“Gimme Shelter”: The “othering” of refugees in forming identity in Australia and New Zealand.

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Questions to consider

• How are refugees perceived in Australia and New Zealand (historically and currently)?

• How does ‘othering’ refugees influence how we construct ideas of who ‘we’ are?

• How does Edward Said’s Orientalism speak to the notion of ‘othering’ in the current context?
Links between Australia and New Zealand through dealings with refugees
Australia and New Zealand are ‘settler’ nations populated by ‘boat people’
Australian response to refugees

“Though it may be perfectly true to say 'that the internment of all refugees is the only possible way of making sure for ourselves, it is an extreme and wholly unjust and judicial remedy, and one of its worst evils is the certain impetus it gives to allegations of espionage and worse often based merely on racial prejudices and confused thinking. The psychology is perfectly well known to all students of the dictatorship countries.
The fear of otherness

For instance, the very fact that espionage could be charged against Jewish refugees can be used as the groundwork for an anti-Semitic campaign. Indeed this ground has already been prepared in Australia by an insidious whispering campaign against the Jews, and particularly in the big cities it may be heard quite freely....Never let us forget that it was through this very means that Hitler secured his greatest initial triumphs.” (The Longreach Leader, Letter to the Editor, Jan 18, 1941. P. 19)
New Zealand response to refugees

“Non-Jewish applicants are regarded as a more suitable type of immigrant.” (Edwin Dudley Good, Comptroller of Customs in the mid 1930s. Quoted in Beaglehole, A Small Price to Pay, 1988, p. 16)

“There is a major difficulty of absorbing these people in our cultural life without raising a feeling of antipathy to them.” Walter Nash, Minister of Customs in New Zealand’s first Labour Government which took office in 1936, shared the same view. (Ibid).
Philomena Essed:

“Power exists as long as the group stays together against the “others”... Exercising power over other people affects them, through action or inaction...whether or not those who exercise power are aware of the success or consequences of their practices and whether or not the other party is aware of the power being exercised over him or her.”

https://othersociologist.com/otherness-resources/
"I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians. They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate. Of course, I will be called racist, but if I can invite whom I want into my home, I should have a right to have a say in who comes to my country. A truly multicultural country can never be strong or united." (Australian Parliament, ACT, 1996)
Pauline Hanson in 2016

"We have to stop more people coming into Australia of Islam background. Let the Muslim countries take them." (Sunrise, Channel 7, August 2016)
Winston Peters, NZ First Leader

"I think we can do better, but we can't do that while we've got mass immigration. And if we're going to do it, let's bring the women and children and tell some of the men to go back and fight for their own country's freedom, like we are." (NZ Herald)
Dr Zian Ali, Head of the Islamic Studies Research Unit, UoA

"You are saying to them, 'go and fight for your freedom'. But in Syria at the moment there are, according to the BBC, 1000 different rebel groups - which one do you want them to fight for?" (NZ Herald, Sep 8, 2015)
In conclusion