

The Unstated

by Laurie Johnson

As the saying goes, some things are better left unsaid. The truth of this saying is in the principle that no word is ever just a word; statements, once made, will produce genuine material and interpersonal realities. Words can divide but they can also unite, they can wound but also heal. Yet it is equally true that the absence of a word, the leaving of something unsaid, can be equally harmful. The absence of the word ‘sorry’ from a certain arena of Australian political discourse in the past decade, for example, has aggravated a number of existing wounds within Australia’s political and social landscapes. While I cannot expound on other examples in more detail here, I would like to begin with the speculative claim that, in a general sense at least, Australia’s government has in the past ten years ruled by division. I do not deny that the Liberal government has been particularly successful in galvanizing its support base, creating an appearance of unity and the much trumpeted ‘mandate’ to implement a number of reforms. Yet I do suggest that the galvanizing of a specific support base is achieved by the implementation of policies and the adoption of rhetoric that are ultimately divisive, shoring up the existing support base while further alienating those who do not belong to this demographic. While this might present a risky political proposition – that a government could profit from widespread disunity – this paper will explore the potential for mitigation of such risk by the adoption of a language that functions by leaving things unsaid: this is the language of the *unstated*. The political functions of this language are exposed at a limit point, I suggest, in the deployment of a master term, ‘unAustralian’, which will be considered in terms of its capacity to foreclose on

the normative and ethical operations of language. By this I mean that it effectively removes the subject of the attribution – the person labelled ‘unAustralian’ – from the field of discourse, thereby rendering it impossible for the accused to reply and thus seemingly absolving the speaker of any sense of responsibility in a here and now of the speech act.

The word ‘unAustralian’ is of course not of very recent invention and it would be a mistake to simply credit the current government with its existence. As Philip Smith and Tim Philips (2001) have pointed out in a survey of scholarly work done on the history of the word, it has in the past enjoyed substantial currency as a ‘part of a broader set of terms used to label non-whites and communists, such as aliens, fifth columnists, foreigners or the Yellow Peril’ and was employed at the highest level of government under both Stanley Bruce and Joseph Lyons (p. 325). In a less systematic fashion, the term appears to have continued to resonate within Allied propaganda in the Second World War and in anti-communist rhetoric of the Menzies era, in which it ‘served primarily as a boundary-maintaining discursive player through which the right could allege sedition, subversion and disloyalty’, Smith and Philips surmise (p. 326). In this sense, they argue that up until the 1950s the word served a similar purpose to the use of ‘unAmerican’ under McCarthyism, yet the Australian context gave a more pronounced ‘subordinate racial or ethnic component’ to the word (p. 338). What is significant in this history is that for about three decades, the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, the word ‘unAustralian’ appears to have fallen into disuse. It has been revived in the press during the mid-1990s, and I think it must be no coincidence that this has been the period during which the Howard government came into office and has been able to maintain power despite what would seem to be a habit of committing electoral suicide with alarming frequency.¹

Smith and Philips note that in the past decade the term has not only been used with increasing frequency by politicians; it has also become the subject of inquiry in editorials, feature articles, and other sites of public speculation. In 1998, for example, Craig McGregor published an article in *The Melbourne Age* giving consideration to the use of the term in recent Australian political rhetoric. Prominent figures such as Malcolm Fraser, Pauline Hanson, Donald Horne, and Cheryl Kernot were asked for their views on the meaning and application of the term, and the majority expressed concern at the term's potential to operate 'as a cloak for racism and social exclusion' (Smith and Philips, 2001, p. 326). Smith and Philips note that among those who were interviewed, Hanson – then leader of the One Nation Party – was most comfortable with the label. Indeed, Hanson is cited by McGregor as saying that thinking about the word 'unAustralian' is interesting 'because in many ways an examination of this makes it a little easier to grasp who Australians are' (cited in Schwarz, 2004, p. 214). No surprises, then, that the republican academic Horne and the left-leaning politician Kernot should voice their suspicions about the label, and that even former Liberal Prime Minister Fraser's ambiguous right-wing liberal humanism lends itself to the expression of similar suspicions. It is only in Hanson's unashamedly xenophobic vision of 'one nation' that the potential for such labels to define the 'them' and 'us' of Australian identity sits comfortably.

In the past decade, then, there has been this revival of the label 'unAustralian' in Australian political and social discourse, accompanied by a sometimes ironic effort in the popular press to pin the label down to a clear definition. In fact, Smith and Philips present their research precisely as an attempt to fill the void in academic interest in a term that had previously gone undefined in any systematic way. They note that at the time of writing the term remained absent from *The Macquarie Dictionary* despite its

regular use by journalists, politicians and the general populace (p. 325). This situation has of course been corrected very recently, with both *The Macquarie Dictionary* and *The Australian Oxford Dictionary* having included definitions of ‘unAustralian’, the latter being given as ‘not in accordance with the characteristics, attitudes, etc. said to be typical of the Australian community’ (Moore, 2004, p. 1401). Take particular note of this definition, for it highlights something that I shall return to in a moment: the label ‘unAustralian’ refers to characteristics that are *said to be* typical. The wise heads of the lexicographers responsible for this definition recognise its highly contingent quality in being reliant on what has been said before. As I say, I shall return to this point momentarily. For now, the point I wish to make is that interest in the use of the label ‘unAustralian’ by both journalists and scholars has predominantly in the past decade involved the issue of clarifying the term’s meaning, if only in some cases to point out the very obvious fact that those who use the term indiscriminately are using a term that is effectively devoid of meaning in any official sense.

In this paper I intend not to add anything to such discussions on a definition of the term. That I am avoiding this task is not because I think it unnecessary. As Smith and Philips describe their project, based on the tools developed by Raymond Williams for investigating broad structures of meaning through specific meanings of keywords, an attempt to identify popular understandings of the term ‘unAustralian’ in the current context goes hand in hand with furthering ‘our knowledge of how symbolic processes are involved in reproducing relations of inclusion and exclusion in Australian society’ (p. 324). Yet I think that it may be equally important to leave this talk of a definition of the term to one side, if not least of all because Hanson may have been right when she said that an examination of what the term ‘unAustralian’ means also makes it easier to identify Australians. This is to say that I begin with a suspicion that

clarifying what it is that makes somebody ‘unAustralian’ merely strengthens the position of the speaker who uses the term. Is this necessarily something that should be cause for concern? In some sense, by beginning with this suspicion do I not already declare in advance that I am taking a position against those who include the term ‘unAustralian’ in their arsenal of pejoratives? The answer to this second question is, of course, yes. I shall not shrink from the responsibility of declaring my interests explicitly, but I will insist that these interests are not simply party political. I maintain – as would many of us working in the humanities, I suggest – that this party political allegiance is one part of a broader set of commitments that we make in our lives based on what we have learned from the great thinkers of the past and from the debates in which we are currently embroiled.

In this sense, I am immediately suspicious of the term ‘unAustralian’ not simply because it so obviously belongs to the rhetoric of a conservative nationalism favoured by the current federal government. As an academic with a background in philosophy and cultural theory, I am suspicious of the term in a far more general sense, because it strikes me as being so patently *unethical*. This would seem to me, at face value, to be a self-evident feature of the use of the term ‘unAustralian’ although a little reflexivity may be in order here: what is it about the use of the term ‘unAustralian’ that seems so self-evidently unethical? Perhaps it is not in fact the term alone – in and of itself – that conveys this impression. I suspect that with hindsight I might say that uses of the term seem so self-evidently unethical because of the manner in which they are presented. It would be fair to say in lieu of more detailed surveys of uses of the term ‘unAustralian’ in political discourse and elsewhere that it is invariably used as a form of denigration in the third person. In other words, it is said by one person *to* a second person or via a

channel of communication to an audience *about* a third person or group. It is, in this sense, tantamount to speaking ill of people behind their backs.

What I need to spell out in more detail, of course, is why this aspect of the uses of the term strikes me as being unethical, rather than simply mean. When I invoke the idea that we can judge a speech act in terms of whether it is ethical or unethical, I am drawing on a particular field of philosophical inquiry: Ethics. Is this perhaps in itself a risky proposition? If our goal is to shed light on discursive processes in the Australian political and social context, do we risk obscuring these things on which we shed light if we retreat into a highly specialised discourse of our own? This is not a new problem but it has certainly gained considerable valence for practitioners of Cultural Studies in Australia in the last year, as a result of a public dispute over the call for papers for the Everyday Multiculturalism conference. One of the sticking points in this dispute was a sense – expressed by journalists and academics – that the terms used by academics to promote the study of culture remained opaque to a public readership whose cultural practices were the very object of scrutiny. I suggest that this dispute reminded us that Australian academics may have long since lost the battle for access to the popular imagination: it seems that the general populace are happy to view academics with but an air of caution so long as we while away our time in the harmless confines of the academy, and our esoteric gazes remain fixed on equally obscure matters of interest; as soon as we turn our gazes to Australia and its people, caution gives way to mistrust or even disdain. One reason for this, I suggest, is that the idea of ‘Australianness’ has developed in the popular imagination alongside a current of anti-intellectualism. Thus we confront the not insubstantial issue that it is perhaps most ‘unAustralian’ of us to want to scrutinise with an intellectual eye the very idea of the unAustralian.

With this observation, we already hit upon a second characteristic of the use of the term ‘unAustralian’ that leads us to question its ethical status. Not only is it akin to smear tactics, it carries the hallmarks of heresy: whosoever shall decry the verdict of heresy is guilty of the same. It is this second characteristic, I suggest, that brings us closer to understanding why the use of the term is unethical, rather than simply mean, for example. To make this point, but with an eye to keeping the discussion as focused as possible, I shall refer only to a very specific set of concepts derived from the work of Emmanuel Levinas, one of the more influential French philosophers of the second half of the Twentieth Century. Levinas spent the last four decades of his life working on an examination of the philosophical principles for ethical conduct. Importantly, in Levinas’s ethical framework, language is the key to the establishment of any ethical relation in the first instance. Language is, in this sense, a contract into which I enter with at least one other than myself. This contract is what Levinas considers the key to every individual’s responsibility to every individual Other. Responsibility emerges as a direct corollary of the principle that the Other is my interlocutor. I *talk with*, rather than *talk to* the Other. The possibility of response, which is here called a condition of *respondence*, is thus a guarantee of the fundamental alterity of the Other and me – our difference at the most basic level of being two distinct and separate individuals – but also a demand to address myself to the Other as my interlocutor or correspondent in the manner of a here and now of the face-to-face interaction.

By likening the use of the term ‘unAustralian’ to a verdict of heresy against an individual, we can see in some degree the mismatch between this term and Levinas’s description of the ethical relation between two individuals dependant on a possibility of response. The verdict is indisputable, and the possibility of response is already closed off by virtue of the fact that response itself is seen as an admission of guilt on

the same charge. We can take this line of questioning further, however, by drawing on two more key terms in Levinas's ethical framework. For Levinas, language occupies two distinct timeframes: *saying* and the *said*. Saying is language in the time of being in use, whereas the said is language as having-been used. Yet it is important that we do not take this distinction to be simply between speaking and speech, for example, understood as a difference between a linguistic process and its material content. It is not the goal here to privilege speaking as a primary process and to consign the written or recorded word to the level of the artefact, somehow secondary and after-the-fact. In Levinas's view of language, all words are encountered after-the-fact to some extent, but language understood as the possibility of response retains a trace of its saying. The distinction here is perhaps best described, then, as that between language that can be part of an active dialogue and language that fixes meanings, attributions, identities, and states, closing off response.

This distinction is crucial to understanding how Levinas's picture of the minimal ethical relation between two interlocutors can be expanded upon to account for ethical relations within broader demographics, extending to issues of social justice or human rights, for example. As Emily Wyschogrod (2002) explains, the distinct timeframes to which Levinas refers with the concepts of saying and said are always potentially concurrent within any statement, and our responsibility extends to locating pathways to dialogue:

Yet saying must find its way into the language that is uttered and written and that identifies entities, the language of the said, in order to make thought and justice in the social order possible... Saying itself must be thematized, 'contract

into thought', show itself as the subject of a sentence. Together the correlation of saying and said manifests the subject-object structure of language. (p. 201)

That the correlation of saying and said is described here as manifesting at the level of the structure of language must call into question some of our initial assumptions about the ethical status of the term 'unAustralian' in its apparent similarities to either smear tactics or the verdict of heresy. In the first instance, the idea that the term is unethical was in fact an observation that the context in which it is invariably used automatically excludes the subject of the accusation from the field of the addressee. In the second instance, the verdict of heresy, we can now say that what we find unethical is not so much the phrase itself as it is the intentionality we ascribe to the speech act. We may point out that the phrase 'X is unAustralian' coincides more with Levinas's account of language in the time of the said, but what we are actually dissecting in this respect is the form of the proposition 'X is [attribution]' in the sense that such statements make the truth of what they declare to be true, without recourse. For Levinas, statements of this order are not, in and of themselves, unethical since it is fair to say that the whole judicial system and other vehicles for maintaining social justice are predicated on the need to hand down verdicts of this kind as a viable component of due legal process.

What we need to do, then, is focus far more closely on the word itself. From this most recent set of observations, however, it must by now be clear that it is no longer within our power to declare the word itself to be either inherently ethical or unethical. A word is rendered as such within the structure of a language that enables the ethical relation to emerge, but neither the language itself nor the words which populate it can be characterised as wholly ethical or unethical. Nevertheless, by giving more detailed attention to the word itself, I suggest we might at least more fully inform claims about

the ethical status of either the context or the intentionality behind the majority of uses of ‘unAustralian’ in the pejorative sense. To shift our focus onto the word itself, it is worth our while to reconsider the definitions recently added to dictionaries of English in the Australian context. As I noted earlier, *The Australian Oxford Dictionary* defines ‘unAustralian’ as being ‘not in accordance with the characteristics, attitudes, etc. said to be typical of the Australian community’ and I emphasised the point that this hinges on what has been said before. *The Macquarie Dictionary* definition is somewhat more convoluted, including several variations on the theme of not being in accordance with what is associated elsewhere with Australian values. In defining these values to which the term ‘unAustralian’ is opposed, the qualifier ‘such as honesty, hard work, etc.’ (Delbridge, 2001, p. 2035) is used. It is worth noting that the definitions in both the *Oxford* and *Macquarie* dictionaries rely on the use of the non-specific ‘etc.’ as central to their definitions. This failure to be specific is not a weakness in the definition so much as an exposure of the slippery quality of the term.

Furthermore, in place of the stipulation that the characteristics, attitudes, values, ‘etc.’ in question are ‘said to be typical of the Australian community,’ the *Macquarie* definition states that the notion of Australian-ness to which ‘unAustralian’ is opposed is simply ‘implied by the user’ of the latter term. To my way of thinking, this is in fact a weakness in the definition, yet I say this with some reservation for reasons that will soon become clearer. The apparent weakness of this definition is in what seems to be a reliance on circular reasoning: ‘unAustralian’ means the opposite of ‘Australian’ but what ‘Australian’ means is implied by the use of the term ‘unAustralian’ – the result is a lexicographical black hole. The stronger definition would seem to be the one that declares that whatever it is to which the term ‘unAustralian’ will be held to be directly opposed should indeed have been previously *said*. After my comments about Levinas

and the notion of a distinction between saying and the said, it may be easy to see now why I was keen to return to this part of the *Oxford* definition. I suggest that Levinas's use of the word 'said' within the terms of this distinction may be comparable to the 'said before' that I have been using in relation to this definition. What do I mean by this? The *Oxford* definition clearly does not mean that use of the term 'unAustralian' must always be accompanied by a clarifying statement from the speaker about what typically counts as Australian. The phrase 'said to be typical' refers to a prior and far more general sense of something having been said elsewhere by other people. In this sense, the definition gestures toward a fairly well established, relatively coherent and contained set of meanings to which the term can be assumed to refer.

Yet the 'etc.' on which both definitions rely rather undermines this sense of the 'said before' being at all well established. In an article by Richard White (1995), a survey of the recent history of notions of the 'typical Australian' shatters the illusion that there is anything that could be said to be coherent or well defined about the supposed attributes of a typical Australian. White begins by reminding us that Russell Ward's historicised image of a typical Australian in *The Australian Legend* was in fact a product of Ward's 1950s. White then goes on to map three 'contradictory but co-existing variations' into which Ward's dominant notion had become splintered by the 1980s (p. 8). As an 'object of critique' the idea of a typical Australian had become at best a caricature or at worst a figure of ridicule for a younger generation of literate urbanites, and as an 'object of nostalgia' the same idea was revered because of its increasing irrelevance: White identifies John Williamson's "True Blue" as perhaps the 'most evocative expression' of this lament for the loss of simpler times, embodied in a figure that 'exists out of everyday time, in the past, in a romanticised outback setting, on a Sunday morning' (p. 9). The third variation to emerge in the 1980s is more

difficult to reconcile with these two different perspectives on the same largely irrelevant figure. In the 1980s, the idea of the typical Australian became highly relevant as the basis for several major advertising campaigns, as a key factor in the way in which Bob Hawke promoted himself during his rise to power, and as part of the rhetoric associated with the rise and fall of the larrikin entrepreneurs. White's analysis of this newly relevant version of the figure of the typical Australian shows us that in order to make it relevant these uses of the figure transformed its image but also 'to a degree discredited it' (p. 12).

Armed with this assessment of the state of play in 1995, it must seem absurd to suggest that the term 'unAustralian' is defined in use as not being in accordance with the characteristics that were said in and around 1995 to be typically Australian. If the term 'unAustralian' is defined in relation to any understanding of that which is said to be typically Australian, then it must do so by skipping one or two generations of the notion of the typical Australian and refer directly instead to the figure as it presented itself in the 1950s *à la* Ward's *Australian Legend*. I would argue instead that the term is not used with reference to any specific and well established prior set of meanings of Australianness. In the past decade, as Anja Schwarz (2004) has demonstrated, the term 'unAustralian' has been marked more by its remarkable elasticity than by any adherence to a single core definition: during the Woomera detention centre protests in early 2002, the fact that several detainees sewed their lips together in protest at their treatment was called 'unAustralian' by Howard; the same word was used by Federal Workplace Relations Minister Tony Abbott to describe the activists rallying for improvements in conditions in the detention camps; and at this time Abbott also gave the same label to both supporters of a republic and those who favoured reconciliation (Schwarz, 2004, p. 211). Using even the most isolated list of examples such as these,

we can see that at any single moment in time, circa January 2002, the term could potentially extend to just about anybody. In Schwarz's analysis, there is a goal to identify a certain type of speaker and target that could be said to be more likely than any other to use or to be labelled 'unAustralian', and to this end she concludes that for the most part only those with 'a high number of desired national traits' could possess such a 'governmental belonging' to Australia as to be able to use the term, but also that a certain amount of national capital is needed in order to qualify as potentially un-Australian (p. 216).

Yet this general picture of the typical speaker and subject of the use of the term as both being able to identify as typically Australian is undermined to some extent by the initial snapshot of the range of uses of the term in circulation in January 2002. The more useful trend that we might identify here is that the term seems in all cases to be an expression of a *desire* to be identified with authority on a national level to declare cases of non-Australianness where they present in any guise. In this respect I think Schwarz accounts for Howard's own persistent use of the term more accurately: when he characterises those who contradict the position of his government as unAustralian, 'he aims to transform the governmental position into the definition of Australianness itself' (p. 260). For this reason, I may suggest that the weak *Macquarie* definition – using the phrase 'implied by the user' – in spite of its lexicographical shortcomings, might well be a more viable description of how the term *functions* if not of what it supposedly means. The Australianness implied by the user of the term 'unAustralian' is intended only to be congruent with the speaker rather than with some external *a priori* ideal. The term is rendered so versatile by virtue of the fact that it is not bound to any previously agreed definition of the term which it negates. The meaning of the term 'unAustralian' is ultimately that it has no meaning and, in so far as it conceals

this fact of its own emptiness, its function is thus nothing more than to credential the speaker *as its opposite*.

We arrive, then, at a point on which it might be worth hanging a conclusion: the term 'unAustralian' does not, strictly speaking, adhere to the normal rules of language that are seen, for example, by Levinas, to be the cornerstone of the ethical relation. It is devoid of meaning to the extent that the anchoring lexical items in the statement 'X is unAustralian' are in fact excluded from the universe of meanings it calls upon to convey its sufficiency *as a statement*. Let us be clear what I mean by this. In effect, in saying 'X is unAustralian' the speaker is really saying 'I am Australian' for all intents and purposes, and to the exclusion of *both* the person or group named as X *and* a clear and finite definition of the term for which 'unAustralian' is the negative form. This is why I have decided to refer to such a statement in the negative, as an *unstatement*. Its sufficiency as a statement ultimately only resides in what it does not, indeed must not, say. Accordingly, it cannot be said that the term exists in any sense that would prove meaningful within an ethical framework of the kind we have been considering here. It is, in a purely Levinasian sense, always *untimely*, since it belongs neither to the time of saying nor the time of the said: it is outside the time of saying because it rejects in advance any possibility of response, excluding the subject of attribution from the discursive field it creates; and it fails to even coincide with the time of the said since it presents the attribution only as the negative of an empty signifier.

If we say that the term is unethical, then, we do so only with a qualification that it is a term that simply cannot be accommodated within an ethical framework. Thus it can equally be said that by using the term the speaker is absolved of any responsibility but that this is by subterfuge rather than an act of good conscience. What I think may be capable of being demonstrated by more detailed analysis of the political rhetoric of

the past ten years is that this one unstated which lends itself to infinite reiteration may well be the master term around which an entire rhetorical empire – the language of the unstated – has been constructed. Again, I do not think that we must see such an edifice as necessarily having been systematically and consciously developed from the ground up by the conservative parties in the last years of Labor rule in the 1990s. It is sufficient to observe – as Craig McGregor did in his 1998 article – that the resurgence of a term like ‘unAustralian’ is indicative of a more widespread social fragmentation: ‘It’s a sign, perhaps, of the deepening divisions in our society that it is used, and by people from all parts of the social and political spectrum. When a nation’s social cohesion is threatened, the calls for some sort of national unity grow stronger’ (cited in Schwarz, 2004, p. 214). Deep social divisions generate a language of division. The success of the Howard government has in part been the success of a program of harnessing this language of division and attaching it to the issue of national identity rather than to a rhetoric of unity. The important point here is that the divisions imagined at the heart of the matter are many, hence the idea of an increasingly fragmented society rather than one nation simply divided in two by a single rift. The master term ‘unAustralian’ enables the speaker to contain the nation’s many smaller divisions within the terms of a single master division which is not, strictly speaking, a rift between sections of the Australian community; it is, rather, the separation of Australia from the enemy within.

Using the example with which I began this paper, we may begin to expand out from this analysis of the term ‘unAustralian’ to see how a language of the unstated is at work in specific areas of concern for the government. Penny Rossiter (2002) has described this federal government’s refusal to say ‘sorry’ to Australia’s indigenous population as an insistence on ‘the irredeemable character of the past’ (p. 92). Yet

Rossiter draws on the work of Ien Ang, Moira Gatens, Genevieve Lloyd, and others to also show that the path to reconciliation is difficult to imagine in real terms in the present, no matter how much we may declare a shared commitment to collective responsibility. The difficulties Rossiter presents are only partly associated with the government's direct attempts to thwart the many programs for reconciliation. The greater difficulties are associated with the complex differences between cultures such that even the idea of dialogue can mean different things to each of the groups trying to create dialogue. Where dialogue breaks down, a government that seeks to rule by division need not become involved to any great extent, since division already exists. Most importantly, they should not be seen to present an affirmative position. Instead of the collective statement, 'We are sorry,' or better, an individual expression of apology – 'I am sorry' – the government's position is constituted by what it will not say. How does this relate to my claims that the term 'unAustralian' functions as a master term within the language of the unstated? We see this in operation at just such moments where a government adopts the position of not saying something, that is, where a division that suits the government's agenda already exists. In lieu of saying anything, the government can fall back onto a master term of unstatement, and so it is that proponents of reconciliation are on occasion labelled as 'unAustralian' for their insistence that we recognise this past that the government deems to be irredeemable. In lieu of 'I am sorry' we find only 'X is unAustralian' (which we know now to be code for 'I am Australian and X does not belong'). The division is secured, yet the speaker comes out, if not perhaps on top, at least standing tall, to one side, at a safe distance from the point of impact of social divisions. This is of course no ethical standpoint at all, but it is a standpoint nevertheless, and one that has for the past decade proven to be highly effective in dodging electoral bullets.

Notes

1. In a public lecture of 7 December 2006, Klaus Neumann indicates that the records of speeches in federal parliament dating back two decades include some 600 uses of the term 'unAustralian' of which almost half were in speeches prior to 1996. We may account for the apparent discrepancy between Neumann's research and the work of Smith and Phillips, I think, by concluding that what the latter identify is a resurgence of the use of the term in the press by politicians and journalists, whereas the former identifies a continued use of the term within the confines of parliament for some years prior to its resurgence in the public sphere.

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