THE AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF THE STATE
Egalitarian Ideologies and New Directions in Exclusionary Practice

Bruce Kapferer and Barry Morris

Abstract

This article considers the broad historical and ideological processes that participate in forming the continuities and discontinuities of Australian egalitarian nationalism. We draw attention to its formation and re-formation in the debates surrounding the so-called Hanson phenomenon. Hansonism refracts the crisis of what we regard as the Australian society of the state in the circumstances of the development of neoliberal policies and the more recent neoconservative turn of the current Howard government. Our argument is directed to exploring the contradictions and tensions in Australian egalitarian thought and practice and its thoroughgoing creative reengagement in contemporary postcolonial and postmodern Australia.

Key words: Nationalism, egalitarianism, individualism, nation-state, globalization, neoliberalism, Hansonism

I regard Australia's social cohesion, born of a distinctive form of egalitarianism, as the crowning achievement of the Australian experience during the last one hundred years.

— Prime Minister John Howard, 2000

Introduction

Our discussion develops in relation to events in Australia that saw the momentary emergence to political prominence of Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party, a phenomenon widely referred to in Australia as Hansonism. Weber might have recognized Hansonism as one of those switch moments in history where potentialities already apparent in ideas and practices suddenly crystallize

into a relatively original form, influencing the development of new social and political directions.[1] We are concerned to demonstrate the Hanson phenomenon as one of these moments which is both a particular expression or formation of historically laid ideological and institutional currents, and also, most importantly, as giving form to relatively novel dynamics of ideas and practice.

There is a further set of concerns that guide our analysis. Hansonism is a particular social and political expression of the crisis that is affecting modern states perhaps worldwide. This achieves specific interest in the Australian context. As we shall argue, Australia is a particularly strong example of a social formation which, for all its contextual diversity, is entirely a state construction. Australia is a society of the state, and the crisis that it manifests—of which Hansonism is a singular expression—opens in an acute way, even in its distinction or particularity, some of the ideological and structural forces that are at work in many contemporary states. From its beginnings, Australia was through and through a modernist creation, perhaps more so than many other state/society systems, and it is this, we contend, that makes Hansonism and the crisis of the state that surrounds it of potentially general interest. This is so especially in the context of comparative analyses of state processes and discourses concerning citizenship and democracy in the contemporary climate of postcolonial globalization.

It is tempting to see Hansonism as a reaction to what some commentators would describe as the liberal and socialist ethos of post–World War II societies. While there is much to be observed in favor of this opinion, we wish to break away from such a dialectical orientation and the resulting confinement of analysis to an endless circularity. We will suggest that Hansonism is a positivity in the sense argued by Deleuze (1994): it is less a negative dialectic constituted by an imagination of the past or in the past tense than it is an ideological and practical formation created in the present future tense. That is, it is a construction completely thrown up in the circumstances of the present, which gains some of its orientation from a projection of what is believed to be a realizable future. Hansonism gave acute expression to a vision of state and society (however dismal) that is ultimately irreducible to earlier conceptions and practices.

Hansonism and Its Local and Global Context

The 1996 Federal election in Australia which saw the Liberal-National Party Coalition returned to power with a landslide popular vote (a forty-four seat majority in the Federal Parliament) ended a long period of Labor Party government. Most significantly, it ushered in a wave of political attacks against the 'politically correct' policies of the previous Labor government. The attacks concentrated on Labor's opening up of a hitherto highly restricted immigration policy, its multiculturalism policy, and Labor's program of extending citizen rights to the indigenous Aboriginal population. These crystallized around the issue of Australian identity which successive Labor governments, from Whitlam and Hawke

and culminating in the prime ministership of Paul Keating, had brought to the forefront of Australian politics.[2]

The Keating period (1991–1996) is perhaps the most important for understanding, not just the landslide vote against Labor, but also for comprehending some of the specifics of the Hanson phenomenon and its relation to larger global forces. The Keating government made the clearest linkage, on the one hand, of a policy of economic rationalism associated with globalization with, on the other hand, a presentation of a new national identity that stressed cultural heterogeneity rather than homogeneity. (With Keating, this also involved a re-orientation of Australia to Asia, and away from its British, European, and North American metropolitan associations.) As Archer has argued, multicultural policies were often "portrayed as the creative force behind our rich, diverse and tolerant society" (1997: 33). The economic reforms associated with contemporary globalization, and an increasing intensity of transnational flows of goods and services, were considered logically consistent with the unfettering of the "untapped economic potential of migrants and the freeing up of a discriminatory migrant policy in order to make Australia more open and competitive in the global economy" (ibid.: 32). Trade was the main game and Australia, like the city states of old Asia and Europe, "could achieve greatness from the wealth of ideas that flow at the 'crossroads of cultures'" (ibid.: 33). For Keating and his government, Australia's economic maturity was to be found in global economic competitiveness, in which migrant knowledge of overseas markets was the key element. At the same time, Australia was to achieve its political maturity as a republican nation by erasing its links to a British heritage. However, for its critics, multicultural policies promoted favoritism and inequality. While they appeared to deny, as Hirst (1990) suggests, "any superior legitimacy to the host culture," such policies deployed public funds in the service of migrants for retaining their own culture and would be offensive "to the liberal and egalitarian values of our (Anglo-Celtic) culture" (cited in Jupp 1997: 137). The debates were as much about how Australians should view their past as they were about the contemporary Australian identity.

These debates gained greater intensity when, in the early 1990s, the recognition of past injustices committed against indigenous Australians moved from public debate to the legal judgement of the High Court of Australia. The High Court's decisions in the Mabo (1992) and Wik (1994) cases meant that indigenous forms of ownership could be recognized under Australian common law. However, they did more than provide for recognition of indigenous claims to land; they formed an acknowledgement of the past injustices of indigenous dispossession. This brought before public knowledge debates, which, more than hitherto, were concerned with the non-indigenous treatment of indigenous Aboriginal Australians. The High Court decisions led to unprecedented attacks on the integrity of the High Court by politicians, public commentators, and historians.[3] Indeed, the High Court decisions brought to an end two decades of consensus between the major party politics in relation to indigenous land claims. Issues concerning the political use of history were now firmly placed in the open

arena of public debate. The hitherto largely unquestioned moral authority of Anglo-Saxon values, so deeply embedded in the institutional habitus of Australia, was now an object of contest. The discursive field was thus set for the emergence of Hansonism as a kind of populist defense of values that were now felt to be marginalized. This was additionally significant because they formed the basis of the social power of the otherwise powerless (see Hage 1998).

We underline the point that, at the time of the landslide, political shift to John Howard's Liberal-National Party Coalition, the populist orientation of the conservative turn had, as yet, not been clearly formulated. For many, as political commentators pointed out, the vote was not so much *for* conservatives as *against* Keating and his Labor government. It was the rise of Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party that initiated, we will argue, the formulation of the popularism that is integral to the contemporary ideological orientations of politically dominant forces in Australia. Hanson's election to a normally secure Labor seat, and the creation of her One Nation Party that, for a brief period, was the third most powerful political party in Australia, facilitated the first major and relatively coherent articulation of the social and political discontent that was motivating the majority settler population of Australia. In her maiden parliamentary speech, Hanson gave public expression to disparate dissenting voices concerning immigration and indigenous rights, focussing them around larger discussion relating to citizenship, and above all, the character of national identity.

While Hanson and One Nation have disappeared from the political arena, their ideas largely have been absorbed into the neoliberal (or neoconservative) political tide that has overtaken Australia along with much of Western Europe and North America. Currently within Australia, there is little that separates the political 'left' and 'right' parties, although the present conservative government under John Howard represents the extreme of neoliberalism. This government has, in many ways, turned back the clock on Aboriginal rights, especially with regard to land claims. It has established barriers to immigration and refugees that are the envy of governments in Europe, and its programs of political, social, and economic 'deregulation' are powerfully in line with the globalizing recommendations of the U.S., underlined by the strong alliance of Australia's Prime Minister, John Howard, with President George Bush in regard to the Iraqi invasion.

We stress the degree to which Australia under Howard has been embraced by the neoconservative turn in the United States. Thus, Australia's foreign policy is thoroughly in support of the American policy of unilateral and preemptive intervention. In keeping with the American stance, there has been a general downgrading of Australia's participation in the United Nations' monitoring programs for international human rights and active non-compliance with UN directives, for example, concerning the treatment of refugees. Australia has sided with the American refusal both to sign the Kyoto protocol and to recognize the international court at The Hague for war crimes.[4]

The contemporary crisis of the Australian state and its particular political direction are being echoed in a locally specific manner throughout the world. In

numerous ways, they refract re-formations in socio-political alignments and structures (frequently, their hybridizing) as a consequence of the emergence of virtually uncontested American imperial—and to a lesser extent North European—control over the different forms of global power (politico-military, technology, capital, media). What Hardt and Negri (2000), among numerous others, recognize as a new global totalizing force has perhaps brought to an end the interlude of nation-state autonomy, or at least its fantasy, especially for postcolonial states. Furthermore, such developments as the above have undermined Hobbesian or contractarian visions of the state. The phenomenon of 'privatization' and the retraction of state agencies from the public sector (the cornerstone of neoliberal policies) have thrown into question the nature of the relation between people and the state and, more broadly, the character of democratic institutions, especially in essentially social-democratic states like that of Australia. Such major political and economic developments have brought in their wake a local politics of redefinition and renegotiation that takes the form of reaction, as Hansonism, but in its effects can also be seen as integral in the restructuring of relatively new socio-political formations. This dynamic of re-formation, as we show, often engages old discourse in radically new ways.

Egalitarian Individualism and Australian Identity: Lineages of Ideological Formation

We are concerned here with the broad historical and ideological (cultural) processes, which participate in forming the continuities and discontinuities in what we describe as egalitarian individualist thought and practice in Australia. Our aim is not to force a distinction between idea and practice, nor to treat history or conceptions of Australia's past as constructions somehow independent of ideological practices. The direction of the analysis is such as to suggest some of the similarities, but more importantly, the distinctions that may be apparent in Hansonism as a discourse within egalitarian assumptions. On the surface Hansonism, and latterly, the arguments of Howard and his government, appear to be (re)articulating with contemporary content, a logic of orientation to the present (an ontology) that appears to be consistent with old arguments. The past seems to be manifesting itself as the present which some might see as vital to its appeal. There are reasons why this may be so, for egalitarian ideology was embedded within political and social institutions and is an energy in their reproduction. But we are also interested in demonstrating redirections in current Australian elaborations of egalitarian individualism, and the contemporary contextual factors that drive such re-orientations.

In particular, within Australia contemporary forces of globalization, shifts in state sovereignty, and transnational flows in goods and people, have opened up new ruptures in the social fabric. Australian egalitarianism, as in the past, re-emerges and functions to resolve such ruptures, but it does so distinctively. One aspect that we suggest is that Australian egalitarian ideology, even more so than

before, seeks to establish a factuality of community and broader unity in situations where the experience of social fracture and fragmentation is perhaps more intense than at earlier times in history. To some extent, what some might see as the intense fetishism of individualist communitarianism and culture in the political and social ideologies and practices of modern Australia, is a teleological outcome of the deeply laid forces of individualist value in Australian social institutions. We indicate that egalitarian ideology or value is integral to the way many Australians attach significance to processes of social fracture. Moreover, we suggest that the very recognition of fracture (or communitarian unity) not only flows from egalitarian value, but also that such value is vital in the promotion of a discourse of exclusion and hostility to otherness.

We begin by focussing on the ideological and related practices that have been at the center of the nationalist imagination of Australia, even before 1901 when the several colonies (now semi-autonomous states or provinces) of the continent were federated as the independent Commonwealth of Australia. Before we do so, however, we note that the egalitarian individualist ideology we discuss is akin to that which has been variously described as egalitarianism and individualism, which has long been conceived as integral to global modernities in Europe and North America (e.g., De Tocqueville 1968; Dumont 1980; Foucault 1977, 1979, 1991). We stress individualism *as a value*, and not the trivial fact that it is individual human beings acting in concert or separately who continually make and remake their existential and historical realities. This, as Dumont and others have tirelessly emphasized, is true for all social contexts. However, individualism as value is a relatively modern phenomenon connected with the development of secularism (including its religious forms such as Protestantism), the spread of capitalism, and closely associated bureaucratic and managerial practice in state and non-state institutions.

Individualism *as an ideology* (a discursive system of value, our concern here) constructs the individual subject as the primordial and generative center of all social and political realities. Egalitarian individualism insists on the fundamental equality of all human beings in nature, and represents social inequality (often described as hierarchy) as the contradiction of egalitarian ideals. In Europe, of course, such an ideological vision was vital in the French Revolution, and carried through as the characteristic ideal of the American Revolution. Many forms of such egalitarianism are apparent in pre- and post-Enlightenment discourse, and were a force in anarchist and socialist movements worldwide. If they were integral in the social cries for human freedom and liberation, they were also appropriated by the pragmatic interests of power and control whose effects were the denial or restriction of pressures toward freedom and liberation. Referring to Bentham's individualist reformist pragmatism and orientation to a specular state (Bentham's panopticon was actually built in the penal colony of Van Diemen's Land [Tasmania]), Foucault explores aspects of the individualism underlying the formation of the biopower of the modern state. Individualism is an aspect of the inhabitation of the person by the state and part of what Foucault describes as governmentality, whereby modern citizens govern themselves

on behalf of dominant state interests. Hardt and Negri (2000) have recently expanded Foucault's notion of biopower and governmentality to discuss the forces of control in what they call Empire, or the political orders articulating globalization. We make the reference to underscore the close affinity of individualism with state interest, and paradoxically, with hierarchializing and subordinating power, relations that are very apparent in contemporary Australian populism and developments in citizen conformity and protest.

Our central argument is that egalitarian individualism as it has achieved particular shape in Australian nationalist ideologies is critical for understanding present political and social developments, which stress an exclusionary cultural and social homogeneity and an apparent re-emergence of an hostility to otherness, for want of a better expression.

Ideological Formation in the Circumstances of the Colonial State

An obvious feature of most colonial and postcolonial contexts is that their social and political realities were formed or reconfigured through the institutions and practices of the colonial state. The order of the state defined the social orders that it encompassed, and established the limits to the autonomy of those social formations already founded in the context of the colonial state. Australia is a particular but extremely radical instance of such a process. Although there was a sizeable indigenous population at the time of colonization, the British colonial authorities declared the country to be *terra nullius*. This had disastrous consequence for the Aboriginal population whose own institutions received virtually no government legitimacy. Their lack of legal and official recognition removed the capacity of Aborigines to negotiate the terms of their own existence in the context of the state. The situation of Aborigines emphasizes the uncontested and totalistic character of the colonial state in Australia, whereby it was able to determine effectively unchallenged the social and political conditions of its existence. This was further facilitated by the fact that major centers of population were initially established as penal settlements: colonial hells governed by particularly brutal military regimes (see Hughes 1996).

From the foundation of Australia, the colonial state was an absolutist state and a disciplinary society, achieving from its start what the modern state might have projected as its future (see Lattas 1985). The state was the circumstance within which social relations and their subjectivities were constituted, the process of exploration and settlement being more or less completely mediated through its offices. We re-iterate to strengthen the point. In Australia the modern state did not so much emerge from within an already established and diverse scattering of settlements and communities; rather, these emerged from within and by means of the machinery of the state. Australian society was through and through a conception of the state, society in its colonial manifestations already being internal to it. The state did not become internal to the person so much as the person was instituted already as internal to the state. If the

biopower of the state in the sense that Foucault has described for Europe grew as a process of historical evolution, in Australia the state as biopower was there from its inception.

The all-embracing character of the Australian state (both in its federal and regional manifestations) from the start was influential in the development of an internal discourse of opposition to the state. This is apparent in two early ideological developments in Australian nationalist imaginaries and practice, which are referred to as the 'pioneer legend' and the 'Australian tradition'. To a large extent these refracted the fact that, while state power and the institutions for social control were concentrated in urban centers, much of the population was distributed through rural areas which, of course, were central to the economy and initially provided the major labor opportunities. In the pioneer and Australian tradition orientations are located in a state/people (also city/country; see Kapferer 1996) opposition that is strongly apparent in later ideological developments, especially that of Anzac (discussed below). Shades of the ideological positions are evident in Hansonism, and in larger assertions and reaction to neoliberal programs. This is particularly so with regard to Hanson's popularity in rural Australia and in small-town communities.

The 'pioneer' and 'Australian tradition' visions privilege rural Australia (referred to as the 'bush') as the primal scene. In contemporary Australia, they are reproduced to support values of mutual help in times of crisis and notions of citizen service, an idea to which the Anzac tradition was to lend particular poignancy. The pioneer legend depicts the pastoral pioneer as the hero in a battle with nature in which individual perseverance and effort overcomes hardship. As Hirst has put it, the pioneer legend is the core element in Australian nationalism, as it deals "in an heroic way with the central experience of European settlement in Australia: the taming of the new environment to man's use … Their enemies are drought, flood, fire, sometimes Aborigines …" (1978: 316). Not only did the pioneer "show the way for following generations," but also gives historical witness to the egalitarianism and camaraderie that emerged across class lines between owners and workers in collaboration against the hardships of an unfamiliar and hostile Australian environment. The 'pioneer' largely refers to the small holder, who developed the land and shared the early hardships with his workers. The 'bush' is more than an escape from unsatisfying society; it is the ideal community central to the reproduction of a national subjectivity and differentiated from class and conflict-ridden city and society.[5]

The Australian tradition also makes the bush vital in the national imaginary, and, as with all imaginaries, this did not arise *de novo*. The country regions were the sites for early workers' struggles. Some of the most important union and labor movements had their origins in the bush. The Australian socialist movements saw their early impetus in rural regions. The infamous 'White Australia' policy had its roots in a labor movement—largely rural—concerned to protect its interests and oriented to maintain what it conceived to be the homogeneity integral to its projection of class and egalitarian solidarity (see Hancock 1961; Turner 1982; Ward 1958).

The imaginaries of Australian nationalist ideologies combine senses of sto-icism and fatalism (of the individual pitted against all odds, and in a Niet-zschean way who, in all likelihood, can be expected to succumb even despite superhuman efforts). There is an echo in such sentiment of the experience of the penal system. Many of the terms associated with rural life (e.g., station, muster) are derived from colonial prison practice.[6] The bush is an ambiguous and historically complex conceptual category that does not fall into easy semi-otic dualisms of nature/culture. It is the place where human beings were sub-jected to the harshness and vagaries of dominant elites and of government authority and regulation. Convicts were sent to the bush to work as virtual slave labor on the properties, building roads, etc. It was a place to escape from authority, and therefore was as potentially liberating as imprisoning. It was in the bush, following the end of transportation in 1868, that the intense efforts to invert the master/servant relations took early intense form.[7] Overall, the mix of optimism and pessimism still apparent in modern egalitarian ideologies in Aus-tralia might be seen as, in some respects, continuous with the earlier senti-ments and their ground that we have described.

Generally, the bush continues to hold a place in the Australian nationalist imagination as a place where self-regulating individual common sense and good will had its source. These were to flower in the Australian legend of Anzac (a voluntary army of largely rural men) and its ideology of 'mateship'. However, in Anzac, a stronger communitarian idea (impelled in Australian notions of mateship which refuse distinction) was to develop, appropriate to the nationalist vision of Australia as a new and original kind of society in which bush ideologies with their often dominant reveries of isolation and lone-liness had less place.

It should be clear from what we have said that the bush was no Arcadian realm in early nationalist imaginaries, although aspects of this have more recently emerged (e.g., in representations of traditional Aboriginal society, reevaluations of desert wilderness, etc.). Furthermore, the ideas it spawned were, through and through, modernist urban visions of class struggle, excori-ating conditions of work, general hardship, and poverty. They were not so much romantic constructions of the idyllic kind as views that were thoroughly integral to the experiences born of modernism (of industrialism, urbanization). This extends an understanding of why ideologies associated with the bush could continue in their relevance in the growing city contexts of Australia. It was not merely because country people migrated to the towns (making Aus-tralia one of the most urbanized countries in the world), but because the sen-sitivities of bush ideologies were already urban in the encompassing notion of modernism that we use here. (We note that bush ideas of personal loneliness, of wilderness, translate into common urban characterizations of forms of indi-vidual alienation.)

Australia, as a modernist society from the very start, one in which the state played the key mediating role, expands an understanding of the egalitarian ideas that developed over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and their

instrumentality as an agency of government and populist expression. Further observations in this regard should be made.

Australian egalitarianism is a continuing if heterogeneous construction of Australia as a modernist society of the state. We stress the particularity of this ethos, its historical specificity. While Australian egalitarianism resonates with other populist egalitarianisms elsewhere, contrary to some interpretations (see Davidson 1997), both the history of its evolution and its circumstances are significantly distinct from overtly similar developments in Europe and the United States. Colonizing forces are conventionally seen as a major mechanism of modernization at metropolitan peripheries and Australia is certainly no exception. But we add that there was no gradualist formation of modernism in Australia; it was modernist through and through from the very start. Moreover, it was virtually completely British in its modernist political, social, and economic institutions. This was rather different from comparable political orders such as North America, where colonial beginnings were far more diverse, and where social formation took place outside the regulatory eye of the state. In North America (especially the U.S.) there was a suspicion of British and other European centered institutions (encouraged perhaps in strong non-conformist influences), and a powerful energy to start something new.

The egalitarian cultural and social conformity of Australian ideology and institutional practice relates to its greater social homogeneity as compared with other colonial situations. Largely British, the immigrant population brought with it social conflicts and other divisions that certainly had ideological and practical roots in Britain. But, in the context of Australia, these achieved an added dynamic and value. They became a force for a sense of unity despite conflict. More to the point, they were active in the institutional construction of modern Australia, and vital in producing a taken-for-granted cultural hegemony: the assumed dominance of what are now termed Anglo-Celtic values or, more recently, the often hidden power of 'whiteness' in much Australian governmental and social practice (see Hage 1998).[8] It was such value that was influential in the White Australia policy when sections of the population felt their interests and hegemony threatened and which has re-emerged in Hansonism and the unabated hostility toward refugees.

One general point should be re-insisted upon at this stage. This relates to the internality of the state within the formation and use of egalitarian thought and practice. The liberal historian, W. K. Hancock (incidentally an ambivalent supporter of the White Australia Policy), writing in 1930, asserted that the state had an essential role in the creation of Australian egalitarian society.[9] He recognized the identity of state interest with the promotion of egalitarian individualist value. Hancock articulated the state formation of the individual subject as a self-governing entity as being vital to government control and social coherence. For Hancock, the prevailing ideology of Australian democracy was simple—justice, rights, and equality rested on the "appeal to government as an instrument of self-realization" (1961: 57). It is Australia as a society of individual self-discipline (Australia as a disciplinary society) that extends an understanding of the

ideological centrality or nationalist fetishism of practices such as sport and the expanding importance of national celebrations such as Anzac Day and its traditions, and even the ceremonialization of national disasters such as the recent Bali bombing. Here, too, is located some understanding of contemporary discourses in Australia concerning citizenship and the construction of projections of what kind of society Australia should become and who may not be appropriate to it.

Egalitarian Individualism and the Anzac Tradition

A short account of the Anzac tradition brings our discussion into the center of Australian nationalist discourse, and the way it may bring together social and political elements that on the surface might be seen to be opposed.

Australian nationalism and the consciousness of Australian identity now, and in the past, had little purpose other than to mark Australian distinctiveness in an era of nationalism that still bears force. Unlike elsewhere, it did not grow out of social and political struggle with colonial hegemony. Rather, what antagonisms there were, were reconstituted as a resolution in an idealism in which erstwhile opponents were united in agreement. In effect, the ideology of Australian national identity emerged as an imagined resolution of difference as sameness, or unity of project. In this sense it did, as its critics have complained, continue some of the logic inherent in the British ideology of Empire.

The foregoing considerations are underscored in the phenomenon of Australian nationalism and the consciousness of Australian identity. These were constructions of the society of the state having little purpose other than the creation of a sense of distinction appropriate in an age of nationalism. Perhaps, too, Australian nationalism as it developed enshrined those values born of division in the largely British society of the state, re-creating them as principles of unity rather than of conflict. Australian nationalist ideology and discourses of Australian identity did not grow out of processes of social and political struggle. They developed after the fact of independence, and were thoroughly representational, already first and foremost, media events concerned to produce a popular sense of distinctive personal and collective identity relevant to the creation of the Federation of Australia in 1901, the union of hitherto separate colonies. The idea of Australian identity developed within discourses relevant to the dominant British population functioning to further embed its values as integral to the hegemony of the state.

Australian political life was powerfully organized around issues of class and other related conflicts (e.g., Protestants versus Catholics), but these were suppressed or transmuted as part of Australian national presentation. An outstanding example is the legend of Ned Kelly which expresses the mutual antipathy between Irish and English, between small holder and large landowner, and between dominating urban capital and its authorities and laboring fractions (see McQuilton 1979). The legend, in effect, achieves in numerous

representations an uneasy resolution and unity of the competing interests engaged in the production of Australia generating a national value of resigned acceptance, the "Such Is Life" despairing almost defeated tone of so much that passes for Australian nationalist value.[10] In a major way the discourse of Australian identity engaged the language of class in drawing distinctions between Australian forms of life, and those of the 'homeland' and its erstwhile ruling system—Britain. Thus, Australians were presented as egalitarian and classless, whereas the English were typified as class-ridden and hierarchical. Effectively, class conflicts internal to the colonial and postcolonial social orders were both denied in Australian nationalism and reconfigured as a cultural distinction between Australia and its erstwhile colonial ruler.

Australian nationalism has its clearest (and most worshipped) representation in the Anzac tradition, constructed around the legendary exploits of Australian and New Zealand volunteer servicemen (non-conscripted citizens) at Gallipoli in 1915, where they were defeated by Turkey. This tradition, consciously developed to epitomize the heroism of egalitarian Australian individualism against all manner of hardship and suffering (frequently conceived as caused by the ineptitude of hierarchical management), was established as the 'true' birthing event of the new nation, rather than the day of Federation. The egalitarian ideology of Anzac, one which has gone through numerous elaborations since, celebrated a community of individuals who expressed a fundamental unity in nature undifferentiated by the artifice of 'culture' or the legacy of civilizations premised on unnatural hierarchical distinctions. The Anzacs—as their hagiographer, C. E. W. Bean, the inspiration behind the Anzac ceremonial center, the Australian War Memorial at Canberra, described—bore the heroic characteristics of those in the ancient cradles of civilization. In effect, they were constructed as manifestations of ancient ideals, 'new men' who reinvented what later civilizations had debased (see Kapferer 1988). The society that they represented was a society of equals who possessed as inner qualities the capacity to govern themselves. Thus, the need for hierarchical orders of power and control was made redundant.

Anzac Day, the annual event honoring Australia's servicemen and women, and arguably, still the most important national event (even more than Australia Day, marking the arrival of the First Fleet, which is growing in popularity), takes the form of a symbolic suspension of state authority. An interpretation of the practices associated with the Anzac rites on the day is that ordinary citizens, the people, are given over to the formation of their social relations, independently of the authority and mediation of the state. The people are constituted as a community of individuals without internal distinction and bound by acts of mutual reciprocity and recognition of interpersonal equality (mateship). At the close of the rites, the state is reaffirmed and presented as emergent from the body of the people. The People/State opposition and tension which marks the dynamic of events in Anzac Day is, in many ways, a ritual working out of the Hobbesian State/Society dilemma at the heart of the modernist state. The autonomy of the People, it may be interpreted, is recognized by the State. The

potency of this autonomy is acknowledged by the agents of the State, even as it is yielded to the state in War as in Peace in the interest of social and political continuity. Much of Anzac Day is, of course, centered upon the gift (sacrifice) of the autonomy of the People to the State.

There is a clear Christian resonance in this obdurately secular ceremony. Seen by many as largely Protestant in ethos, it nonetheless carries themes that are present in all denominations which enables people of vastly different religious backgrounds to participate. The argument of sacrifice is potentially trans-religious, especially as it is clearly carried through in the contemporary discourse and rhetoric, in Australia and elsewhere, of citizenship and Human Rights.

The Anzac tradition has frequently been interpreted as an artifact of days gone by. Not only is it dismissed as a relic of Empire, masculinist and militarist, it has somehow survived such onslaughts, even gathering strength in the imagination of new generations who have not experienced war. There are now efforts to get Anzac Cove in Gallipoli listed as a World Heritage site. There are numerous reasons why Anzac seems to go from strength to strength as the prime nationalist occasion, not least being media attention and the preparedness of the organizers to adapt its practice to shifts in social attitude.

However, we consider that the egalitarian individualist logic of Anzac continues its relevance *because* of contemporary global processes and their particular local effects in Australia. In certain ways Anzac was already postmodern. Certain vital aspects of current realities—the structural shifts that have occurred because of globalization—discover an import in Anzac and impel its reinvention or reissuing.

Not only was Anzac nationalism a thoroughly modernist idealism (in which real class conflicts and other social differences were suppressed) born, of course, in the first industrial war, but it virtually denied its own historicity. The anti-historical feature of the Anzac ideology marks it out from other nationalism (which often revel in the falsity of their histories) and aggressively underpins its essentialism and universalism. It is this fact that enables it to have continuing force in what is an immigrant society. In certain respects, Anzac ideology enables the erasure of different histories and their amalgamation to the expression of a foundational individuality. Moreover, it is paradoxically relevant to current globalizing realities which may be characterized as intensifying biological and technological determinisms of modernist times. Anzac is pre-adapted, as it were, for a postmodern society with its strong emphasis on individual agency and self-discipline. The occasion of the event—after the parades are over, and frequently during them—manifests as loose and shifting gatherings (communities) of men (and now women) iconic in many ways with the porous and shifting boundaries of postmodern society. The 'communities' that spring up have no internal structures of authority but rather actively resist them, and are expressly antagonistic to those forms of society that are coherent and ordered and that deny individual autonomy. The practice of Anzac seeks to achieve a resolution of any potential contradiction between individual and community interest (see Kapferer 1988).

Anzac, although the most important practice of nationalist ideals, is accompanied by a growing number of other festivals which ritualize individualist value. Some of these considered by many to be more appropriate to modernity communicate the same ideals. Thus, major occasions of celebration in Australia, e.g., Australia Day and the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras (now advertised as among Australia's greatest tourist attractions) display similar egalitarian themes. Australia Day has recently received greater attention. This has some connection to recent patterns of immigration to Australia and the policy of multiculturalism. It is a state and corporate-sponsored instrument of national ideological incorporation. It concentrates around the eating of different ethnic cuisines celebrating differences that can be ingested in a demonstration of essential oneness. The Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras is, of course, presented as anti-masculinist, and opposed to prejudices based on gender difference which are conceived as being at the root of conventional social hierarchies (see Nicoll 2001). In a sense, it is also anti-society though in a different way from Anzac. As with Anzac, it celebrates individuality and expresses powerful ideals of self discipline and control (even as these are given a sexual value loading). In recent performances, the organizers have provided their own marshals who, in partnership with the police, maintain the order of spectators and participants. As well, sport, the national obsession, provides countless arenas for the observation of natural capacities, self discipline, and mutual camaraderie.

Hansonism and Neoliberalism: An Anti-Postmodern Postmodern Turn within Egalitarianism

The emergence of Hanson and One Nation gave expression to prejudices that to many contradicted the progressive developments in thought and practice in Australia. It seemed to air attitudes that those in middle class urban Australia had come to associate with the bush, and what were often characterized as the narrow 'red-neck' ideas of its poorer communities.[11] Hanson and her followers were seen to profess a racism (especially in views toward Aborigines and new immigrants, particularly from Asia) that many in Australia were attempting to distance themselves from. The Australia of the past dramatically demonstrated that it was still very much alive. Hansonism achieved a marked popularity in rural areas and towns, but also, even if more muted, in the cities. Hanson and One Nation was an embarrassment to those in Australia who saw the country as cosmopolitan, and at last rid of its colonial, Crocodile Dundee, backwater image.

However, Hansonism was, of course, one expression of popular resistance to changes being wrought within the country as a result of globalization. It was also an expression of possibilities of egalitarian individualist ideas and practices. This much was recognized by its opponents who associated it with what were regarded as the worst imperialist and racist views of 'old identity Australia'. These were the views of members of the Anglo-Celtic population who had not adapted to contemporary realities in which political and social power

was shared with communities who had few, if any, ties to the Empire of the past. While there is much evidence to indicate that this was indeed the case, the criticism of Hanson was often from within similar egalitarian individualist perspectives. Both the criticism of Hanson and the criticism she and her followers constantly announced, centered around the opinion that both sides, if in different ways, were fostering the growth of inequalities. Furthermore, as events were to demonstrate, those who may have opposed Hanson (even ridiculed her attitudes as did a figure who called himself Pauline Pantsdown who dressed in drag and dogged her political progress; see Nicoll 2001) began to support programs that she had initiated regarding Aborigines and refugees and certain immigrant groups. Many of Hanson's opinions were re-issued as neoliberal political, economic, and social policy, expressing similar lines of social and political exclusion and an apparent return to 'old values'.

If it was a return to past values, Hansonism, and the neoliberals (both of the left and the right) who overcame her, were produced in the structural conditions of the present. These conditions were manifested as a postmodern and postcolonial crisis that achieved especial significance through egalitarian individualist value.

What is most striking about the One Nation period (1996-1998) and after, is the intensity of nationalist egalitarian individualist discourse. This took various forms. But of particular dominance was the revitalization of the old egalitarian problematic, enshrined in Anzac, concerning the State/People relation. This expressed a consciousness of major changes in the order of the state and its social context.

Hanson took the position that the agents of the state, in coalition with old and new political and economic elites, were subjecting the ordinary population (the taxpayer) to illegitimate hardships that defied egalitarian ideals. In Hanson's view, it was a world of "fat cats, bureaucrats and do-gooders" who took advantage of ordinary tax payers who effectively lost their money to the support of "Aborigines, multiculturalists and a host of minority groups," their taxes as well funding the increase in the "power and position" of already dominant groups (Hanson 1996). The state was, in other words, breaking its Hobbesian contract with the people. Hanson and One Nation engaged a class rhetoric, barely concealed in Australian egalitarianism, to argue that the ideals of equality in Australia were being smashed by government policy. The paradox of Hanson's pleas—in the eyes of many—was that she often attacked those who were the clear sites of disadvantage whose evident socio-economic inequality had to be rectified. Hanson's class and populist rhetoric were brought to ridicule (her self-presentation as the owner of a fish and chip shop, a person who was simply educated and a single mother). This, in itself, ironically indicates the emergence of a language of class opposition and subjugation (let alone sexism), but now decentered from its location within a structure of class relations as a consequence of the atomization and fragmentation of class in a post-Fordist era. Paradoxically, however, the engagement of class rhetoric to the subversion of Hansonism indicates the persistence of the forces of class (though

taking new shape) behind the moral progressivism and egalitarianism of those who rejected Hansonism

If the language of class was engaged to subvert Hanson's inegalitarian egalitarian (and cross-class) appeal, a further irony was the engagement of her non-conformism as a method of degradation. Hanson was represented as an inappropriate non-conformist egalitarian, an individualist who was not egalitarian, that is, did not subordinate herself to the collective moral will, as well as manifesting a distinction from a communal uniformity. The ambiguities and contrary tensions germane within egalitarian thought and practice were exploited against her. Thus, the attack on One Nation often took the form that Hanson (and many of her followers) were not individuals in common with the majority of Australia. She was revealed as a divorcee who was on bad terms with her children, in contravention of 'ordinary' values. Moreover, she was an unconventional exception, separate from the crowd—a kind of inverted 'tall poppy', which is a term of abuse in egalitarian Australia against those who stand out and effectively subvert its egalitarian ideals.[12] We referred to Pauline Pantsdown who shadowed Hanson. The one revealed the unconventional, the bizarre, the excessive, the transgressive in the other. They were bonded in identity in their exceptionalism as extremists, breakers of the norms, rather than purveyors of accepted convention (see Nicoll 2001). Irony built upon irony, for the debates surrounding Hanson were the occasion, by Hanson and her opponents, for the emergence and invention of new values, even as they often seemed to repeat the old.

The more general point that the foregoing exemplifies is that the values of egalitarianism are capable of being pursued in a variety of often contradictory directions. The continual development of new import in its terms ensures the vitality of an egalitarian ethos, new meanings or re-evaluations being a potential of egalitarianism founded, as it is, on a dynamic of uneasy resolution and tension. Thus, while individuality is valued, it is potentially seen as subversive of the value of an undifferentiated essential sameness. Australian nationalist egalitarianism is able to take multiple directions, hence its routine political use as well as its risk, exploiting the tensions in its discursive orientations.

The historical context that gave rise to Hanson, and eventually the incorporation of many of her ideas in contemporary mainstream politics, was an era of liberalization (from the late sixties through to the present). This was spearheaded by the Australian Labor Party, which addressed a variety of internal social inequities. It instituted efforts to overcome social and economic disadvantage among Aborigines, and in its advocacy of a policy of multiculturalism, aimed to ensure improved rights and recognition for ethnic minorities.[13] Australia opened its doors to immigrants from Asia and the Middle East who had hitherto been restricted in entry. Similarly, it was the federal government under Labor that instituted a program of economic deregulation, consistent with the globalizing policies of the World Bank and the IMF.[14] These changes, of course, influenced an intensification of notions of individual agency and potency already explicit in egalitarianism, but it also subverted the collectivist

anti-difference (difference as the source of inequality) that is a vital value in Australian nationalism.

The momentary One Nation phenomenon, and the more enduring neonationalist developments that have followed in its wake, are in large measure, a reaction to and an effort both to restore long-term hegemonies and to reposition the upwardly mobile in the changing hierarchies of power and society. Egalitarian nationalism has discovered new impetus in the largely state-mediated changes.

Hanson was one expression of critical shifts in the social order, and a perceived threat to Anglo-Celtic dominance in whose interests an egalitarian nationalism had largely worked, as it still does. But we stress that, more than an expression (a reflection of what in fact was at base), it was more a construction motivated in egalitarian thought and practice that attached specific significance to ongoing processes.

There is strong evidence that, increasingly from the eighties, policies of deregulation had led to impoverishment in rural areas and small towns and growing migration from them to the cities.[15] Small business (of which Hanson and her followers were often representative), a powerful site of values of individual autonomy, was adversely affected as well as the communities with which small business was in mutual dependence. This was exacerbated by a decline of public services (transport, education, health) to rural areas and small towns.[16] That small business interests should take up the cudgels of egalitarianism was in itself relatively original. To some extent, the One Nation populism replaced what was once the more vocal egalitarianism of the laboring and lower middle classes (in the cities and the country) whose power had been reduced by the decline of industry and privatization of government corporations.[17] Many laid off from the manufacturing industry, and those in white collar jobs have themselves entered small business and have been encouraged to become franchise owners and stakeholders in public floated companies.[18] In a real sense, One Nation stood for struggling local small business against the large private, usually foreign conglomerates.[19] These latter were frequently rocked by corruption scandals provoked by greed in the apparent opportunities opened by deregulation, the break-up of government monopolies, etc. Although the egalitarian rhetoric of One Nation appeared to be a throwback to the past, the meaning of its discourse was thoroughly contemporary. The values of Anzac nationalism were given a definitely new twist.

There was some realization among politicians of the left and the right that One Nation was speaking to new fracture and accompanying distress among large sections of the population. We think this is reflected in the way politicians sometimes hedged their bets in elections giving their voting preferences to One Nation. It is our opinion that the leader of the ruling Liberal Party, John Howard, felt the pulse correctly. He initially wavered in his condemnation of the outright racist aspects of Hanson's appeal. Although he and his party members eventually rounded on One Nation and participated in its destruction, it was destruction more by incorporation than anything else. Despite protests

from some in his own party, Prime Minister Howard refused to officially support the movement for Aboriginal Reconciliation mainly promoted by indigenous groups and the educated members of the urban middle class.[20] This is, at the least, in tacit agreement with the Hanson message. As with Hanson, he refuses to acknowledge the responsibility of his generation of white Australians for the destructions and dispossessions suffered by Aborigines in the past. It is Howard's government that has brought in new controls over immigration. and which has effectively closed Australia's borders to refugees, establishing harsh camps for illegal immigrants declared by the United Nations as infringing human rights.[21] These policies are widely believed to have won him majorities in successive elections, despite public corporate scandals and what some see as the introduction of a complicated and punitive goods and services tax. This last point indicates that if economic concerns are causes of the final instance, they are not necessarily first causes. These, in the context of Australia at least, have much to do with the ideas through which the significance of reality is constructed, and on to which responsibility for difficulty and hardship is often too easily deflected.

The One Nation phenomenon is of considerable interest because it triggered a revitalization of an Australian nationalist egalitarianism. We have argued that, if it continued old ideas, it gave them novel valence and direction. This has persisted and been elaborated in the neoliberalism of Howard and his government. Howard himself has transformed from an earlier image of the careful accountant (during years of opposition to Labor) into a figure somewhere between the Australian sports fanatic and the swaggering, broad-brimmed hat wearing hero, of Australian folk caricature, and bush legend.

There is one feature of the new nationalist intensity that demands closer consideration and this relates to the singling out of Aborigines, and new immigrants (usually of Asian and Middle Eastern background), as well as refugees, as objects against which to assert Australian egalitarian difference and value. Undoubtedly, it is an aspect of what Sartre (1962) recognized long ago, the assertion of identity through an act of constructing and then negating an Other. The ideologic of egalitarian thought and practice in the past and in the present is also relevant, as we have discussed. Thus, implicit in egalitarianism is that the ideals of egalitarian unity are most likely to be achieved where there are similarities in essence, for example, in cultural orientations and practice, than where there are marked differences. It was such an egalitarian argument that the well-known Australian historian, Geoffrey Blainey, used to vehemently criticize the multicultural policies of the 1980s in which a large number of immigrants from Southeast Asia settled in Australia's cities. Blainey claimed their cultural differences would inhibit the formation of a coherent and harmonious Australian nation founded in the moral ideals of egalitarianism (see Kapferer 1988). His argument continued notions integral to the earlier White Australia policy, and has been reissued in the moral outrage of majority Australians against populations that appear in their customs to flout egalitarian value. Certainly, policies of major government funding to Aboriginal organizations and land rights legisla-

tion, as well as for multiculturalism and encouragement of ethnic minority rights, created a sense among the 'silent' and hitherto non-ethnically marked majority population that they were the victims of inegalitarian programs.

Other factors, extending on earlier argument, are worth consideration. Hansonism realized an inherent contradiction at the heart of Australian nationalism, that its egalitarianism underpinned the social and political domination of the majority population. As we have said, the origins of Australian egalitarian ideologies were in an Anglo-Celtic population that assumed the superiority of its values. This assumption was problematized in the circumstances both of the new Aboriginal policies (especially after the Mabo and Wik High Court decisions that overruled the doctrine of *terra nullius* that dispossessed Aborigines), and in the context of multiculturalism and increased immigration from Asia. The One Nation attack on these policies was a thoroughgoing reassertion of cultural orientations that were felt to be relatively and illegitimately reduced. In fact, we suggest, government policies were integral to the formation of a cultural self-awareness, of a cultural identity, that had not been so clearly formulated before.

In a sense, the Anzac ideology of the pre-Hanson years was not merely, as we have said, anti-society; it was anti-cultural. Its cult of natural equality valued an essential unity in humanity that was in fact threatened by cultural and social difference conceived to be unnatural. The events and developments surrounding One Nation constituted a shift in egalitarian thought and practice that recognized it as, through and through, the cultural field possessed by the majority population who now consciously defined themselves as Anglo-Celtic in relation to an Australian context explicitly presented as multicultural.

The foregoing is strengthened in the context of other changes we have outlined. The collapse of small rural populations, the increased rural migration to the cities, the fragmentation and dispersal of working populations centered on localized industry, and so on, created forms of social alienation that were counteracted through an intensified commitment to idealized values that buttressed a sense of community, albeit an imagined community of mutual interest and belonging.

Benedict Anderson (in criticism of Ernest Gellner [1964]) makes the observation that it is not the fact that communities are imagined that is the critical feature of contemporary discourse on national identity, but rather *the style of this imagination* (1983: 15). It is our agreement with this position that underlies our concern with egalitarian individualist ideology in its Australian formations and redirections. But we also stress the imagination of community—especially among the dominant Anglo-Celtic population—in the sense of a community that perhaps only exists as an imaginary, an imaginary constituted at an abstract level above the more grounded contexts of social interaction. The attempt to make concrete at a lived everyday social level what is, in effect, a decontextualized abstract imaginary of Australian identity is, we consider, a feature of contemporary practice. This sometimes takes on a strongly ritualistic character. For example, as a superficial observation, what some might see as a fetishism of mateship. Ordinary conversation whether presented in the media or in

activity on the street is replete with assertions that the discourse is between mates (regardless of gender differences) or, in other words, the conversation is possible because the parties to it are already constituted in a community or society of mates.

The relatively recent heightening of a fetishism of community and identity (among Anglo-Celts) has been encouraged in changes to policies in immigration, and to developments in an ethos of multiculturalism (especially under Labor), particularly through the 1980s and 1990s. Immigrant populations, especially early in their experience, tend to be relatively coherent and mutually supportive. It is a well-recorded strategy of immigrant settlement worldwide. They often tend to closure and not merely because of the prejudice and rejection of host populations. While such communities project an imagination of community coherence as culturally and socially conceived, this is by no means ungrounded. The formation of these communities, both through rejection and as a conscious settlement strategy (so much so that social communities were formed that also recognized a high degree of cultural boundedness), stimulated a recognition among Anglo-Celts of their own lack (an absence of experienced social and cultural coherence), and perhaps a consciousness of crisis—a crisis of community—further exacerbated in the retraction of state services, privatization, and economic liberalization. Government programs of support, both exacerbated processes of increased cultural self-awareness among majority Australians, and impelled further processes to cultural closure at a relatively socially alienated imaginary level which impelled popular support for greater controls on immigration. We add, that the popular support for tighter immigration controls (and especially directed to peoples from Asia and the Middle East) was (is) a rhetoric integral to a constitutive dynamics of cultural closure. This is so not only for Anglo-Celts but, we suggest, was also a process vital in the reshoring of communal boundaries among more recent post–World War II immigrant groups who otherwise had little reason to share sentiments in common with Anglo-Celts. A feature of anti-refugee discourse is that it is supported by Anglo-Celts and those from more recently established communities.

The cultural turn among majority Australians was one influence, we consider, for the displacement of difficulties driven in global political and economic transformations on to populations whose existence was conceived to subvert or threaten the social, moral, and now consciously reaffirmed cultural hegemony of majority Australians.

Conclusion

The recent directions in Australian nationalist and political expression have been couched in terms often referred to as a return to the right, or more accurately, practices that manifest essentialist and exclusionist ideas, frequently described as racist. The Hanson phenomenon appears to be similar to movements that have occurred in Europe marked by the populist successes of

Haider in Austria, of Le Pen's outrageous entry into the second round of the French presidential elections, and until his assassination, of Pym Fortuyn in the Netherlands. In the Australian context, Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party, for a brief moment, seemed to crystallize similar forces. Hanson and her followers had limited electoral success through a rhetoric that stressed the 'basic values' of lower and middle income urban and rural communities. The appeal was to those presumed to be white and of British background, or in more recent postcolonial conceptions, of Anglo-Celtic stock. The latter present-day ethnic conception asserts an homogeneity of interest that in the colonial and immediate postcolonial periods were refused in enmities of often bitter class, religious, and national/political kinds. Hanson and her One Nation Party were antagonistic to Asian immigration, an open policy toward refugees, multiculturalism, and to government programs that were aimed to positively discriminate in favor of Aborigines, and in particular, Aboriginal land rights.

The broad similarities linking Australia with other nations undoubtedly relate to political and economic processes produced by globalization, and the consequent crises it has produced in the political order of the state. What is evident to us in One Nation Party's demands to return to protectionist policies of the past, is the appeal to those who have been the major casualties of rapid economic change. Indeed, there is an admixture of century old protectionist policies, in both One Nation policies and the rising political tide of neoliberalism and neoconservatism that has overtaken Australia. Whether it be the response of 'Fortress Australia', the Howard government's remedy to refugees coming to Australian shores, or the demands of One Nation to 'wind the clock back' and protect the community from international competition, the demand to protect Australia from foreign threats, be they refugees or cheap imported goods, is a consistent one in Australian nationalism. Yet, Hansonism says as much about the uneasy marriage between neoliberalism and neoconservatism in the Australian nationalist context. The crisis of the political order of the Australian state can be equated with the breakdown of pre-existing political and economic arrangements, but in acknowledging this, we should not underestimate its contested and contradictory character.

The deregulation advocated by the Howard government has now, more than ever, forced the government to intensify egalitarian appeals, expanding the sense of inner contradictions. The Prime Minister has personally intervened, and supported attacks on multiculturalism and the so-called "Black Armband" history which had sought to restore indigenous struggles against the processes of colonization as part of Australian history, as divisive examples of political correctness. Ironically, attempts to separate the more controversial racist policies of One Nation from the impact of neoliberal policies and economic deregulation ignore the deep historical roots of Hanson's appeal for more protectionist policies and a more interventionist government. We have contended that they are very much in keeping with an egalitarian ethos and logic that historically have been at the center of Australian nationalism and remain so.

Yet, it is perhaps the structural changes and the ideological revisions of Anglo-Celtic Australia, the decline and the discrediting of the Anglo-Celtic narratives of nation building, that do much to explain Hansonism's contemporary relevance and the broader success of neoconservative policy. Indeed, much of the attack by Hanson and Blainey on immigration and multiculturalism is directed at the ascendancy of "white cosmopolites" (Hage 1998) to government, who implement policies accused of being unrepresentative of the people. For Howard and the neoliberal/conservative right, it is the progress and direction of social and historical research, performed by a new class of "intellectual elite" (Dixon 2000), that poses the direct threat to national identity and ideologically sustains the rejection and cut-backs in previous multicultural and indigenous policy. In addition, the new immigrant groups coming in under the conditions of state deregulation have been highly competitive and successful. The formation of relatively stable and well integrated immigrant communities, real or imagined, based on ethnic or religious ties, stand against the fragmentation of the dominant population. This is no more dramatically represented than in the accelerated break-up of rural communities, and the massive drift to the cities in the latter decades of the twentieth century. Hansonism's appeal found resonance with those at the lower end of the socio-economic ladder, that is, those most directly affected by restructuring processes, and particularly, those in the more socially and economically peripheral rural areas. It emerged as a reaction to the set of historical forces that threatened the ideological terms of Anglo-Celtic dominance.

Hanson and One Nation were phenomena in large part generated in the crisis of the Australian society of the state. The public discourse that they provoked revealed many of the contradictions at the center of Australian egalitarianism. It demonstrated both the continuing relevance of egalitarian thought and practice and its redirection in the changing social and political complexities of contemporary postcolonial Australia. We have stressed some of the distinctive aspects of Australian egalitarianism but acknowledge its affinity with modernists-becoming-postmodern discourses elsewhere. Refractively, the Hanson event may throw some light on the paradoxes contained generally in postmodern discourses of egalitarianism and their capacity to be agents in the production of human distress as well as its overcoming.

Afterword

On 20 August 2003, Pauline Hanson was sentenced to a three-year jail term for the fraudulent registration of the One Nation party in Queensland. Ironically, it initially appeared that she was convicted on the kinds of dishonest grounds of which she and her followers had criticized the major parties. To many she had received her just deserts as she is imprisoned in an institution where many of the inmates are from the very communities (Asian and Aborigine) against whom Hanson and One Nation expressed an egalitarian antagonism. However,

as we write this, other ironies are building. Just when the Hanson phenomenon had appeared to have died out, her imprisonment has rekindled and appears to exemplify some of the very issues that she addressed. Hanson is being presented more and more as a victim of the very forces that she questioned and which she claimed silenced the popular interest, that of the typical Australian 'battler' whom she symbolized and represented. Among many it manifests the excessive force of the state and the inequities of the justice system (i.e., the appropriateness of sentence to crimes committed). In the debate surrounding her imprisonment, Hanson is being created as a symbolic type of the contradictions that lie at the heart of the Australian society of the state that we have discussed. As a symbolic type, she began to unify opinion in Australia, which, in her earlier manifestation, she had otherwise divided. Interestingly, the racism that always drew the opposition of major sections of the population has taken backstage, and Hanson is being reinvented as a symbolic catalyst for other ideologically driven concerns that fuel discourse in Australia.

Hanson's imprisonment appears as a disciplinary act consistent with our understanding of Australia as a society of the state. As we have argued, Hanson was a transgressive extreme, and the significance of her current disciplining draws attention to this fact. The debate surrounding the event accentuated the authoritarian and disciplinary aspects of social institutional life in Australia toward which there is considerable popular ambivalence. This ambivalence is vital in egalitarian discourse as the folklore of the Anzac legend demonstrates. Many see Hanson's sentence as excessive and inappropriate to what appears to be a breach of a bureaucratic electoral technicality, the infringement of a rule that had only recently been introduced to regulate a practice that had been flexible and open to abuse. In popular common sense terms, Hanson's sentence did not fit the crime.

Hanson's conviction was presented as the result of behind-the-scenes manipulation of dominant and secretive political and economic forces. Her apparent victimization contradicted the moral legitimacy of a government that claimed to protect the egalitarian interests of the people. What is being alleged is that Hanson was criminally charged after a sustained covert action by key henchmen and wealthy supporters of John Howard's ruling coalition to undermine One Nation. It is alleged that these supporters bankrolled a disaffected One Nation member in his personal legal vendetta against Hanson and One Nation who had dismissed him from the party. The action is being interpreted as cynical and naked political self-interest, born of no ethical or moral concern. Members of political and economic elites, it is implied, have engineered action behind the scenes in a scheme that took advantage of Hanson's political naiveté—the force of hierarchical power over and against the egalitarian individual innocent.

One argument for the severity of Hanson's sentence (Howard, in populist mood, has also indicated that it is severe), and expressed in the court judgement, was that Hanson's fraudulent registration threatened the democratic process. One Nation claimed to be a party when it did not have the appropriate registered members. Acting despite the electoral regulation, it attracted a

popular vote that severely threatened the major and registered parties. It was to protect ruling political and economic interests, even against the common will (One Nation received extraordinary electoral support), that is being put forward as the motivation behind Hanson's legal pursuit and its cloak-and-dagger aspect. What is being suggested is that by taking secret action against Hanson, Howard was able to avoid public disavowal of Hanson's policies. The coalition could quietly destroy One Nation while appropriating its political and populist orientation.

Moreover, it is alleged that the covert action against One Nation was taken with Prime Minister Howard's knowledge, which he initially denied. Commentators recognize Howard's political genius to be located in his adept capacity for denial that the public generally accept. This politics of denial (one that matches Hanson's in its profession of innocence) has been routinely engaged by him to declare that he has always acted in moral good faith; that he did not know that he was making policy decisions on the basis of what appears to have been blatantly false information regarding major national issues, such as refugees (the Tampa incident and children overboard), the war in Iraq, or corporate behavior. The Hanson event is playing a part in the subversion of key aspects of Howard's politics of denial, revealing him and key party members in action of a morally dubious nature. Parallels are being drawn between the covert actions of Coalition parliamentarians and Watergate.

Ironically, Hanson's imprisonment rebounded, initially at least, as reflecting the immorality of the state and its senior political agents. An egalitarian public consciousness is being excited, fueling opinion that Hanson is a victim of inegalitarian class power. Paradoxical as it may seem, the tragic irony of Hanson's downward path repeats, albeit in distinctive vein, the 'Such Is Life' pathos that surrounds other Australian egalitarian heroes. There is a sense of relief in some elite and intellectual circles that Hanson's imprisonment might end the career of a person who was a deep international embarrassment to the attempt of Australians to present a postmodern liberal and non-racist image. But, as this event demonstrates, future social trajectories are never certain. Hanson's growth in symbolic status may be a contributory factor in the sustaining of those populist orientations that many find abhorrent and reactionary, the paradox that lies at the heart of the egalitarian individual logic of practice that we have examined.

NOTES

1. In June 1998, Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party reached the peak of its electoral power, winning 23 percent of the vote from the major parties and ten seats in the Queensland State election. At the next Federal election in October that year, however, the party began its rapid electoral decline. Pauline Hanson lost her seat and the party won only one senate seat in the Federal Parliament. The party's electoral appeal was in irreversible decline.

2. The Whitlam (1972–1975) period ended twenty-five years of opposition for the Labor Party and ushered in a major policy reform program. In its short time in office, the Whitlam government ended Australia's military involvement in Vietnam, introduced a major reduction in tariff protection policy, and presented a broad range of social welfare measures, spanning universal health insurance, land rights legislation, multiculturalism, and introducing the family court. It should also be noted, as Beilarz has commented, that the Whitlam period marked a "a significant ideological turn in the development of the Australian Labor Party—away from laborism" (1994: 87). Whitlam, from a privileged private school background himself, made the Labor Party more acceptable to middle class voters, and to the younger generation weaned on the social protest and change of the 1960s.

3. The Queensland Premier referred to the High Court as "a pack of historical dills" (cited in McKenna (1997: 8). The historian, Geoffrey Blainey, attacked the Keating Government for implementing a "black armband ideology" in having the Native Title Bill "bulldozed through Federal Parliament" and characterized the High Court as the "black armband tribunal" (*Bulletin* 1997: 21–23; cited McKenna 1997: 10). The "black armband" view of history is applied by conservative politicians, public commentators, and historians to a particular "strand of political correctness" which is seen to "belittle past (white) achievements" and encourage a "guilt industry" in relation to past injustices to indigenous Australians.

4. In August 2002, the Howard government announced that it would refuse to sign the protocol on the convention on the elimination of discrimination against women; it would refuse to appear at some of the UN human rights committee hearings and would ban most visits to Australia by UN human rights monitoring teams (*Sydney Morning Herald* 30 August 2002). The reports of the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Human Rights Committee, in March and April respectively, had raised serious concerns about human rights breaches, and was expecting similar adverse findings in the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights report to be presented in September (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 August 2002).

5. The term 'the bush' did not describe a pristine wilderness, but a semi-rural space carved out for pastoralism and, to a lesser extent, agriculture.

6. Words such as 'station', 'muster', and 'superintendent' were part of the vocabulary of the convict system, and were subsequently used throughout the pastoral industry (Fromkin, Blair, and Collins 1999: 405).

7. The transportation of convicts to Australia began and ended at different times in different colonies: New South Wales 1788–1850; Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) 1804–1853; Western Australia 1850–1868; no convicts were sent to South Australia.

8. Hage (1998) argues aspects of this point. But a serious failure in his analysis concerns his neglect of the historical factors engaged in the construction of the Australian situation, both its egalitarian ideas and the structure of instituted often state-mediated practices (see Kapferer 2000). The argument concentrates on attitudes often seriously alienated from their social base. A major gap in his argument concerns serious reference to the White Australia Policy (it was vital in Labor Party policy until the Whitlam years of the late 1960s and early 1970s).

9. For Hancock, this egalitarian ethos was not incompatible with the White Australia Policy, but an "indispensable condition of every other Australian policy" (1961: 59). The functioning of the egalitarian state required the minimization of racial and cultural difference. Hancock cites Alfred Deakin, who became Australia's second Prime Minister, and was given the responsibility for drafting the foundational legislation of the new Australian Commonwealth. As Deakin stated: "[T]he unity of Australia means nothing if it does not imply a united race … [where] its members can intermarry and associate without degradation on either side, but implies … a people possessing the same general cast of character, tone of thought, the same constitutional training and traditions" (1961: 61).

10. Robert Hughes suggests that Kelly's last three words, "Such is life," capture the sto-
icism and fatality that is "the shrug that echoes through the nation's history" (cited in
Adams 1992).
11. The bitter rejection of these urban characterizations of regional Australia has been given
eloquent expression in the poetry of Australia's leading poet, Les Murray, in *Subhuman
Redneck Poems* (1996) and the work of historian, Miriam Dixon, *The Imaginary Aus-
tralian* (2000).
12. The term 'tall poppy' was originally used by Premier Lang of the state of New South
Wales in the period between the two world wars to refer to the wealthy who were
instrumental in depriving ordinary people of their way of life. Hanson engaged, in fact,
tall poppy rhetoric, but in the original sense of such rhetoric, by attacking the disadvan-
taged. Hanson was, indeed, herself a tall poppy. Interestingly, within a new cultural cli-
mate of individualism, the idea of the tall poppy is being revalued. Rather than being
abused, the tall poppy is to be admired as an exemplar of individualist ambition.
13. Multiculturalism was officially adopted as policy by the Federal Labor Government in 1973.
14. Between 1983 and 1985, the Federal Government introduced the deregulation of Aus-
tralia's financial institutions, "floating the Australian, removing capital controls, allowing
entry to foreign banks" (Daly and Pritchard 2000: 174). The dramatic push for privati-
zation and corporatization at State and Federal levels occurred from the late 1980s, gath-
ering pace throughout the 1990s (see O'Connor, Stimson, and Daly 2001).
15. The 1980s was the major period of rural protest with regional, state, and national protests,
which culminated in a major demonstration of an estimated forty thousand rural produc-
ers who assembled at Parliament House, Canberra, in 1985 (Lawrence 1987: 12). Farmer
militancy also reached its high point in the same year, as farmers rallied in response to
banks foreclosing on bankrupt farms (Lawrence 1987: 1). In the previous fifteen years,
the Bureau of Agricultural Economics estimated that nineteen thousand farmers had left
agriculture; the farm workforce declined by thirty-two thousand and the total rural work-
force by 100 thousand (Lawrence 1987: 13).
16. Thirty-three of the thirty-seven poorest electorates in Australia are now located in rural
regions, and "the general health of rural people is, by urban standards, very poor …
[with] above average rates of premature mortality and death through heart disease, can-
cer, suicide, and tuberculosis" (Lawrence 1996: 335).
17. Goot's (1998) survey of One Nation party support, based on the evidence of the demo-
graphic profiles of opinion polls, suggests there is both a rural and urban constituency
based primarily on male, low-educated, blue-collar workers.
18. The fragmentation and realignments of labor need a more detailed discussion than we
can give here. In metropolitan Sydney, for example, higher unemployment rates ensued
from de-industrialization, particularly for low skilled or unskilled workers. In a decade,
manufacturing declined from 20 percent to 15 percent of GDP (BIE 1994: 30). One-fourth
of the entire manufacturing sector workforce or, in real terms, 123,000 jobs disappeared
from the low-skilled or unskilled sector (BIE 1994: 30). This work has been replaced by
casual and temporary work in the retail and hospitality industries, and through the pur-
chasing of small businesses or franchises ranging from lawn-mowing services to the cut-
price delicatessen.
19. The pressure on small rural communities/small business is evident in the research car-
ried out in two rural seats (Barwon and Dubbo), where One Nation gained the highest
primary vote in New South Wales (Howard 2001). The research revealed major concerns
with economic rationalization, that is, reductions to tariff protection and increased com-
petition with imported rural produce, service cuts to rail and roads, banks and health ser-
vices, and the decline of small businesses as the population drifted to major regional
centers (Howard 2001).
20. Howard has re-iterated this point on many occasions since he has been in government.
Howard's position has been consistent in his response to what has been termed the

"black armband history," the government commissioned responses to the *Stolen Generations* and the debate over the High Court's *Wik* decision on native title rights. Howard's confrontation with delegates at the Reconciliation Convention in Melbourne in 1997 was symptomatic of his opposition. As delegates stood up and turned their backs on him as he spoke, he stated that he was unwilling to accept that Australian history was "little more than a disgraceful record of imperialism, exploitation and racism," and hence that contemporary Australians should not be held responsible for the sins of past generations (McKenna 1997: 10).

21. Although the Howard government made it a major political issue, the policy for creating detention centers came from the Keating Government.

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