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‘New migration’ in the 1990s: a retrospective

Chris Wickham-Jones

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1. Introduction

The restructuring of the economies of the developed countries of the West, the break up of the former Soviet Union, and the resurgence of nationalism in the Balkans and elsewhere was seen by many commentators in the early and mid 1990s as ushering in a 'new age' of migration. The changing geography of migration flows, the increasing diversity and complexity of those flows and the emergence of new migratory processes, were considered to amount to a new phenomenon, which could be considered as quite separate and distinct from what had gone before. This 'new age' of migration was seen to pose fresh challenges to nation states, requiring them to develop new response strategies and to revisit their approaches to issues of multiculturalism and plurality.

The concept of something distinctly new and different occurring within the field of migration is the over-arching theme of a number of influential publications during the 1990s including King (1993), Wrench and Solomos (1993), Gould and Findlay (1994), Richmond (1995) Weiner (1995) and Koser and Lutz (1998).

Castles encapsulates this idea of the beginning of a new, different, era of migration in his 1993 paper entitled 'Migrations and Minorities in Europe. Perspectives for the 1990s: Eleven Hypotheses', which was first published in the Wrench and Solomos book referenced above, and re-printed in his later work 'Ethnicity and Globalization' (2000). Castles sets out his own analysis of the reasons why a 'new age of migration' has come about (within the first set of five hypotheses) and goes on to describe how, in his view, these changes play through into issues of ethnic diversity, national identity and citizenship (the second set of six hypotheses). The overall thrust of his position appears to be that the world has, for various reasons, entered into a new phase of mass migrations and that, as a consequence of this phenomenon, it has become necessary for nation states to revisit and reformulate previously held concepts of ethnic diversity, national identity and citizenship.

This paper examines that posited causal relationship, using the benefit of nearly ten years of hindsight, and will seek to demonstrate that the salience of racism and the current discourses around citizenship and multiculturalism do not so much arise from step changes in the patterns and processes of migration as from other socio-economic and socio-political factors in Western society. It will address the question of whether the 1990s did, in reality, mark the beginning of a 'new age of migration' or whether, in global terms

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and the recent break up of the Soviet Union was causing fears among Western European states of a flood of immigration from former Soviet bloc countries (Carter et.al. 1993). The countries of Southern Europe, traditionally countries of emigration, were becoming for the first time in their history countries of net immigration (King et.al. 1997). Northern European states, led by Germany, were beginning to introduce tougher immigration laws in an attempt to reduce what were perceived as dangerously escalating numbers of refugees and asylum seekers. The year 1993 also marked the founding of the International Centre for Migration Policy and Development, which saw its role as 'Advising Governments on the prevention of migratory movements from East to West and South to North.' At the same time Western Europe was beginning to experience changes in the geography of migration as human smugglers and traffickers sought new migration routes and techniques to circumvent harsher and more sophisticated state controls over asylum and immigration (Koser 1997).

Against this backdrop, Castles sets out his first five hypotheses, which deal with the changes in global migration movements (see Box 1 in Appendix 1). His second set of six hypotheses address the responses of nation states to this 'new migration' and the issues that are raised in respect of concepts of citizenship, multiculturalism and the salience of racism (see Box 2 in Appendix 2).

These hypotheses give rise to a range of theoretical and conceptual questions, some of which would need to be the subject of further research, others of which can be critically examined within the context of existing research and in the light of events and trends since 1993.

The main thrust of Castle's position however appears to be the posited existence of a causal link between what is happening in respect of global migration processes and the various discourses around racism, ethnicity and citizenship taking place within Western Europe. He describes a series of such issues within the UK and Western Europe that he portrays as becoming elevated in significance as a

result of the changes in migration patterns, processes and volume.

This paper sets out to challenge that position, contending that what has been depicted as a 'new age of migration' is simply an evolutionary continuation of processes that had their genesis decades earlier. It will seek to show that the current discourses around citizenship, multiculturalism and the salience of racism, do not derive from recent changes in migration patterns, processes or volumes but rather from other, more deeply rooted, socio-economic and socio-political issues in Western society.

In order to frame this analysis it is proposed to examine two sets of questions that arise out of Castles' hypotheses. The first set is concerned with the patterns, processes, types and volumes of migration, and it explores, firstly, whether there can truly be said to be a 'new age of migration' which commenced in the 1990s (questions 1-3) and whether the response of nation states is likely to lead to the emergence of further new patterns (question 4).

The second set (questions 5-8) looks at the premised links between the 'new' migration and current discourses around citizenship, ethnicity, plurality and the salience of racism, with particular reference to the situation in the UK.

The first set of questions to be addressed is:

1. Is the 'new age of migration' an essentially European phenomenon or are there indications of a major shift in global migration patterns, processes, types and volume?
2. Are previous distinctions between types of migration becoming meaningless because of a new breaking down of the boundaries between different migration categories, or is it that pre-existing complexities of migration processes and flows are now better understood?
3. Can growing disparities between the countries of the south and the north (and east and west) truly be said to result, as Castles suggests, in a greater potential for future mass movement,

having regard to the impact of development on mobility?

4. What will be the effect of nation state political responses to immigration and asylum issues on the future patterns, processes, types and volume of migration?

- and the second set -

5. Do the processes of social, economic and political change described by Castles in 1993 as producing an increased salience of racism remain the main causal factors in 2002?
6. Is the current discourse on multiculturalism and national identity driven by the presence of 'new' minorities within communities or by the continuing development of processes, structures and systems that address the need for social inclusion of longer established minority groups?
7. To what extent have the 'potential contradictions in anti-racist positions' been examined over the past decade and are current political agendas contributing to the creation of 'democratic, multicultural societies'.
8. Is there a need for further research that seeks to examine issues of ethnicity, national identity and citizenship in relation to new migration flows?

It is not suggested that these are the only questions that arise from Castles' paper but they have been selected in order to examine the overarching issue of whether there are demonstrable links between changes in migration flows, patterns, processes and types, and the issues of citizenship, ethnicity and racism as Castles' paper would appear to suggest. Initially these questions will be considered individually as self-contained lines of inquiry but will be drawn together in the conclusions, both to address the overarching theme and to seek to formulate new propositions for the first decade of 2000 that build upon and develop Castles' work.

3. Global migration in the 1990s

Was the 'new age of migration' an essentially European phenomenon?

The only certainty in the field of migration studies, as with most other areas of life, is the certainty of change. Since records were first kept migration flows have grown and diminished, changed qualitatively and quantitatively, created new patterns and geographies, and altered the societies of both sending and receiving countries. Some changes have been precipitous and momentous, for example where war has resulted in a mass exodus; others have developed over a long period, for example through pioneers and followers.

During the latter part of the 20th century the world saw a growth, but hardly a

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in the patterns, geography, types, processes and effects of migration and to what is perceived as an increased complexity in all of these elements. But are these new complexities an essentially European phenomenon or symptomatic of trends within other worldwide

The USA and Canada

Traditionally, the USA and Canada have been the main countries of immigration, California alone taking more permanent immigrants than any nation, apart of course from the USA itself (Massey et. al. 1998:62). Massey records that in 1990 there were 19.8 million foreign born residents within the USA representing 8% of the total population and 4.2 million foreign born residents in Canada, representing 16% of the population. Since 1990 immigration to the USA has proceeded at the rate of around 860,000 per year (IOM 2000:242) and to Canada at the rate of around 225,000 per year (IOM 2000: 236). This represents an upsurge of immigration to both countries since the mid 1960s (Massey et. al. 1998:62). A feature of immigration to North America is its diversity and Massey notes that 'virtually every country in the world sends at least some immigrants to Canada, the USA or both.'

The main discernible trend in terms of the geography of migration to North America is the increase in immigration from Asia. Massey notes that in the USA and Canada Asian migration arose from virtually nothing in the mid-1960s to become a pre-eminent source by the 1980s representing 47% of all Canadian immigrants and 37% of those to the USA. This trend continued through the 1990s, the main sources of immigration to the USA in 1998 being Mexico, Mainland China, India, the Philippines and the Dominican Republic (IOM 2000:243). In Canada the main sources were China, India, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the Philippines, with immigration from Asia representing more than half of the total.

The growth of Asian immigration to North America, and the decline in immigration from Europe is not a new phenomenon but

Asia and the Pacific

This is the newest and fastest growing of all the established global migration

programmes that would buy foreign labour without resultant long-term immigration, the closed non-democratic social and political structures of their societies, enabled them to be more successful in maintaining strict control over their 'guest workers' and preventing long term settlement. Policies are now in place in all six countries to maintain or increase birth rates and so reduce dependency on foreign labour (IOM 2000: 108).

The trend in the Gulf, which has emerged over the last thirty years, has been for labour migrants from South Asia to replace migrants from other countries of the Middle East. The Gulf War in 1991 accelerated this process of change (IOM 2000: 109). There has also been a diversification of Asian migration with particular growth in immigration from Indonesia, Korea, the Philippines and Thailand (Massey 1998: 136).

The region has also seen a growth in irregular migration although the Gulf States have shown themselves to be extremely effective in carrying out mass repatriations with over a million returned from 1996 – 1998 (IOM 2000: 113).

In summary the migration patterns within the Gulf over the past decade do not appear to display any noticeable divergence in kind from what had gone before, but are more a development of pre-existing patterns with some diversification and changes as a result of political events and state imposed controls.

Sub-Saharan Africa

If there is any region in the world where the migration system could be said to be going through fundamental change it is Sub-Saharan Africa, which displays complex and shifting migration patterns arising from wars and civil strife, social and economic restructuring within individual countries and closer economic cooperation between groups of African states. The major host countries within the region are Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Botswana and South Africa and the main countries of origin Mali, Burkina Faso and Lesotho (IOM 2000: 134), and in numerical terms the overwhelming proportion of movements are

intra-regional. Where a distinction can be drawn from the South American system however is in the propensity for transcontinental emigrations to assume greater significance, as the traditional migration strategies such as temporary long-term circular migration prove inadequate to meet the economic needs of families. There is a paradox in that, whilst African states seek greater economic cooperation through sub-regional and regional associations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) the South African Development Community (SADC)

the traditional pattern of male migration in which wives and children remain at home, the growing extent and diversity of female migration is apparent within each of the other world migration systems. By 1995 about 48% of all international migrants were women, outnumbering male migrants in about a quarter of receiving countries (Zlotnik 1999).

The relatively recent emergence of female migration as a significant area of study in migration research can be attributed to two factors. The first can be seen as no more than a long overdue counterbalancing measure against the extent to which older studies and narratives were gender blind, either ignoring female migration altogether or portraying the process, implicitly or explicitly, as male-led and male-dominated (King 2002). More recently there has been a greater awareness of the diverse roles that women may play in the migration process (Castles 1998: 9).

The second factor is the growing ability for women to access labour markets, to function as principal wage-earners for themselves and their families (IOM 2000: 49) and to twoakatttdvt ae-ef thsoci n

A common thread that runs through each of the global migration systems is the tendency for all receiving countries to impose stricter and/or more selective immigration controls as a response to social, political or economic conditions within that particular country. This is inevitably accompanied, throughout the world, by

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leave unchanged, the propensity to migrate?

In order to address this question it is necessary to consider the types of disparity to which Castles refers, which he categorises as economic, social and demographic. These need to be examined in the context of the various theoretical positions adopted by migration scholars to seek explain why, in Faist's words, there are so few migrants out of most places and so many migrants out of a few places (Faist 2000: 1 - 8). A recent study by the United Nations Population Division (UN 1998) indicates that 90% of the world's migrants live in about a quarter of the world's countries. It has long been acknowledged that it is not the poorest countries of the world that give rise to the largest migration streams and more than half the world's migrant population remain within developing countries (IOM 2000: 6). Massey comments (Massey 1998: 277) that 'studies consistently show that international migrants do not come from poor, isolated places that are disconnected from world markets, but from regions and nations that are undergoing rapid change and development as a result of their incorporation into global trade, information and production networks'. This has consistency with Zelinsky's mobility transition model where an increase in the scale of migration follows the initial stages of transition from a pre-modern to a newly industrialising society (Zelinsky 1971: 219-249).

Within the standard push-pull model of migration growing demographic imbalances would result in an increased propensity for migration. A large population increase in the sending country provides an excess of labour supply that cannot be absorbed within the economy of that country and encourages migration to destination countries which are unable to meet their labour demands from within their native populations (e.g. Schaeffer 1993, Straubhaar 1993). This over simplistic explanation is inadequate however to explain why many countries with rapid population growth have low levels of emigration, whilst others with low rates produce high levels of emigration.

Similarly growing economic imbalances would, in simple push-pull terms, have a similar effect. As wage differentials increased between countries of origin and destination so increasing numbers of migrants would find that the benefits of migration outweighed the costs. Again

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by some process of transition within the sending country. This would seem to indicate that policies designed to stimulate development within potential sending countries, with the sole motivation of reducing the propensity for emigration, are unlikely to achieve the desired outcome, but are instead more likely to result in an increase in global movements.

What will be the effect of nation state political responses to immigration and asylum issues on the future geography of migration?

In recent years much of the political discourse around migration issues has been about ways of controlling or preventing immigration, and there is evidence from each of the global migration systems referenced above, that the governments of the receiving countries wish to maintain as close a control as possible over the question of who may or may not be admitted. Immigration control remains high on the agenda of the USA and Canada. The receiving countries of East Asia and South East Asia all operate exclusionary immigration policies and permit the importation of labour only to fill specific labour needs (IOM 2000: 74 and 102). Control over immigration remains to the forefront of government policies in Australia and New Zealand, and the countries of the Gulf continue to seek to prevent permanent settlement of imported workers, particularly in view of demographic changes which are increasing the indigenous labour force (IOM 2000: 128). In Sub-Saharan Africa host countries such as South Africa and Cote d'Ivoire are seeking to restrict immigration as a counter-measure to high unemployment among the indigenous population.21tggeno6 aeigenous

political co-operation, into economic groupings, such as the EU in Europe, ASEAN in South East Asia, COMESA, ECOWAS and NEPAD in Sub-Saharan Africa and MERCOSUR in South America, so the country of destination for migrants will become less important than the destination region. This is already apparent in Western Europe where irregular migration routes and destinations are seen to change according to the effectiveness or otherwise of the border controls maintained by individual countries (Morrison 1998: 41 – 47). There is evidence that irregular migrants who put themselves into the hands of smugglers and migrants lose control over both the route and the destination of their migration, finishing up in a country not of their choosing and isolated from family and social networks (Koser 2000).

One discernible trend that seems to be emerging is what might be called the 'commodification' of migration, paralleling the commodification of warfare described by Hobsbawm (2000: 7-13). In other words a function that appeared, at least during the first half of the 20th century, to fall clearly within the sphere of influence of the nation state has been progressively 'privatised' and transformed into a business venture with predominantly commercial, rather than political, imperatives. Cohen (1998: 355) refers to the 'lawyers, travel agents, employment bureaux and 'fixers' of all kinds' who provide services to those who wish to migrate and Salt and Stein (1997) have modelled migration as a business, with particular reference to issues of trafficking. This commodification of migration looks likely to increase within a number of specialised areas – particularly elite labour migration, retirement migration, student migration, smuggling and trafficking – further lessening the influence of the nation state which is now but one player in a panoply of global forces driving change.

Whilst it would be an unfeasible act of clairvoyance to draw up a cartographical map that predicts a future geography of migration there are some general conclusions that may be drawn from the foregoing. Firstly, the influence of the nation state over future migration flows is

likely to lessen both on account of the increasing forces of globalisation and the propensity for migration streams, once started, to perpetuate themselves (through family reunification, the establishment of transnational communities, the logistical difficulties of enforced return etc). Secondly, where the nation state seeks to impose controls that work against the various forces driving migration there is likely to be an increase in unauthorised or 'illegal' migration. Thirdly where unauthorised or 'illegal' migration takes place the destination region, rather than a specific destination country will assume greater importance as the would-be migrant, or her/his agent, seeks the line of least resistance for entry. These factors together are likely to produce an

the need to draw such distinctions, now seek increasingly to do so.

Regarding Castles' third and fourth hypotheses concerning increasing disparities between countries of the north and south (and east and west) the conclusions are that increasing disparities are not in themselves likely to lead to greater migration, although disparities between sending and receiving countries do appear to be a pre-condition for mass migration to occur. So far as the global restructuring of economies and labour markets is concerned, the conclusion is that forces of globalisation will become an increasing challenge to the primacy of the nation state and that where there is a conflict between the objectives of the nation state and the economic forces driving migration, this is likely to result in the growth of irregular or 'illegal' migration. This is clearly an issue that Castles recognised in 1993, although the exponential growth in the power base of transnational corporations and international business organisations during the last decade has possibly outstripped any predictions that might have been made at that time. As well as the growth in size and influence of individual transnational corporations - for example, of the 100 largest announcements of mergers in history, 84 were made in the years 1996 – 2000 (Draffan 2002) – there has been an increase in the influence of international trade associations, business lobby groups, think tanks and multilateral trade and development agencies (Ainger 2000). Groups such as the Transatlantic Business Dialogue, established in 1996, have added their collective muscle to longer established international business organisations such as the International Chamber of Commerce, the Business Roundtable and the World Economic Forum. No longer can individual nation states or international groupings of nation states such as the United Nations dominate the international political agenda, which is increasingly hi-jacked by the interests of international capitalism.

The next set of international

class structures of those economies. The conceptualisation of racism as a primarily economic, rather than cultural, issue is one which is also prevalent among other contemporary left-wing writers (e.g. Sivanandan 2001).

This paper does not seek to make any comparative evaluation of the various theoretical and conceptual explanations of racism but rather to examine some of its various manifestations as an empirical reality, pre-supposing some measure of agreement that such manifestations do indeed exist and are capable of being recognised as such.

Castles makes the point that racism as an empirical reality changes over time, with regard to its targets, its forms of expression and its intensity and this is concordant with Banton's warnings of the danger of 'presentism' in any conceptualisation of racism (Banton 1980). Just as, over the last twenty years or so the discourse has shifted from that of 'race relations' to concepts of 'ethnicity' that find their expression through multiculturalism, so

sections of those same communities disenfranchised and socially excluded. The inability or unwillingness of the state to tackle structurally-embedded forms of discrimination was highlighted in the response of anti-racist campaigners to the recent Challenge Inquiry report on Race and Housing (National Housing Federation: 2001), who criticised the Inquiry for ignoring the key issue of segregation in housing and being seemingly more concerned with the issue of employment opportunities for Black housing professionals (Guardian newspaper 25 July 2001).

It is also apparent that, at the same time as some attempts are being made to dismantle the economic and social barriers that exist for Black and minority

'Illegal' immigrants, who are likely to find themselves employed within the informal economy devoid of the protection and the 'equal

as opposed to a national unitary culture, 'lifestyle' politics replacing the politics of emancipation, diversity rather than equality, networks rather than hierarchy, and fleeting, multiple identities rather than fixed identities. In this context plurality has to be understood and accommodated at the individual level, since assignment of the individual to membership of a particular group may merely result in a different form of social exclusion.

Castles' 'Eleven Hypotheses' paper identifies the need for nation states to address issues of multiculturalism and national identity but he appears to predicate this need on the formation of new minorities resulting from the increasing diversity of migration flows. It is not clear whether he considers the

To what extent have the 'potential contradictions in anti-racist positions' been examined over the past decade and are current political agendas contributing to the creation of 'democratic, multicultural societies'?

In order to examine this issue it is necessary to consider what Castles may mean when he refers to 'potential contradictions in anti-racist positions.' Racism manifests itself in a variety of ways and each form of racism has its counterbalancing anti-racist position. Anti-racism exists because of, and is defined by, the existence of racism in one or other of its forms. Anti-racism and anti-racist positions can only therefore be understood in terms of their binary opposition to the various manifestations of racism, and by the specificities of those manifestations. Racism can be individual or collective, it can be elective or institutionalised, it can be active or passive, it can be covert or overt and it can be exclusionary or exploitative. The latter terms refer to the racism that excludes by expelling the 'other' from territory, or even from life, and the racism that exploits by inclusion and subjugation.

Racism that is individual, elective, active, overt and exclusionary is generally outwardly condemned by all groups and institutions, even those of the far right. For example, there are few individuals, groups or institutions that would seek to offer moral justification for a physical attack on an asylum hostel, although racist apologists might no doubt offer what they saw as plausible explanations as to why such events might occur and propose racist 'solutions' to the problem.

The more subtle forms of racism however, which are still endemic in western society, can be present and ingrained within polities which declare themselves to be anti-racist and which indeed do take some steps to demonstrate their commitment to anti-racist policies and values. Castles' paper refers to the extent to which the urban working class has seen its economic and social conditions eroded, and how immigrants and new minorities have become the visible symbol of this erosion and the target for resentment. He refers to Balibar's assertion (Balibar 1988) that

racism is not a result of this crisis but simply one form of its expression. In such a situation can the racism be attributed only to the perpetrators of racist incidents or rather to the state's inability or unwillingness to identify, acknowledge and tackle the racism-producing situation at a structural level? In this example the active racism of the perpetrators is brought about

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governance of the nation state' may be equally diverse and contradictory.

Bearing this caveat in mind, is there evidence that current political agendas are, at least, cognisant of these issues and therefore seeking to address these contradictions so as to tackle the hidden causes of racism? Sadly, such evidence as does exist would seem to point in the opposite direction – that national governments remain stubbornly determined not to allow the discourse on racism to leave the arena of the actions necessary

levels so better to understand the nature of those relationships.

Generally these propositions are consistent with Castles' eleven hypotheses but with amendments based on the analyses set out in this paper. However it remains unproven that changes in the flows, patterns and diversity of migration are significant in shaping the challenges that Western countries face in order to develop 'multicultural, democratic societies' and to tackle the causes and effects of racism.

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Appendix 1**Box 1 Castles' first set of five hypotheses dealing with global migration movements**

1. The world is entering a new phase of mass population movements in which migration to Europe and the situation of ethnic minorities in Europe can be fully understood only in a global context.
 2. Previous distinctions between types of migrations are becoming increasingly meaningless. This is undermining government policies.
 3. The growing disparities between economic, social and demographic conditions in south and north (and east and west) provide the context for future mass migrations.
 4. Economic, social and demographic disparities alone do not cause migration. Rather, the movements are an expression of the interdependence between sending and receiving areas within the political economy of the world market. Once movements start, they often lead to chains of migration, which continue even when the initial causes or policies have changed.
 5. The new types of migration correspond with the restructuring of the economies and labour markets of the developed countries in the last twenty years.
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Appendix 2

Box 2 – Castles second set of hypotheses dealing with the response of nation states to the ‘new migration and how this translates into issues of multiculturalism, citizenship and the salience of racism

6. State policies towards migrants and minorities have become increasingly complex and contradictory, as governments have sought to address a variety of irreconcilable goals, such as:
 - provision of labour supplies
 - differentiation and control of migrant workers
 - immigration control and repatriation
 - management of urban problems
 - reduction of welfare expenditure
 - maintenance of public order
 - integration of minorities into social and political institutions
 - construction of national identity and maintenance of the nation state
7. Racism in western Europe has two sets of causes. The first concerns ideologies and practices going back to the construction of nation states and to colonialism. The second set derives from current processes of social, economic and political change. The increased salience of racism and the shift in its targets over the last twenty years reflects the rapid pace of change in living and working conditions, the dissolution of the cultural forms and organisational structures of the working class, and the weakness and ambivalence of the state.
8. The constitution of new minorities, with distinct cultures, identities and institutions, is an irreversible process, which questions existing notions of national identity and citizenship.
9. Western European countries of immigration are being forced to examine the relationship between ethnic diversity, national identity and citizenship. Multicultural models appear to offer the best solution, but there are substantial obstacles to their realisation.
10. In view of the multifaceted links between the world economy, migratory processes, minority formation and social change, research in this area can no longer be monodisciplinary and national in focus. There is a need for a multidisciplinary and international social science of migration and multicultural societies, combining elements of political economy, sociology, political science, law, demography, anthropology and related disciplines.
11. The increasing volume and changing characteristics