

Refining the Political Sociology of International Migration: Mechanisms of Policy Diffusion



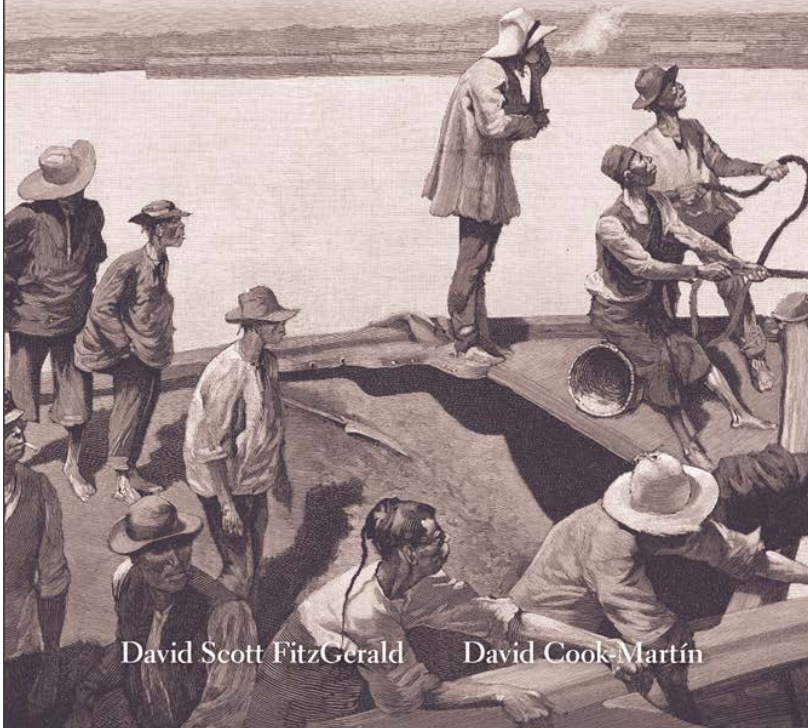
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CULLING THE MASSES

THE DEMOCRATIC ORIGINS OF
RACIST IMMIGRATION POLICY

➤ IN THE AMERICAS ◀



David Scott FitzGerald

David Cook-Martin

The puzzle:

Why did a strong consensus to select immigrants based on racial criteria in the 1920s switch to an anti-racist norm?

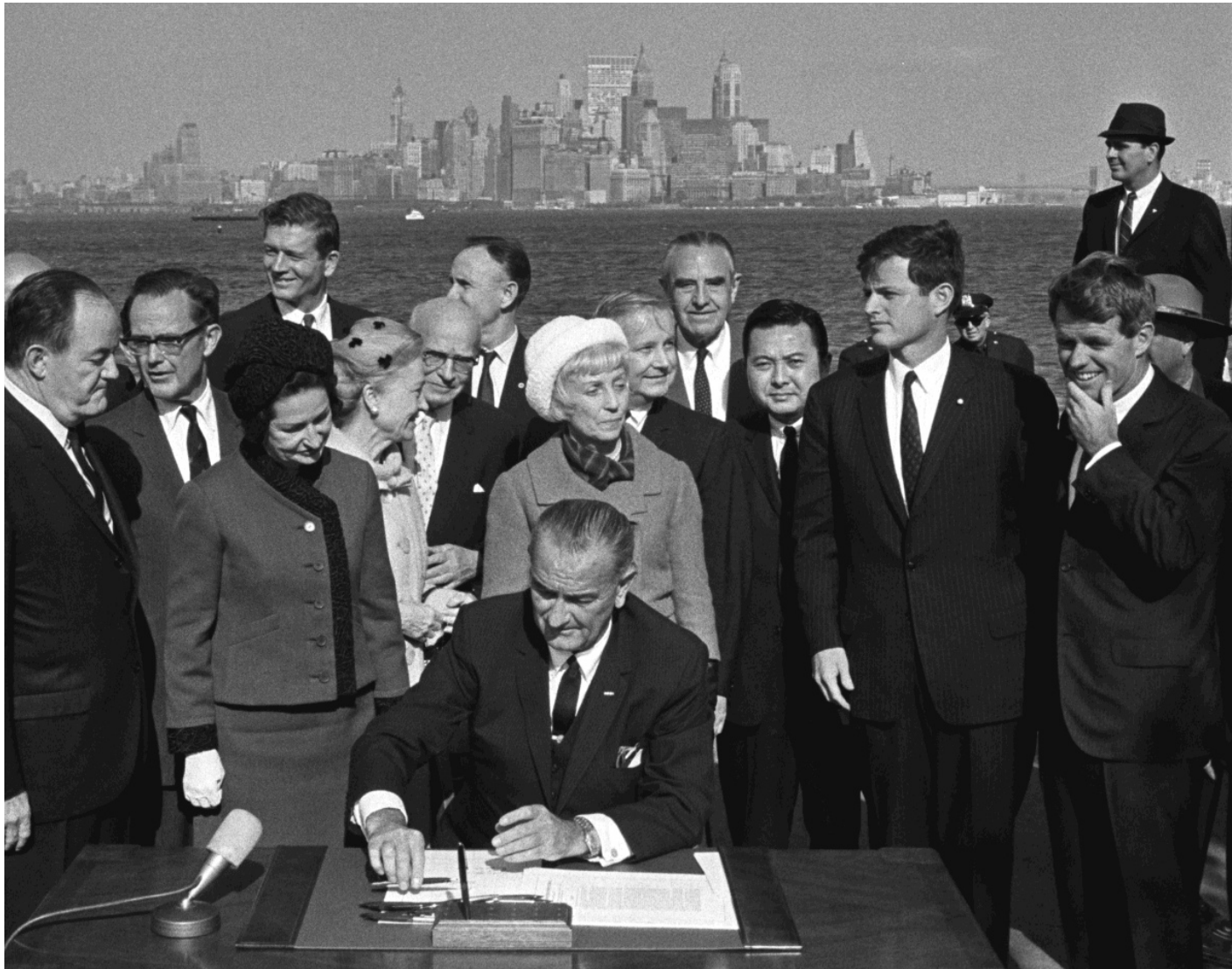
What role did policy diffusion play?



Harper's Weekly, August 7, 1869



San Diego poster 1882



Pres. Johnson signs the 1965 Immigration Act at Ellis Island

CONSTITUCION
DE LA
CONFEDERACION ARGENTINA.



CORRIENTES.
IMPRESA DEL ESTADO.
1853.

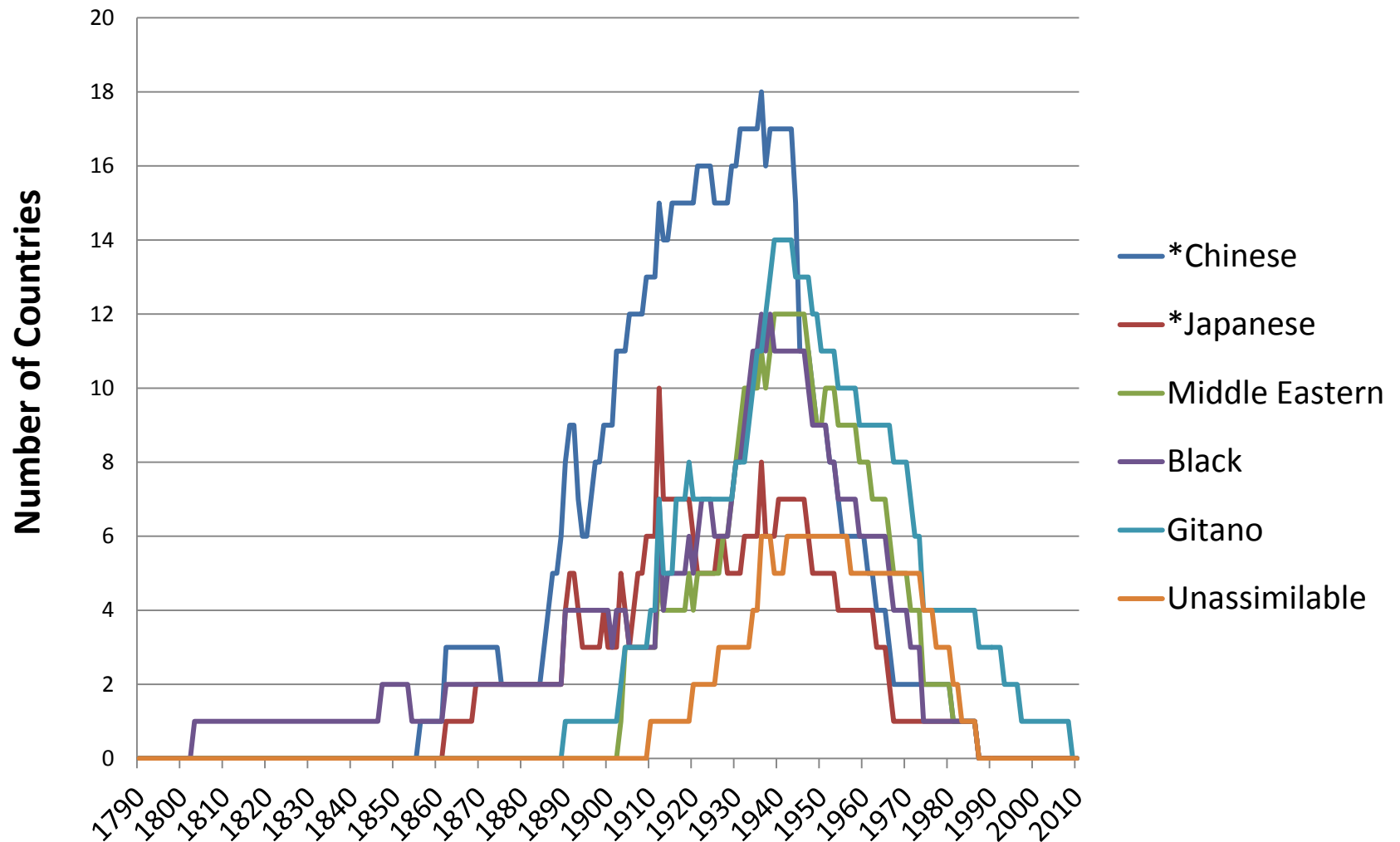


Art. 25.
“El Gobierno federal
fomentará
la inmigración
europea...”



Argentines of Korean descent, 2010

Number of countries in the Americas with negative immigration discrimination against six groups, 1790-2010



The comparativist's problem:

Millian logic misses how diffusion affects policymaking.



Method of agreement:

A B C D occur together with w x y z

A E F G occur together with w t u v

Therefore A is the cause, or the effect, of w.

Method of difference:

A B C D occur together with w x y z

B C D occur together with x y z

Therefore A is the cause, or the effect, of w.

Three mechanisms of diffusion:

1. **Strategic adjustment** – role of geography?
2. **Emulation** – shaped more by power differentials or shared culture?
3. **Leverage** – under what conditions can weaker countries use it effectively?

Strategic adjustment

Policies of other countries change policymakers' perceptions of the objective conditions in ways that push them to adapt accordingly

Post-factum: U.S.-Japanese “Gentlemen’s Agreement” 1907 effects on Brazil and Canada

Pre-emptive: Costa Rica bans blacks 1862 in anticipation of U.S. move

Strong effects of strategic adjustment:

- Main way that U.S. policy has influenced ethnic selection in other countries
- Adjacency matters, but long-distance effects too

Cultural emulation

Policymakers in one country voluntarily model their policies on those of another country or institution

E.g. diffusion of literacy requirements

- 1896. U.S. Congress passed, vetoed
- 1897. Natal Act
- 1898. New South Wales, Western Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand
- 1901. Australia
- 1910. Union of South Africa
- 1913, 1915, and 1917. U.S. Congress passed, vetoed
- 1917. U.S. Congress overrides veto
- 1919. Canada

Direction of emulation:

- Extensive flows from strong to weak...
- and/or within cultural communities...
- but *not* across cultural community divides from weak to strong

Leverage

Diplomatic, military, or economic pressure that one country puts on another to change its policies

E.g. High coercion: U.S. military governor bans Chinese immigration to Cuba 1902

E.g. Low coercion: U.S. pressure Canada and Mexico to exclude Chinese after 1882

Leverage by the weak:

- Collective action



Chinese Exclusion Repeal Is Sought; UN Charter Cited

By KENNETH C. CRAGG

Ottawa, Dec. 5 (Staff).—Repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923, the only Chinese exclusion law in effect on the continent, was urged upon Immigration Minister James A. Glen today by a delegation of six introduced by David Croll (L. Spadina).

- Issue linkage to critical foreign policy concerns of the strong

Comments welcomed:

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