Diaspora: An Important and Neglected Dimension of Australia's Demography

Graeme Hugo
Federation Fellow, Professor of Geography and Director of the National Centre for Social Applications of GIS, School of Social Science, Discipline of Geographical and Environmental Studies, The University of Adelaide, South Australia 5005, email: graeme.hugo@adelaide.edu.au, ph: 61 8 8303 5646, fax: 61 8 8303 3772

ABSTRACT

Although Australia is best known as a country of immigration, around one million Australians currently live outside of their homeland on a permanent or long term basis. The present paper uses a number of quantitative and qualitative data sources to assess the extent to which Australia's expatriate community fulfils the five defining criteria of contemporary diasporas by Butler (2001). These criteria include being a scattering of two or more destinations, a relationship to an actual or imagined homeland, awareness of one's group identity, making allowances for multiple identities and existence over at least two generations. It finds that the Australian expatriate community qualifies on the basis of at least four of those criteria. It is argued that Australia's diaspora constitutes a meaningful and distinctive group and represents an important subject of serious study. Indeed, it is a significant but neglected part of Australia's demography and population geographies. This is reflected in the Australian Senate setting up an Inquiry into the Australian expatriate community.

Keywords:

diaspora, expatriates, emigration, Australian identity, migration networks

INTRODUCTION

The term diaspora has been employed in a number of ways. Although its origins lay in the Greek word "to colonize" it was until relatively recently used to refer largely to a group of people who are linked by common ethno-linguistic and/or religious bonds who have left their homeland, usually under some form of force and who have developed a strong identity and mutual solidarity in exile. The Jewish diaspora has been the classic example (Cohen, 1997). In the contemporary context, where international mobility has accelerated the term has been used more broadly by some to encompass expatriate populations who are living outside of their home countries (Safran, 1991; Vertovec, 1997). Reis (2004, 46) distinguishes between two groups of diaspora theorists. On the one hand are those who focus on "classical" diaspora based on the Jewish archetype, while on the other are those who co-mingle contemporary diaspora with issues of transnationalism and globalisation. The Australian diaspora examined here fits into this second category. There are around 1 million Australians living more or less permanently in foreign nations equivalent to 4.3 percent of the national resident population. While they do not share a common ethnic or religious background, nor were they forced to flee from their homeland by a life threatening situation, this paper suggests that the expatriate population of Australia does constitute a distinctive and meaningful group. Moreover it represents an important subject for serious study for at least four reasons…

- Firstly, it is argued that in a globalising world, what constitutes a national population is increasingly divergent from the population who happens to be residing within national boundaries on the night of the national census and hence included in census data. This is due to the fact that more and more nationals are

living and working outside of their homeland. Hence, perhaps we need to be asking questions about how we should define national populations in the many country contexts where there are diaspora of a significant size. In other words, all of a nation's significant population geographies, and indeed demographies, are not bounded by the nation's borders.

- Secondly, there is an increasing body of evidence that contemporary diasporas can and do have a significant impact on the economic and social development in their home nations (Hugo, 2003). One only need point to the significance of investment from the 30 million overseas Chinese in fuelling the burgeoning economy of China (Lucas, 2003) and the increasing efforts by international development assistance agencies to harness the diaspora to assist development in less developed countries (Hugo, 2003).
- Thirdly, the Australian diaspora, like that of many nations is increasingly self conscious of its identity as a distinct group and are organising in a number of ways and becoming an important and vocal lobby group within Australia.
- Finally, and connected to the last point, in 2003 the Australian Senate set up a Committee of Inquiry into the Australian Expatriate Community in recognition of its growing significance.

Accordingly, the present paper starts from the argument that the diaspora are a significant and neglected element in Australia's population geography and indeed in its national consciousness. The present paper seeks to examine some of the defining features of Australia's diaspora and it does this by assessing the extent to which Australia's expatriate community fulfils the five defining criteria of contemporary diasporas which have been put forward by Butler (2001, 191-3), namely…

- a scattering of two or more destinations.
- a relationship to an actual or imagined homeland.
- awareness of a group identity.
- making allowances for multiple identities.
- existence over two generations.

This paper assesses the Australian expatriate community in terms of these five criteria.

The main sources of information are a postal and online survey of expatriates and a number of in depth discussions with a small number of expatriates in the United Kingdom, United States of America and several Asian nations. The survey was not of a representative sample of the expatriate community. Indeed one of the significant problems in diaspora research is the lack, not only of any comprehensive sampling frame of expatriates, but also the absence of accurate data on their actual numbers since they are not captured in the censuses of their homelands and many are missed in the censuses of destinations. The survey comprises two components (Hugo, Rudd and Harris 2003)…

- A sample drawn from selected Australian university alumni lists indicating former students residing in foreign nations: 1,327 persons representing a 33.5 percent response rate.
- Responses to an open invitation to participate in the survey issued on the websites of a number of expatriate organisations: 745 persons responded.

The same questionnaire was used for both groups. While it included an array of questions about the expatriates' characteristics, reasons for leaving Australia, experience overseas, future intentions and linkages with Australia, one feature was a section allowing respondents to expand on any issues regarding the diaspora which they

considered to be significant and many respondents took this opportunity to expound at length on issues concerning them. In addition many respondents expanded in considerable detail to the specific questions posed in the questionnaire. Hence, there was a considerable body of narrative material in the questionnaires in addition to the more quantitative answers provided. The narratives on the topics of why Australians are leaving, their experience in foreign countries and whether or not and why they intend to return were especially extensive in the 1016 questionnaires, which were completed electronically. The depth of feeling on those issues, so evident in the in-depth interviews, was particularly apparent in many of these questionnaire responses. In addition the author was able to interview a small number of expatriates in depth.

A further source of insight and information was a close analysis of the submissions made to two recent Australian government enquiries which were of significance to expatriates and which attracted large numbers of submissions from Australians based in foreign nations. The first conducted in 2001 was carried out by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) on the issue of loss of Australian citizenship on acquisition of another country's citizenship. It attracted over 800 submissions. The second conducted by the Australian Senate's Legal and Constitutional References Committee was carried out in 2003 into a number of issues relating to expatriate Australians and attracted 677 submissions.

A key point to emphasise in the survey, the examination of submissions to Committees of Inquiry and the in-depth interviews is that the respondents were not only not representative of the total expatriate community but were selective of those who tend to identify with Australia. This is particularly the case for those who completed the questionnaire as a result of seeing a notice on one of the expatriate websites.

Clearly those who identify with their homeland and seek out information about Australia are more likely to be in the study than those who have disengaged with Australia and had no desire to return. Nevertheless, since any policy or program which relates to the diaspora will necessarily be attractive only to those expatriates who have an orientation to Australia this bias in the results is not so important, at least from a policy perspective. Indeed a distinction has been made in diaspora studies "between a symbolic ethnic identity of 'being' and a more active 'diaspora' identity requiring involvement" (Butler, 2001, 191; Tololyan, 1996) with the latter implying active participation in activity in the homeland.

HOW SCATTERED ARE THE AUSTRALIAN DIASPORA?

In addressing the first of Butler's (1997) criteria, we need to acknowledge inherent difficulties in enumerating a diaspora since they are obviously not captured in the population census of the home country[1]. Moreover, foreigners are frequently missed in the censuses of the countries in which they are living. In Table 1, for example, the numbers of Australia-born enumerated in the 2000 round of censuses in several destination nations are presented and several definitely understate the Australian presence. The 2001 census of the United Kingdom, for example, puts the number of Australians at 98,772 while an estimate by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) put it at 200,000 and another writer (MacGregor, 2003, pp.12-20) puts it at 300,000. A number of methods are used elsewhere to estimate the size, characteristics and location of Australia's diaspora (Hugo *et al*., 2001, 2003) and there is space here only to make a few key observations.

[1] Although it should be noted the United States is investigating the feasibility of including its expatriate citizens in the 2010 census (US Census Bureau, 2002a).

Table 1. Australia-born population living in foreign nations around 2001 and counted in population censuses

Country	Year	Source	Number
USA	2001	US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey	56,000
Canada	2001	Statistics Canada, 2001 Census	18,910
New Zealand	2001	Statistics New Zealand, 2001 Census	56,259
England and Wales	2001	UK National Statistics, 2001 Census	98,772
Japan	2001	OECD 2003	9,200[a]
Greece	2001	Greek Census of 2001	18,376[b]
Germany	2001	Federal Statistics Office, Germany	8,322
Netherlands	2001	Statistics Netherlands	4,313
Sweden	2001	Statistics Sweden	2,389
Austria	2001	Statistics Austria	1,686
Denmark	2001	Statistics Denmark	886
Finland	2002	Statistics Finland	673
Thailand	2000	National Statistical Office, Thailand	1,400[c]
Hong Kong	2001	Commissioner for Census and Statistics, Hong Kong	6,251[d]

[a] Population with Australian nationality
[b] Australians with dual Australian-Greek nationality/Australian only nationality
[c] Australian citizens
[d] Population with Australian/New Zealander ethnicity born outside of Hong Kong

In fact in Australia there are excellent *flow* data on emigration from Australia (Hugo, 1994) but there is considerable difficulty in estimating the *stock* of expatriates. The most frequently quoted estimates are those made by DFAT embassies and consulates and these suggest that in 2001 there were 858,866 Australians living in foreign nations and another 264,955 "temporarily present". It has been difficult to assess the degree of accuracy of these data and indeed to establish the methodologies used to collect them in different nations. Figure 1 shows the DFAT estimates for each nation and the limited quality of the data is seen in the obvious over-estimation of the numbers in Greece. Despite the fact that Greece is an important destination of emigrants from Australia (Hugo, 1994; Hugo *et al*., 2001) especially returning Greek-born immigrants and other Australians with a Greek heritage it does not have the second largest expatriate community. The DFAT estimate puts it at 135,000 while less than

20,000 people with Australian, or dual Australian Greek nationality, were counted in the last Greek census. Nevertheless, the DFAT data give an indicative picture of the extent and size of Australia's diaspora

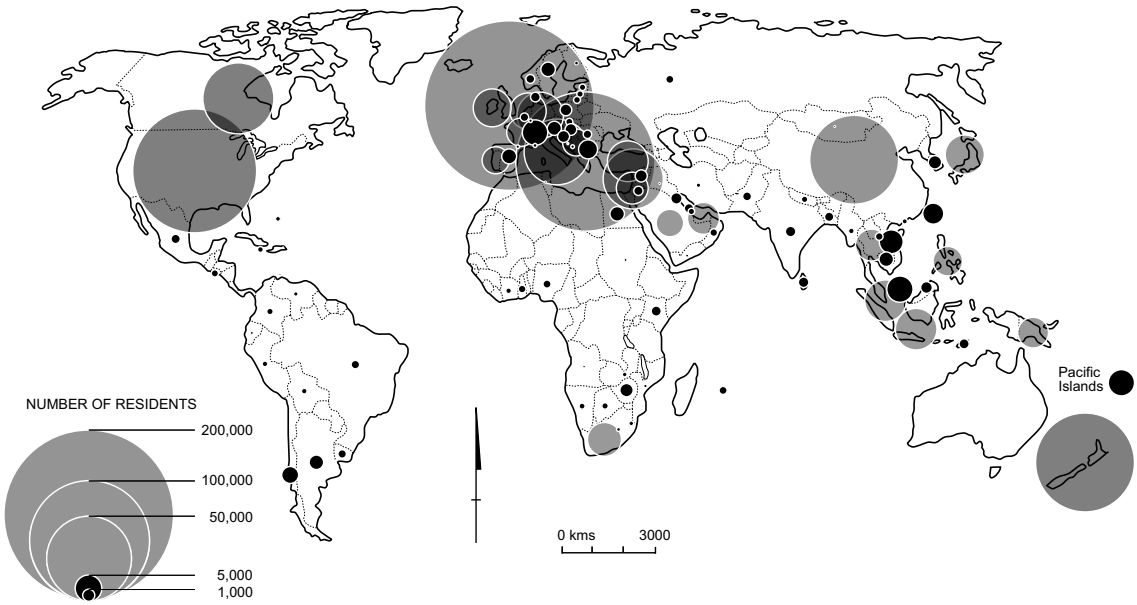

Figure 1. Australian citizens living abroad, 31 December 2001
Source: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Canberra

It is also useful to briefly examine flow data. Australia is one of the few nations to have a comprehensive data collection for all persons leaving the country. Persons leaving the nation are divided into permanent (those indicating they have not intention to return), long term (those leaving for more than 12 months but intending to return) and visitors (the remainder). Our concern here is for the first two groups. Also, however, it must be remembered that Australia attracts a significant number of permanent settler immigrants so that 23 percent of the national resident population is foreign-born (Hugo, 2004a). Hence, within the permanent out movement we can distinguish between residents who are Australia-born and those who are foreign-born (many of whom are return migrants) and within the long term out movement between residents and non residents. While the out movement of each of these is analysed elsewhere (Hugo *et al.,*

2003), we only show one of the groups here who are of particular significance to the diaspora. Hence, Figure 2 depicts the numbers of Australia-born people leaving Australia permanently over the last 10 years according to their intended destination. Clearly the pre-eminent destination is the United Kingdom, which accounts for 20.9 percent of Australia-born emigrants over the last 10 years. Australia's migration relationship with the United Kingdom has changed dramatically over this period (Hugo, 2002). Whereas it has been the pre-eminent source of immigrants to Australia for two centuries, in some recent years there have been more permanent migrants going from Australia to the United Kingdom than have moved in the opposite direction (Hugo, forthcoming). The United States is the second most significant destination and is growing in importance. Asia, which accounts for 33.4 percent of all immigrants currently is the destination of only 23.7 percent of Australian emigrants. New Zealand is also an important destination.

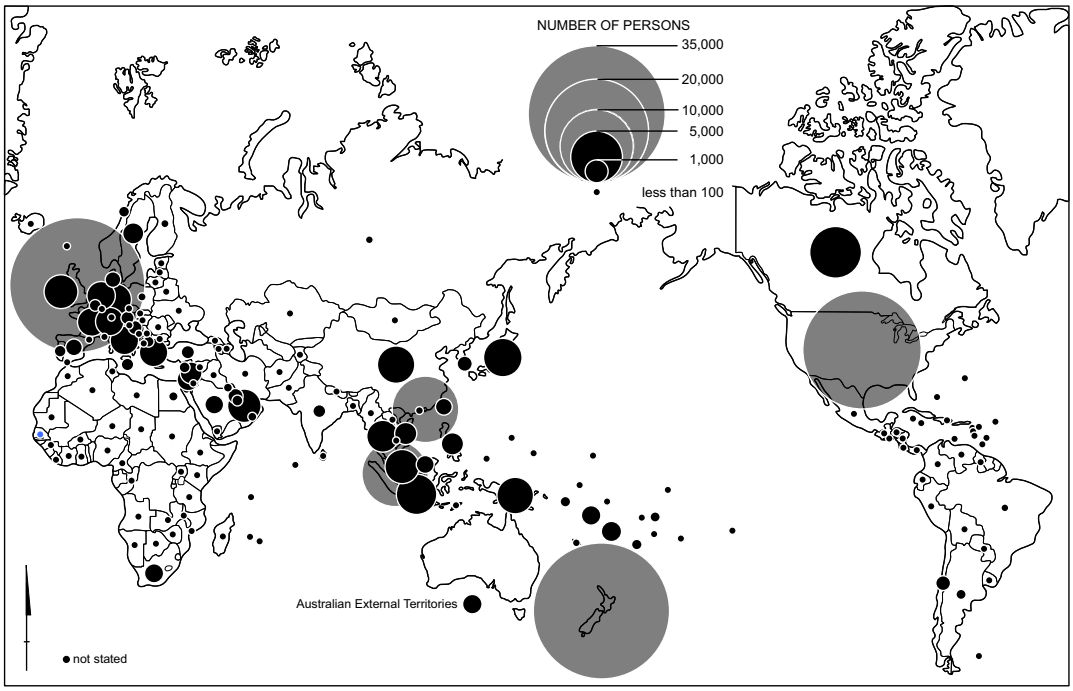

Figure 2. Australia: permanent departures of Australia-born persons by country of intended residence, 1993-94 to 2002-03
Source: DIMIA unpublished data

While there is insufficient space here to consider each of these flows separately as is done elsewhere (Hugo *et al*., 2001), a few points of difference between the flows can be mentioned.

- The movement to the UK includes a significant "rites of passage" component reflecting longstanding colonial links which have led many generations of young Australians to travel and work in, what was called until relatively recent years, "the home country". In addition, London's role as a "global city" is attracting many mobile young Australians in highly skilled, professional and managerial areas who increasingly operate in global labour markets in which Australia occupies a peripheral position.
- The movement to the USA involves immigrants who are a little older on average than those going to the U.K. Males outnumber females whereas the opposite is the case in the UK movement. It is clearly much more associated with young Australians in the more skilled sectors transferring to the headquarters of their employers or seeking work with bigger and more complex organisations than was the case in their work in Australia.
- Australia-born people moving to Asia are generally older and more male dominated again. It reflects the fact that many move to Asia at a later stage of their career cycle. Moreover there is less family migration and more movement of singles.
- The Trans Tasman flow between Australia and New Zealand has greater similarities to internal migration than international migration so that there is a great deal of labour interchange between the two countries. Hugo (2004b) shows

that while the New Zealand to Australia migration is much larger, that from Australia to New Zealand is more selective of high skill groups.

Overall the emigration of Australians is highly selective of young, educated, high income, skilled so called "urban professional" people who are an increasingly mobile group globally (Salt, 1997). These groups are more represented than in inmovement to Australia, although Birrell *et al.* (2001) have shown that in almost all occupation categories there are heavy net migration gains experienced by Australia. It has been shown elsewhere (Hugo, 1994; Hugo *et al*., 2001) that the gap between the occupational/skill structure of incoming and departing permanent migrants has narrowed over recent years. This has been due to some substantial shifts since 1996 in Australian immigration which has favored the selection of more skilled permanent and long term immigrants (Hugo, 2004a)…

- The sharpening of skills selection criteria in the economic categories of permanent settlement.
- The increasing proportion of immigrants in economic categories compared to humanitarian and family categories of immigration.
- The introduction of a range of temporary immigrant schemes that are largely confined to the most skilled areas.

Nevertheless, Table 2 shows that the outflow remains more skilled than the inflow. There is also some discussion in Australia of the strong possibility that while there is a numerical net brain gain to Australia, it is the "best of the best" who are among the Australians who leave so that their impact is out of proportion to their numbers (Wood, 2004).

Table 2. Australia: permanent and long term arrivals and departures by occupation, 1997-98 to 2002-03

	Arrivals		Departures	
Occupation	Settler	Long Term	Permanent	Long Term
Managers & Administrators	12.2	16.9	17.3	12.9
Professionals	41.8	43.0	38.1	43.0
Associate Professionals	8.3	9.3	10.2	9.2
Tradespersons	13.3	6.8	7.4	7.6
Advanced Clerical, Sales, Service	2.9	3.3	3.7	3.1
Int Clerical Sales & Service	10.7	12.7	13.0	14.3
Int Production & Transport	3.2	1.7	2.5	2.2
Elementary Clerical Sales & Service	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.3
Labourers	2.8	1.3	2.2	2.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	255,093	641,651	156,134	548,466

Source: DIMIA unpublished data

While virtually all migration is selective by age there are some differences in the age structures of immigrants to and emigrants from Australia as is evident in Figure 3. The permanent outflow is dominated by young families and this is especially the case for the Australia-born component of that emigration. The long term out movement however is dominated by young adults, reflecting the significance of "rite of passage" movement in that category.

While it is not possible to put an accurate number on the stock of Australians residing overseas, it is clear that they readily fulfill the first diaspora criteria put forward by Butler (2001) in that they are scattered across more than one destination/nation. Indeed as Table 3 indicates, Australia's diaspora in relation to its total resident population is substantial when compared to other nations.

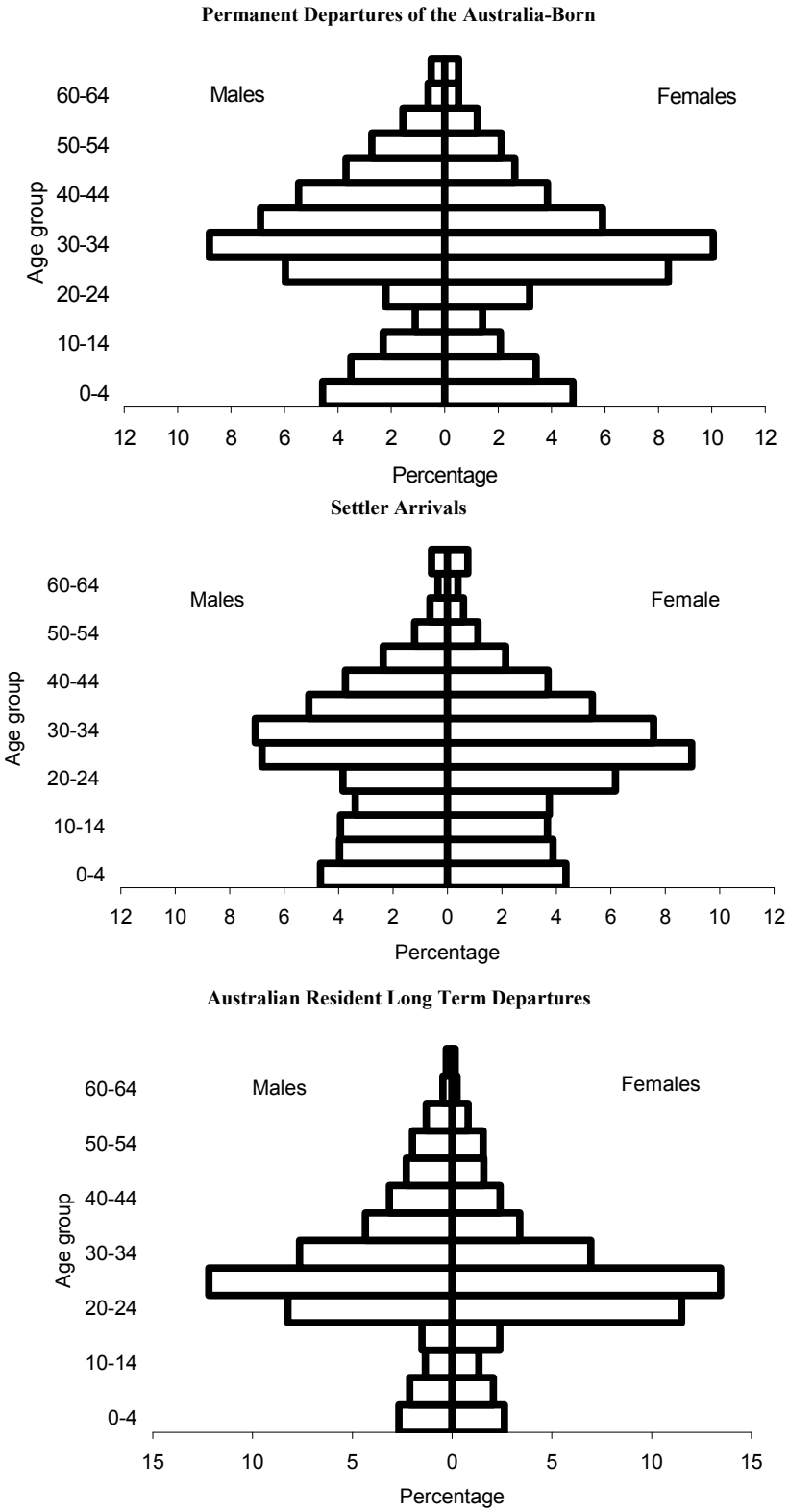

Figure 3. Australia: age sex structures of permanent departures of the Australia-born, permanent arrivals and Australian resident long term departures, 2002-03
Source: DIMIA Movements Data Base

Table 3. National diasporas in relation to resident national populations

USA:	7 million – 2.5 percent of national population
Australia:	900,000 – 4.3 percent of national population
New Zealand:	850,000 – 21.9 percent of national population
Philippines:	7.6 million – 9.4 percent of national population
India:	20 million – 1.9 percent of national population
Pakistan:	4 million – 2.8 percent of national population
China:	30 to 40 million – 2.9 percent of national population
Japan:	873,641 – 0.7 percent of national population
Mexico:	19 million* – 19 percent of national population

* Mexican diaspora in the U.S.

Source: US Census Bureau, 2002a and b; Southern Cross, 2002; Bedford, 2001; Commission of Filipinos Overseas, personal communication, 4 February 2004; Ministry of External Affairs, India, http://indiandiaspora.nic.in; Naseem, 1998; Sahoo, 2002; Iguchi, 2004; Gutièrrez, 1999

RELATIONSHIP TO THE HOMELAND

The second criterion characterising the diaspora is that the expatriate community should maintain a strong relationship with its real or imagined homeland. To test this we will consider the development of networks of relationships between the expatriate community and Australia. One of the most important dimensions in examining the patterns, causes and effects of any mobility is the network of connections developed between origin and destination. The Australian diaspora is not an exception to this. The study found myriads of different types of connections and linkages maintained by expatriates with Australia. These include both family-friend based informal linkages, frequent accessing news about events in Australia and in many cases formally linking with businesses, organisations, professional colleagues and other groups in Australia. While the nature of these is explored elsewhere (Hugo *et al*., 2003) a few points can be made here.

One of the differences between modern diaspora and those of history is the revolution in information and communication on the one hand and the cheapening and

speeding up of international travel on the other which have transformed the extent to which contact can be maintained with the homeland. Australian expatriates receive information about local Australian events, politics and sporting results at the same time as their Australia-based relatives.

One indicator of the significance of the new technology in shaping the relationship maintained by the diaspora with Australia is seen in the number of hits recorded each week from foreign nations on the Australian Football League (AFL) website. Since Australian football is a game largely restricted to Australia, it is not reported on by media in other nations. The AFL has indicated that an average of a quarter of all hits on its website come from foreign nations – around 2.5 million. Figure 4 shows that the USA and UK account for more than a half of these hits but there are also significant numbers from New Zealand, Canada and several Asian, and continental European, nations. The new technologies not only allow expatriates to keep up with events in

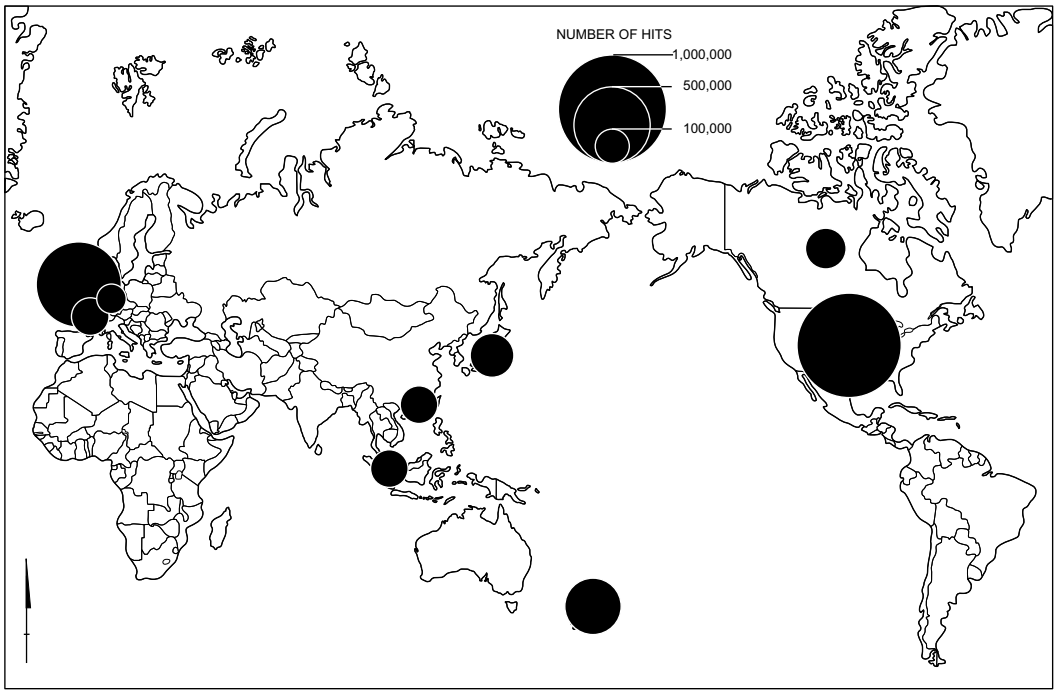

Figure 4. Number of hits from foreign nations on the Australian Football League website
Source: Australian Football League

Australia but they facilitate intimate contact with family and friends. As Azure (2003, 33) writes in a collection of short essays by Australian expatriates…

> "When I open emails from loved ones, I hear the words read to me in their voices."
>
> "My heart aches because it is pulled and stretched across seas, across lands, to encompass births, deaths, marriages, first homes, losing a job, gaining a job, major successes, major setbacks. When the phone receiver is replaced I smile in a distant land."

Hence, Australians overseas are able to interact with relatives and friends in an intimate way more than expatriates of earlier generations and this undoubtedly is a factor in strengthening relationships with home. The cheapening of international phone calls and the development of the internet now means that expatriates can speak directly on a daily basis with friends and relatives whereas in the past such regular intimate contact was simply not possible. It was apparent from discussions with expatriates that electronic communication with "home" had an important reinforcing effect on their connection with Australia and on their identity as Australians.

In the survey of expatriates it was found that most expatriates visited Australia on a regular basis despite the substantial distances involved with over three quarters of respondents being in North America or Europe. Only a small proportion of respondents (13.6 percent) had not visited Australia since moving and these were overwhelmingly recent departures from Australia. Table 4 shows the strong relationship between length of time expatriates had resided overseas and the number of visits they had made. The fact that a third of expatriates had visited Australia 10 or more times is indicative of the intensity of visiting.

Table 3. Emigration survey: percentage of visits by expatriates, still living in country of first move to Australia by time they had been away

	Time away overseas				
No. of Visits	One year or less %	2-5 years %	6-10 years %	10+ years %	Total %
None	46.7	38.2	6.7	8.4	100.0
1-4 times	9.5	56.9	17.5	16.2	100.0
5-9 times	0.3	22.0	30.6	47.1	100.0
10-19 times	0.0	10.6	15.6	73.8	100.0
20 + times	0.0	4.3	10.9	84.8	100.0
Total	11.7	38.7	17.8	31.7	100.0
	N=172	N=568	N=261	N=465	N=1,466

Source: Emigration Survey 2002

One of the major elements associated with maintenance of strong links with Australia is a strong intention to return to their homeland among expatriates. Among respondents to the survey 50.7 percent definitely intended to return with a third being undecided. There was only a small difference between males and females in response. Figure 4 shows that there is a clear relationship evident with the proportion intending to return decreasing with age. This is clearly a process whereby the longer people stay away from Australia the less likely they are to return. The high proportion who replied being undecided is interesting and many respondents elaborated on this and indicated that they genuinely were still in the process of weighing the advantages of being overseas (usually job-related, income, work conditions, etc.) against those of returning to Australia (closeness to family, lifestyle, etc.).

> "Many of us overseas are desperate to return home, but there are very limited opportunities and salaries are less than half what they are here in the U.S."

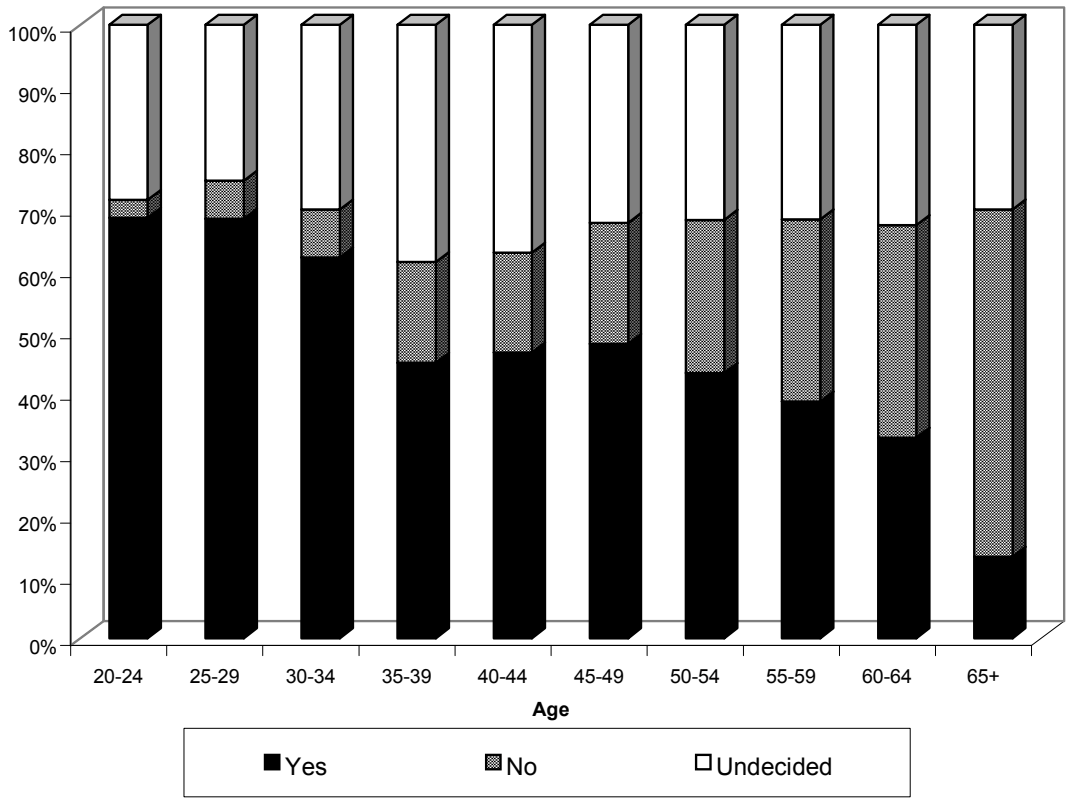

Figure 4. Intentions of respondents to return to live in Australia by age
Source: Emigration Survey, 2002

"I'd just like to say that I wrote undecided (to the intentions to return question) even though I know I'll move back to Australia. But at present we don't know when or how as it depends on employment plus in order for my husband to get a visa I will have to go there before my husband does and perhaps live and work there for more than 6 months."

There were, however many who strongly expressed a desire to return …

"I love Australia and want to return and hopefully make a contribution although I will need to compromise my career to do so."

> "We live in Silicon Valley, California as do numerous other Australians (thousands). Of the hundreds that I've met the majority intend to return to Australia, most commonly within a 10 year span."

Among those who indicated they definitely did not intend to return to Australia, it is apparent that employment, career and income related factors were deterrents to returning. The fact that many were established in their current location was also a major reason for not intending to return as was having a non-Australian origin partner. The latter was especially the case for females, with 37.3 percent of females indicating this as a reason for not returning compared with 18 percent of males. By contrast, males were much more likely to indicate personal tax and business opportunities than was the case for females. Other reasons such as '*children grown up here*' and '*family and friends here*' showed very little difference between males and females.

One of the defining features of Australia's diaspora, which emerged in the study, was the tension which many expatriates feel between a desire to further their careers, maximise income, etc. in the destination on the one hand and the undoubted family and lifestyle advantages of their homeland. This often meant that many expatriates attempt to maximize the advantages of both locations by spending an extended period in foreign countries during their 20s and 30s and early 40s and then returning to Australia as they enter the early family formation stages of their life cycle. It seems important to many that their children spend at least part of their childhood in Australia.

One of the dimensions of the Australian diaspora being investigated by the Senate Inquiry is the extent to which the linkages between it and Australia can be mobilised to assist the economic and social development of Australia. Respondents in the present study indicated a number of ways in which linkages are maintained with Australia

outside of the informal bonds to family and friends. These are expanded upon elsewhere (Hugo, Rudd and Harris 2003) but some examples are…

- Business links with Australia-based companies and individuals.
- Networks with universities and other research institutions maintained by Australian expatriates in such organisations in foreign nations.
- Expatriates acting as a "bridgehead" for the introduction of Australian produced products into foreign markets.

IDENTITY ISSUES

Butler (2001) indicated two areas of identity, which need to be considered when examining the diaspora…

- The extent to which the diaspora identify themselves with their homeland.
- The extent to which the diaspora has a distinctive separate identity.

In firstly considering the extent to which expatriates still identify with Australia, the respondents to the survey were asked whether they still called Australia "home". Table 4 shows that four out of five respondents answered yes to this question. There was a notable difference between males and females with 85 percent of females saying Australia was still 'home' compared with 75 percent of males. However, virtually all of the very young emigrants (aged 20-24 years) considered Australia 'home' and as age increased the percentage steadily declined with only 53 percent of respondents aged 65 years or more answering likewise. This response was clearly related to the time spent overseas with only 67 percent those respondents leaving before 1990 considering Australia to be 'home' compared with 85.4 percent of respondents leaving after 1990.

Table 4. Australian expatriates survey : proportion who consider Australia "home" by birthplace

	Consider Australia Home			
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Undecided (%)	Total
Australia-born	83.0	13.0	4.0	1,669
Overseas-born	64.3	32.0	3.7	403
Total	79.3	16.7	4.0	2,072

Source: Emigration Survey 2002

One of the particular issues relating to the Australian diaspora is that since 23 percent of the Australian resident population was born overseas, many expatriates themselves were not born in Australia. Moreover, a fifth of Australian-born people have at least one parent who was born in a foreign country. Hence, many Australians including Australian expatriates are first and second generation immigrants to Australia. Indeed around a fifth of the expatriate respondents to the survey were not born in Australia. Table 4 shows that while their attachment to Australia is not as great as the Australian-born, some two thirds still call Australia home. One significant element in the Australian diaspora is the second generation of postwar migrants who have "returned" to the homeland of their parents. This predominantly applies to Europeans who have inherited citizenship because of their heritage and is apparent in the substantial numbers in the United Kingdom, Greece and Italy.

One of the striking findings of both the survey and the in depth interviews was the strength of identification with Australia among many expatriates, even among those who had no intentions of returning to Australia to live and who hadn't lived in Australia for several decades. As one indicated…

> "I have my husband and family now here in the USA but all the rest of my immediate family are in Australia – it will always be "home" but I also have a home here. I will never give up my Australian citizenship."

It is clear that, as Brah (1996) points out, not all diasporas sustain an ideology of return. It may also be even that "absence may make the heart grow fonder" with absence from Australia strengthening the sense of being an Australian. Again, to quote a respondent…

'It has really been since I have lived overseas that I have been more acutely aware of my sense of being an Australian."

A way in which expatriate identity with Australia has been demonstrated in recent years has been in relation to *citizenship*. This was apparent not only in the survey and in depth interviews but also in the 825 submissions made to the Australian Citizenship Council. Section 17 of the 1998 Australian Citizenship Act stated the following:

"1) A person, being an Australian citizen who has attained the age of 18 years, who does any act or thing:

(a) the sole or dominant purpose of which; and

(b) the effect of which;

is to acquire the nationality or citizenship of a foreign country, shall, upon that acquisition, cease to be an Australian citizen.

2) Sub-section (1) does not apply in relation to an act of marriage."

The refusal of Australia to allow dual nationality to Australian citizens may appear unusual given the fact that for most of the postwar period Australia had a higher proportion of its population foreign-born than any country of comparable size or larger. It reflected a number of elements …

- An assimilationist perspective, which despite the official transition to multiculturalism meant that there was a strong view that an individual could only have allegiance to a single country.

- The fact that for much of the postwar period citizens of the United Kingdom (the largest group of immigrants) enjoyed all of the rights in Australia as an Australian citizen without becoming an Australian citizen.
- In reality many immigrants could take Australian citizenship without renouncing their former citizenship because their birthplace recognised dual nationality.

The Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) initiated a public inquiry into the issue of dual nationality in 2001 and received 825 submissions from the public (many of whom were based in foreign nations as well as from expatriate lobby groups). As a result, Section 17 was repealed in April 2002 so that Australians could have dual citizenship. Moreover, further lobbying from these groups saw the government, in July 2004, make it possible for former citizens who gave up their citizenship before April 2002 to resume their Australian citizenship.

The survey, however, was carried out prior to the 2002 determination and the anguish and anger that expatriate Australians felt at having to renounce their Australian citizenship was palpable in responses such as….

> "The anguish that existed over whether or not we could keep our Australian nationality is/was a real psychological difficulty, I feel profoundly Australian but needed to take up French nationality to become part of the country that I have been living in so long."
>
> "The most important issue to me is Section 17 of the Immigration Act. I do not wish to relinquish my Australian citizenship, so although I work and pay taxes in the USA I can't vote, either here or there. I have been disenfranchised for over 30 years because of an attachment to a country

whose outdated immigration/emigration polices still reflect the xenophobia of 50 years ago"

"I am not sure what you hope to determine in this study but I hope part of the results reflect the overwhelmingly expatriate anger at being disenfranchised by our government just because we chose to live in another country."

"The nature of what it is to be a citizen is changing as our world evolves. In my mind it makes little sense to penalise your citizenship for taking advantage of global opportunities in a world where the market places of the globe are your customers. For countries to remain vibrant they need to allow their citizens the opportunities to live and work overseas and return home with ease. Allow dual citizenship or tri or quadruple citizenship. The reality is that more people are leaving than ever before, they will continue to leave. I know people that have taken up citizenship even knowing that they would lose their Aussie one. It didn't stop them although it did make them sad. Some were even angry that the government of Australia has the nerve to demand that you forego your citizenship if you want to take that of another country."

The Australian government's decision to allow dual citizenship in 2002 was a major departure from the past. There were 825 individual submissions received by DIMIA with the bulk of these being from expatriate Australians. The *expatriate networks* played a key role both in terms of developing detailed and persuasive submissions but mobilising the diaspora to make submissions as well.

It was apparent that many survey respondents had developed a multiple identity with Australia and their country of residence. For some, this multiple identity has involved a tension but for many this tension was readily resolved by recognizing the advantages of both countries. A number of quotations from respondents testify to this…

> "Dual nationality is important for expatriates as they don't want to give up their Australian citizenship. Yet for business and other reasons being a citizen in the country they reside in is useful."
>
> "I have lived in England nearly 40 years but have kept my Australian citizenship."
>
> "We left Australia because in 1980-81, 2 PhDs in Physics in Adelaide had very little chance of getting reasonably equivalent jobs. We are still here because it is difficult to judge at a distance the costs and benefits of the return… I guess pragmatically we have emigrated but emotionally it feels more like an extended visit."
>
> "It is important that people understand that you don't stop being Australian just because you don't live in Australia."
>
> "My heart's Australian, my physical home is American."
>
> "I regularly struggle with the issue of national identity."
>
> "Melbourne is home, Copenhagen is home."

An important point which emerged during fieldwork was the fact that one dimension of the multiple identities being assumed by expatriate Australian's was a self conscious identification as being an *expatriate Australian*. It is apparent that an Australian expatriate culture is emerging. This is partly associated with the emergence

of new types of formal expatriate groups. In the past such formal groupings of expatriates in individual cities and countries have been common place. Some have had a purely "business/chambers of commerce" role while others have had a social/charitable role. However, it is apparent that the emergence of lobby groups, which are inclusive of expatriates across a wide area, are assuming greater significance. These groups are taking up issues of concern to expatriates within Australia and have been effective in bringing about changes in citizenship and electoral acts. One of the strongest of these groups is the Southern Cross Group (SCG) (http://www.southern-cross-group.org). This was established in 2000 (MacGregor 2003) and has over 5,000 on the electronic mailing list. As Figure 6 indicates, their subscribers are scattered across the world. This form of organization has been made possible by the internet and differs from previous kinds of expatriate organisations. In the United States a group entitled Advance Australian Professionals in America (http://wwwadvance.org) has been established with funding from Australian businesses in the USA. These organizations are an increasingly important element not only in lobbying for expatriate interests in Australia but also in shaping a separate expatriate identity.The latter is nowhere evident than in a collection of short stories assembled through the SCG (Havenhand and MacGregor (eds.) 2003). These stories graphically portray the many dimensions of the expatriate experience. A quotation from one of the authors illustrates this.

> "Becoming an expatriate has also opened my eyes about the world in ways not available to me had I stayed at home. I am aware this life has a price – missing defining experiences, both public and private at home. But I

characterise myself as an Australian member of an internationally minded community, who just happens to live her Australianism abroad."

Caroline Brothers 2003, 48

One element in the emerging expatriate Australian culture is a widespread feeling of neglect and exclusion by Australian governments and Australians generally. This is captured in a statement by the founder of the SCG…

"Many expatriates are bitterly disappointed how Australians at home, and Australian governments, treat them - perhaps subconsciously – as traitors for having left. At the very least it's usually out of sight, out of mind. The "tall poppy" syndrome may play a role, which we will never be able to measure. Expats are also punished – inadvertently perhaps – by the failure of Australian governments to properly consider the impact of laws and policies – in some cases the lack thereof – on Australians living abroad."

MacGregor, 2003, 19-20

It also was reflected in many comments from respondents to the survey and in depth interviews as the following quotations indicate.

"I feel expat Australians tend to be forgotten once they leave the country. Only through my own efforts was I able to receive any information via the Embassy here about current events at home. The embassies don't ever give one the feeling they are particularly interested in us"

"My return to Australia in 1997 was a real eye opener. I realised how inward looking it is…If your business is not property development or selling imported products then Australia is a career cul de sac"

> "It is difficult for people who haven't lived overseas to view the very unentrepreneurial attitude of the Australian government and tax regime"
>
> "I feel very bitter about not being able to fit in (Australia) so I returned to a country that values my skills and provides me with more opportunity (Japan)"
>
> "I was very disappointed with the inward focus of Australia"
>
> "Only family draws me back to Australia. The current Australian political situation is entirely unattractive and reinforces how parochial Australia is"
>
> "It has been my personal experience that many Australians feel somehow that leaving Australia for long periods is somehow unnatural"
>
> "I feel that London is where I 'grew up': I arrived here when I was 22 years and found independence and confidence in myself and my abilities here. Everyday I read with growing dismay the (what appears to be) growing intolerance of political parties and followers towards refugees and asylum seekers and there have been times when I have felt ashamed of Australia and its treatment and attitudes towards human beings fleeing desperate situations, leading me to question my own citizenship"

Several respondents made specific reference to a phenomenon much discussed in Australia – the "Tall Poppy" Syndrome. This refers to an aspect of the egalitarian ethos in Australia which seeks to diminish the achievements of people who stand out from the crowd (unless it is in sport) and cutting down among "tall poppies" that rise above the average. The following quotation is representative.

> "My brother, myself and 2 of his best friends were all high achievers and may be a bit more academically adventurous than average Adelaide people.

> We all separately came to U.K. and have never returned, finding the scope to grow much greater in U.K.
>
> I'm sad about this because Aus is great but nothing I did when working was allowed or valued there and my brother (who sold his business for over $100 million in the US) was unable to get going there either. In Aus we were regarded as misfits and odd, in the wider world we have been regarded as entrepreneurial genius types. Unfortunately we have felt Aus has an ethos of 'no tall poppies'."

In some cases, respondents' quotations reported that they had returned to Australia and were not able to fit in, had difficulty in gaining recognition for their foreign-based achievements and had subsequently left Australia again. Indeed there has been a network set up to support returning Australians in response to these problems.

This alienation factor is of some interest since some of the classical works on the common features of diaspora identify alienation in the host society as a defining element.

> "The belief that they (the diaspora) are not – and perhaps now can be – fully accepted in their host societies and so remain partly separate" (Reis 2004, 43).

In the case of much of the Australian diaspora, it may be that this sense of alienation also applies to their relationship with the origin societies. As one of the contributors to the collection of Australian expatriates, short stories expresses it…"Perhaps my

> husband and I are slipping towards some expatriate no mans land outsiders not only in the country we have chosen to live in but our own country as well. We wonder if we will ever settle contentedly into Australia again, and

> fear we won't. Perhaps we have entered, without even realising it, that strange state of exile where a memory of home is all we have left."
>
> Nikki Gemmell, 2003, 11

EXISTENCE OVER TWO GENERATIONS

Of the five Butler criteria for identifying modern diaspora, it is the fifth which indicates that the diaspora should exist for two or more generations which is most problematical in the Australian case. There is little evidence of the Australian diaspora surviving beyond a single generation. While emigration from Australia is a longstanding phenomenon (Hugo 1994), it is clear that its large scale is a recent pattern. However one of the key factors, which motivates Australian expatriates to return to their homeland, relates to a desire to raise their children in Australia. As one respondent put it…

> "Being born, raised and educated in Australia set the value by which I live today. Had my wife and I had children we would have returned to Australia for their education."

It remains to be seen whether the identification with Australia among the current generation of expatriates will be passed on to their second generation children. It may be that the recent agreement by the Australian government to allow dual citizenship may foster such identification.

CONCLUSION

The Australian expatriate community does not qualify as a diaspora in terms of the "classical" definition but it fulfils four of the five criteria that have been laid down by

Butler (2001) as characterizing contemporary diaspora. In discussing the seminal work of Safran (1991) on the diaspora, Reis (2004, 43) has stated…

> "Very few modern day diaspora ascribe to all of the aforementioned characteristics. Safran did not intend that all of the above criteria should apply in order for a group to be considered a diaspora."

Accordingly, it is argued here that the Australian diaspora does exist as a separate and important part of the Australian population. Clearly, in the contemporary world, the scale and importance of diaspora values between nations but there has been a tendency to confine much of the discussion about the role of diaspora to less developed nations with substantial expatriate communities in more developed countries. An attempt has been made here to establish that Australia's expatriate community does in fact constitute a diaspora and as such has importance and relevance. Portes[2] has said that it is impossible to understand the sociology of many nations without considering their diaspora. Reis (2004, 42) in a similar vein has written…

> "The emphasis or adherence to the state centric model in the realm of international relations has contributed to the sidelining of entities known as diaspora as a valuable unit of analysis. In this sense, the nation state cannot account for certain features in the emerging global political economy, which can be better explained by using diaspora."

It is the contention here that such comments can equally be made about the population geographies and demography of many nation states. To ignore the diaspora is to omit consideration of an important part of the national population.

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[2] Presentation to Conference on African Migration and Urbanisation in Comparative Perspective, Johannesburg, South Africa, 4-7 June, 2003.

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