

Public policy is class war pursued by other means: struggle and restructuring as international education economy

Liz Thompson and Ben Rosenzweig

Abstract

Our goal is to provide an account of the state-imposed restructuring of international education economies, begun in Australia in 2009 and continuing as we write. This restructuring is to a significant extent a response to the diverse struggles of those on international student visas, and the consequences that these struggles had for these economies, in the context of xenophobia and economic nationalism (visible within Australia as a spectrum from street violence to trade union lobbying for border control). Decisions concerning the economy were inseparable from attempts to disempower international students and undermine their capacity for struggle and resistance, and ultimately to frustrate their ability to fulfil many of the needs and desires which underlay their movement into Australia. This restructuring dispensed with significant sections of these economies and effectively expelled a significant proportion of those on international student visas, in efforts to re-found the international education industry on bases less vulnerable to student struggle or to the vagaries of particular markets – shifts articulated as a defence of the “integrity” of Australia’s border control regime and a reassertion of labour market management in immigration policy. In discussing these processes, we question received categories of migration, politics and struggle.

Capitalism is the restructuring

In the familiar, stripped-down narrative, post-war capitalism was increasingly reproduced in “the West” in the form of “Keynesian” social democratic states characterised by a socio-historically specific definition of “full employment”, the development of welfare provision and the recognition and incorporation of trade unions in negotiation of the terms of integration of the proletariat. This “settlement”, created, with variations, by parties across the mainstream political spectrum, entered a period of crises in the late 1960s, and by the early 1970s was subject to political and economic agendas which sought to erode or abolish this form of the capitalist state, and to (re)impose upon the population a more direct relationship between wage-labour and income, between work and quality of life and even survival. This occurred in large measure by actively creating market-based processes of discipline and subjectivation – the reimposition of “money as command” – all often retrospectively understood as the

neoliberalisation of capitalist social relations. This, too, was implemented, with variations, by political parties across the mainstream political spectrum. (Burnham 1990; Clarke 1988).

The process of neoliberal restructuring is not simply a period of transition between the capitalism of the post-war period and some new stabilised "settlement" which will come over the horizon along with a new cycle of accumulation; the restructuring has no predetermined endpoint, and is characterised by struggles in which the dynamics of the self-expansion of capital intersect with the imperatives of neoliberalisation. Capitalism *is* restructuring.¹

Knowledge-mongering institutions and the development of international education economies

"A schoolmaster who educates others is not a productive worker. But a schoolmaster who is engaged as a wage labourer in an institution along with others, in order through his [sic] labours to valorise the money of the entrepreneur of the knowledge-mongering institution, is a productive worker." (Karl Marx 1977: 1044)

In Australia, the neoliberal reconstitution began in earnest under the Hawke/Keating Australian Labor Party (ALP) governments, which began incremental processes of financial deregulation and privatisation, and slowly dismantled the centralised negotiation of wages and conditions for significant sections of the workforce, while undermining or destroying those trade unions which would not be effectively contained within the limits of the federally-managed reform process (Kuhn 1993). The subsequent election of the Howard Liberal-National government saw an acceleration of neoliberalisation combined with efforts to systematically undermine or abolish existing forms of socio-institutional mediation and representation. The significant productivity growth over the period of neoliberalisation is largely explainable through the increase in working hours, and in unpaid overtime, as well as intensification of labour (Bryan 2004). Meanwhile, the stronger relationship of debt to the imposition of work meant that, in a literal, quantifiable sense, large sections of the proletariat were those with less than nothing to sell but their labour: large debts accrued in the course of tertiary education would play an increasing role, alongside mortgages and credit card debts, in the forms of proletarianisation of domestic students and those on international student visas, albeit in very different ways.²

¹ Our account partly follows the analyses of *Theorie Communiste* (notwithstanding certain differences and reservations); for discussion of the development of *Theorie Communiste's* account of the restructuring, see Riff-Raff 2005.

² For an account of the different forms of debt and credit used to facilitate international mobility from India to elsewhere, see Biao 2005.

The massive changes to Australian post-secondary education developed within, and were moments of, this wider restructuring, which only exists in the struggles which define its moments; the reconstitution of the Australian state within the combined and uneven restructuring of capitalist social relations on a planetary scale.

A central aspiration of social democracy had been articulated as the (covertly-national) principle of "free education", abandoned from the mid-1980s as the ALP government reintroduced fees for higher education. As a former Hawke Government minister, Peter Staples, later put it, previous proposals to reintroduce fees for "domestic students" had failed because of opposition within the party and a belief "that such a move would be quite electorally damaging". However: "a drastic fall in the Australian dollar led to a last-minute round of budget cuts in order to give the message to the world's finance markets that the Hawke ALP Government was AAA-rated when it came to being fiscally tough" – a message which included the introduction of fees (Rosenzweig and Thompson 2009). These fees went from a standard fee across institutions and courses, a small portion of the costs of education, to ever-higher fees differentiated by course and institution, primarily experienced as debt through the Federal Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) system (Chapman & Ryan 1997).

In the 1950s, Australian involvement in international education had been framed as "aid" under the "Colombo Plan" - designed to bring South East Asian elites to study in Australia in the hope that this would help to inoculate them again "communism". (Lowe 2010; Oakman 2004). By the 1980s, the Federal government began to see "international education" in terms of "trade", introducing so-called "full fees" for international students in 1986. International education in Australia became measured in foreign exchange earnings and exports, though in the early stages the consumers were still substantially South East Asian elites.

At the same time, the ALP governments of the 1980s and then 1990s would begin a process of restructuring both higher education and the vocational education and training (VET) sector (these VET providers are often known as Technical and Further Education (TAFE) providers) (NTEU 2009). The VET sectors were opened up so that private, mostly commercial "registered training organisations" could operate alongside the publicly-funded TAFEs (Kell 2006); these would expand and become the foundation of a significant part of the international education industry (Victorian Auditor General 2010).³

By the late 1990s, universities were downsizing or abolishing sometimes highly-regarded departments, faculties and courses judged to be insufficiently or not profitable; the benefit to the reputation of the university of such areas was being assessed essentially as a form of advertising, the results of which could be achieved better and cheaper by commercially traditional forms of marketing.

³ Since 2003 in particular, private, commercial providers have grown to more than 50% of VET providers in some states (Victorian Auditor-General 2010).

Pure sciences and the liberal arts faced cutbacks as well as pressure to find ways to generate income, to produce and sell commodities as well as acquire grants, as universities pursued more marketable IT, engineering, and business courses, largely marketed to international students (Hinkson 2002). The traditional academic structure of undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate programs on offer would also shift to better meet these new imperatives. Undergraduate programs were “rebadged” as Masters programs with a postgraduate price tag (Marginson 2002), and often shifted and changed in length to fit the moving requirements of minimum study periods in Australia necessary for applications for permanent migration.⁴ These Masters courses would be often taught by domestic students, usually very recent or imminent graduates employed as casual staff.

Over time the internal relations of universities would become more of an interlocking set of competitive markets, with the generation of income as a primary measure of success and more senior academics spending ever-more time as managers of the casualised bottom end of the academic labour-market.

Meanwhile in 1999, the now Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations introduced the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL). This list was framed as enabling the recruitment of people with particular skills into the Australian labour market from overseas, by awarding such people “points” which could be used to make access to permanent residency and some temporary visas easier.

And then, in 2001, the Howard government introduced changes allowing international students to apply for permanent residency from within Australia upon completion of their courses. Alongside the MODL, this shift gave Australian institutions a competitive edge. For international students, application for permanent residency relied upon completion of a credential in an occupation or field on the MODL – which included accounting, nursing, and various trades (to which cooking and hairdressing were subsequently added) – which gave them close to half of the necessary points for successful General Skilled Migration application.⁵

For many commentators, these policy changes are what created “distortions” in the market (Stone 2010; Mares 2010), when in fact they created the market.

The top source countries shifted, with a drop in numbers from the US, Japan and Hong Kong, and a sharp rise in Indian student enrolments and continuing rise in students from mainland China (Study Melbourne 2009; DIAC 2011). Students from India were and are largely concentrated in private colleges, in vocational trades courses and Masters programs.

The private college sector from which anti-violence protests emerged (discussed in detail later in this paper) is distinct from both universities and domestic

⁴ And are tellingly now considered worthless by the Department of Immigration (DIAC 2010c).

⁵ DIAC figures show an average annual growth rate in student visa holders of 13.9% per year after June 2001 (Koeth 2010).

TAFEs. Whilst offering vocational certificate and diploma course like TAFE, the courses are not delivered in a traditional campus environment. Private college campuses (and often the international recruitment-focussed arms of public universities like CQU Sydney and Melbourne and RMIT Business) are largely old office blocks in either suburban shopping centres or the Central Business District of Australia's capital cities. Many students would use public facilities like local libraries to study, with there being little or no facilities on the premises. Private colleges running hospitality courses might rent out commercial kitchens to run their courses, or hire out restaurants (Das 2009). Students would often pay course fees in monthly instalments, as opposed to the twice yearly, or per semester, payment standard at universities. With business plans and financial strategies contingent on monthly instalments, the college sector is vulnerable to any delays or dips in demand.

By contrast, Chinese students often start in the secondary education and English language training sectors, before moving through to higher education courses. Further, Australian "dual sector" institutions, that is those that run both university and TAFE programs, would build a market based on running Australian TAFE programs offshore, particularly in China, with the students eventually completing their studies in Australia (Study Melbourne 2009). An example of this is the RMIT and Wuhan University of Science and Technology (RMIT WUST) Diploma of Business program, which was the largest single source of international students into the RMIT Bachelor of Business program in 2000. At the effectively subcontracted, pre-existing Wuhan campus in China, students were simultaneously taught the English language and Diploma of Business material (in English) by a combination of local WUST and fly-in RMIT staff, before moving to Melbourne to complete a Bachelor of Business. Though the Diploma was not educationally equivalent to the first year of a Bachelor of Business program, students were articulated into the second year of a Bachelor program in Melbourne with full credit. Several cohorts of these students failed miserably, and faced a hostile response from the institution when they sought help (Rosenzweig and Thompson 2009).⁶ Internal reports documented the failure, but did not dampen the enthusiasm for this profitable recruitment for several more years, on an identical basis (Patrick 2005).

In 2002 Simon Marginson outlined some of these processes, detailing the imperatives which led to the development of these new Masters courses, but suggesting that these processes – of creating new commodities saleable to particular markets and offshore programs to "feed" people into Australian universities – somehow happened "behind the backs" of the "old collegial

⁶ This response included the automatic rejection of appeals from Chinese international students submitting medical certificates from certain ethnically Chinese doctors in close proximity to its Business campus, alleging some kind of conspiracy (McNamara 2006). When this campaign occasionally ensnared a local (often ethnically Chinese) student, this was used as proof that no discrimination against Chinese international students existed. This then became a campaign to change the policies of the entire institution to clamp down on appeal mechanisms and appeal rights.

structures" of Academic Boards when of course, as Marginson notes, Academic Boards still exist and still largely contain academics with responsibility for course approval (Marginson 2002: 128). These processes took place under the watchful eyes of academics, indeed at their instigation; the effectiveness of the restructuring at producing academic subjects competing to pursue the imperatives of the properly capitalist university is surely one of the great success stories of neoliberalism in Australia.

Government funding per student and as a percentage of university budgets would fall drastically, while the proportion which was acquired through commercial activity would rise equally sharply (Marginson et al 2010). The point is not that the university becomes "properly capitalist" when the proportion of its budget which derives from international students and other entrepreneurial activity reaches a certain size. Rather, as government funding decreased, entrepreneurial activity became increasingly constitutive of the relations and processes defining institutions, organised around increasing the source of commercial income which *could* be increased: the self-expansion of the institution-as-capital. These shifts in the form of subsumption of university work under capital reconstituted revenue as profit, and government funding as income closer to the external state subsidies provided to other industries, despite the formal retention of "public" status. While the state and capital in general retain a stake in the role of post-secondary education in producing labour-power and reproducing capitalist social relations, universities would start to appear as properly capitalist institutions, part of a broader shift in the relation of "society" to "economy", and more specifically in the form of integration of the reproduction of the proletariat in the circuits of the valorisation of capital.⁷

Categorical imperatives

Having rehearsed this narrative in some detail, we would like to question and destabilise a series of assumptions and distinctions which function in relation to international education economies and at the intersection of political economy, contemporary border control and (social) movements more broadly.

⁷ This is obviously a controversial thesis, including amongst Marxist writers on education, and one informed by the specifics of Australian institutions. A more orthodox account of universities-in-general would be that of *Theorie Communiste*, who argue, discussing universities in contemporary Greece in particular, that: "Unless they are private universities in which particular capitals requiring at least the average profit rate are invested, and in which the student is a consumer who buys the lesson as a commodity, universities are not fractions of capital (even in this case, universities would not be a productive sector). They are an essential function of the production/reproduction of labour-power, but regardless of their *utility*, to the extent that – *via* the state – it is money as revenue that functions here, and regardless of the necessity of the rationalisation of their performance (the less the student dawdles in his studies, the less it costs), they are not capitalist companies, as for any *faux-frais* of production." (*Theorie Communiste* 2009: 2)

1. Marxist educational theory

I contend that Marx would have scorned this idea of a separate Marxist educational theory because it implies that education belongs to some separate aspect of human life [...] It also implies that our current existence can be understood as the sum of many separate and distinct parts rather than as a totality of inter-connected relations. (Allman 2007)

We question not merely the relevance but the existence of “Marxist educational theory” as a specific discipline, to the point where even our retention of the phrase “international education economies” is problematic, as is our continuing use of the phrase “international students”. While this move is not ours alone, even the sharpest of those who invoke such a critique do so in order to re-found such theory on better bases.⁸ We take this point seriously and literally, however. Without a Marxist educational theory to be applied to differing circumstances, we need to construct an account of the current moment in the history of capitalism, understanding the specific processes of the economies and institutions operating under the sign of “education” without any generalisable assumptions about the “function” of education.

In other words, and in particular in relation to Australian tertiary education and its “international education” economies, we need to ask what it means for these to exist as moments of capital, as a process of exploitation operating through the movement of labour, of complex commodities, of exchange, of the efforts required to realise surplus value as profit, of the self-expansion of capital.

These economies are indeed moments of a process of reproduction of capitalist social relations – a process whose terms are produced as active subjects, a process which has no existence except as the activity of these subjects. That this activity is contradictory, and exists within and as one pole of a contradiction, that there is struggle over the terms of reproduction, means that we should not think struggle as outside of structure or of “everyday life”, and resistance as the opposite of economy and external to capital, i.e. to a conflictually-constituted, non-symmetrical relation.

2. Movement across borders

Though its force and implications are rarely elaborated within even the more politically-radical academic circles, the development of illegal cross-border movement on an enormous scale has been the starting point for critique of accounts which would relegate such movements to the realm of the non- or pre-political. Accounts which sometimes occlude the “agency” of those concerned by placing such movement under the sign of “desperation”, positing a distinction between “struggle for survival” and “political” or “social” struggle, or else, conversely, de-legitimizing this agency as excessively aspirational. For some, illegal cross-border movement stands opposed to the construction of a locally- or nationally-grounded project – recapitulating the terrain of politics in the

⁸ Glenn Rikowski would probably be the most rigorous in his questioning of the foundations of such theory (Rikowski 2007).

shadow of sovereignty and (hence) the nation, i.e. of representation, of democracy, of the citizen, of rights (Mitropoulos and Nielson 2006).

It should be no surprise, and is not a truth limited to "international students" or to those who cross borders, if the individual and collective struggles of people – over their conditions of life and over the terms of their integration into capitalist social relations, however contradictory and antagonistic – are not external to the development of capitalism, of the dynamic of its reproduction and *restructuring*. What appears disconcerting for some on the Left, however, is that the form and content of such struggles, such *movement*, does not conform to established figures of the political and of struggle, figures which became hegemonic to the point of seeming universal and obvious during a previous cycle of struggles – precisely the cycle whose defeat has been the restructuring (Simon 2008).

3. Undocumented/documentated migrants

Whilst "no border" movements have sought to contest the criminalisation of "undocumented migrants", within Australia such tendencies, always marginal, seemed to be dispersed, or recuperated into a more conservative "refugee advocacy" more accepting of the legitimacy of the processes through which people crossing borders are categorised, largely before international education economies were forced into political visibility (Mitropoulos and Nielson 2006; Kumar 2010).

Particularly in the case of Australian border control, the decision to arrive with a visa and try to squeeze through the bureaucratic processes is not qualitatively different from the decision to arrive as an asylum-seeker and attempt the same, both in pursuit of goals that should not be defined out of the political. Beyond the seemingly simple oppositions of legal and illegal migration, documented and undocumented migrants, are the realities of people negotiating, squeezing into and under and through, pushing at the edges of an array of bureaucratic categories and processes which collectively make up Australia's border control regime and its integration with political economy – the proliferating apparatuses of surveillance and control which seek to police and produce the authenticity of those supposed to embody these categories, while disciplining and excluding those deemed insufficiently authentic, patrolling the borders across the social terrain.

The more extensive and intrusive state systems of border control and socio-economic surveillance and policing become, the more such systems can act as disincentives to people who might otherwise add to those statistics of the enormous rise of illegal border crossing (but who wish to avoid the permanent relegation to black economies this would increasingly entail), as well as other consequences of the national and international development of such systems - forms of exclusion and criminalisation which would in particular impact upon their ability to integrate access to conditions of social reproduction in Australia to strategies of survival of, particularly but far from exclusively, partners and

family.⁹ Insofar as this leads people to individually and collectively gamble on getting through “legal” processes, the possibility is created for enormous legal industries to be constructed by economically recuperating and shaping this mobility.

International students are certainly “documented” migrants, but, as they move through the stages involved in attempting to become a “permanent resident”, many if not most will at times breach a shifting subset of their visa conditions (DIAC 2010d) – if “caught” or even suspected, even retrospectively, they become illegal very quickly, sometimes *en masse*. Further, as “temporary migrants”, those on international student visas are excluded from virtually the entire of the state-managed or –sponsored systems of welfare, which exist for “permanent migrants” and which were built up under the sign of “multiculturalism”, as well as from broader social services – government-funded women’s refuges, legal services, community health care centres, etcetera.

Moving solely within the terrain of the bureaucratic categories of migration, people receive solidarity as a defence of authenticity: those seeking asylum are “real refugees”, fleeing political persecution; those non-citizens working illegally in (for example) sex-work are “victims of trafficking”; those on international student visas are “genuine students” motivated by a love of learning, with everything this entails.

Beyond the “genuine student”, however, there is another significant discourse of legitimacy and its other: the respectable, non-queue-jumping and *useful* migrants, who will be productive New Australians. As we will see, a movement within Australian academia has sought to intervene in favour of enhanced border policing and exclusion through claiming to determine the productive and unproductive, tracking of degrees of “progress” (or otherwise) of migrants (or just non-white people) in labour markets, and exposing those deemed insufficiently successful and useful (Perera 2006).

4. Two movements

Capitalism is not made up of an aggregation of atomised individuals passively channelling objective laws of economy, with social movements contesting such processes as external oppositional subjectivities; capitalist society is saturated by movement and struggle. These are not best viewed as exceptions to a capitalist norm; the history of capitalism, of what capitalism *is*, is the history of

⁹ For example, if you choose the humanitarian or refugee pathway to either Australia or Canada, your parents will never be able to join you: in Canada, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Regulations* (Canadian Council for Refugees 2004) prevent minors from bringing parents out once they have obtained residence, while, in Australia, the processing time for a standard parent visa is close to 20 years, and other “humanitarian” parent pathways permit the entry of only one relative, or entry only on a very restricted basis (*Migration Act 1958*). In Australia, if you have enough money, there are other mechanisms through which you may be able to get your parents out to Australia.

what people *do*, including the collision of movements in struggle over the terms of reproduction.

We will call “movement” those networks that seek to intervene in the reproduction of relations, which coalesce in projects and agendas and form alliances based in the assertion of desires and interests.

Within this framework, we want to discuss two movements which existed and collided within and around international education economies in Australia: the movement of guest consumers, of which the wildcat strikes and demonstrations were only the most publicly visible and conventionally politically-coded manifestations, and the movement of a *de facto* alliance of nationalist academics, particular trade unions and officials in the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, coalescing in a demand for stronger and more restrictive border control.

5. Repression of social movements and reproduction of economy

Within this context, the apparently obvious distinction between acts of repression of “social movements” and the reproduction and definition of objective economy should be refused in the same movement of theory which would make problematic the definition of “social movement” and question the production of *the political*. It is the production and content of the distinctions which we must question rather than take as the grounding of theory.

In attempting to move beyond the received figures of the political and of “social movements”, we should also seek to move beyond received ideas of “repression” in our understanding of relations of force and economy: the constitution of economy always moves through and as relations of force and indeed acts of violence – there is no economy prior to such force. And as we will see in the instances under discussion, the restructuring of economy and the defeat of resistances are two sides of the same coin which meet in the regularised, normalised violence of the management of national borders and regulation of educational institutions and economies, as moments in a geopolitics of reification.

Guest consumers

One of your delegation been to India and assured us that you will have bright future in Australia in wide list of courses and then you will be eligible for Permanent Residency (PR) [...] And I have done diploma of community welfare work, and honestly I enjoy it very much.... There is no value of this qualification in my country. I feel like I have been ripped off thousands of dollars on the pretext of getting good future after finishing the studies and could get a permanent residency. Now when I have done whatever suggested by the immigration minister and spent \$40,000 to \$50,000 on my study and living here and now I have be informed that I might not get permanent residency because Australian government doesn't need us this means that they have smuggled me

to Australia to make money and when we have spend that money and expecting a better future here, they are planning to through [sic] us out of the country. (Singh 2010)

Some have tried to collapse those in Australia on international student visas into the category of "migrant labour" or, less sympathetically, "the children of Third World elites". While both have a moment of truth, even if only in a very qualified and substantially anachronistic sense in the latter case, we have tried to understand the integration of those on international students visas – the specificity of their integration into capitalist social relations, that is – somewhat differently, through developing the concept of the "guest consumer" (Rosenzweig 2010).

Not only do these reductions erase this specificity and indeed falsify the nature of the guest consumers even in crudely sociological-empirical terms; they arguably do so through an uncritical deployment of versions of covertly national "class analysis".¹⁰

"Class analysis" must be able to attend to the socio-historical specificity of the differences, divisions and mediations which constitute the proletariat as the reproduction of capitalist social relations, and in the contemporary period to the specificities of the ways in which the reproduction of the proletariat is integrated into the cycle of valorisation of capital.

The concept of "guest consumer" is intended to account for interests and imperatives of the state and capital, in this instance when searching not primarily for foreigners who can be induced to work, but for non-citizens who can induced to *pay*, bringing "export" income and contributing to what is considered a healthy national balance of payments. That these were the primary interests and imperatives which underlay the massive expansion of these economies does not mean that these were the only interests and imperatives; nor is this to deny that these economies became integrated into other economies within Australia in significant ways, especially as the number of guest consumers rapidly grew (Thompson 2009).

The dynamics of these economies were persistently rendered opaque by two officially-sponsored fantasies: that these economies were essentially about "education", with the desire for migration secondary or incidental; and secondarily that all of these genuine students did not to have to work for money.

The relationship between the forms of commodification that produce international students as guest consumers primarily in Australia to have large amounts of money extracted from them, and their proletarianisation producing a new bottom end of labour markets, was pushed into the background by and within these official representations of international education economies. The latter fantasy was animated by the requirement that all prospective international students claim to be so wealthy that they will be able to pay their enormous fees upfront and live for the duration of their studies without ever

¹⁰ For an historically-important if controversial discussion of race in the form and content of Australian trade unionism and of the Australian Labor Party, see McQueen 2004.

having to work. (Any student who did need to work for money, rather than “cultural” benefits, was an exception *a priori* guilty of immigration fraud.)¹¹

However this account of the interests of institutions and states does not account for the imperatives of those who came to consume. To look at why Indians and others seemed to rush to help Australia build a massive export industry on their expropriation is to ask about the process of class formation.

“Class formation”, referring to the totality of social relations that serve to produce individuals as proletarians, is a process that obviously cannot be adequately defined purely at the point of production (i.e. in the direct encounter of labour and capital in wage-labour). Nor can this totality be understood in purely national terms: the process of class formation is increasingly, for many, *immediately international*.¹² It is impossible to adequately understand contemporary patterns of migration, of guest workers and international students and remittance economies, without an appreciation of these forms of transnational class formation.

Whether because of the impact of the Green Revolution, the diminishing capacity to work small landholdings, or simple lack of jobs for those no longer working the land, people have good reasons to want to leave the Punjab (Mathew 2005: 149).

Attacks on people from UP and Bihar in Mumbai haven't stopped them from migrating to Mumbai, have they? As long as there are no jobs in Punjab, the youth will continue to go to Australia or wherever its easy to go.¹³

The remittance strategy of the international student pathway requires significant outlay for the first several years. There is no capacity to remit money whilst driving taxis on the streets of Melbourne, earning \$8.50 per hour (Gascoigne 2008)¹⁴ (just over half the legal minimum wage), as all this money is ploughed back into paying course fees and rent. But, at least until the recent restructuring, it had a good chance of success. With the promise of permanent residency one could eventually look forward to better paying work, which even at the lower ends of the Australian labour market might be enough to pay back a bank loan, re-secure family property and guarantee family reproduction both in India and Australia. Significantly, citizenship and a passport provides the possibility of continuing circulation in the global economy (Biao 2005), as

¹¹ When asked directly during a Senate Committee hearing whether the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the peak council of Australian trade unions, supported easing the restrictions on international student work rights, Senior Industrial Officer Michelle Bissett stated: “We would not support no cap on the hours... What we do say is you have to balance the study requirements and you have to recognise that the purpose of being here is study and not to work.” (Official Committee Hansard 2009: 7)

¹² For an account of the failure of the labour movement to understand and respond to the processes of transnational class formation, restructuring as response to resistance, and its framing of the movement of capital as the movement of “jobs” see Chang and Wong 2005.

¹³ Father of Punjabi international student living in Australia, quoted in Vashisht 2010.

opposed to the one-way ticket home that awaits South Indian workers toiling in the Gulf States.

One agent, who claims to have sent over 9,500 students to Australia in the last ten years, describes the relationship between Australian policy and Punjabi mobility like so:

There are two factors at play here. Australia was so upbeat about the foreign exchange earning potential that their policy initially appeared to be to get as many students as possible. This policy found immediate takers in Punjab, where the average youth has an inherent desire to settle abroad. This led to the proliferation of dubious private vocational centres in Australia and unscrupulous agents in India. (Vashisht 2010)

Agents in places like Chandigarh or Jalandhar assisted students to organise bank loans, course enrolment and offer letters, and interview preparation¹⁵, and some even provided students with contacts in Melbourne to assist with finding work. Sushil Suresh describes these Australian-based Indian contacts as “middleman in the global economy, facilitating the deployment of India’s globalising workforce in Australia’s labour market.” (Suresh 2009: 17)

We can not capture all the motivations underlying the global movement of people from India, or the array of factors which shape those particular determinants of proletarianisation which define the specifics of their transnational class formation; for our purposes it is enough to suggest some of the processes at work, which we hope give some force to our suggestion that only a broader account of capitalist restructuring can capture the dynamics involved in the seemingly “domestic” economies of “international education”.

In work, employers took the opportunity to hyper-exploit, in particular using difficulties of contestation, largely produced by the restrictive work rights permitted by international student visas, to impose a quasi-illegal work status. The requirement for a certain number of hours work to apply for permanent residency meant that even the requirement for remuneration sufficient to reproduce life could sometimes be evaded by employers who realised that the goal of migration and the often-massive family-wide stakes involved supplied an astonishing space for exploitation in the shadow of a threat of deportation (Thompson 2009) – a situation drastically worse following recent regulatory changes and the massive increase in desperation they have imposed, on those already in Australia in particular.¹⁶

The logic of extraction which drove state management of the development of guest consumer economies would loom large in response to struggle. The Victorian government refused to make international students eligible for concessions available to domestic students and welfare recipients, thus annually

¹⁵ For one such example see Cambridge Educational Service Pty Ltd, based in Jalandhar, Punjab <http://www.cambridgedu.com/> (accessed 9.12.2010).

¹⁶ For these reasons, many struggles of guest consumers – for wages as legally-prescribed levels, for instance – have tended to take place retrospectively, when the need for such on-going work, and usually the period of study, is over. For some examples, see the UNITE quasi-union’s account of struggles against 7-11 franchises, available at www.unite.org.au (accessed 9.12.2010)

extracting additional millions from those on international student visas. When problems were later recognised, much emphasis was put on the importance of “providing information”, as if people were simply ignorant of where to go, even though they were in fact ineligible for the vast majority of social, welfare and legal services, since eligibility is largely based on possession of just such concession cards or else on permanent residency or citizenship.¹⁷

As their numbers grew and socio-economic composition shifted away from “elites”, those on international student visas ever-increasingly faced a social terrain of predatory extraction, in (at least nominally educational) institutions, housing, transport, healthcare and wage labour – everyone wanted a cut and the states wanted several (Rosenzweig 2010; Sonja 2008).

The multicultural patriotism of screwdrivers and baseball bats

Within and beyond such predatory economies, a cross-class, multi-cultural phenomenon of anti-international-student xenophobia arose, focussed on Indian males as seemingly a metonym of international education economies or of what is disturbing about restructuring more broadly.

It would be difficult to overstate the degree to which hostility to international students, and anti-Indian-student sentiment in particular, began to leak out seemingly across the entire of Australia’s social terrain, particularly in Melbourne, with actual incidents of physical violence only a tiny element occurring in relation to these much larger shifts. Hostility to Indian non-citizens in particular rose in Melbourne like a wave of anti-Semitism complete with mini-pogroms. Racism and violence assumed a new weight, a thousand acts giving a new context to subordination and to the movement, in all senses, of guest consumers through Australian society.

One notable tendency within this hostility was its constitution as a violent end of multicultural patriotism: Australian citizens, regardless of ethnicity, enacting antagonism to non-white non-citizens.

In one incident in the south-eastern fringes of Melbourne at the beginning of 2010, a car with its headlights off mounted the pavement in an effort to run over a group of Indian students and ex-students, and when this failed several men jumped out of the car and started attacking the students with baseball bats. At this point one of the victims yelled out “I am Australian”, and the assault ended. This was the second time strangers had violently assaulted these students just

¹⁷ Where services were created which did more than just (pretend to) refer, they were either small and cheap – such as the largely volunteer-based the International Student Legal Advice Clinic in Melbourne – or else operated as apparatuses to minimize damage to economy and keep issues out of the media as much as possible – such as the International Student Care Service run by the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

around the corner from their home, in the space of 3 months.¹⁸ This was not the only serious assault which was reported to have ended when the assailant came to believe that the non-white person or people being attacked were actually Australian citizens.

Beyond those picking up knives or baseball bats, it is a quality of some of the most socio-institutionally entrenched forms of contemporary racism and prejudice that those who routinely articulate or enact such taken-for-granted bigotry would, if asked what they thought about racism *in general*, reply, maybe sincerely, that it is *bad*. *Specific* racisms are exempted from this judgment by not being seen as really racism. Rather than affirming bigotry, they feel that they are just being confronted by people who are themselves simply bad in some way; criminal, backward, fanatical, dirty. Or else that they are just being confronted by non-citizens who are taking *something* from "us". Thus abstractly anti-racist racists can feel aggrieved both at those they dislike and toward anyone who they feel may characterise such views and the actions they enframe as racist – the unjust accusation of "politically correct" people who do not understand what "they" (Kurds/Roma/Muslims/Indians, take your pick) are really like/doing.

In Australia, such racism can be expressed in many social circles in relation to Indigenous people, and more recently Muslims; Indian students are an even more recent inclusion, which became prevalent very fast. In such a dynamic, the act of protesting or even publicly pointing out racism can seemingly provoke further racism and extend the social terrain characterised by the normalisation of anti-Indian attitudes – this was certainly evident in some of the visceral responses to taxi driver protests, the comments pages on newspaper sites, for example, suggesting that if Indian drivers did not want to get stabbed they should learn to read the street directory and wear more deodorant, or that students were after all just trying to "buy their way into Australia".¹⁹

While the denial of racism became prominent in the ALP state government's economic booster-ism, the Victorian Liberal Party had worked for years to incorporate the recognition of racism, and of racist violence against international students in particular, into a broader law-and-order politics.²⁰ In response, the ALP Victorian state government played to public resentment of any suggestion that there may be a problem with racism in Victoria, denouncing the Liberal leader for describing the attacks as racist: "Ted Bailieu has called Victorians racist. I'd like to ask Ted Bailieu to name those racist people, maybe

¹⁸ Story told to author by two of the victims, university students who have since returned to India and abandoned their Australian studies.

¹⁹This video of the first cabbie strike against violence (described interestingly as "Punjabi student strike") is illuminating as much for the ferocious anti-Indian commentary underneath as for the protest footage and the poster's description of what the protest is:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqGki_Om3EU

²⁰ See Ted Bailieu's monthly column in the Melbourne-based Indian community newspaper *Indus Age* 2007–2010.

it's my next-door neighbour, maybe its someone's mum and dad, maybe it's somebody's friends." (Rood 2010)

In the aftermath of their protests against racism and violence, international students were confronted by publicly-visible responses which largely fit these patterns, including a persistence of institutional denial, some quite vicious, and a police force which deployed a variety of strategies to prevent international students from lodging complaints and to not pursue complaints if they were nonetheless made.²¹ Given the widely-discussed relationship between publicity concerning attacks and massive drops in export income, it is difficult not to think that this knowledge informed police efforts to prevent incidents from being officially or publicly registered. In addition, the view international students had of police was informed by the experience of many working as cab drivers, who reported almost daily negative experiences of police (Gascoigne 2008).

For these reasons, all statistics released by police concerning attacks upon international students need to be seen as unreliable not only because many would not report attacks (Overseas Student Education Experience Taskforce (Victoria) 2008: 13), but because not all efforts to report attacks would be recorded.²²

"Soft targets"

The term "soft target" emerged as a way for Victoria Police to deflect attention from the perpetrators to the victims, and quickly became a way for police and others to explain away any hint of racial motivation in the violence suffered by international students.

"We think that the majority of these things occur through opportunistic activity. When we look at international students, and particularly the Indian students, they are very quiet-natured people, they are very passive people. They do travel at night, from (sic) whether its from employment or from study, they have a tendency to travel on their own, but they

²¹According to the students involved in the baseball bat incident, police response includes warning students that false reports of violence can result in visa cancellation. According to a Punjabi-Australian friend of the authors, racially abused and assaulted whilst travelling home on the train in early 2010, the police told Indian international students verbally abused at the same time that they would not take a statement unless the students could guarantee that their visas would not have expired by the time the incident went to court; according to students quoted in the play "Yet to Ascertain the Nature of the Crime", police informed students that they didn't have enough cars to respond to an incident, and that they should bash back to defend themselves (Melbourne Worker's Theatre 2010); see also (Naidoo 2010). In 2010, senior police were discovered to have circulated emails joking about the electrocution of an Indian man, suggesting it might be a way to fix Melbourne's Indian student problem (Moor 2010).

²² With the establishment of the International Student Care Service, Victoria Police were officially requested by the Victorian State Government to refer any incident involving international student victims of crime to ISCS. From its establishment in November 2009, until September 2010, not a single referral was made by the Victoria Police to the ISCS.

also do carry valuable items such as Ipods, mobile phones, laptop computers, and of course money. So, we think that they're vulnerable for those circumstances. We don't think that is actually racially motivated, we just think that they're seen as a soft target." (Walshe 2010)

This description of "soft targets" circulated widely and repeatedly in the media, as effectively a list of great reasons to go "curry-bashing". Defendants, lawyers and commentators invoked this stereotype to deflect accusations of racism (see Jones 2010).²³

Strikes and protests

In August 2006, hundreds of taxi drivers, many Indian international students, shut down the city in response to the murder of a fellow student and cab driver, Rajneesh Joga (Petrie and Holroyd 2006). The students occupied a major intersection in the Melbourne CBD for more than 8 hours, blocking peak hour traffic, and marching to State Parliament (Hagan 2006). They demanded improvements in safety, and, significantly, many of their placards and demands denounced police inaction on racist violence. The then-Transport Minister met with the striking drivers at a mass meeting, and promised safety improvements (Sonja 2008).²⁴

In April 2008, another Indian international student taxi driver was stabbed, prompting a 24-hour protest of, at one stage, over 1,000 students/drivers at the same intersection. The students/drivers again demanded safety improvements and condemned police inaction on racist violence. Shutting down this intersection for 24 hours, the taxi driver/student protests received saturation coverage in Melbourne (Dobbin 2008). Only after this protest were the safety initiatives promised in 2006 rolled out.

On 1st December 2008, a Punjabi shopkeeper, whose business serviced the then-growing Indian student community in the outer-western suburb of Sunshine, was attacked in his shop by 10–15 people. Two days later, over 100 Indian men marched on the Sunshine police station to protest the police response (Battersby 2008).²⁵

²³ For example, see Jones 2010. The introduction of the *Sentencing Amendment Act 2009* would on paper have led to increased sentences for offences which are found to have been racially motivated, but appears to have had the effect of motivating defense lawyers to learn how to obscure and deny racial motivation even when such is freely admitted by clients ("Punji-hunting", "curry-bashing"), in which endeavor such lawyers were largely ramming an open judicial door.

²⁴ The Victorian Taxi Driver's Association was formed out of this protest, with protest participants Pritam Gill and Arun Badgujar on its executive.

²⁵ The protestors claimed that police took 50 minutes to respond to the assault, the latest in a string of attacks on Indians in the Sunshine area. They also cited being treated like "animals" by police, as a reason for the protest.

In May 2009, Sravan Theerthala Kumar was attacked with a screwdriver by white gatecrashers at a friend's party. With rumours circulating that he may have succumbed to his injuries, and local and international media gathered outside the hospital, calls for a protest at the now familiar CBD intersection on the next day, 31st May 2009, spread rapidly, assisted by the networks of small businessmen, taxi drivers and private college students.

In fear of a violent confrontation and of a demonstration which it neither called nor controlled, the Federation of Indian Students Australia (FISA) called a different protest, outside the hospital.²⁶ One hundred and fifty people, primarily local students and members of socialist groups, showed up at the hospital, while several thousand Indian students and others, organised through informal networks, gathered at the site of the two previous taxi driver protests. The two groups would eventually merge, but the protest was broken up violently by police in the early hours of the following morning (ABC News 2009).²⁷

Unlike the earlier protests, this last was publicly represented as a demonstration of *international students* rather than *taxi drivers*, and thus threatened recruitment to Australia's largest non-mining export industry. The different responses to these protests depended upon this shift in framing, and was mirrored by shifts in responses in India, as noted by one Indian Leftist magazine:

Remember that not long ago, taxi drivers of Indian and Pakistani origin had protested in Melbourne against police indifference to a series of attacks on them. That story had not been highlighted much by the corporate Indian media because it made less interest copy for elite media than the attacks on "people like us". (Saha 2009)

In fact these two apparently different groups were the *same people* protesting in the *same place* about the *same thing*. But only protests framed as by international students were seen as likely to dissuade people from applying for international student visas in future.²⁸

Student taxi drivers - some loosely connected with the Victorian Taxi Drivers Association, but mostly connected through student networks - were organising their own self-defence against violent passengers, calling other cabbies when confronted with violent or racist passengers, and not relying on police. Cabbies would often gather at hospitals where their comrades were recovering to discuss whether they should protest again.²⁹

²⁶ Personal communication with FISA, 30th May 2009.

²⁷ One student who was charged with offences related to property damage was prevented from returning to Australia because of the criminal charges laid, after he was forced to travel home to see his ailing father. (Personal communication with staff at International Student Legal Advice Clinic.)

²⁸ See Vasanth Srinivasan in (Fitzsimmons 2009).

²⁹ Personal communication with student taxi organiser, identified in Melbourne media as "Jazz Randy-Boy" (see Melbourne reporters 2008)

Self-defence patrols of international students had been operating in the Sydney suburb of Harris Park since 2007, and sprung up around Melbourne's outer-western suburban train stations in June 2009 – they were quickly dispersed by police.

The absence of formal organisation at the origin of the large protests seemed to bewilder many in both the media and organised Left, who automatically looked for some "representative" body – FISA would oblige. Others talked wonderingly about the technological miracle of people "horizontally" organising via text message. But in truth these protests could emerge fairly smoothly from the social relations of these students because they already existed as networks in a shifting set of individual and collective struggles, rendering irrelevant the conventional divisions between "political action" and "private life" as experienced by most Australian citizens. The surprise of some at the possibility of such organisation flowed not only from the social invisibility of the networks of those on international student visas, but from the reality that the terms of their constant engagement, not only with a hostile and predatory social terrain but with institutional impositions of economy connected to distinctly disingenuous public presentations of the content of such "educational" economies, meant that a retreat from visibility and partial clandestinity had become elements of resistance and survival (Thompson 2009).

For this reason, when we talk about the movements of those on international student visas, we are not talking of just the large spectacular protests, or even the broader history of overt collective actions of contestation, but rather of the movement of which these were moments – the needs and desires which inform the projects, and individual and collective struggles, making up their engagement in the transnational processes of these international education economies, and in all of the related socio-economic processes this engagement entailed.

The murder of Nitin Garg

By the time that Indian student Nitin Garg was murdered in January 2010 (Wallace 2010) many international students had come to feel that any form of protest was likely to have substantially negative effects, regardless of how politely expressed. Public responses to protests, and the seemingly-continuing rise in hostility toward the students, together with the beginning of the Federally-managed restructuring in response to the problems their protest and resistance had helped to create, meant that this murder led to no large protests or collective "political" actions.

In this sense, those on international student visas were defeated and dispersed not merely by the institutions of the state or capital, but by a thousand manifestations of Australian society and its multicultural patriotism.

Academics investigating academics

In her discussion of developments in industrial relations within universities, Eddy notes the role that new forms of "enterprise bargaining" played in the shift to what she calls a "regulated autonomy" for academics, "one consistent with the industrialisation of the scholarship discourse and the conditions of scholarship related work", "engineering the complicity of academics in this modernisation process." (Eddy 2003: 3)

Complicity. Broadly we would identify two academic tendencies in relation to international education economies: one characterised by an at least nominally cosmopolitan neoliberalism, evident in many academics whose work increasingly has centred on managing and expanding such economies, and the other a nationalist hostility to international students as a threat to universities and to education standards as well as to Australian economy and society – which we will discuss shortly as a key network within the *de facto* alliance of nationalist academics, trade unions and the Department of Immigration which was empowered by the crises in international education economies.

At the briefest of glances, one could posit that these two tendencies are sharply separated: one a spectrum within entrepreneurial ambition, the other relentlessly pursuing a nationalist politics which seizes on border control as one of the few remaining pillars of traditional laborism and its defence of the institutions of residual social democracy (the trade unions and nationally-constituted labour markets, the university) and the nationally-defined interests these institutions are perceived to embody, or at least to have embodied. Such a view might open up a space for a strange new alliance of neoliberals who don't want borders to get in the way of accumulation, and an anti-border politics with decidedly other commitments.

However, this division is something of a mirage. Just as harsh border control actually plays a vital role in determining the conditions of integration of, for example, Mexican proletarians into agricultural capital in the United States – i.e. as individually-dispensible low-wage workers – so too universities and departments organised around international students tended to increasingly institutionalise systems of student management characterised by entrenched suspicion, by efforts to minimise rights of appeal, by forms of discipline and assessment which can result in high rates of exclusion of international students in particular. Those managers and academics who create and manage such systems seem to relate to international students as a whole in ways which seek to reduce them to compliant guest consumers, and expel and deport them if they threaten to cause any problems – relations of force entailed by the micro-management of the imposition of economy.³⁰

³⁰ Some of those deeply embedded in such processes have, since the emergence of international student protest, been carving niches for themselves as commentators and researchers concerned for international student welfare, framing such concern in ways which render invisible exactly these institutional processes, and thus the role of academics. In the aftermath of the "Chinese doctor's plot" discussed earlier, and in pursuit of policies to curtail the number and avenue of

Imperatives of decisions to restructure

The Federal Government would decide to restructure these economies, this industry. A number of elements seem to have informed this decision.

As Marginson recently put it, "the international student market [...] started to go belly-up, victim of tougher government rules driven by resistance in the electorate to immigration." (Marginson 2010: 16) The use of the word "electorate" can make this seem like simply a calculation made by the ALP of likely future voting, assessing the views and intentions of atomised voters, rather than a calculation within a broader set of processes, with criminal violence as one point on a spectrum which also includes a socio-institutionally mediated struggle for stronger border control.³¹ Nonetheless, Marginson does neatly encapsulate an end-point of these processes: the Australian government deciding that it was impossible or undesirable to either critically confront the existence of significant xenophobia, or publicly acknowledge many key realities of these economies³².

These realities were combined with a new recognition of the fragility of the integration of Australian institutions into world markets, and of the possible consequences of this fragility. At the same time, universities and some academics were attributing all problems to private colleges and the non-"public" sector, deflecting attention from themselves and encouraging policies which might increase the market share of their institutions.

And finally, there was a *de facto* alliance of nationalist academics, trade unions and the Department of Immigration, a movement which coalesced in opposition to the movement of those on international student visas, which sought to use the crisis in international education economies to encourage and facilitate the restructuring.

There is a general recognition that the crisis empowered the Department of Immigration:

academic appeals, Chris Ziguras chaired an RMIT sub-committee which surveyed and explicitly cherry-picked the most hostile aspects of a whole suite of academic policies across Australia's institutions. The resulting proposed policies were considered so hostile as to leave the institution vulnerable to potential legal action, and were withdrawn before being presented to the RMIT Programs Committee (for which one of the authors briefed RMIT Student representatives). Ziguras later wrote a 'sympathetic' article entitled "Indian students in Australia: how did it come to this?", which takes some chutzpah (Ziguras 2009).

³¹ The latter can even cite the former as evidence in favour of the agenda broadly shared across this spectrum. The CFMEU can write that "most (but not all) of the illegal migrants detected by DIAC compliance work are from Asian countries" and that "illegal work is abhorrent and against Australia's national interest", so that: "Failure to prevent illegal work by a mainly Asian workforce is not conducive to developing positive community attitudes towards Asian people and indeed our nation's important place in Asia." (CFMEU 2010a: 4-5)

³² Of course, prior to his recent reinvention as an international student security expert (Marginson et al 2010), Marginson was known to engage in a bit of denialism himself. See his nasty attack on journalist Sushi Das (Pier Online 2008), who is nonetheless later thanked in the preface of his book (Marginson et al 2010: xiii).

The outcome represents a significant victory for the Department of Immigration and Citizenship over the much bigger and generally more powerful Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. When the policy was contested in Canberra corridors, the heavyweight departments of Treasury, Finance and Prime Minister and Cabinet all came down on Immigration's side. (Mares 2010)

DEEWR, having facilitated this multi-billion dollar export industry through the MODL list, and by using Australian high commissions in Asia as a marketing apparatus, could do nothing as the MODL list was scrapped. Both "student representatives" and DEEWR felt obliged to promote and defend something called "international education", not the commodified international mobility that was in fact the foundation of the economy.

Into this confusion came the patriotic clarity of this alliance, this movement.

Australian nationalism

What we ask is: why do the workers confront the state? For the sake of sectional or national "interests"? To chuck immigrants out? Against the Americans? Or because the state stands as the defender of market relations, and so of all the divisions of sector, of nation, of specific demands – against their communist movement? (Roland Simon 2005)

As a constitutive element of developing colonial Australia, the Australian "labour movement" has always existed as mobilisation within and negotiation and management of a racialised division of labour (and of exclusion from labour). From the very beginning, Australian trade unions assumed imperatives to police the boundaries of labour markets at the point of their intersection with the borders of the nation and the definition of citizenship. Even in the case of trade union opposition to conscription during World War One, class struggle and racial mobilisation were seen as closely related if not as identical.³³ When the trade unions created the Australian Labor Party, the "political" evolution of "economic" struggle would be formalised as the defence of national "racial purity", and institutionalised by government in the form of the White Australia policy.

The 1973 end of that policy overlapped with an emerging discourse of "multiculturalism" as the ideology of state management of "difference" and a soft-corporatist recognition and inclusion of "ethnic communities" within Australia – a discourse adopted and pursued by the dominant tendencies in both major parties. The economic nationalism which had been the *de facto*

³³ That the early twentieth century ALP had as a key principle "the cultivation of an Australian sentiment based upon the maintenance of racial purity" is reasonably well known. This principle sat comfortably alongside that of "the securing of the full results of their industry to all producers by the collective ownership of monopolies." Less known are the terms within which trade unions tended to oppose conscription, i.e., as a conspiracy to break down "the white walls of Australia" and "swamp us" with "colored labor" – "an unspeakable calamity alike to Australian unionism and race purity", as one writer put it in a special anti-conscription edition of *Builders Labourers News* in 1916 (Hagan 1986:26-7).

ideology of the Australian labour movement persisted but was discursively de-racialised, as the ALP came to be considered the party of multiculturalism (Jupp 1997).

In recent years, this ideology and its institutional embodiments would come under political attack, but socially would persist and harden into contemporary multicultural patriotism, persisting alongside and somewhat bizarrely overlapping with white racism and particularly xenophobia, in a spectrum increasingly overtly founded upon suspicion and hostility toward the non-white non-citizen. Yet, for Australian liberals and social democrats, "multiculturalism" remains the opposite of racism and xenophobia, and the lens through which most "mainstream" opposition to racism perceives questions of "race" – how to redraw "Australian identity" to include a greater proportion of those within Australia into a patriotic narrative, while urging generic "tolerance" for those who remain incurably un-Australian – or not.

With the conditions of possibility of traditional Australian laborism increasingly undermined, economic nationalist tendencies within threatened "social democratic" institutions – notably trade unions, but also some within or who saw themselves as defending the universities – would shift in focus, with the question of the foreigner once again coming to prominence.

People in their place

If the dominant tendency in Australian academic education commentary was the kind of technocratic policy advice of which Simon Marginson was a progressive Left edge, the ruptures in the process of self-expansion of international education economies precipitated by the resistance of those on student visas would give a new political influence to another tendency. Back in 2002 Marginson would note that:

The recent discussion of university standards has focussed largely on instances of academic favour for fee-paying [international] students. While such problems exist, this issue carries an implicit Hansonite racism: "they" are the cause of falling standards; "they" benefit from special favours, without considering the educational preparation "they" need to compete on equal terms. (Marginson 2002: 123)³⁴

The most systematic, politically aggressive manifestation of this tendency, and the most quoted in tabloid and other mainstream media, centred on Monash University academic Bob Birrell, the Centre for Population Research at which he is a Reader in Sociology, and the network of academics around the journal *People and Place*, which Birrell edits. Birrell - an "economic nationalist floating in an ocean of globalism (at Monash and beyond)" (Rodan 2009: 28) - has

³⁴ "It also deflects attention from the central problems: the corrosive effects of credentialism, the shift from knowledge to skill, the fetish with apparent vocational utility at the expense of the life-forming power of the disciplines, and the collapse of all quality under resource pressure." (Marginson 2002: 123)

dedicated most of his career to arguing against the entry of foreigners he represents as insufficiently useful, increasingly burdensome, culturally corrosive and possibly dangerous or destructive. He was and is one of the key consultants regularly used by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, and has boasted of having advised both the ALP and Liberal Party on immigration. He regularly appears as a "demographer" in tabloid newspapers which wish to run spectacular xenophobic stories – "Mass immigration kills Aussie culture, says demographer Bob Birrell", for example (Staff writers March 24 2010).³⁵

As a journal, *People and Place* is dedicated to a socially and economically nationalist agenda (to put it politely), and a continuing mobilisation of race politics (Jupp 1997) by people of middle-brow appearance – a participant in the December 2005 Cronulla race riot writes an account justifying this "patriotic" action against non-whites, for example (Barclay and West 2006).

Within the context of constant public and academic commentary, two significant interventions into international education by this network were Bob Kinnaird's report for the Australian Computer Society (Kinnaird 2005) and Birrell's work for CPA Australia (Birrell & Rapson 2005).³⁶ Birrell and Kinnaird then launched a campaign, through *People and Place* and elsewhere, for higher English language and professional standards, and a reduction in the intake of recent graduates from these professions into the General Skilled Migration Program.³⁷

This campaign against foreign accounting students in particular continued through *People and Place* (Bretag 2007; Watty 2007; Burch 2008; Nagy 2008)³⁸. Kinnaird's most recent work has been as the "expert" face of opposition to the 457 visa scheme (Official Committee Hansard 2007; AMWU 2006).

This work fed into Birrell's co-authorship of *Evaluation of the General Skilled Migration* program, commissioned by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship in 2006. Using statistics on the labour market destinations of international student graduates who went on to permanent residency through the General Skilled Migration program, Birrell claimed to demonstrate unequivocally that international students, masquerading as skilled migrants,

³⁵ Of Birrell, James Jupp says "Part of the paranoia which grew during the 1990s centred around the proposition that governments would not listen to the people and that elites were shifting debate. The most elaborate version of this had already been developed by Katherine Betts in her study *Immigration and Ideology*. Betts emerged as a close ally of Bob Birrell who has consistently opposed mass immigration for 20 years. Together, they launched the quarterly journal *People and Place* in 1993, which effectively carried on the very debate which was supposed to be 'suppressed' by the 'politically correct'" (Jupp 1997: 34).

³⁶ Both of these bodies are able to accredit professionals for general skilled migration purposes.

³⁷ Kinnaird launched legal action against ACS for attempting to publish his findings without his recommendations urging more restrictive professional standards and English language requirements (Maslog-Levis & Foo 2005).

³⁸ And in fact in the role of *People and Place* contributors like Kim Watty in internal university campaigns like that against the "Chinese doctor's plot".

were in fact utterly unproductive foreigners. After international student protests in 2009, this research would prove crucial in the policy shifts intended to discourage many of those who would have used education in Australia as a pathway to permanent resident status: "An Immigration Department official acknowledged that research such as Dr Birrell's 2006-7 study was part of the reason the new points test weakened the monopoly status of Australian qualifications and [instead] recognised overseas degrees." (Lane 2010)

Nationalist academic networks around Birrell, *People and Place* and the Centre also work for various trade unions, writing for and advising trade union leaderships with complementary agendas. But more significantly, the arguments made by trade unions, publicly and in lobbying government, draw upon the work of these academics. Union leaders write for *People and Place*, such as the CFMEU's John Sutton writing against "the free movement of labour from the Asia-Pacific into Australia" (Sutton 2008: 88). But more pronounced is the reliance of trade union submissions and other efforts at lobbying government on nationalist demography and related research (Catalyst 2008).

Articles such as "Cooks Galore and Hairdressers Aplenty" (Birrell, Healy, Kinnaird 2007) recirculated endlessly within union journals, submissions and media statements and informed much of what the CFMEU and AMWU had to say about the 457 visa scheme and temporary work more broadly (AMWU 2006; 2008; Sutton 2008; CFMEU 2009; 2010; 2010a).

"Here numerical representation acts as a surrogate for explicit racial referencing and classification. One mode in which this proxy discourse of enumeration, in tandem with its invisible twin, essentialisation, operates is the demographic..." (Perera 2006). Demography, it seems, is being deployed as the phrenology of the 21st century.

"But..."

Within Australia's multicultural patriotism, efforts to deny or minimise racism and xenophobia often make strategic use of the word "but". For example, arguing, in relation to Australia's seemingly "racist past", that "we have escaped it", Tanveer Ahmed intervened in the public discussion of xenophobia and violence against those on international student visas with two key "buts". Firstly, opposition to asylum seekers may seem racist, "but unchecked immigration touches on the sense of fairness for all Australians" while "[some] of the most vociferous opponents of asylum seekers have been other migrants". And many would see the White Australia policy as evidence of racism: "But even one of the nation's founding acts of racial exclusion, when Melanesian and Chinese labour was banned, may have had as much to do with economics as it did race. The cheap labour of these migrants threatened organised labour, just as it does today and continues to stir union opposition to immigration." (Ahmed 2010: 3)

Threats to organised labour. Unions constantly negotiate the reproduction of ever-changing divisions of labour – divisions of labour constituted in relation to

divisions between nations, and between citizens and non-citizens. The relationship of Australian unionism to border control has not been merely an external ideological imposition, but emerges as trade unions, whether dominated by Left or Right, pursue interests within this reproduction. However formally “anti-racist” it might (now) be, trade unionism – and social democracy generally – pursues interests defined against those deemed outside of the fictive border.

It is difficult to disagree with Bryan’s assertion, in relation to somewhat different aspects of the economic nationalism of trade unions, that the deployment of such nationalism reflects a process of “representation of the specific interests of those whose incomes are threatened” within the process of restructuring (Bryan 1991: 304). As a set of assumptions informing the discourse of trade unions, economic nationalism need not be persuasive or implementable as an overall national agenda in order to play a useful role in pursuit of particular goals and interests.

With the shift away from Keynesianism and the process of neoliberalisation, economic nationalism within Australian trade unions has been stripped of much of its traditional programmatic content – advocacy of tariffs and protectionism, opposition to “foreign capital”. But with the increasing legal and illegal movement of people across borders on a mass scale over the same period, economic nationalism has come to be asserted centrally in relation to border control.

The divisions within the proletariat as a transnational class are not just illusions, not simply false consciousness, but exist as divisions in the experience of material interest, of a global division of labour of vast distinctions in quality of life, stratifications of survival and life-span, and the constitution of the relatively privileged as increasingly nervous of a downward mobility, at its worst of an exclusion from employment, and precisely when neoliberalisation seeks to strengthen the relation of income to wage-labour and of wage-labour to life and survival.

The CFMEU used the inquiry into student welfare and further inquiries to call for not only a further restriction on student work rights, from the current limit of 20 hours per week, but also the immediate cutting off of a variety of temporary visa pathways that could lead students to permanent residency (CFMEU 2009; 2010). The incongruity of this as a remedy for exploitation did not go entirely unnoticed:

The CFMEU, for example, are very strongly arguing about restricting work entitlements, not just for students but for people on 457 visas, and certainly there are issues there about exploitation. But, as I say, you do not stop exploitation by preventing people from being able to work: you address the exploitation. (Official Committee Hansard 2009:10)³⁹

³⁹ Bartlett goes on to say: “I mention the CFMEU in particular as being vociferously anti migrants being able to work wherever possible.” (Bartlett 2009: 16)

Along the same lines, the ANF suggested more stringent English language requirements to study nursing as a remedy for exploitation of workers. (CFMEU 2010; ANF 2010).

The CFMEU affirms its support for immigrants who become Australians, and its opposition to those who they categorise as “temporary migrants”, who must be excluded from labour markets if not from the country. While the CFMEU of course “strongly supports” permanent migration, “temporary migration [...] is another story” (CFMEU 2009: 3). The CFMEU can hardly be unaware that its concrete proposals for a stricter border control are substantially constructed to minimise or abolish precisely the pathways which otherwise would have allowed many “temporary migrants” to become permanent.

In the context of state-sponsored restructuring, trade unions were able to get significant parts of these agendas adopted by the ALP Federal government.⁴⁰

Restructuring

Beginning almost immediately after the international student mobilisations in Melbourne and Sydney in May and June 2009, the ground rules started to shift rapidly.

Prior to the 2009-2010 reforms, the pathway to PR via vocational education was relatively straightforward. Entering with the assistance of agents and bank loans⁴¹, upon completion of a trade course, a student need only to complete 900 hours of work experience (loosely defined) and pass a reasonably rudimentary English language test. With a vocational qualification, the majority of the points required for skilled migration could easily be secured.

Over the next 12 months after the protests, a dizzying array of changes to initial entry requirements and the general skilled migration program took place: the replacement of the MODL with a much pared back Skilled Occupations List, a massive increase in the English language requirements for General Skilled Migration, and a total overhaul of the points test.

Australia’s visa rules allow international students to apply for permanent residency from within Australia in the six months following the completion of

⁴⁰ In a reversal of the favoured student movement slogan “education for all, not just the rich”, the National Union of Students, and the Australian Federation of International Students (AFIS) both publicly argued for the raising of the income threshold for international students to get a student visa, or extend the same, as its response to the student protests against violence, and framed as for their “welfare” (NUS 2009). The founder and spokeswoman of AFIS, Wesa Chau, argued over: “number of international students who are genuinely here to study. Yes, there are people who are here just for permanent residency, but this is not the majority and I think we need to separate the issue of education and permanent residency.” (Hill 2009)

⁴¹ Under a section of their website called “International Travel” one agency based in Jalandhar, Punjab (www.cambridgedu.com), claims that 75% of all students going overseas for study avail themselves of Education Loans provided with minimum fuss by Indian banks.

their course, but the success of such an application is dependent upon the accumulation of sufficient points in relation to skills, education, English language proficiency and age, to avoid being voted off the island at the end of a temporary (student) visa (Spruce and Vanni 2005).⁴²

On 20th August 2009, then Immigration (and now Education) Minister Chris Evans announced that the Immigration Department was stepping up measures to stamp out “fraud” in student visa applications, in particular “to ensure students have the financial capacity to live and study in Australia.” (Evans 2009). This led to a massive increase in both visa refusal rates (up 68% from the previous year) and the number of applications withdrawn (Koeth 2010: 12-13), particularly for those from Gujarat and Punjab (DIAC 2009).

For prospective Indian and Chinese students, the amount on top of fees required to be held in the bank, per year of study, went from \$12,000 to \$18,000 on 1st January 2010 (DIAC 2010).

The new category of Superior English, an IELTS score of 8, earns 30 points – almost half the points needed for a successful General Skilled Migration application⁴³ - but is a massive barrier to the entry of non-native English speakers (Lane 2010: 25). Previously, an IELTS score of 6 gave you points for General Skilled Migration. Now it is the threshold for the application, but gives you no points – points are only given for a score of 7 and above. For many applications, for example in nursing or accounting, professional bodies now require a 7 to be assessed as skilled. Once again, the ALP and Australia are using language testing to keep out particular foreigners.

With the scrapping of the MODL in February 2010 and a paring down of the occupations that one could use to apply for General Skilled Migration – a much shorter “skills list” - the door was firmly closed behind the protesting students.

⁴² To be allowed to enter the country in the first place, international students have to meet a number of English language proficiency and financial criteria. The latter of these are effectively racially stratified by a system of “Assessment Levels” (DIAC 2005). These assessment levels are adjusted periodically by the Immigration department in a quasi-actuarial fashion to quantify and minimise ‘risk’ on a country-by-country basis: risk of people absconding, of applying for a protection visa, of overstaying. For example, a student from the United States, Malaysia or Hong Kong (Assessment Level 1) only has to *promise* that they have enough money to support themselves, while a student from China or India (Assessment Levels 3 and 4 depending on which of the student visas – high school, language study, vocational training, higher education they are applying for) has to *demonstrate* that they have a certain amount of money in the bank to sustain themselves per year of study.

⁴³ Superior English is considered incredibly difficult for a non-native English speaker to achieve – the chance of a Hindi speaker doing so is 6 per cent and Chinese 2 per cent, according to internal IELTS data (Lane 2010: 25).

The border controlled

The increased border checks on the next generation of students precipitated a massive crisis in cash flow, which took down a string of colleges in 2009–2010 (Thompson 2010). Meridien College, one of an elite group of four within technical training in Victoria, closed down in November 2010 *not* as a result of a government audit, but as a direct result of Immigration's more vigorous checking of "student financials".

Under new rules, colleges will be prevented from offering courses solely on the weekend. Students will have to do a minimum of 20 contact hours per week, with a maximum 8 hours per day. As a "safety measure" colleges will be discouraged through a raft of financial disincentives from holding classes after business hours.⁴⁴

The effect will be and has been the closure of a large proportion of those colleges that facilitate the survival of the poorest international students. By squeezing their classes into the weekend, or odd hours, these students can spend the rest of the time working to earn the money to pay their fees. The state's re-regulation of the sector will effectively remove institutions that allow students to eke out an existence whilst preparing for the final border-crossing – the General Skilled Migration application. Without these institutions, those who survived the skills changes, the language tests, the bashings and the closures of existing institutions will find it near impossible to last long enough to make an onshore application. Those who have not already accumulated enough credentials to jump onto another temporary visa, such as the graduate skills visa or employer sponsorship visa, will have to go illegal or go home, or a combination of both.

The Immigration Department is also busy cancelling the permanent residency of an unknown number of ex-international students and onshore GSM applicants. Those who have gained their work experience at workplaces "under investigation" by Immigration have had their permanent residency cancelled, on the assumption that they must have done something wrong.⁴⁵

The end of a moment

At the beginning of 2011, the figures are in: a drop of over 40,000 in the number of student visas granted to Indians between 2008-09 and 2009-10 (DIAC

⁴⁴ Changes outlined at a meeting of the DIAC Student Welfare Reference Group, meeting August 2010, attended by one of the authors.

⁴⁵ (Nanda 2009) Applicants must individually challenge any *en masse* cancellation decision through the Migration Review Tribunal. Information provided at a Continuing Professional Development seminar in August 2010, conducted by RILC and delivered by Jensen Ma, partner with Tan & Tan Lawyers and Consultants; and information provided by a bridging visa holder to the author.

2011:11). Already, the taxis of Melbourne are missing their drivers (Lucas 2011; Quinn 2011).⁴⁶

The ALP federal government responded to the movements of guest consumers and to fractures in the smooth development of international education economies by sweeping a large part of these economies away and many of those on international student visas out of the country – all in one movement collapsing together economic restructuring, border control and repression. The state sought to disperse struggles and solve problems without having to acknowledge or confront anti-Indian xenophobia in particular or broader hostility to non-white non-citizens, largely by acting to dispense with a section of the (particularly private) international education industry, and with a section of the (particularly less wealthy and/or more likely to be troublesome) students. An historical event in Australian border and population management, expelling tens of thousands of people and preventing future entry. The restructuring of these economies was thus configured as a reassertion of labour market management as well as a defence of the “integrity” of the immigration and border control apparatuses of the Australian state – a performance of sovereignty proudly evoking that readiness for violence the possibility of which seeks to ritually re-found state and nation.

The hope is to re-found such economies on new bases, with increasing controls over who makes it into the country, combined with efforts to develop new markets on this basis, to reduce reliance on guest consumers from particular countries, to buffer the fragility of the integration of international education economies into world markets.

Some of those here on international student visas will head to Canada to pursue a version of the same project⁴⁷, but most will be forced back to their countries of origin, where many face a future in the shadow of an enormous debt they have no conceivable way of re-paying, with their chances of survival significantly diminished (Gonsalves 2010). In the kind of actuarial logic used by the Department of Immigration, this restructuring has probably killed thousands of people (Agnihotri 2010).

The fetishism of the concept of the “refugee” rendered international students invisible (or irrelevant) even to those who attempted to critically discuss Australian migration and border policy, until the movement of international students began to assume more conventional figures of the political, at which point the struggles of those on international student visas were reduced to abstract anti-racism (Peterson & Bolton 2009) or proposed recruitment drives

⁴⁶ In 2011 *Campus Review* was noticing a “rising social movement [that] could collapse the nation’s \$18 billion export education industry” – as if partial collapse had not already begun and the movement had not already been defeated (Woodward 2011: 3).

⁴⁷ Attempts by North Indians to switch to the UK were defeated at the same time, in September 2009 (BBC 2010), and *en masse* expulsions of Indian students are about to take place in the US (Indianexpress.com 2011).

to extend trade union market share (Breen 2009; Trotskyist Platform 2009), while broader questions were effaced or de-politicised.

Covertly-national political categories, at the very least, cannot confront the developing transnational processes of class formation, except as a threat. For much of the Left, struggle is centrally understood in terms of the necessity to defend or try to recreate the assumed norms of Fordism, of a national social democratic state and a trade unionism whose decline in reality can not simply be attributed to capitalist anti-unionism, against neoliberalisation, while effacing the historically specific foundation of really-existing social democracy in particular, gendered and racialised, divisions of labour. Other forms of movement and struggle disappear from sight, or are registered as disturbing neoliberal subjectivity.

It is within this political terrain that key trade unions lobbied hard for and then celebrated the restructuring as a reassertion of (their role in) sovereignty through control of borders and labour markets (AMWU 2010), in tandem with nationalist academics. The CFMEU went further, trumpeting a Bill that would allow the Immigration Minister at any moment to cut off skilled migration applications already lodged, "capping" them on the basis of nationality, occupation, or any other number of as yet undefined characteristics:⁴⁸

The Australian government must have the power to effectively manage the migration program. At present the government does not have that power. This Bill will give the government more power to control the number and characteristics of persons entering, living and working in Australia on most visa classes, though it does not guarantee that the power will be exercised. (CFMEU 2010a)

This restructuring was the end of a moment, the defeat of movements which had successfully pried open a space for mobility not completely under the control of authorities, in which people were not so efficiently judged on their absolute usefulness to established interests.

References

AAP, 20 January 2010. "We've known for two years about Indian attacks", *The Age*. Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/weve-known-for-two-years-about-indian-attacks-overland-20100120-mk8o.html> (accessed 6.12.2010)

AAP, 2 July 2010a. "Kevin Rudd removal paved way for mining tax deal: Martin Ferguson." Available at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/politics/kevin-rudd-removal-paved-way-for-mining-tax-deal-martin-ferguson/story-e6frgczf-1225887638848> (accessed 6.12.2010)

⁴⁸ While this bill has currently been shelved, it has already had the desired effect of creating panic and uncertainty amongst the student population and skilled migration applicants (Mares 2010a).

Australian Broadcasting Corporation News, 31 May 2009. "Thousands protest against Indian student attacks." Available at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/05/31/2585657.htm> (accessed 24.2.2011)

Agnihotri, Ambika (2010). *Submission to Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee, Migration Amendment (Visa Capping) Bill 2010*. Available at http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/legcon_ctte/migration_amendment_visa_capping/submissions.htm (accessed 25.2.2011)

Ahmed, Tanveer (2010). "Far from racist: Australia has much to be proud of." *The Age* 12 June 2010: 3-4.

Allman, Paula (2007). *On Marx: An introduction to the Revolutionary Intellect of Karl Marx*. Rotterdam and Taipei: Sense Publishers.

Australian Manufacturing Workers Union, (2006). *Temporary Skilled Migration: A New form of indentured servitude*. Melbourne: AMWU. Available at www.amwu.org.au/content/upload/files/report/Skilled-Migration-0706.pdf (accessed 22.2.2011)

Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (2008). *Submission, Visa 457 – Integrity Review July 2008*. Melbourne: AMWU. Available at www.amwu.org.au/content/upload/files/submission/sub_457-integrity-review_0708.pdf (accessed 22.2.2011)

Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (2010). "Permanent skilled migration changes welcome – more focus needed on temporary system." *AMWU News* 8 February. Available at www.amwu.org.au/read-article/news-detail/400/Permanent-skilled-migration-changes-welcome-more-focus-needed-on-temporary-system/ (accessed 20.2.2011)

Australian Nursing Federation (2009). *Submission to the Inquiry into the Welfare of International Students*. Available at <https://senate.aph.gov.au/submissions/comittees/viewdocument.aspx?id=863dc078-d513-48fa-a495-79eedad1f24c> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Barclay, Ryan & West, Peter (2006). "Racism or patriotism? An eyewitness account of the Cronulla demonstration of 11 December 2005." *People and Place* 14 (1): 75-85.

Battersby, Lucy, 3 December 2008. "Stop the Violence, demand Indians." *The Age*. Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/stop-the-violence-demand-indians-20081203-6pwc.html> (accessed 23.2.2011)

BBC News, 30 January 2010. "UK suspends Indian student visa applications." Available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/8489349.stm (accessed 6.12.2010)

Biao, Xiang (2005). "Gender Dowry and the Migration System of Indian Information Technology Professionals." *Indian Journal of Gender Studies* 12: 357–379.

- Biao, Xiang (2007). *Global "Body Shopping": An Indian International Labor System in the Information Technology Industry*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Biao, Xiang and Wei Shen (2009). "International Student Migration and Social Stratification in China." *International Journal of Educational Development* 29: 513-522.
- Birrell, Bob and Samantha Evans (1996). "Recently arrived migrants and social welfare." *People and Place* 4 (2). Available at <http://elecpress.monash.edu.au/pnp/free/pnpv4n2/birrevan.htm> (accessed 6.12.2010)
- Birrell, Bob, Earnest Healey and Bob Kinnaird (2007). "Cooks galore and hairdressers aplenty." *People and Place* 15 (1): 30 – 44.
- Birrell, Bob and Rapson, Virginia (2005). *Migration and the Accounting Profession in Australia*. Report prepared for CPA Australia.
- Breen, Chris, 1 June 2009. "Thousands rally against racist attacks (photos and reports)." *Solidarity Online*. Available at <http://www.solidarity.net.au/web/rally-against-racist-attacks-photos-report/> (accessed 25.2.2011)
- Bretag, Tracey (2007). "[The Emperor's new clothes: Yes, there is a link between English language competence and academic standards.](#)" *People and Place* 15 (1): 13-21.
- Bryan, Dick (1991). "Australian Economic Nationalism: Old and New." *Australian Economic Papers* 30 (57): 290-309.
- Bryan, Dick (2004) "Australia: Neo-liberal Globalism and the Local State." Pp 110-131 in *Governing Under Stress: Middle Powers and the Challenge of Globalization*, edited by Marjorie Griffin Cohen and Stephen Clarkson. London: Zed Books.
- Burch, Tony (2008). "Teaching and learning accounting with overseas students." *People and Place* 16 (1): 12-20.
- Burnham, Peter (1990). *The Political Economy of Postwar Reconstruction*. London: Macmillan.
- Butler, Mark, 17 June 2010. "India reassured by teen's arrest as police say death of Nitin Garg not racially motivated." *The Herald Sun*. Available at <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/year-old-arrested-in-relation-to-death-of-indian-student-nitin-garg/story-e6frf7jo-1225880898698> (accessed 6.12.2010)
- Canadian Council for Refugees (2004). *Impacts on children of the "Immigration and Refugee Protection Act"*. Canadian Council for Refugees: Montreal. Available at <http://ccrweb.ca/children.pdf> (accessed 26.2.2011)
- Catalyst, 6 May 2008. "Temporary Migration: Economic Opportunity for Whom?". Available at <http://www.catalyst.org.au/catalyst/events/menu-past-events/42-past-events/48-temporary-migration> (accessed 23.2.2011)

Chang, Dae-Oup and Monina Wong (2005). "After the Consumer Movement: Toward a new International Labour Activism in the Global Garment Industry." *Labour, capital and Society* 38 (1-2): 126 – 155.

Chapman B. and Salvage, T. (1997). "The effect of the 1996-97 budget changes on higher education students." In: *Australia's future universities*, edited by L. Meek and G. Harman. Armidale: University of New England Press.

Clarke, Simon (1988). *Keynesianism, Monetarism and the Crisis of the State*. Aldershot, England: Edward Elgar.

CFMEU (2009). *Submission to Senate Inquiry into the welfare of international students*. Available at <https://senate.aph.gov.au/submissions/comitees/viewdocument.aspx?id=f4b93d9f-ff97-49e0-a6b7-0e837a2f3a9f> (accessed 6.12.2010)

CFMEU (2010). *Submission to Review of Employer Sanctions Legislation 2010*. Available at www.cfmeu-construction-nsw.com.au/pdf/CFMEUSubmissionEmployerSanctionslegislationreview9July2010.pdf (accessed 22.2.2011)

CFMEU (2010a). *Submission to Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee Inquiry into Migration Amendment (Visa Capping) Bill 2010*. Available at <http://www.cfmeu.net.au/multiversions/3540/FileName/CFMEUVisacappingBillJune10.pdf> (accessed 25.2.2011)

Das, Sushi, 23 May 2009. "Our schools for scandal." *The Age*. Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/our-schools-for-scandal-20090522-bic6.html> (accessed 23.2.2011)

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2009). Correspondence from Peter Vardos, DIAC, to Glenn Withers, Universities Australia.

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2010). "Student Visa Living Costs and Evidence of Funds." Available at <http://www.immi.gov.au/students/pdf/student-living-costs.pdf> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2010a). "Introduction of New points test." Available at <http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/pdf/points-fact.pdf> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2010b). "Student Visa Assessment Levels." Available at <http://www.immi.gov.au/students/student-visa-assessment-levels.htm> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2010c). "Factsheet on the New Points Test." Available at <http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/pdf/points-testfaq.pdf> (accessed 23.2.2011)

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2010d). "Student visa conditions." Available at <http://www.immi.gov.au/students/visa-conditions-students.htm> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Department of Immigration and Citizenship (2011). "Student Visa Program Report 2010 – 11 to 31 December 2010." Available at <http://www.immi.gov.au/media/statistics/study/pdf/student-visa-report-to-31-12-2010.pdf> (accessed 23.2.2011)

Dobbin, Marika, April 30 2008. "Protesting cabbies win security boosts." *The Age*. Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/cabbie-safety-protest-jams-cbd/2008/04/30/1209234897135.html?page=fullpage#contentSwap1> (accessed 23.2.2011)

Eddy, Dr Elizabeth (2003). "Australian Higher Education Modernisation: Enterprise Bargaining and the Changing Basis of Academic 'Autonomy'." Paper presented to the Australasian Political Science Studies Association. Hobart: University of Tasmania, 29 September-1 October 2003.

Evans, Chris, 20 August 2009. "Student Visa checks strengthened." Available at <http://www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2009/ce09075.htm> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Ewart, Heather, 11 November 2009. "More college closures predicted." *7:30 Report*. Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Available at <http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2009/s2740164.htm> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Fitzsimmons, Hamish, 9 June 2009. "Student attacks in Australia." *Radio News Australia*, Australian Broadcasting Corporation. Available at <http://www.radioaustralianews.net.au/stories/200906/2590312.htm> (accessed 23.2.2011)

Gascoigne, John, 17 February 2008. "Overworked and under threat: life behind the wheel." *The Age*. Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/life-behind-the-wheel/2008/02/16/1202760669109.html?page=fullpage> (accessed 24.2.2011)

Global Envision, (2005). "Dubai's Kerala connection." Available at <http://www.globalenvision.org/library/3/783> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Gonsalves, Roanna, 22 January 2010. "Doosra: the life and times of an Indian student in Australia." *ABC Radio National*. Available at <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/360/stories/2011/3074311.htm> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Hagan Jim (1986). *Australian Trade Unionism in Documents*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.

Hagan, Kate, 11 August 2006. "Taxi protest causes traffic chaos." *The Age*. Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/taxi-protest-causes-traffic-chaos/2006/08/11/1154803064204.html> (accessed 23.02.2011)

Hartwich, Valérie (2010). *Fortress Academy: The Policing of International Students and Academics*. London: The Manifesto Club.

Hill, Bo, 28 August 2009. "Foreign students competing for Australian jobs", *Radio Australia*. Available at

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/08/28/2670012.htm> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Hinkson, John (2002). "Perspectives on the crisis of the university." [Paper in: *Scholars and Entrepreneurs: the Universities in Crisis*, Cooper, Simon, Hinkson, John and Sharp, Geoff (eds.)] *Arena Journal* 17&18: 233 -267.

Indianexpress.com, 25 January 2011. "Hundreds of Indian students may be deported from US." Available at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/hundreds-of-indian-students-may-be-deported-from-us/741992/0> (accessed 25.02.2011)

Jamieson, Amber, 7 January 2010. "Murder, racism and Melbourne, a Crikey wrap." *Crikey*. Available at <http://www.crikey.com.au/2010/01/07/murder-racism-and-melbourne-a-crikey-wrap/> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Jones, Kate, 12 November 2010. "Julius Medina and Peter Salapura plead guilty to terrorising Indians." *Herald Sun*. Available at <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/julius-medina-and-peter-salapura-plead-guilty-to-terrorising-indians/story-e6frf7jo-1225952326814> (accessed 23.02.2011)

Jupp, James (1997). "Tacking into the Wind: Immigration and Multicultural Policy in the 1990s." *Journal of Australian Studies* 21 (53): 29-39.

Kinnaird, Bob (2005). *Labour Market Impacts of ICT Immigration Policies, January 2005*. Report prepared for the Australian Computer Society.

Kell, Peter (2006). "TAFE Futures Inquiry July–October 2006." Report Commissioned by the Australian Education Union. Available at <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/TFreport.pdf> (accessed 25.2.2011)

Koeth, Else, 18 June 2010. "Overseas students: immigration policy changes 1997 – May 2010." Parliamentary Library background note. Canberra: Parliament of Australia.

Kuhn, Rick (1993). "The Limits of Social Democratic Policy in Australia", *Capital & Class* 17: 17-52.

Kuhn, Rick (2011). "The Zombies of Neoliberalism - The Keynesian moment passes." *Counterpunch* February 11- 13th. Available at www.counterpunch.org.au/kuhn02112011.html (accessed 18.2.2011)

Kumar, Rashmi (2010). "Borders and the commodification of labour." In *Breakout: For the free movement of people Conference Reader*. Sydney: Breakout.

Lane, Bernard, 17 November 2010. "Language rules lift bar for sector." *The Australian*: 25.

Lane, Bernard, 26 January 2011. "International Sector reaps record dividend, but crash looms." *The Australian*. Available at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/international-sector-reaps->

[record-dividend-but-crash-looms/story-e6frgcjx-1225994500389](#) (accessed 23.2.2011)

Livingston, Matt, May 2000. "Students occupy UQ senate chambers." *Green Left Weekly*. Available at <http://www.greenleft.org.au/node/22329> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Lowe, David (2010). "The Colombo Plan and 'soft' regionalism in the Asia-Pacific: Australian and New Zealand cultural diplomacy in the 1950s and 1960s." *Alfred Deakin Research Institute, Working Paper Series 1*. Deakin University.

Lucas, Clay, 10 February 2011. "Driver shortage for taxis as Indian student numbers fall." *The Age*. Available at http://theage.drive.com.au/roads-and-traffic/driver-shortage-for-taxis-as-indian-student-numbers-fall-201102091an3l.html?from=smh_ft (accessed 23.2.2011)

Mares, Peter, 10 February 2010. "From queue to pool: skilled migration gets a makeover." *Inside Story*. Available at www.inside.org.au/skilled-migration-gets-a-makeover/ (accessed 6.12.2010)

Mares, Peter, 3 June 2010. "Capping and culling the migration queue." *Inside Story*. Available at www.inside.org.au/capping-and-culling-the-migration-queue/ (accessed 23.02.2011)

Marginson, Simon (2002). "Towards a politics of the enterprise university." *Arena Journal* 17-18: 109-136.

Marginson, Simon (2010). "2020 Education." *The Australian Literary Review* 5 (11): 16.

Marginson, Simon; Nyland, Chris; Sawir, Erlenawati; Forbes-Mewett, Helen (2010). *International Student Security*. Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Marks, Russell, 6 July 2009. "Racism is not the problem." *New Matilda.com*. Available at <http://newmatilda.com/2009/07/06/racism-not-problem> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Marx, Karl (1977). "Results of the Immediate Process of Production." In *Capital Volume 1*. New York: Random House.

Maslog-Levis, Kristyn & Foo, Fran (2005). "Questions raised over ACS migration policy." *ZDNet*. Available at www.zdnet.com.au/questions-raised-over-ac-s-migration-policy-139190267.htm (accessed 23.2.2011)

Mathew, Biju (2005). *Taxi!: Cabs and Capitalism in New York City*. New York, NY: New Press.

Melbourne reporters, 30 April 2008. "Taxi driver protest clogs Melbourne." *The Australian*. Available at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/taxi-driver-protest-clogs-melbourne/story-e6frg6of-1111116204068> (accessed 23.02.2011)

Melbourne Worker's Theatre (2010). *Yet to Ascertain the Nature of the Crime*. Available at <http://melbourneworkerstheatre.com.au/shows/past> (accessed 23.02.2011)

McNamara, Lisa, 18 July 2006. "Uni targets doctors over sick notes." *The Australian*.

McQueen, Humphrey (2004). *A New Britannia*. St Lucia, QLD: University of Queensland Press.

Mitropoulos, Angela and Brett Nielson (2006). "Exceptional Times, Non-governmental Spacings, and Impolitical Movements." *Vacarme* 34. Available at <http://vacarme.eu.org/article484.html> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Moor, Keith, 9 October 2009. "Victoria Police in Racist Email Scandal." *The Herald Sun*. Available at <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/victoria/victoria-police-in-racist-email-scandal/storye6frf7kx-1225936182709> (accessed 23.02.2011)

Nagy, Judy (2008). "Fit for Intended Use – A Manufacturing Metaphor Applied to International Business Students and Learning Outcomes." *People and Place* 16 (3): 9-18.

Naidoo, Meryl, 11 August 2010. "Student hits out at police." *The Mercury*. Available at http://www.nlc.edu.au/news2010_sub.php?newsID=528 (accessed 6.12.2010)

Nanda, Neeraj, 2 November 2009. "5,000 Oz student visas may be cancelled." *South Asia Times*. Available at www.southasiatimes.com.au/news-5000-oz-student-vsas-may-be-cancelled/ (accessed 28.02.2011)

National Tertiary Education Union (2009). *Submission to The References Senate Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Inquiry into the Welfare of International Students*. Melbourne: NTEU. Available at <https://senate.aph.gov.au/submissions/comitees/viewdocument.aspx?id=7f4e9a6c-fca6-4547-87f7-d4e2e3123880> (accessed 15.2.2011)

National Union of Students (2009). *Submission To The References Senate Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Inquiry into the Welfare of International Students*. Melbourne: NUS. Available at <https://senate.aph.gov.au/submissions/comitees/viewdocument.aspx?id=d8dd693-65a4-4ec7-b969-a2ef945a5463> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Nicholson, Brendan, Nick O'Malley and Heath Gilmore, 8 August 2009. "Rudd pledges India visit after Cairns meeting." *The Age*. Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/national/rudd-pledges-india-visit-after-cairns-meeting-20090807-ecym.html> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Oakman, Daniel (2004). *Facing Asia: a History of the Colombo Plan*. Canberra: Pandanus Books.

Official Committee Hansard (2007). Joint Standing Committee on Migration: Reference: Temporary Business Visas May 17 2007.

Official Committee Hansard (2009). Education, Employment and Workplace Relations References Committee: Reference: Welfare of International Students. 18th September 2009.

Osuri, Goldie (2010). "Once More to a Slightly Different Breach: Race, Neoliberal Governmentality and Violence against International Students." Pp.91-116 in Enter at Own Risk? Australia's Population Questions for the 21st Century. Edited by Suvendrini Perera, Graham Seales, and Sue Summers. Perth. Black Swan Press.

Overseas Student Education Experience Taskforce (Victoria) (2008). Available at http://export.business.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/34999/OS-Student-Educ-Taskford_web.pdf (accessed 20.02.2011)

Patrick, Kate (2005). "Articulating Wuhan students: Outcomes of 2003 and 2004 cohorts." RMIT Business internal report.

Perera, Suvendrini (2006). "Race Terror, Sydney, December 2005." *Borderlands E-Journal* 5 (1). Available at www.borderlands.net.au/vol5no1_2006/perera_racerror.htm (accessed 20.2.2011)

Peterson, Chris and Bolton, Sue June (2009). "Indian students speak: Stop the racist attacks." *Green Left Weekly* 798. Available at <http://www.greenleft.org.au/node/41815> (accessed 25.2.2011)

Petrie, Andrea and Holroyd, Jane, 10 August 2006. "Cabbie in 'wrong place at wrong time'." *The Age*. Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/cabbie-in-wrong-place-at-wrong-time/2006/08/09/1154802962918.html> (accessed 23.02.2011)

Pier International Education Blog (2008). "Welcome to a nation of university ghettos." Available at <http://blog.pieronline.org/2008/07/welcome-to-nation-of-university-ghettos.html> (accessed 25.2.2011)

Quin, Michael, 31 January 2011. "Taxi Drivers urged to return to work." *Melbourne Weekly Port Phillip*. Available at <http://www.melbourneweeklyportphillip.com.au/news/local/news/general/taxi-drivers-urged-to-return-to-work/2060621.aspx> (accessed 23.2.2011)

Radio Australia News, 17 September 2009. "Australia education fears – Indian attacks." Available at <http://www.radioaustralianews.net.au/stories/200909/2688926.htm> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Riff-Raff (2005). "Interview with Roland Simon." *Riff-Raff* 8. Available at http://www.riff-raff.se/en/8/interview_roland.php (accessed 6.12.2010)

Rikowski, Glenn (2007). "Marxist Educational Theory Unplugged." Paper prepared for the Fourth Historical Materialism Annual Conference, 9-11th

November. Available at

<http://www.flowideas.co.uk/?page=articles&sub=Marxist%20Educational%20Theory%20Unplugged> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Rodan, Paul (2009). "The International Student as student, migrant and victim." *Australian Universities Review* 51 (2): 27–31. Available at http://www.aur.org.au/archive/51-02/aur_51-02.pdf (accessed 23.02.2011)

Rood, David, 14 March 2006. "Cash cow students take stand against uni." *The Age*. Available at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/cash-cow-students-take-a-brief-stand-against-uni/2006/03/13/1142098405192.html> (accessed 14.03.2006)

Rood, David, 10 February 2010. "Baillieu faces onslaught for remarks on violence." *The Age*. Available at www.theage.com.au/national/baillieu-faces-onslaught-for-remarks-on-violence-201000209-npqx.html (accessed 6.12.2010)

Rosenzweig, Ben and Liz Thompson (2009). "Permanent Residency not sold separately, education not included." *Overland* 197: 97-102.

Rosenzweig, Ben, February 2010. "Global Thinking: Victoria's action plan for international education." *Indus Age*.

Rosenzweig, Ben (2010). "International Student Struggles: Transnational Economies, Guest Consumers and Processes of Restructuring." *Mutiny* 48.

Ross, Norrie, 21 October 2010. "Bash attack not racist, court hears, despite Indian dog slur." *Herald Sun*. Available at <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/bash-attack-not-racist-court-hears-despite-indian-dog-slur/story-e6frf7jo-1225941770132> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Saha, Tapas Ranjan, 2-8 June 2009. "Rosy Hype of Globalisation vs Realities of Recession and Racism." *ML Update* (Magazine of the CPI(M) Liberation) 23 (12). Available at http://www.cpiml.org/liberation/year_2009/july_09/feature.html (accessed 6.12.2010)

Sheridan, Greg, 11 February 2010. "Brumby blind to the racism everyone else can see." *The Australian*. Available at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/opinion/brumby-blind-to-the-racism-everyone-else-can-see/story-e6frg76f-1225828934371> (accessed 25.02.11)

Simon, Roland (2005). "Self-organisation is the first act of the revolution: it then becomes an obstacle which the revolution has to overcome." *Revue Internationale pour la Communisation* 5 September. Available at <http://meeting.communisation.net/stuff-for-meeting/article/self-organisation-is-the-first-act?lang=en> (accessed 24.2.2011)

Simon, Roland (2008). "The Concept of Cycles of Struggles." *Revue Internationale pour la Communisation* 8 July. Available at <http://meeting.communisation.net/archives/summer-meeting-2008/workshops/article/the-concept-of-cycle-of-struggles?lang=en> (accessed 6.12.2010)

- Singh, Parminder (2010). *Submission 242 to Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee, Migration Amendment (Visa Capping) Bill 2010*. Available at http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/legcon_ctte/migration_amendment_vis_a_capping/submissions.htm (accessed 25.2.2011)
- Sonja, Red (Liz Thompson) (2008). "The Revolution will not be anglicised." *Mutiny* 30. Available at <http://jura.org.au/files/jura/Mutiny%2030%20-%20WEB.pdf> (accessed 06.12.2010)
- Spruce, Damian and Vanni, Illaria, 10 March 2005. "Laboratoria Australia: Setting the Benchmark for world's worst practice." *Migreurop*. Available at <http://www.migreurop.org/article913.html> (accessed 6.12.2010)
- Staff writers, 24 March 2010. "Mass immigration kills Aussie culture, says demographer Bob Birrell." *Herald Sun*. Available at <http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/national/mass-migration-kills-aussie-culture-says-demographer-bob-birrell/story-e6frf716-1225844560248> (accessed 23.02.2011)
- Stone, John (2010). "Immigration Policy: Our Self-Inflicted Wounds." *Quadrant* 54 (9). Available at <http://www.quadrant.org.au/magazine/issue/2010/9/immigration-policy-our-self-inflicted-wounds> (accessed 6.12.2010)
- Study Melbourne (2009). "Snapshot – Victoria September 2009, International Education Export Statistics".
- Suresh, Sushil October (2009). "Indians settled and unsettled..." *Indus Age* (Melbourne edition): 17.
- Sutton, John (2008). "Asia-Pacific Labour Mobility and the Two Track Labour Market." *People and Place* 16 (2): 85-91.
- Theorie Communiste (2009). "The Glass Floor." This text is the introduction for the book, *Les Emeutes en Grèce*, published by Senonevero in April 2009. Available at <http://libcom.org/library/glass-floor-theorie-communiste>
- Thompson, Liz November (2009). "How we created a monster...the complex formula of international student expectation and exploitation." *Immigration Review* 42: 1–4.
- Thompson, Liz 9 January 2010. "The truth behind college closure." *Indus Age*. Available at <http://www.szuba.com/blogs/2010/jan/09/the-truth-behind-college-closure/> (accessed 6.12.2010)
- Trotskyist Platform, August 2009–January 2010. "Stop Attacks on Indian and Chinese students." *Trotskyist Platform* 12. Available at <http://web.aanet.com.au/tplatform/index12.html> (accessed 25.2.2011)
- Universities Australia, June 2009. "Ten Point Action Plan for Student Safety." Available at <http://www.india.embassy.gov.au/ndli/pa142009.html> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Vashisht, Dinker, 31 January 2010. "This way to Australia." *India Express.com*. Available at <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/this-way-to-australia/573495/0> (accessed 6.12.2010)

Victorian Auditor-General (2010). "Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority." *Victorian Auditor-General's report*, Melbourne: Victorian Government Printer.

Victorian Government (2007). "Ministerial Review of Central Queensland University – Melbourne International Campus 2007." Available at http://www.skills.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/12555/CQU-FinalReport.pdf (accessed 23.02.2011)

Walshe, Keiran (2010). Victoria Police Deputy Commissioner press conference 25 September 2010, Melbourne. Available at <http://media.theage.com.au/?rid=49291&sy=age&source=theage.com.au%2Fnational%2Ffive-teens-charged-over-separate-attacks-on-indian-students-20090529-bptj.html> (accessed 23.02.2011)

Wallace, Rick, 4 January 2010. "Killing of student Nitin Garg threatens ties: India." *The Australian*. Available at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/killing-of-student-nitin-garg-threatens-ties-india/story-e6frg6nf-1225815886596> (accessed 23.02.2011)

Watty, Kim (2007). "Quality in Accounting Education and Low English Standards among Overseas Students: Is There a Link?" *People and Place* 15(1): 22-29.

Woodward, Susan, 25 January 2011. "International student movement rising, paper warns." *Campus Review* 21(1): 3.

Yuval-Davies, Nira (1986). "Ethnic/racial divisions and the nation in Britain and Australia." *Capital & Class* 28: 87-103.

Ziguras, Chris, August 11 2009. "Indian students in Australia: how did it come to this?" *GlobalHigherEd*. Available at <http://globalhighered.wordpress.com/2009/08/11/indian-students-in-australia-how-did-it-come-to-this/#comments> (accessed 23.02.2011)

About the authors

Liz Thompson is a former caseworker at the International Student Care Service. Before this she worked at the RMIT Student Union as a student rights officer and research officer. She is a non-voting committee member of the Victorian Taxi Driver's Association, and a volunteer at the International Student Legal Advice Clinic, Melbourne. She can be contacted at redlizthompson AT gmail.com.

Ben Rosenzweig writes with Liz and is obsessed with French people. He can be contacted at lumpnboy AT yahoo.com.