she declined. Moments such as these are scattered throughout the years between 2016 and 2020, years I spent living in places away from home, making art with kids and talking to their parents about ‘what really matters’. There are some patterns and stories that emerge, but also many loose ends, like the above exchange, which I was never able to resolve.

In an attempt to redress the cultural normalisation of white power that leads to exchanges such as those explained above, and the fact that I am a white woman writing on Koorie lands, I draw inspiration from the political orientations of decolonial theorists who work towards a “programmatic” of de-linking from contemporary legacies of coloniality (Mignolo, 2007: 452). Many of the participants and collaborators in my research are living in Australia or England because they needed to escape war and have been, or are in the process of being, granted refuge from Syria, Palestine, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Serbia, West Papua and many other countries. Many Australian refugee participants came via refugee detention centres, having travelled to Australia by boat. To quote one Melbourne father, he arrived from Christmas Island with no more than ‘the shirt on my back’. Others in the UK have been granted citizenship or temporary residence for similar reasons. A father in Manchester told me emphatically: ‘England is a safer place to be a Muslim than any Muslim country’ (inner-south Manchester focus group, 2019). The same sentiment was expressed by members of
the Islamic community in focus groups in Adelaide and Canberra. The causes of the wars from which these people have fled are complex assemblages of politics, capitalism, religion, racism and empire. They can’t be equated solely with European and British colonisation, although in most instances, the broader context of colonisation has led to the stigmatisation of cultural and religious practices that are not historically English (or British).

Australia’s history of racial discrimination, beginning with white settlement in the eighteenth century and the introduction of the White Australia Policy in 1901, was formed on the basis of racist ideologies privileging ‘whiteness’. Australia’s shift to multicultural social policies in the 1970s made space for the appreciation and recognition of diversity and difference, particularly for non-white migrants. However, social relations in both contemporary multicultural Australia and Britain continue to be informed by legacies of colonialism, in which race and racism are used as organising systems that re-inscribe white racial privilege (Hage, 2003, 2005; Noble, 2005).

Pauline Hanson provides the foremost example of using white privilege in an attempt to inform Australian policy. Hanson is an Australian politician who rose to infamy with her notably xenophobic and nationalist campaign for the Liberal Party of Australia in the 1996 federal election. Despite being disendorsed by the party shortly before the election, she won and became a Member of Parliament, first as an independent and then as a member of the far-right One Nation party, which she founded in 1997. After losing her seat in the 1998 election, Hanson was elected to the Senate as the leader of One Nation in 2016. One Nation is a right-wing populist party, with strong white-nationalist platforms formed against First Nations Australians and in response to the ‘invasion’ of immigrants in Australia and the ‘threat’ they pose to ‘white Australia’. These views came to a head in 2017, when Hanson, who is not a Muslim, wore a burqa to a session of the Senate, claiming it ‘oppresses women’ and calling for its ban in public places in Australia.

Similar sentiments can be seen in contemporary Britain’s Prevent counterterrorism strategy. Prevent is one of four streams that comprise the UK’s Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. It is aimed at identifying and stopping individuals and groups who might be ‘drawn into terrorism’ (UK Home Office, 2015). Along
with providing police with increased powers to restrict movement and behaviour, the Prevent strand of the Act is notable in that it anticipates individuals and groups who are likely to be ‘drawn’ into terrorism, rather than punishing them after they have actually committed a terrorist act. Prevent has been criticised for encouraging the formulation of ‘suspect communities’, which are often characterised as existing around particular ideologies, religions (usually Islam), and races (usually non-white) (Qurashi, 2016). It has been criticised for inciting Islamophobia, restricting the freedoms of British citizens, and stigmatising and alienating Muslims in the UK (Awan, 2012; Heath-Kelly, 2013; Sian, 2017). Similarly, Pauline Hanson could easily be compared to UK nationalist politician Nigel Farage, as both Brexit and the Prevent agenda reflect the fact that there are echoes of a more recent kind of white historical displacement haunting Britain, performed in Sarah’s assertion that ‘That’s not really assault though, is it?’ and, more broadly, through the Brexit vote.

Feelings of uselessness lead to frustration, even rage. My mother’s family owned an English sweet shop in Stanmore, London. It was passed through the family for generations. But when it came time for my great uncle to retire, his sons wanted nothing to do with the shop: glass jars of boiled sweets had long been replaced by plastic packets of Haribo soft gummy bear candies from Germany, and corner stores were all Indian-owned businesses. An Indian family bought the shop and transformed it from neat rows of sweets in glass jars into a sell-all corner store overflowing with items ranging from hardware to cigarettes. My uncle and aunt didn’t know how to explain their sadness about this in words. They felt like generations of meaning had lost their place in the world and no one cared. Their own icons, the coloured boiled sweets in glass jars, had been replaced by others: baskets of plantain and stockings on special. Their children didn’t see anything wrong with that – it is the new way. Not long after, my uncle had a fall while riding a bike and passed away, and Aunt Madge moved to a nursing home in Plymouth to be nearer her son. She voted for Brexit. She voted for Brexit because there is not enough space created in England (or Australia for that matter) to bring together value systems of different old and new worlds. Those boiled sweets in glass jars symbolised family, inheritance and belonging for my great uncle and
aunt. It is still a great sadness to my aunt that generations of mean-
ing lost their place, that World War II – the war to keep England safe, in which so many of her friends had died – was a fight for an England that does not exist anymore. In political terms, I could respond by telling Madge that England was built on wealth stolen from others and it was always already overextended, built on slavery and exploitation, a cruel enterprise deserving of its troubles. This truth has, however, been proffered by younger generations for years, and what it completely ignores is the great feeling of sadness. Aunt Madge’s special icons have lost their meaning; indeed, they have gone, and no one cares. This is not just about Aunt Madge; it is also Sarah, the mother from south-east London, and most of the Brexit ‘leave’ vote, who have been told for years that their feelings don’t matter. Systems of attachment, old and new, can’t simply be discarded or replaced. Somewhere in the middle of the cultural mix-
tures that make up contemporary everyday life, we need to make more space for valuing diverse old and new systems of meaning and bringing them together.

I also believe that the broader multicultural histories of colonised countries need to be taught and appreciated, rather than the versions of history so often institutionalised in curricula. In Australia, histori-
cal narratives can still, at times, begin with white settlement, and in the UK, history places the British Empire on a pedestal in ways that fail to recognise the damage caused by colonisation. One example of Australia’s multicultural history that could feature more prominently in the school curriculum is the fact that Turkish Muslims traded peacefully with Indigenous Australian people prior to British colonisation (Ganter, 2012; Hersi, 2018). There is also significant evidence of the role that Muslim camel traders played in supporting expeditions such as Burke and Wills’ journey across inland Australia (Jones and Kenny, 2010). Townships such as Alice Springs in Central Australia and the city of Darwin feature identifiably Muslim place names, particularly street names, which testify to the role that Muslim community mem-
bers played in building these places. Despite this, and other, long-
standing histories, practices of othering and the negative portrayal of Muslims have a long history in Australia (Aly, 2007; Brasted, 2001) and also in the UK. These practices of othering are deeply seated in historical colonial beliefs and continually represent Muslims in a negative light (Aly, 2007; Noble, 2008; Said, 1979).
Even in light of this, there are a lot of fulfilled religious people in my study, living safe and engaging lives. I read a book recently called *It's Not About the Burqa*, a collection of essays edited by Mariam Khan (2020). Some of the stories in this book are amazing: Yassmin Abdel-Magied, a Sudanese-Australian woman, tells of her experience working as an engineer on oil fields and combating sexism and racism, and Jamilla Hekmoun offers an incredibly moving account of struggles with mental health in Muslim culture. Yet other contributions are angry manifestos about the ‘awful plight of the Muslim women’ in fashion, feminism, and various other contexts that are shaped by class privilege. While clearly anger and outrage are key resources for these young women, I was left thinking about the hundreds of Muslim mums in my study, many of whom have lived through extremely traumatising experiences but are, for the most part, often genuinely happy, despite the huge complexities of forced migration, religion and racism. I want to tell their stories of everyday lives, lives that are complex, and include sadness, but are liveable and happy enough. This is not to downplay serious issues, but to suggest we need to celebrate everyday, ‘ordinary’ success stories in all their diversity more than texts like *It’s Not About the Burqa* (Khan, 2020) might suggest.

Philomena has spent her life feeling left out. At school she was called the ‘wog’ kid and her parents really wanted her to marry a nice Italian man. When she married a Muslim, she thought they would never recover. Now here she is, fifteen years later, still being left out. She feels like the only parent who doesn’t speak Dari and is completely overlooked in the principal’s address at her own daughters’ primary school. Why didn’t he talk to all the school parents? Why only address ‘new Australians’? Her mum and dad were new Australians not that long ago. They still think of themselves as new Australians. Her girls had to learn to get along. They could fit in at the mosque, at church, with her husband’s culture and her own culture. Sometimes it felt like the Afghan women didn’t want her to fit in or get to know anyone who didn’t speak Dari. Or maybe it was just that she is always going to be the odd one out, the person who ended up alone. Intersections between race, class, gender and religion teach us a lot about shifting landscapes of inclusion, exclusion, belonging and unbelonging. These feelings make up spaces of everyday life for the people in my ethnography. So many of my
participants are between lines of race, class, sexuality and religion, in ways that lead them to feel like they are outsiders. Lines of inclusion and exclusion are also created in literature that discusses class, which is often only applicable to communities who have lived in places for longer than one generation. Further, discussions of religion often focus on families of one religion only. Migration, global inequality, education markets, economic and social class, and religion create interiors, exteriors and intersections that can leave people in between dominant lines of identification and belonging. These are complicated issues that are mobile and diverse: intersections of religion and class are different from intersections of migration and inequality, and include education markets. However, they are brought together by the feeling of being left out that people experience when they are outside changing contours of culture. The process of engaging with, and coming to understand experiences of being between lines, or ‘outside belongings’ (Probyn, 1996), has also led me to interrogate my own experiences of outside belonging, in terms of class, ethnicity, sexuality and religion, alongside those of my research participants.

Eyes and eyes look out at me from council housing. Flats packed alongside and on top of each other tower over either side of the street. The vibrant blue London summer sky shines between the green-and-white-clad towers. I can feel my own class mobility. The poverty of my grandparents’ farm in County Cork is not visible on my well-presented, if under-rested, façade. I remember my father’s stories about working to make a ‘better life’, stories I would now say are classist. But at the time, the child ‘me’ tried to empathise with him. There was no work for him in Dublin, so he left to find work, to become ‘better’, to make a better life. Trying to cope with the contradictions his life then embodied, he taught us Irish and wore an Akubra hat.

My family was unquestionably aspirational in educational terms. The north side of Dublin is not known for its wealth, although my father won an academic scholarship for financially disadvantaged families to attend the best boys’ school in Dublin: Belvedere College. The school still has a strong social mobility scholarship program. The oldest boy of four children (two boys and two girls), my father was the only one in his family to attend a fee-paying school, and this was because the fees were paid for by the scholarship. After
Incapacity / Neamhábaltacht

graduation, he was accepted to study at Trinity College Dublin. He then left Dublin to find work, and met my mother in Cambridge. She was his boss, having attended university, unlike her parents. The 1970s saw her working in the social work department at Fulbourn psychiatric hospital. When I reread the literature on social and economic class, I can see that my father and my mother were very much the immigrants who were ‘pushed to leave’ (Archer, Hollingworth and Halsall, 2007; Ferro, 2006; Preece, 2020; Walkerdine and Lucey, 1989; Willis, 1978), skilled and able to look for work away from home. My mother’s stories of poverty in England still echo in my memory: her recollection of crying from the pain of cold fingers while cutting potatoes in the freezing English winter. Before I was born, my parents left their damp white stone cottage with its wet thatched roof in Cambridge and emigrated to Australia, settling in Kaurna country. They protested for Aboriginal land rights and denuclearisation and learnt the names of eucalyptus trees. My mother found work at a hospital, and could not believe her first pay cheque was accurate, it seemed so large to her. They had a new life, where mum could afford a ‘whole bottle’ of wine with every pay and where the fire did not smoke out the house. My father went back to university for postgraduate study. They were becoming somebody. But, even as ‘somebody’ who wore Akubra hats and flannelette shirts, nothing ever eased my father’s pain of leaving Ireland. His pain was expressed continuously through his overinvestment in our life ‘being better’ than his life had been, and his ongoing, awkward attempts at class distinction. I remember trying to understand the sadness embedded in the long explanations he gave me as a child between the difference in our family’s neat photos in frames and his childhood home where the photos were ‘just stuck up’ on the wall. The photos in frames did not make him happy, but they were a way for him to express his class aspiration, and gave him some kind of unhappy satisfaction. I still feel his huge sadness, having grown up with it, and I think I always will.

In the middle of this very hot London summer day, under the very blue sky, I am trying to leave this sadness behind. I, too, am aspirational, but I aspire to leave behind the pain of my father that I carry with me. The women who live on the estate flick long ashes off their cigarettes and chat on their front steps. Clean washing flutters in the wind across balconies. I am a stranger to them as they watch
me walk down their road, surrounded on either side by their estate. They also want their kids to become somebody, perhaps somebody just like them, perhaps somebody quite different. My mind wanders back to a conversation I had with one of the mothers from the estate when she attended the exhibition of her children’s artwork I held at Goldsmiths College, with her two young daughters in tow. She was explaining to them how, although this was their first time at university, they would be coming back, they were both going to attend university. She herself had gone to the University of Greenwich to study social work as a mature-age student and single mother of two. It had taken an enormous amount of work and perseverance. After the first time I met her children, I asked their school principal if everything at home was okay, because they had explained their belonging and home stories as featuring their mum ‘who is always angry and yells at us and punches me in the face’. The face punch turned out to be an absolute exaggeration, but the strain of studying, working and parenting was clearly impacting the whole family. How could it not?

Standing in the haze of the estate mothers’ smoking, I wondered if life in one place is ever really happier than life in another. It might be safer. It might be better paid, or have better weather. I wondered at the extent to which being taught to look towards other places all the time – and to distance yourself from your past – was worth the pain of loss and rejection. One of the other mums on the estate contentedly explained her life to me as a bubble: ‘I’ve grown up on a council estate as well, so that is my world ... we’re all very close-knit. I’m not someone who’s majorly into the royal family, I don’t follow politics. I keep myself to myself and I’m in my little bubble, and: “everyone, stay out!”’. If you don’t agree with me, you stay outside my bubble’ (Neve, south-east London, 2018). The bubble seems like a pretty good place to be. Neve’s stories are not concerned with ‘becoming respectable’ (Skeggs, 2002), or any form of searching for approval from others outside her bubble. The residents of the estate are largely white, and I can’t help but think of the stark differences between Neve’s place and class belonging, and the unhappy relationships that some of the Sudanese refugee children living in the Atherton Gardens estate in Melbourne have with their home. Is Neve’s bubble a happy place because she is white? Reflecting on Neve’s bubble, and other accounts of class, ways of
understanding religion, ways of being religious while not professing to understand religion, and the very racialised systems of value we are born into, I have come to see many ‘outsides’ to stories of class in academic work that are largely concerned with white communities, yet do not present their work as studies of whiteness per se (Peel, 2003; Reay and Lucey, 2000; Thomson, 2002; Willis, 1978). Theories of aspirational mobility (Archer, Hollingworth and Halsall, 2007; Ferro, 2006) and understandings of how ‘working-class kids get working-class jobs’ (Willis, 1978) tell us much about how class works in some contexts, but these contexts are largely white. As I have suggested, this literature makes a lot of sense in understanding my own family’s struggles, but it leaves out the loss of belonging inherent in experiences of class mobility and the stinging rejections of those who feel ‘left behind’. It also does not extend to the shifting worlds experienced by the hundreds of migrants with whom I work, many of whom have university degrees that do not translate into the English language, or who speak and write multiple languages fluently and yet are financially punished for not being educated in English. The spaces between these roughly defined collective experiences create new outsides, some of which I explore in what follows.

Class belonging is physical and practical as much as it is conceptual or ideological. The in-between spaces, the unbelonging and loss associated with class and spatial mobility, the sad photo frames, stories of overstretched mothers who had returned to study being angry at home, Uber drivers with multiple degrees in languages other than English, need to be accounted for. Skeggs explains these struggles for women, saying, ‘The real working-class for these women is something from which they are desperately trying to escape. It is why they are doing college courses. They want to be seen as different’ (Skeggs, 2002: 76). Class is expressed in the kinds of identity and community assemblages people make and the ways they experience affinity, success, failure, happiness and unhappiness. Making new mixtures doesn’t always work and is often very uncomfortable. Similarly, the family stories of many non-white families with whom I work, from cosmopolitan migrant and cosmopolitan refugee backgrounds, show how class articulates differently across cultures. Class does not easily translate between cultures. This is exemplified by the high numbers of Indian and Pakistani migrants with multiple
degrees in their first language who are now driving cabs or Ubers in Australia or England.

Despite my discomfort with these gaps, my fieldwork has taught me repeatedly that class is the most significant factor that shapes the ways people see the world, even if academic literature on the subject doesn’t always explain this in a manner that aligns with my experiences. In instances in which people are religious, I have found that class significantly informs why and how people are religious, and can also factor into whether or not they were born into religion or whether they chose religion for personal development. Ethnicity, and then class, tends to be the most significant influencing factor in whether people are born into religion or choose religion for themselves. Class is expressed through attachment to material objects and places (for example, Hunter wellington boots and housing estates), and how conflicts are lived between and across generations of migrants. There are limits to multiculturalism for white families who have tried to belong to these communities. I share some of many stories of cosmopolitan migration in which families from the Middle East have moved to Australia, and unpack their work in finding diverse communities that acknowledge their worldly cultural capital: a process that shows the limits of some studies of class in terms of mainly applying to white, non-migrant communities.

Class, materiality and whiteness

As I have suggested, class is a significant factor in the way people have faith, how they understand their faith, and what faith means to them. Class, faith and belonging are entangled in how people reflect on their experiences of belonging and unbelonging, and those of the people and communities around them. Class is often inherent in spatial and geographical arrangements: the housing estates towering on either side of me make a case in point. Class is reflected in the environments we inhabit and is therefore implicated in people’s day-to-day activities. It contains people at the same time as it provides comfort, identity and structure (Jeffery, 2018). Class is implicit in how my participants narrated their experiences of belonging, even though it is often expressed in terms other than the word ‘class’, through geographic belonging, values, or levels of education. Upon
Incapacity / Neamhábaltacht

reflection and analysis, class emerged in people’s descriptions of material goods, in people’s habits and practices, and in their expectations and aspirations. Class may be somewhat hidden within their descriptions, but on closer scrutiny it becomes clear that class is a fundamental organising aspect of their identities and lives.

Many of my participants with white Anglo-Saxon backgrounds thought deeply about class and about their own class belonging in ways that align with the literature on class (Peel, 2003; Reay, 2006; Savage, 2015; Thomson, 2002; Willis, 1978). Overall, the explicit and insightful conversations I had about class were largely conversations between white people, and I wonder at the extent to which reflexive discussions about class are a form of performative whiteness (Frankenberg, 1993) at times. Several participants were highly critical of the way class plays out in their lives and that of their families. Some felt uncomfortable with the way that class is expressed in objects, practices and desires. As Martha explained, for her family, being upper-class and English entails:

-a stronger identification with a Boris Johnson-style of Britishness. Hunter wellingtons, croquet, rowing. That is it. And there was a certain expectation, totally an expectation of what you do, the sort of jobs you go into, what your leisure activities would be, how you sound, how you speak, what your children do. Blah blah blah. These are elements of what is British in their view. So the Barbour jacket, the green wellies, the foxhound dog, blah blah blah, that is my family. Hunting, shooting, fishing. (Martha, south-east London, 2018)

Martha’s words express upper-class England poetically, and, invoking notions of empire, she refers to ‘Britain’ and ‘Britishness’. Although Martha was born on the island of England (and her family are English), she is well positioned to criticise empire and class because she was born into a well-to-do family as one of five children. Her four siblings were sent to fee-paying schools, and she attended a government-funded school. Whether or not this choice was Martha’s or her parents’ was not clear to me, although Martha did not seem to harbour resentment about being treated differently. She explained:

I know that I experienced a very different education from my siblings, which is quite interesting, because I’m one of five and they all went to public [independent fee-paying] schools and so did my
Faith stories

cousins, but I didn’t. And that was quite interesting … They think I’m the disadvantaged one … But it is very different in terms of schooling and in terms of values, the way values are put across. And expectation. And duty. (South-east London focus group, 2018)

Martha moved to London from the countryside and chose to live in a working-class area of London, a community that seemed the right fit for her in terms of values. This choice, and her exquisite articulation of the way class shapes expectations and taste, is also an expression of her birth into an upper-class family, both worlds and miles away from her current life. Martha can explain class clearly partly because she has been afforded the resources with which to do so.

Martha’s childhood, as the only sibling in an upper-class family to attend a government school, and her decision to bring up her family in a working-class community, informs her perspective on how class systems reinforce inequality. Martha explains how her ambiguity about her family’s class was an issue for her family from childhood onwards. She starts by explaining the kinds of friends she made at her school being compared to her siblings’ friends:

There is definitely something about the public school education which is … I can unpick it because I’ve sort of lived it without being ‘in’ it. And there was something about the expectation of my parents, which was quite difficult for them when obviously I wasn’t in that system and my friends were just everybody locally in the community, and were not the sort of friends that my parents were used to having in their home … my friends would be anybody, where my siblings’ friends would be from an international background or had a certain element of privilege, or their families were living abroad or they were in the armed forces. (South-east London focus group, 2018)

Martha politely expresses her own criticism of class privilege, when she explains how her siblings and their classmates were able to avoid entrance exams because of their attendance at expensive private institutions:

so you have to pass an exam depending on what type of school you go to at eleven, except my siblings didn’t because they all did something called common entrance, for the public school. (South-east London focus group, 2018)
Martha’s critique of the English class system was also expressed by other white English participants. Like Martha’s discussion of Hunter wellingtons and a ‘Boris Johnson-style of Britishness’ as a symbol of class, other participants also brought class together with nationality and ethnicity. Some white English participants felt quite ambiguous about nationality as a means of identification because of the ways that class is embedded in Englishness. Joanie, for example, a participant from Manchester, felt that her identity as a white British woman was cause for a sense of shame as much as a sense of community:

*I didn’t come from a rich family ... you know, I’m one of five. Um, so I know me mum and dad would’ve struggled when we were younger. But we’ve all got a really strong work ethic from that, and that sense of family which you know I’ve now got with my little family ... What does [being] British mean to me? Absolutely nothing. It’s an imperial thing that’s gone back hundreds of years. I think as a nation you can only judge a nation, or in particular the government, based on how they treat their most vulnerable in society, and we are shocking. So as a British person, I am appalled by what my country does ... So yeah, obviously I’m British and I happen to be white. And I know they have those things on forms because it’s a tick-box exercise for ‘oh well look at us’, you know. ‘We’re now employing an increased number in this particular ethnic community.’ Um, but I just, I just think it’s [Britishness] a very old, old way ... it’s just an alien thing.* (Manchester, interview, 2018)

Through characterising classed, racialised Britishness as ‘an alien thing’, Joanie is distancing herself from what she perceives as the problems of colonial Britain. The white fragility (DiAngelo, 2018) embedded in attempts at diversification is a reminder of Britain’s colonial past, which Joanie temporally distinguishes herself from, by describing it as ‘very old’. Colonisation is both very old and contemporary. It happens again and again in all kinds of ways; for example, I would suggest that English people referring to themselves as British can be an act of colonisation, or claiming territories that are not their own place. Joanie’s and Martha’s stories show the entanglement of class and whiteness that is specific to many popular ways of thinking about how ‘class’ operates in England.
Like Martha and Joanie, some white parents among my participants had made the decision to live in relatively working-class, ethnically superdiverse neighbourhoods, framing their decision to do so as an effort towards living in a more inclusive society. The decision to move and settle in a specific location is a performance of what Savage et al. (2010) has termed a sense of ‘elective belonging’ that arises out of people’s perception of place and their ability to choose where to settle. Savage and colleagues define elective belonging as ‘the way that middle-class people claimed moral rights over place through their capacity to move to, and put down roots in, a specific place which was not just functionally important to them but which also mattered symbolically’ (116). While Martha’s family was very involved in her church and had settled into south-east London life, Joanie still felt she was not accepted by migrant families at her daughter’s Manchester school. For Joanie, there was certainly a sense that the other parents at her school resented the apparent ease with which white families can move. Indeed, the difference in migration stories is stark, and includes people who have spent seven to eleven years in Italy after fleeing war in Afghanistan, and now live in England with an Italian passport, to others who have travelled across the sea from Afghanistan on a refugee boat and been detained on Christmas Island, before being released to live in Melbourne, to others who have fled religious persecution in Palestine, Bosnia or Iraq. Joanie’s and Martha’s white mobility stories also stand in stark contrast to some of my other English participants who had been born in, and lived their whole lives, within working-class council estates, and could not imagine moving even just a short distance away.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have examined some of the many causes that lead to an incapacity to understand religious and cultural differences. Biased media representations, classed upbringings, gendered violence, racism and histories of colonial violence are interwoven in creating the reasons that often lead to or result in prejudice. Religious identity can be often only a minor part of individual identity, but it is one that allows or prohibits the formation of a
range of affiliations and solidarities with individuals and groups. In my discussions above I have worked to highlight diversity within Islam as a departure point for discussing Muslim culture as rich and hybrid. This broad terrain of ways of engaging with religion consists of countless examples of personal religious identities, many of which are omitted from popular representations. I have also examined colonial histories, and affective scapes of class as ways of orienting bodies away from non-west religions and their associated affective scapes.

Notes

1 The term multiculturalism holds a variety of meanings in policy and social research and has been both widely endorsed and critiqued (Levrau and Loobuyck, 2018). In the 1970s and 1980s, multiculturalism emerged as a way forward for societies with high levels of immigration (Modood, 2007). The idea was that different groups should be able to practise their cultural traditions and speak the languages of their places of origin while also identifying with their new country of residence (Foster, 1988). Underlying this approach was a cultural relativism of the time that allowed for the equivalence of different cultural traditions. More recently, however, critics have argued that multiculturalism appears as a tokenistic exoticising of otherness (Prato, 2016). As a result of growing collective anxieties around radicalisation, and following terrorist attacks in Europe and other regions of the world in which migrants and the children of migrants have been implicated, multiculturalism and its outcomes have come under increased media scrutiny. It has become clear that many countries struggle with the lack of social inclusion of immigrant groups, and that the limited integration even of second-generation migrants has led to lower outcomes in terms of education and socioeconomic status.

2 The term ‘superdiversity’ was coined by Vertovec (2005a, 2005b), in which he discusses the findings of several census-based projects on migrant identities. He describes the changing nature of UK immigration and make-up of migrant communities, away from two or three established countries with deep roots to the UK as a result of colonial histories and towards a more diverse range of countries and constituencies. Diversity has increased within migrant communities, which as a result have become less homogeneous.
The Australian Liberal Party is a centre-right conservative party akin to the Tories and Republicans, not a ‘small l’ liberal (i.e. progressive) party in the modern sense of the word.

Many of my research participants refer to themselves as British, although all my British participants were born in England, not in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. I have referred to these participants as English, not British, and find the acquiescence to colonial history that I associate with the word ‘British’ unfortunate and something I would like to change.