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Preserving White Hegemony

Skilled migration, 'Asians' and middle-class assimilation

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This article argues that the emphasis on asylum seekers is a distraction in the context of the overall considerations of Australia's migration policy. The article discusses the development of the 457 visa and the role of international students in developing Australia's skilled migration program and goes on to consider the relationship between the policy of multiculturalism and the practice of assimilation for non-white migrants entering Australia's middle class. To this end, the article introduces the ideas of 'model minority' and 'honorary whiteness' into discussions of the Australian situation.

For three decades asylum seekers arriving by boat have provoked anxiety in Australia out of all proportion to their numbers. This anxiety was fanned after the election of John Howard's coalition government in 1996 (McMaster, 2001). At the same time, during the time of Howard's government, Australia rapidly increased its migration program for skilled labour. Historically, since the post-Second World War migration period, there has developed a race-based class system where the middle class has remained predominantly white, indeed Anglo-Celtic. The new skilled migration program, focusing on the development and use of the 457 Visa and on skilled migrants originally coming to Australia as international students, is transforming the racial organisation of the middle class. This article brings into Australian usage ideas that have been current for some time in the United States, the notion of a model minority which has been given the status of honorary whiteness, as a way to understand the effects of continuing discrimination, and the emphasis on assimilation, which pervade employment in the skilled, middle-class workforce.

The public discussion of asylum seekers has especially focussed on those described as boat people—men, women and children crowded

onto small, often only putatively sea-worthy fishing boats struggling to make the journey from Indonesia to landfall within the Australian migration zone so that they can ask to be considered for the status of refugees. In 1992 Paul Keating's Labor government introduced mandatory detention for asylum seekers heralding an increase in the number of detention centres across Australia. The Port Hedland Immigration Reception and Processing Centre had been opened the previous year. Woomera and Curtin were both opened in 1999. Through the 1990s and early 2000s politicians and the media ramped up the anxiety of Australians over the 'threat' posed by those boatloads of asylum seekers. Yet, in 1999–2000 the total number of asylum seekers arriving by boat was only 4,174. This was less than a third of the total number of asylum seekers, 13,100, who came to Australia in 2000. To put these figures into perspective, we need to know that in 2006-07, for example, around 177,000 people were allowed to enter Australia on a permanent basis, of these, over 148,000 migrants were granted visas giving them permanent residency under the Skills and Family visa groupings and over 493,000 people were allocated temporary entry visas for a variety of purposes from three-year work visas to short-term tourist visas.

Why, then, has such concern been generated over such a comparatively small number of boat arrivals? One answer must be that they serve as a distraction. Australians have a history of anxious dislike of migration. In the post World War II era, when governments massively expanded Australia's migration program in order to develop an industrial base, the project was made palatable to Australians still recovering from the fear of a Japanese military invasion in terms of 'populate or perish.' It had been the right-wing politician, Billy Hughes, who coined the term in a speech in 1937. However, the fear of 'Asian invasion' is imbricated in the historical construction of Australia as a nation-state and is as old as federation. As Ruth Balint writes: '[t]he seed of Asian invasion anxiety was sown in the earliest moments of Australian nationhood' (2005: 33). Donald Grant, a Labor senator, typified this anxiety of a white Australia that felt itself beleaguered in this speech in 1949:

I emphasize that Australia is in a precarious position by reason of the fact that as a white people we are surrounded by Asiatics. Therefore, we must increase our population as quickly as possible. I believe that if we fail to increase our population to the maximum within the next twenty years we shall lose this country altogether ... It is our duty to welcome migrants and to educate them to the Australian way of life so that, should the necessity arise, they will be prepared to fight alongside us. We must get the best people of the world to migrate to this country.[1]

This was the kind of rhetoric also used by Labor's post-war Minister for Immigration, Arthur Calwell, to gain support from the general public and the labour movement for the renovation of the migration program.

The need at that time was for unskilled workers. To take one example, the biggest Australian engineering project was the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme. It was initiated by the *Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Power Act, 1949* and finally completed in 1974. In the words of Grahame Griffin, 'it consisted of 16 large dams, 7 power stations (two underground), 80 kilometres of aqueducts and 140 kilometres of tunnels' (2003). Griffin explains that:

During the 25 years of its construction, the scheme employed more than 100,000 men and women (the great majority were men) from 30 countries. At its peak the workforce was approximately 10,000, with the Australian-born constituting only one-third of that workforce. In a period of labour shortage in Australia, the Authority was forced to recruit much of its workforce from overseas, including those categorised as Displaced Persons, most of whom were of eastern and southern European extraction. Other workers were recruited from New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Ireland and western and northern Europe, including France, Germany, and Norway. The scheme therefore became a focal point within the broader vision of Australia's post-war immigration policy — a vision encouraged by the slogan of 'populate or perish.'

Paul Robertson and Keith Trace write that: '[i]n terms of value-added, the post-war expansion of manufacturing was led by the motor vehicle, chemical, electrical, and metal products industries' (1983: 110). In the four years between October 1945 and Labor's election loss at the end of 1949, Calwell was able to come close to achieving his plan which was for a net annual population increase of 1 per cent of the population, or around 70,000 migrants each year. Calwell, and later Ministers of Immigration, succeeded by extending the definition of 'white' to include southern Europeans, Maltese, Christian Lebanese and people from eastern Europe. Today, the invasion rhetoric that legitimated the population increase remains in the idea of boat people as a threat, and the understanding of them as being 'Asian.'

My interest in this article, though, is not with boat people or even with asylum seekers more generally. Rather, I am interested in those that the public preoccupation with boat people makes invisible, the skilled migrants. Since the 1970s the increasing ease of communication and transport has enabled companies to move manufacturing out of Western countries to developing countries where labour costs are lower. John Quiggin (n.d.) has discussed this in the context of technological development. He writes that: '[t]he gradual decline in the proportion of jobs available to unskilled workers in most industries is evidence that the general tendency of technological change has been biased against unskilled labour.' This development has entailed a fundamental shift in Australia's migration preferences. Quiggin (ibid) remarks that, 'the bias of technological change towards skilled workers has been balanced by an increase in the average education and skill levels of the workforce.' To a significant extent this new balance has been achieved by making entry to Australia easier for those people with skills. In 2006-2007, 133,000 people were granted entry to Australia in the Skilled Migration program.

457 Visas

Two changes in particular will concern me in this article. The first is the advent of the 457 visa. Initiated under Keating's government, the 457 visa was introduced by John Howard's coalition government in 1996. One of its key features is that, unlike migrant-driven visas, it is employer-driven. Employers in need of skilled workers find the people they need in other countries and apply for them to be given 457 visas to work for the employer in Australia. In this sense, the visa typifies the neoliberal understanding of the primacy of the market. Workers can be granted a visa for up to four years. However, the visa is renewable and if the worker can find another employer while onshore then that employer can apply for a 457 visa to re-employ the person. In this way a skilled worker can stay in Australia on a 457 visa until such time as no employer asks for their services. At a time when there is global competition for skilled workers, making employers responsible for finding and attracting them to Australia ensures a match between supply and demand. However, without appropriate regulation 457 visas place Australian skilled workers within a global market and drives down Australian wages.

457 visas gained popularity rapidly. In 1996-7, the first year they were available, 8,463 were issued. By 2001-02 that number had increased to 15,646 (these figures come from Khoo et al, 2003: 29). By 2005-06, in a jump of over 40 per cent from the previous year, this figure rose to around 40,000 (Kinnaird, 2006: 49). These figures are for first entry, that is, they do not include applications for further 457 visas for people already in Australia on 457 visas. It is also possible for people already in Australia on other forms of temporary visa to acquire a 457 visa. These combined with the reissuing of 457 issues to previous holders, raised the total number of 457 visas issued in 2003-04 to 40,124 (Khoo et al, 2007: 178). It should be clear from these figures that, with the government's encouragement, 457 visas have become an increasingly important component in Australia's skilled migration program. Indeed, writing in 2006, Bob Kinnaird remarked that: '[i]n 2006-07, for the first time in Australia's migration history, there will probably be more temporary skilled 457 visas granted than skilled permanent visas' (2006: 49). It is significant that, as of 2006, as Kinnaird notes: '[t]here is no cap on the number of 457 visas issued each year,' unlike the General Skilled Migration (GSM) program. Indeed, as Kinnaird asserts: 'The 457 visa rules involved a radical deregulation of Australia's temporary entry regime.'

It is possible that the Australian government is deliberately favouring the 457 visa class over the GSM program which offers permanent residency. The context here is, again, the neoliberal idea of the primacy of the market. One increasingly favoured economic practice in large firms is to attempt to decrease the numbers of staff on long-term contracts. That way, the argument goes, the firm becomes more flexible and cheaper to run. Staff can be laid off when demand decreases and staff can be employed in specific areas as the need

arises. Outsourcing is a different practice with a similar effect. In both cases the firm is also able to reduce its entitlement obligations to its staff. With the 457 visas, the country functions in much the same way as the firm I have just described. The 457 visa holder is the responsibility of the firm that employs them. Australia offers little in the way of the kind of entitlements that citizens or permanent residents have. For example, Medicare is only available to those from countries with a reciprocal arrangement, most 457 visa holders are required to take out private health insurance; in New South Wales fees are charged for children in state schools; no entitlements to social security and welfare benefits. Crucially, when the visa expires the holder has 28 days to be re-sponsored, and therefore get another 457 visa, or leave the country. Thus, while 457 visa holders may stay in Australia for many years because they can be given more than one 457 visa, they have few entitlements or citizenship rights.

There is, though, it should be added, a pathway from the 457 visa to permanent residency. This requires applying under the criteria of the Skilled Migration program. The point, however, is that from the perspective of the marketized state the 457 visa holder is the ideal worker. They enter with guaranteed employment and contribute in this way to the economic wellbeing of the state. They are the economic responsibility of the employer. The employee costs the state only a minimal amount and, when the employee becomes unemployed, they are forced to leave the country. There is here no sense of a state's moral responsibility to those it has accepted within its borders. There is only a market-based relationship.

The Commodification of Higher Education

The second change that I want to address is the marketization of higher education as a pathway to permanent residency for skilled overseas students. This development has taken place in two stages. The first involved the rapid inclusion of the Australian universities in the market economy. This began under Bob Hawke's Labor government with its most obvious sign being the introduction of student fees in the form of the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (H.E.C.S.) in 1989. As a part of its more general marketized revisioning of higher education, the Howard government restructured H.E.C.S., increasing fees by an average of 40 per cent and creating a three tier system of cost depending on the perceived value of the course. However, what is more important for the argument I am making here is the massive decrease in the public funding of universities enacted by the federal government:

The 1996 budget immediately cut direct public funding of universities: between 1996 and 1999, public-sourced funds per student dropped by a massive 20.1 percent. The government also implemented a 12 percent staff reduction at the federal education department. (Berman et al, 2007: 262)

This decrease in funding initiated a rapid turn to recruiting fee-paying international students as a way of making up the short-fall in public funding. Simon Marginson (2007) tells us that:

In 1985 30,000 international visitors arrived in Australia for education ... Twenty years later in 2005 there were 375,000 educational visitors ... The number of foreign students in the world multiplied by three but in Australia it multiplied by 12. In 2005 there were 164,000 international students onshore in higher education.

Marginson (2007) notes that: '[i]n 2005 the [education] industry generated \$11.3 billion in fees and other spending by [international] students, with more than \$4 billion in fees, two thirds in higher education.' International students provided 15 per cent of university funding overall in 2005 (ibid). More than this, education has become Australia's third largest export earner behind only the primary industries of coal and iron ore. In 2007-08 it was worth \$13.7 billion to the Australian economy through 'tuition fees, goods and services related to living in Australia and tourism associated with visits from relatives' ('The Value of International Education to Australia', n.d.). An Access Economics report gives even higher figures suggesting that the general contribution of international students to the Australian economy is \$14.1 billion and that these students create a further \$12.6 billion in value-added goods, services and jobs.[2]

The second step has been the transformation of higher education into a means towards permanent residency for many of this increased number of fee-paying onshore international students. As Marginson (2007) remarks: '[m]ore than a third [of 2005's 164,000 international students] could be expected to later obtain permanent residence.' This has been achieved through changes in the points system used to judge an applicant's eligibility for a visa granting permanent residency in the General Skilled Migration program. In July 2001 new onshore points-tested visa subclasses were introduced to enable international students studying in Australia to apply for a Skilled Migration program visa without leaving the country. A document put out by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs ('Skill Migration', 2003) explains how the points system works:

The points-test recognises a range of skill-related factors. The number of points prescribed for each factor reflects the relative importance of an applicant's potential contribution to Australia. The skill, age, English language and work experience components earn the highest number of points. Other recognised factors include Australian qualifications, spouse skills, Migration Occupation in Demand list (MODL) occupation, work experience obtained in Australia and fluency in a community language other than English.

The same document notes that in 2002-03 'more than 50 per cent of successful General Skilled Migration (points tested) applicants claimed points for an Australian qualification.' From the point of view of higher education the key requirement is a qualification which needs

the equivalent of two years study in Australia, completed in not less than eighteen months.

It is worth considering this eighteen months minimum for a moment. It means that, setting aside the higher-education skill-acquisition process, the applicant for permanent residency will already have eighteen months of cultural and linguistic acculturation into Australian society. This is of particular pertinence because, as Geoffrey Brahm Levey (2008: 18) puts it, there was a 'retreat from multiculturalism' in Australia during the eleven years of the Howard government. In January 2007, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs had Citizenship substituted for Multicultural Affairs. More significantly, as Levey (2008: 19) notes, 'federal reforms include a new citizenship test that emphasizes the English language proficiency and knowledge of Australian values and way of life.' Levey (2008: 19) writes that:

[a]ccording to the government's announcement, the concern seems to be that talk of "multiculturalism" has sent the wrong signals to individuals and groups, that it has encouraged "separatism" and the idea that "anything goes." The hope is that the language of "citizenship" and "integration" and a renewed emphasis on "core Australian values" will arrest those perceived trends.

Within this context it is not surprising to find that the vast majority of international students come from non-English speaking, and indeed non-Western, countries. In 2007 the largest group came from China, 107,071 (a growth of 18.9 per cent on 2006), followed by India, 63,604 (a growth of 63.9 per cent on 2006), Republic of Korea, 34,674 (a growth of 11.3 per cent on 2006), Thailand, 19,987 (a growth of 11.9 per cent on 2006), Malaysia, 19,874 (a growth of 4 per cent on 2006), Hong Kong, 19,742, Japan, 16,077, Indonesia, 14,919 and Brazil, 12,545. After Brazil comes the United States which contributed 11,822 international students.[3] This totals to a figure considerably higher than the 2005 one used by Marginson and quoted earlier. Kieran James and Setsuo Otsuka (n.d.), writing about the racism faced by international students who gain Australian degrees in accountancy, note that their interviewees report being asked if they had gone to high school in Australia. James and Otsuka write that:

[i]t appears that employers in Australia are especially reluctant to hire graduates who did not complete their high school, or a substantial part of it, in Australia. The reason appears to lie in the Marxist view of schools in capitalist countries being accepted socialisation agents to both train workers in the narrow technical skills required for their future occupation, and in the social behaviours expected in the workplace.

It seems that employers are less sanguine about international students' ability to assimilate Australian values than the government. I will address the way that Australians think of cultural difference in terms of race, and racism, later in this article.

This shift to a market-based understanding of higher education has contributed to a perception that no longer sees it as a right, an entitlement, a good that helps raise the quality of life of all members of the state but, rather, constructs it from the state's perspective as an institution through which the state can manage the population. In this instance, by increasing the points in the MODL depending on what skills and professions the state considers are required in Australia, higher education becomes a channel of entry into the Australian state at a time when there is global competition for skilled and professional labour. The state border which is so clearly demarcated and which is patrolled with such rigour and military force to stop a few thousand asylum-seeking boat people entering Australia becomes permeable and almost invisible for international students, especially if they are studying for qualifications in areas in which Australia has needs.

International Students and Permanent Residency

In such a circumstance it is no surprise that many international students view Australian higher education as pragmatically as the state. A Chinese international student in Australia, Feifei Guo (n.d.), comments in her blog that 'many [Chinese students] see overseas study as an immigration ticket.' Guo quotes Danny Wong, a study-abroad advisor with the Study Abroad Service Centre of Beijing Language and Cultural University:

Australia is one of the most popular destinations for Chinese students. Not only because the good quality of higher education attracts Chinese students, but also the immigration policies.

Almost every student who wants to study in Australia comes to my office with their parents to ask questions about the relationship between their study choices and the immigration policy.

In a study conducted in early 2006, Molly Yang (2007: 6) asked 200 Chinese why they were considering studying outside China, and where. Thirty-seven per cent were considering Australia compared with 24 per cent looking to the United States and Canada, and 17 per cent the United Kingdom. Of the students who wanted to study in Australia: '[t]he analysis revealed that over 49% of those students were influenced most by Australia's high quality of education and future migration opportunities after graduation' (Yang, 2007: 6). In the global competition, skilled labour predominately moves from developing countries to developed, Western countries which, provided one is able to access it, have a more elaborated social infrastructure (Gera, Laryea, & Songsakul, 2005). Guo quotes a Chinese student in Australia:

[y]ou can't deny that Australia has a much better living environment than China. Compared with Australia, the population of China is huge. Also Australia has a better social welfare system. Once you get permanent residency, life will become easier. (n.d.)

The final sentence here signals the increase in social security, welfare and other entitlements available to those with permanent residency visas as compared with the entitlements available to international students. For example, international students are allowed to work only twenty hours a week during the period of their course and are not entitled to Medicare.

It is clear that Australia's greater success in attracting international students, assuming that the United States and Britain are also thought to have high-quality higher education, lies in the ease with which international students who have studied in Australia can gain permanent residency. From a marketized, cost-benefit point of view, the extraordinary thing about the streamlined Australian system is that, while it makes Australia attractive to large numbers of potential international students, it provides the Australian state with skilled professionals in areas of need at no cost to the state. Indeed, because the students fund their own education, they also help, as we have seen, support the Australian university system and make a very significant contribution to the broader Australian economy. It does need to be added, however, that such a use implies a fundamental transformation in the meaning and practice of higher education.

However, one very significant consequence of this use of higher education as a permeable border, a site of entry into the Australian state, is the increasing tendency of international students to take courses purely for the opportunity they offer for gaining permanent residence. As Bob Birrell et al (2006: 30) write:

[w]hen the reforms advantaging overseas students trained in Australia were introduced in mid-1999 and mid-2001, it was not anticipated how enthusiastically overseas students and Australia's universities would respond to the new migration rules. In the case of the overseas students, a majority have since enrolled in courses which are believed to provide a relatively assured permanent resident outcome.

There is no guarantee that an international student who gains an Australian degree in, say, accounting, which scores high points on the MODL, will want to go on to practice accountancy once they have acquired permanent residency. Rather differently, there is also no guarantee, as we shall see, that someone who has arrived as an international student, and gained a degree in accountancy, will be able to find a position with an accountancy firm in Australia.

The permeability of the Australian border for skilled workers is, in large part, made possible by the focus placed on boat people. This preoccupation with the exclusion of this small group has the advantage for the state of minimising public awareness and possible public concern over the general migration program.[4] As compared to the hundreds, or low thousands, of boat people who are picked up each year attempting to reach Australia, in 2006-07 the total intake under the Migration Program was 158,630. Of these, 108,540 were

accepted through what is called the Skills Stream. While 457 visa recipients are not included in the Skills Stream, they are included in the total migration figure. Those international students who completed their courses and successfully applied for permanent residency are included in both figures.

It is important to note here that permanent residency is not the same thing as Australian citizenship—a term I am using here in the technical sense in relation to the legal category of Australian citizen. Crucially, for its conceptual importance as a signification of membership of the Australian nation-state, as well as for its practical implications, a permanent resident is unable to vote in Australian political elections. There is one exception to this rule, those people who held British subject status and permanent residency in Australia before January 26, 1984, when the law was changed to exclude such people from the franchise. Also a permanent residency visa can be revoked by the Minister for Immigration under certain circumstances such as the holder's conviction for serious crimes. Citizenship, however, under the *Australian Citizenship Act 2007*, can only be revoked for crimes committed before citizenship was granted or for the provision of misleading information that enabled the granting of citizenship. Thus, citizenship has both a political and legal difference from permanent residency. While the two statuses are usually grouped together in Australian residency statistics, permanent residents exist outside of the political system and their presence in Australia as with other visa holders, is subject to the Executive, in the person of the Minister, rather than to the legal system—though, as we shall see later in the case of Dr Mohamed Haneef, who did not have permanent residency, the Executive's decision remains, to some extent, subject to judicial review.[5]

Boat People and Unskilled Workers

For Australians, boat people have come to represent the lumpen, unskilled racial Other attempting to breach Australia's border. Discussing the way the Howard government handled the attempt by the *MV Tampa* to unload the asylum seekers at Christmas Island that it had picked up from their sinking boat in 2001, Suvendrini Perera (2002: 18) describes how:

[t]he Australian government's attempts to draw a line in the sea against the incursions of international law ... are also being played out in a recognisably colonial and highly racialised register. The phobias and hatreds that emerged in Australian public life in the spring of 2001 open the door to a much older storehouse of images, narratives and representations.

Elsewhere, writing about Howard's government's decision to send troops to the Solomon Islands to provide support for that country's government, Perera (2006: 128) comments that: '[t]he Prime Minister's language firmly positions Australia within the lineage of imperial whiteness.' In 'Borderline Anxieties' I argued that, 'from the

start, the borders of the Australian state, initiated at Federation, served a double purpose: to define that state, and the white, modern nation within it; and to function as part of a larger wall keeping out unwanted 'coloured' peoples, the colonised of Asia and of Africa and the American/Caribbean from Europe and its colonial outposts' (Stratton, 2004: 235). In an article on Australia's racialised reaction to boat people, Sonia Magdalena Tascón (2002) writes that, 'our borders have become more rigid rather than more elastic in relation to them.' This happened at the same time, in the 1990s and early 2000s, that the new visa regulations that I have been discussing, the advent of the 457 Visa and the changed conditions for international students to apply for permanent residency, were being put in place.

As I have already indicated, the boat people have not only been racialised they have also been classed—that is, they have been constructed as unskilled and by implication either lumpen or, at best, lower working class. To give one example, the Democrats senator, Andrew Bartlett, in an article in 2007 sympathetic to the plight of incarcerated boat people, wrote that:

[m]any hundreds of refugees—most of them from Afghanistan and Iraq—were sent to Nauru by Australia in 2001, and after tens of millions of dollars spent by the Australian government over four or five years trying to create the false impression these people were undesirables who should be kept out they were acknowledged to be refugees and brought back to Australia. Many of them immediately started working in jobs such as in the meatworks and agricultural industries, in states all over Australia—the same jobs I keep being told we can't find enough workers for. Every year Australia allows in more than 100,000 people on Working Holiday visas, which our government promotes as a way to fill labour market gaps in seasonal and unskilled work.

It was Bartlett's idea that asylum seekers could make a worthwhile contribution to the community they wished to join by being allowed to take up these unskilled jobs. The reclassified asylum seekers that Bartlett refers to were people granted Temporary Protection Visas, a new category of visa with limited rights and entitlements, including a review of the person's status as a refugee after three years, created by the Howard government in 1999 for asylum seekers who had been given refugee status. As it happens, many asylum seekers are highly skilled. On a 'Facts and Stats' page discussing both asylum seekers and refugees—the former are simply people not yet officially classified as the latter—the Refugee Council of Australia explain that:

[i]t is a myth that all refugees are illiterate peasants. The majority that come to Australia are educated middle class people—whose education, profession or political opinions have drawn them to the attention of the authorities and resulted in their persecution. ('Australia's Refugee Program: Facts and Stats', n.d.)

Nevertheless, it is indeed a persuasive myth that asylum seekers are unskilled. The myth functions as part of a structural transformation of

the modern binary distinction between civilised and primitive, white and coloured. In this case the opposing term to unskilled is, of course, skilled. The kinds of jobs identified by Bartlett are ones which, as he implies, those in Australia, Australian citizens or permanent residents, when they have a choice, prefer not to take. These are the jobs that, in the United States and many European countries, are now done by illegal migrants or guest workers—that is, people who, in one way or another, do not have a status as members of the state. These people are raced as non-white.

As mentioned earlier, migrants entering Australia, after the Second World War were channelled into unskilled and low-skilled, working-class jobs. At that time Australia broadened its definition of who was white with the result that large numbers of the migrants who would previously have been excluded as non-whites were now accepted. As I have argued elsewhere, this produced a long-standing, racialised class structure in Australia where ethnicity became a category used to describe those identified as white but still discriminated against because they were not fully white, not as white as the people who could trace their heritage to Britain or northern Europe, and possibly Ireland (Stratton, 2009). When multiculturalism was introduced in the late 1970s as a population management policy, it mapped onto the established racialised class structure. Thus, middle-class hegemony in Australia remained, essentially, Anglo-Celtic, northern European and, above all, white. The racialised boat people on the other side of the border function to unify the still predominantly working-class and marginalised not-fully-white ethnics with the Anglo-Australian white middle class.

Skilled Workers and Australian Values

The boat people also distract from the changes that are taking place in the composition of the middle class. In 2007-08, 28,029 migrants arrived in Australia from the United Kingdom. This represented 17.7 per cent of the total migration program. Britain remains the largest source of migrants, and we can assume that the vast majority of these are white. This percentage of the total migration program is in decline from a peak in 2005-06 of 22.5 per cent. This, though, is not a steady decrease in percentage. In the late 1990s, the percentage of migrants drawn from Britain had declined to less than fifteen per cent. The percentage increases again after 2001-02, that is, at the time of the introduction of the 457 visa. Looked at from the other way round, in March 2006 there were 12,186 people from the United Kingdom in Australia on 457 visas. This represents 26.6 per cent of all holders of these visas. The next highest percentage of holders comes from India representing only 7.4 per cent or 3,393 people (Kinnaird, 2006: 55). Now, 457 visa holders already have skills, professional qualifications, so it is not that surprising that these people should be drawn predominately from developed countries where there are many people with the relevant training and qualifications. At the same time, the 457 visa is, as we have seen, employer-driven, so it seems that, given the

choice, which there were, Australian employers still prefer to employ Britons over any other national group. The effect of this, as I have just shown, is to increase the Anglo, white component of the Australian middle class.

This is particularly important because Australians have come to think of race in terms of culture. In *Race Daze* I discussed this development in relation to the right-wing populist politician, Pauline Hanson:

Hanson typifies the new kind of racist, really espousing a kind of *culturalism*, in which particular cultures are considered to be incompatible with, in this case, what is claimed to be Australian national culture and this claimed fundamental cultural difference is visibly marked by race. In this thinking, culture is not reduced to race, race works as a signifier of it and, as a consequence, as Hanson insists, small numbers of racially different people can be allowed into the country provided that they actively acculturate to Australian culture. (Stratton, 1998: 13-4, original emphasis)

Cultural difference has come to signify racial difference. Since it is assumed that cultural norms are founded in religion—for example, the claim that Australian culture is a consequence of the country's Judeo-Christian heritage—then religious difference signifies cultural difference which, in turn, signifies racial difference. It is this logic which founds the mis-identification of Muslims as a race and, with the claim that the majority of boat people are Muslim, suggests that they have different values from Australians. Tascón (2002) gives recent examples of this culturalist way of thinking:

culture continues to be invoked today, to mark the irreconcilable differences between 'us' and 'them.' In an interview on ABC's Four Corners (13 September 2001), the Minister for Immigration related the self-harm of the detainees in Port Hedland Detention Centre to their 'culture': "the sorts of things people from those parts of the world are used to doing." ... During the 'children overboard affair' in 2001 when asylum seeker children were supposedly thrown into the ocean from their boat by their parents, Mr Howard as Prime Minister and Mr Ruddock as Minister for Immigration, spouted their horror at 'the sorts of things these people were capable of doing.'

Tascón's examples show how asylum-seeking boat people have been constructed as having fundamentally different, and morally wrong, cultural values when compared to Australian, for which we need to read white, values. British migrants, however, are thought to reinforce the long-standing British grounding of Australia's hegemonic culture, and its founding values, whilst simultaneously reinforcing Australia's whiteness.

Supplementing the 26.6 per cent of British 457 visa holders is a further 22.3 per cent drawn from countries Australians have traditionally thought of as white, including three British settler colonies: the United States, Canada and South Africa. The United States contributed five per cent as did South Africa (given the racial structure

of South Africa we can presume these skilled visa holders to be white), Ireland contributed 4.1 per cent and Germany 3.4 per cent. Canada contributed 2.8 per cent. White countries with close ties to Euro-American modernity, and especially to Britain, therefore, made up 49.9 per cent of the total 457 visa holders in 2006. These people helped to reinforce the whiteness, and by implication the traditional values, those, for example, held by Ruddock and Howard, of the Australian middle class.

I have already noted that India contributed the second highest number of 457 visa holders with a comparatively small 7.4 per cent. One possible reason for India's relatively high contribution may be its history of British colonisation which has had the consequence that many of the middle class speak English as a first or second language. India was followed by China with five per cent, Japan with 4.9 per cent and the Philippines with 4.1 per cent. Malaysia, another country colonised by the British and where English continues to be generally spoken, came in last out of the top twelve countries contributing 1.8 per cent or 810 people. We should note that there is no Middle Eastern, or for that matter no Latin American, country in this 12 and, bearing in mind white Australian anxieties over Muslims, Malaysia is the only country of the twelve where Islam is the dominant religion.

Where all the 'white' countries are thought to share to a large extent a similar set of fundamental values, and indeed Christianity in various forms as a dominant religion, the non-Western, non-white countries are all considered to have quite diverse cultures with little in common. They cannot, therefore, be considered as a more or less unitary block like the white grouping except in white Australian terms as the 'Asian' racial/cultural Other. We can see then, that the introduction of the 457 Visa has had the possibly unexpected consequence of reinforcing the white Australian middle class, and its hegemonic Anglo-Celtic Australian culture, at the same time that the Howard government moved Australia away from multiculturalism and towards a renewed emphasis on 'Australian values' and the Australian way of life—which, in reality, meant white, Anglo-Celtic Australian culture. Indeed, since October 2007, all applicants for a 457 visa, like all applicants for visas granting permanent residency, and applicants for some temporary visas, have had to sign an Australian Values Statement.[6] In the words of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's webpage: '[t]he statement requires applicants to confirm that they will respect the Australian way of life and obey the laws of Australia before being granted a visa' ('Living in Australia: Australian Values', n.d.). At the same time as this reinforcement of white hegemony, and this is a point to which I shall return shortly, we need to remember that just over 21.2 per cent of 457 visas out of the top twelve countries were granted to people from a wide variety of Asian cultural backgrounds.[7]

After Britain, the two source countries that contributed the most migrants in 2007-08 were India with 14 per cent or 22,146 people and

China with 13 per cent or 20,729 people. In 2006-07 China contributed slightly more than India. Between them Britain, India and China contribute just under 50 per cent of Australia's migrants, a total of 70,904 annually with, in 2007-08, South Africa considerably further back on 7,178 and the Philippines on 6,721. These figures are gross, that is, they do not take into account those people from those countries who leave, mostly to return to their country of origin. When these are included, the net overseas migration figures for 2006-07 show China as the biggest contributor on 23,000 followed by Britain with 22,840 and India with 17,410.[8] In broad terms, since around 1990, that is around the time that anxiety was beginning to be ramped up about the boat people asylum seekers with mandatory detention being introduced in 1992, there has been a significant increase in migration from China and India with each country's contribution beginning to match or surpass migration from Britain. Indeed as the Department of Immigration and Citizenship's *Report on Migration Program 2007-08* puts it:

[i]n terms of regions the Indian sub-continent [which includes Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal] now provides 19.9 per cent of the Migration Program (an increase from 18.6 per cent in 2006-07). North Asia [which includes China, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, Vietnam and Taiwan] provided 21.14 per cent of the 2007-08 Migration Program.

To put it differently, and using the conventional Australian understanding of 'Asian,' which would include both these figures, Asian migration for 2007-08 would be thought of as just over 41 per cent of the total.

We need to relate this figure to the directedness of post-1980s migration towards skills. While, as we have seen, the 457 Visa has had the effect of proportionally increasing British migration, much of the Asian migration that I have just identified comes from international students seeking permanent residency after qualifying. I have already mentioned Marginson's informed estimate that over a third of international students subsequently apply for permanent residency. On Marginson's 2005 figure of 164,000, which is considerably lower than the numbers I have quoted for 2007, this suggests a minimum of around 55,000 international students, some with spouses and children, achieving permanent residency. We can see that this would form the majority of the migration intake from China and India. In other words, the bulk of the Asian-identified migration intake since the 1990s, and especially since the changes allowing international students to apply for permanent residency onshore, has been skilled, trained in Australia and already residing in Australia for a minimum of eighteen months before applying for permanent residency.

We now need to remember the structural organisation of Australian society that I outlined earlier. The not-fully-white Australians and their descendants who arrived as unskilled workers after the Second World War remain, in large numbers, in the working class. Middle-class

Australia, the Australia of skills, professional qualifications and salaried positions in business and politics, remains preponderantly the province of the Anglo-Celtics, the so-called mainstream Australia which is the source for 'Australian values' and the hegemonic Australian culture. What, then happens to these Asian-identified migrants as they find themselves in this white Australian middle class? The first thing to remember here is how Australian multiculturalism works—that is, with a core and periphery structure (see, for example, Stratton, 1998: 34-40). The core is the Anglo-Celtic culture, which is primarily middle class with a large working-class component. The periphery is composed of those described in terms of ethnic and racial difference but thought of in terms of cultural diversity. This multicultural periphery is, generally speaking, working class. It is, at the least, suggestive that the Howard government's retreat from multiculturalism, which, after all, had been put in place in response to the lack of assimilation by those not-fully-white Greeks, Lebanese, Maltese, southern Italians and other groups of unskilled, or at least classified as unskilled, post World War II migrants, should come as significant numbers of skilled, Asian-identified migrants are positioned within the hegemonic Anglo-Australian middle class.

Honorary Whiteness and Model Minority Status

In multiculturalism, the celebration of ethnic differences has also been a way of establishing distance from middle-class, white, Anglo-Celtic Australia. The problem for this group now is, in the first instance, how to incorporate this new Asian-identified flow of people in such a way as to preserve their invisibility. Elsewhere, in a discussion of Jews, I have written about invisibility as a tactic of the oppressed group (Stratton, 2000: 101, original emphasis):

[t]his is as a subaltern tactic to escape the threat posed to you by the dominant population. Again, I want to emphasise that this way of thinking is not unique to the Ashkenazi Jews, it has been a characteristic of many migrants, and minority groups, in circumstances where they have not been accepted for what they are, but attacked for their difference. It is, to coin a phrase, the attempt to become *invisible* to the host population.

This also applies to minority groups in Australian middle-class, hegemonic whiteness. However, here, because of the pervasive racial organisation of Australian society, there is, in addition, a need on the part of the white middle class to make the new Asian-Australians invisible through a process of assimilation, couched in terms of the acceptance of Australian values and the provisional attribution of honorary whiteness. The fear would be that, were these people to be visible, there would be a generalised racist backlash aimed, in particular, at Asian-identified migrants.

Aihwa Ong (2006: 127) has written about the Chinese-background middle class in California:

[e]thnic Chinese command of the transnationalized electronics industry has placed them at the top of the ethnic hierarchy in California as ideal border-crossing and enterprising citizens vital to American business. The new status of the cyberhero (think of Jerry Yang of Yahoo) has recoded ethnic Chinese, endowing them with an honorary whiteness that represents a new form of exclusion, in the way that the model minority citizen initially excluded non-Asian Americans.

From its earliest usage, probably by the Hungarian-born, British resident, Jewish humourist and travel writer George Mikes in his account of Jamaica published in 1967, *Not by Sun Alone*, honorary whiteness has been a term that is increasingly used, especially in the United States, to describe groups who, in particular, usually national, contexts are allowed the status of whiteness while there is continuing recognition that the members of the group are not white. In the quotation above, Ong emphasises the exclusionary aspect of the granting of honorary whiteness. In the context of the new presence of significant numbers of people identified as Asian in the Australian middle class I want to start by emphasising the term's inclusive aspect. Given the anxiety about 'Asians' that permeates the Australian national imaginary, those identified as 'Asian' in the Australian middle class are already excluded. However, they are given a conditional acceptance into the middle class, a granting of honorary whiteness provided they accept 'Australian values' and the Australian way of life. Thinking of this in terms of honorary whiteness is a way of acknowledging their difference while preserving the integrity of white, Anglo-Australian hegemony.

At this point we need to note that there are differences in the ways that middle-class Asian-Australians are perceived by the white middle class, that those Asians who have arrived through the international student channel tend to be less accepted than those who have been born in Australia—and whose marker of Australianness is often an Australian accent and a first-language grasp of Australian English. The latter are able to make themselves more invisible. A female colleague, who has a Chinese background, emailed me to say that honorary whiteness 'reminds me of one of my high school friends telling me he didn't particularly like Asians but didn't think of me as Asian. I wasn't sure whether to be flattered to be called an honorary white or to be offended.' This anecdote exemplifies a particular form of racism where the known person is distinguished from the general group against which the individual is prejudiced. It is often used by members of the dominant group to grant honorary membership. In England in the 1960s my father would distinguish the 'good' West Indian he employed as against West Indians as a group against whom he was racially prejudiced. While the high-school friend in the narrative above fits this category, the context of Australian multiculturalism adds a further inflection. It is highly likely that the 'Asians' that this individual 'didn't particularly like' were those who celebrated their ethnicity according to the organisation of Australian multiculturalism; that is, my colleague was acceptable not only

because she was known but also because she appeared to be assimilated into (middle-class) Australian values.

Nevertheless, middle-class Asian-Australians remain identified and fundamentally excluded, as the term honorary whiteness signifies—and as my colleague implies by her ambivalence after being granted it by a white arbiter. The tenuousness of their inclusive acceptance as honorary whites is apparent in what happens to those who do not appear to accept Anglo-Australian, middle-class values. One high-flying, and as it happens non-Asian, example is the American, Sol Trujillo. Trujillo was appointed Chief Executive Officer of Telstra in 2005. In 2009 he stood down and returned to the United States where he complained about Australian racism in an interview with the BBC (see Lane, 2009). In Australia, Trujillo's brashness and bluntness alienated him, as did the large remuneration he was given. He was perceived not to have Australian values. Trujillo is the son of Mexican migrants and, as the Australian dislike of him increased, so his background became increasingly highlighted—not that he was American but that he was Hispanic. This included, for example, cartoons of Trujillo in a sombrero, waving guns around, in the image of a stereotypical Mexican bandit. Nevertheless, the Australian media reacted strongly to Trujillo's claim of racism. Discussing the case, in an article titled 'Sol Was Right: We Are Racist,' Ezequiel Trumper (2009), at *newmatilda.com*, has argued that:

[r]acial stereotypes in the media abound not just in the domain of tabloid journalism but also in those parts of our media with pretensions to quality. Australian financial commentators, supposedly well educated people, had no qualms about using a wide range of Spanish words to refer to Trujillo and his executives disparagingly. Trujillo's complaints over the way he was portrayed by the media in Australia were not new. He had said the same thing about his Australian experience to the *Financial Times* in the middle of his tenure.

When told on camera that Trujillo had left the country, the prime minister, Kevin Rudd, waved and, with a smile, said, 'Adios.' The Australian middle-class rejection of this not-fully-white overseas appointment (he would have been on a 457 visa) was expressed in the withdrawal of his honorary whiteness and the corresponding emphasis on his racial/cultural difference.

Dr Mohamed Haneef provides another, this time 'Asian,' example. Haneef trained as a doctor in Bangalore. After working in Britain he obtained a 457 Visa and started work at the Gold Coast Hospital in 2006. On 2 July, 2007, Haneef was arrested at Brisbane Airport on the way to India to see his new baby daughter who had neo-natal jaundice. Haneef was accused of being a terrorist and helping his cousins who attacked Glasgow Airport by giving them a SIM card before he left Britain for Australia. It was subsequently ascertained that Haneef's SIM card was not used in the bombing, as had been thought. However, without any proof, Haneef was treated as a

terrorist. On 16 July, Haneef was freed on bail. The Minister for Immigration, Kevin Andrews, immediately revoked Haneef's visa on character grounds—the Executive, here, challenging the rule of law. Haneef chose not to post bail as doing so would have seen him immediately taken to Villawood detention centre. On 27 July, the charges against Haneef were dropped. However, Andrews refused to rescind his decision to revoke Haneef's visa. On the same day Haneef's passport was returned to him. Without a visa he had no option but to leave the country which he did on 28 July. The Federal Court reinstated Haneef's visa on 26 December. In spite of an inquiry headed by retired New South Wales Supreme Court judge John Clarke finding that Haneef had been wrongly charged and wrongly detained, the Rudd federal government has refused to apologise on the grounds that the previous government was responsible for the wrongful actions—which seems inconsistent given that Rudd did apologise for the wrongs previous governments had inflicted on the Aborigines of the Stolen Generations.

Haneef's invisibility, his conditional honorary whiteness as a member of the middle class, was removed when he was thought to be a possible terrorist. Haneef has said that, 'he had never experienced any racism from colleagues or patients while working at the Hospital and his idea of Australia as a fair country had not been changed' ('Dr Haneef still indecisive about returning to Australia', 2008). At the time of his arrest, however, he became a highly visible Muslim Indian. As he himself insightfully said, that he was targeted 'might be just because I am an Asian Muslim' (Dr Haneef qtd from 'I was targeted' (2008). The claim of terrorism was used to justify the subsequent actions against him but it was his identification as a Muslim Indian, triggering white Australian anxieties about Muslims and about Asians, which allowed the increasingly questionable actions, from both a moral and legal perspective, to go relatively unchallenged by white Australians.

Haneef already had his medical qualification when he came to Australia. However, the provisionality of honorary whiteness also applies to international students. Michiel Baas is an anthropologist who studied a group of Indian students in Melbourne. He found that 'by far the largest group of Indian students' are studying in Australia in order to be eligible for permanent residency' (Baas, 2006: 21):

[m]any claim to have come to Australia for a 'better lifestyle', which refers both to basic things like clean air, good infrastructure, a safer society and better public facilities, as well as to better opportunities on the job front and generally more money. Interesting though, it is this ... group which often seems to end up in jobs such as a taxi driver, security guard or petrol pump attendant.

It would seem that, when not moving into the middle-class jobs associated with their qualifications, these skilled permanent residents end up in jobs the status of which is not much higher than the jobs which Andrew Bartlett was recommending for detained asylum

seekers. These are the kinds of jobs taken by students, and especially international students, to make some extra money. Often, this is because of the twenty hours limit per week on paid work that I mentioned earlier—many of these jobs are off the books enabling the students to work longer hours. Baas' point is that many Indians in Australia continue in this employment after gaining the qualifications that enable them to attain permanent residency. Baas (2006: 22) comments that:

[t]he money the students will make, even as taxi drivers, or security guards in a local shopping mall, will always be more than what they saw themselves making in India. In this sense they have got exactly what they wanted.

They have not, however, given white Australia what it wanted from them, their skilled labour, and so their honorary whiteness has been withdrawn. The jobs they achieve are those associated with racialised groups such as asylum seekers and, in other countries, guest workers.

Sometimes honorary whiteness is withheld through the racism of employers. Many Asians who gain permanent residency after successfully completing courses that score highly on the MODL are unable to find work in their chosen career. James and Otsuka (n.d.), in their study of the racism in the employment of international students who gain accountancy degrees in Australia, write that:

[I]nternational students typically mail out large numbers of job applications to Australian firms with very little success. [...] Many high-achieving Chinese graduates, after failing to find suitable accountancy-related work, accept cleaning, labouring and sales jobs in Australia and/or quietly return to China.

James and Otsuka go on to write that: 'Indian, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan and Chinese graduates, according to one interviewee, are working in sales jobs at petrol kiosks and convenience stores, creating something of a marginalised underclass.' A study by Alison Booth, Andrew Leigh and Elena Varganova enables us to put this discrimination in context. Booth et al (n.d.) sent out 5000 fictional job applications for advertised positions in four different categories of job: wait staff, data entry, customer service and sales. They were able to identify the employers as Anglo-Saxon—that is, white in Australian terms. For each type of job they sent the same application, only varying the name to signal a particular racial/ethnic background. The backgrounds they chose were Anglo-Saxon (their term), Indigenous, Italian, Middle Eastern and Chinese. They found that, for men and women combined:

[f]or Anglo-Saxon-sounding names, the mean callback rate was 35 percent. However, names connoting the four minority groups received a lower callback rate, with Indigenous applicants obtaining an interview 26 percent of the time, Chinese 21 percent of the time,

Italian 32 percent of the time, and Middle Eastern 22 percent of the time. (Booth et al, n.d.: 9)

We can see here a racial/ethnic hierarchy operating in the context of employment, a hierarchy that places people with Chinese and Middle Eastern backgrounds as the least desirable employees. Booth et al found that the greatest amount of discrimination was for waitstaff and data entry jobs where, for waitstaff, '[a] Chinese and Middle Eastern person ... must submit fully twice as many applications in order to get as many interviews as an Anglo-Saxon applicant' (Booth et al, n.d.: 10). They go on to write that:

[c]uriously, the one job in which the level of discrimination appears to be lower is customer service, in which there is no statistically significant discrimination against any of the minority groups. This is also the one occupation in which those with more education were more likely to receive an interview. (ibid: 12)

From the point of view of my argument this is not curious: the greater the amount of education the more likely that the applicant would be perceived to be middle class. They would then be attributed honorary whiteness.

We should note the apparent relative lack of discrimination against people with Italian-identifiable names. Booth et al also conducted another study in which they sent out over 2000 letters to 'wrong' addresses. The envelopes had names linking the addressee with one of the five groups already listed. The study sought to ascertain if there was a variation in return rate attributable to the name-based identification of the addressees. What they found was that there was a 3-5 per cent drop in the return rate of all letters addressed to people with non-Anglo-Saxon names. This included those with Italian names. What this suggests, I would argue, is that, while white employers are prepared to employ people identified as having Italian backgrounds, probably because they are thought to be second or third generation and therefore to have 'Australian values,' Anglo-Australians are less prepared to deal with Italian-background people socially—indeed as equally unwilling as they are to socialise with people with Chinese or Middle Eastern backgrounds. It also seems that Italian-background employers 'appear to be significantly less likely to call back job candidates with Italian names' (Booth et al, n.d.). It seems that Italian-background employers have internalised the dominant, white middle-class racial/ethnic prejudices.

In an article on the online essay site, *Helium*, Anthony Mukwita (n.d.), writing about the racism faced by African students in Australia, describes how John Banda, working the graveyard shift in an all-night fast food restaurant in Perth, is asked by a customer: "[h]ow come there are so many blacks here ... shouldn't they be working at the farms shearing sheep or picking tomatoes or something?" In the Australian racialised job hierarchy, these jobs rank below the working-class manufacturing and construction jobs that typified the work of the

ethnicised, not-fully-white migrants, some of whom were very well qualified, of the post-Second World War period.[9] More, the reference to pastoral work suggests that the interlocutor was mistaking the black African serving him with an Indigenous Australian, perhaps even not realising a distinction—some sort of ‘all blacks are the same’ claim. There is a further racism here, then, which is the assumption that Indigenous Australians ought to be working in the bush and not present in the city.

William Petersen coined the term ‘model minority’ in a *New York Times* editorial in 1966 to describe the success of Japanese-Americans in American society. The key to model minority status is the acceptance of the fundamental values and goals of the dominant, white culture. This implies the kind of assimilation asked for in the Howard government’s ‘Australian values’ campaign. In the terms of the multicultural organisation of Australian society, the reward for such assimilatory behaviour is not being included in the multicultural celebrations of ethnic difference—which are actually an acknowledgement of the ethnic/racial fracture on which white Australian hegemony depends. The Indians, Chinese, Vietnamese and other Asian migrants who arrived in the 1970s and early 1980s, often with few skills, many of them as it happens as boat people seeking asylum, and who joined the ethnicised working class like the Italians, Greeks, Lebanese and other southern and eastern European groups who arrived in the 1940s and 1950s, also joined this ‘celebration’ of multiculturalism. In a book on whiteness in Britain, Steve Garner (2007: 78) argues that:

[p]eople who are not white can be absorbed into honorary whiteness in particular circumstances, yet this invariably involves othering different groups. In fact this othering appears constitutive of the process of redrawing of the boundary of whiteness in terms of values, so that it embraces British black or Asian people, depending on the context. In confirming shared values both the groups that share and do not share them are defined.

In Australia since the 1980s the conditional inclusion of skilled ‘Asians’ in the white middle class, with the assimilatory claim of their adoption of Australian values, has been reinforced by the racialisation of asylum seekers and the assertions that ‘they’ do not share ‘our’ culture and values. It is these skilled, middle-class ‘Asians,’ many of whom have arrived as international students paying for their own education, who are offered to a greater or less degree honorary whiteness and who, in accepting the values of white, Anglo-Australia, form an invisible model minority in the hegemonic white middle class conditional on their acceptance of those values.

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Notes

1. Senator Grant, 'Estimates and Budget Papers 1949–50', Senate, Debates, 19 October 1949, p. 1561 quoted in Kendall (2008: 56).

2. The Access Economics figures come from Slattery (2009: 5).

3. These figures come from '2007 Annual International Student Statistics' (2007).

4. As I write this paper there is increasing concern among Indian students in Melbourne about racially motivated attacks. For the most detailed discussion to date see Healy (2009). See also Suvendrini Perera and Jon Stratton, 'Introduction: Heterochronotopes of Exception and the Frontiers and Faultlines of Citizenship', *Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, vol 23, no 5, 2009. This article is the Introduction to a special section of this issue of *Continuum* which focuses on the Australian treatment of asylum seekers.

5. The range of judicial review, however, has been increasingly limited over the last twenty years. In 1989, to take an important example, the Labor government, tightening up the border regime, introduced mandatory deportation of illegal non-citizens, mostly visa overstayers, regardless of their time in Australia or their circumstances. See Nicholls (2007), *Deported: A History of Forced Departures from Australia*, especially Chapter 9 'Mandatory deportation and detention.'

6. The *Australian Values Statement* reads in part: 'I confirm that I have read, or had explained to me, information provided by the Australian Government on Australian society and values. I understand: • Australian society values respect for the freedom and dignity of the individual, freedom of religion, commitment to the rule of law, Parliamentary democracy, equality of men and women and a spirit of egalitarianism that embraces mutual respect, tolerance, fair play and compassion for those in need and pursuit of the public good; • Australian society values equality of opportunity for individuals, regardless of their race, religion or ethnic background; • the English language, as the national language, is an important unifying element of Australian society. I undertake to respect these values of Australian society during my stay in Australia and to obey the laws of Australia.'

7. All these figures derive from Kinnaird (2006). Kinnaird also notes that 6.7 per cent of those granted 457 visas have inadequately described countries of origin.

8. These figures come from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2008). In all these calculations I have left out the high numbers of New Zealanders who move to Australia. In 2006-07 there was a net overseas migration of New Zealanders to Australia of 21,420.

9. There is a story that I have been told about a migrant who came in the 1960s. Before she left her country of origin she asked if, in Australia, there were jobs for librarians. She was told that there were. When she arrived in Australia she realized that she had been misunderstood—that there were jobs for labourers but not librarians. This story sounds to me like an urban myth. It is a story that explains, from a migrant perspective, why migrants did not get the skilled positions for which they had the training.

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