

## オーストラリアにおける「黒人性」に関する一考察 ——マイノリティ集団間研究に向けて

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本稿では、オーストラリアにおける「黒人性」がマイノリティ集団の国家への帰属意識や集団間関係に与える影響について考察する。オーストラリアにおいて長年、「黒人」とは先住民を指し、白人性との対比において「未開」、「野蛮」、「怠惰」、「暴力的」等の否定的な意味づけがなされてきた。しかしながら、同国が2000年頃からスーダン難民をはじめとするアフリカ人難民を受け入れるようになると、先住民に加え、彼らもこのカテゴリーに加えられるようになった。そして主流社会のメディアを中心に、白人の社会規範から逸脱した存在として両集団を包括する「黒人性」が構築されるようになったのである。

先住民とアフリカ人難民は、これまで貧困や差別による社会的排除に晒されてきたが、日常実践における白人との相互作用の中で、主流社会で形成された「黒人性」を経験していた。とりわけ、両集団の中には警察からの不当な扱いが「膚の色の黒さ」に起因するものと認識する人々がいたことから、白人性からの逸脱として構築された「黒人性」が、メディア表象だけでなく、一部の当事者の間でも内面化されていることが明らかになった。このような「黒人性」の経験は、両集団のオーストラリア国民としての帰属意識を一層希薄化させるものであったといえる。

一方で、両集団は、「黒人性」の経験を共有しているにもかかわらず、互いの集団に関する知識の欠如により、相互に否定的なイメージを抱いていた。しかしながら、同じ生活空間を共有する中で形成される交友関係や、行政主催の異文化理解プログラムの下での交流は、今後両者の改善をもたらす契機となり得る。多文化社会における集団間の相互理解を重視するインターカルチュラリズム（間文化主義）の重要性が唱えられる昨今、社会的排除の経験を基にマイノリティ集団間で生まれつつある連帯が、多文化国家における新たな帰属意識をつくり出す可能性について今後も注目していく必要がある。



# Study on ‘Blackness’ in Australia: From an Inter-Minority Perspective<sup>1)</sup>

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## 1. Introduction

This article focuses on the creation of ‘blackness’ in mainstream Australian society, which includes Indigenous people and African people from refugee backgrounds. It examines the impact of ‘blackness’ on the sense of belonging felt by these groups and their associated intergroup relations. First, it is important to provide a preliminary explanation of how I began to engage in this research project. I have been conducting field research on the identity of Indigenous people in the north-western and northern suburbs of Adelaide since 2008, during which some African refugees began to move into the area. I was provided the opportunity to hear negative comments about newcomers from Indigenous people with whom I was associated. Meanwhile, I was informed of cases of intermarriage occurring between these groups.

These events motivated me to examine the elements that both sepa-

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1) This paper is based on manuscript (‘“Blackness” as Deviance from the Norm: Experiences of Social Exclusion by Indigenous and African Peoples in Australia’) presented by the author at 2019 Australian Studies Association of Japan International Conference held at Aoyama Gakuin University on 16th of June 2019.

rate and unite these groups and to develop a study on inter-minority relationships in multicultural Australia. In earlier studies on multiculturalism and the sense of belonging, both the potentials and limitations of multiculturalism were discussed, mainly in terms of relationships between white Australians and ethnic minorities. These studies showed that being Australian and the sense of possessing 'Australianness' revolves around 'whiteness', which includes having white skin, speaking English, being Christian and sharing traditional 'Anglo' culture and values (Elder 2007; Hage 1998).

Whiteness was constructed in opposition to 'blackness', which was assigned to Indigenous people, and more recently to African people from refugee backgrounds, whom the Australian government accepted mainly between 2000 and 2005 under its humanitarian programme. Whiteness is considered a norm in multicultural Australia, whereas 'blackness' is equated with deviation from the norm, along with the negative connotations attached to it, such as primitiveness, laziness and violence (Perkins 2004).

Non-white Australians were expected to adhere to the rules and values laid out by the 'white nation', which has allowed them to accumulate a sense of whiteness, implying more of an opportunity to be accepted as Australian citizens. By enlightening ethnic minorities about whiteness, the privilege of whites was reinforced, leading to reproduction of unequal racial relationships (Hage 1998).

Despite the 'blackness' assigned to Indigenous people and African refugees, and the similarities with which both groups are perceived in mainstream society, the experiences of Indigenous people and African

refugees regarding their sense of belonging have, as of yet, been examined separately in Indigenous Studies and Refugee Studies, respectively. This is due to the tension that exists between the groups as derived from differing legal categories assigned to them.

Moreton-Robinson, for instance, emphasises the uniqueness of Indigenous people's sense of belonging based on an ontological relationship to their country derived from the concept of *Dreaming* (a religious concept and worldview shared by Aboriginal people about the Creation). This is incommensurable with non-Indigenous people's sense of belonging as premised on the dispossession of the land that belonged to Indigenous people, implying non-white migrants' complicity in the dispossession (Moreton-Robinson 2003). Moreover, the studies on the 'blackness' of Indigenous people created by urban Indigenous political activists have demonstrated the negative connotations previously assigned to 'blackness' have subsequently acquired or been converted to positive meanings, such as pride and strength.

Studies on the 'blackness' of African refugees, on the other hand, has indicated that the 'blackness' of African refugees has been characterised primarily by deviance and criminality and is often portrayed as a cause of failure of integration into mainstream society by Africans (Majavu 2017: 19). Meanwhile, there are also cases of positively claiming and developing a discourse of 'blackness' among some Africans. In such cases, 'blackness' needs to be reconciled with countervailing notions of 'blackness' asserted by Indigenous people (Phillips 2011: 68).

A few studies which have focused on intergroup relations between Indigenous people and African refugees have indicated that the 'black-

ness' of these groups is competitive in nature because Indigenous people perceive African refugees as a threat to their distinct rights (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2008). Although this study recognises such tensions, given the importance of interculturalism (as premised on the dialogues between cultures for facilitating cross-cultural collaboration among ethnic minorities) in current literature on multiculturalism (Ghorayshi 2010), it is also important to examine the intersectionality of the experiences of both groups. In this manner, this study shall, in turn, seek the potential for the study of inter-minority groups in multicultural Australia.

## **2. Methodology**

The findings in this paper draw on those of previous studies besides my on-going fieldwork on intergroup relations between Indigenous and African Australians, conducted primarily in the north-western and northern suburbs of Adelaide (Australia), intermittently between 2008 and 2018. In this fieldwork, after obtaining permission for the research from the local Aboriginal and Sudanese communities, I interviewed approximately 20 people (10 Indigenous and 10 African Australians) who agreed to participate in the research regarding their sense of belonging as Australians based on their life experiences. Structured and unstructured interviews were conducted at participants' houses, offices or community centres where some of the participants gathered for events. The Sudanese participants were limited to those who spoke English. During the fieldwork, I mainly complied with the 'Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies', created by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), and

the 'Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research'.

### **3. Overview of Indigenous People and African Refugees**

#### **3-1. Historical Background**

After experiencing dispossession and struggling for many years for their rights, Indigenous people in Australia gained citizenship in the 1960s. As Australia began to search for its national identity in the late 1980s, Indigenous people and their cultures began to be appreciated as a symbol of Australia and were thereby incorporated into the wider structure of the State. The Federal Government attempted to improve the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people with a view to the future by a policy of reconciliation beginning in the 1990s. Reconciliation policy placed priority on addressing the problems concerning the 'Stolen Generations' who were removed from their parents under a forced removal policy, which was accompanied by a review of the history of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

A series of these events led to the formal national apology by the former Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, in 2008. Reconciliation under the Rudd administration, following the policy of the Howard administration, emphasised the significance of 'practical reconciliation', which aims to redress disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in terms of employment and education, in addition to a broader 'symbolic reconciliation', represented by the apology to the Stolen Generations. Consequently, a number of employment roles for Indigenous people were established to further incorporate Indigenous people into the nation

through their participation in the market economy and thus the mainstream society.

Regarding the African refugees, Australia is a member of the UN's Refugee Convention (1951) and has accepted a substantial number of refugees from Africa under its humanitarian programme, with Sudan being the leading country where refugees come from. Most Sudanese people accepted under the programme are from South Sudan where sub-Saharan Christians constitute the majority. To escape the oppression by Arabic Muslim North Sudanese, these people were forced to reside in refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya, or find places of asylums in Egypt, Syria and other neighbouring countries. Some people from these places were granted opportunities for resettlement in countries that are signatories of the UN convention including Australia.

Although Sudanese refugees were provided assistance for living in Australia by refugee organisations upon their arrival, after six months they were required to find housing in the private sector and become financially independent by utilising the services provided by social welfare organisations (Lino Lejukole 2008: 139–140). Since refugees accepted under the humanitarian programme are entitled permanent residency, most of them acquired citizenship approximately two years after their arrival.

### **3-2. Socioeconomic Situation**

The population of Indigenous people in South Australia was approximately 30,000 in 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011). The Indigenous population has been relatively concentrated in the north-western suburb, including Port Adelaide and the northern suburbs of Salisbury



and Elizabeth, where inexpensive housing is available. Meanwhile, the population of Sudanese people, who constitute the main population of African refugees in South Australia, was approximately 2,000 in 2011. When African refugees arrived in Adelaide in the early 2000s, they were mostly concentrated in the suburbs of the inner-north area of Adelaide. However, some Africans later moved to the northern suburb and began to share living space with the Indigenous population.

Both Indigenous people and African refugees are socially marginalised and subject to prejudice and racism, particularly in employment and housing. The majority of Sudanese refugees are unemployed or forced to engage in low paid, menial labour. In 2013, the unemployment rate of sub-Saharan Africans, including the Sudanese people in South Australia, was approximately 18% compared with the general population's unemployment rate, that is, 5% (SALT African-Australian News Magazine 2013). Earlier studies indicated high unemployment rates among Sudanese refugees is attributed to their phenotypical features, dress and attire and stereotypes concerning people from Africa held by employers, such as people from Africa 'don't know how to correctly operate machinery'. (Colic-Peisker 2009; Atem 2008).

Unstable employment and low income is directly linked to the difficulty in acquiring housing. In South Australia, the majority of Sudanese refugees reside in private rental housing. Sudanese people tend to be disadvantaged in finding housing due to being unemployed, having low English ability and having relatively large families (Lino Lejukole 2013). Despite these challenges in finding housing, no special measures are provided to assist in securing public housing for Sudanese refugees.

The political and legal situations of Indigenous people is different from that of African refugees in that Indigenous people can claim their distinct rights, including land rights, and pursue the responsibilities of the government over historical injustices owing to European colonisation. However, Indigenous people are in a situation similar to the African refugees in that they are socioeconomically placed at the bottom of society due to racism and poverty. In particular, the Indigenous policy since the 1990s has emphasised the 'mainstreaming' of Indigenous people but has not necessarily had a positive impact on their socioeconomic situation.

According to government statistics in 2011, the unemployment rate of Indigenous people over the age of 15 was approximately 15% , approximately three times higher than that of non-Indigenous people. Although high unemployment rates lead to difficulties in acquiring housing as in the case of Sudanese refugees, the situation of Indigenous people is slightly different. Among Indigenous households in South Australia, approximately 56% of the households reside in rental housing. Out of Indigenous households in rental housing, approximately 32% rent a house from private real estate industries, while 19% rented houses from housing trusts run by the State Government (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011).

This shows that although private real estate companies used to refuse housing opportunities for Indigenous people because of the relatively 'large size of Indigenous families', this tendency has changed. An element that differentiates Indigenous people from Sudanese refugees in terms of access to housing services is that while public housing for refugees is not deliberately prepared, the ones for Indigenous people are secured, which

indicates a higher likelihood of Indigenous people being able to obtain reasonable housing in comparison with Sudanese refugees.

#### **4. The Representation of Indigenous people and African refugees in the Media**

Indigenous people and African refugees have been represented in mainstream media in a similar manner, despite the differences in their historical and sociocultural backgrounds. Both groups have been more likely to be linked with images of vulnerability and violence. Regarding Indigenous people, Dodson notes that a shift occurred in the media coverage of Aboriginal issues from reflecting benevolent paternalism throughout the 1960s and 1970s to a negative representation of Aboriginal people as a threat to public order.

Attention of the media towards Aboriginals intensified after the deaths, which occurred as a result of high-speed car chases involving Aboriginal juveniles. The police officers who jeopardised their lives to protect the public were perceived as the 'goodies', whereas the young car thieves were regarded as irredeemably 'bad' (Dodson 1991). Such media reporting coalesced in the public mind such that a 'juvenile offender' was synonymous with being an 'Aboriginal' (Laurie 1992).

This linkage of the Indigenous youth to crime continued to attract media interest in the late 2000s. Between 2007 and 2010, a gang called the 'Gang of 49', which comprised a number of teenage Indigenous boys, was frequently reported upon. The media described this group as a threat to public safety by reiterating their thefts, robberies and danger-

ous car chases and attributed the cause of such crimes to dysfunctional family environments and low IQs. Although there were some Anglo Australian members in this group, the group was represented as an Aboriginal gang (The Australian, 13 October 2009; The Advertiser, 25 September 2007).

Meanwhile, African refugees, in general, were described as traumatised individuals who suffered from psychological damage because of their war experiences and as passive victims who required assistance from mainstream society (Marlowe 2010). However, as time passed, they became more likely to be associated with violence and crime.

One key event that triggered this shift in representation/perception was the death of a 19-year-old Sudanese Australian man residing in the south-eastern suburb of Melbourne, who was killed by a small group of people. Although the murderer were later revealed to be Anglo Australians, the Sudanese people and community were blamed for his death. This incident eventually led to the announcement by the former Immigration Minister to reduce the intake of African refugees under the humanitarian refugee programme in October 2007, owing to the 'inability' of African refugees to adapt to the Australian way of life (The Advertiser 2 October 2007). Furthermore, a remark by a Macquarie University professor, who linked 'blackness' to crime by referring to the crimes committed by African Americans, impacted the Immigration Minister's decision. The professor claimed that being 'black' implies having a low IQ, which leads to high crime rates, and that black people newly arrived in Australia, and Sudanese persons in particular, are as a group effectively nothing other than a gang (Run 2013).

After these events, a series of crimes committed by a street gang called the 'Apex Gang', which consisted of Sudanese youth in Melbourne, has frequently been referred to in the media. The 'Apex Gang' was reported to be a criminal organisation involved in car theft and robbery. Although this group mainly comprised of Sudanese people, Pacific Islanders and Anglo Australians, the group was explicitly described as a Sudanese gang, which understandably stoked public fear towards this particular racial group (The Age 15 March 2016).

Youths of Indigenous people and African refugees represented as 'gang' were viewed as individuals who are deviant from white normalcy, which places importance on order and self-control. The media also emphasised that they are a threat to 'white privilege' by describing Sudanese youth as not being able to control their violent tendencies because of their previous war experiences, while regarding Indigenous 'gangs' as 'pure evil' without any possibilities for rehabilitation (The Advertiser 14 November 2008; The Australian 13 October 2009). In this manner, both groups were considered as uncontrollable groups by Anglo-Australians, and thus it can be said that epistemological 'blackness' appears in contrast to whiteness. Such descriptions in the media also represent the fear held by white Australians of losing white authority, which Hage described as 'white paranoia' (Hage 1998).

## **5. The Experience of 'blackness' by Indigenous people and African refugees**

'Blackness', as constructed in the mainstream media, is experienced

by both groups—Indigenous people and African refugees—through social exclusion in their everyday lives. For instance, an African man who created ‘African media’, which delivers news stories about the African community in Melbourne, stated the impact of negative media representations of African youth on their everyday lives as follows:

‘I often hear reports of people being called their names in the street. We hear people being called ‘nigger’, ‘criminals’ or being asked to go back to where they came from. Especially, more recently, because of the increased negative report [ing] of Sudanese youth... We know some of them are being involved in criminal activities. The media amplifies it. Crimes always exist in every community group. But whenever Africans are involved in crimes, the media grasp that and makes a whole noise about it. There has been... I don’t know how long it has been but probably less than a year, some African youth [s] were refused entry to a store in a shopping centre. People associate Africans with crime. They think whenever they see [a] young African, whether they are South Sudanese (or other nationalities) because all they see [about] these youth [s] in the media is crime, they associate every African youth with crime. That’s why they ended up refusing entry of some young Africans in [a] major shopping centre in Melbourne.’ (Interview, 31 August 2017)

Some people in both groups have perceived having black skin as a reason for their social exclusion. For instance, a Sudanese woman whose brother was arrested in central Adelaide claimed that he was targeted by the police, who arrested every African man walking on the street af-

ter receiving an emergency call that there was an African man harassing people in the city centre. She considered the reason for the arrest to be because the police linked their black skin to violence and perceived the colour black as being associated with violence and arrogance in Australia. Moreover, this woman pointed out the similarity in the way the police deal with African refugees and Indigenous people; both groups are more likely to be convicted without evidence in comparison to other ethnic groups (Interview, 5 September 2014).

Indigenous people hold a similar perspective on their 'blackness'. Owing to their experiences of historically being subjected to continuous police surveillance and intervention (Beresford and Omaji 1996), some Indigenous people attribute the over-policing of Indigenous people to their race. For instance, one Indigenous woman's nephew was arrested by the police in the city centre of Adelaide; she explained that when his friends and other boys began fighting on a downtown street, he had intervened to end the fight. However, he was the first to be arrested by the police, who rushed over to the scene, because 'He is darker than his friends' (Interview, 20 November, 2009). Since both women perceived the unfair treatment by the police as attributed to their skin colour, the 'blackness' created by the media as a deviation from the norm that has been internalised by some Indigenous and African peoples.

In addition to their experiences with the police, both groups experience 'blackness' in their daily lives. A Sudanese man, for instance, who came to Australia as a refugee in the early 2000s, and now works as a nurse while training to become a priest at an Anglican church, spoke about being Australian.

‘Whether you are [an] Australian citizen, got your citizenship, if anything [any incidents] happen, they call us African, South Sudanese. Not call [us] Australian. It doesn’t make sense. So, to me I can’t feel totally, completely I’m an Australian. I’m an Australian and got a citizenship now, but people ask me “Where do you come from?”’

(Interview, 21 March 2018)

Majavu, who conducted research on the experiences of African refugees in Melbourne, presented similar experiences of alienation and exclusion in these individuals’ everyday lives, such as in their neighbourhood lives and at their places of employment. Although this Sudanese man accumulated some elements of whiteness, such as speaking English and being Christian, he was not perceived as a ‘real’ Australian, as can be seen in the question ‘Where do you come from?’ This question can be viewed, according to Majavu, as a ‘distancing device’ to establish racial boundaries and make black bodies visible in a country that is a geographically white space (Majavu 2017: 71).

A lack of sense of belonging in Australia has also been felt by Indigenous people in a different manner, as evidenced by an Indigenous woman’s explanation of what it means to be Aboriginal in Australia: ‘You meant to feel proud of living in Australia, and I guarantee most Aborigines don’t feel proud in Australia. Our Prime Minister says it’s not a racist country. I don’t think so’. Another Indigenous woman also stated the following: ‘I feel like a second-class citizen of my own country. And it doesn’t make me feel any less of a person. It makes me wanna be stronger in who I am because of the way politics have ruined our culture’ (In-



terview, 5 September 2008). Although these women attribute their lack of sense of belonging in Australia to the racism and poverty they experience, it is also important to not overlook the reinterpretation of the 'blackness' as a symbol of strength.

## 6. Inter-Minority Relationships

In experiencing social exclusion, how do both groups (i.e., Indigenous people and African refugees) perceive one another? A case study in Perth indicated that some Indigenous people perceived the arrival of black Africans as a further formal dispossession based on their misunderstanding that 'these people are getting special treatment and us poor original owners of the land are getting nothing' (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2008: 45). Some Indigenous people in Adelaide had a similar attitude towards African refugees. An Indigenous woman in her fifties, for instance, who resides in the north-western suburb of Adelaide, explained her perception of the African refugees:

'We have a lot of Africans at the moment. It's difficult for the Aboriginal people to get on with that, especially when I see the immigrants benefiting from it. Like the Africans now. I mean a lot of Aboriginal people could have shared this country with a lot of... It could have become a multicultural country as long as we get to tell how it is, not white men telling' (Interview, 5 September 2008).

Her comments imply that Indigenous people have the right to decide

who belongs as original owners and who does not. Another Indigenous woman in her thirties from the same suburb complained that she could not get an appointment for her children at a healthcare service for Indigenous people at a local community centre because it had been 'taken over' by Africans (Interview February 21, 2013).

However, in four years, this same woman's attitude towards African refugees changed in the wake of an event. When she enrolled in a community service course at an Aboriginal community college, she had the opportunity to interact with a group of African refugee women at that centre as a part of the course, during which they cooked together while chatting with one another about their backgrounds. The Indigenous woman heard the life story of an African woman from a war-torn country who fled to Australia as a refugee to protect the lives of her children. After this event, the Indigenous woman stated, 'Now I feel sorry for them. If I were in the same situation as her, I would do every possible thing to save my children's lives'. (Interview, 11 September 2017)

Similarly, an Indigenous man who resides in the northern suburb of Adelaide held a critical attitude towards African refugees at first in regard to the degree of their integration into society.

'They are not acceptant of Aboriginal culture, not only Aboriginal culture, Australian culture. They keep onto their own traditions and beliefs. At home, they practice their own culture. They come from somewhere... a war-torn country, so it's hard to fit into the rest of the society. I've never had any personal problems or anything like them though' (Interview, 24 September 2015).

It seems that this man adopted a stereotype towards African refugees that prevailed in mainstream society. However, after his daughter befriended Somali girls, who were her neighbours and went to the same school as her, he began to interact with their parents. Moreover, his partner invited the Somali girls, whom she met while at a local football club, to their home and he had some conversations with them. These experiences changed his attitude towards African refugees, and in two years, he stated, 'Africans are more acceptant of our culture' (Interview, 9 March 2017).

Besides interaction on an individual level, the local councils in the northern and north-western suburbs of Adelaide occasionally provide opportunities for both groups to interact with each other and promote cross-cultural understanding. For instance, in Kilburn community, where there was fighting between Indigenous and African youths, the local football club invited youths of both groups to participate in the programme, through which all the players were supposed to learn social interaction, respect for people from another community, and what it means to be a part of community through playing football together.

The former president of the club, who is from an Indigenous background, emphasised on the similarities rather than the differences between the two groups: 'We are two different cultural groups struggling for jobs and stable housing, and looking for [a] positive role-model, positive social connection and engage [ment] in the sports'. (Interview, 12 March 2017) According to him, the programme also aimed to reverse negative perceptions of the two groups regarding one another due to a lack of knowledge about the background of each group and build inter-

cultural relationships. After the programme, the fighting ended and the relations of both groups improved.

Although more case studies are necessary to examine inter-minority group relationships, in a suburb where Indigenous people and African refugees have more opportunities to interact and can engage in dialogues on a daily basis, these opportunities may bring forth the potential for both groups to share their experiences as displaced people and alleviate misunderstandings about other groups, which in turn can improve inter-group relations.

## Conclusion

The image of 'blackness' assigned to Indigenous and African peoples has been constructed and reinforced by mainstream media, where the youth of both groups have been categorised as gangs that threaten public order. They have been 'othered' by the white authorities as the 'extraordinary' who are out of control. The series of reports on gangs can be considered to have been created to drive and reiterate the anxiety of Anglo Australians of losing their authority as the managers of their national space.

The so-called deviance of 'blackness' as constructed through the media has created and reinforced stereotypes and prejudices against both groups within mainstream society, which has been experienced in the everyday lives of these groups, where the causes of social exclusion are more likely to be attributed to their racial differences, rather than their cultural differences. Consequently, some individuals of both groups have

perceived their black skin as a deviance from the norm in Australian society, where Anglo or White people are dominant, which has prevented them from acquiring a complete sense of belonging as Australians. Meanwhile, it is important to note that even black people who have accumulated some elements of whiteness, such as speaking English and being Christian, have nonetheless experienced 'othering' on a daily basis: after all, they appear black to Anglo Australians. This demonstrates that having white skin remains the most valued characteristic among several elements that constitute whiteness as a core of Australianness.

Furthermore, as indicated by earlier studies, some extent of hostility has existed among the two groups against one another mainly owing to the lack of knowledge about the historical and social backgrounds of the other group, the adoption of stereotypes about both groups within mainstream society and the resulting prejudice. However, some case studies conducted thus far have shown that, even if people originally held prejudices against other groups, such prejudices can be alleviated, and their relations may be improved at the individual level through mutual interaction. Of course, mutual interaction does not necessarily change the attitudes of Indigenous people about the complicity of refugees in dispossession. However, mutual dialogue opens the potential for each group to be aware of the commonality of their experiences of colonisation, subordination and exclusion, and it may help their mutual experiences of 'blackness' to become reconciled.

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