1. Introduction

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The world appears to have entered a long but unpredictable cycle in which violence is becoming an increasingly prominent feature of domestic and global politics. As identity, culture and religion emerge as reinvigorated organising principles for this violence the implications for the international community are clear; current social and political dynamics point to higher levels of intramural tensions that will test their social resilience for many years to come. Consequently, recent sociological thinking focusing on globalization has placed the concept of risk at the centre of contemporary life (Beck 1999). As it applies to issues such as terrorism and environmental degradation the notion of risk has intensified human anxieties and thus precipitated new forms of public behaviour. We, along with many of the contributors of this volume, argue that elevated perceptions of terrorism-related risk in particular have had a deleterious impact on many societies, diluting intercultural and interreligious harmony and by so doing inadvertently elevating the risk of further violence.

From Melbourne to Moscow, concerns have been raised regarding the post-September 11 rise of xenophobia. Terrorist attacks in the US, Madrid, Bali, Beslan, London and Mumbai and discourses of exclusion, propagated by governments and media following these events, have had the effect of focusing these xenophobias on Muslim and immigrant communities. At the official level, Muslim communities have been singled out for particularly close scrutiny by police and intelligence services. At the social level, public fear has increased racist violence and a growing sense of isolation and alienation among Muslims and other immigrant communities in the West. Diaspora communities and their children have expressed that where they had previously felt safe, respected and supported in multicultural societies they now feel increasingly threatened. Governments have been accused of contributing to this global climate of intolerance and of being too passive in addressing it (Bouma et al. 2007; Viera de Mello 2005). Fears of terror and of

social security pertaining to jobs and welfare abound and are currently being compounded by the global economic crisis.

Yet *what if our fears and our perception of risk are misplaced?* What if the greatest risk is not terrorism itself but the conditions that allow terrorism to flourish? Following this argument, we posit that exclusion poses a significant security risk and is a causal factor not only of terrorism but also of a range of what others have called 'new security challenges' that range from poverty to global warming. As perceptions of risk have been misplaced, many counter-terrorism strategies have been similarly misguided and have therefore exacerbated feelings of exclusion amongst Muslim and immigrant communities. The attitude towards immigrants before September 11 was already undermined by widespread stereotypical fears and prejudices arising from the pressures of globalization. Following September 11, a false link between immigrants and terrorists has been used in many countries as a reason to further harden regimes, inhibit freedom of expression and to toughen migration policies. This has resulted in the exacerbation of existing tensions and a further undermining of the 'security' that such programs aim to provide. The *War on Terror* has been proven to aggravate grievances (National Intelligence Estimate 2006) and consequently anti-Western and particularly anti-US sentiments have risen throughout the world. In addition, despite the Council of Europe's identifying 'minimising disparities and avoiding polarization' as core components of social cohesion (European Committee for Social Cohesion 2004, p. 4) and the EU Common Agenda for Integration's commitment to 'two-way' integration (Commission of the European Communities 2005b) many integration programs currently being developed and implemented in the EU and in other countries such as Australia have had more of a one-way assimilation orientation, based on ascribing to local 'ways of life' and allegedly apodictic sets of EU or Australian values. The divisive discourse employed by many Western governments has fuelled exclusion of Muslim and immigrant communities by asserting the supremacy of Western values and Western democracy (Beck 2006; Bouma et al. 2007; Halafoff 2006). This has given license to the emergence of what some authors describe as civilizational violence, evident in conflicts such as the 2005 Cronulla riots in Sydney – where perpetrators drew a sense of purpose and legitimacy from the divisive rhetoric of political leaders (Halafoff 2006) – as well as the 2005 rioting that spread across France and which has recently shown signs of erupting elsewhere in Western Europe (see Bowen 2006; Fetzer and Soper 2004). Growing exclusion and discrimination has aggravated grievances and feelings of injustice, alienation and marginalization, especially experienced by young people from majority and minority groups made vulnerable to processes of radicalization (Commission of the European Communities 2005a, p. 3; Roy 2005;

Wieviorka 2003). In addition, globalization has not only aggravated the processes of exclusion, it has enabled grievances to become globalized as a result of global communication systems, thereby potentially posing even greater risks.

In response to these heightened tensions, on 1–2 June, 2006 a two-day workshop *Globalization's New Challenge: Social Cohesion in Diverse Communities* was co-convened by the Global Terrorism Research Centre (GTRc) Monash University and the Royal Institute of International Affairs at Chatham House, under the auspices of a grant from the Scanlon Foundation as part of the *Scanlon Foundation Social Cohesion Research Program*. It was coordinated by the Monash Institute for the Study of Global Movements in association with the Australian Multicultural Foundation (AMF). The workshop brought together an array of scholars, covering a range of disciplines and regional expertise, to address the growing problem of violence in culturally and religiously diverse societies. Focusing on Muslim minorities in particular, but looking also at deleterious effects experienced by other minorities, workshop participants shared research experiences and discussed policy options for reversing the polarization of societies evident since the attacks of 9/11. This volume contains chapters arising from the workshop presentations and discussions that explore the challenges posed by the globalization of risks and new methods of addressing them effectively. To this end, it is hoped this volume will serve as a reference point for the recalibration of counter-terrorism policies so that they unite rather than divide our multicultural societies.

Indeed it follows that if exclusion is a significant risk then counter-exclusion strategies provide a much-needed antidote. A common theme throughout the book is that in order to better minimize the risk of a prolonged cycle of violence there is a need for greater levels of cross-religious and cross-cultural communication and understanding at the local and global level to better respond to the underlying causes of global risks. Deliberation pertaining to the root causes of global risks including terrorism, poverty and climate change needs to be included in security debates. For as long as minorities are targeted as scapegoats by governments and corporations, including the media, underlying causes of socio-economic inequities that spur global grievances will continue to flourish, as will persisting frustration regarding the double standards of the West. While we espouse freedom and human rights on one hand and condone economic oppression and torture on the other, anti-Western sentiments will spread unabated and the positive elements of Western, particularly multicultural and multifaith societies, will remain undervalued. Without justice and genuine processes of reconciliation, post-conflict reconstruction strategies will remain meaningless. In Western and also non-Western societies, particularly in strengthening autocratic

regimes such as China and Russia, repression of religious minorities and religious freedom exacerbates the risk of conflict. Where elites resist reforms that may undermine their positions of privilege and power, or impose reforms that seek only to benefit the status quo, conflict will undoubtedly persist. Where the military is used by the state to maintain a stronghold against the will of the people, structural violence prevails and direct violence is inevitable.

We argue that in an increasingly globalized world, a multilateral distribution of power and responsibility is the only way forward if we are genuinely committed to peaceful, equitable and sustainable solutions. With the election of Kevin Rudd in Australia and Barack Obama in the USA we are witnessing a shift in post-neoliberal societies, away from intergroup competition to renewed awareness of interconnectedness and the need for greater collaboration among majority and minority groups. Whether at the micro or macro level, the issues are the same. If we are to counter global risks then it is vital that we implement inclusive strategies that are consistent with a representative global ethical polity focussed on common security. The politics of exclusion can only be remedied by inclusive, equitable, participatory and deliberative measures.

Deliberate democracy aims to give voice to *all* of the citizenry, to include everyone in the conversation. Reflexivity is called for among dominant and minority groups to address the underlying causes of tensions. We no longer have the luxury to continue blaming one another for our misfortunes and stay trapped in oppositional identity politics. We must find new ways to co-operate, to develop new understandings of risks and of solutions that will benefit us all, and the planet we co-inhabit.

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