Bordering (on) Racism
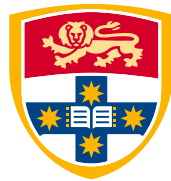
Migration, Division, and Consent in Australia

By

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This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of another degree or diploma in any university, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due references is made in the text of the thesis.

DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, on whose country I lived and breathed throughout this thesis. Their fight against the brutal imposition of a border erected to exclude them from their own country, ongoing since day one of colonialism, remains an inspiration for all who challenge the colonial border which delineates 'Australia'.

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This thesis owes its existence to you.

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ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ABF	Australian Border Force
AEI	Australian Education International
ALP	Australian Labor Party
CFMEU	Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union
FWO	Fair Work Ombudsman
MFP	Multi-Function Polis
MUA	Maritime Union of Australia
NUMAS	Numerical Multifactor Assessment System
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PR	Permanent Residency
SSCEE	Senate Standing Committees on Education and Employment
SPERL	Strategy Policy and Research in Education Limited
SIEV	Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel
SMH	Sydney Morning Herald
SMW	Student Migrant Worker
SSAS	Structured Selection Assessment System
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WAP	White Australia Policy
WHM	Working Holiday Maker

A ustralia's border is marked by extremes of incorporation and exclusion. Australia leads the world in cruelty to refugees. It is unique in mandatorily and indefinitely detaining asylum seekers (Menadue et al., 2011: 31). It locks up refugees on remote islands in the Pacific, in conditions that amount to torture (Mendez, 2015: 9). These cramped, hot, and degrading camps have claimed nine lives since 2014. That is not to speak of the rape of women, sexual assault of children, or the high incidences of self-harm. Yet this sits side by side the mass inclusion of migrants. Australia's overseas-born population is among the highest in the world relative to population (OECD, 2017). Permanent migration brings almost 200 000 migrants into the workings of Australian capitalism each year. The stock of temporary migrants in Australia meanwhile nears two million. There is a contradiction in the border—between incorporation and exclusion.

For Marx (1976a: 103), "the movement of capitalist society is full of contradictions". At its base, capitalist social relations are founded on contradictions between use-vale and exchange-value, capital and labour, wealth and value, public and private. He mocks the attempts of bourgeois economists to "explain away the contradictions" (Marx, 1976a: 209). Ollman (2003: 84–5) suggests that contradictions are driven by five movements: mutual support, mutual undermining, immanent unfolding, metamorphosis, and resolution.

Incorporation and exclusion operate through these movements. They are mutually supportive. Implicit to every included migrant, is the exclusion of unknown others who failed to fit the hierarchy of eligibility. Likewise, exclusion is ever predicated on incorporation—boatpeople are vilified for 'sneaking' through the 'back door' and not entering 'the right way'. But so too do they undermine one another. In attempting to make visible the exclusion of refugees, politicians galvanise opposition to migration in general. Likewise, the inclusion of migrants does not have the automatic effect of creating racism. Rather, the incorporation of migrants into workplaces holds the potential

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of interpersonal friendship and inter-racial solidarity. Understood as a contradiction, incorporation and exclusion will not tend to cancel out one another, but rather immanently unfold, increasing in volume and intensity. This description fits the Australian border perfectly, with the contradiction unfolding necessarily in opposite directions— towards the mass incorporation of almost two million temporary migrants, alongside a refugee regime growing ever crueller. Capital's requirement for skilled and unskilled labour has been realised through modulations in the incorporation-exclusion relation. Unfortunately for those under the border regime, any resolution of the border relation seems all too far away.

This contradiction between incorporation and exclusion lies deep in the Australian border. The reasons that Australia includes migrants has been relatively well theorised— Australia gains when workers come to Australia. Neoclassical economists estimate a world of open borders could precipitate increases to world GDP of 50—150 per cent (Clemens, 2011: 84). Australia's economy is buoyed by mass inclusion. What is less well theorised is what explains the exclusion of migrants.

And Australia's border is dripping with exclusion. The permanent migration program is predicated on the exclusion of the 'wrong' migrants. Those that are incorporated into Australia still experience structural and interpersonal exclusion in the form of racism. Temporary migrants are excluded from whole swathes of Australian life— they may not vote, they are denied full working rights. Those that breach these conditions face the threat of deportation. And no group is more viscerally excluded than refugees, who are imprisoned in offshore prison camps on Pacific islands. Exclusion saturates the border.

This thesis aims to address a question at the heart of the border: Why does the Australian state close its borders to migrants whose labour could benefit capital? What explains this exclusion so prominent across the border?

Framework

This thesis utilises a relational framework to understand the border. For Marx, capital is not "a thing, but a social relation between persons which is mediated through things" (Marx, 1976a: 932). Poulantzas extends this, arguing the state is not an "intrinsic entity" but "rather a relationship of forces" (Poulantzas, 1978: 128–9). The two are

understood as relations inextricably bound together. This thesis conceptualises the border as a sub-relation within the state relation. It is thus not a fixed thing, but a social relation that is constantly rendered "into seemingly fixed and stable thing-like realities with a semblance of objectivity, durability and intrinsic power" (De Genova, 2016). In its thing-like guise, the border appears as a line on a map delineating inside and outside. Ostensibly, it merely lets in some, and blocks entry to others. However, understood as relation, the border encompasses more than line.

Border-as-relation acts as filter, mould, and ideology. Borders do function as filters at one level. There is, for example, a huge disparity between the border experience of a United States businessman and a refugee. However, Anderson et al. (2009: 6) argue that borders are "better analysed as moulds" than filters. People do not merely pass through borders unaffected. Their relationship with others, with the state, and with capital are fundamentally shaped in the process. Border regimes frequently impose conditions on people making those crossings, for example with visa laws. Indeed, one doesn't even need to cross a border to have its impact felt. Refugees and would-be-migrants are keenly aware of the difficulties and problems of border crossings well before they get anywhere near them. Moreover, the ideological moment of the border shapes domestic workers' conception of themselves and the nation. This is affected by the border's concrete and rhetorical operation, which is often either implicitly or explicitly racially discriminatory. The border has a key role in constructing the conception of national divisions. To cite the Australian Border Force (ABF, 2017):

> "We consider the border not to be a purely physical barrier separating nation states, but a complex continuum stretching offshore and onshore, including the overseas, maritime, physical border and domestic dimensions of the border."

The border is more than just a membrane; it shapes migrants and ideologically conditions all workers.

Border and capital are inextricably linked. This capital relation does not contain within itself the conditions for its own reproduction. It requires the state to provide education and healthcare, and it requires the gendered reproduction of workers in the household. These necessary conditions for the reproduction of capitalism are not mediated through the value form itself—through value valorising itself. Rather they exist

as a basic meta-relation: capitalist production logically entails the reproductive frameworks that uphold it. This meta-relation is reproduced with capitalism and sits at the base of the social formation (Jessop, 2002: 16). This thesis suggests that the border forms a key support for capital accumulation. But what role does the border play? What does it support?

Thesis Structure

This thesis argues that at its deepest level, the Australian border's dynamic of exclusion is predicated on a racist division of the working class. It argues that the border relation acts to secure consent, through a process of hegemony. The divisions of race and nation are not timeless and automatic features of people's consciousness. Rather, they are continually produced and replicated with capital's self-expansion. This thesis argues that borders have a key role in rendering these divisions from theory to the "common sense" of the working class (Gramsci, 1996: 433). By enacting divisions in the working class, rhetorically and concretely, borders ensure that the global proletariat is divided by nation. It makes this argument through four chapters.

Chapter one reviews the literature on Australia's border, arguing that authors fail to grasp the border's contradiction between exclusion and incorporation. It considers the attempts of conservative, liberal, pluralist and Marxist theorists to understand Australia's border. It posits that the literature has attempted to grasp the contradiction either by one horn or neither, and thus struggles to explain the contradictory tendencies of the border.

Chapter two advances a political economic approach that grasps the contradiction across the border. It introduces three key themes of explanation in Marxist theorisations of borders: reserve army, superexploitation, and division. It argues that the three explanations are mutually internal, but that at its deepest level, racial divisions precede the significance of reserve army and superexploitation

Chapter three applies this to Australia's refugee program, which provides a clear example of the border's ideological function in division. This chapter examines the main pillars of refugee policy: mandatory detention, offshore processing, and militarised nationalism. It argues that the rhetorical focus of refugee policy has been domestic rather than foreign, that the continual stream of anti-refugee sentiment has had a structural

impact on class struggle, and that anti-refugee racism is related to anti-migrant racism in general.

Chapter four uses the three explanations offered in chapter two as a lens to investigate the major features of Australia's border: the permanent program, 457 visas, international students, and working holiday makers. It argues that each component is marked by the concrete and rhetorical division of workers. The Australian border divides workers through a long process of producing 'common sense' racism. Secondly, it argues that the operation of the border itself relies on the racism it helps produce.

This thesis concludes that Australia's border is deeply characterised by racism, which operates across the border. It notes that specific programs serve various functions important to explaining them. But abstracting across the border relation as a whole, racism is the key presupposition explaining the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion. This underlying process is a powerful moment of the hegemony that secures for capital the consent of labour.

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EXPLAINING AWAY THE CONTRADICTION: THEORISING THE AUSTRALIAN BORDER

Colonial Australia's border has been characterised by a deep contradiction for the duration of its existence. It has been defined by efforts to include new workers, but simultaneously denigrate a swathe of potential workers. Efforts to import early workers coexisted with a brutal war against Australia's First Peoples. Ruling class fears of Asian invasion, embodied in the White Australia Policy (WAP), sat alongside historically high immigration rates. Today, Australia has one of the world's highest relative migrant intakes, and leads the world in anti-refugee brutality. But this chapter argues this contradiction between inclusion and denigration has not been sufficiently theorised.

This chapter surveys the literature attempting to explain the refugee and migration programs, considering the major liberal, conservative, pluralist and Marxist accounts. It argues that the prevailing literature has failed to grasp the contradiction as a whole. First, it considers explanations of incorporation, which attribute its existence to respectively: state, non-state, and economic motivations. Second, it examines explanations for exclusion, considering racial, political, and departmental accounts. This chapter argues that each approach attempts to evade the contradiction, and thus fails to comprehend it in its entirety. This leads theorists to essentialise the phenomenon to some feature or other, which fails to explain the structural production of countervailing tendencies towards incorporation and exclusion.

Theorising Incorporation

Attempts to theorise the border's incorporative moment have failed to grasp the exclusion inherent to it. The three main conceptions of incorporation are: state motivation, non-state motivation, and economic motivation. Theorists who ascribe incorporation to state motivation, divorced from economic motivation, are drawn to conspiratorial and idealist accounts which fail to explain actual migration policy. Theorists who argue that non-state actors have supplanted the state as determinants of border policy find limited empirical support for the position, and fail to theorise the state's role in exclusion. Theorists who place economic motivation as main driver of inclusion are led to posit purely political motivations for border closure. This struggles to explain the continuity and seemingly structural nature of exclusion. Each explanation fails to grasp the border contradiction.

State Motivation: Essentialising Racism

Conservative accounts emphasise the exclusionary moment of the border, and fail to theorise incorporation. In essentialising racism and cultural difference, they portray the dynamic of incorporation as an end-in-itself, or attribute it to a purportedly powerful 'ethnic lobby'. Conservative theorists argue for a reduction in the immigration program, not simply because it is rational, but because it is democratic. Pro-immigration activists are an "intelligentsia... anxious to distinguish themselves" from those of "working- or lower-middle-class origins" (Betts, 1996: 14). Conservative theorists regard their remarks as representative of the silent majority of Australians—fondly called "lower-class parochials" (Betts, 1999: 3). This is sometimes used to justify the inclusion of racist proclamations. Blainey (1984: 14–6) writes:

> "Slogans appeared in large letters on many walls in the older Australian suburbs:
> STOP THE ASIAN INVASION
> ASIANS GO HOME
> These warning signs were ignored in Canberra"

Racism is conceived as endemic to ordinary Australians, and conservative theorists are cast as representing them.

This theory struggles to describe increases in the migration program. Assuming Australia is broadly democratic, large cuts to the immigration program become the "only response possible" (R. Birrell & Betts, 1988: 264). Yet the immigration program continues to facilitate the incorporation of migrants in increasing numbers, despite the purportedly ubiquitous anti-migrant sentiment of the working class.

Explanations of the tendency towards incorporation are heavily undertheorised, frequently verging on the conspiratorial. Geoffrey Blainey's (1984: 7) infamous condemnation of Australian multiculturalism typifies this, using an extended analogy of a "secret room", existing "[u]nknown to the public, unknown probably to the parliament", in which "are devised plans that run counter to the immigration principles announced to parliament". This invokes a quasi-conspiratorial conception of the real workings of immigration policy. Other accounts regard migration as end-in-itself. Immigration's "economic benefits" are portrayed as a façade disguising the "prime goal" of policymakers: increasing the migrant intake (R. Birrell & Betts, 1988: 262) Policymakers attempt to "mute" the democratic discussion of immigration and "defuse opposition" by cynically "recommending an economically oriented, nationalist program" (R. Birrell & Betts, 1988: 264).

The group behind this drive is purportedly a powerful 'ethnic lobby'. The migration program is "driven by ethnic lobbying rather than by rational analysis" (Betts, 2003: 174). A minority of influential "ethnic lobbyists" (Betts, 2003: 187), and "ethnic press and politicians" (R. Birrell & Betts, 1988: 261) are said to have formed a powerful "alliance of academics and ethnics" and taken hold of policymakers (Blainey, 1984: 13). The thesis that an ethnic lobby has been the primary driver is faulty. 'Ethnic lobbies' have "invariably" pushed for high family migration, and have typically been "apprehensive" about increases to skilled migration (Stilwell, 1987: 49). But immigration policy has moved from family reunion to an emphasis on skilled migration. Ethnic pressure fails to predict actual migration policy trends.

Liberal theorists are often drawn to idealism, tending to essentialise state motivations. Idealism conceives of the border as a consequence of the ideas of public officials, and politicians. Jupp (2007: 7) emphasises the extent to which immigration policy is "influenced by ideologies". The spread of neo-classical economics in the 1980s-90s "strongly influenced" Hawke-Keating era policy (Jupp, 1998: 164). While politicians and economists were probably often educated and exposed to such ideas, this approach has some limitations. Neoclassical economics has been existence since the 1930s (Wolff

& Resnick, 2012: 53–4); its prominence in the immigration department requires further explanation. Moreover, the policy prescriptions of neo-classical economics are for increases and deregulation of the migration program. However, the actual changes of the Hawke-Keating governments did not reflect this. As will be described in chapter four, the policy was of a re-regulation of the migration program, with a plethora of rules, visas, and points coming to further define entry. The Hawke-Keating era was also characterised by large temporary cuts to the immigration program during recessions. Though ideology may have been important, there is clearly more to be explained.

Non-state Motivation: W(h)ither the state

Some theorists place the dynamics of inclusion largely on the autonomous decision making of migrants, their families, or cultural networks. They either fail to sufficiently consider the actions of the state, or argue that it has lost prominence in migrant networks. Such approaches fail to capture state exclusion of migrants.

Neo-classical and rational choice explanations of migration are neither prominent nor successful in migration research. Some use individual factors to examine the decision making structures of some classes of migrants (Kline, 2003; Yang, 2007). However, it does not serve very well as an explanation of systemic factors decisive in changing migration regimes. The characteristic 'push-pull' explanations tend to focus on individual decision-making. These theories perform very poorly in predicting the actual decisions made by migrants, which are heavily influenced by historical and communal connections (Castles, Haas, et al., 2014: 30–1). However, other decision-based approaches are more popular.

Pluralist theorists disavow the possibility of a single coherent theoretical treatment of migration (Portes, 1997: 810–2; Castles, 2007: 365–6). They argue that systemic changes in migration regimes necessitates a focus on factors less centred about the state. These various changes are grouped under an underlying trend of 'globalisation' (Castles, 1996; Castles et al., 1994). Castles et al. (2013: 116) claim that "employers, markets, families and informal networks... may have as much influence as governments in shaping who moves, how and when", questioning whether there exists a "large pool of people with the requisite skills and labour market characteristics who want to come to Australia, so that the Australian government and employers can pick and choose" anymore. Castles (2013: 116) also claims that "new means of transport and

communication make border control much more difficult" (see also Castles, Vasta, et al., 2014: 116). These changes purportedly make the state less relevant.

However, the Australian state still plays the dominant role in much of the migration. Tightly regulated caps in the permanent migration program allow the state to determine migrant numbers. The points system, which assesses eligibility for Australian residency by scored criteria, allows the state to shape a selection of characteristics of those coming to Australia, including English-speaking ability, age, and qualifications. While various networks, markets, and individual decision-making clearly affects which particular individuals go where, this does not change the fact that the state has a decisive role in choosing how many people migrate, how they are assessed as eligible for entry, the terms on which they come, and the visa conditions to which they are subjected if they do come. The claim that the pool of migrants is dissipating is not well evidenced. The state has not struggled to fill its migration quota yet. There is also little evidence that technology is making it harder for states to control their borders. Indeed, the immigration department is utilising new technology to make that control even more extensive. Brennan (2007: 97) terms the system of computerised processing of migrants an "electronic offshore border". At the time of writing, the government announced a $10 million satellite program which aims to help detect asylum seeker boats (Borys, 2017). Investigating the personal motivations of migrants is a limited approach. Particularly in Australia, the state still plays the primary role in border control.

Economic Motivation: Bisecting the contradiction?

Many theorists see incorporation as a positive economic force. Yet they are still confronted by the contradiction between incorporation and exclusion. Freeman (1995: 882) notes the contradiction between increasing "conflicts over immigration" and "an expansionary bias". For Jupp (2007: 197), the expansion of migration and the policy of multiculturalism has been "driven with the brake on". Tavan (2006: 8) argues there is "an inherent paradox about Australian immigration policy": the Howard government oversaw both cruelty to refugees and mass increases in Asian migration. Liberal theorists describe a dichotomy of motivations—positing an economic driver to increase immigration, and a political driver to decrease it. But this leads to further problems. If the government wants to increase immigration, then it should be driven to limit its "social costs" by discouraging racism (Walsh, 2011: 864). But instead it seems to cynically stoke racism through its refugee program. Each year, and under each new government, policy

is marked by mass inclusion, and cruelty to refugees. Liberal theorists cannot offer a structural explanation for the continual production of this contradiction.

Marxists too have attempted to bisect the contradiction between incorporation and exclusion. Seeing the economic benefits of incorporation, some portray anti-Asian racism as contrary to the needs of Australian capital, necessitating a shift to anti-Islamic racism. Bradley and Minns (2015: 130) argue that Howard's attempt to tap the "rich populist vein" of anti-Asian racism as Liberal leader in 1988 was thwarted for this reason. They draw attention to the statements of key business groups such as the Confederation of Australian Industry, and interviews with Liberal MPs indicating Howards immigration stance was the reason he lost the leadership (see Kelly, 2008: 425–8). Anti-Islamic racism is thus a way to satisfy both the function of populist anti-immigration rhetoric and the need to satisfy business interests. This, they argue, has led to the widespread use of "dog-whistling" rhetoric: concealed racism masquerading as politically acceptable discourse (Bradley & Minns, 2015: 132).

This theory divides racism between the refugee and migration programs. Bradley and Minns (2015) see racism as beneficial in the refugee program and harmful in the migration program. Therefore, harmful anti-Asian racism can be diverted into the refugee program. However, this fails to take account of the exclusion in the migration sphere. The rhetoric and practice of politicians still perpetuates anti-Asian racism in the migration program (e.g. P. C. Manning, 2004). For example, similar 'dog-whistling' rhetoric is directed against temporary migrant workers, and permanent migrants. The tendency to regard racism as discretely promulgated through the refugee program alone is not convincing. Bradley and Minns (2015: 135) themselves note the "strong correlation between anti-immigrant sentiment and opposition to asylum seekers". Attempting to bisect exclusion and incorporation fails to understand both.

Theorising Exclusion

Theorisations of the exclusionary moment of the border attempt to explain the processes of racism, but often end up decontextualizing it, divorcing from the structures that create it. The three main explanations of exclusion are: race, politics, and department. Those who regard the exclusionary moment of the border as a result of race tend to decontextualize the process of racism. They comprehend racism as static thing and fail to grasp racism and the exclusion it purportedly explains. Theorists who regard exclusion as result of political motive grasp the contradiction by the exclusionary horn. But

they conceive of exclusion as a contingent and individual phenomenon, which struggles to explain its predominance. Finally, those who regard exclusion as result of departmental action tend to essentialise the exclusionary moment, and fail to capture the fact that politicians rhetorically stoke racist sentiment. Each explanation is unsuccessful in theorising the mutual internality of incorporation and exclusion.

Racial Motivation: rational and natural

One line of thought portrays racism as a rational, or semirational, response from workers, since migration is said to run counter to their interests. Betts (1996: 19) argues people are rationally "worried about job competition and about increasing levels of cultural diversity". Opposition to immigration is thus conceived as the rational response to migration policy. Any changes in public opinion are "most[ly]" attributable to changes in government policy (Betts, 2002: 26). Increases in anti-migrant sentiment come from a policy that is letting in more and more 'Asians'. Decreases in anti-migration sentiment is the exception to the rule which must be explained. Betts (2002) suggests that these occurrences can mostly be explained by governments making conservative policy prescriptions: restrictions of access to migrant welfare, decreases in family migration or planning levels, and anti-multiculturalism. Such policies are seen to appease a population that wishes to limit the excesses of migration.

Some pluralist and Marxist thinkers also regard racism as rational. For Collins (2008: 252), while elites have been pro-immigration, the working class has "not been as enthusiastic". This situates racism as originating in the ideas of Australians. Williams (2007: 10) suggests that since migrants increase unemployment, immigration is contrary to the interests of the working class. Zappala and Castles (1998: 274) construct immigration policy as a result of "class conflict" between employers who wish to increase immigration and unions who wish to decrease it. For Castles (1996: 41), workers are "threatened" by immigration as it degrades their conditions. Thus anti-immigrant sentiment has a "semirational genesis", as employers bring in "cheaper and more abundant labour" (Castles, 1990: 19). However, none provide evidence for their claims that migration degrades the domestic working class. Castles et al. (1998: 55) even admit that there is no evidence linking immigration to decreases in wages, conditions, or employment. On empirical grounds then, the 'semirational' opposition is recast as 'irrational'. Racism is not the sound response to immigration as ruling class assault, but rather an instance of bourgeois hegemony, transmuting worries about wages, conditions, or employment into fruitless intra-class division.

A related line of reasoning regards racism as a natural, or automatic, response to migration. Australians are said to "define themselves as members of a national community possessing identifiable and distinctive national traits" (R. Birrell & Betts, 1988: 265). Thus any "influx of Asians" inflames passions because they are "seen as manifestly different in race and culture" (R. Birrell & Betts, 1988: 265). Freeman, likewise, argues that immigration naturally breeds its own opposition (Freeman, 1995: 886). For Phillips and Spinks (2013a: 6), opposition to refugees is a natural result of increasing numbers of refugee boats coming. Jupp (2007: 197) suggests that racism "reflect[s] the upbringing and collective culture" of a generation that lived under White Australia, arguing this undercurrent of "xenophobia, assimilationism and lack of tolerance" explains the refugee program.

Understandings of racism as natural or rational struggle to explain actual trends in racist sentiment. There is little evidence of correlation between people with high immigrant contact and the reaction of racism (Dunn, 2003). The thesis that racism is merely a generational issue doesn't accord with the persistence of racism (Markus, 2016). Rather, racism ebbs and flows, often most influenced by media. Likewise, government policy does not engender racism in the way conservative theorists suggest; anti-immigrant rhetoric tends to inflame rather than quell public opposition. Betts admits the theory is undermined by periods of high-immigration with little public backlash. But she suggests in response that "many Australians may be unaware of the recent increases in the intake" (Betts, 2002: 28). This caveat betrays a flaw in the conservative account of racism—Australians typically know very little about the intricacies of Australia's migration program. Anti-migrant sentiment is much more a function of media reporting on the issue, often dominated by political manoeuvring. Jupp (1995: 219) notes that opposition to immigration is "hard to gauge because media coverage revives the story from time to time and by doing so encourages public reaction otherwise remain dormant". Moreover, "public opinion polling does not show immigration to be a major concern when media campaigns are in progress" (Jupp, 1995: 219). This undynamic conception of racism fails to comprehend the varying prominence of racism. While there is latent racism in Australian society, it forms a poor causal explanation for policy due to the fact its prominence is linked with media presentations.

This de-contextualisation of racism from media and political sources is key. Media sensationalism about migration is commonplace in Australia. Blainey (cited in Gardiner-Garden, 1993: 17) describes one speech where he argued that Australia's immigration gives "preference to a tiny ethnic minority of its population", that 'Asians' were taking

jobs, and threatening Western values of democracy and freedom of speech (see Milne & Shergold, 1984). After asking a firm to provide him with any clippings about the speech, Blainey (1984: 27) received "so many clippings—a brown-paper package full of them every few days—that I have given up hope of reading them all". Anti-immigrant discourse receives a disproportionate hearing in Australia's media.

Betts (1999) doubts the significance of surveys and interviews about racism, with people fearing the charge of 'political incorrectness' and thus feigning tolerance. The "more anonymous setting of the telephone interview can make it easier to tell the truth" (Betts, 1999: 114). But this ignores the fact that just as surveys and interviews introduce bias, so do the normal media sources and social influences of everyday life. There is nothing inherently natural about being asked in the home, in the company of your television, radio, and newspaper. The idea that the individualised phone call represents a freedom from bias is symbolic of the decontextualisation of racism in conservative accounts of racism.

This presents a problem to conservative theorists—in the absence of 'media sensations' people are not sufficiently opposed to immigration. In response, Betts (1999: 101) muses, "It is easy to implement unpopular policies if people do not know much about them". Betts makes clear the conservative theory of racism. When sensationalist media inflate the claims of conservative anti-immigrant sources, this elicits people's true feelings about immigration. If not, the government has made anti-immigrant policy prescriptions. And if neither, then people are unaware of the actual policy. This explanation appears to treat anti-immigrant sentiment as a foregone conclusion that must be fit around any evidence, and struggles to explain policy.

Political Motivation: Isolated Cynicism

Liberal theorists frequently explain refugee policy as a result of cynical political opportunism. Freeman (1995: 886) argues that "during bad times [immigrants] are targeted as scapegoats for conditions they may have no part in causing". The creation of populist fervour via border spectacles is "produced for domestic consumption" (Devetak, 2004: 105). Maley (2004: 161) argues Howard's rhetoric and policy was "perfectly calculated to play on" the fears of former One Nation voters after the 1998 Queensland election—in which Pauline Hanson's party surpassed expectations in receiving 22.7 per cent of the vote, decreasing the primary vote for all the major parties (Newman, 1998). Mares (2002: 160) interviews the then immigration minister, deducing cynicism on his part:

> *"[Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock] says that his ultimate priority is the
> offshore resettlement program, which he wants to protect at all costs. But if
> this is true, his tactics are self-defeating. By vilifying boat people and other
> asylum seekers who arrive in Australia unlawfully,... he scratches at the
> wound exposed by Pauline Hanson, instead of applying a healing salve."*

Thus Mares (2002: 160) concludes that the minister for immigration is "one of the
government's frontline players in the shabby politics of division". Liberal theorists con-
vincingly identify political expediency is key explanations of refugee policy.

The factors that lead to this cynicism are generally understood not as structural,
but individual. The problem is "political leaders who are ice-cold, free of meaningful
values, and crave only power" (Maley, 2015: 86). Devetak (2004: 108) laments: if only
"the government decided to treat asylum-seekers as humanitarian concerns" the cru-
elty to refugees could have been avoided. This suggests, however, that refugee cruelty
is merely a contingent feature of Australian capitalism. This is hard to square with
the continuous stream of refugee cruelty for the period this thesis examines, including
under Prime Ministers whom purportedly aim to treat asylum-seekers humanely. This
suggests there may be structural factors that push politicians to anti-refugee measures.
It also leaves open the explanation of the "deeply rooted popular fears" that are ex-
ploited by politicians (Mares, 2002: 27). The constancy of refugee cruelty indicates that
liberal explanations of the refugee regime portray as contingent are incomplete.

Departmental Duty: Essentialising Exclusion

Conservative theorists typically regard Australia's refugee regime to exist due to a le-
gitimate or commendable desire to control borders, to protect the Australian people, or
to protect asylum seekers. For Betts (2001), opposition to boatpeople is the deep-felt
and rational desire of ordinary Australians. Millbank (2010: 42) calls the 1951 Refugee
Convention the "root of the boat people problem", as it legitimises the movement of boat-
people. This causes boatpeople to come to Australia, and thus Australia to be forced to
control them through expensive measures which would "be better spent helping home-
less people" (Millbank, 2010: 44). Even those critical of the refugee regime call for Aus-
tralia to "secure our borders decently" (Brennan, 2007: xi). Australia's border controls
are natural, rational, and democratic.

This theory runs into problems in describing the actual formation of the refugee regime. Most refugees coming by boat to Australia are eventually resettled here, meaning government policy does not actually prevent boatpeople reaching Australia. If prevention is the goal, then policy is hard to explain. The "lack of a coherent rationale for mandatory detention" (Brennan, 2007: 256), makes bipartisan support for such policies difficult to fathom. Moreover, it struggles to explain government racism. Though Brennan (2007: 289) is critical of the way governments use "community anxiety about border protection as an excuse" for border policies, he does not include the ways in which that anxiety is created or exacerbated by the selfsame government. Government rhetoric does not merely follow public opposition to refugees; it also leads it.

Immigration department culture is sometimes cited as an explanation of refugee policy (e.g. Maley, 2004: 161). Cronin (1993) suggests that a bureaucratic culture of control has arisen, that saw the immigration department drawn increasingly into conflict with the judiciary. To prevent the possibilities of judicial challenge, the government has "confined and constrained" the courts (Cronin, 1993: 104). This has subsequently eroded rights and freedoms, including particularly those of refugees. This has some utility in explaining government actions particularly in the late-1980s to early-1990s (see Chapter Three). However, it does not fully capture the refugee regime. In particular, the racist rhetoric of politicians that constantly escorts refugee cruelty is not explained. Cronin (1993: 87) agrees, arguing that the fear and anxieties of the migration program must be understood to explain the program. Her work is useful in describing the structures of control within the immigration department. But to understand the refugee program as a whole requires a theorisation of racism.

Pluralist theorists fail to apply insights about the structure of race to refugee policy. Some pluralist theorists, including Ellie Vasta and Stephen Castles, have more thoroughly theorised racism in Australia. Castles et al. (2014: 142) note the importance of "government policies and political leadership" in "shap[ing] public opinion". Concentrating on everyday racism, they argue that the "anti-racism of official policies and public rhetoric is often only skin-deep" (Castles & Vasta, 1996: 4), noting that it has not led to reductions in the everyday racial abuse migrants experience (Castles, 1996: 43). This is traced back to a lack of any "commitment to fundamental change" from the Australian government (Castles & Vasta, 1996: 5). For Castles (1996: 44), racism cannot be seen as "peripheral to capitalist society, and therefore excisable with out basic changes". Rather, racism is intertwined with nationalism—defined as the "constant process of asserting, questioning, redefining and examining the national identity" (Castles, 1990: 6). Plural-

ist theorists have developed tools to understand racism, but have failed to apply them. This analysis of racism is not linked to refugee policy. Castles (2011: 317) notes the possibility that immigrants can act as "scapegoats" but does not link this to refugee policy. Rather, policy and rhetoric is said to originate in refugees undermining "the tradition of strict government control of entries" (Castles, Vasta, et al., 2014: 135). But this fails to capture why politicians would stoke racist sentiment.

Marxists have sometimes gone to the other extreme—essentialising exclusion. Grewcock's 'Border Crimes' is a detailed investigation of Australia's refugee regime. Using a broadly Gramscian criminological approach, Grewcock (2009: 214) theorises the abuse and deaths of refugees not as the acts of "errant individuals" but as crimes attributable to the Australian state. He situates the regime in a global system of "Western exclusion zones", under which border controls are militarised, refugees are demonised for failing to fit into a schema of legitimacy, a calculated rhetorical and material war is waged on people smuggling, and refugee mistreatment is deliberately fostered as a major domestic political issue (Grewcock, 2009: 57). He contextualises popular support for border controls and the abuse of refugees within a process of hegemony (Grewcock, 2009: 23–4, 30). This shows how civil society is able to "[stabilise] and [protect] the state during times of economic or social crisis" by diffusing ideas which perpetuate ruling class power (Grewcock, 2009: 24). This is a crucial insight left behind by many theorists. However, border-control and not racism is portrayed as the end goal.

Grewcock does not connect refugee policy to the production of racism. His tendency is to paint the "main purpose" of refugee policy as to "deter and punish irregular travel to Australia" (Grewcock, 2009: 72). This fails to explain **why** the government is driven to punish refugees. What benefit do successive governments reap from such policies? Moreover, it does not describe why politicians promulgate racism. Grewcock (2014a: 72) muses that state rhetoric targeting people smuggling seems "pitched more at a domestic audience than refugees in transit". This hints at the gains that may be realised through a harsh refugee program, but doesn't link it to the refugee policy itself.

Conclusion

In attempting to theorise Australia's migration and refugee program, theorists have often proposed different theoretical frameworks for incorporation and exclusion. For some, migration is economically motivated and the refugee program politically so. Some

attribute anti-migrant sentiment to a decontextualized conception of racism as natural and rational. Others decontextualise the immigration department, portraying immigration increases as the result of a conspiratorial coalition of ethnics and academics, or portraying refugee policy as result of a department purely anxious to control its borders as an end in itself. Others still deny the significance of state action, and fail to comprehend the dynamics pushing towards either incorporation or exclusion. In each case, the contradiction is not grasped by both horns. By essentialising either of the incorporative or exclusionary moments, its internal opposite is downplayed.

This chapter has argued that incorporation and exclusion are mutually internal poles of a contradiction, and must be understood as such. It established this by surveying prominent explanations of the Australian border—conservative, liberal, pluralist and Marxist—and concluding that attempts to divide the contradiction were not fruitful. Chapter two takes this insight forwards, proposing three interconnected explanations of borders from a Marxist framework, which aim to grasp the contradiction by both horns.

RACIST TO THE CORE: A MARXIST THEORY OF BORDERS

M arx's dialectical method allows us to grasp contradictions at their root. Rather than reducing contradictory dynamics to inert thing-like entities, dialectical thinking "regards every historically developed form as being in a fluid state, in motion, and therefore grasps its transient aspect as well" (Marx, 1976a: 103). It avoids "static, partial, one-sided, and one-dimensional" understandings (Ollman, 2003: 4), moving past these appearances to the essence of contradiction: its underlying dynamics of motion. Chapter one argued that Australia's border regime was defined by a contradiction between incorporation and exclusion. It argued that theorists have failed to grasp the border relation in its entirety, instead objectifying its various moments. This chapter turns to Marxist attempts to theorise borders, which grasp the transient and contradictory movement of the border.

It sets out three themes of Marxist approaches to the theorisation of borders. Racism produced at the border is said to channel class antagonism into worker-worker struggle, delivering a structural benefit to capital. Migrants are said to be 'shamelessly' super-exploited, facing poor wages and conditions through the border's production of limited residence. And borders are said to act as a 'lever' preceding supply and demand to secure a reserve army of labour for capital. This chapter uses a Marxist method to probe the internal relations of these explanations, arguing that the racism presupposed by all three explanations forms the underlying dynamic behind the border contradiction. It

does so by moving through the three explanations in turn: racism, superexploitation, and reserve army.

Racism and division

Border relations play a crucial ideological and political role. For Merrill (2011: 49–50), the political theatrics of immigration law reform frequently have limited material impact on capital in terms of the actual number of migrants or would-be-migrants effected. Rather, theatrics serve a key politico-ideological function. Borders predicated on racial discrimination are material conditions that underpin racism. This racism can be used to drive wedges in the working class, channelling class rage away from capital and against other workers.

On this account, borders function to alter more than just wage-levels, conditions, or the numbers of workers. Marx (1870: 222) concedes in probably his most comprehensive treatment of immigration—his correspondence with Meyer and Vogt—that "Ireland constantly sends her own surplus to the English labour market, and thus forces down wages and lowers the material and moral position of the English working class" (see also D. L. Wilson, 2017). But for Marx, the most important feature of the undercutting of domestic pay and conditions is that it drives a wedge in the working class, with English workers siding with English capitalists against the Irish worker. Thus, "all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes" are dedicated to the continuation of this artificial antagonism (Marx, 1870: 221). He even calls it the "secret of the *impotence of the English working class* despite its organisation" (Marx, 1870: 221). This figures too in Lenin's (1963: 457) theory of imperialism, under which the "bourgeoisie incites the workers of one nation against those of another in the endeavour to keep them disunited". This places borders as a key conduit to the ideological function of division so essential to the capital.

Racism is a key tool of this division. Racism is not theorised as a natural result of human differences but ideology historically specific to capitalism; "Racial differences are invented" (Callinicos, 1993: 18). Race is a "social category, not a scientific one" (Malik, 1996: 121). Its existence is not biological but discursively and materially constructed under capitalist society. For Hall (1986: 10), race and ethnicity are key elements in capitalist social formations. Though they are historically specific and not universal, they are crucial political and ideological supports of the social division that upholds capitalist production. Merrill (2011) argues against economistic theories which treat race as

epiphenomenal.[1] Racial identities are "in themselves material forces" fundamental to creating the conditions of accumulation (Merrill, 2011: 1567).

Marxists have long recognised the crucial role race plays in securing capitalism. For Cox (1959: xxx–xxxi):

> "*Racial antagonism is part and parcel of this class struggle, because it developed within the capitalist system as one of its fundamental traits... Probably one of the most persistent social illusions of modern times is that we have race prejudice against other people because they are physically different— that race prejudice is instinctive.*"

Racial divisions cement the conditions of imperialism. They naturalise inter-country disparities, dispossession and slavery. Moreover, racial division naturalises itself; workers essentialise its thing-like form and the process of racism becomes the natural instinct of the working class. Racism is a process of dividing workers.

For Callinicos, the border is one mode through which racial division can be expressed. The very "existence of a working class composed of 'natives' and immigrants... makes possible the division of class on racial lines" (Callinicos, 1993: 34). This is upheld via three mechanisms (Callinicos, 1993: 35–9). First, capitalism's production of economic competition between workers is liable to infusion with race. Competition between capitals, state policy and the bourgeois actions frequently pit workers against each other, between skilled and unskilled, employed and unemployed, and so on. The racialised nature of global and domestic capitalism means that these categories may coincide with national origin or 'ethnicity'. Secondly, domestic workers are made to feel "a member of the ruling nation" and thus become "a tool of... aristocrats and capitalists" (Marx, 1870: 221). This process of nationalism binds domestic worker to domestic capital. Finally, racism is constructed by capitalists and politicians particularly through the media. Though sometimes deliberate, it need not be. These three mechanisms are articulated through the border.

Racist division is also produced through the related ideology of nationalism. Anderson's (2006: 6) conception of nation as "imagined political community" reveals its socially constructed nature. However, for Alonso (1994: 382), Anderson does not go far

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[1]Though Merrill regards all Marxist theory as economistic.

enough in explaining how the nation is embodied in "material practice", or rendered into "common sense". The nation is not mere ideology but is materially embodied in borders which reinforce these distinctions via the "socio-spatial segregation" of migrant and citizen populations (Ferguson & McNally, 2014: 13). Likewise, the production of nationalism is a continuing process of state formation. This "generates categories of Self and Other within a polity" (Alonso, 1994: 391), which reinforces the formation of racism at the national level. In conflating people, territory, and state, nationalism is a crucial "form of consent generated by racialization" (Merrill, 2011: 1558). Hall (1986) suggests that race and class are interlinked, with race a component of the social formation which supports the capitalist mode of production.

Superexploitation and precarity

Migrant workers experience a particular form of exploitation. For Lenin (1963: 454), "dire poverty" in migrants country of origin underlies the process of migration, with capitalists implicated both in the production of imperialism and the exploitation of migrant workers "in the most shameless manner". Pröbsting (2015: 329) terms this shamelessness "superexploitation". Superexploitation occurs through the avoidance of reproductive costs, low pay, and bad conditions. It is also said to be linked to the production of "precariousness" (Bourdieu, 1998: 82). Precariousness describes the production of migrant conditions that renders them more vulnerable to poor conditions and pay.

Pröbsting (2015: 330) argues that immigration constitutes a "value transfer" from foreign to domestic capital. One substantial part of this is in the avoidance of the costs of reproduction. There is a long history of capital shifting the costs of the social reproduction of labour-power away from itself, into the domestic sphere. Migration allows domestic capital to avoid various costs of social reproduction (Pröbsting, 2015: 330–1). Though these costs may be shifted over time between private and public sectors, or in and out of the formal economy or domestic sphere, these costs are in the last instance borne by capital. Migration can thus be a check on the tendency of Australian profit rates to fall, by extracting not just surplus value from migrants, but by avoiding the costs of the reproduction of workers.

The shamelessness of capitalist exploitation of migrant workers rears its head in low wages and the frequent deprivation of rights (Lenin, 1964: 168). For Pröbsting (2015: 330–3), migrants are paid less than domestic workers, and given fewer rights. These

disparities originate in a "condition of deportability", whereby striking becomes difficult, sacking becomes easier, and wages are kept low (Ferguson & McNally, 2014: 6). Limiting wages clearly increases profits. Migrants who are kept in a state of fear of deportation are far less likely to unionise, and more likely to accept bad conditions and lower wages. Pröbsting (2015: 343) cites The Economist (2010): "Those dynamic enough to hop between countries to find work are also the sort of people willing to change job, take a pay cut or move home within a country in order to keep working. Such flexible and productive labour is often just what flagging economies need".

Superexploitation is said to rely on the production of migrant precarity. Précarité has its roots in Bourdieu's writings establishing 'a new mode of dominance' based on the insecurity produced by globalisation and working class fragmentation (Shucksmith & Brown, 2016: 668). This concept has been used by others to describe the position of migrants in particular. For Anderson (2010), migrants' specific experience of precarity is central to their exploitation. Immigration controls are what produce the status of migrants. They do this by creating categories into which migrants are sorted, by "moulding... employment relations" and creating "legality and its obverse" (Bridget Anderson, 2010: 308–9). The conditions migrants face in the workplace and in society are largely produced by the state. Standing (2011a: 105) goes further, arguing migrants form a large part of a global precarious proletariat—"precariat". Migrants frequently face unstable employment, and limitations on work rights and pay. He argues this constitutes a new "dangerous class" (Standing, 2011a: 2, 147, 2011b).

Other theorists disavow this usage of 'precarity'. For Jonna and Foster (2016), "the term precariat is often no more than a fashionable and mistaken substitute for proletariat itself... or else is employed to refer to a subcategory of the proletariat". In the first case, a false dichotomy is created between workers with stable employment and migrants as victims of capitalism. In the second, the ability of migrant workers to challenge capital is cast as different from that of the working class. In this case, migrants' precarious existence calls into question the stable link they have to production and thus the power they hold. For Munck (2013: 759), the concept has a "family resemblance" to the lumpen-proletariat "too strong to ignore"; precariat theory represents migrants as a subproletarian workforce that lacks the tools, capacity and objective standpoint to struggle against capital. Rather, for Seymour (2012), precarity is a constant and necessary feature of the entire proletariat—migrant, temporary, or otherwise. But this approach risks denying the particular experience of migrants under capitalism, and erasing that struggle.

An understanding of superexploitation must therefore mediate between the dual ills of essentialisation and erasure. Migrants are not inherently docile, nor inherently predisposed to worse conditions or pay. These are not characteristics of people from this or that geographical area. And nor are the conditions they are exposed to identical to those of a domestic worker, say. Rather, the living and working conditions that underpin superexploitation are produced differentially between migrant and domestic workers, via a process of racial division. It is this racism that underpins the production of the state of superexploition. Understood thus, the debates of precarity are recast. Migrants are of course differentially treated under capitalism; racism is constantly objectified into concrete racial divisions in conditions and circumstance. But likewise, migrants are not an objectively different class. It is only racism that makes it seem so. A theory that fails to understand this grasps race only in its thing-like guise, ignoring its processual nature. One must dialectically comprehend superexploitation's predication on racism to understand its basic workings.

Migration as Reserve Army

The concept of the reserve army is introduced in Engels' (1845: 379–88) *Condition of the Working Class in England* and Marx's (1976b: 433) essay '*Wages*' (see for discussion Hollander, 2008: 218). Capitalism is marked by a perpetual oscillation between prosperity and crisis (Engels, 1845: 383). Times of slump are followed by periods of overproduction. This necessitates, for Engels (1845: 383–4), the existence of a reserve army, which can be drawn into production during the "liveliest months".

The reserve army has a dual role, also beneficial to the bourgeoisie during the times of slump. It functions to increase the supply of labour-power relative to demand, which acts to decrease the price of labour-power. Through this depression of wages, overpopulation breeds profits. Engels (1845: 380–1) observes:

> *If a manufacturer can employ ten hands nine hours daily, he can employ nine if each works ten hours, and the tenth goes hungry. And if a manufacturer can force the nine hands to work an extra hour daily for the same wages by threatening to discharge them at a time when the demand for hands is not very great, he discharges the tenth and saves so much wages.*

Marx (1976a: 784) argues migration is not merely a by-product of the cycles of booms and bust, but that it becomes a "lever of capitalist accumulation". In its role in producing

the labour market, migration ensures any "absolute increase of capital is not accompanied by a corresponding rise in the general demand for labour" (Marx, 1976a: 793). The reserve army doesn't just meet the labour requirements of capital in times of overproduction, but floods the market. Far from mere reaction to it, the reserve army functions as "the background against which the law of the demand and supply of labour does its work" (Marx, 1976a: 790).

The reserve army serves a crucial ideological function. Its production produces in turn an unnatural antagonism between workers, driving down wages and thus feeding profits (Engels, 1845: 384). Through this antagonism, the reserve army pits worker against worker and "rivets the worker to capital more firmly than the wedges of Hephaestus held Prometheus to the rock" (Marx, 1976a: 799).

Marx (1976a: 794) delineates three forms of the reserve army (or relative surplus population): "floating", "latent" and "stagnant". The floating form consists of workers who are thrown in and out of production along with the vagaries of accumulation. Marx (1976a: 796) also identifies the "constant flow" of labour toward the centres of capitalist production, which "presupposes... a constant latent surplus population" from which to draw. This second 'latent' form refers to those not yet drawn into the centre of production, but produced in such a condition that they can be pulled in. The final form is the 'stagnant' population which is a "part of the active labour army but with extremely irregular employment" (Marx, 1976a: 796). It is characterised by "a maximum of working time and a minimum of wages" (Marx, 1976a: 796). Outside of these main forms is the "lowest sediment of the relative surplus population", which consists of the lumpenproletariat, orphan children, those unable and unwilling to work, and paupers awaiting work (Marx, 1976a: 797).

Marx and Engels do not explicitly link the reserve army to migration. Engels (1845: 384) does note that "agricultural districts and branches least affected by the general prosperity" may send their surplus labour to areas of high economic activity, even including Ireland as a potential source in the German edition. He notes also that the "rapid extension of English industry could not have taken place if England had not possessed in the numerous and impoverished population of Ireland a reserve at command" (Engels, 1845: 389). But this is not theoretically developed.

Modern theorists have made the connection more explicitly (e.g.: Bridget Anderson, 2007; Everson, 2011; Ferguson & McNally, 2014; Merrill, 2011; Pröbsting, 2015). These

theorists argue controlled migration can act as a reserve army lever, regulating the levels of migration needed for national capital. Anderson (2007: 248) contends that migration acts as "a 'tap' that can be turned on and off". Differential rates of immigration can thus be targeted for different levels of economic activity, acting as one mode of the reserve army.

The categories of reserve army can be applied to migration. The 'latent' army refers in this context to potential migrants produced 'outside' Australia's borders, whom can be brought in via Australian migration policy to lever the forces of supply and demand in the interests of capital. The 'floating' component is migrants pushed in and out of employment. And the 'stagnant' component is employed migrants who experience variable and 'irregular' wages, hours, and conditions—pushed easily into long hours, low pay, and poor conditions.

Debates surge as to whether migrants constitute a reserve army. Birrell and Birrell (1981: 278) argue the concept is totally inapplicable as there has been no deliberate effort on the part of "policy-makers to 'Asianize' the intake" or consciously produce a reserve army. For Lever-Tracy and Quinlan (1988), the latent reserve is the only applicable category of the three. To imply migrants are stagnant or floating layers is to extend a false dichotomy between the workers who can fight capitalism, and the migrants who are harmed by it. For Lever-Tracy (1981: 23), migrants are not a "reserve army but. . . a possible potential vanguard". Collins (1984: 62) disagrees, describing the reserve army as "alive and kicking".

The reserve army has two primary functions. First, a reserve army produces workers to feed capital in times of expanded accumulation, beyond any "natural limits" (Marx, 1976a: 788). It is more than a force equating supply and demand, but rather a lever that 'loads the die' of market forces in favour of capital by artificially flooding or starving the market (Marx, 1976a: 793). Second, it is used to drive down the wages and conditions of the working class. This role can be subdivided into two parts. First, migrant workers are forced into poor conditions that can purportedly be used to undercut domestic workers. Second, a domestic working class resentful of this perceived fact become hostile to the migrant workers.

These dynamics are liable to essentialisation. Migrants are only forced to accept poor conditions due to the conditions of superexploitation. Migrant workers are no inherently less militant than their domestic counterparts, as a long history of migrant militancy

attests (Lever-Tracy & Quinlan, 1988). And superexploitation too must be understood as predicated on the divisions of race. Likewise domestic hostility should not be treated as natural. Collins (2008: 248) regards "social conflict" or electoral gains of the far right to be the inevitable consequence of immigration. Migrants become "one of the major reasons for a diffusion of class struggle" (Collins, 1978: 58). But to regard such diffusion as inescapable is to misconstrue racism as object, and misconceive of it as peripheral to or separate from the function of the reserve army. Rather, any hostility of domestic workers towards migrants should be understood as product of the ideological processes of division. In both of these senses, reserve army is predicated on the process of race.

Conclusion

In the Grundrisse, Marx (1993: 88–100) utilises a dialectical method to comprehend totality. To understand the interconnectedness of the internally related moments of production, distribution, exchange, and consumption, he shows that each of the categorises are mutually presupposed. What is more difficult is to show how production "predominates" over both itself and the other categories (Marx, 1993: 99). It is difficult because the structures of logical entailment generally run contrary to the structures of appearance.

In the case of borders, appearances suggest that the border's primary function is to mediate for capital the number of workers. This is precisely the role of the border in its objectified form—a membrane arbitrating entry. A further push into appearances might reveal the border's role in constricting and constructing entry. And further still might reveal its ideological moment. But this chapter has argued that essences run counter to appearances. Internal to the role borders have in mediating entry is their role in constructing that entry through a contradictory movement of incorporation and exclusion. And moreover, internal to the construction of entry are the divisions of race needed to secure the racial divisions that superexploitation employs.

In theorising the border's contradiction between incorporation and exclusion exposed in chapter one, this chapter places racism at the core of the border, and at the base of the social formation. But racism's position in the social formation also points to its contingency and historical specificity. Hall (1986) suggests therefore that the study of racism's role should also be historically specific, and not made to abstractly cover all times and places. Griffiths (2004: 4, 2006, 2012) has analysed periods of Australian

racism, arguing that racism in Australia has been shaped by three dynamics: the justification of "*dispossession* and genocide" of First Nations Australians to legitimise colonial Australia, a ruling class "strategic fear" of mass Asian immigration, and a divide and rule function. The border relation has developed alongside this, first imposing its colonial existence, and then through the racially discriminatory White Australia Policy (WAP). But racism's operation is historically contingent, and changes over time. This analysis must also be carried out for contemporary forms of racism. Chapter three thus turns to the cutting edge of Australian racism, disseminated through the border: refugees.

3

Australia's Refugee Program: Cynicism, Continuity, and Structural Impacts

This thesis address a question at the heart of Australia's border: why does the Australian state close its border to migrants whose labour could benefit capital. Chapter one argued that Australia's border is marked by a contradictory dynamic of exclusion and incorporation that eludes theorists. Chapter two advanced a Marxist theory of borders which conceives of the two opposing aspects of the contradiction as mutually internal, arguing that in mediating the contradictory movement, borders serve to produce a reserve army, secure the conditions of superexploitation, and divide workers through racism. It found that racism sits at the heart of the border relation. The thesis has thus far formulated the theoretical tools to understand the exclusionary moment of Australia's border. For Marx, there are limitations to theoretical treatments. Not only is the historical development of anything key to explaining it, but that history forms part of what it is (Ollman, 2003: 151). Hence, Marx searches for those essential characteristics which both explain and define the subject of study.

Chapter three traces the historical development of the most brutally exclusionary moment of Australia's border: its treatment of refugees. In doing so, it provides a study of why Australia closes its borders to a particular group of people, applying the tools developed in chapters one and two. The chapter investigates in turn the three major pillars of the refugee regime—mandatory detention, offshore processing, and militarised nationalism.

Through these case studies, it makes three connected arguments. First, it argues that refugee policy plays a domestic role, noting that refugee policy changes have been accompanied by anti-refugee rhetoric aimed at the domestic audience. Second, it argues that refugee racism has a systemic political-economic effect on capital's reproduction, pointing to the effects of over twenty years of continuous of refugee racism. Finally, it argues that racism is not discretely portioned out at the refugee program and disconnected from the migration program.

Mandatory Detention

Public opposition to refugees is not hard-wired. It is rooted in a long history of the rhetorical and concrete operation of borders. The roots of mandatory detention can be found before 1992, when it was formally instituted by the Keating government. This move was founded on the groundwork of anti-refugee rhetoric laid by a long line of politicians. The origins of the rhetoric of 'queue-jumping' are to be found in the mouth of Gough Whitlam (Stats, 2015: 77). Whitlam linked refugees, crime, and disease in his push to intensify border security (Stevens, 2012a: 530). The "deep economic recession" of the late 1970s was said to provide "fertile ground for those agitating to tighten immigration and refugee policies" (Garnier & Cox, 2012: 3). Immigration ministers under Fraser dismissed refugees as economic migrants (Stevens, 2012a: 538), threatened to block entry (Canberra Times, 1979a), and oversaw deportations to danger (Canberra Times, 1979b). Fraser himself threatened to deport Vietnamese boatpeople landing in Australia (Stevens, 2012b). It is also hard not to see a fundamental congruence between Howard's insistence on Australia' sovereign right to 'decide who comes here and in what circumstances' and Hawke's remark in 1977 as president of the Australian Labor Party (ALP), about Australia's "right to determine how it will exercise its compassion and how it will increase its population" (Stats, 2015: 78). The modern refugee regime is grounded in a history of continuous border-control rhetoric.

Mandatory detention was also prefigured by racism embodied in concrete policy. From 1958, the policy was to lock up those arriving in Australia without a visa, though it was not mandatory in law (Betts, 2001: 37). In 1989, anti-refugee border control was stepped up considerably. The Migration Legislation Amendment Act 1989 was among the "the most fundamental changes to Australia's immigration laws", designed to improve "our ability to curb abuse of the immigration program by people seeking to come to Australia illegally" (Ray, 1989). It introduced a harsh regime of 'mandatory depor-

tation' after a 28-day grace period. Cambodian boat arrivals from 1989 faced a policy described as "administrative detention" (Phillips & Spinks, 2013a). The average length of detention shot up from 15 days to 523 days for Cambodian boat arrivals (Phillips & Spinks, 2013a). While the policy was formally discretionary, it was applied to "all people entering Australia without a valid visa... while their immigration status was resolved", which meant years in detention for Cambodian boat arrivals (Phillips & Spinks, 2013a). To "deal with" the growing numbers of Cambodian refugees (Canberra Times, 1990), the Port Hedland detention centre was established in 1991 and refugee "processing centres" were introduced into law (Commonwealth, 1991: 9). The architecture of mandatory detention was in place before 1992.

This period saw inflamed anti-refugee political rhetoric. Foreign Minister Gareth Evans warned repeatedly in 1990-91 of "unregulated population flows" from Asia (G. Evans, 1991), despite the historically small numbers of refugees coming to Australia. Laurie Ferguson, an MP of Labor Left, described Cambodian boat people as "bogus arrivals who think it might be quicker to get a Ford Falcon here than in Kampuchea" (The Socialist, 1992). In a long tradition of Parime Ministers denying the authenticity of asylum claims, Hawke (cited in The Socialist, 1995: 2) claimed "these people are not political refugees". Immigration Minister Gerry Hand was key in delegitimising asylum seekers' claims, protests, and supporters—calling the protests of three women fleeing the Khmer Rouge "pointless and... unnecessary", implementing laws allowing for force-feeding, and mocking protesters as "noble crusade[rs]" (Steward, 1992). The UNHCR condemned Australia's policy for failing to protect the rights of children detained at this time (Bramble & Kuhn, 2010: 116). Anti-refugee rhetoric coincided with the establishment of the architecture for mandatory detention.

Mandatory detention was formalised in 1992 with an amendment to the Migration Act providing that "each non-citizen who is a designated person should be kept in immigration detention until he or she: (a) leaves Australia; or (b) is given a visa" (Commonwealth, 1992 Section 176). The legislation "formalised into law" the largely pre-existing detention regime (York, 2003: 14). This was used by Immigration Minister Gerry Hand as an opportunity to appear tough on immigration (Bolger, 2016: 209). The explicit aim was to "enhance the Government's control of people who wish to cross our borders" (Gerry Hand, as cited in Phillips & Spinks, 2013b: 6). In 1994, when the law was due to formally come into force, the 294-day limit was removed, formalising the policy of indefinite detention. Mandatory detention's history is intimately bound up with the rhetoric of border control.

While both rhetoric and policy was continuous under various governments, the construction of modern mandatory detention occurred under Hawke-Keating governments. What is striking about the development of mandatory detention is the prominence of rhetorical assurances of border control, promulgated in English and seemingly targeted at a domestic audience rather than at refugees themselves. This supports the understanding of borders that emphasises its domestic ideological role in securing racism and nationalism as preconditions of capital accumulation.

Contradictory Pressures

This moment of exclusion contains also an incorporative element. Though mandatory detention has persisted as a bipartisan feature of Australian capitalism, it has been marked by contradictory pressures of exclusion and incorporation. The same pressures which led to the racist scapegoating of refugees and its ultimate embodiment in the brutalisation of refugees in detention facilities continues unchanged. But as the state is pushed to lock up refugees in detention centres, that same brutality tends to create crises. Refugees fight back against deplorable conditions, frequently sparking solidarity protests in Australia more broadly. The imprisonment of refugees leads to the continual production of controversies and backlashes against cruelty. A plethora of reports have continued to detail the conditions of Australia's detention camps (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1998, e.g. 2004).

This contradictory pressure has been felt in the perpetual opening and closing of different detention centres across Australia. Curtin detention centre was opened in remote Western Australia in 1999. In 2000, refugees coordinated a protest of mass break outs between Curtin, Woomera and Port Hedland. In 2002, national outrage saw Curtin detention centre closed. After Hazara refugees went on hunger strike, demanding access to legal support, men were locked in an isolation unit (O'Neill & Jones, 2002). Many were driven to self-harm, with one refugee falling unconscious in altercation with guards. Presuming him dead, refugees started a violent protest, tearing down fences to free those locked in isolation. This precipitated the closing of the centre.

Woomera detention centre was opened in 1999 in the South Australian desert. Self-harm and protest were common. In 2002, during one hunger strike, one asylum seeker attempted suicide, prompting violent protest, and increases in self-harm (Fernandez, 2013). At least 500 Australian protesters joined a camp outside the detention centre (Phillips & Spinks, 2013b). In a coordinated action designed to allow those inside and

outside the camp to meet, protesters broke down an outer fence and rallied inside. Up to 50 refugees escaped, though the majority were returned to the detention centre. The centre was closed in 2003, with refugees shuffled to other detention centres. Other detention centres were opened and closed, including Baxter from 2002-07 (SMH, 2003) and later Curtin from 2013-14 (Gribbin, 2014; P. Taylor, 2013).

The overall political trend in this period was an upsurge in anti-racist efforts, including rallies against the Iraq war, unions for refugees and Labor for Refugees working against the policy. Though the structures of mandatory detention were maintained, pressure saw children released to 'community detention' by 2005 (Phillips & Spinks, 2013b). From 2007, following political mobilisation, this trend was reversed, with numbers in mandatory detention increasing again. The movement of exclusion contains elements of incorporation. However, this moment of inclusion is heavily contingent on struggle. It faces a border structurally weighted towards the production of racism through rhetorical and concrete division.

Offshore Processing

Offshore processing sees the same detention of refugees escalated—pushed brutally overseas. This move toward militarism and the creation of neo-colonial camps has been historically predicated on domestic pressures. This section argues the exclusionary moment is not just linked to political gains to politicians, but also structural economic gains for capital.

The origins of offshore processing can be found before 2001 when Howard opened the first refugee detention centre on Nauru. The Fraser government helped fund— and "strongly lobbied" neighbouring governments to set up—refugee camps including in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Hong Kong (Sheehan, 2007). The conditions in these camps were notorious. Men, women, and children were imprisoned for years at Hei Ling Chau camp in Hong Kong, a rock island and ex-leper colony replete with barbed wire (Basler, 1988). Hundreds died at the Galang refugee camp in Indonesia, with suicide, rape, and self-immolation commonplace (Fitzpatrick, 2009). These camps remained open for years under Hawke and Keating governments. They also embodied a rhetorical emphasis on sorting the 'genuine' refugees from the 'rest'. Many made it to Australia, but the process preferenced those refugees who were the "'best fit' for Australia's migration" such as skilled refugees and professionals (Bolger, 2016: 205). Hawke and Keating governments continued to finance refugee camps in Malaysia and Indonesia (Griffiths, 1992).

Though the Australian government had a clear hand in these camps, refugees were settled to Canada and the USA as well as Australia, and the UNHCR and Doctors without Borders had a presence. These early camps were a combination of offshore processing and regional cooperation.

The modern offshore processing regime was born in the lead up to the 2001 election. Before a small Indonesian fishing boat filled with asylum seekers entered Australian waters in August 2001, the Sydney Morning Herald predicted the Liberal—National coalition would lose the election and Howard would lose his seat, with voters angry about petrol prices and the introduction of a Goods and Services Tax (Cumming, 2001). However, August brought a substantial change, when a Norwegian cargo ship—the MV Tampa—picked up and attempted to bring the 438 predominantly Hazara refugees to Australia. But rather than provide the food and medicine requested, the Australian government quickly militarised Christmas Island, and sent SAS troops to board the freighter (Marr & Wilkinson, 2004: 75–88). This bred a flurry of media coverage, and the refugees were drummed up into a full international crisis.

In this climate, Howard announced the beginnings of the 'Pacific Solution'. In return for a $16.5 million payment to the Nauruan government, mainly securing drinking water and annulling hospital debts to Australia, Nauru agreed to a camp being set up on the island (Marr & Wilkinson, 2004: 108–9). The asylum seekers were transferred to the HMAS Manoora with threats of force and moved to Nauru (Marr & Wilkinson, 2004: 126). The Australian government also commenced negotiations for another offshore processing camp in Papua New Guinea (PNG), which was set up on Manus Island in October 2001 (Marr & Wilkinson, 2004: 159). These moves were predicated on the posturings of a government consciously portraying itself as tough on refugees.

Media articles demonising the refugees were rife during the period. Maley (2004: 155) argues many displayed the "hallmarks of having been planted by government sources"—with media containing information likely only known by high-level immigration officials, as well as close links between reporters and the immigration department, and explicit ministerial compliance. The legal negotiations following the Tampa occurred in the aftermath of attacks on the world trade centre in September 2001. Howard took this as an opportunity to further the demonisation of refugees, arguing "you don't know who's coming and you don't know whether they [refugees] do have terrorist links or not".

Structural benefits

Following this media storm, there was a surge in support Howard government. Marr and Wilkinson (2004) argue that this, along with other racist refugee rhetoric such as the 'children overboard affair', helped facilitate the Liberal—National Coalition's 2001 electoral victory, off the back of predicted electoral loss at the beginning of the year. But the 2001 election campaign presents a key example of the kind of structural benefits that accrue to capital when anti-refugee sentiment is propagated year after year by politician after politician. For more than just assisting electoral chances, it was also a distraction from the issues in that election cycle. 2001 was a year of intensified class warfare. For H. Manning (2002: 237), "[p]rior to the Tampa saga and the war against terrorism, industrial relations appeared likely to be one of the key campaign issues" . In August 2001, the Howard government had launched the Royal Commission into the Building and Construction Industry, which would eventually "recommended the establishment of an independent commission, provisionally called the Australian Building and Construction Commission" which would wage industrial war on the CFMEU (Cole, 2003: 13). In the campaign itself, Howard introduced three key anti-union policies (H. Manning, 2002: 238–9). First, he argued for a requirement for the performance of a secret ballot before every strike action, which would slow down bargaining processes and be a strong demobilising force. Second was an exemption of small businesses from fair dismissal laws. And third was increased powers for small business to fight secondary union boycotts through the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. The Liberal Government also indicated moves to make breaking up unions easier, and launched an attack on the ALP's support for 'pattern-bargaining' (H. Manning, 2002: 239,242). This provides an example of how refugees can function as a "red herring" (Kuhn, 2007: 18) behind which governments in power can prosecute economic agendas that could otherwise be deeply unpopular. It also indicates that racism can have a systemic economic role.

This systemic role was also felt in the election itself. Changes in government's electoral promise increased pressure on the unions to direct energy towards electoral strategy, and side-lining a focus on industrial struggle. Unions spent millions on a 'marginal seats campaign' (H. Manning, 2002: 243), which directed worker's energies to the ballot box. This too is indicative of the structural benefits racism can have to capitalism.

Offshore Processing Rebooted

Offshore processing was also subject to the inclusionary moment of borders that affected mandatory detention. The Manus Island detention centre was eventually closed in May 2004, after political and legal pressure to release the final occupant—Aladdin Sisalem—whom was left as the sole refugee in the centre for ten months (Jackson, 2004). Nauru remained open until in February 2008, on the back of years of political mobilisation, the last refugees on Nauru were granted residency in Australia (C. Evans, 2008). However, the same press release promised that "future unauthorised boat arrivals will be processed on Christmas Island" (C. Evans, 2008), in the new detention centre completed and opened in that year (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2012: 14). The contingency of inclusionary struggle remains a potentially powerful force, but the border's exclusionary racism runs deep.

Unsettling similarities can be found between moves made by Howard and those of ALP governments years later. In 2009, Rudd attempted to reboot the Howard's policy with his own 'Indonesia solution'. In October, one boat of 78 Sri Lankan asylum-seekers were rescued and put aboard customs ship the Oceanic Viking (Manne, 2010: 12). Rudd attempted to offload the people to Tanjung Pinang refugee camp, financed by Australia. However the refugees refused to leave the ship, and protests in Indonesia and Australia added pressure, with the state eventually capitulating, promising them resettlement in Australia (Fitzpatrick, 2009). In April 2010, the Rudd government increased border protection policy and rhetoric by suspending the processing of Sri Lankan and Afghan asylum applications, and reopening Curtin detention centre (Refugee Council of Australia, 2016).

In July, the new Prime Minister Julia Gillard took steps to intensify Labor's anti-refugee credentials. In her first major policy speech to the Lowy Institute, she stepped up border control rhetoric, with her call to "stop the boats", driving home the rhetorical wedge pitting refugees against 'working people' (Gillard, 2010a). She insisted:

> *"That hardworking Australians who themselves are doing it tough want to know that refugees allowed to settle here are not singled out for special treatment; That people like my own parents who have worked hard all their lives can't abide the idea that others might get an inside track to special privileges"* (Gillard, 2010b)

Gillard was also clear to link this to the migration program in general. She argued "the debate on sustainable population growth" should be undertaken unconstrained by "political correctness". Rather, she called for a frank debate about "border protection and asylum seekers", on which her position was clearly militarisation and intensification of the border (Gillard, 2010a). She inaugurated a new position of Minister for Sustainable Population (Karlsen, 2010). Gillard linked the tiny numbers of refugees with a fear of mass migration, and portrayed her government as protector from any such invasion.

This affected the 2010 election, with 73.9% of voters rating refugees and asylum seekers as "extremely important" or "quite important" in their voting decision (McAllister et al., 2011: 74). However, the impact went deeper. Gillard's capitulation to the right made 'stop the boats' rhetoric a bipartisan policy. This rhetorically recasts the issue of 'stopping the boats' from subject of political debate, to an issue on which both sides of parliament can agree. This reinforces the idea that migrants are to blame for environmental problems and job losses, arguably playing a role in limiting the window of acceptable political discourse. This in turn plays a role in reinforcing the legitimacy of Australian capitalism.

The dynamic of exclusion pushes not towards stagnant but increasing ostracism. Gillard went on to implement an increasingly cruel refugee regime. She signed a memorandum of understanding with Afghanistan allowing for the involuntary repatriation of Afghan asylum seekers, and started construction on a new detention centre at Wickham Point (Refugee Council of Australia, 2016). Soon after her ascension to prime-ministership she announced a new offshore processing regime with the "East Timor solution", though this was not to eventuate (SMH, 2010). This pre-figured her later attempts at a Malaysia solution, which aimed to involuntarily move 800 asylum seekers to Malaysia, a country with no refugee protections. After a High Court dismissal, she attempted to change the migration act to grant ministerial powers to send refugees to any country, though this too was unsuccessful (Gleeson, 2016: 20). In September 2012, Nauru's offshore processing centre was reopened, and asylum seekers were sent there once again (Refugee Council of Australia, 2016). Steps were taken to start using the remnants of the detention centres that Howard set up in PNG, under the so called "no advantage" rule, which ensured that refugees would languish in Australia's offshore detention centres for as long as other refugees were waiting in Indonesia.

This would only get worse in 2013, when on the 19th of July, Rudd (cited in Crowe & Callick, 2013) introduced, seven weeks out from the election, that "any asylum-seeker

who arrives in Australia by boat will have no chance of being settled in Australia"—an unprecedented step in Australia's border history. This was accompanied by tough talk on the "scourge of people smuggling" (Rudd, 2013). Later that year, Temporary Protection Visas were reintroduced (Grewcock, 2014b: 104). In the 2013 election, parties competed on refugee cruelty. Opposition leader Tony Abbott led a campaign dominated by "stop the boats" sloganeering (Abbott, 2013). In the election, 80.1% of respondents to one poll rated refugees and asylum seekers "extremely" or "quite important" in their voting behaviour, with over half of those rating it of 'extreme' importance (Bean et al., 2014). Offshore processing has remained in place since then.

The continuation of offshore processing under successive governments, moving against the inclusionary moment of struggle, is testament to the depth of racism in the border. The effect of anti-refugee rhetoric, repeated year after year, builds up 'common sense' notions of anti-refugee racism and scapegoating. Indeed one of the reasons it is so electorally effective is because it has been stoked for so many years. This ubiquity of refugee cruelty points to the thesis that it serves not merely an occasional, contingent role, but a structural role in securing Australian capitalism. Offshore processing casts the Australian state as the protector of the working class against refugees. These refugees are scapegoated for unemployment and the 'special priviliges' that domestic workers are missing out on. This role in the production of racist division welds domestic worker to capital.

Militarised nationalism

Australia's refugee policy has become intertwined with the production of militarised nationalism, which provides a prime example of political cynicism. This thesis traces modern militarised nationalism around refugees to 'Operation Relex'—a child of the Tampa affair. This was the well-publicised militarisation of Australia's Northern territorial waters. Brigadier Gary Bornholt revealed that it explicitly sought to "target" the "Australian domestic audience" in its message of border control (Marr & Wilkinson, 2004: 135), the media rules also explicitly prohibited the 'humanising' of refugees.

One of the first exercises of Operation Relex was the furore surrounding the Suspected Illegal Entry Vessel (SIEV) 4—the 'children overboard' scandal. It showed the clear role of governments in producing racism, with the Howard government manufacturing racist fears, fabricating evidence, and using the military for political purposes.

On 7 October, two days after the start of the 2001 election campaign, Immigration Minister Ruddock reported that refugees on the SIEV 4 had thrown their children overboard in an attempt to force the Australian military to initiate a rescue. He argued "people would not come wearing life jackets unless they planned an action of this sort" (Marr & Wilkinson, 2004: 186). The report was repeated by various government ministers in the coming weeks, including Prime Minister Howard who contributed: "I don't want in Australia people who would throw their own children into the sea, I don't think any Australian does" (Slattery, 2003: 95). The story was, however, completely untrue.

Though the purported 'children overboard' incident occurred on 7 October, Peter Reith's media office released images taken on the following day when the vessel was sinking. The images showed children in the water, and so with the dates and captions removed, Reith was able to claim they provided evidence of the incident, describing it as an "absolute fact" (Reith, as cited in Slattery, 2003: 96). Despite being informed that the images did not support the story, Reith made no effort to correct it. Rather, he claimed that video footage provided "even starker evidence" than the photographs, but that "operational security" prevented him from being able to share it (Marr & Wilkinson, 2004: 209). Reith's response to being informed that the video did not show any children in the water, and that the incident may not have occurred at all, was: "Well, we better not see the video then" (Commonwealth of Australia, 2002: 86). Even when the department was directly informed that there was "no documentary evidence" for the incident and that the claims were unfounded sensationalism, the Coalition refused to amend the record (Marr & Wilkinson, 2004: 255). It was in this climate of racism that Howard proclaimed in an election speech "we will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come", bolstering government credentials on border racism (Howard, 2001). On November 8th, just two days before the election, Howard released part of an Office of National Assessments report which he claimed evidenced the incident, aiming to evade the escalating media scrutiny and continue the racist fabrication. In fact, the classified report consisted of secondary sources merely repeating the original fiction. These military tendencies have continued to exist under various guises, Operation Relex turning into Operation Resolute. This instances is indicative of the cynicism with which politicians sometimes stoke anti-refugee sentiment.

Since then, rhetorical and physical moves by the Australian state have made clear links between refugees, economic prosperity, and security risks. In 2013, the Liberal Government introduced Operation Sovereign Borders—a civilian law enforcement agency, led by a 3-star military commander reporting to the Immigration Minister. The integra-

tion of military structures and individuals was matched by language, uniforms and officer ranks, with some public servants leaving as a result. In making these changes, the promise was to "treat the border protection crisis as a national emergency and tackle it with the focus and energy that an emergency demands" (Coalition, 2013: 2).

On the day of Abbot's election, the immigration department was renamed Department of Immigration and Border Protection, and the website eventually changed to *www.border.gov.au* (Hodge, 2015: 122). In 2015, the Australian Border Force was established aiming to achieve: "strong national security", "a strong economy", and "a prosperous and cohesive society" (ABF, 2017). The Border Force Act also included strong secrecy laws which threatened up to two years imprisonment for health professionals whistleblowing about abuses in Australia's detention centres. In 2017, the Turnbull government proposed putting Immigration Minister Peter Dutton in charge of a new Home Affairs ministry, combining spy, police, border and other agencies (Yosufzai, 2017). This rhetorically linked national security, economic wellbeing, and refugees, as part of the production of the 'common sense' linkages of those ideas through the process of scapegoating.

Conclusion

Australia's refugee regime is a policy particularly marked by the promulgation of racism. Through studies of mandatory detention, offshore processing, and militarised nationalism, this chapter aimed to probe this racist division. This chapter found that anti-refugee rhetoric was the constant accomplice of harsh border policy. This suggests that the domestic reception of refugee policy is a primary concern. More evidence was found for this thesis in the roots of militarised nationalism, where the Howard government deliberately misled voters for electoral gain.

This chapter also found a continuity of anti-refugee rhetoric and harsh refugee policy under Labor and Liberal governments alike. Harsh refugee policy and rhetoric occurred during non-election periods, as well as election periods. The cumulative effect of repeated anti-refugee rhetoric and policy, repeated by government after government for over twenty years, is more than just a couple of election victories. It plays a key role in the production of hegemony. It concretises ruling class ideas into 'common sense'. Refugees become illegitimate migrants, undermining the employment and welfare of domestic Australians. The state becomes protector of Australian workers. Domestic

workers become bound to capital. But of course, this is all bound up in racial divisions, not as object, but as process, continually functioning to produce hegemony. This chapter pointed to the example of union struggle in 2001 to illustrate the structural function of anti-refugee racism.

Finally, this chapter noted that the refugee program and migration programs cannot be neatly separated. Politicians and government departments link the small numbers of refugees with worries about population growth and what impact this might have. This conclusion hints that the same continuity of border racism, structural benefits of border racism, may apply also to the migration program, where the incorporation moment of border is purportedly dominant.

AUSTRALIA'S MIGRATION PROGRAM: THE INTERNALITY OF EXCLUSION

Migration in early colonial Australia and under the WAP has been analysed, and soundly condemned for its overt racism. But the modern migration program is often said to have facilitated the transformation of Australia from explicitly racist nation to one of the world's most multicultural. This chapter questions the extent of this purported transformation. Chapter one established that the border was marked by a contradiction between exclusion and incorporation. Chapter two advanced three interconnected Marxist theories that attempted to grasp the contradiction—reserve army, superexploitation, and racist divisions. It argued that racism underlies the border relation. Chapter three analysed Australia's refugee regime, finding a continuity of racism and linking this to structural benefits.

Chapter four turns these insights to the migration program. It uses the categories of reserve army, superexploitation, and racism as a lens through which to analyse Australia's migration program. It considers first the permanent program, before turning to the temporary program's three main component parts: temporary skilled workers (or 457s), students, and working holiday makers. This chapter does not find evidence that a single explanation is by itself satisfactory to describe the border relation. Rather, different explanations gain prominence in the different components of the border. But nor does it find that the explanations support the border symmetrically. Rather, they are interconnected and presuppose one another.

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At closer levels of analysis—at the level of the programs themselves—it is frequently the case that programs are described by superexploitation or reserve army. But this chapter argues that the operation of these explanations is intimately bound up with racism, both promulgating and relying on it. At higher levels of abstraction, over the migration program as a whole, the border relation enacts division, moving through its twin rhetorical and concrete moments to construct the 'common sense' of national and racial divisions.

This chapter makes three interconnected arguments. First it argues that borders have concretely and rhetorically divided workers through a long process of producing 'common sense' racism. Secondly, it argues that the border's role in securing reserve army and 'superexploitated' migrants, has relied on, and enacted racism. And finally, it points to the real impact this has in terms of diverting class sentiment against migrants, not only fruitlessly but harmfully.

Permanent Program

Migration has been one of the main methods of regulating the Australian labour force. Each year, the Immigration department lets in migrants according to a 'planning intake'. Since 1947, about half of the labour force increase has come via immigration (Collins, 2008: 249). Due to the significance of migration in determining labour force sizes, migration gives the state a strong influence in determining the numbers of workers in Australia. For Jupp (1993: 255), Australia has "one of the most tightly controlled and carefully planned immigration intakes in the world". The permanent migration program has facilitated for Australian capital a latent reserve army—those drawn in from outside productive Australian capital. Permanent migrants also formed part of the 'floating' reserve army of people thrown in and out of employment. Recent migrants are typically hit hardest by recessions, as they are "concentrated in industries" with the highest job losses, and have the hardest time getting jobs (Ackland & Williams, 1992: 39).

Immigration numbers suggest this reserve army has artificially flooded the Australian labour market. This intake level has certainly fluctuated along with the health of Australia's economy. Several temporary decreases in the permanent program have coincided with recessions, such as in the mid-1970s and early 1980s. Figure 4.1 presents the upwards trend of total migration numbers against the relatively stable humanitarian program since 1983. Post-1983, the most notable decrease occurs from the 'Black
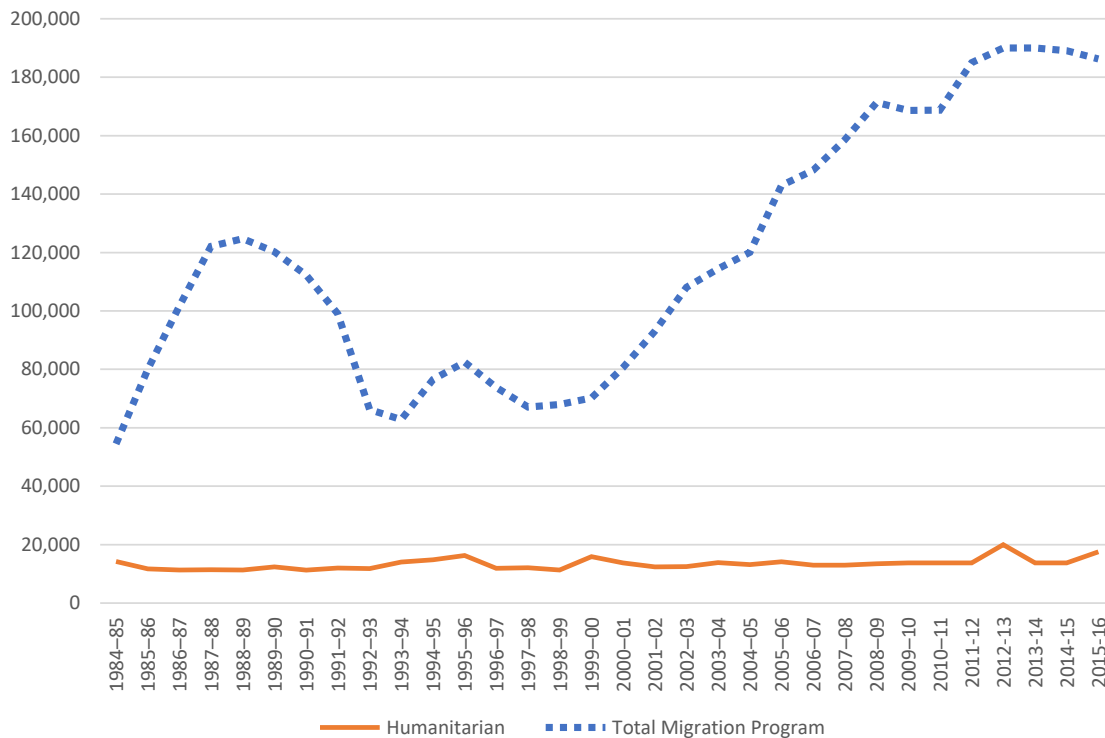
Figure 4.1: Permanent versus Humanitarian intake 1983-2016

Tuesday' crash of 1987 to the end of the 'recession we had to have' in 1992. In this period, Australia's migration program fell by 44.3 per cent. Following a downturn in the mid-1990s and the 'great recession' of 2008, immigration decreased by 18.9 per cent and 1.6 per cent respectively. While intake numbers have fluctuated, there has been a trend towards larger intakes since the 1980s. This likely reflects a period of the almost uninterrupted expansion of capital accumulation. Even in the depths of the recession of the early 1990s, with increasing unemployment, intake numbers did not drop below 60 000. The fact that migrants were still added to the labour force in large numbers despite increasing unemployment suggests that the reserve army is not merely tracking supply and demand pressures. The aggregate data provides limited indicative support for the thesis that borders have allowed for an injection of a reserve army migrants over and above supply and demand pressures.

Internal to this incorporative moment of the border is its exclusionary opposite. Migration numbers are fixed to the state planning levels. This requires the exclusion of other migrants who might have crossed were the program not mediated by the state. Thus coevolving alongside increases in the migration program has been an exclusionary

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moment, felt through a discriminatory points system. Introduced by the Fraser government in 1979, the Numerical Multifactor Assessment System (NUMAS) instituted the quantitative testing of migrants for eligibility to enter Australia. Though English language skills and personal employability factors had been considered before, under the NUMAS this was formalised into policy through a scoring mechanism (Hawkins, 1991: 142–5).

While a break from the overt discrimination of the White Australia Policy (WAP), the points system still tangibly discriminates. English testing gives immediate advantages to those from English speaking countries, while employability testing advantages those from Western countries. These constitute a de-facto advantage to white and Western immigrants. Indeed, the ALP initially opposed the legislation on these grounds. Then opposition leader Bill Hayden argued it "discriminates in a significant way – although not completely" on racial and economic grounds (cited in Hawkins, 1991: 144). It is often claimed that the years since the end of WAP have made Australia 'the most multicultural country in the world'. However, this is not true by any common measure (Jupp, 2007: 6–7). More Australians born overseas are from the United Kingdom than any other country (Phillips et al., 2010: 24). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017), most Australians speak only English, most are nominally Christian, and more people report 'English' as their ancestry than any other category, including 'Australian'. This homogeneity has withstood four decades of points tested permanent migration, at relatively high levels. The points system represented a shift from explicit to implicit discrimination.

This concrete discrimination was coupled with rhetorical push against immigrants. Immigration Minister MacKellar (cited in Jupp, 2007: 145) announced that the new NUMAS system would ensure that no one would be admitted "who would represent an economic burden... through inordinate claims on welfare, health or other resources". The suggestion that migrants are a disproportionate burden on Australian society propagates the myth that migrants are wholly or largely responsible for issues in the Australian economy. However, evidence shows that similar proportions of migrants and non-migrants rely on welfare, and that any disparities are swamped by the average tax contribution of migrants, which is higher due to Australia dodging reproduction costs (Castles et al., 1998: 62–4). While state expenditure on welfare and health has a profound effect on workers' access to these benefits, the same is not true of migration numbers. MacKellar's rhetoric helps form the idea that workers should channel their energy towards opposing migrants and immigration, as opposed to a state that controls

the funds to such programs. Similarly, his promises the program would not "jeopardise social cohesiveness" (MacKellar, as cited in Jupp, 2007: 145) may have been interpreted as an assurance the system would not allow too many 'Asians'.

The rhetorical and concrete division of people based on place of origin, race, and language has a key role in constructing 'common sense' notions that underlie division. It cannot simply be assumed that the division of workers along national lines, tying employment opportunities only to those available within one the nation of origin, is a timeless and necessary fact of human existence. The existence of borders that enforce—rhetorically and tangibly—a "socio-spatial segregation" must be understood as historically specific to capitalism (Ferguson & McNally, 2014: 13). It is only through its ongoing operation that the border relation is turned into 'common sense' notions accepted by many. The points system should be understood as a further implementation of this process, helping to construct a rigid hierarchy of eligibility for migration to Australia. Its shift from more discretionary entry requirements to objective and quantitative entry requirements was crucial in conferring legitimacy to the border relation. Moreover, by concretising discriminatory requirements into the border, it entrenched the racial element in national divisions.

Entrenchment of skilled migration

The contradiction between exclusion and incorporation is also affected by other relations. Structural changes in domestic and global capital have resulted in the "restructuring of the Western economies", borders included (Collins, 2008: 246). From the end of the long-boom, changes in the contours of international capital have seen much low-skilled manufacturing work shifted away from Australia to countries with lower labour costs (Probert, 1996). This decrease in manufacturing is paired with a corresponding increase in the other sectors, including finance, information technology, education, media and communications (Mahony, 1993: 9; Collins, 2000: 13). Australia was no mere victim of these changes; they were exacerbated and propelled by Hawke and Keating policy. By floating the dollar, decreasing tariffs and interest rates, marketising wages and making the reserve bank 'independent', Australia was rendered more susceptible to these global pressures. This has metamorphosed the incorporation/exclusion contradiction.

The border's dynamic has been shifted from towards the incorporation of high-skilled workers. These workers fuel labour supply in the sectors required by the change. Under Hawke, the category of skilled migrants rose from a small program to a significant por-
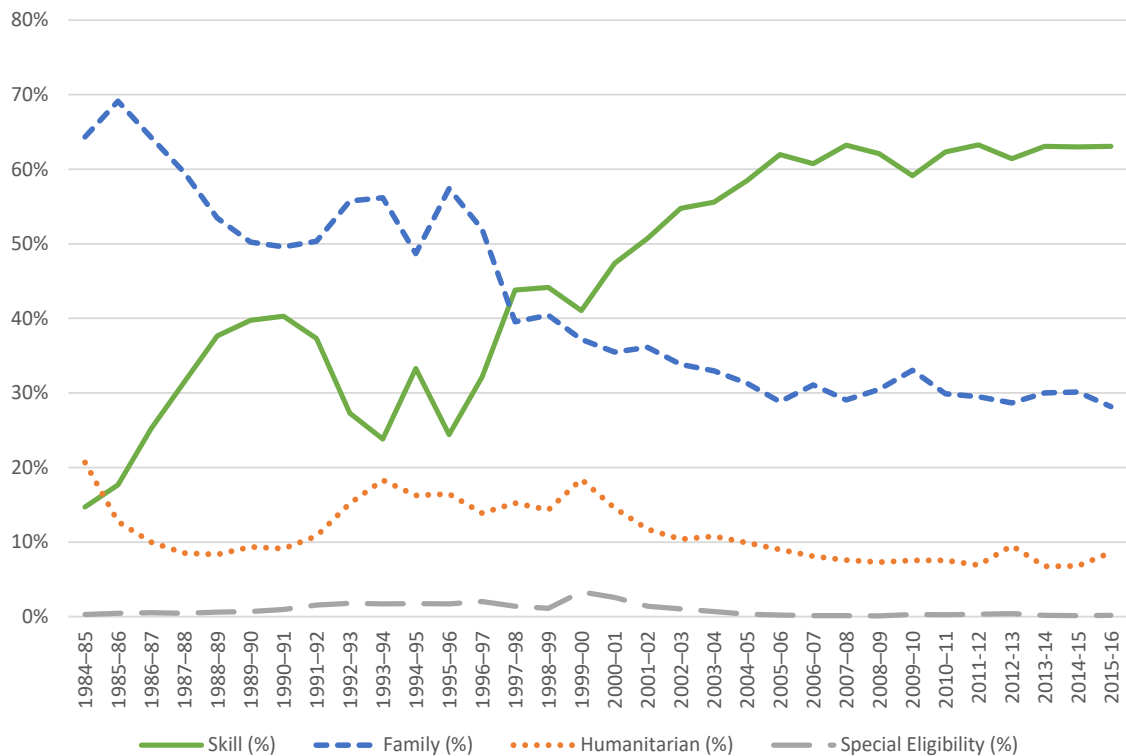
Figure 4.2: Percentage makeup of Permanent Migration Program 1983-2016

tion of the permanent intake (B. Birrell, 2003: 38). This occurred despite the ALP's initial condemnation of the discriminatory nature of the points system. Figure 4.2 presents the proportional increase in skilled migration. Though experiencing fluctuations in response to recessions, the proportion of skilled migrants has grown to become the dominant mode of permanent migration. This incorporation relatively displaced family migration, overtaking it in 1997-98.

This metamorphosis in the incorporation/exclusion contradiction manufactured another category of exclusion—family migrants. Immigration Minister Phillip Ruddock (cited in Masanauskas, 2015) asks "If you're bringing here people who have never worked, never contributed, who are going to draw benefits, the community asks should we be paying benefits to them?". Throughout his tenure, Ruddock continually portrayed family migrants as a "burden" on Australian taxpayers (cited in Mares, 2002: 142). Though it is true that family migrants may draw welfare, this ignores the overall effects to the Australian economy. Castles et al. (1998: 54–5) find that the migration of dependents—especially older people—has positive net economic outcomes, including especially its

impact in decreasing unemployment. The skilled/family distinction became a site of portraying migrants as burdens. However, this was not limited to family migrants.

All migrants were the rhetorical butt of Howard-era exclusion. For Pietsch (2005: 112), Howard's 1996 'For All of Us' campaign was implicitly exclusionary, aiming to hint that the system had previously unfairly advantaged migrants and the unemployed. The campaign launch was summed up in the Daily Telegraph: "In essence, Mr Howard took the $1 billion he wants saved over three years from the social security given to migrants and the unemployed, and redirected it to the "battler" families with jobs" (Malcolm Farr, as cited in P. Williams, 1997: 253). Howard took a stance against migrants for the duration of his term, carrying out a loud and consistent campaign against 'welfare fraud' for the years following, despite the low incidence of actual cases (F. Taylor, 2009: 67). Wilson and Turnbull (2001: 2) argue this constituted 'wedge politics', where "unpopular or stigmatised" groups are targetted for political gain.

Rhetoric was paired with policy changes that presented Howard as protector of 'Aussie battlers' against migrants and welfare cheats. The Howard government extended the period for which migrants were denied access to welfare to two years. Highlighting the continuity in the migration program, the denial of welfare payments was originally implemented under Keating as a 6-month ban. The strong statements and loud promulgations with which this was announced were not, however, matched by significant savings to government expenditure. The degree to which migrants actually use social security relative to the Australian-born population has been significantly overstated (Whiteford, 1991). Indeed, Jupp (2007: 149) argues cuts to migrant welfare made no substantial difference to government expenditure. While the cuts make little economic difference, they make powerful political tools. They are a concrete expression of the idea that migrants are a drain on the economy.

Shifts towards skilled migration facilitated higher value-transfers to Australian capital. As the migration program was skewed in favour of those with more qualifications, Australian capital shifted reproduction costs overseas. While welfare cuts made little difference to capital, these changes represent a saving to Australian capital. For example, Birrell et al. (2001: 15) estimate the 'brain gain' to Australia in the three years from 1997-8 to be 24 420 managers and administrators, 32 628 professionals, 6 404 associate professionals, 12 113 tradespeople, and 8 567 other. Australia avoided subsidising the education of all of these workers. As an indicative measure, if the Australian state had to pay for just the subsidised portion of the tertiary education of those professionals and

associate professionals at the 2014 Commonwealth Grant Scheme levels (ABC, 2017),
this would cost over $412 million. This does not include other expenditure on primary
and secondary education.

The actions of unions and social movements have often reflected these ideas. One
example of this is in the Hawke government's vague and strange proposal for a 'Multi-
Function Polis' (MFP). The MFP was a proposed city built in the Australian desert,
using Japanese capital, designed to be a futuristic cultural and technological hub (see
Rundle, 2015). The proposal included legislation that would limit labour rights and
thus the ability of unions to organise in the MFP. However, resistance to the MFP
was couched in highly racist terms. Precursor to the Greens, the RAINBOW Alliance
concentrated in its literature on the 100 000 people who would be brought in "up to
80% of whom may be Japanese", including several racist Japanese caricatures (Bram-
ble, 1990: 14). One protest rally at Coomera saw people wearing "Slap a Jap" T-shirts
(Griffiths, 1990). Rather than focus on the anti-union legislation or conditions, workers
were drawn to anti-Japanese and racist ideas. This potentially makes it more difficult
to unionise Asian workers in the future by encouraging racist sentiment. It also acted
as an electoral distraction, which Rundle (2015) argues was instrumental in Peacock's
1990 electoral win. This indicates the function that the racist divisions of border can
have in both galvanising electoral support and deflecting class sentiment against for-
eigners.

The border's twin concrete and rhetorical movement has been a powerful mode of di-
vision. Concrete changes in the border enacting division of workers have occurred con-
tinuously, including election and non-election times, and over different political lead-
erships. Its rhetorical edge is often deployed by individual politicians, sometimes as
'wedge politics' aiming to target political opponents. However, the long-term impact of
the constant deployment of this division for political ends, had been a political-economic
formation of division. This continuous movement of the border through concrete and
rhetorical modes enacts the division of workers in both modes. It has led to the gradual
construction of 'common sense' ideas of racism, with domestic workers encouraged to
perceive migrants as threats whose interests are opposed to theirs.

Temporary Program

Temporary migration has changed the face of the Australian border. In 1999, numbers
of temporary migrants overtook permanent migration, and have grown exponentially

since (Hugo & Harris, 2011: 5). Numbers now approach two million (Mares, 2016: 274). Hugo (2006) estimates that temporary migrants contribute approximately 400 000 full time jobs, or 3.9% of the workforce. For Mares (2016: 39), temporary migration is "no longer a marginal phenomenon" but rather "integral to boosting the responsiveness of the labour market to changing economic conditions, enabling employers to access a supply of workers at all skill levels who can be more easily hired or let go as the situation demands".

Temporary migration should not be conceived as a discrete form of existence in Australia, disconnected from other forms of residence. Rather, it is the production of a certain form of restricted residence. Migrants are denied economic and political rights by function of their place of birth. Temporary visas come with the hanging threat of deportation, which entrenches these inequalities further. Temporary migrants are frequently subject to poor conditions. Despite the fact temporary migrants make up around 5 per cent of Australia's workforce, they accounted for 11.7 per cent of complaints to the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO, 2016: 46). This is indicative of the 'superexploitative' conditions many migrant workers face.

Temporary migration is also continuous with permanent migration, forming a hybrid program. Many 'temporary' migrants transition to permanent migration (Dauvergne & Marsden, 2014: 230). In 2003-04, around a third of permanent places were granted onshore to people on temporary visas (Hugo, 2006: 227). In one survey, Khoo (2008) found that over 95% of migrants had either already applied for, or intended to apply for, permanent residency (PR). But only a fraction actually gain PR. Temporary migration thus acts as an extended testing regime preceding the permanent program.

The three major categories of temporary migrant are 457 visa holders, students, and working holiday makers. Though the three are marked by different dynamics, this chapter argues in each case that the production of temporary migration as a category both relies on the pre-existence of racist divisions, and produces those racist divisions.[1]

Temporary Skilled Workers—457-visas

Operating from 1996-2017, the 'temporary skilled-worker scheme' allowed for a four-year stay, sponsored by business, in areas of high labour demand (Markus et al., 2009:

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[1]Though outside the scope of this thesis, New Zealand citizens also make up a large proportion of the temporary workforce (Mares, 2016: 128–53). There may also be a higher number of undocumented migrants than is commonly thought (SSCEE, 2016: 204).

63). Its origins can be found under the Keating government in the 1995 Roach report, which argued for more flexibility, company transfers and easier access to skills (Khoo et al., 2007: 9), again evidencing political continuity between Liberal and Labor governments.

The main restriction on 457 workers is that residency is tied to employment. The visa is conditional on the migrant worker holding a sponsored job. If they lose the job, they are given 90 days to find a new one, or their visa is revoked, leaving them liable to deportation (Larsen, 2013). Should they wish to transition to another job without the risk of deportation, they are also denied the ability to work a second job. The PR pathway also requires a 457 worker stay with an employer for two years, exacerbating the pressures tying workers to their employers (SSCEE, 2016: 146). On top of working restrictions, 457 visa-holders are also denied access to welfare, despite paying taxes, are denied the right to vote, and denied access to public healthcare, instead having to purchase private cover (Larsen, 2013).

The conditionality of a migrant workers' residence on their employer ties the worker to capital tightly, and renders them particularly vulnerable to mistreatment. It introduces a structural power imbalance wherein migrants are pressured to endure poor conditions to avoid losing their visa status. Perversely, if employers do break labour laws, it puts 457 workers further at structural disadvantage. Not only does it constitute a breach of visa condition opening the possibility of deportation, but it constitutes a criminal offence (SSCEE, 2016: 147). Migrants have reported receiving pay at rates for their country of origin, receiving pay at below award-wages, being prohibited from joining unions, and being threatened with sacking and deportation (H. Williams, 2007: 4–5). While some of these cases, such as reports of wages less than a dollar per hour, are probably marginal, the systemic reliance of migrants on employers leave them liable to abuse. Competitive pressures also mean that capitalists are structurally driven to undercut each other. Temporary migrant workers disproportionately believe that discrimination occurs regarding conditions, with over 50 per cent of personal services workers, and over 30 percent of hotels, restaurant and education worker reporting belief that foreign workers are discriminated against in terms of working conditions (Khoo et al., 2006: 17).

This movement contains contradictory pressures regarding national division. By putting 'foreign workers' in the same country working alongside one another, these personal connections open the potential for international proletarian solidarity. Contradictorily however, it also opens the possibility of directing anti-migrant sentiment

against workers living in the same country. But the 457 system does more than just put workers alongside one another. It constructs a limited form of residence in which temporary workers in Australia do not have citizenship or full working rights, and even face threats of deportation. This limitation of rights animates the tendency towards anti-migrant sentiment being directed at fellow workers. National divisions are combined with divided working conditions.

This concrete division has been joined by rhetorical division from across the political spectrum. Pauline Hanson's website cites 457 visas and refugees as the primary examples of the "uncontrolled, mass migration" she hints may be "largely responsible for Australia's $150 billion welfare bill each year" (One Nation, 2015). But this sentiment is not limited to right populists. In the lead up to the 2013 federal election, Prime Minister Julia Gillard undertook to wage "a fight... to stop foreign workers being put at the front of the queue with Australian workers at the back" (as cited in Berg, 2015: 133). In one television advertisement campaign castigated for its predominantly white cast, opposition leader Bill Shorten (2017) stated the Liberals were giving jobs to "457 overseas workers" despite the fact "the people who want the jobs are here", promising instead to "employ Australians first". He blamed temporary workers for "lowering wage outcomes and taking the jobs of nurses, motor mechanics, carpenters, auto-electricians" (Shorten, cited in Karp, 2016). Even Greens MPs have argued that by endorsing 457 visas, the government of the day "wasn't really serious about putting locals first" (Bandt, 2013) and questioning whether Pauline Hanson was "serious about looking after local jobs" (cited in Karp, 2016b). Turnbull (2017) encouraged similar sentiments as Prime Minister when he announced the abolishment of 457 visas, on the grounds that "Australian workers must have priority for Australian jobs", proclaiming the necessity of "Australian jobs and Australian values". Though the visas are concentrated in professional and management workers, politicians have focussed on the minority in construction and trades. They have frequently blamed 457s for unemployment, and poor wage outcomes, despite the lack of evidence for said impacts (Castles et al., 1998: 54).

Workers have been led to oppose 457-visas. Many unions have joined together in a 'Protect Aussie Jobs' campaign. The Maritime Union of Australia (MUA, 2016) ran radio ads linking migrant labour to "managing you out of a job too". This nationalist campaign led to the opposition of temporary migrant workers. The Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU, 2013) organised a rally in Melbourne, uploading images of workers wearing T-shirts with an image of Victoria, with a cross going through '457'. One picket of the Werribee sewage treatment farm, proclaimed "Stop visa (457) work-

ers. Employ locals" (Lynch, 2013). Union officials and politicians almost universally claimed their opposition was to the bad conditions imposed on temporary workers, and not to the workers themselves. These campaigns and rhetoric, however, have fostered working class antagonism to the temporary workers themselves. The substance of the campaign was for the abolition of the visa class rather than the extension of full citizenship rights to 457 workers. By mobilising domestic workers against temporary migrant workers, and promoting nationalistic slogans for 'Aussie jobs', unions have fallen prey to the politics of division. This provides indicative support for Marx's (1976a: 799) thesis that immigration would rivet "the worker to capital more firmly than the wedges of Hephaestus held Prometheus to the rock".

Relying on Racism

The 457 visa allows for a closer realisation of the reserve army. It represents a shift from supply- to demand- driven systems (Papademetriou et al., 2008). The scheme is uncapped, making it far more flexible than the permanent program, which is fixed at government predictions of the health of the economy. The 457 program thus frees capital's need for migrant labour from the impediments of any errors in those predictions. The worker's residence in Australia is predicated on the employer's direct need and sponsorship. Moreover, it facilitates the hybrid temporary-permanent program where migrants are subjected to more extensive testing to get a PR. While about 64 per cent of 457 visa-holders report wishing to transition to PR, only about 50 per cent attain it (B. Birrell & Healy, 2014: 20; Velayutham, 2013: 343). The 457 visa "acts as a filter" allowing employers to test whether a worker is an ideal employee (Mares, 2016: 217). If the employer deems the worker unfit for employment, not only is the migrant worker fired, but can no longer remain in Australia, given 90 days before their visa is revoked.

457 workers face the conditions of superexploitation. While regulations are supposed to prevent the undercutting of domestic wages, Birrell and Healy (2014: 22) indicate "Employers of these cooks are almost certainly violating the rules by paying less than the minimum amount and/or perhaps requiring extra hours beyond the award level". The SSCEE (2016: 153–4) documented cases of underpayment, threats, and unfair dismissal. One 457 contract stated (illegally) that workers "engaging in union activities... shall shoulder the expenses for his/her own repatriation back to the Philippines" (SSCEE, 2016: 155).

This not only enacts racist divisions, but is founded on them. The conditions of superexploitation are upheld by structural racism. This includes racism at work such as

discrimination, harassment, language barriers and differential treatment based on appearance (SSCEE, 2016: 153–4). Not only are these poor working conditions, it also decreases job opportunities and makes it more difficult for migrants to seek out justice in protective bodies. 457 migrants are not inherently more vulnerable, but rather this vulnerability is produced through the border, and moreover, is underpinned by racism.

Students-migrants-workers

Students are the largest category of temporary migrant worker.[2] They are difficult to classify, sitting at the nexus of education, migration, and work. Neilson (2009) terms them "students-migrants-workers" (SMWs)—to use an "apt, albeit awkward" neologism (Robertson, 2011: 2195). SMWs are workers—both in-training and frequently while studying. They face economic pressures, including exorbitant upfront fees and living costs, which pushes many into work while studying. Without waged work, a "significant proportion" would receive an income "less than half the Henderson Poverty Line" (Nyland et al., 2009: 1). In 2006, 56 per cent of international students engaged in paid work according to one survey (AEI, 2007). However student visas impose several conditions, including a maximum of 40 hours work per fortnight, and non-failure of courses. These conditions render SMWs a superexploited workforce, which facilitates a value-transfer to Australian capital.

SMWs face discriminatory work conditions. They are frequently pushed into low-skilled jobs, and casual or short-term work. The combination of working hours restrictions and financial burden lead to frequent breaches of student visa conditions—working cash-in-hand, working excessive hours, or failing courses. This leaves SMWs "teeter[ing] on the edges of legality" (Robertson, 2011: 2195–6), with their residence conditional on their working hours and pay not being discovered. One well-publicised case revealed the conditions and pay of 7-Eleven employees—a majority of whom are international students (FWO, 2016: 46). The FWO (2016) found a systemic lack of knowledge of work rights, working in excess of visa limitations, falsification of records, unpaid training, and underpayments. The incident also revealed the systemic nature of student superexploitation, with over two thirds of the franchises of this major chain implicated in "payroll compliance issues" (ABC, 2015). Nor is it merely 7-Eleven at fault. One survey of SMWs in general found 60 per cent of respondents receive lower than minimum wage and 76 per cent did not receive penalty rates (SSCEE, 2016: 203).

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[2]FWO (2016: 48) estimates SMWs are the largest category of temporary workers (43 per cent) compared to WHMs (33 per cent) and 457-visa holders (24 per cent).

This superexploitation both enacts, and is founded upon, racist divisions. The border relation constructs a division between the experiences of domestic and international students, subjecting SMWs to poor work conditions and pay, limiting or denying access to welfare, and increasing education fees. But it is also predicated on deeper issues of discrimination. In a series of interviews, Nyland et al. (2009) found that SMWs have less social or cultural support to demand decent conditions than domestic students with cultural knowledge and confidence, and less knowledge of labour rights. Most were employed by people "of their own cultural group" (Nyland et al., 2009: 8), possibly indicating differential treatment of migrants based on race in other workplaces. Some report experiencing overtly bigoted verbal abuse. Many SMWs described a general hostility directed towards them and differential treatment based on language or appearance (Nyland et al., 2009: 8–10).[3] The border relation's ongoing construction of the experience and conditions of SMWs is intimately bound up with concrete divisions between students, both relying on and propagating the conditions of racism.

These divisions between international and domestic student workers has led to the diversion of class sentiment. One CFMEU official spoke against migrants working in "low-paid jobs at convenience stores and driving cabs", claiming "that's not a good outcome for anyone" (Bita, 2013). But rather than call for an extension of student working rights, the CFMEU called for inquiries into further restrictions on those rights, such as decreasing the allowed working hours from 20 hours per week. The CFMEU (2015: 12) argues that international students are "inherently more susceptible to exploitation" due to language, culture, and age. But these conditions of superexploitation presuppose the structures of racial division, which are a process that can be challenged, not an object to be accepted. Thompson and Rosenzweig (2011: 65) argue that the National Union of Students partook in similar divisions, in calling for a raise in the income requirements for international student visas. These moves indicate that the divisions imposed through the border allow for a diversion of class sentiment into anti-migrant sentiment, with unions calling for reductions in worker rights in some cases.

SMWs also subsidise the education of other students through high student fees, saving the Australian state further education outlays for future workers. Student migrants have turned from a small diplomatic program, to an important source of education finance. There has been deregulation in student numbers from the beginning of international student migration in 1951, through to the removal of caps in 1985, with almost

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[3]Interestingly, students frequently denied that this treatment constituted discrimination.

a quarter of students today coming from overseas (Burke, 2014: 2; Mares, 2016: 39; SPERL, 2009: 10). There has been a corresponding increase in fees from their introduction in 1979, gradually increased to full course fees in 1985 (SPERL, 2009: 9–10). Since 1982, education exports have grown at an average of 14 per cent per annum, and have become Australia's third largest export (SPERL, 2009: 19). Student migrants provide not only value-transfer to capital in terms of their skills, but also subsidise the education of other workers.

Many SMWs transition into PR. This both transfers value to Australian capital, and encourages international student migration. This has become successively easier, with international students granted bonus points granted for PR in 1998, and easing the transition to other visas in 2001 (Robertson, 2011: 2194; Spinks & Koleth, 2016; Stratton, 2009: 6). In 2004 over a third of graduating students transitioned to visas leading to permanent residence (B. Birrell, 2006: 60). Singh et al. (2010: 21) argue this has allowed the state to produce ideal "designer migrants" who come, pay for their own education, and then are permitted to stay only should they fulfil the requirements of capital through the permanent migration program. The student migrant visa allows capital to gain skilled workers, whilst avoiding reproduction costs.

These changes have been the subject of a racist backlash, characterised by some as surreptitious back-door entrants. Academic Bob Birrell (2006: 53; Birrell et al., 2007) wrote several articles bemoaning PR changes and student's "poor English" abilities. This received extensive media attention, with newspapers declaring 'Skilled migration a rort', 'Overseas students fail in job language' (Baas, 2015). One Nation (2011: 6) describes international students as "smart foreigners" who are able to get "citizenship through the back door".

The extension of work and citizenship rights to student-migrants has also found opposition amongst the left. One policy move created a 485 visa class, which allowed student migrant graduates to stay in Australia and work for four years, extending further possibility for PR. Doug Cameron—Labor Left Senator and convenor—described the policy as "diminish[ing] opportunities for young Australians" (cited in Bita, 2013). Some unions argued against migrants "snatch[ing] jobs from local graduates" (Baas, 2015). However, there is no evidence for a link between skilled PR and unemployment. This opposition to migrant rights is one that fails to address underlying structural causes of unemployment.

SMWs provide a large workforce to capital, and facilitate a large value transfer to Australian capital. Their limited residential rights in Australia mean they face discrim-

inatory conditions that both presume and enact racist division of the working class. This has been a moment in the construction of "common sense" racism through the border.

Working Holidays Makers

Working holiday visas allow tourists aged 18-30 to work and travel in Australia for 12 months (Tan & Lester, 2012: 360). Changes in 2005 allowed the provisioning of a second 12 month visa, provided WHMs worked seasonal jobs in rural areas (Mares, 2016: 37). The Department of Immigration and Border Protection purports the Working Holiday Maker (WHM) visa to be "primarily a cultural exchange programme" and therefore not part of the temporary labour regime aiming to fill labour shortages (DIBP, 2014: 9). It is, however, very clear that the WHM program provides a huge source of migrant labour. From 2012-16, the department granted an average of around 337 500 WHM visas per year.[4] A majority of this group—about 85 per cent—engage in paid work during their stay (Harding & Webster, 2002: 6). The scheme itself explicitly "encourages visa holders to find short-term or casual work" (Department of Industry, Innovation and Science, 2017), and even directs migrants to rural areas for the second visa. WHMs were instituted in 1975, but expanded out to a larger number of countries and further still after 2000, student numbers becoming uncapped in the 1990s (Mares, 2002: 47; Shah & Burke, 2005: 5).

The WHM visa produces a superexploited temporary workforce. Much media attention is focussed on certain supposedly exceptional cases of particularly low pay rates and abusive bosses (Mares, 2016: 237). But these stories may disguise the fact that the conditions come as a result of state policy around visa conditions and the structures of competition which drives businesses to undercut one another. Though the literature is small, some evidence is indicative of systemic problems in the conditions of WHMs. Over a third of WHMs are paid below minimum wage (Tan & Lester, 2012: 368).

Even WHMs have been a site of division. The majority of WHMs are European (67 per cent), and thus are not the target of racism to the same extent as migrants coming from Asia.[5] None-the-less, there has been negative media attention. Peel and Steen (2007) find that print media has focussed on conflict between WHMs and domestic Australians, criminal activities, and reckless behaviour, but also attention given to

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[4]Calculated from DIBP (2016a: 25, 2016b: 19) statistics, including first and second visas granted.

[5]Calculated from DIBP (2016a: 25, 2016b: 19) statistics.

economic impact of the program and WHMs being victims of crime. There is not sufficient research to conclude whether this may inflate actual incidences. While this is certainly not to the same level as that for 457 workers or SMWs, there has still been negative media attention. There have also been anecdotal instances of racial targeting in the workplace. A Current Affair (2012) interviewed WHMs who reported incidences of racial abuse, deportation threats, and poor treatment. These instances underlie the division imposed through the border. Though the rhetoric has been far less divisive, there have still been tangible divisions in working conditions.

These divisions have also led to a degree of diversion of class sentiment. The CFMEU (2014: 6) has called for restricted entry to Australia and for reviews into limiting WHM working rights, on the basis of protecting young Australians. However, evidence suggests that young Australians typically benefit from WHM migration due to the increased demand for services and thus jobs in industries typically dominated by young people. Tan and Lester (2012) find that every 100 WHMs have a net effect of creating the equivalent of five full-time jobs.

WHMs provide a temporary reserve army in response to shortages of low-skilled labour in certain sectors or regions. Employers report that these shortages are due to the difficult nature of the work, and low pay. Indeed over 80 per cent of employer reported WHMs as important or very important to business, according to one survey (Tan & Lester, 2012: 375). WHMs thus serve a "critical dependence" of the Agricultural sector, though only a minority of WHMs are actually employed in regional areas (SSCEE, 2016: 101).

WHMs secure for Australian capital a workforce of superexploited migrants in low-skilled jobs. Even this predominantly European class has been part of the process of divisions—constructing and requiring 'common sense' racism.

Conclusion

This chapter applied the explanations from chapter two to Australia's migration program, considering permanent migration as well as the three main components of temporary migration—457 visas, student visas, and working holiday visas. But no single explanation was perfectly descriptive of the operation of the border. Between the programs different explanations dominate. Permanent migration is described well by the reserve

army explanation. The 457 program is characterised by superexploitation. Student migrants are superexploited, and are particularly used to transfer value to Australian capital. Working Holiday Makers provide a superexploited reserve army for low-skilled work. There is no singular and ahistorical scheme that dictates every facet of the border. The border operates contingently and is driven by various forces.

Abstracting away from specificity however, this has chapter placed the dynamic of racism at the foundation of the border's operation. It argued that in each case, not only does the border perpetuate racism through its twin moments of concrete policy and rhetorical promulgations, but it also relies on the pre-existence of division by race. This was also felt in the actions and rhetoric of workers and unions, whose resistance was channelled away from capital and deployed against migrants. In this way, in its continual and almost mundane operation, the border enacts and is intimately bound up with the production of the 'common sense' of racial division.

Why has the Australian state closed its borders to migrants whose labour could benefit capital? What factors lie at the heart of the exclusion so dominant throughout the border?

This thesis has argued that this exclusionary moment of borders is explained at its deepest level by the importance of racial divisions. Borders are a contradictory relation, not explained by any unitary description. Australia's border is varied and multifaceted. Its different faces serve their own peculiar purposes, developed contingently in time. The border secures many things for capital. It provides cheap exploitable labour for the agricultural sector. It delivers high-skilled workers to fuel expansion without the worry of paying for their education, and draws billions of dollars of student fees to subsidise the education of the next generation of workers. It produces a workforce with conditions rendering them liable to systemic mistreatment. But this thesis argues that through all of these modes of operation, borders have delivered a sweeter benefit yet.

Through the grinding process of its own operation, at once brutal and mundane, the border has helped secure the hegemonic force of racism. Australia's border has operated to divide workers, by concretely imposing racial segregation, and rhetorically imposing an ideology of racism. It has not just excluded swathes of the world's population with an impersonal metric of numbers on a discriminatory points system. It has locked a small number up on Pacific islands to make the division even clearer. It has imposed divisions on those entering the country, forming a limited form of residence, and deported many who fail to fit the schema—all the while deploying racism as a tool which upholds its own operation.

Moreover, the border's operation has been drenched in rhetoric identifying migrants as threats. Whether they were refugees on leaky boats, international students driving taxis, 457 workers in hospitality, or just workers overseas applying for a visa, the operation of the border relation has cast migrants as enemies of domestic workers, and cast

the state as the protagonist protecting Australian workers from them, in a perverse performance. The policies of government, the rhetoric of politicians, and the reporting of media have been committed to the production of this peculiar antagonism between workers.

The border relation has been among the primary drivers in the production of a hegemony of racism. It has turned these divisions-in-theory into the common sense of the working class: of course workers oppose immigration; of course migrants are under-unionised; of course they get bad pay. It has defined and legitimated the state, welding workers to capital in the process. And it has redirected workers struggle away from anywhere it might do harm, instead towards an opposition to foreign workers and their rights. This ideological function of borders is foundational, underpinning its other functions. For Marx (1870: 221),

> *"This antagonism is the secret of the impotence of the English working class, despite its organisation. It is the secret by which the capitalist class maintains its power."*

To make this argument, this thesis started with the identification of a contradiction at the base of the border, arguing that theorists had failed to grasp one or both of its poles: incorporation and exclusion. Theory that relied on inert, lifeless abstraction-as-object obscured the contradiction, suggesting the path of dialectical abstraction-as-process. Chapter two thus proposed a Marxian framework of borders, investigating three interrelated functions of borders. It argued that each was predominated by one in particular: the function of racist division. On theoretical grounds, racism was proposed as a processual abstraction with which to grasp Australia's border relation.

In chapters three and four, this understanding was applied in turn to the different categories of the border relation. Chapter three considered the refugee program in its profoundly racist cruelty. It argued that refugee policy had been aimed at a domestic audience, that anti-refugee racism had a systemic effect on Australian capitalism, and that refugee racism was related to migrant racism. Chapter four applied the categories of chapter two, and the insights of chapter three, to Australia's migration program. It argued that throughout the border was a tendency towards the concrete and rhetorical division of racism via the production of hegemony. Finally, it argued that the borders own operation presupposed the racism it helped produce, concluding that the Australian border's exclusionary moment is founded on the process of racism.

This investigation of the Australian border is profoundly relevant to those seeking to understand it, as well as those seeking to fight the structures it legitimates. This thesis suggests the value of Marx's method in comprehending borders, usefully employing it in the absence of a clear theory of borders. It also contributes the relatively novel conception of Australia's border as characterised by a contradiction between incorporation and exclusion, in an expansive and somewhat ambitious study of Australia's border relation as a whole. Australia provides an important example where the contradictory pressures of borders are at their deepest–some of the deepest in the world in both its exclusionary and incorporative moments. It may provide a more developed example of tendencies yet immanent elsewhere. In propounding the border's role in securing the hegemonic structures that regulate labour-power, it points not only to the importance of theorising the structures of racism so intimately bound up with borders, but in challenging them.

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