The Resilience of Nondiscriminatory Immigration Policies:
Evidence from the United States and Australia

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Abstract:

In the English-speaking settler states (Australia, the United States, Canada, and New Zealand) the notion of "nondiscriminatory" immigration policy has the precise meaning of eschewing ethnicity, race, and national origins as selection criteria in the context of past policies that had blatantly resorted to them. There has been an interesting recent debate whether the commitment to nondiscrimination has consolidated into a "structural feature of liberal democracy" (Freeman 1995), or whether it is a conjunctural "feature of public discussion at certain times and places" (Brubaker 1995), and thus could be easily reversed. Evidence from the United States and Australia can adjudicate this debate, in favour of the structural position. Three factors are identified that shore up nondiscriminatory immigration policies: the acceptance of the nondiscrimination norm even by those who are opposed to some of its effects; the shrinking demographic possibility of ethnic selectivity "by subterfuge"; and the instantly mobilizeable memory of settler states' racist pasts.
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Because in selecting some by implication all others have to be rejected, the notion of a "nondiscriminatory" immigration policy seems paradoxical, perhaps even non-sensical. However, not all selection criteria are equally innocent. If one surveys contemporary immigration policies across Western states, one will find only three legitimate selection criteria: skills, family ties, and elementary human need (which is channeled into the separate refugee and asylum policy domain). Immigrant selection on the basis of ethnic, racial, or national origin criteria, which used to be the dominant mode of immigrant selection in the first half of the 20th century, has either disappeared or survived in only highly specific and exceptional forms, such as the "return" of putative co-ethnics in the Israeli Law of Return or the German Aussiedler policy.

In the English-speaking settler states (Australia, the United States, Canada, and New Zealand) the notion of "nondiscriminatory" immigration policy has the precise meaning of eschewing ethnicity, race, and national origins as selection criteria in the context of past policies that had blatantly resorted to them. More than that, the settler states' ethnically selective immigration policies, which all had prioritized north-west Europeans, were tainted by the flip side of racial exclusion, which had targeted primarily Asians. The negatively and positively discriminatory aspects of these immigration policies were not necessarily related, and they were often processed as separate laws and policies. However, the interesting side effect of the outlawing of negative race discrimination after World War II was to cast doubt on all forms of positive discrimination too. The outcome are the "nondiscriminatory" immigration policies of today, which notionally abstain from any ethnic, racial, or national-origin selectivity, negative and positive. Accordingly, legal immigration in the US occurs in terms of numerically equal quota for all countries in the world (internally apportioned according to family ties first, and skills as a distant second); and in Canada and Australia in terms of point systems that have variably emphasized skills or family ties.

The turn to nondiscriminatory immigration policies, which occurred from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s, has led to a massive ethnic transformation of settler societies. To refer only to the American and Australian experiences, the once generically excluded Asians today represent well above one-third of the annual immigrant intakes in both countries. Conversely, the share of the once favoured European immigrants has significantly decreased, in the U.S. from 40 percent in the 1960s to just 15 percent by 1998 (Schuck, 2002:19), and in Australia from 70 percent in 1972 (the last year of the White Australia policy) to under 30 percent by 1988 (Jayasuriya and Sang, 1992:42). Three decades of diversified flows have left a significant imprint on the population balance. The Anglo-Celtic component of the Australian population dropped from nearly 90 percent in 1946 to seventy percent in 1998, while the Asian and North African component increased from under one percent to over eight percent in the same period (Price, 1998:127f; 1999:12). In the US, characterized by far more diverse immigrant flows from the start, the post-1965 "Third-Worldization" of immigration has increased the population share of Hispanics from 3.5 percent in 1960 to 13.4 percent in 2000, and of Asians from 0.6 to 4.2 percent in the same period. Non-Hispanic white Americans are expected to be eclipsed by a
new majority of Hispanics, blacks, and Asians by 2050.

Given the magnitude of the population changes brought about by nondiscriminatory immigration policies, there has been surprisingly little opposition to the settler states' radical departure from their European origins. At the elite level, Gary Freeman (1995) has attributed the absence of such opposition to the existence of an "antipopulist norm" that prohibits "argument over the ethnic composition of migrant streams" (p.884) and that "dictates that politicians should not seek to exploit racial, ethnic or immigration-related fears in order to win votes" (p.885). There has been an interesting debate about the origins and nature of this "antipopulist norm." Freeman (1995b) sees it grounded in the Tocquevillian "ethos" of liberal democracy, according to which "the forces of equality and individualism gain strength over time, each new victory merely whetting the appetite of democrats for more victories still" (p.909). Rogers Brubaker (1995) has argued against this that "constrained discourse over immigration" (Freeman), rather than being grounded in the structure of liberal democracy, "is a historically specific and contingent feature of public discussion at certain times and places" (p.904f). This view is supported by the fact that the very settler states, from whose turn from ethnically selective to universalist immigration policies Freeman derives his notion of antipopulist norm, had until fairly recently practiced ethnically selective policies. How can the structure of liberal democracy be held responsible for a recent shift of policy; was the United States no liberal democracy before 1965? Moreover, as Aristide Zolberg (1999:87) observed, "(t)oday as well, on both sides of the Atlantic, elites hardly display a uniformly universalist orientation in immigration politics." The implication of a conjunctural reduction of the antipopulist norm is that the wheel could at any moment be turned back to racial discrimination. Freeman responded to this that the move from ethnic selectivity to universalistic principles of immigrant selection certainly "take(s) place in a specific historical/cultural context," but once it has happened it corresponds to the "core values of liberal democracy" and becomes "irreversible in practical terms" (1995b:913).

It is the claim of this article that evidence from the United States and Australia can adjudicate this debate, in favour of the structural position proposed by Freeman. Both are hard cases, because in terms of "diversity immigration" the United States has recently included an obvious national-origin discrimination into its immigration law, and because (in tandem with New Zealand) Australia has been the latest and most reluctant of all English-speaking settler states to give up its racially discriminatory immigration policy. The American-Australian comparison is motivated by yet another consideration. Underneath their common Anglo-European origins both countries are set apart by sharply distinct immigration experiences and national self-definitions. The United States was built by highly diverse migration flows, and defined itself at an early stage as a non-ethnic nation held together by universalist values, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," as the Declaration of Independence put it. By contrast, Australia is a predominantly British settlement and until the early 1970s understood itself as an ethnic British outpost in the south sea. Their different national self-definitions ("civic" versus "ethnic") control for the possibility that different nationhood traditions could be held responsible for the shift to, and subsequent consolidation of, nondiscriminatory immigration policies--on this assumption, the U.S. should never have had an ethnically selective policy, while Australia (not a "nation of immigrants" a l'Americaine) should not have given up her policy in 1973. Instead, the difference of national self-definition suggests that something common to both countries, namely
the commitment to ethnic and race neutrality that became the stock-in-trade of liberal democracies in the West after the double shock of Holocaust and Decolonization, was driving the turn to nondiscriminatory immigration policies.

It is undoubtedly true that the "boundaries of legitimate discourse" are subject to "chronic struggle" (Brubaker, 1995:905), and even more so in liberal democracies that cherish the principles of free speech and association. However, it is still questionable whether these discourse boundaries are elastic or wide enough to reintroduce the notion of a hierarchy of races, nations, and ethnic groups that had informed Asian exclusion and ethnically selective immigration policies in the United States and Australia before World War II. Brubaker (p.907f) backs his argument of the variability of discoursive boundaries with reference to "(chronically) restrictive appeals" in post-oil-crisis Europe, and an emergent "populist moment" in 1990s California. However, this conflates two different notions of "restrictive": quantitative and qualitative. The European recruitment stop, which ended all new non-EU labour migration after 1973, was numerically restrictive only, as it was equally effective on all (non-EU) nationalities and thus did not violate the nondiscrimination norm. And the animus in California was uncurtailed illegal migration, and particularly its draining effect on public services and expenditures--it entailed neither a call for selective discrimination against Mexicans nor a reverse toleration of the illegal migration of non-Mexicans.

Instead of being subject to contestation, the norm of nondiscrimination functions as a fundamental, taken-for-granted assumption even by those who are opposed to its effects. This will be demonstrated in the following along the example of "diversity" immigration in the United States, which arguably was at heart a case for more European (especially Irish) immigration, but which had to present itself in universalistic terms. In Australia, three moments of more openly led charges that "too many Asians" were entering after 1973 had much the same result, as they revealed that the only alternative to a nondiscriminatory immigration policy was one that openly discriminated on the bases of race, ethnicity, or national origins--and the political mainstream forces decidedly shrank back from that.

But perhaps the facially non-ethnic, skill- and family-based selection categories that predominate today provide possibilities for an implicit ethnic selectivity "by subterfuge"? Because the ethnically anonymous selection categories tend to be disproportionately used by specific nationality groups, there is the persistent suspicion that favouring one over the other category is ethnic or racial discrimination in disguise. The call for skill-based immigration, raised in Australia and the United States alike since the onset of "globalization" in the late 1980s, is then denounced as a preference for European immigrants. Conversely, parallel attempts to restrict (usually low-skilled and heavily non-European) family migration are denounced as proxies for opposing non-European immigration. It is the nature of such reasoning to be inherently polemical and reserved to the critics of government policy. Governments usually deny that ethnic considerations shape their immigration policies. Accordingly, it is most often impossible to know whether the statistical correlation between ethnic group and selection category is also a causal "mechanism" (Elster 1989) that drives government policies. However, especially the Australian case will show that the possibility of ethnic selectivity by subterfuge has been undermined by an increasingly even distribution of non-European (especially Asian) immigrants across all selection categories, the skill-based selection categories included.

Next to the taken-for-grantedness of the nondiscrimination norm and a reduced
demographic possibility of ethnic selectivity by subterfuge, there is a third factor that shores up nondiscriminatory immigration policies, one that is distinct to settler states: the reference to these states' own discriminatory pasts. Compared to European states, where positive ethnic and national-origin discriminations in immigration policy are fairly common, a distinct feature of settler states is the tainting of most positive discriminations by their legacies of negative race discrimination. Conversely, positive discriminations in Europe persist because of the lack of comparable legacies of racial exclusion. By contrast, whenever the possibility of a (however smallish) positive discrimination is raised in a settler state (particularly with respect to a European immigrant group), it is countered by the potent reference to the racial exclusivism of the past. The occasional challenge to nondiscrimination then becomes a moment of ceremonially affirming the mainstream elite consensus in favour of a nondiscriminatory immigration policy. This dynamic at least is very visible in the following comparison of the United States and Australia.

"Diversity Immigration" in the United States

Once they are in place, nondiscriminatory immigration policies are typically subject to two opposite pressures, "liberal" and "restrictive." On the liberal side, the claim is that not enough has been achieved. This liberal critique has been especially strong in the United States, pointing to the present effects of past racial legacies, the fact that asylum and refugee policy are still discriminatory (e.g., Lennox 1993), or that "facially race-neutral" immigration policies may be clouded by "unmistakably disparate impacts on immigrants of color" (Johnson, 2000:532). On the restrictive side, there is the opposite claim that too much has been achieved. As one notorious critic of U.S. policy put it, "(t)he racial and ethnic balance of America is being radically altered through public policy...Is it what Americans want?" (Brimelow, 1995:xvii).

A distinct mark of "diversity immigration" is to inscribe national-origin distinctions into the letter of immigration law itself, and it thus amounts to the most serious challenge to "source country universalism" (Schuck 1991) after 1965. Liberal critics thus usually include it in their list of discriminatory features prevailing in current U.S. immigration law and policy (e.g., Ting 1995; Chin 1998). However, diversity immigration differs from other discriminations, such as past racial legacies or admissions policies "not yet" seized by the norm of nondiscrimination, in having arisen as a very response to the nondiscriminatory immigration policy established in 1965. Formally introduced in the 1990 Legal Immigration Act, diversity immigration is at heart a restrictive backlash to the turn to a nondiscriminatory immigration policy under the 1965 Immigration Act. In the words of Democratic Senator Daniel P. Moynihan, one of the early supporters of a "diversity" quota: "The effort to limit immigration in 1924 to some groups, to prefer some groups over others, was not well received...Now, we seem to have moved too far in the other direction, and I think a mid-course correction is in order." However, as I shall demonstrate in the following, the case of diversity immigration proves that the only legitimate opposition to a nondiscriminatory immigration policy is one that seeks to perfect it; it reaffirms rather than questions the nondiscrimination norm that underlies today's immigration policy.

At the origin of diversity immigration lies ethnic politics. The 1980s witnessed a massive wave of Irish immigration, which was caused by a severe economic crisis in Ireland. In the New York area alone, some 150,000 Irish newcomers arrived between 1982 and 1988, mostly
entering as students or tourists and then overstaying. Their precarious status revealed some shortcomings of the present immigration system. Lacking the requisite family ties, the Irish newcomers could not profit from the large family quota that dominated US legal immigration since 1965; and there were too many of them (and insufficiently skilled at that) to profit from the small occupational quota. Finally, as illegal immigrants the Irish were also not covered by the (Hispanic-oriented) amnesty provision under the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), because they had arrived after its cutoff-date in 1982. At the same time the most folklorized of all European immigrant groups in America, the Irish quickly came to symbolize a sense that Europeans were the losers of the 1965 immigration reform and its sequels.

The first success of Irish lobbying was a last-minute addition to IRCA, the so-called "NP-5" visa program, which allotted 5000 extra visa for 1987 and 1988 to citizens of 36 countries that were deemed "adversely affected" by the 1965 Act. 27 of these countries were European, 2 Asian, 2 African, 4 North- and South-American, and one Oceanian. Interestingly, a measure that had a clear national and regional focus--Ireland and Western Europe--still could not present itself as such explicitly, but had to camouflage its intention in neutral language, thus allowing the entry of other countries and regions not primarily "meant" by the measure. This did not matter much--40 percent of NP-5 visa according to IRCA's section 314 were reaped by Irish applicants (not least because they were better informed and organized than any other nationality group). In 1988, the NP-5 program was extended for 2 more years, now with the triple amount of 30,000 visas to be handed out. Because there was concern about the Eurocentric bias of the program, Congress also passed an additional "OP-1" program in 1988, which consisted of 20,000 visas over a two-year period for natives of "underrepresented countries."

Both formulas, "adversely affected" and "underrepresented", were regional formulas. Yet they differed in important ways. "Adversely affected" made the 1965 Immigration Act the touchstone: only natives from countries that sent less immigrants after the act than before the act qualified. By contrast, "underrepresented" referred to any country that at present used less than 25 percent of their annually allotted maximum visas. This included many African and Asian states that could not be "adversely affected" by the 1965 act, because they had been barred from sending any immigrants up to that point. Accordingly, it was mostly immigrants from non-European states who would profit from the OP-1 program--Bangladesh, Pakistan, Egypt, or Peru.

The interesting further development is that, under the umbrella of diversity immigration, the "adversely affected country" component was gradually eliminated, whereas the "underrepresented country" formula was rendered permanent. This must be read as a concession to the principle of source-country universalism, which was more blatantly violated by the (Euro-centered) "adversely affected" than by the "underrepresented country" formula. As a result, the Europeans who originally were meant to profit from diversity immigration were eventually pushed to the margins. Diversity immigration took this final form in the 1990 Legal Immigration Act. The NP-5 program for "adversely affected" countries was prolonged for only three more years (yet with a significantly increased visa total of 120,000). Curiously, 40 percent of these visas were to go to "natives of the foreign state the natives of which received the greatest number of visas issued under section 314 of I.R.C.A."

This contortedly circumscribed state was--Ireland. An Irish lobbyist explains: "The
Senate didn't want to be country-specific. The attitude was, 'We'll do this for you guys, but let's not talk about it.' (ibid., p.334). From 1994, the permanent diversity visa program, modeled on the "underrepresented country" formula, was to take the place of the temporary program that was modeled on the "adversely affected" formula (and became known as the "Irish lottery"). Using a complex mathematical formula that divides the world into "high" and "low-admission" states and regions, the permanent program provides 55,000 visas per year to natives of states from which immigration had been lower than 50,000 in the past five years.

Epitomizing the drift away from its European origins, in 1990 this permanent diversity program excluded only those twelve states in the world that monopolized legal immigration to the United States at this point. In the late 1990s, in a further concession to the potent charge of Eurocentrism and Irish favouritism that continued to cloud diversity immigration, Congress introduced a self-correcting formula that excluded from the program those countries that had used almost all of its allotted diversity visas during the preceding five years. Accordingly, among the leading sending countries in 2002 were Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Ukraine, Bangladesh, and Ethiopia. Ireland, whose late-1980s (and long obsolete) immigration emergency had started the whole program, is now far down the list (Schuck, 2002:56).

Besides its increasingly extra-European focus, diversity immigration underwent a second interesting transmutation. Initially, the call for more European immigrants was fused with the call for reorienting the selection focus from family unification to skills. The massive third-worldization of post-1965 immigration occurred predominantly through the large family quota. For instance, by the mid-1980s Mexico and the Philippines alone accounted for almost forty percent of the two million registered would-be family migrants waiting "in the pipeline". Studies showed that this Asian- and Hispanic-dominated family immigration went along with a decrease in the human capital of migrants (e.g., Borjas 1990).

Conversely, in the early debate preceding the 1990 Legal Immigration Act, there was an automatic equation of "more skilled" with "more European" immigrants. This equation was most obvious in the category of "independent immigrant", which was proposed by Senators Kennedy and Simpson in 1987. They were to be selected on the basis of a points system stressing origins in "any country adversely affected" by the 1965 law, education, needed skills, and English language competence. This Senate proposal married two agendas, Democrat Kennedy's interest in helping out the Irish, presented as strengthening "the old seed' sources of our heritage"; and Republican Simpson's interest in more skill-based immigrants, characterized by him as "the 'new seed' immigrant, 'classic immigrant', if you will, (who)...represents now only five percent of our total immigration." Crucially, the space for "independent immigrants" was to be created by cutting the second and fifth preferences for family immigrants, which were jealously guarded by the Asian and Hispanic lobbies. Their opposition helped crush this proposal in the House, where it was perceived as "racially-biased" (in Tichenor, 2002:269). The Irish lobby also wasn't happy, because they feared to be outskilled by English-speaking Asians, and because this proposal did little to help those who were currently illegal.

This was a critical juncture for the association between functional selection category and ethnic group in the United States: this association continued to be legitimate if it favoured formerly excluded Third World immigrants; conversely, it was not legitimate if made by the government to further European immigrants; but a new demographic reality had anyway undermined the old equation of skilled with European immigrants.
The further development, culminating in the 1990 Legal Immigration Act, was to turn the negative-into a positive-sum game, so that the (ethnic) wins in one category would not occur at the cost of (ethnic) losses in another; and, crucially for our purposes, the trend was to differentiate more clearly between skill-based and diversity immigration. The 1990 Legal Immigration Act, which increased legal immigration by forty percent, could thus be hailed as a simultaneous "triumph for 'cultural diversity,' 'family unity,' and 'job creation'" (in Tichenor, 2002:274). This meant that the skill-component in diversity immigration had now practically disappeared: a high-school diploma or two-year work experience sufficed on the skill-side to qualify for a diversity visa. Due to the differentiation between skill-based and diversity immigration, the United States now has four modes of selecting immigrants instead of the usual three: humanitarian, family, skills, and--diversity.

With respect to the debate surrounding diversity immigration, its proponents tried to set it apart from the pre-1965 national-origins quota, whereas its opponents did everything to identify both. On the proponents' side, the dominant move was to present the case for diversity immigration as a matter of justice. This is encapsulated in the very notion of "diversity", which was pirated by European ethnics from non-European minority groups in the U.S. "We need to restore fairness and balance to our immigration laws to ensure that certain individuals are not penalized because of their long heritage in this country," Senator Moynihan underscored the justice motif. In this sense, diversity immigration was not a violation of a nondiscriminatory immigration policy, but a matter of "fine tuning" the latter.

A second way of setting diversity immigration apart from national-origins immigration was in terms of their different scales: whereas the national-origins quota had constituted the totality of legal immigration between 1924 and 1965, diversity immigration constituted less than ten percent of legal immigration after 1990, and--as its proponents busily pointed out--the diversity quota did not substitute, but was added on to the family quota (which were considered by all, even the Europeans, as the legitimate turf of the non-European immigrant lobby). Diversity immigration was thus utterly devoid of the negative discriminations that were the driving intent of the only facially positive discriminations enunciated in the national-origins quota. "Our proposals do not take any number away from any other countries. If our proposals are implemented, the vast majority of visas will continue to go to countries which currently dominate the immigrant stream," said the leader of the Irish Immigration Reform Movement. This explains why the opposition by the non-European ethnic groups was more ceremonial than acidic--both camps fished in different waters.

On the critics' side, there was every attempt to identify diversity immigration with the discarded national-origins quota. In one critic's words, a preference for immigrants from "adversely affected countries" comes "very, very close to a national origins concept, which we worked very, very hard to get out of our laws for many years." For the Organization of Chinese Americans, the "adversely affected country" criterion was "discriminatory per se against most Asian, Hispanic and Third World countries," simply because it left out most of them. This overlooked the fact that this exclusion was de facto, not de jure, and that the European ethnics could make precisely the same argument with respect to their de facto exclusion from the family quota.

A more effective critique was to point to the faulty baseline of the "discrimination" charge made by the European lobby. In the latter's view, the sharp drop of European
immigrants after 1965 constituted "discrimination in reverse." However, this brackets the fact that the privileged position of (some) European before 1965 was itself premised on an explicit and intended discrimination, against south and east Europeans, but first and foremost against Asians and Africans who were not even included in the calculation of the national-origin quota. It is astonishing that the proponents of the "discrimination-against-Europeans" charge, many of whom had impeccably liberal credentials, could close their eyes on this. As Stephen Legomsky (1993:334) correctly pointed out, their claim was equivalent to asking to be compensated for the abolition of slavery.

The critics of diversity immigration identified a second flaw in its justification: the assumption that "justice" was to be dispensed to countries, rather than to individuals. Lawrence Fuchs has powerfully argued against this that "countries do not immigrate; persons immigrate." Would-be-immigrants without family ties, from the Philippines or from Ireland, are "very much in the same pickle" when queuing for a visa under the small occupational quota. Even worse, the Filipino or Filipina without family ties was worse off than the Irish, because he or she orginated from a far more populous and poorer country with a far higher demand for emigration. Accordingly, if justice was for individuals and not for countries, not the large family quota, but the uniform country ceilings under the 1965 law were the real culprit. As Fuchs concludes, true to the spirit of the 1965 reform, immigrants should be selected "because they are desirable for their attributes as persons and not because of their national or ethnic backgrounds." In this limited respect, diversity immigration is indeed a violation of the principles of nondiscrimination and source-country universalism that post-1965 U.S. immigration policy has notionally subscribed to. However, as this discussion has shown, it is a violation that arrived under the cloak of these very principles.

"Too Many Asians" in Australia

Compared to the United States, Australia is marked by the near absence of liberal critiques of "not enough" nondiscrimination after the abolishment of White Australia in 1973, and more openly and frequently raised restrictive charges that as a result of public policy the country was losing its Anglo-European roots and becoming "Asianized." This reflects the stronger ethnic inflection of Australian nationhood and the relative absence of a universalistic "nation of immigrants" imagery. However, these restrictive charges have all been occasions for ceremonially renewing the elite consensus around a nondiscriminatory immigration policy--so much so that one critic deemed Australian immigration policy in the clutches of a "new class" of liberal opinion-makers and political elites who systematically discarded the different wishes of the majority population (Betts, 1988; 1999).

There were three moments when the increasing Asian share in Australia's immigrant intake stirred major political debate. When the enigmatic historian Geoffrey Blainey launched the first debate in March 1984, the "first real test" to the disestablishment of the White Australia policy had already "successfully passed" (Viviani, 1984:115). By 1984, Australia had accepted almost 100.000 Indochinese refugees, which made it the world's major refugee-receiving country in per capita terms. The refugee entry coincided with a parallel (but entirely unrelated) turn from skill- to family-based immigrant selection, which had occurred due to the lobbying efforts of south-east European ethnic organizations, especially under a new Labor government.
entering in 1983 (Betts, 1988:158). This meant that the Asian refugees could immediately sponsor their extended family members. When Blainey entered the scene in March 1984, this was the moment in which Australian immigration policy was maximally decoupled from skill considerations and tied instead to family reunion and humanitarian help (Birrell and Birrell, 1987:277f). As a result, the Asian proportion of the permanent settler intake jumped from 25 percent in 1982 to 38 percent in 1983 (Betts, 1988:159), while Asians constituted only about two percent of the Australian population at the time. This disproportion inflamed the first restrictive attack on "too much" source-country universalism after 1973.

Blainey's momentous address to the Rotary Club in the provincial town of Warnnambool on 18 March 1984 (quickly expanded into a book, Blainey 1984) contains a right and a wrong. Factually true was his main charge that the "pace of Asian immigration to Australia is now well ahead of public opinion." A Gallup Poll taken at the height of the controversy in May 1984 found that 62 of the public "disapproved" that "(a)n increasing proportion of migrants are coming from Asia compared with the United Kingdom and Europe," with only 30 percent "approving" this trend. However, Blainey also propagated a clear wrong, and one that injected particular venom into this first Australian immigration debate after 1973: the claim that an "Asian preference," shared across party lines, had been driving government policy at least since the late 1970s (Blainey, 1984:10-12). In other words, the turn to Asian immigration was not (as the current Labor government claimed) the unintended consequence of a nondiscriminatory selection process, but of intended ethnic selectivity. He couched this suspicion in the metaphor of the "secret room", in which "the government, for political and ethnic reasons, bends its rules to encourage immigrants from Vietnam" (ibid., p.103), and he even claimed that the Asian immigrant share of 38 percent in the past year was the result of a deliberate "Asian quota": "(T)hey were probably the percentage that...the government aimed for" (ibid., p.116). This was conspiracy reasoning for which no evidence existed.

In a hastily called parliamentary session, Labor Prime Minister Bob Hawke and his Immigration Minister Stuart West credibly dissected the causes of the Asian immigration hike--the "priority (given) to family reunion and refugees", which had commenced under the previous conservative government, plus the "lessening of interest" from the traditional source countries, most notably the United Kingdom. Reviewing the conservative opposition's attempt to capitalize on the Blainey attack, one notices the difficulty of refracting into partisan terms what had been done by it too when still in power--accept Indochinese refugees and prioritize family over skill-based selection. The opposition's continued support for both was hardly reconcilable with their charge that the Labor government had "adopted the most anti-British stance which we have ever seen in this country." In the words of a prominent commentator (Kelly, 1992:126), the opposition danced around the dilemma that "the only alternative to a non-discriminatory policy was a discriminatory policy." Only for Blainey himself this was no dilemma: all immigration policy was inherently "discriminatory," and accordingly it was best to "open and honestly" place a "ceiling" on Asian immigration (Blainey, 1984:162).

However, this far (back to White Australia) no mainstream political actor was willing to go. In fact, the opposition did not openly charge the government of being "pro-Asian", and instead mocked "the twisted logic of those...who say that if one asks a question about British or European migration one is being racist." Instead of a cap on Asian immigration, the opposition
proposed the notion of "balancing": not reducing the Asian intake, but "increasing the European element." However, this notion was quickly dropped because it required an explicit ethnic quota and an increased total intake to which the public was opposed. After a brief internal debate over the rivaling objectives of "nondiscrimination" versus "social cohesion," the conservative Shadow Cabinet committed itself to nondiscrimination, thus "retreating" to the orthodox (Kelly, 1992:133). This outcome incidentally revealed the truth of the initial government response to the Blainey speech, which had done much to inflame the entire "debate" surrounding it--that the "increasing Asianisation of Australia was inevitable", at least as long as Australia remained committed to a nondiscriminatory immigration policy.

If the Blainey debate was a blast, the two following debates on "too many Asians" were ripples, with a fixed script of reaffirming the nondiscriminatory immigration policy and marginalizing its challengers. In August 1988, conservative opposition leader John Howard said in a radio interview that it would be "supportive of social cohesion if (the Asian intake) were slowed down a little" (quoted in Morita, 1999:114). His temporary loss of leadership of the Liberal Party in May 1989 is generally attributed to this statement (see Betts, 1999:299), and six senior Liberal Party members (including former Prime Minister Frazer and Howard's own later Immigration Minister Ruddock) supported Labor Prime Minister Hawke's symbolic motion in parliament for an "unambiguous and unqualified commitment" to a nondiscriminatory immigration policy (Rubenstein, 1993:153).

Though in terms of "debate" this was it, its context deserves further attention. Howard felt emboldened by the government-commissioned "Fitzgerald Report" of 1988, which had criticized Australia's multiculturalism policy and proposed an immigration policy with "a sharper economic focus," that is, away from family to skill-based selection (Fitzgerald, 1988:xi). Although the Labor government had responded to the Blainey debate by tightening the contested extended family migration and increasing the skill-component (an obvious instance of ethnicity "by subterfuge") (see Birrell and Birrell, 1987:292), about two-thirds of the total intake was still through the family (and refugee) categories. Because of sheer demand, sibling migration represented the biggest growth point within the entire immigration program, increasing from 12,464 in 1983/4 to 32,349 in 1987/8 (Birrell, 1990:3). Despite their marginal population share, six of the eight top sending countries in the sibling category were Asian, the Philippines topping the list in 1987/8 with 5,519 migrants (ibid., p.16). The situation with respect to the spouse/fiancée and parent categories was similar (ibid., ch.4 and 5). Accordingly, not only did Australian immigration remain family-dominated, but also the Asian share of family immigrants continued to increase, from about fifty percent in 1983/4 to sixty percent in 1988/9 (ibid., p.43). This is why Howard's incriminated statement could invoke an association of functional selection category and ethnic group that had been fairly standard since the end of White Australia: "(I)f you have less family reunions, you have less coming from Asia" (in Morita, 1999:114).

While the Fitzgerald Report tapped into the same critique of an immigration program unduly dominated by low-skilled family immigration, its whole point was to reject the old association of selection category and ethnic group. Led by a prominent Asian scholar and diplomat, Steven Fitzgerald, who was certainly not known to be fearful of "too many Asians," the Fitzgerald Report started from the premise that "(r)acism is by no means excised from Australia"--which soon should be powerfully affirmed by the overwhelming popular support for Howard's anti-Asian invective. However, the report's answer to this was precisely "not to halt
immigration from Asian countries or abandon the principle of non-discrimination,” but to give the program a "sharper economic focus", in the hope that the public legitimacy of a large immigration program could be recovered by presenting it as good "for the whole of Australia" and not just for ethnic groups (Fitzgerald, 1988:8f). What Howard's anti-Asian statement and concurrent "One Australia" campaign had ignored was that even after the cutting of the extended family categories Asians would continue to arrive in the skill categories. Prime Minister Hawke rebutted Howard to the point: "To reduce Asian immigration would mean reducing the skill level of the migrant intake...The Opposition simply does not appreciate the extent to which Australia's economic livelihood is now enmeshed with that of Asia..."

Epitomizing its progressively diminishing scale, the third challenge to "too many Asians" was no longer raised from within the political mainstream, but by a populist right-winger shunned by the political establishment. After her surprise capture of a "safe" Labor seat in the federal elections of 1996, the partyless Pauline Hanson said in her infamous parliamentary "maiden speech": "I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians. Between 1984 and 1995, 40 percent of all migrants into this country were of Asian origin. They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate” (quoted in Deutchman and Ellison, 1999:36). Stripped of her Liberal Party membership just before the elections for insensitive remarks about Aborigines, Hanson spoke to an empty chamber. This does not mean that she did not have public support. A 1996 poll showed 53 percent of the public endorsing her call for a reduction of Asian immigration (see Perera and J.Pugliese, 1997:18, fn.21). Nevertheless, by October 1998 her recently founded 'One Nation' party dissolved after faring badly in the federal elections, and the Hanson phenomenon had run its course.

More relevant for our purposes, Hanson's meteoric rise on the political scene only reconfirmed the bipartisan commitment for a nondiscriminatory immigration policy. Now in the capacity of Prime Minister, John Howard declared in parliament that he would "always defend the non-discriminatory character of Australia's immigration policy," and in a Joint Parliamentary Statement of 30 October 1996 the entire House of Representatives "reaffirm(ed) its commitment to maintaining an immigration policy wholly non-discriminatory on grounds of race, colour, creed or origin." This time round there was no bickering about a more "balanced" immigrant intake as during the Blainey debate a decade earlier, and Howard's Immigration Minister, Philip Ruddock (1999:6), declared that "the whole idea of playing around with immigration policy to deliver some particular ethnic composition is to me totally repugnant."

While short-lived and without major effect on Australian immigration policy, the Hanson phenomenon still expressed a "deeper problem," which a commentator aptly identified as the final "dismantling of the post-federation Australian Settlement" (Kelly, 1998:96). This settlement had consisted of the White Australia policy, trade protection, centralized wage arbitration, a paternalistic welfare state, and linkage to the British empire. Since the onset of perceived "globalization" in the late 1980s, also the political-economic dimension of this settlement fell apart, giving way to a commitment to free trade and a general retreat of the state. Moreover, in the hour of the Asian economical miracle, when the Japan-led Pacific emerged as the world's third major economic bloc, and reflecting a continued trend toward dependence on regional trade, "enmeshment" with Asia became the order of the day. So strong was this trend that Australia figured as a lunatically "torn country" in Samuel Huntington's epic of the "clash of civilizations" (1996:151-7). A "torn country," according to Huntington, was one with a
"single predominant culture" yet "its leaders want(ing) to shift it to another civilization"--to the West in the case of Russia or Turkey, but to Asia in the case of Australia.

At the level of political rhetoric, Prime Minister John Howard, not unlike Hanson, has thrown himself against the Asian drift, defending the cause of the marginalized "Aussie battler" against the cosmopolitan elites. However, in terms of actual policies he only continued the dismantling of the old "Australian settlement". While two academics think that under Howard "White Australia...is being effectively reconstituted in the present," (Perera and Pugliese, 1997:5), there is no sign of this in immigration policy. In fact, Howard's immigration policy is the most consequential realization yet of the Fitzgerald Report's demand for a "sharper economic focus." In 1995/6, the last year of the old Labor government under Paul Keating (1993-96), the family component within the (non-humanitarian) migration program had still accounted for 68.7 percent of new immigrants, whereas the skill component amounted to only 29.2 percent; in 2000/1 (to quote the last available figures), this order was reversed, with 55.5 percent of visa in the various skill categories, and 41.5 percent family-related.  

To the degree that extended family reunion still exists, it is now rigorously subordinated to skill factors, as in the new "Skilled Australian Linked" category of 1997 ("Skilled-Australian Sponsored" since 1999). At the same time, widespread fraud in spouse and fiance(e) migration has been countered by imposing waiting periods and enhanced bona fide tests. Finally, and obviously influenced by the parallel welfare cuts for legal immigrants in the United States, the Howard government imposed bonds on Australian residents or citizens sponsoring their relatives abroad, and newcomers were excluded from most welfare and social benefits during the first two years after entry.

There is no doubt that these measures hit hardest on Asian immigrants, and some even furthergoing proposals were blocked on this note in the Senate (Birrell 1996). However, there still was a remarkable absence of charges of ethnic selectivity by subterfuge, simply because Asians were also the major winners in the parallel expansion of skilled immigration. This is especially visible in the inclusive approach toward foreign students graduating at Australian universities, who are in the majority Asian. Throughout the 1980s, Australian governments had subsidized Asian overseas students as a foreign-aid measure. This changed in 1989, when full-fee paying foreign students came to be considered as a "market to be exploited" (Birrell, 1999:55). Responding to a world-wide competition for the "best and brightest", a rule change in 1999 released foreign students who graduated at an Australian university from a twelve-month occupational experience requirement, and allowed them to apply directly for an immigrant visa. This is just a facet in a broad campaign for highly skilled immigration, which recently has also focused on accommodating a growing trend toward temporary skilled migration. In a minimalist reading, the perceived need to master the challenge of "globalization" has chased away all old ethnic sentimentalities. More than that, conservative Immigration Minister Ruddock (1999:6) now views "our cultural diversity" as "one of our strengths as we move into the twenty-first century."

Conclusion

What the Fitzgerald Report (1988) cautiously observed for the case of Australia is true more generally: "(R)acism in many forms pervades our society. It seems, however, that its open institutional articulation in an immigration context is for some reason inhibited, and is perhaps felt
to be unacceptable" (Fitzgerald, 1988:7). Gary Freeman (1995) captured this with the notion of "antipopulist norm." The fact that significant restrictive challenges in the 1980s and the 1990s could not derail nondiscriminatory immigration policies in Australia and the United States confirms Freeman's claim (1995b) that the underlying principle of nondiscrimination has come to be part and parcel of the "ethos" of liberal democracy itself. While the turn to nondiscrimination is of course a "historically specific" (Brubaker, 1995:905) event, occurring in different moments and with different connotations in each state, like a ratchet it is subsequently immune to revision. Retreating from it would immediately be branded as violation of fundamental liberal-democratic norms and be tantamount to a civilisatory break, which may always be possible but then could not be limited to immigration policy.

More concretely, we identified three factors that shore up nondiscriminatory immigration policies. First, backed by international conventions and the constitutions of all liberal states, and as the lingua franca of public discourse in the West, the principle of nondiscrimination has taken on a "doxic" quality (see Bourdieu, 1977:168), whose power is affirmed by the fact that even the opponents of some of its effects have come to subscribe to it. It is the core principle of the global human rights culture that has arisen in response to the Holocaust and received further impetus from the Decolonization of Africa and Asia. Under its rein, the only "restriction" that is allowed in the immigration domain is the cutting of numbers, but never, never the targeting of a specific racial, ethnic, or national-origin group. This has important consequences. Though notionally policing the boundaries and internal composition of domestic society (in conjunction with citizenship law), immigration policy has lost its dimension of particularist nation-building that it once had under the auspices of the "high modernist" state (see Scott 1998). Then it was undisputed that immigrants should be selected according to their proximity to the predominant ethnic character of the receiving society. Now the only option a liberal state has is the negative option of closing all (new-seed) immigration; if such a state ventures new immigration, there is nothing it can do to prevent the ethnic transformation of domestic society. This is the lesson of the United States after 1965 and of Australia after 1973, and of contemporary European states too.

Secondly, the increasing skill level of third-world migrants (especially from Asia) has undermined the possibility of ethnic selectivity "by subterfuge", that is, the manipulation of non-ethnic skill and family selection categories to achieve a desired ethnic result. This was especially demonstrated by the case of Australia, whose recent turn to a resolutely skill-focused immigration policy is tantamount to the further "Asianization" of society, notably under a conservative Liberal Party government that had in the past expressed some resentment about this trend. As one commentator aptly summarized the dilemma of ethnic foes: "(T)hose who are opposed to any pronounced increase in an Asian presence must renounce the principles of skill, language and youth and quite frankly accept a quota system based on race, color and creed." This is not to say that there are not other ways of doing ethnic selectivity by subterfuge, but it is increasingly disfunctional not just in terms of violating domestic and international norms, but of harming the material interests of states in the age of globalization.

Thirdly, an additional mechanism of shoring up nondiscriminatory immigration policies, one that is specific to settler states, is these states' instantly mobilizeable memory of their racist pasts. The politics of memory has been a potent force of consolidating democracy in formerly fascist states (see Buruma 1994). Though at appositely smaller scale, a quite similar dynamics is
at play in the knee-jerk shunning of negative race discrimination in settler states, which becomes instantly applied to positive discrimination too (at least if the latter targets Europeans). Diversity immigration in the United States, a smallish measure of positive discrimination for Irish and other European immigrant groups who had lost out after 1965, became immediately couched by its critics as a rebirth of the maligned national-origin quota, even though the thrust of the latter had not been positive but negative (in terms of excluding south-eastern Europeans). In fact, diversity immigration became only tolerable once its European tilt was completely eradicated, within the "underrepresented country" formula.

Notably absent from this inductive list is the factor most often cited when explaining the resilience of nondiscriminatory and expansive immigration policies: "path dependence" (e.g., Tichenor 2002; for Europe, see Hansen 2002). While the inert consequences of past choices are incontrovertible, in immigration as in any other policy, their impact should not be overrated. In line with recent revisionist citizenship and immigration scholarship (especially Smith 1993), Daniel Tichenor (2002:293f) argues that America's "multiple traditions" provide the possibility of nondiscriminatory or racially discriminatory immigration policies; only "path dependence", in terms of "immigrant voting blocs and competitive elections" (p.295), has helped consolidate the former after 1965, containing racist possibilities that always lurk around the corner. The fact that all Western states lastingly abandoned discriminatory immigration policies at about the same time, and under highly variegated domestic circumstances, suggests that factors other than contingent "path dependence" must be held responsible for this outcome--such as the doxic quality of the nondiscrimination norm. The presence of former immigrants in the electorate as such does not prejudice the nature of immigration policy. Note that before the 1960s civil rights rupture Hispanic immigrant organizations in the U.S., such as the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), had heartily supported restrictive immigration policies that targeted their illegal co-ethnics (see Garcia, 1989:59).

Whatever the precise mechanisms that shore up nondiscriminatory immigration policies, it has to be conceded that the source-country universalism envisaged by them is generically incomplete. Facial non-ethnic immigration policies will always have disparate impacts on different ethnic groups. As Hiroshi Motomura (1996:1941) put it with respect to the U.S., "(e)qual protection does not necessarily lead to equal outcomes." Accordingly, a charge that ethnic favouritism or racism is driving facially universalist immigration policies can always be made. If even the uniform country quota in U.S. legal immigration policy constitute "discrimination" against the would-be immigrants from populous (non-European) states (such as Mexico or the Philippines), as some critics have argued (most lucidly Ting 1995), then the very possibility of nondiscrimination and source-country universalism is indeed in question.

More seriously still, the claim for the "resilience" of nondiscriminatory immigration policies seems to be refuted by the widespread national-origin "profiling" that especially the United States has resorted to after the terrorist attacks of September 2001. In response to this, visa applications by adult male natives of designated Muslim countries were subjected to special scrutiny, the Patriot Act required this target group to register with the immigration authorities when visiting or residing non-permanently in the US, and to be fingerprinted and photographed at the point of entry; most recently, asylum-seekers from Iraq and 32 other designated Muslim countries are automatically detained. "There is a propensity in this administration," argued a critic of the last measure, "to establish blanket policies that prejudice guilt based on country of"
origin...Those countries of origin are all Arab or Muslim countries, and it's sending the wrong message.  

Deplorable as such national-origin profiling may be from a liberal point of view, it does not amount to "ethnic selectivity" in the sense discussed in this article (see endnote 1). Note that only a specific age group and sex is targeted by most of these measures, whose rationale is not to exclude certain ethnics qua ethnics but to identify potential terrorists. These measures are based on the simple statistical fact that terrorists are concentrated in certain populations. If women, children, or the aged are excluded from these measures, one cannot reasonably argue that a generalized animus against "Muslims" is driving them. Furthermore, if one compares the mass internment of Japanese-origin American citizens and permanent residents (whatever their sex or age) after Pearl Harbour with the rather differentiated response to September 11, one sees the difference between a policy that really discriminates and a policy that operates on and is constrained by the premise of nondiscrimination.
Endnotes

1. Here and in the following I use the notion of "ethnically selective" immigration policies as umbrella term for immigration policies that screen newcomers according to ethnicity, race, or national-origins, and that are driven by the assumption that these markers make them intrinsically worthy or non-worthy to be accepted.

2. On both sides this debate has slid between arguments about the limits of "discourse" and about the conceivable range of laws and policies in a liberal democracy. However, at heart I consider it a debate about the connection between both: only what can be legitimately said stands a chance of being cast into a law or policy.

3. An explanation of nondiscriminatory immigration policy in terms of a "civic" nationhood legacy is especially popular in the United States, where it has framed the crucial immigration reform of 1965 (for a classic statement, see Kennedy 1964).

4. The "nation of immigrants" logo was cautiously adopted in a government brochure issued at the tail-end of the White Australia policy (Lynch 1971:17), but it never really took off.

5. Ample evidence for this association of functional selection category and ethnic group can be found in the debate surrounding the 1990 Legal Immigration Act in the United States (see Schuck 1992); in Australia it framed immigration debates until the late 1980s (see Betts 1988).

6. Spain formally discriminates in favour of "Hispanic", Portugal of "Lusophone", and France of "Francophone" immigrants; and Germany pursues an active "return" policy for ethnic German Aussiedler. In addition, almost all postcommunist east European states have preference schemes for co-ethnics without citizenship abroad.

7. Most notably the as of today unrepealed, race-tainted "plenary power" doctrine that exempts the executive from judicial control in immigration policy (see Chin 1998).


10. The Irish Immigration Reform Movement, formed in 1986, was centrally involved in shaping all the various incarnations of diversity quotas between 1986 and 1990 (see Jacobs 1992). In Congress, the major pro-Irish players were Brian Donnelly in the House, and Edward Kennedy in the Senate (both Democrats from Massachusetts).

11. This is not to say that the Irish Immigration Reform Movement (IIRM) did not have its hand also at the permanent diversity program. Its influence shows in the doubling of Ireland into Northern Ireland (which is politically a part of the United Kingdom) and the Irish Republic, which assures the Irish a special advantage also with respect to the "underrepresented country" formula. As IIRM's chief lobbyist characterized the program, it was "not quite as neutral as it seems" (quoted in Jacobs, 1992:318).

12. The two countries that received the most visas in 2001 were Ghana (6.333) and Nigeria (5.989) (Migration News 9(7), July 2002, p.4).

13. See the statement by Mark Everson (INS), in: Senate Immigration Hearings 1987, p.82.


15. Simpson statement, in ibid., p.3.
16. "(C)ontrary to popular belief, the point system in the Senate bill offers almost no solace to the IIRM and other nationality groups which share our plight" (Donald Martin, Irish Immigration Reform Movement, in: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 100th Congress, 1st Session on S.358, H.R.672, H.R.2448, and H.R.2646, 1989-90; the quote is from part 1, p.219; the hearings are henceforth referred to as House Immigration Hearings 1990).

17. Note, however, that the original choice for a family-dominated immigration policy in 1965 had been in the intention to minimize the possibility of ethnic change, thus constituting an instance of (pro-European) ethnic selectivity "by subterfuge" (see Reimers 1983); only after Hispanics and Asians pirated the family quota did the call for more skilled and European immigration come to be equated.

18. Especially the Irish Immigration Reform Movement (IIRM), which was the only ethnic group without a stake in the family quota, sought to prevent the wrath of the other (Asian and Hispanic) ethnic groups by stressing the additive (rather than substitutive) nature of diversity immigration. See the statement by David Martin (IIRM), in: House Immigration Hearings 1990, part 1, p.270.


25. On the politicians' side, liberal Democrats Edward Kennedy and Daniel Moynihan (see above); on the experts' side, for instance, Michael Teitelbaum, one of America's most quick-witted immigration experts (who argued that the 1965 reforms unintentionally "discriminate(d) against would-be immigrants from Europe and Africa, and discriminate(d) in favor of immigrants from Asia and Latin America", in: House Immigration Hearings 1989, part 1, p.389).


27. Ibid., p.161.


31. Interestingly, the shift from skill- to family-focused immigrant selection was justified in economic terms, namely "that in times of economic recession our first commitment would be to honour responsibilities to those migrants already in Australia" (Immigration Minister West, "Migration Program 1983-84: Ministerial Statement," Australia Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 7 March 1984, p.640).

32. The quotes are from "Migration Program 1983-84: Ministerial Statement," op.cit., pp.640 and 643. The Immigration Minister's rebuttal of a "deliberate Asianisation" of the immigration
program was given shortly before the Blainey intervention; the latter only brought to the open what had been a latent opposition charge against Hawke's Labour government since its arrival in 1983.

33.. "In relation to family reunion,...there is bipartisanship", said the Shadow Immigration Minister Hodgman, in: Australian Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 30 May 1984, p.2469. With respect to refugee resettlement, the opposition even criticized the (politically motivated) "diversification" of source countries (which now included El Salvador and Chile) under Hawke. Ibid., p.2472f.

34.. Mr.Hodgman (Shadow Immigration Minister), Australian Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 8 May 1984, p.2008.

35.. Mr.Hodgman (Shadow Immigration Minister), Australian Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 30 May 1984, p.2472.

36.. Shadow Prime Minister Peacock: "What he (the immigration minister) has to do is not reduce the Asian element...but redress the imbalance by increasing the European element that has been allowed to slip..." (Australian Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 8 May 1984, p.2028).

37.. This was revealed by the same Gallup Poll that had shown the public in opposition to increased Asian immigration ("Migrant poll shock," The Herald, 19 May 1984, op.cit.).

38.. "Asian entry threatens tolerance: Blainey," The Age, 19 March 1984 (reprinted in Singer 1984). Only in this indirect way the notion of "Asianisation" slipped into the debate; Blainey had never himself used it.

39.. Though he never officially retracted his one-time gaffe, the ostracized Howard would later admit: "If I had the opportunity to rephrase something I have said in my political career, I would rephrase that" (in Betts, 1999:287).

40.. It must be pointed out that in numerical terms the leading recipient of sibling visa between 1985 and 1988 were the United Kingdom and Ireland (Birrell 1990:18); however, this was only due to their vastly bigger population share.

41.. A national telephone poll found a staggering 77 percent of respondents in agreement with Howard's statement that "Asian immigration to Australia should be slowed down" (see Betts, 1999:293).

42.. This rebuttal appeared in The Age, 9 September 1988 (it is partially reprinted in Lack and Templeton (1995:244-248).


44.. Quoted in National Multicultural Advisory Council (1999).

45.. If there was any "Hansen effect" at all, it was that "her targeting of Asian migration made it more difficult to review migration issues rationally" (Birrell, 1996:58), and some early measures of the incoming Howard government to tighten family reunion were stalled as a result.


47.. In 1971, east and south-east Asia had taken 39 percent of Australia's exports and provided 21 percent of imports; by 1994, these figures had increased to 62 and 41 percent,
respectively (Huntington, 1996:151).


49. In 2000-01, ten of the eleven leading source countries of foreign students were Asian, and they accounted for 56 percent of all student visa granted (the only leading non-Asian source country was the United States, which received nine percent, and thus just ranked just behind the number one source country, China, which received ten percent of visa that year) (see DIMIA 2002, p.44).

50. In this category, the Asian component is less preponderant but still significant (see DIMIA 2002:48f).

51. Family migration and asylum-seekers cannot be stopped on liberal principles--this is why Western Europe after the recruitment stop in the early 1970s continued to be immigrant-receiving.

52. One could of course argue that the European Union internal free movement regime is a large-scale arrangement of positive national-origin discriminations, launched to minimize the ethnic transformation of European societies. This is conspiracy reasoning that ignores the economic origins of the European project, as well as the non-intentional "spill-over" logic that carries it further.


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DIMIA. See: Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs.


